

## **MIT Program in Art, Culture and Technology**

The MIT Program in Art, Culture and Technology (ACT) is a discipline group and an academic program within the Department of Architecture, and a center for artistic research and practice within the School of Architecture and Planning (SA+P). ACT is headed by distinguished artist-professors and supported by a dynamic cast of practitioner graduate students and staff, visiting artist-lecturers, fellows, affiliates, and guests. Through an integrated approach to pedagogy, a dynamic coterie of visiting artists and research affiliates, public event programming, and publication, ACT builds a community of artist-thinkers around the exploration of art's complex conjunctions with culture and technology. The program's mission is to promote leadership in critical artistic practice and deployment, developing art as a vital means of experimenting with new registers of knowledge and modes of valuation and expression, continually questioning what an artistic research and learning environment can be and do.

### **Year in Review**

#### ***Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)***

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) first appeared in late December 2019 and spread across several countries. In late January, MIT Medical and the Office of the Provost alerted the MIT community that the spread of the coronavirus was being closely monitored. On March 10, President Rafael Reif announced that classes would be taught online, effective March 30; and on March 23, Governor Baker issued an emergency order requiring that organizations “close their physical workspaces and facilities to workers, customers, and the public,” effective March 24. These requirements meant that in-person programs and gatherings were cancelled and staff moved to dispersed, largely home-based work.

#### ***Key Accomplishments***

The year was marked by faculty, staff, and student acknowledgements; the receipt of funding from the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR), and the initiation of the redesign of ACT's website.

It was an award-winning year:

- Professor Renée Green: Berlin Prize, American Academy in Berlin, Fall 2019
- Yuping Hsu, SMACT '20: Second Prize, Harold and Arlene Schnitzer Prize in the Visual Arts
- Yuping Hsu, SMACT '20: Enterprise Poets Prize for Imagining a Future – 1st Prize
- Nancy Valladares, SMACT '20: Enterprise Poets Prize for Imagining a Future – 2nd Prize
- Marissa Friedman, Kevin McLellan, Chelsea Polk, Thera Webb, John Steiner, Graham Yeager: School of Architecture and Planning Infinite Mile Award

#### ***Collaborative Engagement***

ACT participated in two active and ongoing collaborations:

Arts on the Radar (AOTR). The Program in Art, Culture and Technology worked with the Arts at MIT, the List Visual Art Center, and MIT Music and Theater Arts and welcomed over 350 members of the MIT community to the fifth AOTR event.

Transmedia Storytelling Initiative (TSI). As part of the first year of the three-year Transmedia Storytelling Initiative (TSI), ACT oversaw the administration of funds supporting student and faculty projects, workshops, staffing, and equipment related to the TSI.

## **Selected Artistic Output**

### ***ACT Faculty***

ACT's tenured and tenure-track faculty were referenced in the popular and art press, participated in group and solo exhibitions in Europe, Asia, and the United States, and lectured extensively.

Judith Barry. Professor Barry participated in six exhibitions. The permanent exhibition, *about documenta*, opened in November in Kassel, Germany; five exhibitions in the United Kingdom, China, Portugal, and the United States (New York and San Francisco) were postponed due to the pandemic. Barry contributed to four publications and was referenced in six. She was scheduled to be a lecturer or visiting artist at Hunter College and the University of Pennsylvania; these presentations were postponed. Barry curated the lecture series at ACT.

Renée Green. During the fall semester, Professor Green was the Ellen Maria Gorrissen Fellow with the American Academy in Berlin. While in Berlin, Green gave several lectures on her work and had a solo exhibition, *Prelude*, at the Nagel Draxler Gallery. She also participated in five group exhibitions in Europe and the United States, published *Hubert Fichte*, *Tour-isms*, *Negotiating in Contact Zones*, and *Contact*, and contributed four articles to various publications.

