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This month's featured image is Nic Ularu's rendering of the National Exhibit which is on its way to Prague to be part of the 2007 Prague Quadrennial. PQ opens on Thursday, June 14, 2007. Additional photos and information about the exhibits can be found here, with a link to the final moments before the container was closed here.

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USITT Funds Compelling Research

Tim Kellv

Chair, USITT Grants & Fellowships Committee

The Grants and Fellowship Program continues to be unique in the entertainment industry by providing funds for a range of research limited only by the imagination of its investigators. The curiosity that drives theatre practitioners to explore, discover, criticize, conceive, reinvent, document and amaze seems to be insatiable.

It is that Pied Piper of unquenchable curiosity that led Michael Ramsaur, the Institute's most recent Fellowship recipient, on an international quest. His research topic, *What is Lighting Design?* An International Perspective, seems to pose questions for which there are as many answers as there are lighting designers. It was a leap of faith by the G&F Committee to believe that any one person could develop comprehensive documentation on this subject.

What qualifies a USITT member's project or proposal to receive funding from this program? It's a hard call, as all of the Committee members will attest, because of the extraordinary scope, range, and creativity of the proposals. To calculate the individual merits of each application and then to be required to judge one against another can be trying. The basic premise of the research or project must be intriguing. It is imperative the applicant has the ability to present the material in a clear and concise manner that readily permits the committee to know what the intended body of work entails.

It is not an absolute prerequisite, but it weighs in favor of a proposal if the applicant is an actively involved member of the Institute. It is imperative to demonstrate in the applicant's own writing, as well as in letters of support, the applicant's unique ability and experience to work in the proposed subject area. Another key component of the program is to disseminate the information to USITT members so they can benefit from any new developments or accumulated knowledge.

The Committee found that Mr. Ramsaur had precipitated a perfect storm of circumstances to make him and his proposal one the Institute believed worthy of funding. For years he has worked in the area of lighting design and is considered an expert nationally and internationally.



Tim Kelly, chair of USITT's Grants & Fellowships Committee, announced the awarding of a major USITT Fellowship to Michael Ramsaur at the 2007 Awards Banquet. Deadline for the next round of funding is January 10, 2008.

Photo/R. Finkelstein

A 30-year member of USITT, he has been involved in regional, national, and global activities including his current post as President of OISTAT. Mr. Ramsaur is a scholar, researcher, and prolific author with an impressive body of publications which assured the Committee he could carry out the proposed work.

Michael Ramsaur as an extraordinary example of an individual who put together a proposal that was compelling, submitted by a proven researcher. The Institute has, however, invested in proposals by members who are new to research and invention.

Funding has gone to institutions as well as individual members, and the resulting work has been seen in books, articles, program sessions, and a general advancement in all areas of the industry. Since 1985, the Institute has provided well over \$200,000 in funding for the Grants & Fellowship Program. The mission of USITT is to actively promote the advancement of the knowledge and skills of its members and this program is dedicated to supporting that mission.

Deadline for the 2008 round of Grants funding is January 10, 2008. More information and applications will be available later in the year.

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Bird Parade Planned for Prague

Anyone planning to be in Prague, Czech Republic on June 15 is invited to wear a silly costume and wander the streets of the ancient city.

All Prague Quadrennial and Scenofest attendees are invited to celebrate in an extraordinary festival of design. A coordinated theatre and carnival parade will begin from the grounds of Prague Quadrennial at the end of the first full day activities. Organizers are expecting about 3,000 participants from 59 countries, starting from the Vysteviste at 7 p.m. and reaching the Old Town Square in Prague at 8 p.m., where the parade will continue until 9 p.m. After that people will be free to eat, drink, and be merry.

Participants can assemble costumes during a two-day workshop or bring costumes or native dress to wear. Organizers will create objects, banners, giant flying beings, and oversized carnival costumes June 14 and 15, 2007. All is loosely centered on the theme of "The Birds."

International speakers include: Clary Salandy, from the UK about Trinidad Carnival Rollie de Leon, from the Philippines about giant Foam Costumes Elio Miralles, from Cuba showing his Hombres Carozzas.

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Seek Teaching Project Submissions

It is summer and time to think about all the projects neglected during the school year. *Projects for Teaching Costume Design and Technology* is still accepting submissions for Volume 2. Share ideas and participate in this endeavor. The submission form is accessible through the Costume Commission link from the USITT website.

The editors also are looking for educators who would like to try projects in their classrooms and provide feedback. For a list of teasers, contact Judy Adamson at jadamson@email.unc.edu.

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Tony Party Assists BTS

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Teaching Projects Needed

Tony Party

ESTA Adds Research Categories

Standards Review

The second annual Behind the Scenes Tony Awards Party is set for Sunday, June 10 in New York City. Continuing a longstanding tradition, the shops that work on Broadway gather together for an evening of food and drink to cheer on their Tonynominated shows. Last year over 125 professionals and industry talent had a fabulous evening.

The 2007 Behind the Scenes Tony Awards party will be held 7 to 11 p.m. at Cibo restaurant, 767 Second Avenue, between 41st and 42nd Streets. The evening includes an open bar, served hors d'oeuvres, dinner buffet, and dessert buffet. Tickets are \$200 each, and \$105 of each ticket is tax deductible. The reservation form is available online <u>here</u>, by e-mailing info@estafoundation. org, or by calling 212-244-1421.

Behind the Scenes, an initiative of The ESTA Foundation, provides financial assistance to entertainment technology professionals who are seriously ill or injured. For more information visit here.

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ESTA Adds New Research Categories

ESTA, the Entertainment Services and Technology Association, announced the addition of LEDs and Media Servers to its Market Research Program for Manufacturers. The program provides manufacturers with accurate market information for business planning, product development, trend charting, financing, and business valuation.

Since 2000, participants have reported quarterly sales figures for moving lights, fixed luminaries, followspots, lamps, dimming, control and networking, and fog and haze to an independent third party accounting firm to ensure complete confidentiality. The resulting data is available only to those reporting.

