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AD HOC COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE CREATIVE ARTS AT MIT  
REPORT TO THE PROVOST

July 1987

Released September 1987

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Ad Hoc Committee to Review the Creative Arts at MIT (the Committee) was created by Provost John Deutch in late September 1986.<sup>1</sup> The Committee was charged to review and assess all of the creative arts activities at MIT and to make recommendations on their role, organization and support.<sup>2</sup> The Committee was asked to make recommendations by the end of the 1987 spring term. The scope of the Committee's charge made it impossible to complete a review and prepare a report and recommendations by that time. The Committee did, however, provide preliminary recommendations to the Provost in two areas where time appeared to be critical.<sup>3</sup>

The Committee's review of the creative arts at MIT proceeded in the following way. The Chairman first spent about a month reviewing the reports of previous committees and documents describing current activities, and interviewing people who have been intimately involved in creative arts

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<sup>1</sup>A list of the members is attached as Appendix A.

<sup>2</sup>The Committee's charge is attached as Appendix B.

<sup>3</sup>The letters that contained these recommendations are included as Appendices C and D. They are discussed further below.

activities at MIT. This preliminary activity helped to define an agenda for the Committee's inquiry and to identify the individuals to whom the Committee would speak in order to fulfill its charge.

Beginning in November, 1986, the Committee met approximately monthly, each time for an entire day, with faculty, staff, and student representatives of specific creative arts activities. Those invited to speak to the Committee were generally asked to prepare background material for advance distribution to the Committee. These materials were supplemented by material prepared by the Committee's staff.<sup>4</sup> Invitees generally made brief presentations which were followed by questions and discussion. Further discussion among the members of the Committee followed these presentations.

After its first major meeting, the Committee came to the conclusion that the charge that it had been given was far too broad to be met given the time constraints and available human resources. In light of the concurrent reassessment of MIT's undergraduate educational program, and especially the proposed reforms in the HASS requirements, the Committee decided to focus primarily on issues related to undergraduate education and the role of the creative arts in campus life generally.

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<sup>4</sup>All of these materials have been retained and can be made available to assist with the implementation of any of the Committee's recommendations with which the Provost decides to go forward.

Thus, we have largely ignored graduate programs except as they affect our primary foci.<sup>5</sup>

During the course of the Committee's work, it had the opportunity to hear from and ask questions of a very large number of people involved in the creative arts at MIT. The Chairman met separately with several individuals who, for one reason or another, could not meet with the entire Committee. He also met with the Executive Committee of the Council for the Arts. The Committee, together with the Undergraduate Association and the Graduate Student Council, sponsored a Student Forum, attended by forty to fifty students, to elicit further student views. It also met with the Council for the Arts at the Council's Special Mid-year Meeting.<sup>6</sup>

The Committee's task would have been impossible without the extensive cooperation of the administrators, faculty, staff, students, and friends of MIT with whom we met. All who were requested by the Committee to appear did so willingly. In many cases, the Committee requested that substantial quantities of information be made available to it. It was almost always provided. In a few cases, requests for additional information, proposed recommendations, and follow-up meetings were made by

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<sup>5</sup>Time and resource constraints aside, it is also the view of several members of the Committee that a committee such as this is not the appropriate vehicle for a serious review of graduate programs at MIT.

<sup>6</sup>A list of the people who made presentations to the Committee and/or were interviewed by the Chairman is attached as Appendix E.

the Chairman. In every case, these requests were met with affirmative responses. The Committee is grateful to those in the MIT community who have given so much time and effort to assist the Committee with its tasks. It is clear that there are a large number of individuals at or connected to MIT who care enormously about the future of the creative arts here.

The Committee did not adopt any formal voting mechanism to arrive at a final report and recommendations. A considerable amount of time was spent discussing various issues both during and between committee meetings. In many areas, a clear consensus emerged. In others, either a clear consensus did not emerge or a predominant view was accompanied by strongly held differences of opinion by a small minority.

Rather than trying to arrive at a consensus on every issue, this Report accommodates differences in views in two ways. First, where we could reach no consensus on a particular issue, the Report simply discusses the issues and competing views without making a recommendation. Second, all Committee members were invited to prepare their own comments to be attached to this report or communicated to the Provost privately.<sup>7</sup> A draft of our report was provided to the Provost for review on July 1, 1987. A few minor changes have been incorporated in the Final Report.

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<sup>7</sup>As of September 1, 1987, no supplementary comments had been received by the Chairman for inclusion in the report.

The Committee's Report proceeds in the following way. The next section presents the Committee's general views regarding the role, objectives and challenges for creative arts programs in undergraduate education and campus life at MIT. The sections following this overview discuss the history, structure, strengths, and weaknesses of specific creative arts activities and make recommendations where appropriate. The final section discusses organizational issues<sup>8</sup> and contains recommendations for Institute-level organizational changes that are not included in any earlier section.

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<sup>8</sup>A proposed organizational chart reflecting the recommendations in the body of the Report is attached as Exhibit 1.



## II. THE ROLE OF THE CREATIVE ARTS IN UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION AND CAMPUS LIFE AT MIT

The role of the creative arts in undergraduate education and campus life has been the subject of ongoing discussion since at least the late 1940s. The Lewis Report (1949) focused on humanities and social sciences education generally and concluded that these fields should develop not as mere service facilities within MIT, but as important fields in their own right. It urged that scholars in these fields be given greater opportunities to undertake creative work at the same high professional level as that characteristic of other fields.

The first Hayes Committee Report (1952-54, published in 1957) focused on the visual arts in particular, but provided a thoughtful discussion of the role of the arts in the academic curriculum of an institution which views its mission primarily as the training of scientists and engineers. The first Hayes Committee recommended that a visual arts program be initiated in the School of Humanities. It also recommended exhibition, film, and lecture programs. Most of this Committee's recommendations were implemented. The major deviation was that the responsibility for the visual arts program was given to the Department of Architecture.

The second Hayes Committee Report (1970) considered the role of the arts more generally at MIT. While it called for an array of modest, small-scale expansions of creative arts activities, the primary contribution of the report was its

discussion of the perceptions of students, faculty, and friends of MIT regarding the role, status, and future of the creative arts here.

The Lyndon Committee Report (1976) provided a broader and more ambitious perspective of the role of the creative arts at MIT. It clearly viewed the creative arts as an integral part of the general education of MIT undergraduates, but it also saw MIT as playing an important role on the national and international frontiers of the creative arts.

The reports of the committees that have preceded ours share many common themes. They identify many common challenges. They differ in focus, emphasis and vision, in part as a consequence of the changing role and status of the creative arts at MIT and in part because of differences in the historical contexts in which they were written. Taken together, they provide a vision for the role of the creative arts at MIT that continues to provide a viable and appropriate framework for maintaining and enhancing our creative arts programs.

The Committee believes that high quality academic and co-curricular programs in the creative arts must be an integral component of undergraduate education. These fields should not be viewed as "frills," "extras," or "icing on the cake" to a "serious" education in science and engineering. MIT's ability to continue effectively to attract and educate creative leaders in science and engineering in today's world requires that it

have educational programs in place that confront students with a diversity of approaches to thinking about their world and for participating in it. High quality educational opportunities in the visual and performing arts must be a central part of this set of broad educational opportunities. Providing these opportunities should continue to be a primary goal.

Our meetings with administrators, faculty, staff, and students suggest that there is broad support for this general perspective. Indeed, the Committee has perceived an increasing effort by the administration to make it clear to the outside world that MIT provides a much broader and more diverse set of educational opportunities and community interests than is commonly perceived. The current efforts to revise the undergraduate curriculum are consistent with this view. The Provost's charge to this Committee is consistent with this view as well. While the Committee is pleased to see this kind of broad expression of support for the creative arts, we want to emphasize that it is much easier to state the objectives than it is actually to achieve them.

As we shall discuss in more detail below, MIT has made a great deal of progress since 1950 in developing creative arts programs. Faculty, students and staff have done an enormous amount with few resources. We have had some stunning successes, such as that of the Music Section. Nevertheless, very serious weaknesses--and in some cases, clear inadequacies--remain. Even the best creative arts programs at

MIT are fragile. They require additional resources and support to maintain their excellence. The weaker programs will survive only if they are reorganized, with strong new leadership and a demonstrated commitment by the Institute.

The Committee reached several general conclusions concerning the creative arts at MIT:

1. MIT is an institution dedicated to science and engineering, which attracts students who are primarily interested in majoring in those fields. It does not have the resources to create departments in all of the arts, humanities and social sciences comparable in size and breadth and quality to those of other leading universities that are less focused on science and engineering. At the same time, MIT wants to continue to broaden itself to attract and train the best scientists and engineers, and to provide them with a more rounded education. That goal requires that MIT achieve excellence in selected areas of the arts, humanities and social sciences. All of the Committee's assessments and recommendations (including findings of weakness and inadequacy) are made in the context of MIT's own mission.

Maintaining this half-way position between a purely technical school and a full university is very difficult. Such an arrangement is potentially unstable and must be expected to be a continuing source of problems and frustrations that will require constant attention from the senior administration.

2. MIT's creative arts programs contain several areas of current or anticipated weakness as well as areas where constraints impede the achievement of excellence. These problems are not primarily a consequence of organizational failures, although some organizational problems do exist. Rather, they are due to a lack of leadership and/or to a lack of adequate financial support.

Leadership is required at two levels--at the intellectual level by outstanding faculty who are secure enough to develop far-reaching, original new programs, and at the administrative level by knowledgeable, sympathetic, and highly placed champions of the arts. A succession of Presidents, Provosts, and other senior administrators following World War II provided a context of institutional support and commitment that attracted faculty of the highest quality to MIT: Klaus Liepmann in music; Wayne Andersen, Gyorgy Kepes, and Minor White in the visual arts. These individuals were subsequently the intellectual and spiritual leaders responsible for much of MIT's success in the arts. In some cases, these individuals were able to institutionalize their creations, and strong programs have resulted. In other cases, extraordinary programs emerged but did not last long after the departure of their creators.

Leadership, both intellectual and organizational, is important in any field. It is especially crucial for the creative arts at MIT because they are too often treated as

being of secondary importance by the faculty and student body of the Institute. The Committee cannot overemphasize its belief that there is no substitute for a sincere, informed, and visible commitment to the arts, and an understanding of the needs and aspirations of those who are outside of MIT's traditional primary mission, at the highest levels of the Institute's administration. This commitment might best be demonstrated by allocation of at least the minimal resources required to maintain and develop quality arts programs at the Institute.

3. Creative arts programs cannot be built around the traditional "research model" in which the engine of new academic programs is research funding and where the faculty depends on research funds for a large fraction of its support.<sup>9</sup> While some research and grant funds can be obtained, programs in the creative arts will have to depend primarily on general funds.

4. Attracting and retaining high-quality faculty to teach in the creative arts at MIT represents a special challenge.<sup>10</sup> MIT will not be able to attract first-rate individuals to the faculty if they are to be brought here only to teach "service" courses. MIT must make available to the faculty opportunities

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<sup>9</sup>There are at least a few fine departments at MIT (e.g., Economics) that do not fit this model.

<sup>10</sup>This challenge faces MIT in the humanities and social sciences more generally.

to work more closely with undergraduates in advanced courses, a critical mass of colleagues, and opportunities to pursue professional interests, including research, writing, and creating and performing art. MIT must, in addition, recognize that the creation and development of graduate programs in certain areas may be necessary to attract and retain high-quality faculty.<sup>11</sup>

5. Many of our most important arts educators do not follow the traditional MIT faculty tenure career path. If MIT is to expand and increase the quality of its arts programs, there must be clear career paths for those who choose to express their expertise through teaching, creating, and performing. Two types of teacher/artists must be considered. First are the tenure-track faculty in the performing arts whose output is performances rather than publications. It is not reasonable to require that they mimic their science and engineering counterparts to survive; the tenure system must find a way to support and nurture excellence in their areas. The second type are the affiliated artists, appointed at the lecturer or instructor level, who do a substantial fraction of the arts

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<sup>11</sup>Several people have expressed the view that it is not really possible to strike a balance between a "service-oriented" mission, and a full commitment to large arts, humanities and social science departments with the full range of undergraduate, graduate and professional programs. The Committee recognizes that striking a balance is difficult, but also notes that there are many fine programs in arts, humanities and social science at liberal arts colleges that do not have graduate programs.

teaching. MIT needs a defined track for individuals such as John Corley (Director of the Band) and some mechanism for granting them long-term job security.

