



**DEDICATED HACK**—At last Friday's Corporation meeting, Building E40 was renamed the Muckley Building in recognition of the beneficence and long service to the Corporation by Harold J. Muckley '39 (above with Mrs. Muckley). The dedication ceremony was brightened by discovery of a hack, the covering of the plaque by a cardboard replica naming the building "E. Phorthey" in recognition of the "stewardship of W.D. Phorthey '40 and N. Dallas Phorthey." **Photo by L. Barry Hetherington**

## FIRST REPORT

## Vest: Ideological Attacks Hurt Universities

American research universities are being buffeted by a storm of external actions and issues—some of them ideological and government-inspired—that threaten to undermine public support for higher education, the president of MIT said in his annual report released Friday, Oct. 4.

Dr. Charles M. Vest, completing the first year of his MIT presidency after serving as provost at the University of Michigan, said the situation is related to an underlying "erosion of the partnership between the federal government and our research universities."

But he also identified two specific major sources of changing public perceptions and attitudes toward research universities.

"First, there is a growing wave of populism and an associated widespread distrust of expertise, excellence, and privilege, whether real or perceived," he said.

"Second, there have been direct assaults, largely on ideological grounds, against our universities," he continued. "These began in earnest when William Bennett used his pulpit as Secretary of Education to attack American higher education."

"The flames he ignited," Dr. Vest said, "were fanned by others," including the "picture of the presumed decline of higher education" painted by Allan Bloom in his book, *The Closing of the American Mind*, and the "intemperate portrait of the American professoriat" by Charles Sykes in *Profscam*.

Such criticisms of universities, Dr. Vest said, "have struck a resonance with the public, which had taken account of rapidly rising tuitions and come to believe, almost antithetically, that the quality of teaching and the commitment to undergraduate education had degenerated."

Against this backdrop, he said, came three "catalytic federal actions"—the investigations at Stanford, MIT and other universities of alleged abuses of the system for reimbursement of indirect costs of sponsored research; the continuing investigation of fraud charges associated with university re-

search; and the investigation by the Justice Department of alleged conspiracy and price-fixing among universities in the area of financial aid.

Less publicized issues, he said, included investigations about conflicts of interest on the part of faculty with strong ties to industry; debates about technology transfer from US universities to foreign countries, particularly Japan; criticisms about the numbers of foreign students studying engineering and science in American universities; and a continuing decline in the effective level of federal financial support of students.

Dr. Vest said the present situation "means, basically, that our universities are not immune to the strains present in our society, and that the tight budgetary times and shifting, or indeed uncertain, federal priorities are likely to

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## NEW TECHNIQUE

## Got a Sick Fish? Try Ultrasound

■ By Elizabeth A. Thomson  
News Office

An invention developed at MIT could revolutionize the fish-farming industry by providing an easy, efficient way to treat sick fish, vaccinate them to prevent diseases, or administer other compounds such as reproductive hormones to get fish to spawn.

In the MIT technique ultrasound is applied to water containing fish and the vaccine, antibiotic, or other compound of interest. In initial experiments, the scientists found that the technique was very effective in getting a reproductive hormone into goldfish.

Currently, all other ways of administering such compounds are either commercially impractical or inefficient. For example, the only reliable way to vaccinate fish is to inject each individual animal. "That is impossible on a large scale, and for some fish injection is too stressful," said Yonathan Zohar, a visiting scientist in chemical engineering and the leading researcher in the work.

The ultrasound technique could be a revolutionary alternative to such traditional approaches. In addition, the scientists believe that it could be applied to other aquatic animals, including mollusks, shrimp and lobsters. As a

result, they have applied for a patent on the invention. "We think it has great potential," said Dr. Zohar, who is also an associate professor at the University of Maryland's Center of Marine Biotechnology.

The ultrasound invention grew out of MIT research by Robert Langer, Germeshausen Professor of Chemical and Biochemical Engineering, and colleagues on the use of ultrasound to enhance drug delivery to humans. "We sort of jointly wondered if ultrasound would enhance the transport of compounds to fish, and it did," Dr. Langer said.

The other principal researchers in the work are Joseph Kost, a visiting scientist now at Ben Gurion University in Israel and an expert on ultrasound, and Antony D'Emanuele, a postdoctoral associate now at the University of Manchester in England.

In initial experiments, the group exposed goldfish to ultrasound for 10 to 15 minutes. The water the fish were in contained one of two model molecules "to represent the range of products that might be of interest to the industry," Dr. Zohar said. These particular molecules happened to be reproductive hormones.

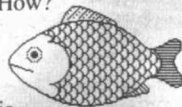
The scientists then analyzed the levels of hormone in the blood of the fish before ultrasound and at different

times afterwards (fish were anesthetized to remove the blood). In the end, they found that fish exposed to ultrasound had a 10 to 20 fold increase of the model molecule in their blood, as compared to fish that had not been exposed to ultrasound.

Dr. Zohar suspects that the hormones are getting into the fish through their skin and gills. How?

"We think that with ultrasound we're changing the permeability of those tissues for a short time," he said. So the hormones can get in the fish during ultrasound and probably for a little while afterwards, but then the permeability returns to normal and they are locked in the fish.

