thetech.com

Volume 141, Number 27

WEATHER, p. 2

THU: 48° F | 35° F

Mostly Sunny.

FRI: 51° F | 33° F

Sunny.

SAT: 53° F | 36° F

Sunny.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2021



MIT Energy Night, the first flagship event of the MIT Energy and Climate Club, takes place in the Sloan Samberg Conference Center, showcasing close to 50 interactive presentations highlighting MIT's unique innovation in climate and energy, Sunday.

# Tech Shuttle expands to new all-day 12 stop route beginning Nov. 1

The Tech Shuttle expanded its route beginning Nov. 1 to provide more shuttle coverage on the east side of campus.

The new route includes 12 stops beginning at the Kendall Square MBTA station, circling around the Sloan School of Management, driving from the east to west side of campus via Memorial Drive and Amherst Street, and circling back to the MBTA station via Vassar Street.

Previously, the shuttle had 11 stops on its morning route, and the afternoon route did not circle the Sloan School. The shuttle will

now run a single 12-stop route all-day.

The Shuttle Committee determined that it would expand the afternoon route following a student request.

MIT Parking and Transportation Office Operations Manager Tom Giannino wrote in an Oct. 28 email that "a change in traffic patterns established by the City of Cambridge" made it possible to restore the full route in the afternoon "without having traffic

The new all-day route will operate during the Tech Shuttle's

usual hours — Monday through Friday from 6:15 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. — and "will remain in place for the foreseeable future."

Giannino added that while the new route will be slightly different from the Tech Shuttle's previous route, riders "will experience few if any changes with the new route" and can still expect the shuttle to arrive at its usual times.

Community members may view the shuttle's location on the MIT Mobile app and may contact the Parking and Transportation Office at mitparking@mit.edu.

— Kristina Chen

# City Council passes resolution backing MIT Divest's efforts

Newly elected Boston Mayor Wu also voices support for MIT Divest

By Kristina Chen

EDITOR IN CHIEF

The Cambridge City Council passed a resolution in support of MIT Divest's campaign to divest MIT's endowment from the fossil fuel industry at its Nov. 1 meeting.

The resolution was introduced to the council by Cambridge Mayor Sumbul Siddiqi and Councillors Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler, Quinton Zondervan, and Marc McGovern. All nine members of the council voted unanimously in favor of the resolution

MIT Divest Co-Chair Peter Scott '23 and member Ellie Rabenold '23 attended and spoke at the meeting over Zoom.

The passed resolution writes that in light of Harvard University and Boston University (BU) deciding to divest from the fossil fuel industry, because of the dangers surrounding

climate change and global warming, and given the city council's history of supporting activists from MIT and Harvard demanding divestment, the city council has decided to "go on record in full support of MIT Divest's campaign."

Additionally, the resolution states that the city clerk will notify President L. Rafael Reif of the council's support of MIT Divest and send Reif the resolution.

Rabenold said in an interview with *The Tech* that MIT Divest decided to "step up" their outreach efforts and contact local councillors after Harvard and BU announced that they would divest, and Sobrinho-Wheeler of the Cambridge City Council offered to write a resolution to present at the council meeting.

In addition to the passing of the resolution, MIT Divest has reached

Resolution, Page 2

# **IN SHORT**

Daylight savings time ends Nov. 7.

Nov. 11 is **Veterans Day**. No classes will take place.

All students are required to **receive a flu vaccine by Nov. 21** in order to access buildings and register for classes.

The **Spring 2022 housing switch lottery application** is open until Nov. 29 at *myhousing.mit.* 

Interested in **joining** *The Tech*? Email *join@tech.mit.edu*.

Send news and tips to news@tech.mit.edu.

# Preliminary unofficial results of 2021 Cambridge City Council election released, MIT alumnus elected

The preliminary unofficial results of the Nov. 2 Cambridge City Council election have been announced. A total of 19 candidates ran, and nine were elected to the council.

Incumbents Sumbul Siddiqui, Patricia M. Nolan, E. Denise Simmons, Dennis J. Carlone, Marc C. McGovern, Quinton Y. Zondervan SM '95, and Alanna M. Mallon were re-elected.

The two newly elected candidates were Burhan Azeem '19 and Paul F. Toner.

Incumbents who were not re-elected were first-term councilor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler and Timothy J. Toomey; Toomey did not run in the 2021 election.

Total votes cast in the election fell slightly from 20,433 in 2019 to 20,253 this year.

The School Committee election's preliminary unofficial results were also released; Ayesha Wilson, Alfred B. Fantini, Akriti Bhambi, Rachel B. Weinstein, José Luis Villarreal, and David J. Weinstein were elected.

All three measures on the 2021 ballot — an annual review of the city manager's performance, allocating council power to approve city manager appointments, and a review of the city charter every 10 years by the council — also passed preliminarily.

Official results for both elections will not be declared until Nov. 12, when provisional and overseas absentee ballots will be counted.

— Kristina Chen



ALEXA-RAE SIMAO—THE TECH

Where's Waldo? Students in costume enjoy skating at Johnson Ice Rink during Spooky Skate, Oct. 29.



# ROMEO AND JULIET

Love and violence, oh my! ARTS, p. 6

# THE GSU DOES NOT NEED UE

The UE does not have graduate students' best interests in mind. **OPINION**, p. 4

# STUOPIS ON STUDENT HEALTH

Medical responds to op-ed on unsatisfactory MIT healthcare. **OPINION, p. 5** 



# FAMILY WEEKEND CONCERT

Welcome back to live concerts! **ARTS, p. 7** 

# **MARIEL**

Tapas and Havana. **ARTS, p. 8** 

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2 THE TECH THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2021

§ Hurricane

**WEATHER** 

# Prepare for a probable pause in precipitation

By Spencer Rhodes and Malachi Macon

Alright everybody. Our weather is going to be arguably boring, but really nice for clubs and organizations to do stuff outside! So go study outside and enjoy the breezy autumn weather during the day, and bundle up during the night. After all, we're reaching that point where we can once again freeze water with some outside air, and it's gonna get colder from here. So stay warm, enjoy your hot drink of choice, and wear a jacket.

In other weather-related news,

Tropical Storm Wanda recently broke a month-long drought of storm formation in the Atlantic Ocean when it formed on October 30. This drought was one of the longest during the hurricane season in the modern era, being especially significant coming off the back of a historically active season. Tropical Storm Wanda marks the third time in history, and the second year in a row, that the National Hurricane Center has exhausted its standard list of 21 names. While it is not expected to impact land, its formation is still a historical occasion in storm activity.

