



Sightlines

The monthly newsletter for USITT members

January 2016

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News & Notices

Member Spotlight: Sarah Pickett

Sarah Pickett, sound designer and composer, assistant professor of sound design and music composition at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, and Director of Diversity Outreach for USITT's Sound Commission.

You've had a lot of different experiences. How did you get to sound design?

Sarah: I was born in Syracuse (NY) but spent part of my childhood in the Netherlands and grew up speaking Dutch and English. I studied piano with Lucille Sack and melodic percussion with Ernest Muzquiz, and I studied voice growing up. I got my BFA in Musical Theatre from Syracuse University ... then I lived in NYC and spent several years working in theatre and three punk rock bands, one of which, *Triple Forbidden Taboo*, put out a couple records.

Then I got into Japanese studies, went to Japan to teach English for three years and came back to get a Master's in Asian Studies from Cornell University. That was a sidelight, but it really influences my perspective as an artist. Living in a remote fishing village in rural Japan, I was 'other' for the first time in my life, in an extreme and real way. I learned what it really means to be an outsider.

Then, after doing some recording work on a film, I began to pursue sound design. I got an MFA in Sound Design from Yale School of Drama in 2008, and I think I'm done earning degrees now.

How did you get involved in USITT?

I went to USITT the first time in 2013, my first year teaching at CMU. My colleague Joe Pino encouraged me to attend the Sound Commission programming session, and when I got



Sarah Pickett takes notes during a recent rehearsal of *The Underpants* that she sound designed for Syracuse Stage.

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there, I was the only woman in a room of 20 to 40 people. As I sat there, one other woman entered the room. But I knew there were other women in sound at the Conference because friends of mine were there. So I said on Twitter, 'Hey, let's go to dinner and talk about why we're not more involved.'



Sarah and her Gateway mentee, Lydia Pearce at USITT 2015.

It turned out a lot of people thought it was a closed session because it didn't say 'open.' So we told David Grindle and they fixed that. And the next year we got a greater diversity of people to come. The racial mix is still lopsided. There are men of color in the sound commission, but it's an area we definitely need to work on.

Tell us about your Diversity Outreach role and the Sound Inclusion scholarship?

The sound commission was talking about how we want to do more than just state that our meetings are open – we want to be proactive and get people engaged and involved! (Commissioner) Dave Tosti-Lane said, 'What if we created the position of Director of Diversity Outreach and also gave a scholarship?' He was instrumental in creating a scholarship to bring someone from an underrepresented group to the Conference via the Sound Commission.



With her friend and CMU colleague, the late Tayneshia Jefferson, who inspired the Gateway Program.

Have you felt underrepresented as a woman in sound?

In the early to mid '80s, things were different than they are now. Early on, working as a load-in worker in the Berkshires, I did feel at times that there was a difference in how men and women were treated. I don't feel that way anymore. I do have female students who feel that way, and I always encourage them to take the lead in activating change ... Women have been underrepresented, but I honestly think that's going to change soon. Over 50 percent of our (CMU) students in the area of sound are women now.

Please talk about being a Gateway mentor?

After Tayneshia (Jefferson) passed away, Tina Shackelford asked me to

mentor for the Gateway Program (established in Tayneshia's memory), and it was a wonderful experience. You get to know people from backgrounds that aren't really represented in the backstage industry, and honestly, that changed the way I think about USITT. It made me think that USITT could be, in many ways, life-changing for people. Because through USITT, people can be exposed to so many key players in the industry that they wouldn't have access to, and it would take years to develop those contacts. So it's like a fast track, because theatre is all about contacts.

I think Tayneshia would be incredibly pleased and proud that we are taking it to the next level.

You just designed a show in Syracuse while working at CMU in Pittsburgh. How do you sound design remotely?

We hold meetings through video chat to talk about the play and the overall design concept. We email ideas back and forth, and once we start making decisions, we make a Dropbox folder and share with the team. I make a QLab session so they can play the cues in rehearsal and the Stage Manager will give me feedback. Then I come for Tech Week to make sure it all works and to train the assistant who will run the show.

That said, I really enjoy being in rehearsal. For me, it's important to be in some early rehearsals because you take cues from the body language and how the actors approach the text. So it's hard for me to be doing desk work remotely, and having to split my focus with teaching, because I'm also involved in my students' productions. But it's really important that I stay active for my students and my university demands that I show a continuous body of work in the field.

Do you often compose as well as design?

It depends on the gig. When I work at OSF, it's a composition gig, and I'm also responsible for all the sound design elements, including how to implement body mics on upwards of 27 actors ... Some shows, it depends on the size, the amount of time and the budget how you approach it. For example, if you're writing orchestrated music, you need to determine how much time it will take and how many



Visiting her Syracuse University mentor, Syracuse Stage Resident Sound Designer Jonathan Herter, while in town for tech on *The Underpants*.



Working with Syracuse Stage Sound Apprentice Ryan Johnson.

instruments to record versus how many will be virtual. I mean, you can't get away with a virtual cello. That doesn't fly. But you might get away with a virtual harp.

What would you tell a student considering sound design as a career?

I would say, 'Understand theatre history and music history, and understand how to look at the text, because it's not just about the sound technology elements, but it's also about the storytelling. So it's important if you want to be a theatre sound designer that you can do dramaturgy. If you want to be a sound engineer in addition to that you need to understand how the science works, you need to understand the laws of physics as they relate to sound.'

Thank You! See you at USITT 2016 in Salt Lake!

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News & Notices

Chicago, UK, Quebec Theatres to Get Top Architecture Honors

The Theatre School at DePaul University in Chicago; the Everyman Theatre in Liverpool, U.K.; and the Salle de Spectacles de Mont-Laurier in Quebec, Canada; will receive USITT's 2016 Architecture Award Honor Awards.

The Performing Arts Center at the State University of New York Potsdam and Norway's Stavanger Concert Hall also will be recognized with Merit Awards in the annual competition for best contemporary performance spaces.

Designers and consultants for the winning venues will receive their awards at USITT 2016 in Salt Lake City March 16 to 19.

USITT's Architecture Commission received 20 submissions to this year's contest. This is the first time since 2001 that a jury has bestowed three Honor Awards.

