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After a record-setting event in Kansas City, the USITT Conference Committee is already making plans to visit the Queen City of Charlotte, North Carolina, shown above, in March of 2011.

Get your first taste of what Charlotte has to offer with articles by [Helen Willard](#) and [David Fillmore](#).

Photo/Courtesy Visit Charlotte

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Paul Brunner, far left, Vice-Commissioner for the Technical Production Commission, his wife Emilia Brunner, Julie Grindle and her husband, David Grindle, new Executive Director for USITT, share a social and professional moment.

Photo/Courtesy Emilia Brunner

David Grindle – Executive Director

Barbara E.R. Lucas
Sightlines *Editor*

As the new Executive Director of USITT, David Grindle wants it known that "it's all about the people." That includes folks who are already familiar with the organization, and the broader audience of organizations, companies, and individuals who he hopes will soon be better acquainted with all USITT has to offer.

Mr. Grindle sees his new post, heading the professional staff of a not-for-profit organization, as an amalgamation of all the skills he has accumulated in a varied career, including time at Atlanta Opera and stage managing throughout North America. He comes to this position from nine years as production manager for the Indiana University Department of Theatre and Drama in Bloomington, Indiana, where he created the Stage Management Program.

He has been a member of USITT for more than a decade, and has been an integral part of the Management Commission and the Stage Management Mentoring Project. He is also a member of OPERA America's Production and Technical Committee, the Stage Managers Association, and the Production Managers Forum.

"I've experienced what the bulk of USITT's members have," he said. "I understand their diverse viewpoints. As an organization,

we can help each other so we're not reinventing the wheel but are sharing and networking."

Mr. Grindle takes the Executive Director position with USITT as it enters its second half century, and those years provide "a fabulous base on which to build," he said. "We, as a membership group, have created amazing work, and I want to be a facilitator to allow our members and volunteers to have what they need to concentrate on that work.

"It is important that people see the value of their membership increase and grow. We're proud of our members; that is who we are."

Carl Lefko, USITT President, remarked that Mr. Grindle is a very energetic person who is going to be effective in aiding the work of the Institute. "He will coordinate external initiatives where USITT has not had an opportunity to have a presence before and facilitate business outside of the organization while guiding USITT towards central objectives initiated by the Board of Directors."

Mr. Grindle said one focus of his is to remember that each event, program, or benefit is someone's favorite and someone else's first. Each time someone is introduced to USITT, that is their first experience: their first issue of *Sightlines*, their first Annual Conference & Stage Expo, or their first symposium or regional event. The organization has so much to offer that Mr. Grindle wants to be sure people see that variety and experience the best in all its programs and services. Each component – from Commissions to committees to student chapters -- all work together to make USITT what it is.

Mr. Grindle sees USITT as a diverse organization whose many different types of members bring something unique. The mix of creative and innovative individuals and organizations allows networking that enriches all involved. "It's about mining the creativity, getting the best from new and old techniques and technologies" that brings value to members.

While he will be leading the professional staff, Mr. Grindle noted that the organization's direction is determined by the Board, not by him. "I'll be taking the Board's direction and working to make their vision a reality. Since the Board consists of our members, that means my direction comes right from the membership."

On a personal level, he says he looks forward to moving to Central New York with his wife of 16 years, Julie, and his two sons. "We're an arts family," he said, since his wife is a musician and conductor and his children are musically and artistically inclined.

Moving a family of four to Syracuse shows how focused Mr. Grindle is on his new position. "My family defines what is important to me," he said, and starting in mid-June, all the important parts of his life will be in Syracuse, New York.

Mr. Grindle can be reached at 800-938-7488, ext 108, or by e-mailing david@office.usitt.org.

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Several of the authors who contributed to *Late & Great: American Designers 1960-2010* signed copies of the book at the 2010 Stage Expo, where the work was introduced. Shown are Kristina Tollefson, left, and Laura Hanson.

Photo/R. Finkelstein

25 Great Designers Featured in New USITT Publication

Late & Great: American Designers 1960-2010 is now available from the USITT bookstore.

The volume was released at the 2010 Annual Conference & Stage Expo which included a special book signing where many of the 27 authors involved in the book's creation were able to interact with readers.

While designers participate in the creation of art and entertainment productions with the same level of professionalism as performers and directors, their names are less often remembered and their contributions can often recede into the collective memory. This book, edited by Bobbi Owen and published by USITT, keeps the memory and contributions of these designers alive.

