The largest art conference ever held at MIT will begin Oct. 15 with hundreds of participants expected to attend. Otto Plane, director of MIT's Center for Advanced Visual Studies and co-chairman of the conference called "Art Transition," said that the five-day series of seminars, presentations and lectures has attracted "remarkable response from all over the United States and abroad." Not only have invited guests and speakers put themselves to some trouble to attend, but hundreds of participants are expected to pay $50 ($30 for students) to register for the series.

"Art Transition" is being funded by MIT, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and private donations, according to Virginia Gunter, project director for the event and director of programs and exhibitions at Massachusetts College of Art. Plane said that "we're trying to do it for next to nothing," with most of the money coming from NEH and registration fees. He said that MIT was providing "underwritten money that permits us to do the event but we are expected to bring back the money." President Jerome B. Wiesner and Plane said that as co-chairman, Plane is "representing MIT, while NEH is represented by co-chairman Peter Feinstein, director of the University Films Study Center.

Feinstein said that "Art Transition" is the fifth and final event in a series of conferences funded by NEH. The University Films Study Center has participated in the other four, held at Boston College, University of Illinois (Animation and Special Events), the International Museum of Photography at Rochester (Sound in Films), Yale (Film and Modern Art), Brandeis (American Documentary) and Wesleyan (Surrealism and French Documentary).

The theme of "Art Transition" is broader than any of the previous conferences. Gunter said the purpose of the event is "to share ideas and bring people together from various parts of the country who have interests in the concerns of art and society and to examine the changes and developments in art."

When asked if an art conference was unusual for a science-engineering school, MIT, Gunter replied that "MIT has become more involved in both the arts and humanities, and at MIT is changing and expanding its interests, art itself is becoming more openly involved with technology and science."

Plane agreed with Gunter, saying that such events are now "less unusual all the time."