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Miodrag Tabacki, center, discussed his work during a book signing for the 2006 Golden Pen Award at the recent USITT Annual Conference in Louisville, Kentucky. With him is Martha Marking, right, a member of the USITT Golden Pen committee which selected the monograph on his work written by Gordana Popovi• Vasi• and Irina Suboti•. Nominations are now being accepted for the 2007 award. To learn more, [click here](#).

Photo/Casey Kearns

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Ron Naversen, left, presents the USITT Special Citation to Darwin Reid Payne at the 2006 Annual Conference & Stage Expo in Louisville, Kentucky. The citation was "in recognition of the profound and enduring contribution you have achieved in your roles as scene designer, educator, and author. USITT honors your innovation, creativity, and inspiration, as well as your contributions to theatrical design education."

Photo/Tom Thatcher

## Darwin Reid Payne Receives USITT Special Citation

The lifetime body of work created by Darwin Reid Payne as a designer, teacher, and author was recognized as part of the USITT 2006 Annual Conference where Mr. Payne received a Special Citation.

Mr. Payne, who has designed for numerous summer stock, regional, and university productions, may be best known for his theatre design texts. In presenting the award, Ron Naversen said "When I first came to Southern Illinois University Carbondale 20 years ago, I felt the presence of two very significant designers who came before me. The first was Mordecai Gorelik whose design process I learned in school and whose designs were a Special Exhibit at the 2006 Stage Expo.

"The second is Darwin Reid Payne whose models and renderings I've discovered in various nooks, crannies, and offices around our building. Darwin is rather careless in the treatment of his designs either giving them away or simply leaving them in the scene shop after the show has opened. We were able to gather just a few of the models and renderings of the over 400 productions that he has designed, which I hope all of you were able to visit in his retrospective exhibit (also part of the 2006 Stage Expo).

"But although Darwin hasn't been very judicious at preserving the

actual artifacts of his profession, we may be grateful that he has preserved many of these designs along with his design philosophy and process in his many books on theatrical design. In particular his *Theory and Craft of the Scenographic Model* was the first text on model building to treat the model as a tool in the creation of the design. His *Design for the Stage: the First Steps* was also the first text to treat design separate from stagecraft. His *Computer Scenographics* was also the first text on using computer-aided design software for scenery."

In continuing the tradition of acknowledging those who had influenced his development as a designer, Mr. Payne thanked the people who had helped. He thanked three men who had been "kind" to him when he was younger: Jo Mielziner, Donald Oenslager, and, of course, Mordecai Gorelik.

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Dennis Dorn, left, and Joe Aldridge, right, were presented with Special Citations for their volunteer commitment of time and talent to benefit ETCP on behalf of USITT. The award was presented by Immediate Past President Bruce Brockman.

Photo/Tom Thatcher

by **Barbara E.R. Lucas**  
Sightlines *Editor*

## Dorn and Aldridge Honored for ETCP Involvement

Two men active in the leadership of the innovative Entertainment Technology Certification Program (ETCP) were honored at the 2006 Annual Conference for providing guidance to the development of certifications for those working within the industry. Both men were given Special Citations by the Institute "in appreciation for an outstanding commitment of time and expertise as USITT representatives...These contributions to this important effort will be of tremendous benefit to the theatre and live entertainment profession."

Dennis Dorn, Professor of Theatre Technology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Joe Aldridge, Coordinator of Entertainment Engineering Design at University of Nevada-Las Vegas, have both represented USITT on the ETCP Certification Council since it was formed. They helped develop the new industry-wide programs which certify individuals as having specific activities, skills, and knowledge. The first exams for certified riggers were given last Fall at LDI, and the first electrical skills exam will be given at LDI this October.

Mr. Dorn, former USITT Vice-President for Commissions, has been at Madison for more than 25 years. Co-author of *Drafting for the Theatre*, he has worked extensively as a consultant, technical director, and set designer. Mr. Dorn, a graduate of the Yale School of Drama, also served as Director of University Theatre in

Madison for 11 years and has worked to encourage and fund research projects, especially those on technical innovations. He was co-chair and chair of Tech Expo for USITT and has also served as Chair of the Midwest Section, and a Director at Large. Mr. Dorn was named a Fellow of the Institute in 2000.

Mr. Aldridge, USITT's Vice-President for Conferences, has worked on and off the Las Vegas strip for more than 30 years, and has been at UNLV since 1974 serving as Technical Director, and head of the MFA design program. He has also served as a trustee for the Nevada Resort Association/IATSE Local 720 Training Trust, and initiated numerous safety and training programs. For USITT, Mr. Aldridge has presented many sessions, served as Chair of the 1995 Conference & Stage Expo and was previously Vice-President for Special Operations. He is now developing and coordinating a groundbreaking Entertainment Engineering Design program as a collaboration between the College of Fine Arts and the College of Engineering.

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Miodrag Tabacki was an enthusiastic participant in signing the 2006 Golden Pen Award winner, a monograph of his work written by Gordana Popovi• Vasi• and Irina Suboti•.

Photo/R. Finkelstein

## Nominations Needed for 2007 Golden Pen Award

**Martha Marking**  
*Golden Pen Committee*

All USITT members are eligible to nominate books for the USITT Golden Pen Award, which honors an outstanding publication in the field of design and production for the performing arts. Books are eligible for a three-year period from the date of publication. Nominations do not automatically carry over from one year to the next, but it is possible for a book to be nominated more than once.

Nominations for the 2007 Golden Pen Award are being accepted until June 15, 2006. Members can easily nominate a book by using the form [here](#). Or, with member number in hand, simply visit [www.usitt.org](http://www.usitt.org), click on Major Activities, then the Awards link and follow it to the Golden Pen link. Anyone with questions about this process can contact a member of the Golden Pen subcommittee of USITT Publications: Lance Brockman [brock001@tc.umn.edu](mailto:brock001@tc.umn.edu), Martha Marking [markngma@appstate.edu](mailto:markngma@appstate.edu); Rich Dunham [rdunham@arches.uga.edu](mailto:rdunham@arches.uga.edu), or Mike Monsos, [michael.monsos@umontana.edu](mailto:michael.monsos@umontana.edu).

The winning work should make a significant contribution to the field of theater design and technology as an outstanding example of one or more of:

- scholarly research and critical thinking;
- presentation of the work and methodology of exceptional practitioners of theatrical arts and/or crafts; or
- description of the methods, skills and technology involved in creating works of theatre and/or crafts.


In the application, available online, nominators should address how the specific book fulfills one or more of these criteria. Nominations can be completed online.

Among previous Golden Pen Award recipients are; 2006: Gordana Popovi• Vasi• and Irina Suboti•, *M. Tabaki: A Design Monograph*; 2005: Meredith Chilton, *Harlequin Unmasked*; and, in 2004: Mark Cotta Vaz and Craig Barron, *The Invisible Art* and Rosamary Ingham and Liz Covey, *The Costumer Technician's Handbook*.

A complete list of all USITT Golden Pen winners can be found [here](#).

The Publications Committee forwards its recommendations of potential award winners to the full Board of Directors. Books that receive the USITT Golden Pen Award are added to the USITT Bookstore, where USITT members receive a discount on purchases.

Award recipients are invited to the USITT Awards Banquet as well as to the Annual Conference where members can meet the author(s) and have their purchased copy of the books personally inscribed.

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## Seeks Health & Safety Session Descriptions

Attention packrats! Jim Cooper, Co-Commissioner Health & Safety, is attempting to put together a history of the Health & Safety Commission sessions.