Gediminas Urbonas. Associate Professor Urbonas taught and lectured domestically and internationally. His visiting professorship positions included Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas, Lithuania; Central Academy of Fine Art in Beijing, China; Nuova Accademia di Belle Arte in Milano, Italy; and Iuav – Università Iuav di Venezia in Venice, Italy. During the reporting period, Urbonas became a Member of the Blackwood Gallery (Toronto, Canada) Advisory Board. He received funding from the Center for Art, Science, & Technology (CAST), the MIT International Science and Technology Initiatives (MISTI), and from the European Social Fund. Urbonas Studio participated in seven group exhibitions in Italy, Sweden, and Lithuania and he organized an exhibition and symposium, *Futurity Island: Amphibian Pedagogies and Submerged Perspectives*, at MIT. Urbonas had essays in several publications and produced *Amphibian Songs* with Nicole L'Huillier and Nomeda Urbonas.

Azra Akšamija. Associate Professor Azra Akšamija was on sabbatical during the academic year. Receiving grants from the Leventhal Center for Advanced Urbanism (LCAU), the Abdul Latif Jameel World Education Lab (J-WEL), Alumni Class Fund, Center for Art, Science & Technology (CAST), and the Transmedia Storytelling Initiative (TSI), Akšamija had a solo exhibition, *T-Serai*, at the Sharjah Museum of Islamic Civilization in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), exhibited work as part of *Sanctuary* at the Aga Khan Museum in Toronto, and participated in the traveling group exhibition *Arts Crafts: Between Tradition, Discourse and*

*Technologies* in Austria and Germany. In addition, she was the editor of *Architecture of Coexistence: Building Pluralism*, contributed a book chapter, “Yarn-Dez-Vous” in *Being Material*, and was included in the exhibition catalog for Kunst Handwerk – *Art Craft. Between Tradition, Discourse and Technologies*, edited by Bargara Steiner. Akšamija received the Honorary Doctorate from the Montserrat College of Arts in Beverly, MA.

Nida Sinnokrot. Assistant Professor Nida Sinnokrot had a solo exhibition at Saint Peter’s Cathedral in Köln, Germany and contributed to group exhibitions in the United States (*History Is Not Here: Art and the Arab Imaginary*, Minnesota Museum of American Art) and Europe (Paris Photo Week: *Flight Jalazon* and *West Bank Butterfly*, ARCOmadrid International Contemporary Art Fair, Madrid, Spain). Sinnokrot received funding from Visual Arts: A Flourishing Field (VAFF), Al-Mawred Al-Thaqafy Culture Resource, and the International Relief Fund for Organizations in Culture and Education. He was an editor of “Sakiya 01”, an organizer of the Sakiya symposium “Rewilding Pedagogy”, and curated the exhibition “Between the Qaicub and Balut.”

### ***Lecturers***

Lara Baladi. In July, the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) Shanghai opened the exhibition *Miss Dior Love N’Roses* featuring work by ACT lecturer Lara Baladi; and she exhibited work at the MUDAM Museum of Contemporary Art Luxembourg. Baladi was a keynote speaker for Section One: Media & Technology at the Creative Time Summit X as well as a speaker in the Artists Sanctum Salon Series.

Georgie Friedman. Friedman had a solo exhibition at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, *Georgie Friedman: Fragments of Antarctica*; and a screening at the University of Mary Washington, Fredericksburg, VA. She received funding from the Massachusetts Cultural Council (Film and Video), Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, MA, and the Public Art Commission for “Journey to the Sun,” a 60-minute, 4k video. Friedman gave artist talks at Tufts University and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

Marisa Morán Jahn. Jahn (SMVisS ’07) curated “Gifts of Earth and Extimacy” with Associate Professor Rafi Segal, participated in group exhibitions in New York and Boston; performed in New York and Houston; and created *Volador*, an illustrated Pandemic Toolkit for Undocumented Workers. Jahn served on several panels with PS1/MoMA, Creative Time Summit X, and Arts in America and was a featured speaker at the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, the United Nations, NeON Festival, and L’Hotel de Ville.

Rasa Smite / Raitis Smits. Smite and Smits created *Atmospheric Forest* as part of the ZKM|The Center for Art and Media’s “Critical Zones” exhibition in Karlsruhe, Germany. They have new exhibits in Canada (*Swamp Radio. Fluctuations of Microworlds* at THEMUSEUM) and Germany (*Biotricity. Bacteria Time*, FUTURIUM Museum); curated the “Un/Green” exhibition at the Latvian National Museum of Art, were editors of “Virtualities and Realities. Art and Ecologies in Virtual Age” in the Acoustic Space journal (Vol. 17); gave artist talks in Canada and Switzerland, and organized the international Open Fields conference in Riga, Latvia.

