

In League...



September – October 2017

A quarterly newsletter

Dear League Members and Friends,

Welcome to 2017-18! We look forward to expanding our outreach to the MIT community and to working with you on future activities and events.

As the new academic year begins, I invite you to join me in welcoming Kirsty Bennett, the new MIT Women's League Staff Associate. Kirsty's background in communications and social media and her experience and enthusiasm will serve the League well as the year ahead unfolds. Some of you may have met her. If not, do drop by the office, 10-342, and say hello to her. Our Staff Associate, Sis de Bordenave, has retired after almost 25 years with the League. Her patient guidance, steady support, and positive attitude have sustained us through the years. We wish her all the best.

Many of our League members worked tirelessly this summer to prepare programs and events for you in the coming year and we hope that you will participate in as many as your schedule allows. Consider joining one of our Interest Groups, which bring together women who share a common passion. The group list can be found on our website, web.mit.edu/womensleague. Do you see one that interests you? You are welcome to suggest something new!

Interested in teaching English? Sign up to be a teacher for the English Conversation Classes or become an English Conversation Partner. We welcome your participation in our ongoing Service Projects. In addition to our English language programs, we sponsor a clothing program for students that culminates with the Fall Fashion Free For All and operate a used furniture and housewares business, the Furniture Exchange, whose proceeds benefit our scholarship fund for undergraduate women.



The Program Committee and the Interest Groups host a range of activities — from a night of stargazing at MIT to a chocolate making and print making tour in Boston; a visit to MIT's Glass Lab for a glimpse of the intricacies of glassblowing; a walking tour of the Rose Kennedy Greenway; or to a talk and demo by the talented Emma Rogers Room Chef Tim Healey. Expert and inspiring speakers insure that the Stratton Lecture Series, the Breakfast Series, and the Annual Meeting are well attended, and the MIT Women's Choral concerts continue in their spectacular fashion.

The Springtime Tea, hosted by MIT's First Lady and the Women's League Honorary Chair Chris Reif, is an annual event League members cherish.

Connections continues to be a platform for women to meet with old friends and make new ones. Held once a month, this year it will take place at noon to make participation more convenient for women in the MIT community. So bring your lunch and share the break with a friend or co-worker. This newsletter and our online events calendar provide an

array of opportunities for you to explore. To learn more, contact the League office by phone, email or social media. (See our website for details.)

A survey, available at <https://goo.gl/VBquv3>, was sent out this summer to learn how the League can better serve you. We hope to hear from you.

Thank you again, League members, for your encouragement and support. Your hard work and enthusiasm help the League continue to fulfill its mission statement:

MIT Women's League, founded in 1913, strives to connect women in the MIT community through activities, interest groups and volunteer service opportunities, enriching their lives and the broader MIT community.

I look forward to serving as your Chair, working with you to build an even stronger League community.

Srirupa Mitra
Chair



We're currently seeking volunteers to join our team of dedicated English Conversation Class teachers.

For over half a century, our popular **English Conversation Classes** have been a signature service of the Women's League. They were created to assist international women arriving on campus from all over the world. These classes

offer the opportunity to learn or improve English skills, make new friends, learn about American customs and holidays, and gain confidence and comfort with life in the United States. Since the program began, more than 3,600 women from 76 countries have taken part, taught by 77 dedicated and enthusiastic League volunteers!

Offered only to those with MIT affiliations, classes meet Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:15am to 11:00am during both the fall and spring terms. Beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels are offered.

Classes are informal but not unstructured. No special academic credentials or experience are required of teachers, just time and enthusiasm. It does take effort to prepare and teach classes, but the teachers all say they love doing it and that they think they are learning as much about the world from their students as the students are learning from them.

If you are interested (or even just a little bit curious), please contact the Women's League Office: wleague@mit.edu or call 617.253.3656.



Conversational English Class Registration

Tuesday, September 12
9:00 – 11:00 am
Stratton Student Center, Room 491

The English Conversation Classes sponsored by the Women's League are ideal for international women arriving at MIT whose first language is not English. There students meet and come together to practice and learn English with the guidance of dedicated Women's League teachers.

Providing friendly settings for practicing English, these classes offer students assistance with increasing vocabulary and engaging in conversations about a variety of subjects with their classmates. Not only do they learn about American culture, they also share their own cultures and interests with their class. Teachers, as well as classmates, provide information about MIT and Boston and offer helpful

suggestions to accomplish everyday tasks. Speaking and listening competence improves as stories and experiences are shared.

In addition to learning or improving their English skills in these classes, students make new friends and gain confidence while living their new life in the United States. The focus is on functional "how to" English conversation and student interests vs. grammar. Grammar instruction, however, is provided and reviewed at the Basic and Intermediate levels.

