Intergenerational & Collaborative Learning

“ Every time someone leaves Otis, art evolves and design gets better. And that’s really your job when you leave here…to move things along.” This was the stirring message from 2009 Commencement Keynote Speaker Mark Parker, Nike CEO/artist and designer, who received an honorary doctorate degree from Otis. During his acceptance remarks, he imparted sage words of guidance to the Class of 2009 (see page 24). It was an inspirational occasion that epitomized the interaction and exchange between experienced professionals and young talented students, and defines daily teaching and learning at Otis.

Otis students benefit from a multigenerational educational environment that encourages intergenerational learning. Not only do they study with a faculty of artists, designers and scholars of different generations, they also learn from their very diverse peers through a college-wide pedagogy that promotes exchange and collaboration. As a result, students gain from a vigorous mix of seasoned and youthful perspectives. The collaboration of generations is manifested most visibly at Otis in the graduate programs, where established practitioners serve more as guides than teachers to emerging artists, designers and writers.

I invite you to read the stories of two of the College’s graduate programs marking milestone anniversaries this year (see pages 02–21). Graduate Fine Arts celebrates its 20th year, and Graduate Writing marks its10th anniversary. Together with Graduate Public Practice and Graduate Graphic Design, they form an innovative quartet of Master of Fine Arts offerings.

At Otis, we believe that the richness of ideas that emerge from a confluence of fresh impulses and experiences will shape a new future that is solidly grounded yet daring; a future that embodies the creative impact of Otis graduates as described above by Dr. Parker.

Samuel Hoi, President