

**MIT  
MUSEUM**

**TIME**  
A Yearlong  
Exploration



# A Voyage Through TIME at the MIT Museum

What is time? How do we measure, understand, and perceive it? From circadian rhythms to wormholes, from atomic clocks to time travel, our yearlong focus on TIME at the MIT Museum invites audiences to experience programs, educational workshops, and installations, exploring our complex relationship with the topic. Under our new mission – we welcome all to participate in MIT’s unique culture of problem solving and playful creativity – we explore this theme to uncover the connections between diverse disciplines, research, and storytelling drawing from the MIT and global community of faculty, students, researchers and artists.

These themes open the doors to the MIT Museum, enabling us to catalyze conversation and spark creative thinking regarding the major topics of our times – with the Museum acting as MIT’s Public Lab. At a time when people need to better understand universities and cultural institutions and the value of the work that goes on in them, we envision the MIT Museum as a portal to the MIT campus, a playground for ideas focused this year on TIME. Through our thematic focus, we will enact our vision, inspiring a world where people are authentically connected into the conversation around how science, technology, and design will shape our future.

We look forward to welcoming you to the MIT Museum.



**Michael John Gorman**

The Mark R. Epstein (Class of 1963) Director,  
MIT Museum and Professor of the Practice of  
Science, Technology, and Society  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
September 2025

# EXHIBITIONS

A person is lying on a large, circular, tufted bed in a room. The room is illuminated by a large, glowing circular light fixture above the bed, which is surrounded by a ring of light. The bed is also illuminated from below by a ring of light. The overall atmosphere is warm and cozy, with a monochromatic orange-red color scheme.

# Janet Echelman: Remembering the Future

September 17, 2025 – August 1, 2027



Janet Echelman's *Remembering the Future* widens our perspective in time, giving sculptural form to the history of the Earth's climate from the last ice age to the present moment, and then branching out to visualize multiple potential futures.

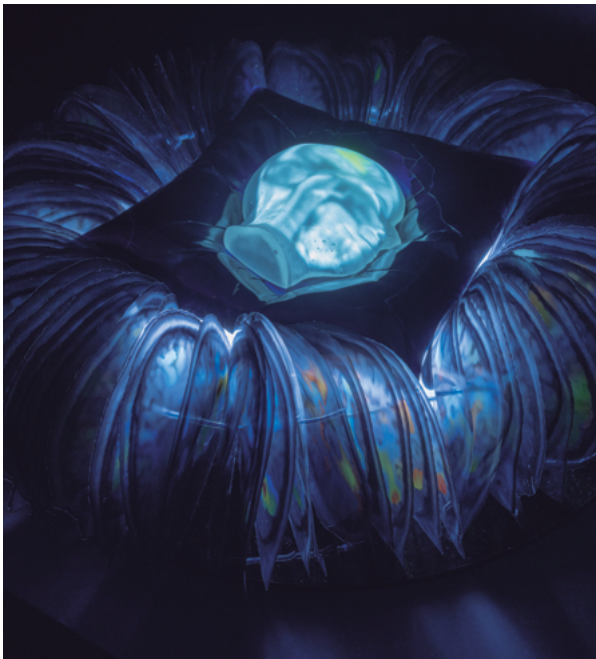
Constructed from colored twines and ropes that are braided, knotted, and hand-spliced to create a three-dimensional form, the immersive artwork greets you with its grand scale presiding over the MIT Museum lobby.

This large-scale installation by 2022-2024 MIT Distinguished Visiting Artist, Janet Echelman, was developed during her residency at the MIT Center for Art, Science & Technology (CAST). Architect, engineer, and MIT Associate Professor Caitlin Mueller collaborated on the development of the piece.

*Remembering the Future*, Janet Echelman.  
Photo by Anna Olivella

# Lighten Up! On Biology and Time

October 28, 2025 - August 15, 2026



*Lighten Up!* explores the intimate connection between living organisms and the natural cycle of night and day. This exhibition features fifteen artists with eighteen immersive artworks, installations, and experiential environments either specifically conceived or newly adapted for the exhibition. Biology and time intersect in circadian rhythms, the internal clock within living beings that responds to time-based patterns of light and dark. Circadian rhythms in turn influence sleep, alertness, immunity, and mood.

*Lighten Up!* highlights the beauty of these rhythms and invites visitors to discover the secrets of biological clocks, explore alternative representations of time, and probe how light cycles impact our well-being. Artists include Kirell Benzi, Marilynne Andersen, James Carpenter, Liliame Lijn, and Helga Schmid. Also featuring Carsten Höller, in a bespoke collaboration with MIT Media Lab alum, Adam Haar, and MIT Museum Studio and Compton Gallery founding manager, Seth Riskin.

