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Outstanding Individuals Needed

Nominations are now open for USITT's most prestigious awards for individuals and organizations, including the Joel E. Rubin Founders Award, Special Citations, and more »



Read a Good Book Lately?

USITT's Golden Pen Award showcases books that are stellar additions to any personal or professional library. Suggest the 2014 winner through the online nominations process. more »



USITT Presents: Melding LEDs

Blending LEDs with Traditional Fixtures with Ford Sellers of Chauvet Professional on June 3... more »



OISTAT Meets In Shanghai

Members from the Research and Performance Design Commissions gathered to share information and learn about changes within the organization, more »



USITT's President: Building Career Capital

How do we approach work, and how do we work together - and how USITT is part of the process. more »



USITT's Executive Director: Summer

Changing locations, or just changing how we look at venues can make summer a refreshing time of year for all of us... more »



A Big Texas Welcome

Fort Worth is already looking forward to hosting the 2014 USITT Annual Conference & Stage Expo, but there are a few things every attendee should know. more »



Stage Expo set to grow

Building on the successes of 2013 and the return of Sound Lab, Stage Expo 2014 is already looking at new exhibitors and opportunities. more »



Costume's Student Leadership Initiative

Five students participated in the 2013 session, with plans already in place for how the session will continue in 2014. more »



The Last Word — Elite Training

Sunrise over parched distant hills, intensive training during the day, and the lights of the Las Vegas strip to end the day (the lights never dim) more »

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News & Notices

Nominate for Awards Online Now

Michael Mehler Chair, USITT Awards & Resolutions Committee



Tom Young received the Dr. Joel E. Rubin Founders Award at the 2013 Annual Conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The award was presented by President Lea Asbell-Swanger.

Photo/Tom Thatcher

As of June 1, nominations may be submitted online for the five Special Achievement Awards: the USITT Award, the Joel E. Rubin Founders Award, the Thomas DeGaetani Award, the Honorary Lifetime Membership Award, and Special Citations.

Any USITT member may nominate an individual for one of these awards. Nominations will be accepted online from June 1 through July 1. The Awards & Resolutions Committee will review all completed nominations and recommend recipients to the Board of Directors for consideration at its mid-August meeting at which the Board will vote on the recommendations.

Questions about the nominations forms or process should be directed to Shannan Hoerger shannan@usitt.org, USITT Member Services Associate; Michael Mehler mmehler@allegheny.edu, Chair of the Awards & Resolutions Committee, or any other member of the committee.

The **USITT Award**, the highest honor given by USITT, recognizes a lifetime of distinguished contribution to the performing arts or entertainment communities in any capacity. Recipients need not be members of nor have any connection to USITT.

The **Thomas DeGaetani Award**, named in honor of the first USITT president, honors an outstanding lifetime contribution to the performing arts or entertainment industry by an individual or a performing arts/entertainment-focused organization living and/or working in a particular region of the country, generally near the location of the Annual Conference & Stage Expo. Traditionally a nomination for this award originates from regional representatives on the Conference Committee and members of the Regional Section.

The **Joel E. Rubin Founder's Award** is presented to a USITT member in recognition of outstanding and continued service to the Institute. This award is named in honor of Dr. Joel E. Rubin, a founder and the second president of the Institute.

The **Honorary Lifetime Membership Award** is bestowed to a small but very distinguished group of individuals who have been recognized for providing a significant period of years of continuous and extraordinary service to the Institute.

A **Special Citation** recognizes outstanding achievement in any area of the performing arts or entertainment industry by an individual or an organization. This recognition is used for an acknowledgement that does not seem to the nominator or the Committee on Awards and Resolutions to fall into one of the established award categories.

Click here to find more information about these awards and past recipients.

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Members Invited to Showtech

USITT will be exhibiting at Showtech 2013 from June 18 to 20 at the Exhibition Center in Berlin, Germany. President Lea Asbell-Swanger, Executive Director David Grindle, and Lauren Wilde, winner of the 2013 Kryolan Makeup Design Award will be on hand in Hall 4, Stand C44.

USITT members and guests are encouraged to click here and use code bkv7-599a-d6hw-t6je for a free pass to participate.

Showtech is an international trade show and conference for theatre, film, and event professionals which includes both a trade show and programming. USITT will be part of the inaugural pavilion of international associations.

TCG Slates 2014 Conference in San Diego

San Diego, California, will be the site of Theatre Communications Group's (TCG) 24th Annual National Conference June 19 to 21, 2014. The TCG National Conference provides one of the largest forums for the national theatre community to assemble for artistic and intellectual exchange.

The San Diego-area TCG Member Theatres contributing to the planning for the Conference will include: Cygnet Theatre Company, Diversionary Theatre, Ion Theatre Company, La Jolla Playhouse, Lamb's Players, MOXIE Theatre, North Coast Repertory Theatre, The Old Globe, San Diego Junior Theatre, and San Diego Repertory Theatre.