He is missing conference programs from 1996 through 2000, and all copies prior to 1995. Is there anyone out there who has these programs stashed away that Mr. Cooper might borrow or get copies of the session descriptions? Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Those who can help may contact Mr. Cooper at [jcooper@palomar.edu](mailto:jcooper@palomar.edu)

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## Ming Cho Lee Monograph Available

Copies of the second in the USITT Monograph series are now available from the Institute's Bookstore. Orders can be placed online [here](#), or by calling 800-938-9488. The book was launched at the 2006 Annual Conference & Stage Expo where both Mr. Lee, center below, and author Delbert Unruh, right, drew a large crowd when they autographed copies of the work.

Take a few minutes to look at all the new books now available, including *Miodrag Tabacki, a Design Monograph*, winner of the 2006 USITT Golden Pen Award, and new books by member-authors including Dr. Randall W.A. Davidson and Arnold Aronson. USITT members receive discounts ordering either online or by telephone.

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## Contributions Still Eligible for Match

### This month:

Session Descriptions  
 Lee Monograph Available  
 Contributions to USITT@50  
 Certified Riggers Online  
 Behind the Scenes  
 BSR E1.17 Review



There is still time to guarantee a 50 percent match on contributions made as part of the USITT @ 50 campaign. The Institute has drawn increasing support, and is very appreciative of those who have already participated in the effort designed to help USITT to secure its financial future and celebrate the organization's 50th birthday in 2010.

Donations made using the special support form available [here](#) allow donors to support research, students, international activities, or future initiatives of the Institute. This support is a marvelous start to celebrating USITT's 50th birthday.

Initial donations and intentions must be made by June 30, 2006 to qualify for the matching authorized by the Board of Directors. Anyone with questions about details of the USITT @ 50 fundraising, or estate gifting should contact USITT Treasurer Larry Hill at [larry\\_hill@usitt.org](mailto:larry_hill@usitt.org).

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### **Find an ETCP Certified Rigger Online**

The listing of ETCP Certified Riggers is now available online [here](#). These individuals have passed the rigorous examination in arena and/or theatre rigging. Find a certified ETCP rigger by using the search map or form. Direct contact information is available for many of these individuals.

The certification examinations are now available at centers throughout the United States and Canada for qualified riggers. For more information and deadlines click [here](#). Those wishing to have the examination information and application forms mailed, contact Katie Geraghty, ETCP Certification Director, at 212-244-1505 or [kgeraghty@esta.org](mailto:kgeraghty@esta.org).

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### **Behind the Scenes Accepting Applications**

Behind the Scenes, the new initiative of the ESTA Foundation, is ready to help -- so help it spread the word.

Behind the Scenes is accepting applications for grants which can be used for medical or basic living expenses. Anyone living in the U.S. or Canada who has been employed for at least five years in the entertainment technology industry may qualify for support.

More information and applications are available on the foundation's web site at [www.estafoundation.org/bts/grants.htm](http://www.estafoundation.org/bts/grants.htm).

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### **BSR E1.17 (ACN) Is Available for Review**

BSR E1.17, Entertainment Technology - Multipurpose Network Control Protocol Suite, the draft standard commonly called "ACN," is now available for public review through June 19, 2006. The draft standard is a suite of protocols offering needed services in network management, device management, device description, and device control with reliable multi-cast transport on data networks that use the common Internet Protocols. There are 21 documents that describe various aspects of the suite of protocols, and they are all contained in the approximately 2.5 megabyte compressed file ACN.zip. Reviewers should also read the Readme.pdf file. It is not part of the draft standard, but it explains the structure of ACN and the changes that were made since the last public review. All the public review materials are at [http://www.esta.org/tsp/documents/public\\_review\\_docs.php](http://www.esta.org/tsp/documents/public_review_docs.php).

There are several small changes that have been made to BSR E1.17 since the last public review, but the most important one--the one that made this public review essential--was the change to the SLP (Service Location Protocol) templates. These have been reworked to be fully compatible with OpenSLP source code. The previous templates were valid SLP, but didn't work with OpenSLP, so implementers of E1.17 would have had to develop their own code rather than use the popular, open-source, OpenSLP.

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USITT's 48th Annual Conference & Stage Expo will be held in Houston, Texas from March 19 to 22, 2008. Stage Expo dates for 2008 are March 20 to 22.

"Houston has much to offer our members and exhibitors," said Joe Aldridge, USITT's Vice-President for Conferences, in announcing the site. "We look forward to working with our friends at the Alley Theatre, Jones Hall, Houston Opera, and, of course, the great folks in USITT's Southwest Regional Section who are already investigating how best to spotlight Houston's performing arts community."

The Alley Theatre, winner of the 1996 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Company, is only one part of the 17-block Houston Theatre District which has 12,948 seats. Houston boasts permanent professional resident companies in theatre, ballet, opera, and symphony -- one of a few American cities with such a diversity of resident productions.

When USITT visits Houston in 2008, major events will be held at the George R. Brown Convention Center, which is located at 1001 Avenida de las Americas. The Convention Center is across the street from the Hilton Americas-Houston which has been selected as the headquarters hotel. Other hotels which USITT will use, including the Courtyard and Residence Inn, are only a few blocks away, close to the Main Event restaurant area and the theatre district.

## USITT Chooses Houston for 2008

by **Barbara E.R. Lucas**  
*Sightlines* Editor

Above, the George R. Brown Convention Center at dusk shows off its impressive facade.

Photo/Courtesy George R. Brown Convention Center

"We are confident that the 2008 Conference & Stage Expo will provide our guests with the experience they have come to expect from all USITT events," Mr. Aldridge said. "Houston in March will be vibrant as we bring performing arts professionals from throughout the world to visit this exciting city."

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## Dick Durst to Head Baldwin-Wallace College

Our warmest congratulations to Dick Durst, former president of USITT and OISTAT, on his recent appointment as the eighth president of Baldwin-Wallace College in Ohio. Mr. Durst, who is currently dean of the College of Arts and Architecture and executive director of University Art Services at Pennsylvania State University, was chosen after a national search to replace Mark H. Collier, who retires on June 30, 2006.

Mr. Durst, known to many USITT members as the colorful moderator of the New Products Showcase at the Annual Conference, is a former dean of the College of Fine and Performing Arts at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and dean of the School of Fine Arts at the University of Minnesota, Duluth, where he had also been a faculty member and department head.

*A special USITT connection: Sandy Bonds, Vice-President for International Activities grew up in the house Mr. Durst will occupy. Ms. Bonds' father was president of Baldwin-Wallace for 26 years.*

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## President, President-Elect Visit Office

In May, President John S. Uthoff and President-Elect Sylvia Hillyard Pannell visited the USITT offices in Syracuse for discussion, planning, and reviews.

Although the ceremonial gavel of office was transferred at the Awards Banquet in April 2006, the visit to Syracuse included the handing off of the plaque noting the names and years of service of all USITT's presidents. Ms. Pannell's name was added to the plaque and the band of the gavel before the presentation. (below).

### This month:

Dick Durst

Officers Visit

Lisa Westkaemper

Symposium Sold Out

CITT/ICTS



Photo/Barbara E.R. Lucas

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### **Lisa Westkaemper Appointed**

Congratulations to Lisa Westkaemper who was recently appointed as USITT's Acting Vice-President for Promotion & Development. The position was realigned by action of the Institute's Board of Directors and Ms. Westkaemper will be the first occupant of the reconfigured vice-presidency. We look forward to Ms. Westkaemper's ideas and enthusiasm.