### ***Affiliates***

ACT had six research affiliates: Javier Anguera Phipps of CC Index and Free Agent Media (FAM), Nikola Bojić with the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb, Croatia; Rodrigo Campos with Justus-Liebig University in Gießen, Germany; Kristupas Sabolius of Vilnius University; Viktorija Siaulyte, a collaborator on the Zooetics research program, and Nomeda Urbonas, principal in Urbonas Studios. Selected updates are presented below:

Javier Anguera Phipps. The Contemporary Culture Index (ccindex) “is an online, open-access bibliographical database indexing international journals and periodicals.” Over the academic year, 1,269 new records were added to the database and one new infoweb record was added for Bit international. As FAM archivist, Anguera coordinated the production of *Prelude*, a solo exhibition of Renée Green’s work at Galerie Nagel Draxler, Green’s contribution to the exhibition *Love and Ethnology – The Colonial Dialectic of Sensitivity (after Hubert Fichte)*, and the publication documenting Green’s two-year project at the Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts.

Nikola Bojić. Bojić, a lecturer at the Academy of Fine Arts in Croatia, curated *The Capsule* in Stockholm, Sweden; collaborated on *The Eat Me!*, an online artist game; and worked with Gediminas and Nomeda Urbonas on *The Swamp Observatory* project. He also curated The Terra Effluviens, a three-day program in Rijeka, and delivered the keynote lecture related to the *Mud Moses* exhibition at Moderna Museet in Stockholm.

Rodrigo Campos. Campos worked with ACT Professor Urbonas to research new modes of public and environmental art production, programming, and publication that shift the discussion on public space towards Anthropocene public space.

Kristupas Sabolius (Vilnius University) and Viktorija Siaulyte. Sabolius and Siaulyte continued their collaboration with ACT Professor Urbonas focused on the development of a Zooetics publication based on the spring 2018 Zooetics+ Symposium.

Nomeda Urbonas. Urbonas contributed artworks to exhibitions in Lithuania, Sweden, Italy, and the United States (Cambridge). In addition, she was a presenter at Bard College, at the Ru.De.Ri. Association in Italy, and the University of Waterloo.

### ***ACT Students – Selected Honors and Recognition***

Six students comprise the Class of 2020 and five students are in the Class of 2021. The Transmedia Storytelling Initiative (TSI) issued a Request for Proposals for “Fialkow” Distance Residencies and production projects for the summer of 2020. Of the 23 residencies and projects funded, ACT graduate students received 13 grants: six of the ten residencies and seven of the 13 project and equipment grants.

ACT graduate students were recognized by the Office of the Arts, Comparative Media Studies/Writing, and the Taiwanese government:

Rae Yuping Hsu (SMACT ’20) won first prize in the Enterprise Poets Prize for Imagining a Future for her work, “In Between Empathy and Wonder Lies the Contamination that Makes Us

Human.” Hsu also won second place for the Schnitzer Prize and along with ACT graduate students Po-Hao Chi and Nancy Valladares was awarded a grant by the Taiwanese government for the project *3000 Years Among Microbes*.

Nancy Valladares (SMACT '20) tied for second place for the Enterprise Poets Prize for *Imagining a Future* for her work, “A Dedicated Mechanism for Forgetting (Master Letters).”

Po-Hao Chi (SMACT '21) was featured in Hong Kong’s *Very Natural Actions* exhibition at the Tai Kwun Centre for Heritage and Arts with his work *Lightscape*; he was also an artist in the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Art’s “Sound lines” exhibition in February.

