

Pro-Palestinian student encampment clashes with admin, police force and counterprotestors

Tensions heighten as MIT administration mandates clearing of the encampment following pro-Palestinian and pro-Israeli rallies and attempted negotiations

By The Tech News Staff

Primary reporting by Ellie Montemayor '26.

Additional reporting contributions from Alex Tang '26, Karie Shen '27, and Russel Ismael VS.

As the pro-Palestinian Scientists Against Genocide Encampment pressed on with its third week holding Kresge Oval, its continued presence has escalated into numerous clashes between the encampment and MIT officials, law enforcement at the municipal and state level, and pro-Israeli counterprotestors.

The past week saw major demonstrations by the Coalition For Palestine (C4P) including coordinated rallies on May 1, May 3 and May 6. The Institute administration continues to voice disapproval of the encampment as negotiations between administrators and student protestors enters its second week. An initial negotiation meeting on April 26 was staffed by Chancellor Melissa Nobles, Vice President for Research Ian Waitz, Provost Cynthia Barnhart PhD '88 and Vice President and General Counsel Mark DiVincenzo.

Demonstrations against the encampment also occurred as pro-Israeli counter-protestors planted rows of signs depicting Israeli hostages held in Gaza, posted signs and posters supporting the Israeli intervention in Palestine, and staked Israeli and American flags around the encampment. On numerous occasions, groups of pro-Israeli counter-protestors draped in Israeli and American flags occupied the interior of the encampment.

Friction between the Kornbluth's administration and encampment organizers

Negotiations between the administration and representatives of the campus pro-Palestinian movement began on April 26, with further meetings scheduled for the days following. After student protestors disrupted a donor event at the Boston Marriott Cambridge in Kendall Square the following day, negotiations were abruptly terminated and President Sally Kornbluth issued a statement to the MIT community de-

tailoring the current state of the situation.

Kornbluth stated that the encampment on Kresge Oval "has been a clear violation of our procedures for registering and reserving space for campus demonstrations," and these rules the encampment members are violating are "independent of content [of speech]." She clarified that these rules are in place to "make sure that everyone can have freedom of speech." For individuals that have broken Institute rules, Kornbluth said that they "will face disciplinary action."

Kornbluth also noted that although she finds some chants by the protestors to be "disturbing" — like calling for "the elimination of the state of Israel" — she believes that "these chants are protected speech." Furthermore, Kornbluth claimed that the students involved are no longer engaging in "good-faith discussions" because of how they "disrupted another official MIT event" the morning of April 27, referring to the incident at the Boston Marriott Cambridge.

Kornbluth also addressed the resources required to keep the area staffed and monitored, the range of views expressed to her administration by various members of the MIT community and her commitment to academic freedom at the Institute.

At the end of the statement, Kornbluth affirmed her willingness to continue negotiations but reiterates her desire for the closure of the encampment, writing, "We are open to further discussion about the means of ending the encampment. But this particular form of expression needs to end soon."

In response, the C4P sent out an email on the same day to all undergraduates. Safiyyah Ogundipe '24, a C4P organizer, wrote that the group met with MIT officials to confirm their demand of "[cutting] ties with the Ministry of Defense of Israel."

Ogundipe claimed that Kornbluth's administration "came unprepared with nothing concrete in hand" and practiced "bad-faith engagement." Ogundipe added that the administration "pushed for a vague and ill-defined 'review process' regarding their demand to divest from Israel."

She also claimed that the administration representatives attempted to

SEE INSIDE *Live updates from Kresge Oval encampment, May 6–7*

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PHOTO BY ELLIE MONTEMAYOR · THE TECH

Pro-Palestinian protestors surround the entrance of the Scientists Against Genocide Encampment during an emergency rally on campus, Monday, May 6.

leave the negotiations and threatened "violent arrest against the encampment." According to Ogundipe, the academic freedom argument that the administration presents is "inconsistent with reality and history," and they also did not provide a counter proposal to work towards.

Negotiations were resumed the following day with no clear resolution. Counter-proposals offered by admin were rejected by the pro-Palestinian negotiators on Monday, April 29.

On the eve of April 29, the encampment was mobilized as rumors of a possible police raid surfaced in the wake of a full clearing of the pro-Palestinian encampment at Northeastern University. The anticipated sweep did not material-

ize, and further negotiation efforts were scheduled in the following days.

Wednesday, May 1 — Demonstrators establish second encampment in May Day rally

On May 1, a community rally was organized as a collaborative effort between the campus pro-Palestine movement and local organizers such as the Boston chapters of the Palestinian Youth Movement and the Party for Socialism & Liberation. The rally marched to 77 Mass Ave and took up the steps of Lobby 7 by 5:00 p.m., as part of a nationwide call to action in observance of International Workers' Day and amidst workers' rights rallies mobilized across the Greater Boston area. International

Workers' Day, also referred to as May Day, is not officially recognized by the United States, which instead observed Labor Day in September. Other pro-Palestinian demonstrations on May 1 were held at Emerson College's Boylston Place Alley and also at Boston City Hall.

Nishad Gothoskar G, an area chief steward for the Graduate Student Union (GSU) representing the MIT School of Engineering and the College of Computing, served as one of the Mass Ave rally's speakers. "We are here at the steps of MIT to demand that our institution cut our research ties with the Israeli occupation — MIT must end its complicity," Gothoskar said.

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BREAKING: Pro-Palestinian student protestors receive notices of suspension

From 2:40 pm to 3:00 pm today, Pro-Palestinian student protestors received notices of suspension from MIT administration via email. The encampment on Kresge Oval remains up with a police presence.

Dozens of students were said to have been issued suspensions, ranging from academic suspensions to full disciplinary suspensions that end access to campus buildings and housing, dining halls and meal access, employment and income, and academic participation. Reportedly, students issued with full suspensions have been asked to vacate campus housing.

Earlier at 8:30 am, a contingency of pro-Palestinian protestors blocked the entrance to the Stata Garage while chanting and waving signs. MIT, Cambridge, and State Police were present. At around 9:15 am, police relocated and began allowing vehicular traffic into the garage.

— The Tech News Staff

MIT eliminates diversity statements in faculty hiring

On May 5, the President Sally Kornbluth announced that the Institute will no longer include diversity statements as part of the application process for faculty appointments. The move to eliminate such statements for hiring is purportedly the first amongst elite universities.

Quoted in The New York Times, Kornbluth said that "diversity statements constituted a form of compelled speech that do not work."

"My goals are to tap into the full scope of human talent, to bring the very best to M.I.T. and to make sure they thrive once here," Kornbluth said. "We can build an inclusive environment in many ways, but compelled statements impinge on freedom of expression, and they don't work." The MIT administration did respond to a request for comment by the Tech at the time of this writing.

— Alex Tang

Class of 2026 holds Ring Delivery event

The MIT Class of 2026 held their Brass Rat Ring Delivery ceremony on the evening of May 5 at the Prudential Center in Boston. The ceremony marks reaching the halfway point of one's time at the Institute. This year marked the 97th Brass Rat, a tradition begun in 1929 by C. Brigham Allen '29.

— Alex Tang

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WEATHER FORECAST

Rainy Weekend Ahead

By Adrienne Lai
CHIEF METEOROLOGIST

A rainy weekend is ahead with a 70% chance of rain Friday night, 60% chance of showers on Saturday, and 40% chance of precipitation on Saturday.

Winds from the Northeast direction will be roughly 10 mph, blowing away the nice weather we had in the past week. Temperatures range from high 50s to high 40s.

THURSDAY

57°F | 48°F

FRIDAY

52°F | 45°F

SATURDAY

58°F | 47°F

MAY 9
SITUATION FOR NOON (ET)

Extended Forecast

Today: 40% chance of precipitation with a high of 57°F (14°C) and 9 mph Northeast winds.

Tonight: Low of 48°F (8°C) with 14 mph Northeast winds. 70% chance of rain.

Friday: 26 mph Northeast winds with a high of 52°F (11°C) and a 60% chance of rain.

Saturday: High of 58°F (14.5°C) and a low of 47°F (8°C). Chance of rain 40%. 11 mph North winds.

Sunday: Chance of showers (30%) with a high of 56°F (12°C) and 11 mph East winds.

Weather Systems	Weather Fronts	Precipitation Symbols	Other Symbols
H High Pressure	— — — Trough	Snow:	Fog
L Low Pressure	Warm Front	Light:	Thunderstorm
Thunderstorm	Cold Front	Medium:	Fog
	Stationary Front	Heavy:	Fog

Compiled by MIT Meteorology Staff and The Tech

UA food survey results released for the 2023-24 year

The UA Food Security Committee released its report on campus food security on April 23.

By Tina Zhang & Russel Ismael
NEWS EDITORS

The Undergraduate Association (UA) Food Security Committee released its report on food security for the 2023-2024 school year on April 23. The UA Food Security committee was established in Fall 2023 as an ad-hoc committee created to address growing food insecurity concerns for undergraduates.

The committee released a voluntary survey regarding food security earlier during the semester and drew its report from the 496 students who responded. One key finding was that even though 51 percent of students were enrolled in meal plans, it didn't automatically

translate to higher food security compared to students without meal plans. The average meal plan cost-per-meal is \$16.87, over twenty percent more costly than the meal cost determined by the committee to be "around \$14."

Furthermore, the committee stated that "[s]tudents who experience food insecurity are more likely to need additional financial resources compared to their counterparts." The report noted the two primary causes of food insecurity are a lack of time and a lack of money, with 41 percent and 51 percent of respondents indicating these reasons, respectively.

Additionally, the committee found that students primarily use meal plan swipes at the Maseeh Dining Hall and New Vassar Hall dur-

ing lunch time, two of the residence halls closest to the main campus. Due to distance and time constraints, students who have classes at locations like the Sloan School of Management feel compelled to eat at non-MIT restaurants. Some students also report "[forgetting] to pack lunch and eat bananas that day," referring to the Banana Lounge.

In response to the findings of the report, the UA Food Security Committee recommended that the UA partners with student organizations such as DormCon, the Division of Student Life, and the ARM Coalition to "offer a bulk delivery service through the new grocer, Concord Market, which would be run, managed, and operated by dorms." The Concord Market is expected

to open in Fall 2024, replacing LaVerde's. The proposed service would deliver food to students on a weekly basis and would accept TechCash as the form of payment.

Additionally, the UA Food Security Committee suggested that MIT extends TechCash use to all food locations on and near campus, as "this would homogenize geographic access to food on campus and solve the recurrent issue of not having affordable food options on the East side of campus." The committee hoped that implementing a "preestablished swipe-per-dollar exchange rate" would help with regards to the already expensive meal plans that are purchased on set quantities of swipes.

Vice Chancellor Ian Waitz announced as next Vice President of Research

In an email to the MIT community on April 24, President Sally Kornbluth announced that Ian Waitz, Professor of Aeronautics and Astronautics, will begin his tenure as MIT's Vice President of Research (VPR) after Professor Maria Zuber steps down effective May 1.

Waitz's role as VPR includes "fostering an outstanding research environment, enhancing research support services, and enabling major multidisciplinary research initiatives." He is also responsible for overseeing labs including the Lincoln Laboratory.

Waitz earned his PhD from the California Institute of Technology and spent the majority of his career at MIT leading Course 16 and eventually the School of Engineering. He also played a key role in launching programs such as Beaverworks and Sandbox and has gained extensive insight about the scope of research at MIT because of his position as a member of the Academic Council. Waitz also held a crucial position in negotiating the bargaining agreement for the Institute's graduate students, helping balance "being responsive to [MIT's] graduate students' needs and advancing [MIT's] research and educational enterprise."

In 2017, Waitz became Institute Vice Chancellor, a new role created to supervise both undergraduate and graduate education. Under this position, Waitz "spearheaded important financial assistance, student support and professional development opportunities for graduate students and an extensive evaluation of the first-year undergrad experience."

With Waitz becoming the next VPR, Chancellor Melissa Nobles is currently searching for a new vice chancellor, with Professor Dan Hastings serving as the interim Vice Chancellor.

— Tina Zhang

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Dorm Row plunges into darkness following manhole explosion

By Alex Tang
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

At approximately 1 a.m. May 6, a manhole explosion near W85 (Westgate Apartments) and Tang Hall caused power outages to numerous buildings along the Amherst Alley, also known as Dorm Row. The Cambridge Fire Department were present at the scene, and at the time of this writing, are investigating what happened. No injuries were reported. Power has since been restored.

According to an MIT Alert notification sent at 1:24 a.m., W85, Tang Hall, Next House, New House, and McCormick were among the buildings that lost power. In Next House, students were reportedly trapped within elevators, necessitating rescue by firefighters. At the time of this writing, it appears that all elevators have been cleared.

At 2:10 a.m., an update from emergency.mit.net stated "the cause of the power outage has been determined as damage to MIT electrical equipment caused by the manhole explosion." The update also said that equipment was being repaired by the electrical crew, but did not provide a timeline for restoring power. Amherst Alley and Audrey Street are open.

At 6:52 a.m., an update from emergency.mit.net stated that power had been restored to "all impacted buildings." The grassy area between W85 and Tang Hall remain closed.

In other affected residences, limited lighting remains and internet connection appears to be intact following the activation of backup generators. Some students reacted with consternation to the outage. Emma Shi '26 lamented the loss of refrigeration, stating, "it's so over for my frozen meal prep." Across the athletic fields, residents of New Vassar reported lights briefly flickering around the time of the explosion.

Although infrequent, manhole explosions have been reported in the area in recent months. In Aug. 2023, the fiery explosion of two manholes shut down Harvard Square and leaked noxious gases into the air, including carbon monoxide. In Jan. 2024, multiple manhole explosions occurred near Northeastern University, causing traffic diversions. Authorities attributed the explosions to rainfall and a cable failure. Prior to the explosion on MIT's campus, a steady rain had poured down on Cambridge and Boston in the afternoon and into the night of May 5.

The last reported time that MIT had lost power was on the afternoon of Nov. 30 2012, when large parts of Cambridge, including East Cambridge and Kendall Square, went dark.

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SPORTS BLITZ	
Saturday, April 27th:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Women’s Openweight Crew placed V8: 1st; 2V8: 1st; V4: 1st, 3rdWomen’s Lightweight Crew placed Pair: 1st; 2x: 1st; V4: 1st, 3rdMen’s Lightweight Crew placed V8: 1st; 2V8: 3rdMen’s Heavyweight Crew placed 2V8: 1st; V8: 2nd; V4: 1stWomen’s Lacrosse defeated Wheaton College 23-5Softball defeated Smith College 5-1Baseball defeated Wheaton College 6-3Women’s Tennis defeated Salve Regina 9-0Men’s Tennis defeated Clark University 5-0Softball defeated Smith College 13-7Baseball lost to Wheaton College 3-8Men’s Lacrosse defeated Salve Regina 25-10	
Sunday, April 28th:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sailing placed 10th at Women’s Team Race FinalsMen’s Tennis defeated Babson College 5-0Baseball lost to University of Southern Maine 7-11	
Tuesday, April 30th:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Baseball defeated Emerson College 4-2	
Wednesday, May 1st:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Softball lost to Endicott College 6-11Baseball lost to Endicott College 2-9Softball lost to Endicott College 0-4Women’s Lacrosse defeated Springfield College 15-10	
Thursday, May 2nd:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Men’s Lacrosse lost to Springfield College 14-18 in NEWMAC Tournament	
Friday, May 3rd:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Men’s Track and Field placed 5th at New England DIII ChampionshipsWomen’s Track and Field placed 1st at New England DIII ChampionshipsSoftball defeated United States Coast Guard Academy 9-1Softball lost to United States Coast Guard Academy 1-8	
Saturday, May 4th:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Women’s Openweight Crew placed V8: 1st GF; 2V8: 1st GF; V4: 2nd GF; 2V4: 2nd GFMen’s Heavyweight Crew placed V8: 2nd GF; 2V8: 6th GFMen’s Track and Field placed 1st at New England DIII ChampionshipsWomen’s Track and Field placed 1st at New England DIII ChampionshipsSoftball defeated Clark University 7-1Baseball defeated Clark University 4-1Women’s Tennis defeated Smith College 5-0 in NEWMAC TournamentWomen’s Lacrosse lost to Babson College 7-10 in NEWMAC TournamentSoftball defeated Clark University 6-1Baseball defeated Clark University 11-8	
Sunday, May 5th:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Women’s Tennis defeated Babson College 5-3 in NEWMAC Tournament to become NEW-MAC Champions!Baseball lost to Endicott College 2-15	
Tuesday, May 7th:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Softball defeated WPI 6-2Baseball lost to Babson College 7-9Softball defeated Wheaton College 4-1	

Interview with 2024 Boston Marathon runner David Suarez ’25

Suarez: “I felt the love and the support of that day—especially if you find yourself at the Boston, bask in it all.”

By Tina Zhang
NEWS EDITOR

The Boston Marathon is one of the oldest and most famous marathons in the world. It takes place annually on Patriot’s Day in Boston, Massachusetts, attracting tens of thousands of elite runners and excited spectators. Totalling to more than 26 miles with numerous challenging segments, the Boston Marathon requires all participants to run a qualifying time depending on the age group and gender.

The Tech spoke with David Suarez ’25, a participant in the 2024 Boston Marathon, on his experience and perspectives about running. Suarez is majoring in 6-4, and said that his favorite part about running in marathons is the “excitement and energy people bring.”

Suarez first started running because he was “forced into a sport,” which was cross country. However, his passion for running grew significantly at the end of Spring 2021 when the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions loosened. He began to run for enjoyment, not merely for the sake of running, because he noticed that “with slight changes in routine came new discoveries.”

