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Jennifer Tipton



Oscar Brockett



Sally Struthers

A series of blockbuster speakers will launch each day of USITT's 50th Annual Conference & Stage Expo from March 31 to April 3 in Kansas City, Missouri. USITT will honor Oscar Brockett on the publication of his seminal work, *Making the Scene: A History of Stage Design and Technology in Europe and the United States* with co-authors Margaret Mitchell and Linda Hardberger. The book will receive USITT's 2010 Golden Pen Award on Thursday, April 1.

Sally Struthers will open the Conference on Wednesday morning, March 31 with a dynamic presentation. Jennifer Tipton will speak on Friday, April 2, and Walt Disney Entertainment Vice President François Leroux will give his perspective on what lies ahead for the entertainment industry in Saturday morning's supersession.

Read more about what to expect during the year-long celebration [here](#).

Ms. Tipton's Photo/Courtesy John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation



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## Planning a Star-Studded USITT 50th Celebration

**Carl Lefko**  
*USITT President*

July 1 marked the beginning of the year-long celebration of USITT's 50th birthday. As the fireworks explode on the United States Independence Day celebration, there is an increased level of activity in almost every area of the Institute.

That includes a stellar line-up of special speakers and session presenters for 2010. Sally Struthers will kick off the festivities on Wednesday, March 31 with a 10 a.m. Keynote presentation. Ms. Struthers, a two-time Emmy Award and Golden Globe Award winner for her work in the groundbreaking series, *All in the Family*, has continuing roles on the CBS comedy *Still Standing* and *Gilmore Girls*. She has appeared on Broadway and toured with the Tommy Tune production of *Grease*. Ms. Struthers has worked tirelessly on behalf of hungry and uneducated children worldwide and has won numerous awards for those efforts.

Also on tap will be Dr. Joel E. Rubin, a founder of the Institute and its second President, who will deliver the Fellows Address on Wednesday evening. Dr. Rubin, whose distinguished career has stretched across more than six decades, will give his views on USITT.

On Thursday morning, the Institute will honor Oscar Brockett who will receive the 2010 USITT Golden Pen award, along with co-authors Margaret Mitchell and Linda Hardberger for their seminal work, *Making the Scene: A History of Stage Design and Technology in Europe and the United States*. The book, which is being published by The Tobin Fund for Theatre Arts and distributed by the University of Texas Press, will be launched at the Conference where a special book signing event will honor the authors. The opening session on Thursday will focus on the history of design and technology, with a multimedia slide show featuring images from the book.

Jennifer Tipton, who in 2008 was honored with a MacArthur Foundation "genius award", the latest in string of honors for this amazing designer will speak on Friday morning to start the Conference day. Ms. Tipton was honored as a stage lighting designer who is "pushing the visible boundaries of her art form with painterly lighting that evokes mood and sculpts movement in



dance, drama, and opera.” She is receiving \$500,000 over five years, with “no strings attached.” Her use of white light in theatre and dance has been especially noted, as well as the range of her artistry for both small and large productions, and her influence as a teacher. She has been an adjunct professor of lighting design at the Yale University School of Drama since 1994.

As USITT celebrates its 50 anniversary, it is also looking to the future. François Leroux Vice President Segment for Products and Services Entertainment Creative Development, Character Strategy, and Walt Disney World Entertainment will speak on Friday, to give his perspective on what lies ahead for the entertainment industry.

The new Conference format, designed to highlight USITT’s 50 year history and bright future, includes opening Stage Expo on Wednesday instead of the traditional Thursday opening, and time for major sessions at the start of each day.

But blockbuster speakers at the Annual Conference are just part of what is being planned.

Sections are already scheduling their 2009/2010 Master Classes and events as part of the celebration.

It is important to remember that as we celebrate our accomplishments the work of the institute marches on. The USITT/ USA Design Exhibit committee is hard at work planning the 2011 exhibit with plans to tour museums across the United States and travel to Prague as our entry into the Prague Quadrennial. We hope to get a glimpse of exhibit pieces as part of Stage Expo in Kansas City, Missouri. Additionally four subcommittees from the Transition Advisory Team are working feverishly to accomplish the Board of Directors charge to hire an Executive Director and shift our organizational model to a governance structure.

The search firm, Albert Hall and Associates, has been contracted to assist the committee in identifying a pool of candidates for the position. The three other committees are in the process of examining our bylaws, job descriptions of our leadership positions, and compiling and reviewing our policies and procedures. As you can image these are daunting tasks and represent the long term goal for sustainability as we prepare to meet the challenges during our next 50th years.

The Conference Committee is working diligently with the Commissioners, Sections and Chapters, our office staff, and contractors to make this a very special year. One that we can rejoice in our accomplishments and know that when our glasses of champagne are raised we will be not just be looking back at 50 years of successes but looking forward to new horizons and success as we position the institute to meet the new challenges of an ever changing highly technologically driven entertainment industry. Join us March 31 to April 3, 2010 in Kansas City, Missouri to celebrate our rich history and look toward our future in a world of exciting changes.



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## Discounted Books at USITT's Online Store

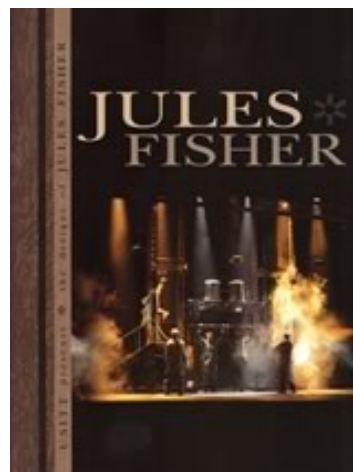
**Michelle L. Smith**
*Membership & Ad Sales Manager*

Check out the latest additions to USITT's online store, including the fifth installment in the monograph series, the 2009 Golden Pen winner, and new titles from member authors.

### The Designs of Jules Fisher

*by Delbert Unruh*

The fifth monograph in USITT's unique series, *The Designs of Jules Fisher*, presents the philosophies and visions of one of America's greatest lighting designers. The book is filled with wonderful stories of Mr. Fisher's life on Broadway along with stunning production photos from shows such as *Grand Hotel*, *Dreamgirls*, and *Chicago*.

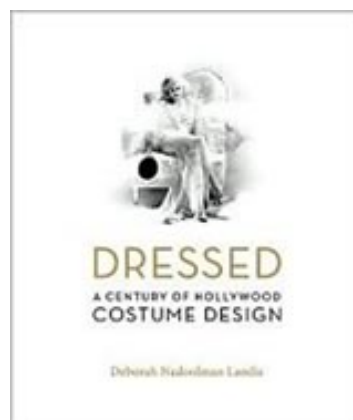
**Member Price: \$30**


Fans of the monograph series will want to take advantage of a special offer: purchase all five monographs for only \$100!

### Dressed: A Century of Hollywood Costume Design

*by Deborah Nadoolman Landis*

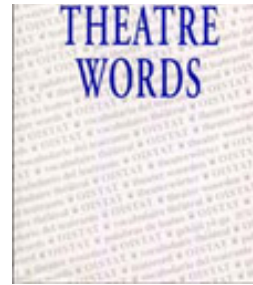
*Dressed* is a lavish and revealing look at the costumes of Hollywood from the Golden Age to today. Ms. Landis presents rarely seen images and stunning photographs, uncovered through meticulous research, to explain the role costumes have played in the development of characters and movies.

**Member Price: \$51**


USITT also offers a variety of useful reference tools like *New Theatre Words: World Edition*, recently back in print.



Click [here](#) to visit the online store and start adding to your library today! To purchase by phone, call the USITT office at 800-938-7488 ext. 104.



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

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

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*An Abstraction for Arnold Schönberg's Opera - Pantomime Die Glückliche Hand (The Hand of Fate), 1930 by Robert Edmond Jones. Gift of Mrs. Donald M. Oenslager to the Morgan. Photography by Schechter Lee, 2009.*

## Exhibition Examines Artistry, Innovation Of 20th-Century Stage Design

The 20th century saw a renaissance in the art of the theatre. Modern technology and materials allowed for innovative approaches to stage sets. New theories concerning the role of the actor and set in theatrical performances encouraged a radical departure from long-standing practices and the literalism of the 19th-century stage. Imagination and vision were encouraged allowing a vital and varied stagecraft to emerge throughout England, Europe, Russia, and America.