6. There is an enormous demand for creative arts courses and co-curricular activities by MIT undergraduates.<sup>12</sup> We are not force-feeding the arts to our students. On the contrary, students are increasingly finding that the opportunities to pursue their interests in music, drama, and visual arts are not equal to what they expected. We are turning students away from courses in the visual arts. Spaces for practice and performance in music and drama are severely limited. And, of course, the pressures created by our undergraduate programs in science and engineering are a severe constraint on the ability of students to pursue other interests.

Reforms in the HASS requirements have recently been made and "The Arts" have been designated one of the major distribution and concentration areas. These changes may increase even further the demand for arts courses. The Committee recommends that the demand resulting from these reforms be carefully monitored and that the resources required to satisfy increases in demand be made available.

For many years, the perception of MIT as a science and engineering school did not reflect the reality of MIT as a

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<sup>12</sup>Statistics on student participation in and oversubscription of particular programs are presented later in this Report.



place with much broader opportunities. The Committee is concerned that unless continuing efforts are made to maintain and enhance this breadth of opportunities, MIT's vigorous efforts to portray itself as a broader institution may result in just the opposite kind of inaccuracy.

7. A number of people have suggested to the Committee that there is and should be a special character to the creative arts at MIT that fits in naturally with the general ethos and mission of the Institute as a place where things are done rather than abstracted through books and slides. Some have said that MIT students do art, while at other schools such as Harvard, students just think about art. Neither characterization is accurate or desirable.<sup>13</sup> Thinking critically about the arts without any opportunity to create art is far from ideal. Doing without thinking critically is certainly no better.

The most successful arts programs at MIT have had a heavier emphasis on actual creative expression than those of many other institutions, which does fit well with MIT's students and faculty. A greater relative emphasis on doing, however, must be balanced with learning to think about how the arts fit into the larger world, both contemporary and historical, and understanding and comparing the wide variations in approaches to them. A good creative arts program should

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<sup>13</sup>In recent years, Harvard has added many opportunities for students to create and perform art.

encompass the study of history, theory, and criticism as well as provide opportunities for actual creation.

8. Many feel that MIT's strongest contributions to the arts make use of MIT's special character, i.e., the ability to merge art and technology. Although that is something which is done well at MIT (witness the Media Lab or the courses offered by Heather Lechtman), one cannot minimize the importance of teaching the basics. Solid, traditional training in the arts, as well as in science and engineering, is a prerequisite to contributing to new arts-technology ventures. The Committee sees the urgent need to preserve and expand this type of arts training at the undergraduate level.

9. Unlike most other areas of education at MIT, the formal academic programs and the extracurricular or (more fashionably) co-curricular opportunities our students have in the arts are intimately related to one another. Co-curricular activities include exhibition, creative, and performance programs on the MIT campus, as well as activities available in the greater Cambridge/Boston community.

10. The visual and aesthetic environment of the MIT campus has improved enormously since 1950. The sculpture collection, indoor public art, art galleries, student art loan program, concerts, theatrical productions, and other performance events have played an educational role and have made MIT a much warmer, inviting, and challenging place to study, work and

live. Still, many opportunities remain to improve on the progress that we have made.

11. An effective means for generating student interest in the arts is through their faculty advisors. Currently, few advisors are knowledgeable about curricular and co-curricular arts opportunities at MIT. Correction of this deficiency should be one of the missions of the Office for the Arts (see below). An informed and interested faculty is a key ingredient to a healthy arts program.

In light of these observations, the Committee recommends that MIT pursue the following broad objectives:

1. Maintain its outstanding undergraduate academic program in music. Though the Music Section has been very successful, its continuing excellence will require new space for offices and rehearsals, and a long-range commitment by the Institute to construct adequate concert facilities.

2. Develop stable, high-quality undergraduate academic programs in drama, dance, and the visual arts. These programs should provide a broad menu of courses in history, criticism, and creative expression to satisfy the HASS requirements and to offer opportunities for undergraduate concentrations and majors. To support these developments, the administration should allocate the necessary faculty appointments and develop plans for improvement of MIT's theater facilities.

3. Maintain the flexibility and willingness to nurture the development of graduate programs in specific areas of the creative arts where opportunities for excellence emerge and/or where necessary to attract first-rate faculty.
4. Provide adequate opportunities and recognition for creative arts faculty to pursue their professional interests.
5. Encourage, but do not force, the exploitation of "special" opportunities for interdisciplinary education and research in the creative arts resulting from MIT's strengths in science and engineering.
6. Provide opportunities for students, faculty and staff to pursue interests in the creative arts outside of structured academic programs.
7. Provide spaces and facilities for academic and co-curricular activities in the creative arts of the quality that we expect for other activities at MIT.
8. Take full advantage of opportunities for students and faculty to participate in creative arts activities in the greater Cambridge/Boston community. MIT should also make it possible for its creative arts programs to give something back to the local, national and international communities.

The Committee has tried to review all of the major undergraduate academic and co-curricular activities in the

creative arts at MIT. We have been able to examine some activities much more closely than others. A discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of each major area follows. Where the Committee has not been able to explore an activity in adequate depth, this fact is duly noted. Intra-school, -department, and -section organizational changes are discussed at several places in the following sections. The Committee's recommendations for larger organizational changes are stated in the last section of this Report.

### III. THE PERFORMING ARTS

#### 1. Music

All academic and many co-curricular activities in music are the responsibility of the Music Section of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS). Its faculty offer introductory and advanced courses in the theory, history and literature, and performance of music. Courses are available to undergraduates to satisfy their HASS requirements, for concentration in music, and for majoring in music. The Music Section has no graduate students.<sup>14</sup> A large, excellent, but overcrowded music library serves the section.

The Music Section is not a conservatory and is not in the business of training professional musicians, although some of its students have become professionals. There is, however, a much heavier emphasis on performance than is typical of music departments in liberal arts colleges. This emphasis is reflected in the important role that the Music Section plays in co-curricular music activities. The Section offers four ensemble subjects in which students can participate on a curricular or co-curricular basis.<sup>15</sup> It also hires the Directors of two non-credit groups (the Festival Jazz Ensemble and the Concert

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<sup>14</sup>The Experimental Music Studio (EMS) in the Media Laboratory of the School of Architecture and Planning does admit graduate students. The EMS programs are discussed below.

<sup>15</sup>These are Chamber Music Society/Brass Ensemble, Choral Society/Chamber Chorus, Concert Band, and Symphony Orchestra.

Jazz Band), and it provides token financial support to the Gospel Choir and the Logarithms.<sup>16</sup>

The Music Section enrolled over 1,000 students in 1986/87, exclusive of students who participated in ensemble subjects on a non-credit basis, and enrollment appears to be increasing. The Section has 9 faculty positions, 6 (FTE) lecturers, and 13 affiliated artists (not FTE) employed on a fee-for-service or hourly basis for performance and labs. It sponsors about 70 concerts each year. The curricular and co-curricular activities of the Music Section are supported by an annual budget of approximately \$1 million.<sup>17</sup>

The Music Section has managed to attract and retain an outstanding faculty, many of whom have national and international reputations. The absence of a graduate program and other professional opportunities on campus has been partially compensated for by providing the faculty with considerable flexibility to pursue their professional interests in performance both at and away from MIT. Several members of the Section expressed an interest in increasing the opportunities for advanced study of music at MIT, in particular by greater involvement with an expanded Experimental Music Studio and

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<sup>16</sup>Additional recognized student music groups are the Chorallaries, Marching Band, and Guild of Bellringers. None of these groups receive administrative or financial support from the Music Section.

<sup>17</sup>All references to budgets and costs in this Report exclude overhead. Budget figures that reveal confidential individual salary information, or that were presented to the Committee in a way that was not useful, are not reported.

through closer interaction for research and study with MIT faculty in other disciplines.

### Evaluation and Recommendations

The Music Section and the curricular and co-curricular courses and performance groups for which it is responsible are a great success. This Section should be a model for other areas in the creative arts. Additional resources are needed in two major areas, however, in order to maintain what has been achieved and to enhance the quality of the program.

#### a. Facilities for Study, Practice and Performance

The Committee has already communicated, to the Provost and to the Dean of the SHSS, its views regarding the inadequacy of facilities for the study, practice and performance of music, as well as for drama and dance.<sup>18</sup> Simply stated, the current facilities are embarrassingly inadequate.<sup>19</sup> The planned renovation of the former Hayden Gallery as an acoustically suitable, small performance space will remedy one of the most pressing needs, but others remain.

The Provost informed the Committee in April that the funds necessary for a major facility are not available, although

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<sup>18</sup>A copy of the letter dated February 9, 1987, from the Chairman of the Committee to the Provost and the Dean is attached to this Report as Appendix C.

<sup>19</sup>The need for performing arts facilities was recognized in the Lyndon Report (1976), and a proposal for a performing arts building was made at that time. Subsequently, several facilities plans were developed, but they did not lead to the construction of the facilities envisioned in the Lyndon Report.



limited funds might be available from time to time over the next several years. We understand that he recently authorized a study of opportunities for modest improvements in the facilities situation.

The Committee recommends against approaching the facilities problem incrementally over time. Instead, it strongly urges the Institute to develop a long-term plan for the construction or renovation of the needed, additional facilities that fits the resources that are likely to be available. We also believe that a substantial commitment of funds will be necessary to bring the facilities up to par.

With respect to music programs the following are the most pressing needs:

- (i) A 1200-seat concert hall with excellent acoustics.
- (ii) Expanded and improved facilities for teaching and practice of music and for storage of musical instruments.
- (iii) Expanded and improved space and equipment for the Music Section faculty.

These needs (including those for drama and dance, as discussed further below) might be met most efficiently by constructing a separate performing arts building along the lines of the Hopkins Center at Dartmouth.

b. The Experimental Music Studio (EMS)

The EMS was established within the Music Section in 1971 by Professor Barry Vercoe, with the goal of making the resources of computer technology accessible for musical use. The EMS is

engaged in teaching, research, and performance activities. Professor Vercoe's salary is paid from the Music Section's budget. The EMS obtained additional support for its activities from donations of equipment, research grants, and contracts, and, until 1982, from general funds in the amount (in 1982) of about \$100,000 per year. In 1982, the EMS obtained a \$1.1 million research grant to support research over a five-year period, and MIT's support was substantially reduced by the Provost.

In 1985, the EMS moved to the new Media Laboratory (and thus to the School of Architecture and Planning), although Professor Vercoe's salary has continued to be covered from the Music Section's budget. The EMS now admits graduate students through the Department of Architecture's Media Arts and Sciences Program. It is the Committee's understanding that the EMS is now a formal part of a larger music and cognition group in the Media Lab and has no formal governance relationship with the Music Section, aside from Professor Vercoe's position in the Section.

The EMS has always struggled to achieve its objectives in the face of continuing budget crises. Funding uncertainties and the threat of bankruptcy have made it difficult to maintain a permanent technical and support staff and to support its innovative performance activities. The EMS sought the shelter of the Media Lab, in part to find a home where graduate students could be admitted, in part because of shared interests with others affiliated with the Media Lab, and in part to obtain greater financial security. When the Committee met with

Professor Vercoe in the fall of 1986, however, the financial situation had deteriorated once again.

Despite all of these problems, the EMS has become a recognized, international leader in the application of computer technology to music. Professor Vercoe has been joined by Professor Tod Machover and Professor Marvin Minsky in the Media Laboratory. Together, they have endeavored seriously to join music with technology and to mix teaching, research and performance activities. In principle, the EMS could provide a vehicle for ongoing interdisciplinary work involving other faculty in the Music Section, as well as others at MIT interested in music cognition and computer technology. It is an activity that deserves more stable financial support from the Institute.

The music faculty have a growing appreciation for the EMS and its potential for enhancing their own intellectual interests. They support it and desire to become more involved with it. The Committee believes that the development of a financially stable, joint endeavor between the Music Section and the Media Laboratory should be encouraged, since this is exactly the kind of relationship among art, science, and technology that many had hoped the Media Laboratory would represent. In light of the historical relationship between the Music Section and the Media Laboratory, however, this new interest in more active support and participation by the Music Section cannot simply be imposed on the Media Laboratory. The Head of the Music Section, the Dean of the SHSS, the Director of the Media Laboratory, and those

involved with its computer music program should be encouraged to work out a plan for joint governance and financial responsibilities.

## 2. Drama

The SHSS supports three activities which together may be seen as MIT's commitment to a program in theater arts: Dramashop, Dance Workshop, and the Shakespeare Ensemble.<sup>20</sup> None of these activities is part of any academic department.<sup>21</sup> A student may elect a concentration in Drama--the Drama Program--by participating in Dramashop and/or Dance Workshop in combination with selected subjects in dramatic literature.

