



Sightlines

The monthly newsletter for USITT members

July 2015

[Print this page »](#)



[Lead story »](#)

NEWS & NOTICES:

- Golden Pen to Honor Brockett
- New Rigging Safety Grants
- LiNK Returns in 2015
- Early Career Mentoring
- Kasey Allee-Foreman New VP
- Announcements
- Sharing Learning
- OISTAT Lighting Symposium
- Buy the Tech Expo Catalog
- Last Word: Busy June

NEWS FROM:

- Around the Institute
- Contributing Members
- USITT's President
- Sustaining Members
- Spotlight on Giving
- USITT's Executive Director

COMMISSIONS:

- Why Badges?

CONFERENCE & STAGE EXPO:

- Salt Lake City in Motion
- Sound Opportunities

FOR THE RECORD:

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members

[VIEW ISSUE AS A PDF »](#)

[CONTACT THE EDITOR »](#)

[Search the Archives](#)

GO

[SIGHTLINES ARCHIVE »](#)



Golden Pen book award to honor Brockett

USITT's prestigious Golden Pen Award will now be known as the Oscar G. Brockett Golden Pen Award and will now include a cash prize... [more »](#)



12 Schools Benefit from RSI

USITT's Rigging Safety Initiative has awarded schools from Florida to Oregon inspections of their rigging and instruction on their systems... [more »](#)



LiNK Registration Opens

SETC and USITT will again offer auditions and interviews for those considering graduate school in Atlanta this November... [more »](#)



Early Career Mentoring A Success

USITT Fellows mentored two Early Career members at a program which had its debut at the 2015 Annual Conference... [more »](#)



Kasey Allee-Foreman's New Job is Growing

As the incoming Vice President for Programming, she's finding ways to expand her role beyond Conference sessions... [more »](#)



Taking Advantage of Year-round Learning

Kyle Himsworth first experienced a USITT Presents event. Now he is sharing the organization with his students... [more »](#)



OISTAT Plans Lighting Symposium

Hong Kong will be the site of OISTAT's next major event, and International Lighting Symposium scheduled to open in September... [more »](#)



Tech Expo Winners Highlighted in Catalog

Their projects were on display as part of the 2016 Annual Conference, now buy the catalog which highlight their projects and... [more »](#)



USITT's President: Always Something New

As Mark Shanda takes office as President, he looks forward to the changes and challenges ahead... [more »](#)



Spotlight On Giving

Joe Tilford, noted designer and USITT Board member gives his reasons for giving back... [more »](#)

Executive Director: Collaboration Continues

Another way to look at the different forms and directions that true



collaboration can take us all... [more »](#)



Why Badges?

Identifying and tracking skills can take many different forms, so looking at the potential for badges is helpful... [more »](#)



Salt Lake City in Motion

The host city for USITT's major 2016 event takes part of its appeal from the bustle in and around the city... [more »](#)



Sound Opportunities for Students

SoundLab 2016 is seeking student participants in a new adventure in learning which will culminate with presentations in Salt Lake City...

[more »](#)



The Last Word: A Busy June for European Tour Participants

An intrepid group found much to enjoy on their visits to theatres, opera houses, Set / Sound / Scenery, the Prague Quadrennial and... [more »](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Lights, Posters, Action!
- PLASA to Host Second Happy Hour at LDI
- Fall Protection Standard Posted for Review

NEWS FROM: AROUND THE INSTITUTE

- Have you Visited USITT.org Recently?
- DThG Features USITT 2015
- The Long Reach Long Riders complete their 12th annual Charity Ride

NEWS FROM: CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS

- **ETC:** Nick Wurzel Promoted, Products Highlighted at PLASA Focus Event
- **Philips Strand Lighting:** Emergency DMX Bypass Switch Simplifies Life Safety System
- **Creative Stage Lighting:** New Rental Model Focuses on Dry-Hire Only
- **Production Resource Group:** Inaugural Summit Marks Alliance's First Anniversary

NEWS FROM: SUSTAINING MEMBERS

- **Alcons:** *Bright Star* Musical Shines
- **Chauvet Professional:** Rogues Add Flair to Broward Center Ballroom
- **GLP:** X4 Bar Joins Product Lineup
- **Cobalt Studios:** Sign Painting Intensive Offered
- **Theatre Projects:** Los Angeles Office Is Now TheatreDNA

[Lead story »](#)

Volume LV, Number 7



© United States Institute for Theatre Technology, Inc.



Sightlines

The monthly newsletter for USITT members

July 2015
Print this page ›



[Next story ›](#)

FRONT PAGE »

NEWS & NOTICES:

- Golden Pen to Honor Brockett
- New Rigging Safety Grants
- LiNK Returns in 2015
- Early Career Mentoring
- Kasey Allee-Foreman New VP
- Announcements
- Sharing Learning
- OISTAT Lighting Symposium
- Buy the Tech Expo Catalog
- Last Word: Busy June

NEWS FROM:

- Around the Institute
- Contributing Members
- USITT's President
- Sustaining Members
- Spotlight on Giving
- USITT's Executive Director

COMMISSIONS:

- Why Badges?

CONFERENCE & STAGE EXPO:

- Salt Lake City in Motion
- Sound Opportunities

FOR THE RECORD:

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members

VIEW ISSUE AS A PDF »

CONTACT THE EDITOR »

Search the Archives

GO

News & Notices

Golden Pen Award Named for Designer, Author Oscar G. Brockett

Janet Gramza *Communications Associate*

USITT's top publications award will now be known as the Oscar G. Brockett Golden Pen Award and a cash prize given to the winner thanks to a collaboration with the Oscar G. Brockett Center for Theatre History and Criticism at the University of Texas at Austin.

The award for a book-length project, first given in 1986, has not carried a monetary award as other USITT publications awards do. Under this partnership, the Brockett Center and USITT will each provide \$1,000 to future award recipients. The prize will continue to include complimentary USITT Conference registration and two nights hotel stay.



Oscar G.
Brockett

Charlotte M. Canning, Director of the Brockett Center, said "I know Dr. Brockett would be proud to have his name on this award. USITT was one of his professional homes and he always treasured his time with colleagues there. He was a champion of design and technology scholarship so everyone at the Brockett Center is thrilled to have his legacy honored."

2016 Golden Pen nominations close August 15. [Nominate here.](#)

Oscar G. Brockett was a scenic designer, author, and scholar at UT-Austin who "wrote the book" on theatre history. Besides his several famous *History of the Theatre* editions, he co-authored *Making the Scene: A History of Stage Design and Technology in Europe and the United States* with Margaret Mitchell and Linda Hardberger. He died in November 2010, a few months after the book won the 2010 Golden Pen Award.

"I am so pleased this award now has his name," said Ms. Mitchell, a costume and scene designer and former student. "I know he would also be very happy about it. Dr. Brockett started his career in the theatre as a TD and scene designer, and stage design always remained important to him. In some ways, working on *Making the Scene* brought him full circle back toward the genesis of his life in the theatre."

His work is credited with inspiring several generations of students in technical theatre. The USITT Oscar

SIGHTLINES ARCHIVE »

G. Brockett Golden Pen Award "seems an appropriate way to honor an important figure as well as to promote the highest levels of research and writing about the disciplines that USITT champions," wrote USITT VP-Publications Michael Mehler.

The **Oscar G. Brockett Center for Theatre History and Criticism** promotes excellence in the study of theatre history by recognizing the highest quality scholarship and pedagogy in the field, so its sponsorship of the Golden Pen seems a perfect fit, Mr. Mehler said. USITT's Board of Directors approved the agreement last month.

Nominations for the 2016 Oscar G. Brockett Golden Pen awards are open through August 15. For more information and award criteria, visit www.usitt.org/goldenpen.

« [Front page](#)

[Next story](#) »



Michael Mehler, VP-Communications, presents Christin Essen with the 2015 USITT Golden Pen award.

Volume LV, Number 7



© United States Institute for Theatre Technology, Inc.



Sightlines

The monthly newsletter for USITT members

July 2015
Print this page ›



[Next story ›](#)

FRONT PAGE »

NEWS & NOTICES:

- Golden Pen to Honor Brockett
- New Rigging Safety Grants
- LiNK Returns in 2015
- Early Career Mentoring
- Kasey Allee-Foreman New VP
- Announcements
- Sharing Learning
- OISTAT Lighting Symposium
- Buy the Tech Expo Catalog
- Last Word: Busy June

NEWS FROM:

- Around the Institute
- Contributing Members
- USITT's President
- Sustaining Members
- Spotlight on Giving
- USITT's Executive Director

COMMISSIONS:

- Why Badges?

CONFERENCE & STAGE EXPO:

- Salt Lake City in Motion
- Sound Opportunities

FOR THE RECORD:

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members

VIEW ISSUE AS A PDF »

CONTACT THE EDITOR »

Search the Archives

GO

News & Notices

12 Schools Get USITT Rigging Safety Help

Janet Gramza *Communications Associate*

USITT has approved funding for free stage rigging inspections and safety training at a dozen more schools as part of its Rigging Safety Initiative (RSI).

Of those schools, five were recent applicants to the program and seven applied previously. A USITT panel of rigging experts determines when applicants are approved based on need, safety concerns, and the amount of funding available.

USITT will continue approving funding for about a dozen schools each spring and fall as long as sponsorships and donations keep the program alive, said Executive Director David Grindle.

