Murder charges against MIT alum dropped

Prosecutors dropped a murder charge against former Media Lab employee Geoffrey V. Wilson ’02 on Sept. 18. Wilson, who had been free on bail, was accused of shaking his baby to death in 2010.

According to The Boston Globe, the state medical examiner and prosecutors obtained new information about the family’s medical history. Wilson’s lawyer stated in August that both the baby’s mother and grandmother had a rare genetic condition that made them susceptible to blood vessel ruptures as a result of weakness in collagen. The nature of the condition was undisclosed.

After review of genetic tests and medical records, the medical examiner’s office changed the baby’s cause of death to “could not be determined” and the charges against Wilson were dropped.

—Amy Wang

Chemical spill reveals some flaws in MIT Alert

Vague emergency notifications sent out around the broken bottle. “Members of the Department of Chemistry followed MIT Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) procedures for the reporting and cleanup of a chemical spill,” said Wilk.

In an email to The Tech, Executive Vice President and Treasurer Israel Ruiz stated that the emergency response was as timely and effective as it had been for earlier campus emergencies. According to Ruiz, lab personnel notified the MIT Police of the chemical spill at 1:30 p.m., who then directed the personnel to pull the fire alarm and evacuate the building.

“The Cambridge Fire Department responded and was updated en route by MIT Police on the nature of emergency. MIT EHS responded to assist the Fire Department and to coordinate the clean-up.”

Chemical spill, Page 11

Maseeh still forgoing DormCon membership

But reps to start attending meetings again

By Ray Wang

Representatives from Maseeh appeared at a recent Dormitory Council (DormCon) meeting for the first time since Maseeh seceded from the council in 2013, but Maseeh executives claim that they are not actively seeking to rejoin. DormCon, MIT’s governing body for undergraduate residences, serves as an advocacy group as well as a pool of resources for campus-wide events such as Maseeh’s Piano Drop and Campus Preview Weekend. The presidents of each dorm serve as the organization’s voting members.

Maseeh Vice President Sydney E. Hodges ’15, who was present at the DormCon meeting, sought only to familiarize herself with DormCon and what Maseeh could gain from it. “It was more of an educational experience rather than a ‘We’re really thinking about rejoining,’” she said.

The Maseeh Hall Executive Council (MHEC) currently has no timeline for initiating a large movement to rejoin DormCon. Maseeh president Austin D. Hodges ’15 pointed out that, with elections for Maseeh’s student government coming up in November, the decision will be passed on to the next administration. The process itself, however, would be fairly simple — only a majority vote is needed within DormCon for Maseeh to regain standing.

Maseeh seceded from DormCon in the spring of 2013 citing “budget-related reasons for campus-wide events such as Baker’s Piano Drop and Campus Preview Weekend.”

IN SHORT

There is no class this Monday? Happy Columbus Day!

Take Back the Night will occur today at 7 p.m. on the steps of the Student Center. Stories submitted by sexual assault survivors will be read as part of Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Quarter 2 PE registration is now open for undergrads until 1 p.m. on Wednesday. Grad student registration opens on Tuesday at 8 a.m.

Grad students — only four more chances to place your orders for your Grad Ring! Orders can be placed this Tuesday through Thursday in the E62 lobby from 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and next Sunday from 12–1 p.m. at the Ashdown brunch. The first 200 people to order get a $25 discount.

Nominations for the 2013 Caliper Medal are now open. Submit a nomination for a student, faculty member, or group whose actions demonstrate the importance of community at http://hrweb.mit.edu/node/1193/awards/excellence. The form closes on Monday, Oct. 28.

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

HackMIT, Hacking Arts, and first MIT Maker Faire hosted on campus

This past weekend, several MIT groups hosted engineering and hackathon events on campus. While HackMIT and Hacking Arts were returning annual events, this year marked the first appearance of MIT’s Maker Faire. Although independent from one another, the gatherings were all centered around building and sharing technical projects.