This year's jury, led by Architecture Vice Chair William Murray, AIA, included Architect Mark Reddington of LMN Architects in Seattle; Duane Schuler of Schuler Shook Theatre Consultants, Chicago; and Acoustician Russ Cooper of Jaffe Holden Acoustics, Norwalk, CT.

2016 HONOR AWARDS

The Theatre School at DePaul University, Chicago

- Architect: Pelli Clarke Pelli, New Haven, CT
- Theatre Consultant: Schuler Shook, Chicago
- Acoustical Consultant: Kirkegaard Associates, Chicago
- Cost: US\$63.2 million
- Completed: 2013
- Scope: 175,000 square feet, two theatres, acting/movement/voice and design studios, all shops, theatre support spaces, public areas and offices.
- Description: "There is a fluidity between inside and out: scene shops, normally hidden, are placed on the first floor behind glass and pedestrians



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may watch the building and painting of sets ... The fourth-story 100-seat black box theatre cantilevers above the sidewalk. Creative lighting design illuminates the interior frame of the large, square window, and like a scrim, reveals the space to the outside world.”

Everyman Theatre, Liverpool, U.K.

- Architect: Haworth Tompkins, London
- Theatre Consultant: Charcoalblue, London
- Acoustical Consultant: Gillieron Scott Acoustic Design, London
- Cost: £13.4 million
- Completed: 2013
- Scope: 400-seat adaptable theatre, smaller black box, rehearsal room, exhibition spaces, catering/bar facilities, workshops and supporting offices.
- Description: “Sustainable practices included dismantling the existing 19th century structure and salvaging the old bricks for re-use in the auditorium shell. The façade is a collaborate work of public art. The building aims to be as inclusive and accessible as possible for all users, both front and back of house. The team worked closely with Making Access Work, and an access forum of theatre users with a wide range of disabilities reviewed the project at all stages of the design process.”



Salle de Spectacles de Mont-Laurier, Quebec, Canada

- Architect: Les Architectes FABG, Montreal
- Theatre Consultant: GO Multimedia, Montreal
- Acoustical Consultant: N/A
- Cost: CA\$9.2 million
- Completed: 2015
- Scope: 3,200-meter multipurpose hall able to accommodate traditional performing arts events as well as configurations for cabarets, banquets, corporate events and trade shows.
- Description: “A structural grid of cross-laminated wood beams supports the roof and creates a canopy over the main entrance. It clearly communicates the importance of wood for the region and supports the local development of new technologies that add value to this natural resource with a better environmental footprint than steel and concrete.”



2016 MERIT AWARDS

Performing Arts Center at SUNY-Potsdam, Potsdam, NY

- Architect: Pfieffer Partners Architects, Los Angeles

- Theatre Consultant: Fisher Dachs Associates, New York City
- Acoustical Consultant: Acoustic Dimensions, New Rochelle, NY
- Cost: US\$43 million
- Completed: 2014
- Scope: 97,000-square-foot facility with 350-seat proscenium theatre, 200-seat black box theatre and 200-seat dance performance hall, studios for theatre and dance, crafts and costume lab, lighting design lab, other support spaces.
- Description: "Bringing dance and theater together under one roof for the first time in either program's history, and locating them adjacent to the Crane School of Music, provided the university and the design team a great opportunity ... The lobby became the living room of a new arts village where all paths would cross, blurring the distinction between front of house and back of house, and one school from another."



Stavanger Concert Hall, Stavanger, Norway

- Architect: AIX Arkitekter AB, Stockholm Sweden
- Theatre Consultant: AIX Arkitekter AB
- Acoustical Consultant: Kahle Acoustics, Brussels, Belgium
- Completed: 2012
- Cost: €130 million
- Scope: Two auditoria of similar size, 1,500 seats and 800 to 1,900 seats, one primarily for natural acoustic sound and one for amplified sound, both with side balconies extending to the front of the stage.
- Description: "Stavanger Concert Hall is a versatile venue and stage, for a wide variety of genres from rock and electronica for a standing audience, to intimate chamber music and dance performances ... Built in separate constructions, the two halls are soundproof from each other, making it possible to have a loud rock concert in Zetlitz Hall and an acoustic symphonic performance in Fartein Valen at the same time."



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In Memoriam: Sarah Nash Gates

USITT members, colleagues, friends and former students across the nation were saddened to learn of the passing of USITT Fellow and former president Sarah Nash Gates on December 4 at her home in Seattle.



A USITT member for 40 years, Ms. Gates is best remembered by Institute colleagues as the Institute's first female president from 1992 to 1994. She was inducted as a USITT Fellow in 1983 and received the Joel E. Rubin Founders Award in 1995. Sarah served as a member of the Finance Committee starting in 1981 and chaired that committee from 1983 to 1991. More recently she served on the Awards Committee and the Graduate School Interview Task Force, which ultimately became the LiNK Program. She also served three years as president of the University/Resident Theatre Association (URTA).

On hearing of Sarah's passing, USITT Immediate Past President Lea Asbell-Swanger said, "Sarah was a wonderful person always willing to provide guidance and support to anyone in this organization and industry; all you had to do was ask. Not only was she our first female president, she was a role model. I know there were several times during my tenure when I would consciously consider what she would have done in a specific situation."

Sarah was first and foremost a highly respected and talented **costumer**, artist, and educator. Her professional credits included several tours and Off Broadway shows from her early freelance days in New York. In the Seattle area, her design credits included the Seattle Opera, Seattle Repertory Theatre and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

Sarah's professional training began in her hometown of Boston. After completing her BFA (Boston University, 1973) and MA (UC-Santa Barbara, 1974) she freelanced in New York City and taught briefly at Stephens College and SUNY-Fredonia before returning to BU to complete her MFA in 1984. She then joined the University of Washington faculty as a Costumer and a decade later advanced to the position of Executive Director for the School of Drama, a position she held for the next 20 years until her retirement in 2014. Sarah was always quick to credit her USITT experiences with providing her the necessary financial and leadership training to be successful in her later administrative career.

