

NEWS

USITT

LETTER

U. S. INSTITUTE FOR THEATRE TECHNOLOGY, INC. · BOX 866 · RADIO CITY STATION · NEW YORK 19

Henry W. Wells, Editor

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Ned A Bowman, Assoc. Editor

Courtesy of Wide World Photos.



JOHN F. KENNEDY

THE THEATRE THROUGHOUT HISTORY HAS BEEN A MEANS BY WHICH MEN EXPRESSED THEIR JOYS, THEIR ASPIRATIONS, THEIR WAYS OF COMING TO TERMS WITH FATE. THROUGH ILLUSION IT HAS EXPRESSED TRUTH: THROUGH GAIETY AND DELIGHT IT HAS TOUCHED ON THE BIG ISSUES OF LIFE. I AM GLAD TO SALUTE WORLD THEATRE DAY, WHEN MEN OF MANY NATIONS REAFFIRM THE ENDURING VALUE OF THE GREAT STAGE. MAY THIS CELEBRATION BRING US ALL CLOSER TOGETHER IN A REALIZATION OF OUR COMMON CULTURE AND OUR COMMON HUMANITY. WITH ALL BEST WISHES,

-- JOHN F. KENNEDY

The above is a letter from President Kennedy addressed to the U.S. Institute for Theatre Technology upon the occasion of World Theatre Day, March 27, 1962.

OUR NATIONAL LOSS

The members of the USITT, with all other citizens, have been deeply moved by the death of President Kennedy and have felt with special acuteness the shock of a tragedy that has created a profound sense of disturbance where the cultural ideals of the nation are concerned. Confident as we are in the enduring and accumulative force of the cultural movements advanced by the late President's administration, we cannot but feel profound grief in the loss of such inspiring leadership.

With the urgent accord of the Executive Committee, the Institute's President wrote in its behalf letters to both Mrs. Kennedy and President Johnson. The letter to Mrs. Kennedy expressed gratitude for the rare accomplishments not only of her husband but of herself in behalf of the presentational arts in our country. It remarked on both the importance of governmental aid for these arts and the peculiarly warm and personal support such measures have received from the late President and herself.

The following letter was addressed to President Johnson:

"Dear President Johnson,

The United States Institute for Theatre Technology, through its Executive Committee, Board of Directors, national membership and affiliated national and international organizations, expresses its gratitude and admiration for the program initiated by the administration of our late President through the President's Advisory Council on the Arts.

We believe this to be a singularly useful and progressive measure greatly in demand at this crucial stage in the advancement and maturing of our nation's life and culture. It is our earnest hope that the Council receive generous support from your own administration.

We further suggest in token of the enterprising and imaginative support of our late President to the National Cultural Center that the Center henceforth be constituted as a living memorial to President Kennedy, with, if necessary, appropriate enlargement of its program and scope.

May we further take this opportunity to extend to you our wishes for the success of your administration, and to pledge our support to administration programs which will strengthen the role of the arts in America.

Most sincerely,

UNITED STATES INSTITUTE FOR THEATRE TECHNOLOGY INC.

Joel E. Rubin, President"

The proposal made in the foregoing letter to establish the new National Cultural Center as a living memorial to John F. Kennedy occurred almost simultaneously to several persons devoted to the welfare of the arts. Shortly after Dr. Rubin's letter was dispatched, action was initiated in Washington. A resolution was introduced in the Senate by Senator J. W. Fulbright to designate the building of the John Fitzgerald Kennedy Memorial Center. A bill to this effect was passed by Congress on its reconvening in January. The center as planned will cost \$31 million, although it is thought by some that this may have to be increased. Officials have stated that approximately \$12.9 million has already been raised in private donations and pledges. The legislation calls for Federal funds to match equally private donations, including those already in hand. Although Congress has thus far moved cautiously, confidence is now assured that more favorable action will be forthcoming. It is certain that Mr. Kennedy's personal efforts will not be forgotten. Mrs. Kennedy, an honorary co-chairman of the center, has taken an active part in fund raising. Two watercolors which she recently created have been reproduced on Christmas cards for sale for the center's benefit. The building, as designed by Edward Durrell Stone, is to house a 1,000-seat theatre, a 2,750-seat symphony hall, a 2,500-seat opera hall, and a 600-seat motion picture theatre. Italy has agreed to donate all the needed marble, a gift believed worth \$1.7 million.