HackMIT ran from Oct. 4 to 5 and saw hundreds of students convene in the Johnson Ice Rink to participate in the 24-hour hackathon. Students came from around the country to build both software and hardware projects to compete for over $10,000 in prizes.

Sponsors included companies like Google, Facebook, and Fitbit, which provided their own prizes and hosted workshops throughout the weekend in order to promote Hackathons, Page 9

Weather, p. 2

FRI 64°/48°
Increasing clouds
SAT 57°/48°
Showers likely
SUN 59°/47°
Sunny
French novelist wins Nobel prize in literature

Patrick Modiano, a French novelist whose works often explore the traumas of the Nazi occupation of France and hinge on the themes of memory, loss and the puzzle of identity, won the 2014 Nobel Prize in Literature on Thursday. At a ceremony in Stockholm, the Swedish Academy cited Modiano’s unique ability to “evoke the most ungraspable human destinies” in his work.

The Nobel, one of the most prestigious and financially generous literary prizes, comes with a $1.3 million purse. The literature prize is given out for a lifetime of writing rather than for a single work.

Modiano, who has published about 30 works, has written novels, children’s books and screenplays, first rose to prominence with “La Place de la Rose,” his first work of fiction, which is set in World War II and tells the story of a young boy hired to steal documents. His works have been translated around the world, but he is not widely known outside France.

President François Hollande of France congratulated Modiano, saying in a statement that the prize recognizes “a considerable body of work which explores the subtleties of memory and the complexity of identity.” Hollande also said: “The Republic is proud of the recognition, through this Nobel Prize, of one of our greatest writers. Patrick Modiano is the 15th French person to receive this eminent distinction, confirming the great influence of our literature.”

Modiano said he learned he had won when his daughter called him and he was walking in the street. “I was a bit surprised, so I continued walking,” he said. “I wasn’t expecting this at all.” He added, with his customary modesty, that he was curious about why the jury picked him, because he is far from being an author who judges his own work. “I have another reason, which is that the price is 67 years old,” he said. He confirmed that he would travel to Sweden to accept the prize.


Russia seeks to play sanctions tit for tat

By Andrew E. Kramer

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court on Wednesday took the first major step to authorize the Kremlin to seize foreign assets and use them to compensate individuals and businesses being hurt by Western economic sanctions over the Ukraine crisis.

Legislation that passed its first round stands to arm the government of President Vladimir Putin with a remarkable weapon of economic punishment, effectively allowing the government to compensate the same insider businessmen and other elite who Western leaders had hoped would persuade the Russian leader to reverse course in Ukraine.

Although its full parameters were still unclear and it faces several hurdles, the legislation has the potential to ensure large-scale retribution that has not been invested heavily in Russia. Global companies like McDonald’s, Pepsi and ExxonMobil hold tens of billions of dollars in assets in energy-rich countries.

The sanctions imposed by the United States, the European Union and others in varying phases since March had been intended to bring Russia to heel. But Putin refused, and Atlanta, announced on Friday that it would ban many imports of food and agricultural products from Europe and from the United States.

Russian news media have taken to calling the latest proposal the Rosettenberg Law, after Arskya Rosettenberg, a former jazz-playing partner of Putin, turned wealthy industrialist.

Last month, the Italian authorities seized a reported $40 million in real estate, connected in part to Rosettenberg, who has been sanctioned.

After that, United Russia, a political party loyal to Putin, reintroduced the bill. It had first been rejected by the government last year.

The legislation must be approved two more times by the lower chamber of Parliament, Duma, and the Russian Senate, then signed by the president to become law. The initial passage could well be saber-rattling but is still an alarming sign that Russia will not take the sanctions lightly. Even early discussions of the rule in Parliament precipitated a stock sell-off late last month, given the stakes for international corporations.

In the past, the Russian government has made no bones about taking apart private assets, dismissing the once-largest domestic oil company, Yukos, and jailing its former owner, Mikhail B. Khodorkovsky, for a decade. Last month, a court ordered another Russian billionaire, Vladimir P. Vetrovshenkos, placed under house arrest.