Designers in the book, and the authors who have profiled them are:

- "Ralph Alswang" by Mike Monsos
- "Martin Aronstein" by Ann M. Archbold
- "Lucinda Ballard" by Peggy Rosefeldt
- "Howard Bay" by Arnold Wengrow
- "Harold Burris-Meyer" by John L. Bracewell
- "Peggy Clark" by Ben Coolik

- "Alvin Colt" by Jade Bettin
- "Judy Dearing" by Jade Bettin
- "Raoul Pène du Bois" by Bobbi Owen
- "Ben Edwards" by Andrew Rich and Erik Viker
- "Abe Feder" by Annie O. Cleveland and M. Barrett (Barry) Cleveland
- "Arden Fingerhut" by Linda Essig
- "John Gleason" by Linda Essig
- "Gilbert Hemsley" by Mary Tarantino
- "Bernard Johnson" by Kristina Tollefson
- "Richard Nelson" by Jeff Davis
- "Ben Nye" by Patricia Dennis
- "Chris Parry" by Craig Wolf
- "Irene Sharaff" by Gail Brassard
- "Thomas Skelton" by Richard E. Dunham
- "Oliver Smith" by Laura Hanson and Robert Lewis Smith
- "Rouben Ter-Arutunian" by Jody Blake
- "Miles White" by Holly Monsos
- "Freddy Wittop" by Sylvia Hillyard Pannell
- "Patricia Zipprodt" by Whitney Blausen

Late & Great: American Designers 1960-2010 helps to raise designers' public profile by honoring 25 designers with a record of their artistry. Twenty-seven authors, all members of USITT, participated in creating this volume which has an introduction by theatre design historian and USITT Fellow Arnold Aronson.

Late & Great is the most recent volume in the USITT Monograph Series and is available through the USITT bookstore as well as via Amazon.com. To purchase this publication and take advantage of the discounted price available to USITT members, visit the [USITT Store](#).

The next monograph, *The Designs of Carrie Robbins*, will be published in March 2011 and launched at USITT's 51st Annual Conference & Stage Expo.

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Job Site Updated Weekly

JobsUSITT, an easy, online source for opportunities in the technical aspects of theatre and live performing arts, is just a click away. New ads are posted each Thursday so people seeking new employment are urged to check frequently.

The process of submitting ads is also easy to complete and done entirely online. Complete the online form by midnight Pacific Time on Tuesday, and jobs will appear on Thursday.

Those seeking employment or who need to fill a position, check out the [website](#).

[To Top](#) ↑**Plugfest Returns in July**

With the growing success from each of the previous Control Protocols Plugfests, the event is now a regular part of the ESTA Technical Standards Program meeting schedule and will return for another run in July at the Dallas/Ft. Worth Marriott Solana hotel in Westlake, Texas. The Plugfest will run three days: 4 to 10 p.m. Friday, July 23; 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday, July 24; and 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday, July 25.

The event in January was the first in the expanded format, not being limited to ANSI E1.20 RDM (Remote Device Management), but open to all CPWG protocols, including the recently released ANSI E1.31 DMX over Ethernet protocol.

For more information and to register, contact Scott Blair at sblair@rdmprotocol.org. Registration is important so that the logistics of the equipment delivery, setup, and removal can be organized. There is no charge for participation and the event is open to everyone. Hotel sleeping rooms can be reserved through [ESTA](#).

[To Top](#) ↑**Seek Rock Our World Awards Nominations****This month:**

JobsUSITT

Plugfest in Texas

Rock our World

Nominations for the third annual ESTA Rock Our World Awards will be accepted through July 1.

The awards recognize groundbreaking achievement by ESTA members in new products, product applications, or projects, and were created to acknowledge the genius of both the creator of technology and the designer or integrator who applies the technology in a real world environment.

Contestants for the 2009 awards showcased everything from the lighting of the Grand Mosque to the staging of the Democratic National Convention. All highlighted the collaborative nature of the industry. Nominations may be made by anyone in the industry, but an ESTA member must be involved as the designer, manufacturer, supplier, or collaborator.

Nominations for the 2010 awards must have been introduced to market or taken place between October 1, 2008 and June 30, 2010, and must not have been previously nominated.

The finalists will be announced in early September and the winners at ESTA's annual dinner on October 21, the evening before the LDI show opens. To view the 2009 finalists, winners and judges go to www.esta.org/news/awards/RockOurWorldAwards. Nominations can be made on the same site, by calling 212-244-1505, or e-mailing info@esta.org.

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Think 'One More Time' To Give**Lawrence J. Hill***USITT@50 Chair*

The last toast to the first 50 years has been made. In Kansas City, Missouri we were filled with memories, listened to fabulous speakers and panels, and celebrated away each night. Now we come to the end of another important portion of the homage to those 50 years, the fundraising campaign – Securing Our Future.

Briefly, the perfect ending to this fundraising campaign is this final plea to all who need an additional nudge. Remember that donations made to the four major funds supporting our mission can be made online with a match of 50 percent through June 30.

I refer to a master of the extended endings for this message: Count Basie's monumental recording of *April in Paris*. At the seeming end of this bravura piece, there is a pause and the Count says, "One more time!" (Think about one last contribution to the Institute's future and get the added match.)

