Dear Friends,

The 2006-07 year saw many significant achievements for the arts at Brandeis. Increased interaction and in-depth integration of the arts into the Brandeis University community distinguished the year. Here is a review of what was new and noteworthy.

**The Creative Campus**

Creative and cultural boundaries were broken when the Brandeis Theater Company partnered with the Spanish department to produce faculty Dian Fox’s new translation of Calderon’s *The Physician of His Honor*, Provost Marty Krauss hosted a reception at the Rose Art Museum to celebrate its opening night. The Brandeis University Chorus, under the direction of Jim Olesen, joined forces with classics faculty Leonard Muellner for the concert, *Orpheus: First Poet-Musician*. Nancy Scott in fine arts partnered with Rose curator Raphaela Platow on a new course in museum studies.

The anthropology and philosophy departments sponsored a campus-wide symposium inspired by the fall Rose exhibition *Balance and Power*. Women’s and Gender Studies hosted a spring conference on “Women Making Arts” featuring arts faculty Susan Lichtman, Adrianne Krstansky, and Yu-Hui Chang PhD’01. Mark Auslander’s cultural production program sponsored the powerful exhibition *Leave the Bones and Catch the Land: Southern Sudanese Art from Kakuma Refugee Camp* in the Goldfarb Library. The glorious, annual Messiah Sing-along Concert (left) in the Shapiro Atrium had its highest attendance ever.

The Arts and Humanities Faculty Committee continued to imagine new opportunities for collaboration. They launched an online directory of interdisciplinary courses and sponsored a highly successful “Convivium” at the Rose, in which faculty convivially shared interdisciplinary ideas and experiences. A highlight of the event, hosted by the Office of the Dean of arts and sciences, was Susan Lichtman and Robin Miller discussing their team teaching of a new course that innovatively connected drawing with Russian literature.

October’s Brandeis Alumni Making a Difference conference included a vigorous forum on the value of the arts in academia and society. Panelists were television producer Marta Kauffman ’78; musician George Kahn ’73, sculptor Peter Lipsitt ’61, director of the Chicago Center for Arts Policy Nick Rabkin ’69; playwright Theresa Rebeck MA ’83, MFA ’86, PhD ’89; and director of the Whitney Museum Adam D. Weinberg ’77. The SunDeis Film Festival also saw the return of many noted alumni working in film and television, and presented screenings of work by students and film legends Patricia Neal and Roy Scheider, who also participated in revealing and charming one-on-one interviews.

The Provost’s Advisory Committee on the Arts focused on the theoretical and practical relationship between the arts and social justice. It considered fresh strategies for potential campus partnerships from the Heller School to the School of Social Sciences while building on the work of the International Center for Ethics, Justice, and Public Life.
Increasing Arts Participation

Arts membership, the unified donor program, reached a new high of 92 members with nearly half of them in theatre arts. Membership also became available online. The Rose attracted nearly 100 new members. Our two corporate members, Gordon Brothers Group and Simpson Gumpertz & Heger, increased their membership support. Online ticketing for theater and music events will be available for the first time beginning in the fall of 2007.

State of the Arts magazine was redesigned and expanded to 20 pages, allowing for more scholarly content. The Arts@Brandeis E-List grew to nearly 1,300 subscribers. A faculty member in NEJS recently described the E-List’s free ticket offers as “the best benefit of working at Brandeis!” The arts at Brandeis now have an online Facebook presence with 200 “friends.” The Office of the Arts presented special arts orientations to all new staff and faculty arriving on campus throughout the year. The Office of Admissions added Slosberg Music Center and Leonard Bernstein’s childhood piano to the campus tour.

The Office of Communications generated nearly 30 media releases on campus arts events, providing continuous representation on the Brandeis homepage and University publications. The spring issue of Brandeis magazine featured the Rose’s Henry and Lois Foster Director Michael Rush on its cover. Michael and I each lectured at New York’s Brandeis House, and I also had the pleasure of talking to alumni in London about the revitalized Brandeis arts community.

New levels of community outreach were achieved with the Office of the Arts building relationships with more than two dozen businesses, schools, senior centers, and service groups such as Waltham Community Access Television, Waltham Tourism Council, Waltham Boys and Girls Club, Children’s Hospital at Waltham, Olin College, Regis College, Cambridge School of Weston, Walnut Hill School, Gann Academy, Longy School of Music, Community Music Center of Boston, and Waltham Mills Artists Association.

Entrances and Exits

Joining the SCA community were faculty Yu-Hui Chang Ph'D’01 (music composition) and Peter Kalb (art history); and staff Ingrid Schorr (Office of the Arts), Adelina Jedrzejczak and Elizabeth Thach (the Rose) and Cheryl Naubach (music department). Alice Kelikian assumed leadership of the Film Studies program and hosted an exclusive campus preview of Oscar winner Errol Morris’s upcoming documentary about the Abu Graib prison scandal.