FedEx Offers Free Package Design, Testing

FedEx provides free laboratory testing and package design services to its customers. Proper packaging protects theatrical equipment, lighting fixtures, and control systems; minimizes package weight; and helps goods arrive on time and intact.

To submit package samples for testing, go to fedex.com/packaging and download the FedEx Packaging Test Application at the bottom of the page. When shipping packages or freight, take advantage of the free USITT Freight Savings Plan to reduce shipping costs. For more information, call Siriani at 1-800-554-0005.

OISTAT Headquarters Reaches Out with New Team

OISTAT Headquarters welcomes new Executive Director Kathy Hong and staff members Wan-Jung Wei, Lulu Yeh, and Lucy Wang. With experience in entertainment and performing arts, Ms. Hong aims to embrace the diversity of cultures with openness and reach out to the community.

Ms. Wei, HQ's senior secretary, has a master's degree in arts and politics and comes from the United Nations headquarters in New York City. She now serves the OISTAT community with her outgoing personality and exceptional attention to global affairs. Ms. Yeh and Ms. Wang both graduated with MAs in arts management. Ms. Yeh has just returned to the arts field after a year of traveling in Australia and New Zealand. Trained in classical music, Ms. Wang's artistic brain has balanced nicely with her experiences in public relations and marketing for performing groups in the United States.



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News & Notices

Nominations for Golden Pen Open until August

Mike Monsos Chair, USITT Golden Pen Subcommittee

Identifying and honoring great additions to the reading list of designers and technicians is one of the goals of USITT's Golden Pen award. Nominations are now open for the 2014 Golden Pen Award. USITT members may nominate books through August 15 by clicking here.

This recognition, which can be given annually, honors outstanding publications in the field of design and production for the performing arts as well as the history and documentation of theatre and theatre design. Richard Pilbrow's A Theatre Project, was honored in 2013 allowing USITT to add to Mr. Pilbrow's many accolades and providing an opportunity to invite him to participate as an honored guest at the Annual Conference. The book is currently available through the USITT bookstore.

The Golden Pen winner should provide an outstanding example of scholarly research and critical thinking, presentation of the work and methodology of exceptional theatrical practitioners, or description of the methods, skills, and technology involved in creating works of theatre. The committee seeks books published in the last three years that have made a significant contribution

When Richard Pilbrow, winner of the 2013 Golden Pen Award, talked about his career at the Annual Conference in Milwaukee, those who attended were delighted with his anecdotes and insights.

Photo/Tom Thatcher

to any aspect of theatre design and technology and are much too valuable a resource not to recognize.

Previous Golden Pen winners, such as Making the Scene: A History of Stage Design and Technology by Oscar Brockett, continue to provide inspiration. Other recent winners -- such as George Tsypin Opera Factory: Building in the Black

Void by George Tyspin, and *M. Tabacki: a Design Monograph* by Gordana Popovic Vasic and Inng Subotic -- have been called "must-haves" for university library holdings as well as personal collections.

Each nominated book receives a thorough and thoughtful review by members of the Golden Pen Subcommittee who read, analyze, tabulate, and make a recommendation to the USITT Publications Committee. The full committee discusses and forwards the recommendation to the Awards & Resolutions Committee for action by the Board of Directors. Books that are chosen as Golden Pen winners are added to the USITT store, where members can purchase them at a discounted price. Authors as well as subjects of books are invited to attend the Annual Conference & Stage Expo. The 2014 event in Fort Worth, Texas in March.

For more information, contact either the National Office at info@office.usitt.org or Mike Monsos, Chair of the Golden Pen Subcommittee, at michael.monsos@umontana.edu.

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News & Notices

Next *USITT Presents* June 3 in Florida

Janet Gramza Communications Associate

USITT's goal of bringing its members year-round training opportunities continues with the next session of USITT Presents, the new series of hands-on workshops with industry leaders across the country, deeply discounted for members.

USITT Presents: How to Blend LED with Traditional Fixtures is a daylong session by Chauvet Professional on June 3 at the University of Miami, Miami, Florida. Ford Sellers, senior product development manager for Chauvet Professional, will demonstrate how to transition and replace existing stage lighting with energy-saving LEDs. For more information or to register for the Chauvet training, visit

www.usitt.org/chauvet.

The class covers LED basics, fixture types, theatre applications with Lekos,

strips, Fresnel lenses, and cycs; as well as design concepts and expert advice, plus three hours of hands-on practice with Chauvet tools. The cost - including lunch – is just \$50 for USITT members and \$25 for student/early career members. (Fees double for non-members.)

USITT kicked off USITT Presents early this year with two classes -- a Meyer sound mixing class in Nashville, Tennesee in February, and a two-day Studio Gear HOG 4 training in Milwaukee, Wisconsin leading up to USITT's Annual Conference & Stage Expo. Both classes sold out.