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## PARENTS WEEKEND

## Families to Visit Campus

■ By Maryglenn Vincens  
Alumni/ae Association

Mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers and even a few grandparents will converge on campus October 18-19 to experience in capsule undergraduate life at MIT.

Hosted by the Alumni/ae Association, the third annual Parents Weekend will enable families of current students to briefly join Institute life in full semester swing: meeting faculty and administrators, learning about recent highlights, sitting in on classes, visiting living groups and departments. But, most importantly, they will be able to connect with other families.

Continuing his inaugural theme, "Shaping the Future," President Charles Vest will host a panel discussion Saturday morning aimed at stimulating thought about the world MIT students will enter after they graduate. Parents have been asked to "do their home-

work" by reading David Halberstam's *The Next Century*, (this year's Book Night assignment). They will also be encouraged to participate in the question-and-answer session after the program. Members of the panel will be Professor Eleanor D. Westney of the Sloan School of Management, Professor Phillip Sharp, head of biology, Professor Stanley Fischer of economics, and Yonah Chery '89, a doctoral candidate in electrical engineering and computer science.

For evening entertainment parents will have choices among the best of the Institute's musical groups as well as a selection from Shakespeare by the School of Humanities.

Parents Weekend is part of the MIT Parents Program developed to build communication and involvement between the Institute and its students' families. The program also publishes Parents News and manages the Parents Fund.

## MacVicar Memorial

A community memorial service for Professor Margaret L.A. MacVicar will be held Thursday, Oct. 31, at 3pm in Kresge Auditorium. It will be followed by a reception in the Norma Mele Room at McCormick Hall.

Dr. MacVicar, the Institute's first dean for undergraduate education, died at the Dana Farber Cancer Institute in Boston on September 30 at the age of 47. She had been ill with lung cancer for a year.

Dr. MacVicar founded and di-

rected MIT's Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program and was a nationally known educator and scientist. She held dual appointments as a professor of physical science and Cecil and Ida Green Professor of Education.

Contributions may be sent to UROP in Rm 20B-140, the Dana Farber Cancer Institute at 44 Binney Street, Boston, Mass., 02115, or the American Cancer Society's Hope Lodge at 636 West Lexington Street, Baltimore, Md., 21201.

## IN BRIEF

## COLLOQUIUM TODAY

The MIT Colloquium, Teaching within a Research University, with President Charles M. Vest, Provost Mark S. Wrighton, a panel of ten faculty members and students, and former Governor Michael Dukakis as interlocutor, will begin at 4pm today (Wednesday, Oct. 9) in Kresge Auditorium. The plenary session will be followed by departmental dinners for further discussion. Papers for the post-colloquium publication are still being accepted (hard copy and disk) in the Colloquium Committee Office, Rm 7-104. The papers, concerning any aspect of the colloquium topic, should be no more than 750 words. The deadline for submission is Tuesday, Oct. 22.

## FACULTY MEETING

A regular meeting of the faculty will be held next Wednesday, Oct. 16, at 3:15pm in Huntington Hall (Rm 10-250). Agenda items include:

—Motion to revise the Rules and Regulations of the Faculty to abolish the special end-of-May meeting to vote degrees by Professor Vandiver.

—Report of the Faculty Study Group on the International Relations of MIT by Professor Skolnikoff.

—Discussion of measures for preventing sexual harassment at MIT by Associate Provost Keyser.

—Update on federal relations and other matters: indirect costs, RA/TA tuition remission, antitrust litigation, progress report on ROTC by President Vest.

## NO PAPER

MIT Tech Talk will not be published next week because of the Columbus Day holiday Monday, Oct. 14. Publication will resume on October 23.



## PREMIER TEACHER

# Williams Is Appointed To Engineering Chair

Professor James H. Williams Jr., frequently recognized in student course evaluation guides as one of MIT's premier teachers, has been appointed to the School of Engineering's Professorship in Teaching Excellence.

The professorship was established by an anonymous gift to recognize teaching excellence and to support educational program development. The appointment of Professor Williams for a five-year term was announced by Dean of Engineering Joel Moses, the Dugald Caleb Jackson Professor of Computer Science and Engineering.

Professor Williams' contributions to undergraduate teaching have been formally recognized through a number of awards, including the Everett Moore Baker Award for "outstanding undergraduate teaching" (1973) and the inaugural J.P. Den Hartog Distinguished Educator Award in the Department of Mechanical Engineering (1981).

Assessments by both students and colleagues have cited the intellectual rigor of his teaching, his lucid presentations, high expectations and excellent results. Also cited were his commitment to the professional and personal development of students and

his counseling and tutoring outside of the classroom.

He served as the first faculty resident at New House from 1975-82.

Professor Williams is also known for his commitment to minority student development and to increasing the presence of minority faculty at MIT.

To focus awareness on the educational needs of minority students at MIT, Professor Williams attracted the attention of the national media as he sat and fasted at a small table outside the offices of the president and the provost each Wednesday in April.