Each group has a Director whose salary is paid for by the Dean of the SHSS, although each group also has a long history as a student activity. Technical and administrative support staff are also supported from School funds. The three Directors report to a Coordinator of the Performing Arts (currently Professor Thompson) and to the Executive Committee on Drama and Dance, which is made up of faculty, staff and student representatives. The program costs the SHSS roughly \$300,000 per year.

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<sup>20</sup>There are three additional drama groups active at MIT: Community Players, Project for Student Summer Theater (PSST), and Musical Theater Guild (MTG), which has absorbed the currently inactive Tech Show. These function entirely as non-academic student and community activities and are funded from sources such as ticket sales, bake sales, and gifts, supplemented occasionally by modest FinBoard support. At one time, the Shakespeare Ensemble fell into this category.

<sup>21</sup>At one time, the Dramashop was closely connected to the Literature Section, but this is no longer the case.

## Evaluation and Recommendations

There has been concern about the role, structure and operation of the drama program for some time. In 1974, Michael Murray reviewed the drama program and produced a report that recommended that a more "serious" drama program be encouraged and more adequate theater facilities built. In 1981, the Wolff Committee again reviewed the drama program, primarily from the perspective of the Literature Section, and in light of continuing conflicts between the Shakespeare Ensemble and the Dramashop. It made a variety of organizational suggestions which appear to reflect, more than anything else, the Literature Section's lack of interest in the program.

Last year, Dean Friedlaender asked Peter Altman, the Director of the Huntington Theater, to provide her with a confidential assessment of and recommendations regarding MIT's drama and dance activities. He submitted his report about a year ago.

This Committee has already communicated some of its concerns about the drama program to the Provost and the Dean of the SHSS. We suggested that the Dean of the SHSS proceed to implement Peter Altman's recommendations.<sup>22</sup>

The drama program continues to be popular with students, and all three groups put on excellent productions, but the program has no academic home and lacks senior programmatic leadership.

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<sup>22</sup>A copy of the letter, dated February 9, 1987, from the Chairman of the Committee to the Provost and the Dean is attached to this Report as Appendix D.

Facilities are critically inadequate. MIT does not have a single theater space that meets any normal college, or even high school, standard. Allocation of scarce performance space is repeatedly a source of controversy among the groups and between the groups and other Student Activities. Controversies about the proper mix of curricular versus student-led activity continue.

The Committee makes three recommendations with respect to the drama program:

a. Organization

The Music Section should be the model for the drama program, not in terms of size, but in terms of overall structure and responsibilities. A drama or theater arts program should provide a balanced menu of curricular offerings in literature, criticism, and performance. It should also nurture co-curricular performance activities, with varying levels of faculty involvement, as the Music Section has for the performing groups in music.<sup>23</sup>

The resources available for appointments in drama are too modest to create a separate section in the SHSS. Instead, the

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<sup>23</sup>The student participants in the Shakespeare Ensemble have expressed considerable concern about faculty domination of what until recently has been a closely knit student and alumni activity. The Committee is sensitive to these concerns, but it sees no reason why the interests of the students and this reorganization should be antithetical. Under this recommendation, the Shakespeare Ensemble could choose, however, to become a completely independent student activity such as MTG, with the consequence that it would then have to be funded on the same basis as are those groups.

Committee suggests that the Institute follow Altman's recommendation, and the invitation of the Music Section, to merge the drama program into the Music Section, creating a new Music and Theater Arts Section (and ultimately a department) within the SHSS. This would mean that the Executive Committee for Drama and Dance, and the position of Coordinator of the Performing Arts, would disappear. The funds now allocated directly by the Dean of SHSS would be transferred to the new section under the terms and conditions proposed by Altman and the Music Section. If this course is followed, the Committee urges the Dean to establish separate line items for music and for drama and dance in the new section's budget.

b. Leadership

Reorganizing the drama program will not, in and of itself, improve the current situation. If the drama program is to realize its full potential, it is essential that MIT recruit a senior faculty member in theater arts to be its intellectual and programmatic leader and to be responsible for all drama and dance activities that receive support from the SHSS. Resources beyond those now available will be required to pay for this position.

Several members of the Committee have expressed some doubt that MIT will be able to recruit a high-quality individual for this position, given the state of the drama facilities, the modest resources available for the program, and the historical problems that continue to infect the program. The Committee does not believe, however, that such doubts should preclude a search.

c. Theater Facilities

The letter dated February 9, 1987, from the Chairman of this Committee to the Provost and the Dean of the SHSS regarding the inadequacy of performing arts facilities pertained to theater as well as music.<sup>24</sup> The Little Theater in Kresge and the Sala de Puerto Rico in the Student Center, now used by the drama and dance groups in stiff competition with other users, are inadequate performance spaces. Moreover, allocation controversies arise frequently. The Dance Workshop has no permanent rehearsal or performance space. Neither drama nor dance has adequate space to construct sets and store costumes.

Ideally, these needs would be filled with the construction of a new performing arts building with suitable theater arts spaces. Improvements can be made, however, with more modest expenditures. The Committee urges that Peter Altman's recommendations regarding facilities be reviewed and that a feasibility plan be developed.

Finally, the Committee also encourages the development of a space-allocation protocol that fairly and efficiently allocates existing facilities among competing uses. We suggest below that this task be assigned to a new Office for the Arts.

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<sup>24</sup>After that letter was written, we also received a petition from students in Dramashop expressing their concern about the inadequacy of the existing facilities.



#### IV. UNDERGRADUATE VISUAL ARTS PROGRAMS

Undergraduate visual arts education is primarily the responsibility of the Department of Architecture,<sup>25</sup> which has many responsibilities in addition, including undergraduate and graduate professional programs in architecture, graduate programs in Visual Studies and Media Arts and Sciences, and a graduate program in History, Theory, and Criticism of Art and Architecture.

The Committee focused primarily on the undergraduate courses offered by the Department in two areas: Visual Art and Design (two- and three-dimensional visual design in various media, graphics, photography, film/video, and environmental art); and History, Theory, and Criticism of Art and Architecture (which includes art history). Some courses in these two areas satisfy the HASS requirements, and students who choose to obtain a Bachelor of Science degree in Art and Design can concentrate in either.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>There is also, in the SHSS, a Film and Media Studies concentration composed of courses in Literature, Foreign Languages and Literature, STS, and Political Science. The Committee met with the director of this program, but we did not explore it in any depth. In addition, Heather Lechtman, Professor of Anthropology and Archaeology, teaches a course called Culture and the Visual Studies.

<sup>26</sup>The degree program also allows concentrations in architectural design or building technology, which are outside of the Committee's charge.

The Department of Architecture is not directly involved in co-curricular activities. Non-credit courses in studio art are offered by the Student Art Association. This program is discussed further in Section VIII of this Report.

There is substantial student interest (600-800 students enrolled each year) in the courses offered by the Department of Architecture in these two areas. The Committee learned that many more students (over 400, by Department estimate) would like to enroll in some of these courses but are turned away for lack of staff or space. While there is excess demand both for courses in the history of art and architecture and for visual studies, it is most severe, and is likely to become more so, in the visual studies area.

1. The History of Art

The History, Theory, and Criticism (HTC) group currently consists of three full-time, tenured faculty, as well as a few junior faculty and visiting professors. Only one of the faculty is an art historian.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, the undergraduate program has remained reasonably strong because the existence of the graduate program and the congeniality and coherence of the HTC group helps to attract excellent faculty, and because the members of the HTC group have made commitments both to the provision of high-quality undergraduate offerings and to active and on-going research activities.

Evaluation and Recommendations

The primary concern of the Department of Architecture with respect to the HTC group should be to retain the current

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<sup>27</sup>The relationship between the history of art and the history of architecture is discussed below.

faculty<sup>28</sup> and to add at least one more art historian. The additional art historian should, of course, complement the individuals in the existing group. Several members of the Committee have suggested that serious consideration be given to attracting a person who specializes in 20th-century art, perhaps with research interests in film, video, or photography.

## 2. Visual Studies

The situation in Visual Art and Design is quite different. MIT has a long tradition of excellence in visual studies (with illustrious individuals such as Gyorgy Kepes, Minor White, and Richard Leacock on the faculty) and an active program of both undergraduate and graduate education.

In the past few years, however, course offerings and faculty positions in visual studies have declined substantially, both in absolute terms and as a fraction of departmental resources, compared to what was available ten to fifteen years ago. Over the next five years, several faculty and other teaching staff involved in teaching visual design, film/video, and photography are likely to retire.<sup>29</sup> The Department is already relying heavily on graduate student instructors, supervised by the

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<sup>28</sup>On June 24, 1987, we were informed that the Department's art historian will be leaving MIT after the 1987-88 academic year.

<sup>29</sup>Photography, graphics, and film/video are primarily the responsibility of faculty members who have joined the Media Laboratory and the associated Media Arts and Sciences Program in the Department of Architecture. The special problems this poses for undergraduate visual arts education are addressed below at footnote 44.

faculty, to teach undergraduate photography and graphics courses. If the trend of the past decade continues and anticipated retirements are not replaced with new appointments, the undergraduate visual studies program will virtually disappear within five years.

The Committee was assured that no formal decision has ever been made to phase out undergraduate visual studies opportunities. Rather, the decline has resulted from general budget cuts affecting the Department of Architecture as a whole, competition for resources from other programs within the Department of Architecture, and a lack of leadership committed to undergraduate visual studies.

The Committee observes that the continuing erosion of opportunities in visual studies is inconsistent with MIT's objective of offering creative arts opportunities to undergraduates. It is in direct conflict with the special place for the arts in the new HASS requirement reforms.<sup>30</sup> Student preferences indicate that there is substantial demand for increasing MIT's commitment to this area. The Committee believes that MIT should have a strong, balanced undergraduate program which includes broad opportunities in both visual studies and the history of art and architecture. We would also like to encourage additional interactions with faculty in literature, history and other departments in the SHSS. MIT should certainly not be

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<sup>30</sup>The Committee wonders whether those responsible for the reforms have considered whether the Department of Architecture will be willing and able to supply the required courses.

putting its visual studies program on a path to oblivion by neglect.

### Evaluation and Recommendations

The Committee has given considerable thought to how to stop the hemorrhage and reverse the trend. We have considered proposals to move the visual studies program (with and without art history), along with its budget, to the SHSS.<sup>31</sup> We have considered proposals to set up a separate visual arts section (with and without art history) within the School of Architecture and Planning. After considerable discussion with those directly and indirectly involved, however, we have concluded that either of these organizational changes is likely to make things worse rather than better. Instead, we believe that a "Department of Architecture solution" offers the best hope for addressing the current and emerging problems.

The solution we are recommending is merely the best of several less than satisfactory alternatives. There should be no illusions that these problems can be easily solved through organizational changes alone. New leadership is the critical element of a solution to the problems the Committee has identified.

Before proceeding to discuss the nature of the solution we recommend, we offer a brief discussion of the reasons for our rejection of the other proposals.

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<sup>31</sup>We note that this was where the first Hayes Committee (1952-54, 1957) recommended it go.

Moving visual studies, including art history, presumably in the form of a section, to the SHSS would result in several potential benefits. These include unified administrative responsibility for the HASS requirements, the SHSS's tradition of commitment to undergraduate education, and increased opportunities for interaction among those interested in the visual arts, music, theater arts, and film history and criticism.<sup>32</sup>

There would also be major disadvantages to such a move. First, moving art history along with visual studies would separate one or two art historians from colleagues in architecture and isolate them from professional opportunities available there. This would make it very difficult, if not impossible, to attract first-class art historians to MIT. It would also diminish MIT's strengths in architectural history. Art and architectural history are two parts of the same discipline, relying on common methods, materials and facilities. The traditional arrangement in liberal arts colleges locates history of art and architecture in the same department to reflect these commonalities.<sup>33</sup>

There would also be disadvantages in moving both the art and architectural historians, together with the artists, to the SHSS.

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<sup>32</sup>While this sounds appealing, such interaction may not occur in practice, and this benefit may be too easily overestimated.

<sup>33</sup>It should be noted that there is no natural affinity between art historians and artists.

The HTC group benefits considerably from its association with the Department of Architecture, and vice versa. Their separation would diminish the attractiveness of MIT to excellent historians of either art or architecture, as well as other potential SA&P faculty, and would probably lead to duplication of effort and facilities. Thus, we believe that it is essential that art history continue to be part of the HTC group and that the HTC group continue to be part of the Department of Architecture.