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A pioneer and barrier-breaker, she was understandably proud of her unprecedented leadership as the first female chair of one of the nation's top five professional training programs. But as her colleague Sam Read wrote in a tribute on the UW School of Drama website, "To say that Sarah had a profound impact on the School of Drama and the Seattle theatre community does not do her justice. For more than 30 years, Sarah served our community as educator, mentor, leader, designer, producer, patron, and, most importantly, unfaltering champion of the artists and students with whom she worked. Her devotion to the field of theatre, to her work, and to the people in her life was unparalleled." The stage of the Floyd and Delores Jones Playhouse at the University was named in her honor shortly before her retirement.

USITT Fellow and close friend Rick Stephens recalled how Sarah impacted those around her: "She was always so fun and involved with everything. In addition to theatre she loved horseback riding, sailing, the Boston Red Sox, the Seattle Mariners, Washington Huskies football and the family cabin in Maine. People were just drawn to her. Charisma is difficult to define, but in her case it was a combination of intelligence, enthusiasm, charm, grace, beauty, wit, compassion, courage and personality. Sarah had all of that and more in abundance."

"It is impossible to have only one favorite memory of her. But for those of us in attendance at the 1993 Conference in Wichita, one incident stands out. The lovely Ms. Gates always took the work seriously, but always had a sense of humor regarding herself. The Conference had encountered a number of difficulties, but Sarah decided to lighten the mood by arranging to make her presidential entrance to the banquet riding a horse! And, of course, she raised spirits and brought down the house!"



"You know," he added. "I'll bet the first thing Sarah did upon arrival in heaven was to find the riding stables."

A Memorial Service for Sarah is scheduled for 6 pm Monday, Feb. 1, at Meany Hall on the University of Washington campus. [View her Seattle Times obituary here.](#)

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News & Notices

Jay O. Glerum Rigging Master Classes Set for June

Eric Rouse *USITT VP - Special Operations*

The first Jay O. Glerum Rigging Master Classes will be held Monday, June 13 and Tuesday, June 14, in Denver.

The master classes honor the memory of rigging master teacher, author, safety advocate and USITT Fellow Jay O. Glerum, who passed away last year.

The classes have two learning tracks. The advanced level is for experienced professional riggers. The entry level track is for teachers who work on school stages and student/early career riggers.

Entry level classes will cover both counterweight and automated rigging operations and safety. Advanced classes will carry ETCP renewal credit and will be comprised of rotating topics in more intensive areas such as rigging math, rescue planning, and automation.

The advanced classes are being held at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, and the entry level classes at nearby Metropolitan State University of Denver. The cost is anticipated at \$350 for the advanced classes and \$150 for the entry-level class.

Registration is planned to open on Jan. 25. More info will be posted at www.usitt.org/glerummasterclass as it becomes available.



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Jay Glerum's wife, Sallie, and four children came to USITT 2015 for the announcement of the Jay O. Glerum Rigging Master Classes to be held in his memory.

L to R: USITT Executive Director David Grindle, Phil Glerum, Reid Neslage of sponsor H&H Specialties, USITT Fellow Randy Earle, Peter Glerum, Sallie Glerum, Matt Glerum, Andrea Glerum.

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News from **Carolyn Satter**, *eSET Council*
Why eSET? Who is it for?

The answer to the second question is YOU, if you are in entertainment - studying, working, teaching or hiring, this tool is for you.

To answer the first question - What is eSET? It is an acronym for Essential Skills for the Entertainment Technician. The concept and lexicon began with the ESTA Foundation, and is being further developed by USITT. In essence, it is a proficiency examination, written and practical, determining the knowledge and skill set of an entry level entertainment technician.

ESSENTIAL SKILLS FOR THE
ENTERTAINMENT TECHNICIAN

With the successful passing of the both exams, a certificate is granted. Passing indicates accomplished basics. For the working technician, it shows proficiency with the entry level skill sets. For the educator, it is a teaching tool, a listing of the basic skills that students will need for success in the entertainment industry. For employers, it gives the confidence that their hire is familiar with the discipline. eSET provides an assessment, written by industry experts, for all sectors of the entertainment industry

The eSET process is two-fold. There is online testing for the essential knowledge and a practical exam testing applicable skills. The passing of the written exam is required before applying for the practical. The written exam consists of two tests: one of basic venue terminology and safety questions along with testing for a specific discipline.

This month, the online testing will go live for costuming, lighting, and rigging. Successful passing of this online portion will qualify the person for the practical testing at USITT 2016 in Salt Lake City, on Thursday and Friday, March 17 and 18.

The cost of the online exams will be \$40 for the first test and \$20 for each subsequent test. The practical exams are free. The first eSET certificates for those who pass both tests will be awarded at the Conference.

Terminology used throughout all of the exams is found in the lexicon, available to [download on your Apple device here](#). Launch of the Droid app is scheduled for Feb 1.

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Here is an overview of some of the skills being tested:

- COSTUMING -- construction, stitching, fabric, tools, hardware, safety, personnel
- ELECTRICS -- fixtures and accessories, electrical theory, cabling/connectors, color theory, digital control/protocol, safety, tools
- RIGGING -- knots, RWL and design factor, hardware, theory: chain hoist, counterweight and hemp rigging, arena rigging, fall arrests, wire rope,

Certificates of successful completion will be awarded on Saturday, March 19, 2016 at the Innovation Stage, at the end of the eSET Jeopardy contest at Stage Expo. This event will begin at 12:45 pm.

For further information, contact Christine Troscher, USITT Education and Training Coordinator, christine@usitt.org

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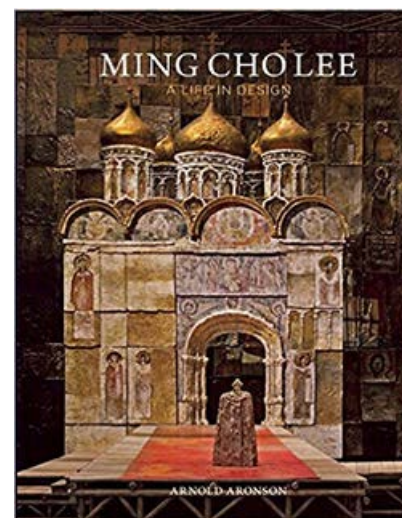
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News & Notices

Aronson Wins 2016 Golden Pen

USITT Fellow Arnold Aronson, a Columbia University professor and former editor of *TD&T*, has won the 2016 Oscar G. Brockett Golden Pen Award for his 2014 book *Ming Cho Lee: A Life in Design*.