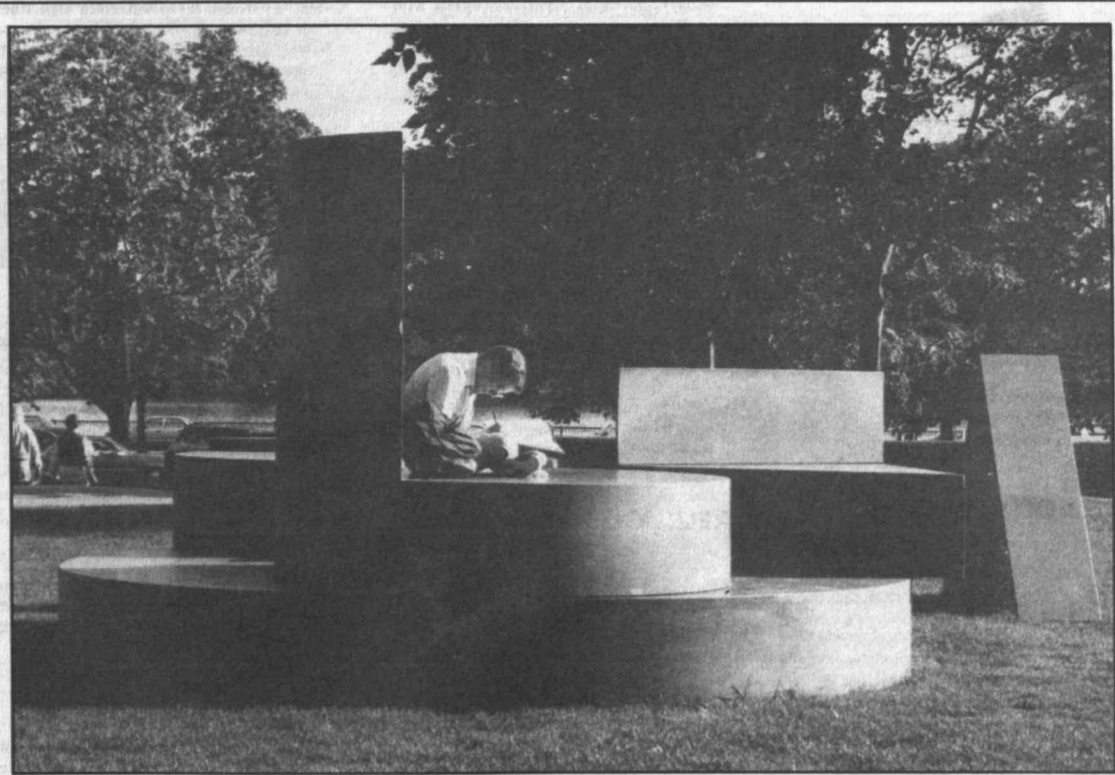
Professor Williams, who joined the faculty in 1970, is currently the head of the Mechanics and Materials Division within the Department of Mechanical Engineering. He earned the SB (1967) and SM (1968) from MIT and the PhD (1970) from Trinity College, Cambridge University, England.

His research in the Composite Materials and Nondestructive Evaluation Laboratory, which he founded, has led to the analytical and experimental characterization of the stresses and fracture properties of fiber-reinforced composites. His development of nondestructive methods to evaluate such materials, involving ultrasonics, acoustic emission and thermography, have earned him an international reputation.

He is a member or fellow of several international professional societies.



Williams



**HARD AT WORK**—Freshman Brian Blatnik puts the inspiration of sculpture to good use as he studies in the afternoon sun. Photo by Donna Coveney

## ENERGY CHAIR

## Ceyer Named First Keck Professor

Dr. Sylvia T. Ceyer of the Department of Chemistry, whose internationally recognized research in surface chemistry has important applications in the conversion of natural gas to useable fuels, has been named the first holder of the W.M. Keck Foundation Professorship in the field of energy.

The professorship was established in June with a grant of \$1.5 million from the W.M. Keck Foundation of Los Angeles. The foundation selected MIT as the first recipient of an energy professorship. Seven other universities also submitted invited applications.

MIT Provost Mark S. Wrighton, the CIBA-GEIGY Professor of Chemistry, announced Professor Ceyer's appointment for a five-year term. He cited her

"extraordinary accomplishments" and her potential "to make fundamental and transforming contributions to the Institute, experimental physical chemistry, and the broad field of energy."

Professor Ceyer received her BA summa cum laude in chemistry from Hope College (1974) and her PhD from the University of California at Berkeley (1979). She joined MIT in 1981. Her research into the dynamics of molecule-surface interactions has resulted in the observation of new mechanisms for dissociative chemisorption, desorption and absorption, and surface reactions. Her work has also extended the understanding of molecular precursors, identified and clarified the site conversion process and provided a novel method for adsorbate synthesis.

Professor Ceyer received the Baker Award for Undergraduate Teaching in 1988, MIT's Edgerton Prize for junior faculty in 1987 and the AAUW Young Scholar Award in 1988. She has also been the holder of the Class of 1943 Career Development Chair, a Sloan

Foundation Fellowship and a Camille and Henry Dreyfus Teacher-Scholarship. She is an editorial board member for the Journal of Chemical Physics, Langmuir and the Journal of Physical Chemistry and an executive committee member for the Gordon Research Conference Council, the Division of Physical Chemistry of the American Chemical Society and the National Research Council on Atomic, Molecular and Optical Sciences.