This extraordinary period of innovation in modern scenic design is the subject of an exhibition, *Creating the Modern Stage: Designs for Theatre and Opera* at The Morgan Library & Museum in New York City. It runs through August 16. The exhibition features more than 50 drawings from the Morgan's holdings, principally from the collection formed by American set designer Donald Oenslager (1902–1975). Enriching these colorful drawings is related material that includes musical scores, rare books, and autograph manuscripts as well as more than 30 performance photographs documenting the finished set.

The exhibition is divided into four thematic sections -- Origins of Modern Scenic Theory, Destroying Tradition, the Russian Avant-Garde, and Diversity of the American Stage -- together emphasizing the international scope of advances in set design.

### Origins of Modern Scenic Theory

The exhibition opens with visionary drawings for the stage by Edward Gordon Craig (1872–1966) as well as texts fundamental to modern scenic theory by Craig and Swiss stage designer Adolphe Appia (1862–1928). Appia spurred a move toward visual simplicity and a unity of aesthetic elements in set design and direction in part through his 1899 book, *Die Musik und die Inszenierung* (*Music and Set Design*). *Craig's Art of the Theatre* (1905) set out principles for an imaginative and suggestive, rather than literal, approach to set design.

### Destroying Tradition

At the beginning of the 20th century, ideas about the new stagecraft spread throughout Europe. A synthesis of the arts was elemental to several avant-garde movements, such as the Austrian Sezession and the German Jugendstil. Artists became more involved in the theatre, revitalizing scenic design and resulting in new and daring productions. The break from aesthetic tradition is documented in dramatic designs by German Expressionists. During and immediately following World War II when materials were scarce, Berlin designers' clever use of available resources continued to push the limits of convention. Dialogue, set, and movement were fused together to create a comprehensive theatrical experience.

### The Russian Avant-Garde

The Moscow Art Theater, founded in 1899, represented the vanguard of innovation. The collaboration between producers and designers, many of whom were painters, yielded an exceptional standard of stagecraft. At the center of this phenomenon was Mir iskusstva (World of Art), a group that emerged in St. Petersburg during the late 1900s. Members Alexandre Benois, Serge Diaghilev, and Léon Bakst designed and executed dance and theatre productions in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Shortly afterward, avant-garde artists Alexandra Exter, Natalia Goncharova, and Nikola? Pavlovich Akimov broke further from conventional set design influenced by Cubism and Constructivism.



Scene design by Erté (Romain de Tiroff), Russian, for the Ziegfeld Follies, 1923. Gift of Mrs. Donald M. Oenslager to The Morgan. Photography by Schecter Lee, 2009.

### **Diversity of the American Stage**

On stages throughout the United States, the vaudeville tradition of the early years of the 20th century gave rise to the genre of musical theatre, a distinctly American art form. Actors were in demand for both stage and screen, and the Depression inspired socially conscious plays as well as comedies. American theatre also benefited from an influx of European and Russian designers, who brought their experience to New York and other major theatre centers in the United States. A new American stagecraft originated largely in the work of Robert Edmond Jones (1887–1954), one of the principal designers responsible for its reinvigoration. He aimed to unify the elements of acting, lighting, and setting through his dramatic use of abstract forms and lyrical tonal effects.

Eugene Berman is one of the best known New York stage designers of the 1940s and 1950s. Born in Russia, he fled during the revolution and worked in Paris before emigrating to America in 1940. As a set designer, he rejected the abstract aesthetic established by Appia and Craig in favor of more evocative, elegant, and richly colored settings, often on a vast scale and replete with ruins and mysterious light.

As a young man, Donald Oenslager began collecting drawings, rare books, and prints related to the theatre dating from the 16th through the 20th centuries. Totalling approximately 1,600 sheets, the collection was presented to the Morgan by his widow in 1982.

*Creating the Modern Stage: Set Designs for Theatre and Opera* is organized by Jennifer Tonkovich, curator of drawings and prints, with the assistance of Elizabeth Nogrady, Moore Curatorial Fellow, The Morgan Library & Museum. The exhibition was made possible through the generosity of Jane and Robert Carroll and Eliot and Wilson Nolen. Generous assistance was also provided by the David L. Klein Jr. Foundation and the Tobin Theatre Arts Fund. This program is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.





Donald Oenslager's design of the Banks of the Salinas River for Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*, 1937. Gift of Mrs. Donald M. Oenslager to The Morgan. Photography by Schechter Lee, 2009.

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## USITT Needs 'Bricks' to Secure Future

**Lawrence J. Hill**
*Chair, USITT@50 Campaign*

The past year has been economically volatile, and that has affected this industry, its jobs, and images of its future. It is heartening to review the strong response to the special USITT campaign to build a solid base of financial support for grants, awards, and recognition of members. This solid base will also ensure a future for the Institute itself.

In an early message about this five-year fundraising campaign, the appeal closed with:

**Become a brick in the foundation of the Institute's future.**

Those who are devoted to British films of the 1930s and 40s will recall hearing the term "brick," used to describe people. "What a brick Charles is" or "Cecily is a real brick about it, you know." Loosely, a "brick" is a good sort, a person who won't let the side down. More importantly, this is often used to describe someone after they have demonstrated such qualities.

More prosaically they are reliable, helpful, and **generous**. We have been asking USITT members to "step up" and "stand up" and make a financial commitment in this early appeal; the members have done so.

As we move quickly along the road to Kansas City and the 50th year celebration, think on what these acts of philanthropy mean. A donation becomes the principal for a grant so a member can complete research about the theatre world. An award means the imprimatur from USITT on the professional quality of a person's work. An international travel award means USITT reaches out to world theatre.

While sensitive to the circumstances surrounding us, remember that a gift to USITT this year continues to convey one specific message, year after year, to the recipient: your work is important and the Institute is proud to recognize it.

During this special year, there is a 50 percent match of gifts going to four funds that support USITT's mission: Samuel H. Scripps for international activities; Edward F. Kook for research; New Century for student activities; and USITT for the organization's



future.

Giving can be done online, with online or paper membership renewals, and on any Conference registration form.

Additionally, USITT welcomes offers of an estate gift or other efforts in supporting USITT. To initiate discussions, contact Michelle L. Smith at michelle@office.usitt.org or by calling 800-938-7488, ext 102.

A foundation of bricks will secure USITT for decades. Envision a time in the future when an Anglophile who receives a grant will muse gratefully on the **generosity** of those in 2010 who made a gesture of philanthropy, a pledge of faith in the future. Hear the murmur, "Garn, what wonderful blokes did that?" The most appropriate response? "They were good sorts, those bricks!"

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## Rendez-Vous Registration Continues

Registration continues for CITT/ICTS Rendez-Vous 2009 in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. The Citadel Theatre is proud to host the 19th Annual Conference in downtown Edmonton.

Penny Ritco, keynote speaker, has been the executive director of the Citadel Theatre since October 2003, returning to a life in the theatre after 15 years in the film and television industry. Prior to joining the Citadel Theatre, she was vice president of productions for Edmonton-based Great North Productions (an Alliance Atlantis Company).

For conference schedule and updates, please visit the [website](#). To register, [click here](#).

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## ETCP Launches Web-Based Practice Exams

The Entertainment Technician Certification Program (ETCP) launched practice exams for the Rigger-Arena, Rigger-Theatre, and Entertainment Electrician certification exams on July 15.

The web-based practice exams consist of 50 questions and are available for \$35 at [www.goamp.com](http://www.goamp.com). Candidates should go to “Candidates” and then follow the menu to ETCP to choose one of the three exams.

The practice exams will provide candidates with a valuable tool for self assessment before sitting for the actual exam. There is no application process with the practice exams; so any interested candidate will be able to take the exam privately at home, at the office, or on the road whenever it is most convenient

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## Launch eSET for Technicians

This month:  
Registration Continues  
ETCP Launches Practice Exams  
eSET for Technicians

The ESTA Foundation announces the launch of eSET (Essential Skills for the Entertainment Technician), a web based source for essential terminology used within the entertainment technology industry. From Lekos to Cheeseburgers, eSET cuts through the jargon and establishes clear terminology to ensure better communication from region to region and person to person.

Subscription based, eSET's searchable database provides the user with the terminology needed to understand and to be understood wherever the work takes them. In addition to the terminology, assessments for each discipline are provided as well as the means to create specific resources for learning and teaching. It will continually be updated and refined to better serve the needs of an ever-changing industry.