The fall semester saw the debut of the Brandeis Dance Collective, co-founded by faculty Susan Dibble and Susanna Katsman ’98; alumnae from New York City to California returned to campus to perform. The Irving Fine Society is a new student music ensemble dedicated to great American composers of the 20th century; and the new Free Play Theatre Collective produces theatre for social change, with sponsorship from the theater department. A new film production club, Works in Progress, welcomed more than 100 members. A new Brandeis Marching Band provided pep at athletic events. This summer, the Berkshire Institute for Music and Arts (BIMA) relocates to Brandeis. BIMA offers intensive study in music, painting, theater, and creative writing for gifted high school students and presents an opportunity for student recruitment as well as summer work for our faculty and students.

Some beloved members of our community left Brandeis for new artistic horizons: Raphaela Platow (pictured, right; Rose Chief Curator), Stephanie Molinard (Rose Direction of Education), Moira Louca (Rose Membership Coordinator), Leah Zaiger (Director of Arts Programs, WSRC), and Chris Abrams (Artist-in-Residence, fine arts). We will also miss Design Director Chuck Dunham from the Office of Communications, who for 22 years created the graphic identity of Brandeis including our arts websites and publications; and Associate Dean Andrea Nix, a loyal patron of the arts. Their many contributions to our University have left a rich legacy.
Theater Arts

A dramatic evolution is underway in the Department of Theater Arts, evidenced by the doubling of the number of theatre majors and minors in the past three years. Susan Dibble assumed leadership as department chair, allowing Eric Hill to focus more on directing, including two productions at the Berkshire Theatre Festival. Eric continues to serve as artistic director of the Brandeis Theater Company. The M.F.A. design program underwent reassessment and will look to enhance opportunities for undergraduate participation.

In September, the BTC season was launched with a powerful production of David Hare’s Via Dolorosa, about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Guest artist Jonathan Epstein (right) starred in the one-man play and received a 2007 Elliot Norton Award nomination. The Waiting Room, exploring women’s oppression in the name of beauty, traveled to Florida to perform for the Brandeis National Women’s Committee. The BTC ended the season with their first original work, The Dream Project (left), created during an innovative nine-month collaboration. Dream lighting designer Michael Jarrett M.F.A.’07 was awarded the prestigious Gilbert Hemsley Internship to work at the New York City Ballet, New York City Opera, and the Lincoln Center Festival.

Award-winning playwright Ellen Gould ’67 workshopped her new play, Family Trust, with the BTC. Several faculty and alumni were honored by this year at Boston’s Elliot Norton Awards; winners included Larry Coen ’81 for Outstanding Actor and Theresa Rebeck for Mauritius, which will be produced on Broadway next year. Acting faculty Adrienne Krstansky received the Michael L. Walzer Award for Teaching. She responded: “It is a joy to teach at Brandeis. I hope the students know that my life is enhanced immeasurably by knowing them.”

Music

Enrollment in undergraduate music courses continued to grow with the new Introduction to World Music course proving extremely popular. Participation in the Brandeis University Chorus and Brandeis-Wellesley Orchestra was especially strong. The concert season began with all six of the music department’s outstanding student ensembles uniting for a new MusicFest during parents’ weekend. The standing-room only concert featured the debut of the new Leonard Bernstein Scholarship Trio. The fall of 2007 will mark the arrival of Brandeis’s first Leonard Bernstein String Quartet.

Music department concerts had the largest attendance in years, an increase of more than 1,000 audience members from four years ago. The Brandeis Early Music Ensemble celebrated its 25th anniversary with a concert featuring returning alumni. The Lydian String Quartet hosted a series of solo recitals and began the multi-year series “Around the World in a String Quartet.” Faculty composer Eric Chasalow premiered his new multi-media opera The Puzzle Master (right) at the Spingold Theater as part of Boston’s Cyber Arts Festival. Jazz faculty Bob Nieske launched a new Jazz at the Rose concert series. The American Academy of Arts and Letters inducted Peter Lieberson PhD ’85 and honored Scott Wheeler PhD ’84 for distinguished orchestral composition.

The MusicUnitesUs concerts and intercultural residencies continued to galvanize the campus. The fall featured Turkish and Persian music by Kayhan Kalhor and Erdal Erzinçan. In March, Amazones: The Master Women Drummers of Guinea brought a whirlwind of activity to campus, such as drumming and African dance workshops, and symposia hosted by anthropology and women’s and gender studies. Their final concert at Spingold was the most highly attended arts event of the year; more than 700 audience members were on their feet cheering for the dynamic performance of African rhythm and dance.
Fine Arts

The most exhilarating news for the Department of Fine Arts was that famed architect Moshe Safdie will design the new Edmond J. Safra Fine Arts Center. Mr. Safdie’s distinguished body of work spans from China’s Guangzhou Children’s Palace to the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem. To be built in three phases, the project will break ground in 2008. The elegant design has a physical and aesthetic relationship to the Rose Art Museum (preliminary concept model at right). President Jehuda Reinharz, who selected the architect, was especially pleased that only three trees will be removed to accommodate the design.