Finally, the Committee does not think that the visual studies artists, without the historians, would comprise a viable section in isolation from the Department of Architecture. It would be too small, it would lose important intellectual relationships with Architecture that once served the visual studies program very well, it would find it more difficult to attract high-quality faculty interested in working with graduate and professional students, and it would have to confront difficult facilities problems. If this is not enough, the Committee believes that the visual studies program is too fragile to survive such a move at the present time.

In short, the Committee believes that the option of moving the visual arts undergraduate programs from the SA&P to the SHSS is inferior to other options. It is possibly even inferior to the status quo. We, therefore, do not recommend it.

The Committee also considered a proposal to create a separate Visual Arts Section within the School of Architecture and Planning, analogous to the sections in the SHSS. The

benefits of a separate section would include the creation of an entity with clear responsibilities for undergraduate education in the visual arts, a separate budget that would not have to compete with other departmental resource demands, and the potential for attracting a leader for the group who could anticipate considerable freedom and independence.

Although we were initially more enthusiastic about this proposal, discussions with those concerned about the visual arts situation within the Department convinced us that this would be a bad idea as well. Such a reorganization would involve many of the same costs as a move to the SHSS, and would not offer some of the benefits offered by integration within one school.

There are significant advantages to retaining both art history (as part of HTC) and visual studies within the Department of Architecture. We therefore recommend that the Department of Architecture be given the responsibility to solve the current problems in visual studies by addressing directly the factors that have led to them.<sup>34</sup>

Specifically, we recommend the following:

1. That the Department of Architecture be given the responsibility to develop and maintain a first-class Visual Studies Program within the SA&P that would provide a broad range

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<sup>34</sup>Several discussions have taken place within the Department of Architecture and between the Chairmen of the Department and this Committee regarding the visual studies problems and alternative solutions. It is our understanding that the Department is amenable to trying to work out a mutually satisfactory solution to these problems.



of hands-on undergraduate courses in areas such as drawing and visual design, photography, film/video, and environmental art.<sup>35</sup> We expect that such a program would, in the long run, have at least one, and ideally two, FTE positions for each area. This group should be integrated into graduate and professional programs in the Department as appropriate and necessary to attract and retain high-quality individuals.

2. That an individual with broad authority be appointed to organize and lead this group or cluster. It is likely that this individual will have to be recruited to come to MIT to take on this task.<sup>36</sup>

3. That a separate budget be developed for this group, including resource allocations for staff, equipment, and technical support.

4. That a mechanism be established for coordinating HASS requirement teaching responsibilities with the SHSS.

To implement these recommendations certain actions should be taken immediately. First, the Dean of the SA&P or the Provost should designate an individual within the Department of Architecture to head a committee to develop the details of the

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<sup>35</sup>The details should be determined by the responsible group in the Department of Architecture.

<sup>36</sup>Lest this recommendation appear more costly than those we have rejected, the Committee notes that the appointment of an individual such as the one we recommend here would be necessary to strengthen the deteriorated visual studies program under any plan of organization or re-organization.

recommended Visual Studies Program and to begin the search for its leader.<sup>37</sup> This committee should also work with the Dean and the Chairman of the Department to develop a proposed allocation of funds and facilities among the new Visual Studies Program, the Media Arts and Sciences Section,<sup>38</sup> and the rest of the Department of Architecture, and to identify the nature and magnitude of any additional funds and facilities that may be required for this program in the long run.

Second, those items in the Department of Architecture's current budget which are allocated, or arguably should currently be allocated, to such a Visual Studies Program should be identified, segregated, and not irrevocably reallocated until a plan is developed and approved.<sup>39</sup>

Third, within six months, a proposed plan of action which meets with the approval of the Department and the Dean of Architecture should be provided to the Provost who will determine if further action is needed.

The Committee believes that this action plan can be implemented without any short run increase in funding. The most important steps are the development of a long term plan for the Visual Studies Program and the selection of an individual to take

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<sup>37</sup>This would be a time-consuming job and we would expect that released time would be provided to the individual chosen.

<sup>38</sup>See footnote 41 below.

<sup>39</sup>This includes a determination of the appropriate allocation of funds historically allocated to visual studies education that are now part of the Media Arts and Sciences program's budget. See footnote 45.

responsibility for it. Only after a satisfactory program is approved and an appropriate leader chosen should additional funding be given serious consideration. The Department of Architecture solution to the problems in Visual Studies will only work if the Dean of the SA&P and the faculty of the Department of Architecture make a serious commitment to resolving these problems as soon as possible. We hope that they will do so, but are under no illusion that it will be easy.

## V. OTHER ACADEMIC PROGRAMS RELATED TO THE VISUAL ARTS

### 1. The Media Laboratory and the Media Arts and Sciences Program

The Media Laboratory, within the School of Architecture and Planning, was created in 1985 to bring together, under the roof of the new Wiesner Building, ten previously separate groups. These groups include the Film/Video Section, the Visible Language Workshop, and the Electronic Music Studio,<sup>40</sup> as well other groups with little, if any, relationship to the visual or performing arts. The Media Laboratory is organized into three groups: information and interface technologies, cognitive information systems, and media arts.

The faculty members who participate in the Media Laboratory encompass several disciplines and have appointments in the Department of Architecture as well as in other Departments. Only three of the faculty members appointed through Architecture have strong historical and intellectual roots in the Department of Architecture's visual studies program. Others have been appointed through Architecture primarily as a matter of convenience.

The Media Arts and Science (MA&S) program is an academic program, currently within the Department of Architecture,<sup>41</sup> and

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<sup>40</sup>As noted earlier in this Report, it is the Committee's understanding that the EMS has ceased to exist as a separate entity. Its activities have apparently been incorporated into a larger music and cognition group within the Media Lab.

<sup>41</sup>It is anticipated that Media Arts and Sciences will become a separate section or department within the School of Architecture and Planning.

serves as the academic arm of the Media Laboratory. It is difficult to describe precisely either the Lab or the MA&S program in a few words.

The MIT Bulletin states the following:

The goal of both the research and academic programs is to bring together the invention and creative use of modern media in general and electronic means, with special application to education, medicine, and arts.<sup>42</sup>

The interim report of the Summer Study conducted in 1986 by the Media Laboratory faculty to explore and define the structure of a field called Media Arts and Sciences stated:

"Tools to Think With" was adopted as the shortest description of an overarching purpose that embraces the common intellectual goals of those involved in the study. An expanded statement of that purpose engages four concerns:

1. Building those technologies than enhance an individual's or group's creative scope;

2. Understanding how computers are changing our concept about ourselves and the outside world;

3. Making a science of understanding human intention and its expression;

4. Building the most advanced human computer environment.<sup>43</sup>

The role that the creative arts will play in this endeavor is uncertain at the present time and remains a topic of lively,

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<sup>42</sup>1986-87 MIT Bulletin, p. 108.

<sup>43</sup>"Toward a Department of Media Arts & Sciences," Interim Report of Summer Study conducted by all of the faculty affiliated with the Media Laboratory, October 28, 1986, p. 2.

ongoing discussion among those involved. The Lab's Director believes that the creative arts should have a relatively small role in the research and teaching program. Others believe that it should be larger. Some even suggested to the Committee that the Lab or the MA&S program should become the umbrella for visual arts education generally and assume major responsibilities for MIT's undergraduate visual studies teaching program.

After consideration, the Committee rejected this proposal as unworkable. To begin with, both the Lab and the MA&S program are orientated primarily toward research and graduate education.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, the attention which will be required to resuscitate MIT's declining visual studies program would too greatly burden the Lab and the MA&S program in these early stages of their development.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>A small undergraduate program is planned, and UROP students are increasingly involved with the research activities of the Lab.

<sup>45</sup>Two of the Media Laboratory's groups have historically made a significant contribution to undergraduate education in visual studies, the Film/Video Section and the Visible Language Workshop (creative photography and graphic imaging). Some decision must be made as to whether these groups will retain responsibilities for undergraduate education in these areas with suitable coordination with the Visual Studies Program that we have recommended be developed within the Department of Architecture, or whether such responsibilities will be transferred back and re-integrated into the Department of Architecture. (The teaching of labor economics as a shared responsibility of the Labor Relations Section of the Sloan School and the Department of Economics in the SHSS might provide a model.) A suitable resolution of the allocation of responsibilities and funds should be a high priority for the Dean and the individuals responsible for developing and maintaining a Visual Studies Program within the Department of Architecture.

In light of these facts, the Committee did not spend much time looking further at the Media Laboratory and the MA&S program. To the extent that individuals involved with the Media Lab and the MA&S program have an interest in expanding their creative arts activities, we would, of course, like to encourage them to do so. Aside from the discussion and recommendations regarding the EMS, above, however, we have no further specific recommendations regarding the Media Lab or the Media Arts and Sciences program.

We do want to make one additional observation of direct relevance to our charge. There exists on the MIT campus a tremendous amount of misunderstanding about the role and activities of the Media Laboratory and the Wiesner Building. In some cases, this misunderstanding is accompanied by hostility. There is no need here to speculate about how this came to pass. It is a fact. Suffice it to say that this misunderstanding and hostility benefits neither MIT's creative arts programs nor the Media Lab.

We are particularly concerned about the misperceptions that the Wiesner Building and the Media Lab represent a major increase in MIT's financial commitment to education and research in the visual and performing arts, and that substantial additional Institute resources were allocated to make it possible for creative arts programs to expand at the same time that the rest of the Institute was subjected to severe financial pressures. This is simply not an accurate perception of what has happened or

is happening. In the case of undergraduate visual studies education, just the opposite has taken place. The Committee urges the Administration to make an effort to set the record straight.

## 2. The Center for Advanced Visual Studies

The Center For Advanced Visual Studies (CAVS) was formed in 1967 by Gyorgy Kepes, whose primary objective was to bring to MIT a group of resident fellows who would work with one another, with faculty and staff affiliated with the Center, and with other interested MIT faculty, on projects at the frontier of the intersections among art, science, and technology.

Beginning roughly in 1974, when Otto Piene assumed the directorship from Kepes, the Center took on additional educational responsibilities in conjunction with the Department of Architecture. These educational responsibilities include courses for graduate and undergraduate students. The Center's main areas of interest are environmental art and design, developmental media work, celebrations, and education toward the new arts--video, holography, computer-aided design and programming, laser art, and sky art. Resident graduate students at the Center are enrolled in the S.M.Vis.S. program through the Department of Architecture.

The Center's headquarters and studio facilities are located in Building W11. At one point, efforts were made to include the



Center in the Media Lab facilities, but differences in philosophy made this unattractive to the primary individuals involved.<sup>46</sup>

The Center's Director is a tenured Professor in the Department of Architecture. The Center also employs one full-time administrative staff, two part-time research staff, and one member of the teaching staff (N. Bichajian) who is shared with the Department of Architecture. It has 5-20 resident Fellows (who take on teaching responsibilities for little or no pay) and 5-10 resident graduate students. While the Center claims responsibility for teaching about 200 undergraduates each year, most of these students are taught by N. Bichajian, who is associated with the Center and is a Lecturer in the Department of Architecture.<sup>47</sup> Mr. Bichajian is approaching retirement age.

MIT's financial support for the Center has fluctuated widely since its inception. At the present time, MIT pays the salary of the Director and contributes approximately \$50,000 to operating expenses.<sup>48</sup> Additional support is provided by foundations, corporations and other entities.

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<sup>46</sup>The differences in philosophy have been characterized in a variety of different ways. The CAVS appears to be more committed to the humanistic and performance aspects of work at the intersection of art, science and technology, while the Media Lab appears to be more interested in cognition and technology. This, of course, oversimplifies the differences.

<sup>47</sup>He teaches courses in architectural photography and drawing which are very popular with undergraduates.

<sup>48</sup>This figure was as high as \$150,000 in the past.

## Evaluation and Recommendations

The Committee did not spend any significant amount of time examining the CAVS beyond its current role in undergraduate education. There appears to be broad support for the concept of a Center, as envisioned by Kepes, to bring artist-fellows to MIT. A few members of the Committee also expressed the view that it is unfortunate that more of the artistic and humanistic orientation of the Center, as originally conceived, has not been incorporated more fully into the Media Lab or the Media Arts and Sciences program.