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### **Costume Symposium Sold Out**

Congratulations to organizers and those already scheduled to attend the 2006 Costume Symposium in Cedar City, Utah this August. We don't know whether it was the appeal of the subject, the presenters, or the setting but all spaces in both sessions are already filled. We look forward to the reports of the Master Class at the Utah Shakespearean Festival in a future issue of *Sightlines*.

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### **Building Featured at CITT/ICTS Show**

Our colleagues in Canada tell us Rendez-Vous 2006: The Centre of the Universe awaits us all. Canadian Institute for Theatre Technology/Institut canadien des technologies scénographiques' 16th Annual Conference and Trade Show takes place in Toronto in August. Those who attended USITT's 2005 Conference in Toronto know what an enchanting city it can be, and CITT/ICTS Rendez-vous is an annual classic within the Canadian performing arts industry.

It combines professional workshops, social events and unique networking opportunities for members. This year, the Toronto Committee has been working "relentlessly" they tell us at putting together a fantastic four-day event centered around the theme Enter: The Building - More than Bricks and Mortar. Conference dates are August 10 to 13 2006, with pre-conference workshops August 8 and 9. Conference details and schedule are available [here](#).

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### MDG Fog Upgrades

We thank **MDG Fog Generators** for increasing its membership support of USITT to that of a Contributing member. The Montreal-based company manufactures a complete line of reliable fog generators distributed worldwide for the entertainment industry. MDG has been in business since 1980, and has been a member of the Institute for more than 10 years, with Martin Michaud as the main company contact for USITT members. Information about their full line of products, capable of producing anything from a discrete haze to an overwhelming effect of pure white fog, can be seen at [www.mdgfog.com](http://www.mdgfog.com).

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### Changes at Vincent Lighting

Several personnel changes have been announced by **Vincent Lighting Systems**. Melissa Schmidt was named product manager, working from the company's Cincinnati branch. She has been VLS' rental shop manager. J.R. Simons, who has been with VLS since 1998, has resumed his previous role in inside product sales in the Cleveland headquarters, where he will be joined by Brian Bernicken, who has been assistant rental shop manager. All three can be reached at 800-356-5356.

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### Rose Brand Helps Hurricane-Ravaged School

The April 14 episode of ABC's *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* featured **Rose Brand** and **Mainstage Theatrical Supply**. The companies teamed up to donate a full set of stage curtains to the Sabine Pass School, a small, K-12 public school. Located in the small town of Sabine on the Texas gulf coast near the Louisiana border, the school was devastated by Hurricane Rita in September 2005.

For over 35 years, Sabine Pass School has regularly won regional and state theatrical competitions, and the badly damaged school auditorium had been the town's pride and joy. In recognition of the importance of arts in education, Rose Brand and Mainstage welcomed the opportunity to show their appreciation for school theatre programs by their donation to the Sabine Pass School. Rose Brand, Mainstage, and *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* hope to show the community of Sabine, Texas that the country cares about them as well as other areas hit by hurricanes Rita and Katrina.

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MDG Fog Generators  
 Vincent Lighting Systems  
 Rose Brand  
 Stage Research  
 Norcostco  
 Meyer Sound

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### **ShowBuilder: RF Introduced**

**Stage Research, Inc.** announces the addition of ShowBuilder: RF to its audio software products line. ShowBuilder: RF is designed specifically for sound professionals who manage wireless microphone frequencies for live applications.

ShowBuilder: RF will calculate intermod-free wireless microphone frequencies for anywhere in the world -- a must for tours where frequencies change often. ShowBuilder: RF is sold individually or is included for free in the ShowBuilder: Sound Design application that allows you to manage paperwork, document your sound system, create shop bids, keep track of budgets and payroll, and plan show routes.

For more information, go to [www.stageresearch.com/products/SoundDesign.aspx](http://www.stageresearch.com/products/SoundDesign.aspx)

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### **Norcostco Plans Summer Specials**

**Norcostco** in New Jersey is giving a summer-long special offer to summer and community theatre customers, and is reminding people of its large selection of patriotic costumes. To learn more, contact [costumenj@norcostco.com](mailto:costumenj@norcostco.com) or call 800-220-6940.

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### **Shrine Improved with Meyer Sound**

The legendary Shrine Auditorium's \$15 million renovation included special needs, because of the unusual shape of the room, and those needs are being met by **Meyer Sound's** more compact M Series models. Shrine General Manager Duke Collister worked with audio consultants Jack Haffamier of Complete Production Rentals and Joe Hesse of MSS Audio Services to configure a system centered on Meyer Sound's MICA compact high-power curvilinear array loudspeakers. Featured products for the installation were MICAs, M1Ds, 700-HP subwoofers, and two Galileo loudspeaker management systems.

To learn more, visit [www.meyersound.com](http://www.meyersound.com).

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### Lex Products New Sustaining Member

We appreciate the additional support provided when **Lex Products Corp.** changed its membership level to Sustaining. Lex Products is an award-winning innovator which manufactures electrical and data products for theatre, live events, motion pictures, and convention centers. Among its products are PowerGate Company Switches, data cables for DMX, ethernet, color-changer and RFU cable. The company has won three Widget of the Year awards at LDI. Its entire line of products can be seen at [www.lexproducts.com](http://www.lexproducts.com).

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### Smooth-On Upgrades

We also appreciate **Smooth-On, Inc.** increasing its support of USITT by upgrading to a Sustaining membership. Smooth-On, based in Easton, Pennsylvania, manufactures Liquid RTV silicone and urethane rubbers, liquid urethane plastics, liquid urethane expanding foams, and numerous ancillary materials used for innovative and traditional moldmaking and casting applications. Smooth-On's products can be used for creating custom props, SPFX, sets, and themed environments, and can be found at [www.smooth-on.com](http://www.smooth-on.com).

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### CAST Connects, Things Fly!

**CAST Software** and **BOXX Technologies Inc.** have formed an alliance that lighting and event professionals everywhere need to hear about. It began with the goal in mind to enhance the overall usability of Vivien - Virtual Event Designer and WYSIWYG Production Design Suite. Testing completed by CAST revealed that running WYSIWYG on a BOXX 7400 Series Workstation increased overall functionality by producing shaded views and renderings up to four times faster, opened large files quicker, and made general application performance much more responsive.

For more information on CAST and its products, visit [www.cast-soft.com](http://www.cast-soft.com).

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### Leviton Celebrates 100 Years in Business

#### This month:

Lex Products  
Smooth-On  
CAST Software  
Leviton  
Designlab Chicago  
Stage Technologies  
Sapsis Rigging  
Tobins Lake  
TOMCAT  
Altman Rental

**Leviton Manufacturing Company**, North America's largest manufacturer of electrical and electronic wiring devices, is celebrating its 100th year in business. With a rich tradition of innovation in the electrical industry, Leviton grew from its roots as a producer of mantle tips for gas lighting at the dawn of the electrical era into a giant in the electrical industry.

Leviton operates warehouses and distribution centers across the nation, has representatives in five continents and over 100 countries produces more than 25,000 different products for residential, commercial, industrial, and OEM customers. Products are marketed through electrical distributors, retailers, and direct to companies that purchase components to integrate into their own manufacturing operations.