To join the program, contact Lori Rubinstein at 212-244-1505 or lrubinstein@esta.org. More information about the ESTA Market Research program may be found at here.

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Standards Up for Review

Two draft standards -- for projection quality and for safe use of tungsten-halogen lamps -- are available on the ESTA website for public review through June 25.

BSR E1.35-200x, Standard for Lens Quality Measurements for Pattern Projecting Luminaires Intended for Entertainment Use, describes a method for measuring stage and studio luminaire lens quality with emphasis on contrast and sharpness. It also offers a way to present these results on a datasheet in a format readily understood by a typical end user and to allow the user to directly compare lenses. Standards currently exist for projection lenses, but these are not applicable to the lower quality stage lenses and studio luminaires.

BSR E1.36-200x, Model Procedure for Permitting the Use of Tungsten-Halogen Incandescent Lamps and Stage and Studio Luminaires in Vendor Exhibit Booths in Convention and Trade Show Exhibition Halls, is a model set of procedures convention center and exhibition hall staff can use to mitigate the perceived risks associated with using tungsten-halogen lamps and stage and studio luminaries. This draft standard offers a procedure to permit or prohibit the use of these lamps and stage and luminaires, and helps promote their use in a safe manner.

Reviewers also are asked to look for protected intellectual property in the draft standards. Any protected intellectual property in the document should be pointed out in the public review comments.

For more information, contact Karl G. Ruling, technical standards manager, ESTA, 875 Sixth Avenue, Suite 1005, New York, New York 10001; phone 212-244-1505; fax 212-244-1502; or e-mail standards@esta.org.

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Costumes surround the front of the USITT PQ USA 2007 National Exhibit before it was disassembled for shipment to Prague, Czech Republic.

Photo/Laura Crow

by **Sandy Bonds** *USITT VP-International Activities*

USITT PQ USA 2007 Exhibits Head To Prague

After more than two years of preparation and nine months of construction, the three exhibits representing the United States at the Prague Quadrennial have begun their journey overseas.

The team of faculty and students from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, led by Tom Korder and R. Eric Stone, completed the finishing touches in the last few weeks, mounting the renderings and photographs, preparing the scenic models, and placing the three-dimensional objects. With these last details, the structure of the exhibits came alive with the design contents.

A unique feature of this year's National exhibit will be areas



allocated for the display of puppets and costumes. The curators incorporated puppetry to illustrate the theme of "New Voices, New Visions," as an alternative to conventional performance. Among the puppets on display is an animated model for Michael Curry's paper ghosts from Cirque du Soleil's new production, *The Beatles' LOVE*, used to visualize George Harrison's song, *While My Guitar Gently Weeps*, left.

Costumes from 14 productions surround the inside front of the exhibit. A notable

characteristic of each costume is the use of collaged fabrics, found objects, or painting to create unique surface textures. Susan Hilferty's design for Elphaba, the witch in *Wicked*, used layers of ruffled, multi-textured fabrics to create the look of strata to connect her to the earth.

The Student Exhibit also includes costumes and props. The emphasis on three-dimensional objects moves the presentation past the formative stages of renderings and models into execution, giving the exhibition attendees greater insight into the experience of the performance audience. Costumes and props



from *The Gods are Not to Blame* by Ola Rotimi, an African version of the Oedipus story, will be on view among other production artifacts. Class projects also are represented in the



exhibit including a series of concept shoe designs from Carnegie Mellon University. The project brief asked for the materials and design elements to express an idea through the medium of shoes.

The Architecture Exhibit highlights 17 performance spaces for the next generation focusing on training facilities for universities and colleges, professional theatres, and performing arts facilities. A photomontage was created to show the unique features of each along with



an accompanying DVD for additional details. Two projects emerged as featured designs: the Class of '62 Center for Theatre and Dance, (right) Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts (Architect William Rawn Associates), and the Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York (Architect Gehry Partners, LLP). Both were seen as projects of outstanding architectural distinction containing exciting theatre spaces and providing a stimulating educational environment.

When the three exhibits were nearing completion, the proud construction team hosted a gala reception for their UIUC hosts on March 27 and an Open House for the community on April 4. Members of the Theatre Department and Fine and Applied Arts faculty attended. The guests were impressed with the high quality of the work accomplished by the staff and the dedication of the student team who volunteered their spare time throughout the year to work on the project.

The students were very excited to have had the opportunity to work with the artifacts of prominent productions and theatre designers and to see the impressive results of their months of labor. While the project involved a great deal of challenging work, they enthusiastically agreed seeing the exhibits as completed pieces made their efforts worthwhile. Now, the student team is looking forward to seeing the exhibits from the other countries

After the reception, the team carefully disassembled the structure and packed the pieces into their custom built crates. The time finally came to load the crates into the shipping container and bid a bon voyage to the contents. (See <u>The Last Word</u> for a picture of the load-out.)

The team will be reunited with the exhibits in Prague on June 10, when set up for the entire PQ begins. Upon arrival, the exhibit pieces will be delivered to their pre-assigned locations within the four exhibit areas in the Industrial Palace. The National Exhibits will be located in the left and right wings, and Architecture will be situated around the balcony of the central hall surrounding the Scenofest activities.

A second building behind the main hall has been added to the exhibition area to house the Student Exhibits. This PQ will be the largest exhibit ever in square footage as well as number of participants. Curators and production teams from 60 countries will gather for three and a half days mounting over one hundred displays. Opening night will be 7 p.m. Thursday, June 14. When asked how long the party would last, Daniela Parizkova, Deputy Director and Chief Coordinator of the PQ, answered, "We suppose 'til midnight."

Photo credits: Paper ghost/R. Eric Stone Concept shoe/Susan Tsu Williams College/Robert Benson Photography



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Michelle L. Smith

Membership & Ad Sales Manager

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Music Books Plus - 10% off any purchase. Titles available include: Production Management, Sound for Stage, and An *Introduction to Rigging in the Entertainment Industry.* To order: visit www.musicbooksplus.com and enter your USITT member number in the comments field or call 800-265-8481 and quote your member number when ordering.