The W.M. Keck Foundation, one of the nation's largest in terms of annual grants, was established in 1964 by the late William M. Keck, founder of Superior Oil Company. He also created the W.M. Keck Trust for the benefit of the foundation. The foundation's primary focus is on grants to US universities and colleges with an emphasis in science, engineering and medical research. It also provides limited support, focused on programs serving Southern California, in the areas of community services, health care, precollegiate education and the arts.

## SHARING INSIGHTS

## Teaching Resources Available for Faculty

A seminar and discussion series about teaching and a service which provides classroom videotaping are available this year for faculty interested in sharing insights about teaching issues and honing their own teaching skills.

Both activities are provided with the help of the Faculty Instructional Resources Program (FIRP) and the Office of the Dean for Undergraduate Education.

"Teaching at MIT," a series of four fall-term seminars, will begin next week with a half-dozen more seminars scheduled to take place during IAP. All Institute faculty, instructors, teaching assistants, and community members are invited to attend and participate.

All teaching seminars begin at 4pm and run for about an hour. The series schedule is as follows:

Thursday, Oct. 17, Rm 37-696, "Planning and Teaching an MIT Subject," Professor Donald Sadoway and Professor Leonard Morse-Fortier of architecture.

Wednesday, Oct. 23, Rm 36-428, "Working with Students: Handling Problems, Counseling and Advising," Dean Robert Randolph of the Office of the Dean for Student Affairs.

Tuesday, Oct. 29, Rm 8-302, "Teaching Recitation Sections," Professor Arthur Mattuck of mathematics and Professor Campbell Searle of electrical engineering and computer science.

Thursday, Nov. 7, Rm 37-696, "How To Lecture," Professor Hal Abelson of electrical engineering and computer science and Professor Daniel Kemp of chemistry.

FIRP was started in spring of 1987 as an outgrowth of the Commission on Engineering Undergraduate Education. Its goal was to enhance the quality of teaching in the School of Engineering. FIRP assists in the orientation of new faculty, aids the process of pedagogical self-evaluation, and seeks to promote lively debate about pedagogical issues among the faculty as a whole. Interest and participation have been growing steadily according to Maureen Horgan of the Office of the Dean for Undergraduate Education.

Classroom videotaping is available through the Video Production Services in the Center for Advanced Engineering Study.

Classes are videotaped in the regular classroom, and the tape is turned over to the faculty member at the end of the class session. The premise of the program is that viewing oneself in action is excellent feedback in itself.

There is a charge for this service but support from the deans of the School of Engineering and the School of Science permits faculty from those schools to be taped at no cost.

Further information about both programs is available from Ms. Horgan, Office of the Dean for Undergraduate Education, Rm 20B-141, x3-5049.



Ceyer

## FLAMES, ENGINES &amp; THE BRAIN

## Three Visitors to Give Talks Here

## DIFFUSION FLAMES

Dr. Forman A. Williams, director of the Center for Energy and Combustion Research at the University of California, San Diego, will deliver the 1991 Hoyt C. Hottel Lecture in Chemical Engineering October 18.

Dr. Williams, widely known for his writing and research on the theory and mathematical aspects of combustion, will speak at 3:30pm Friday, Oct. 18, in Rm 66-110, the Edwin R. Gilliland Auditorium. His subject will be "Theory of Turbulent-Jet Diffusion Flames." A reception will follow at the Cambridge Marriott.

The Hottel Lectureship, established in 1985, recognizes Hoyt C. Hottel's contributions "to the intellectual climate of the Chemical Engineering Department, to the encouragement of students over six decades, and to the foundation and direction of the Fuels Research Laboratory."

Professor Hottel, 88, began his career at MIT in 1924 as assistant director of the Chemical Engineering Practice School. He is currently professor of chemical engineering emeritus.

## BRAIN FUNCTIONS

Dr. Gerald M. Edelman, director of The Neurosciences Institute in New York City, will give a talk titled "Neu-

ral Darwinism: Is it Possible to Construct a Perception Machine?" Thursday, Oct. 10, at 4pm in Rm 26-100.

Dr. Edelman, who received the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine in 1972, is the third lecturer in a series on Computational Approaches to the Neurosciences. He will discuss an overall theory he has proposed to explain the development and organization of higher brain functions in terms of a process known as neural group selection.

The talk is sponsored by the Center for Biological Information Processing of Whitaker College.

## AIRCRAFT ENGINES

Dr. Nicholas A. Cumpsty, the 1991 Hunsaker Professor of Aeronautical Engineering, will present the Minta Martin Lecture, "Aerodynamic Problems of Aircraft Engines: Strides and Some Stumbles," Tuesday, Oct. 15, at 4pm in Rm 6-120.

Dr. Cumpsty is a faculty member in the Department of Engineering at Cambridge University in England, where he received his PhD in 1967. The Minta Martin Lecture by the Hunsaker Professor is given in several aeronautical centers throughout the nation.

## Advisory Committee Named

Professor Bernard J. Frieden of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning has been named to chair an advisory committee to the provost for the selection of the next dean of the School of Architecture and Planning.