A third generation, family-owned business, the company was founded by Isidor Leviton, father of the company's current CEO and Chairman of the Board, Harold Leviton. As part of its Centennial celebration, Leviton is offering special programs and promotions. For more information visit [www.leviton.com](http://www.leviton.com).

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### **New Hires at Designlab Chicago**

**Designlab Chicago** announced the addition of two experienced professionals to its production staff.

Garrison Franklin, formerly of On Location Lighting Systems, brings attention to detail, vast photometric knowledge, and easygoing people skills to the production manager position. Allen Stevens, most recently of Legacy Marketing Partners and former senior technical director of KBA Marketing, steps in to fill the vacancy of production account executive. Mr. Stevens' credits include events such as Camel Bartender's Ball (with Lenny Kravitz, James Brown, B-52's), Salem Green Ball tour (Wyclef Jean), and the Twix in the Mix tour (Mixmaster Mike).

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### **Stage Technologies Cruise with Queen Victoria**

**Stage Technologies** will provide stage automation equipment onboard the latest cruise ship to be ordered by Cunard. The *Queen Victoria* is being built by Fincantieri in Marghera, Venice, for delivery in 2007.

Stage Technologies will supply and install the complete stage automation system. This will be the first non-Princess Lines ship to be fitted with Stage Technologies' second generation BigTow 2 winches and TanJent guidance system. The stage will be equipped with two scenery elevators, and **Serapid** tracks in the stage floor will be used for moving scenic items horizontally across and up/down stage. The contract includes catwalks, lighting trusses, and fixed lighting grids.

The automation control system will include an Acrobat control console with Chameleon application software, as well as the

latest generation Solo hand held controllers. The position control system will use MaxisID, the latest generation of technology developed jointly by Stage Technologies and Siemens.

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### **Sapsis Installs Pennsylvania Arrest System**

**Sapsis Rigging** recently completed a fall arrest system for the Pennsylvania Convention Center (PCC) in Philadelphia. The system was put into the Grand Hall, the renovated Reading Terminal Trainshed which is used for parties and events as well as larger exhibitions. Fall arrest was needed because there is not a great deal of lighting in the hall and when more is added there is lot of rigging to get those lights hung.

"We installed a fall arrest system for 44 purlins and five main arches," said Allison Helms, safety coordinator. This entailed 44 horizontal lifelines, eight self-retracting vertical lifelines, and five arched lifelines. The installation was completed in 11 days in March.

The biggest challenge of the project was the historic building itself, said Mike Yocum, project manager for Sapsis Rigging, who was in charge of the installation. "Virtually every location on the steel where we put an anchor in for the lifelines is different in size or thickness. In addition there is the fact that when the whole building was restored, some repairs were done to the steel, which increased the size of steel in some areas."

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### **New Address for Tobins Lake**

Those needing to reach **Tobins Lake Sales** should note that the company has moved to 11035 Hi Tech Drive, Whitmore Lake, MI 48189. Their new toll-free main telephone number is 888-525-3753 with the regular telephone number changing to 734-449-9810. The web address continues to be [www.tobinslakesales.com](http://www.tobinslakesales.com). Bill Ebeling is president of the company.

The telephone, address, and internet access for Tobins Lake Studios, Inc. and TLS Productions has not changed.

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### **TOMCAT Travels with Hill and McGraw**

**TOMCAT USA** is providing equipment for the Soul 2 Soul II tour featuring Faith Hill and Tim McGraw. The set features truss circles, including 50- and 19.5-foot OD medium duty circles and a 16-foot OD light duty circle. TOMCAT also provided the custom connections and motor pickup brackets needed to produce lighting effects. Custom four by six foot light frame pods were manufactured with special transport devises so they can move around the set.

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### **Altman Rental Expands Offerings**

**Altman Rentals** now offers truss and chain hoists to its customers. Truss, mainly from **James Thomas, Columbus McKinnon** hoists plus rigging hardware and decking is now available. If needed, Altman Rental can also provide riggers for specific jobs. "We have always tried to provide our clients with everything that they need to make their lives easier," said Randy Altman, owner of Altman Rentals. "This was the next logical step for us."

For more on Altman Rental's offerings, including a large selection of LED technology, visit [www.altmanrentals.com](http://www.altmanrentals.com).

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Time for conversation and mental stimulation occurred throughout the 2006 Conference, including Richard Pilbrow taking a few moments to converse before the start of the Keynote Address.

Photo/R. Finklestein

by **John S. Uthoff**  
*USITT President*

## Farewell, But Not Goodbye

As I look back over the last two years, I have memories of many wonderful events. The opening of World Stage Design; the OISTAT World Congress; attending performances at the Actors' Theatre of Louisville; section meetings at the conference; over 300 programming sessions; Rick Stephens and Richard Pilbrow's Fellows Addresses; the Board of Directors Retreat in Orlando where we brainstormed about the 50th birthday celebration: Jon Jory's wonderful Keynote address; our two largest Stage Expos; Ming Cho Lee's comments at the Louisville conference; the work with ESTA, USA, and KCACTF; and lots of good times with lots of good friends.

Such is the fabric of USITT -- I think Rick Stephens expressed it best, all of the wonderful experiences you gain when you get involved with this wonderful organization.

When you receive the honor of being the President of USITT, you have the pleasure of finishing, or at least working on the tasks left by your predecessors and create new tasks to pass on to your successors. Many wonderful events happened during my time as President of USITT, thanks to all the work and support of all the members, as well as the vision of all the Past Presidents, and I have enjoyed every minute of it. I am so glad I raised my hand so many years ago and said "Yes, I'll be the Programming Chair of the Wichita Conference." From that point events have piled on events, providing me with a wealth of new challenges, bringing

me to this point. The point where I need to say "Farewell," pass my remaining projects on to your next president, and withdraw to the shadows.

I am not a believer in long goodbyes. So I leave you with some words from my acceptance speech at the Long Beach conference in 2004.

"Many of you in this room have been active in the Institute for many more years than I have and know the benefits of participation. Many more have not. I challenge you all to work on the projects, publications, and programming of the Institute. Exhibit your work at World Stage Design; go to the OISTAT World Congress; propose a program; publish; join a regional section; get involved in the projects of the Institute. Most important, don't let yourself be separated from others that do the work of theatre, talk to everybody. Talk to students, talk to Richard Pilbrow, talk to an International Guest, talk to as many of your fellow members as you can. If you do, like me, you will not just find great friends, you may just find yourself."

With that, I'll see you around the conference, next year in Phoenix. For now, I think I'll go talk to Richard Pilbrow. Farewell to all!!!

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## Southeast Section Plans Master Classes

The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) is well ahead of the game when it comes to getting ready to host the Southeast Regional Section Masters Class. Kelly Allison, head of design and production at UAB and the Masters Class host, has left no stone unturned in his search to provide a full slate of offerings. Scheduled for September 8 and 9, the preliminary program promises a wide range of workshops across the entire spectrum.

Scheduled are: *The Difficult Fitting*, focusing on difficult body types (Kim Schnormeier and Elizabeth Pollard); *Plotting with VectorWorks Spotlight* (Kelly Allison); *From Classroom to Main Stage*, examining how undergraduate programs train students to design; *Weapons Care and Feeding* (Ron Hubbard); *Upholstery for the Stage* (Phillip Anderson); *Stage Management for Dance* (Heather Jackson); and. *Research, Interpretation, and Application - The Design Process*.