The Director of the Center seemed quite interested in taking on the responsibility for undergraduate visual studies education, which we have identified as a serious problem. The Director himself, however, does not appear to enjoy the support of the Dean of the SA&P or broad support within the Department of Architecture.<sup>49</sup> The Center is not well integrated into related programs in the SA&P or elsewhere at MIT and, at present, appears to be tolerated, rather than supported with any enthusiasm.<sup>50</sup>

Although the Chairman of this Committee was given the impression that the Center is a "problem," no clear articulation of exactly what the problems are or what alternative solutions the Committee should have been considering, were ever presented.

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<sup>49</sup>We assume that the recent reductions of MIT's financial contributions to the Center reflect this lack of support.

<sup>50</sup>The Director's offer to solve MIT's undergraduate visual studies problem was not greeted with any enthusiasm by members of the Department of Architecture.

The wide scope of the Committee's responsibilities, the time and effort that would have been required to figure out what is actually going on within and about the Center, and the lack of clear guidance and direction, led to a decision by the Committee not to embark on this detective mission. If there are, in fact, "problems" with the Center, the Dean of the SA&P and the faculty in the Department of Architecture are in the best position to articulate and propose solutions for them. The Committee suggests that they be encouraged to do so, with appropriate consideration given to the very sound objectives that form the basis for the Center's creation.

## VI. NON-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS IN VISUAL ARTS

### 1. The Committee on the Visual Arts (CVA)

The Committee on the Visual Arts (CVA) consists of 18 faculty, staff, and students appointed by the President for the purpose of administering many of the non-curricular programs and activities related to the visual environment and arts at MIT. It was founded in 1966 to help create an educational atmosphere balanced between scientific and humanistic values.

The primary responsibilities of the CVA include:

(1). The Albert and Vera List Visual Arts Center (Hayden, Reference, and Bakalar Galleries) in the Wiesner Building, and the exhibitions, events, artist residencies, and other special projects that take place or originate there.

(2) The Catherine N. Stratton Collection of Graphic Art, the List Student Loan Program, and the Ronald A. Kurtz Student Loan Collection, which loan original works of graphic art to students during the academic year.

(3) The MIT Permanent Collection of contemporary paintings, sculpture, drawings, and photography that are sited in offices and public spaces throughout the Institute.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>51</sup>Unlike a museum, the works in the Permanent Collection are on view around the Institute.

Historically, the CVA has focused its efforts in each of these areas on the highest quality, advanced, contemporary art. It does not aim to provide a "balanced" exhibition program that encompasses all historical periods and schools. Nor does it provide an exhibition outlet for student or faculty art work, or for shows or events specifically related to curricular undertakings. Furthermore, the CVA's exhibitions programs are aimed at attracting a local, national, and international audience in addition to the MIT community.

The CVA has a staff which includes a Director (of the Albert and Vera List Visual Arts Center), a Curator, an Assistant Curator, a Registrar, and associated support and administrative personnel, all of whom work under the Director.<sup>52</sup> As a practical matter, it is the Director and her staff that administer and provide the artistic and intellectual leadership for the CVA's programs, not the members of the CVA itself, who serve more as a lay advisory and internal support group.<sup>53</sup>

The CVA has a budget from the Institute of about \$400,000 and has been able to obtain outside support in the form of grants from various sources of about \$150,000 annually.

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<sup>52</sup>Upon the resignation, in June, 1986, of the former Director, Kathy Halbreich, the Center's Curator, Katy Kline, took on the additional duties of Acting Director, which she continues to fill.

<sup>53</sup>This should not be construed as a criticism of the Committee. It has done an excellent job. The members of the CVA were much more actively involved in the artistic program at its inception, but their role has changed by necessity over time.

## Evaluation and Recommendations

The CVA has achieved excellence in each of its major areas of responsibility. The exhibition programs have a national reputation. The outdoor sculpture collection and the collection of works on paper are especially distinguished. The student loan program is far oversubscribed each year, and the available art work must be allocated through a lottery. The CVA has played a major role in transforming MIT's visual environment, helping to make it a more hospitable and interesting place to study and work.

Despite these historical successes, the CVA faces several long-term challenges and problems. These include:

### a. Financial Resources

With the CVA's move into the completed Wiesner Building, its exhibition spaces were expanded considerably. It now has three gallery spaces available for exhibitions rather than one. Unfortunately, the funds raised for the facilities were not matched with additional funds for running them, and the costs of mounting exhibits continues to escalate.

The staff seeks each year to originate 10 to 12 exhibits which investigate pressing issues and innovative practices in advanced contemporary art, architecture, design, and new media. Exhibitions are accompanied by publications and educational programs. Only rarely are circulating exhibitions borrowed from other institutions. In addition, the CVA runs a series of artists' residencies based in the Reference Gallery which bring

leading artists to MIT for one or two months to pursue projects which take advantage of MIT's technological and intellectual resources.

It has been made quite clear to the Committee that the staff is hard pressed to satisfy the goals that have been established for it within its current budget, despite the fact that there has been a significant increase in funds made available by the Institute in recent years. The Acting Director estimates that an additional \$80,000 per year is required to provide the staff resources necessary to sustain the current level of activity.<sup>54</sup> While the Staff has been reasonably successful in obtaining outside grant support for special projects, these funds are uncertain and subject to intense competition from other institutions. To maintain the excellence of its exhibition/educational program additional, stable, long-term financial support must be found.

In addition to the exhibition programs and the activities related to them, the staff is charged with building, administering, documenting, and maintaining MIT's Permanent and Student Loan Collections. There are no funds budgeted for ongoing acquisitions.<sup>55</sup> Thus, there is little activity on the

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<sup>54</sup>Several members of the Committee believe that this estimate is low.

<sup>55</sup>MIT has a 1% for Art Policy which historically has made funds available for purchases of art for certain new and renovated buildings. In recent years, however, there has been little new construction that qualifies, with the result that no construction moneys have been available to purchase art. One percent of nothing is nothing.

acquisition front, aside from donations by friends and alumni. To continue to enhance the visual environment, and to reduce the excess demand for loans of art work to students, additional funds will have to be found.

b. Relationship to the MIT Community

The CVA has always prided itself on serving both the MIT community as well as a wider local, national, and international audience. By striving to appeal to wider audiences, the exhibition programs have been stimulated to achieve excellence. The MIT community has, in turn, benefited from this stimulus, both through the quality of the exhibition programs themselves and through the ability of the CVA as a whole to attract donations of outstanding works of contemporary art to its collections. In addition, by this vehicle of widely acclaimed exhibitions, the CVA has made it possible for MIT to give something back to the community. The Committee supports these objectives. We hope that the CVA will continue in its efforts to reach beyond the MIT community.

At the same time, the Committee is concerned that the exhibition and educational programs associated with the List Visual Arts Center are not reaching as many members of the MIT community as they might and are not as well-integrated into campus life as would be desirable. The movement of the galleries to the Wiesner Building has removed them from the center of campus life. Students, faculty, and staff have argued that they are not kept informed or encouraged to become actively involved



in the activities.<sup>56</sup> Others have suggested that galleries open only during the day are difficult for students to attend. The characterization of these activities as those of a "Committee" causes confusion both on and off campus among those unfamiliar with MIT's way of organizing things.<sup>57</sup>

The Committee encourages the CVA to increase its efforts to reach out to members of the MIT community and to get them more involved in its exhibition and educational programs.

c. The Focus on Advanced Contemporary Art

The CVA's focus on advanced contemporary art is, not surprisingly, a subject of considerable controversy. Some think it too narrow and inconsistent with the broad educational objectives that MIT should be striving to achieve. In particular, some have argued that the CVA should have a much broader perspective and should try to provide access to art representing many different historical periods and many different schools. The objective of such an approach would be, apparently, to use the exhibition facilities to provide a broad educational perspective on the visual arts for the MIT community. This approach could be extended as well to the Permanent and Student Loan Collections.

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<sup>56</sup>By every objective measure, however, the activities are well publicized.

<sup>57</sup>The non-MIT members of the Ad Hoc Committee found the organizational structure and the names of the various organizations at MIT especially confusing.

While the Committee understands these concerns, we believe that it would be both impractical and unwise to attempt to provide this level of "breadth" in the CVA's programs. We come to this conclusion for several reasons.

First, students, faculty, and staff should not expect to depend on MIT for all of their visual arts experiences. There are several fine museums in Boston and Cambridge areas with internationally known collections which cover a wide range of periods, countries, and schools of art.

Second, MIT does not have the resources to organize or attract high quality exhibitions which cover all historical periods or all schools of art. The available resources have required that MIT concentrate on some well-defined area of art if our programs are to achieve excellence.

Third, Boston and Cambridge have been traditionally weak in contemporary art and MIT has helped to fill a gap. An attempt to reproduce what is available at the MFA, the Fogg, and other area collections would not only be futile, but would result in a lesser availability of contemporary art in the area.

Fourth, MIT depends primarily on donations from alumni and friends for its major works of art. Donors, of course, have many motives, but one is to see that their gifts become part of a quality collection that is recognized and sought out by the public. Growing competition for donations by other institutions, as well as changes in the tax laws, will make it even tougher to

acquire works in the future if we cannot maintain the excellence and visibility of our Permanent Collection.

In summary, the CVA and MIT have been successful in developing a reputation for excellence by concentrating specifically on contemporary art. One could argue that some other specialty should have been chosen, but had that been done, it is very unlikely that we could have achieved the same success. In any event, this is what we have done. We are best advised to build on our success.

We do not want to suggest that our students should only be exposed to what is "new" and "on the cutting edge," or that they should be given the impression that only the "new" is or should be of interest. We simply do not feel that a major redirection of the CVA can achieve the kind of broad exposure to and understanding of the visual arts that ought to be made available to students. This can best be achieved with strong curricular programs in the history of art and in visual studies (as discussed above), and with greater efforts to involve our students with visual arts opportunities at other institutions in Cambridge and Boston.

At the same time, we also do not want to say that there is no room for some broadening or change in focus within the basic parameters of contemporary art. The precise direction that the program will take will depend in part on who is chosen to be the Director. We suggest that opportunities for modest changes in

focus be discussed by those responsible for selecting and appointing that person.

In light of these observations, the Committee makes the following recommendations:

1. The organizational structure of the CVA should be changed to reflect the reality of its functions. The CVA, as it is currently structured, should be abolished. Formal responsibility for the galleries, the collections, and the programs surrounding them should be vested in the Director, who should report to the Provost. An Advisory Board made up of faculty, staff, students, and outside professionals (and, perhaps, drawn initially from past and present CVA members) should be appointed by the President or Provost with the advice of the Director.

2. A single name that communicates more accurately the organization's function, purpose, and offerings, should be adopted. The Committee suggests that this name be the List Visual Arts Center at MIT.

3. A "Friends of the Visual Arts" organization should be created. Made up of MIT faculty, students, staff, and "outsiders," this organization would have two primary functions: (1) to reach more people, especially on campus, and to involve them with the Center's programs; and (2) to raise money to finance the Center's programs, including the acquisition, maintenance, and preservation of works for the Student Loan and

Permanent Collections.<sup>58</sup> It is our hope that the Director would involve members of the Council for the Arts in the development of this Friends organization, and that a goal would be set of having representation by a faculty or staff member from every department, center, laboratory, or other administrative unit on campus.

4. The Provost should organize a search committee as soon as possible to select a permanent Director of the List Visual Arts Center. This committee should include individuals directly connected to MIT as well as non-MIT individuals expert in the collection, preservation and exhibition of art. Further consideration of the "focus" of the Center should be the first task of that committee (in consultation with other interested parties) as it develops a job description and identifies potential candidates.<sup>59</sup>

5. If adequate funds cannot be made available to finance 10 to 12 exhibitions per year as the CVA and staff desire, the number of exhibitions, rather than their average quality, should be reduced. If this means closing one or more of the galleries for

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<sup>58</sup>A protocol will have to be worked out with the Development Office. We would anticipate that most of the members would be people who would not ordinarily give money to MIT and that the typical contribution would be relatively small.

<sup>59</sup>It may be desirable for the Director to have a faculty appointment in the Department of Architecture. This would be a courtesy appointment and would not involve any increase in funds for the Department of Architecture.

part of the year, that alternative should not be automatically rejected.

The Center is a valuable MIT resource. Much has been done with limited resources by a committed staff. With appropriate Institute support and increased opportunities to raise external funds, it can contribute even more effectively to the visual climate and educational objectives of MIT as well as to the cultural vitality of the region. We urge the President and Provost to renew their commitment to support the Center and to work with the Director to maintain and enhance the contributions it makes.

