



home **USITT**

Sightlines

May 2009

Lead Story

▷ USITT ▷ Calendar ▷ JobsUSITT ▷ Sightlines

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to kansas city
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf



Read about many of the awards presentations, special events, and sessions from USITT's 49th Annual Conference & Stage Expo throughout this issue of *Sightlines*. Enjoy learning about USITT's new Fellows, USITT Award winners, Distinguished Achievement winners, member generosity, and more. Here, photographer Richard Finkelstein captures one of the specialized tools used to create the special effect makeup shown on the presenter in the background. This presentation was one of hundreds of sessions which were part of the record-breaking event held March 18 to 21, 2009 in Cincinnati, Ohio



home **usitt**

News & Notices

[Next Story](#)

▷ USITT ▷ Calendar ▷ JobsUSITT ▷ Sightlines

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to kansas city
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf



Oscar Brockett

Brockett Receives USITT Award

Oscar Brockett, given by Margaret Mitchell

Oscar Brockett was honored with the USITT Award, given at the 2009 Annual Conference & Stage Expo. His remarks were delivered by Margaret Mitchell.

I am extremely pleased to be offered this award by USITT. It is especially meaningful to me because during the convention I will have my 86th birthday, which is also the reason why I am not here in person. My physical well-being does not, at the moment, let me travel and therefore I am sorry to be unable to be present for the honor you are giving me.

But, I have a couple of things I'd like to say briefly. Those of you who know me probably think of me primarily as an author of books about theatre history, but I'd like to proudly say that the first ten years of my work in theatre was in design and technology, and that my first graduate degree was in that field.

My first appointment in a university job came in 1949 at the University of Kentucky, after which I returned to Stanford University to complete a Ph.D. degree and, while working at that university, held the title of Junior Artist in Residence which actually was a job that required me to replace any of the four faculty members in the design-technology area when any one of them was on leave. Since the university was on a quarter system, this meant that I had to replace one of the four each quarter of the year, which in turn, meant that I had to do both their practical theatre work and teach their classes. It was a very interesting experience for me, one that meant that I had to deepen my knowledge and skills rapidly in several different areas of production and to apply it immediately.

That was my greatest immersion in this field. Afterward I went to teach at the University of Iowa, where the chair of the department was Arnold Gillette, one of the nation's best known designers. I was more useful in other areas, especially in that time when academic theatre was perhaps in its greatest time of growth.

When the dean of my college began to ask me to create and teach graduate-level classes in theatre history and similar academic subjects, I became a writer in the 1960s and have continued so ever since. But what I learned from design and technology has remained with

Margaret Mitchell received the USITT Award on behalf of Oscar Brockett. The USITT Award is given to recognize a lifetime contribution to the performing arts community. It was presented as part of the Awards Banquet which concluded the 2009 Annual Conference.

Photo/Tom Thatcher

me still.

Last year, at the USITT Conference & Stage Expo in Houston, there was a rather long discussion of a book I am writing (along with my stand-in here). As a result, several people have been asking when the book, which is called *A History of Stage Design and Technology*, is to be published, and so I take this opportunity to say (not as a promotion of the book so much as an answer to that question) that it will be published during the coming year.

I am also pleased to report that my award and this book are closely connected with Robert Tobin, who received the same award in 1992 that I am being given here tonight. Robert Tobin, as you may know, was one of the major collectors in the United States of scenic designs and became the founder of the Robert L. B. Tobin Fund for Theatre Arts, which is supporting our book. This project was a dream of Robert Tobin's, and we are pleased that we can put forth an account of the development of scenic design and the technology that has made it possible to put scenery on stages -- from the beginning to the present. Robert hoped and *we hope* that what we are doing will be of great interest and help to all of you in the field of design and technology.

I look upon it as the culmination of my career. I thank you most heartily for your attention and for this honor.

[To Top](#) 

home **usitt**

News & Notices

[Next Story](#)
[▷ USITT](#) [▷ Calendar](#) [▷ JobsUSITT](#) [▷ Sightlines](#)

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to kansas city
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf



Gregg Henry, Co-Manager, Artistic Director for the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, accepted the USITT Award during the Awards Banquet which closed the 2009 Annual Conference & Stage Expo in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Photo/Tom Thatcher

KCACTF Receives USITT Award

USITT presented one of its highest awards to KC/ACTF during the Awards Banquet at the 2009 Annual Conference & Stage Expo. Gregg Henry accepted the accolade on behalf of the organization. Here are the introductory remarks for the award.

John Uthoff
USITT Past President

When I returned from Vietnam in 1971, I worked on two productions at the University of Iowa that were invited to participate in a fairly new organization called the American College Theatre Festival. One was a production of *Marat/Sade* and the other an arena production of *Story Theatre*. The festival was at what is now Webster University. I had never been at such an event in my life. There were design exhibitions, auditions, and shows every night. Immediately after each performance, the critics would take the stage and tell everyone at the production what they thought was right and what they thought was wrong. After it was over, we took apart the set and took the show back to Iowa.

Such was my introduction to an organization that I have been closely aligned with since -- until stepping down as USITT's Representative to KCACTF last year.

KCACTF was founded by Roger L. Stevens in 1969. The earliest National Festivals were performed in tents on the National Mall. Since those beginnings, the program has grown into a network of more than 600 academic institutions throughout the country and involves 18,000 students yearly. Theatre departments and student artists showcase their work and are critiqued, both at home, and at eight regional festivals. The winners attend workshops with theatre professionals in Washington, D.C. and elsewhere each year and are awarded scholarships and opportunities that may launch their careers.

The goals of KCACTF are in harmony with many of the goals of USITT:

- to encourage, recognize, and celebrate the finest and most diverse work produced in university and college theatre programs;
- to provide opportunities for participants to develop their theater skills and insight; and achieve professionalism;

- to improve the quality of college and university theater in America;
- to encourage colleges and universities to give distinguished productions of new plays, especially those written by students; the classics, revitalized or newly conceived; and experimental works.

KCACTF has become the organization where we can go to meet other professionals outside of technical theatre, management, and design. It is where the playwrights, the critics, the directors, the actors, converge, do workshops, and talk into the night. It has become an essential part of this country's theatre fabric.

It is with great pleasure that I present USITT's highest award, the USITT Award -- given to recognize a lifetime contribution to the performing arts community -- to the Kennedy Center American College Theatre program.

The plaque reads:

USITT Award 2008

Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival

In recognition for the advancement of theatre over the past forty years and providing a catalyst for quality theatre involving over 18,000 students throughout the United States annually. KCACTF has enriched the lives of over 400,000 college and university students through a nationally renowned festival. We honor your extraordinary commitment to education and the advancement of the performing arts community.

Board of Directors

Cincinnati, Ohio

March 2009

[To Top](#) 

[Next Page](#) →



home **USITT**

News & Notices

[Next Story](#)

▷ USITT ▷ Calendar ▷ JobsUSITT ▷ Sightlines

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to kansas city
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf

Distinguished Achievement

Seven individuals received Distinguished Achievement Awards as part of the 2009 Annual Conference in Cincinnati.

Lenna Kaleva was honored for Distinguished Achievement in Costume Design; **Jules Fisher** was honored for Distinguished Achievement in Lighting Design; **Jack Mann** was honored for Distinguished Achievement in Sound; **Franco Colavecchia** was honored for Distinguished Achievement in Scenic Design; **Barton Myers** was honored for Distinguished Achievement in Architecture; **Ben Sammler** was honored for Distinguished Achievement in Technical Production, and **Robert Rody** was honored for Distinguished Achievement in Management.

Lenna Kaleva taught more than a generation of makeup and wig design students at Cincinnati's College Conservatory of Music. A Russian émigré, Ms. Kaleva was instrumental in creating one of the premiere educational makeup and wig design programs in the United States. Her work has been seen not only in Cincinnati at CCM and Edgecliff College but also at Cincinnati Opera and numerous theatre and opera companies around the country. Her legacy continues in the work of her students who are employed in the film industry, regional theatres, opera companies, and academic programs all over the United States.



Lenna Kaleva

Jules Fisher calls himself a lighting designer who creates illusions. He has created magical lighting for Broadway shows, film, concerts, and television for over 50 years and along the way has received eight Tony Awards (and 12 more nominations), seven Drama Desk Awards, and an Emmy Award nomination for lighting the celebration of President Clinton's inaugural in 1993. He was inducted into the Theatre Hall of Fame in 2006, received the USITT Award in 1995, the Illuminating Engineering Society's Lighting Design Award in 1978 (for *Dancin'*), and the Henry Hewes Design Award in 1996 (for *Bring in 'Da Noise Bring in 'Da Funk*). Mr. Fisher has shared his "design imperatives" with scores of young professionals through the *Live Design* Broadway Master Classes. His prolific achievements are the subject of *The Designs of Jules Fisher*, the fifth in USITT's Monograph Series honoring living designers.



Jules Fisher

Jack Mann is considered one of the true pioneers of theatre sound design. Originally from Michigan, he began his life in the theatre in 1941 as an electrician when he was just 18. After serving in World War II, he returned to Michigan where he continued as a theatre electrician for eight years before moving to New York in 1959. He became involved in theatre sound and soon gained a reputation for his creative design and innovative techniques, long before the term

Sound Designer came into being. During his 27 years on Broadway, Mr. Mann had the privilege of working with renowned artists such as George Abbott, Leonard Bernstein, Harold Prince, and Stephen Sondheim. He is a father of two, grandfather of four, and great grandfather of four. He retired in 1986 and now lives in New Jersey with Jean, his wife of 66 years. The award was presented by David Collison, who came from England for the presentation.