Extensive sessions are planned in *Photoshop Rendering Techniques*. (Cliff Simon); *Tutu Construction*, a material fee may be applied for this hands-on workshop (Betty Smith, Costumer for the Alabama Ballet); *Programming Intelligent Lighting*; *Painting Translucent Drop*; and, *Stage Management* (perhaps with Carey Lawless, Production Manager for Arena Stage in Washington, DC).

Additional sessions are in the process of being confirmed. At this time Mr. Allison hopes to receive commitments for *Costume Design for Television*; *Film and Video Lighting*; *SFX* (audio playback); *Setting Microphones for an Orchestra*; and *Organizational Communication*.

Tours of Birmingham's performance venues are being arranged for the Alys Robinson Stephens Performing Arts Center (*below*), the Historic Alabama Theatre, and the Historic Lyric Theatre.

**This month:**

Southeast

Upstate New York



The Section also announced its new webmaster. Shannon Miller, lighting designer at Western Kentucky University, has agreed to lend his expertise to updating and maintaining the web site ([www.southeast.usitt.org](http://www.southeast.usitt.org)).

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### Fall Kick-Off Kicked Up a Notch



The fall meeting of the Upstate New York Regional Section, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on September 16 at SUNY-Geneseo, will kick it up a notch by including workshops in lighting, rigging, costuming, and crafts. Most recent to sign on is Joe Rial, a designer who has never met a piece of recyclable material he didn't like. Part stand-up, part magic, and good part sheer fun, this workshop will challenge attendees to wrap their brains around yet another low tech answer to a high tech problem.

As the fall is the start of an academic year, the fall kick-off activities include a focus on students. Some are specifically designed to prepare students for the annual winter job fair. Lynne Koscielniak, KC/ACTF Region II Design Chair and head of the Design and Technology Task Force, is organizing portfolio reviews as well as sessions in resume writing and best practices in interviewing.

Johnnie Ferrell, SUNY-Geneseo's light and sound designer is point person for this event.

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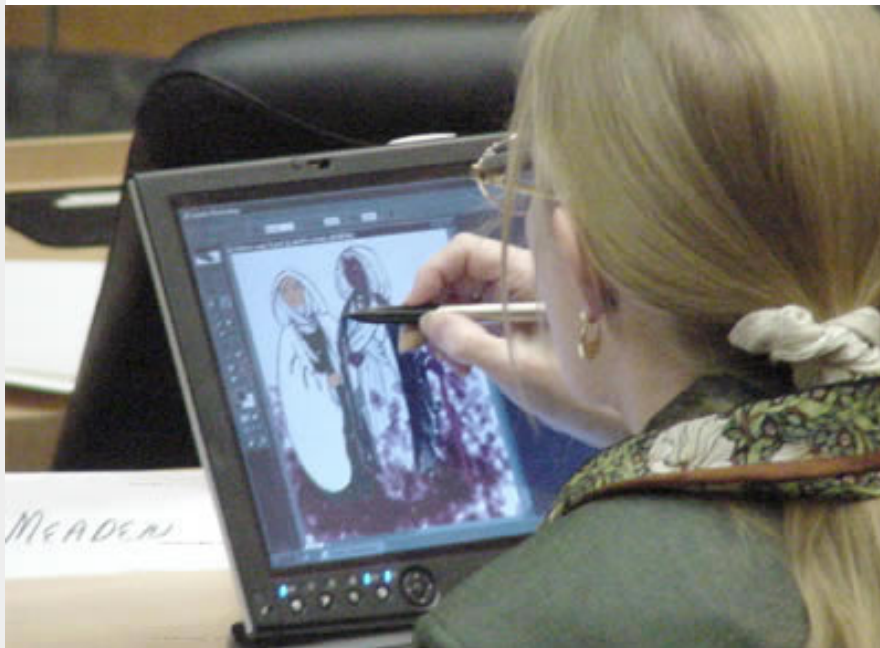
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Professional Development Workshops presented by the Costume Design & Technology Commission are always quickly filled, as was the case in 2006 for *Costume Drawing & Rendering*.

Photo/Casey Kearns

by **Patricia J. Martin**  
*Costume Design & Technology Commissioner*

## Costumers Review Louisville Sessions

Thanks to those who presented and attended the many wonderful workshops in Louisville. For those unable to join us, here are some highlights from this year's USITT Annual Conference & Stage Expo.

The Costume Design & Technology Commission began the conference with two Professional Development Workshops. *Costume Drawing & Rendering Techniques: Basics & Beyond*, a two day-workshop presented by Herb Camburn and ably assisted by Ron Goekler and Susan Thomas Babb, gave participants the opportunity to complete drawings and colored renderings of costumed models using the tried and true method of pencils and paint. Then everyone brought their computers and digitizer pads and learned two software programs: Photoshop and Poser. Patience and practice were the watch words of the day. *Hat's Entertainment: Simple to Sew Millinery* was held at Baer Fabrics. In this hands-on workshop, Joel Ebarb taught the participants two simple but impressive hats -- the Coil Hat and the Valois bonnet.

Linda Sparks presented a detailed session on the Basics of Corset Building discussing several different techniques and options of construction. Hilary Baxter, international guest from England, presented a provocative and entertaining session *Drag, Gay Pride, and Pricilla: The Role of the Designer*. Chicago-based freelance

milliner Hannah Bledstien discussed the process of creating headblocks from lightweight and durable material.

At the Costume Design & Technology Commission meeting, members networked and received updates on the 2006 Costume Symposium, *A Master Class in Tailoring Techniques*, held this year at the Utah Shakespearean Festival, and all other active commission projects. One member called it an important and eye-opening introduction to the incredible projects and ongoing activities of a vibrant Commission.

*The Costume Poster Session* gave people an opportunity to interact with 21 presenters each offering a new discovery, product, or technique. Topics ranged from wigs made of fabric, to make-up techniques for maturing actors' faces, to designing and mounting folding fans. *Creating Non-Traditional Wigs* provided members with a wide variety of unusual materials and methods to create wigs of all styles and shapes. The creative solutions were exciting and inspirational. Susan Davis and Becky Kauffman provided members the rare opportunity to examine actual period corsets in *Vintage Undergarments -- Up Close and Personal*.

In *Computer Pattern Making for Costumers* members had the opportunity to learn more about the advances and applications of patternmaking software from leading software pattern representatives. Cecilia Friedrichs, Deborah Nadoolman, Pamela Shaw, and Charles Berliner presented an incredible session on costume careers outside of theatre. The presentation was illustrated with amazing costume design work in the field of circus, ice skating, parades, theme parks, animate film and video games, music concerts, and feature films.

Since the Conference was in Louisville, home of the Kentucky Derby, it seemed only appropriate to dedicate a session to the history of the jockey silk in the session *Jockey Silks and Sports Uniforms* presented by Bobbi Owen and Holly Jenkins Evans.

Who knew that Theatre de la Mode, a unique collection of theatre sets and fashion designs in miniature developed in 1945-46 by the Parisian Couture industry to raise funds for the war relief, was housed in the United States in the remote Maryhill Museum of Art? Betty Long-Schleif shared the history and treasures of this unique collection in *Theatre de la Mode: Parisian Fashion after World War II*. In the highly informative and practical, *Costume Shop Management: Tools and Techniques*, four professional costume shop managers shared forms and time-saving techniques developed for optimal shop organization and production management.

During *An Evening with Rosemary Ingham*, the audience was enthralled listening to Ms. Ingham share the circuitous journey of her life in costuming and her process as an artist. This delightful session was followed by a reception where members were able to meet her and enjoy an evening of food and networking.