Gradually, he was running between 50 to 70 miles per week and held a personal record of 1 hour and 20 minutes for half marathons. His progress motivated him to set a higher goal: to run a qualifier for the Boston Marathon. Eventually, he signed up for a qualifier in October 2022. As Suarez continued to train, his hard work paid off — he was able to achieve a run-

ning time of 2 hours and 52 minutes, which is more than enough to qualify for the Boston Marathon.

Suarez trained intensely from June to September of the summer prior to his qualifying race, accumulating to a total of four months. Suarez said that his training routine is mostly based on feel. Nevertheless, he expressed that he wants to “take things more seriously when the idea of a work-life balance doesn’t feel like something of a fever dream.”

Eventually, when the day of the Boston Marathon came, Suarez noted the vibrant scene with the ecstatic runners accompanied by cheering spectators in stark contrast with the challenging course that awaited them. He remarked, “As soon as the gun goes off, you will get wind of the fact that the course is not for the faint-hearted. If you push miles 1-16, you will be at the mercy of the hills from mile 17 onward. That’s what I came to understand, at least: I cramped from miles 17-26, eventually toughing it out to reach the finish.”

As an avid long-distance runner and student at MIT, Suarez acknowledged that it could be difficult to achieve a work-life balance. He said, “I’m no stranger to the fact that MIT is a difficult school, so I don’t hold it against myself when I have to set aside running for the sake of coursework.” He added, “With the support network of peers and friends I have, I’m able to see past any of the setbacks.”

Suarez’s advice for aspiring marathon runners is the following: “Know that if you don’t

train, it will show on the day of the race, and let that be enough to keep your training consistent.” Additionally, he encourages prospective marathon runners to always try to push beyond their limit. He said, “The marathon is an exercise in running on tired legs. So you have to get used to the stress and the strain of the marathon distance. Make those long runs a little longer, and fit in a few more workouts at or exceeding your goal marathon pace.”

He also noted, “Much of the speculation in the running world centers around advice regarding electrolyte consumption. I often see people decked out in elaborate kits (gels, tablets, shoes, etc.) on race day, and question whether I’d been unprepared.” However, he firmly believes that none of these preparations is strictly necessary.

Instead, Suarez expressed, “Running should be an affordable and accessible activity for all. The bulk of your expenses will typically result from shoes and race fees.” For prospective marathon runners, he recommends buying “a pair of stable trainers that last 500+ miles, saving up for a pair of lighter race-day shoes (so, two pairs of shoes), and registering for local races so that you don’t incur travel expenses (the Cambridge Half and the Boston 5K/Half come to mind).” He also noted, “You can ask for student discounts if you’re buying gels/salt tablets: in particular, Heartbreak Hill Running Company will give you 10% off.”

He also recommends local running clubs such as Heartbreak and Tracksmith as well as

the app Strava to keep in touch with other runners. Moreover, Suarez encourages prospective marathon runners to have some figures to look up to. He has his own heroes as well — Suguru Osako and Eliud Kipchoge.

Finally, Suarez gives some advice specific to the Boston Marathon. He said the following: “Make sure that your sleep hygiene is near-perfect by the day of the race. Wave 1 leaves from Boston Common at 6:45 AM sharp, just to give you an idea of what to expect. Bring some food as well. If it’s particularly cold, find some extra clothing to donate while at the Athletes’ Village (volunteers have bags for such donations). And make sure to bring your own food and fuel on the bus. Three or four Maurten gels, plus Gatorade, water, the occasional orange slice, and a few high-fives from spectators make up the extent to which you’ll be provided fuel along the course.”

Suarez gave some advice for some prospective runners: “Don’t take Boston too seriously, especially if it’s just your first. Just try to relax. Enjoy the experience: if you’re up to it, talk to a few people on the ride to Hopkinton. Thoughts I’ve had about the entire Boston Marathon as an experience seem to resonate more generally, especially as a student with the privilege of being here at MIT: really, who knows if you’ll have a chance to meet these people ever again?”

Overall, Suarez enjoyed his experience, saying, “I was glad to see that a few of my friends and family had shown up to support me, and we took some time to celebrate afterward.”

Upcoming Sports Events	
THURSDAY 9	Women’s Track and Field
Softball NEWMAC Tournament	MIT Final Qualifier
FRIDAY 10	Women’s Openweight Crew
Softball NEWMAC Tournament	Patriot League Championship
Women’s Tennis NCAA First Round	Softball NCAA Tournament
Men’s Lightweight Crew Dad Vail Regatta	
Women’s Lightweight Crew Dad Vail Regatta	
Men’s Track and Field Farley Inter-Regional Extravaganza	MONDAY 20
Women’s Track and Field Farley Inter-Regional Extravaganza	Sailing vs Women’s Fleet Race Championships 10 a.m.
Men’s Tennis NCAA First Round	TUESDAY 21
SATURDAY 11	Sailing vs Women’s Fleet Race Championships 10 a.m.
Softball NEWMAC Tournament	FRIDAY 24
Men’s Lightweight Crew Dad Vail Regatta	Sailing vs Open Fleet Race Championships 10 a.m.
Women’s Lightweight Crew Dad Vail Regatta	FRIDAY 31
Men’s Track and Field Farley Inter-Regional Extravaganza	Men’s Heavyweight Crew IRA National Championship
Women’s Track and Field Farley Inter-Regional Extravaganza	Men’s Lightweight Crew IRA National Championship
Women’s Lacrosse NCAA First Round	
SUNDAY 12	Women’s Lightweight Crew IRA National Championship
Softball NEWMAC Tournament	
Men’s Heavyweight Crew National Invitational Rowing Championship	
THURSDAY 16	
Men’s Track and Field MIT Final Qualifier	

Tensions escalate in student encampment’s third week

Encampment, from Page 1

After Gothoskar’s speech, a rally organizer requested that “all of us come together as compact as possible and move to take both sides of this street here, so we shut down all traffic.” By 5:41 p.m., the rally took hold of Mass Ave and blocked traffic.

After another speech by Northeastern University graduate student and Boston South Asian Coalition organizer Sana Qureshi, organizers from the encampment rushed into the scene with supplies and began setting up a second encampment on the field at 84 Mass Ave adjoining the pavement. “Now if you turn around and look behind you, in real time we will see the MIT encampment expanding,” a rally organizer said.

The action, which was not previously announced as part of the rally, led to a rapid, heightened mobilization of law enforcement as eventually officers from MIT Police, Cambridge Police, and State Police convened upon the scene.

A rally organizer called on the attendees to “form a picket around [the MIT students] as they expand the encampment.” By 5:54 p.m., the group moved to surround the sidewalk and the field as student organizers from MIT set up tents and brought in supplies. A large welcome sign was erected facing Mass Ave which read, “MIT Dahdouh Welcome Center,” in reference to Palestinian journalist Wael Al-Dahdouh.

Mohamed Mohamed G reaffirmed the purpose of the student pro-Palestinian movement and the impetus behind this action in a speech. “We are here because we have seen every institution fail to stand up for the Palestinian people,” Mohamed said.

The establishment of the second encampment was reportedly in response to the police selectively moving correspondents from Al Jazeera, a Middle Eastern media network, to Mass Ave. In recent days, Al Jazeera reporters had been observed taking interviews and broadcasting coverage from the Mass Ave sidewalk.

The second encampment consisted of a central canopy surrounded by six tents, each named after localities from the States of Israel and Palestine: Bethlehem, Jabaliya, Birwa, Al Bireh, Gaza City and Deir Yassin. Some of the tents were newly set up while others were brought to the so-called Welcome Center from the Kresge Oval encampment. Three large banners stylized as receipts were hung from

the central canopy of the second encampment: one detailing all current funded research contracts between MIT and the Israel Ministry of Defense, a second highlighting statistics of incidental damages and civilian injuries resulting from the Israeli intervention in the Gaza Strip, and a third that writes, “MIT engineers Israeli killer drones.”

The rally continued into the night with chanting and community socializing as food was handed out by encampment organizers. By 10:00 p.m., the crowd had largely dispersed. The second encampment was left uninhabited at the end of the night and encampment organizers moved three of the larger tents back to the Kresge Oval encampment. Administrators reportedly threatened organizers with disciplinary action and suspension.

The same day, the Boston City Council officially called for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza by an 11-2 vote. The Cambridge and Somerville City Councils had voted in their own ceasefire resolutions in late January.

Rumors surfaced that night of a possible police raid in retaliation to the establishment of the Welcome Center, but were soon debunked after mediated discussion. The Welcome Center was left unmanned overnight, as all encampment affiliates remained at the site of the Kresge Oval encampment. By 9:00 a.m. the next day, the Welcome Center was disassembled by facilities workers and the field was enclosed with metal barricades. The field continues to be closed off with fencing as of the time of this article’s publication.

At the time, encampment affiliates had begun preparing a response to a planned pro-Israeli rally to be held on May 3 at Mass Ave.

Friday, May 3 — Pro-Israel rally takes up steps of Lobby 7

As word of a planned pro-Israeli rally on 77 Mass Ave spread, campus organizers coordinated with local pro-Palestinian activist groups to orchestrate a call for a counterdemonstration at the Kresge Oval encampment on the opposite side of the street.

A six-foot-tall metal barricade, covered in green tarp, was established the morning of May 3 by facilities workers in anticipation of the event. Encampment affiliates subsequently called on the administration to tear down their “apartheid wall,” referencing the use of fortifications to enact political segregation and likening

this action to ongoing accusations of Israeli-led apartheid. The enclosure had two entrances: one facing McCormick Hall, designated for emergency egress and manned by MIT Police, and a main entrance facing the Zesiger Center.

Three-foot-tall metal fencing was also extensively placed around the Student Center plaza and across Mass Ave. MIT Police, Cambridge Police and State Police were observed patrolling the scene.

Ahead of the rally, pro-Palestinian protestors drew to the Student Center plaza and the Kresge Oval encampment at 11:00 a.m. Throughout the day, encampment affiliates and demonstrators engaged in chanting, picketing and speaking as part of an “emergency rally” to “defend the MIT encampment.”

The pro-Israeli rally convened on the steps of Lobby 7 at 1:00 p.m., with dozens of pro-Israeli counterprotestors gathered around a large stage and speaker system as a speaker series began. Among other topics, the speakers discussed the ongoing pro-Palestinian encampment across the street from Lobby 7 and expressed displeasure with the MIT administration for a perceived lack of direct action to shut down what they viewed as an illegal and disruptive demonstration.

Pro-Palestinian demonstrators were observed on the other side of Mass Ave silently holding up picket signs and Palestinian flags. Verbal and physical confrontation between pro-Palestinian and pro-Israeli demonstrators were observed, with demonstrators from the groups continually being separated from one another through police intervention.

As the rally came to a close around 2:30 p.m., the organizers of the event reiterated to the crowd to avoid engaging with pro-Palestinian protestors. “We are going to stay here and then disperse in that direction,” one of the organizers said, pointing away from the encampment. “So that’s how we do it — we do not engage.”

Small groups of pro-Israeli demonstrators still made their way to the encampment. Over the next hour, tensions heightened as pro-Palestinian and pro-Israeli demonstrators faced off. No major physical altercations were observed.

Spectators and police gathered around the entrance of the Kresge Oval as confrontations between protestors ensued. Some participants of the pro-Israeli rally attempted to enter the encampment, and were eventually let in after extensive me-

diated discussion with police officers present. Over the next hour, the encampment was at various times closed for access as encampment organizers blocked the entrance. A pro-Palestinian chanting circle was initiated at the encampment, followed by megaphone-supported chanting by pro-Israeli counterprotestors from the encampment entrance.

By 4:30 p.m., the pro-Israeli group stationed outside of the encampment entrance had largely dispersed. Heightened police presence was observed until the end of the day.

Monday, May 6 — Protestors swarm Kresge Oval encampment as evacuation ordered

Around 8:00 a.m. on Monday, May 6, an I.D. checkpoint was set up at the main entrance of the encampment and manned by MIT Police and staff administrators from the Division of Student Life. Access to the encampment was restricted to MIT affiliates, and anyone entering the encampment was ordered to tap on card readers.

Officers and staff administrators manning the checkpoint expressed a lack of clear instruction with regards to this action and described to reporters from The Tech that they had not received word from Institute officials regarding the checkpoint.

Tensions heightened as those within the encampment were served a letter signed by Chancellor Melissa Nobles around 1:13 p.m. warning them of disciplinary action for those remaining in the encampment. The letter issued a deadline of 2:30 p.m. for evacuation of the encampment. Access to the encampment was also fully restricted; all individuals were allowed to exit but denied entry at this point in time.

As the letter was circulated to the MIT community with a community message sent out by President Kornbluth around 1:37 p.m., officers and administrators who manned the checkpoint continued to express a lack of communication from the administration and held that no instruction had been given. “All I know is what’s on that,” a staff administrator said, pointing to copies of the letter issued by Chancellor Nobles.

By 2:00 p.m., dozens of pro-Palestinian demonstrators swarmed the entrance of the encampment, calling against the anticipated suspensions of the students. The emergency rally in front of the encampment entrance on May 6 came just hours following another round of failed negotiations

between the MIT administration and a negotiating team representing the pro-Palestinian movement on campus from earlier that day.

The Institution’s push for evacuation of the encampment came as the administration faced continuing pressure from pro-Israeli demonstrators. Jewish and Israeli affinity groups on campus had, prior to the establishment of the encampment, reserved Kresge Oval for a planned celebration for the Israel Day of Independence on May 7. According to MIT Israel Alliance presidents Talia Khan G and Eitan Moore ’26, the groups were “assured” by the administration in private communications from late April that the encampment was to be removed from the lawn ahead of the event, based on emails reviewed by The Tech. The groups reportedly denied an offer to relocate the event to Hockfield Court on the same day, and a second offer to postpone the event to May 14.

Activity in the area intensified in the following hours, and by 5:00 p.m. the plaza was occupied by hundreds of students and spectators, including protestors and counterprotestors; dozens of officers from MIT Police, Cambridge Police and State Police were deployed in the area. At the time, five students remained in the encampment and were accompanied by three faculty members.

A second pro-Palestinian demonstration was also observed on Mass Ave that afternoon.

Pro-Palestinian demonstrators then began scaling the six-foot-tall fence, completely bringing down the enclosure and took hold of Kresge Lawn, forming a human chain surrounding the encampment as organizers rushed in to rebuild tents and re-organize supplies.

Pro-Palestinian demonstrators continued to hold the lawn for the rest of the day, and the situation escalated as the demonstrators maintained control of Kresge Oval well into the night. The encampment has remained on the lawn with no further interference and remains active as of this article’s publication.

The same day, Cambridge City Council passed a resolution urging “the City Manager and the administrators of MIT and Harvard to respect the rights of students to advocate for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza.” As of January of this year and based on the results of a council vote, the City Council has officially adopted a ceasefire resolution for the Israeli intervention in Gaza.

Referendum 2 proponents speak at UA Council meeting

Speakers call for a committee “to handle the implementation of the referendum.”

By Karie Shen & Alex Tang
EDITORS

Editor’s note: Ellie Montemayor ’26 is The Tech’s publisher. She was not involved in the publication of this article.

In the 2024 Undergraduate Association (UA) elections, Referendum 2 passed with three terms: to call for a ceasefire in Gaza, to condemn the suspension of the Coalition Against Apartheid (CAA), and to terminate ties with the Israeli Ministry of Defense. The UA held an open council meeting on April 10, where four student speakers reaffirmed the contents of Referendum 2 to the UA Council and advocated for the creation of an ad hoc committee.

The UA Council is the UA’s legislative body, and is independent from the UA Officers and Committees. It can amend the UA Constitution and create new committees.

Quinn Perian ’26 stated that the majority of cast ballots supporting the referendum represents a “unique and rare call to action,” and characterized the referendum result as a reflection of the “collective frustration that the MIT administration ignores.” He called for 2023-2024 UA President Andre Hamelberg ’24 to use his speaking powers at the April 17 faculty meeting, where President Sally Kornbluth and other administration would be present, to read out the full election results. Perian also advocated for a new UA ad hoc committee “to handle the interpretation and implementation of the referendum.”

Ellie Montemayor* ’26 spoke next about how

the referendum embodies students’ “fear of retaliation” for “speaking out against the Institute’s actions.” Montemayor cited incidents at Columbia University and Vanderbilt University, where student protestors were suspended, evicted from housing, and denied medical care. She concluded her speech by asking the UA Council to establish an ad hoc committee to stand by students as they “fight back.”

Sandra Youssef ’26 spoke of MIT students’ desire to pursue an ethical career, naming numerous class offerings on ethics. Youssef argued that rather than supporting ethics in practice, the MIT administration hypocritically “[suppresses] attempts by students to discourage unethical engineering and scientific practices.” She called on the UA to represent the beliefs of the undergraduates — the constituents — whose strength, she stated, “lies in our unity, our voice, and our organization.”

Lastly, Jessica Cohen ’22 stated to the council, “As much as MIT is a bubble, it is also deeply connected to the rest of the world.” Cohen cited death tolls and descriptions of flattened schools and hospitals. “We are here and are privileged to be able to pursue a higher education,” she said, and it is “beyond shameful as an MIT student” that the Institute is not taking “tangible steps such as the ones lined out in the referendum.”

The rest of the council meeting was closed to the public so the council members could discuss in private. “I definitely learned some things that I didn’t know prior,” Hamelberg said. “It’s always great to be able to have people come in and share what they want to share.” While Hamelberg did

read out the election results at the faculty meeting on April 17, the creation of the ad hoc committee is still to be determined.