In the USITT board there have been detailed discussions of the programming for the proposed center. It is hoped that this may develop as a leading force in the arts and serve not merely as accommodation for visiting organizations. The needs for good theatre also require efforts in all the fine arts and the decorative arts as well. Cannot provision for these be included in the center? All the more does this seem reasonable, since the late President and Mrs. Kennedy have placed no arbitrary limitations on the arts which they have encouraged. Members of the USITT might consider writing to their congressmen to this effect.

THE FOURTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE USITT

Barbizon-Plaza Hotel
106 Central Park South
New York City

April 25-26, 1964

TODAY'S THEATRE: YESTERDAY'S OR TOMORROW'S

Preliminary Announcement of Events

Saturday, April 25

9:00-10:00 Coffee Hour and Registration
10:00-10:45 Opening Session
 1. Greetings and general remarks by the president
 of USITT.
 2. Keynote speaker
11:00-12:30 Planning the Theatre
 (An evaluation and survey of the planning considerations
 as well as the needs of the group or community, both
 present and projected.)
12:30-2:00 Lunch
2:00-4:30 Function and place of the Theatre Specialist as a con-
tributing consultant. Relationship of all consultants.
(Discussion in all areas from Architects, Consultants
and Clients dealing with the questions of coordination,
supervision, responsibilities to the Architect and/or
Client, checklists, authority in the resolution of
problems, etc.)
5:15-6:30 Committee Meetings
6:30 Dinner

Sunday, April 26

9:00-10:00 Coffee Hour
10:00-12:30 Reports on operating theatres representing multi-form
type or significant departure from conventional proscenium
form. (These reports will discuss the experiences of
owners, operating personnel, directors, and others who
have had the opportunity of working in some of the more
controversial plants.)
12:30-2:00 Lunch
2:00-2:45 Business Meeting which will include short reports from
officers and committee chairmen.
3:00-5:00 Continuation of morning session.
6:30 Board of Directors Meeting

Accommodations are available at the Barbizon-Plaza through special arrangement by USITT. The date of the Conference enables its participants to visit the World's Fair and to enjoy the accelerated cultural activity in New York City to take place at this time. The final program for the Conference and all necessary information regarding it will be contained in a final program book.

REQUESTS OF THE SECRETARY - TREASURER

The Institute has a new address. This, as recorded on the first page of this NEWSLETTER, is: Box 866, Radio City Station, New York, N. Y., 10019. The Secretary-Treasurer, Richard D. Thompson, especially requests that this change be noted. To this address should be sent any notification of a change of address for any member or of changes which any may desire in his participation in one or another of the Institute's Committees. Where members have specific communications to a particular officer or member of the board, they are requested to write such a person directly rather than to the Institute's post office box, since there is some delay in transferral of mail from one office to another. Members and officers working on official Institute business or projects may obtain USITT letterheads by writing the Technical Secretary, Donald H. Swinney, Department of Drama, Hofstra University, Hempstead, L. I., N. Y.

Payment of dues is being placed on a smoother and more secure basis than hitherto. There has, naturally enough, been some procrastination on the part of members. The office procedure itself, after the experiment inevitable in a young organization, is now being established in the most effective possible manner. Final letters have gone out to those who have fallen considerably in arrears. In an organization as active in its correspondence as the USITT, it will at once be seen that the recalcitrants in this respect cannot indefinitely be retained in membership. In future, dues payment will be issued the first of each year and dues pre-rated on a quarterly basis. Therefore, a member who has joined during the first quarter of a year pays a complete dues for the following year, whereas, a member who has joined during the last quarter of the year pays only one fourth of the dues towards that year's membership and the remainder is credited to the following year.

In the interest of the Institute's general effectiveness, membership should be materially increased, so that our services may be improved and regional chapters formed. Our members are urged to recruit industriously for the Institute. Membership information and applications may be obtained by addressing the Secretary-Treasurer, Richard D. Thompson.

It is requested that all Institute members preparing papers concerning theatre or theatre technology mention themselves as members of the Institute and so give credit to it.

THE FORTHCOMING USITT JOURNAL

Ever since the founding of the USITT, one of the Institute's chief aims has been the establishment of a Journal dealing with theatre technology. That no such publication at present exists in this country is abundantly clear. That such would be eminently useful is no less obvious. The publication of a journal under auspices of the USITT seems distinctly appropriate. Although existing journals, excellently edited, represent the theatre more or less from the viewpoint of

and is a principle at no time to be overlooked. The Institute itself has given this much thought. The reader will find here a systematic body of statement, kept scrupulously up-to-date, which should have marked utility. The Journal should make a substantial contribution to the files of libraries, personal and public, wherever such knowledge is in demand. The very large investment being made in theatres for professional and amateur use, in community and educational fields, justifies such concerted attention. However great they are, resources should not be wasted in supplying the wrong things or in failure to master their operation. Those concerned with providing the public with sound presentational art should know what is needed in any given situation to produce the best available results.