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Focal Press - 15% off all titles including Character Costume Figure Drawing, Scenic Art for the Theatre 2nd ed., and The Automated Lighting Programmer's Handbook. To order: visit www.focalpress.com and enter "79623" in offer code box or call 800-366-2665 (U.S./Canada only) and mention offer code 79623.

Click <u>here</u> for a complete list of member discounts. For instructions on accessing a discount, select the item of interest and enter user name (USITT member number) and password (last name) at the prompt.

If you have questions or suggestions for a new benefit, contact Membership & Ad Sales Manager Michelle L. Smith at 800-938-7488 or michelle@office.usitt.org.



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President and Treasurer Visit

May started very pleasantly in the USITT Office in Syracuse, New York when President Sylvia Hillyard Pannell and Treasurer Larry Hill spent almost a week working on Institute business.

One highlight was a Syracuse University Drama Department production of My One and Only which featured a six-foot tapdancing wiz.

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Rick and the Archivists Return

Rick Stephens and members of his hard-working Archives Committee spent seven days pouring over the Institute's history during May.

Returning for a second round of sorting and filing were Mr. Stephens, Lea Asbell-Swanger, and Richard Arnold. They commented it was very pleasant to see the city and enjoy daylight because during their last visit, in December, Mr. Stephens kept them occupied from before sunrise until after sunset.

Longer days, not shorter hours, were responsible for the change, and first time archival visitor William Browning quickly fell into the routine of early arrival and late departures.

We hope for a more complete report of the committee's activities in a future issue of Sightlines.

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Long Riders to Stop in Syracuse

Preparations for the 4th annual Long Reach Long Rider Charity Motorcycle ride are in full swing. This year's trip will be unusual since the ride will start July 29 and finish at the same place nine days later -- Philadelphia.

In between will be a leisurely run through New York and New England stopping first in Syracuse, then heading for Canada and on to Vermont, Maine, (with a stop at Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream factory), and Connecticut. There are 19 riders to date as well as chase drivers and support staff.

This charity ride will benefit Broadway Cares/Equity Fights Aids and the ESTA Foundation's Behind the Scenes program. Both organizations do great work and any support would be greatly appreciated. Those interested can donate online or by mail. All donation information, including how to sponsor a rider, is

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Long Reach Long Riders

William Ivey Long

Houston Meetings

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available on the LRLR website.

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Long's Work Featured

The exhibit of William Ivey Long's costume designs at the Cameron Art Museum in Wilmington, North Carolina has been drawing national attention.

Holly Tripman, the museum's registrar, and Brandon Wardell, from Mr. Long's New York Studio, were featured in *The New York Times* on Sunday, April 22 in a photo showing them preparing for the exhibit opening. The Backpage feature photo was by Jenny Warburg.

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Planning Houston Programming

The first planning meeting for the 2008 Annual Conference & Stage Expo went off without a hitch in Houston, Texas. Janet Harreld, Kasey Allee-Forman, and Kristina Hanssen provided 80

degree days and low humidity, which were much appreciated.

In a marathon session involving massive amounts of paper, spreadsheets, databases, maps, room capacity charts, session attendance estimate, and dueling computer programs, the first round of programming was completed by 5:30 on Saturday, May 19.

Changes have already been made, of course, but the first indication is that



Houston will have plenty of room, and larger capacity for meetings, sessions, and workshops than has been possible at recent Convention facilities.

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Madame Butterfly Exhibit at McNay

A new exhibit, *Madame Butterfly from Puccini to Miss Saigon* has opened at the McNay Art Museum, sponsored in part by the Tobin Theatre Arts Fund. The show, which runs through July 29, 2007, was organized and produced by San Francisco Performing Arts Library and Museum.

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Order from Vincent Online

Vincent Lighting Systems of Cleveland, Ohio has added an ecommerce component to its revamped website, www. vincentlighting.com. This one-stop shopping venue for boxed goods offers over 6,000 products from 41 manufacturers with new products being added continually. In addition to 24/7 convenience, customers benefit from interactive features such as in-depth product descriptions and photos. The user-friendly system allows even a first-time customer to place an order with ease. Regular customers who set up an account have access to the Business-to-Business portal of the online store. B2B access allows a customer to view previous orders, quickly place a reorder of a previous purchase, view shipping information, and check invoices and RMA tracking.

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Clancy Continues to Promote Safety

J.R. Clancy has always promoted the belief that rigging safety requires constant vigilance. In its over 120 year history, it has made safety a priority from design innovation through manufacturing and installation and promotes daily reinforcement of rigging safety. To help users of rigging systems, professionals and non-professionals alike, J.R. Clancy offers several safety support items.

Rigging products, like the PowerLift and the award-winning PowerAssist, offer innovative features for safely running a rigging system. The firm recently turned its attention to a few low tech safety solutions. J.R. Clancy has redesigned all of its instructional signs. They are free and can be ordered from Clancy as two-color signs or downloaded from the website.

The company has always sent out bright yellow plastic batten end caps to increase visibility of the ends of standard pipe battens. Now set capacity information has been added to the batten end caps, and Clancy will send up to 10 batten end caps to users without charge.

J.R. Clancy can help find a qualified rigging specialist to inspect the condition of backstage equipment. Those who would like to have a theatre inspected for safety and talk to a qualified rigging specialist can contact Tom Young at tomyoung@jrclancy.com.

The J.R. Clancy website is a great resource of rigging information, safety articles and even hosts interactive tours of different types of rigging systems so take time and explore it. The company also sponsors www.rigging-safety.com, a site that provides a wealth of rigging safety information.

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Creative Adds Divisions

Creative Stage Lighting (CSL) has added North Central and South Central Dealer Sales divisions increasing the number of sales divisions from four to six.