Franco Colavecchia has designed internationally for opera and theatre, working with Luciano Pavarotti, Gian Carlo Menotti, Frank Corsaro, and Ian Strasfogel among others such as Tommy Tune. Mr. Colavecchia has designed productions for locations as varied as the New York City Opera, Chicago Lyric, Houston Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, Washington Opera, New Opera Theater at B.A.M., Pittsburgh Opera, San Antonio Festival, The Music Opera Association/Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in Los Angeles, Den Norske Opera in Oslo, The Wexford Opera Festival in Eire, and Glimmerglass Opera. He designed the Italian tour and the Broadway version of *La Boheme* for Mr. Pavarotti. His work has been seen in numerous locations around the world and he has worked for The Oxford Playhouse, the Roundhouse, the Edinburgh Festival, and the York Festival in the United Kingdom. He was the assistant to Julian

Beck of the Living Theatre on the London Production of *The Brig*. His designs have also been seen on PBS television for *La Boheme* for Pavarotti in Philadelphia, *Faust* for the Opera Company in Philadelphia, *Carmen* for New York City Opera (Live from Lincoln Center) and *Treemonisha* for Houston Opera. He has also worked on several documentary films. He has exhibited his paintings and drawings extensively through out the country. His designs have been included in the Prague Quadrennial three times, and some of his work is in the permanent collection at the Tobin Collection in San Antonio. He has taught and mentored numerous students at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts where he continues to paint and to design. He also has taught at DePaul University, Colgate University, SUNY Purchase, Carnegie Mellon, and Harvard University. He continues to be a guest lecturer in rendering all across the country.

Ben Sammler has been at the Yale School of Drama for more than 25 years and currently holds an endowed chair position as the Henry McCormick Professor of Technical Design & Production. Mr. Sammler is known as a leading educator, a supportive mentor, a diligent editor, an award-winning author, a USITT Tech Expo founder, and a frequent presenter and leader of Professional Development Workshops at USITT and other conferences.

Mr. Sammler received his master's degree from Yale and in 1974 was promoted to Assistant Professor and remained as technical director at the school until 1980 when he changed jobs, taking on the position of Production Supervisor for both the School and the Yale Rep.

According to Dennis Dorn, who presented him with the award, "Ben's foresight and ambition has transformed the original TDL Program (Tech, Design & Lighting) into the current Technical Design & Production Program. The program has gone from a generalist focus in Technical Production to one that addresses the needs of present-day theatre technical designers and technical managers. Although admission to the School requires meeting very high standards, it can be truthfully said that at any one time nearly 25% of the nation's technical production graduate students are studying at the Drama School.

The Technical Briefs he oversees have been published in two anthologies with a third in the works. He is the co-author (with Alyce Holden) of *Structural Design for the Stage*, which won USITT's Golden Pen Award in 2000.

For USITT, Mr. Sammler served as a Technical Production Vice-Commissioner and Co-



Jack Mann with David Collison



Franco Colavecchia with Howard Jones



Ben Sammler

Commissioner for a number of years, and was instrumental in creating and nurturing Tech Expo, which in 2009 is celebrating its 12th anniversary.

In November 2006, the New England Theatre Conference (NETC) presented Ben with the Leonidas A. Nickole Theatre Educator Award -- the first time the NETC has so honored a theatrical design and production educator.

Barton Myers received his Master of Architecture degree from the University of Pennsylvania. He first established his firm in Toronto and, in 1984, opened an office in Los Angeles that is now the firm's base.

Mr. Myers received the first Toronto Arts Award for Architecture in recognition of his contribution to that city, and in 1994, he received a Gold Medal from the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC). In 2002, Barton received the Gold Medal from the Los Angeles chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA/LA). Mr. Myers has taught architecture and planning and has been a Visiting Professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Design and the University of Pennsylvania. He also served as Thomas Jefferson Professor at the University of Virginia. Since 1980, he has been a professor of architecture at the UCLA School of Art and Architecture and lectures extensively throughout North America and abroad.

He is a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects, Los Angeles Chapter; Past Fellow, Royal Architectural Institute of Canada; a Retired Board Member and Lifetime Patron of the Society of Architectural Historians, and a member of the President's Circle, United States Naval Academy.

Robert J. Rody is Technical Director of Playhouse Square Foundation in Cleveland, Ohio. The foundation is a 501(c)(3) with \$50 million in revenue which incubates, produces, and presents theatrical and musical entertainment and operates five theatres and three performance spaces. Playhouse Square Center is the second largest entertainment center in North America and in it the Foundation presents over 600 event-nights annually. Mr. Rody has been the Foundation's Technical Director and principal technical theatre specialist since 1973. Mr. Rody was active throughout all phases of the Foundation's redevelopment. He helped coordinate the opening of the restored Ohio Theatre in 1982 and the State Theatre in 1984. He personally supervised the construction of the \$10 million State Theatre stagehouse, a nationally known 10-story facility that still defines the state of the art. He helped coordinate the opening of the Palace Theatre in 1988 and the Allen Theatre in 1998. He currently coordinates the needs of the center's six constituent groups which present ballet, opera, modern dance, and legitimate theatre. He provides technical direction for the Foundation's presentations which range from Broadway (seven productions per year) to jazz and pop. Mr. Rody received his master's degree from Bowling Green State University.



Barton Myers with John Prokos



Carolyn Satter with Robert J. Rody

[To Top](#) ↑

[Next Page](#) →



home **USITT**

News & Notices

[Next Story](#)

▷ USITT ▷ Calendar ▷ JobsUSITT ▷ Sightlines

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to kansas city
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf



Leon I. Brauner was surprised to receive USITT's Honorary Lifetime Member Award at the 2009 Annual Conference & Stage Expo in Cincinnati, Ohio. The award was presented to Mr. Brauner by John Uthoff at the conclusion of the Fellows Address.

Photo/Casey Kearns

Brauner Presented Honorary Lifetime Member Award

John Uthoff

When I first became involved in the USITT Conference & Stage Expo planning in 1992, there was one person's name I kept hearing but didn't get to meet until the August meetings. It was always, "Oh, Leon is on sabbatical. You will meet him in August. He is out of the country." Indeed, Leon has spent a good part of his career "out of the country" serving as an ambassador of goodwill for USITT overseas.

Leon has worked as a costume designer and educator for over 40 years. During that time, Leon has designed for academic theatre, regional opera, ballet, and theatre dance companies in Los Angeles, Indianapolis, and New York. He has regional theatre design credits in California, Arizona, Utah, and Indiana. His designs have been exhibited in PQ and in international exhibits in Yugoslavia, Poland, and the Czech Republic. Leon served as chair of the Department of Theatre and Drama at Indiana University from 1996 until his retirement in July of 2002.

Leon has served USITT in a variety of positions. He served as Costume Commissioner, VP Commissions, National Program Chair (VP for Programming), VP for Conferences, and President and currently serves as head of the United States Centre of OISTAT. In addition, Leon planned and led the PQ Tours for many years. These were always exciting and unusual personal voyages of discovery of theatrical and national treasures. I will never forget participating in his last tour as leader.

I think the best way to honor Leon as a person is with his own words. These come from his Fellows Address of 1994.

"What can we do for the Institute? If the Institute is of value to us, then we must demonstrate this belief -- we must do something. We must participate in projects, write articles, report on expositions, create a new project and project teams, direct the energies of a Commission or committee, make a symposium, and participate in an on-going discussion on an electronic forum or newsletter. We can bring life in a daily and on-going way to our Institute. While the conference may be the visible heart of the organization, you become the life-giving blood that nourishes and refreshes our profession and colleagues."

Leon has lived his life as the life-giving blood of the Institute, and it is with great pleasure that I present him this Honorary Lifetime Membership in USITT.

[To Top](#) 



home **USITT**

Announcements

[Next Story](#)

▷ USITT ▷ Calendar ▷ JobsUSITT ▷ Sightlines

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to kansas city
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf

New Books Online at USITT Bookstore

Several new books, including the latest addition to USITT's Monograph Series, *The Designs of Jules Fisher* are now available online. USITT also is selling *Dressed: a Century of Hollywood Costume Design*, which won the 2009 USITT Golden Pen Award, and new books by member authors.

Members always receive a discount on books purchased through the [website](#), or by calling 800-938-7488.

[To Top](#) ↑

ESTA Announces BPGAP, Design Day

ESTA has introduced the Business Peer Group Advisory Program (BPGAP), an opportunity for members to meet regularly with a small group of peers in the industry with similar business issues, questions, and solutions. The program provides a forum where members can feel comfortable discussing, sharing, and brainstorming to help their businesses and each other in a non-competitive atmosphere. BPGAP is open to individuals from ESTA dealer, manufacturer, production, and professional service members.

For more information on BPGAP and to download the application to participate, visit www.esta.org/BPGAP or contact Lori Rubinstein in the ESTA office at 212-244-1505.

Designers on both sides of the Atlantic supported Behind the Scenes and Light Relief By Design Day, the day the industry came together to celebrate its successes and to give back in thanks. On April 24, designers with shows around the world donated their royalties to support one or both of the two charities dedicated exclusively to helping entertainment technology and design professionals, Behind the Scenes in the United States and Canada, and Light Relief in the United Kingdom. Designers and others not in royalty situations have stepped forward with direct donations.

To find out more and to read about the original idea, go to www.estafoundation.org/bts or www.lightrelief.org.uk.

[To Top](#) ↑

Registration Open for Costume Symposium

The USITT 2009 Costume Symposium, *Creating Creatures with Foam and Varaform*, will be held August 6 to 8 at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio.

The 2009 Costume Symposium will create an opportunity for participants to learn about and create reticulated foam and Varaform creatures.

As part of the symposium, led by seasoned professionals, each participant will receive a detailed workbook illustrating step-by-step development processes, basic patterns for creating donkey heads and puppets, and a DVD that details the development processes in action.

These hands-on workshops include sculpting, adapting patterns, and assembling thermoplast and foam creatures. Participants will also explore a variety of approaches to designing creature costumes and show how simple rigging tricks to help creatures "come alive."

Costs will increase June 1, if the event is not sold out, so those who are interested are urged to register before that deadline.

For more information, or to register, [click here](#).

[To Top](#) ↑

This month:
New Books
ESTA Initiatives
Costume Symposium

[Next Page](#) →



home **USITT**

News & Notices

[Next Story](#)

▷ USITT ▷ Calendar ▷ JobsUSITT ▷ Sightlines

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to kansas city
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf



Grants & Fellowships Provide Funding for Institute Members

Tim Kelly
Chair, Grants & Fellowships Committee

In January of 1985, then USITT President Randy Earle, established the Endowment Management Committee to assist in overseeing the Kook Fund and to initiate a Grants & Fellowships Program. Guidelines were drawn up that would allow the Institute to sponsor research in subject matter of interest to our membership.

From 1985 through 2009, Institute members have been awarded a total of \$246,554 in the form of Project Grant and Fellowship funding. There have been 36 Project Grants given to investigate a wide variety of subjects including: Controls for moving scenery, Flat pattern exchange, USITT assistance to the Socialist countries, Theatre of the Fraternity FOFMO, Virtual reality interface, Theatrical costume designs, Shop built goniophotometer, International design archives, Circus in America, and a host of others.