Paul Thompson offered a wonderful demonstration of various

make-up techniques in *Character Make-up*. The fire alarms didn't stop participants or panelists Gweneth West, Laura Crow, Linda Roethke, and Susan Tsu from discussing the design processes or creating evocative images for *Macbeth* in the double session *Developing the Costume Idea: Take Two*. The panelists led the group in a discussion of *Macbeth* and used art supplies and magazines to create an array of inspirational images. The session was described as a highlight of a fantastic week.

Programming is already in place for Phoenix in 2007 and the Commission is looking forward to Houston in 2008. To share an idea for a programming session for Houston, contact Kevin McCluskey at [kmclusk@umw.edu](mailto:kmclusk@umw.edu)

Special thanks to Randal Blades, Wendy Meaden, Anne Towe, and Ester Vaneek whose comments contributed to this article and to all who volunteered to help Kristina Tollefson by filling out session response forms. Sadly, it seems that someone removed the envelope of session response forms from the message board in Louisville so we were not able to use those reports in the writing of this article. We are working on a new system for getting the comments back to us so this will not happen in the future.

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## Seek Session Proposals for Costume Sessions in 2008

**Kevin McCluskey**

*VC-Programming, Costume Design & Technology Commission*

With the Costume Design & Technology conference planning finished for Phoenix, it is time to start thinking about programs for Houston in 2008.

What! Why the heck so early? Especially when people are not even through finals or dress week yet?

Well, all session proposals need to be in hand *before* Phoenix since one of the last things that happens at each conference is to solidify the programs for the next conference.

If you have an idea for a conference session proposal, the complete details and instructions to submit a proposal are on the Costume & Technology Commission site on the USITT web page [here](#).

After completing the proposal form, send it to Kevin McCluskey, Department of Theatre and Dance, University of Mary Washington, 1301 College Avenue, Fredericksburg, VA 22401 or by e-mail to [kmclusk@umw.edu](mailto:kmclusk@umw.edu).

The Commission wants to try something that came out of one of the Strategic Planning sessions at Louisville. Have you ever said, "I wish they had a session on [insert costume related topic here]?" Well, let's try that! Send topics you wish were sessions. The Commission will compile the list and post it on the costume listserv. Someone may be able to propose a session that covers one or more of those "wishes." This is not intended to replace the traditional submission process, but to let all know what is of interest to everyone else. Send "Sessions we would like to see" topics to [kmclusk@umw.edu](mailto:kmclusk@umw.edu).

Sessions for Houston will be accepted until February 19, three weeks before USITT's 47th Annual Conference & Stage Expo begins in Phoenix, Arizona.



Special exhibitions, above, can be coordinated with sessions proposed to the Costume Design & Technology Commission sessions, especially those concerning honored designers. The commission is seeking ideas for 2008 programming.

Photo/Casey Kearns

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This French Directoire Room is part of the Narcissa Thorne Miniature Room collection at the Phoenix Art Museum.

by **Jeff Brown**  
*Phoenix Promotions  
Coordinator*

## Phoenix Art Museum Accessible and Interesting

While everyone is in Phoenix in March for the 2007 USITT Conference & Stage Expo, don't allow that week to go by without personally enjoying some of the outstanding fine arts offerings that define Phoenix (and the surrounding Valley of the Sun) as the cultural capital of the southwestern United States.

Situated prominently between the Phoenix Theater and Playhouse on the Park (home to the Arizona Jewish Theater Company), the Phoenix Art Museum is located just 1.3 miles north of the Phoenix Convention Center (site of the Conference). Phoenix Art Museum is the leading art museum in the Southwest. It features a collection of more than 17,000 works of Early American, Asian, European, Latin American, modern and contemporary, and Western American art including originals by such greats as Monet and Rodin. The museum is currently undergoing a \$60 million renovation and expansion due to be completed in November 2006.

Phoenix Art Museum also features two exhibits that could be of special interest to members of USITT -- the Fashion Design collection and the Thorne Miniature Room collection. The Fashion Design collection (formerly called the Costume collection, renamed in 1996) has more than 4,500 American and European garments, shoes, and accessories from the eighteenth to twentieth centuries.

Exhibitions that focus on clothing both as an art form and as

This Delphos Dress by Mariano Fortuny circa 1920 is silk velvet stenciled with metals and can be found in the Phoenix Art Museum's collection.

Photos/Courtesy Phoenix Art Museum



cultural phenomenon are rotated regularly in the Fashion Design gallery. When the museum renovation is complete, the collection will be moved to a new wing where an increased selection from the permanent collection (as well as touring exhibits) will be displayed. Some of the American designers represented are Adrian, Norell, Galanos, and Claire McCardell. European designers represented include Balenciaga, Chanel, Dior, and Yves Saint Laurent.

The Thorne Miniature Rooms collection houses 20 of Mrs. James Ward Thorne's miniature rooms constructed to a scale of one inch to one foot. Only 99 such pieces exist, a majority of which are at the Art Institute of Chicago. Many of Mrs. Thorne's rooms are exact replicas of existing houses in the United States and Europe dating from the fifteenth through the twentieth centuries. The rooms faithfully depict the architecture and interior design of their periods and countries; some of the rooms even contain miniature period-style rugs that Mrs. Thorne had woven specifically for each space. The rooms are lit to look very natural, with light spilling in through a hallway or through carefully placed windows.

Mrs. Thorne began collecting miniature furniture and household accessories during her travels to England and the Far East shortly after the turn of the twentieth century. Beginning in 1930, she devised the plan to construct these model interiors to hold her growing collection of miniature objects. Her additional hope was that perfectly proportioned rooms in miniature could substitute for costly and space-consuming, full-scale period rooms that museums across the country were beginning to acquire.

Yet another point of interest at the Phoenix Art Museum is the Western Art collection. It is comprised of nearly 900 paintings, sculptures, drawings, and prints that explore the landscape and history of the American West. Highlights include paintings from the earliest explorations of Arizona, dating back to the mid-1800s.

While at the Museum, don't get away without a bite to eat from the Art Museum Café by Arcadia Farms, which offers a range of sandwiches, salads, and desserts. The kitchen closes at 3 p.m. but pastries, desserts, and drinks are available until 5 p.m. daily.

Introduce yourself to the Phoenix Art Museum online at [www.phxart.org](http://www.phxart.org), then visit in person at 1625 N. Central Avenue, just north of the Convention Center which is also on Central Avenue. Hours are Tuesday through Sunday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., with late hours on Thursday until 9 p.m. Admission is \$9 for adults, and \$7 for senior citizens and full-time students with a valid I.D. Daily one-hour tours are led by museum-trained volunteer docents and are included with museum general admission.

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## Stage Expo Filling Up for Phoenix 2007

**Helen Willard**  
*Stage Expo Sales Manager*

The site of the 47th Annual USITT Conference & Stage Expo in 2007 is the Phoenix Convention Center, formerly known as the Phoenix Civic Plaza. The downtown facilities originally opened in 1972 as the Phoenix Civic Plaza and Convention Center, which included Symphony Hall and Symphony Hall Terrace. An expansion project in the mid-1980s added the South Building, including exhibit halls D and E, the Ballroom, and the Tucson and Yuma meeting rooms, where the USITT Conference & Stage Expo will be held.