The North Central Dealer Sales Division is managed by Rocky Harlow and includes Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. The South Central Dealer Sales Division is managed by Seth Scott and includes Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.

For more information, visit the company's website at <u>www.</u> <u>creativestagelighting.com</u>.

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American Harlequin Promotes Basileo

Patricia Basileo has been promoted to vice president of **American Harlequin**. She has been the company's genereral manager since 1999. "Pat has become an irreplaceable part of American Harlequin" said President Robert Dagger. "With her vast knowledge of both our products and the sales industry, she is a driving force behind our success in the United States."

Ms. Basilio, of Medford, New Jersey, is a former Lindenhurst firefighter and Long Island business owner.

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Vari-Lite Hits the Road

Beginning in April, **Vari-Lite** embarked on a six-city road show as part of its 25th anniversary celebration. The show highlights the new VL3500 Wash luminaire, the newest member of the VARI-LITE Series 3000 family of luminaires, along with the complete line of VARI-LITE automated luminaires. The road show began in Los Angeles, California and will conclude in November in Orlando, Florida.

The Vari-Lite road show is scheduled to visit Los Angeles, California; Las Vegas, Nevada; New York City; Mexico City, Mexico (June 5 to 6); Nashville, Tennessee (June 14 to 15); Chicago, Illinois (June 21 to 22); and Orlando, Florida. To schedule a personal demonstration during the Vari-Lite road show, contact the appropriate Vari-Lite Regional Sales Manager.

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City Theatrical Moves, Expands

City Theatrical, Inc. (CTI) has moved to a new 40,000- square foot facility in Carlstadt, New Jersey. The move allows space to add newer and more productive machinery, better work flow, faster throughput, and improved facilities for employees and visitors, all while remaining almost the same distance from the Broadway theatre district as its former South Bronx factory.

CTI's move has allowed a significant expansion of manufacturing capability and speed. The addition of a second Amada CNC punch press more than doubles punching capacity, while the installation of a full conveyorized powder coating system will allow parts to move through the manufacturing line from raw materials to finished goods in just hours.

In electronics assembly, the addition of a lead-free surface mount pick and place system for printed circuit boards propels CTI to among the leaders in the lighting industry in this area, and complements CTI's existing wave solder line.

City Theatrical produces a full catalog of lighting accessories. The company's new contact information is: City Theatrical, Inc., 475 Barell Avenue, Carlstadt, NJ 07072; phone 201-549-1160; and fax 201-549-1161.

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ETC Supplies Colleges, TV Studios

As universities and academic performing arts centers employ increasingly sophisticated lighting rigs, they need powerful lighting consoles to control them. And consoles themselves become essential learning tools within the curricula of lighting design and theatre technology programs. Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) is among the most recent schools to add **Electronic Theatre Controls**' (ETC) new Eos lighting control system to its program.

MTSU used the console for the first time in February, on *Ramona Quimby*, a play based on the book by Beverly Cleary. The Eos was delivered just days before the show's opening, and without any formal training, the lighting designer was able to program the show on the console. For more information about Eos, go to www.etcconnect.com.

Poland's broadcasting market is one of the largest in Eastern and Central Europe and Polish Public Television (TVP S.A.) is the largest broadcaster in the country -- with an average of 8 million viewers. TVP was so impressed by the caliber of lighting control on the 2005 Eurovision Song Contest, which was done with four ETC Congo consoles, TVP decided to acquire its own Congo.

TVP's studio in Pozna• employs a range of moving lights including Clay Paky CP Colors, Robe ColorSpots, ColorWashes, and other lighting equipment similar to that used at Eurovision, so TVP technicians were confident the Congo would be compatible with their lighting inventory and could easily handle the station's changing demands. TVP technicians appreciate

Congo's optional Polish language interface, which makes the system even easier and more accessible.

Steeped in history, TVP was created in 1937, the first television channel in Poland.

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Barbizon Assists Telefutura Studio B

Barbizon Systems Team in Florida played a vital role in the design, installation, and implementation of Telefutura Studios Stage B in Miami, Florida. The studio is home to Escandalo, a daily entertainment program featuring musical acts, topical issues, and entertainment personalities.

One of the challenges facing Telefutura was that the space was below three floors of active office space. Barbizon Florida Systems Manager Chip Schane worked closely with the architect, Antonio Cantillo, to design an insert support structure from which to suspend the pipe grid without transferring weight load to the surrounding floors. Stage B also was unique because many different productions take place within the course of the week and a series of ETC Unison push button stations enable the weekend staff to bring up looks from the floor without using the console or the RRFU.

Rounding out the integration for the ETC Net 2 system, was a series of portable touring nodes and stationary nodes, an ETC Insight 3, and a Martin Light Jockey for intelligent lighting control.

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Joint Licensing for PRG, HES

Production Resource Group, L.L.C., (PRG) and High End Systems, Inc., (HES) announced a joint licensing agreement regarding their patent portfolios of lighting and control technology.

Both PRG and HES have been innovators in developing digital and analog lighting fixtures, systems, and controls for the entertainment industry. Both companies hold extensive catalogues of patents in the United States and abroad. Under the agreement, PRG will be able to offer licensees a single license that covers both the PRG and the HES patents.

HES is headquartered in Austin, Texas, and a leading innovator and manufacturer of automated and digital lighting instruments, and lighting control systems. PRG is a worldwide supplier of entertainment technology solutions, including video, lighting, audio, scenery, and automation systems. It has more than 19 offices in North America, Europe, and Asia.

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Stage Technologies Assists Awards

Silk performers demonstrated incredible skill and strength at the Cannon United Kingdom Awards recently. The acrobatic show used a Stage Technologies automated winch to give greater height and movement to one of the silk performers.

The awards were held at the East Winter Gardens in Canary Wharf, London, a beautiful glass building with a very high arched ceiling, ideal for an aerial performance. Stage Technologies worked Acrobat Productions, a visual and physical artistes' consultancy, which wanted to add something special to the Cannon Award by including the automated effect. Stage Technologies provided a BigTow290 performer flying winch, controlled by a simple Saxis control unit and handheld controller. For more information, visit the Stage Technologies website.