The Institute is a most reasonable sponsor for such a publication. It has an active and articulate membership representing all the chief phases of theatrical craftsmanship along technical lines. It also supplies fruitful contact between those immediately concerned with the mechanical or business aspects of the theatre and the aesthetic aspects. At its conferences and committee meetings directors, producers, consultants, architects, designers, specialists in sightlines and sound transmission are brought together. This promises a lively collaboration in the pages of a magazine between experts in as many fields. Although the Journal is to be eminently technical, this will not mean that its outlook or its philosophy will fail to be liberal. The scope and, we trust, the quality of our membership will guard us in this respect.

The Journal is not, however, conceived merely as an organ of the Institute. To an even greater degree than the NEWSLETTER, it will be addressed to all persons engaged in theatrical work. Although edited within the orbit of the Institute, it is specifically designed to represent the widest possible views of technical progress for the theatre. It solicits contributions no less from persons outside the Institute than from persons within its membership. It proposes to represent the best that is thought and done not only in the theatres of this country but in modern theatres throughout the world. Only within these broadest horizons can it serve to best advantage even the most local need.

Although the Journal will publish notes and reviews, its function will be kept strictly apart from that of the USITT NEWSLETTER, which will be continued as a medium for notifying its readers of activities and events both in and out of the Institute. At no time has the NEWSLETTER published articles, nor will it do so in the future. The purpose of the Journal, on the contrary, is to stimulate rather than to announce. One publication resembles a miniature newspaper, the other is to be, as its name implies, a critique of technology. The former loses much of its value with the passing weeks, the latter, maintained on file, will, it is hoped, accumulate value with the years.

There is still some planning, editorial and financial, to be accomplished before the Journal will appear. We are not at present prepared to announce its frequency or size. The initial format will in all probability have to be modest. But the urgency of the need argues in behalf of optimism rather than of excessive caution.

announcement may be expected at the annual Conference of the Institute, April 25-26, at the Hotel Barbizon-Plaza, New York.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

NED A. BOWMAN

Professor Ned A. Bowman, of the University of Pittsburgh, has been appointed Associate Editor of this NEWSLETTER. The Editor takes this occasion to express his warm thanks and admiration for the many contributions made by Ned Bowman to all numbers of the NEWSLETTER that have thus far appeared and also to express the deep gratitude, certainly shared by all members of the USITT, for his willingness to undertake even larger tasks in the future, for which he is so exceptionally equipped by scholarship and imagination.

USITT CODE COMMITTEE

With the writing of a revised Building Code for the City of New York now going full tilt, the USITT has set up a committee to work on the special theatrical involvements of the new Code. C. Ray Smith, Vice-Chairman of USITT's Committee on Theatre Architecture, is Chairman of this Committee, the members of which include Arthur Bonline, Thomas DeGaetani, Donald H. Swinney, William Warfel, Joel Rubin, and Richard D. Thompson.

The Building Code is being rewritten under the supervision of a team of experts at the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn. The three technical consultants retained are Frederick G. Frost Jr. and Associates, consulting architects; Meyer, Strong and Jones, consulting mechanical engineers; and Praeger-Kavanagh-Waterbury, consulting structural engineers. William H. Correale is technical director of the project.

Since Ben Schlanger, USITT's Vice-President, has been appointed a special consultant to the Building Code Project on places of public assembly, the Institute's Code Committee finds itself in the happy position of working with Mr. Schlanger, who has so recently placed these additional honors on his well-decorated shoulders. Meetings have also been held with Mr. Dan Larson, of Frederick Frost's office; with George Jerris and John Fox, of Meyer, Strong and Jones; and with various members of the Code Committee of the National Automatic Sprinkler and Fire Control Association.

Members of the USITT having a special interest or knowledge of code problems are invited to become either direct or corresponding members of the Institute's Code Committee by contacting Mr. C. Ray Smith at Reinhold Publishing Corp., 430 Park Avenue, New York 22, N.Y.

USITT THEATRE SURVEY

I

Readers of the NEWSLETTER are aware that we list domestic and foreign theatre openings which have come to the attention of the Institute. Members of the Institute are requested to send any information to the Editor of the NEWSLETTER, Henry W. Wells, 777 Kappock Street, New York 63, N. Y. This should be done, if possible, in advance of the opening, since the Institute sends congratulatory telegrams in recognition of such events.