## 2. The MIT Museum

In recent years, the MIT Museum has been an increasingly important arena for the arts not simply at MIT, which it primarily serves, but in the larger Cambridge/Boston community as well. The Museum was founded in 1971 to collect and conserve materials and artifacts connected with MIT and to use such materials in exhibitions and educational programs to illuminate the intellectual, educational, and social history of the Institute, as well as MIT's connection with relevant aspects of the history of modern science and technology. While such programs are designed with the needs and interests of the MIT community in mind, they now attract a significant number of visitors (45% of all museum visitors) from the larger metropolitan community. Thus, the Museum may be said to have

acquired a broader function than its original one; it now also plays a significant role in the complex task of fulfilling the Institute's responsibilities to its community.

The story of the Museum since its founding has been one of steady creative development as well as growing public visibility. It is clearly a dynamic enterprise filling an important need. At the beginning it had no exhibition space of its own. Now, besides the Hart Galleries (2,000 square feet in Building 5) and the Compton Gallery (1,200 square feet in Building 10), it has a useful array of galleries at its command (5 large ones, 4 smaller ones, totalling perhaps 12,000 square feet) in the Museum building at 265 Massachusetts Avenue, where the Museum has been located since 1972. Similarly, its exhibits are no longer derived solely from the Museum's own collections. Although they remain heavily MIT-derived and always MIT-appropriate, they now include original exhibitions developed by the Museum (usually based on the work of Institute-affiliated artists, scientists, and engineers), and occasional visiting shows (e.g., the recent Bauhaus exhibit, widely publicized and praised in the Boston press).

Perhaps the broadest extension of the Museum's exhibition horizon has involved the increasing attention paid to the arts, broadly defined, especially as they are being developed in their more traditional forms. In almost all instances, such exhibitions are designed to illustrate the ways in which artists have explored the possibilities opened to their art by new

technologies and new media, and new ways in which they have used old materials. That is to say, such exhibits point to larger relationships and developments of abiding intellectual and aesthetic interest here at MIT, and not simply to the achievements of individual artists. In all this, the Museum pays ample attention to historical as well as contemporary developments in the uses of materials and technologies. Through its exhibits, the Museum explores, more broadly than any other enterprise here at MIT, the complex interchange between the arts, science, and technology.

The Museum still has no exhibition budget. It must scrounge to fund its exhibitions in whatever creative ways it can. What seem to be exhibition funds are, in fact, funds for salaries. The Director estimates that roughly \$80,000 per year is spent on arts-focused exhibits and programs (\$50,000 from general funds and \$30,000 from outside sources), and that 75% of the time of the Assistant Director for Exhibitions and of the Assistant Curator for Exhibitions is spent on such activities.

The Museum is not directly connected to any academic department and offers no courses for credit. The Director of the Museum, now Mr. Warren Seamans, who has been Director since its inception, reports to the Director of the MIT Libraries.

In recognition of its growing stature and excellence, the Museum was accredited in 1983 by the American Association of Museums. It achieved this distinction in very rapid time for a University-based, general museum in the United States, where the



test for accreditation is extremely stringent. (Of the roughly 6,000 museums in the U.S.; only 600 are accredited by the AAM.)

#### Evaluation and Recommendations

1. While it appears to some that the Museum has become much more than it was originally intended to be, its original mission statement, approved by the Museum Board, was sufficiently broad to encompass all its present activities. What its mission should in fact be, and whether it is encroaching on the functions of other enterprises at MIT (notably the CVA) has been a subject of some discussion by the Committee.

It is undeniable that the Museum has grown impressively. This development seems to us to be healthy and laudable, because it has been in response to real needs and opportunities at the Institute. To explain how this happened would require a more thorough history than we can offer here. Briefly, the Museum occupied territory left vacant by a shift in policies of the CVA (subsequently the List Visual Art Center). As the CVA tightened its exhibition focus and began its current earnest pursuit of the avant-garde, and especially after it decided, for various reasons, that it would no longer exhibit MIT artists, the MIT Museum assumed these functions, and it has continued to do so in lively, adventurous, and imaginative ways. The Museum has, for example, become the only formal exhibition/gallery space at MIT in which Media Laboratory and CAVS artists and technicians can exhibit their work. No fewer than five of the Museum's current (June, 1987) exhibits are CAVS- and Media Lab-based. Similarly,

it was the Museum, and not the List Visual Arts Center, that put on the recent Gyorgy Kepes retrospective. And it is the Museum that continues to bring to the MIT community a wider range of art (and crafts), traditional and modern, than is encompassed by the new orientation of the List.

We do not see any conflict between the work of the Museum and that of the CVA. The List now has an exclusively avant-garde and resolutely non-MIT focus. In pursuing its new objectives with a keen eye for excellence, it has achieved high esteem in the avant-garde world beyond MIT. The Museum remains MIT-centered (though not rigidly so) and eclectic in its exhibition policies. In this eclecticism, it reflects the democratic heterogeneity and the experimental openness of the Institute itself. We intend nothing invidious in this comparison; the Museum and the CVA are complementary in their work, and there is a place at MIT for both. The Museum has clearly used its experimental freedom to the great benefit of MIT and we think it should be encouraged to continue its imaginative exploration of the worlds of art and technology. By doing so, it fulfills an important educational function at MIT.

2. We applaud the way in which the Museum has thus far responded creatively to the needs of the MIT community. It would not seem wise to constrain the free-wheeling experimentalism that has thus far been central to the Museum's successful development, or to tie it down with too tight and prescriptive a definition of its proper role at MIT. Since the Museum's relationship to the

Institute has become quite complex, however, we think it would benefit by informed guidance and thoughtful oversight provided by a more active Advisory Committee drawn from the various schools at the Institute.

### 3. Acquisition and Deaccession Policies

MIT acquires works of art in several different ways. The CVA acquires sculptures, paintings, and works on paper through donations and, when available, with funds from the 1% for Arts Program. These become part of the Permanent or Student Loan Collections. The MIT Museum also adds works of art (as well as many other things) to its collection. Donations of works of art apparently may come to MIT and reside in neither collection. Academic departments, for example, sometimes acquire art independently for their particular spaces.

Both the CVA and the Museum have guidelines for acquiring works of arts. Neither has guidelines for deaccessions. The CVA's acquisition guidelines reflect its commitment to specific areas of contemporary art, and it has a long-term commitment to the development of a more specific policy for both acquisitions and deaccessions.<sup>60</sup> The Museum's guidelines for acquiring works of art are extremely vague and do not appear to take explicit account of the quality of the art work that it acquires. The Museum's acquisition and deaccession policies were the subject of

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<sup>60</sup>Given the pressures the CVA's staff has been working under during the past couple of years and the minimal funds available for acquisitions, the Committee understands why this has not been a high priority.

an Advisory Board meeting in May, 1985, but we are not aware that anything definitive ever emerged. It appears also that from time to time, and for reasons of donor relations, the CVA and the Museum come under pressure from other MIT offices or individuals to accept works of art that do not fit in with their collections.

#### Evaluation and Recommendations

The Committee believes that both the CVA and the Museum should have clear policies, approved by the Provost, for acquiring and deaccessioning works of art.<sup>61</sup> Once these policies are in place, particular acquisitions and deaccessions should be primarily the responsibility of the Directors of the CVA and the Museum, with the advice of their respective advisory boards. Major acquisitions or deaccessions (i.e., those exceeding a specific market value) should be subject to approval by a higher authority (e.g., the Provost).

Potential conflicts between the interests of the Development Office in maintaining relationships with donors and the interests of the Museum and the CVA in maintaining the quality and integrity of their collections raise difficult issues. As a general matter, the Committee does not feel that either the CVA or the Museum should be forced to accept works of art that do not fit their collections. For cases in which donor relations considerations make rejection unacceptable to the Development

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<sup>61</sup>The Museum's acquisitions policy, of course, will cover more than works of art, but only works of art are of concern to this Committee.

Office, the Committee recommends the establishment of a mechanism to advise the Provost about the perceived artistic merit of the works at issue and alternatives for exhibiting, storing, and/or deaccessioning them.

## VII. THE COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS

The Council for the Arts was founded in 1971.<sup>62</sup> It consists of up to 100 individual members who have demonstrated scholarship, creativity, and distinguished service to the arts. Of the 89 current members, 52 are MIT alumni.

In theory, the Council functions in a manner similar to an independent, private, non-profit agency, accomplishing its work through standing Executive, Grants, Development, Membership, and Permanent Collection Committees. In actuality, however, the Council's relationship to MIT is institution-specific and much more intimate than would be the case of an independent foundation.

The Council has several major ongoing programs. The Council's Grants Committee awards financial support to MIT students, faculty and staff, of amounts in the range of \$100-\$10,000 per project for a variety of arts projects on the basis of written proposals and site visits. Approximately \$75,000 in grants are made each year. Over the Council's 15 years, roughly \$600,000 of grants for almost 400 projects have been made.

The Council publishes a calendar/newsletter, "The Arts at MIT," four to six times each year, and "MIT Arts in the News," an annual compilation of news and feature articles about MIT artists

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<sup>62</sup>The Council grew out of two earlier groups, the MIT Art Committee, organized by Catherine Stratton in 1961 (which was instrumental in bringing Calder's "La Grand Voile" to MIT), and the Friends of the Arts at MIT.

and arts activities. It also maintains "The Arts Hotline" (253-ARTS), a telephone announcement of all arts events taking place at MIT during the coming week, and has published "The Arts at MIT," a brochure used by the Admissions Office and the Educational Counselors which identifies and describes all of MIT's arts resources for undergraduates, including faculty, courses, facilities, scholarships, awards, and local attractions.

The Council staff and committees solicit nominations, select winners, and present four annual, endowed prizes and awards in the arts. Using income from the endowed Abramowitz Memorial Concert Fund, the Council also produces a major dance, theater, or music performance every two years.

The Council supports a variety of programs to increase the participation in the arts by the MIT community and to make MIT arts activities known to the outside world. These activities include underwriting the cost of MIT's participation in the University Membership Program of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (MFA), which allows MIT students to attend any MFA exhibit or event at no charge. (Council staff has arranged for free faculty and staff passes as well.) The Council staff has also helped to arrange and prepare arts-related courses and symposia during IAP.

Finally, this year witnessed the inauguration of the Council's Visiting Artist Program through its sponsorship and presentation of two contemporary, experimental theater groups,

Antenna Theater of Sausalito, California, and the Wooster Group from New York City.<sup>63</sup>

The Council's staff of three professionals and one support person reports through its Executive Director to both the Chairman of the Council and to the Office of the President. In addition to administering the programs and activities enumerated above, the Council staff provides general administrative support, technical assistance (i.e., identification of funding sources and writing of applications), and liaison with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities, to MIT students, faculty, and staff. A considerable amount of the staff's time is devoted to member and donor relations and to fund raising.

Prior to 1982, the Council received an annual subsidy of general funds in the amount of \$20,000-\$30,000. In 1982, the Council was informed that it would have to be entirely self-supporting thereafter. (MIT agreed to continue to provide office space and utilities.) From 1982 until 1985, the Council's total program and operating budget was provided through gifts from members and donors.<sup>64</sup>

In 1986, the Council had a small deficit. A larger deficit was projected for 1987, but will probably be avoided because of

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<sup>63</sup>Additional activities include, "The Event," "A Day with the Artists," and nationwide "Salons" for Council members, friends, and potential donors.

<sup>64</sup>Approximately 60 members make annual gifts that range up to \$30,000, the current average gift being \$3,200. Approximately 55-60 non-members also make gifts averaging \$600 each.



the Provost's contribution of funds to cover Council staff time devoted to work with this Committee.

Of the Council's current total budget of \$275,000,<sup>65</sup> the Grants Committee disperses \$75,000 in awards, \$10,000 pays for the MFA membership, roughly \$10,000 is spent on the production of publications, and the remaining \$180,000 covers Council and committee meetings, travel, office expenses, and staff salaries.

#### Evaluation and Recommendations

The Council has played a very important, positive role in the development of creative arts activities at MIT. The programs currently supported by the Council and administered by its staff are of enormous value to MIT. The members are a reservoir of good will, support, and advice, and desire to continue to play a supportive role at MIT. The Committee feels that it is important to maintain the programs currently supported by the Council<sup>66</sup> and to enhance the ability of the members of the Council to provide advice and support for the arts at MIT.

The Council appears to the Committee, however, to be at a crossroads in its history. Throughout most of the first decade of the Council's existence, two senior members of the MIT Administration--the President, Jerome B. Wiesner, and the Special

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<sup>65</sup>This figure represents non-endowed programs and operating expenses. The five endowed funds administered by the Council staff produce, in addition, roughly \$25,000 in income which can be used only for the funds' stipulated purposes.