That grand riff is explosively repeated with a second pause when the Count says, "Let's try it once more!" (This may be your first or last chance; go online now.) The recording concludes with same not-to-be-forgotten melody.

So humming that tune, go to YouTube, scroll your iPod, or play that scratched LP and listen to the Count's advice about "one more" while you go online and contribute.

That support may be just that extra bit needed to push us to or beyond our goal.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of USITT, we thank you.

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Quadrennial since 2003. The Institute thanks the members of the Tobin board, Mel Weingart, Linda Hardberger, and Bob Perdziola, for their continuing support.

The USITT-USA Exhibits Committee has shifted the generation of ideas and execution of the Student Exhibit into the hands of a team of students, giving them artistic and creative control over the exhibit which will represent them at the PQ. The 2011 Student Exhibit is being designed and curated by a team of three students, with the assistance of a faculty mentor.

Through the generous contribution of the Tobin Theatre Arts Fund, the three student curators/designers will receive support for their travel expenses to participate in the planning and execution of exhibit. They will attend the trial set up of the exhibits at the University of Montana School of Drama and Dance in the College of Performing and Visual Arts. In June 2011, the students will travel to Prague to participate in the set up the exhibit there. The award from the Tobin Theatre Arts Fund also covers the cost of the materials for the exhibit design.

The student curator/designers are Rachelle Beckerman, Collin Ranney, and Yu Shibagaki, and their mentor is Tom Burch. Ms. Beckerman received her BA from SUNY Buffalo and studied with Ursula Belden and Michael Lincoln at Ohio University, majoring in lighting and scenic design. She has also studied at Central St. Martins College of Art and Design in London. She worked as a student volunteer on the USITT PQ '07 USA Student Exhibit and is now freelancing in the New York City area.



Collin Ranney is an MFA candidate at the University of Maryland. A winner of the USITT W. Oren Parker Scene Design Award, he has also received a Design Fellowship at the Kennedy Center. Mr. Ranney has studied in London and worked as an assistant scene designer at the Pacific Conservatory for Performing Arts.

Yu Shibagaki is studying for her MFA in design at Northwestern. She earned a BA in theatre design and production from California State University, Fullerton, where she was honored with the Todd Muffatti Merit Scholarship in Scene Design. She has assisted designers at the Pacific Conservatory for Performing Arts.

Mr. Burch teaches design and technology at the University of Chicago. He has designed extensively in the Chicago area, receiving a Jeff Award, two After Dark awards, and Chicago's Michael Maggio Emerging Designer Award. A graduate of Northwestern, he also holds a graduate diploma from the University of Bristol, England.

A trial run of the live-action design was tested in Kansas City, and now the curators are recruiting students from around the country to volunteer to join the challenge in Prague. To find out more and to sign up to participate, contact Mr. Burch at tomburch@uchicago.edu.

The student exhibit team was charged with creating an exhibit that would encourage other students to travel to Prague to view the exposition and take part in the rich array of activities in the Scenofest, a festival of workshops and seminars associated with the PQ. Their exhibit, entitled Emerge, will contain both a gallery exhibit, curated from over 450 entries from 300 students and 60 schools, and a participatory design challenge.

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June 12 Microphone Use Deadline

Jerry Gorrell, USITT Standards Chair, reminds those using wireless microphones, in-ear monitors, and/or other similar wireless devices that operate in the 700MHz band, that they must stop using them on June 12.

Devices that operate in the 470MHz to 698MHz frequency band will continue to be permitted. Some of the devices no longer permitted may be able to be modified to operate on a permitted frequency. A list of banned products and whether the product can be modified can be found [here](#).

It is recommended that the Firefox browser be used instead of Internet Explorer.

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Blog Discusses Art in Higher Ed

Crystal Tiala, former chair of the New England Regional Section, has started a blog and is trying to get a conversation going about the importance of art in higher education and elsewhere. Anyone interested in discussing the issue, can visit her [blog](#).

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Conference Photos in Member Newsletter

There are lots and lots of great photos of the recent USITT Annual Conference & Stage Expo. Gary Fails and the folks at City Theatrical incorporated many, including shots of the flying Easter Bunny, in their [April newsletter](#).

We appreciate their assessment of the event. "USITT 2010 in Kansas City was the 50th anniversary of the organization, and it was a great show. There were good crowds, good seminars, good speakers, and lots of friends and customers to see, as well as thousands of theatre students from all over the world."

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Clark Transfer Issues Challenge Grant

This month:
Wireless Deadline

Blog on Art

Conference Photos

LRLR Challenge Grant

The Long Reach Long Riders announced that Clark Transfer is offering a \$5,000 Challenge Grant for this year's Long Reach Long Rider charity ride. The grant, which will be divided between the ESTA Foundation's Behind the Scenes program and Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, will be in place until the start of the ride in July. It was issued at the Kansas City 2010 Annual Conference & Stage Expo.