## Research Activities

### *Integrated Approach to Pedagogy*

ACT subjects and faculty research are interwoven. There are seven active research projects that are, or will be, tied to ACT subjects:

1. Embodiment in Contemporary Art (J. Barry). ACT Director and Architecture Professor Judith Barry explores themes of embodiment in contemporary art and architecture.
2. Machine Learning and Machine Vision (J. Barry). Barry’s research extends her artistic and pedagogical work toward understandings of machine learning and machine vision as they relate to embodiment in contemporary art and architecture.
3. Cinematic Migrations (R. Green). SP20 4.356/7 Cinematic Migrations is a multi-faceted look at the role of cinema’s transmutations over time.
4. Synchronizations of Senses (R. Green). This body of research centers on testing various ways aesthetic forms and their shifts — historic and contemporary — are related to still emerging contemporary subjectivities.
5. Zoetics/Sympoiesis (G. Urbonas). In FA19 4.314/5 Advanced Workshop in Artistic Practice and Transdisciplinary Research: Interspecies Ecologies and SP20 4.368/9 Studio Seminar in Art & the Public Sphere: Swamp Observatory, Urbonas’s research speculates on interspecies ecologies and probes the usefulness of the concept, “sympoiesis,” toward imagining and working together in radical inter-disciplinarity toward desirable futures.
6. Future Heritage Lab (A. Akšamija). The Future Heritage Lab explores creative responses to conflict and crisis.
7. Art/Science/Agriculture (N. Sinnokrot). Sinnokrot’s research scrutinizes the intersection of Art, Science, and Agriculture and offers students the opportunity to develop projects as a means for addressing the social, cultural, and ecological consequences of technology.

### *Public Programs*

Lecture Series. The fall lecture series was entitled *The Inexplicable Wonder of Precipitous Events*. Four lectures were planned; however, the November presentation by Jenna Sutela was cancelled due to speaker illness.

- **Sarah Oppenheimer**, *FE\_20190923: Periodic Function*; Respondent: Cristina Parreño Alonso, Lecturer in Architecture and Urbanism, MIT School of Architecture and Planning, (September 23 – Attendance: 56 people)

- ACT faculty member **Gediminas Urbonas**, *Wet Ontologies of the Swamp*; Respondent: Pedro Gadanho, Director of the Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology, Lisbon, Portugal, and 2020 Loeb Fellow at Harvard. (October 7 – Attendance: 46 people)
- **Naeem Mohaiemen**, *A Missing Can of Film*; Respondent: Sylvia Schedelbauer (December 2 – Attendance: 26 people)

The title of the spring series was *The Allegorical Resonance of Alchemical Affect*. The lecture series speakers and respondents are listed below:

- **Jill Magid (SMVisS '00)**, *The Proposal*, Architecture Professor Caroline A. Jones moderated a conversation between Jill Magid and Architecture Associate Professors Ana Miljaki and Timothy Hyde on the subjects of copyright, architecture, activism, and performance. (February 10 – Attendance: 94 people)
- **Stephen Prina**, *Stephen Prina Live!*, Respondents: Renée Green, Professor, ACT, and David Joselit, Professor of Art, Film and Visual Studies at Harvard. (March 2 – Attendance: 66 people)
- **Barbara London**, *What's Technology Got to Do with It?* (April 13 – Postponed)
- **Cesare Pietroiusti**, *Economic Principles and Artistic Use of Paradox*, Respondent: Jesal Kapadia, Lecturer, ACT (May 4 – Postponed)

Artistic Research Lunches. ACT scheduled four Artistic Lunches during the spring semester. The goal of the series was outreach to MIT's science community. Three of the four luncheons were held:

- **Jacopo Buongiorno**, TEPCO Professor of Nuclear Science and Engineering, and **Gordon Kohse**, Interim Director, Nuclear Reactor Laboratory (February 4)
- **Nicole L'Huillier**, PhD Candidate, MIT Media Lab, Opera of the Future Research Group (February 27)
- **Robert Dell**, CAVS Fellow 1993–1997, CAVS Projects Director 1995–1996 (March 10)
- **Jean-Baptiste Labrune**, Research Affiliate, MIT Media Lab, Tangible Media Group (April 14 -- Postponed)

Public Lectures. In addition to the Artistic Research Lunches, ACT hosted seven public talks, five of which were related to ACT classes:

- **John R. Blakinger**, Terra Foundation Visiting Professor of American Art at the University of Oxford, *The Military-Industrial-Aesthetic Complex: György Kepes at MIT* (October 21)
- **Joe Davis**, CAVS Fellow 1982-1992, *BioArt*, 4.314/5 Advanced Workshop in Artistic Practice and Transdisciplinary Research (October 31)
- **Martin Guinard**, Artist and Curator, *Critical Zones: Observatories for Earthly Politics* (December 5)
- **Dora Garcia**, Artist, *Love with Obstacles: Art, Forms of Life and Commoning*, 4.368/9 Studio Seminar in Art and the Public Sphere (February 10)
- **Brian Mayton**, Artist, *Brian Mayton: Living Observatory*, 4.368/9 Studio Seminar in Art and the Public Sphere (March 4)