#### **Extended Forecast**

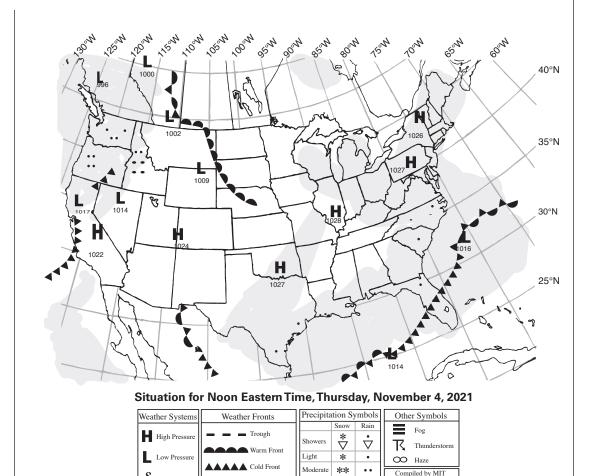
Today: Sunny. High around 48°F (9°C). Low of 35°F (2°C). Light winds in the north, around 5 mph.

Tonight: Mostly cloudy. High of 49°F (9°C). Low around 35°F (2°C), with light winds in the north around 6 mph.

Friday: From cloudy to sunny, high around 51°F (11°C) and low around 33°F (1°C). Northwest winds stay around 6 mph.

Saturday: Sunny day at 53°F (12°C) and partially cloudy night around 36°F (2°C). Wind is now west, but still at 6 mph.

Sunday: Partial clouds at 53°F (12°C) transition to a lot more clouds at night, with a low of 39°F (4°C). The wind is now north and is still at 6 mph.



# MIT Divest efforts include **Energy Night presentation,** pledges, and upcoming rally

Resolution from Page 1

out to candidates in the recent Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville local elections for public endorsements.

Cambridge Mayor Siddiqi wrote in support of MIT Divest, "We need to lower the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere as soon as possible" by reducing "our dependence on fossil fuels." Siddiqi added, "I hope MIT will join that movement and divest as soon as

Newly elected Boston Mayor Michelle Wu wrote about MIT Divest, "I have been inspired by the work of youth climate activists on this front, and I am committed to following their lead and centering their generation in taking action on the big issues that sit squarely on all of our

Akriti Bhambi, newly elected to the Cambridge School Committee, wrote that she endorses MIT Divest because "educational institutions

have a duty to ensure a safe and healthy future for their students and the world."

Scott said in an interview with *The Tech* that MIT Divest hopes "the administration sees what they're up against; not only does 80% of the student body and a majority of opinionated faculty support divestment, but the city government of Cambridge is also telling them their stance is wrong, and divestment is a big step toward holding companies accountable."

In addition to contacting local politicians, MIT Divest is continuing to push MIT toward divestment through other initiatives, including presenting its standards of investment at MIT Energy Night, organizing a divestment day of action to educate about the importance of divestment, and encouraging students to sign its climate conscious pledges to individually divest from the fossil fuel industry. MIT Divest also plans to hold a rally the afternoon of Nov. 12.



Next Haunt members construct the walls of the escape room's second floor, Oct. 17.



Students browse clothes at UA Sustain's Pop-Up Thrift Shop outside the Student Center on Friday, Oct. 29.





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# **GUEST COLUMN**

# The UE isn't the union the GSU claims it is

Why should graduate students settle for a union that compromises values and fails to protect us?

All financial numbers reported in the opinion piece below are sourced from *UE-notforMIT.org* — an information site run by graduate students for graduate students, detailing the unique risks and issues with unionization through the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE).

The UE does not want us to join to support us. They want the nearly \$2 million we will pay in national dues every year.

I support our right to unionize. I support the concept of graduate unionization at MIT. And I would support the Graduate Student Union (GSU) if they were unionizing without the UE. However, they have elected to choose a nearly bankrupt, predatory, and oppressive national union that supports none of our interests.

# Why are we aligning with a union that will take our money and cannot even protect us in our hour of need?

The UE has minimal financial assets, reporting only \$2.5 million in holdings in the most recently available (2018) NLRB mandatory reporting data. This number represents the latest in a steady decline since the early 2000s when the UE assets totaled nearly \$15 million and included investments and liquid assets, in contrast to the remaining assets, which are nearly entirely invested in U.S. treasury securities.

The UE does not want us to join to support us. They want the nearly \$2 million we will pay in national dues every year. This would increase their annual national budget (currently \$4.5 million) by nearly 50%. This capital could help the UE resolve its downward trend, but we shouldn't be the ones providing the funds unless it benefits us.

The GSU claims that the UE provides invaluable support in our unionization effort, primarily in the form of professional organizers and potential legal guidance around constitution drafting and defense around contract negotiations. However, the legal expenditures of the entire UE — for all of its many local unions ("locals") — totaled a mere \$2.3 million in the past year, less than the \$2.8 million we will be paying in dues our first year. (The salaries of professional organizers at MIT contribute a relatively small amount that does not change this comparison.) The bottom line is that the UE cannot support us better than we can support ourselves, at least until we suddenly need financial support we cannot provide ourselves, such as if we strike.

# A better graduate union could be formed without any national union, and a better graduate union could be formed with a stronger national union.

So what happens if we strike and the university docks our pay? Five thousand graduate worker salaries are not chean and, at an estimate of \$20/hour and eighthour work days, would come to \$800,000 per day. This would bankrupt the UE's entire \$2.5 million asset portfolio in three days (were those assets even liquid), and even if the UE applied their entire (newly increased by our contributions) annual dues budget of \$6.5 million to our strike pay, it would still run out in about two weeks. For reference, the strike at Columbia this past spring lasted nearly two months. The UE is not nearly large enough to support us financially when we would need it most.

To compound these financial issues, the UE boasts extensive policy positions on a number of issues, many of which I personally find reasonable and agree with, but many others which run directly counter to active, ongoing research at MIT. Their sup-

port of the Green New Deal inexplicably includes a denunciation of nuclear power. Their general critique of the U.S. military denounces aerospace research. Their foreign policy exhorts their locals to divest from various U.S. allies such as Israel and Japan. These are all issues that run directly counter to existing MIT programs, both of internal departments and international collaborations.