Annual subscriptions are \$10 for students, \$15 for professionals, and \$40 for a five-site license. To subscribe, go to [www.eset.net](http://www.eset.net).

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Deborah Nadoolman Landis was on hand to sign copies of her USITT Golden Pen-winning book during the 2009 Annual Conference & Stage Expo. The session about the book was a big draw during the Conference.

Photo/Tom Thatcher

## Golden Pen Winner Named New Copley Chair at UCLA

Deborah Nadoolman Landis, an Academy Award-nominated costume designer and scholar, has been named to the newly endowed David C. Copley Chair for the Study of Costume Design at the UCLA School of Theater, Film, and Television.

USITT's 2009 Golden Pen award was presented to Ms. Landis, author of *Dressed: A Century of Hollywood Costume Design* (Harper Collins, 2007). She attended the USITT Annual Conference & Stage Expo in Cincinnati where her activities included a book signing and Conference session.

An unprecedented gift of \$6 million to the school from newspaper publisher and philanthropist David C. Copley last June supported the establishment of both the chair and the David C. Copley Center for the Study of Costume Design. The center will enhance scholarship in the field through research, coursework and a program to bring in leading professionals as visiting faculty. Ms. Landis will serve as the founding director of the center, the only one of its kind in the world.

In addition to her distinguished film career, she is an award-winning designer for the theatre and opera and is a noted scholar and author in the field who has lectured and written extensively and published three books.

Ms. Landis received an MFA degree in costume design from

UCLA in 1975 and a PhD in the history of design from London's Royal College of Art in 2003.

She recently completed her second term as president of the Costume Designers Guild, Local 892. She has had a distinguished career designing for major motion pictures directed by John Landis, Steven Spielberg, Louis Malle, and Costa-Gavras.

The David C. Copley Center for the Study of Costume Design will work toward three pioneering objectives:

- Becoming the world leader in the academic study of costume design crossing media boundaries and enhancing the already top-ranked theater costume program at UCLA;
- Preparing graduates for career and artistic success through a balanced curriculum of theory and practical experience, as well as mentorship from the most accomplished practitioners in the world; and
- Establishing an approach to unify theory and practice in the area of costume design through the research and study of the cultural significance of costume, its relationship to aesthetic theory and the role of costume as a centerpiece of narrative and storytelling.

As a member of the international film community, Ms. Landis delivered the keynote address at the inaugural Costume Symposium in London in 2006 and served on the 2007 Cinefondation Jury at the 60th anniversary of the Cannes Film Festival. She teaches at the University of Southern California School of Cinematic Arts and the American Film Institute and is a professor at the University of the Arts London.

She wrote *Screencraft/Costume Design* (2003), *50 Designers/50 Costumes: Concept to Character* (2004) and *Dressed: A Century of Hollywood Costume*. She is preparing *Deconstructing Glamour*, due out in 2010.

As a costume designer, her many collaborations with her husband, director John Landis, include *Animal House* (1978), *The Blues Brothers* (1980), *¡Three Amigos!* (1987), and *Coming to America* (1988), for which she was nominated for an Academy Award, as well as the groundbreaking music video "Michael Jackson's Thriller" (1983). She worked with Steven Spielberg on *1941* (1978) and designed the iconic Indiana Jones adventure *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981). Her theatre work includes costumes for the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco, the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles and *Turandot* for the Virginia Opera.

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## Officers Visit

A delightful time was had when several USITT officers and members of the Transition Advisory Team subcommittees visited Syracuse, New York in late June. Several of these dedicated volunteers who are working on the tasks of restructuring the organization to meet the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century were able to take a break and enjoy dinner with staff members.

President Carl Lefko lead the group on a visit to Asti Café. There the sprit of Syracuse' Little Italy neighborhood was extremely evident in the menu selections and decor.

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## Costume Symposium Sells Out

The 2009 USITT Costume Symposium "Creating Creatures with Foam and Varaform" is scheduled for August 6 to 8 at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio and is already sold out.

Expect a full report in a future issue of *Sightlines* covering all three days of information and instruction from this exciting event.

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## Rose Brand Receives Commuter Award

For the second year in a row, the State of New Jersey has awarded **Rose Brand**, the industry leader in theatrical custom sewing and supplies, the top honor for providing excellent commuting solutions for their employees. The Platinum Award was presented by the New Jersey Commissioner of Transportation, Stephen Dilts, in a May 7 ceremony at the New Jersey Institute of Technology campus in Newark, New Jersey.

New Jersey Smart Workplaces (NJSW) recognizes and honors organizations and individuals who help reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality by providing commuter benefits to employees as well as raise awareness of the carbon load created by the various commuting options. The program is a voluntary partnership of participating employers, the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), NJ TRANSIT, and the state's Transportation Management Association (TMA) coordinated in the region by Meadowlink Commuter Services.



Rose Brand moved to Secaucus, New Jersey in January 2007 after many decades in New York City.

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## App Allows iPhones to Control Lighting

Lighting technicians and programmers love their iPhones – and they want to use them everywhere! **ETC** has answered the call by allowing them to turn their Apple handhelds into miniature lighting-controllers. ETC has released its iRFR (Radio Focus Remote for iPhone and iPod Touch), while donating all the proceeds to industry-aid organizations Behind the Scenes and Light Relief.

The iRFR will offer all the functionality of an ETC Net3 Radio Focus Remote unit, interfacing to ETC's Eos, Ion, Element, Congo, and Congo Jr lighting control desks. The iRFR is supported in the current



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ETC

J.R. Clancy

GAMPRODUCTS Inc.

Vincent Lighting Systems

PRG

Theatre Projects  
Consultants

Congo software release, and will be supported in the upcoming Eos release for Eos and Ion, and in Element when it is released this summer.



There are two versions of the iRFR application. Purchase of the iRFR – BTS is in support of Behind the Scenes, while the iRFR – LR supports Light Relief. [Download the apps here.](#)

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### **J.R. Clancy Achieves ISO Recertification**

**J. R. Clancy Inc.** recently was recertified for the new ISO 9001:2008 Quality Management Systems standard. Clancy is the only rigging company in the American technical theatre industry to achieve ISO 9001:2008 certification.

ISO 9001:2008 is the fourth edition of the standard, which underwent a complete revision in 2000 to emphasize the customer, moving beyond the factory floor and into every point at which a company connects with its customers. The 2008 revision promotes an even greater emphasis on meeting customer requirements, both at the time of product delivery and throughout the product's life, all while reducing costs through efficiencies for the company as well as the customer.

J. R. Clancy was a four-star sponsor of the 33rd annual League of Historic American Theatres (LHAT) conference in Cleveland, Ohio, July 15 to 18. Hosted this year by PlayhouseSquare in Cleveland's downtown theatre district, the LHAT conference places historic theatres and their renovations in the spotlight including the Hanna Theatre, the permanent home of the Great Lakes Theatre Festival (GLTF). For this recently completed renovation project, J. R. Clancy supplied 48 PowerLift automated rigging linesets, a SceneControl 500 motion control system, a handheld portable pendant for remote control of the PowerLifts, and three hydraulic lifts for the unique thrust stage configuration.

For additional information, contact J. R. Clancy at 800-836-1885 or [www.jrclancy.com](http://www.jrclancy.com).

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### **New Patterns Offered**



**GAMPRODUCTS, Inc.** has introduced five new patterns to its collection. They include Kwanzaa, Party Cake, Fence Breakup, Airplane, and Pinwheel Breakup.

For information or to order, visit [www.gamonline.com](http://www.gamonline.com).



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### Lighting Office Expands to New Space

The Cleveland headquarters of **Vincent Lighting Systems** has expanded to a new location. The company has moved into a 25,000 square foot office located at 6161 Cochran Rd., Ste D, Solon, OH 44139, with easy access from the highway and ample parking.

Phone and fax numbers remain the same at 216-475-7600 and 216-475-6376, respectively. Also unaffected are the Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, and Detroit branches. For complete information, log onto [www.vincentlighting.com](http://www.vincentlighting.com).