- **Carlos Garaicoa**, Artist, *Carlos Garaicoa*, 4.368/9 Studio Seminar in Art and the Public Sphere (March 9)
- **Stefanie Hassler**, Artist, *A Talk with Stefanie Hassler*, 4.368/9 Studio Seminar in Art and the Public Sphere (March 30 -- postponed)

Arts on the Radar. The fifth Arts on the Radar (AOTR) was held September 6. The List Visual Art Center (LVAC) gallery was open for the Student Loan Art Program and Evelyn Rydz, an interactive artist, participated in the event; ACT featured Open Studios and a slide show of student work accompanied by a dance party; the Office of the Arts had a number of student projects that were funded by the Council for the Arts at MIT; and students from Music and Theatre Arts provided live music.

### ***Archives and Collections***

ACT manages five archives and special collections: The Center for Advanced Visual Studies (CAVS) Special Collection, the Visual Arts Program (VAP) Special Collection, the György Kepes Vision + Value Papers, the Visible Language Workshop (VLW) Archive, and the ACT Archive. The past year has been focused on cataloging the collection. Simmons University MLIS intern Lisa Bravata aided in arranging and describing the VAP collection.

Research / Reference. There were 57 reference requests, four research visits, two exhibitions based on the materials in the ACT archives and collections, and 12 publications and one documentary film featuring works and artists from the archive. Researchers were MIT faculty, students and staff (18); students, staff, and faculty from non-MIT universities and colleges (19), and independent researchers (20). The distribution of requests among the collections is summarized below:

<b>ACT Collections Accessed, AY2020</b>	
<b>Name of Collection</b>	<b>Research Visits</b>
Center for Advanced Visual Studies (CAVS)	47
Kepes Vision and Value Papers	6
Visible Language Workshop (VLW)	2
Program in Art, Culture and Technology (ACT)	2
TOTAL	57

Council on Library and Information Resources. In April, ACT received a \$47,305 grant from the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) as part of the Recordings at Risk program. This funding will allow ACT to preserve recordings from the MIT Experimental Music Studio.

Outreach. Increasing the visibility of the archives and collections has been a priority, leading to collaborations with the MIT Libraries, particularly the Department of Distinctive Collections (DDC). Specific projects are listed below:

- The **Artists & Archives** series, co-sponsored by the DDC. The program focused on past CAVS fellows and current artists whose work resonates with the collection. Robert Dell, Center for Advanced Visual Studies Fellow, 1993-1997, and Jasmine Dreame Wagner, multimedia artist, were scheduled to present their work in March and April, respectively. (Spring 2020 – postponed)
- The **ACT Virtual Museum** was launched in April. Five exhibits were launched and three – *Art and Activism at MIT*, *Holography at the Center for Advanced Visual Studies*, and *Environmental Alchemy* – used materials from the archive.
- ***Diffractions: Holography at the Center for Advanced Visual Studies*** was a multimedia exhibit that was presented in November.

## Academic Program

### ***Master of Science in Art, Culture and Technology***

The MIT Program in Art, Culture and Technology offers a selective, two-year, graduate program leading to a Master of Science in Art, Culture and Technology (SMACT) degree. The program focuses on researched-based artistic practice, advanced visual studies and experimentation, and offers opportunities for transdisciplinary relationships with other programs and labs at MIT. The program culminates in a final project and a written thesis.

### Open Houses.

- **Fall Open House.** ACT hosted its eighth open house for prospective students on November 12. Seventy-five (75) people registered for the event and 39 people attended, a 15.2% decline over the previous year. The open house included lunch, a tour of ACT facilities and student studios, a question and answer session with current students, faculty presentations, a review of the application process, and a reception.
- **Spring Open House.** In April, ACT hosted a virtual open house for admitted students; six of the eight accepted students attended. The Open House included an overview of the academic requirements, presentations by the fabrication, media, and archival research staff, faculty and student presentations, and an opportunity for accepted students to speak with current students as a group.