Although adoption of these policies by individuals is optional, locals of the UE as a whole are expected to conform to these policies and, in fact, are explicitly forbidden by the national constitution to contradict them in their local documents. Thus, aligning with the UE would necessarily introduce these harmful policies to our campus, causing them to remain at best a looming specter and at worst a way to actively discriminate against students on our campus.

Why are we aligning with a union that will take our money and cannot even protect us in our hour of need? Moreover, why should we choose to align with such a union, when doing so will actively compromise the values of MIT students?

# Aligning with the UE would necessarily introduce these harmful policies to our campus.

The UE needs us, but we do not need the UE. A better graduate union could be formed without any national union, and a better graduate union could be formed with a stronger national union. MIT students would absolutely benefit from a union, but we are not in desperate need for one and shouldn't just jump at the first to pass by. We have the resources, drive, and privilege to wait for a better union for us.

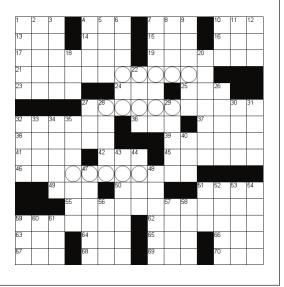
Rescind your card today. MIT works because we do, but there's no reason for the UE to do the same.

Please reach out to *uenotformit-contact@mit.edu* if you want to get involved.

Akiva Gordon is a third-year graduate student in Chemical Engineering. He is one of the primary authors of the information site: UEnotforMIT.org.

# **CORRECTIONS**

In last week's issue of *The Tech*, the crossword in the fun pages did not contain numbers. The corrected crossword is displayed to the right. In addition, the clue for 29-down should read "... in 20-down", not "... in 20-across"



# **OPINION POLICY**

**Editorials** are the official opinion of *The Tech*. They are written by the Editorial Board, which consists of Publisher Joanna Lin, Editor in Chief Kristina Chen, Managing Editor Chloe McCreery, Executive Editor Wenbo Wu, and the opinion editor, a position that is currently vacant.

**Dissents** are the signed opinions of editorial board members choosing to publish their disagreement with the editorial.

Letters to the editor, columns, and editorial cartoons are written by individuals and represent the opinion of the author, not necessarily that of the newspaper. Electronic submissions are encouraged and should be sent to letters@tech.mit.edu. Hard copy submissions should be addressed to The Tech, P.O. Box 397029, Cambridge, Mass. 02139-7029, or sent by interdepartmental mail to Room W20-483. All submissions are due by noon four (4) calendar days before the date of publication.

Letters, columns, and cartoons must bear the authors' signatures, addresses, and phone numbers. Unsigned letters will not be accepted. *The Tech* reserves the right to edit or condense letters; shorter letters will be given higher priority.

Once submitted, all letters become property of *The Tech*, and will not be returned. Letters, columns, and cartoons may also be posted on *The Tech*'s Web site and/or printed or published in any other format or medium now known or later that becomes known. *The Tech* makes no commitment to publish all the letters received.

**Guest columns** are opinion articles submitted by members of the MIT or local community.

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# **LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

# Director of MIT Medical responds to "How MIT health insurance fails graduate workers"

On behalf of MIT Medical, I write in response to the opinion piece that appeared in the Oct. 28 issue of *The Tech* ("A \$6,000 bill and inadequate coverage: How MIT health insurance fails graduate workers").

We offer our graduate students competitive and reasonably priced health and dental insurance, provide generous support for students facing medical and other financial hardships, and work collaboratively with students to improve our delivery of medical services.

First, MIT is proud to offer its graduate students comprehensive health insurance whose premiums compare very favorably to those at our peer institutions, let alone the open marketplace. Our rates for individual students, or for students and their partners, are on par with or less expensive than those at peers such as Brown, Yale, Harvard, Dartmouth, and Stanford. MIT's rates for plans including spouses and children are significantly lower than those peers — often by half — and our family plans are nearly two-thirds less expensive.

MIT is proud to offer its graduate students comprehensive health insurance whose premiums compare very favorably to those at our peer institutions.

Students also have multiple other insurance options available to them. Some choose to waive the Student Extended Insurance Plan each year. Those who do so can select plans from the Massachusetts Health Connector, find other private insurance, or join plans through spouses, partners, or parents.

Second, for graduate students who encounter financial hardship — whether due

to medical or other expenses — MIT offers many types of emergency financial assistance. Since the pandemic began, the Miller Fund has approved nearly \$21,000 of support to help students with their medical expenses.

# During the last year and a half, MIT has allocated \$510,000 in short-term funds to 325 students.

In addition, graduate students have access to short-term emergency funds (for one-time, non-recurring emergencies), doctoral long-term financial hardship funding, and need-blind grants for graduate students with children. During the last year and a half, MIT has allocated \$510,000 in short-term funds to 325 students. In the last academic year, MIT distributed \$79,000 in long-term hardship assistance funds to 10 students and \$230,000 in dependent child grants to 99 students.

Finally, at MIT Medical, we are always available to hear students' concerns directly. Indeed, one of the cases cited in last week's opinion piece is an excellent example of