"We had eight spots for the Studio Gear training and 10 people showed up," said Stage Expo Manager Ron Procopio. "We set the Meyer training for 20 spots and 24 people showed up. Both Meyer Sound and Studio Gear have expressed interest in doing more training with us."

Other sessions in the planning stage include a class on projection with Panasonic August 19 in San Francisco, California and media server training with TMB August 19 in Los Angeles. USITT is working with other partner companies to provide more training in audio, lighting, video, and rigging.





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News & Notices

OISTAT Commissions meet in Shanghai

Carl Walling USITT International Committee



Fausto Viana's presentation on Local Festival Costumes in Brazil

Photo/Carl Walling

OISTAT's Research and Performance Design Commissions held a joint meeting March 25 to 28 hosted by Shanghai Theatre Academy in Shanghai, China. Sixteen OISTAT members representing Brazil, Bulgaria, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, Great Britain, Hungary, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Taiwan, and the United States traveled to Shanghai to join members from OISTAT China, as well as faculty and post-graduate students from Shanghai Theatre Academy.

During the symposium members of both commissions, along with scholars from China, presented their research. Presentations included Dr. Dorita Hannah's keynote "Critical Costume: Operating Between Local Encounters, Global Events and Our Daily Lives," Fausto Viana's presentation on local festival costumes in Brazil, Dr. Joslin McKinney's paper "Cultural Encounter and the Body of the Spectator," Henk van der Geest's presentation on cultural approaches to lighting practice, Ya Li's research titled "Earring Study in Yuan Dynasty of Ancient China," and Piroska.E.Kiss' presentation on a recent scenographic encounter during a production of *Waiting for Godot* in Haiti. During four days, 20 research presentations and workshops were shared.

OISTAT Headquarters updated the commissions about several updates that were recently made to the OISTAT website at commission meetings. The updates include recent revisions to the Performance Design Commission galleries and Research Commission archives. Currently, OISTAT Headquarters, along with OISTAT Commission Chairs, are developing the website with additional new galleries, databases, and networking tools.

During the Shanghai meetings, commission members discussed several website projects, which should increase the effectiveness of the new OISTAT website. The Research Commission updated its members on two ongoing projects: TESTing 2013 and a recommended publications database.

This September, the Research Commission will try out TESTing 2013 during World Stage Design 2013. TESTing 2013 will allow research practitioners an opportunity to experiment with performance design projects and explore theoretical models. The commission received 25; the peer-review jury will select 10 to 12 projects for final inclusion in World Stage Design 2013. Once selected, the TESTing 2013 research projects will transpire over five days, September 9 to 13. Presentations and lectures stemming from these projects will be open to WSD 2013 attendees.

In addition to the TESTing project, the Research Commission is developing a recommended theatre publications database which will include books,



The 2013 Meeting Poster for OISTAT
Performance Design and Research
Photo/Carl Walling

book chapters, and essays recommended by OISTAT members. OISTAT will host the database on its website for public access.

The next business meeting for OISTAT's Performance Design Commission and OISTAT Research Commission will be during World Stage Design 2013 in Cardiff, Wales. Any USITT members attending are welcome to come to the meetings. For more information about OISTAT, go to www.oistat.org.

For more about USITT – International Committee and the Institute's international activities, visit the Facebook page USITT – International Activities.

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The Last Word:

Snapshots of Elite Training

Cirque du Soleil Training Center & Silver Stage Wire Rope

Las Vegas, Nevada

Special thanks to Cirque du Soleil, Columbus McKinnon Entertainment Technology, Coolux, Meyer Sound, Silver State Wire Rope, and Stage Technologies.

Photos/Barbara E.R. Lucas



Enjoying the view while waiting for Elite Training to begin.



The lineup of instructors and staff from Cirque du Soleil who made the event possible.