The studio art program hosted five exceptional exhibitions of student work in the Dreitzer Gallery. Jolie Schwab ’80 sponsored the first published catalog of work by post-baccalaureate artists, designed by Peter Wilson PB’07. Painting faculty Joe Wardwell was accepted into a tenure-track position. The head of studio art, Graham Campbell, received the faculty award for distinguished contribution to the arts from Provost Marty Krauss (below), at the opening of the Bernstein Arts festival.

Art history faculty Nancy Scott gave her scholarly insights to a Rose catalog of work by former faculty Peter Grippe; Renaissance and Baroque art historian Jonathan Unglaub received tenure. Department chair Charles McClendon’s latest book, The Origins of Medieval Architecture, received an award as the best in its field from the International Medieval Congress. The semester ended with an amusing and informative lecture from Jon Landau’68, best known as the manager of Bruce Springsteen, who spoke on his private collection of medieval and Renaissance paintings.

The Rose Art Museum

Balance and Power were the topical topics of the provocative fall exhibition of video art, which explored surveillance techniques related to performance art and government spying. Clare Rojas filled the Rose with gender-bending folk images, and the museum’s publication of her first catalog was celebrated at a special event featuring dance by faculty Susan Dibble and students from creative writing offering poetic interpretations of the paintings. In December, Michael Rush curated the Art Video Lounge at the Basel Miami Art Fair, one of the most prestigious contemporary art venues in the world, with attendance exceeding 50,000 people.

During the winter, stunning modern masterpieces from the Permanent Collection came out from hibernation, including significant works by Robert Motherwell, Philip Guston, and Andy Warhol. The final exhibition of the year is John Armleder’s Too Much Is Not Enough, an outrageous site-specific installation of fluorescent light, disco balls and exotic flowers. The Boston Globe praised its “infectiously insouciant, antiauthoritarian spirit.”

The Rose is preparing to publish the museum’s first comprehensive catalog of its collection, due to be released by New York art publisher Harry N. Abrams Inc. in 2009 with editorial support from Ann Tanenbaum ’66 and funding support from by donor Michael Schulhof PhD ’70. Christie’s Fine Art Auctioneers were engaged to do a formal evaluation of the value of the famed collection. The Rose welcomed seven new members to the Board of Overseers this year: Norma Fine, Eric Green, Diego Gradowczyk ’89, Jonathan Lee, Joan Lowenfels, Liz Rueven, and Nancy Scott.
Leonard Bernstein Festival of the Creative Arts

Momentum surrounding the festival began in November when the Office of the Arts received 50 grant applications to participate -- nearly three times as many as the year before. Ultimately, more than 400 students, faculty, staff, and guest artists contributed to this year's event. The 2007 festival broke new artistic ground and attracted record-breaking crowds of more than 4,000 people to the five-day event. This was made possible through new support from Sue Pollets Nager ’55, Jolie Schwab ’80, and Carla Singer ’72.

The festival grand opening at the Rose was abuzz with excitement and anticipation. Later that night hundreds of cheering students attended the A Cappella Fest concert benefiting children in Haiti. Among the more than 30 original works of art created and exhibited across campus, a life-size recreation of Vincent van Gogh's bedroom (left) in the campus center by Joshua Simon ’07 inspired astonishment and delight. Visual artist Fran Forman ’67 led a symposium on creativity hosted by the Women's Studies Research Center.

Saturday night's magnificent concert of Brahms's German Requiem filled the Levin Ballroom to capacity. Under the direction of faculty Jim Olesen and Neal Hampton, the Brandeis-Wellesley Orchestra, the Brandeis University Chorus and Chamber Choir together with professional guest soloists Don Wilkenson and Janet Brown received a prolonged standing ovation for their moving performance.

More than 2,000 were in attendance for the family-sized Performing Arts Festival on Sunday afternoon. From the Tanglewood Marionettes to the concert premiere of Leonard Bernstein's Peter Pan, the campus was filled with creative energy. While honoring Bernstein’s contribution to our past, the festival has become a vibrant example of a generation discovering forms of creative expression not even imagined yet.

Concluding Thoughts

I just completed my senior year -- the Office of the Arts is four years old. The amount of change experienced in that time by the arts community, and Brandeis itself, has been remarkable. I am enormously pleased by a May 2007 survey finding that 97% of arts students feel Brandeis values the arts -- an increase from 68% in 2004. That reflects a University-wide commitment to making art and creativity central to Brandeis’s mission and identity.

I thank all of you who have given generously of your time, talents, and spirit to help achieve this goal. I especially want to thank my new partner in the Office of the Arts, Ingrid Schorr, who has made a such significant contribution to our community and our students during the past nine months. We have several ambitious new initiatives planned for 2007-08.

Alumnus and arts festival sponsor Sue Pollets Nager ’55 recently said to me: “The work you are doing is so important and necessary. Teaching young people to participate in the arts is as essential as teaching them to read. It will transform their whole lives.” I know you agree.

Warm regards,
Scott Edmiston
Director
Office of the Arts