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### Scenic Technologies Relishes Circus Challenge

**PRG's Scenic Technologies** group was particularly excited to have the chance to join *The Circus Starring Britney Spears*. The European leg of the world tour, which began at the

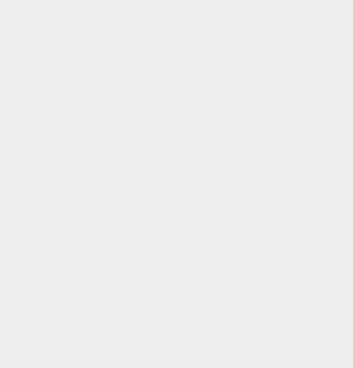


O2 Arena in London, was the debut of the overhead automation system and two flying scenic elements. PRG received the request to engineer and build the system approximately four weeks before installation. The design concept presented a challenge that the PRG engineers found impossible to resist.

PRG Scenic Technologies has over 20 years' experience engineering automation for the theatrical market, corporate events, and themed environments. For more information on PRG Scenic Technologies, please visit [www.prg.com](http://www.prg.com).

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### New Website, New Look



**Theatre Projects Consultants**, which helps create extraordinary performance spaces throughout the world, has revamped its website. The site not only has a new look, but simplifies navigation, improves searches, and makes it easier to find related information. There also is a new resources section which provides information on the theatre and architecture industries.

To experience it personally, visit [www.theatreprojects.com](http://www.theatreprojects.com).

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## RC4 Wins Lighting Product of the Year

Independent judges unanimously selected RC4BlackMagic for wireless features, small size, and value for money.

RC4 Wireless was awarded Lighting Product of the Year by the Association of British Theatre Technicians (ABTT) in London for their RC4BlackMagic Wireless DMX and Dimming System.

“We are particularly flattered by this award because of the nature of the voting process,” said James David Smith, president and chief product designer at RC4.

RC4BlackMagic wireless dimming debuted at the ABTT Theatre Show. It is an incremental revision of the well-established RC4Magic series, featuring improved protection against dimmer overloading and overheating. “Our larger dimmers have been well protected for years – we’ve been doing this since 1991 – but we struggled with ways to reliably squeeze all that power circuitry into a very small space. Now, with RC4BlackMagic, even the tiny little DMX2dim and DMX4dim are fully protected.”

The ABTT show in London marks the first time RC4 Wireless has exhibited outside North America, despite having customers in England, Ireland, Switzerland, Germany, Spain, Japan, China, Australia, Brazil, Mexico, and elsewhere.

Visit [www.theatrewireless.com](http://www.theatrewireless.com) for more information about RC4 Wireless.



James David Smith with the ABTT trophy for Lighting Product of the Year, and an RC4BlackMagic DMXio with external antenna option.

This month:  
Lighting Product of the Year

Georgia College & State University

Stagecraft Institute of Las Vegas

Serapid

Stage Technologies

TMB

TOMCAT

Leviton/NSI/Colortran

Wybron, Inc.

Schuler Shook

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**New Member**

USITT welcomes **Georgia College & State University** as a new Sustaining member.

Karen Berman is Theatre Chair & Artistic Director of the university, which is based in Milledgeville, Georgia. It is Georgia's public liberal arts university.

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### **Training Program Begins Third Season**

On June 8, the doors opened on the 2009 Session of **Stagecraft Institute of Las Vegas (SILV)**. Students from 15 U.S. states and seven countries are attending sessions with SILV this summer.

Training includes drafting/CAD, theatrical rigging, automated rigging, lighting technology, moving lights, sound technology, special effects and make-up with each course formatted to an intensive five-day segment. Each segment can be taken for three college credits.

For more information, visit the [SILV website](#).

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### **Serapid To Install Lifts at Wharton Center**

**Serapid, Inc.** stage lift systems will be installed in the Cobb Great Hall at the Wharton Center at Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan as part of the theatre renovation project.

Twelve of Serapid's LinkLift Rigid Chain Lift columns will be installed to replace the existing hydraulic lift systems at the center. Eight columns will be installed for the Down Stage Lift, and four columns will be installed for the Up Stage Lift. These new lift systems are a part of the first renovation the Wharton Center has undergone in more than 25 years.

Serapid is a leader in stage, orchestra and piano lifts. For more information, contact Serapid at 800-663-4514 or on the web: [www.serapid.com](http://www.serapid.com).

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### **Stage Technologies Makes Queen's List**

2009 has been a landmark year for **Stage Technologies** and the 16th year since its formation by John Hastie and Mark Ager.

This year the company received The Queen's Awards for Enterprise: International Trade for the second time. The Queen's Awards for Enterprise are the United Kingdom's most prestigious awards for business performance and are widely recognized throughout the world. Stage Technologies opened its doors June 26 to several key suppliers and partners in the industry to celebrate this award along with staff. A commemorative bowl and Grant of Appointment were presented.

Never forgetting its roots in the West End of London, Stage Technologies is now a prominent world leader in pioneering

automation technology in live performance industries across the world.

*Automation in the Entertainment Industry - A User's Guide*, written by Mr. Ager and Mr. Hastie, is now available. It reveals the common-sense thought processes that go into using automation in the theatre. All proceeds that the authors make from the sale of the book will be donated to the Stage Technologies charity, which supports individuals at a grass roots level who want to follow a career in theatre automation and allied industries.

To purchase copies of the book, visit [www.etbooks.co.uk](http://www.etbooks.co.uk) or [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk).

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### **TMB Aides Contest, Launch New Products**

Solaris products were part of the 54th Eurovision Song Contest in May. Contestants from European Union nations and beyond gathered in Moscow, Russia to compete, each hoping to become the next ABBA. The event has become one of the world's largest production spectacles. **TMB** is the exclusive distributor of Solaris products.

This year TMB launched several new products at InfoComm. They included UberPan from Green Hippo, amBIENT XC from amBX, ProFan, ProPlex RMT, ProPlex GBS, ProShell, and Solaris CF-35 strobe.



Find out more about the products and services offered by TMB at [www.tmb.com](http://www.tmb.com).

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### **Exhibit at InfoComm09**

**TOMCAT** was at the InfoComm Exhibition June 17 to 19 at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Florida. TOMCAT is a manufacturer of staging, lighting and support systems to the entertainment and leisure industries. The company also partnered with InterAmerica



Stage, a specialty equipment company that provides rigging and show system solutions to the broadcasting and entertainment industry, in the promotion of SkyDeck, a modular wire grid system that provides safe access to theatrical lighting, audio cables, loudspeakers, stage rigging, and effects. Accompanying the InterAmerica SkyDeck system was TOMCAT's Sky product, a ladder beam truss product with a sturdy spigot connection. It's



designed for light, medium and heavy duty applications over short and large spans.

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### **Leviton Relocates Global Headquarters**

**Leviton Manufacturing Company**, North America's leading producer of electrical and electronic wiring devices, relocated its global corporate headquarters to Long Island's Suffolk County on June 15. Leviton outfitted the four-story, 140,000 square foot facility, located at 201 North Service Road in Melville, with the latest "green building" materials and systems. This includes a variety of Leviton's own devices and controls -- from sophisticated lighting energy management systems to box-mounted designer switches, outlets and dimmers.

The state-of-the-art office complex serves as a showcase for the Company's installed products and as a model high-performance building. Comprehensive interior renovation of the complex took 18 months to complete and included a new floor plan design and building systems makeover. Backbone systems such as Leviton's daylight harvesting, occupancy detection and high-speed data networking products combine to maximize energy efficiency, enhance operating efficiency and reduce the building's carbon footprint.

For more information, contact Leviton Manufacturing, 201 North Service Rd., Melville, NY, 11747, [www.leviton.com](http://www.leviton.com).

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### **Wybron Launches Redesigned Website**

An easy-to-navigate graphical interface highlights the redesigned Wybron website launched June 24.

With detailed information and photos for every model of each product, the redesigned site should make it easier for customers to find exactly what they need.

The redesigned site also offers some new features, including an online chat program that allows customers to connect instantly with a Wybron customer service representative. It will soon feature tutorials for Wybron's products, giving a detailed look at how to use each one.

Visit the redesigned site at [www.wybron.com](http://www.wybron.com).

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### **Schuler Shook Named to Melbourne Project**

**Schuler Shook** Theatre Planners was appointed the theatre planning consultants for the renovation of Hamer Hall at The Arts Centre in Melbourne, Australia.

The \$128.5 million (Australian dollars) redevelopment of Hamer Hall is part of a larger revitalization project for The Arts Centre and the first step in the Southbank Cultural Precinct Redevelopment plan. The Arts Centre is the largest and busiest performing arts complex in the southern hemisphere.