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RC4 Wireless Assists New Cirque Show

How many RC4Magic receiver-dimmers can be used in one show? There's no limit! Ask Cirque du Soleil who is hiding small RC4Magic DMX2dim receivers in costumes all over a new show. Which show? Sorry -- that's a secret. Let's just say the circus is now more "magical" than ever.

RC4 Wireless is supplying the lighting equipment for the new show. To find out more information about the RC4Magic Wireless DMX and Dimming system, check out www. theatrewireless.com; call toll-free 866-258-4577; or e-mail moreinfo@theatrewireless.com.

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Thern Partners with Hall Stages

Thern Inc., a leading manufacturer of winches, cranes, and rigging systems, recently announced a partnership with Hall Stage North America (HSNA) to form a new network of distributors and installers serving the theatre rigging industry. Created by Hall Stage Limited, a United Kingdom (UK) company, HSNA was designed to provide a comprehensive distributor network serving the United States and Canadian markets.

HSNA has an extensive catalog of over 1,200 items. Coupled with Thern's product offering of clew winches, roll drops, and line shaft and drum winches, the new venture will provide

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TOMCAT USA

customers with a full menu of rigging options. Products will be available from stock via a network of suppliers and installers across the U.S. and Canada beginning in the second quarter. The new venture was announced at USITT's Annual Conference & Stage Expo in Phoenix, Arizona.

For more Hall Stage information visit www.hallstage.com or contact rick@hallstage-inc.com. Learn more about Thern products at www.thern.com or via e-mail at info@thern.com or call 800-843-7648.

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TOMCAT Training a Success

TOMCAT USA celebrated 15 years of in-depth training courses for professionals in the entertainment industry with a sold-out Hoist and Rigging Workshop in Midland, Texas.

Top-notch instructors and 82 participants from all over the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom were brought together for the four-day workshop. This year also marked the third annual Advanced Hoist and Truss Workshop with 10 participants from around the United States.

Don Dimitroff of **Columbus McKinnon** coached participants through the disassembly and reassembly of a Lodestar chain hoist. Rocky Paulson, recently retired president of Stage Rigging Inc., taught safe rigging techniques, while Morgan Neff of Mine Safety Appliances gave instruction on fall protection practices and equipment. Training was rounded out by Keith Bohn's truss class on design, usage, and theory.

The traditional "factory night" at TOMCAT USA featured a tour of the facility, demonstrations, and graduation ceremony.

The Advanced Workshop was brought back by popular demand after its successful debut in 2005. The Advanced Workshop is a two-day course with more in depth training for those who just can't get enough.

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Lawrence J. Hill, left, is stepping down as USITT's Treasurer. Mr. Hill is noted for his good humor, appreciated by his fellow officers and Directors at Large, as well as by the staff and members. Here he shares a laugh with John Uthoff, center, and Brian Reed, right.

Photo/Barbara E.R. Lucas

Saying 'Goodbye' -- And 'Hello'

Sylvia Hillyard Pannell USITT President

Where is the good in goodbye?

-- Meredith Willson, The Music Man

Dr. Lawrence Hill has selflessly and tirelessly served USITT, not only as our Treasurer (since 2002), but in many other ways. As Treasurer he has worked alongside Administrative & Finance Manager Carol Carrigan and CPA Jim Bandoblu to revise our financial systems making this valuable information easily accessible to all members of USITT.

While this task was heroic, it is only one of many contributions Mr. Hill has made to our organization during this term of office and a previous stint as Treasurer from 1996 to 1998. He has optimized the use of investments and, together with Past President Richard Durst, inaugurated the USITT@50 development initiative. Now concluding its second year, it has raised more than \$300,000 toward "Honoring Our Past and Securing Our Future."

Beyond the call of duty, he has actively and effectively mentored each of the Institute's incoming officers and Directors at Large, providing valuable budget information and making each more knowledgeable, comfortable, and better able to perform their job. From serving as an active leader in the Board's effort to redefine

the Institute as we seek our place in the 21st century, to routinely encouraging and providing for student participation in the organization, Mr. Hill has been a key player in solidifying the health and welfare of USITT.

At the March Board of Directors meetings in Phoenix, Arizona, Mr. Hill, announced his decision to make this year his last as Treasurer. He will take his final bow on June 30, 2007, at the end of USITT's fiscal year. The Board and staff of USITT are indebted to and very fond of Mr. Hill and his wit, wisdom, and humanity. He will be sorely missed among our ranks.

Mr. Hill joined USITT in 1968 and served in a number of leadership roles in both the regional and national arenas. He served on the Board of Directors of the Northern Boundary Section and was twice elected and served as a Director at Large for the National organization. He was Programming Chair for the 1987 USITT Annual Conference & Stage Expo in Minneapolis and served as Finance Committee Chair for five years.

It was with particular pride that in 1996 he became a Fellow of the Institute. In 2005 he received one of the Institute's most prestigious awards: the Joel E. Rubin Founder's Award. That award is given to a USITT member in recognition of outstanding and continued service to the Institute. (See story about that awards presentation here.)

Past President Bruce Brockman observed, when he presented the Founder's Award, "Following a distinguished career as a theatre educator, designer, historian, and department head, Dr. Lawrence J. Hill took on the task of treasurer of USITT... giving generously of his time at a point in life where retirement activities would seem far more interesting than the finances of USITT."

We're sorry Mr. Brockman invoked those images of "greener pastures" since Mr. Hill has come to agree with that. He will hand over the reins and the coffers at the conclusion of this fiscal year in order to take time to engage in some of those more interesting pursuits, many of which he discussed in an interview in the August 2002 edition of *Sightlines* (available here).

All of us at USITT offer our heartfelt thanks to Mr. Hill for the profound influence he has had and the gifts of time, expertise, and acuity he has so generously shared.

