

NEWSLETTER

U.S. INSTITUTE FOR THEATRE TECHNOLOGY, INC.
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COMMISSIONERS' RETREAT MEETING IN PITTSBURGH YIELDS POSITIVE RESULTS

The Commissioners and Vice Commissioners of USITT met in Pittsburgh on June 26th and 27th for a "Commissioners' Retreat" with President Edward F. Kook and 2nd Vice President James R. Earle, Jr., to discuss the continued growth of the Institute. Although not all of the Commissioners and Vice Commissioners were able to attend, six of the Commissions had active representation and all were represented in some way by "position papers" or related correspondence from the Commissioners. Due to the fact that several of the documents were circulated in advance of the "retreat" along with a general outline from Mr. Earle, the participants came prepared to discuss a number of vital subjects. All of the sessions were recorded and a written report was prepared and distributed to the Officers and Board of Directors prior to the August Board Meeting at the ATA Convention in Los Angeles.

The "retreat" considered such key questions as: How can members become active in Commission Projects?; Dissemination of information vs. communication between members and projects; What is the charge of each Commission?; and How can individual members be identified for Commission participation? Although answers to these questions were long and cannot be fully answered in this space, the participants were able to make recommendations which should provide some answers. Some of the recommendations by the Commissioners included the following:

A survey of the entire USITT Membership to determine how they perceive their role in the USITT Commissions. Do members wish to become actively involved in the work of the Commissions, or do they wish to receive printed information from the Commissions? What does it mean when a member checks the space marked "Commission Interest" on the Membership Application blanks?

A yearly retreat be held to assure that Commission goals, procedures, and objectives are constantly reviewed with the assumption such "retreats" will continue to shape the basic Commission on Projects structure and allow for changes, as required.

The Presentation Commission should be restructured so as to allow for operation of the current projects which involve liaison with the creative artists under a separate committee or commission structure AND a new Commission -- SCENOGRAPHY -- should be formed to serve the needs of United States Scenographers. Subsequent discussions at the Board of Directors Meeting in Los Angeles have indicated that liaison with the creative artist might well function under the National Liaison Committee rather than the Commission on Projects.

The goals and objectives of the Administrative Commission require redefinition and there should be joint cooperation between this Commission and existing U.S. Arts Administration Organizations to assure we are not duplicating their work. USITT should be involved in Arts Administration and should continue its Theatre Administration component.

Future USITT Conferences (Annual) should take into account the role of the Commissions within the organization and should allow for presentation of the calibre and level of programming which reflects existing Commission projects and concerns. These conferences are the only regular opportunity for USITT members to participate in Commission activity and contribute actively to projects.

The Board of Directors took positive action on the Commissioner's recommendations and gave direction as to how certain actions might best be carried out. With this support from the Board of Directors, it is the intent of all involved to begin immediate action on all recommendations. Toward this end, you will find in this Newsletter a questionnaire which solicits your cooperation in completion and return of same. You can be assured that the results from this survey will be reflected in future Commission projects and communications.

SURVEY

As a direct result of the Commissioners' Retreat, 2nd Vice President James R. Earle, Jr., Chairman of the Commission on Projects, is requesting ALL USITT members to complete and return the brief questionnaire on page 9 of this Newsletter. The purposes of the Survey are three-fold:

1) To determine which Commission(s) YOU are interested in receiving information from.

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COMMISSION REPORTS

CODES COMMISSIONER ADDRESSES THE MEMBERSHIP

The following is my address: Dr. Randall W.A. Davidson, USITT Commissioner of Codes and Standards, 1612 Linwood Avenue, Erie, Pennsylvania 16510, (814) 459-8117. Please direct all information dealing with the Codes Commission to that address. We are calling on all those who have shown any interest in the Codes Commission work, in any form, in any direction, to contact us with positive and negative comments so that we may re-formulate our direction and gain more knowledge of our work force.