The newly approved schools that will get free inspections and four to six hours of safety training for their faculty and stage crew are:

- East Buchanan Schools in Winthrop, Iowa
- Middleton High School in Middleton, Wisconsin
- White County High School in Cleveland, Georgia
- Triad High School in Troy, Illinois
- Adena High School in Frankfort, Ohio
- Tippecanoe High School in Tappan, Ohio
- East Rochester Union Free School District Jr.-Sr. High School in East Rochester, New York.
- Chautauqua Lake Secondary School in Chautauqua, New York.
- Marshall High School in Missouri City, Texas.
- George Bush High School in Richmond, Texas.
- Cleveland High School in Portland, Oregon.
- Howard W. Blake School of the Arts in Tampa, Florida.

RSI has approved applications from over 100 schools in 25 states since it began in 2011. School drama instructors and auditorium managers say the program fills a huge need.



SIGHTLINES ARCHIVE »

Of the latest round of schools, most said their stage rigging hadn't been inspected in recent memory. One reported its rigging system was installed in 1996 and its last inspection was in 1996. "This space desperately needs an overhaul," the theatre director wrote.

Current RSI sponsors are JR Clancy, ETC, Shepard Exposition Services, H&H Specialties, and USITT members like you! *[Help out with your donation here.](#)*

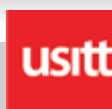
Besides donating to provide inspections and training for school stages, USITT needs rigging companies to sign on as sponsors to perform inspections at reduced rates. USITT supports other rigging safety programs, including a new series of master classes in memory of Jay O. Glerum slated to begin next year.

For more information on the Institute's Rigging Safety efforts, visit www.usitt.org/rigsafe.

[« Previous story](#)

[Next story »](#)

Volume LV, Number 7



© United States Institute for Theatre Technology, Inc.



Sightlines

The monthly newsletter for USITT members

July 2015
Print this page ›



[Next story ›](#)

FRONT PAGE »

NEWS & NOTICES:

- Golden Pen to Honor Brockett
- New Rigging Safety Grants
- LiNK Returns in 2015
- Early Career Mentoring
- Kasey Allee-Foreman New VP
- Announcements
- Sharing Learning
- OISTAT Lighting Symposium
- Buy the Tech Expo Catalog
- Last Word: Busy June

NEWS FROM:

- Around the Institute
- Contributing Members
- USITT's President
- Sustaining Members
- Spotlight on Giving
- USITT's Executive Director

COMMISSIONS:

- Why Badges?

CONFERENCE & STAGE EXPO:

- Salt Lake City in Motion
- Sound Opportunities

FOR THE RECORD:

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members

VIEW ISSUE AS A PDF »

CONTACT THE EDITOR »

Search the Archives

GO

News & Notices

LiNK 2015 Offers Grad School Interviews

Potential grad students can meet with several grad schools for interviews at the second annual LiNK November 13 to 15 at the Atlanta Airport Hilton, Atlanta, Georgia. USITT and SETC are organizing the event, and Focal Press is returning as Platinum Sponsor.



Last year's premiere drew 48 theatre grad school programs and 80 potential students for two days of interviews, auditions, portfolio reviews, and networking. This year, USITT and SETC hope to increase the number of institutions and potential grad students, said USITT Executive Director David Grindle and SETC Executive Director Betsey Horth.

"This event is vital to our mission to support continuing education for our members," Mr. Grindle said. "We are providing the most affordable, accessible, and convenient



opportunity to connect aspiring grad students in our industry and theatre schools seeking candidates for their advanced degree programs."

"The 2014 participation at LiNK and the feedback from recruiters and applicants was remarkably positive," Ms. Horth said. "We plan to build on its success and fold in suggestions to enhance the process and grow the graduate school auditions and interviews for 2015. There's also the fun piece – our Friday LiNK Soirée is back again, thanks to the sponsorship from Focal Press."

Interviews/auditions will be offered in the areas of acting, directing, stage management, arts management, scene design, costume design, lighting design, sound design, technical direction, stage technology, lighting technology, and costume technology.

The fee for students remains \$40, less than the cost of one grad school application. At last year's LiNK, some students met representatives from over 20 schools in one weekend. Online applications for students will open in August.

Institutions pay \$125 to participate. Registration for institutions is now open at www.usitt.org/link15.

SIGHTLINES ARCHIVE »

The timing of the event gives students connections and information early in the school year. The Atlanta Airport Hilton location allows participants to get off a plane and be at the event in minutes. The Hilton is offering hotel rooms for under \$100 to LiNK attendees, and those who stay overnight can attend evening gatherings for informal networking.

Participating schools last year included Carnegie Mellon University, CALArts, The Ohio State University, University of Alabama, University of Georgia, and the Stella Adler Studio of Acting.

In 2014, LiNK held one day of interviews for theatre tech students and one day of auditions for acting and directing students. This year, LiNK will expand to three days, with Sunday morning available for callbacks.

For more information, check for updates at www.usitt.org/link15 or www.setc.org/link15.

[« Previous story](#)

[Next story »](#)

Volume LV, Number 7



© United States Institute for Theatre Technology, Inc.



[Next story ›](#)

FRONT PAGE »

NEWS & NOTICES:

- Golden Pen to Honor Brockett
- New Rigging Safety Grants
- LiNK Returns in 2015
- Early Career Mentoring
- Kasey Allee-Foreman New VP
- Announcements
- Sharing Learning
- OISTAT Lighting Symposium
- Buy the Tech Expo Catalog
- Last Word: Busy June

NEWS FROM:

- Around the Institute
- Contributing Members
- USITT's President
- Sustaining Members
- Spotlight on Giving
- USITT's Executive Director

COMMISSIONS:

- Why Badges?

CONFERENCE & STAGE EXPO:

- Salt Lake City in Motion
- Sound Opportunities

FOR THE RECORD:

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members

[VIEW ISSUE AS A PDF »](#)

[CONTACT THE EDITOR »](#)

[Search the Archives](#)

GO

News & Notices

Two Benefit from ECM Mentoring Assistance Program



USITT Fellows Randy Earle and Richard Pilbrow in discussion at the 2015 Annual Conference. Both participate in Fellows Mentoring.

Renee Garcia and Eben Alguire were the first to benefit from the USITT's Fellows' Mentoring Assistance Program, which provides mentoring and financial assistance for two Early Career Members. The recipients were able to attend the Cincinnati 2015 Conference & Stage Expo under the guidance of two Fellows.

Ms. Garcia and Mr. Alguire were selected based on their work to date and accomplishments achieved in starting their careers. They met with Fellows Mentors Sarah Nash Gates and Ben Sammler at the Conference where they discussed the entertainment business and met with many colleagues.

Based on this year's success, the program is expected to continue and be a basis for other awards geared toward Early Career Members. ECMs can look for announcements in upcoming Sightlines and direct e-mails.

Ms. Garcia and Mr. Alguire recently reported on their Conference experiences

Ms. Garcia:

The Conference was a transformative experience; I had a wonderful time and met some incredible theatre artisans. A huge part of what made this year's Conference so productive and enjoyable was being selected for the Fellows ECM Mentoring Assistance Award. The ECM Mentoring Program was helpful in providing a view of the bigger picture, which I believe will be helpful in my long-term goal – to have a lasting career as a theatrical designer. As a new member, it can be intimidating to go to a large event like USITT and not know very many people, but Sarah helped pave the way for me to double my theatre connections. I now want to make USITT more of a priority, part of my yearly routine, and become more actively involved by working on committees.

Mr. Alguire:

At the end of the day on Friday, I came to our second official meeting, the Yale Alumni Reception. Ben suggested that I mingle with the people who were there and introduce myself. Despite being a somewhat shy and reserved person when it comes to those unfamiliar to me, I did as he suggested. And it worked out wonderfully! Perhaps the most exciting thing about this whole program, aside from having the undivided attention of a leader in our field, was getting a chance to know Mr. Sammler as a person instead of an abstract name that gets thrown around and whose books get read.

[« Previous story](#)

[Next story »](#)

Volume LV, Number 7



© United States Institute for Theatre Technology, Inc.



Sightlines

The monthly newsletter for USITT members

July 2015
Print this page ›



[Next story ›](#)

FRONT PAGE »

NEWS & NOTICES:

- Golden Pen to Honor Brockett
- New Rigging Safety Grants
- LiNK Returns in 2015
- Early Career Mentoring
- Kasey Allee-Foreman New VP
- Announcements
- Sharing Learning
- OISTAT Lighting Symposium
- Buy the Tech Expo Catalog
- Last Word: Busy June

NEWS FROM:

- Around the Institute
- Contributing Members
- USITT's President
- Sustaining Members
- Spotlight on Giving
- USITT's Executive Director

COMMISSIONS:

- Why Badges?

CONFERENCE & STAGE EXPO:

- Salt Lake City in Motion
- Sound Opportunities

FOR THE RECORD:

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members

VIEW ISSUE AS A PDF »

CONTACT THE EDITOR »

Search the Archives

GO

News & Notices

Meet VP-Programming Kasey Allee-Foreman

Janet Gramza *Communications Associate*

Kasey Allee-Foreman is a familiar face at USITT, having coordinated programming for the Annual Conference & Stage Expo for almost 10 years and having served on the Board of Directors for three.

This month, she takes over as Vice-President for Programming from Tom Hackman. In this role, she'll lead programming efforts that are growing far beyond the Conference.



"I think it's incredibly exciting to continue excellence in programming at the Conference, but also to offer more year-round education and training opportunities like Elite Training and USITT Presents," she said.

Her leadership in the Institute follows her career path from theatre technician to designer to production manager. Growing up as the eldest of three girls, she said, "My father never acted like there was anything I couldn't do."

After acting in middle and high school, she went to Furman University for pre-med but decided to keep her theatre "hobby." She was cast in the first show and took a work-study job in the costume shop since she knew how to sew. There, "I discovered and fell in love with the whole world of design and production," she said.