The UA has two types of committees: the permanent standing committees and ad hoc committees such as the food insecurity committee, which exist for a finite period to address a timely issue. The Referendum 2 speakers called for the latter.

Establishing an ad hoc committee requires a majority vote from the UA Council to approve a charter. The charter would include the committee’s name, purpose, principles of operation, and membership provisions. Moreover, it would need to be submitted to the UA by the Referendum 2 sponsors. The council can request changes to the charter before a vote is taken. It could take as little as two meetings to introduce and vote on the charter.

While Enoch Ellis ’26, the recently sworn-in UA President, is not able to vote for or against the charter, he sees his role as helping to abide by procedure and ensuring that what happens will “reflect well on the UA, both now and in the future.” He stated that the UA’s principal role is to advocate to the administration on behalf of the students and that they cannot guarantee a “yes or no.”

Hamelberg shared a similar sentiment. The formation of an ad hoc committee could carry more legitimacy if it advocates for a cause to the administration. “But at the end of the day,” he said, “it doesn’t necessarily give an immediate avenue.”

Safiyah Ogundipe ’24, a member of the CAA, added that the ad hoc committee would ideally

exist until the end of 2024, allowing students to advocate as part of the UA. Since UA committees are open to any student, the ad hoc committee would allow existing UA members to continue to focus on their tasks and expand “the position that the UA has to advocate” simultaneously.

According to precedent, the committee would likely accept anyone willing to join. “We’ve never refused anybody from being on a committee,” Ellis stated. “Counsel members are trying to be cognizant of the fact that even though we are honoring Referendum #2, it is important to note that it didn’t [pass] unanimously.”

The UA cannot make a committee that “only represents one belief on any given matter,” Ellis added.

Ogundipe is confident that an ad hoc committee would honor the referendum. “How many things can you say that 63% of undergraduates actually agree on?” Ogundipe opined that an ad hoc committee is “never going to be able to represent every voice.” She claimed that “there’s a desire by some to want to point to the number of ‘no’ votes, because it seeks to minimize the fact that it did pass.”

Regarding the creation of the charter, Ogundipe stated that organizers do not have it prepared yet. “To be honest, everyone who is involved with that is [at the encampment].”

As a whole, the referendum is “unprecedented, at least in recent memory,” Ellis stated. “I think it represents a paradigm shift in terms of how people both view the UA and are able to use the UA to augment their political agency.”

LIVE FEED

Live Updates: student encampment, May 6–7

By *The Tech News Staff*

Publisher’s Note: Live reporting for this feed has concluded as of Tuesday, May 7 at 9:36 p.m., with its last update coming in at 7:58 p.m. Further coverage will be reported through separate articles.

Primary reporting by Ellie Montemayor ’26 and Karie Shen ’27.

Additional reporting contributions from Alex Tang ’26, Geoffrey Enwere ’26, Vi Trinh ’27, and Russel Ismael VS. Photos by Isabella Yu ’24, Alexa Simao ’25, Omar Orozco ’25, Marcelo Maza ’25, Ellie Montemayor ’26, and Michelle Xiang ’26.

TUESDAY, MAY 7

7:58 PM: As of 7:58 p.m., no students reportedly referred to the Committee of Discipline have received official notice about their suspensions. Pro-Palestinian demonstrators continue to hold the Kresge Oval encampment by Tuesday night.

6:53 PM: The pro-Israeli event has concluded without escalation. A small contingency remain standing near the fencing around the encampment while playing music through a speaker. MIT Police remain on-site. Officers from Cambridge Police have also been observed patrolling the area. (9:07 PM clarification: the anticipated support rally coming from Harvard did not seem to significantly alter the pro-Israeli event at Kresge Oval. The event at Harvard Yard reportedly had low attendance, and reporters from The Tech were unable to confirm if participants had rallied to Kresge Oval.)

4:52 PM: Dozens of pro-Israeli demonstrators congregated around the speaker system, which was set up against the outer barricade of the encampment facing McCormick Hall, as a brief speaker series began. (5:05 PM update: the event later transitioned to streamed music and a cappella performances.)

4:25 PM: Reporters for The Tech observed that the Student Center has returned to tap access, alongside signage posted on the door requiring tap to enter the building. (5:32 PM clarification: reports indicate that the building may have been on tap access as early as 2:30 p.m.)

4:24 PM: Some organizers clarified that the Israel event was intended as a “celebration, not a rally.” Organizers also began setting up speaker systems for use during the event.

4:14 PM: A few dozen demonstrators join the pro-Israeli event, and begin distributing food and playing on the field. No significant interactions have been observed between pro-Israeli and pro-Palestinian demonstrators. An increased MIT police presence was observed on the scene.

3:55 PM: A small congregation of pro-Israeli demonstrators took up the open space of Kresge Oval adjoining the chapel. Demonstrators began putting up Israeli and American flags and pro-Israeli signage against the tarped barricade partially enclosing the encampment.

3:37 PM: In an email sent at 3:31 p.m., Chancellor Melissa Nobles warned of disciplinary consequences “in light of yesterday’s actions.” Nobles wrote that “dozens of interim suspensions and referrals to the Committee on Discipline” have been initiated following a letter outlining disciplinary consequences distributed to protestors in the encampment yesterday. Nobles justified these actions as “necessary” to ensure campus safety.

3:11 PM: A small congregation of less than a dozen pro-Israeli protestors were observed gathering by Johnston Gate at Harvard University.

2:00 PM: A pro-Israeli community rally is reported to begin at Harvard Yard at 3 p.m. and will move to MIT by 4 p.m. to join a pro-Israeli event on Kresge Oval.

12:30 PM: MIT facilities workers began re-establishing a tarp-covered six-foot barricade surrounding the encampment, feet away from the ad hoc fencing set up by the pro-Palestinian demonstrators last night. The barricade currently encloses around half of the encampment’s perimeter, facing McCormick Hall and Maseeh Hall and extending to the walkway adjacent to the chapel; this enclosure has not been extended to the sides facing Kresge Auditorium and the Student Center.

Three-foot-tall barricades continue to enclose the field off 84 Mass Ave where the “MIT Dahdough Welcome Center” was temporarily erected by pro-Palestinian demonstrators during a rally on May 1. Reports indicate that the barricades are meant to be temporary and will not be expanded unless the situation escalates.

12:29 PM: Pro-Israeli demonstrators were observed placing dozens of small Israeli flags on an open corner of Kresge Oval near the Student Center. This demonstration of pro-Israeli sentiment coincides with a nationwide flag-placing project organized by the Young America’s Foundation (YAF), an organization that describes itself as a “leading organization for young conservatives.” (May 8 10:09 a.m. clarification: an earlier version of this article describes the action at MIT as being affiliated with the nationwide project on college campuses as organized by the YAF. This claim was

contested by MIT Israel Alliance president Eitan Moore ’26.)

11:30 AM: The MIT Israel Day event celebrating the Israeli Day of Independence has been postponed to May 14 from an original plan for today at Kresge Oval, according to an email from MIT Hillel. In the same email, an “Israel event” with speeches, food, and an a cappella performance was announced to be held at 4 p.m. today on Kresge.

10:15 AM: Workers from MIT Facilities were observed clearing out the torn-down six-foot-tall barricades.

8:34 AM: The Student Center has reopened to normal public access and card access for student offices, with reports of signage being taken down and the center being open since 8:10 a.m.

7:50 AM: The Student Center is closed indefinitely until further notice, according to signage posted on the main entrance of the building.

MONDAY, MAY 6

11:16 PM: As of 11:16 PM, all reporters from The Tech have left the site of the encampment and are no longer providing live updates from the ground. The Tech will continue to monitor the situation as it develops overnight and re-deploy reporters to the scene as major events play out.

10:59 PM: An MIT Police cruiser stationed by the Zesiger Center briefly switched on its siren before exiting the premises.

9:58 PM: MIT Police officers continue to patrol the Infinite and Lobby 7. Nearby Institute buildings remain on card access, and the Student Center and Lobby 7 remain closed. No city police officers or state troopers were observed patrolling the area.

9:07 PM: In a statement to the MIT community at 9:07 p.m., President Kornbluth provided an update on the status of the encampment and recounted the day’s events. Kornbluth acknowledged the continued presence of state troopers as well as Institute and city police officers, and stated that nearby Institute buildings were to remain on card access.

9:06 PM: Encampment affiliates began to repurpose the knocked-down three-foot-tall barricades to again surround the encampment. The taller barricades remained on the ground.

Cambridge Police also reportedly began clearing the premises. Some officers from MIT Police remained monitoring the area.

8:50 PM: The speech concluded, and demonstrations ended once again as students and supporters continued to hold Kresge Oval.

8:35 PM: After an intermission, demonstrations resumed at the encampment as another speaker took up the megaphone.

8:16 PM: As of 8:16 PM, the crowd at the Student Center plaza had largely dispersed into a few dozen spectators and pro-Palestinian protestors. State troopers and many police officers left the premises as the situation gradually de-escalated.

8:12 PM: A planned inaugural reception for incoming UA President and Vice President Enoch Ellis ’26 and Rishika Bansal ’26, to be hosted in the Student Center tonight, was officially postponed due to the building’s continued closure.

8:04 PM: The Mass Ave sit-in ended as the demonstrators joined the group at the encampment. Traffic on Mass Ave resumed shortly. Major demonstrations at the encampment ended, and the fervor that had taken hold of the Student Center plaza calmed as demonstrators conversed and ate food distributed from the encampment.

8:02 PM: A group of state troopers and city police officers moved from their post near the Student Center to supervise the sit-in on Mass Ave.

7:14 PM: Reporters from The Tech observed that the pro-Israeli counterprotestors have left the scene. Israeli and American flags were no longer visible at the Student Center Plaza. Speakers continued to speak at the encampment, and pro-Palestinian demonstrators at the Mass Ave sit-in continued to chant.

7:09 PM: The organizers of the pro-Palestinian encampment declared their intent to continue holding the Kresge Oval space overnight as student demonstrators returned to organizing encampment supplies and setting up for another overnight stay.

7:03 PM: More police officers from the Special Emergency Response Team joined the force on standby in front of the Student Center.

6:55 PM: A contingent of uniformed police officers affiliated with the Special Emergency Response Team armed with zipties moved in from Mass Ave and are currently on standby behind the metal barricades previously held by the pro-Israeli counterprotestors.

6:53 PM: The majority of vocal pro-Israeli counterprotestors have left their position in front of the Student Center.

6:41 PM: Pro-Israeli demonstrators called out Massachusetts State House representative Mike Connolly, who was in attendance in support of the action by the pro-Palestinian protestors and who has visited the campus in support of the campus

movement and its encampment, to “hold up an American flag.”

6:40 PM: State police officers and the chief of MIT Police are reportedly reluctant to make arrests, and continue to be on standby.

As of 6:40 PM, a small contingent of pro-Palestinian protestors continue their sit-in on Mass Ave. The street remains closed off.

6:22 PM: As of 6:22 PM, the Student Center is closed to the public. The front and back entrances of the building are staffed by police officers and workers from SOLE.

6:13 PM: The Student Center will reportedly be closed starting 6:30 PM with all occupants being removed from the building, according to building workers.

6:06 PM: The sit-in on Mass Ave, reportedly composed largely of the student supporters from local high schools, began to disperse.

6:01 PM: Four news helicopters are now flying overhead.

5:56 PM: Demonstrators tore down the six-foot barricades facing Kresge Auditorium. (6:11 PM clarification: the barricades facing Maseeh Hall and McCormick Hall remain standing.)

As the pro-Palestinian demonstrators established control of Kresge Oval, the event turned into a mix of prepared speeches from speakers and chanting. Pro-Israeli counterprotestors continued to speak out from their position in front of the Student Center against the pro-Palestine speakers.

5:51 PM: Pro-Palestinian demonstrators brought out a tent and other supplies that were returned to the encampment. They also brought out a mock watchtower made of cardboard with a poster writing, “MIT — take down your apartheid wall.” (6:04 PM addition: more supplies continued to be brought out in carts and boxes.)

5:41 PM: Dozens more students and demonstrators joined the human chain as pro-Palestinian demonstrators continued to chant.

5:35 PM: Pro-Palestinian demonstrators pushed down and broke through the metal barricades closest to the chapel. Within minutes, demonstrators stormed the barricades and broke the walls down almost in their entirety. They mobilized in groups and linked arms around the tents, fully encircling the encampment.

5:31 PM: Pro-Palestinian demonstrators started tearing down the tarps covering the encampment’s barricades and pushing against the barricade.

5:30 PM: Several students and pro-Palestinian demonstrators scaled the fence and entered the encampment. This action was met with cheers and increased energy from the pro-Palestinian group outside the encampment.

5:28 PM: Three staff administrators stationed at the main entrance of the Student Center began requiring individuals attempting to enter the building to tap their MIT IDs on installed card readers. (May 7 8:14 AM retraction: an earlier version of this article noted that elevator use in the building was also restricted to tap access. This statement was later determined to be incorrect.)

5:27 PM: A sound resembling a police siren began playing on a megaphone, and was determined to be initiated by a pro-Israeli demonstrator. The sound was silenced a minute later. (May 7 8:11 AM clarification: this sound was played several more times over the course of the day. In all times unless specified otherwise, the sound was determined to have originated from the pro-Israeli group.)

4:39 PM: All on-the-ground news and media reporters were reportedly escorted away from the Student Center plaza. Reporting teams continued to hold interviews and provide coverage from Mass Ave.

4:34 PM: Two news helicopters from NBC News and WCVB returned, encircling the area. A drone, whose affiliation is undetermined, was also seen hovering overhead. (5:29 PM clarification: the drone was determined to be capturing footage for Boston 25 News.)

4:30 PM: A large contingent of state police as part of the Special Emergency Response Team mobilized on Student Center Plaza and separated the pro-Palestinian protestors from the pro-Israeli group. Officers dressed in motorized police gear were also spotted approaching from the direction of Killian Court. Metal barricades separating the groups also began to be set up.

4:26 PM: Instances of pro-Palestinian chalking were also reported outside Compton Laboratories and Stata Center.

4:12 PM: The entrance to Lobby 7 was closed off from access, with police patrolling the entrance. An MIT Advisory Alert was issued on 4:12 PM. (5:26 PM addition: the pro-Palestine group initiated a sit-in at the Mass Ave crossing and a speaker series was established as participants began writing on the street with chalk.)

4:10 PM: At around the same time as the Lobby 7 group moved to Mass Ave, a small group of student demonstrators unrolled large banners styled as receipts and attempted to set up tents

during a sit-in in the lobby. They were detained and removed from the lobby, and continue to sit atop the steps of the lobby. No arrests were made.

4:04 PM: The pro-Palestine group in front of Lobby 7, which has grown significantly in size, moved to occupy Mass Ave and began blocking traffic. Police began redirecting traffic from the Vassar Street intersection.

3:58 PM: Cambridge Police officers moved away from the encampment to separate the pro-Palestine group by the encampment entrance from a forming pro-Israeli counterprotest near the Student Center.

3:52 PM: A force of seven state troopers were seen approaching the encampment from Mass Ave, approaching from the direction of Harvard Bridge. More pro-Israeli counterprotestors were seen in the area.

3:46 PM: A second pro-Palestine group was spotted forming at the steps of Lobby 7.

3:42 PM: A state trooper was seen entering the area and is currently stationed between the Student Center and the Zesiger Center alongside a force from MIT Police. The chief of the MIT Police confirmed that current police response to the developing situation involves coordination between MIT Police, Cambridge Police and state police.

A smaller gathering of pro-Palestinian demonstrators were also seen at a second “emergency exit” opening of the encampment facing McCormick Hall.

3:27 PM: A group of three pro-Israeli counterprotesters stood upon picnic tables in front of the Student Center, where many of the belongings and supplies from the encampment were moved. They held up American and Israeli flags and began chanting against the pro-Palestinian protestors.

3:17 PM: Reporters for The Tech have noted eight individuals who remain inside the encircled encampment. They appear to be a mixture of students and non-students. (5:17 PM clarification: there are five MIT students and three MIT faculty inside the encampment. They plan to remain indefinitely.)

3:09 PM: President Kornbluth’s deadline of 2:30 passed. Hundreds of students and spectators are in the Kresge Oval area, with many watching from the second floor balcony of the Student Center. Police on bikes have formed a blockade around the entrance of the encampment.

2:40 PM: Reporters for The Tech observed a group of individuals moving from Kendall Square to the Kresge Oval. They are reported to be supporters of the encampment from neighboring universities and high schools.

2:36 PM: Officers dressed in motorized gear were seen approaching the encampment. Contingents of MIT Police and Cambridge Police monitored the area. (Note: an earlier version of this article incorrectly described the uniforms as “riot gear.” This has been corrected as of 7:28 PM.)

2:25 PM: News helicopters for NBC News and WCVB began circling the area for live coverage.

1:44 PM: In a statement to the MIT community at 1:44 p.m., MIT President Sally Kornbluth set a deadline for clearing the Pro-Palestinian encampment on Kresge Oval by 2:30 p.m., referencing the warning issued by Chancellor Nobles just minutes earlier.

Encampment affiliates continued to move supplies and belongings out of the area as the demonstration surrounding the encampment grew in numbers.

1:13 PM: A letter signed by Chancellor Melissa Nobles to those within the encampment warned of varying degrees of academic suspension to students who remained. The letter was issued physically to those in the encampment. Those not already in the encampment were no longer allowed entry even when providing MIT ID.

Not long after the warning was issued, spectators and demonstrators began to gather by the entrance and confronted the officers manning the checkpoint.