There is information that we wish to gain-- first-hand information from the membership, and from sources that members may have access to. We are doing an article on the subject of THE USE OF LASERS IN ENTERTAINMENT and wish to provide the membership with material on their use and form. We visited TRW Systems, California Institute for Technology, and Hughes Aircraft for some up-to-date information. The use of lasers and holographs is now beginning to spread to the Entertainment Industry, and our personnel will be using these hazardous forms. It is of the utmost necessity that they be trained and have knowledge of their use and dangers. We have observed a number of uses of the laser and its application to amusement parks and rock concerts and the ignorance of the users.

We are gathering information on the number and use of asbestos fire curtains. Up to now we have had no data or information on the use and misuse of these curtains or their possible dangers. We are now pursuing the health threats from asbestos fibers. It is the secondary problems we are concerned about -- the ones that are ten and fifteen years down the pike. We wish to pursue the testing of the environment on stages over a period of some time and record test data to indicate particles per million with the use of the curtain. Our data, so far, indicates the lack of use of the fire curtain by most theatres. Some new theatres, up to five years in use, have not used these curtains in keeping with the regulations for most states and cities. Most of us will recall, with great difficulty, the practice of keeping the fire curtain down until some moments before the production opened. Perhaps with the onslaught of other safety devices the fire curtain has lapsed. We are concerned with the use of this curtain in houses that still have it, and with those who use it. Examinations by the sponsoring group, be it college or school, or community situation, would then have to take place. Please write to me about the laws in your community, and of the enforcement both by legal authorities and officials of your own group.

During the past year, we have written to many places concerning materials that are used in makeup. Cosmetics are under the jurisdiction of two agencies in Washington, the Consumer Product Commission, and the Federal Drug Agency. Carcinogen substances are being examined in respect to these areas. We have talked to some people and wish to have more information and hard data before we pass material on to the membership. We have visited the National Institute for Occupational Health and Safety, and spoke with several of their scientists. 60,000 injuries per year are caused by cosmetics. Cosmetics do not have to be safety tested and so we are pushing for this testing. Diaries are being kept by a test group. We are concerned with hard data--not just reactions to reports. We are concerned with the long term use of makeup and its secondary problems over a long period.

A cursory study of the total Entertainment Industry has indicated to us over this last year that a great many of the workers and employers in this area are not shielded from toxic substances that are found in the places of employment, or in school situations. We find this criminal, in that the employers and workers, students, etc., seem to be ignorant of this situation overall. We are not talking about a few such substances, but of many, and these seem to be common in the Industry. Many of them are solvents and aerosols, but there are other areas not usually connected with our work that use other toxic substances that must be monitored as well. The U.S. Government is becoming more concerned and now there are materials from Cincinnati and Washington, as well as OSHA. A thorough study of these areas in our industry is underway. Any contribution you wish to make to the Commission will be studied.

The Sections might consider using the safety areas as one of their topics for yearly meetings -- or for an annual meeting, and having specific members work in that area. The Commission would be pleased to work with you and give you some guidelines, and is always willing to accept suggestions.

We are completing a counterweight study and wish to add some final touches to it. There is little data in this field and we are concerned that ignorance abounds among most technicians as to the sum and substance of the counterweight system -- use of cable and what types -- care of cable -- use and care of rope and hemp -- lubrication -- crosby's, number, etc. The number of accidents that occur in this area, reported and found out, are numerous. In observing, over the last four or five years, the use of counterweight systems, it has saddened some of us that they are not used more carefully. We have also found that some of the equipment is not quality equipment and is easily broken and this renders accidents all the more easy to the technician and the performer. We have been consulting with leading manufacturers of this equipment and find there are some problems that must be ironed out regarding those who might lessen the quality of equipment, thus creating hazardous situations for workers.