The 336-page hardbound book published by TCG contains over 500 images of the designer and Yale School of Drama professor's work that has changed the face of theatre over his 50-year career.



"This book is visually stunning and chock full of information on one of the seminal designers of 20th Century American theatre," the Publications Committee wrote in its unanimous recommendation of the book.

"Aronson's work is an excellent example of scholarly research and critical thinking, and he beautifully presents the work and methodology of Ming Cho Lee."

"I'm very honored and grateful to join the distinguished company of previous winners of the Golden Pen Award," Aronson said. "Of course, this award is also a tribute to the work of Ming Cho Lee. Immersing myself in Ming's world for a few years was one of the great pleasures of my life. And I also want to thank Theatre Communications Group. There are not many publishers these days that would devote such resources to a book on scenography."

Aronson will be honored with an award session and book-signing at USITT 2016 in Salt Lake City. The Publications Committee also will present the Herbert D. Greggs writing awards at that time (see below).

Called "the dean of American set designers" by the *New York Times*, Ming Cho Lee went from a watercolor artist training in China to the most influential set designer in American theatre and chair of Yale Drama's design department.

Aronson, a celebrated theatre historian, has written several other books on American and international scenic design. He has taught at Columbia since 1991.

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Three other writers will receive Herb Greggs Awards for the best articles for *TD&T*.

Mervyn Heard will be honored for his piece *Dressed in Light: The Ancient Art of Projecting on People*, published in Fall 2014. The article explores the “somewhat bizarre concept” of using slides and film to project costumes on, and scenery around, actors onstage from the late 1890s to the 1950s.

Herb Greggs Merit Awards will go to Margaret Mitchell for *Wood and Canvas (and Rabbit Glue) in the Modern World*, about the Bourla theatre in Antwerp, Belgium, and Betsy Adams for *Spotlight on Women in Lighting*. Both appeared in the Summer 2015 *TD&T*.

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News & Notices

New for USITT 2016: Overheard in the Network Nexus

Tim Kelly *USITT Fellow*

USITT's Fellows boast a wealth of experience, talent, and war stories. At USITT 2016, they'll be sharing that wealth in three new sessions planned for the USITT Nexus at Stage Expo.

Overheard in the Network Nexus presents notable Fellows being interviewed by their fellow Fellows during Stage Expo Only time on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday of the show.

These casual Salon style tête-à-têtes will feature Richard Durst at 4 p.m. Thursday, Sonny Sonnenfeld at 4 p.m. Friday, and Joy Spanabel Emery at 10 a.m. Saturday.

The lineup:

Thursday, March 17, 4 p.m. --

Richard Durst, former president of Baldwin-Wallace College in Ohio, former Dean of Fine Arts at the University of Minnesota, former president of OISTAT, and former president of USITT, will share his stories with Fellows – and brothers -- Lance and Bruce Brockman. **Lance Brockman** is a retired professor of scenic design at the University of Minnesota, and **Bruce Brockman** is director of the School of Theatre, Film and Television at the University of Arizona. There will no doubt be a spirited conversation when these three Fellows and longtime friends discuss Dick's considerable accomplishments!



Richard Durst

Lance Brockman

Bruce Brockman

Friday, March 18, 4 p.m. -- **Sonny Sonnenfeld**, legendary lighting consultant to be honored with USITT's 2016 Distinguished Achievement Award in Lighting Design & Technology, will discuss the history of theatre lighting in America and share his experiences in developing some

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great advances in lighting instruments and controls. His Fellow moderator will be **Joe Tawil**, founder and president of GAMPRODUCTS, INC., theatrical lighting and special effects in Los Angeles, himself a significant figure in the development of lighting equipment for entertainment.

Saturday, March 19, 10 a.m. – Joy Spanabel Emery, curator of the *Commercial Pattern Archive*, professor emerita at the University of Rhode Island and USITT 2016 Distinguished Achiever in Costume Design & Technology, will talk costumes and patterns with her fellow costume designer and Fellow **Sylvia Hillyard Pannell**. Pannell is professor emerita of theatre and film studies at the University of Georgia. Who better to encourage stories from Joy Emery than one of the Institute's very best costumers, past presidents and inveterate storytellers?

The Fellows invite any and all attendees to join the fun in eavesdropping as these industry notables discuss their lives in The Business!

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Sonny
Sonnenfeld

Joe Tawil



Joy
Spanabel
Emery

Sylvia H.
Pannell

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Student Architecture Deadline Jan. 19

Teams of students entering USITT's 2016 Architecture & Theatre Student Design Competition must submit their theatre designs by Jan. 19.

The contest asks teams of architecture students with at least one theatre student to work together to design an "ideal" theatre for their campus. Students already should have declared their intent to compete. Submissions may be sent to Rose Steele at rose@landb.com.

A professional jury will select the three top designs for \$1,000 cash prizes, and those teams will present their work at USITT 2016 in Salt Lake City. The top team will get another \$500 and formal recognition for their school.

The competition is sponsored by American Seating. For more information, contact shannan@usitt.org.

Save Money on USITT 2016, Register by Feb. 4

There's still time to get a break on USITT 2016 rates! [Register for the Conference](#) by Feb. 4 to avoid paying the on-site price in Salt Lake City.

Before Feb. 4, the rate for the full 2016 Conference & Stage Expo is \$396 for members, \$565 for non-members, and \$240 for student/early career members. The rates will rise to \$468 member, \$670 non-member, and \$298 student/early career on Feb. 5.

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Late & Great: American Designers Available for Purchase

Late & Great: American Designers 1960-2010, a compilation of 25 essays profiling design pioneers in scenery, costumes, lighting, sound, and make-up, is available in the USITT member-exclusive bookstore for \$30.

The book, edited by Bobbi Owen, includes chapters on Ben Nye by Patricia Dennis, Thomas Skelton by Rich Dunham, John Gleason by Linda Essig, Abe Feder by Annie O. and Barry Cleveland, and more.



To order, go to www.usitt.org/lategreat or call 800-938-7488.

Stage Technologies NATEAC 2016 Platinum Sponsor

Stage Technologies is once again the Platinum Sponsor for the North American Theatre Engineering and Architecture Conference.