The Long Reach Long Riders, charity ride begins in San Francisco on July 24 and ends on July 31 back in San Francisco. What was supposed to be a one time ride in 2004 has become an annual event that has raised over \$200,000 for the two charities.

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Stage Technologies Upgrades Membership

Stage Technologies has upgraded its support of USITT to the Contributing membership level. The company is a key developer and supplier of entertainment automation solutions. It has projects in more than 30 countries and offices in London, England; Las Vegas, Nevada, United States; Macau, Australia, and Italy. For more information, visit [Stage Technologies' website](#).

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Power Systems UL Listed

Creative Stage Lighting announced that [Entertainment Power Systems](#) power distribution units are now UL listed meeting the safety requirements of Underwriters Laboratories, Inc.

Creative Stage Lighting's EPS racks are fully modular power distribution systems for industrial uses and touring entertainment productions. EPS racks are made for lighting, sound, and video applications and are available in standard configurations or custom built for specific needs.

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Rose Brand West Celebrates

On April 1, 1994, Rose Brand West opened its doors in a 5,000 square-foot facility on Vanowen Street in North Hollywood, California. Today, celebrating 16 years of operation, Rose Brand West has developed into a complete office, warehouse, and sewing room in a 42,000 square foot facility in Sun Valley,



California. Maintaining a premium on servicing the urgent needs of Hollywood studios, RBW has expanded its reach to the event industry, nightclubs and architecture. General Manager Tina Carlin Wright was hired in 1996 and was instrumental in the expansion.

Rose Brand is the premier provider of FR fabrics, stage curtains, custom sewn creations and production supplies for live

This month:

Stage Technologies
 Creative State Lighting
 Rose Brand Theatrical
 Fabrics, Fabrications &
 Supplies
 Electronic Theatre
 Controls (ETC)
 Vortek, a division of
 Daktronics
 J.R. Clancy, Inc.

entertainment, film, TV, display, house of worship and event organizations.

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ETC Lighting System at Kentucky Center

The Kentucky Center for the Performing Arts (KC) produces more than 700 shows a year, from ballet to symphony, Broadway to opera. When KC had the opportunity in 2009 to upgrade its lighting equipment, it chose a complete **Electronic Theatre Controls (ETC)** package with controls, dimming and fixtures.



Among the features provided by ETC are its Eos-family lighting consoles, a Net3™ RVI (Remote Video Interface), an Element board, an ETC Advanced Features Sensor+ dimming system with DimStat software networked throughout KC's theatres, and an ETC Unison Paradigm architectural control system.

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Vortek Training Gives ETCP Credits

Vortek, a world leader in the design and manufacturing of automated rigging, offers a two-day, dealer training program. This course, Vortek Dealer Training, Automated Rigging Solutions, is now an approved ETCP Recognized Training Program. ETCP Certified Technicians can receive 11.25 ETCP renewal credits for attending the course.

Vortek structured a comprehensive training program with Dave Lane, the company's controls and service engineering manager, as the principal trainer. For more information on Vortek's training program contact sales@vortekrigging.com.

For additional information on Vortek and its rigging systems, visit the company's [website](#), e-mail the company at sales@vortekrigging.com, or call 1-866-4VORTEK.

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Clancy Completes Makeover

After more than 20 years of troubleshooting, the rigging control system challenges are over in the showroom at Trump Plaza Casino Hotel in Atlantic City, New Jersey, thanks to the new control system and the complete makeover provided by **J.R. Clancy, Inc.**

The software specialists and engineers at J. R. Clancy replaced another manufacturer's troublesome rigging controller with its own SceneControl 500 automated motion control system.

In related news, Eric McAfee, a member of the sales team at J. R. Clancy, Inc, has been named to a new position as domestic sales manager where he will supervise all U.S. sales of Clancy rigging systems, working closely with specifiers, dealers, and end users to determine the best rigging solution their each projects.

Geoff Stock and Patrick Finn, both Dealer Project Managers with J. R. Clancy, Inc., have passed the exam in the Entertainment Technician Certification Program (ETCP) for Theatre Rigging.

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New Sustaining Member

We welcome the University of North Carolina-Greensboro to the Sustaining level of membership just in time to prepare for the 2011 Annual Conference & Stage Expo in Charlotte in March 2011.

James Fisher is the head of the Theatre Department at UNC-G. The department offers MFA degrees in design (costume, scenery, and lighting), acting, directing, and theatre for youth, as well as BFA degrees in design and production, technical production, acting, and theatre education, and a BA in theatre. For more information, visit www.uncg.edu/the.

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Stage Lifts Exhibited at China Event

SERAPID, Inc. showcased its award-winning products at PALME Show May 20 to 23 at the China International Exhibition Centre in Beijing.