Ms. Allee-Foreman ended up studying costume and lighting design, which led her to the Southeast Regional Sections's 1996 Master Classes featuring Desmond Heeley. "The way he spoke about his art, his standards, his love of theatre, and his passion for life struck such a chord with me that I knew this industry was my home," she said.

She participated in "an incredibly magical" USITT Costume Intensive trip to England the next year and has been an active member since. She spent two years in the film industry in Los Angeles, where she said, "I really honed my production management skills on a scale that has been so helpful to me in my design and management careers." She went on to earn her MFA in costume design and lighting design from the University of New Orleans.

After several years in costuming -- including stints at the Houston Shakespeare

SIGHTLINES ARCHIVE »

Festival, Stages Repertory Theatre, Houston Grand Opera, and the University of Oklahoma -- she supervised her way into production manager roles at OU and the Sphinx Organization, a non-profit for diversity in the arts, a cause she cherishes.

Ms. Allee-Foreman said roots in Colorado and New Orleans gave her a passion for celebrating diversity and advocating for equity and inclusion. She worked to establish and expand USITT's Women in Theatre Network and its Diversity Initiative, which she has chaired for two years.

"New Orleans is an amazing blend of cultures and heritages, and we celebrate *everything!* I find that informs how I approach many things in my life, especially experiences that may not be my norm," she said. "In Colorado, everyone is very independent and respected. Growing up, all my friends had different religions and races and socioeconomic backgrounds, and my insatiable curiosity and passion for learning how things work have made those differences beautiful contributions to my life."

Her other passion is Tae Kwon Do, a sport she discovered through her two young sons. She is currently training for her black belt.

"It provides such stress relief, is such a positive family environment, and I love that my boys see me choosing a healthy lifestyle and that they think I'm strong," she said. "We train with a pretty equal split of men and women, and I love modeling gender equality for my sons as we train together."

[Previous story](#)

[Next story](#)

Volume LV, Number 7



© United States Institute for Theatre Technology, Inc.



Sightlines

The monthly newsletter for USITT members

July 2015
Print this page ›



[Next story ›](#)

FRONT PAGE »

NEWS & NOTICES:

- Golden Pen to Honor Brockett
- New Rigging Safety Grants
- LiNK Returns in 2015
- Early Career Mentoring
- Kasey Allee-Foreman New VP
- Announcements
- Sharing Learning
- OISTAT Lighting Symposium
- Buy the Tech Expo Catalog
- Last Word: Busy June

NEWS FROM:

- Around the Institute
- Contributing Members
- USITT's President
- Sustaining Members
- Spotlight on Giving
- USITT's Executive Director

COMMISSIONS:

- Why Badges?

CONFERENCE & STAGE EXPO:

- Salt Lake City in Motion
- Sound Opportunities

FOR THE RECORD:

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members

VIEW ISSUE AS A PDF »

CONTACT THE EDITOR »

Search the Archives

GO

News & Notices

Announcements

- [Lights, Posters, Action!](#)
- [PLASA to Host Second Happy Hour at LDI](#)
- [Fall Protection Standard Posted for Review](#)

Lights, Posters, Action!

The Lighting Commission's fourth annual poster session will be held at the 2016 Annual Conference & Stage Expo in Salt Lake City, Utah.

This is when lighting designers, technicians, educators, and students share information that is not well known, or perhaps of their own invention. It can be a new solution to an old problem, a new problem and its solution, a classroom or management technique, the results of research, or other ideas, discoveries, or developments in the field of lighting. This session has grown rapidly and has offered refreshing ideas such as creating light plots with Origami, monochromatic color theory, and cable management ideas.

Poster presentations often meet the requirements for scholarly publication since all submissions are blind juried by the Lighting Commission Poster Selection Committee. Ideas must be presented in the form of an abstract, no more than 200 words typewritten, submitted to the USITT website. Posters are selected based on relevance to the field, originality, and a clear and thorough proposal. The deadline to submit abstracts is November 15. Applicants will be notified by early January if their submissions are chosen. The poster image and handout will be due February 15.

Instructions for submitting a proposal are available at www.usitt.org/poster or join the lighting community via the Connect tab at www.usitt.org. Contact Poster Session Co-Chairs Deanna Fitzgerald (deannaf@email.arizona.edu), Phillip Franck (phillip.n.franck@vanderbilt.edu), or Alan McEwen (alan.mcewen@mail.wvu.edu) with questions.

PLASA to Host Second Happy Hour at LDI

PLASA will host the second Behind the Scenes Happy Hour -- an evening with music, food, and drinks -- 6 to 8 p.m. on Thursday, October 22 at the Westgate Las Vegas Hotel during LDI 2015.

Current sponsors include A.C. Lighting, Heartland Scenic Studios, iWeiss, RC4 Wireless, Sapsis Rigging, Inc., Stage Equipment and Lighting, Stan Pressner, and Ultratec Special Effects.

After a successful event in 2014 that was attended by over 400 creative industry professionals, the Behind the Scenes Happy Hour will be the biggest pre-LDI party of the year and will raise money for the Behind the Scenes charity. The charity, an initiative of the PLASA Foundation, brings help and hope in times of great need, and has granted over \$500,000 since its inception in 2005.

PLASA seeks sponsorships for the 2015 event. Information on how to become a sponsor is [available online](#). or by e-mailing bts_hh@plasa.org

Tickets for the Behind the Scenes Happy Hour will be \$60 in advance and will go on sale later this summer.

Fall Protection Standard Posted for Review

A draft of *BSR E1.46, Standard for the Prevention of Falls from Theatrical Stages and Raised Performance Platforms* is available for public review through July 13.

BSR E1.46 addresses the problem of people falling from theatrical stages and raised platforms. Falling into an orchestra pit, an open stage trap, or similar openings in stage floors can lead to debilitating injuries, a lifetime of pain, and sometimes death. Health and safety regulations require action to prevent these falls -- there is no exemption from fall protection for the entertainment industry -- but these regulations offer little guidance suitable for theatrical environments.

For more information, contact Karl G. Ruling, technical standards manager, PLASA, 630 Ninth Avenue, Suite 609, New York, NY 10036; 1-212-244-1505; standards.na@plasa.org.

[« Previous story](#)

[Next story »](#)

Volume LV, Number 7



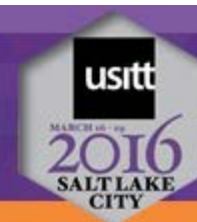
© United States Institute for Theatre Technology, Inc.



Sightlines

The monthly newsletter for USITT members

July 2015
Print this page ›



[Next story ›](#)

FRONT PAGE »

NEWS & NOTICES:

- Golden Pen to Honor Brockett
- New Rigging Safety Grants
- LiNK Returns in 2015
- Early Career Mentoring
- Kasey Allee-Foreman New VP
- Announcements
- Sharing Learning
- OIStat Lighting Symposium
- Buy the Tech Expo Catalog
- Last Word: Busy June

NEWS FROM:

- Around the Institute
- Contributing Members
- USITT's President
- Sustaining Members
- Spotlight on Giving
- USITT's Executive Director

COMMISSIONS:

- Why Badges?

CONFERENCE & STAGE EXPO:

- Salt Lake City in Motion
- Sound Opportunities

FOR THE RECORD:

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members

[VIEW ISSUE AS A PDF »](#)

[CONTACT THE EDITOR »](#)

[Search the Archives](#)

GO

News & Notices

Theatre Tech Teacher Taps USITT Training

Janet Gramza *Communications Associate*



Students from Indian Hill High School in Cincinnati pose with their teacher, Kyle Himsworth, at the 2015 Annual Conference & Stage Expo. From left are Karthik Raturk, Maggie Dorgier, Ana Fernandez, Mr. Himsworth, and Kemal Whitham.

Photos/Courtesy Kyle Himsworth

Two years ago, Kyle Himsworth wasn't too familiar with USITT. He had just started a job as performing arts facilities manager for the Indian Hills School District in Cincinnati. He studied acting, directing, and sound design at the University of Dayton, but had never taught technical theatre to kids.

His school district welcomed his idea to use its two theatres to teach stagecraft at the high school level. They let him start an afterschool club, the Indian Hill Tech Crew, and offer class credit to students to learn lighting, sound, and rigging.

Now he needed some teaching tools.
That's where USITT came in.

"Indian Hill was still using a CD player

SIGHTLINES ARCHIVE »

or an iPod to play music," he said. "They would have technical issues with assemblies and shows, and I knew we needed a more reliable playback device. We were able to buy a Mac and a license for QLab show control software. It's used primarily for audio playback, but it can do MIDI, video projections, even Power Point, and run automation."

He found a *USITT Presents* Figure 53 QLab 3 training class in Washington, D.C., and asked the school to send him. He joined the Institute to get the member rate, and came away a USITT training enthusiast.

"The trainer shared a lot of cool things, nifty tools and tricks to make it easy to work with students," he said. "If I say, 'I can make this song start to play every time you walk into the room,' it blows them away. Or we can sit around the console and figure out how to make a thunderstorm using stock sound. Do we want a full-on T-storm, or will the rain start and fade out slowly? It becomes a really effective teaching tool, and then the kids want to learn more."

When he got an USITT e-mail about Elite Training 2014, he jumped at the chance to refresh his sound design knowledge and acquire more tools.

He called the four days he spent learning D-Mitri programming with Meyer Sound, "a once in a lifetime experience."

"You get to talk to and work with people you just don't run into on a day-to-day basis," he said. "Being young and still early in my career, I could ask, 'How did you get where you are?' And that inspiration is almost as valuable as the training you receive."