Other members of the committee appointed by Provost Mark S. Wrighton are: Ann Beha, Beha & Associates, Boston; Professor Stephen A. Benton, head, Media Arts and Sciences Section; Michael Dennis, Dennis & Clark, Boston; Catherine Donaher, Brookline; Michael Mc Kinnell, Kallmann, Mc Kinnell & Wood Architects, Inc., Bos-

ton; Professor William L. Porter, Department of Architecture; Jean A. Riesman, PhD candidate, Department of Urban Studies and Planning; Aysen Savas, PhD candidate, Department of Architecture; Assistant Professor Lyna L. Wiggins, Department of Urban Studies and Planning; and Professor David N. Wormley, associate dean, School of Engineering.

The new dean will succeed Professor John de Monchaux, who has served in that post since May 1981. Dean de Monchaux announced last spring that he would conclude his term in January 1992.

## It's a Fact

The Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., The Minute Man in Concord, Mass., and John Harvard's statue in Harvard Yard, Cambridge, were all sculpted by an MIT alumnus, Daniel Chester French, a member of the class of 1871.







# The Arts

The Arts Page is produced by the Office of the Arts in collaboration with ARTSNET-253-4003

## TODAY

### Colloquium Follow-Up for the Arts

The MIT community is invited to an informal dinner/discussion on arts and humanities-related issues, following the MIT-wide Colloquium on "Teaching Within a Research University." The colloquium is Wednesday, Oct. 9, from 4-5:30pm in Kresge Auditorium, and the departmental meeting is from 6-8pm in Rm E15-305, preceded by a pizza dinner in the Atrium of the Wiesner Bldg. Among the proposed discussion items are: the development of new criteria for the definition of "research" in arts-related disciplines; the need for both undergraduate and graduate arts and humanities programs, and their integration into a science and technology-based institution; and tenure evaluation for arts faculties. Information: 253-4006.

## THURSDAY

### Dean Reads Poetry

Ayida Mthembu, assistant dean for student affairs, will be the featured poet at the Bookcellar Cafe's evening of poetry on Thursday, Oct. 10.

In addition to being a poet, Dean Mthembu is a playwright and screenwriter, with a Master of Fine Arts from the American Film Institute. She will read from her book *Ambrosia: A Montage of Inner Recordings* as well as from later works.

The Bookcellar Cafe, a new establishment at 1971 Mass Ave. in Cambridge, has inaugurated these Thursday night poetry readings which begin with an open mike at 7pm, followed by the featured poet, and conclude with a "poetry slam" — a competition, in rounds, in which individuals read their own poems and are judged by a panel of judges selected from the audience.

Admission is free; there is a \$2 entry fee for the poetry slam.

Until the cafe menu is prepared, complimentary coffee and tea will be served. Information: 864-9625.

## Erratum

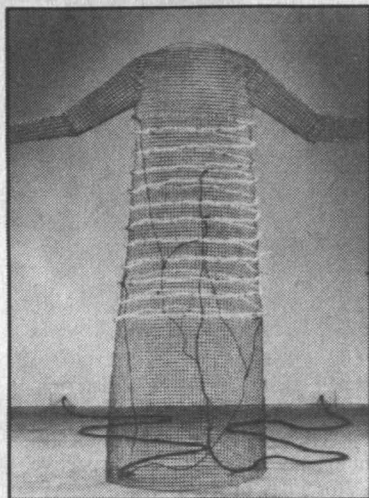
The Festival Jazz Ensemble will perform Saturday, Oct. 19 at 9:30pm in Kresge Auditorium following the MIT Chamber Orchestra concert, not on October 21 as previously reported.

## New Season Begins at List Visual Arts Center

The List Visual Arts Center opens its 1991-92 season presenting the work of two female artists. The List is located on the ground floor of the Wiesner Building (E15) and is open weekdays noon-6, weekends 1-5. Both shows run through November 24. Information: 253-4680.

### Jana Sterbak

*Jana Sterbak: States of Being*, is a ten-year overview of this Czech-born Canadian artist's work and consists of approximately 15 sculptural works ranging in media from cast bronze and lead to such unusual materials as dressmaker's tapes, electrical stove coils, and raw flank steak. The exhibition also includes a number of the artist's drawings and photographs.



*I want you to feel the way I do... (The dress) 1984-85* Jana Sterbak

Using the human body as a central symbol, the artist transforms and activates ordinary, physical objects in ways that subvert normalcy, examining social and cultural conditions. Sterbak uses the physical properties of materials as analogues for psychological states, or, as she has observed, "the material becomes part of the idea." One of Sterbak's most important works is *Vanitas: Flesh Dress for an Albino Anorectic*, a dress of raw meat in which the artist comments upon both the objectification of women and the perishable nature of the human body.

On Thursday, Oct. 24, Czech art historian Milena Kalinovska will present the lecture "In Search of ... Jana Sterbak," at 8pm in the Bartos Theater (Wiesner Building, lower level).

### May Sun

Multi-media artist May Sun began working daily in the Reference Gallery of the LVAC on September 30, building an elaborate and ambitious room-sized installation. *FUGITIVE LANDING: a revolutionary at sea*, involves walkways over a large pool of water, video projection, audio tapes, and a game of goh.