Kim Scott, Ray Fortin, and David Grindle discuss the entertainment industry



Martin from Meyer Sound engages his students



Gemma Guy from Stage Technologies gets technical about automation



The sad results of destructive testing at Silver State Wire Rope



Waiting for a backstage tour in the lobby of the "O" Theatre at the Bellagio

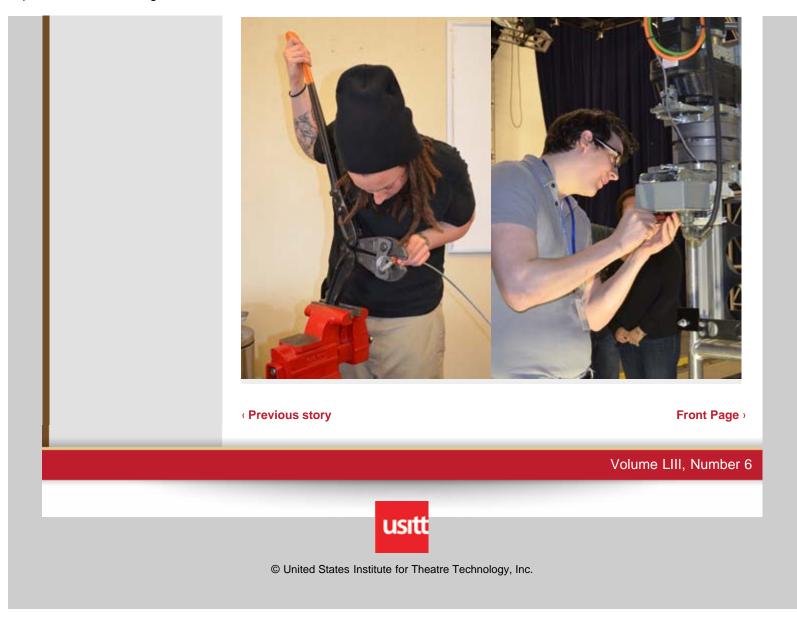


Hands-on training with Coolux





The group asks questions after a backstage tour of Zarkana at Aria





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To Lead Cirque Company

We wish Kim Scott great success in her new position with Cirque du Soleil. Kim, who serves on USITT's Board of Directors, is now company manager for Cirque du Soleil's Criss Angel BeLIEve, the most spectacular illusions from the magician of the century. The show is now open at the Luxor Hotel Casino in Las Vegas.

Designs Exhibited in Austin, Texas

Congratulations to Karen Maness on her recent solo exhibition - "to sea" - which ran in April and May at the West Austin Studio Tour #93 and at dwg, a landscape architecture firm in Austin, Texas.

Additional work by Karen, who is USITT's Scene Design Co-commissioner, can be found at www.karenmaness.com

How to Stage a Production When the Audience Is Canoeing

Sometimes we receive information about performances, but we never hear about how they turn out. Here's one recent example: just what did occur on May 18 when PlaceBase Productions and performers from the Upper Minnesota River Valley area staged a Paddling Theater Production on the Minnesota River as part of Minnesota River History Weekend and Minnesota State Water Trails 50th Anniversary?

From their canoes, the audience was engaged with stories, songs, and characters from local river lore, presented both as live theatre and live-action radio drama in the original production: With the Future on the Line: Paddling Theater from Granite Falls to Yellow Medicine. Characters from throughout history emerged on the river's banks to lead the audience on an interactive journey into the past, bringing the stories of the Minnesota River Valley.



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ETC: Building Purchase Helps Expand Manufacturing

ETC (Electronic Theatre Controls, Inc.) expanded its manufacturing after buying a 350,000-square-foot building in Mazomanie, Wisconsin. ETC will move portions of its manufacturing and warehousing to the Mazomanie facility, while maintaining the company's headquarters in Middleton, Wisconsin.

ETC's Middleton headquarters is known for its innovative 'Town Square' themed environment. The Mazomanie building will also reflect the ETC aesthetic and corporate culture.

ETC has chosen architectural firm KEE Architecture, Madison, for the Mazomanie renovation. The builder will be Design Structures, Middleton. Construction is slated to begin in June, with portions of the facility opening in the fall. The building previously housed printing company Sunny Industries.

Stage Technologies: Elite Training Focuses on Automation

Stage Technologies again supplied a hands-on Automation course for the 2013 USITT Elite Training Weekend in Las Vegas, Nevada May 9 to 11. The Automation course covered an introduction to



automation, introduction to operating and programming the eChameleon software, and a hands-on look at Stage Technologies' winches and control systems.

The Elite Training Weekend, which takes place annually at the Cirque du Soleil training facility in Las Vegas, Nevada, includes classes in Automation, Rigging, Sound, and Projection for a limit of eight students each. Students, selected by application, spend days with trainers and evenings backstage at Cirque du

Soleil shows. Applicants are USITT student or early career members.

For more information visit www.stagetech.com or see photos from the USITT Elite Training Weekend at The Last Word.

PLASA: Hoepker Joins PLASA Team

Industry veteran Laura Hoepker joined **PLASA** as an events sales executive working with the North American team on the PLASA Focus NA regional events. She is a 19-year veteran of Electronic Theatre Controls where she oversaw ETC's trade shows and events.

Ms. Hoepker can be reached at laura.hoepker@plasa.org or 212-244-1505, ext. 608. Focus Austin will be held at the Palmer Events Center in downtown Austin, Texas September 10 to 11; and Focus Nashville will be held February 5 to 6 at the Municipal Civic Auditorium in Nashville, Tennesee. For more information, visit www.plasafocus.com.