Bill Sapsis of Sapsis Rigging, a **Sustaining member**, is director of NATEAC and organized its first quadrennial conference in 2008. NATEAC 2016 will be held July 17 to 18 in New York City. For more information, visit www.NATEAC.org

Jan. 12 Deadline for Young Designers', Technicians' Forums

Applications are being accepted through Jan. 12 for USITT's **Young Designers' Forum** and **Young Technicians' Forum** to be part of the Conference in Salt Lake City.

These forums bring talented students in their last year of graduate or undergraduate program together with established designers, technicians, and directors for a review and discussion of students' work.

Participation is by juried selection based on resume, two letters of recommendation, and 16 to 24 examples of each applicant's work. The forums are limited to no more than 15 students each. Applicants must be student, early career, or individual members of USITT. Those accepted will receive free full Conference registration.

There is a \$40 entry fee.

PLASA Raises \$18K for Behind the Scenes at LDI Happy Hour

More than 400 guests attended the Behind the Scenes Happy Hour, hosted by PLASA at LDI October 22, from 6-8 pm at the Westgate Las Vegas. Thanks to the generosity of sponsors and attendees, PLASA was able to donate over



\$18,000 to Behind the Scenes.

Sponsors of the Behind the Scenes Happy Hour included Altman Lighting, executive sponsor; 4Wall Entertainment, IATSE, Nemetschek Vectorworks, Inc., and Ultratec, platinum sponsors; Heartland Scenic Studio, Inc., LDI, RC4 Wireless, and Stage Equipment and Lighting, Inc., gold sponsors; Barbizon Lighting Company, ENTTEC Americas, iWeiss Theatrical Solutions, LEX Products, Musson Theatrical, Stan Pressner (Silver), Sapsis Rigging Inc and Alan Rowe & Tristan Smith, silver sponsors; CMET, badge sponsor; and Lighting&Sound America and Protocol, official media sponsors.

Parade Float Fall Prevention Standard Available for Review

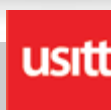
BSR E1.57, Recommendations to prevent falls on or off movable parade floats, movable stages, and similar moving platforms is available for public review through Feb. 1.

It offers recommendations to prevent falls by anyone on parade floats, movable stages, and similar moving platforms.

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News & Notices

USITT 2015 Board of Directors Election Results

Jimmie Byrd *USITT Secretary*

One of the duties of Secretary of the Institute is leading the Nominations committee in developing a slate of candidates for the Board of Directors. One of the tasks related with this duty is affirming the election results.

Please join me in congratulating the following USITT members on being elected as Directors on the Board. They will be serving a three-year term beginning July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2019.

- **James (Jim) Streeter**
- **Carey Hanson**
- **Paul Brunner**
- **David S. Stewart**
- **Tina Shackleford**
- **Kim Scott**

Paul and Kim will both be serving a second consecutive term.

I wish to thank everyone who was willing to put their name forward for consideration. In our volunteer-driven organization it is critical to have dedicated individuals who are willing to step up and be leaders. I also want to thank the Nominations committee for their work in determining the slate of candidates as required by the Bylaws.

I also want to thank those who took the time to consider the nominees' qualifications and to cast an informed ballot. You and the candidates are the foundation of the Institute.

I look forward to seeing you all in Salt Lake City.

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The Last Word:

USITT Year-End Givers Gave Money and More

As part of our year-end giving campaign, USITT asked members who supplied reviews on [Great Nonprofits](#) and in our 2015 Annual Report to let us share their quotes and photos on our Facebook page cover photo.

Thanks to the members whose faces graced our Facebook during Year-End Giving!

If you would like to be included, please send a quote and photo to janet@usitt.org.

"Besides fostering my immediate career steps, USITT is consistently providing space for me to grow as a leader in the field."

Madilynn Garcia
UT-Austin
USITT Diversity
Committee

www.usitt.org/giving



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R.I.P. USITT Fellow Jan Musson

Jan Musson, USITT Fellow and founder of USITT Contributing Member Musson Theatrical, passed away on Dec. 28 at age 79. Look for a tribute to Jan in February Sightlines.

USITT Names in the News...

Lighting Designer and USITT member **Chris Wood** was recently featured on Sustaining member **Elation Professional's** blog: "Freelance lighting designer Chris Wood turned to Elation Platinum Series moving heads and Colour Chorus Series LED battens to light a recent production of the Tony Award-winning rock musical *Rent* at the University of Northern Iowa's Strayer-Wood Theater ... Wood, who was the recipient of the 2015 USITT Rising Star Award as one of our industry's best young talents, was brought in as a guest designer for the production..." Read more [here](#).



USITT Executive Director **David Grindle** penned an open letter to the theatre community and the *New York Times* giving thanks for the restoration of production credits in the *Times'* theatre reviews. "This [letter] is meant for everyone who expressed to *The New York Times* how important it is to recognize the *full* production team in their theatre reviews," David wrote. "It also goes to the folks at the *New York Times* for listening ... On behalf of everyone involved with USITT, I offer a boisterous *thank you!*"

Grindle's letter received news coverage in *PLSN magazine* and *Stage Directions*, among other news outlets, and was shared widely on social media.

Jeromy Hopgood's Dance Book Now Out

USITT member and presenter **Jeromy Hopgood**, known as the author of *QLab 3 Show Control*, has published a second book with Focal Press. *Dance Production: Design & Technology* details the technical aspects of producing dance performances. It features hundreds of stunning photos of illustrations, interviews with working professionals, and projects and exercises for students. Read more about the book [here](#).



Hopgood will be among the member authors participating in a book-signing event at USITT 2016. He's also presenting at two sessions. He'll serve on the Working with Dancers panel and chair a session called Publish My Work with fellow author and Board Member **Rafael Jaen**. Check out these and other sessions [here](#).

USITT's Gateway Program Gets a Boost from TCG

After USITT pledged \$5,000 and a commitment to join Oregon Shakespeare Festival in promoting diversity and inclusion in technical theatre, another USITT diversity partner, Theatre Communications Group, ran a series of stories featuring Gateway participants on its TCG Circle blog.



TCG Online Curator Jacqueline E. Lawton posted a piece by 2014 Gateway mentee **Madilynn Garcia**, and held Q&A's with 2015 Gateway mentee **Sarah Haber**, Haber's Gateway mentor **Ruth Anne Watkins**, and **Kasey Allee-Foreman**, VP Programming and Chair of USITT's Diversity Committee.