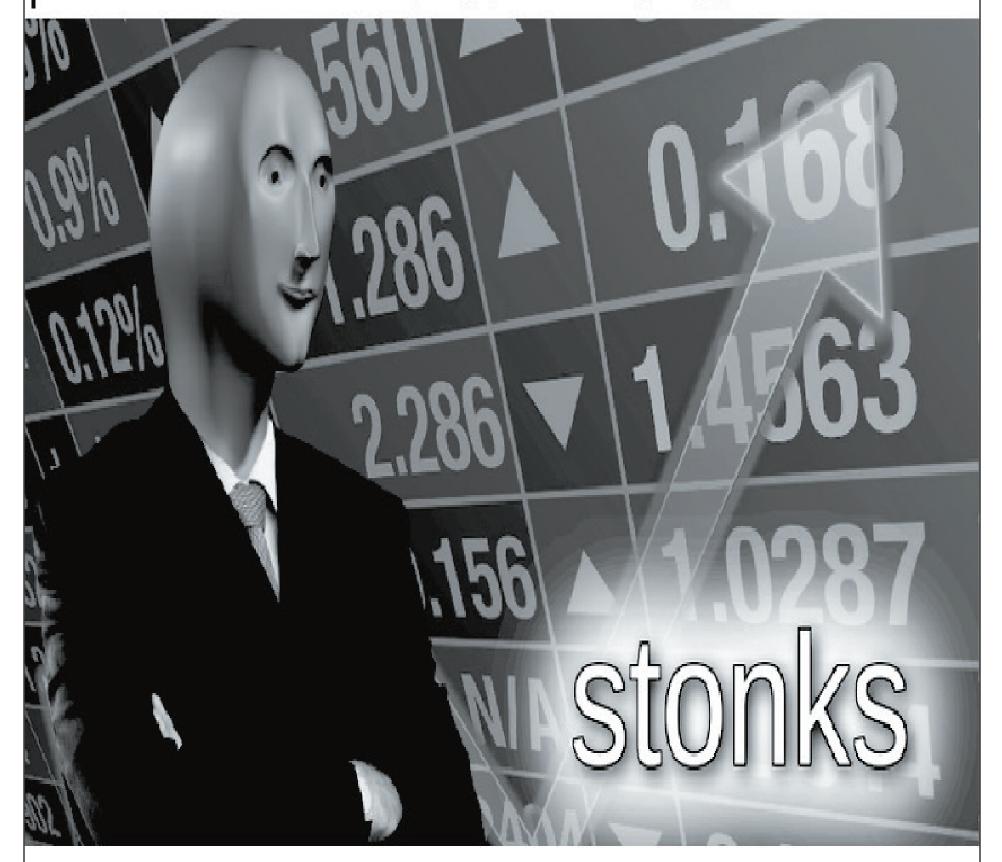
MIT Medical partnering with students to achieve expanded health care access: prior to 2019, graduate students received coverage for 12 therapy sessions per year outside of MIT Medical, before a \$25 copay per session was applied. An impacted student expressed concerns to MIT Medical in Fall 2019, and we immediately opened a dialogue with a group of graduate students about improving the benefit. Together, we worked to enhance the medical plan to increase coverage to our current 52 therapy sessions a year.

# Together, we worked to enhance the medical plan to increase coverage to our current 52 therapy sessions a year.

We continue to encourage all students to educate themselves about their health insurance benefits and options, and we are always available to answer students' questions.

Cecilia Stuopis, M.D., Medical Director, MIT Medical

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# THEATER REVIEW

# A classic love story, unraveled

# MIT's Shakespeare Ensemble returns to stage with Romeo and Juliet

By Neha Pant and Meghana Vemulapalli

For their first in-person show since the pandemic began, the MIT Shakespeare Ensemble put on a lighthearted and actionpacked production of Romeo and Juliet. They did a wonderful job of breathing life into a play that most of us were required to stumble through in high school, using a pared-down script with plenty of comedic moments to make the production as accessible as possible.

The play tells the tragic love story of Romeo and Juliet (Ilani Alexrod-Freed '23 and Tian Lin '23, respectively), a pair of teenagers whose families have been feuding for generations. It explores how easy both falling in love and descending into violence can be, emphasizing the wildness and danger within each.

Both Axelrod-Freed and Lin convey lively, distinctive personalities. Axelrod-Freed infused Romeo with youthful exuberance, skipping about as they oscillated between soaring highs and desperate lows. Despite a quick progression, Romeo and Juliet's ro-

## Romeo and Juliet

Written by William **Shakespeare** 

**Directed by Rainer Pearl-Styles** 

**Starring MIT** Shakespeare Ensemble

**Kresge Little Theater** 

Oct. 29-30 at 8 p.m., Oct. 31 at 2 p.m., Nov 4-6 at 8 mance feels genuine as the lovers display their passion with trembling, blistering earnestness in words and gentle touches. Lin shows how Juliet's resolve grows through the play: initially, she is more scattered, needing others' approval of Romeo, but she develops a spine, silencing her trusted nurse's objections in defense of their relationship.

Rainer Pearl-Styles writes in the director's note that "[Romeo and Juliet] is not a love story. This is a story about trying to find yourself within the flawed society that doesn't support the emotional growth of adolescents, where the only way out is succumbing to the same violence from which you are trying to escape." Many of the protagonists' soliloquies highlight this idea, illustrating the repression that Romeo and Juliet each sought to escape. Zoe Garcia '24, playing Tybalt, arrests the audience with her quivering rage, showing how violence builds and bubbles under the surface, waiting to be released. When Tybalt kills, it is sudden but not surprising. In contrast, when laughing, joyful Romeo murders Tybalt with cold intention in their eyes, the shift is palpable. This is not a love story. The violence takes center stage, suffocating the budding infatuation.

Despite putting on a tragedy, the Shakespeare Ensemble incorporates quite a bit of levity - Romeo's throwing themself at the ground in despair and Juliet's dramatic outbursts and gestures never failed to make the audience laugh. Sarah Knopf '22 shines as Mercutio, delivering a cheeky, swaggerfilled performance heightened by fluid physical humor. No part is too small for the actors to commit to their performance - even Lord Capulet's servant Peter (Jurgis Ruza G) had the audience in stitches, rolling his eyes or facepalming in the background whenever the main characters made bad decisions.

The production captures our attention from the second the lights come up, when the entire cast stares out into the audience, reading the prologue as if it were a prophecy. From that point forward, the actors' comedic asides, unrestrained displays of emotion, and eventual descent into violence keep the audience engaged until the

very end. Take some time this weekend to be transported to Verona and watch the story of everyone's favorite star-crossed lovers unfold!



Romeo (Ilani Axelrod-Freed '23) grieves over a seemingly-dead Juliet (Tian Lin '23) in Shakespeare Ensemble's production of Romeo and Juliet.

# **MOVIE REVIEW**

# The pursuit of blind nostalgia and shimmering stardom

Forget all your troubles and go downtown to Soho

By Erika Yang

ARTS EDITOR

"When you're alone and life is making you lonely / You can always go downtown." A haunting melody, the weight of which is felt throughout much of Last Night in Soho, captures the innocent attraction to an idealized foreign city or era in time where dreams come true and everything goes as planned. Director Edgar Wright capitalizes on this naivete to create a new twist on the thriller genre. Welcome to Soho, where your brightest desires become vour darkest nightmares

Eloise (Thomasin McKenzie) is an amateur fashion designer living in rural England with a longing for the '60s. An acceptance letter from the London College of Fashion takes her to London, inserting her into the frenzy

of an urban environment and its people. She eventually finds her way to an old bedsit in Soho, where vintage furnishings are the first signs of familiarity and comfort since her arrival in the city. The room's flashing neon lights and dusty pink walls become a launchpad for Eloise as she finds her nights filled with adventures to the '60s through the life of an aspiring songstress, Sandie (Anya

An obvious duality exists between the two lead characters. Where Eloise is brunette, Sandie is blonde. Where Eloise is timid and uncertain. Sandie is self-assured and determined. Where Eloise backs down, Sandie marches forward. Eloise sees the traits she wishes she had in Sandie, leading to an obsession that only grows as she lets her life become more and more influenced by Sandie's

Anya Taylor-Joy and Thomasin McKenzie star in Edgar Wright's latest film, Last Night

stardom and history, fulfilling her dreams of living in the '60s. The two girls are not so dissimilar, though. Both are ultimately betrayed by their own passions: one burned by her yearnings for the past, the other scarred by her climb to the spotlight, presenting an overarching cautionary tale in the dangers of an alluring appearance, a danger that the film itself falls victim to.