This action came after another round of failed negotiations between MIT administration and the organizers of the campus pro-Palestine movement that day. Both the administration and the organizers detailed a series of bad-faith negotiation tactics initiated by the other side.

People affiliated with the encampment also began moving valuables and belongings from the encampment. Many tents were taken down. Some of the supplies were brought in front of and inside the Student Center.

8 AM: At around 8 AM on Monday, May 6, an I.D. checkpoint was set up at the entrance of the Scientists Against Genocide Encampment and manned by MIT Police and staff administrators from the Division of Student Life. Access to the encampment was restricted to MIT affiliates, and anyone entering the encampment was ordered to tap on card readers. This action by the administration came after the encampment was enclosed from all sides by a six-foot-tall barricade and tarped over on Friday, May 3rd, in anticipation of a pro-Israel rally.

World & Nation is a two-page column featuring news articles syndicated from a selection of major newspaper outlets, covering topics of public interest and critical information which extend beyond the bounds of The Tech’s coverage as centered around the MIT and local community. Ownership of syndicated content is retained under their original respective publications, and is republished in this format to serve as an easily-accessible, printed digest for The Tech’s readership.

The column consists of two pages, with Side A focused on US news and politics and Side B on topics of international concern. The articles featured here are abridged as to contain only their most essential points; readers are directed to read more about an article from its original publication.

Police clear University of Chicago camp in latest move to quell protests

Campus police removed a protest encampment at the University of Chicago early Tuesday as colleges nationwide continued to grapple with a wave of demonstrations against the war in Gaza, where Israeli forces have entered the southern city of Rafah. The decision by the president of the University of Chicago to end an eight-day pro-Palestinian protest marks a turning point for the institution, which has built a reputation in higher education for protecting freedom of expression.

The university’s president, Paul Alivisatos, warned in recent days that its hands-off approach to the protest could no longer continue. On Tuesday, he said safety concerns had increased, prompting the university to intervene.

— Kim Bellware & Joanna Slater, FROM THE WASHINGTON POST
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MAY 7, 2024

Congress holds antisemitism hearing focused on K-12 schools

Lawmakers on Wednesday grilled the leaders of three school districts in liberal cities about alleged antisemitic incidents, marking the first such Congressional hearing to focus on K-12 schools.

The hearing, which began at 10:15 am ET, gave Republicans a chance to confront officials from New York City; Berkeley, California; and Montgomery County, Maryland, about reports of antisemitism in their districts.

The K-12 hearing is being held by the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education and will also include a representative from the American Civil Liberties Union.

— Matt Egan, FROM CNN
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MAY 8, 2024

Gaza protestors picket outside of Met Gala 2024 in NYC

While celebrities are putting on their best for the Met Gala, protestors are hitting the picket lines. Protesters in support of Palestinians amid Israel’s war in Gaza made their voices heard outside of the Met Gala.

Students from Hunter College, roughly a mile from the Met Gala, marched with signs calling for their university to “divest” funding. “We will not stop, we will not rest,” the students chanted, per videos shared by reporter Katie Smith on X.

In another video they chanted, “There is only one solution.” One user on X shared a photo of protestors walking through Central Park and toward the Met Gala.

— Naledi Ushe, FROM USA TODAY
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MAY 6, 2024

Columbia University cancels main graduation amid protests

Columbia University has cancelled its main graduation after weeks of protests on campus over the Israel-Gaza war. The Ivy League school said it was ditching the 15 May commencement in favour of smaller celebrations to focus on “keeping them safe”. The New York City university said it had arrived at the decision after consultations with student leaders.

Colleges across the US are bracing for disruptions at graduations amid pro-Palestinian protests. Columbia University said in a statement on Monday: “Our students emphasized that these smaller-scale, school-based celebrations are most meaningful to them and their families. “They are eager to cross the stage to applause and family pride and hear from their school’s invited guest speakers.

— Rachel Looker, FROM BBC
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MAY 6, 2024

Suspect in Laken Riley killing indicted on murder, kidnapping and ‘peeping tom’ charges

A Georgia grand jury indicted the man accused of killing 22-year-old student Laken Riley on 10 charges, including malice murder and kidnapping, according to an indictment filed Tuesday in Superior Court of Clarke County.

The indictment formally charges Jose Antonio Ibarra in Riley’s murder, which authorities described as a crime of opportunity. Ibarra is charged with three counts of felony murder, a count of malice murder, kidnapping with bodily injury, aggravated assault with intent to rape, and “peeping tom” among other charges.

— Doha Madani, FROM NBC NEWS
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MAY 8, 2024

MIT to end compelled diversity statements for faculty hiring

Anemona Hartocollis

FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MAY 6, 2024

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology said on Monday that it would no longer require candidates applying for faculty positions to write diversity statements, which have been denounced by conservatives and free-speech advocates as forcing a kind of ideological conformity.

In their statements, generally a page-long, candidates were required to explain how they would enhance the university’s commitment to diversity.

Such statements have become enshrined in faculty hiring at many elite public and private universities, as well as in corporate life. Academics have defended them as necessary in judging whether a faculty member can reach out to an increasingly diverse student body.

In announcing the change, M.I.T.’s president, Sally Kornbluth, said diversity statements constitut-

ed a form of compelled speech that do not work.

“My goals are to tap into the full scope of human talent, to bring the very best to M.I.T. and to make sure they thrive once here,” Dr. Kornbluth said in a statement. “We can build an inclusive environment in many ways, but compelled statements impinge on freedom of expression, and they don’t work.”

M.I.T. and Dr. Kornbluth have been under scrutiny by House Republicans for the university’s handling of antisemitism accusations. In December, Dr. Kornbluth testified alongside two other presidents, Claudine Gay of Harvard and Elizabeth Magill of the University of Pennsylvania, in a congressional hearing on antisemitism, which helped lead to Dr. Gay and Ms. Magill’s resignations. And M.I.T., like many other campuses, has struggled to handle an increasingly intense pro-Palestinian encampment.

Diversity statements have long been opposed by conservatives

and many academics as enforcing a kind of ideological conformity. M.I.T.’s decision to drop them could embolden other universities to take a second look. A 2021 study by the American Enterprise Institute found that selective universities were more likely than less selective ones to require such statements.

M.I.T., whose students are required to immerse themselves in science and technology courses, has been in the forefront of pushing back against measures that some say could dilute the rigor of its education. After the pandemic, it was among the first universities to restore standardized testing in admissions, saying that it helped predict academic success.

The practice of screening candidates for their diversity statements, sometimes before considering their academic qualifications, has been attacked as particularly corrosive in the sciences, where maintaining academic rigor in research projects can actually be a matter of life and death.

U.S. pauses shipment of thousands of bombs to Israel

John Hudson

FROM THE WASHINGTON POST

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MAY 7, 2024

The Biden administration paused the shipment of thousands of weapons to Israel, including controversial 2,000-pound bombs, amid mounting concern about the country’s plan to expand a military operation in southern Gaza that could dramatically increase the conflict’s death toll, U.S. officials said Tuesday.

“Israel should not launch a major ground operation in Rafah, where more than a million people are sheltering with nowhere else to go,” said a senior administration official, explaining the U.S. decision to pause the weapons shipments. “We are especially focused on the end-use of the 2,000-pound bombs and the impact they could have in dense urban settings as we have seen in other parts of Gaza.”

The disclosure marks the first known instance of a pause in U.S.

arms transfers since the Oct. 7 Hamas-led attack into Israel that killed more than 1,200 people.

Since then, the United States has surged tens of thousands of bombs and missiles to its ally even as huge swaths of Gaza have been turned to rubble and the death toll among Palestinians has ballooned to more than 34,000, many of them women and children, according to local health authorities. President Biden has described the bombing as “indiscriminate,” but he has been reluctant to leverage weapons transfers to try to force a change in Israel’s behavior.

A second U.S. official, who like others spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations, described the move as a “shot across the bow” intended to underscore to Israeli leaders the seriousness of U.S. concerns about the offensive in Rafah, where an estimated 1.5 million displaced Palestinians are massed in camps near Gaza’s

border with Egypt.

The Israeli Embassy in Washington did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The shipment being prepared for delivery to Israel last week included 1,800 2,000-pound bombs and 1,700 500-pound bombs, the officials said. That decision will be felt quickly as Israel continues to rapidly expend munitions as the conflict passes the seven-month mark.

The Biden administration is reviewing other planned transfers that are not set to ship imminently, the first official said. That pertains to 6,500 Joint Direct Attack Munitions, which convert free-fall “dumb bombs” into precision-guided weapons, people familiar with the matter said.

Though delayed, those munitions as well as last week’s paused shipment could still be delivered depending on the White House’s discretion. “We have not made a final determination on how to proceed,” the first official said.

Trump goes face-to-face with testimony he’s denied for years

Stephen Collinson

FROM CNN

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MAY 8, 2024

It was the moment that Donald Trump’s hush money trial — bogged down in recent days in dreary testimony about accounting — roared back to life on Tuesday.

A former president — who could find himself back behind the Oval Office desk in January — came face-to-face for the first time in years with the adult film star whom he’s accused of silencing with a hush money payment.

What came next was tawdry, compelling, and achinglly embarrassing to Trump, who was forced to sit scowling as Daniels painted a detailed scene of a black-tiled hotel suite that allegedly hosted a liaison that the ex-president still denies.

What came next was tawdry, compelling, and achinglly embarrassing to Trump, who was forced to sit scowling as Daniels painted a detailed scene of a black-tiled

hotel suite that allegedly hosted a liaison that the ex-president still denies.

It was the latest unfathomable lurch of an election campaign like no other. And for a normal candidate who lacked Trump’s Teflon political hide, it would probably be the end of the road.

But as so often happens, one devastating legal blow to the ex-president was followed by a silver lining. He learned late Tuesday afternoon that Judge Aileen Cannon, whom he appointed, indefinitely postponed a trial in his classified documents case in Florida. This means Trump almost certainly won’t face a jury on federal charges of mishandling classified information before the election — a reality that prompted his former White House counsel Ty Cobb to accuse Cannon of slow walking the case, indulging frivolous motions and misunderstanding applicable law. “This is a case of bias and incompetence,” Cobb told CNN’s Erin Burnett.

Cannon’s move comes with

Trump’s two election interference cases, both of which have become swamped by his pre-trial delaying tactics and fulsome appeals, also unlikely to go on trial before voters make their fateful choice in November. The Georgia Court of Appeals said Wednesday it will consider an effort by Trump and his co-defendants to disqualify District Attorney Fani Willis from the 2020 election subversion case — another sign that pre-trial efforts to delay a trial are succeeding.

So, while the hush money case is widely regarded as the weakest of the bunch facing Trump, it’s likely the only one that could create the never-before-seen scenario of a convicted felon asking voters to elect him president.

That made the testimony of Daniels even more critical. And the most important question after her first bruising three-and-three-quarters hours on the stand is whether her salaciousness testimony made a guilty verdict more likely — or ended up undermining the case.

Israel seizes Rafah crossing, described as limited operation

Samy Magdy, Melanie Lidman & Lee Keath

FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MAY 7, 2024

Israeli troops seized control of Gaza’s vital Rafah border crossing on Tuesday in what the White House described as a limited operation, as fears mount of a full-scale invasion of the southern city and talks with Hamas over a cease-fire and hostage release remain on a knife’s edge.

The U.N. warned of a potential collapse of the flow of aid to Palestinians from the closure the Rafah crossing from Egypt and the other main crossing into Gaza, Kerem Shalom, from Israel, at a time when U.N. officials say northern Gaza is experiencing “full-blown famine.”

The Israeli foray came after hours of whiplash in the now 7-month-old Israel-Hamas war, with the militant group saying Monday it accepted a cease-fire proposal that Israel insisted fell short of its own core demands.

The high-stakes diplomatic moves and military brinkmanship

left a glimmer of hope for a deal to bring at least a pause in the war, which has killed more than 34,700 Palestinians, according to local health officials, and has devastated the Gaza Strip.

The Rafah and Kerem Shalom crossings are critical entry points for food, medicine and other supplies for Gaza’s 2.3 million people. They have been closed for at least two days, though the smaller Erez crossing between Israel and northern Gaza remains open.

By capturing the Rafah crossing, Israel gained full control over the entry and exit of people and goods for the first time since it withdrew soldiers and settlers from Gaza in 2005, though it has long maintained a blockade of the coastal enclave in cooperation with Egypt.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called the capture of the crossing an “important step” toward dismantling Hamas’ military and governing capabilities, and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said Israel would “deepen” the Rafah operation

if talks on the hostage deal failed.

Osama Hamdan, a Hamas official based in Beirut, said the militant group would not respond to military pressure or threats and would not accept any “occupying force” at the Rafah crossing.

White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said the operation along the Gaza-Egypt border in eastern Rafah was not a full-on Israeli invasion of the city that President Joe Biden has repeatedly warned against on humanitarian grounds. Kirby said Israel described it as “an operation of limited scale and duration” aimed at cutting off Hamas arms smuggling.

Kirby expressed optimism about the cease-fire negotiations, saying Israel and Hamas “should be able to close the remaining gaps” to complete an agreement. He said CIA chief William Burns will attend further talks in Cairo with representatives from Israel, Egypt and Qatar. Hamas also sent a delegation to Cairo, which will meet separately with the Arab mediators.

Death toll of Brazil floods rises to 83, dozens remain missing

The death toll from a series of catastrophic floods in the southern Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul has risen to at least 83, the state’s civil defense unit said Monday.

Authorities are also investigating another four deaths to determine if they were related to the storms. A further 276 people are reportedly injured and at least 111 people are missing, while at least 121,000 people have been displaced, according to the Civil Defense of Rio Grande do Sul. The disaster has affected more than 850,000 people in 345 municipalities, destroying homes, roads and bridges.

CNN spoke to local residents and evacuees who reported seeing dead bodies still in the flood water, likely not yet counted in the death toll.

— Jack Guy & Julia Vargas Jones, FROM CNN
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MAY 6, 2024

Hindu nationalism mainstream after Modi’s decade in power

Hindu nationalism, once a fringe ideology in India, is now mainstream. Nobody has done more to advance this cause than Prime Minister Narendra Modi, one of India’s most beloved and polarizing political leaders.

And no entity has had more influence on his political philosophy and ambitions than a paramilitary, right-wing group founded nearly a century ago and known as the RSS.

“We never imagined that we would get power in such a way,” said Ambalal Koshti, 76, who says he first brought Modi into the political wing of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh in the late 1960s in their home state, Gujarat.

— Krutika Pathi & Sheikh Saaliq, FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED

Hezbollah says its drone hits northern Israeli town, two soldiers killed

Hezbollah said on Monday it carried out a drone attack on an Israeli military position near the northern Israeli town of Metula. The Israeli military later confirmed two soldiers were killed in the attack.

Iran-backed Hezbollah also said it had sent dozens of rockets towards military targets across the border with Israel.

Israel and Hezbollah, which has amassed a formidable arsenal since 2006, have been engaged in daily cross-border strikes over the past six months, in parallel with Israel’s war in Gaza.

Hezbollah has so far restricted its attacks to a strip of northern Israel, seeking to draw Israeli forces away from Gaza.

— Laila Bassam & Maytaal Angel, FROM REUTERS
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MAY 6, 2024

In Serbia, Xi underlines close ties with ally that shares wariness of US

China and Serbia on Wednesday proclaimed an “ironclad friendship” during a visit to Belgrade by the Chinese president, Xi Jinping, underlining the close political and economic ties between two countries that share a wariness of the United States.

Mr. Xi arrived in Serbia late Tuesday — the 25th anniversary of a mistaken 1999 airstrike involving the U.S. Air Force during the Kosovo war that destroyed the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, the Serbian capital. Three Chinese journalists were killed in the strike.

Mr. Xi appeared briefly on Wednesday morning with the Serbian president, Aleksandar Vucic, before a cheering crowd gathered in front of the Palace of Serbia.

— Andrew Higgins, FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MAY 8, 2024

Olympic flame arrives in Marseille

Before a crowd thronging the waterfront and hilltops of this ancient port city of Marseille, the Olympic flame arrived in France on Wednesday, beginning a 79-day relay across the country and its territories that will culminate in Paris with the start of the Olympic Games on July 26. In an elaborate ceremony attended by President Emmanuel Macron and a crowd estimated at more than 150,000 people, all eyes were on the Belem, a historic three-masted ship that bore the flame, and was greeted by more than 1,000 boats in a forest of masts filling Marseille’s harbor.

The Belem, which spent much of the day cruising just beyond the city’s old port, left Greece on April 27, carrying the flame lit in Ancient Olympia eleven days before that. Marseille is a traditional rival of Paris, in sporting terms and most others. Mr. Macron, a supporter of Olympique de Marseille, has been a regular visitor to the city throughout his seven-year presidency.

— Roger Cohen & Ségolène Le Stradic, FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MAY 8, 2024

Going to the extreme: Inside Germany’s far right

It is a spring evening in Germany’s eastern city of Cottbus, and dozens of people have crowded into a small venue to hear a man who once dubbed himself the “friendly face” of National Socialism (Nazism). Two other men with prior links to extremist groups are also in the room, including a candidate for forthcoming state elections.

They’re all there to hear Matthias Helferich at a youth event organised by members of the prominent far-right party, Alternative für Deutschland (AfD). The AfD has repeatedly rejected accusations of extremism. However, by investigating the past of these three men, the BBC has found a clear crossover between AfD figures and far-right networks, some of which are classed as anti-democratic or racist by German authorities.