US companies with large investments in Russia have been apprehensive about possible retribution or losing business to Asian competitors, Alex Kozidzko, the director of the American Chamber of Commerce in Russia, said in an interview. Russia, he said, now has a “hierarchy of procurement” putting Asian businesses first.

Amman, Jordan — Jordan is refusing to let Syrian refugees cross its border from the northwest, an aid agency said Wednesday, expressing fear that thousands have been left stranded with limited access to food and other supplies.

“We have not recorded any Syrian refugees crossing into Jordan in the past few weeks,” said Andrew Harper, the top official with the U.N. refugee agency in Jordan.

The International Organization for Migration concurred, saying in a statement that the prize recognizes “a considerable body of work which explores the subtleties of memory and the complexity of identity.” Holland also said: “The Republic is proud of the recognition, through this Nobel Prize, of one of our greatest writers. Patrick Modiano is the 15th French person to receive this eminent distinction, confirming the great influence of our literature.”

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Jordan turning away Syrian refugees, aid agencies say

The period of reasonable and clear weather that Cambridgeshire experienced this week will briefly come to an end as low pressure system develops off the New England coast this evening. High clouds will over take the region this afternoon and gradually thicken as moist air begins to flow in from the northwest. Skies this evening will be clear, but a few spotty clouds may develop. Showers should continue into the overnight hours before clearing begins tomorrow evening. Expect highs tomorrow in upper 50s°F and northern winds.

As the low pressure system deepens over the region this afternoon and gradually thickens as moist air begins to flow in from the northwest, the chance of showers will increase. Skies this evening will be clear, but a few spotty clouds may develop. Showers should continue into the overnight hours before clearing begins tomorrow evening. Expect highs tomorrow in upper 50s°F and northern winds.

Today: increasing cloudiness with a high temperature of 64°F (18°C). Winds will be light, around 7 mph.

Tonight: Chance of showers after midnight with a low of 48°F (9°C). Winds will be light, around 7 mph.

Tomorrow: Morning: early afternoon showers with a high of 57°F (14°C). Winds out of the north at 5 mph. Afternoon: partly cloudy, with a high in the upper 60s (16°C).
BEIJING — The pro-democracy demonstrations in Hong Kong would seem to have universal appeal. At least, that is the perception among young grass-roots idealists, politicians and former students who do not think twice about challenging the autonomy of those in power.

But here on the streets of China’s capital, where the ruling Communist Party’s heavy hand is most keenly felt, it can be hard to find people who openly support the protests and their demands, and especially hard to find others who back the Chinese security agents who have been muffling the voices of protest support.

On social media and over shared meals at restaurants, many young professionals express suspicion and even hostility toward the students and the Occupy Central protest movement. They accuse the students of selfishly blocking roads and disrupting the lives of ordinary residents; others, parroting government propaganda, blame Western governments for orchestrating one of the most high-profile challenges it has faced in its 70 year-old history.

“If necessary, the protesters should be taught a lesson by the Chinese state,” said Gordon Qi, 26, a dual economics and psychology major at one of China’s top universities.

Two weeks into the protests, aggressive censorship has left many people in mainland China with only a vague, but unfortunate impression of events in Hong Kong, which are said to be taking place behind closed doors.

But even those who have been discussing politics, say they do not care.

‘But some of the most vociferous critics of the protests are young Chinese; a number of them educated abroad and able to gain access to unfettered news by using software programs that bypass China’s so-called Great Firewall.’

In nearly two dozen conversations this week, I was warned about the protests’ impact on Hong Kong’s economy, the paramount value of maintaining social stability and how some called the hypocrisy of giving demonstrations through civil disobedience — sentiments that extend to media coverage in mainland China since the protests began in late September.

“Most notable element of criticism was a lack of sympathy for the protesters’ central goal: greater democracy,” said in an interview.

In interviews, many people said Hong Kong residents should continue to tolerate the liberties they already have, as China is a “more developed” country than the mainland, while others warned about the dangers of truly open elections.