Visually, Last Night in Soho is absolutely stunning. It is perhaps one of the most beautiful films of this year. The immersive cinematography and flashing colors create some brilliant transitions between the past and the present. One minute we're in the present, then with a wave of neon lit bedsheets, we're back in the '60s, Additionally, the cast's performances are the strongest aspects of the whole production. Having never performed in a thriller or horror before, McKenzie captures Eloise's vulnerabilities perfectly, creating an effective mixture of hopefulness and desperation. As the film progresses, Eloise is driven closer and closer to a tipping point, and McKenzie toes that line extremely well. Taylor-Joy, a seasoned actress in the genre, never ceases to impress with each character she takes on, and her performance as Sandie is no different. She presents a masterclass on the subtleties of elegance, fear, and confidence and is simply marvelous. Taylor-Joy adds layers of complexity to this character, always shrouded her in some aura of mystery or intrigue.

Last Night in Soho clearly excels in the glamour of its surface-level appearance but, disappointingly, falls short in its story and characters. The storyline is shaky at best, with some acts being stronger than others, and ventures into predictable and cliché territory. "Country girl feels like a fish out of water in the big city and is looked down upon by

**★★★☆☆** Last Night in Soho **Directed by Edgar Wright** 

Screenplay by Edgar Wright and Krysty Wilson-Cairns

Starring Thomasin McKenzie, Anya Taylor-Joy, Matt Smith, Michael Ajao

Rated R, Playing Oct. 29

her wealthy peers" is certainly not an original storyline, nor does Wright try to flesh it out more. There seems to be a missed opportunity to create something more compelling by delving deeper into the characters themselves, deeper than a narrative about blind nostalgia or chasing fame. Themes of mental health or the seedy underbelly of the entertainment industry could have been further explored, but instead Wright chooses to rely too much upon jumpscares and phantoms to evoke some sense of fear in the audience when the most terrifying things are those grounded in reality.

For the sensory experience alone, Last Night in Soho is certainly worth a viewing. The story itself is a unique approach to the thriller/horror genre, but there is much left to be desired. Regardless, it is a film best left unspoiled, so whatever happens in Soho stays Thursday, November 4, 2021

The Tech 7

# **MUSICAL REVIEW**

# What we do with *RENT*

The struggle to follow your dreams without selling out

# RENT

Story by Jonathan Larson

Music composed by Jonathan Larson

**Directed by Evan Ensign** 

The Boch Center, Shubert Theatre

Oct. 12-Oct. 17

#### By Renee Ge

Is Bohemia dead? No, Jonathan Larson said when he wrote the musical *RENT*, but it is in a ceaseless struggle with the need to survive before it can live. At the Shubert Theatre in Boston, with the lights back on again after over a year of going dark, this question was posed again by *RENT*'s 25th Anniversary Farewell Tour.

RENT follows the lives of struggling Bohemian artists living in the East Village in Lower Manhattan. Affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic, they search for meaning in their lives in spite of their imminent mortality, all while struggling to make RENT. RENT made its Broadway debut in 1996 and went on to win the Pulitzer Prize for Drama and the Tony Award for Best Musical that

same year. The Broadway production closed in 2008, but there have been countless other national tours and productions, including this year's 25th Anniversary Farewell Tour, which promises to be the final chance for people to see it live on tour.

The Farewell tour has a lot of history to honor, and it delivers. The vocals and athleticism in *RENT* are incredibly demanding, and the cast rises to the occasion. Angel Schunard (Javon King) and Mimi Marquez (Aiyana Smash) are simply mesmerizing, and thinking about Charlotte Odusanya's solo in the iconic song "Seasons of Love" still gives me chills. This production of *RENT* — the dance numbers, the performances, and the sheer stage presence of the entire cast — is masterfully executed and an exuberant celebration to the reopening of live theater.

While I enjoyed the execution of RENT, the musical itself wasn't to my taste. I was partial to "Tango: Maureen" and "La Vie Bohème," but otherwise it is difficult to recall the tunes after the show. The combination of the lyrics and the notes felt clumsily done. The chords were grating at times, almost designed to raise the hairs on the back of one's neck, especially in the opening song "Rent." They added to the countercultural, scrappy nature of the premise but, paired with the sheer amount of movement on stage, were a little overwhelming. Some of the characters came off as stereotypical, caricatured versions of members of the LGBT+ community. I also thought the plot lacked coherence — there were too many

characters to keep track of and too many unrelated events in the story that seemed interesting on their own but felt unfinished when linked together. The musical tried to cover too much at once.

But I can see how *RENT* is so culturally significant. The story of *RENT* moves beyond the scope of a few artists in New York City in the '90s — it still rings true for us, too, 25 years later. When faced with death in the near future, the characters cling to what they love, whether it's their craft or

their relationships, and they are constantly wracked with indecision and uncertainty. Does their work have any significance, in the end? Should they let go of their dreams and sell out to ethically dubious corporations in exchange for functional heating and secure housing during brutal New York winters? These questions plague the characters in *RENT* in the same way they plague us, as we navigate both the exaltant freedoms and the cold realities of adulthood. The search for purpose in our lives continues.



THE COMPANY OF THE RENT 20TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR

The cast of Rent performs for the RENT 25th Anniversary Farewell Tour.