Applicants / Admissions. Summarized below are ACT’s application and admissions statistics for the last four years:

ACT Admissions, AY2017-2020						
Class Entering September	Applicants	Acceptances	Waitlist	Declines	Matriculants	Deferrals*
2020	67	8	4	5	4	2
2019	81	7	3	5	5	0



**ACT Admissions, AY2017-2020**

<b>Class Entering September</b>	<b>Applicants</b>	<b>Acceptances</b>	<b>Waitlist</b>	<b>Declines</b>	<b>Matriculants</b>	<b>Deferrals*</b>
2018	81	8	5	2	6	0
2017	71	6	4	2	4	0

\* ACT did not grant deferrals prior to spring 2020.

Class of 2020. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was highly disruptive to the thesis process. As a result, in consultation with their thesis advisors, the six members of the Class of 2020 opted to complete their thesis during the summer and move to the September degree list.

***Academic Curriculum and Enrollment***

In past years, more courses have been offered in the spring than the fall. In an effort to balance offerings, courses were more evenly distributed between the semesters and courses that were traditionally taught in the spring, e.g., 4.320 Sound Creations and 4.354 Intro to Video and Related Media, were offered in the fall.

ACT offers electives for undergraduate and graduate students. The table below summarizes the distribution of classes between graduates and undergraduates as well as architecture and non-architecture students from 2017 to 2020:

**ACT Enrollment, AY2017-2020**

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b># Enrolled</b>	<b># Classes</b>	<b>% Grad</b>	<b>% Under</b>	<b>% Arch</b>	<b>% Other</b>
2020	209	23	49%	51%	45%	55%
2019	226	24	58	42	48	52
2018	210	21	46	54	39	61
2017	257	23	67	33	45	55

**Finance and Administration**

***Strategic Planning***

In February 2019, ACT embarked upon a strategic planning process designed to lead to a five-year vision for ACT, articulate ACT’s role at the intersection of art, culture, and technology, and

create a compelling resource development case. This process was disrupted by several faculty leaves and the COVID-19 pandemic, and as a result, during the spring 2020 semester, senior faculty worked with MIT’s internal consultants to develop a shared vision of ACT’s curriculum, with particular emphasis on the synthesis of the thesis and 4.390 ACT Studio.

***Grants Administration***

ACT has a fiduciary responsibility for the administration of \$15,000 on behalf of the Council for the Arts at MIT (CAMIT) and administered the year 1 pilot funds (\$365,000) for the Transmedia Storytelling Initiative (TSI).

CAMIT Funds. For the third year, ACT administered a portion of the funds that the Council for the Arts at MIT (CAMIT) provides for student projects. The goal is to support the artistic production of ACT's graduate students while preparing them to successfully present their work to non-artists. Ten proposals were submitted and CAMIT funds totaling \$13,452 were allocated. Five first year students submitted proposals each semester.

Transmedia. During year one of the pilot, TSI provided funding for one workshop, three classes, seven presentations and lecture series, equipment, and staffing support. In addition, grants were provided for ten “Fialkow” Distance Residencies, a student equipment purchase that was subsequently folded into the ACT inventory, and 12 individual and collaborative projects. At the end of year one, \$269,737 of the pilot funds had been spent and all of the funds had been allocated.

***Communications***

With the move to remote learning and dispersed work, finding alternative means to present and develop art was essential. ACT started a virtual museum and podcast, actively repurposed digital assets for multiple outlets, e.g., for the ACT website and social media, and actively used its e-newsletter as an engagement tool.

E-Newsletter. ACT sent 51 emails to the members of its mailing list, with an average open rate of 33% and an average click rate of 2.6%. Listed below are ACT’s open and click rates compared to other, similar organizations:

<b>ACT Email Communications Performance vs Industry Benchmarks</b>		
	<b>Open Rate</b>	<b>Click Rate</b>
ACT (51 emails)	33.05%	2.56%
Overall	21.33	2.62
Arts and Artists	26.27	2.95
Education	23.42	2.90
Entertainment & Events	20.51	2.36
Non-Profit	25.17	2.79

\*Source: Mailchimp, Email Marketing Benchmarks and Statistics by Industry, <https://mailchimp.com/resources/email-marketing-benchmarks/>.