Starting in 1998, funding for 12 Fellowships has been provided to assist Institute members in exploring topics in their areas of specialization. Fellowship investigations have delved into: Japanese Yuzen Dyeing Techniques, Costume designer Percy Anderson, An international perspective of lighting design and Mexican mask makers, to mention just a few examples.

It was one of the founding fathers, Eddie Kook, who insisted that the Institute invest in research and development as well as the scholarly pursuits of its members. Included in USITT's **Vision Statement** is this sentence: *USITT is dedicated to the professional development of those who are an integral part of the performing arts and entertainment industry.*

It is that basic tenet of the Institute that is at the core of the Grants and Fellowships program which encourages invention, imagination and creativity. The original Endowment Management Committee has morphed into the Grants & Fellowships Committee and now takes responsibility for soliciting and adjudicating grant and fellowship proposals. This program has met a critical need for the Institute and has become a vital resource for funding successful petitioners.

Competition for these limited funds is rigorous. Annually, one proposal is weighed against another in the difficult task of selecting the most outstanding projects and critical areas of study. Two Fellowships were awarded in Cincinnati. They went to Deborah Bell for her research into *Mexican Mask Makers and Collectors*, and to Bruce Auerbach for his study of the *History of Lighting: Philosophy, Science, and Aesthetics*.

Bidding became heated as the 2009 Art Auction, which benefits the Edward F. Kook Fund, drew to a close. Those attending the 49th Annual Conference & Stage Expo had almost three days to follow items as their prices increased.

Photo/Tom Thatcher

In addition to the Grants & Fellowship work, every three years since its inception in Boston during the 1991 Conference, the Committee has produced the ever-popular Tri-Annual Art Auction. The auction raises money for the Kook Fund.

Those who have witnessed and participated in this raucous event can attest to the additional excitement it sets off on the Stage Expo floor. Auctions have taken place in Boston, Nashville, Pittsburgh, Denver, Minneapolis, Louisville, and Cincinnati. The total raised for the Kook Fund by this event is over \$75,000. The auction just concluded in Cincinnati brought in \$11,137 through the generosity of our members. Many colleagues graciously donated their works of theatre art for the auction as well as “*treasures*” unearthed from back stages, warehouses, and cluttered office spaces for the garage sale.

The **Vision Statement** goes on to say: *USITT will actively promote and support research and development today that creates the theatre of the future.* Through the Grants & Fellowships program, which is paid for by General Operating Funds, the Kook Fund, and other generous donations from the Membership, USITT will continue to invest in the future of our industry and our members.

[To Top](#) 


[home](#) **USITT**

News & Notices

[Next Story](#)
[▷ USITT](#) [▷ Calendar](#) [▷ JobsUSITT](#) [▷ Sightlines](#)
May 2009
News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to kansas city
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf



Louis Bradfield, New Fellow

John Uthoff
USITT Past President

I met our next inductee while I was still in high school. I called the local university and asked for some help fixing the master dimmers for my high schools autotransformer board. Since the school was built in the 1930s and it was then the 1960s, these masters were saturable core dimmers. David Thayer showed up and brought along one of his students. That student was Louis Bradfield. Louie, will you please come to the stage?

Louie left Iowa in 1964, and after brief stops in other entertainment centers, he settled in Las Vegas, working at various showrooms up and down the strip. He is a longtime member of IA Local 720, and has been head electrician at Bally's (previously the MGM Grand) in the Ziegfeld Theatre since the building opened in 1972. During this time, he became friends with George Thomas Howard, the building's consultant. Louis was responsible for the electro-mechanical systems for the long running production of Hallelujah Hollywood, and for the current show, now running 26 years, Jubilee. Many of these systems are still in use today as he continues to maintain and update equipment.

A survivor of the Casino fire at the MGM, he was involved in the rebuilding of all these systems and the theatre automation controls after the fire. In 2004, he worked on the major update and redesign of the lighting system to meet specifications of Ken Billington and Jason Kantrowitz. Louis serves as faculty at the Stagecraft Institute of Las Vegas and is a founding member of the advisory board for the Entertainment Engineering and Design program in the colleges of Fine Arts and Engineering at UNLV. He has been involved in the ESTA Standards program since it began.

Louis has been a member of the Institute since the 1960s, and has been a long time member of the Engineering Commission and the Standards Committee. He did many presentations in the 1970s and 1980s about production in Las Vegas and the systems at Bally's. During the Las Vegas Conference, he was responsible for the Super Sessions and arranged for many of the production teams of the Las Vegas shows to come and speak at the conference. The

Louis Bradfield, left, was introduced and presented his Fellows plaque by John Uthoff. He was one of four new Fellows inducted at the 2009 Annual Conference & Stage Expo.

Photo/Casey Kearns

success of those sessions was a direct response to his dedication and attention to detail.

Anyone who has been on one of Louis's personal theatre tours knows of his great knowledge and generous nature. He has served on Standards, as a Director at Large, and is currently the Alternate Liaison to the ESTA Technical Standards Committee.

Louie, with great pleasure, I welcome you to the Fellows.

Louis Bradfield was one of four new Fellows to be inducted in a ceremony at the 2009 Annual Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio. The honorary designation is given to those selected by vote of the current Fellows and is bestowed for life upon those members who have made a truly outstanding contribution to the theatre and the work of the Institute.

Click their names to read the introductory remarks about the other new Fellows, [Laura Crow](#), [Carl Lefko](#), and [Bill Sapsis](#).

[To Top](#) 

[Next Page](#) →



home **USITT**

News & Notices

[Next Story](#)

▷ USITT ▷ Calendar ▷ JobsUSITT ▷ Sightlines

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to kansas city
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf



Laura Crow, New Fellow

Zelma H. Weisfeld

I first met our next inductee when she joined the faculty at The University of Michigan as costume designer two years after I retired, during which time the MFA program in design had disintegrated to zero students.

She quickly rebuilt the program in costume design and was able to attract excellent students. She also brought in designers, such as the distinguished British scenographer Pamela Howard, for seminars.

From Michigan, she moved to the University of Connecticut where she still teaches. There she recruits outstanding young students from countries such as the former Yugoslavia. Several have won the USITT Costume Design & Technology Award sponsored by Zelma H. Weisfeld. She also designs professionally and carries out a series of projects, any one of which could be a full time job.

She is active in the Costume Design & Technology Commission, and with a grant from USITT recently started the Fine Arts Digital Media Archive. In addition to being a presenter at conferences, she brought three prominent Cuban Costume designers to the New Orleans conference, several of whom have returned. An active reviewer for USITT's Project 2000, she also organized public portfolio critiques for student members. She co-chaired the Young Designers' Forum for five years, was co-chair of the PQ Schools Exhibit in 1999, 2003, and 2007. She was the costume curator for the 2007 PQ. Her contributions to the projects were substantial. She also was active and strongly contributed to the success of World Design 2005.

Professionally she is an award-winning Broadway, Off-Broadway, and regional theatre costume designer, including working in Chicago and San Francisco.

Just to keep from being bored, she is active internationally as Chair of the Costume Working Group for OISTAT, which meets worldwide. She organized the international Carnival Symposium in Cuba and an International Textile Symposium in the Philippines, and was a Fulbright Scholar to the Philippines to explore multi-ethnic influences on Costume.

I could go on, but time does not allow, and my eyes grow misty thinking about how I have wasted my time and career.

Laura Crow was one of four new Fellows inducted into the ranks of the august group as part of USITT's 2009 Annual Conference & Stage Expo. Zelma Weisfeld gave the introductory remarks for Ms. Crow.

Photo/Tom Thatcher

Laura, I don't know how you do it, but we are all grateful that you do it and grateful as well for your never ending cheerfulness and willingness to share. I am honored to present you to the Fellows and to the members of the Institute.

Laura Crow was one of four new Fellows to be inducted in a ceremony at the 2009 Annual Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio. The honorary designation is given to those selected by vote of the current Fellows and is bestowed for life upon those members who have made a truly outstanding contribution to the theatre and the work of the Institute.

Click their names to read the introductory remarks about the other new Fellows, [Louis Bradfield](#), [Carl Lefko](#), and [Bill Sapsis](#).

[To Top](#) 

[Next Page →](#)

home **usitt**

News & Notices

[Next Story](#)
[▷ USITT](#) [▷ Calendar](#) [▷ JobsUSITT](#) [▷ Sightlines](#)

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to kansas city
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf



Carl Lefko, New Fellow

Sandy Bonds
VP-International Activities

I am pleased to invite Carl Lefko to the stage to become a Fellow of USITT. Carl has been the professor of scenic and lighting design for the Department of Theatre and Cinema at Radford University (in Virginia) since 1979, where he is now chair. Carl is actively involved in the Southeastern Theatre Conference. For the USITT Southeast Regional Section, he has held the offices of Treasurer, Vice-Chair and Chair.

He developed the program of Master Classes and worked to strengthen the ties between the section and the national. In USITT, he started working on conferences in Nashville and was on the first National Conference Committee in Pittsburgh. After serving as our Vice-President for Programming, he is now our President, in case you hadn't noticed.

Radford College Dean Joseph Scartelli said, "While I was impressed to hear of Carl's election to this prestigious post, I was not all surprised. Carl is highly respected in his field; he's thorough, responsible, and an effective leader. USITT could not ask for more in a president."

I first became aware of Carl when I nervously attended my first USITT Board of Directors retreat in 2001. My initial and lasting impression is that Carl is indefatigable, good natured, fair, energetic, and dedicated to USITT. I immediately admired his even-tempered, Southern, gentlemanly manner and his Hawaiian shirts. An interview with Carl in the March edition of *Live Design*, available at the LDI/Live Design booth at this conference, refers to his belief in balancing work with other facets of life: family, friends, fun, and service. In order to perform his duties as department head and President of USITT -- as well as to enjoy his family and friends -- Carl is remarkably self-disciplined. He is always up at 5 a.m. and, after a work-out on his elliptical exercise machine, next he has his omelet and is ready for work by 7 a.m.