II

Starting with the next NEWSLETTER, Ned A. Bowman, its Associate Editor, has offered to extract from his bibliography items on the openings of new theatres as reported in various periodicals. This material will henceforth appear as a special section of the NEWSLETTER, with any additional information on current openings and dedications. This will constitute as far as information allows an account of building activity, listing the name and location of the theatre, architect, date of opening, form of stage-audience, and audience capacity.

III

At the suggestion of the Committee on Theatre Architecture all members of the Institute will shortly be requested to list all theatres on which they have worked from 1960 to the present. The list should include theatre name, location, architect, theatrical consultants if any, stage form, number of seats, and the general purpose for which the theatre was built. Each succeeding issue of the NEWSLETTER will carry a reminder for Institute members to submit such information regularly. A master list will thus be formed and kept up to date. A standard reply card will be circulated in the next mailing.

The Institute's list will serve as a valuable adjunct to the continuing list of theatres which is compiled by the AETA and which unfortunately has never been widely distributed by that organization. While the Institute has as its rule scrupulously to resist efforts that duplicate services rendered by other organizations, it is felt that the importance of the theatre survey is such that independent action is warranted by the USITT in this particular case.

DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN THEATRE OPENINGS

1. Grand Salle, Place des Arts, Montreal, Canada; 3,000 seat multipurpose hall; architects, Afflock, Doskarats, Dimakapoulos, Lobensold, Michaud and Lisc; September 21, 1963
2. Philharmonic, West Berlin, Germany. 2,000 seat concert hall; architect, Hans Scharoun; October 15, 1963
3. Clowes Memorial Hall, Butler University, Indianapolis, Indiana

Woollen III, Associates; October 8, 1963

4. East-West Theatre, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii; associate architects, I.M. Pei, and Young and Henderson; December 4, 1963
5. Bayerische Staatsoper, Munich, Germany; (reconstruction) November 23, 1963
6. Turku Municipal Theatre, Turku, Finland; main theatre with 668 seats, little theatre with 100; architects, R.V. Luukkonen and Helmer Stenroos; September, 1962
7. Juopio Community Theatre, Kupio, Finland; 426 seats; architects, Luukkonen and Helmer Stenroos; September, 1963

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF AUDITORIUM MANAGERS

Among the organizations with which USITT maintains a close working relationship is the I.A.A.M. (International Association of Auditorium Managers). Francis R. Deering, of Houston, is President. Charles R. Byrnes is Executive Director; its headquarters are Room 261, Sherman House, Chicago 1, Illinois. The I.A.A.M. publishes a monthly newsletter dealing with management of auditoria, arena and stadia structures and has several district meetings each year as well as an Annual Convention and Industry Trade Show. The thirty-ninth Annual Convention will be held this year July 28 - 31 at the Deauville Hotel, Miami Beach. Contact Mr. Byrnes in Chicago for further information.

THE TYRONE GUTHRIE THEATRE

Members of the Institute will shortly receive gratis copies of the opening season program book for the Guthrie Theatre. These books were made available to the Institute by the Minnesota Theatre Company Foundation through the courtesy of Mr. Peter Zeisler. In the same mailing will be a copy of PROGRESSIVE ARCHITECTURE's December 1963 cover story on the Guthrie Theatre, written by that journal's Associate Editor (and USITT's Vice-Chairman of the Committee on Theatre Architecture), G. Ray Smith. This report was made available by Kliegl Brothers, who supplied PROGRESSIVE ARCHITECTURE with the interior illustration of the theatre used in the article.

The Institute has further purchased copies of a photographic essay on the Guthrie Theatre published in the Quarterly of the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. This issue of DESIGN QUARTERLY is available to NEWSLETTER recipients at cost, which is forty cents, postage prepaid within the United States. See the special ordering form enclosed with this NEWSLETTER.

TWO USEFUL PAMPHLETS

A pamphlet, FUTURES IN AMERICAN THEATRE, is available from the Drama Department of the University of Texas, Austin 12, Texas. It contains five lectures delivered in a new Drama Building: "Some Credo Notes for Theatre Workers," by Paul Green; "The Future of Theatre Architecture," by Jo Mielziner; "The Dramatic Critic Looks at the Contemporary Theatre," by John Gassner; "Future Directors of Educational Theatre," by Samuel Seldon; and, "The Director and the Theatre in Transition," by Alan Schneider.