SERAPID's LinkLift and horizontal motion systems provide simple solutions to many of the common challenges associated with stage engineering. The simple design helps keep the systems safe for on-stage performers. For more information about SERAPID, visit its web site at www.serapid.us

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Avolites Controls Johnny Rotten

A brand new Avolites Pearl Expert is the lighting control console of choice on the North American tour of Public Image Ltd. (PiL).

Theatrical Media Services (TMS) of Omaha is supplying the Pearl Expert for the six-week tour supplied by **TMB**.



TMB is the exclusive distributor for Avolites in North America. For more information, visit www.tmb.com/products/avolites

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Begin Center Work, Complete Museum Work

This month:
University of North
Carolina-Greensboro

SERAPID, Inc.

TMB

Auerbach Pollock
Friedlander

Theatre Projects
Consultants

Auerbach Pollock Friedlander is providing theatre and audio video systems consulting for the new Signature Center, currently under construction on 42nd Street in Manhattan. The firm is working in collaboration with the design architects, Gehry Partners, LLP and architect of record, H3 Hardy Collaboration Architecture.

Auerbach Pollock Friedlander recently completed work on the Musical Instrument Museum in Phoenix, Arizona. On that project, the firm worked with RSP Architects.

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Book Outlines Partnerships for Facilities

Theaters 2: Partnerships in Facility Use, Operations, and Management by Holzman Moss Architecture, JaffeHolden, and **Theatre Projects Consultants** and published by Images Publishing, was released recently.

The book reveals a determining factor behind successful performing arts venues: truly collaborative partnerships. Theatre Projects' Benton Delinger is among the contributors to *Theaters 2*, and many of the organization's projects are discussed as case studies, including the Dee and Charles Wyly Theatre and the Margot and Bill Winspear Opera House at the AT&T Performing Arts Center, Dallas, Texas, and the Oslo Opera House, Oslo, Norway.

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Looking Beyond!

Carl Lefko
USITT President

In Kansas City, on the closing day of the 2010 Annual Conference & Stage Expo, I symbolically handed the gavel of office to Joe Aldridge, who will become our organization's 25th president on July 1.

The words I used on that occasion bear repeating: "With a new Executive Director in the wings and the Board of Directors' exciting strategic plans in place, the membership has chosen you to usher USITT into its second half century and assure for the next generation that USITT is vital, visible, sustainable, marketable, and innovative in 21st century style."

At the same time, to assist in dealing with all of the "hot issues" that he will face during the next two years, I handed him a large bunch of chili peppers, one of Joe's favorite spices, along with my best wishes and congratulations.

We have much to celebrate in 2010. We are moving toward goals that were developed by USITT members in response to recent internal and professional external organizational assessments, to meet the needs of USITT members in the next half century.

USITT Presidents, past, present, and future, line up to pass the gavel of office starting with Dr. Joel E. Rubin who held office in 1963-1965, far right, Dr. Richard Arnold, Randy Earle, Richard Devin, Sarah Nash Gates, Richard Durst, Christine Kaiser, Bruce Brockman, John S. Uthoff, Sylvia Hillyard Pannell, leading to Carl Lefko, current USITT President, and Joe Aldridge, who will take office on July 1.

The gavel passing took place at the conclusion of the 2010 Fellows Address in Kansas City, Missouri.

Photo/Tom Thatcher

Our new Executive Director is working with our volunteer leadership and professional staff to achieve even more of the ambitious goals which we set for ourselves and each other.

Our Board of Directors is reviewing existing policies and procedures, and updating as necessary, to guide us through the coming decades.

In addition, to support for a number of ongoing Commission projects, the Board of Directors approved funding to support two projects brought forward by the Grants & Fellowship Committee which are described [here](#).

At the same time, USITT is supporting and funding participation in the 2011 Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space where our National, Student, and Architectural exhibits will join a broad spectrum of contemporary performance design disciplines and genres.

Our international colleagues, so many of whom were on hand in Kansas City to wish us well, are a valuable part of our collaborative efforts.

All of our momentum in these and many other areas is driven by the membership – student, individual, senior, professional, supporting, sustaining, and contributing.

Thank you all for making USITT a dynamic, forward thinking, and collaborative Institute. The ideas and support of you, our members, have made us vibrant and will continue to be the driving force as we move into the future.

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New Officers

Two new officers have been selected for the New England Regional Section. Joseph Donovan is now Chair with Daniel Bilodeau as Vice-Chair. Other regional officers are continuing.

Plans are being made for programs to be held later this year.

[To Top](#) ↑**Symposium Wraps Up Programming**

The USITT-Southwest Regional Section wrapped up its Winter 2010 programming with a Symposium January 17 at Frisco High School in Frisco, Texas.