Sylvia Hilyard Pannell, who as Immediate Past President worked quite closely with Carl, reminds us that Carl is a good party boy nevertheless. And coming from Sylvia, that makes it true. She adds, "He is a man of good humor, sensitive to the needs of others and at the same time deliberate, reasonable, and capable of making the hard decisions facing him in his simultaneous and demanding jobs."

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the fellowship of the Fellows. Party tonight in the President's suite, and you all are invited.

Carl Lefko was one of four new Fellows to be inducted in a ceremony at the 2009 Annual

Carl Lefko, left, laughs during the remarks introducing him as one of the four new Fellows of USITT. Sandy Bonds, at podium, jokingly invited the entire crowd to Mr. Lefko's suite for a party following the ceremony.

Photo/Tom Thatcher

Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio. The honorary designation is given to those selected by vote of the current Fellows and is bestowed for life upon those members who have made a truly outstanding contribution to the theatre and the work of the Institute.

Click their names to read the introductory remarks about the other new Fellows, [Laura Crow](#), [Louis Bradfield](#), and [Bill Sapsis](#).

[To Top](#) 

[Next Page →](#)



News & Notices

[Next Story](#)

▷ USITT ▷ Calendar ▷ JobsUSITT ▷ Sightlines

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to kansas city
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf



Bill Sapsis, New Fellow

Joe Aldridge

The next new Fellow has been in the entertainment business since 1972. In that time, he has run the gamut of technical positions from company driver to technical director at a number of institutions across the country. His work on Broadway includes the original productions of *Chorus Line* and *The Runner Stumbles*.

In 1981, he started his own company, and since then the company has grown from a two-person operation installing manual rigging systems to a multi-faceted installation/production/service company with clients on four continents. His commitment to safety-related issues in the entertainment business is well established and his articles on rigging and safety issues can be found in numerous entertainment industry publications while his lectures can be heard all over the world. He recently organized and offered the first North American Theater Engineering and Architecture Conference, which was patterned after two previous Theatre Engineering and Architecture Conferences held in the United Kingdom.

"It is the mission of the North American Theater Engineering and Architecture Conference (NATEAC) to promote communication between the architects, engineers, consultants, and manufacturers responsible for designing and building new theatres and renovating existing facilities in North America. It is also our goal to promote a higher level of interaction between these professionals and the end users of their facilities."

The conference was so successful that it will be repeated in 2012. You also can find him participating as vice president of the board of directors for Theatre Circ, a children's theatre group in Philadelphia. He is also on the advisory board of *Stage Directions* Magazine as well as the New York City Technical College. He recently joined the ranks of the published; his book, *Heads! & Tales: Uncle Bill's Musings on the Theatrical Experience*, was published in 2007. It is a re-working of articles he has written on the subject of safety in the theatre, an issue that he holds near and dear to his heart. He dedicates his booths at LDI and USITT to raising money for Behind the Scenes and for Broadway Cares, two charitable organizations that benefit people in the entertainment industry.

He has served as a Director at Large on the USITT Board of Directors, representing our commercial members' interests. He has been active in programming for many of the Commissions at USITT conferences. He has hosted the annual "Stump the Rigger" session

Bill Sapsis was introduced by Joe Aldridge as one of four new Fellows at a ceremony that concluded the Annual Fellows Address in 2009. Sonny Sonnenfeld gave the 2009 Fellows Address.

Photo/Casey Kearns

where members can bring questions regarding safe rigging practices before a panel of experts for discussion. He has been an avid sponsor and supporter of the Student Tech Olympics competition at the conferences, furnishing prizes and trophies as awards to the winners. He is co-chairperson of the ESTA Technical Standards Program Rigging Working Group, which is responsible for developing and writing standards to be used in the entertainment industry. Similarly, he, as a member of the ETCP Certification Council, is a co-chair of the Rigging Skills Working Group and a Subject Matter Expert in the development of the ETCP Rigger certifications.

His dedication to this industry and to his profession is evident by his inability to say “no” to just about any cause or worthwhile project. He is an ardent supporter of USITT, volunteering to serve on committees, chair programming sessions, and spearheading new initiatives. His work is an inspiration to young technicians entering the profession. It is with great pleasure that I introduce Bill Sapsis as the newest Fellow of USITT. Bill, could you join me on the stage.

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Click their names to read the introductory remarks about the other new Fellows, [Laura Crow](#), [Louis Bradfield](#), and [Carl Lefko](#).

[To Top](#) 

[Next Page](#) →



home **USITT**

Member Benefits

[Next Story](#)

▷ USITT ▷ Calendar ▷ JobsUSITT ▷ Sightlines

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to kansas city
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf

Mailing Lists Available to Organizational Members

Michelle L. Smith
Membership & Ad Sales Manager

Organizational level members (Organizational, Sustaining, and Contributing) may use USITT member lists to promote their products and services or announce special offers. The postal and e-mail lists contain information only from members who have consented to participate, so senders can feel confident recipients will welcome their messages and not view them as junk mail or spam.

Organizational members receive 50 percent off their first use of the list each membership year. Sustaining members receive one free use of the list per membership year. Organizational and Sustaining members wishing to use the list again in the same membership year may purchase it at the regular price.

Contributing members enjoy unlimited, free access to the list.

To learn about all the benefits of organizational levels of membership, [click here](#).

Only current organizational members may request lists, and they must adhere to usage rules. List requests are generally filled within 48 hours. USITT provides the list as a comma delimited text file which is e-mailed to the member who requested it. List usage fees are .075 cents per name. Additional fees may apply if lists are requested in a different format.

To request a member list or verify member status, contact Membership & Ad Sales Manager Michelle L. Smith at 800-938-7488 ext. 102 or michelle@office.usitt.org. Monica Merritt, Database & Conference Registration Manager, also takes requests. She can be reached at ext 104 or monica@office.usitt.org.

If you have questions or suggestions for a new benefit or discount, contact Membership & Ad Sales Manager Michelle L. Smith at 800-938-7488 ext. 102 or michelle@office.usitt.org.

[To Top](#) ↑



home **usitt**

News & Notices

[Next Story](#)
[▷ USITT](#) [▷ Calendar](#) [▷ JobsUSITT](#) [▷ Sightlines](#)

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to kansas city
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf



The Bottle and Hat Make Successful Rounds

Lawrence J. Hill

Chair, USITT @ 50 Development Committee

A rising philanthropic surge was evident during the USITT Annual Conference as “The Hat” joined “The Bottle” as companions in raising awareness of and soliciting gifts to support *Securing Our Future*. The Institute has identified the 50th year celebration as a time to greatly increase the balance of funds that support grants, awards, and research projects.

Many may remember The Bottle from the 2008 Conference where it was often rattled while its handler uttered the refrain “Do you hear the music? Listen to the music!!!” This year, USITT’s astute President Carl Lefko momentarily interrupted the plea to fill The Bottle and declare the need for greater visual effects for this worthy endeavor. He promptly presented The Bottle’s carrier with a top hat with a flashing \$ sign to raise his profile while soliciting gifts throughout conference venues.

Clearly the new partnership of The Bottle and The Hat appeals to the philanthropic sense of many members, as demonstrated by the positive response to this creative request for support. When the dynamic duo were passed at a Board of Directors meeting and a Fellows’ business meeting, the leadership responded by contributing \$725.00. Conference-goers brought the total to \$1,391.00. When The Bottle and Hat appeared at the banquet to announce the amount, President Lefko produced a second hat and encouraged the assembly to contribute. Zelma Weisfeld, Fellow and creator of the USITT Costume Design & Technology Award, responded immediately with a gift matching the announced total. By the conclusion of the banquet, a total of \$3,655 had been collected. With the application of the 50% match, a grand total of \$5,483 was raised.

As USITT enters the last year of its five-year fundraising campaign, USITT@50, members are asked to follow the generous lead of their friends and colleagues who were at the Annual Conference in Cincinnati. [Click here](#) to make a contribution online, or [download a form](#) to return by fax or mail. Members have the option of directing their support to one or more of four funds. For specific details on these funds and the activities and programs they support, [click here](#).

Remember, every dollar donated between now and the end of USITT’s 50th celebration will be matched 50% by the Institute. Help *Secure our Future* by making a contribution today. Then help *Honor our Past* by coming to Kansas City, Missouri in 2010 for a wonderful celebration of USITT’s 50 years of success.

USITT’s philanthropic efforts were assisted by two very noticeable characters at the 2009 Annual Conference, where both “The Hat” and “The Bottle” put in appearances.

Photo/Lawrence Hill

home **USITT**

News & Notices

[Next Story](#)
[▷ USITT](#)
[▷ Calendar](#)
[▷ JobsUSITT](#)
[▷ Sightlines](#)

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis Bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - Carl Iefko
 - Bill Sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul Anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to Kansas City
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf

In Memoriam: Paul Anderssen, Dutch OISTAT Center

Joel E. Rubin

USITT Fellows and Past-President of USITT and OISTAT

Paul Anderssen was, I believe, the preeminent figure of the Dutch technical theatre world over the past few decades. Paul was 77 years old when he passed away on January 9.

I first met Paul when he served as a member of the Dutch delegation to the First OISTAT Congress in 1969. He remained active in OISTAT for the next three decades. He was a member of the Technical Commission and served several terms on the Executive Committee. Paul Anderssen also was one of the first in the Netherlands to realize the importance of international contacts. He maintained intensive contacts with Eastern European colleagues. He had an innate understanding of this different world and these different cultures.

Paul had an ability to assuage the east-west rivalries that inevitably arose during the early days of OISTAT (the Cold War days) when there was any possible political overtone to a OISTAT action. During my terms as President of OISTAT, I counted on Paul's diplomatic skills, since he was trusted by both "west" and "east" and was frequently the catalytic presence providing the means for agreement.

I don't recall Paul ever being angry. His way of getting around a tough obstacle was to tell a little joke, followed by a little laugh, and then to make his point very precisely and always with good humor. He usually got his way.

In the 1960s, he founded the first Dutch technical theatre trade magazine, the *Tijdschrift voor Theatertechniek*. Through several reincarnations this periodical is currently published by the Dutch Guild of Theatre Technicians as *Zichtlijnen* (i.e. *Sightlines*). He founded the NTKK (the Netherlands Theatre Technical Circle) and co-founded the *Theater Technische Vakbeurs* (Dutch Exposition for Theatre Suppliers).