The inspiration for this piece is the sometimes secret journeys of the Chinese statesman Sun Yat-Sen (1866-1925) who sailed to the United States to solicit support for his vision of a western-style democracy for China.

Los Angeles based May Sun was born in Shanghai and lived in Hong Kong until the age of 16, when she came to the US to attend college. Her focus on this earlier episode of Chinese-American relations is both personal and political. Her grandfather was a general in Sun Yat-Sen's army and one of the patriots who traveled to Japan to plan the Chinese revolution. Her ongoing commitment to exploring the dialectic between the personal and the political, the self and social transformation, was reaffirmed by the climax of the recent Chinese democrat movement in Beijing's Tianamen Square in June, 1989.

May Sun often refers to aspects of her Chinese heritage in her work, which consistently crosses cultural and political boundaries as well as the boundaries traditionally separating art forms and disciplines.

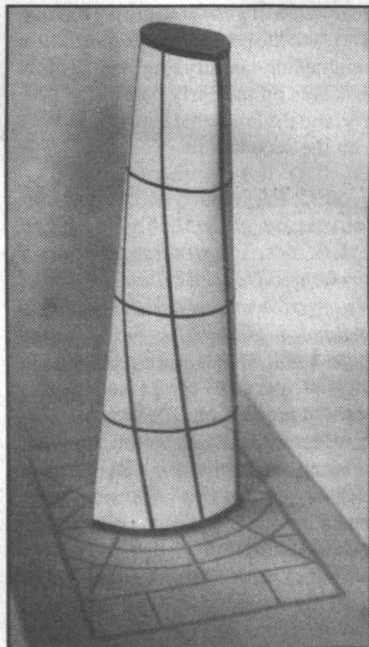
While in residence at the LVAC the artist will be researching details of Sun Yat-Sen's visit to Boston in 1911. Visitors are encouraged to stop in repeatedly to meet the artist and observe the development of the work, the completion of which will be celebrated by a public reception and artist's talk on Sunday, Oct 20 at 3pm.

May Sun is interested in talking to MIT students who are descendants of Sun Yat-Sen and/or who are interested in expressing their ideas about this historical figure. Anyone wishing to contact the artist can reach her at x3-4400.

## OPENING RECEPTION

### Visual Trickery in the Compton Gallery

The MIT Museum invites everyone to an opening reception for *Architectural Illusions: Sculptures by Raymond Bareiss*, Thursday, Oct. 10 from 5-7pm, in the Compton Gallery.



The exhibition will feature a collection of Bareiss Columns, a structural phenomena with artistic, engineering, and architectural ramifications.

California artist/inventor Raymond Bareiss has employed light, movement, and the manipulation of form in space to create a collection of structurally sound columns, which appear on the verge of toppling one moment, and perfectly stable the next. Each 6-9' high columnar sculpture is on a rotating base, with special lighting, to enhance the illusion.

Bareiss first conceived this structural anomaly while attempting to design an unusual, twisted hotel canopy. Since then he has designed a number of variations including skylights (using a column of space), cosmetics bottles, home furnishings, and high-rise office buildings.

*Architectural Illusions* continues through December 27. The Compton Gallery is located off Lobby 10. Hours are weekdays 9-5. Information: 253-4444.

## Musicians Behind-the-Desk



Carrie Nafziger Bullington



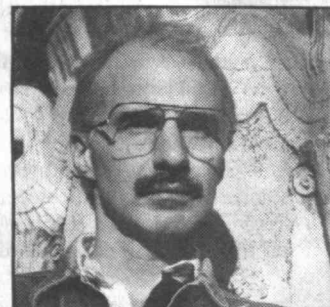
Laurie Collier



Eileen Mullen



Stacia Conklin



Nicholas Altenbernd

A new concert series featuring the musicianship of MIT employees debuted this fall. The MIT Musicians Behind-the-Desk Concert Series presents MIT staff members in Wednesday and Friday noon performances in Killian Hall. Made possible by the MIT Office for the Arts, and Music and Theater Arts, the first performance was Friday, Oct. 4 and featured soprano Carrie Nafziger Bullington, senior secretary-technical in the MIT Plasma Fusion Center, in a program of duets by Mozart, Brahms, Faure, Schumann, and Rossini.

On Wednesday, Oct. 9 (today), Laurie Collier, administrative staff assistant in the MIT Department of Brain and Cognitive Science, presents a piano recital featuring works of Beethoven, Stravinsky, and Mendelssohn.

Vocalists abound in the October lineup which continues October 11 with Sandra Hammond, soprano (senior secretary, MIT Japan Program) in a vocal quintet featuring a program of early music by Weelkes, Byrd, Farmer, and others.

Many of the staff members in this series are professional musicians with active performing lives outside of MIT.

On October 16, Eileen Mullen, vocalist/pianist (administrative secretary, MIT System Dynamics Group), will present a set of original songs and cover songs, assisted by Ken Selcer, guitar and back-up vocals, and Lynn McKenna, keyboard and back-up vocals.