Programming included sessions on puppetry, stenciling, WYSIWYG, and running production classes. The student design exhibit drew its largest number of entries. Winners included: Ben & Liz Shurr (Frisco High School) – Outstanding Volunteers; Abby Barker (Sam Houston State University) for Excellence in Costume Technology; Amy Shuffield (TCU) for Excellence in Costume Design; Angelica Vyushkova (TCU) for Excellence in Lighting Design; Heather Selbe (Sam Houston State University) for Excellence in Make-up Design; Sandra Silea (Frisco High School) for Excellence in Promotion Design; Vilija Tuminas (Sam Houston State University) Excellence in Prop Design; Mayra Guerrero (Univ. of Texas Pan American) for Excellence in Puppetry; Nathan Stanaland (Sam Houston State University) for Excellence in Scenic Design; Seth Bales (Sam Houston State University) for Excellence in Sound Design; Rick Mireles (Univ. of Texas Pan American) for Excellence in Stage Management; Jeff Boomstein (Univ. of Oklahoma) for Excellence in Technology; and Michael Weiss (Sam Houston State University) for Best Overall Presentation.

[To Top](#) ↑**Reemtsma Named Chair**

Todd Reemtsma, who can be reached at toddr@jtlighting.com, has assumed the chair of the Northern Boundary Regional Section. Northern Boundary draws its members from Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

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Costuming sessions at the Annual Conference in Kansas City were created by the leadership and selected by the Costume Design & Technology Commission members.

Photo/Casey Kearns

Commission Changes Guard at Conference

Donna Meester

Costume Design & Technology Commissioner

With the advent of Kansas City 2010 Conference & Stage Expo came the changing of the guard for the Costume Design & Technology Commission. The green clipboard was handed from Joel Ebarb to Donna Meester, the new Commissioner. The changes take place officially on July 1.

Outgoing Co-Commissioner Kristina Tollefson's post will be covered by several new Vice-Commissioner positions. Vice Commissioners include:

- Vice-Commissioner of Programming (through 2011): Kerri Packard
- Vice-Commissioner of Programming (beginning 2011): Melissa Merz
- Vice-Commissioner of Pre-Conference Events: Cathryn Ellis
- Vice-Commissioner of Symposia: Kevin McCluskey
- Vice-Commissioner of Design: Thomas Bernard
- Vice-Commissioner of Technology: Regina Truhart
- Vice-Commissioner of Heritage: Cynthia Turnbull-Langley
- Vice-Commissioner for Communications: Carey Hanson

Ms. Meester handed the reins as Chair of the Costume Poster Committee to M.C. Friedrich this year, but not before paying

tribute to the founder of this highly successful annual event. Betty Blyholder's enormous contributions to the Commission were recognized with a brief talk by Dr. Andy Gibbs, University of Arkansas, and PowerPoint presentation of previous posters.

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Working with Hair, a session at the 2010 Annual Conference in Kansas City, Missouri, showed how intricately work can be done.

Photo/R Finkelstein

Variety Marks Costume Sessions

Carey Hanson

With session reports provided by Marilyn Bertch, Stacey Galloway, Doris Nash, Jessica Thonen, and Amanda Profaizer

Kansas City proved to be a charming host city for the 50th anniversary of USITT. Not only was there great food at a great price, but the downtown historic buildings were inspirational for many who teach period styles in the classroom.

To celebrate the 50th year of USITT, the Costume Design & Technology Commission included several special sessions dedicated to outstanding designers and educators. The Legacy project is a new and exciting addition to the Commission chaired by Cynthia Turnball. This project follows the family tree of costume designers and technologists starting with influential educators and the costume designers and technologists they mentored. The first session of the Legacy project paid tribute to some of the first American costume educators: Lucy Barton, Frank Bevan, and Berniece Prisk. The second session of the Legacy project honored the second generation of costume educators: Barbara and Cletus Anderson, Doug Russell, Paul Reinhardt, and Zelma Weisfeld.

Another special session was *50 Years 50 Costume Designers*. This session paid tribute to 50 influential costume designers from the last 50 years. Those on the list of honor ranged from Theoni

Alrigde, to Susan Hilferty, to Cathy Zuber. The presenters did a wonderful job providing overviews of the careers of all 50 chosen designers in the allotted time. After the presentation, Costume Commission members were able to meet and greet during the annual reception.

Before the conference officially began, several Costume Commission members took advantage of the Professional Development Workshop *Tailoring a 1930s Male Suit* presented by British tailor Graham Cottenden. To kick off the conference Ricky Greenwell presented a session *Working With Hair*. Those who attended loved the hands-on opportunity to ventilate and create a moustache. Another favorite session of the Commission is its version of the popular television show *What Not To Wear*. This session demonstrates appropriate attire for job interviews. The session also covered other "what not to do's" to be successful in the costume industry. Some of these included padding a resume and speaking ill of previous employers. The presenters also advised attendees on making the right first impression by being prompt, professional, and patient at all times.