As a token of great respect, last fall the Dutch technical theatre community presented Paul with a newly minted award, the *Prix d'Amix*, presented to him by Ide van Heiningen, the director of MAPA. (The particularly Dutch Moving Academy for Performing Arts which offers training programs for theatre management and theatre technology). Over 150 friends, family, and colleagues came to the Agora Theatre in Lelystad for this occasion. At the time of the presentation in September, Mr. Anderssen was already ill so the homage was also a goodbye.

Lighting and lighting techniques were Paul's greatest passion. "Light is the essence of human existence," was one of his observations. In 1955, when working for engineering company Projecto, he got acquainted with the lighting products of ADB. The encounter soon turned into a love affair. He decided to stay in the world of theatre, did the odd job as a young man in the De La Mar (the historic theatre which dates back to 1840), and finally founded the company Contralux Lichttechniek in 1968 where he proceeded to furnish many theatres during the following decades. Later he enjoyed teaching at the Theatre School in Amsterdam (the training center for theatre technicians.)

Mr. Anderssen was a man of clear principles. He took his trade and his customers very seriously, always ready to lend his ear. Paul valued the close friendships formed in the theatre as much more important than trading. Those friendships were many, as was proven at the testimonial party in his honor in September. With Paul's passing, an icon of the Dutch theatre has gone. The influence he had on today's theatre techniques and the contacts he established between the theatre people of many countries will still be felt for decades to come.

For these notes I have drawn heavily on the obituary written by Ferenc Vajda and Paul's son Victor which was published in the March issue of the Hungarian theatre magazine *Szinpad*, and I added some material of my own. For those interested in further information on Paul (in Dutch), a long interview with him appears in the November 2008 issue of the Dutch periodical *Zichtlijnen*. It was always a joy to receive the Anderssen's Christmas card. Each year provided an illustration of an historic theatre or an historic lighting device. Paul is survived by his wife Frederika, three sons, and three grandchildren. Paul was a very special individual, much loved by those of us who knew him, a personal friend and a noble spirit.



Paul Anderssen

home **USITT**

News & Notices

[Next Story](#)
[▷ USITT](#) [▷ Calendar](#) [▷ JobsUSITT](#) [▷ Sightlines](#)

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to kansas city
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf

In Memoriam: Alvin Cohen

Randy Earle
Chair, USITT Fellows

Alvin Cohen died March 29, 2008 after being in the hospital for many months unable to communicate. His wife, Harriet Cohen, who lives in Tamarac, Florida survives him along with daughter Paula (Golden) and son David.

Mr. Cohen was USITT's Treasurer during the mid-1970s, a time when the Institute's finances were on less than firm ground. His conscientious stewardship of our funds brought us out of near-fiscal disaster, and his term ended with a surplus of \$55,000, quite an accomplishment in those times. John Bracewell said Mr. Cohen was "quite austere in managing USITT business ... always fair ...of enormous help to me as a young Commissioner."

Many Fellows such as Zee Weisfeld and Jay Glerum commented on their relationships with his company, Alcone, Inc., a major theatrical supplier to the profession for over 50 years. Mr. Cohen was a strong supporter of theatre for young people as noted by Randy Davidson in reflecting on his help to "literally thousands of schools this nation over."

Joel Rubin also reminded us of Al's ongoing passion for children's theatre through his support of the Children's Theatre Conference and other similar organizations. A fitting tribute to him is the Children's Theatre Foundation Alvin H. Cohen Memorial Scholarship. Joy Emery shared a story from Irene Corey when she was seeking something to bind the satin pieces on costumes for *Book of Job*, and Mr. Cohen supplied "ply-on film," a relatively new product to solve the problem. Ms. Emery noted, "Al enjoyed working with designers ... to find various products developed for a myriad of varying professions that could be useful to our theatrical applications".

A May 1995 letter from Mr. Cohen to past President Richard Arnold mentions Mr. Cohen's proposal for the Edward F. Kook Endowment Fund. He was also Chair of the New York Regional Section and organized many successful programs and sessions. His final sentence is worth quoting: "Thinking back to the years I was active in USITT, I have many fond memories. Healthwise, I'm not in the best shape, but what's the sense of complaining?" He always had a positive attitude.

The Fellows of the Institute join in expressing our condolences to the family of Al Cohen, remembering his significant contributions to our financial stability and acknowledging his friendship to so many of us over the years.


[To Top](#)
[Next Page →](#)



home **usitt**

News & Notices

[Next Story](#)

▷ [USITT](#) ▷ [Calendar](#) ▷ [JobsUSITT](#) ▷ [Sightlines](#)

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to kansas city
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf

Electrical, Rigging Training Slated in Michigan

The Joint Training Initiative of The ESTA Foundation and USITT announces Electrical and Rigging Training Sessions at the Village Theatre at Cherry Hill in Canton, Michigan. The event will be hosted and co-produced by Eastern Michigan University at Ypsilanti in association with The Village Theatre at Cherry Hill.

Each session is a three-day event designed for entertainment technicians at a basic to intermediate level. The rigging session will be held May 29 through 31. The electrical session will be held the following week June 5 through 7.

The rigging course will be taught by ETCP Recognized Trainer Jay Glerum. His program, *The 4 K's of Stage Rigging*, will cover liability, forces and reactions (the physics of rigging), types and designs of hardware, proper operation, and inspection/maintenance issues. Also included will be discussions of motorized rigging, fire curtain rigging, and rigging math.

The Electrical course will be taught by Richard Cadena, ETCP Certified Electrician and ETCP Recognized Trainer. The course, *The FUNdamentals of Electricity!*, will cover basic electricity, power distribution, and control systems as they relate to the work of the entertainment electrician.

Both courses will count towards renewal credits for ETCP certified technicians. Course descriptions, fees and the registration form are available at www.estafoundation.org/seminars/schedule.php. For additional information, e-mail fstewart@estafoundation.org.

[To Top](#) ↑

usitt

THE
ESTA
FOUNDATION

usitt

THE
ESTA
FOUNDATION



home **USITT**

News from:

Around the Institute

[Next Story](#)

▷ [USITT](#) ▷ [Calendar](#) ▷ [JobsUSITT](#) ▷ [Sightlines](#)

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- [Around The Institute](#)
- [Contributing Members](#)
- [Sustaining Members](#)
- [USITT's president](#)
- [Regional Sections](#)

Conference & Stage Expo

- [on to kansas city](#)
- [2009, a student perspective](#)

For the Record

- [Leadership](#)
- [Contributing Members](#)
- [Sustaining Members](#)
- [May 2009 issue pdf](#)

Honored for 10 Years with USITT

As part of the USITT Annual Meeting in Cincinnati, three members of the USITT staff were recognized for 10 years of service to the Institute. Carol B. Carrigan, Administrative & Finance Manager; Barbara E.R. Lucas, Public Relations & Marketing Manager; and Monica L. Merritt, Conference Registration & Database Manager all joined the organization in 1998. Ms. Lucas and Ms. Merritt began their tenure on the same day in July and Ms. Carrigan came on board in October.

In addition to the recognition at the Annual Meeting, the three were presented with plaques "in recognition and gratitude for 10 years of dedicated service and support of USITT" during the Board of Directors meeting held during the Annual Conference.



Monica L. Merritt, left, Barbara E.R. Lucas, and Carol B. Carrigan receive congratulations on 30 years of combined service from Carl Lefko, center, USITT's President.

[To Top](#) ↑

Taylor Inducted

Dana Taylor has been named a Distinguished Alumnus of the Singing Hoosiers (Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana). As an undergraduate, he was a singer and guitarist for the ensemble and was assistant director during his graduate studies. Mr. Taylor holds degrees in music education (BME) and choral conducting (MM) from Indiana University. Distinguished alumni are selected based on professional and personal achievements following their tenure at Indiana.

[To Top](#) ↑

Normand Bouchard Retires

Former VP and Director at Large Normand Bouchard has retired from the University of Calgary. The change occurred at the end of March, just in time for Mr. Bouchard to enjoy the opening of golf courses in the greater Alberta region. Mr. Bouchard was honored in 2004 with the USITT Joel E. Rubin Founder's Award. At the presentation, Past President Richard Durst called Mr. Bouchard "one of the Institute's most tireless workers and insightful, dedicated leaders." [Click here](#) to view a complete profile of Mr. Bouchard.

[To Top](#) ↑

Stump the Rigger trophy awarded at USITT

This month:
 10 Years of Service
 Taylor Named
 Bouchard Retires
 Stump the Rigger Winner
 Honored by IATSE
 Behind the Scenes Winners

Scott Mollman, Technical Director for the Theatre Department at the University of South Dakota, Vermillion, won the Jack Suesse Memorial Stump the Riggers trophy at the USITT Annual Conference in Cincinnati. The trophy is awarded for the best question or situation that the Stump the Rigger panel cannot correctly answer or identify. This year's winning situation involved the load rating of home made wire rope which had been constructed of baling wire and twisted into shape with a battery operated drill.

The trophy is named for Jack Suesse, an industry icon who passed away in August of 2007. Bill Sapsis, session moderator, noted: "Jack was one of the good guys. He wasn't flashy. He didn't make a big deal about his work but he was responsible for many of the rigging innovations we've seen over the past 20 years. He was also a mentor to many people coming up in the business. I met him in 1979 and he was instrumental in shaping the way I approached my career."

The Trophy was introduced in 2008 at the USITT conference in Houston and was awarded to Carla Richters of Dartmouth College. The winner is chosen by acclamation and confirmed by the Stump the Riggers panel. The 2009 panel included Don Dimitroff of Columbus McKinnon Corp, Eric McAfee of J. R. Clancy, Inc., and Tray Allen of James Thomas Engineering. The moderator was Bill Sapsis of Sapsis Rigging, Inc.



Scott Millman, at right, with his trophy.

Photo/Greg Williams

[To Top](#) ↑

Honored by IATSE

Jan Musson, Fellow of the Institute and former Treasurer, was presented with an honorary lifetime membership in I.A.T.S.E. Local #134 in honor of her long career as a lighting technician, designer and entrepreneur.

Jan applied for membership at a time the union was almost 100% male.



Obviously this has changed as she was presented her "tool kit" by Cindy Parker, President, I. A.T.S.E. Local 134. In the photo, Jan is shown with her cake accompanied by Steve Kaplowitz, member, I.A.T.S.E. Local 134 who organized this long overdue recognition of Jan. It should be noted the local celebrated its centennial in the Summer of 2008. Photos were taken by Richard Reizner, member, I.A.T.S.E. Local 134.