Over the years, the media and the public shortened the name to the Phoenix Civic Plaza. With the current \$600 million expansion elevating Phoenix's convention center into one of the top 20 in North America, the city has launched a new name -- the Phoenix Convention Center, while retiring the name Phoenix Civic Plaza. When



USITT members Carolyn Satter, Jill Maurer, Michael Mehler, Jeff Brown, and Dan Denhart, enjoyed the sunshine in Phoenix May 21 and 22. They were part of a group preparing for the 2007 Conference & Stage Expo. In the background is a portion of the Phoenix Civic Plaza which will imploded, as the entire complex is renamed the Phoenix Convention Center. Photo/Barbara E.R. Lucas

### Already Booked for Stage Expo 2007, as of May 1, 2006

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AC lighting Inc.</li> <li>• A.C.T Lighting, Inc.</li> <li>• Altman Lighting</li> <li>• American Harlequin Corporation</li> <li>• Apollo Design Technology, Inc.</li> <li>• Barbizon</li> <li>• Ben Nye Company</li> <li>• California Institute of the Arts</li> <li>• City Theatrical, Inc.</li> <li>• J.R. Clancy</li> <li>• Clear-Com Communication Systems</li> <li>• Columbus McKinnon</li> <li>• Comfor Tek Seating Inc.</li> <li>• Conductix/Insul-8</li> <li>• Dazian LLC</li> <li>• d&amp;b audiotechnik</li> <li>• Electronic Theatre Controls (ETC)</li> <li>• Electronics Diversified, Inc.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make-Up Designory</li> <li>• MDG Fog Generators Ltd</li> <li>• Mehron Inc.</li> <li>• Meyer Sound/LCS Audio</li> <li>• Mongol Global Tour Company, Inc.</li> <li>• Norcostco Inc.</li> <li>• North Carolina School of the Arts</li> <li>• Ocean Optics, Inc.</li> <li>• Oregon Shakespeare Festival</li> <li>• The Painter's Journal</li> <li>• Period Corsets</li> <li>• Production Intercom Inc.</li> <li>• RC4 Wireless Dimming</li> <li>• Rosco</li> <li>• Rose Brand</li> <li>• Sapsis Rigging Inc.</li> <li>• Sculptural Arts Coating, Inc.</li> <li>• SECOA, Inc.</li> <li>• Selecon</li> <li>• Show Distribution Group</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

expansion is complete in late 2008, the Phoenix Convention Center will include the new West Building, a new North Building, and the existing South Building.

The 110,000 square foot exhibit hall in the PCC's South Building will be jam-packed with exhibits next year. More than 80 percent of the available booth space for Stage Expo 2007 has already been booked. Space selection for Non-Commercial Tables will take place in the fall. For more information on exhibiting at Stage Expo 2007, contact [hpwillard@aol.com](mailto:hpwillard@aol.com).

The preliminary list of exhibitors for Stage Expo 2007 as of May 1 is at right.

- Entertainment Services and Technology Association (ESTA)
- The ESTA Foundation/ Behind The Scenes
- Entertainment Technology
- Future Light
- GALA Systems, Inc.
- GAMPRODUCTS
- Grosch Scenic Rentals
- H&H Specialties Inc.
- Heatshrink.com
- HM Electronics, Inc.
- IATSE
- IATSE Local One
- Irwin Seating Company
- Robert Juliat USA
- Kenmark, Inc.
- Kryolan Corporation
- LEE FILTERS
- Lehigh Electric Products Co.
- Le Maitre Special Effects, Inc.
- Leprecon
- Lex Products Corp.
- Limelight Productions Inc.
- Live Design/LDI

- Inc.
- Smooth-On, Inc.
- Stage Directions
- Stage Research, Inc.
- Stagecraft Industries, Inc.
- StageRight Corporation
- Steeldeck, Inc.
- Strand Lighting Inc.
- Strong Entertainment Lighting
- Syracuse Scenery & Stage Lighting Co., Inc.
- Texas Scenic Company
- Thematics
- Thern Inc.
- James Thomas Engineering
- Tiffin Scenic Studios, Inc.
- Union Connector
- United Scenic Artists Local 829 IATSE
- Walt Disney Entertainment
- Wenger Corporation
- Wybron, Inc.
- ZFX, Inc.
- Zucker Feather Products





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## Executive Committee

- John Uthoff, *President*
- Patricia Dennis, *Secretary*
- Lawrence J. Hill, *Treasurer*
- Kim Williamson, *Vice-President for Commissions*
- Bobbi Owen, *Vice-President for Communications*
- Joe Aldridge, *Vice-President for Conferences*
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- Bill Teague, *Vice-President for Special Operations*
- Bruce Brockman, *Immediate Past President*
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## Directors at Large

2003-2006

- Lea Asbell-Swanger
- Mitch Hefter
- Debra Krajec
- Jean A. Montgomery
- Richard Pilbrow
- Donna Ruzika

2004-2007

- C. Lance Brockman
- Normand Bouchard
- Gregory Horton
- Cindy Poulson
- Dave Will
- Stephanie Young

2005-2008

- Ann Archbold
- Bill Browning
- Dan Culhane

- David Krajec
- Martha Marking
- Brian Reed

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## Honorary Lifetime Members

- Richard L. Arnold
- Willard F. Bellman
- Joy Spanabel Emery
- Ted W. Jones
- Christine L. Kaiser
- Joel E. Rubin
- Samuel H. Scripps
- Tom Watson

USITT gratefully recognizes the individuals and businesses in these special categories of membership:

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- Contributing Members
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## Contributing Members

- American Harlequin Corporation
- Apollo Design Technology, Inc.
- Automatic Devices Company
- Barbizon Lighting Company
- Cirque du Soleil
- City Theatrical Inc.
- J.R. Clancy, Inc.
- Clear-Com Communication Systems
- Creative Handbook
- Creative Stage Lighting Co., Inc.
- Disney Entertainmnet Productions
- Electronic Theatre Controls (ETC)
- Entertainment Services & Technology Association (ESTA)
- Entertainment Technology
- Future Light
- GAMPRODUCTS, INC.
- H & H Specialties Inc.
- heatshrink.com
- Hoffend & Sons, Inc.
- InterAmerica Stage, Inc.
- KM Fabrics, Inc.
- Kryolan Corporation
- *Live Design Magazine /LDI Show*

- Martin Professional, Inc.
- Masterstage Mfg. Inc.
- MDG Fog Generators
- Meyer Sound Laboratories, Inc.
- Norcostco, Inc
- Ocean Optics, Inc.
- PRG
- Production Advantage, Inc.
- Rosco Laboratories, Inc.
- Rose Brand Theatrical Fabrics, Fabrications & Supplies
- Schuler Shook
- SECOA
- Stage Decoration & Supplies, Inc.
- *Stage Directions Magazine*
- Stage Research, Inc.
- StageRight Corporation
- Steeldeck Inc.
- Strand Lighting
- Syracuse Scenery & Stage Lighting Co., Inc.
- Texas Scenic Company
- TMB
- Vari\*Lite
- Vincent Lighting Systems
- Walt Disney Entertainment
- Wenger Corporation