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- Stagecraft Institute of Las Vegas: Summer Slots Filling Quickly
- International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees: Union Reaches Agreement, Elects Trustee

GLP German Lighting Products: Welcomes New Sustaining Member

The Institute welcomes GLP German Lighting Products as a new Sustaining member. Since 1995, GLP has provided innovative and quality professional lighting solutions. The company combined with entertainment software group CairosTechnologies AG in 2006. GLP provides lighting for many entertainment and architectural applications.

Creative Conners, Inc.: Introduces Hoist

Creative Conners, Inc., which recently upgraded its level of support to that of a USITT Sustaining member, has introduced the Spotline Hoist. Spotline is specifically designed for vertical lifting, and has integrated safety features including a redundant brake. It is capable of lifting 500 pounds at 36 inches per second.

For more on the company and its products, visit www.creativeconners.com.



Alcons Audio: Expanding US Pro-Ribbon Partner Network

Alcons Audio welcomes Griffith Sales as an independent firm to support the company's ongoing growth in the United States. Griffith Sales will handle Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

Alcons Audio offers a wide variety of systems and covers a number of critical vertical markets. For more information, visit www.alconsaudio.com and www.facebook.com/AlconsAudio.



Meyer Sound: LFC Element Chosen for Cirque Show

Since it began shipping last June, **Meyer Sound's** 1100-LFC low-frequency control element has been used in numerous applications; from supporting massive live concerts, to testing the human response, to extreme low frequencies in a *Mythbusters* experiment.

The element which won a PAR Excellence Award, was chosen for an upcoming Cirque du Soleil production.

For more information, call 510-486-1166, fax 510-486-8356, e-mail winnie@meyersound.com or visit www.meyersound.com. Become a fan of Meyer Sound on Facebook: www.facebook.com/meyersoundlabs.

TMB: Schnick Schnack Systems Gives *The Voice* an Accent

When the chairs spin on NBC's *The Voice*, they are lighed by Schnick Schnack Systems's LED accent lighting. The company's products are exclusively distributed in North America by **TMB**.

Schnick Schnack Systems' camera-friendly, calibrated colors light the triangular podium on the front of each judge's chair. When a critical red decision button is pushed, the LEDs behind the Plexiglas podium change colors and the chair spins around.

Learn about other innovative products from TMB at www.tmb.com.



L-ACOUSTICS: Adds Controller to Product Series

L-ACOUSTICS recently added the LA4X amplified controller to its amplified controller series.

The LA4X is based on a four input by four output architecture combining the benefits of self-powered speaker packages with the flexibility of outboard DSP and amplification. It is a "green" amplified controller that relies on a universal switch mode power supply suitable for mains from 90V to 265V.



Vectorworks, Inc.: Updates Spotlight Plot Handbook

An updated edition of *Light Plot Deconstructed for Vectorworks Spotlight*, written by scenic and lighting designer Gregg Hillmar, is now available. The guide functions as a companion handbook to the software to help readers draft light plots more easily.

An image of the book cover can be downloaded from the company's Flickr page.

More information about this and other Vectorworks tutorials can be found on its Training Guides page.

Stagecraft Institute of Las Vegas: Summer Slots Filling Quickly

Stagecraft Institute of Las Vegas still has slots available for its 2013 program.

Scheduled to begin June 10, weekly subjects include: Week 1 – CAD; Week 2 – Rigging; Week 2 – SFX; Week 3 – Automation (seven spots); Week 3 – Foam Arts (four spots); Week 4 – Audio; Week 4 – Make-up & Prosthetics (two spots); Week 5 – Lighting Tech (seven spots); Week 6 – Previsualization (three spots); and Weeks 7 and 8 – Movers & Digital Media (three spots).

Register at stagecraftinstitute.com.

International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees: Union Reaches Agreement, Elects Trustee

After a lengthy process spread over five months, the **International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE)** International and The Broadway League/Disney Theatrical Productions have reached a tentative agreement for a new three-year contract. IATSE also elected Patricia White as an International trustee.

In addition to wage increases, a primary goal for IATSE negotiators was to address challenging travel conditions faced by workers on tours. Thus, the agreement includes premium pay for load-outs on multiple show days and for travel after a short-rest period, first time additional pay for make-up artists and hairstylists traveling on a seventh day, and first-time overage participation (i.e. bonus) for workers on successful tiered tours. The agreement includes significant employer contributions to the health and pension plans for workers on tiered tours and wage increases for workers in all categories. It also includes employer contributions to the IATSE Training Trust.

Ms. White has been an IATSE member since 1986 when she joined ACT as a wardrobe employee. She transferred into Theatrical Wardrobe Union Local 764 in1989, where she has served as a trustee and officer since 1995. She is currently the president of Local 764.

Ms. White is department director of education and training and works to promote the education of IATSE local leaders through the LEAP Program, union skills education at conventions, and IATSE staff training. She serves as a member of the ETCP Certification Council.