Robert Shook, ASTC, is the principal in charge of theatre planning. Joshua Grossman, ASTC, is the senior theatre planner, and Lisa Bernacchi is Schuler Shook's CAD leader. Schuler Shook's presence in Melbourne is led by Project Manager Jim Hultquist, ASTC, LEED AP.

Mr. Hultquist recently joined Schuler Shook as a project consultant with nine years of theatre consulting experience ranging from black box theatres to multi-venue performing arts centers, capitalizing on his experience as a theatre lighting designer with designs for regional, civic, and touring productions, as well as architectural lighting designs. His specialty is technical equipment design and specifications from stage lighting to rigging with a special emphasis on coordinating stage equipment with building systems. He has also been working with manufacturers and other partners to increase the sustainability and energy efficiency of theatre buildings.

For more information, visit [www.schulershook.com](http://www.schulershook.com).

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## Ohio Valley Announces Fall Conference

The Ohio Valley Regional Section will hold its Fall Conference on Saturday, October 3 at Seton Hill University. The conference includes a full day of sessions as well as tours of the new Seton Hill University Performing Arts Center in Greensburg, Pennsylvania and the nearby roadhouse, Palace Theater.

Those in Cleveland will recall the tour of the Hanna Theatre and will want to share the excitement of the Seton Hill faculty and students as they move into their brand new facility.

Topics for sessions cover a wide range from scene painting with Jenny Knott from Rosco; evoking emotion with costume renderings with Mary McClung from West Virginia University; taxes, 1099s and unions with Annmarie Duggan from the University of Pittsburgh; and hands-on lighting control with Pete Neal from LaFace & McGovern Associates' Specialty Lighting Division, to name a few. For more detailed information, check the website or the soon to be e-mailed newsletter.

In addition to the many sessions, portfolio reviews will be held for all design disciplines. Sign up for times at conference registration.

The conference will also feature a keynote address by Dick Block, chair of the Department of Drama at Carnegie Mellon University and co-author of *Scene Design and Stage Lighting* (8th and 9th editions).

As always with the fall conference, the Peggy Ezekiel Design Exhibit will be on display and the awards will be announced at the membership meeting. This exhibit is open to any member of the section. Check the website for details regarding the format for this year since there have been some major changes.

Details will be posted on the OVS website, [www.usittohiovalley.org](http://www.usittohiovalley.org), in early August.

Inspired by the upcoming 50th Anniversary of USITT, the section is undertaking an exciting project to gather the history of the section into one place. Tammy Honesty, VC for Programming, has created a WIKI where members can add what they know of the section's past. Visit [usitt--ohiovalleysection.wikispaces.com/](http://usitt--ohiovalleysection.wikispaces.com/) and share recollections of the section and any personal stories. The Section is especially interested in updating the list of individuals who have received the OVS lifetime

This month:  
Ohio Valley  
New England  
Desert State  
Southwest  
Heart of America

achievement award.

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### **Plan Ninth Annual BBQ**

It is time for the ninth annual New England Regional Section summer barbecue 1 p.m. Saturday, August 22 at the Chair's house in West Roxbury, Massachusetts.

There will be lots of food, snacks, and things to quench your thirst. Want to bring a guest? Sure! Not a member? Come anyway! Check us out. Students are welcome for free. Thinking about becoming a member of the New England Section? Come to the barbecue and sign up for only \$15 dollars regular membership. Catch up on everyone's activities, see what progress has been made since the Annual Conference, and think of new adventures.

RSVP by e-mailing Crystal Tiala at [tiala@mindspring.com](mailto:tiala@mindspring.com). Please include the names of any guests and if there are any food allergies/issues

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### **Plan Retreat and Workshop, On Facebook**

The Desert State Regional Section has been busy in the hot summer making plans for its annual retreat up in the cool northlands. On August 15, the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 boards will meet for an intensive planning session at Northland Pioneer College in Arizona. This is when the schedule for the year will be created, budget planned, workshop ideas discussed, and groundwork laid for the 2009-2010 Student Scholarship Award Program. A panel discussion on Renovating Performance Spaces will be held later in the day. Those interested in attending should contact Fran Sutherland ([fransutherland@cox.net](mailto:fransutherland@cox.net)) or Debra Ann Fisher ([debraann.fisher@npc.edu](mailto:debraann.fisher@npc.edu)).

The Section will present a workshop on August 29 at Scottsdale Community College. *Putting your Best Foot Forward: How to market yourself and your art* is geared toward students so they know how to put together a portfolio and resume for the industry.

The Section is on Facebook! Join the group for updates on this and other events.

Thanks go to Laurie Kinckman for her many years of dedicated service to the board. She has accepted a wonderful opportunity in Wisconsin.

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### **Symposium to Mark 40th Anniversary**

As USITT celebrates its 50th anniversary, USITT-Southwest will turn 40. The Section will kick off its 40th year with two days of workshops and seminars in Oklahoma City. The Southwest Regional Section will hold its Fall *TechXperience Weekend* September 5 to 6.

Events will be held at the Stage Center Theatre in the Arts District of downtown and at Oklahoma City University. Workshops include: Men's Tailoring with Kristina Hanssen and George Curry; Scene Painting with Jenny Knott and Heidi Hoffer; Theatre Architecture tours with Jack Hagler; Moving Lights & Ion demo with Eric Marsh; Color Theory and Design by Joe Tawil; and Designing for Outdoor Theatre. The keynote speaker will be Robert Benedetti, lighting designer, Emmy winning director, producer, and author; his address will be about the Director/Designer Relationship. There also will be a Professional Design Exhibition that is open to all Section members.

During the symposium there will also be opportunities to see three local productions: *Death of a Salesman* at the Pollard Theatre, *Twelfth Night* at Oklahoma Shakespeare in the Park, and *Compleat Female* at the Stage Center.

Registration for the symposium is \$5 for student members and \$20 for members. For more information, check out [www.usitt-sw.org](http://www.usitt-sw.org).

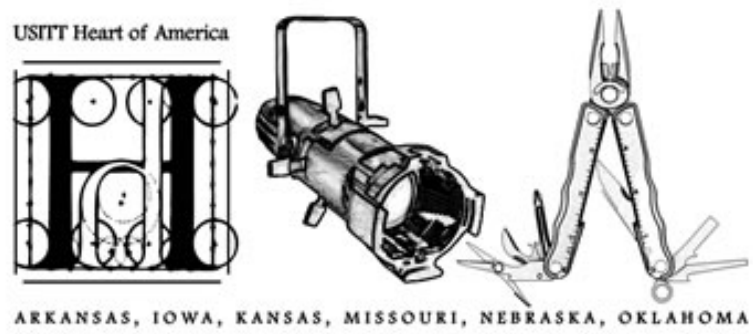
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### **Fall Workshops at Heart of America**

The Heart of America Fall Workshops & Mini Expo will be held at the Lied Center, University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas September 11 to 12. Del Unruh, professor of scenography and author of *The Designs of Ming Cho Lee*, *The Designs of Tharon Musser*, and most recently *The Designs of Jules Fisher* will be the featured speaker Friday evening. Saturday will include a USITT/The ESTA Foundation Rigging joint training workshop on establishing an inspection record and Richard Wolpert of Union Connector speaking on theatre electricity safe working practices. Additional workshop topics include costumes by Ashley Bellet of University of Tulsa, adapting other technologies for theatre by Ed Baker of Wichita State University, and a tour of Kansas University's Lied Center. Several regional vendors will also be represented at a mini expo. More information and registration is available at [www.usittheartofamerica.com](http://www.usittheartofamerica.com).

Heart of America also has a new logo which will be rolled out onto its website over the next few days.





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### Taylor M. Long Named Technician of Year

This year's recipient of USITT's Frisco High School Chapter of Technician of the Year Award is Taylor M. Long.

Ms. Long graduated in 2009 from the Texas school, and has been a part of the theatre program at FHS for all four years. She worked in all capacities

including: stage manager for *Medea*, *Into the Woods* and FHS' UIL competition show *The Cripple of Innishmaan*; co-stage designer for *Tales of Winters Past*, the FHS fine arts holiday show (first of its kind); make-up artist for *Shattered Dreams* (an anti drunk driving campaign for the prom); artist for the local disaster drill which certifies the community volunteer crew; lights for *Experiment with an Airpump*; and as dance choreographer for a program set to lights. She was one of the founding members of the USITT chapter at FHS and its first Chair. "All in all an excellent, bright and upstanding student," said Benjamin P. Shurr, Student Chapter Advisor.