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### **Sustaining Members**

- A.C. Lighting Inc.
- AC Power Distribution, Inc.
- A.C.T Lighting, Inc.
- Altman Lighting, Inc.
- Altman Rentals, Inc.
- Auerbach + Associates
- A V Pro, Inc.
- B.N. Productions, Inc.
- Baer Fabrics
- Bandit Lites, Inc.
- Ben Nye Makeup
- Brawner & Associates LLC
- California Institute of the Arts
- Cast Software
- Center Theatre Group
- Checkers Industrial Products Inc.
- Chicago Spotlight, Inc.
- Cobalt Studios
- Columbus McKinnon Corp.
- Comfor Tek Seating, Inc.
- The Crosby Group, Inc.
- d&b audiotechnik
- Dazian Fabrics, LLC
- Designlab Chicago

- Dove Systems Inc.
- Electronics Diversified Inc.
- Entertainment Lighting Services
- Foy Inventerprises, Inc.
- GALA Systems, Inc.
- Gerriets International Inc.
- Grand Stage Company, Inc.
- Grosh Scenic Rentals
- Haussmann Theaterbedarf GmbH
- High End Systems, Inc.
- Hollywood Lighting Services, Inc.
- I. Weiss
- International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE)
- Irwin Seating Company
- Johnson Systems Inc.
- Kansas City Costume Co.
- Kenmark, Inc.
- Kirkegaard Associates
- KUPO Industrial Corp.
- LCS Audio
- Le Maitre Special Effects Inc.
- LEE Filters
- Lehigh Electric Products Co.
- Leprecon
- Leviton/NSI/Colortran
- Lex Products Corp.
- Lighting & Electronics, Inc.
- Limelight Productions, Inc.
- Lite-Trol Service Company, Inc.
- LVH Entertainment Systems
- Lycian Stage Lighting
- The MAGNUM Companies, Ltd.
- Mainstage Theatrical Supply, Inc.
- Mehron, Inc.
- Musson Theatrical, Inc.
- Mutual Hardware
- Niscon Inc.
- North Carolina School of the Arts
- Northwest High School
- Ontario Staging Limited
- Performance Solutions
- Production Intercom, Inc.
- Prolyte Products Group
- Quinette Gallay
- Sapsis Rigging Entertainment Services, Inc.
- Sculptural Arts Coating, Inc.
- Selecon
- Serapid, Inc.
- Show Distribution Group Inc.
- Smooth-On, Inc.
- South Dakota State University
- Spotlight S.R.L.
- SSRC

- Stage Equipment and Lighting, Inc.
- Stage Technologies
- Stage Technology
- Stagecraft Industries, Inc.
- StageLight, Inc.
- STAGEWORKS
- Staging Concepts, Inc.
- Strong Entertainment Lighting
- Theatre Arts Video Library
- Theatre Consultants Collaborative, LLC
- Theatre Projects Consultants, Inc.
- Thern Inc.
- James Thomas Engineering
- Tiffin Scenic Studios, Inc.
- Tobins Lake Sales
- TOMCAT USA, Inc.
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- Wayne State University Dept. of Theatre
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## A Paperless Production

**Travis DeCastro**

*General Manager, Pennsylvania State University's Pennsylvania Center Stage Theatre*

It was never my intention to stage manage a paperless production. But this last fall, I found myself with circumstances that led to a production not totally reliant upon paper based communication and record keeping.

I have long been an advocate for a more clever approach with technology in stage management. For two years now, students at Pennsylvania State University have posted their rehearsal and performance notes on a "digital callboard." This opportunity was unheard of a few years ago but, with the proliferation of the personal computer and the explosion of wireless technology, the marriage of technology and communications seemed ripe.

The circumstances around this production of *Singing the Moon Up!* were unique. Rehearsals began at the end of the summer when most of the support staff were enjoying summer vacations. The production itself was a musical review, and the director was also the author of the piece. The performers were all musicians playing a minimum of three instruments apiece -- not your typical theatre group nor organization.

The production was built around the music of Jean Ritchie, a folk performer of substantial work and merit. The woman who was to play Jean was the wife of the director/author. Two of the performers in the play (who played various Ritchie kin) were actually Ritchie's kin -- her two sons. They played so many

Cast members from *Singing the Moon Up!* a recent production based on the work of legendary "song catcher" Jean Ritchie were part of an almost "paperless" production at Pennsylvania Center Stage.

Photo/Courtesy Travis DeCastro

instruments between them, I lost count. The final actor in the production was a performing and recording fiddle artist. All together they represented a musical force that was at once a well balanced band and would drop into songs (show written or not) at the drop of a hat.

Since the scenery had been designed and built before our arrival (I didn't get a floorplan until the second week of rehearsal), we rehearsed on the set. A prop master was assigned to work with the director and me from the beginning. As we created the "front porch of the Ritchie Family home," she would bring in loads of options for us to choose from. I generally e-mailed our choices to the designer, who was in and out of town, and sought approval or modification.

I started with the typical stage manager's notebook and tabbed dividers in the order that I am most accustomed to working. Since it was a work in progress, I only received the first act (digitally) to work with. In my communications with the director, I was informed he would arrive with the second act for the first rehearsal. Needless to say, the cast hadn't seen the second act either. It was distributed by CD and they all loaded it into individual laptops.

From the very first rehearsal it was clear there was going to be a lot of cut and paste activity as songs were moved, lyrics eliminated, new songs added, and new orders arranged. Rather than print out a new script and order nightly, I printed out one set of songs and dialogue per page. Then as they were either cut or modified, the performers made the adjustments on their printed pages while I kept each version documented on my laptop. Nightly I would post the latest version on the digital call board for all to reference while sending a digital copy to the director who, to my knowledge, never used a paper copy.

Rehearsal schedules, notes, costume calls, and press and publicity dates were all posted on the on-line callboard. The cast members all had broadband wireless routers installed in their local housing and, with the wireless technology in all of our theatres, I was able to update and organize the company via the on-line callboard.

The rehearsal schedule was very brief. By the end of the second week, we were in technical rehearsals. With so many alterations and changes being made, I still hadn't printed out a calling script. I began to see little use in it. I entered all the cues directly into the script on my laptop. Each night while I was uploading the new notes, calls, etc. to the callboard I also hot synced the files to my Tungsten T3 Palm Pilot. With "Documents to Go" software, I am able to run Word and Excel files directly off my palm. In a worse case scenario, I could still open my palm and run the show. Cues were color coded to make identification easier. Just to be safe, I would occasionally take all the files and throw them on my jump drive -- just in case.

Normal call board functions didn't seem to apply either. The



traditional half hour call was supplanted by the performers themselves. With so many musical instruments on stage, they needed close to an hour just to tune them. I found myself getting to the theatre early to open the doors since they often wanted to sit around and play some music to get them in the mood prior to a performance.

By the end I had generated significantly less paper than I had on any prior production. There was no production book. The blocking was entered directly onto a running list of floor plans I generated in Excel. All the music, all the dialogue, and all changes had been saved to my hard drive. At the end of the run, I merely burned all my files to CD: one for the company, one for the director, and one for me.

Admittedly, the circumstances surrounding this production were unique. However, I did relish a certain satisfaction that I had used the available technology in an environmentally responsible manner. In a field well known for paper use, it was a pleasure to decrease my reliance on paper.

Communication is influenced by the tools we use, and the tools of the day are computers, PDA's, cell phones, digital cameras, etc. Already my students are using their laptops, AIM, and wireless routers to assist in running rehearsals and productions. We are installing web cameras in our theatres for remote access. I am able to talk with my students and view their work either directly or from a remote location. With multiple productions going on at the same time, I cannot be in two places at once physically. But I find I can still be there as a resource at all locations we are producing a play -- something a few years ago I would have run myself ragged trying to follow.

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