# **CONCERT REVIEW**

# Family Weekend Concert: a wonderful night for music aficionados

MIT Wind Ensemble, Jazz Ensemble, and Vocal Jazz Ensemble perform live for first time since pandemic

# By Anahita Srinivasan

Last Friday, MIT Wind Ensemble (MIT-WE), MIT Jazz Ensemble, and MIT Vocal Jazz Ensemble came together in Kresge Auditorium for the first time in a year and a half to perform their annual Family Weekend Concert. The overwhelming theme was gratitude — the conductors of all of the ensembles acknowledged the difficulty of COVID times, expressed thanks for MIT's support, and, most importantly, were thrilled to be performing again. The concert itself was excellent, with a diverse selection of pieces ranging from highenergy funk to slower, softer melodies.

MITWE, conducted by Dr. Frederick Harris, Jr., kicked off the concert with a rendition of Gustav Holst's "Moorside March," which started off strong with powerful resonance. The triangle and flute both added mellower notes to the song, making it evocative of spring. Following this lively opening was Carolyn Bremer's "Early Light," a piece Bremer wrote as a celebration of America and a tribute to her love for baseball. True to its form, the piece featured motifs from the "Star Spangled Banner" in its main theme. The conductor described it as "full of hope and light," and the piece was certainly true to that description.

But the standout pieces from MITWE were those from the score of *Star Wars*—more specifically, "Princess Leia's Theme" and the main *Star Wars* theme. Dr. Harris proclaimed that the music would "speak for itself," and indeed, it did. "Princess Leia's Theme" was performed exactly true to form; it is a softer, dreamier piece, and the flutes especially created the sensation of floating throughout the music. Plus, the muted purple lighting contributed to the tranquil atmosphere.

The biggest surprise, however, was the transition to the next song. Instead of ending "Princess Leia's Theme" with a traditional cutoff, Dr. Harris held up a blue lightsaber in the darkness of the auditorium and used it to conduct the first downbeat of the *Star Wars* title theme. The transition was met with a resounding cheer and the high energy continued throughout the piece. The trumpets especially were powerfully

Again conducted by Dr. Harris, the MIT Festival Jazz Ensemble took over for the next portion of the concert, beginning with Hoagy Carmichael's "Georgia on My Mind." Miles Taylor's ('25) solo on the tenor saxophone contributed to the smooth danceability of the piece. This was followed by a

double whammy: Fernando Huergo's "Field of Sky," which transitioned into Sy Johnson's "The Subtle Sermon." Peter Godart's G solo in the former was played so flawlessly he could have been tickling the keys, and the audience began clapping along to his duet with the upright bass in the latter. Miles Kaming-Thanassi's ('23) trumpet solo in "The Subtle Sermon" was truly like a sermon, and Mike Jiang's (G) ending keyboard riff was just the icing on the cake.

MIT's Vocal Jazz Ensemble, conducted by Laura Grill Jaye, then took over for a short interlude, performing two songs: Nelson Angelo and Fernando Brant's "Canoa, Canoa" as well as Fiona Apple's "Hot Knife." This was the world premiere of both songs' arrangements, and the vocal jazz ensemble certainly did them justice. The bass and piano blended in seamlessly with the overlapping vocal parts of both songs. Jaye also accompanied the singers on the drums for the latter song, adding a brisk rhythm to the niece.

The concert concluded with two more pieces by the jazz ensemble. First was "Inundation," composed and arranged by Peter Godart when he was an undergraduate at MIT. The piece had a fantastically strong beat that had the crowd clapping along.

Taylor and Andrew Li ('25) performed a fantastic duet on the tenor saxophone and alto saxophone, respectively, and the rainbow lights reflected the upbeat mood of the piece.

But the real showstopper was Sabrina Drammis's G tap dance performance during Charles Mingus's "O.P.". Inspired by bassist and cellist Oscar Pettiford, the piece was a throwback straight to Charleston in the 1920s. Drammis's tap was the perfect complement to the swinging melody and the pink and red lighting, both visually and aurally. "O.P." was the ultimate finale: the piece had so much energy that the performers and the conductor himself were dancing along to the music. The response from the audience was so exhilarating that Drammis and the jazz ensemble actually performed a short encore.

All in all, the excitement from the audience as well as the passion of the performers created an upbeat, high-energy environment. The song selection skillfully balanced jazz funk with more classical forms of jazz, and the experience of attending a concert in-person after so many months of virtual compromises contributed to the positive mood. It was a wonderful night for music aficionados and novices alike.

# MIT's Annual Family Weekend Concert

**Directed by Edgar Wright** 

MIT Wind Ensemble, Festival Jazz Ensemble, and Vocal Jazz Ensemble

Conducted by Dr. Frederick Harris, Jr. and Laura Grill Jaye

**Kresge Auditorium** 

Oct. 29



MIT Wind Ensemble, Festival Jazz Ensemble, and Vocal Jazz Ensemble perform in Kresge, Oct. 29.

# **RESTAURANT REVIEW**

# A trip to old Havana

# Who knew you could find a taste of Old Havana in Boston?

**★★★★☆** 

Mariel

**Cuban, \$\$\$** 

10 Post Office Square #120

Boston, MA 02109

**Hours:** 

Monday-Wednesday 5 p.m.–12 a.m.

Thursday 5 p.m.-2 a.m.

Friday 4 p.m.-2 a.m.

Saturday 11 a.m.-2 a.m.

Sunday 11:30 a.m.-12 a.m.

### By Mindy Long

The wooden beat of rumba claves mixed with the strums of a Cuban tres rise above the bustle of Boston's Financial District. Latin music and festive voices can be traced back to Mariel, a Cuban-inspired tapas restaurant operated by the COJE Management Group, which also owns Yvonne's, Ruka, and Lolita.

Mariel is housed in a former bank, but its interior belies its domineering beginnings. Dimmed lights and rustic architecture captivate the vision upon arrival. Colorful murals splatter the walls, which surprisingly don't diminish the refined atmosphere but instead complement it, adding a taste of real Havana. A stucco bar greets guests, and around the corner the restaurant opens up to a chandeliered dining hall, which features a DJ stand in the back corner.

I had the opportunity to order from Mariel's dinner menu. The restaurant is tapas style, which allowed us to sample a wide range of Cuban-inspired dishes. Our waiter recommended the pork empanadas, octopus pinareños, and steak churrasco.