"Marketing the Arts", is a pamphlet written by Arnold Mitchell and published by the Stanford Research Institute, Menlo Park, California. This is available to members of USITT on request to the Stanford Research Institute.

One interesting note here is that SRI re-uses the figure of "1000 prospective theatres in the decade of the 60's" initiated by USITT and subsequently picked up by Architectural Forum.

BUHEMENTECHNISCHE RUNDSCHAU

Anyone wishing to secure the BUHEMENTECHNISCHE RUNDSCHAU on microfilm is asked to communicate with the Technical Secretary of the USITT, Donald H. Swinnoy, c/o Department of Drama, Hofstra University, Hempstead, L. I., N. Y.

ABSTRACTS FROM FOREIGN TECHNICAL JOURNALS

Arrangements have been concluded whereby abstracts will be prepared of articles on theatre technique originally appearing in foreign technical journals. These abstracts will be prepared under the auspices of the University of Pittsburgh by a group headed by Ned Bowman. Dr. Bowman will supply these abstracts to USITT three or four times yearly, for publication by USITT in suitable format.

ON REVIEWING BOOKS

The Institute has recently received a book, IMAGES IN LIGHT FOR THE LIVING THEATRE, By Edward F. Kook, privately published by The Arts of the Theatre Foundation, 521 West 43rd St., New York, N. Y. The Institute will be pleased to review books within the general field of its concern. The Book here mentioned will be reviewed as soon as possible.

THEATRE IN SKOPLJE, YUGOSLAVIA

A letter from Jean Darcanto, Secretary-General of the International Theatre Institute, describes the distress of theatrical artists in Skoplje, Yugoslavia, occasioned by the severe earthquake which destroyed the larger part of their city. It is suggested that contributions in aid of the theatre personnel there be sent to the Head Office, Institut International du Theatre, Unesco Annex, 6, rue Franklin, Paris 16, France. All theatres in the city have been completely destroyed with all their equipment. Performances are, nevertheless, given with the courage which in this land we have come to expect. Five hundred artists, workers and technicians are living and working under the most distressing conditions. Aid is urgently in request and will be deeply appreciated.

A. E. T. A. APPOINTMENTS

Chairman, Theatre Architecture Project: Arthur C. Risser, Dept. of Engineering, University of Wichita, Wichita, Kansas (new appointment)
Chairman, Stage Design and Technical Developments Project, Ned Bowman, Dept. of Speech and Theatre, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh 13, Pa. (continuing appointment)

The Institute wishes to commend Prof. Crabg of Rutgers University upon his brilliant direction of the Committee on Theatrical Architecture during the past two years, and to pledge continued cooperation with Professors Risser and Bowman. They have, naturally, been invited to meet with the USITT at its April Conference.

A. I. A. COMMITTEE ON THEATRE ARCHITECTURE

The American Institute of Architects has announced its new committee assignments for 1964. Of special interest to USITT is the membership of the Committee on Theatre Architecture. Its members are Ben Schlanger, Chairman, William E. Briggs, Clinton Brush, Arthur C. Risser, and Preston M. Bolton. Corresponding members are, John Morse and Hilyard Robinson.

The USITT wishes to take this opportunity to congratulate former Chairman Morse on the Committee's vast activity under his direction for the past year and to offer to his successor, Ben Schlanger, the fullest cooperation during the present year.

The A. I. A. Committee has been invited to meet with the USITT during the forthcoming fourth Annual Convention in April.

RECENT USITT APPOINTMENTS

By action of the USITT Executive Committee, the following appointments have been made in recent months: Legal Counsel, Hays, Bushy and Rivkin, 750 Third Avenue, New York 17, N. Y., Mr. Donald Rivkin and Mr. Crawford Shaw. Accounting, Lutz and Carr, C. P. A. 122 East 42nd Street, New York, N. Y., Mr. Edward Lutz. Public Relations, Seymour Krawitz and Associates, 137 West 48th Street, New York, N. Y., Mr. Seymour Krawitz. These services, which the USITT so vitally requires, have been made available to us on a non-profit basis by the firms listed above. The USITT is most aware of the generosity of these individuals in giving of their time and talent and wishes to take this occasion to express grateful thanks.

The Institute has obtained 300 copies of the special issue of Design Quarterly featuring the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre. This issue is available to members for \$0.40 a copy. You may obtain this publication by filling out the attached order blank and sending it to USITT; P. O. Box 866; New York, N. Y. 10019.

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