Taylor M. Long with Benjamin P. Shurr

This month:  
Technician of the Year  
Disaster Drill

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### FHS USITT Participated in Disaster Drill

Members of the FHS USITT student chapter participated in a disaster drill as a chapter activity and community service for the Frisco CERT (Community Emergency Response Team). CERT is an all-risk, all hazard training program that trains people to be better prepared to respond to emergency situations in their communities. CERT members give critical support to first responders in emergencies, provide immediate assistance to victims, organize spontaneous volunteers at a disaster site, and collect disaster intelligence to support first responder efforts. Throughout the CERT program, citizens are trained to respond effectively and efficiently without placing themselves in danger. CERT is a nine-week program with classes held twice a year. The drill is held at the end of the training. This year's disaster was a earthquake.



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# Online Communities Provide Wealth of Information

**Kristiana Tollefson**
*Co-Commissioner, Costume Design & Technology*

The Costume Design & Technology Online Communities continue to support members, and two of the most popular offerings are the Costume Info and Costume Locator e-mail lists.

The Costume Info list celebrated its eight year anniversary in April and, by the time this is published, will likely have recorded its 6,000th post and 600th member. This e-mail list enables members to exchange sources, ideas, techniques, and products used in any area of theatrical costuming.

Subscribers post questions ranging from machinery recommendations to dye techniques, textbooks, web sources, internships, and job openings. This list does not accept rental inquiries of any kind. To join the Costumer's Info list, send a blank e-mail to [costumeinfo-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:costumeinfo-subscribe@yahoogroups.com).

The Costume Locator service is the place to send any rental inquiries large or small. Inquiries have ranged from a single suit, to the Equus heads, to entire productions. No request is too large or too small. Archive searches can provide information on whether someone has posted a particular item in the past. The list is only responsible for getting people in touch with each other, not for transaction processes. To subscribe to the CostumeLocator service, send a blank e-mail to [costumelocator-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:costumelocator-subscribe@yahoogroups.com).

Both services are moderated, and the list moderator must approve each request or post. This ensures the integrity of postings, allows the moderator to edit/combine duplicate messages as well as edit for clarity, and ensures that members are posting to the correct list for their inquiry. Therefore, it is normal for there to be a few days from the time of posting to the distribution of messages. The main features of both lists can be accessed through e-mail alone but both lists have web pages to access additional resources. Both lists allow the choice of individual message format or digest format which compiles all of the day's messages into one e-mail. New members are automatically subscribed to the individual message format and can switch to digest by sending an e-mail to [costumeinfo-digest@yahoogroups.com](mailto:costumeinfo-digest@yahoogroups.com) or [costumelocator-digest@yahoogroups.com](mailto:costumelocator-digest@yahoogroups.com). Anyone may belong to either list or



both. Spend some time looking around the websites, which have very detailed help sections. For additional information, contact the list moderators:

Costumer's Info List Moderator, Kristina Tollefson:

- [kristina@tollefsondesigns.com](mailto:kristina@tollefsondesigns.com);
- Website [groups.yahoo.com/group/costumeinfo/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/costumeinfo/)
- Subscribe [costumeinfo-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:costumeinfo-subscribe@yahoogroups.com);
- Digest [costumeinfo-digest@yahoogroups.com](mailto:costumeinfo-digest@yahoogroups.com);
- No mail (vacation setting) [costumeinfo-nomail@yahoogroups.com](mailto:costumeinfo-nomail@yahoogroups.com);
- Individual Messages [costumeinfo-normal@yahoogroups.com](mailto:costumeinfo-normal@yahoogroups.com);
- Post message [costumeinfo@yahoogroups.com](mailto:costumeinfo@yahoogroups.com).

Costume Locator List Moderator Kevin McCluskey;

- [kmccclusk@mw.edu](mailto:kmccclusk@mw.edu)
- Website [groups.yahoo.com/group/costumelocator/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/costumelocator/)
- Subscribe [costumelocator-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:costumelocator-subscribe@yahoogroups.com);
- Digest [costumelocator-digest@yahoogroups.com](mailto:costumelocator-digest@yahoogroups.com);
- No mail (vacation setting) [costumelocator-nomail@yahoogroups.com](mailto:costumelocator-nomail@yahoogroups.com)
- Individual Messages [costumelocator-normal@yahoogroups.com](mailto:costumelocator-normal@yahoogroups.com);
- Post message [costumelocator@yahoogroups.com](mailto:costumelocator@yahoogroups.com).

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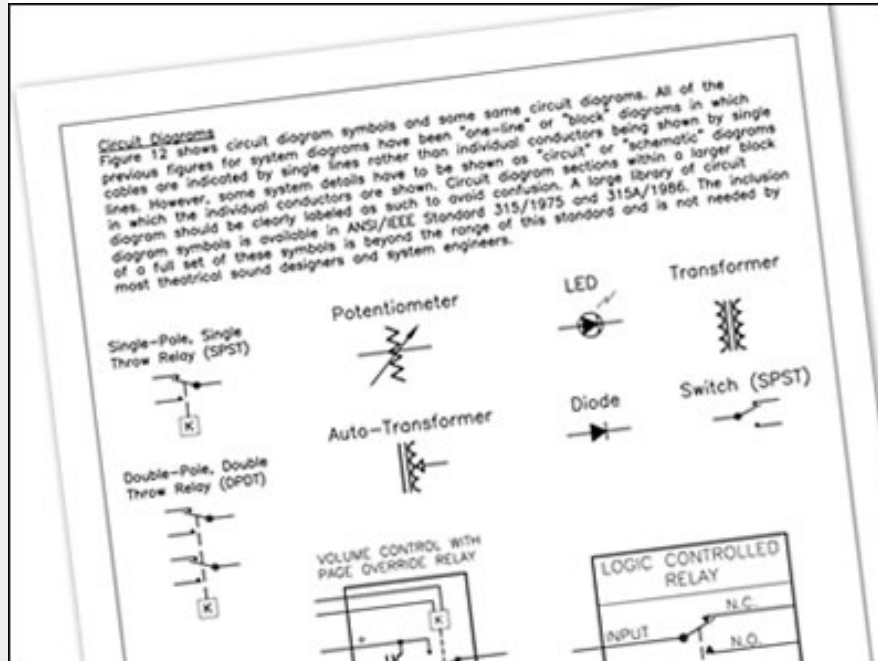
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## Seek Comments on Sound Graphics

USITT's Sound Commission is seeking comments on its proposed *Sound Graphics Recommended Practice*.

A PDF of the draft document is [available for download here](#). Any member of the Institute who would like to comment should send details remarks to:

Jonathan Darling, Senior Consultant  
 Kirkegaard Associates  
 801 W. Adams, 8th Floor  
 Chicago, IL 60607  
 312-441-1998 ext. 42 direct line  
 312-441-1980 office  
 312-441-1981 fax  
 847-571-5895 cell  
[jdarling@kirkegaard.com](mailto:jdarling@kirkegaard.com)  
[www.kirkegaard.com](http://www.kirkegaard.com)

The final date to submit comments will be October 2, 2009.

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## Costume Design & Technology Commission

### Projects for Teaching Costume Design & Technology

The Costume Design & Technology Commission is soliciting your ideas for a new volume of *Projects for Teaching Costume Design & Technology*. The first volume included projects such as: rendering, costume management, collaboration between scenic & lighting design, written expression of analysis & discovery, portfolio development and other costume & technology projects.

The new volume is long overdue. It will be edited by Martha Marking from Appalachian State University ([markngma@appstate.edu](mailto:markngma@appstate.edu)) and Judy Adamson from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill ([jadamson@email.unc.edu](mailto:jadamson@email.unc.edu)).

Proposals are still being accepted. In addition, the editors are looking for

## Projects for Teaching Costume Design, Technology

**Judy Adamson**

*Costume Design & Technology Commission*

Fall is a perfect time to think about ideas which could be incorporated into a continuing USITT program. Projects for Teaching Costume Design and Technology has been an on-going project of the Costume Commission for over 10 years. Volume 1, published in 1998 and edited by Pat Martin, inspired everyone from the instructor entering the profession to the experienced teacher looking for a new approach. USITT Costume Design & Technology Commission continues to solicit ideas for Volume 2.