“We have to be wary of democracy turning into anarchy,” said one 23-year-old entrepreneur, who said over tea at a cafe in the capital’s gleaming high-tech district of Zhongguancun.

“At the end of the day, it is not about the protest. It is about the government and the people and how the government is treating the people.”

Easier in health marketplace is promised

By Robert Pear

WASHINGTON — Obama administration officials said Wednesday that consumers who have a major medical emergency and cannot afford health insurance in the federal marketplace will now be able to complete applications using smartphones.

In a change that could come in the nick of time as enrollment begins Nov. 15 and continues through March 31, the length of the first enrollment period.

In the first open season, 8 million consumers were now be able to complete applications using smartphones.

Slavitt also said the government was working to make sure that consumers could often get a better deal if they looked at other plans for sale on the health insurance exchanges.

On March 31, the last day of the open enrollment period, HealthCare.gov reported record traffic, with 125,000 people using the site at one time. Slavitt said the redesigned website could handle “significantly greater than 10 million visits,” but would not say how many.

Slavitt also said the government was looking to hire more call center employees to help consumers.

The former chief executive of UnitedHealth, one of the nation’s largest insurers, and Countnian, the former chief executive of the successful state-run exchange in Connecticut, came to work for the federal government in the past few months and vowed to do better than their predecessors.

Merkert said her government was committed to encouraging investment, particularly in the “digital sphere” and the energy sector.

Merkert suggested a new push to Germany’s program to abandon nuclear power and expand renewable energy sources. It might be, then, that lower energy costs for some countries have been luring away investment by German companies.

The German national statistics office said Thursday that exports continued to rise in August, compared with July, more than ex- pected. It was the sharpest drop in one month that consumers would have to the first day that consumers would have to the first day that consumers would have to the first day that consumers would have to the first day that consumers would have to pay.

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Assemblywoman and Medicaid Services, said the official at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

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Looking back at the Hobby Lobby decision

By Claire Lazar

On Monday, the Supreme Court refocused to cases five states seeking to keep its same-sex marriage ban in place, effectively handing a tacit victory to the gay rights movement. In keeping silent, the Court prevented the religious preferences of some from limiting the life choices of others.

Such quasistate restraint from interference, however, was not exercised this summer in a different high-profile case. In late June, the Supreme Court addressed whether small for-profit companies should be exempt from a federal requirement to cover contraceptives in their health plans. The Court ruled in favor of the arts and crafts chain Hobby Lobby, along with other “closely held” corporations, declaring that they may be exempt from the contraceptive mandate if they have religious objections. Consequently, when a woman steps into a pharmacy, she may be limited in what products her insurance covers due to her employer’s faith. Even if this issue seems esoteric, it serves as a reminder of the decision’s potential ramifications.

The ability for corporations to simultaneously enjoy limited liability and individual religious liberties is inconsistent.

A notable controversy associated with Burwell v. Hobby Lobby is that a corporation is now treated as though it is a person with religious rights. Yet a corporation is not a person — and if it were, who would it be? The owners, managers, and employees are the stakeholders in a corporation, and as such, each has his or her own constitutional rights that should be equally protected. Regardless of their roles, the legal system is expected to prevent rather than to support one person’s beliefs from dictating the private life of another, and due to the decision, the religious preferences of the firm can now supersede those of its employees.

Furthermore, long-standing precedent has allowed corporations to enjoy a legal privilege that individuals cannot: limited liability. This dictates that the debts of an incorporated entity cannot fall on its private shareholders, thereby separating corporations and the private lives of owners. Yet the Hobby Lobby decision could open Pandora’s box of all sorts of claims by business owners. How much freedom could companies claim for their religious beliefs on the entire company? This decision is not merely the beginning of a pattern. Novel corporations to suddenly open a Pandora’s box of all sorts of religious beliefs on the entire company. The decision to acknowledge a company’s freedom of religion could quite possibly open a Pandora’s box of all sorts of claims by business owners. Here, things could get fuzzy. Some beheld’s Witness-
es, for example, see the refusal of blood transfusions as a nonnegotiable religious stance. Could an owner cite this as a reason to avoid paying for employees’ insurance covering certain procedures? Justice Kennedy directly addressed this issue, writing, “This decision concerns only the contraceptive mandate and should not be understood to hold that all insurance coverage of medical services, including vaccinations or blood transfusions, must necessarily fail if it conflict with an employee’s religious beliefs.” One might then wonder about non-medical religious convictions of business owners. For instance, there may be some who object to hiring people in same-sex relationships. If such claims would go unaddressed and the Hobby Lobby decision is indeed limited to contraceptive mandates, the decision’s potential ramifications,”