The empanadas were encased in a crispy shell and contained lightly seasoned pork, queso, and ham. The dish also came with a sour and cool salsa that enhanced the savory meat inside. Next we tried the octopus pinareños. Served on lettuce leaves, the dish featured octopus as well as roasted pork belly, onions, and yucca, with a sprinkle of red pepper on top. The meat was dipped in a sweet and tangy glaze. The steak churrasco was an eight-ounce prime skirt, finely precut and glazed with a slightly sweet aji sauce, and sat in a corn and cucumber salsa. We also ordered tuna coco crudo, which was a light ceviche with peppers, onion, and avocado with a slight hint of coconut. The cool ceviche perfectly complemented the heavier dishes we ordered and was our favorite of the night.

To top off the night, we ordered an Old Havana mojito, the most popular drink at Mariel. After all, what's a trip to Havana without a mojito? Our bartender might have been trigger-happy that night, though, because our drink had more rum in it than anticipated, but I enjoyed the refreshing guava and mint.

Overall, I would highly recommend a meal at Mariel. The tapas menu has something for everyone, whether it be steak, tuna, chicken, or plantains. Loud at times, the Afro-Cuban jazz and "faded elegance" deco can add some spice to your day. Each tapas plate is around \$15-20, and two people could finish three to four, placing Mariel on the pricier end of a MIT student's budget, but not out of reach.



Tuna coco crudo, octopus pinareños, and steak churrasco from Mariel, clockwise

# **ART EXHIBIT REVIEW**

# The marginalization of weeds

# The MIT List Museum reopens strong with three new exhibitions

**By Victoria Dzieciol** 

STAFF WRITER

Grave/Grove is one of three new exhibitions at the MIT List Museum upon its reopening, along with Leslie Thornton's Begin Again, Again and Andrew Norman Wilson's Impersonator. Both Begin Again, Again and Impersonator are video-based and definitely worth checking out if you have a little more time to invest in watching artistic films. Sreshta Rit Premnath's Grave/Grove, however, is an installation that awes for as little or as much time as you spend viewing it.

Premnath's installation is composed of a number of ground- and wall-based sculptures that all fall under a common theme. Built on site, Grave/Grove is one-of-a-kind and attuned to its space. The work incorporates elements of minimalism and conceptualism to create a beautiful and contemporary reflection on those marginalized within

The most unique part of Grave/Grove is its use of live plants. From the cracks between sheets of aluminum made to resemble discarded cardboard emerge various green plants, soil and all. The vibrant flora brings life to the installation and stands out in stark contrast to the industrial materials that form the rest of the sculptures. Key to the meaning of the piece is the fact that these plants are all weeds — a classification that has no biological basis, but is simply a category for the plants deemed less useful and desirable than others. However, weeds are resilient, rising from cracks in sidewalks and thriving where no other plants survive. They are beautiful and alive despite the societal stereotypes against them. In Grave/ Grove, the plants are a perfect symbol for those neglected by society, who lack permanent housing and must survive in the worst

Minimalist figures — simplified forms made of foam, cut to resemble legs - also populate the sculptures. They slump with an almost human posture, appearing to sit or lie among the discarded materials and plants. The figures are coated in plaster, which creates a tough protective shell on the foam, much like the disadvantaged people they represent, who are hardened by difficulty.

Premnath's use of industrial materials brings to mind the modern, commercialized environment that has allowed the marginalization of certain groups. The metal sheets resemble discarded cardboard boxes, often used by those who lack housing as makeshift shelter. At the far end of the installation is a fence covered with a reflective emergency blanket, serving as a backdrop for one of the sculptures. Plastic bottles hang from the ceiling on metal wires from fencing, and IV tubes carry water from the bottles to the plants below. They are a thoughtful reflection on how people in need must often find resourceful ways to reuse discarded materials in order to survive.

The final element of the Grave/Grove installation is a series of exit signs protruding from the walls around the room. Each contains a pair of related words, one on either side, including the title inspiration grave/

Grave/Grove **Sreshta Rit Premnath MIT List Museum** On display until Feb. 13, 2022

grove. The signs are another mark of modern industrialized life. Because it's impossible to view both sides at once, the exit signs encourage viewers to walk around and explore the installation as they ponder the relationship between the two words and their connection to the work as a whole.

Premnath's work is something that should be seen by everyone. Grave/Grove is a conscientious representation of an important societal issue that manages to be both thought-provoking and aesthetically pleasing.



# FUNFUNFUNFUNFUN **FUN**FUNFUNFUNFUNFUNFUNFUNFUNFUN UNFUNFUNFUNFUNFU

# **Daylight**

Solution, page 3

9			<b>1 5</b>	2	9	6	1	2
4	9		4		3			6
		5				3		
1			9				2	
			6	3	1			7
7	2							3
<b>3 7</b>		9	7		2			

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column, row, and 3 by 3 grid contains exactly one of each of the digits 1 through 9.

# **Savings**

Solution, page 3

	120×			
<u> </u>	8×	3		6
:		150×	:	2
432×				3×
10×		<b>–</b>	1	
	6×		8×	
		432× 10×	8× 3 150× 10×	8× 3 150× 10× 10×

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column and row contains exactly one of each of the numbers 1–6. Follow the mathematical operations for each box.

# Smartea by Jonathan Huang

Solution, page 3

### **ACROSS**

- 1. Prude or proper
- 5. \_\_\_ Punk (split this year)
- 9. Donkey's friends 14. Donuts, topologically
- 15. Waves, in Cancun
- 16. Never frozen
- 17. Something to not cry over
- 19. Half of half and half?
- 20. To-do over break
- 21. Missile interceptor, in brief 22. Valuable calcium carbonate deposits
- 27. What muscles do during a massage
- 30. Plants with a spadix
- 31. Goose egg, in scorekeeping
- 32. Elie Wiesel's 1960 memoir
- 35. Kazakhstani currency
- 36. It's not good when they're full
- 38. First Nations members
- 40. Center at MIT
- 41. Gave up (control)
- 43. Bronze Age civilization containing Mohenjo-Daro
- 45. But ending

- 46. "Get ready!"
- 48. Song with a story
- 50. Being envious, informally
- 53. Cells resulting from meiosis
- 54. Like half of a body or a chair?
- 58. Defend a position
- 61. Harvard and MIT, or a homophone of where one might find the ends of 17-across, 22-across, and 50-across?
- 62. First American consumer product produced and sold in the Soviet Union
- 63. Shades
- 64. Common execution at MIT
- 65. German industrial center 66. Trivial
- 67. Lots of dots, in Morse?