Liliame Lijn, *Sweet Solar Dreams*.  
Image by Julien Gremaud for EPFL Pavilion

# Freezing Time: Edgerton and the Beauty of the Machine Age

January 22, 2026 - August 2, 2026

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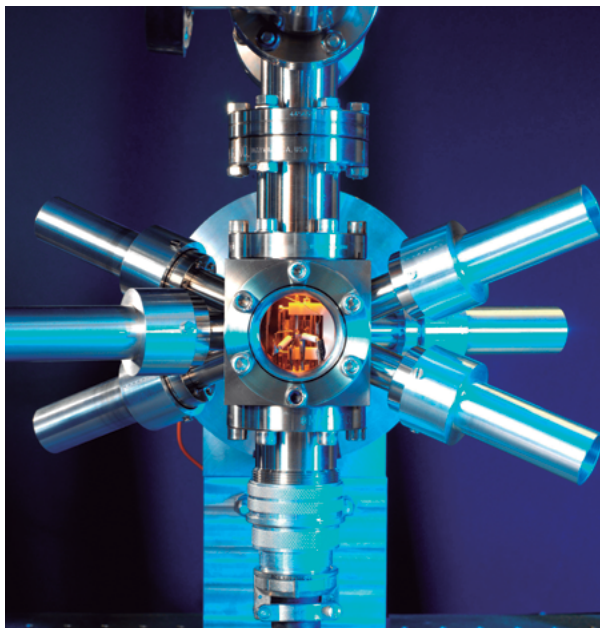
In the 1930s, the startlingly original photographs of Harold Edgerton captured the imagination of engineers and artists alike. *Freezing Time: Edgerton and the Beauty of the Machine Age* is a new look at the inventions that enabled the manipulation of time and light and his unexpected discovery of sublime beauty while studying motion and machines of America's factories. This exhibition will illustrate how Harold Edgerton and his students' early work on the stroboscope led to his fascinating interweaving of technology and art.

Harold Edgerton, Hammer Breaking Glass, 1933.  
Photo by Harold "Doc" Edgerton

# Split|Second

Feb 19, 2026 - January 4, 2027

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Strange things can happen in a split second. This exhibition will be housed in our Art+ Science gallery and is drawn from objects from our collection, combined with responses from the larger community drawn from our TIME Open Call. *Split|Second* explores attempts to measure time using everything from sundials to quantum atomic clocks.

*Split|Second* takes visitors through the history of precision time measurement, offering a close-up look at the instruments developed to measure time in ever smaller and more precise increments.

Strontium Optical Clock.  
Photo by Andrew Brookes for the Science Photo Library

# PROGRAMS

A group of five students are gathered around a dark table, intently focused on a task. They are using various tools like tweezers and pipettes to handle small, colorful, glowing particles (possibly microbeads or cells) scattered across the surface. The scene is lit with a cool, blue-purple light, creating a high-tech, laboratory-like atmosphere. One student in the foreground is wearing a blue jacket with yellow accents. The overall mood is one of collaborative scientific inquiry.



Photo by Michael J. Clarke

### **THEMATIC APPROACH**

In celebration of this year's thematic focus on TIME, we're hosting events, programs, panel discussions, and more. We welcome all to join us, as we share ideas, explore new perspectives, and connect over the questions that shape our world.

Drawing on the creative, intellectual, and entrepreneurial energy of MIT and our global community, we'll create spaces for conversation, collaboration, and discovery. Together, we'll explore the many ways TIME influences our lives and our shared future.

# Highlighted Programs

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Photo by Deborah Douglas

Our popular **After Dark series** is a lively evening of entertainment, science, and tinkering for the 18+ crowd focusing on themes including: spacetime, rhythm, time travel, memory, and more to be announced. After Dark is held on the second Thursday of each month from 6pm – 9pm.

**Time Travel on Screen** is a new Science Fiction Film Series that explores time travel through the lens of science fiction cinema. From Victorian

inventors to futuristic hitmen, each screening offers a unique take on the paradoxes, perils, and possibilities of traveling through time. Presented in partnership with the **Boston Sci Fi Film Festival**.

TIME programs also include a **Symposium on Biological Time**, organized in partnership with Swissnex Boston, and **Circadian Rhythms Day**, both in celebration of our *Lighten Up!* exhibition.

## Join Us

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We welcome all to participate in MIT's unique culture of problem-solving and playful creativity via Open Calls.

Members of the MIT community and the public are invited to submit proposals for innovative public programs or exhibitions that demonstrate a meaningful connection to one of our themes. We are eager to review proposals that bring a thought-provoking or unexpected perspective and are especially interested in projects that connect art, science, technology, and design.

Open Call application cycles follow our thematic programming schedule. Apply via our website.



Join us! Come to a program, visit the museum, or submit your ideas to one of our Open Calls.



MIT Museum Team. Photo by Michael J. Clarke

## ABOUT THE MIT MUSEUM

The MIT Museum aims to connect curious minds to MIT's unique culture of problem solving and playful creativity, bringing together science, technology, art and design in surprising ways to explore our future.

In addition to exhibitions, programs, a maker hub, and learning labs, the museum invites visitors to take part in ongoing research while demonstrating how science and innovation will shape the future of society. In October 2022, a reinvented MIT Museum opened in a new location in the heart of Kendall Square in Cambridge, MA.

Highlights of the Museum include freshly conceived exhibitions featuring objects from the Museum's

prodigious collections of over 1.5 million objects, along with loans of art and other objects; the Yuchun (1989) and Agustina Lee Family Exchange event space for public dialogue and conversation; the hands-on Maker Hub, where audiences can create and invent; and an expanded Museum Store.


The MIT Museum's main building is situated on Kendall Square, in the heart of "the most innovative square mile on the planet," at the base of the Kendall/MIT MBTA Red Line stop at the new Kendall Gateway to the MIT Campus and is open daily 10am- 5pm.

For more information, including accessibility and amenities, please visit [mitmuseum.mit.edu](https://mitmuseum.mit.edu)

**“Time is not a  
thing that passes,  
it’s a sea on  
which you float”**

**—Margaret Atwood**

Cover Photo: Circadian Rhythms, Kirell Benzi

 Massachusetts Institute of Technology

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To learn more about our  
focus on time, please visit  
[mitmuseum.mit.edu/time](http://mitmuseum.mit.edu/time)