Thursday was a busy day for the Costume Commission with lots of offerings for all. The day started off with the very popular Costume Poster Session, a juried presentation of posters with a variety of creative solutions to common costuming problems. This year, members saw a wide range of topics from temporary tattoos to Lexan fairy wings. There were 19 presenters from all over the country who shared their experience and knowledge.

After the Poster Session, many members attended the very informative session on mask making presented by D. Tristan Cupp, James J. Glavan, and Elizabeth Propiel. The next session, *Message From a Piece of Cloth*, was chaired by Alexandra Bonds. The son of a piano teacher, WSD Gold Medal winner Lin Heng-Cheng, explained that his developed ear contributes to his selection of materials as well as his sensitivity to how the color and shape of things create a certain feeling or emotion. Heng-Cheng emphasized that beauty and appropriate design are not always conventionally beautiful, but rather possess a beauty in their appropriateness, that a disorganized and crumbling space can be beautiful because it communicates the appropriate character and emotion.

For those who love the creative design work in Cirque de Soliel, the last session of the day was not a disappointment. In the session *Make-up for Cirque de Soleil*, those attending were able to glean tricks and techniques.

The last sessions of the conference were presented on Friday and Saturday. *The Alterable Elizabethan Peascod Doublet*, chaired by Laurie Kurutz, was the first session on Friday followed by *The Future of Ballet Costumes* chaired by Kristina S. Hanssen. Costume Commission members were educated on the traditional and modern adaptations of romantic and classic tutu construction. Photographs of costumes from the Houston Ballet were shown as

examples of where the future of ballet costume is heading.

Another wonderful opportunity for Costume Commission members interested in international costume design and technology came with the *International Workshops through OISTAT*. Creative design workshops are offered by OISTAT which gives commission members the chance to be inspired by creative costuming from around the world. This year's meeting covered several of the recent OISTAT events including those held in Romania and Korea.

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The NC Blumenthal Performing Arts Center is just one of many venues which make Charlotte a vibrant performing arts community.

Photo/Courtesy Visit Charlotte

Queen City: A Gem of the South

David Fillmore
Charlotte Promotions Coordinator

Charlotte, the Queen City, has been good to me for six years now. I arrived in 2004 and have had plenty of time to discover many of the hidden gems and interesting factoids which those planning to attend the 2011 USITT Annual Conference & Stage Expo will enjoy.

Charlotte was originally named after Queen Sophie Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, a patroness of the arts who also happened to be the wife of King George III of England and the mother of 15 children. If you arrive via the airport, you will see her statue surrounded by a fountain just outside the arrival gates.

Charlotte was founded in 1768 as a cotton town, and since then has grown into a major financial and Fortune 500 hub with 326 of the top 500 companies taking advantage of the city's pro-business environment. Charlotte is the second largest financial center in the United States with the nation's largest bank, Bank of America, having roots in Charlotte for over a century.

In 1798, the first gold rush began in Charlotte. Conrad Reed, a 12-

year-old boy, used a 17-pound nugget as a door stop for years before his dad sold it for \$3.50, that was until he found out it was actually worth thousands more! This was the first gold discovered in the United States, and Reed Gold Mine soon became open for business. Although most of the gold mines have since been closed down, the recent rise in gold prices has sent people hunting again. For your own piece of gold, stop by the Cotton Patch Gold Mine while visiting the area.

"Uptown" or "Downtown," or even "Center City" depending if you are from the area or just arriving, is the only part of the city on a grid system. The rest of Charlotte resembles Paris, with all roads radiating toward and away from the city center. Originally the city was divided into four sections, called wards, with Tryon and Trade Streets serving as dividers. Although most of the wards have been dismantled to make room for new construction, the fourth ward was placed on the historic registry in order to preserve its enviable Victorian architecture. It is within easy walking distance of the Convention Center as it remains inside the uptown loop. The neighborhoods just outside of uptown that will require a car, but should not be missed, include Dilworth, the South End, Elizabeth, Myers Park, Plaza-Midwood, South Park, NoDa, and University City. Beyond the city limits, places of interest include two of the Catawba River's largest watersheds (Lake Norman and Lake Wylie), the historic town of Davidson, the NASCAR resort area of Concord, Gastonia, Ballentyne, and Fort Mill, South Carolina (home to Carowinds amusement park).

Those planning to be at USITT in 2011 should not forget their antihistamines, because the emerald city will be in full bloom for USITT next year. If you fly in during the day, you will see skyscrapers soaring above a sea of green punctuated by patches of purple and white. It's not called the "City of Trees" gratuitously.