[To Top](#) ↑

USITT Attendees Support Behind the Scenes

The Long Reach Long Riders and The ESTA Foundation announced the results of their joint raffle to benefit the Behind the Scenes program at the USITT Annual Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio. A total of \$5,236 was raised from raffle ticket sales during the three days of Stage Expo, more than doubling the \$2,500 Challenge Grant issued by Sapsis Rigging. In addition, Jonathan Deull made a \$1,500 donation to Behind the Scenes in support of the Long Reach Long Riders 2009 charity ride this summer, bringing the total raised at USITT to \$9,236.

The winners and their prizes are: Fred Allen – Altman Rentals Ghostlight; Shan Ayers – USITT 2010 Conference Registration; Dennis Booth – Nolan Engineering Services' Structural Master Class; Ed Condit – Martin Light Jockey; Kacey Fisher – Live Design's Broadway Master Class; Ben Gasper – Utah Shakespearean Festival Ticket Package; David Griffith – Sapsis Rigging's Safety Seminar with Bill Sapsis; Karl Hoffman – Barbizon Gift Certificate; Randall Presswood – Vectorworks Spotlight with Renderworks; Paul Sanow – Vincent Lighting Systems Gift Certificate; Charles Smith – Le Maitre's Radiance Hazer; Nathan Szewczyk – Field Template's SoftSymbols and Field Templates



Photo/Tom Thatcher

The traditional pre-affle kazoo parade kicked off the festivities on Saturday afternoon with stops at specially selected booths for a private serenade. The raffle was emceed by Bill Sapsis, resplendent in a full tuxedo and sporting his just-conferred USITT Fellows medal.

Before the raffle began Bill invited Paul Vincent, Kim Craigie and Walt Weber from Vincent Lighting Systems up to the podium to be acknowledged as VLS enters the fourth year of their Behind the Scenes Workplace Giving Campaign.

All proceeds go to The ESTA Foundation's Behind the Scenes program which provides entertainment technology industry members with grants for emergency situations, such as serious illness, injury, or death.

[To Top](#) ↑



home **USITT**

News from:

Contributing Members

[Next Story](#)

▷ USITT ▷ Calendar ▷ JobsUSITT ▷ Sightlines

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to kansas city
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf

Production Advantage President Dies

It is with deep sadness that **Production Advantage** announces the unexpected passing of its founder and President, John Camm, on April 1. His widow, Penny Camm, will immediately assume the role of President and Chairman as confirmed by the company's Board of Directors. Mr. Camm's family and co-workers are grateful for the wonderful support and kind wishes of friends during this difficult time.

[To Top](#) ↑

ETC Introduces Element, Supplies Eos

Users have been asking for an ETC lighting control console designed expressly for modest rigs and maximum hands-on fader control. In response, ETC introduced Element consoles at the Cincinnati 2009 Conference & Stage Expo. The company also supplied its Eos system for the Golden Globes and Academy Awards shows.

Element comes in two hardware versions based on fader count – the Element 40 or the Element 60. Each supports either 250 or 500 channels and two full universes of DMX output. It is directed at smaller venues like schools and houses of worship which depend on single console operators or volunteer staffers. It is designed to handle rigs outfitted predominantly with conventional fixtures while accommodating some LED fixtures and/or a small number of simple moving lights. ETC plans to begin shipping Element this summer. For more on Element, see product page: www.etcconnect.com/element



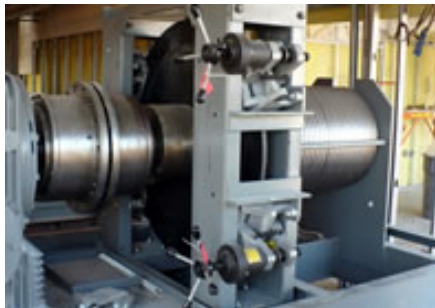
For the 2009 Golden Globes, an Eos console – along with a 2x20 ETC Universal Fader Wing – controlled all of the conventional and practical lights. An Eos console also controlled 700 channels of conventional dimming and hazers, as well as house, architectural and on-stage conventional lights for the Academy Awards on February 22. Backing up the Eos on this high-stakes, most-watched entertainment program in two years, was an Eos Remote Processor Unit and two 2x20 Universal Fader Wings with added additional playback options.

[To Top](#) ↑

Vortek Hoists Featured in Dallas Theatre

Texas theatre goers will soon experience one of the most versatile facilities capable of transforming itself from one event to the next. Hoists manufactured by **Vortek, a Division of Daktronics Inc.** are center stage in the Dee and Charles Wyly Theatre at the Dallas Center for the Performing Arts. The custom hoists manipulate seating sections along with Vortek Pro Series hoists in an advanced fly system.

Scheduled for completion in October, this 74,915 square foot facility has 12 stories and seats approximately 600 people. The vertically stacked floors are unique compared to the traditional form of theatres. It places support spaces above and below the auditorium, providing maximum flexibility of performance space.



To follow the development of the Dee and Charles Wyly Theatre, visit their web site at www.dallasperformingarts.org and to learn more about Vortek, visit www.vortekrigging.com.

This month:

Production Advantage

ETC

Vortek, a Division of Daktronics Inc.

InterAmerica Stage, Inc.

Creative Stage Lighting

J.R. Clancy

[To Top](#) ↑

Acquires Lift Contractor

InterAmerica Stage, Inc. announced the acquisition of New York- based Independent Theatrical Installations, Inc. ITI, one of the country's leading stage and orchestra lift contractors, has provided stage, orchestra, and organ lifts since the early 1980s.

James Cherniss managing director of ITI has been retained as special consultant to IASTAGE. A new line of lift products, LiftDeck, debuted at the USITT 2009 Conference & Stage Expo in Cincinnati. To learn more, visit www.iastage.com.

[To Top](#) ↑

Changes at Creative Stage Lighting

Creative Stage Lighting has been named the exclusive distributor for German lighting manufacturer JB Lighting in the United States and Mexico. It has also hired Michael Nevitt as product manager.

Creative Stage Lighting will offer the JB-lighting product line to North America, including the JB LED line of LED fixtures, Varycolor Wash fixtures, VaryScan Moving Heads, and Licon lighting consoles. The firm displayed the JBLED A7 at its booth at USITT's Stage Expo in Cincinnati.

Mr. Nevitt's responsibilities at Creative Stage Lighting include full-time support of new product offerings, including Compulite and JB-lighting products. He is a veteran of the lighting industry. His design and automated lighting programming experience includes work on feature films such as *The Grinch*, *Batman & Robin*, *The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas*, and *Miss Congeniality*. In addition, he has worked on top sporting events like the Salt Lake Olympics, Super Bowl Half-time show, and the Ryder Cup Opening Ceremonies. Mr. Nevitt also brings product management experience from Martin where he worked on the development of Martin's Maxxyz Console and Maxedia Media Server.



Michael Nevitt

[To Top](#) ↑

Offers Three-Year Warranty Extension

In an unprecedented move for the theatrical rigging industry, **J. R. Clancy, Inc.** now includes a three-year warranty, provided that the owner completes a maintenance and safety inspection of rigging each year by an authorized J. R. Clancy dealer.

Generally, motorized rigging manufacturers offer a one-year warranty on new systems. This three-year warranty from J. R. Clancy rewards theatre managers and technical directors for performing inspections and maintenance on an annual basis helping customers protect their investment in automated rigging. Clancy has offered a three-year warranty on manual (counterweight) rigging since 2001, with considerable success.

To find an authorized rigging inspector in their area, customers can contact J. R. Clancy at 800-836-1885 or e-mail Eric McAfee at ericmcafee@jrclancy.com, or Marilyn Larsen at marilynlarson@jrclancy.com.

More information about J. R. Clancy is available at www.jrclancy.com.

[To Top](#) ↑
[Next Page →](#)



home **USITT**

News from:

Sustaining Members

[Next Story](#)

▷ USITT ▷ Calendar ▷ JobsUSITT ▷ Sightlines

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to kansas city
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf

New Sustaining Member

We welcome **Harkness Screens (USA) Ltd.** as a new Sustaining member of USITT. The company, based in the United Kingdom, has been manufacturing screens for more than 80 years and today has factories in the United Kingdom, United States, and France. It recently opened a factory and sales office in Beijing, China. Harkness says it is the world's leader in manufacturing and supplying screens for cinema, film production, special effects, 3D, events, and audio-visual uses. To learn more, visit www.harkness-screens.com.

[To Top](#) ↑

Historic Strand Theater Renovated

The rigging system of the Strand Theater in Lakewood, New Jersey was recently renovated by RDM Rigging of Pine Beach, New Jersey. Opened in 1922, the Strand Theater remains a popular center for plays, musicals, and touring productions. As part of the rigging renovation, all the on-stage circuitry and associated support structures were replaced. Equipment was supplied by TMB.



Funding for the renovation was provided by Lakewood Development Corporation, the theatre's owners. Information about the Strand Theater can be accessed at www.strand.org. Learn more about the many products and services from TMB at www.tmb.com.

[To Top](#) ↑

Introduces New Fall Protection Line

Sapsis Rigging, Inc. announces The SRI ProPlus Fall Protection System, a new line of fall protection equipment designed for technicians working at height in the entertainment industry.

The entire ProPlus line meets the new ANSI Z359.1-2007 standards. In addition, all ProPlus harnesses come with a sub-pelvic strap which helps reduce the stress caused by orthostatic intolerance (suspension or harness trauma).

The SRI ProPlus Fall Protection System line was shown for the first time at the 2009 Stage Expo in Cincinnati. The entire ProPlus Fall Protection System line is available from the online catalog www.sapsis-rigging.com. For more information please contact sales@sapsis-rigging.com.

[To Top](#) ↑

TOMCAT Adds Facebook Page

In addition to its home on the web at www.tomcatglobal.com, **TOMCAT USA** has a new page on Facebook.

Those who visit the page will find photos of TOMCAT products, workshops, and projects. In addition, anyone with an account can stop by and become a fan of the staging and lighting equipment company. Just search for TOMCAT USA on Facebook or use this [direct link](#).

[To Top](#) ↑

TPC Aides Metropolitan Lighting

This month:

Harkness Screens

TMB

Sapsis Rigging, Inc.

TOMCAT USA, Inc.

Theatre Projects Consultants, Inc.