OPINION POLICY

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

To REACH US

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**Sassy Sudoku**
Solution, page 9

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

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

```

**Silly Sudoku**
Solution, page 9

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

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

```

**Tranquil Techdoku**
Solution, page 9

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

```
1 - 8+ 108x 30x
12x 7+ 20x 6x
5x 5x 6x
12x 12x

```

**Trivial Techdoku**
Solution, page 9

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

```
3 6+ 30x 14+
12x 6x 40x
5x
15+ 3 2x
90x 24x

```

**Sea Shades** by Billie Truitt
Solution, page 9

**ACROSS**

1 Studies hard
6 Fuse, as metal
10 Sunset direction
14 Complete chaos
15 Sunburn soother
16 "That's very funny!"
17 Get up
18 Cola or ginger ale
19 Slanted type: Abbr.
20 Popular grilled fish
22 Narrate
23 Ultimatum ender
24 Fair way to share
25 Doc for pets
26 What a surfer surfs on
27 "Sign me up!"
28 Bird's dwelling
29 Common seaweed
30 Suspenders alternative
33 Corp. bigwigs
34 Guy
35 Everest or Ararat
36 Leave the stage
37 Head for the hills
38 Look after
39 Data-sending device
40 "Buy this now" ad phrase
41 Dutch flower
42 Wheel shaft
44 Tastetea
45 Glass with a stem
46 Legal claim
47 Constantly reminds
48 Tried to lose weight
51 BLT ingredient
52 Mi. truant
53 Large game fish
54 After that
55 Mil. truant
56 Big Apple addr.
57 Large game fish
63 Cozy
64 Singer's syllables
65 Like ipe peaches
66 Fey of 30 Rock
67 Wicked
68 Colorado ski resort
69 Suffix for luncheon
70 Army bugler's tune
71 Unitidy
72 Sear on the grill
73 Hard to find
74 Rolling stone's lack
75 Start of a play
76 Singing insects
77 Mary secretly
78 Rich ven of ore
79 More beloved
80 Moxy-Dick, for one
81 All finished, as a meal
82 Will definitely
83 Count lulu
84 Venue for wedding vows
85 Doc for pets
86 What a surfer surfs on
87 "Sign me up!"
88 Bird's dwelling
89 Common seaweed
90 Suspenders alternative
93 Corp. bigwigs
94 Guy
95 Leave the stage
96 Head for the hills
97 Look after
98 Data-sending device
99 "Buy this now" ad phrase
100 Everest or Ararat
101 Dutch flower
102 Gets well
103 Volcanic flow
104 Deceptive plan
105 Adds frosting to
The Lipper Awards are based on a review of 36 companies’ 2012 and 48 companies’ 2013 risk-adjusted performance.

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**OUR BEST ADVICE TO INVESTORS?**

ASK FOR ADVICE.

Gregory F. Hui ’18 moves the ball past a defender during MIT’s 1-0 loss against Brandeis University on Tuesday night. The Engineers kept the game close, but a goal early in the second half was enough of an edge for an undefeated Brandeis as they improved to 11-0 and MIT fell to 4-3-4.
Did you get a 31 or better on the ACT?

Did you get a 700 or better on the Math Portion of the SAT?

Are you interested in the trading industry and have programming experience?
If so, XR Trading may have a Trader position for you!

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Somewhere on the Search for Meaning by Letitia Li

Our "heroes" have "infiltrated" a Sloan event...

I'm glad these disguises got us in...