Since then, USITT has held more *USITT Presents* and held Elite Training 2015 with 40 new trainees. To learn about future opportunities, check the USITT website under Education & Training.

Mr. Himsworth took advantage of the 2015 Annual Conference & Stage Expo being held in Cincy, and brought four of his Tech Crew students for a day at Stage Expo. The students -- Karthik Raturi, Maggie Dorger, Ana Fernandez, and Kemal Whitham -- "spent the entire day exploring new products, watching demonstrations, networking with theatre professionals, and meeting with various university theatre programs," Mr. Himsworth said.

"Students had the unique opportunity to witness many pieces of technology they otherwise would never have known existed," he added. "As they reflected on



Student Karthik Raturi examines the guts of a moving light at Stage Expo.

their experiences, they all remarked on the vastness of the available technology and the possibilities presented to them for future careers in theatre technology."

Mr. Himsworth said he sees USITT as his first resource for theatre tech training and information. "I'll probably continue to be a member from now on," he said.



Indian Hill students Ana Fernandez, Maggie Dorger, Kemal Whitham, and Karthik Raturi enjoy fog effects at Stage Expo.

[Previous story](#)

[Next story](#)





Sightlines

The monthly newsletter for USITT members

July 2015
Print this page ›



[Next story ›](#)

FRONT PAGE »

NEWS & NOTICES:

- Golden Pen to Honor Brockett
- New Rigging Safety Grants
- LiNK Returns in 2015
- Early Career Mentoring
- Kasey Allee-Foreman New VP
- Announcements
- Sharing Learning
- OISTAT Lighting Symposium
- Buy the Tech Expo Catalog
- Last Word: Busy June

NEWS FROM:

- Around the Institute
- Contributing Members
- USITT's President
- Sustaining Members
- Spotlight on Giving
- USITT's Executive Director

COMMISSIONS:

- Why Badges?

CONFERENCE & STAGE EXPO:

- Salt Lake City in Motion
- Sound Opportunities

FOR THE RECORD:

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members

VIEW ISSUE AS A PDF »

CONTACT THE EDITOR »

Search the Archives

GO

News & Notices

Hong Kong to Host OISTAT Lighting Design Symposium

Michael Ramsaur *OISTAT Executive Committee*



INTERNATIONAL LIGHTING SYMPOSIUM HONG KONG 2015

LIGHTING DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY "PRESERVATION VS INNOVATION"

The International Lighting Symposium Hong Kong 2015 provides a platform for exchanges and networking among professionals and students in lighting design and technology. The Symposium is first of its kind in Hong Kong, and aims to provide vibrant and informative seminars, workshops, exhibitions and round-table discussions.

Now that the PQ is over, lighting designers are looking forward to the International Lighting Design Symposium to be held in Hong Kong September 29 through October 4.

The organizers, the Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts and the Hong Kong Association of Theatre Technicians and Scenographers, have just announced information about the event. In addition to Jennifer Tipton from the United States, keynote speakers will be Sha Xiaolan, the Chinese lighting designer for the Beijing Olympics, who is currently working on significant architectural projects in addition to his theatrical projects; and Lee Zen Chien, the Taiwanese lighting designer for open air arena events as well as award-winning theatrical production in Asia.

Other highlighted conference presentations include John A. Williams from Hong Kong talking about the Hong Kong Victoria Harbor show "Symphony of Lights," and Danish lighting designer Jasper Kongshaug talking about new color control technology for LED fixtures. Dawn Chiang will discuss lighting for Broadway. The symposium will include attendance and back stage tours of the Hong Kong Sky 100 observation deck, Hong Kong Disneyland, and Macau production of "House of Dancing Water." Visits are also planned to "The Peak" 1,800 feet above Hong Kong, the Tai O fishing village built on boats and stilts, and the Big Buda and Po Lin Monastery.

This symposium has dual tracks, one aimed at students and one for

SIGHTLINES ARCHIVE »

professionals. The international gathering is an extraordinary opportunity to gain knowledge about lighting from an Asian perspective.

Total cost for the symposium and local travel to theater venues, Macau and theater performances, and back stage visits will be about \$300 US. USITT members will receive a 10 percent discount as OISTAT members. Students will receive a 30 percent discount. Full details and registration will be announced soon and be available at www.hkatts.com.hk.

[« Previous story](#)

[Next story »](#)

Volume LV, Number 7



© United States Institute for Theatre Technology, Inc.



Sightlines

The monthly newsletter for USITT members

July 2015
Print this page ›



[Next story ›](#)

FRONT PAGE »

NEWS & NOTICES:

- Golden Pen to Honor Brockett
- New Rigging Safety Grants
- LiNK Returns in 2015
- Early Career Mentoring
- Kasey Allee-Foreman New VP
- Announcements
- Sharing Learning
- OISTAT Lighting Symposium
- Buy the Tech Expo Catalog
- Last Word: Busy June

NEWS FROM:

- Around the Institute
- Contributing Members
- USITT's President
- Sustaining Members
- Spotlight on Giving
- USITT's Executive Director

COMMISSIONS:

- Why Badges?

CONFERENCE & STAGE EXPO:

- Salt Lake City in Motion
- Sound Opportunities

FOR THE RECORD:

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members

[VIEW ISSUE AS A PDF »](#)

[CONTACT THE EDITOR »](#)

[Search the Archives](#)

GO

News & Notices

Ingenious Ideas in Tech Expo 2015 Catalogs

Janet Gramza *Communications Associate*



The 2015 Tech Expo projects on display in Cincinnati

Photo/Barbara ER Lucas

The top three projects earning USITT's 2015 Tech Expo awards are all about making special effects more realistic – an LED candle, a valve system for instant stage rain, and a wireless controller to activate pneumatic effects “with the click of a mouse.”

A Realistic and Interactive LED Candle by Trent Kugler, production supervisor at Contemporary American Theater Festival in West Virginia, uses an Arduino microcontroller, a small wind sensor, an IR sensor, and three LEDs inserted into a hollowed out pillar candle to create a candle that lights when it senses a flame, flickers realistically, and can be “blown out” by an actor’s breath.

No Rain Delay by Adam Maxfield, technical director, and Laura Pates, assistant technical director at PlayMakers Repertory Company in North Carolina is a system of electronically controlled irrigation valves to make it rain onstage with no hesitation or post-storm dripping.

Chris Rybitski, stage shop foreman at the University of Virginia devised *Wireless Solenoid Controller*, a wireless system and software package to control pneumatic effects – like kitchen shelves tipping to spill their contents in Mary

Poppins -- using a PC with Windows.

These are just three of 18 creative solutions to theatre technology problems collected in the 2015 Tech Expo Catalog, now available for purchase at www.usitt.org/store.

In the catalog introduction, Tech Expo Chair Rob Kerby writes, "I have begun to think of this project as a means of honoring the unsung heroes of theatre technology." He sees his past Tech Expo catalogs as "practically another production team member that I refer to from time to time to help me out of a bind."

Other 2015 ideas include using a vaporizer system like those in electronic cigarettes to create a witch's staff that lights up and blows smoke for *Into the Woods*, using drip irrigation tubing to create the structure of a woolly mammoth costume for Thornton Wilder's *The Skin of Our Teeth*, and making water-resistant mic packs from polyurethane laminated fabric used in cloth diaper covers.

Tech Expo is a biennial event that will produce its 16th exhibit and catalog for the 2017 Annual Conference & Stage Expo. [Past catalogs also are available at the USITT store.](#)

« [Previous story](#)

[Next story](#) »

Volume LV, Number 7



© United States Institute for Theatre Technology, Inc.



[Front page ›](#)

FRONT PAGE »

NEWS & NOTICES:

- Golden Pen to Honor Brockett
- New Rigging Safety Grants
- LiNK Returns in 2015
- Early Career Mentoring
- Kasey Allee-Foreman New VP
- Announcements
- Sharing Learning
- OISTAT Lighting Symposium
- Buy the Tech Expo Catalog
- Last Word: Busy June

NEWS FROM:

- Around the Institute
- Contributing Members
- USITT's President
- Sustaining Members
- Spotlight on Giving
- USITT's Executive Director

COMMISSIONS:

- Why Badges?

CONFERENCE & STAGE EXPO:

- Salt Lake City in Motion
- Sound Opportunities

FOR THE RECORD:

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members

[VIEW ISSUE AS A PDF »](#)

[CONTACT THE EDITOR »](#)

[Search the Archives](#)

[GO](#)

The Last Word:

A Busy June for European Tour Participants



Stage | Set | Scenery

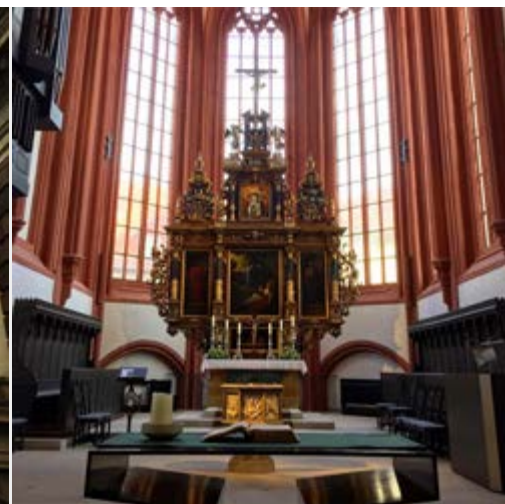
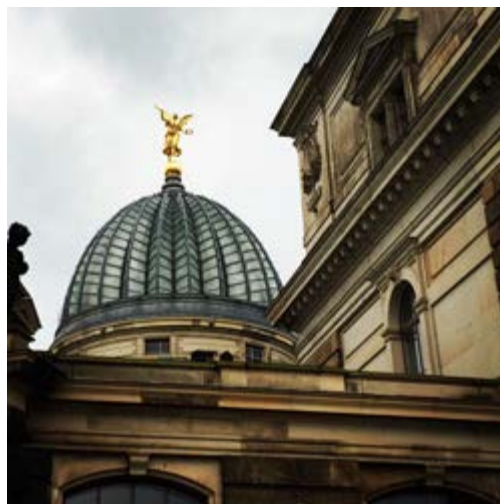
We thank M.L. Hart for capturing the excitement as the USITT tour and many members visited Germany for the Stage / Set / Scenery event and other landmark theatres and then moved to the Czech Republic for tours and the Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space.