Schuler Shook

Wybron, Inc.

Theatre Projects Consultants (TPC) was approached by the architectural firm of Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo and Associates to help renovate the American Wing Courtyard at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (MMA). As part of the renovation, they were looking for a better way to access the exhibit lighting for routine maintenance and focusing.

Approximately 60 feet above the exhibit floor, the existing lighting position spanned over 100 feet in length and was situated along the edge of a third story gallery. By applying a little entertainment technology to the museum environment, TPC provided a well-designed and efficient solution.

Together, the lighting components and self-climbing trusses provide an integrated system that gives the MMA the easy access and focusing capabilities they desired.

[To Top](#) 

Active Time for Schuler Shook

Schuler Shook Senior Consultant Joshua Grossman, ASTC, recently presented an educational tour of the Lookingglass Theatre in Chicago for the membership of USITT's Midwest Regional Section. Hosted by Joel Hobson, Lookingglass technical director, the tour focused on the technical systems and flexible layout of one of Chicago's premier theatre companies. The tour was organized by Shane Kelly, head of technical theatre for the Theatre School at DePaul University. Mr. Grossman served as Schuler Shook's project manager for the award-winning adaptive reuse that created Lookingglass Theatre's new home in 2001.

Mr. Grossman also was elected to the board of directors for the American Society of Theatre Consultants. The organization met to select the five-member board at the end of February. A full member of ASTC since 2005, he is looking forward to serving the membership in his new position.

In other Schuler Shook news, Partner Todd Hensley, ASTC, is teaching Stage Lighting Design at DePaul University's Theatre School this spring as an adjunct faculty member.

[To Top](#) 

Online Store Opens

Wybron, Inc. customers can shop for color changers, luminaires, gelstrings, and more anytime day or night with the lighting manufacturer's new online store.

Launched March 19, the online store sells Wybron's Coloram IT, CXI IT, and Forerunner color changers; Nexera LX CMY dichroic color-mixing luminaires; gelstrings; and accessories such as power supplies, mounting brackets, and cable. The full line of Wybron products, including such items as the Eclipse mechanical dowsers and the Transition fiber optic illuminator, will only be available through the company's distributors or the company's internal sales team.

Products online will be sold at full retail price and must be paid for with a credit card. Any Wybron product listed in the online store, as well as Wybron's complete line of products, will be available through the company's worldwide dealer network. To find a dealer, visit www.wybron.com/dealers. For more information, call 719- 548-9774, e-mail info@wybron.com, or visit www.wybron.com.

[To Top](#) 



home **usitt**

News from: USITT's President

[Next Story](#)

▷ USITT ▷ Calendar ▷ JobsUSITT ▷ Sightlines

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to kansas city
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf

Looking Forward to A Year of Celebration

Carl Lefko
USITT President

USITT is on the move. Following two years of intense review and planning, the Board of Directors has just moved to initiate a search for an Executive Director and to begin the gradual shift in our leadership structure to a Governance model. I applaud the Board of Directors in its work to envision a USITT for tomorrow and look forward to working toward these goals.

In an attempt to have a diverse group on each of the committees needed to implement the recently approved governance initiatives, I placed a call for volunteers. I am pleased that over 40 individuals responded. The list included current leaders, representatives from the membership, and at least two students. I am ecstatic to have such a broad and skilled pool from which to fill needed positions and look forward to working on these projects and want to thank personally everyone who responded to my call for volunteers.

By all measures, Cincinnati was a success surpassing the terrific crowd in Houston with over 4,400 in attendance. While many people recall the 1996 Conference in Las Vegas as *huge*, our numbers have surpassed that mark for the past six years. The conference began with an inspirational Keynote address by D. Lynn Meyers, producing artistic director for ETC.

In another first for USITT, the Keynote, Fellows Address and Induction, and the Jules Fisher sessions were all broadcast live in streaming video in preparation for our 50th celebration in Kansas City. During April, a link from the main USITT web page has allowed visitors to view these events and share with others. Those sessions are now on the recap page for the 2009 Conference and our plan is to do even more sharing in Kansas City.

The USITT @ 50th Planning Committee has been working diligently for over three years to bring you the best USITT has to offer for our celebration next year. We are in the process of confirming four blockbuster speakers who will kick off each day with an all-conference event. Each evening will culminate in a party, and on Saturday we plan to toast with our USITT engraved champagne flutes. This will be an event you will not want to miss.

Securing Our Future, the second half of our theme for the 50th moved into high gear in Cincinnati and continued a significant shift in our focus on giving. In addition to The Bottle being the collector of donations, a blinking dollar sign adorned a top hat worn by Larry Hill as he wandered through conference sessions and Stage Expo. At the banquet, the announced total of \$1,391 became a challenge. Zelma Weisfeld, long time member and a Fellow of USITT, immediately matched the sum and the passed hat collected another \$725. Currently, these donations are matched 50 percent from USITT's reserves and placed in the New Century Fund, which supports future student activities.

After four days of spirited campaigning, \$5,483 will benefit the Institute's goal of building the principal needed for awards and projects. Another \$2,362 was generated by the New Products Showcase, which will benefit the Kook Fund.

Additional efforts by Grants & Fellowships in the 2009 art auction generated an additional \$11,100 in revenue to support future grant requests. The Fellowships were announced at the banquet, and Deb Bell will use \$4,000 to assist with her research in ceremonial masks with Bruce Auerbach receiving \$6,000 to assist his research into the history of light. Combining with the Hat and the Bottle, our total giving campaign produced \$25,675. A special thank you goes to Tim Kelly, Larry Hill, and all who assisted with the projects.

As we turn our attention to the Annual Conference in Kansas City and the year long celebration of our 50th anniversary, I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has contributed to our success. USITT has been successful due to the passion exhibited by our volunteers, contractors, professional staff, and Contributing and Sustaining members all working tirelessly to accomplish the many activities of the Institute.

At the same time, I am reminded of the critical role we play in the world today. We are the problem solvers, the creative visionaries who know how to dream and are then able to turn dreams into reality for others to enjoy. We are the builders of bridges that eliminate barriers we have been told could not be crossed. Let us now begin the journey into the celebration of



our 50th anniversary “Honoring our Past and Securing our Future.”

[To Top](#) 

[Next Page](#) 



home **USITT**

News from:

Regional Sections

[Next Story](#)

▷ [USITT](#) ▷ [Calendar](#) ▷ [JobsUSITT](#) ▷ [Sightlines](#)

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to kansas city
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf

Spring Meeting Planned in Buffalo

The University at Buffalo announced its tentative programming and events schedule for the upcoming Spring Upstate New York Regional Section Meeting on Saturday, May 2.

Featuring a full day of sessions on costuming, lighting, set construction, and more, the event will be worthwhile for any theatre artist or technician. Learn about the latest LED lighting technologies (with demonstrations); get tips and tricks on lighting and costumes for dance from the people who light and costume LehrerDance, Configuration Dance Theatre, and others; and learn about upcoming Prague Quadrennial Student Opportunities.

To view or download the schedule, visit www.usittupsnny.org and follow the links. Those interested are encouraged to RSVP for the event at usittupsnny-s09.eventbrite.com.

A Student Showcase will be part of the event, where student design and tech work will be on display. Configuration Dance Theatre also will offer special deals on tickets for its evening performance at the University at Buffalo's Center for the Arts.

[To Top](#) ↑

Ohio Valley Plans Fall Conference

The big news from the Ohio Valley Regional Section isn't really "news" at all! OVS was proud and excited to serve as the host section for the recent 49th Annual Conference & Stage Expo at the Duke Energy Center in Cincinnati. From all reports, the conference was a huge success from the simply amazing keynote speech from Cincinnati's own D. Lynn Meyers, producing artistic director of the Ensemble Theatre of Cincinnati, to the inspirational video of Stirling Shelton's rocky road to the New Products Showcase reprised during the waning moments of the closing banquet.

Thanks to the Board of Directors, the many Section members who served as coordinators, presenters, and ambassadors, and the thousands of USITT members and friends who made this event so special. A few highlights worthy of special mention: Paul Shortt, Tom Umfrid, and Brian Ruggaber conducted a successful model-making PDW hosted by CCM; the special section displays drew attention throughout the week - The Designs of Paul Shortt; the Peggy E! Awards; the three OSU exhibits: Midnight Riders: The Artists of the Notting Hill Carnival, Design for Performance: Treasures from the TRI, and A Tribute to Ursula Belden; and finally, John Lavarney (Wright State University) conducted a two day PDW on casting breakaway objects. One final thank you to those who worked directly with the Conference & Stage Expo: Tammy Honesty and Brian Ruggaber (co-chairs of programming), Kathy Brookfield (PR), Richard Keith, Pam Lavarney, and Meg Haven (troubleshooters), and Eric Rouse (transportation).

Looking ahead, OVS announced its Fall Conference will be held October 3 at Seton Hill. A full day of sessions covering a wide range of topics will include preparing for the move from the campus to the big city, marketing yourself as a designer/technician, preparing and presenting a portfolio, stage management for dance, and more. Stay tuned to the website and list-serv for more information as it develops.

Information from several highly successful sessions and events are being posted on the OVS website, www.usittohiovalley.org.

[To Top](#) ↑

This month:
Upstate New York
Ohio Valley

[Next Page](#) →



Conference & Stage Expo

[Next Story](#)

▷ USITT ▷ Calendar ▷ JobsUSITT ▷ Sightlines

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to kansas city
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf



Stage Expo 2010 Kansas City Here We Come

Helen Willard
Stage Expo Sales Manager

Stage Expo 2009 in Cincinnati was a great success, with 180 exhibitors in 28,100 square feet of exhibit space, second only to Stage Expo 2008 in Houston. Preliminary attendance figures announced at the Conference included 4,363 attendees, up nine percent from 2008.

Attendees awaiting the grand opening of Stage Expo were treated to a spirited performance by Jake Speed & The Freddie's, a Cincinnati band playing a mix of traditional and original American folk and bluegrass music. VP Conferences Joe Aldridge cut the USITT tape, and the crowd streamed into the exhibit halls to gather technical information and collect swag. Exhibitors were extremely happy with the traffic at Stage Expo, in part due to the more than 1,200 people who visited Stage Expo on a VIP Pass.