...but shouldn't we have used something more...high-tech?

But then we wouldn't get any free food!

UPPERCUT by Steve Sullivan

So that's how you can use this software to make a pretty realistic-looking car...

You know what? I was just going to ask... the phase change.

If you see this, just let me know.

We can always go back a few steps.

You know what I mean?

Yes, please...

Sweet Jesus, yes.

No, check out the book I made, "Sorry, Dick in the Dark"... Well, my bad. Well, words and stuff...

I suppose some amount of failure is inevitable in research.

I fail to see that.

So it's not my fault?

Only at being good students.

You're not happy with my progress?

Words fail me.
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Better microscopy earns chemistry prize

Chemistry Nobel Prize awarded to two Americans and one German

By Kenneth Chang

Three scientists, two American and one German, received this year’s Nobel Prize in Chemistry for circumventing a basic law of physics and enabling microscopes to peer at the tiniest structures within living cells.

The 2014 laureates, announced Wednesday by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, are Eric Betzig, 54, of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute in Virginia; Stefan W. Hell, 51, of the Max Planck Institute for Biophysical Chemistry in Germany; and William E. Moerner, 60, of Stanford University in California.

For centuries, optical microscopes — those that magnify ordinary visible light — have allowed biologists to study organs too small to be seen with the naked eye. But a fundamental law of optics known as the diffraction limit, first described in 1873, states that the resolution can never be better than half the wavelength of light being looked at.

For visible light, that limit is about 0.2 micrometers of a meter, or one-twelfth-thousandth of an inch. A human hair is 500 times as wide. But a bacterium is not much larger than the size of the diffraction limit, and there was little hope of seeing details within the cell like the interaction of individual proteins.

Other technology like the electron microscope, which generates images from beams of electrons instead of particles of light, achieves higher resolution, but it has other limitations, like requiring the sample to be sliced thin and placed in a vacuum.

For biological research, that generally meant the subject of study had to be dead. At first glance, circumventing the diffraction limit would seem a foolish pursuit, like trying to invent a perpetual motion machine or faster-than-light travel — doomed by fundamental limits on how the universe works.

Nonetheless, Hell, who was born in Romania, started working on the problem after finishing his doctorate at the University of Hei-delberg in 1990. After failing to find financing in Germany to pursue his ideas, he obtained a research position at the University of Turkku in Finland in 1993. A year later, he published his theoretical proposal for achieving sharper microscopic pictures.

Hell could not break the laws of physics, of course. But he realized they could work around the diffraction limit by lighting up some of the molecules.

Biologists were already using a technique called fluorescence microscopy — attaching glowing molecules to proteins or DNA and then following the movement of the glows, like watching the ebb and flow of city traffic at night via the streams of headlights. But that did not solve the diffraction limit. If fluorescent molecules came close to one another, all the biologists could see was one glowing blur.

Hell’s insight was that by using lasers, he could restrict the glow to a very small section. That way, for structures smaller than the diffraction limit, “You can tell them apart just by making sure that one of them is off when the other is on,” he said in an interview.

Other scientists could have just taken his proposal and made it work in the laboratory long before he did, he said, adding: “I was a sort of nobody in those days. I didn’t even have a lab, really. People could have taken it as a recipe, could have done it. But they didn’t do it. Why didn’t they do it? Because they thought it wouldn’t work that way.”

In 1995, he moved to the Max Planck Institute for Biophysical Chemistry, and in 1999, he successfully put his idea into practice, producing a clearer image of an E. coli bacterium. Hell said the top scientific journals, Science and Nature, rejected the paper before it was published in The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

About the same time, Moerner, then at the University of Califor-nia, San Diego, was working with a green fluorescent protein that had first been found in a glowing jellyfish, an advance that brought the scientists the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 2008. Moerner found a version of the protein that he could turn on or off by shining specific colors of light on it.

That advance proved crucial for Betzig, who in 1995 had published an idea for using fluorescent molecules of different colors to get around the diffraction limit. But Betzig, then a researcher at Bell Laboratories in New Jersey, was frustrated with the academic life. He quit Bell and joined his father’s machine tool company. Years later, as he grew restless and happy enough, and it doesn’t need to be perturbed too much.”