Haber's was titled, "USITT's Gateway: A Reminder That You Have a Voice," from a quote in her interview with Lawton. Read the TCG Circle blog at www.tcgcircle.org.

ZFX Comes to Syracuse to Fly Peter Pan

USITT Contributing Member ZFX Flying Effects was in Syracuse, NY, home of the USITT National Office, for tech rehearsals on the Syracuse Stage production of *Peter Pan*, which opened Dec. 4 and runs through

Jan. 3.

ZFX Flying Director Russell Morgan flew across the country from his California home to coach the area's first male Pan, Syracuse University senior musical theatre major Troy Hussmann, and other cast and crew in the art of flying using ZFX's single-point harnesses.



Read more [here](#).



Members: Have news to share?

Articles, videos, blog posts or speaking events to announce?

Tell us at janet@usitt.org.

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|--|---|

ETC: Gio 'Transfers' Nuremberg Theatre to Beijing

Contributing member ETC provided Germany's Staatstheater Nürnberg – or Nuremberg State Theatre – with an easy way to bring its performance of Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* to China's National Centre for Performing Arts in Beijing. The company supplied the Beijing theatre with a Gio control desk and over 40 traditional Source Four fixtures like those used at the Nuremberg theatre, allowing lighting designers Wolf Gutjahr and Ernst Schiessl to bring the show file to China on a USB stick.

Vectorworks: Launches Spanish, Portuguese Software Versions

Sustaining Member Vectorworks, Inc. recently released Spanish and Portuguese versions of its Vectorworks 2016 software line. Part of a worldwide rollout, the Spanish and Portuguese versions join English, Dutch, French, German, Italian and Norwegian versions released over the past few months. Software products are now offered in these languages include Vectorworks Designer, Architect, Landmark, Spotlight and Fundamentals, as well as Renderworks software.

Chauvet: Over 200 Attend Grand Opening, Products Earn Awards

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A crowd of over 200 lighting professionals marked the grand opening of **Sustaining member** Chauvet's European headquarters in Ghent, Belgium, and the company's 25th anniversary by enjoying an evening of festivities, product demonstration, music, and a breathtaking lightshow. As Chauvet's second European facility, the office will cater to demand in the Belgium, Netherlands, and Luxembourg regions.



Alison Istorick of WFX with Chauvet's Mike Graham.

The Ovation ED-190WW fixture from Chauvet earned two awards at the WFX Conference and Exhibition. It won the 2015 WFX Best Lighting Product Award as well as the Best LED Product Award.

LynTec: RPC Boards Support BACnet Protocol

Supporting Member LynTec recently announced that its Remote Power Controller (RPC) family of panels now supports the open BACnet networking protocol.

Meyer Sound: Dave Matthews Band Tours Europe with LEO

Now in its 20th year of touring with **Contributing member** Meyer Sound systems, Dave Matthews Band (DMB) again relied on a LEO linear large-scale sound reinforcement system for its recent 20-city tour of European arenas. LEO is the latest in a line of Meyer Sound loudspeaker systems provided by longtime supplier Pro Media/UltraSound, dating back to DMB's first major headline tour in 1996 with an MSL-3A conventionally powered loudspeaker system.

Nicopress: Introduces Cable Cutter

Supporting member Nicopress introduced its 1-VC1, a new powerful cable cutter, at LDI 2015. Designed for repetitive use cutting cable up to 3/16 inch in diameter, the 1-VC1 produces clean cuts without fraying wires. It requires lower handle force, resulting in less hand fatigue. Featuring a longer life blade, the cutter is ergonomically balanced for easy, one-handed operation. Non-slip grips provide a firm, comfortable feel.

RC4 Wireless: Goes Mountain Biking in *Darklight*

Sustaining member RC4 Wireless' Magic-900 was the backbone for the wireless rig set up to film *Darklight*, a film about extreme professional



mountain in the most remote forests of Oregon and the moonscapes of Utah.



GLP: Introduces Impression X1

Sustaining member GLP's tiny, lightweight, and budget-conscious Impression X1 is now in production. It marks a departure from other products in GLP's X range by featuring four, high powered, 15W RGBW LEDs, with a narrow fixed beam output, that offers continuous pan and tilt motion in a compact housing — and it is this continuous motion that gives the product its unique twist.

Nova Lume: Green GO Integrated into NFL Systems

The National Football League is implementing Green GO Digital Intercom, distributed by **Sustaining member** Nova Lume, across its Instant Replay and Injury Review systems this season. Through extensive testing, Green GO has modified existing products to more closely align with the NFL's specific requirements.

City Theatrical: Named Manufacturer of the Year

Contributing member City Theatrical was named the New Jersey Small Manufacturer of the Year by NJBIZ Magazine in partnership with the New Jersey Manufacturing Extension Program, at the fourth annual New Jersey Manufacturing Day ceremonies in October.

City Theatrical was recognized for bouncing back from the devastating effects of Hurricane Sandy, which poured 39 inches of water into its 40,000-square-foot Carlstadt facility, damaging or destroying all its manufacturing equipment as well as phones, computers, offices, files, and most inventory.

PRG: Supports *The Wiz Live!*

Contributing member PRG provided video, scenic, and automation support to help bring Oz to life for Designer Derek McLane's vision for *The Wiz Live!* on NBC Dec. 3.

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Sightlines

The monthly newsletter for USITT members

January 2016
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Transitions

Scott Hansen of **Contributing member** Production Resource Group (PRG) will transition from his current role as chief financial officer to chief asset officer. He has held a number of key executive positions at PRG and, in his new role, will be responsible for the global annual capital expenditure plan, and the development and implementation of strategic asset initiatives.



Scott Hansen



Jaime Friedstadt

Sustaining member Chauvet recently appointed Jaime Friedstadt to director of business development and marketing for hispanic markets for the company's Professional and Illuminarc divisions. Prior to joining Chauvet, Friedstadt was international sales manager of Philips Entertainment. Having been with that company since 2001, he managed Latin American sales of all Philips Entertainment brands, including Vari-Lite, Strand Lighting, Selecon and Showline. Earlier in his career, he was Latin American sales manager of Hubbell Lighting.