An international representative since 2007, she has worked with many locals of all types, but especially closely with wardrobe locals, to assist them in building stronger local unions and in representing the workers in negotiations with employers. She will join Thomas J. Cleary (Local 2) and C. Faye Harper (Local 834) as an IATSE International Trustee.

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News From Lea Asbell-Swanger, USITT President **Building Career Capital**

This is often the time of year that heralds the "summer reading list." I guess there's the hope that all those school children will make good use of their summer vacation by reading something. If a list of suggestions encourages and informs that behavior, then why not? I've always enjoyed reading - not always that which I was supposed to read, but I enjoyed a variety of genres. As my career took twists and turns, I would often go in search of reading materials as a source of professional development.

With the advent of the internet, there is no shortage of articles, blogs, and information about almost any topic. I subscribe to a few listserves and other collectives that provide access to concise articles, which my schedule can absorb. Recently, I read one entitled *The 7 Ways Successful People Approach* Their Work.

It turned out to be an article about a more involved book series due out in September that was the result of a research study about how people approach work. The researcher and book author, Laura Vanderkam, discovered that most successful people have similar habits. She compiled what she believes to be the top seven shared approaches and, unfortunately, none of them were new. In fact, they were essentially common sense habits that we all know, but most of us don't do consistently. It is possible to learn these habits, but unless they become one's routine it's like the difference between going on a diet and changing one's eating habits. The former will get you a short-term loss that's hard to maintain while the latter becomes a lifestyle.

There was one of the seven that Ms. Vanderkam valued more highly than the rest and that she called paying into your career capital account. She defines this account as "the sum total of your experiences, your knowledge, your skills, your relationships — and all these things enable you to get a new job if you need one, create new situations for yourself or other people, or even let you take a break without having it ruin your career." The pay in or building of career capital comes down to three basic options: improving existing skills, learning new ones, and building a loyal network.

I believe that those of you who use your membership with USITT to its fullest are already doing all three of these things and probably aren't even conscious of the career capital you've created. The good news is that it has prepared you for the unforeseen that inevitably happens in every career. If you are a USITT member and you aren't availing yourself of all the things that USITT has to offer,

it's never too soon or too late to start building your own career capital. We'd like to hear your comments on this story. Please e-mail Lea at Lea. Asbell-Swanger@usitt.org. Next story > Previous story Volume LIII, Number 6 usitt © United States Institute for Theatre Technology, Inc.



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News From David Grindle, USITT Executive Director

A Reflection on the Venues of Summer From the Executive Director Summertime!

It's been a long winter. Groundhogs across North America have been cursing their public spokes-rodent for the ill will we humans have been steering their way. People continually think, "Surely this will be the last snow storm!" I believe our friends in Minneapolis and Denver have given up that thought. But soon, soon we shall all forget this and begin complaining about heat and humidity.

Summertime brings summer theatre. For that we should all be thankful. Whether that theatre is outdoors, indoors, or indoors with sliding walls to let us think we are outdoors, summer venues hold memories for all of us.

I remember my very first opera at the Santa Fe Opera with the back wall out so the setting sun over the Sangre de Cristo Mountains provided the backdrop for Gustav Holst's Savitri. It is an esoteric first opera, and frankly, I remember the setting far more than I remember the music. That is to be expected when the venue has been designed as an experience that can equal the performance.

Think about the great venues we see in the United States and even around the world. The Elizabethan Theatre at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Barns at Wolf Trap, American Players Theatre, or Ravinia -- each has a history and excitement to it even without a performance. For that, we owe a "thank you" to the architect and now the theatre consultant.

So often we at USITT get caught up in the design and technology on stage, we forget to appreciate the



The back wall of the Santa Fe Opera stage can be opened to create a dramatic backdrop of hills and high desert, an

design and technology that *is* the stage. Summer venues, for some reason, seem to highlight this for me. Perhaps it is the ability, especially in an "outdoor" venue, to incorporate the

almost perfect setting even if nothing is on the stage.

Photo/Barbara E.R. Lucas

landscape in a way that remains visible to the audience. But think about the additional challenges.

One of my favorite indoor venues, Sidney Harman Hall, has a fire station across the street. A couple of well-constructed sound doors properly placed and properly functioning mitigate the sound of the fire trucks leaving during a show. Summer venues don't get that luxury.

Before moving to the Paramount Theatre in downtown Charlottesville, Virginia, the Ashlawn-Highland Festival produced shows in an outdoor space on the grounds of Ashlawn-Highland, the historic home of James Monroe. That space was also home to a historic flock of peacocks – birds that can be noisy when the summer heat puts them in an amorous mood, which would happen during shows. A peacock strutting the dance of love will overpower a fire truck siren any day. So, in outdoor venues the beauty of nature can often be upset by the nature of nature.