More detailed coverage of PQ will appear in future issues of *Sightlines* and *TD&T*.

Photos/M.L. Hart



SIGHTLINES ARCHIVE »



[« Previous story](#)

[Front page »](#)

Volume LV, Number 7



Sightlines

The monthly newsletter for USITT members

July 2015
Print this page ›



[Next story ›](#)

FRONT PAGE »

NEWS & NOTICES:

- Golden Pen to Honor Brockett
- New Rigging Safety Grants
- LiNK Returns in 2015
- Early Career Mentoring
- Kasey Allee-Foreman New VP
- Announcements
- Sharing Learning
- OIStat Lighting Symposium
- Buy the Tech Expo Catalog
- Last Word: Busy June

NEWS FROM:

- Around the Institute
- Contributing Members
- USITT's President
- Sustaining Members
- Spotlight on Giving
- USITT's Executive Director

COMMISSIONS:

- Why Badges?

CONFERENCE & STAGE EXPO:

- Salt Lake City in Motion
- Sound Opportunities

FOR THE RECORD:

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members

VIEW ISSUE AS A PDF »

CONTACT THE EDITOR »

Search the Archives

GO

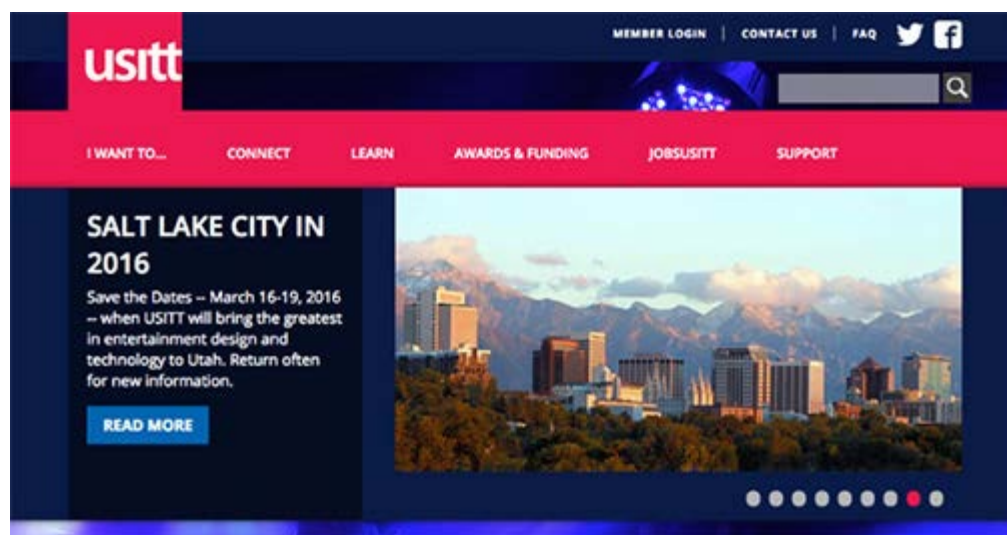
News From Around the Institute

- [Have you Visited USITT.org Recently?](#)
- [DThG Features USITT 2015](#)
- [The Long Reach Long Riders complete their 12th annual Charity Ride](#)

Have you Visited USITT.org Recently?

While it is still a work in progress, USITT's new web look and feel launched in late June. There is a new member interface, new discussion forums, and a way to ask questions or see what others are asking.

This is a great way to interact with members (and those thinking about membership), share expertise, and tap into the collective experience and expertise of our more than 3,800 supporters.



DThG Features USITT 2015

Visitors to Stage / Set / Scenery in Germany were treated to a review of the USITT Conference & Stage Expo which was included in one of DThG's publications for the event.

SIGHTLINES ARCHIVE »

We are delighted that our German colleagues were able to join us in Cincinnati and participate in so many USITT activities. In return, USITT had a stand at Stage / Set / Scenery and two members presented sessions there. Josafath Reynoso, winner of the 2015 Rose Brand award for Scene Design, and Daniel Lisowski, who received a USITT grant for *Demystifying Dynamic Braking Resistor Calculations*, were warmly welcomed as speakers.



The Long Reach Long Riders complete their 12th annual Charity Ride

The Long Reach Long Riders are thrilled to announce the overwhelming success of their 12th annual charity motorcycle ride. The ride, which was dubbed *Cruzin' the Ozarks, The Dozenth Year*, by ride marshals Mark and Ali Heiser, raised over \$53,000 for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS and the PLASA Foundation's Behind the Scenes program, bringing the total raised since the rides began in 2004 to \$503,500.



Mark noted, "Alison and I thoroughly enjoyed coordinating the ride and discovering the Ozark Mountains. The roads, the many people we met along the way, and the shared experiences with our fellow riders will be a treasured memory for us, made all the better by the money raised on behalf of Behind the Scenes and Broadway Cares."

The riders enjoyed touring the many scenic back roads of four states; Arkansas, Missouri, Mississippi and Tennessee. The most common sights along the way were:

- Live box turtles in the middle of the road
- Fried Chicken
- Flat armadillos in the middle of the road
- Fried Oca
- Throwed (sic) dinner rolls at Lambert's Cafe
- Fried Shrimp

- Norse lego people claiming the land for their king
- Sweet tea.

LRLR 2016: *The Radioactive Ride* is scheduled to start in Las Cruces, New Mexico and wander through the southwest desert, stopping in places like Los Alamos, Santa Fe, Four Corners and, possibly, Roswell. Tentative ride dates are June 4 through 12. Visit lrlr.org for updates on the 2016 ride, to join the ride or to make a donation.

[Previous story](#)

[Next story](#)

Volume LV, Number 7



© United States Institute for Theatre Technology, Inc.



Sightlines

The monthly newsletter for USITT members

July 2015
Print this page ›



[Next story ›](#)

FRONT PAGE »

NEWS & NOTICES:

- Golden Pen to Honor Brockett
- New Rigging Safety Grants
- LiNK Returns in 2015
- Early Career Mentoring
- Kasey Allee-Foreman New VP
- Announcements
- Sharing Learning
- OISTAT Lighting Symposium
- Buy the Tech Expo Catalog
- Last Word: Busy June

NEWS FROM:

- Around the Institute
- Contributing Members
- USITT's President
- Sustaining Members
- Spotlight on Giving
- USITT's Executive Director

COMMISSIONS:

- Why Badges?

CONFERENCE & STAGE EXPO:

- Salt Lake City in Motion
- Sound Opportunities

FOR THE RECORD:

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members

VIEW ISSUE AS A PDF »

CONTACT THE EDITOR »

Search the Archives

GO

News From

Contributing Members

- **ETC: Nick Wurzel Promoted, Products Highlighted at PLASA Focus Event**
- **Philips Strand Lighting: Emergency DMX Bypass Switch Simplifies Life Safety System**
- **Creative Stage Lighting: New Rental Model Focuses on Dry-Hire Only**
- **Production Resource Group: Inaugural Summit Marks Alliance's First Anniversary**

ETC: Nick Wurzel Promoted, Products Highlighted at PLASA Focus Event

ETC's Nick Wurzel was promoted to the newly created position of entertainment national sales manager. He will oversee ETC's entertainment regional managers and be responsible for the sales territories of North and South America, Australia, and India.



"We're experiencing a ton of growth at ETC," said Vice President of Sales Mark Vassallo, "with strong sales coming from recovering markets, new market segments, and expanding product families. Nick is a great asset to have in charge of our entertainment-lighting sales group, to ensure continued growth in this market, and to take ETC to the next level."

Mr. Wurzel holds a bachelor's degree in technical theatre and economics from Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin. After completing his degree, he worked as a production manager for several local theatres and was the master electrician for the Ice Capades.

Many of ETC's LED luminaires and lighting control products – including the Source Four LED Series 2 system – made their appearance at PLASA Focus: Kansas City May 20 and 21.



Customers experienced limitless possibilities when mixing and matching Source Four LED light engines with a variety of adapters, accessories, and lens tubes. Some of the company's world-

renowned lighting consoles, including the Gio lighting control system, ETCnomad, and ETCnomad Puck also were showcased with both Eos- and Cobalt-family software.

To learn more about ETC and its products, visit www.etconnect.com.

Philips Strand Lighting: Emergency DMX Bypass Switch Simplifies Life Safety System

Philips Strand Lighting recently introduced the **Emergency DMX Bypass Switch** allowing control of four individual universes of DMX. This simplifies Life Safety Systems, providing emergency and panic lighting control solutions for DMX-driven house lights and all DMX controlled lighting needed for emergency and egress lighting.

“For over 100 years, Philips Strand Lighting has been leading the way in dimming controls for entertainment venues around the world,” said Julie Smith, General Manager for the Americas. “Today, with so many facilities implementing entertainment lighting into their daily lives, the need for simple, powerful Life Safety Systems is imperative so that both the house and entertainment lighting can work in unison in an emergency situation.”