Classes are held from September to December on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9:15 am to 11:00 am. (A second semester is offered in the spring.) Four levels of classes (Basic to Advanced) are offered and after a brief interview with one of our teachers,

each student is placed in an appropriate level class. Babysitting is provided for children, age 6 months up to 4 years at a cost of \$200 a semester per child. Textbooks are provided and included in the class fee of \$100 per semester. All questions will be answered by calling Laurie Scott, coordinator of the English Classes, at 781.648.0976 (home).

An **English Conversation Partner Program** provides students additional practice in conversational English with fluent English volunteers. Since most Partners are MIT employees, these informal meetings usually take place on campus on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. Participation is optional and subject to the availability of volunteer partners.



MIT Women's Chorale: A few places left for our fall season!

First Rehearsal
Wednesday, September 13
7:15–9:30 pm
Emma Rogers Room, 10-340

The MIT Women's Chorale rounded out the 2016–2017 season with a fond farewell to Sis de Bordenave at the Women's League Spring Tea at Gray House. We surprised her with a special thank you for all she has done for the Chorale to the tune of an Irish folk song, *The Parting Glass*.

The MIT Women's Chorale has a few openings for new singers for our fall semester. Rehearsals with our inspired and inspiring director, Kevin Galiè, begin on September 13, and take place on Wednesdays from 7:30–9:30pm in room 10-340. The Chorale is filled with interesting and friendly women who are serious about making music and serious about enjoying making music.

Our winter concert on Saturday, December 9th will feature the *Te Deum* of Giacomo Puccini, great great grandfather of the opera composer, and Irish folk songs setting by Beethoven. Prospective members must contact us at de-fazio@comcast.net.

Please visit our website for more information:
web.mit.edu/womensleague/womenschorale/



September Brown Bag Lunch

**Boston Lyric Opera Season
Preview with Guest Speaker,
Esther Nelson**

Wednesday, September 27, 2017
12:00 – 1:00 pm
Emma Rogers room (10-340)

Esther Nelson, the Stanford Calderwood General & Artistic Director of Boston Lyric Opera, is a *tour de force* in Boston's cultural community and American opera today. Responsible for everything ranging from artistic programming and casting to the Company's business model and fiscal health, her vision charts the course forward for the largest and longest-lived professional opera company in New England. Ms. Nelson joins the MIT Women's League to give a preview of BLO's 2017/18 Season, from its unforgettable music to insider information on the singers, costumes, and sets that will make these masterpieces come to life. With three works from the 20th century and one brand-new World Premiere, she shares how the 2017/18 Season came together and how it demonstrates opera's incredible versatility, from beloved classics to the fresh and urgent for today's audiences.

BLO's 2017/18 Season includes:

- *Tosca*
October 13–22, 2017
- *Burke & Hare* | World Premiere –
Opera Annex
November 8–12, 2017
- *The Threepenny Opera*
March 16–25, 2018
- *Trouble in Tahiti and Arias & Barcarolles*
May 11–20, 2018

ESTHER NELSON

**Stanford Calderwood General &
Artistic Director**

Esther Nelson combines an extensive career in the arts with significant management expertise. Prior to joining Boston Lyric Opera in September 2008, Ms. Nelson was a management consultant for a broad range of clients that included the New York Historical Association, their research library, and their associated Fenimore Art Museum; the Farmers' Museum in Cooperstown, NY; the European International Music and Arts Foundation; the Cultural Diplomacy Institute in New York and Berlin, Germany; Albany Symphony Orchestra in New York; The Douglas Moore Fund in New York City; Foothills Performing Arts Center in Oneonta, NY; Virginia Opera; Memphis and Portland (Maine) Operas; and the National Endowment for the Arts. She currently serves on the Board of OPERA America, the national service organization for the field.

The mission of Boston Lyric Opera is to build curiosity, enthusiasm and support for opera by creating musically and theatrically compelling productions, events, and educational resources for the Boston community and beyond.

Both locally and beyond, BLO leads the way in celebrating the art of the voice through innovative programming and community engagement initiatives that redefine the opera-going experience. Since its founding in 1976, the company has staged world premieres, U.S. premieres, co-productions and co-commissions of note with organizations such as The Royal Opera, Covent Garden and Scottish Opera, and continues to be a destination for some of the leading artists, conductors, directors and designers from around the world.

To reserve your seat, please contact the League office **by September 20** at 617.253.3656 or wleague@mit.edu, or register online at bostonlyricopera.eventbrite.com. Feel free to bring your lunch and we will provide beverages and dessert.