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

The Impact of a Teacher's Question

Mark Shanda *USITT President*

Around 1984, when I was a graduate student in the University of Wisconsin-Madison's master of fine arts in theatre technology program, my mentor and teacher, Dennis Dorn, profoundly affected my life by asking a single and most timely question.

The first technical rehearsal for a faculty directed project had occurred the night before, and I dreaded my morning trip to Dorn's office to report in. The stage director of the project had held the rehearsal until well after the 10:30 p.m. department schedule guidelines, aggravating many, and then concluded his "notes" session focusing his attention on me in my role as the assigned technical director, shouting a long list of what I "had to have done before the 7 p.m. start of the second tech or else." His demands were far more than I could accomplish in less than eighteen hours, and it was now Thursday. In addition to these production demands, I had class, work hours, and whatever small outside life one has in graduate school.



Dennis Dorn

Dorn was working at his drafting table drawing elegant plates of scenery that soon would be constructed in the scenic studio for an upcoming production. Screwing up my courage, I haltingly shared the list of the previous evening's difficulties, talked about the priorities that I felt needed to be addressed, and expressed my frustration at the "or else" demands of the director.

Without looking up from his work, Dorn uttered a question that had never been asked of me, but one that to this day has guided me. "Mark, how well do you handle failure?"

Taken aback, I couldn't process the question. He put his pencil down, looked straight at me and said, "Through his demands, the director has tried to take your power as a collaborator away. If you let his attitude control you, then you cannot be effective. Do what you think best for the production in the time that is available, tell the director at the start of rehearsal what you have accomplished, affirm your commitment to the project, and declare what you have 'failed' to achieve. Nothing more can be expected."

Dorn was not asking me to shirk my duties or walk away from my assignment. Rather he was teaching me to give my all, be direct in my communication, and

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accept the consequences for my own behavior. He taught me what it meant to be personally responsible and not be defined by others. This insight has served me well ever since.

I don't ever like to "fail," but knowing my personal limits and not allowing others to define my success guides my work life still. No one is immune from limitations. Knowing how well one can handle failure lifts a burden of inappropriately placed responsibility eliminating wasted energy and providing focus for success.

I will always remember his question, "How well do you handle failure?" and its impact on me. For Dorn's insight, I am eternally grateful.

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

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



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Spotlight on Giving 100 Percent Board Giving!

Mark Shanda

For the second year in a row, 100% of the Institute's officers and board of directors have made the choice to give not only of their time, but all have donated funds to the various activities of the Institute. 100% Board participation in giving is a key metric examined by numerous funding agencies when grants are being considered.



While USITT's board has never been approached with the minimum "Give/Get" expectation of many other not-for-profit boards, all have seen the value of making their personal choice to give and the impact such funds have on the Institute. We continue to wisely use our various funds to support research, member opportunity, and to reduce costs for other member services and we hope that you too will join with the board's enthusiasm in making your own financial gift to advance the Institute.

Mark Shanda, USITT President

Donors from November 15 to December 14, 2015:

Kook Fund

- Andi Lyons
- Loren Schreiber
- Charles Williams

New Century Fund

- Judy Adamson
- Randy Earle *In Memory of Sarah Nash Gates*
- Andi Lyons
- Charles Williams

New Century Fund - Diversity

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

Wishing You Eustress

David Grindle *Executive Director*

So begins a new year. Much as anything begins, it is full of anticipation and excitement for some, dread and fear for others.

One of the things I love about a career in the entertainment industry is that most of us get many new beginnings each year. For me, starting something new is an exciting time. It is filled with possibility of what is to come. Ideas will be realized and new things might spring from there. However, I recognize that those same things that make me excited bring dread to others.



I am a strong believer in the psychological principle of the self-fulfilling prophecy. If we go into something thinking that it will be horrible, it will be. If we approach the same event focused on overcoming the obstacle, not letting the obstacle overcome us, it becomes a challenge, not just something horrible. Each time we go in to tech, we have this opportunity. I used to ban the phrase "This is going to be a horrible tech," when I was a stage manager. It could be challenging. It could be a week requiring great amounts of focus or a week that would test my abilities, but it could never be horrible. To me, that focused on the negative of the trials and not the victory of the end result.

The endocrinologist, Hans Selye, calls these types of stress, eustress and distress. What a stressor is doesn't categorize it as one of the two; rather how individuals perceive the stressor is what defines the category. Stressors that are seen as a challenge, excitement, building resilience, or a sense of achievement are considered eustress. The person, like a runner at the end of a race, sees the outcome as beneficial. Whereas a distress is viewed as causing anxiety, fear, doubt, or despair. Tech week can easily be seen as fitting both of those categories.

How we frame things is at the center point of our society today. Look at media and politics for perfect examples. In the 1990s we came to accept the spin doctors of politics who worked the media to frame the story in ways that made a candidate sound good or bad. Frankly, to many these spin doctors grew to have a negative connotation. They aren't new to this. Most of us can think of commercials that say "Four out of five doctors prefer..." Would you buy the product if they told you 20 percent of doctors wouldn't touch the stuff?

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But here we are today being our own spin doctors. Do we approach our next project with dread or anticipation? How are you framing your work? If we are to grow as individuals and artists, we must push ourselves to take on challenges. I'm not arguing that a Pollyanna approach should be our way of dealing with life. Instead I think that we should see the opportunity that challenge brings. It may not be pleasant to get through, but the end result may well be worth it, and that is what we focus on.

Winston Churchill is credited with saying, "If you are going through hell, keep going..." Now Churchill was credited with saying many things, and much of that credit is apocryphal. However, the sentiment is correct. How we approach new challenges and stress affects us, our health, and all of those around us. Take the opportunity this New Year to frame learning and challenges in ways that focus on the growth each brings. It could take some of the stress off your shoulders and make an easier world.

We remain the luckiest people in the world to work in this industry. We create new worlds, adapt new spaces, and appear to defy physics while adhering strictly to it. All of these things are challenging and stressful, but the honor of doing them makes for an incredible outcome. I wish you all the best in the New Year and hope it is full of eustress for everyone.

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StageSource and USITT New England Section present: **The Annual StageSource Job Fair!**

Michael Katz *USITT New England*

Looking for personnel?