For more information on the Emergency DMX Bypass Switch from Philips Strand Lighting, contact a **Regional Sales Manager** or visit www.strandlighting.com.

Creative Stage Lighting: New Rental Model Focuses on Dry-Hire Only

Creative Stage Lighting is refining its rental business model. CSL rentals will offer the most in-demand lighting equipment to the entertainment industry on a dry-hire only basis. This allows the company’s rental division to provide the most technologically advanced lighting equipment and focus on service to its rental clients.

“We have learned a lot from and tremendously enjoyed our historic model,” said CSL President George B. Studnicky III. “It is time for us to channel our energy and effort in the area where we excel. All of us are excited by taking this next step!”

Creative Stage Lighting will continue to distribute, support, service, repair, and manufacture a diverse product mix. It is also reducing its current rentals inventory and is accepting related inquiries.

Production Resource Group: Inaugural Summit Marks Alliance’s First Anniversary

Production Resource Group (PRG) concluded the first PRG Alliance Summit April 16 during the Prolight + Sound 2015 trade fair at the Festhalle Messe Frankfurt in Germany.

This was the ideal event to bring together the PRG Alliance members. There

were 28 countries represented by 65 attendees at the Summit. The PRG Alliance was launched at Prolight + Sound 2014.

“This is a milestone for the PRG Alliance,” said Tom Van Hemelryck, director. “In just one year, 13 of the world’s most highly regarded technical event production companies have joined. They bring to the PRG Alliance a tremendous depth of expertise, a commitment to customer service, and a global breadth of coverage that is unequalled in our industry.”

The event was an opportunity for the Alliance members to network as well as attend meetings about new developments, learn about PRG business insights, and participate in discussions about the future of the industry. A highlight was the Market Trend panel sessions with Valerie O’Keeffe, CEO from Brighter Than The Sun; Designer Koert Vermeulen, founder of ACT Lighting Design; Remi Oerlemans, chief creative officer at DVP Event Marketing; Executive Producer Ben Hawkins from George P. Johnson; Production Manager David Wright; and Nick Eltis, senior technical director for the European Games Baku 2015.



[Previous story](#)

[Next story](#)

Volume LV, Number 7



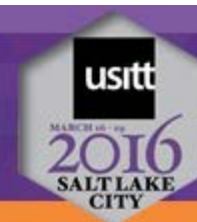
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Sightlines

The monthly newsletter for USITT members

July 2015
Print this page ›



[Next story ›](#)

FRONT PAGE »

NEWS & NOTICES:

- Golden Pen to Honor Brockett
- New Rigging Safety Grants
- LiNK Returns in 2015
- Early Career Mentoring
- Kasey Allee-Foreman New VP
- Announcements
- Sharing Learning
- OISTAT Lighting Symposium
- Buy the Tech Expo Catalog
- Last Word: Busy June

NEWS FROM:

- Around the Institute
- Contributing Members
- USITT's President
- Sustaining Members
- Spotlight on Giving
- USITT's Executive Director

COMMISSIONS:

- Why Badges?

CONFERENCE & STAGE EXPO:

- Salt Lake City in Motion
- Sound Opportunities

FOR THE RECORD:

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members

VIEW ISSUE AS A PDF »

CONTACT THE EDITOR »

Search the Archives

GO

News From **Mark Shanda**, *USITT President*

New President Looks Forward to Changes, Challenges



Mark Shanda accepts the king-sized version of the Presidential gavel from Lea Asbell-Swanger during a visit to the USITT office in June.

Photo/Barbara E.R. Lucas

July 1 not only marks the beginning of my term as President of USITT, but it is also the start of my 30th year on the faculty of The Ohio State University.

I had the good fortune of being hired into a tenure-track assistant professor job as the resident technical director for the department of theatre in the summer of 1986 and planned to stay two or three years. Since that start to my career in Ohio, I have progressed to associate and then full professor, served as associate chair and then chair of the theatre department, and most recently completed a five-year term as the dean of arts and humanities in Ohio State's College of Arts and Sciences.

Through these years I have had the pleasure of serving with six different college presidents. One of those presidents had a very large sign hanging in his office which said, "If you don't like change, you are going to like irrelevance even less." Despite my nearly 30-year tenure, I have indeed experienced a variety of great changes at work and certainly throughout the entertainment industry.

Much is written about how to cope with change and every organization, including USITT, at times wonders about what to retain from its past while moving forward into a changed future. Fear of change is often a limiting factor for individuals as well as organizations because of the difficulty shifting from the comfortable known into the potentially less comfortable unknown.

One definition of that fear is "False Evidence Appearing Real." Often in hindsight we can look back and realize that so much of what was holding us back from change was indeed false evidence. However, one must realize that there is no group better prepared for change than those of us in the design and technology fields of the entertainment industry.

Our whole substance is based on projects that have a distinct beginning, middle, and end. We regularly open productions and close productions as part of our rhythm of life and are more often than not ready to move onto the next project even slightly before the current one is completed. Even within our production efforts, we celebrate change through executing different lighting, sound, and projection cues as well as orchestrating scene shifts to transport our audiences from one location to the next. In fact, one could argue that the most successful designers and technicians are those who master the ability to change to effectively tell a story.

I have no fear that what we do will ever become irrelevant, for we embrace change. That attitude is good for the projects that we work on and is particularly good for the vitality of our Institute.

Officers' terms come to an end; new ones start afresh. Anniversaries are celebrated and new challenges are envisioned. Programs which remain effective are sustained, and those that have lost their luster are often changed into something new.

Our process for making these changes is usually pretty smooth, and our engagement with our members throughout the year is ever increasing. I am thrilled to be able to take temporary custody of this great organization, and I look forward to partnering with you on many adventures and changes that lie ahead over these next three years.

We'd like to hear your comments on this story.

Please e-mail Mark at Shanda.1@osu.edu.



« [Previous story](#)

[Next story](#) »



Sightlines

The monthly newsletter for USITT members

July 2015
Print this page ›



[Next story ›](#)

FRONT PAGE »

NEWS & NOTICES:

- Golden Pen to Honor Brockett
- New Rigging Safety Grants
- LiNK Returns in 2015
- Early Career Mentoring
- Kasey Allee-Foreman New VP
- Announcements
- Sharing Learning
- OISTAT Lighting Symposium
- Buy the Tech Expo Catalog
- Last Word: Busy June

NEWS FROM:

- Around the Institute
- Contributing Members
- USITT's President
- Sustaining Members
- Spotlight on Giving
- USITT's Executive Director

COMMISSIONS:

- Why Badges?

CONFERENCE & STAGE EXPO:

- Salt Lake City in Motion
- Sound Opportunities

FOR THE RECORD:

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members

VIEW ISSUE AS A PDF »

CONTACT THE EDITOR »

Search the Archives

GO

News From

Sustaining Members

- **Alcons:** *Bright Star* Musical Shines
- **Chauvet Professional:** Rogues Add Flair to Broward Center Ballroom
- **GLP:** X4 Bar Joins Product Lineup
- **Cobalt Studios:** Sign Painting Intensive Offered
- **Theatre Projects:** Los Angeles Office Is Now TheatreDNA

Alcons: *Bright Star* Musical Shines

Hollywood star Steve Martin and singer/songwriter Edie Brickell might seem an unlikely pair to write a musical, but their shared love of bluegrass music resulted in *Bright Star*, a story of love and loss in North Carolina's Blue Ridge Mountains. Delicate reproduction of the bluegrass score was vital to the show's success, which is why sound designer Nevin Steinberg chose an **Alcons** pro-ribbon sound system.

Bright Star premiered at the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego, California where the show's music and the theatre's physical attributes perfectly benefited from Alcons pro-ribbon audio technology.

The system included eight Alcons LR7s micro (single 6.5-inch by 4-inch pro-ribbon) line-arrays and two LR7B single 12-inch line-array subs as a split cluster, flown centrally above the proscenium, plus left-right arrays of five LR14 ultra-compact (double 6.5-inch by 4-inch pro-ribbon) line-arrays and an LR14B double 12-inch sub each on the proscenium itself, with the whole system powered and controlled by three Sentinel 10 4x 2.5kW and 96kHz Amplified Loudspeaker Controllers.

The production's onstage band all played acoustic bluegrass instruments, with other musicians playing cello, viola, mandolin and keyboards offstage.

For more information, visit www.alcons.audio

SIGHTLINES ARCHIVE »



Chauvet Professional: Rogues Add Flair to Broward Center Ballroom

After completing a \$60 million renovation project, management felt the lighting in the center’s new ballroom needed to go beyond what a conventional system could deliver. They found what they wanted in a collection of Rogue R1 Spot LED moving fixtures from **Chauvet Professional**.

Sitting on five and a half acres of palm tree-lined riverfront property in downtown Fort Lauderdale in a gracefully balanced modernistic building designed by American Institute of Architecture Gold Medal winner Benjamin C. Thompson, the center has become one of the most popular theatre venues in the U.S.

Twelve Rogue R1 Spot fixtures are evenly spaced around the center of the ballroom. The Rogue R1 Spot features a rotating three-facet prism, seven interchangeable gobos, 16.5-degree beam angle, and motorized iris and focus for beam shaping. These and other features of the Chauvet moving fixture help create a variety of looks for the ballroom’s diverse range of functions.



GLP: X4 Bar Joins Product Lineup

GLP recently announced the full production release of the latest addition to its product range: the **X4 Bar**.