Reception to Welcome Women New to the MIT Community

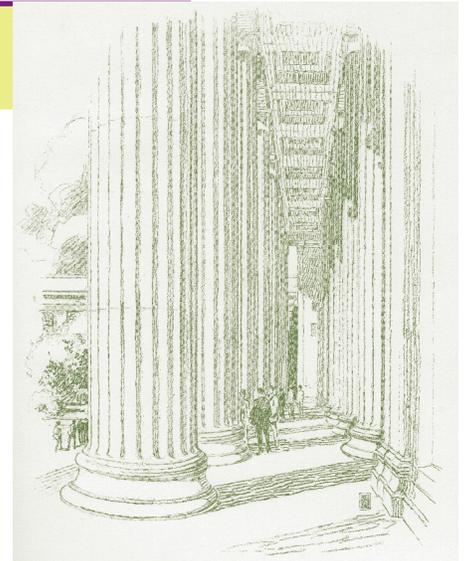
Monday, September 25
4:30 – 6:00 pm
Vannevar Bush Room, Room 10-105

This fall the MIT Women's League will once again host its annual reception to welcome women who are new to the MIT community. These new arrivals, having come from around the world and across the country (as new faculty, staff, and graduate students, and as spouses and significant others of new faculty, staff, and graduate students) are looking for ways to meet others and participate in the community while here at MIT.

To ease their transition into our community, the reception introduces newcomers to helpful MIT offices and services as well as to the activities, programs, and opportunities of the Women's League, making it a rich and informative experience.

Women's League Chair Srirupa Mitra and Vice Chair for Social Activities Jennifer Fleming Sousa will welcome guests and introduce a short informative program presented by representatives from Human Resources, MIT Spouses & Partners Connect, the MIT Work-Life Center, and MIT Police. There will be ample opportunity to talk with these representatives as well as with League members. Other helpful offices at the Institute will be in attendance showcasing their resources and support. All will be happy to explain and answer questions about their offerings.

League members are encouraged to attend and renew their membership and to greet these newcomers. A warm introduction, informal conversation, and helpful information make a very welcoming difference to someone who



knows very little about MIT, Cambridge, or the United States.

We hope that you can be part of this annual social event, as well as events to come. The Women's League welcomes all women in the MIT community to join us.

Explore your campus! Public Art Tour

Tuesday, October 3 • 12:00 – 1:00 pm
(Rain date Wednesday October 4)
Meet in the lobby of the List Visual Arts Center, 20 Ames Street (Building E15)

Join us for an opportunity to learn the stories behind the sculptures and installations you walk past every day! MIT's contemporary art museum, The List Visual Arts Center, reaches across campus and the wider Cambridge community with its Public Art Collection, which is open to all. Whether you're new to MIT or have walked across campus every day for years, there is much to discover and learn.

This tour of MIT's impressive collection of public art, led by museum staff from MIT's List Visual Art Center, explores featured works by Frank Gehry, Anish Kapoor, Sol LeWitt, I.M. Pei and Ursula von Ryndingsvard.

The decision to postpone due to poor weather will be made by 10:00 am on October 3.

Email wleague@mit.edu or visit mitarttour.eventbrite.com to register.





How many volunteers can you fit in a Gaylord?

Fall Fashion Free For All

Friday, October 27
Emma Rogers Room (10-340)

A good idea whose time had come! True twenty-two years ago, true today — and going strong! Generous donors from the MIT community and enthusiastic League volunteers and friends have kept and continue to keep this program vibrant.

Back in 1996 when the program started, the Hosts to International Students Program (HISP) coordinator observed that many of her students were unprepared financially for the cost of fully outfitting themselves for both our harsh winters or for buying formal clothes suitable for interviews, internships or presentations. To solve that problem, she reached out to friends and colleagues and proposed that rather than giving away the good or almost new clothing in their closets they were no longer wearing or had never worn elsewhere why not give it to the students.

And so the program began... and has grown into a fabulous 'Green' program, embracing recycling at its best!

This summer, our amazing volunteers sorted through 14 large cardboard gaylords containing 400 donated bags of clothing — around 3.5 tonnes!

The culmination of our clothing donation collecting is our Fall Fashion Free For All, an annual event to supply **free** clothing to our international undergraduate students. As clothing needs are met, to the unexpected delight of the students, smiles appear on every face. On ours too!

This fall help us help the students stock up with just the right things for those cold winter days, interviews, and even formal holiday occasions.