Exhibitors were invited to reserve Kansas City 2010 booth space during the priority space selection held in Cincinnati on the last day of Stage Expo 2009. A total of 85 booth exhibitors booked 22,000 square feet of space during the priority space selection. Over 70 percent of the available booth space has been reserved for next year's show, so Stage Expo 2010 is already well on its way to filling three large exhibit halls.

The 50th Annual USITT Conference & Stage Expo will be held in the Kansas City Convention Center, located in downtown Kansas City, Missouri. Stage Expo 2010 will be in the Convention Center's Bartle Halls A, B, & C, with meeting rooms located below the exhibit halls. Four escalators lead from the registration area and the meeting rooms directly into the exhibit halls.

Booth space selection will continue until all available booth spaces are sold. Priority space selection for table spaces will be conducted later in the year. Anyone who would like to exhibit at Stage Expo 2010 in Kansas City should contact hwillard@aol.com for more information.

Stage Expo aisles were filled with customers looking at design innovations and adaptations, talking to vendors, and learning about conquering technological challenges.

Photo/R Finkelstein



The Kansas City Convention Center will host USITT's 2010 Annual Conference & Stage Expo, and a celebration of the organization's 50 years of innovation and networking.

Photo/Courtesy VisitKC.com

[To Top](#) 

[Next Page](#) 



Conference & Stage Expo

[Next Story](#)

▷ USITT ▷ Calendar ▷ JobsUSITT ▷ Sightlines

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to kansas city
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf



Cincinnati 2009 Conference & Stage Expo - A Student Volunteer Perspective

Sara Burnham
University of Oklahoma

Sara Burnham writes about her experiences at the recent USITT Annual Conference & Stage Expo in Cincinnati as a student volunteer. The program is open to USITT Student members and applications for the 2010 program will be available in September.

I attended my first USITT Annual Conference last year in Houston. It just so happened that I grew up in Houston, and so room and board were generously provided by my parents, who were happy to see me the few hours I was home between conference goings-on. By the end of that Conference, I was already planning on how to make it to the 2009 event in Cincinnati. A professor suggested the student volunteer program as a way to help waive conference fees, and so I eagerly applied.

I was accepted into the student volunteer program, and my week's assignments were posted for me to peruse online. Working 15 hours over the course of the Conference didn't seem like a lot to ask, and in the end I feel I gained as much from the time I spent working as the time I spent in sessions.

The student volunteers were assigned different tasks from trouble-shooting, to being a room monitor, to working in the USITT office. I lucked out; my first task was to be a room monitor for the Keynote Address. D. Lynn Myers set the conference off to a great start, speaking to the economic troubles that lay ahead and the ability of theatres to continue to do quality work in spite of it all.

I was inspired and ready to make a difference. And I did just that, as I was called to the Stage Expo floor to help move bi-folds from one end to the other.

I continued to make a difference as I worked in the USITT Conference office. This, for me, was the best part of the student volunteer program. Not only did I get to meet students from across the country, I also was submerged deep into USITT inner workings. I met the people who helped make the Conference happen, and was in turn inspired to go to my Commission's meeting and look for ways to get more involved in the future. The office was, of course, all work and no play, but somewhere in there I managed to meet almost everyone who came through the door.

Whether it was someone trying to find a lost cell phone or a presenter who had finally made it to the conference center, I was networking whether I realized it or not. I had the

USITT's student volunteers have a vital part in making the organization's Annual Conference a success. Schedules allow student volunteers to be room monitors and at the same time participate in events, such as the Keynote by D. Lynn Myers.

Photo/R. Finkelstein

opportunity to pick the brains of those around me who were working in their respective fields and gain insight and knowledge about what to expect upon graduation. We talked about everything from resumes, to portfolios, to why the fire alarm was going off and still managed to get all the copies made and assembled in time for the board meeting.

The people I met while working in my student volunteer assignments kept appearing -- at sessions, at Stage Expo, even on my way to and from the Hilton. (They at least didn't give me quite the strange look that the local Cincinnatians did as I pushed an A/V cart filled with water, paper and candy across downtown Cincinnati). They smiled, and would often stop to chat or introduce me to someone they were with. I had a whole new set of acquaintances and contacts merely from helping the Conference to run smoothly. Somehow, I think I received the better end of the deal here.

The student volunteer program not only provided me with a financially feasible way to attend the Conference, it enhanced my experience while at the Conference, putting me in contact with people I would not have otherwise met. My only regret? I graduate in May and won't be eligible to be a student volunteer in Kansas City!

[To Top](#) 

[Next Page](#) 



For the Record

▷ USITT ▷ Calendar ▷ JobsUSITT ▷ Sightlines

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to kansas city
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf

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[To Top](#) ↑

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[To Top](#) ↑



For the Record

▷ USITT ▷ Calendar ▷ JobsUSITT ▷ Sightlines

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to kansas city
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf

Contributing Members

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Contributing Members

Sustaining Members

[To Top](#) ↑

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[To Top](#) 



home **USITT**

The Last Word

Cover

▷ USITT ▷ Calendar ▷ JobsUSITT ▷ Sightlines

May 2009

News & Notices

- USITT Awards
 - Oscar Brockett
 - KCACTF
- Honored for Distinguished Achievement
- Lifetime Award
- announcements
- 2 Receive grants
- new usitt fellows
 - Louis bradford
 - Laura Crow
 - carl lefko
 - bill sapsis
- member benefits
- Philanthropy grows
- in memoriam
 - Paul anderssen
 - Alvin Cohen
- training offered
- The Last Word

News From:

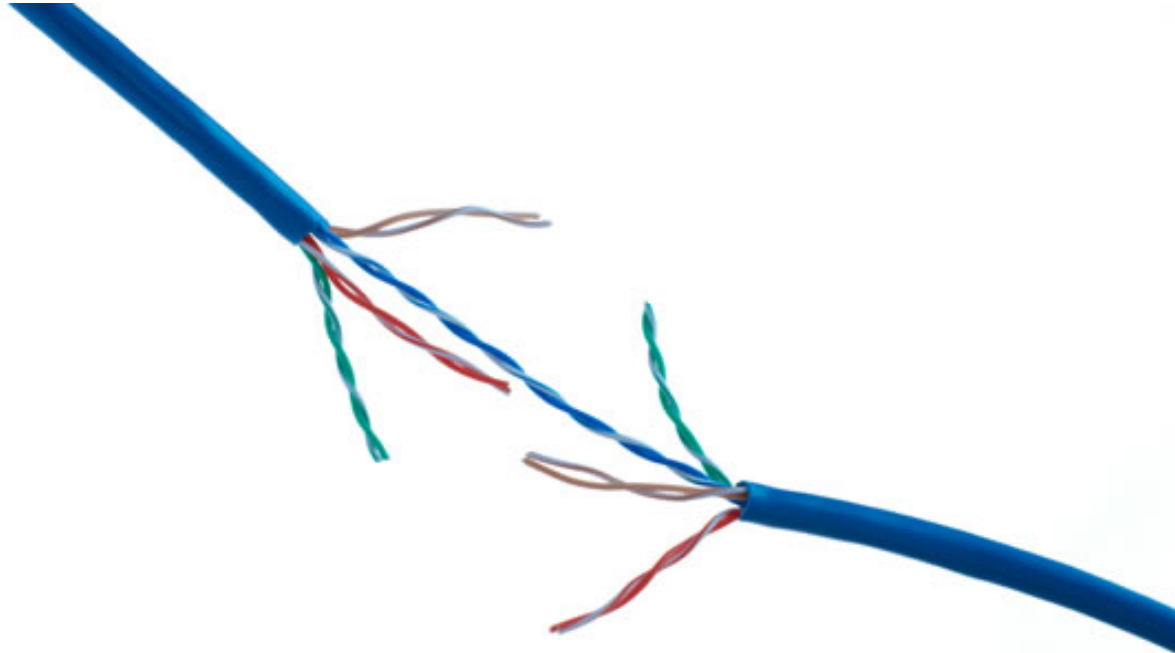
- Around The Institute
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- USITT's president
- Regional Sections

Conference & Stage Expo

- on to kansas city
- 2009, a student perspective

For the Record

- Leadership
- Contributing Members
- Sustaining Members
- May 2009 issue pdf



"...sends the wrong message" ...sends the wrong message

By Bryan H. Ackler

Imagine a group of colonial shipwrights applying their trade's art, skills, and materials to rig Philadelphia's Walnut Street Theatre in 1811 and finding themselves a new business sideline.

This industry, business, avocation, hobby, and profession has a long and treasured history of finding, adapting, and making things work for us; no matter what "... the show must go on."

When the original Peter Pan flew, the flymen used the best available materials. When the director wanted the actors to be able to climb the walls, old surplus industrial cargo nets worked fine.

We as a profession have experimented, tried things out, asked for or made changes, all in the name of the art, safety, convenience, and budget. We asked and demanded the datasheets, the guidelines, the standards, but we still tried new things if they were appropriate for the show, if it was relatively safe, and if common sense prevailed. If enough people reused it, someone would redesign, build, and test it, or incorporate the material into their product. Very little of our equipment, hardware, software, and products are genuinely original to our profession.

However, to quote the old folk song, "...today a new crisis has arisen." In the desire to send the right message, innovation and improvisation are being restrained. It appears that some of us are teaching, directly or by example, compliance to rigid concepts, not teaching safe innovation or safe integration of originality. Do not get me wrong, I applaud and support safety, standards, and enforcement, but I also support innovation and original thinking.

Have an idea, improve it, test it in the lab, test it in use, wade through the certification process, but don't tell me that I can't adapt a desire or product to our profession just because it wasn't originally designed for that usage and hence "sends the wrong message." If that were true, to stage a production we would still be using "two planks with our passion."

Oops, sorry, planks are inappropriate. They were designed for house siding, not for actors to walk upon. Since we do not want to "send the wrong message," now all we have is passion.

Mr. Ackler's diverse background includes original professional staff at numerous new or renovated theatres including Virginia's Barter Theater, the Powerhouse at Vassar College, California State University-Bakersfield, University of Maine & Cerritos Center and several manufacturers including, Electro-Controls, Colortran-NSI, Strand Lighting, Electronics

“... sends the wrong message” ...sends the wrong message

Diversified, and Genlyte Controls in marketing, engineering, and project management. He attended Virginia Tech and the University of Maine at Orono, and is an active member of the Institute.

[To Top](#) 

[Next Page -->](#)