<sup>66</sup>The Committee expressed some concern, however, that the Grant's Program's review process should involve MIT faculty more directly.

Assistant to the President for the Arts, the late Professor Emeritus Roy Lamson--were intimately involved with its activities. In fact, both the position of Special Assistant and the Council itself were created by or with the guidance of Dr. Wiesner in order that the arts would have Institute-wide attention and support, and in order that he, as President, would be well-advised as to their needs.

The institutional factors and personalities that led to the creation and successes of the Council have now changed, however, and similar factors and personalities cannot be counted on to guide the Council or its relationship with MIT in the future. While the current administration continues to support the Council and its activities, there is no individual in a senior administrative position at MIT who has strong, personal interest in the Council's activities.<sup>67</sup> There is also no clear institutional connection between the Council and specific academic or co-curricular activities on campus.

Moreover, the Council's financial circumstances are precarious. Limited by its Constitution to 100 members, and required by MIT's overall development strategy to rely on the voluntary gifts of those members (and a small number of additional individual donors) for its entire budget, it is unlikely that the Council can continue to be self-supporting without significantly reducing the funds available for its major

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<sup>67</sup>This is not meant as a criticism, but simply as a statement of fact.

programs. It is the Committee's belief that unless structural and organizational changes are made, the Council will slowly fade away as an effective and financially viable institution.

As early as 1978, the Council itself became concerned about its own future.<sup>68</sup> A report, issued in 1979 by an Ad Hoc Committee on the Future of the Council (chaired by Roy Lamson), stressed the importance of maintaining liaison with academic programs, alumni, the Corporation's Visiting Committee on the Arts, and the CVA. The Ad Hoc Committee found these connections weak or lacking and stated:

Liaison with departments, divisions, alumni, etc. should be maintained by the staff, and, when possible, by designated Council members.

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In our view, it would be dangerously self-defeating for the cause of the arts at MIT--and, indeed, for the Council itself--to permit the state of unstructured liaison with [the Visiting Committee and the CVA] to endure.<sup>69</sup>

The Committee believes that implementation of its recommendations regarding overall changes in the organization and oversight of MIT's creative arts programs, which are discussed in the last section of this Report, would better focus and direct

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<sup>68</sup>Already then, much of the time and attention of active Council members and Council staff was focused on the planning, design, financing, and construction of the Wiesner Building. That project continued to occupy the Council's center stage until it was completed in the fall of 1985. Since that time, the sense of weakened mission and lack of direction has been felt much more acutely by both members and staff.

<sup>69</sup>Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Future of the Council for the Arts at M.I.T. to the Executive Committee of the Council, April, 1979, pp. 10, 12.

the activities of the Council for the Arts as well. These changes, if adopted, will necessarily require that the Council act somewhat less like an independent foundation on campus and more in advisory and support roles for specific campus programs. Hopefully, the loss of some autonomy will be more than compensated by increased interaction with, and usefulness to, particular campus activities.

Any transformation, of course, should be the result of ongoing discussion between the leaders of the Council and responsible authorities on campus. We envision the Council and its staff playing a critical role in some of the organizational changes that we recommend. We will discuss this role in detail in the course of discussing our proposed organizational changes.

For the short run, we have only two primary recommendations:

1. The Council should seek to maintain the excellent programs that it is now supporting.
2. Rather than seeking to launch new programs at the present time, we encourage the Council to work closely with the new Associate Provost for the Arts and the Creative Arts Committee that we are recommending be formed, in order to define the institutional structure in which the Council will continue to provide advice and support to the arts at MIT.

## VIII. OTHER NON-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

We have already discussed most of the co-curricular activities in music, drama, and dance as part of our discussion of the Music Section and the Drama Program. As noted in that discussion, there are other musical and theatrical groups which operate as recognized student activities without any financial or administrative support from an academic section or school. These include the Musical Theater Guild (now including the Tech Show), Community Players, Project for Student Summer Theater (PSST), the Chorallaries, the Marching Band, and the Guild of Bellringers.<sup>70</sup> These groups get nominal support from the Undergraduate Association or the Graduate Student Council and raise additional funds on their own. In addition, several MIT living units present regular theatrical or musical productions. The Lecture Series Committee (LSC) and other groups exhibit films on campus almost every day. Other groups, e.g., the MIT Activities Committee (MITAC) and the Technology Community Association (TCA) offer discount tickets for movie, theater, and music performances in the Boston area.

We have also discussed the exhibition and educational programs associated with the CVA and the MIT Museum. Finally, we have discussed the Grants Program, the MFA University Membership Program and the visiting artist and performance programs of the Council for the Arts.

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<sup>70</sup>The Committee did not look into these student and community groups.

In addition to these activities, several others play an important role in campus life outside of any formal or informal curricular program.

1. The Student Art Association (SAA)

The Student Art Association (SAA) provides non-curricular opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and their families to learn photography, painting, sculpture, graphics, and other studio arts. The SAA was formed in 1966 and occupies space in the Student Center. Instruction is provided by professional artists. Five Technical Instructors, one of whom administers the Association, and 16-20 other instructors work cooperatively with studio members.

The SAA has no formal relationship with any academic department. The SAA's programs serve 700-800 people per year, about half of whom are students, but it is not a recognized student activity and receives no support from FinBoard. The SAA is partially supported with funds from the Office of the Dean for Student Affairs (roughly \$15,000 per year) and with fees paid for courses (roughly \$30,000 per year).

The Committee was very impressed with the level and nature of the opportunities provided by SAA. We urge the Dean for Student Affairs to continue to support this activity at current funding levels and to insure that adequate space continues to be made available in the Student Center.

## 2. The Jerome B. Wiesner Student Art Gallery

The Jerome B. Wiesner Student Art Gallery, located on the second floor of the Student Center, was opened in April, 1984. It was established as a place for students to express and exhibit their artistic endeavors, both academic and co-curricular, in media such as photography, painting, sculpture, music, dance, and drama. No academic credit is available. A schedule of monthly exhibits is being developed.

The Gallery is managed by an ad hoc advisory committee consisting of students, faculty, and staff. Representatives of the Department of Architecture, CAVS, the Media Laboratory, the Materials Sciences Laboratory, and the Student Art Association are actively involved.

MIT provides no funds for the Gallery's support. Operating expenses (\$1500 in 1986) are paid out of the income generated from its endowment. Some additional capital funds are needed to improve the facility. The Committee urges the Institute to ensure that the modest funds required to keep this activity operating continue to be made available.

### Evaluation and Recommendations

The Committee believes that these co-curricular activities in the creative arts are in reasonably good shape. Additional needs have been identified in two areas:

1. A greater effort should be made to involve students with creative arts opportunities in the Boston area. The MFA University Membership Program, administered by the staff of the Council for the Arts, should provide a model for the development of similar relationships with other institutions and activities.

2. Efforts to bring visiting performing groups and visiting artists to MIT should be expanded both in number and scope. In particular, we feel that the Council for the Arts' and the CVA's focus on advanced contemporary and avant-garde art creates a need for an expanded visiting artist program.



## IX. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS ABOUT EXHIBITIONS, PERFORMANCES, AND SPECIAL EVENTS

By almost all objective measures, MIT does an excellent job of disseminating information about arts exhibitions, performances, and related co-curricular activities. These activities are given very extensive coverage each week in Tech Talk, both through the weekly calendar and in feature articles. The Council for the Arts publishes a calendar/newsletter four to six times each year which is distributed campus-wide, and it maintains a telephone hotline for information. The Music Section publishes a bi-monthly calendar of music events on campus. The bulletin boards around the Institute are filled with notices about upcoming events. The Tech runs an arts calendar and publishes reviews of on-campus arts event. In short, non-curricular activities appear to be well advertised, and many are very well attended.

Despite the objective evidence, many students and faculty have complained that they are not well informed about these opportunities, especially with regard to the CVA. Some students opined that the process for disseminating information around campus is too confusing and disorganized. The Committee has no clear explanation of the discrepancy between the subjective evaluations and the objective reality. The Committee believes that it would be worthwhile to explore in more detail the methods

by which students and faculty obtain information, to identify problems in disseminating information, and to develop improved methods for getting the relevant information out to the community in a timely fashion.

## X. WELLESLEY EXCHANGE PROGRAM<sup>71</sup>

Students can expand their educational opportunities in the arts by cross-registering for courses in art history, studio subjects, theater, and music at Wellesley College. Roughly thirty MIT students do so each year, taking primarily courses in art. The number of MIT students taking Wellesley courses could probably be expanded if a greater effort were made to insure that MIT's undergraduate advisors informed students of the opportunities.

The Wellesley exchange program, however, cannot be expected to fill major holes in the basic educational program at MIT. A good exchange program requires strong educational programs and faculty relations at both ends. Furthermore, Wellesley has resource constraints in some of the same areas that are becoming weak at MIT, in particular, studio subjects in the visual arts.

Recognizing that no exchange program can be a cure-all, the Committee nevertheless recommends that creative arts faculty and staff at MIT work more closely with their colleagues at Wellesley to increase students' knowledge about exchange opportunities and to increase their participation.

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<sup>71</sup>MIT students can cross-register for courses at Harvard and the School of the Museum of Fine Arts. We have not examined the extent to which students take advantage of these opportunities.

## XI. ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES

As we indicated above, the areas in which we have identified current or anticipated weaknesses and constraints on achieving greater excellence in MIT's creative arts programs are not primarily a consequence of organizational failures. Rather they are due primarily to failures of leadership and/or the lack of adequate financial support. Nevertheless, organizational changes can be made to utilize better the human and financial resources that are available.<sup>72</sup>

We have already discussed several organizational issues. To summarize:

1. Responsibility for all curricular activities and for the bulk of co-curricular activities in music, drama and dance should be the responsibility of a new Music and Theater Arts Section (and ultimately a department) within the SHSS.
2. Responsibility for all curricular activities in art and architectural history and visual studies should be the responsibility of the Department of Architecture in the SA&P. We have suggested a structure and procedure to strengthen both programs, with special emphasis on the Visual Studies Program. If the Department of Architecture is unable to develop and implement a satisfactory plan, an alternative governance structure will have to be found.

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<sup>72A</sup> proposed organizational chart embodying the Committee's recommendations is attached as Exhibit 1.

3. The CVA should be reorganized to reflect its actual operation and re-named to enhance its visibility both on and off campus. We have made several recommendations for improving the effectiveness of the Center's programs, including the creation of an Advisory Board and a Friends organization for development and integration purposes.

The Committee believes that several other issues and needs should be addressed through organizational changes. These are:

1. The need for coordination between the SHSS and the SA&P in the development and maintenance of an appropriate set of undergraduate course opportunities, especially those offered to satisfy the HASS requirements.

2. The desirability of better coordination and enhancement of non-curricular creative arts opportunities both on campus and off campus, and of the dissemination of information about these programs.

3. The desirability of encouraging the development of curricular and research programs that cross disciplinary boundaries and schools and that might lead to the development of excellent programs that truly integrate art, science and technology.

4. The need to create an institutional mechanism to provide advice to the Provost and President regarding resource and facilities needs, the appointment of Directors of the List Visual Arts Center at MIT and the Office for the Arts (see below), the

quality of the exhibitions programs, art acquisition and deaccessioning policies for the Institute, and other matters related to the arts that span or fall outside of the governance of the SA&P and the SHSS and that, therefore, must properly be the concern of the senior administration.

5. The need to provide a more structured and integrated institutional structure to govern the relationship between the Council for the Arts and the Institute.

To satisfy these needs we recommend that an Associate Provost for the Arts be designated as the person in the senior administration with primary responsibility for the oversight of creative arts activities on campus. Ideally, the Associate Provost for the Arts would be a faculty member appointed in the Department of Architecture or the Music and Theater Arts Section,<sup>73</sup> whose time would be divided approximately equally between teaching and administrative duties.

We also recommend that two new entities be created: (1) a Creative Arts Committee; and (2) an Office for the Arts, both of which will report to the Office of the Provost.

The Creative Arts Committee<sup>74</sup> would be chaired by the Associate Provost for the Arts and would include the Chairman of

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<sup>73</sup>In light of the current weakness, someone appointed in the Department of Architecture would probably be preferable.

<sup>74</sup>Our preference for the name for this entity is "Creative Arts Council," but this would cause confusion with the Council for the Arts.

the Music and Theater Arts Section, a representative from the HTC group in the Department of Architecture, a representative from the Department of Architecture with responsibility for visual studies, the Director of the List Visual Arts Center at MIT,<sup>75</sup> the Director of the MIT Museum, the Chairman of the Council for the Arts, the Director of the Office for the Arts (see below), three faculty members with interests in the arts drawn from the Schools of Science and Engineering and the Sloan School, one undergraduate student, and one graduate student.