Yet Snoopy's quandary persists:

"Why can't we get all the people together in the world that we really like and then just stay together? I guess that wouldn't work. Someone would leave. Someone always leaves. Then we would have to say good-bye. I hate good-byes. I know what I need. I need more hellos." -- Charles M. Schulz

Hello and welcome, Travis DeCastro, USITT's incoming Interim Treasurer.



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Chesapeake Plans Design Expo

Attention all designers and technicians! The Chesapeake Regional Section's Design Expo '07 is just around the corner. Members look forward to presenting some of their best work at the annual Convention to be held at Shenandoah University on September 15.

The chairman for this event is Andrew Rich, and he eagerly awaits hearing from those who wish to participate. Stand by for deadline submissions. Watch the section's website and the July issue of Sightlines for more details.

An entry form will be posted online or sent by mail to those wishing to participate. Inquiries for the event can be e-mailed to Andrew Rich at rich@susqu.edu or Dan Niccum at daniel. niccum@stockton.edu.

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New Chair for New York Area

Scott Parker, one of the key members who helped revitalize the New York Area section has stepped down as Chair because he is moving to Nebraska. Mr. Parker will teach lighting at the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

He has been succeeded by Jim Streeter, production manager at Princeton University. Mr. Streeter may be reached at 609-258-0508 or streeter@princeton.edu.

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Distinguished architects
Norman Pfeiffer, left, and
Malcolm Holtzman, were
honored for their work at
both an Architecture
Commission reception
and at the 2007 USITT
Awards Banquet. Hugh
Hardy was also honored,
but weather prevented his
attending the Conference.

Photo/Casey Kearns

Architecture Updates

Raymond Kent

Architecture Commission

The Architecture Commission was busy at the Annual Conference & Stage Expo in Phoenix, working on activities for the 2008 Conference, and keeping members up-to-date.

From Phoenix:

The first Student Design Competition was a great success! This competition draws theatre and architecture students together to design a performing arts facility as a collaborative effort. Students from Clemson University won this year's competition and were at the conference to give a detailed description of the process and project. Sugggestions for running the contest will be incorporated in the future. Any comments about the competition should be sent to Scott Georgeson, AIA, at scott.georgeson@yahoo.com.

Hugh Hardy, Malcolm Holtzman, and Norman Pfeiffer received the first USITT Distinguished Achievement Awards in Architecture nominated by the Architecture Commission. Although inclement weather held Mr. Hardy on the East Coast, Mr. Pfeiffer and Mr. Holtzman were on hand to receive their awards. Anyone wishing to recommend someone for this honor can forward that person's name and a brief description of why they deserve the award to John Prokos (johnp@gundpartnership.com),

Bill Murray (bmurray@pfeifferpartners.com), or Raymond Kent (rkent@wrldesign.com). The award is open to architects, theatre consultants, and acousticians on an individual basis (not a firm) who have advanced the art and design of performing arts facilities.

AIA/CES credits were offered for attending Anthony Shou's session on *Movable Element Design*. The Commission will continue to offer credit for those sessions that qualify. Watch the USITT website and Commission e-mail blasts for what sessions carry credit.

Phoenix seemed to be all about tours, and what a lot of them there were! The Commission offered a Professional Development Workshop tour of the Tempe Center of the Arts and the New Mesa Arts Center led by Michael Tingley. There was a tour of the restored Orpheum Theater where the keynote address was given. The Herberger and Phoenix Symphony tours were very successful.

On to Houston!

The Architecture Commission, is proposing a variety of programming for the 2008 Conference & Stage Expo in Houston, Texas.

Mr. Kent will chair a session, *Technical Positions and Their Place in Space*, in conjunction with the Lighting and Sound commissions. This session examines where best to place lighting catwalks, house mix positions, box boom, and other technical positions within a facility from a theatrical designer's perspective.

Mr. Prokos will chair the annual Architecture Commission meeting to discuss new ideas, make new friends, connect with old friends, and learn more about the design of theatres. He will also present the Distinguished Achievement Award with a reception for the Distinguished Achievement Award will be hosted by the leadership of the Commission.

The annual USITT Architecture Award Review has moved to Friday immediately following the Commission meeting. This should create fewer conflicts for members who would like to attend.

Another round of the Student Design Competition, chaired by Mr. Georgeson, will be offered in 2008. Members also will examine the design of educational spaces in a session chaired by Charles Cosler.

Laura Cabo will chair a session on combined performing arts and fine arts facilities and examine what makes a successful merger of the two. *To LEED or Not to LEED - Sustainable Design*, chaired by Mr. Georgeson, will look at green building practices and how to incorporate them into a performing arts facility.

Mr. Shou will chair a session with the Scene Design Commission on *Acoustics in Scene Design* to examine the effects of what a set designer puts on stage has on the acoustics of a room. Robert Long will chair a *Slide Slam*, presenting examples of both good

and bad design of performing arts centers for a lively discussion.

Jonathan Darling, in conjunction with the Sound Commission, will present an acoustics primer for those who may lack understanding in this area. Mr. Kent also will chair a session on *Room Automation* dealing with what to do when there is a stack of remote controls to use during a performance. Michael Frank from Crestron will present the session which will carry AIA/CES credit.

The Commission is planning a special exhibit with a twist. It will be a shared exhibit with the Scene Design Commission where firms are asked to submit model boxes of the stage house and auditorium theatre projects they have designed in the last five years. The Scene Design Commission will connect forms with set designers who will design a set model to be placed in the architectural model. Architecture firms wishing to submit entries must contact Mr. Kent (rkent@wrldesign.com). The exhibit is only open to members of USITT who will attend the conference in Houston and who plan to bring the model box and take it away after the conference.

Next year's tour sites may include the Wortham Center, The Alley Theater, the Ballet, and the Opera in the Houston theatre district.

Other Commission News

Jody Kovalick of Schuler Shook has agreed to take responsibility for the Commission's website. Look for new information on that page in the near future.