On a sunny spring day, the city sparkles like the magical city of Oz. Geography buffs may be interested in knowing the following facts. Charlotte is 765 feet above sea level, and totals approximately 242 square miles. The average annual rainfall is 43.5 inches; the average daily temperature is 39.3°F in January and 79.3°F in July. Charlotte is located in the southern part of the state of North Carolina and is part of the agriculturally rich Carolina piedmont.

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David W. Will, Vice President for Conferences, wraps up the 2010 Annual Conference & Stage Expo in Kansas City, Kansas on Saturday, April 3.

Photos/R. Finkelstein

A Kansas City Wrap- up

To the Membership:

It is hard to imagine that two months have gone by since we were in Kansas City for the Annual Conference & Stage Expo. The 50th Anniversary Celebration is in the books, and I wish to say, "Thank you!" It will be hard to forget Joel Rubin's Fellows address along with Sally Struthers, Oscar Brockett, Jennifer Tipton, and Matt Conover. Each day gave us something new to think about; something new to celebrate. And celebrate we did!

The final numbers are in, and 4,096 persons gathered in Kansas City, Missouri March 31 to April 3. To everyone who was able to attend, I wish to say, "Thank you."

Had it not been for the work of the 50th Anniversary Committee, chaired by Bobbi Owen, we would not have the framework from which we formulated our celebration. To all of those on that committee, I wish to say, "Thank you."

To the Commissioners for their programming, to Exhibitors for the largest Stage Expo ever (complete with that Center Stage), and to all the presenters and panelists, I wish to say, "Thank you."

I also want to acknowledge this year's Conference Committee. This group deserves a little extra pat on the back for all of the hard work they put into the planning and execution of this year's conference; I wish to say, "Thank you."

And finally, to the USITT office staff. Your work, commitment, and dedication to the Institute is remarkable. I wish to say, "Thank you."

Thanks Kansas City! Hello, Charlotte and number 51!

Dave Will

Vice-President for Conferences

PS. I do wish to give an extra big **thank you** to those Founders who decided one day to bring together a group of theatre designers, technicians, and manufacturers 50 years ago.

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Michael Mehler, Vice-President for Programming, makes a point about upcoming activities at the 2010 Annual Conference.



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This classic car, which those visiting Charlotte can examine, is a precursor to the vehicles which are now associated with the Charlotte Motor Speedway, the nearby engine and fabrication facilities, and the newly-opened NASCAR Hall of Fame.

Photo/Courtesy Visit Charlotte

Heading to Charlotte For Stage Expo 2011

Helen P. Willard
Stage Expo Sales Manager

The 51st Annual USITT Conference & Stage Expo will be held at the Charlotte Convention Center in Charlotte, North Carolina. The "Queen City" is a study in contrasts. Charlotte is a vibrant, modern city still steeped in the traditions of old-fashioned southern hospitality. Known as the banking center of the south, the city is thriving despite the current economic uncertainty. Revered as a cultural center, it is also the home of the brand-new NASCAR Hall of Fame.

The Charlotte Convention Center is found uptown, in City Center, where attendees can explore the African American Cultural Center, the Bechtler Museum of Art, Discovery Place, IMAX Dome Theatre, the Charlotte Nature Museum, ImaginOn & Children's Theatre, Levine Museum of the New South, McColl Center for Visual Art, the Mint Museum of Craft & Design, Blumenthal Performing Arts Center, and the Spirit Square Center for Arts & Education.

Bracketing the Convention Center are the Westin Charlotte and the Hilton Charlotte Center City, with the Westin serving as the USITT conference headquarters hotel. A Portman design, the

Westin makes a bold statement in the Charlotte skyline. Additional room blocks have been booked at the Hilton, the Charlotte Marriott City Center, the Hampton Inn Charlotte Uptown, and the Hilton Garden Inn Charlotte Uptown.

Attendees enter the Convention Center on the Concourse level, traveling down escalators to the exhibit halls, or up to meeting rooms and ballrooms. USITT Stage Expo 2011 will take place in Exhibit Halls B & C1, a 140,000 square foot space shaped like a backward L. East and West Wing meeting rooms are located on the top level of the convention center, separated by the light rail, which runs right through the building. Nine pieces of public art are displayed in the CCC celebrate the creations of locally and nationally known artists.

Plan now to spend March 9 to 12 in Charlotte. More than 80 exhibitors have already reserved space for next year's show. For information on exhibiting at Stage Expo 2011, contact hpwillard@aol.com.

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- Sherry Wagner-Henry
- Craig Wolf

2008-2011

- Dan Culhane
- Mary Heilman
- David Krajec
- Carolyn Satter
- John S. Uthoff
- Monica Weinzapfel

2009-2012

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

- Martha Marking
- Kim Scott

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We thank Michael Devine, of Devine Design Group in Savannah, Georgia, for sharing his insight into theatre, at left. Mr. Devine plans to publish a collection of his cartoons on theatre this fall. Look for more of his work in future issues of *Sightlines*.

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