The range features two fixtures, the X4 Bar 10 and X4 Bar 20, both high performance battens offering flexibility to today's lighting designer across multiple applications. The X4 Bar uses high output RGBW LEDs that are packed tightly to give a full batten of light, with 20 LEDs used in the 40-inch long (100cm) X4 Bar 20 and 10 LEDs in the shorter 20 inch (50cm) X4 Bar 10. High quality optics ensure a smooth, homogenized output across the batten through a broad pallet of pastel and saturated colors. This allows for subtle graduated fades, or for distinct color breaks between LEDs. DMX control offers full pixel mapping capabilities, allowing a whole multitude of dynamic fades and chases through intensities and colors.



Advanced versions of the X4 Bars have appeared on **several high profile events**, most recently the *American Idol* finale and the Eurovision Song Contest in Vienna.

Cobalt Studios: Sign Painting Intensive Offered

Sign Painting: The Art of Lettering for Theatre and Film, Painting For Film And Television will be held by **Cobalt Studios** August 17 to 21.

Theresa Dringenberg will lead this in-depth seminar that will address traditional sign materials, tools, alphabets, and lettering techniques. Aged signs, special effects, and unusual surfaces will also be covered. Ms. Dringenberg draws from her classical lettering training and over 25 years of experience to guide participants



For more information, visit www.cobaltstudios.net/training/sps.html.

Theatre Projects: Los Angeles Office Is Now TheatreDNA

Theatre Projects will spin off its Los Angeles office into a new company, TheatreDNA.

Long-time Theatre Projects principals Michael Ferguson and Benton Delinger will transition from their roles at Theatre Projects to lead TheatreDNA along with Fred Vogler, founder of Sonitus, a Los Angeles-based AV design firm that will be merging with TheatreDNA.

For more information about TheatreDNA, visit www.mytheatredna.com

[Previous story](#)

[Next story](#)

Volume LV, Number 7



© United States Institute for Theatre Technology, Inc.



Sightlines

The monthly newsletter for USITT members

July 2015
Print this page ›



[Next story ›](#)

FRONT PAGE »

NEWS & NOTICES:

- Golden Pen to Honor Brockett
- New Rigging Safety Grants
- LiNK Returns in 2015
- Early Career Mentoring
- Kasey Allee-Foreman New VP
- Announcements
- Sharing Learning
- OISTAT Lighting Symposium
- Buy the Tech Expo Catalog
- Last Word: Busy June

NEWS FROM:

- Around the Institute
- Contributing Members
- USITT's President
- Sustaining Members
- Spotlight on Giving
- USITT's Executive Director

COMMISSIONS:

- Why Badges?

CONFERENCE & STAGE EXPO:

- Salt Lake City in Motion
- Sound Opportunities

FOR THE RECORD:

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members

VIEW ISSUE AS A PDF »

CONTACT THE EDITOR »

Search the Archives

GO

USITT is One of the Best Deals in American Theatre

Joe Tilford *nationally-known freelance scenic designer and educator*

I have been fortunate to have a terrific career in the theatre; everything I have is due to the good fortune I have had in our art form.

I believe my good fortune in life requires me to give back so that others, especially young people, may benefit.

I give to "best-of-breed" organizations, and to that end, I give annually to St. Jude's Children's Hospital and to USITT.

My giving to USITT is done on two levels. First, I give annually to the USITT general fund. Then I also support the local USITT Student Chapter at UNCSA.

I am enthusiastic about USITT, and I think it is, dollar-for-dollar, one of the best deals in American Theatre.



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◀ [Previous story](#)

[Next story](#) ▶



Sightlines

The monthly newsletter for USITT members

July 2015
Print this page ›



[Next story ›](#)

FRONT PAGE »

NEWS & NOTICES:

- Golden Pen to Honor Brockett
- New Rigging Safety Grants
- LiNK Returns in 2015
- Early Career Mentoring
- Kasey Allee-Foreman New VP
- Announcements
- Sharing Learning
- OISTAT Lighting Symposium
- Buy the Tech Expo Catalog
- Last Word: Busy June

NEWS FROM:

- Around the Institute
- Contributing Members
- USITT's President
- Sustaining Members
- Spotlight on Giving
- USITT's Executive Director

COMMISSIONS:

- Why Badges?

CONFERENCE & STAGE EXPO:

- Salt Lake City in Motion
- Sound Opportunities

FOR THE RECORD:

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members

VIEW ISSUE AS A PDF »

CONTACT THE EDITOR »

Search the Archives

GO

News From **David Grindle**, *USITT Executive Director* **Collaboration**

We do love that word in our industry. It brings images of everyone working together to bring life to great ideas – a finished product that reflects a little bit of every person's input.

We have also worked with people who believe “collaboration” means doing it their way...

True collaboration, in its best forms, bears more resemblance to the romantic, first definition. This happens most easily when everyone realizes that true collaboration means an open exchange of ideas and a desire to expand our understanding of one another. Perhaps that means we change our view of things because working together brought out new thoughts that challenged the old ones.

Collaboration means learning how one group of people do something so you take an idea or two of theirs to improve the work that you are doing. And they can adapt some of your point of view and incorporate it into their thinking.

All of this is fresh in my mind because I've witnessed some incredible collaboration in our organization lately. There are obvious examples, such as the Prague Quadrennial exhibition that just closed in Europe. The US exhibition (which you will see in Salt Lake City) is the work of many -- with ideas and input from everyone who touched it. I mean that quite literally, since it is interactive in areas. That collaboration brought people together who might never have worked together. The interaction between the people was incredible, because it was “open source” design and execution.

I've watched our elected leadership get together and bounce ideas around a table in ways that were refreshing and exciting. Each person was working for the common goal of a stronger USITT, and that encourages us to continue this incredible forward momentum. Much like improvisational acting, the “yes and”



Projection Designer Wendall Harrington

attitude filled the room which creates a great collaboration.

Collaboration is all around us. The recent party to celebrate the Tony Awards shows that everyone can contribute to and build on a good idea. It takes work, of course. It takes a willingness to admit that your ideas "might be brilliant, might be crud, I don't know." At minimum, we should all look for the kernel of value when someone puts an idea forward. It might be an idea for this project, it could be something to use in the future.

Knowing each person brings something, even if it is naiveté to ask a question so simple and innocent it helps everyone refocus, means seeing value in those around you.

Seeing that value is the first step that has led us to those great recent collaborations.

[« Previous story](#)

[Next story »](#)

Volume LV, Number 7



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Sightlines

The monthly newsletter for USITT members

July 2015
Print this page ›



[Next story ›](#)

FRONT PAGE »

NEWS & NOTICES:

- Golden Pen to Honor Brockett
- New Rigging Safety Grants
- LiNK Returns in 2015
- Early Career Mentoring
- Kasey Allee-Foreman New VP
- Announcements
- Sharing Learning
- OISTAT Lighting Symposium
- Buy the Tech Expo Catalog
- Last Word: Busy June

NEWS FROM:

- Around the Institute
- Contributing Members
- USITT's President
- Sustaining Members
- Spotlight on Giving
- USITT's Executive Director

COMMISSIONS:

- Why Badges?

CONFERENCE & STAGE EXPO:

- Salt Lake City in Motion
- Sound Opportunities

FOR THE RECORD:

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members

[VIEW ISSUE AS A PDF »](#)

[CONTACT THE EDITOR »](#)

[Search the Archives](#)

[GO](#)

Commissions

Why Badges? (Part 1)

Autum Casey *Education Commission*



Illustrations/Courtesy Education Commission

Theatre educators are constantly looking for ways to verify and track the skills and accomplishments of students. Within the structure of a course, students demonstrate mastery -- or not -- of a skill and a grade is awarded.

However, there are problems tracking that data for students throughout their educational career and certainly their professional work. A student could fail a flat-building project because they did not learn to measure properly, but their work with the power tools in the shop was exceptional. They have demonstrated achievement using the chop saw and table saw, but are not yet accomplished in measuring and scale. Most educational theatre institutions have yet to find a way to track mastery that can follow a student throughout courses, productions, and shops.



SIGHTLINES ARCHIVE »

Digital achievement badges have become popular lately thanks to organizations like the Humanities, Arts, Science and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory (HASTAC) and funding from the MacArthur Foundation, Mozilla, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Badges (digital or otherwise) are a way of recognizing achievement or mastery. This idea is not new; the Boy Scouts of America and Girl Scouts of America have been using badges for decades. While earning a badge provides the student with a sense of accomplishment, it allows shops, crew heads, and educators to get a better picture of the student's skills and progress.

Using badges in the classroom or shop could have a broader impact on education and the industry. Badges can be as simple as a sticker, but the real potential is in tracking the information. For educational institutions, badges may be tracked via Blackboard or other educational management software. The platform HASTAC and its partners have created, openbadges.org, is a free software tool that allows any organization to implement digital badges.

Keep reading *Sightlines* for Part II on badges.

« Previous story

Next story »

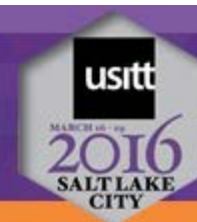




Sightlines

The monthly newsletter for USITT members

July 2015
Print this page ›



[Next story ›](#)

FRONT PAGE »

NEWS & NOTICES:

- Golden Pen to Honor Brockett
- New Rigging Safety Grants
- LiNK Returns in 2015
- Early Career Mentoring
- Kasey Allee-Foreman New VP
- Announcements
- Sharing Learning
- OISTAT Lighting Symposium
- Buy the Tech Expo Catalog
- Last Word: Busy June

NEWS FROM:

- Around the Institute
- Contributing Members
- USITT's President
- Sustaining Members
- Spotlight on Giving
- USITT's Executive Director

COMMISSIONS:

- Why Badges?