Contribute to the project by sharing projects that have been successful in the classroom. It is easy to submit a project. A project submission form is on the [Costume Design & Technology Commission web page](#). Under Commission News, a link will lead to a pdf form that can be submitted electronically or printed and mailed. If encountering difficulty, or not receiving an acknowledgment of submission, contact Judy Adamson directly.

In addition to soliciting submissions, the editors are seeking educators willing to try the projects in their classrooms and provide feedback. To see a list of the submissions to date in "teaser" form, e-mail: [jadamson@email.unc.edu](mailto:jadamson@email.unc.edu). Those interested

in trying one of the projects will receive the complete submission.

The membership of the Costume Design & Technology Commission represents diverse teaching challenges including educating those interested in becoming teachers as well as those who will follow professional careers. Commission members work with those of with all levels of interest and talent. Feedback will be instrumental in providing levels of approach in the final publication.

To assist, contact one of the editors: Judy Adamson, CB# 3230, Center for Dramatic Art, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3230; or Martha Marking, Department of Theatre and Dance, Appalachian State University, 480 Howard Street, Boone, NC; markngma@appstate.edu.

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Exhibitor programs enhance the offerings at each USITT Annual Conference. At left, Christopher Lyons of Shure Inc. was the presenter for wireless Microphones, White Spaces, and Spectrum Changes at the 2009 Annual Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Photo/R. Finkelstein

## Stage Expo 2010 Exhibitors Plan Programs

**Helen Willard**

*Stage Expo Sales Manager*

In addition to exhibiting at Stage Expo, several companies sponsor programs at the Conference. Here are brief descriptions of some of the sessions which will be presented by exhibitors in Kansas City.

### **Designing with Color & Gobos: Where do I begin?**

*Sponsored by Apollo Design Technology*

Like an artist staring at a blank canvas or a writer at a blank page, lighting designers face the same challenge. Selecting the appropriate colors and patterns to best complement the story, theme, or environment can be daunting. Join this panel discussion on how and when to effectively use these tools together to create memorable designs.

### **Make-up for Cirque du Soleil**

*Sponsored by Cirque du Soleil*

Make-up and costumes are the gateway through which an artist slips into the skin of their character, like a magical wand that takes away all inhibitions. Since artists must do their own make-up before every show, Cirque du Soleil make-up artists are often called upon to play the role of a teacher. Join in a glimpse behind the scenes at this impressive universe of creativity and originality,

and learn how artists create the designs and teach the applications that reflect the spirit of the characters.

### **So You Think You Know Everything about Top Hats**

*Sponsored by City Theatrical*

Top hats are just one of the many beam shaping accessories used on lighting fixtures. This session will discuss the effects of top hats, flocking, concentric rings, egg crate louvers, donuts, and other accessories. Real world applications of these accessories will be discussed and how they affect the beams shown.

### **Automated Rigging - Safety, Inspection, Maintenance**

*Sponsored by JR Clancy*

As more automated rigging is installed in theatres, users will need to develop the skills to inspect and maintain the equipment. Motorized equipment has to be actively inspected and regular maintenance performed. Users will also need to learn a new approach to operation for backstage safety.

### **Making Your Way to Broadway**

*Sponsored by the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees*

This panel discussion will include representatives from the Broadway League and IATSE, labor relations, company manager, general manager, etc.

### **Wireless DMX and Dimming in Practice – Case Studies**

*Sponsored by RC4 Wireless Dimming*

Wireless Dimming and Wireless DMX -- what it is, how it works, tips and tricks, and pitfalls and safety concerns. A panel discussion with guest speakers will explain how they use Wireless DMX and Dimming.

### **100 Years of Color in Stage Lighting**

*Sponsored by Rosco*

The first mass-produced color filter, Roscogel, was introduced in 1910. Now, 100 years later, we're coloring stage light with plastic, LEDs, dichroics, and emerging technologies. This session looks back at the history and looks forward to the implications for lighting designers.

### **Fabric and Theatre Throughout the Ages**

*Sponsored by Rose Brand*

This session will focus on changes and advancements relating to fabric and other items used for theatrical purposes. Topics covered will include changes in topical flame treatment; the development of inherently flame retardant fabrics and how this can affect painting techniques; the incorporation of digitally printed surfaces; and changes in projection surfaces.

### **Stump the Rigger**

*Sponsored by Sapsis Rigging & Entertainment Services*

This session is a perennial USITT favorite. A panel of industry experts invites you to take pot shots at them. Bring your best (and worst) questions and try to stump these guys. Who knows? You could win a prize.

## **Integrating Show Systems Without Resorting to a Sledgehammer**

*Sponsored by Stage Research*

With so many systems that need to be integrated for a successful show, Stage Research will explore some of the possible tools and devices used to coerce unlikely systems into proper etiquette for communication. Not for the faint of heart.

## **Gaslights to LED**

*Sponsored by Walt Disney Entertainment*

Join a historical journey through the evolution of key technologies behind the secrets of the live Disney show. See how the development of pyrotechnics, automation, audio animatronics, and standard lighting/stage effects has kept the Disney show unique for 50-plus years. Visit the facilities live via video conference and talk directly with the people who make the magic happen.

## **Debunking the Nicopress**

*Sponsored by ZFX*

This session will address the myths and misconceptions surrounding Nicopress cable swaging. Many points will not only be discussed, but put to the test in the Destructive Test Machine. The different styles and applications of cable terminations will be compared. Part presentation, part audience participation, part discussion, with plenty of room for greenhorns and old salts alike.

Please plan to join us in Kansas City March 31 to April 3, 2010 for these and many other sessions.

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The Costume Design & Technology Commission's session featuring poster presentations by members is extremely popular at each USITT Annual Conference. At left, one of the displays at the 2009 Annual Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Photo/Casey Kearns

## Seek Costume Posters for 2010 Conference

**Donna Meester**

*Costume Design & Technology Commission*

Calling all costume designers and technicians! When planning designs and construction techniques for fall productions, don't forget about the opportunity to share innovations with peers.

Those unfamiliar with the Costume Poster Session are in for a treat. This is a time when costume designers and technicians share information that is probably not well-known or perhaps of their own invention with colleagues. This includes, but is not limited to a new solution to an old problem, a new problem and its solution, a classroom or management technique, the results of research, or other ideas, discoveries, or developments in the field of costuming.

Poster presentations are widely accepted as meeting the requirements for scholarly publication. Those who work for an educational institution might be able to get the school to fund some or all expenses to the Kansas City 2010 Annual Conference & Stage Expo. Poster presenters also may have the opportunity to publish their ideas in *TD&T*.

All submissions will be juried by the Costume Poster Selection Committee. Ideas need to be presented in the form of an abstract –



a brief, concise summary of the information to be presented in the poster, no more than 200 words typewritten. Mail, e-mail, or FAX the abstract by November 16 to Donna Meester. The early deadline is in response to requests from those who need to know if a proposal has been accepted in order to receive funding. Applicants will be notified by early December. Only the abstract is due by this date. The actual presentation and handout information are not due until March 22.

Ways to archive the presentations are being explored. As a result, there are several guidelines to be followed. Presenters will be sent a list of guidelines when they are notified of acceptance. All presenters must submit a copy of their presentation and handouts electronically by March 22.

For questions or additional information, contact: Donna Meester, The University of Alabama, Box 870239, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487; phone 205-348-9032; fax 205-348-9048; e-mail [dmeester@as.ua.edu](mailto:dmeester@as.ua.edu).

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- Monica Weinzapfel

2009-2012

- William Browning
- Jonathan Darling
- Linda Essig
- Mitch Hefter

- Martha Marking
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## Welcome to Egypt: Designing for the American University in Cairo

**By Donna Ruzika**  
*USITT Director at Large*

The wheels of the plane touched down and bounced back up, touched down and bounced up again. Finally, the third time, the plane landed on solid ground. It was difficult to tell with all the blowing sand. ..I had arrived in a *khamisin* (a sand storm) in the Sahara Desert. Welcome to Egypt!