# **DOWN**

- 1. Shell shock, for example
- 2. Drag (in)
- 3. Rainbow goddess 4. Author of Paradise Lost
- 5. Terminal type

- 6. First string players
- 7. Like a dilemma in a fallacy
- 8. "For shame!"
- 9. Built different
- 10. Cringes
- 11. Adjudicate 12. Approx.
- 13. Sheepish
- 18. Model for 21. CPW month
- 23. Gave stars to movies
- 24. National vehicle?
- \_\_ Beach, CA (with many art festivals)
- 26. Like playoff teams in a bracket
- 27. Organization that administered over 65 million vaccines in 2019
- 28. Creed that affirms the trinity
- 29. Hodge-podge
- 33. Composer of Peer Gynt suites
- 34. Farm laver
- 37. Parasite found in salmon farms
- 39. Re-rent
- 42. Outdoor theater
- 44. Islamic daily prayers
- 47. CAT, possibly
- 49. "ABCDEFG ... ", for one 51. Sixth book of the Old
- Testament, in French
- 52. Document (data) 55. Jersey greetings?
- 56. Word after loose or split
- 57. Consoles with two screens
- 58. Gorilla or chimp
- 59. Low-\_\_\_ (fuzzy)
- 60. Software on almost all phones
- 61. Statement with proofs, in

# running late by Alina Sarmiento











Holiday Solution, page 3

2			3	5	8	4	9	
		8		4	9			3
3						5		
						1	7	
			9	7	4			
	8	9						
		2						4
1			2	6		9		
	6	7	4	8	5			1

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column, row, and 3 by 3 grid contains exactly one of each of the digits 1 through 9.

# A WEBCOMIC OF ROMANCE, SARCASM. MATH. AND LANGUAGE by Randall Munroe

# [2306] Common Cold

HI THERE! WE'RE THE VIRUSES THAT CAUSE THE COMMON COLD.
THIS HANDWASHING...
IT STOPS WHEN THIS IS ALL OVER, RIGHT?

0

စ္ဖ



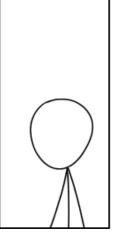
IT'S JUST, IT'S

MAKING THINGS

WE WON'T KILL YOU!
WE JUST WANT TO GET
BACK IN YOUR THROAT
AND MAKE YOU FEEL
GROSS NOW AND THEN.

SHOW US
SOME







THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2021



# [1790] Sad HOW ARE YOU DOING? HAH. YOU SEEM DISTANT LATELY. FOR THE PAST FEW MONTHS. CAN'T IMAGINE WHY.







With the right 90-degree rotation, any effect is a side effect.

# Season

Solution, page 3

9+			29+		32×	126×		9
8×		6					10×	<u> </u>
2–		60×		360×	<u> </u>		216×	
2–		<b>-</b>	6	_	3×	<u> </u>		2
36×	7	<b>-</b>	48×		<del> </del>	- 14+		4
	- 18×	6-		<del>-</del>	315×	┥····		8
2	<b>-</b>	16+			<b>-</b>	- 22+		5–
240×				12+	<b>-</b>			
3×		4÷			22+			
	!		!			I I	!	 

Thursday, November 4, 2021 **THE TECH 12** 

# **SPORTS BLITZ**

#### Saturday, October 30

- **Sailing** finishes 5th out of 9 at the Boston University Invite.
- Sailing ends at 8th out of 16 at the Urn
- Men's Heavyweight Crew places 1st and 4th in 2V8+, 4th in Collegiate 8+, and 12th and 13th in Collegiate 4+ at the Head of the
- Sailing earns 11th out of 18 at the Schell Trophy.
- Sailing achieves 9th out of 22 at the Nick-
- erson Trophy. Men's Cross Country finishes 1st out of 7 at the NEWMAC Championship.
- Water Polo faces defeat against St. Francis
- Women's Cross Country ends at 1st out of 11 at the NEWMAC Championship.

- Women's Volleyball serves up a victory against the U.S. Coast Guard Academy
- Women's Openweight Crew places 4th in V8. 1st in 2V8. and 11th in 3V8.
- Women's Soccer defeats Smith College
- Football crushes the U.S. Coast Guard Academy 21-7.
- Field Hockey stomps WPI 4-1.
- Men's Soccer loses to WPI 2-3.
- Water Polo faces defeat against Princeton University 4-14.

#### Sunday, October 31

Water Polo narrowly loses against Iona College 14-15.

#### Tuesday, November 2

Women's Volleyball shuts out Smith College at the NEWMAC Tournament 3-0.



An MIT student scores a head kick at the first in-person Eastern Collegiate Taekwondo Conference (ECTC) tournament run after the pandemic, hosted by MIT Oct. 30.

# **Upcoming Sports Events**

# **THURSDAY 4**

#### Men's Soccer

vs. U.S. Coast Guard Academy, NEWMAC Tournament 4:00 p.m.

#### Squash

vs. Boston University 5:00 p.m.

## **Field Hockey**

vs. Wellesley College 6:00 p.m.

## Squash

vs. Boston College 6:30 p.m.

## Women's Soccer

vs. Worcester Polytechnic Institute, NEWMAC Championships 7:00 p.m.

# **SATURDAY 6**

#### Women's Soccer

NEWMAC Championship

#### **Field Hockey**

NEWMAC Championship

## Men's Soccer

NEWMAC Championship

9:00~a.m.

**Water Polo** vs. Harvard University

## Men's Swimming and Diving

vs. Springfield College 1:00 p.m.

# Men's Basketball

vs. Rhode Island College 1:00 p.m.

# Women's Swimming and Diving

at Springfield College 1:00 p.m.

# **SATURDAY 6**

### Women's Volleyball

vs. United States Coast Guard Academy 3:00 p.m.

#### **Water Polo**

vs. Connecticut College 3:00 p.m.

# **SUNDAY 7**

#### Men's Fencing

The Big One Invitational 9:00 a.m.

### Women's Fencing

The Big One Invitational 9:00 a.m.

Women's Volleyball

NEWMAC Championship

PORTSSPORTS SPORTSSPORTS SPORT

# 1:00 p.m.

**Water Polo** vs. Brown University 3:00 p.m.

# **TUESDAY 9**

#### Squash

vs. Northeastern University 6:00 p.m.

# Men's Basketball

vs. Husson University

# **WEDNESDAY 10**

# **Field Hockey**

NCAA First Round

## Women's Basketball

vs. Rhode Island College 7:00 p.m.

# It's Dangerous to Go Alone!



Take This.

photo@tech.mit.edu