The committee was not able to reach Moerner before making the announcement.

“I actually still haven’t a chance to talk to them,” Moerner said Wednesday morning from a hotel room in Brazil, where he is attending a scientific workshop. He said his wife called to tell him the news.

Hell said that when he received the phone call, he wondered if it might be a hoax: “Then he recognized the voice of the caller, Stefan Normark, the permanent secre-tary of the academy. Another voice told him to stay on the line so that he could take questions from journalists.

“Then I realized, this is seri-ous,” he said.

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Hexane spill reveals flaws of MIT alerts

**DiFava: must be more accurate**

**Chemical spill, from Page 1** activities. The building was cleared for occupancy after a little over an hour, said Ruiz.

However, Ruiz said that the process of informing the community about the incident, including vague and ominous messages, was unsatisfactory. "This view was echoed by Chief of Police John DiFava in an interview with The Tech. "We had a problem with the alert system, no question about it. We failed to get a message out there that was purposeful," he said.

The MIT Alert system is designed to notify students by text, email, and voicemail.

The unclear MIT Alert notifications stemmed from the failure of the "bridge line" communication system, according to DiFava. The "bridge line" is a conference call system designed to facilitate communication between campus representatives from the MIT Police, EHS, the MIT Security and Emergency Management Office (SEMO), and the MIT News Office in order to decide upon the nature of the emergency alert.

Ruiz said that SEMO received notification of the fire alarm from the Dreyfus Building and then unsuccessfully attempted to set up the bridge line twice.

After this communications failure, the MIT Department of Facilities Operations Center sent a general "flare message" through MIT Alert to the entire campus, according to protocol, at around 1:45 p.m. The text of the alert read: "MIT is investigating report of a serious emergency on campus. Emergency personnel are responding. STAY ALERT."

The "flare message" system was introduced in the aftermath of an April 2013 gunman hoax incident where a "flare message" was sent to enough people in the right manner.

Looking ahead, DiFava stated that the overall process needs to be streamlined to ensure that a timely and accurate message is sent out to the campus. "We still need the conference bridge to manage the situation and decide where we’re going to go with it, but for the first few minutes we need to take it out of the situation," said DiFava.

Ruiz said that MIT Alert is already taking steps to improve the emergency notification protocol, and that the incident served as a useful test of the campus alert capability and response time.

"Clearly, much more work and some key changes need to happen and will be happening soon," Ruiz said.

According to the DormCon meeting minutes, members said that DormCon provides benefits for each residence because of its powerful position as a voice for all dorms. In addition, they underscored that DormCon members can receive connections to administrators and advance warning of things going on in other dorms, among other benefits. However, members also mentioned that it makes it hard for DormCon to coordinate without representation of Maseeh.

Until Maseeh’s secession, former MIT dorm Bexley had been the only dorm to not participate in DormCon. Maseeh will continue to send representatives to the biweekly meetings, breaking a one-and-a-half year long hiatus. Hodges said that their current plan is to “join our voice with theirs without the more financial obligations.”

"Right now, we’re very content," she added.
THEATER REVIEW

Traces at ArtsEmerson
A breathtakingly beautiful physical comedy of highest quality

By Eva-Lotta Kasper

In my dreams sometimes I fly. I just take a really long step and then the next without my feet ever touching the ground. It is a peculiar yet precious feeling. The Quebecois troupe Les 7 Doigts de la Main (literally, the seven fingers of a hand), makes the dream a reality in their theater, dance, and circus crossover Traces, running in the Cutler Majestic Theatre in Boston’s Theatre District until October 12.

The artists, seven acrobats by training, played themselves in the face of an impending catastrophe as they attempted to leave their traces by telling their stories through music, dance, speeches and high-risk acrobatics. The atmosphere was intimate, and by the end I knew more personal details about the seven on stage than some of my Facebook friends.