— Jessica Parker, FROM BBC
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MAY 8, 2024

Ukraine says it foiled Russian plot to kill Zelensky

Constant Méheut & Maria Varenikova

FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MAY 7, 2024

Ukraine’s security services said on Tuesday that they had foiled a Russian plot to assassinate President Volodymyr Zelensky and other top military and political figures. Two Ukrainian colonels accused of participating in the plot have been arrested on suspicion of treason.

The Ukrainian domestic intelligence agency, the S.B.U., said in a statement that the plot had involved a network of agents — including the two colonels — that was run by Russia’s Federal Security Service, or F.S.B., the main successor to the K.G.B. According to the S.B.U., the agents working at Russia’s direction were tasked with identifying people close to Mr. Zelensky’s security detail who could take him hostage and later kill him.

The agency’s statement said the other top Ukrainian officials targeted in the plot included Vasyl Maluk,

the head of the S.B.U., and Gen. Kyrylo Budanov, the head of Ukraine’s military intelligence agency. The Ukrainian claims could not be independently verified.

It is not the first time that Ukraine has reported a potential assassination attempt aimed at its top leaders. Mr. Zelensky said in an interview with an Italian television channel earlier this year that his security services had told him of more than 10 such efforts. Ukraine’s security services offered few details about previous assassination plots. But this time, the agency went to some length in its statement to describe how the Ukrainian officials were to be killed.

The services said the two colonels accused in the plot belonged to the State Security Administration, which protects top officials. They had been recruited before the beginning of Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, according to the statement, which identified three F.S.B. members — Maxim Mishustin, Dmytro Perlin and Oleksiy

Kornev — as running the operation from Moscow. The two Ukrainian colonels were not named.

In a video released by the security services, a man identified as one of the colonels, his face blurred, describes details of the apparent plot that involved blocking Mr. Zelensky as he entered or left a building. The authenticity of the video could not be independently confirmed.

As for the assassination attempt aimed at General Budanov, the services said it was planned to take place before Orthodox Easter, which was celebrated on May 5. The F.S.B.’s network of agents in Ukraine was tasked with observing and passing on information about General Budanov’s whereabouts, the Ukrainian security services said.

Once his location had been confirmed and communicated, he would have been targeted in a multilayered attack involving a rocket strike, followed by a drone attack to kill people who were fleeing and then a second rocket strike, the security services said.

Russia to hold nuclear drills following ‘threats’ from West

Laura Gozzi

FROM BBC
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MAY 6, 2024

Russia has started preparations for missile drills near Ukraine simulating the use of tactical nuclear weapons in response to “threats” by Western officials.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said recent statements by French President Emmanuel Macron and the British Foreign Secretary David Cameron constituted a “completely new round of escalation of tension.”

Last week, Mr Macron refused to rule out potentially deploying French troops, should Kyiv request them, while Lord Cameron said that Ukraine had the right to use British weapons for strikes within Russia.

On Monday, Russia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that Lord Cameron’s “hostile outburst” contradicted previous British assurances that the long-range missiles sent to Ukraine would not be used on Russian territory and meant

that the UK was a “party to the conflict.”

The ministry added that the response to Ukrainian strikes using British weapons on Russia could involve targeting any British military facilities and equipment on the territory of Ukraine and beyond.

It also said that Mr Macron’s statement on possible deployment of French troops to Ukraine could be considered as “readiness for direct confrontation with Russia.”

Both the British and the French ambassadors in Moscow were summoned on Monday.

The tactical nuclear weapons drills announced on Monday were ordered by Russian President Vladimir Putin, according to TASS news agency.

They were expected to take place “in the near future” and would involve missile formations as well as air and naval forces.

Tactical nuclear weapons are small nuclear warheads and delivery systems intended for use on the battlefield, or for a limited strike.

They are designed to destroy en-

emy targets in a specific area without causing widespread radioactive fallout.

Strategic nuclear weapons, on the other hand, are large and designed to be fired at a long range - for example, between continents. Russia holds regular drills with strategic nuclear weapons.

In April, Belarus’s long-time leader Alexander Lukashenko said “several dozen” tactical nuclear weapons were stationed in his country.

A Ukrainian military intelligence spokesman dismissed the announcement that drills would take place, calling it “nuclear blackmail.”

But Nato spokesperson Farah Dakhilallah said it was “dangerous and irresponsible” and stated that Nato remained “vigilant.”

Following a meeting in Paris with Mr Macron and Chinese President Xi Jinping, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said that she hoped President Xi would help de-escalate Russia’s “irresponsible” nuclear threats.

SPEAKER EVENT

ChatMIT: Sam Altman on the AI Revolution

By **Karie Shen & Alex Tang**
EDITORS

On May 2, over 1,000 members of the MIT community sat in Kresge’s Swraj Paul Theater to hear from Sam Altman, co-founder and CEO of OpenAI in an event called ChatMIT hosted by President Sally Kornbluth.

Kornbluth posed many questions surrounding AI, including mitigating bias in training models, protecting user privacy, and optimizing energy usage. Altman also discussed the potential of AI to reshape the workforce and revolutionize scientific discovery.

OpenAI has made “surprisingly good progress,” Altman said, in learning how to make a system behave according to a certain set of values. He added, “Humans are clearly very biased creatures,” whereas GPT-4 does not share “our same psychological flaws.”

Regarding data usage, Altman said, “I can imagine this future in which, if you want, you have a personalized AI that knows that has read every email, every text message you’ve ever sent or received, has access to a full recording of your life.”

“You can imagine that would be super helpful. You can also imagine the privacy

concerns that that would present,” he added. “That’s a new thing for society to navigate. I don’t know what the answer will be.”

Altman stated that soon after GPT-4’s release, everyone wanted to know, “Where’s GPT-5?” and the expectation for perpetual progress was “legitimately great.” A major improvement to the current GPT model, Altman envisions, is to separate the storage of data from the training done on that data. To memorize the data it trains on is, according to Altman, “a weird waste of resources.” A more efficient GPT would partition reasoning from memory. Particularly resonant with the students in the audience was Altman’s advice about taking part in this technology revolution.

“This is probably the most exciting time to be launching your career in many decades,” Altman stated. He described the internet boom and subsequent smaller waves in mobile and cloud technologies to emphasize how the world has been waiting for almost a decade. Now, as Altman sees it, AI is next up.

“The ground is shaking,” Altman said, encouraging creation of start-ups, which have a number of advantages over big companies. “You can take more risks than usual, and you can have more impact than normal,” he added.

“You can move much faster. You can live in the future... And that’s how you win.”

Altman is under no illusions about how AI will change the workforce, including eliminating, altering, and creating jobs. “That always happens with technology,” he stated, though, “It’s probably never happened this fast.” Naturally, Altman is biased towards a career involving AI.

“The most important lesson to learn early on in your career is that you can figure anything out,” he stated. “You stumble your way through it, have a fast iteration speed, try to drift towards the most interesting problems to be around, the most impressive people and have this trust that you will successfully iterate to the right thing.”

Altman took a strong stance against those who believe progress in AI should be halted because of issues such as energy usage or bias. “It is true that AI needs a huge amount of energy, but not huge relative to what the rest of the world needs,” Altman said. He provided the example of Google, which consumes an incredible amount of energy but also saves it by improving access to information, thereby reducing extraneous costs that would be expended in the lack of such knowledge. It is ac-

tually a “net savings in energy,” he stated.

Altman plans to continue figuring out ways to make AI more energetically efficient and argues that it could help yield insight into harnessing non-carbon based energy, which would be a “massive win.”

“The way we are teaching our young people that the world is totally screwed, that it’s hopeless to try to solve problems, that all we can do is stay in our bedrooms in the dark, is a really deeply unproductive streak,” Altman said. “You all need to make it part of your life mission to fight against this,” he added.

Using GPT for scientific discovery and personalized learning experiences are among the benefits that excite Altman the most, but he believes it is just the beginning. “Babies born today will never know a world in which the products and services that you use are not intelligent,” and cognition will be omnipresent in day-to-day life.

“We have a ton of work in front of us,” Altman stated. “We have a new tool in the tech tree of humanity, and people are using it to create amazing things. They will continue to get way more capable and way more prominence over time. It’s going to integrate into society in an important and transformative way.”

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Impacts of early exposure to machine learning

By **Anna Murphy**

Kids born today will never know a world where the technology they interact with is not intelligent. Toddlers are often playing with iPads before they can walk, and they may soon be learning to speak by using Al-exas. This motivates the question: how might machine learning education fit into an increasingly AI-driven world?

Natalie Lao ’16 PhD ’20 is Executive Director of the App Inventor Foundation, a nonprofit built off of the MIT App Inventor Project that empowers students across the globe to create mobile apps for social good. She emphasizes the importance of educating students in machine learning (ML) early on. The number one reason, she stated, is simply that interacting with the world involves interacting with ML, from scrolling social media to getting a loan at a bank. The second reason is that ML knowledge is increasingly relevant as students become voters and involve themselves in policy creation and evaluation. “Students are going to become voters,” she stated, “and they need to be informed enough so that they feel competent voting on [ML] policies and asking the right questions.” For example, how are tech companies regulated? How is the usage of data regulated, such as avenues of redress if someone is training a generative AI model on data without consent? What are the court cases currently going on that people need to be aware of to protect themselves?

Lao argued the importance of educating students about these topics as young as possible. Incorporating ML knowledge into their worldview is easier when they’re younger, she explained. A report released in 2019 by Purdue University found that exposing kids to STEM early in elementary school provides students with the foundation necessary to fulfill an increased number of STEM-related careers. The report also finds that “girls are five percent less likely to recall learning STEM concepts in elementary and middle school”, highlighting a gender disparity that can be found in STEM fields later in life.

ML education has the potential to create profound implications in the world. To support this vision, she proposed a framework for evaluating ML competency in her PhD thesis, establishing three categories: knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Knowledge encompasses concepts including the ethics of artificial intelligence and societal impact, while practical abilities such as debugging, analyzing artifacts, and participating in conversations about AI fall into the skills bin. The third category, attitudes, Lao finds the most challenging to address. She emphasizes the role of self-efficacy theory, or the belief in one’s own ability to achieve goals, particularly among underrepresented students. Lao notes that these students often do not see people who look like them or come from similar backgrounds succeeding in AI and technology, which can lead to a decrease in self-efficacy. To counteract this, she advo-

cates for the importance of mentorship and role modeling in ML education. By exposing students to diverse individuals who are only a few steps ahead in their careers and are successfully navigating the field, students can begin to envision a future for themselves in similar roles.

Inspired by a conversation with Lao and his passion for STEM education, Kent Brought ’26, joined a team advised by Vincent Monardo, Lecturer of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, to create MacLea, an online educational tool for machine learning geared toward elementary and middle schoolers. In a field crowded with learning opportunities for adults, this project uniquely targets young learners, highlighting an effort to engage the next generation in machine learning early on. “In high school, I made several trips to local elementary schools to help establish robotics teams in an area where STEM is not a dominant field,” Brought reflects. Since then, he has had an interest in different ways of helping kids learn new things.

MacLea provides guided tutorials on topics including Convolutional Neural Networks, as well as optimizers, epochs, and loss. Similar to Scratch, a block-based visual programming language created by the MIT Media Lab, users assemble blocks rather than writing text themselves to build a machine learning pipeline. Brought’s goal for the project is to prove that it is possible to make complex machine learning concepts

accessible at an early age. The platform will be piloted in the 8th grade STEM program at John D. Runkle School this year, with the hope of gathering feedback and extending the tool to target younger students.

How will ML be taught in classrooms of the future? Monardo thinks it’s an open question. “If we’re adding computer science and machine learning into the curriculum,” he contemplates, “what are we taking out?”

Lao advocates for adding AI to current computer science (CS) or technology classes, rather than a broad curriculum integration across every class, which are two ways people are approaching the issue. However, Lao also recognizes the value of AI’s presence in seemingly unrelated subjects, reflecting on the evolution of internet skills in education: once a specialized topic, now a ubiquitous tool in every classroom. She draws parallels to technology she was taught in school “I had a class for typing and how to use Google. Nowadays, in every single class, you’re expected to use Google for research, you’re expected to type papers.”

By integrating ML education into K-12 education, Lao, Brought, and Monardo hope to ensure that the next generation of students are not only consumers of technology but also its informed creators and regulators. The endeavors of educators and innovators are laying the groundwork for a future where ML is not just understood but embraced, empowering students with the knowledge and skills to thrive in an AI-saturated world.

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

MIT.nano: engineering at the heart of MIT

By **Karie Shen**
SCIENCE EDITOR

Jorg Scholvin can distinguish silicon materials just two nanometers apart in thickness with his naked eye. In the blanched rooms of Building 12, machines buzz a steady low hum. The MIT.nano veteran points out three thin, circular plates of varying colors on a metal table. The brownish-orange one, he says, is coated in a film 60 nanometers (nm) thick. The purple one corresponds to 68 nm, and light blue to 72 nm. “There are tools that can tell me this,” Dr. Scholvin ’00 PhD ’06 states from behind his cleanroom suit mask, but “I know from the color.”

These plates are 200-millimeter (8 inches in diameter) wafers, thin slices of semiconductor such as silicon. They are commonly used in industry as a base for etching and deposition to create microcircuits, solar cells, and other devices. MIT.nano houses instruments used in industry, as well as those geared specifically towards research.

The physics is simple enough: light waves travel down and either reflect off of the top surface of film or continue down through it, reflecting on the bottom surface. The light that our eyes see is a combination of the two waves, and the different colors are a result of the waves interfering with each other. The

blue 72 nm wafer, for instance, indicates that light rays are constructively interfering in the blue range, whereas red and green wavelengths are destructively interfering. Oil spills and soap bubbles, with their rainbow patterns, display the same phenomenon, called thin film interference.

Scholvin presents a fourth wafer, colored somewhere in between the purple and light blue ones, which means it has a film thickness of around 70 nm. For reference, a strand of hair is about 100,000 nanometers thick. This means that the difference between these plates is as little as two nanometers, or 10 layers of silicon nitride – and it is easily observable to the naked eye. “This shouldn’t be possible,” Scholvin states. It is still baffling, even after his years of experience.

These technologies are not only possible but accessible for MIT and external groups. Around 500-600 users have their primary projects in the nanofabrication lab (“the fab” for short), but there are even more who temporarily use the tech for a larger project.

Start-ups and over 40 labs on campus come in for applications ranging from coating a stainless steel needle with nanoparticles for biomedical inventions, to creating nanoscale filters for corrosive liquids in order to recycle batteries. “Those are fun things because they are the non-obvious applica-

tions of the fab,” Scholvin states, “and they enable something that otherwise wouldn’t be possible.” Being conveniently situated in the center of campus means that “everyone is within pretty much a 3-minute walk of the lab.”

Scholvin stated that users range from 17 to 70 years in age. As early as freshman year, MIT students can take the IAP workshop “Make your own chip inside the lab!” or the intro class Micro/Nano Processing Technology (6.2600[J]). Students from almost every course have taken a class in the fab.

One motivation of these classes and workshops is to introduce underclassmen to nanofabrication and its vast applications early on. Scholvin reflects on his experience as an undergraduate at MIT studying electrical engineering.

Like many, he delayed taking the GIR biology class until his senior year. “I was sitting in class like, ‘Wow! This is kind of cool.’ But, too late! If I had taken it earlier, maybe I could have mixed it with something else,” he shares. “If you’re a sophomore or freshman, ideally, you get exposed to this environment and that gives you the chance to say, ‘This is something I want to do.’”

Scholvin believes that all it takes is to be in a space for a short amount of time, to know that something exists. “In the fabrica-

tion world,” he states, “you can contribute and do cutting edge parts relatively quickly.”

The mysteries of nanofabrication are endless. “Nothing that happens in microfabrication should work,” Scholvin argues. “And the reason it’s possible is because we negotiate with nature, in some sense.”

Say someone wants to be able to fly. It’s not possible, unless they use an airplane. “You give up on generality, but ideally the things you give up will allow you to do it,” Scholvin explains. Similar concessions are made in the negotiation of nanotechnologies.

“That’s what goes on in the lab. How do you take something that, at first glance, is impossible to do, and find the right boundary conditions and the right constraints so suddenly it becomes possible?” It may be as simple as spacing devices out a certain amount, or having them face the same direction, or it may be a more complex puzzle.

The colored silicon wafers are an example of this. The human eye generally cannot see the difference of a few atoms, but in this case, it is possible – on thin films only. This is a generality that is negotiated for this ability to distinguish between a 68 nm film and a 70 nm film.

“It is beautiful,” Scholvin states. “That is impressive.”



THE TECH

Monday, May 6, 2:37 PM: Cambridge and MIT police block students from entering the encampment.



THE TECH

Monday, May 6, 3:58 PM: Counterprotesters in front of the Student Center.



THE TECH

Monday, May 6, 4:00 PM: A protest on Lobby 7 steps, right before protestors take Mass Ave.



THE TECH

Monday, May 6, 4:05 PM: Students rally opposite of the main protest on Kresge Oval.



THE TECH

Monday, May 6, 4:06 PM: Protestors sit in at the front of Lobby 7 entrance.



THE TECH

Monday, May 6, 4:11 PM: High school protestors arrive on Mass Ave.



THE TECH

Monday, May 6, 4:22 PM: Pro-Palestine protestors block Mass Ave.



THE TECH

Monday, May 6, 4:22 PM: Onlookers watch the protests from the Student Center.



THE TECH

Monday, May 6, 5:44 PM: SERT separates Pro-Israeli protestors and Pro-Palestinian protestors.



THE TECH

Monday, May 6, 5:47 PM: Protesters link arms around the encampment after breaking down the barricade



THE TECH

Monday, May 6, 5:49 PM: Protestors form a human chain and yell out chants in support of the Palestinian cause.