Join theatre companies from all over New England on February 20, 2016 at Back Bay Events Center from 11am-3pm (set up at 10am) to find administrative, production, design, and creative services personnel for your upcoming projects. USITT member organizations get the StageSource discount upon sign up! On average, the StageSource job fair sees 250-300 job seekers interested in getting a job with you!

Looking for a Job in New England?

Come to the Job Fair on Saturday Feb. 20. Admission is free. Come say hello to USITTNE leadership.

Please visit the [StageSource website](#) for more information, or call Emma at 617-350-7611, or email ops@stagesource.org.

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International Activities

Be a Student Ambassador at USITT 2016

Three lucky students will get to serve as ambassadors to USITT's international guests at USITT 2016 in Salt Lake City.

The deadline for applications and recommendations for the Student Ambassador Program is Feb. 15. Applications may be sent to Shannan Hoerger at shannan@usitt.org. See application instructions below.

Each student accepted as an ambassador will be assigned to one of three guests – lighting designer [Yaron Abulafia](#) of Israel, costume designer [Simona Rybakova](#) of the Czech Republic, and arts management educator [Wan-Jung Wei](#) of Taiwan.



The program matches student members with visiting international guests at each Conference to encourage international networking between early designers and managers and global colleagues.

Three student members will be selected based on their areas of interest, compelling application, and letter of recommendation from an adult mentor.

Student Ambassadors receive free Conference registration and a luncheon with the three international guests. Those who have already registered for USITT 2016 will be given a refund if selected as a Student Ambassador.

Previous Student Ambassadors described the experience as life-changing. *Read Sarah Robins' essay on being ambassador to Japanese mask-maker Hideta Kitazawa at USITT 2015 [here](#).*

Application requirements

Instructors/Mentors must submit a written detailed nomination that must include:

1. Name, title, position, and contact information
2. Name of your institution
3. Student's name

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4. Student's email address and cell phone number
5. Student's grade level
6. Student's area of interest
7. Student's unique qualifications

Students must submit a written letter of interest indicating why they would like to take on this challenge. Include in your statement your field of interest and study and at least three questions you would like to ask your prospective guest.

Accompanying documentation:

1. Student's Résumé
2. Sample copies of Student's work (photo, drawing, rendering)
3. Contact information (email, cell phone)

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Commissions

Make It Fit!

M.C. Friedrich VC- Programming, Costume Design & Technology Commission

Mary K. Cyr Presenter

"Fashion is a form of ugliness so intolerable that we have to alter it every six months," Oscar Wilde wrote in *The Happy Prince*.

Sooner if it's a costume...much, much sooner. At USITT 2016, the Costume Design & Technology Commission will host several sessions addressing intermediate to advanced level issues regarding patterning and fitting.



When researching period looks for a costume, does the thought "If only I had the time to adapt this to make it work" pop up? Plan to get up early for the 8 a.m. session on Friday, March 18 for *History's Mysteries: Patterning for Publication & Exhibition*. It's a two-in-one session with Mandy Barrington and Nancy Hills sharing their separate research on garments and collections in Great Britain that has resulted solutions for adapting historic garments for the modern figure.

The choreographer needs the actor to do what?! In that fitted Edwardian suit?! Don't cry; the answers may be found on Wednesday, March 16 at 4:30 p.m. in *High & Tight: Fitting Period Trousers & Sleeves on Active Actors*. Kristina Hanssen and Laura Robinson will share their solutions for fitting period pants and sleeves that allow the actor or dancer to move as required while still maintaining the historic integrity of the period.

In the fitting room, the ingénue is shaped like an apple, the leading man in the shirtless costume has a sunken chest, the actor forgot to mention during initial measurements that she was three months pregnant, or any and all of the 10 people who feel the need to be in the fitting room at the same time are having melt-downs. *Talking the Talk: Negotiating in the Fitting Room* 1 p.m. Wednesday, March 16 will reveal ways to stay calm and professional (or appear to). The panel discussion will offer insight by experienced costumers into just such issues.

These and many more wonderful, useful sessions can be experienced at USITT 2016 in March.



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Commissions

Costume Commission Seeks Student Leadership Proposals

USITT's Costume Design & Technology Commission offers students an opportunity to get more involved via its Student Leadership Initiative (SLI) session planned for USITT 2016 in Salt Lake. The Commission is seeking proposals from students who would like to present on their ideas and achievements before a national audience of professionals, educators, and their peers.

"We are particularly interested in innovative work and thinking from the newest generation of designers and technicians," said organizer Steven Stines.

This year's SLI session will be held on Thursday, March 17, moving from the traditional Saturday slot, and will feature multiple student presenters. Each will have 15 to 20 minutes to present. Past conferences have featured three to five presentations.

PowerPoint slide shows are a recommended format, but the format itself can be innovative. A Mac and projector will be available. There may not be reliable Internet access in the conference rooms.

Proposals should include the following information:

- Name
- Email
- Cell Phone
- School
- Degree
- Concentration
- Topic
- 100 Word Project Abstract
- Email letter of support from faculty member

The deadline for submitting proposals is February 5, 2016. Submit to sstines@arts.ufl.edu

Vetting of proposals will be completed February 12, 2016.

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Slide shows are due March 1, 2016, with revisions completed by March 12.

For more information, please contact Steven Stines at sstines@arts.ufl.edu

Information about past presentations can be seen in the USITT archives, or by following these links:

- [SLI: Rethinking the Classics, Paving the Way for the Future](#)
- [Traditional, Green, Digital Approaches: Student Leadership Initiatives](#)
- [Fresh New Approaches: Student Leadership Initiatives](#)

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Conference & Stage Expo

Salt Lake City is Cooler than you Thought...

“Salt Lake is not the quiet, conservative town of yore,” says Scott Beck, president and CEO of Visit Salt Lake. “Far from it – in fact, we’ve experienced a sea of change in dining, night life and culture over the past decade. And to the uninformed bellyachers whose conception of Salt Lake is 10 years old, we say, “www.theresnothingtodoinSaltLake.com” – a video that features many exciting options.



Check out the Smart Meetings story [here](#).

USITT recently made our own list of the Top 5 Reasons we’re excited about our 2016 destination. Read it [here](#).

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- Feld Entertainment
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- Backdrops Beautiful
- Batts Audio, Video and Lighting
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- Designlab Chicago
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