Virtual Exhibitions. Five virtual exhibitions were launched on Flickr and Cargo between March and May:

- *Art and Activism at MIT* featuring work by ACT and CAVS artists Lara Baladi, Mel Chin, Juan Downey, Sharon Hayes, Wendy Jacob, Marisa Morán Jahn, Otto Piene, Damon Rich, Jenny Romaine, Gediminas and Nomeda Urbonas, and Krzysztof Wodiczko.
- *Futurity Island* is a collaboration between the Urbonas Studio, ACT lecturer Tobias Putrih, Indrė Umbrasaitė (Die Angewandte), Nicole L’Huillier (MIT Media Lab), and the Blackwood Gallery, University of Toronto Mississauga.
- *Holography at the Center for Advanced Visual Studies* features CAVS fellows Friedrich St. Florian, Lowry Burgess, Harriet Casdin-Silver, Sesuko Ishii, Eric Begleiter, and Dieter Jung.
- *Environmental Alchemy*, works by Robert Dell, CAVS Fellow, and Project Director.
- *The Swamp Pavilion, La Biennale di Venezia*, an exhibit from the 16th Venice International Architecture Biennale curated by Nomeda and Gediminas Urbonas.

Podcast. ACT started a podcast series, *The Eye of the Artist*, that included an interview with Professor Akšamija discussing her exhibition, *Sanctuary*, and a brief overview of Akšamija’s proposed project, *The Future to be Rewritten*, commemorating the 100th anniversary of women’s suffrage.

Social Media. ACT’s social media growth for the past two years is summarized below:

<b>ACT Social Media Followers, AY2019 vs AY2020</b>			
	<b>June 30, 2019</b>	<b>June 30, 2020</b>	<b>% Growth FY19-FY20</b>
<a href="#">Twitter</a>	5,298	5,933	11.9%
<a href="#">Facebook</a>	5,806	6,079	4.7%
<a href="#">Instagram</a>	2,780	3,593	29.2%

Website. ACT developed a Request for Proposals (RFP) and solicited a response from eleven companies for the redesign of its website and the development of a new visual identity. We want our website and identity to reflect ACT's experimental, transdisciplinary, and global nature; our placement within a world-class institute of technology; and the ability of artists to push public discourse in a singular way. In November, ACT selected the New York City-based firm WKSHP.

## **Personnel**

### ***Staff Accolades***

ACT staff members Marissa Friedman, Kevin McLellan, Chelsea Polk, John Steiner, Thera Webb, and Graham Yeager received the School of Architecture and Planning’s Infinite Mile Award for their outstanding contributions to ACT.

## ***Personnel Changes***

### Faculty

- **Renée Green** was in residence as a fellow at the American Academy in Berlin in the fall.
- **Azra Akšamija** was on sabbatical for the academic year.
- **Nida Sinnokrot** was on research leave during the spring semester.

### Lecturers

- In October, **Katarina Burin** joined the teaching community as one of the three instructors for 4.390 ACT Studio.
- **Andy Graydon** joined the ACT community in the fall to teach 4.354 Intro to Video and Related Media and 4.352 Advanced Video and Related Media; he relocated to Minnesota in the spring and was replaced by **Georgie Friedman**.
- **Marisa Morán Jahn**, SMVisS '07, taught 4.301 Introduction to Artistic Experimentation.
- **Jesal Kapadia** taught 4.341 Introduction to Photography and Related Media and 4.344 Advanced Photography and Related Media in the fall and 4.361 Performance Art in the spring; **Lara Baladi** returned from leave in the spring and taught the two photography classes.
- **Tobias Putrih** taught 4.322 Introduction to 3-Dimensional Art in the fall and 4.373 Advanced Projects in Art, Culture and Technology in the spring.
- Visiting Lecturers **Rasa Smite and Raitis Smits** returned to teach 4.320/1 Sound Creations in the fall.

### Staff

**Drew Nichols** resigned as Academic Assistant in February to accept a position at the MIT Libraries.

Judith Barry

Director, Program in Art, Culture and Technology

Professor of Architecture