Stacia Conklin, mezzo-soprano (senior office assistant, MIT Undergraduate Education Office), accompanied by pianist Darryl Cooper, will sing works of Barber, Poulenc, and Cole Porter on October 18.

On October 23, amidst this sea of vocalists, a piano interlude of Beethoven and Chopin will be performed by pianist Nick Altenbernd, formerly of the Music Library and currently administrative secretary in the MIT Writing Program.

Helene Gove, staff assistant in the MIT Credit Union is vocalist of the jazz group "Local Culture" performing on October 25.

And finally for the October schedule, Paul Johnson, viola da gamba with the Providence Players (research staff member, Laboratory for Computer Science), will present a program of chamber music for recorder, gamba and harpsichord with Margaret Spura and Catherine Gordon-Seifert on Wednesday, Oct. 30.



Akira Kurasawa's 1960 classic, *The Bad Sleep Well*, the second in a series of three Japanese 'bad guy' films, will be shown Monday, Oct. 21 at 7:30pm in Rm 10-250. The secretary (Toshira Mifune) to the president of a government housing company suspects his father's death was caused by foul play. He plots to expose the corporation's corruption, but in seeking revenge he himself becomes degraded by the evil he is seeking to combat, eventually sacrificing his wife's sanity and his own integrity. In Japanese with English subtitles. \$3 donation. 253-8095.

# Putting Women's Issues into Context

(Dr. Ruth Perry is Professor of Literature and Women's Studies in the Department of Humanities. Naomi F. Chase, assistant director of the News Office interviewed her recently on the evolution of women's studies at MIT. Professor Perry will also discuss the subject and coming signs of changes in the field at the Women's Forum on Monday, Nov. 4, at noon in Killian Hall.)

**NFC:** A recent study of smoking habits shows young black women smoking less than young white women, apparently because they are less concerned about their weight. What would Women's Studies have to say about that?

**RP:** It would say you can't generalize across race any more than you can generalize across class. It might show that the issue of weight is more salient to women's body image in white culture, and a different kind of body type is considered sexy and womanly in black culture. Women's Studies have become much more complicated with the recognition that gender interacts with historical period, nationality, ethnicity and class in different ways in different contexts. The driving motive in Women's Studies is to make clear what the experiences, perceptions and contributions of women have been, always paying attention to historical periods, national boundaries, ethnicities.

**NFC:** So women's feelings about their bodies can be different at different periods in history or in different cultures.

**RP:** Yes. Or their feelings about other issues. Here's another important example. What may have been liberation for white middle class women in the mid-70s, i.e. getting out of their houses and going to work, was not necessarily liberation for black women who have usually worked outside the home and have usually been responsible for taking care of their families, as well. For some black women, liberation may well be the luxury of staying home and raising their children peacefully, rather than having to always balance working, household duties, childrearing, self-education, etcetera. The definition of what is liberation is always related to context.

Here's another example. Several years ago I was teaching an Introduction to Women's Studies class to a small group of seniors; a couple of black women and four white women. At a certain point in a discussion of black and white identity formation, we got onto mother-daughter relationships. The black women in this class and one of the white women adored their mothers. The other white women were quite ambivalent. The white woman who adored her mother came from an all-female household. Her mother had several daughters by different men but she had never married, and was the sole support of her family. That was true of the black women as well.

We theorized, on the basis of what the ambivalent students were saying, that their ambivalence was due to the message they got from their mothers about accommodating to male domination within a family setting. The women whose mothers did not have to accommodate to male authority were the ones who unambivalently respected their mothers. They understood that their mothers worked very hard to put bread on the table and to raise them and they respected and admired them. Those women who watched their mothers accommodating to male power felt ambivalent about their

mothers' lessons about what it meant to be an adult woman.

We did a totally unstatistical, methodologically imperfect study, asking everybody we knew how they felt about their mothers. It seemed to corroborate our conclusions that family configurations in black families set a different kind of standard when the maternal head of household who is the breadwinner is not in a subordinate relation to a particular man. The messages she gives her daughter are not ambivalent about what it means to be in the world as an adult woman. However, I'm hesitant to generalize those ethnic differences beyond these people in my classroom.

**NFC:** How much can you generalize about anorexia from the study on smoking and women's bodies, especially if you don't regard anorexia as only a contemporary phenomenon.

**RP:** But it's also not a cross-cultural phenomenon.

**NFC:** It seems to exist in cultures that are heavily patriarchal where women have a difficult time finding a place for themselves. For instance, Saint Catherine of Sienna, who was anorectic, starved herself to death at the age of 33 in 14th century Italy.

**RP:** When I was in China in '87, I found that people did not understand eating disorders. They were curious about sexual practices in the US, because Chinese culture is much more straight-laced about such things. But eating disorders! They couldn't believe such a thing existed anywhere in the world. It's not a current problem in China or a historical one, I think.

**NFC:** Why is Women's Studies important for MIT students?

**RP:** The special focus of Women's Studies at MIT has got to be the relation of gender to the practice and theory of science and engineering. When I started this program in 1982, there was an interest in changing the gender constituency of the undergraduates.