CONFERENCE & STAGE EXPO:

- Salt Lake City in Motion
- Sound Opportunities

FOR THE RECORD:

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members

[VIEW ISSUE AS A PDF »](#)

[CONTACT THE EDITOR »](#)

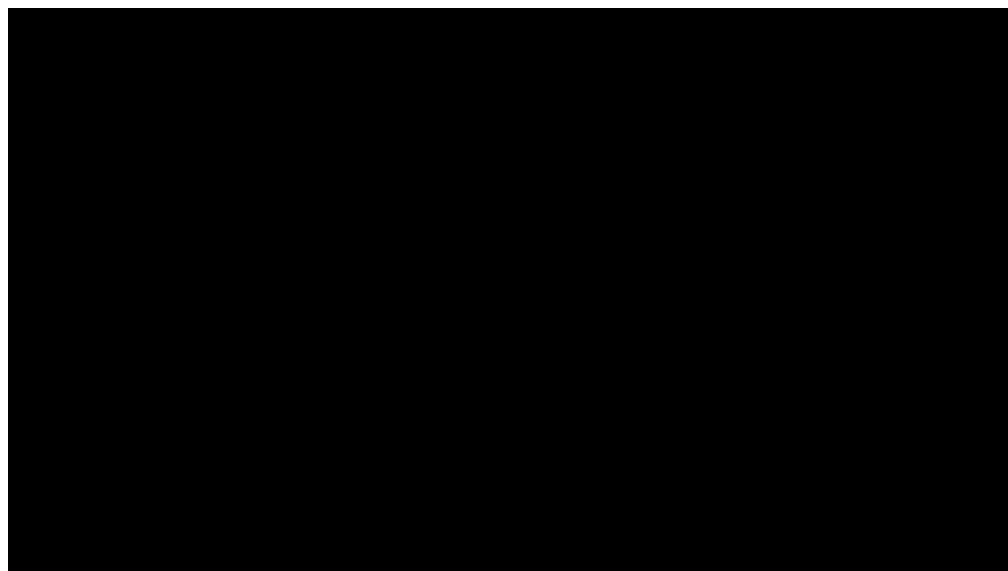
[Search the Archives](#)

GO

Conference & Stage Expo

Video Glimpses of USITT's 2016 Destination

USITT's next Annual Conference & Stage Expo will be March 16 to 19 at the Salt Palace Convention Center in Salt Lake City, Utah. Here's a short video on the many attributes of "the crossroads of the West."

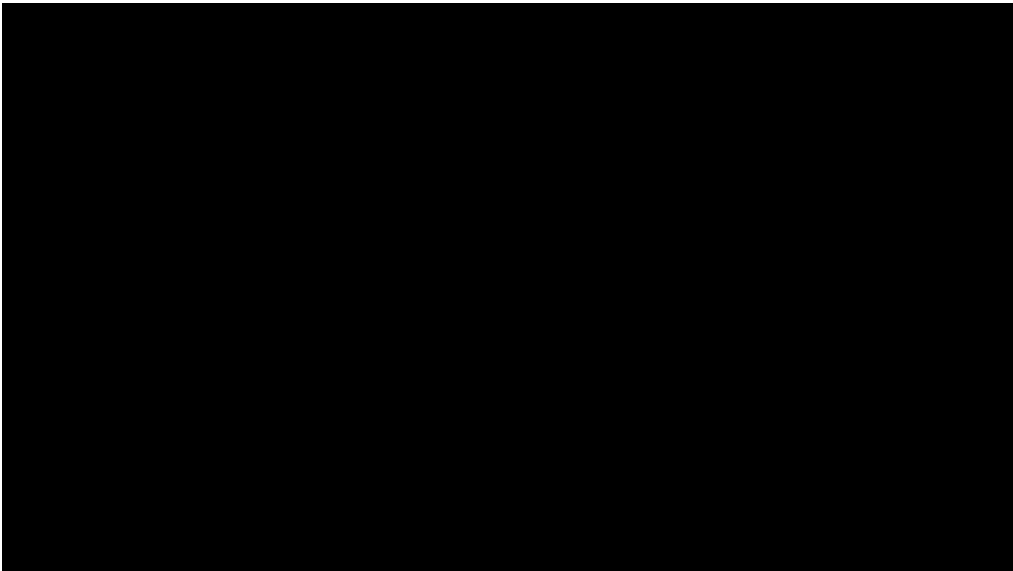


To get a feel for the area's fresh mountain vibe, here's BeUTAHful, a timelapse by John Stinnett.



SIGHTLINES ARCHIVE »

And to enjoy the light rail that moves people rapidly around the entire valley,



« Previous story

Next story »

Volume LV, Number 7



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Sightlines

The monthly newsletter for USITT members

July 2015
Print this page ›



[Next story ›](#)

FRONT PAGE »

NEWS & NOTICES:

- Golden Pen to Honor Brockett
- New Rigging Safety Grants
- LiNK Returns in 2015
- Early Career Mentoring
- Kasey Allee-Foreman New VP
- Announcements
- Sharing Learning
- OISTAT Lighting Symposium
- Buy the Tech Expo Catalog
- Last Word: Busy June

NEWS FROM:

- Around the Institute
- Contributing Members
- USITT's President
- Sustaining Members
- Spotlight on Giving
- USITT's Executive Director

COMMISSIONS:

- Why Badges?

CONFERENCE & STAGE EXPO:

- Salt Lake City in Motion
- Sound Opportunities

FOR THE RECORD:

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members

VIEW ISSUE AS A PDF »

CONTACT THE EDITOR »

Search the Archives

GO

Conference & Stage Expo

Begin 2016 SoundLab Project for Students

Beginning this summer, students and their mentors will begin working on the Sound Commission's 2016 SoundLab Student Project.

Building on previous success, the 2016 SoundLab will focus on sound design content and creation for multi-channel theatrical playback. The SoundLab Student Project is a six-month program where students work on sound designs. This work leads to opportunities for students to design in the 2016 SoundLab.



Student sound designers from high school, college, and graduate school programs can submit applications to USITT for the program. Each student will work with a mentor to analyze a play and develop a sound design concept. In December, students will submit their research and concept to the SoundLab Student Project organizers who will review all submissions and invite selected students to move on to the second phase of the project.

Students will work with their mentors in the second phase to turn their concept into a realized piece. Again, students will submit their work to the SoundLab Student Project organizers, who will review the submissions. From the submissions, a small group of students will be invited to install their designs in the 2016 SoundLab at the Salt Lake City 2016 Conference & Stage Expo.

There, each student will have a reserved time slot to work with a mentor and SoundLab staff to implement the design in the custom-built, multi-channel lab. Each design will become a permanent part of the 2016 SoundLab, accessible by any attendee at the Conference and possibly archived on the web.

Mentors can be current teachers or professors of the student. If a student needs a mentor, USITT will help find a mentor.

SoundLab 2016 Director of Programming Vincent Olivieri said, "The Student Project in Salt Lake City will be an exceptional opportunity for students from a wide range of backgrounds to work on a challenging project and make connections with sound designers from across the country."

Student Project Coordinator Drew Dalzell added that students who participate

SIGHTLINES ARCHIVE »

“will have a unique opportunity to see a project through from conception, through research, and finally to its execution.”

Registration information is [here](#).

For more information, e-mail Mr. Olivieri at olivieri@uci.edu.

« Previous story

Next story »

Volume LV, Number 7



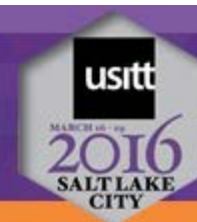
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Sightlines

The monthly newsletter for USITT members

July 2015
Print this page ›



FRONT PAGE »

NEWS & NOTICES:

- Golden Pen to Honor Brockett
- New Rigging Safety Grants
- LiNK Returns in 2015
- Early Career Mentoring
- Kasey Allee-Foreman New VP
- Announcements
- Sharing Learning
- OISTAT Lighting Symposium
- Buy the Tech Expo Catalog
- Last Word: Busy June

NEWS FROM:

- Around the Institute
- Contributing Members
- USITT's President
- Sustaining Members
- Spotlight on Giving
- USITT's Executive Director

COMMISSIONS:

- Why Badges?

CONFERENCE & STAGE EXPO:

- Salt Lake City in Motion
- Sound Opportunities

FOR THE RECORD:

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members

VIEW ISSUE AS A PDF »

CONTACT THE EDITOR »

Search the Archives

GO

For the Record:

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Sightlines

The monthly newsletter for USITT members

July 2015
Print this page ›



FRONT PAGE »

NEWS & NOTICES:

- Golden Pen to Honor Brockett
- New Rigging Safety Grants
- LiNK Returns in 2015
- Early Career Mentoring
- Kasey Allee-Foreman New VP
- Announcements
- Sharing Learning
- OISTAT Lighting Symposium
- Buy the Tech Expo Catalog
- Last Word: Busy June

NEWS FROM:

- Around the Institute
- Contributing Members
- USITT's President
- Sustaining Members
- Spotlight on Giving
- USITT's Executive Director

COMMISSIONS:

- Why Badges?

CONFERENCE & STAGE EXPO:

- Salt Lake City in Motion
- Sound Opportunities

FOR THE RECORD:

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members

VIEW ISSUE AS A PDF »

CONTACT THE EDITOR »

Search the Archives

GO

For the Record:

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- [Contributing Members »](#)
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SIGHTLINES ARCHIVE »

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Volume LV, Number 7



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