So why was I in Egypt? I was invited to design the lighting for The Department of Performing and Visual Arts' first theatrical production, *School for Wives*, in its new theatre, the Malak Gabr Arts Theatre (named for a 14-year-old theatre student by her father whose donation made the facility possible). For me, this was a dream come true. I am certainly not the first lighting designer to have the pleasure of designing for the AUC; USITT member Dick Devon has designed many productions at the

Donna Ruzika fulfilled a long-time desire to design lighting for a production in Egypt and shares her experiences with *Sightlines* readers. Shown above is a depiction of the night scene, complete with plants, but without all of the parts of the "egg" which is shown as just the frame, not the cover.

Photo/Ehab Shehata

university. However, ever since reading my first ArtSearch many years ago, I have been intrigued by the few-and-far-between ads for positions at the American University in Cairo. After a vacation in Egypt about 10 years ago, I became even more intrigued because I fell in love with the country and its people.

Two years ago, my friend David sent an e-mail telling me that he and Michele were moving to Egypt. I replied back that if he ever needed a lighting designer to give me a call. Well, last summer I was asked if I was available to be the visiting artist in residence for a month this spring. Having left my full-time job at Pomona College for the life of a freelance designer, I immediately said, **“Yes!”**

After getting off the plane, I was delighted to see my name on one of those placards. It was held up by a man named Zamir who hustled me through immigration. We quickly got my extra-heavy baggage (in addition to my clothes, it was stuffed with hats and corsets for the production and jars of peanut butter, Gold Bond powder, muffin mixes, and other assorted goodies for my friends with whom I would be living). Zamir passed me off to a driver, and we went roaring and tailgating through the roads outside of Cairo. The drivers here have their own system, the lines in the roads are “guidelines” that most drivers ignore. I was reminded how exciting it is to ride in a car in Egypt...just sit back and relax and you will make it to your destination, *enshallah* (God willing).

We found our way to El Rehab City, a gated community located in New Cairo, approximately 45 minutes from Cairo, where I would be living with David Wlordarski, the production manager/technical director for the American University in Cairo, and his lovely wife Michele. They moved to their spacious apartment when the American University in Cairo relocated to its new campus last fall. Founded in 1919, the AUC (which is the region’s premiere English language university) relocated the majority of its university from its Tahrir Square campus due to “overcrowding and institutional fragmentation.”



That night around midnight, I got up to use the facilities and, as I was washing my hands, gunshots rang out. I looked at the frosted window and saw the bluish flashes of light and thought, “I wonder who they’re aiming at?” I went in to the extra bedroom and peeked out of the window and saw four men walking away. I went back to bed and thought, “Welcome to Egypt!”

The next morning, David mentioned



the gunshots sounded like an AK-47. He said it was a very rare occurrence and speculated that they were probably shooting rats or rabid dogs. Oh goodie. We boarded the bus, which is the main transportation to and from the University for the faculty, staff and some students. The university provides bus service from a variety of places in and around Cairo. After a 20-minute drive through the Sahara Desert outside of Cairo



(which is undergoing a major construction boom), we arrived at the beautiful new 260-acre AUC campus. Concrete, marble, and wood combined in geometrical patterns create modern buildings based on traditional Egyptian looking-architecture. The central walkway goes from one end of the campus to the other and provides an open breezeway which helps cool off the sunny campus during the hot summer months. The Department of Performing and Visual Arts (art, film, music and theatre) is located in the AUC Center for the Arts. In addition to the 300-seat Malak Gabr Arts Theatre, it houses the Sharjah Art Gallery; the Gerhart and Howard Theatres; labs for electronic music and photography; studios for drawing, painting, sculpture, and theater design; and studios for music and film editing and production.

After months of communicating via e-mail, it was lovely to finally meet the terrific faculty and staff I would be working with: Stencil Campbell, scenic designer and chair of the Department of Performing and Visual Arts; Jeanne Arnold, costume designer and director of the Theatre Program; Frank Bradley, professor and *School for Wives* director; professors Mahmoud El Lozy and Leila E. Saad (both of whom were acting in *School for Wives*); Lecturer Elissa Stankiewicz; and master electrician Samy Shawky and his assistant Ehab Shehata. David took me on a tour of the facilities, and when we arrived at the Gabr Theatre I was delighted to find that Samy and Ehab had completely hung the preliminary light plot that I had sent a week before my arrival.

That evening I attended a run-through of *School for Wives*. Heavily jet lagged, it was amazing that I got all of the cues in my script. The play was in great shape, (except for the lead who had the flu). We were three weeks away from opening. Since the plot was hung, the next day we started focusing lights.



AUC master electrician Samy Shawky and assistant master electrician Ehab Shehata.



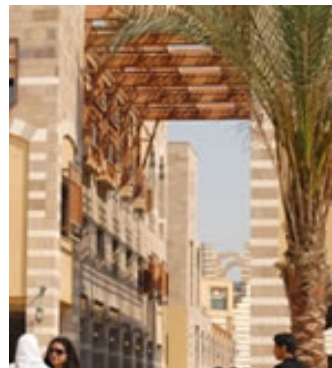
Unfortunately I didn't have a complete section of the theatre when I designed the plot; I had guessed wrong about the height of the anti-pro positions, and we had to replace about 12, 26-degree Source Fours with 19-degree barrels. Samy and Ehab were not upset, in fact they truly took great pleasure in their work. Samy told me he would rather work hard than just sit around doing nothing. Samy and Ehab were excellent electricians, and we had fun working together. Samy spoke better English than Ehab, so he translated some words to Ehab. I started writing theatrical terms down in Arabic on my Cheat Sheet. I like to try using some of the language of the country I am working in as much as possible; however, Arabic is very difficult, and while I couldn't pronounce them too well, Samy, Ehab and I had a great laugh whenever I tried.

It was a delight working with USITT members Mr. Campbell, Jeanne Arnold, and David Wlodarski. Jeanne's costumes were lovely. She has only one staff member who works with her in the costume shop, so she relies heavily on students to help her build the majority of the costumes. For this production several custom made period suits, beautiful dresses, corsets, skirts and blouses, hats, suspenders, and spats combined to create a professional and artistic look for all the characters.

Stancil created a most unusual and exquisite scenic design for *School for Wives*, a serene wild garden, and David and his crew did an excellent job getting it built. The stage floor was painted in an intricate cobblestone pattern with an oval pool downstage. A very large and ornate metal gate opened in the middle giving access to a wooden bridge, which led up and over a three-foot wide stream to a door in a huge trunk of a tree (which housed the servants). The water in the pool and stream helped create the wild garden feeling and the actors loved it.

The tree had two large branches, one created a stairway up to a lovely Faberge egg perched atop the tree trunk (where Agnès lived), which opened and closed "magically." (Okay, there were two members of the crew in the trunk performing the "magic.") The other branch provided the support for a tree swing. Silhouettes of large branches laden with hanging moss arched over the trunk. One afternoon, we watched in awe and amusement as a crew of about 15 men from the AUC Desert Development Center delivered and artfully placed five 20-foot high trees and a variety of huge bushes upstage and around the scenery, thus completing Stancil's wild garden setting.

Working with the students was great. My student assistant, Kareem Kassem, was a directing major and apparently a minor movie star in Cairo. His interest in lighting was limited, but he was willing to help out and became my model for setting cues and taking notes during



dress rehearsals. Our stage manager, Haya Abdulrahim, was excellent. She and her Assistant Stage Managers Berfu Teapot and Nadeen Lotayef did a great job pulling a complex show together in a short amount of time. My board operator Lina Mawaheb had fun learning a new skill from Samy and did a fine job. The students at AUC reminded me of students at Pomona College -- smart, many seemingly from privileged families, and studying theatre because they love it.



The afternoon of opening, I had the privilege of having tea from what Stancil labeled "Samy's Café," a kitchen facility located on the second floor balcony near the theatre's control booth. Samy brewed the strong tea and added sugar. David, Ehab, Samy, and I sat in the shade looking out over the Sahara desert and toasted each other for a job well done.

That night when the curtain came down, there was an immediate standing ovation. *School for Wives* was a hit; the audience loved it! Due to the hard work of David, Stancil, Jeanne, Frank, Samy, Ehab, the staff, the students, the volunteers, the cast, and the crew, we got to celebrate the opening of the play and the opening of a brand new theatre. Welcome to Egypt.

*Shukran* (thank you) to the faculty, staff, and students at the American University in Cairo for making my dream of working at AUC come true and for providing me with such an exceptional design experience. A special thank you to David and Michelle for being such wonderful hosts. I felt right at home.

The day scene is shown without all the plants which were provided for the production.

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Photo/Ehab Shehata