The Creative Arts Committee would provide advice and guidance to the Associate Provost for the Arts in the following areas:

1. Undergraduate curricular and co-curricular opportunities in the creative arts, including coordination of the implementation of the HASS requirements in the arts by the SHSS and the SA&P.<sup>76</sup>
2. Cooperative curricular and research programs between the SHSS and the SA&P.
3. Conduct periodic, internal and/or external reviews of the academic programs in the creative arts, the List Visual Arts Center at MIT, the Office for the Arts, and the arts-related exhibition programs in the MIT Museum.

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<sup>75</sup>Until the CVA is disbanded, its Chairman should also participate on the Creative Arts Committee.

<sup>76</sup>Primary responsibility for design, implementation, and evaluation of HASS requirement offerings will, of course, remain with the two schools.

4. Appointment and evaluation of recommendations of search committees for the Director of the List Visual Arts Center at MIT and the Director of the Office for the Arts (see below).
5. General acquisition and deaccession policies for the List Visual Arts Center at MIT and the MIT Museum in consultation with the Directors and Advisory Boards of those organizations.
6. Major resource and facilities needs in the creative arts, and coordination, with the Development Office of proposals for and implementation of major development initiatives in the creative arts.
7. Relationships between campus activities and the Council for the Arts.
8. Implementation of any of the recommendations of this Committee that the Provost chooses to accept.
9. Additional organizational changes that are needed to enhance the creative arts and their relationship to science and engineering.

The Office for the Arts would have a Director and staff, as necessary, to fulfill its duties. Ultimate responsibility for determining the "menu" and structure of programs to be administered by the Office for the Arts would be determined by the Associate Provost for the Arts in consultation with the Committee for the Creative Arts and all interested groups.



This Committee envisions and suggests, however, that the Office would:

1. Provide staff support to the Associate Provost for the Arts.
2. Execute the current responsibilities of the Council for the Arts staff. The transformation of Council programs into Office for the Arts programs (fully or partially supported by the Council) is seen by this Committee as essential to the better integration of the Council for the Arts with campus activities and to the enhancement of the Council's long-term advisory and support roles.

Basically, the Committee is recommending that the Council agree to cease having a staff of its own and to "purchase" staff support from the Office for the Arts. We expect that all major Council programs would be maintained and that Council members would have a continued advisory and support role in both these and new programs. The total program administered by the Office for the Arts would be supported by a combination of Institute funds, Council funds, and funds from other outside sources.

Obviously, it will be left to the Council to determine which of the programs on the menu it wishes to support with its own funds. MIT will have to provide funds to support necessary programs that the Council cannot or does not wish to support. It is this Committee's recommendation that MIT should assume responsibility for staff salaries and operating expenses. Gifts could then be directed primarily to the support of substantive

programs. We hope that this aspect of our proposed reorganization will be the subject of early discussions between the Council and the Creative Arts Committee.

3. Assume, by transfer from the Office of the Dean for Student Affairs, administrative and, perhaps, financial responsibility for the Student Art Association and the Wiesner Student Art Gallery.

4. Develop a more extensive visiting artist and guest performers program in conjunction with academic departments, student activities, and the Council for the Arts.

5. Develop improved linkages and programs with creative arts institutions in the Boston area to improve access and utilization by MIT students.

6. Ensure that fair and efficient protocols are in place for allocating the utilization of public performance facilities by the Music and Theater Arts section, student groups, and other activities that make use of these facilities.

7. Streamline and improve the effectiveness with which information about the arts is disseminated on and off campus. The Office will work closely with the Admissions Office, the Development Office, the Wellesley Exchange Program, The List Visual Arts Center at MIT, the MIT Museum, the Council for the Arts, and the News Office.

8. Generate and coordinate the dissemination of information on curricular and co-curricular arts opportunities to undergraduate faculty advisors, perhaps following the model of the UASO in its capacity of informing freshman faculty advisors.

## XII. CONCLUSION

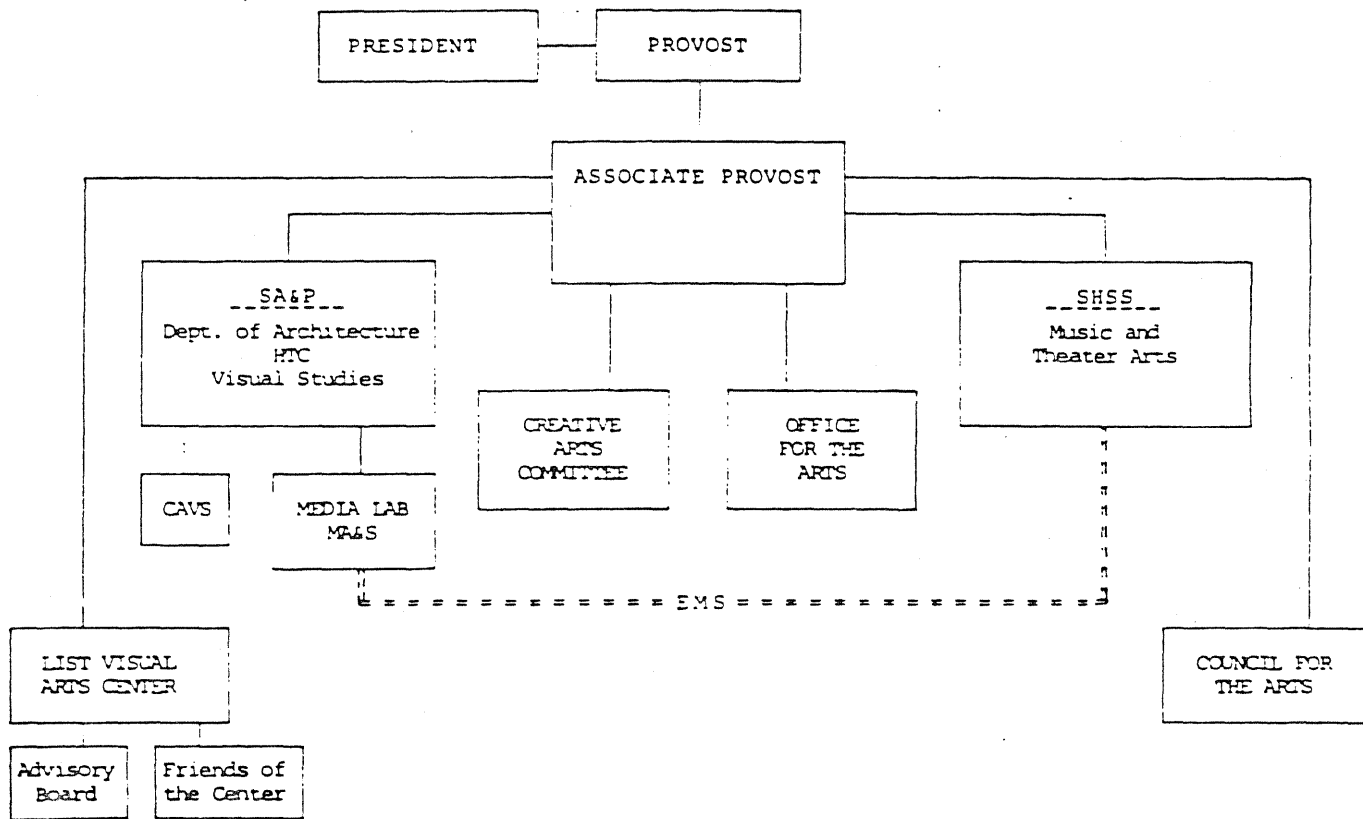
Over the past forty years, the role of the creative arts in undergraduate education and campus life at MIT has increased substantially. This increased role for the creative arts has been an important component of the transformation of MIT from an institution devoted almost exclusively to science and engineering to an institution with much broader perspectives and opportunities. This transformation has, in turn, made it possible for MIT to provide the kinds of educational opportunities necessary to attract outstanding students and to educate them effectively to think, work, and live in an increasingly complex society.

If we are to continue to attract and train the nation's future leaders in science and engineering, it is essential that we work hard to sustain what we have achieved and to remedy the continuing inadequacies that exist in the arts, and in the humanities and social sciences generally. This goal can only be achieved if the Institute makes a commitment to provide the financial and physical resources and broader institutional support necessary to attract and nurture intellectual leaders in these areas.

We hope that this Report will help the Institute to understand the strengths and weaknesses of our creative arts programs and provide guidance for determining the nature and magnitude of the commitments that are required to achieve the Institute's long-term goal of excellence in undergraduate education.

EXHIBIT 1

PROPOSED ORGANIZATION OF THE  
CREATIVE ARTS AT MIT



APPENDIX A

COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE ARTS AT MIT  
MEMBERS

Paul L. Joskow, Chair; Professor of Economics, MIT

Henry A. Millon, Vice Chair; Visiting Professor of Architecture, MIT; CASVA, National Gallery of Art, Washington; DC

Lawrence B. Anderson; Dean Emeritus, School of Architecture and Planning, MIT

Lilian Armstrong; Professor of Art History, Wellesley College

Muriel R. Cooper; Associate Professor of Visual Studies, MIT; Head, Visible Language Workshop, Media Laboratory

William K. Durfee; Assistant Professor of Mechanical Engineering, MIT

A. R. Gurney\*; Professor of Literature, MIT

Arthur Kaledin; Associate Professor of History, MIT

Laurence Lesser; President, New England Conservatory of Music

Myra Mayman; Director, Office for the Arts at Harvard and Radcliffe

Jeffrey A. Meldman\*\*; Senior Lecturer, Sloan School of Management, MIT; Associate Dean, Office of the Dean for Student Affairs, MIT

William M. Siebert; Ford Professor of Engineering, Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, MIT

Marcus A. Thompson; Professor of Music, MIT; Chair, Music Section; Coordinator for the Performing Arts

Peter A. Wolff; Professor of Physics, MIT; Director, Francis Bitter National Magnet Laboratory

Helvi McClelland; Executive Director, Council for the Arts at MIT

\*Named to the Committee, but resigned mid-year due to other commitments.

\*\*Added to the Committee at the request of the Dean for Student Affairs.

## APPENDIX B

### AD HOC COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE CREATIVE ARTS AT MIT

In 1952 and 1969 MIT appointed special committees to examine the place and the meaning of the arts at the Institute. The consequent commitment of academic and financial resources led to rich and varied offerings in the creative arts at MIT. Today this variety itself presents new opportunities and raises new issues that deserve serious review. The current attention to broadening undergraduate education suggests that it is an appropriate time to consider expansion and realignment of art endeavors at MIT. In sum, a strengthened program in the visual and performing arts is important to this university and is the ultimate objective of this review.

The Committee to Review the Creative Arts at MIT, appointed by the Provost, is charged with reviewing the role, organization, and support for the visual and performing arts at MIT and with making recommendations for invigorating the arts both in the academic program and in campus life. In the review, particular attention should be given to:

the organization and role of general and specialized academic programs in the visual and performing arts;

the relation to the academic programs of the extracurricular, public exhibition, and performance programs in the visual and performing arts;

arts acquisition policies and responsibilities;

assessment of the need for additional facilities on campus;

the administrative structure for the visual and performing arts at MIT and the adequacy of financial support for these activities.

In reviewing and assessing the creative arts at MIT, the committee should review the history of arts activities at the Institute and solicit the views of those involved in the existing programs in the visual and performing arts, and should actively seek the views of students interested in these issues. In addition, the committee should survey the way in which programs in the creative arts (academic, performing, exhibition) are conceived and organized at other institutions.

Among the programs and organizations to be brought into the review are:

AD HOC COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE CREATIVE ARTS AT MIT

the programs in the School of Humanities and Social Science in drama, dance, and music;

the programs in the School of Architecture and Planning in art history and visual studies, the Media Laboratory, and the Center for Advanced Visual Studies;

the Committee on Visual Arts and the List Visual Arts Center;

the Council for the Arts at MIT;

the MIT Museum; and

the relation to Wellesley College programs in the arts.

The objective of the review is to define the initiatives and arrangements needed to secure a robust program in the creative arts at MIT, one which will thrive in the special environment of this university. The Committee should expect to make recommendations to the Provost before the end of the 1987 spring term so that initial implementation of recommendations could take place by the beginning of the 1987-88 academic year.

September 26, 1987