If you would like to participate:

Donate – We accept new and clean, gently used clothing, especially:

- **Winter Clothes** for women and men: Coats, Jackets, Hats, Gloves, Mittens, Scarves, (like new) Snow Boots
- **Men's Clothing – Small sizes!**
 Slacks: 30–32" waist, 28–29" length
 Suits: 38–40" regular
 Shirts: 15/15 ½/16 collar, 32–33" sleeve
- **Interview Clothes**
 For women: suits and dresses
 For men: suits, dress shirts, neckties

Clean clothing may be left at the League office, Room 10-342, during business hours or you may mail them to us. Additionally, there is a drop box at the Furniture Exchange (FX) which is open Tuesday and Thursdays, 10-4:00 pm. The deadline for donations is October 13, 2017.

Your donation is tax deductible and we supply a receipt for income tax purposes. Please call League office beforehand (617.253.3656).

Volunteer

- Help the **Display Team** unpack, sort and display the clothing before the event — anytime from 1:00–5:00 pm on Thursday, 10/26, and from 9:00–5:00 pm on Friday, 10/27.
- Be a **Fashion Consultant** at our annual 'Fall Fashion Free For All' on Friday, 10/27, 5:00–7:00 pm.
- Join the **Prep Team** once a quarter to prepare donations for the annual event. Refreshments are served!

Ready to join the fun?

- Please call the League office, 617.253.3656, or email wleague@mit.edu or mdzurikdesprez@gmail.com if you have questions about donations or if you would like to volunteer.

League Interest Groups and Classes

LEARN MORE

Book Discussion

Barbara Donnelly
 781.646.4617
 Nancy Hollomon
nancyredsox@gmail.com

Chorale

Sharon Lin: hllin@mit.edu
 Sally De Fazio: de_fazio@alum.mit.edu
web.mit.edu/womensleague/womenschorale

WORK WITH YOUR HANDS

Informal Needlework

Beth Harling
 781.749.4055, oharling@mit.edu;
 Claudia LaBollita-James
nonnajames@gmail.com

MIT Gardeners' Group

League Office
 617.253.3656
wleague@mit.edu
web.mit.edu/womensleague/gardeners

Women's League Community Craft Fairs

Brenda Blais
bmblais@mit.edu

MAKE NEW FRIENDS AND CONTACTS

CitySide Dining

League Office
wleague@mit.edu

MIT Japanese Wives Group

Kimie Shirasaki
mitjwg@yahoo.com

Groups meet weekly, bi-monthly or monthly. Contact the above women to learn more about their groups.



Halloween Party!

In past years, the MIT Japanese Wives Group has played host to Halloween parties after class in the Babysitting Room for our English Conversation Class students and their children along with the English class teachers and Keiko Kanda and her babysitters. Adorable costumes and smiling faces! This October the Babysitting Room will once again be the setting for the Halloween party hosted by the MIT Japanese Wives.

Connections

Thursday, September 7:

3:00–5:00 pm

Monday October 16:

12:00–2:00 pm

Monday, November 13:

12:00–2:00 pm

Emma Rogers Room (10-340)

Connections is our informal monthly open house, offering a chance to meet and talk with fellow MIT women. This year, Connections will meet from 3:00–5:00 pm in September, before moving to lunchtime, 12:00–2:00 pm, on Mondays in October and November. For our lunchtime events, please feel free to bring your lunch and take the chance to catch up with friends both old and new, and we'll provide a selection of cookies and good conversation!

Come by when you can and stay as long as you wish.

Save the date!

Holiday Wreath-Making

Wednesday, November 29:

9:00–11:00 am

**Student Center, 20 Chimneys
(W20-306)**

Get into the festive spirit by joining our annual tradition of making the holiday wreaths for MIT's main entrance at 77 Mass Ave. League member Brenda Blais will guide the creative and crafting process. All are welcome! Please contact the League Office at 617 253 3656 or email wleague@mit.edu to volunteer. We welcome your assistance for as long as your time permits that morning.

Stargazing

Wednesday, November 29:

4:00–6:30 pm

**(Alternate night: Thursday,
November 30)**

Roof of Building 37

After a wonderful program last year, Dr. Amanda S. Bosh, Atmospheric and Planetary Sciences Department, is again offering the chance to view the winter sky through MIT's telescopic equipment, atop Bldg. 37. More details as the date approaches.

General Information

The MIT Women's League newsletter is published four times during the academic year. The deadline for submission for the **November–January issue is October 1**. All items should be sent to the Women's League office.

Please call the League office for a hard copy of the newsletter and for answers to questions you may have. The office can also arrange for your membership.

Staff Associate Kirsty Bennett
League Chair Srirupa Mitra
Honorary Chair Christine Reif
Design Tim Blackburn Design

Notable — Books for discussion

11:30–1:00 pm

September 27 • Non-fiction
Alice Maclaurin Room (10-300)

A Spy Among Friends
by Ben Macintyre

October 25 • Fiction
Emma Rogers Room (10-340)

Vinegar Girl
by Anne Tyler



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 instagram.com/mitwomensleague