On the other hand, the Santa Fe Opera, in its last renovation, became a model for water reclamation and reuse. Being in high mountain desert, every drop of water must be used wisely. From capturing winter snow melt to using grey water for landscaping, Santa Fe Opera is a wonder to behold and that is before you ever hear the glorious music. Getting a tour of the facility should be on people's theatre bucket lists, in my opinion.

In summer venues, both indoors and out, we should take the time to appreciate the work of the architect locating the facility for a certain wind pattern, or the consultant working to insure the water drains were properly insulated to avoid hearing every flush; While I should appreciate them in any facility, I think I appreciate them more in our summer venues.

Even in my current job, seeing a show is something I don't get to do nearly enough. But I try to make sure to get to an outdoor venue for a performance of some type. It is where our art form started all those many years ago.

Take the time and make the effort to see a show this summer. We get to be indoors plenty all year long. Enjoy nature and thank not just the people who perform, but those who create the venue. They have toiled to insure we could enjoy the place as much as the performance.



We'd like to hear your comments on this story. Please e-mail David at david@usitt.org.

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A Fort Worth Welcome

Benjamin Shurr Fort Worth Promotions Committee



A Texas-sized star, made of autographed cowboy hats, is just one of the unique features of the Fort Worth Convention Center. The center will host many of USITT's 2014 Annual Conference events, and be the site of Stage Expo.

Photo/Barbara E.R. Lucas

Howdy, y'all!

There. It was said. Might as well get it out of the way. Texas and Fort Worth are honored and excited to welcome USITT to this wonderful place we call home for the 2014 Annual Conference & Stage Expo.

I have lived in the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) area for 11 years now and have come to love this place. I am originally from Ohio, so you can imagine the bit of culture shock I had upon arrival. I even made the joke as we crossed from

Arkansas into Texas, "Where do I exchange my money?"

I learned that you do not put beans in chili, "fixin to" and "y'all" are words (and I now use them regularly), not everyone wears a cowboy hat, a cold front means it's going to be in the 90s, and the University of Texas mascot is not an Aggie. (Learned that the hard way.) I also learned that you could not find a friendlier or politer group of people.

My first trip to Fort Worth absolutely floored me, and I was hooked instantly. There are not many cities that can take you from a slice of American history to one of the most critically acclaimed zoos in the world.

Art is reflected everywhere: performances at the Bass Performance Hall, major works at the Kimball Art Museum, and natural beauty at the Fort Worth Botanic Gardens. You can go to the world's largest honky tonk, take in some Red Dirt Music, and enjoy a cold Rahr Beer or just stroll around Sundance Square taking in all that you can. This is just the beginning of what you can do and see here.

We are extremely excited about hosting this event for ya'll that are fixin' to come. We will present monthly articles to help get you ready for your trip. As my friend and mentor, Don Childs, would say, "It's all about the experience." We're gonna give you an experience you will never forget. Welcome to Fort Worth!

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Conference & Stage Expo

Stage Expo Plants the Seeds for a Strong

Ron Procopio Stage Expo Manager



Sound Lab, which had its debut in 2012 in Long Beach, will be a vital part of the USITT Annual Conference in Fort Worth next March.

Photo/USITT Archives

USITT's Stage Expo took giant steps in Milwaukee. Manufacturers from all areas of the entertainment and production industries were represented. This was the result, in part, of a near world tour. Representatives from the National Office visited the Audio Engineering Society show, the National Association of Music Merchandizing show, the Sewing Dealers Trade Association show, LDI, PLASA PALM, and many cities promoting the growth of Stage Expo and USITT's networking and education opportunities.

As a result, the 2013 event grew 11 percent in size and scope. The goal of Stage Expo is to bring manufacturers and service providers in theatre and live entertainment production industries to the managers, designers, and technicians who use these products and services daily.

USITT representatives found some manufacturers were surprised to learn that

their products are being used in the entertainment industry. Sewing machine manufacturers were made aware of the various departments that utilize their machines. Safety product manufacturers were told the extent of use for their products.

The emergence of greater technology in media servers and projection technology has gathered much attention. More of these sorts of companies will become part of USITT in the coming years as the cost of some technologies decreases, and making some more affordable, smaller in size and stronger in reliability.

The 2014 will mark the return of Sound Lab. While USITT begins to focus on companies at Stage Expo, we are making room for a greater audio presence. Microphone, audio mixer, and speaker companies are being courted to participate in an expanded Sound Lab, which will have a close relationship both in proximity and programming in Fort Worth. Programming is underway and will excite those audiophiles in the USITT community.

USITT is an all- encompassing gathering of the theatre and live entertainment industries; and Stage Expo is the personification of this. The seeds we plant this spring will sprout with the best event ever in March 2014!