THE TECH

Monday, May 6, 7:41 PM: Pro-Palestinian protestors sit around the encampment.



THE TECH

Monday, May 6, 8:43 PM: Pro-Palestinian demonstrators take hold of Kresge Oval.

CONCERT REVIEW

Hilary Hahn steals the show at the BSO

The BSO performs Thorvaldsdottir, Mozart, and Brahms

Week 20:

Anna Thorvaldsdottir's ARCHORA,

Mozart's Symphony No. 33,

Brahms's Violin Concerto in D Major

Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO)

Conducted by Andris Nelsons

Hilary Hahn on Violin

Boston Symphony Hall

April 18, 2024

By Vivian Hir
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

The BSO concert on Thursday, April 18, was memorable not only because of the program's diverse and rich sound palette but also for world-renowned violinist Hilary Hahn's stunning rendition of Brahms's Violin Concerto in D Major. Despite it be-

ing a weekday night, Symphony Hall was packed, the atmosphere buzzing with excitement and energy in anticipation of Hahn's performance.

The concert opened with contemporary composer Anna Thorvaldsdottir's ARCHORA, a minimalist yet captivating piece. Although the composition consisted of long notes interspersed with atypical melodies, the creative use of instrumentation made ARCHORA shine. The woodwinds employed breathing techniques that made the notes short and fluttery, akin to chirping birds.

The percussion section was small, but the gong and the light sliding of a bow on the large brass drum created sounds like a gust of wind.

While the piece sometimes sounded empty and flat, the atonal lines and gradual glissando from the strings section created a suspenseful and eerie atmosphere. Toward the end of the piece, the melody seemed to be on the cusp of hope and renewal, transitioning to a less dissonant and more familiar sound. The orchestra, however, finished with a long pianissimo ending close to complete silence. The strange closing made the audience hold their breaths, uncertain of when the piece would actually end. When conductor Andris Nelsons finally lowered his baton, the audience broke into warm rounds of applause.

What followed ARCHORA was Mozart's Symphony No. 33 in B Flat Major, a piece dominated by the strings section but char-

acterized by rich sounds from other instruments (horns, bassoons, oboes). The first movement, Allegro assai, had pleasant homophony from the strings, which made the sound jovial. The horns and oboes had a bright timbre that contrasted well with the violin's merry sound, as they helped accentuate the main notes in the strings' melody. The oboe was the highlight of Andante moderato for its serene expressive solo, and the reedy sound added vibrancy to the movement.

In Menuetto, the unique phrasing of legatos punctuated with staccatos made the piece enthralling for its light, dance-like qualities. Even Nelsons let the melody take over him, his hands gently swaying back and forth as he conducted the piece. The symphony ended strongly with a delightful dialogue between the oboe and the strings in Allegro assai, while the bassoons had a distinctive buzzy sound that complemented the high pitches.

After intermission, Hilary Hahn stepped onto the stage. The Brahms Violin Concerto in D Major began with a mellow oboe opening, followed by tremolos in the strings section that built up anticipation for the start of the violin solo. Hilary Hahn's performance was engrossing as she played the sixteenth notes masterfully in quick succession. Her ability to make significant note shifts smooth and connected was impressive. The energy of the arpeggios undulated from her violin, creating a dizzying effect of ascending and descending notes. Her body moved with

the violin naturally, as if she and the instrument were one body.

Hahn also made the solo sound seamless with the rest of the orchestra. For instance, in Adagio, the ethereal sound of the violin paired well with the oboe's sweet melody, offering the audience respite from the energetic Allegro non troppo. Hahn returned to play the violin with great intensity in Allegro giocoso, dazzling the audience with her flawless cadenza: the scales were perfect, and the playful staccato was amusing. The concerto's ending was engrossing because the violin solo gradually slowed down, as if it would conclude the piece. The movement, however, ended with the entire orchestra playing the last notes of the finale in great unison.

Immediately after the performance, everyone in the audience stood up to give a standing ovation, a sight I have only seen a handful of times in my entire life. The applause went on for minutes, with cheers and whistles from the audience. In response to the overwhelmingly positive response from the audience, Hahn played Bach's Sarabande from Partita in D Minor, a slow but moving piece.

Her playing finely captured the sorrow and melancholy in the piece, the trills like quavers in a voice filled with vulnerability. While short, the encore was just as memorable as her performance of the Violin Concerto in D, leaving the audience to marvel at music's ability to express emotions that words cannot.

CONCERT REVIEW

Romeo and Juliet, as told by Berlioz and the BSO

Dramatic choral symphony renews messages of love and peace

Berlioz's "Roméo et Juliette"

Boston Symphony Orchestra

Tanglewood Festival Chorus

Conducted by Andris Nelsons

Boston Symphony Hall

May 4, 2024

By Melbourne Tang

Romeo and Juliet is a story of love, war, and peace that has stood the test of time and has inspired countless generations of artists and storytellers. Among these artists was Hector Berlioz — a French composer who lived in the first half of the 19th century. Berlioz is known for his programmatic works that tell stories through music, such as the Symphonie Fantastique. His Roméo et Juliette is a programmatic symphony with elements of opera that heighten the drama. Berlioz based his symphony on eighteenth-century English actor David Garrick's version of Romeo and Juliet, through which he fell in love with his future wife, actress Harriet Smithson.

The symphony opens with an exciting frenzy of sharp notes from the viola, depicting combat between the Montagues and Capulets. The prince intervenes and the prologue follows. The prologue serves a similar function to an opera overture by providing a preview of the scenes to follow. Unlike an opera overture which is strictly orchestral, however, the prologue includes a small chorus and two soloists (mezzo-soprano J'naï Bridges and tenor Nicholas Phan) alongside the orchestra.

Compared to other programmatic symphonies, it was refreshing to hear a narration by the chorus and soloists which provided context and added meaning to the music. For instance, the lush sound of strings was accompanied by

Bridges' praise of love. Conversely, the music also enhanced the sung text. When the chorus sang of the fairy of dreams Queen Mab vanishing into air, there was a corresponding flourish in the flutes followed by silence which led to a few chuckles from the audience.

After the prologue, the orchestra primarily told the story. Berlioz adeptly uses a variety of instruments and musical textures to paint each of the scenes. During the scene of the Capulets' ball, the vivacious strings and waltzy strum of the bass made me want to stomp and dance along. The guests sang along as they trickled away. The chorus sang from backstage, effectively creating an impression of faraway voices. The voices then faded away, melting into the sound of the clarinet for the next scene. This is one of the many transitions that the BSO smoothly executes, keeping the audience entranced by the music and story.

The most powerful aspect of the performance was the chorus. In the romantic and dreamy scenes, the angelic singing of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus complemented the soaring cello melodies, the arpeggios of the harp, and the delicate and smooth flute lines to create an ethereal atmosphere. In the Finale, the chorus played the important role of the Montagues and Capulets. Having so many voices gasp in synchrony amplified the tragic surprise of Romeo's and Juliet's deaths. The arguing and finger-pointing between the two families played out in clamorous polyphony, adding to the chaos of the scene.

Friar Lawrence, portrayed by bass John Relyea, silences the chorus and begs them to stop fighting. The Friar's commanding authority and frustration with the warring families was palpable in Relyea's singing. The Montagues and Capulets listen to him, recognizing the detrimental effects of their feud, and agree to reconcile. The chorus's vow to peace and brotherly love ends the symphony.

The journey from ethereal voices to a booming chorus was a transformative experience, reminiscent of awakenings in religious masses. The sonorous power of both the chorus and the orchestra at the end made it difficult to not believe in love and peace, especially in these times of turmoil. Overall, Berlioz's use of a chorus and vivid musical imagery and the BSO's gut-wrenching execution of the piece renewed messages of love and peace in the classic story of Romeo and Juliet.

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CONCERT REVIEW

A celestial symphony of sensation

Featuring Yuja Wang and an obscure electronic instrument

Olivier Messiaen’s Turangalîla-Symphonie

Boston Symphony Orchestra

Conducted by Andris Nelsons

Yuja Wang on Piano, Cécile Lartigau on the ondes Martenot

Boston Symphony Hall

April 13, 2024

By Grace Tian

April 13’s Boston Symphony Orchestra performance featured distinguished pianist Yuja Wang and Cécile Lartigau, on the ondes Martenot, playing Olivier Messiaen’s Turangalîla-Symphonie. I had never heard of this piece or the instrument ondes Martenot before, so this was a fun experience.

On stage, there were four key instruments at the front. From left to right: keyboard glockenspiel (small), celesta (medium), and piano (large), all facing the ondes Martenot, a mysterious instrument. We got to learn more about the

ondes Martenot at the end of the concert! The whole performance was just this one 1.5 hour piece with no intermission. The piece has ten sections, so I’ll structure the rest of this article accordingly.

1. The start is dark and ominous. The piano does some scratchy chord trills that sound like a furious flute. There is a dramatic piano solo in the middle featuring more cat-scratching. From the ondes Martenot, we hear otherworldly sliding sounds, and Lartigau uses some interesting wrist-circle techniques in the left hand.

2. The orchestra alternates between intense moments of passion and mystical moments of tender melody. The snare sounds like a bird’s wings flapping. Wang seems to be having a lot of fun. There is a conversation between the discrete keyboards and the sliding ondes Martenot. At the end, there are a few rogue clappers from the audience who are quickly hushed.

3. The clarinet and the ondes Martenot exchange a pensive melody. The celesta-piano double creates an interesting effect where the celesta is piercing and the piano is fuller. The ondes Martenot continues to slide alongside other instruments. The symphony jumps between different wind instruments and different keyboard instruments, creating a fidgety feel.

4. There’s an emphasis on dissonance, which is reflected in the piano solo. Rhythms and contours are often repeated in small chunks. In general, the piece uses a lot of local repetition like this. A return to the first movement gives us more piano cat-scratching ondes Martenot sliding. The keys shimmer in a glittery end.

5. A frenzy of excitement. There was an extremely loud ending of one note on a humon-

gous crescendo. I had to cover my ears. Fun fact: you can hear Balinese gamelan influences in many of Messiaen’s works. The MIT Gamelan Galak Tika actually performed at Symphony Hall before the concert. You can check out MIT Balinese Gamelan (21M.450) if you’re curious!

6. Hyper-realistic bird sounds coming from the whole orchestra - winds, strings, piano, etc. Messiaen was a bird lover and into ornithology, which his music definitely reflects. Check out Messiaen’s Réveil des oiseaux if you’re interested in even more bird sounds.

7. It was at this movement when I succumbed to sleep. On the other hand, here are some fun facts. Did you know that Messiaen had synesthesia? He associated certain colors with certain notes, and combinations of notes. He even marked some of his scores with colors. He was also very religious and much of his music has a divine feel. This is reflected in his use of the ondes Martenot, an early electronic musical instrument which has an especially supernatural sound. Check out Messiaen’s Fête des belles eaux for six ondes Martenot at once! Turangalîla-Symphonie is supposedly about love, though I didn’t completely understand it. Messiaen’s wife, violinist Claire Delbos, had been institutionalized for amnesia from a brain infection after a hysterectomy. He started to develop mutual feelings for pianist Yvonne Loriod but Messiaen was strongly religious and refused to get remarried until Delbos died. As such, he and Loriod waited for two decades before marrying.

8. We see another interesting ondes Martenot effect that has some sort of buzzing sound. The clarinet plays a line, and then on the last note, the ondes Martenot does a little buzz. We continue to see the contrast between disso-

nant and consonant chords. The brass are the bones, and the strings are the meat.

9. This movement was perhaps my favorite melody of the piece, with some romantic chromaticism. I especially enjoyed it when the piano played this melody. The blocks have a distinct sound which is ominously calming. The strings sometimes play a smaller role, with only the first stands playing.

10. The grand fanfare finale was a chaotic frenzy with long stretches of dissonance. It ends with three hits and a bloom — a little arpeggio with a huge crescendo. I had to cover my ears. Interestingly, Wang did too. Of course, there was immediate loud applause with a standing ovation.

Wang did not perform an encore, but we did get a mini-lesson from Lartigau about the ondes Martenot. It is an early electronic instrument with a theremin-like sound. It consists of three parts: a keyboard-like interface, a vertical fan of strings, and a hanging metal plate. The interface lets you slide your hand down the keyboard to produce a sliding sound. The twelve strings are divided six on the left and six on the right, making up the two whole tone scales. The plate amplifies the sound. Lartigau told the audience about how she invented a tuning system for the ondes Martenot!

Overall, the Turangalîla-Symphonie was a unique piece. I enjoyed the cool sound effects and the energy, but perhaps I’ll have to listen a few more times to see the connection to love. This concert led my curiosity down little rabbit holes about the ondes Martenot, Olivier Messiaen, and Balinese gamelan - all three of which I will continue to listen to, and I recommend checking out!

CONCERT REVIEW

An angry piece, an interesting trumpet concerto, and a wonderful symphony

The BSO performs Gubaidulina, Glanert, and Prokofiev.

Week 21:

Sofia Gubaidulina’s The Wrath of God,

Detlev Glanert’s Concerto for Trumpet and Orchestra,

Prokofiev’s Symphony No. 4, Op. 47

Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO)

Conducted by Andris Nelsons

Thomas Rolf on Trumpet

Boston Symphony Hall

April 27, 2024

By Vivian Hir
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

The BSO performed an eclectic selection of pieces on Saturday, April 27. This concert was unique not only for its relatively recent repertoire but also for being a trumpet concerto. While concertos exist

for most, if not all, instruments, the most famous ones are piano and violin concertos. As a result, this performance was memorable for its novel and unconventional works of music.

The concert began with Sofia Gubaidulina’s The Wrath of God, a piece dedicated to Beethoven on his 250th anniversary. The piece started off with a very loud opening line from the tuba that had an underlying sinister energy, as if the sound came from a powerful supernatural force. However, the brass section’s strong melody initially overpowered the strings section.

The dynamics between the strings and brass section were interesting because their dissonant melodies and crescendo helped further develop the ominous feeling that perfectly captured a divine force’s extreme anger. The other instruments in the orchestra contributed to this agitated atmosphere, from the flute’s high-pitched screeches to the violin’s forceful, deliberate bowing.

The ending lacked cohesion due to the various distinct timbres and instruments playing different time values, which made the piece feel somewhat chaotic. Despite deviating from the traditional format of a finale, the piece closed off well with a pervading glockenspiel melody. The bright timbre made the piece end on a more hopeful and optimistic note, a direction different from the primarily tense climate. Overall, The Wrath of God did a wonderful job encapsulating this suspenseful and apocalyptic mood, though the cacophony

and themes felt somewhat repetitive at times.

Next was Glanert’s Concerto for Trumpet and Orchestra, a BSO commission piece composed in 2019 for BSO Principal Trumpet Thomas Rolf. The concerto was memorable in highlighting the trumpet’s diverse range of timbres, proving that a trumpet is more than just an instrument that takes on a loud, brassy role in an orchestra. For instance, Rolf used a mute for the trumpet in “Rites,” making the trumpet take on a more raspy and reedy voice. Although the mute made the trumpet sound less bright, hearing the muted trumpet’s contrasting timbre was fascinating for its jazzy feeling.

Rolf’s rendition of the trumpet solo in “Songs” was impressive for playing long stretches of melody while smoothly transitioning between quick breaths. Compared to the jocular and energetic “Rites,” his solo in “Songs” was more lyrical, as he played in deep contemplation. The other instruments produced sounds that complemented well with the trumpet, like the slides on the violin that were analogous to the wah-wah sound effect played by a brass instrument.

The concerto ended splendidly with the instruments coming together all at once. People in the audience gave a standing ovation, and Rolf responded by brandishing his two trumpets in the air. When composer Detlev Glanert came up to the stage, there was another warm round of applause.

The concert ended with Prokofiev’s

Symphony No. 4, Op. 47, an orchestral work based on the ballet Prodigal Son. Unlike the first movements in other symphonies that follow an allegro tempo, this symphony began at andante assai, a slower pace than usual. Despite this difference, Andante assai was wonderful to listen to for its mellow and calming effect, especially the otherworldly sounds from the flute and woodwinds that paint a peaceful horizon. Then, the movement undergoes a magnificent transformation, transitioning to Allegro and ending with the bright, celebratory sounds of the brass instruments.

Andante tranquillo returns to this familiar mood in Andante assai, as the woodwinds have a sweet melody. Moderato, on the other hand, is enjoyable for its playful nature. The light pizzicato in the strings has a tip-toey feeling, while the call and response among the various instruments like the violin and clarinet make the piece more light-hearted. The last movement, Allegro risoluto, was brimming with energy that came in waves, gradually building up to a strong finale. Prokofiev’s Symphony No. 4 was outstanding because of significant contrasts in sounds across the four movements, from the soothing flute solo in Andante tranquillo to the boisterous character in Allegro risoluto.

Although the performance began with unfamiliar sounds that were harsh for the ear, as a whole, the listening experience was enriching for its various colors.

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THEATRE REVIEW

Becoming a Man asks questions about life, love, and connection

A memoir about a 50 year old man who is finally growing up

By Vivian Hir
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Becoming a Man mixes biography, documentary, and humanity into a single unique theatrical experience. The play, based on the memoir of the same title, tells the story of the author P. Carl, a transgender man who transitioned in his fifties. It explores his relationships and personal growth during what Carl tells the audience was the “best and worst year of his life,” the period after he started taking testosterone and was able to live as a man completely for the first time.

