

Dear Colleagues:

It is a pleasure to offer a brief update about MIT's Center for Advanced Visual Studies (CAVS). The Center has had three Directors since its founding in 1968 by Prof. Gyorgy Kepes: Profs. Otto Piene (1974-1992), Krzysztof Wodiczko (1992-1996), and myself (1996-present). It has moved twice since being established in purpose-built studios opposite the main entrance to MIT, and is now settled in nicely-renovated space (about 700 sq. meters) above the MIT Museum, on the North edge of the campus. However, in the Spring of 2004 the CAVS will move again, to a building designed by Fumihiko Maki (a winner of the Pritzker Prize), for which ground is now being cleared alongside the Media Laboratory. Exciting new art-science-technology projects await us there!

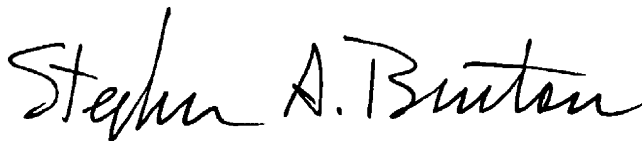
The CAVS continues to offer a working environment that encourages collaborations among artists, scientists, and technologists. These are built around projects undertaken by Fellows, visiting artists who come to MIT for up to two years, some of whom receive modest stipends while they are here. Students are involved as assistants, under MIT's pioneering "Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program," which provides funding for several MIT students at a time. The Center no longer has an academic program of its own, but we host seminars and short courses in cooperation with the Visual Arts Program and the Program in Media Arts and Sciences at MIT, and supervise occasional theses.

Some of the people now at the CAVS are: Prof. Emeritus/Director Emeritus Otto Piene, who is working on a historical retrospective about the Center as well as planning another SkyArt conference; Prof. Krzysztof Wodiczko, whose large-scale projections continue to reach new audiences and themes; Senior Fellow Elizabeth Goldring, whose "Visual Poetry for the Blind" project remains very active; Fellow Hisham Bizri, who is working on an immersive interactive exploration based on Joyce's *Ulysses*; Fellow Naoko Tosa, who has just arrived from Japan; Fellow Ioannis Michaloudis, who is studying steam art at MIT; and Affiliate Seth Riskin, whose "Light Dance" projects are becoming widely known.

Current goals for the CAVS have mainly to do with fund raising. We hope to raise funds for stipends so that we can support more Fellows at the Center, and we hope to raise an endowment for a Kepes Professorship in Visual Arts, while Prof. Kepes is still able to appreciate such a wonderful occasion.

I invite you to follow the activities of the Center for Advanced Visual Studies via our web site, which you will find at <http://cavs.mit.edu>.

With all best wishes for the Light Symposium,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen A. Benton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stephen A. Benton

E. Rudge ('48) and Nancy Allen Professor of Media Arts & Sciences
Director, Center for Advanced Visual Studies (CAVS)