We must consider in our training and in our instruction that we have isolated ourselves in theatre for too long, and that our business now moves into every entertainment and amusement field in existence. Therefore, we must consider in the application of the work of USITT, the total Entertainment Industry. In the area of Safety and Loss Control, we have a long way to go. We are not cognizant of the liability and insurance problems we must know about. The recent legislation in New York State, and present in a dozen other states give us pause to consider our liability problems. They are not going to go away. They are going to increase and cost more. We must think of many ways to save the money we have invested in buildings and people. Inflation and suits, which are always with us, have a way of getting sidetracked. Local insurance agents for small theatres do us a favor, and we are not covered as adequately as we might be. We cannot rebuild. We cannot cover suits. Most of us open ourselves up to large suits and extinction. Deaths are occurring in our profession from negligence and, with the upswing of consumerism, we will be out of business. We must not think too lightly upon this. From tools and

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SPOTLIGHT ON SECTIONS AND CHAPTERS



DELTA NEW OFFICERS ELECTED PROJECTS UNDERWAY

Michael S. Corrison, Interim Chairman of the Delta Section, State of Louisiana, stated that the balloting for the Officers of the Section was completed in June, and the following individuals have been elected for the coming year.

Chairman

Elliott Keener, Instructor at the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts.

1st Vice Chairman

Paul James, Technical Director/Designer, Louisiana State University.

2nd Vice Chairman

Robert Buford, Technical Director/Designer, Grambling State University.

Secretary-Treasurer

Gerilyn Tandberg, Costumer and Chairman of the Louisiana College and University Theatre Festival, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge.

Preliminary plans are underway for workshops at the Louisiana College and University Theatre Festival and throughout the year. The first collective meeting of the Section will be held at the Festival in Baton Rouge, October 22nd - 25th. Corrison, who has served as Interim Chairman, was one of the key figures in getting the Section started along with Elliott Keener, and Ms. Cindy Morris of Northwestern State University. Mr. Corrison will now be Technical Director/Designer at Susquehanna University in Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania.

With the encouragement of PATE Commission, John Bracewell, the collection of technical theatre course syllabi will continue. Mr. Corrison, in charge of this project for the past year, summed up the progress by stating that there was a limited mailing and thus there was a limited response. However, the response has been good. The scope of the project is to collect course syllabi for Stagecraft, Stage Lighting, Stage Makeup, Sound, Costuming, Scene Design, Theatre Labs or Practicums, and any other course that falls under Technical Theatre. The purpose is to see what is taught across the United States, and also for an individual to see how his teaching matches up with his fellow colleagues. It is hoped that a set of standards may be developed from this.

Mr. Corrison asks that members take a few minutes and mail some of the above course syllabi to him so that at our next convention a panel can be developed to discuss the findings of this study. All information should be mailed to Michael S. Corrison, Communication and Theatre Arts Department, Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania 17870.

P.S. And, is that Elliott Keener doing a bit of moonlighting on the MacDonald TV Commercials?



NO. ARIZONA U. MEMBERS WORK WITH PRO

The Northern Arizona University Summer Repertory Theatre, a part of the Flagstaff Summer Festival, struck the set of "The Glass Menagerie" July 10th. Veteran actress Patricia Barry played the role of Amanda Wingfield, and also starred as Julie Cavendish in Kaufman and Ferber's "The Royal Family". Ms. Barry is the Past President of ANTA West, and is very concerned with the young people in theatre. Connie Bever, Past President of USITT's Northern Arizona Student Chapter, and a member of the student delegation to the OISTT Congress in Prague, was featured in the role of Laura in "The Glass Menagerie".

Set Designer for both productions was Stephen G. Hild, Lighting Designer--Jean Anderson, Costume Designer--Carol Mead Cartmell, Assistant Technical Director was John Wainwright, and Curtis Miner was Property Master. All are members of the N.A.U. Chapter of USITT. Everyone agreed that working with Ms. Barry was a unique experience that greatly enlarged one's field of vision.