After his three-year term on the Architecture Commission, Mr. Kent will step down as Vice-Commissioner for Programming. Mr. Shou will replace him and will start programming for the 2009 conference. Mr. Kent will continue to serve the Commission in many other capacities such as the AIA/CES Liaison, Special Projects Coordinator, E-Blast Editor, and chair of many sessions.

The Architecture Commission is making an effort to communicate on a quarterly basis with e-mail blasts. To be included, call the USITT office and designate Architecture as an interest area, or do so when renewing memberships.



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Portrait Painting in Phoenix

Several outstanding scenic artists traveled to the Xavier Performing Arts Center in Phoenix, Arizona on a warm, sunny day to participate in a Professional Development Workshop sponsored by the Scene Design Commission. The fantastic end results were displayed in the Scene Design Commission's primary meeting room throughout the 2007 Annual Conference & Stage Expo.

The workshop offered participants a chance to challenge their artistic skills by painting large scale portraits of larger-than-life figures: Judy Garland and Humphrey Bogart.

Presenter Clare P. Rowe, associate professor at the University of Arizona, and assistant Eugenia Furneaux-Arends, third year graduate student from UA, took participants through the steps of creating a realistic sepia tone portrait suitable for stage productions. Each participant received a color handbook of supporting illustrations for future reference as well as a selection of scenic fitches.

The Scene Design Commission offers its thanks to **Limelight Productions, Inc** for generously supporting this workshop.
Limelight donated the brushes used by each participant and paint for the portraits. Organizers noted "We could not have had this fantastic day without them."

Next year in Houston, the Scene Design Commission is proposing up to three incredible Professional Development Workshops, which would provide a broad range of topics to provide "something for everyone." Participants in the *Portrait Painting* Professional Development Workshop gained skills during the event held prior to the 2007 Annual Conference & Stage Expo in Phoenix, Arizona.

Photos/Karen Maness

by Michelle Harvey Vice-Commissioner for Programming, Scene Design Commission





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Once Upon a Time... A Fable for Houston

Janet Harreld

Houston Promotions Coordinator

Once upon a time in a far away northern university, lived a charming and kind young cutter/draper. The cutter/draper possessed great potential but she was very young and wanted to discover a source whereby she could increase her knowledge and hone her skills. The costume designer, the technical director, and the scene designer at her frost-encased institution all agreed she needed to attend the USITT Conference where, indeed, such wisdom might be found

"How now!" cried the lovely young woman after conducting an extensive search on her trusty desktop. "The 2008 USITT Conference is in Houston at the George R. Brown Convention Center!"

The 20-something cutter had been told of immense, shimmering, glass pyramids that contained rainforests and aquatic life from around the globe; of men who donned gadget-covered suits and fishbowl-like helmets and strolled through the heavens; of a colossal urban park that gave rise to premier museums, to rolling verdant spaces where people chased small white dimpled balls with sticks, and to an open-to-the-stars theatre where people picnicked upon the hillside while captivating performances





occurred; of a spectacular mall where ice skating happens even in midsummer; and of a massive 60-foot concave tower where 11,000 gallons of water fall every minute. She was desirous of seeing these things for herself and of

participating in the amazing opportunities of the Conference.

But she was sorely troubled. For as much as she wanted to partake of the enlightenment offered at the USITT Conference and of all of the magical things the city could provide, the Conference was to be held on March 19 through 22 -- right before Easter! The youthful cutter/draper realized that Easter Bunny, of whom she



Attending USITT's 48th Annual Conference in Houston should not trouble any new or more experienced professionals.

Illustrations/Janet Harreld

was so very fond, may not be able to find her in the maze of downtown Houston buildings.



She would miss her white, fuzzy friend and the time they always spent together on that particular morning chatting and partaking of rich chocolate and brightly colored jelly beans.

Hastily, the young woman wrote an urgent note to the wise and all-knowing staff of USITT in the quaint community of Syracuse nestled in the rolling countryside of lush upstate New York.

Understanding the cutter/draper's apprehension, the USITT staff quickly reassured her that her furry friend would not only find her in Houston but that she could easily bring the bunny (along with all of his off spring) with her to any of the many activities Houstonians schedule to celebrate that special time of year.

Churches large (the First Methodist just a few short blocks from the conference hotel or one of the "mega" community churches with a congregation of 30,000) or churches small would welcome guests to their egg hunts on the lawn or to the quiet meditation of their services.

The little ones could be kept happily engaged during the Conference by strolling through shark tunnels at the downtown

Aquarium and taking a spin aloft its gigantic Ferris wheel; by visiting komodo dragons and 3,100 other animals (including some distant cousins) at the Houston Zoo; by experiencing more than 14 separate galleries of vibrant exhibits absolutely bursting with action-packed fun; by churning butter at the Heritage Society's

19th century Duncan Store, or by doing dozens of other things that all little bunnies would love to do.

Still filled with trepidation, the young woman wrote another electronic epistle. "I realize there is much for the E. Bunny Family to do and see in Houston, but what if we want to visit each other in my cozy home in the chilly North?"

"Forsoothe you should not worry, childe!" replied the astute staff in Syracuse. "As Houston has one of the largest air transportation systems in the nation, you can acquire a convenient flight after the Saturday Banquet and still be home to spend Easter with the Bunny Family!"

Finally relieved of all her apprehensions, the young cutter/draper made arrangements to attend and enjoy the USITT Conference. The tender-hearted woman knew that she and Easter Bunny had many joyous hours to spend together choosing which activities they should experience.

And they all lived happily for the next year in contemplation and anticipation of the 2008 USITT Conference and the city located deep in the heart of Texas.



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Stage Expo: **Filling** qU Houston

Helen Willard

Stage Expo Sales Manager

The site of the 48th Annual **USITT** Conference & Stage Expo in 2008 is the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston, Texas.