**NFC:** What was the ratio of men to women then?

**RP:** When I first started teaching here in '73, I had two women in a class of 20. It was 10 to one, or less. The Women's Studies program was born at the same time as the administration became interested in increasing the proportion of undergraduate women. And to the extent that Women's Studies made the Institute a more hospitable place for women, it was very important. For instance, my classes were used in a film to recruit women students.

I felt that it was important to develop MIT as the country's central source of information on gender and

The special focus of Women's Studies at MIT has got to be the relation of gender to the practice and theory of science and engineering.

mathematics, natural sciences, and engineering. Our library, the Women's Studies Research Room, has a complete collection of monographs on subjects such as women and math, women and technology, women and engineering, women and science, collected systematically by Marlene Manoff in the Humanities Library. With the aid of UROP students, we've also put together bibliographies on women and mathematics, reproductive technologies, gender and science, and of course bibliographies from our conference on women and computers in 1984.

**NFC:** Your next conference is on gender and environment.

**RP:** Yes, for May '92. We're waiting to hear about funding but our premise is the pragmatic recognition that the people most directly affected by the degraded environment and who interact most directly with it are women.

The overwhelming majority of human beings are dependent on a woman for maintenance and subsistence, and those women must wrest that maintenance and subsistence from the earth in whatever form they find it. In Africa they're responsible for gathering water and fuel. In coal-mining towns in America they're responsible for keeping the sheets or plates clean as the coal dust filters over everything.

It's the grass-roots organizers around environmental issues—not the policy makers, and not the researchers—who have noticed more defective births in their communities, that people are getting lung disease, that the water tastes funny. And it's women who tend to do the organizing around these issues. One of the things we're interested in doing is identifying those specific areas in which women and environment intersect.

**NFC:** And what are they?

**RP:** We want to look at: women's lives in rural and urban environments, the relation of women to institutions, and the place of women in the environmental movements. For example, the motivation energy for many of the conservation movements in America often comes from hunters and fishermen who want to maintain wilderness areas for sport. That's a different kind of group and a different kind of emphasis than Save The Whales. Another connection is the gendering of nature itself. There are some eco-feminists who draw parallels between the domination of women and the domination of nature, between the attitudes which appropriate to individuals the resources, including the reproductive resources, either of women or of the natural world.

**NFC:** Kirk Sales makes a similar point in *The Discovery of Paradise*, his new book about Columbus, describing the European patriarchal attitudes about man's right to dominate nature which became American attitudes.

**RP:** Right now I am working on the late eighteenth-century period in England, when the notion that common land which was lying fallow and which had been commonly available to people for planting small gardens, grazing cattle, and keeping pigs, could now be appropriated by large land-owners for capitalized production and big-business agriculture. That's when the process of enclosure, which had been going on for centuries, accelerated, culminating in new enclosure acts. A quarter of England's arable land was enclosed in the eighteenth century. Both the land and any animals living on it were commodified for the sole use of single individuals. I do believe that some of our American attitudes about the ownership of land and the notion that you can do anything you want to the land you happen to own comes from the attitudes born in that period.

**NFC:** That's Sales' point, that those attitudes were reflected in the development of capitalism.

**RP:** Right. This was the first time there was big money in big agriculture. And so people with enough capital to hire labor and buy equipment took land

Originally I was interested in the ways in which men and women might use the narrative form differently and the different themes or plots or character types that would surface. After reading 40 or 50 novels, I ended up feeling that everybody writing in that period was writing about family relations because the kinship relations were being significantly altered.

**NFC:** What was changing them?

**RP:** For one thing land enclosure, which entails a restructuring of class. This was also the period when England's empire was established when it took India and Canada, and maintained a standing army for practically the whole second half of the eighteenth century. That's what made agribusiness. A standing army required food, as well as uniforms and transportation.

This was the beginning of industrialization, mechanized spinning and weaving, when the first fortunes were being made in manufacturing. Class and gender roles were being significantly restructured and so was the psychological meaning of family.

**NFC:** From what to what?

**RP:** Take the attitudes towards women's sexuality and maternity. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, women were still considered sexual creatures, lusty, and interested, as they had been in the Renaissance and earlier. By the end of the eighteenth century what we think of as Victorian attitudes were already in place, and the mark of a good woman was to be asexual and not interested in physical relationships. And similarly, although motherhood obviously is eternal—I mean it is the oldest profession—the end of the eighteenth century saw similar Victorian attitudes about motherhood—maternal self-sacrifice, endless patience, kindness, all that stuff that modern women often feel burdened with. So the notion of an ideal mother appears concurrently with the desexualization of women. My most recent article is about the reversal of those attitudes and their interrelationship. That's saying it much too simply and reductively, but it's clear in reading the literature of the period that those were the terms of debate.

**NFC:** Did the work of your parents influence your work? Your father was an anthropologist.

**RP:** Yes, so this kind of vocabulary and way of thinking cross-culturally feels quite natural.

**NFC:** And your mother?

**RP:** My mother is a biologist who turned psychologist. My parents had a standing argument all during my growing-up years about nature-nurture. My mother believed that most things were inborn and my father believed that everything was environment. And I guess I am uncomfortable with either view when it denies or dismisses the other.

Photo by Donna Coveney