The play has little plot, feeling more like a documentary of Carl’s life than a story or traditional narrative. This allows the artists more space to explore the relationships in Carl’s life. As the American Repertory Theater (A.R.T.) loves to remind audiences, their work is based on essential questions. The art they present wrestles with these complex topics and the director’s note reminds audience members to continue to ponder them on the way home. Becoming a Man asks “When we change, can the people we love come with us?” A.R.T. takes the questioning to a new level with their most recent work, as the first act includes the entirety of the 90-minute scripted play and the second act consists exclusively of a 20-minute audience conversation where audience members are asked to raise their hands and share their thoughts on the production based on guiding questions.

The play starts after Carl has been able to finally fully transition and shows the tension and stress that change creates for him and his loved ones. In a series of slice of life scenes and flashbacks to critical moments in his past, the audience is given a window into who Carl is. The highlight of the play is seeing the different relationships Carl has with his wife, best friend, parents, and past self as he fully embodies himself for the first time.

With stellar performances across the board, Petey Gibson (Carl) carries the show with his depth and range of emotion and character. Elena Hurst (Lynette, Carl’s wife) pulls at heartstrings, often coming off as more sympathetic than Carl with her emotionally wrought struggle to deal with her husband’s new life. Christopher Liam Moore (Carl’s father) and Stacey Raymond (Polly, Carl’s deadname) both also show up in big ways, making the entire show that much more believable and real. The only confusing choice is why Carl and Lynette are portrayed as in their mid-20s to 30s when the story plac-

es them in their 50s. It seems as though it would make the entire story that much more poignant to watch people no longer in their youth deal with these challenges of maturity and caring for each other.

The performance offers several different definitions for its title, “becoming a man.” Carl tells the audience that he considers the day he became a man to be the day he was not misgendered a single time. If you were to ask Carl’s therapist, she might say the entire play is about the process of Carl’s transitioning from a woman to the man he is. I think both the author and the audience know, however, that the true arc is Carl’s journey working to transition from a boy to a man. The play highlights insights into the challenges Carl faces from never having had the opportunity to be a teenage boy. From the loud shoes to the offhanded misogyny, the memoir component of the production gives the most cringe-worthy moments an air of self-reflection as Carl the playwright tells the audience of the failures of his boyish mid-fifties.

The connecting humanity that truly ties the performance together is the endless plea of each of the characters to be seen. While it is Lynette, Carl’s wife, who delivers the punchline “You aren’t seeing me” in one of their many marital fights, that frustration permeates the entire play. It ranges from Carl begging his wife to use his name, to Lynette asking how he didn’t realize his transition would impact her life too, to Polly desperately begging his mom to understand his mental health struggles. A more accurate essential question might be “How can we work to see each other?” That is what makes the story so compelling, as people from any identity and background can recognize in Carl’s journey the desperate need to be seen and loved as they are. It is the foundation of the human experience to reach out to our loved ones and ask them to see us as our true selves.

This production falls squarely into A.R.T.’s tradition of unexpected and unique theater. Bringing a brutal level of honesty to the story invites everyone to engage with, understand, and relate to Carl’s life. If you want a Disney movie, this might be as far as you can get, but if you want to spend your walk home wondering about how you balance your own needs with those of your loved ones, how to connect, how to love people the way they need, and how to understand life’s complex journeys, Becoming a Man is well worth the time.



Hilary Hahn performs the Brahms Violin Concerto with the BSO

CONCERT REVIEW

Yo-Yo Ma and Kathryn Stott conduct final joint Boston show

The pair was greeted with standing ovation

By Helen Hu & Manaal Mohammed

On Tuesday April 9, the Celebrity Series of Boston presented a special classical music concert revolving around the duo of cellist Yo-Yo Ma and pianist Kathryn Stott. This was the pair’s ninth collaboration and their last joint Boston appearance, as Stott announced her retirement from public performance. Both artists have chosen paths that revolve around unity and connection through music, with Stott curating and directing chamber music festivals and Ma involved in an array of global humanitarian initiatives, including being a United Nations Messenger of Peace.

The program opened with a unique choice to perform five independent pieces as a cohesive set, like a multi-movement piece with no breaks for applause. The pieces felt united under a theme of childlike innocence, displaying touches of lyrical nostalgia but also playful abandon. On a deeper level, however, the five-piece suite was carefully curated by Stott to highlight the intersection of her path with Ma’s, namely, through their shared teacher, Nadia Boulanger, whose piece is complemented by other compositions significant to their lives. In Ma’s words, the suite “is a microcosm fittingly framed by the composer who has been with Kathy since the very beginning, Gabriel Fauré, friend and mentor to Nadia Boulanger.”

Fauré’s lullaby, Berceuse, seemed to naturally develop into Dvorak’s gypsy-inspired “Songs My Mother Taught Me,” the cello part singing a strikingly similar melody. Sergio Assad’s Menino was, in the composer’s own words, about “the child we all have inside of ourselves.” As the piece’s tempo quickened, it was reminiscent of youth and innocence, and the banter between cello and piano feeling jazzy and improvisational, bringing in a Brazilian flavor with a hint of original instrumentation composed of two guitars in place of the piano.

Next was Nadia Boulanger’s Cantique, a piece which Yo-Yo Ma had written: “It feels right that [this piece] – a song of praise – arrives two-thirds of the way through our opening suite, at its golden mean.” Finally, Fauré’s Papillon jumped straight into a virtuosic buzz of rapid runs in the cello, interspersed with airy melodic sections. While Papillon, the French word for butterfly, conjures a vivid image, Fauré had no patience with his publisher: “Butterfly or dung fly, call it whatever you like.” Whatever this showpiece was, its coda fizzled out into a pizzicato chord, candid yet awkward in a way that made the hall erupt into laughter and applause.

After the opening suite, Ma and Stott paused to introduce the Shostakovich Cello Sonata. I really appreciated hearing the performers’ thoughts, as it’s relatively unheard of for performers in traditional classical performances to introduce what you’re playing, or even engage with the audience on any deeper level than bowing. It was clear that I wasn’t alone in this – the audience emitted a collective “ooh...” after Ma said that playing this piece was like “playing truth to power.” Speak-

ing more broadly about his long standing musical partnership with Stott, Ma described life as “the short space between the cradle and the grave,” adding that “loving life is [their] greatest creative art.”

Dmitri Shostakovich, the genius composer he was, gives us a little bit of everything in this cello sonata. This four-movement piece alternates between slow and fast, lyrical and agitated. The first movement has a sense of urgency propelled by crescendos and a seeking beat, as if we’re marching towards the unknown. The Allegro second movement is garnished with fun accented scales and harmonic glissandos. Then we enter a rich and meditative Largo, like a passionate serenade. Finally, the fourth movement’s Allegro keeps us on our toes with a playful catchy theme, adding in pizzicato chords in the cello which Ma accomplishes in wide brushing motions.

Yo-Yo Ma and Stott then led into Arvo Pärt’s Spiegel im Spiegel (“mirror in the mirror”), which was written the year the two met. Stott described it as a “white light full of colors” and taking a moment to slow down because of how fast life goes. As they played, the lights were turned down and a projector behind the duo displayed images taken from the James Webb and Hubble telescopes, starting with celestial bodies and images of space, then pictures of earth and nature, ending with a light map of the United States. The piece was fluid and smooth, complementing the fading in and out of the images shown behind – there was a sense of looking through a kaleidoscope and feeling the romance of belonging to something so large and significant as the human race and the planet we live on.

They followed up with Sonata in A Major by César Franck, a piece they stated was about the “cycle of life.” The piece was a wedding gift for violinist Eugene Ysaye, who had to do the last three movements from memory in the dark when premiering it. The piece had very smooth bow changes when played, and sounded like one long bow. In the last movement, the piano and cello took turns leading – the interactions were natural and intuitive, making it clear that they’ve been playing together for a long time. Yo-Yo Ma’s performance of this piece showed off his technical skill well; he played very high notes so far down on the fingerboard that he had to lean over the edge to see his fingers. The piece changed pace quickly, contributing to the cyclical feel.

After the performance, the pair was met with thunderous applause, and once they left the stage they soon came back on for an encore of two pieces, both of which had a gaiety and exuberance to them. Although Yo-Yo Ma seemed to not have his sheet music with him, the performance went unhampered as he was able to look over at Stott’s. Overall, the two’s final performance together in Boston (as Stott will be retiring from public performance after this year) was a resounding success and a beautiful testament to the pair’s dedication to their craft over the years and their longstanding musical collaboration and partnership.



Yuja Wang performs Messiaen’s Truangelila-Symphonie with the BSO.

EVENT REVIEW

Lights! Camera! Fashion! The 2024 MIT Gala finds success on- and off-stage.

From fashion to art to music, this event had it all.

By Alor Sahoo
CAMPUS LIFE EDITOR

The epitome of fashion and art

Students on the second floor of the Student Center peered inside Lobdell, amazed by the sights. Outside, a sparkly photo booth for all guests, dutifully manned by Jakob de Raiij '24. Inside, rows of chairs, crowds of people, tasteful decor, tasty appetizers, and music from the MIT Laptop Ensemble. Upstairs, a plethora of art and artists for guests to interact with.

This professional scene is MIT Gala: a fashion and art show that culminated with the release of the 12th edition of the Infinite Magazine, MIT's premier fashion publication.

Launch Director Haydn Long '26 raved about the event and her experience with Infinite as a whole. Last year, her living community (Burton 2) introduced her to the organization, and she has been hooked ever since. "I felt really heard and seen by the [MIT Gala] board," she fondly recounted, a pleasant surprise [to her] since arts at MIT are sometimes "overlooked." Long's drive to make the 2024 MIT Gala spectacular is also fueled by its accessibility. After all, she noted, "where else...are first-time designers having [outfits] walked [on] a runway in front of hundreds of people?"

Artists and creators of all types are highlighted

One might assume that only certain media and art forms, such as photography, are highlighted at the MIT Gala. This couldn't be farther from the truth.

An example is the particularly striking Luminous Borders by Safiyah Gold and Tanya Brudner. Inspired by edge detection algorithms from robotics, the piece is a dynamic display that responds to movement in front of the camera. Observers are thus seamlessly engaged directly and allowed to watch a version of themselves. Gold was inspired after she took Introduction to Interactive, Participatory, and Generative Art Making, which encouraged her to "co-create art with the viewer."

Other work was just as engaging. Nami Yamaguchi, a Boston-based craftsperson, presented an array of pigments of her creation. She both wanted to minimize her "environmental impact as an artist" and prove that natural alternatives were just as pigmented and vibrant as their conventional counterparts. With an array of brushes, water, and watercolor paper at her station, numerous visitors got to test her paints for themselves, derived from marigolds, walnut husks, onion skins, bugs, and more. Such work encourages viewers to think more critically about the relationship between an art medium and the natural world.

Dedication to fashion

At 7:30 pm, people quickly shuffled to their seats and awaited the runway. The program

gave no information about the outfits themselves — only the names of the designers and the models. After a brief introduction, the runway commenced.

With a rhythmic beat playing, the models walked out. With each new model, the audience alternated between quiet shock and uproarious clapping. From their walks to hand-embroidered outfits to complex makeup, everyone was distinctly different and provocative — adorned with dresses, coats, embroidered jeans, pink lace ribbon, polygonal skirts, luggage, and more.

One unusual fashion medium drew loud applause: pure metal. Sabine Chu '26, modeled the outfit designed by Managing Director Gloria Zhu '26 along with Teresa Jiang '26, Lee Liu, Lindsay Reyes '26, and Fernando Valenzuela '26. For the metal corset piece specifically, Zhu made numerous prototypes, "making small adjustments" each time to account for "how the metal would warp and bend around the body and bold to itself." After a long and arduous trial-and-error process — made more challenging by Zhu's lack of "garment construction experience" — the final product emerged: a beautiful top made from 3 pieces of metal, bent around the shoulder and waist and bolted to one another.

In addition, the corresponding spread of the magazine visually details so many other metal creations — from face pieces to wings to intricate finger ornaments. It's no surprise that these metal creations are the cover of Issue 12.

The success of this event built on its predecessor — the very first MIT Gala in 2023, which was led by Shua Cho '24, the current Editor-in-Chief of Infinite. Like many, her history with Infinite is long. However, she recognizes that other MIT students may not be aware of Infinite as a creative space, so she is excited to observe the MIT Gala's blossoming. To Cho, this growth is encapsulated by creators like Joshua Osifo '26. After attending the first MIT Gala, he was determined to become a designer himself. This year, despite his limited fabrication background, he created an entire wedding dress as his first original outfit. His hours spent sewing and planning shined through, as his dress, paired with a 3D-printed anatomical heart, hit the runway with loud cheers.

Infinite is not a "traditional magazine"

Finally, Shua also emphasized Infinite's and MIT Gala's accessibility as core strengths that will only continue to grow. These organizations are one of few arts spaces that embrace "amateurs who are learning a new skill" while simultaneously helping them create "high level professional work." According to Shua, this is only possible because Infinite and MIT Gala aren't traditional magazines and fashion shows, respectively — rather, they are creative "incubators" with "mentorship [that helps anyone] execute their project."



Sabine Chu by Gloria Zhu, MIT Gala 2024.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JACK FIELD STUDIO



MICHELLE XIANG - THE TECH

Guests admire artwork showcased at the Student Art Showcase, part of MIT Gala organized by Infinite Magazine, held at Lobdell on Sunday, April 28th.



MICHELLE XIANG - THE TECH

Guests admire artwork showcased at the Student Art Showcase, part of MIT Gala organized by Infinite Magazine, held at Lobdell on Sunday, April 28th.



ISABELLA YU - THE TECH

Present and past members of the Ring Committee attend Ring Delivery on the rooftop patio of the Prudential Center.



JADE CHONGSATHAPORN PONG - THE TECH

The cast of LOST's rendition of Oscar Wilde's 1895 comedy The Importance of Being Earnest pose for a group photo before opening night.



ALEXA SIMAO - THE TECH

Students gather around one of the few lights that remained on in Next House during the Dorm Row blackout on Monday, May 6.



KATE LU - THE TECH

MIT Syncopasian presents their spring 2024 a cappella concert, themed “The Syncooking Show”, Saturday, May 4.

GUEST COLUMN

Antiracism or Oppression: MIT Must Choose

By MIT Black Graduate Students Association

Just after 5 p.m. on November 9th the MIT community bore witness to a scene that belongs in a dystopian fever dream, not a 21st century hall of learning. Dozens of MIT police officers stormed into Lobby 7, batons and pepper spray at the ready. Their target? A peaceful sit-in by students protesting the university’s complicity in the genocide of Palestinians. MIT police stood guard at all points of entry and barricaded the peaceful student demonstrators inside; even denying re-entry if students left Lobby 7 to access food, water or bathroom facilities. The next day, MIT police stood guard outside 10-250—where a pre-approved series of Palestine-related educational programming (documentary screenings, lectures, and teach-ins) was scheduled to take place—and barred anyone from entering.

This was not the first time MIT police have oppressed members of our community under the guise of “public safety”. From enduring a SWAT raid in dorms to having guns drawn at us in parking lots, Black and brown members of the MIT community have long faced pervasive racial profiling and interrogation (see minutes 33:00 – 43:00 here). The present escalation of oppressive policing that is being used to target students, faculty, and staff protesting genocide is rooted in the MIT administration’s failure to listen to Black students who have long fought to address anti-Black racism at MIT. The university cannot plausibly create an anti-racist environment while continuing down this path; now, MIT must choose.

Empty Commitments to address anti-Black racism and public safety

Nearly 4 years ago, students from the Black Graduate Student Association (BGSA) and the Black Student Union (BSU)

released the petition to Support Black Lives (SBL) at MIT. The murders of Breonna Taylor and George Floyd in the summer of 2020 seemingly illuminated the reality that violence and racism are inherent to policing itself and that we must reimagine public safety in the U.S. The SBL petition was our way to bring this moment to MIT, and it was met with overwhelming support with over 5,000 individual signatures from students, staff, faculty, and others.

One of the primary goals of the SBL petition was to reduce the scale of policing on MIT’s campus and reallocate resources to build other structures better equipped to address certain public safety concerns. In July 2020, former President Reif ensured that MIT would respond to this historic moment by creating a working group to reimagine public safety. This working group, which was composed of students, faculty, administrators, and MIT police officers, made a number of recommendations. One proposal, put forth in response to the MIT police department’s (MITPD) self-reported statistics that over 90% of calls for service are non-violent concerns such as stolen bicycles, was to establish unarmed community service officers (CSOs) and/or clinicians, who would respond to routine calls and mental health crises. This would have narrowed the scope of policing on our campus and prevented the current use of police force to surveil and intimidate MIT community members. The working group also recommended increased transparency on police policies and procedures, and a community advisory group to provide feedback regarding campus safety. None of these recommendations have been fully realized.

MIT’s (in)actions show how little the Institute values the community members that devoted over a year of labor to the ‘Reimagining Public Safety’ working group, and the

Black and brown communities chronically and disproportionately impacted by policing. MIT’s (in)actions reveal that the university’s 2020 pledge to “address systemic racism at MIT” was only opportunistic alignment during the momentary “trendiness” of antiracism. MIT’s true values are revealed in the current moment, when the Institute is faced with a groundswell of justified anti-genocide protest.

MIT’s Response to Peaceful Protest Against Israel’s Genocide of Palestinians in Gaza

Over the past six months, students, staff, and faculty have raised alarms about the Institute’s complicity in the maiming, death, displacement, and starvation of 2.2 million Palestinians in Gaza given MIT’s direct and unique research ties to the Israeli Ministry of Defense. Rather than grappling with this serious issue, nearly 4 years after MIT’s empty commitments to addressing systemic racism and policing, the Institute has turned to using its police force to heighten the surveillance and intimidation of its own community members.