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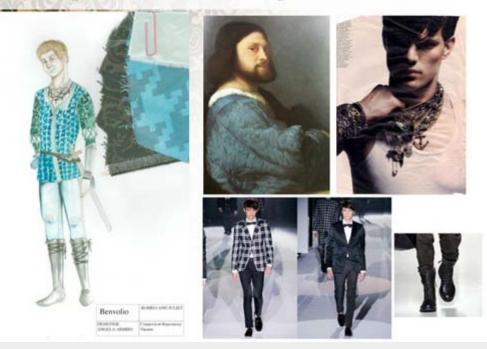
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SLI: Rethinking the Classics, Paving the Way for the Future

Caroline Spitzer Costume Design & Technology Commission

Step 9/11: Research color and patterns for sketches



Angela Armijo - Tips on Co-Designing Shakespeare with Contemporary Touches

Marking its third year in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the Student Leadership Initiative (SLI) from the Costume Design & Technology Commission continues to highlight innovative approaches from students in the commission. After participating in Long Beach in 2012, I was thrilled to continue my involvement with SLI, returning as an alumna to help moderate the 2013 session.

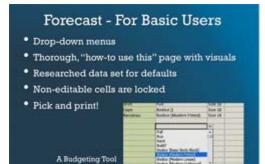
Created as a way to meet the needs of an ever-growing student membership base, SLI serves as a forum for students to present their work to peers and professionals. These works get archived in the Costume Commission's digital web files. A portion of SLI is also dedicated to networking, forming connections among students and professionals that might not have otherwise been possible.

The forum has continued to have an increase in both submissions and attendance since its creation in 2011. SLI has acted as a great stepping-stone for students wishing to continue their involvement with USITT. With the continued support of the Costume Commission, great things are on the way for the Student Leadership Initiative.

Spanning a wide variety of topics, this year's presenters included:

- Angela Armijo (BFA costume design/technology, University of Connecticut) presented Tips on Co-Designing Shakespeare with Contemporary Touches.
- Derek Robertson (BFA, wig/ make-up design, St. Louis Community College) presented Clue: The Musical, Hair and Make-up Tricks.
- Jillian Westplate (BA, specialization in technology, Indiana University South Bend) presented Forecast, A Budgeting Tool for Costumers, by Costumers.
- Matt Caron (MFA directing, Minnesota State University-Mankato) presented Photomanipulation in Costume Design.
- Serena Berkes (BFA costume technology, Midwestern State University) presented Walk a Mile in Dionysus' Shoes.

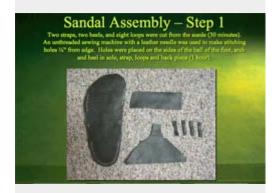
Starting this fall Steven Stines will take over for Rafael Jaen, who started SLI. We will miss Rafael's enthusiasm and dedication, and we look forward to working with Steven. We are USITT; endless opportunities await!



Jillian Westplate - Forecast, A Budgeting Tool for Costomers, by Costumers

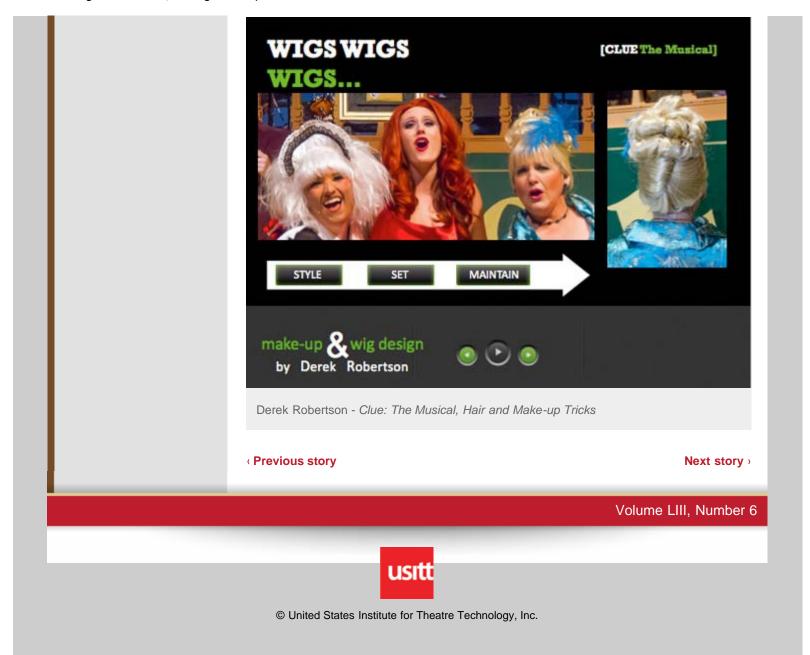


Matt Caron - Photomanipulation in Costume Design



Serena Berkes - Walk a Mile in Dionysus' Shoes

For more information e-mail stevenstines@gmail.com





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