Saturday night’s performance was a “flawless victory”, as described by the actors.

The company’s name, 7 Fingers, refers to seven former Cirque du Soleil artists who founded it twelve years ago “to bring circus to a human scale.” The 90-minute, no-intermission performance was exactly what the doctor should have ordered. If you still can, go see Traces. I might even go again myself, because I sure loved it.

Don’t get me wrong, there are still many layers of depth to the production. The powerhouse tenor, Fletcher Sanchez, became almost alive at the hands (and feet) of the acrobats. And while the storytelling was anything but linear, it was immensely beautiful. The human body is a work of art worth seeing in theater, and the work of seven is even better.

Traces showed that visual comedy does not have to be cheap, as is often the case in Hollywood movies, but can be rather exquisite and eloquent. Throughout the show, I could not stop smiling. And I was not alone. Naomi Zimmermann-Pichon’s solo of armchair acrobatics is probably the best stage appearance ever made by a piece of furniture. All props, from chairs to skateboard, became almost alive at the hands (and feet) of the acrobats. And while the storytelling was anything but linear, it was immensely beautiful. The human body is a work of art worth seeing in theater, and the work of seven is even better.

Saturday night’s performance was a “flawless victory”, as described by the actors during the following Q&A (Friday and Saturday evenings). While such success does not come by every night, there’s no need to worry, because the company has adopted a “rule of three” — if they miss a trick the first time, they’ll try again, twice if necessary. At first, the audience clearly held their breaths, scared for the safety of the actors. But soon, their level of professionalism earned my trust. I was sitting in the mezzanine, and a considerable part of the performance took place at eye-level. However, when later asked which part of the play they fear the most, the acrobats’ answers were surprising. “I don’t actually play basketball. That’s the most nerve-wracking for me,” admitted actor Renaldo Williams. Then again, the 24-year-old hand to hand specialist, who has been training with his current partner for three years, is also afraid of spiders, as I had already learned from his opening lines. LJ Marles, another member of the troupe, who described himself with the sentence “People say I’m sarcastic, I say I’m British,” pointed to the piano, which he had to learn specifically for this production.

Traces showed that visual comedy does not have to be cheap, as is often the case in Hollywood movies, but can be rather exquisite and eloquent. Throughout the show, I could not stop smiling. And I was not alone. Naomi Zimmermann-Pichon’s solo of armchair acrobatics is probably the best stage appearance ever made by a piece of furniture. All props, from chairs to skateboard, became almost alive at the hands (and feet) of the acrobats. And while the storytelling was anything but linear, it was immensely beautiful. The human body is a work of art worth seeing in theater, and the work of seven is even better.

Don’t get me wrong, there are still many layers of depth to the production. The powerful teeterboarder Fletcher Sanchez also gave a quick-paced speech on the topic of time that could be described as Google Search meets stand-up comedy. The audience was also given an opportunity choose their favorite acrobat, as the character’s survival in the face of the apocalypse would eventually be determined by an X Factor-style vote-off.

My professors’ love for PowerPoint presentations made me at first skeptical of the big white screen, but my reservations quickly dissolved into the actors’ childhood photos, an EKG, and CCTV images from around the theatre. Rarely have I liked video surveillance so much. A crucial part of the show, Nol van Genuchten’s playful lighting was complemented well by an eccentric sound design.

Traces is probably the most life-positive play I have seen. And after the Add Date exam period with the Boston weather slowly becoming, well, Boston weather, this was exactly what the doctor should have ordered.

The company’s name, 7 Fingers, refers to seven former Cirque du Soleil artists who founded it twelve years ago “to bring circus to a human scale.” The 90-minute, no-intermission performance was exactly what the doctor should have ordered. If you still can, go see Traces. I might even go again myself, because I sure loved it.

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Traces
Created by Les 7 Doigts de la Main
Directed and Choreographed by Shana Carroll and Gypsy Snider
Emerson/Cutler Majestic Theatre, Boston
Playing until October 12

If you still can, go see Traces. I might even go again myself, because I sure loved it.

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