Without any attempt to gather broad community input, MIT has permanently stationed police officers in Lobby 7. These officers have reportedly conducted random and potentially racially motivated MIT ID checks that resemble racist Stop and Frisk laws. Dozens of cameras have also been installed on campus (in Lobby 7, in front of 77 Massachusetts Avenue, and along the path to the student center) without notification to community members. Police officers have consistently been stationed outside all events organized by student groups aiming to educate the community about the ongoing Palestinian Genocide; resembling the racist policies that the Reimagining Public Safety group recommended we discard. The Institute’s emergency alert system is con-

stantly misused to notify the community of peaceful demonstrations passing through Massachusetts Avenue. In short, the facade of addressing antiracism and reimagining public safety has come crashing down.

MIT Has A Choice To Make

The suppression of anti-genocide and anti-Zionism protest inherently relies on and reinscribes racist policies, procedures, and policing. This reliance on policing has created fertile ground for the violent scenes we have witnessed at Columbia, NYU, USC, University of Texas at Austin, University of Minnesota, Emory, and in our own backyard at Emerson and Northeastern. If MIT is to seriously embrace its professed commitment to address systemic racism, MIT must abandon its carceral—surveillance, policing, and punishment—stance and engage with members of the MIT community in good faith. This means reinstating the Coalition Against Apartheid, rescinding the racist and unprecedented protest policy, and avoiding further police escalation. It also means engaging with and honoring the MIT community’s collective demands—to divest from research and financial relationships with the Israeli military and publicly call for a ceasefire. Finally, to affect long-lasting anti-racist change, MIT must re-allocate MITPD’s budget to develop evidence-based structures proven to create real holistic safety.

We have laid out some steps on the path to anti-racist actions that MIT can take if antiracism, not oppression, is the value MIT wants to reflect. Every member of MIT’s community has a choice in this matter and must decide to either let oppression permeate our culture or take anti-racist action to build a better world. Now, MIT must choose.

This piece is cross-published in the faculty newsletter.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Re: *From the River...*

By Aygul Balcioğlu & Geoffrey Dutton

We read Richard Solomon’s op-ed in the March 7th 2024 edition of The Tech over lunch and discussed it over dinner. We found Solomon’s portrayal of the Palestinians’ plight deeply motivated and moving, impassioned and yet utterly rational.

In December, Steve Carhart whined and opined about CAA protests and DEI initiatives in your pages; Solomon’s op-ed doesn’t whine. It strikes at the heart of MIT’s all-too-easy embrace of dehumanizing technologies and their monied constituencies. After reading Solomon’s articulate, well-documented exposition, it would not surprise us when some will call him an alarmist, naive radical, and much worse. But they have to admit that he’s been there, seen it firsthand and through the eyes of victimized Palestinians. “Propagandist! Hamas Apologist!” you might yell at this man who calls himself a Christian who served as a diplomat; then, close the newspaper and look away because none of this is your problem. Unless, however, you work or teach or learn at MIT, in which case consider the ways he enumerates the Institute complicity with state violence and, yes, genocide. Do not be bothered by its sanitized bureaucratic rationales for suppressing dissent when it challenges

MIT’s complacent complicity.

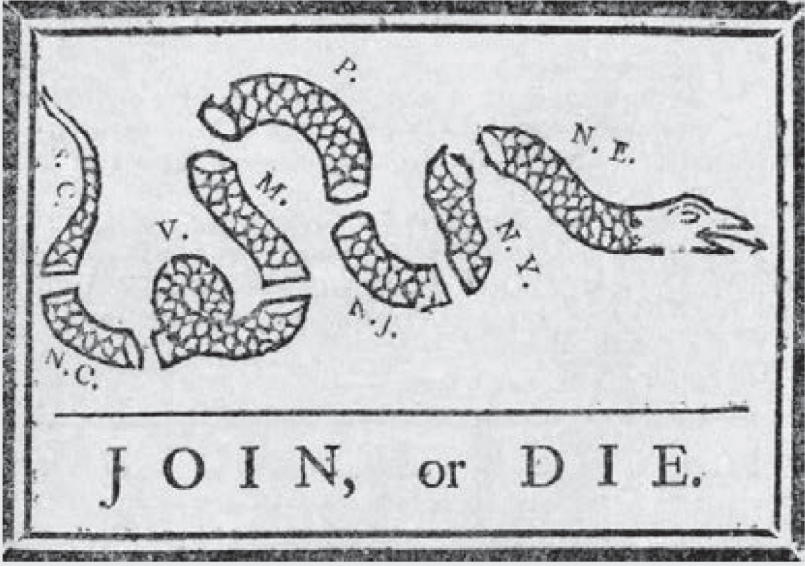
Ladies, gentlemen, and others: dare to expose smug beliefs to the brutal facts scattered about the shattered ground before us. Beat swords into plowshares, as the US military seems to be doing to deliver urgent aid to Gaza while Israeli leaders say things like “I am personally proud of the ruins of Gaza” (Israeli minister May Golan), “that every baby, even 80 years from now, will tell their grandchildren what the Jews did.” Is that how you feel? If you still unconditionally support Israel’s right to defend itself after witnessing the heartbreaking scenes Mr. Solomon described plus those that news media has reported, then ask your conscience if it’s okay to dismiss it as the price of statehood.

And MIT powers-that-be, remember that it’s just as easy to support students’ idealism and commitment as it is to dismiss or suppress it, so do the right thing. As Mr. Solomon says, the “balance” to be struck is not between free speech and safety, it’s between supporting human rights, no matter whose they are, and suppressing dissent, however inconvenient to the institution it may feel.

We offer these thoughts to promote dialog and would like the favor of a reply.

Sincerely,
Aygul Balcioğlu
Geoffrey Dutton

The Tech is looking for editorial cartoonists.



Have something to say?
Write opinion for *The Tech!*

OPEN LETTER

A Public Letter to President Sally Kornbluth

A reminder of your inaugural address for a time such as this

By Kelvin Green II

Written on Monday, May 6, 2023.

Dear Sally,

A year ago this week you were becoming the 18th President of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. I remember sitting close and hearing your speech about the possibility of MIT becoming a place where no problem is too large. And why? You said it best in your May 1, 2023 Inaugural Address with the question you raised first to all present: “What are university leaders good for?”: “Three things – that add up to something big.

First, we can help provision the trip – the right resources and the right talent.

Second, we can clear away bureaucratic boulders that block the trail.

And finally: We can scout out the best routes for scaling the toughest peaks – and build and inspire the right teams to get there. This capacity to link vision and action – that may be the greatest accelerant of all.

If we do those three things right, we create an environment in which every individual has the freedom and support to flourish and grow, and in which we all have a sense of community, connection and shared purpose – those human bonds that allow us to go farther and faster together than any of us could go alone.”

I believe in the power of words, especially one’s own words. Your operative words here are can and if. These words imply an ability to do something (can) and a consequence relying on that faithful execution of that ability (if). So, why aren’t you mobilizing this 3-step capacity or ability for protesting university students under your current leadership? Where are the purported “resources”? Where is the clearing of “bureaucratic boulders”? Where is the report out on “scout[ing]

out the best route”?

You’ve seen the hundreds of MIT students protesting with their bodies, you’ve heard their voices and their reasoning, and you’ve read their demand for a total divestment of MIT from the governmental state of Israel. And that should be enough, yet these courageous students have even done the administrative work of identifying what the specific MIT to Israel ties are, including the drone technology the IDF benefits from directly, the training of police forces by IDF intelligence, and so on and so forth. A significant student population is yearning for your leadership to take action based on their work and thorough vision for an MIT that is not contributing technology toward genocidal use.

Let’s be clear – this problem did not appear on October 7, 2023 with the in-kind and murderously resistant effort by the Hamas government against the occupying forces of the Israeli government – this problem has origin a little under 80 years ago in 1948 with genocide, ethnocide, and outright massacre of the people in Palestine, called “Nakba,” by the Israeli regime. MIT’s relationship with modern day Israel as an institute of technology was always going to produce disastrous results — it was just a matter of when and how. No one chose this time to be alive, not the students and not you. But, we all have to deal with life on life’s terms. There’s no place for pride, only humility. There’s no place for fear, only love. You’ve been chosen by fate to play this role today, a privilege that calls for both humility and gratitude.

Instead of respect for the intelligence of the students and a multi-faceted approach to clarifying and establishing their demands, you and your administration are more focused on silencing. I’ve written extensively about this topic and will leave that explanation in those writings, but I come

now because of what I said to you when we first spoke that warm Spring day of celebration and your new beginning.

After your inaugural address, you walked down the aisle toward the line of folks waiting for you. I interjected early to shake your hand, take a picture, and told you from my own wealth of experience fighting for justice at MIT under your predecessor’s leadership (and members of your current team) that the best advice I could give you was to listen to the MIT students. I remember telling you that you have to trust them, because they are the beneficiaries of this MIT experience and that their hearts and minds are what make this place what it is. After all, college is an experiment and the students give the best data for analysis. I am beyond disappointed in how blatantly you’ve forgotten the meaning behind these words. The academic suspensions and other disciplinary actions you’ve sanctioned, including the series of other violent acts you’ve taken against your own students reveal an eerily familiar playbook of facism that has no place in this world, and no place at MIT.

For me to offer a solution would be arrogant at best. So, instead I’ll give you back your final words in your inaugural address as a path forward, because I agree with them: “Importantly, curiosity is also the one and only path to understanding one another – to empathy and appreciation and mutual respect. In effect, curiosity is the indispensable first step in both collaboration and community.

Today, the problems before us – the problems of human society, and of its only planet so far – require that we harness our curiosity in exceptionally productive ways. The people of MIT have always wanted to know how things work, and how we can be part of big solutions. Now, it’s imperative that we know – and that we help lead the

world to action.”

So, get more curious. It takes immense courage to do what students under your leadership are doing and at the time they are doing it. Students would much rather be focused on their chosen course of study. Graduating students would much rather be excited for Commencement. But, the times have chosen all of us to do something.

Please don’t disrespect their efforts by not treating students as the brave souls they are. Ask more questions in an effort toward collaboration. Don’t give into propaganda and noise from others. MIT is in your hands and history will view it that way, as well. And when it gets tough, take your words as goal posts:

Provision the trip for your students’ clear demands as Scientists Against Genocide.

Clear the bureaucratic boulders stifling progress toward an actionable plan of divestment; and

Scout out the best route for scaling this “[tough] peak” that accompanies any multi-million dollar divestment plan.

It’s as simple as 1-2-3; and the good news is you wrote the steps. It’s time for you to lead us and the world at-large into a brighter future where “every individual has the freedom and support to flourish and grow, and in which we all have a sense of community, connection and shared purpose.”

Can we count on you to join us?

In Solidarity,
Kelvin

Kelvin Green II '24 is a writer boasting 10+ opinion editorials in The Tech during his time on campus. He has also worked closely to affect change with undergraduate, graduate, staff, faculty, and administrative leadership.

OPEN LETTER

Response to Quinn

By Roberto Perez-Franco

Dear Quinn,

You do not know me, but I was once an MIT student like you. Maybe you were not born yet when I first took my shoes off on the deep-green grass of Killian Court. During my days as an MIT student, I was active in the struggle to get MIT to divest from the genocide in Darfur.

I write to you today because I have seen your name in news videos about the protests currently taking place across US campuses, as a Jewish student leader associated with the protests at MIT. I know you are not the only one, but since I know your name, I wanted to tell you how proud I am of what you and others like you are doing.

It takes a lot of courage and conviction to take a principled stance, based on your values, against what may be the prevailing view of those around you. Particularly for you, as a young Jewish man, it must be hard to take a stance that is critical of Israel’s ongoing military activities in Gaza, because they were started in response to the atrocities committed by Hamas on October 7 (which continue to this day with their refusal to release the remaining hostages). And because speaking against Israel’s actions is often seen by many Israelis and supporters of Israel as a direct attack on Israel’s right to exist and on the safety of the Jewish people as a whole.

I applaud the courage you and others have shown in standing up and stating that it is precisely your Jewish values that compel you to express the view that peace will only come through justice, including justice for Palestinians. I applaud your moral strength for standing next to those who justly speak for their oppressed relatives back in Palestine in asking for divestment from, and a cease-fire to, a war that you and many others see as genocidal. The fact that you used such a term, which we used decades earlier in our activism regarding Darfur, blew me away. It takes courage, my

friend, and you have it in spades.

I imagine that this stance must have come at a cost, and suspect that you may have friends or relatives who think you are betraying “your people”. But I imagine you have come to recognise that “your people” is all of humanity, and that oppression needs to be denounced, even if those oppressing are closer to us than those being oppressed.

I feel kinship with you in this sense: I am neither Arab nor Jew, neither Palestinian nor Israeli.

But I am human.

And, just like I think there is a duty of every moral person with links to Palestine to demand the immediate release of all remaining hostages, I think there is a duty of every moral person with links to Israel to call for a cease to the carnage in Gaza. To call for the immediate and sufficient supply of long-overdue humanitarian aid to starving Palestinians. And to demand from all parties the honest and deliberate pursuit of a long-term just and peaceful solution that includes equal rights to a safe home and a life with dignity and opportunities for everyone, Jews and Palestinians, in their common ancestral land.

Continue to be strong and brave, and to speak clearly amidst the noise. I am extremely proud of you. You have my respect, young man. Please make my words extensive to the other young student leaders and organizers at MIT, be them Jewish, Palestinian or otherwise, who are leading the principled protest on campus, with a well-designed message of protest. Despite the noise of opportunistic outsiders and of people with extreme views who may want to hijack your stage, keep sharing your principled message for divestment and peace. Here on the other side of the world, we hear you loud and clear. From Australia, please receive a fraternal hug from this fellow alum.

Roberto Perez-Franco '04 is a former collaborator of The Tech.

Meet your fellow tech staff.
(aka, your new 3 a.m. pset support group)



OPINION POLICY

Editorials are the official opinion of *The Tech*. They are written by the Editorial Board, which consists of Publishers Jyotsna Nair and Ellie Montemayor, Editor-in-Chief Alex Tang, Managing Editor Kate Lu, Executive Editor Vivian Hir, and Opinion Editor Srinidhi Narayanan.

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

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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

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

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A pie is applied to a member of Phi Delta Theta at the Pie Delts fundraiser for Camp Kesem during Springfest Carnival.



A few members of Video Game Orchestra play a small group piece during their spring concert in Kresge auditorium, Sunday, April 28.



Cordae, Springfest’s headliner, performs at Briggs Field A, Saturday, May 4th.



Students dance at the 2024 Next House Formal held in the Media Lab, Saturday, April 27.

Only Together

By Raul Radovitzky

Raul Radovitzky is a Professor in Course 16. Ever since joining MIT in 2001, he has marveled at the strengths of the MIT community. Since becoming the Head of House at McCormick Hall in 2015, he has largely devoted his life to supporting students and to contributing to making our community even stronger. The following poem is an expression of heaviness and anguish over the apparent, and hopefully temporary loss of a lot of what was once precious on this campus.

I have stayed silent respecting your pain.

Because mine is nowhere near what I can only imagine yours is.

But it's been too long... so here it goes:

I'm speaking to you, you'll know... that specific you, but also ANY-other-student you on this campus.

Together we are capable of impossible things... like finishing an 8.01 pset on time, or... that mesmerizing feeling of... an almost on-key karaoke duet of "A sky full of stars."

I've rejoiced in the warmth of your scintillating humanity,

and I know that you have felt my imperfect one too.

I weep at the thought that our sky full of stars is gone.

So there, I said it, there's something precious to lose here too.

I'm the same me, and I know that you are the same you, essentially.

So please don't write me off.

We, together, are the glimmer of hope, because together we are capable of impossible things.

Only together...

101 THINGS TO DO BEFORE YOU GRADUATE

32. Take a stroll through Little Italy in the North End

Join the Arts department at *The Tech* and write restaurant reviews.

(And get reimbursed for your meal!)

Lifeblood

by Manaal Mohammed '25

Across

01 Crystal Castles song

09 Without markup

15 Prominence

16 "Mm...I don't think so"

17 Removed of all inhibition

18 One who likes to chatter, perhaps

19 Basic unit of inheritance

20 Western film trope

22 The 'S' in SEVT

23 Critic Roger

25 June birth flower

27 Squeeze (out)

28 "Dear old" family member

29 Knot-tying words

32 Boris Badenov in "Rocky and Bullwinkle"

34 Shine

36 "___ he cute?"

37 "Real dogs eat meat" brand

40 Assert

41 "It ___ the question..."

42 Escapade

43 Apartment residents

45 Souls, as in Greek

47 Pressure meas.

48 "The Way I ___" (Timbaland hit)

Down

01 Nailed

02 Single-celled organism

03 Nailed

04 Disparaging look

05 Position tongue at roof of mouth, as to realign teeth

06 "Malory Towers" author Blyton

07 Free speech defending org.

08 Actress Winona

09 "___ lmao"

10 Prickly plant

11 Mob boss

12 "Give me a break..."

13 Covertly moving

14 Downloads through peer-to-peer sharing

21 Friendly hit

24 Up to, shortly

26 They're on the rocks

30 Situated away from the point of origin

31 "My Year of Rest and Relaxation" author Moshfegh

33 Some of those with center-left political beliefs, briefly

34 Dragon Ball Z character

35 Darken

37 Mexican pork preparation style based on lamb doner

38 Cell alternative

39 Occurs before

44 "___ the season.."

46 Producers

48 Invites home

49 Lifted

50 Penetrates

53 Tripping

55 Bill Withers hit song

57 Indian tea

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59 Model Moss

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63 Ayahuasca tryptamine

65 Gallivant