Houston is considered a toptier convention city, and the George R. Brown is one of the largest convention centers in the US, with:

- 1.2 million square feet of exhibit, meeting and registration space
- 7 exhibit halls with 862,000 square feet of exhibit space
- 117 meeting rooms
- 8
- Boardrooms
- 4 conference rooms
- An arena with telescopic seating for 6,000
- A 3,600 seat



The George R. Brown Convention Center is designed to resemble a ship, including red doors with round windows into the meeting rooms. During a recent site visit led by GRB officials, Carolyn Satter, center, and Dan Denhart, right, reviewed the facility. Photo/Barbara E.R. Lucas

Preliminary list of exhibitors for Stage Expo 2008, as of May 1, 2007:

- A.C. Lighting Inc.
- A.C.T Lighting, Inc.
- American Harlequin Corporation
- Apollo Design Technology, Inc.
- Barbizon Lighting Company
- Ben Nye Makeup
- California Institute of the Arts
- Cirque du Soleil
- City Theatrical, Inc.
- J.R. Clancy, Inc.
- Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center
- Clark Transfer, Inc.
- Clear-Com Communication Systems
- d&b audiotechnik
- Dazian Fabrics, LLC
- Eartec
- Electronic Theatre Controls (ETC)
- **Entertainment Services & Technology** Association (ESTA)
- **Entertainment Technology**
- Feld Entertainment
- Florida State University
- **Future Light**
- GALA Systems, Inc.
- GAMPRODUCTS, INC.
- H & H Specialties Inc.
- heatshrink.com
- The Hilliard Corporation
- **HME®**
- I. Weiss
- IATSE Local 1
- InterAmerica Stage, Inc.
- International Alliance of Theatrical Stage **Employees**
- Irwin Seating Company
- Kenmark, Inc.
- Kryolan Corporation
- Le Maitre Special Effects Inc.
- LEE Filters

- Meyer Sound Laboratories, Inc.
- Mongol Global Tour Company, Inc.
- Norcostco, Inc.
- North Carolina School of the Arts
- University of Oklahoma
- Oregon Shakespeare Festival
- The Painter's Journal
- Penn State University
- **Period Corsets**
- PRG
- Production Intercom, Inc.
- Protech Theatrical Services. Inc.
- RC4 Wireless / Soundsculpture Inc.
- Robert Juliat
- Rosco Laboratories, Inc.
- Rose Brand Theatrical Fabrics, Fabrications & Supplies
- Sapsis Rigging Entertainment Services,
- Sculptural Arts Coating, Inc.
- SeaChanger by Ocean Optics
- **SECOA**
- Selecon
- Serapid, Inc.
- Show Distribution Group Inc.
- Smooth-On, Inc.
- Stage Research, Inc.
- Stage Technologies
- StageLight, Inc.
- StageRight Corporation
- Steeldeck Inc.
- Strand Lighting
- Strong Entertainment Lighting
- Syracuse Scenery & Stage Lighting Co.,
- Texas Scenic Company
- Thern Inc.
- James Thomas Engineering
- Turning Star Inc.

- tiered theatre hall
- 31,500 square foot ballroom
- 4 exterior balconies for outdoor receptions
- 17 show offices
- 39 freight doors
- 9 drive in doors
- 11 freight elevators
- 66 loading docks

USITT Stage Expo 2008 will take place in Exhibit Hall E, a 130,000-squarefoot exhibit hall which was added when the Convention Center's size was nearly doubled in 2003. The large exhibit hall will be jampacked with exhibits during Stage Expo 2008, as more than 85 percent of the available booth space has already been booked, and special exhibits will include the **PQ USA 2007** exhibits.

The headquarters hotel for the 2008 Annual Conference & Stage Expo is the Hilton Americas Hotel, which opened in 2003, has 1,200 rooms, and is connected to the Convention Center by two sky bridges. The hotel's Lanier **Grand Ballroom** is the city's

- Lehigh Electric Products Co.
- Leprecon
- Lex Products Corp.
- Lighting & Electronics, Inc.
- Limelight Productions, Inc.
- Live Design Magazine/LDI Show
- Look Solutions USA, Ltd.
- Lycian Stage Lighting
- Make-Up Designory
- Martin Professional, Inc.
- MDG Fog Generators
- . Mehron, Inc.

- Union Connector Co., Inc.
- United Scenic Artists Local USA 829
- Vari-Lite
- VectorWorks Spotlight by Nemetschek North America
- · Vortek, a division of Daktronics
- Walt Disney Entertainment
- Wenger Corporation
- Wybron, Inc.
- ZFX, Inc.

largest, at 40,000 square feet, and can be divided into as many as 12 rooms. The second hotel ballroom, the Ballroom of the Americas, is 28,000 square feet.

Three restaurants, a full-service health club, pool, and spa are also on site. State-ofthe-art technology features are found throughout the hotel, from the ballrooms to guest rooms, including wired and wireless high-speed internet access.

For more information on exhibiting at Stage Expo 2008, please contact hpwillard@aol. com.

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- 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
- Alexandra Bonds, Vice-President for International Activities
- Carl Lefko, Vice-President for Programming
- Lisa Westkaemper, Acting Vice-President for Promotion & Development
- Holly Monsos, Vice-President for Members, Sections & Chapters
- Daniel Denhart, Vice-President for Special Operations
- John Uthoff, Immediate Past President

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

2005-2008

- Ann Archbold
- Bill Browning
- Dan Culhane
- David Krajec
- Martha Marking
- Brian Reed

2006-2009

- Leon Brauner
- Richard Dunham
- Debra Krajec
- Mike Murphy

- Donna Ruzika
- Bill Teague



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Almost two months before the opening of the 2007 Prague Quadrennial, the last box is added to the container leaving the Krannert Center for he Performing Arts of the College of Fine and Applied Arts at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

All of the carefullywrapped and packed materials will be reassembled starting June 10 in Prague, Czech Republic.

Photo/R. Eric Stone

Packing the Last Box: USITT PQ USA 2007

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