S.U.N.Y. - OSWEGO THE BIG APPLE VISITED

Jeffrey L. Glave, President of USITT's Student Chapter at the State University of New York-Oswego, reports that the Chapter recently arranged two tours for its members. The first of these was of the new Onondaga County Civic Center in Syracuse, New York, where a view of their three theatres and a great deal of information on the design and technical capabilities of the theatres was given to the members by Mr. Dan Woolley, member of USITT, and the Operations Manager of the Cultural Resources Center in Syracuse.

The second tour was a three-day trip to New York City where the members had an inside look at Nolan Scenery Studios, Brooks-Van Horn Costumers, Kliegl Brothers Lighting, CBS Studios, the Metropolitan Opera, and Bob Kelley Makeup. These visits combined with brief glimpses of some Broadway and Off-Broadway shows were a welcomed breath of fresh air for anyone who felt the academic view of theatre was not enough in itself.

Mr. Glave points out that although it may not be possible for many of the Student Chapters to visit New York, it is an excellent opportunity to take advantage of their local theatre offerings and see how things are in "the real world." Tours such as these are not difficult to arrange (especially if other members of USITT are

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Bolt, Beranek and Newman, Inc. announces its eighth annual course on "Noise and Vibration Control of Mechanical and Electrical HVAC Equipment in Buildings," to be given this year only once, during 12-15 October, 1976 in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The course is directed to architects and engineers, and includes room acoustics, sound transmission loss data of walls and floors, noise control procedures noise level data of HVAC equipment, and vibration control approaches and materials. The procedures and much of the data are also applicable to many other types of noise and noise isolation problems.

Printed lecture notes document the course and contain many tables and graphs of data on noise and noise control. The course is taught by Laymon N. Miller, Principal Consultant at Bolt, Beranek and Newman, who has 22 years' experience in noise control of mechanical installations in buildings.

For a brochure describing the course, write or phone: Miss Gloria A. Cianci, Bolt, Beranek and Newman Inc., 50 Moulton Street, Cambridge, Mass. 02138, phone (617) 491-1850.

TD & T ON MICROFILM

Are you looking for back issues of the USITT Journal? **THEATRE DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY** is now available on microfilm from Xerox University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106.

Issues not available through the National Office (see the Publications Available list), can be obtained by writing to Xerox University Microfilms for cost and delivery information.

KLIEGL APPT.

Kliegl Bros. is pleased to announce the recent appointment of Gordon W. Pearlman to their Marketing Department. Mr. Pearlman will serve as the Kliegl Western Regional Sales Manager with offices in Portland, Oregon.

Mr. Pearlman holds a M.F.A. from Tulane University, was previously with Electronics Diversified as

Marketing Vice President, and for the nine years prior, with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill as Lighting Designer and Technical Director.

Mr. Pearlman may be contacted at Kliegl Bros., 3004 N.W. Luray Terrace, Portland, Oregon 97210, phone (503) 223-0956.

THEATRE ON FILM-VIDEOTAPE

The Theatre Collection of The New York Public Library has been filming and videotaping selected live performances of theatrical productions for its archives since 1970. In addition, tapes and films have been made of dialogues between important theatrical personalities. Betty Corwin, Project Director of the Library's Theatre on Film and Tape Collection, has announced that many films and videotapes are now available for viewing at the Library by qualified theatre researchers, students and professionals. Plays in the collection are restricted for replay until two years after their release to stock; musicals until five years after release.

To request use of the Collection, or for further information, write the Theatre on Film and Tape Collection, The New York Public Library at Lincoln Center, 111 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, New York 10023 or call (212) 799-2200, extension 271 or 205. This project is supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington, D.C., a Federal agency.

FELLOWSHIPS OFFERED

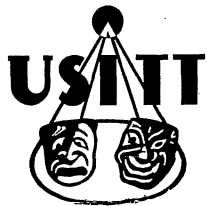
USITT members in the Massachusetts area have an opportunity to apply for \$3,000 Creative Artists' Fellowships now available in film, video, music composition and choreography. Several fellowships will be awarded in each field. Applications for creative artists working in painting, sculpture, printmaking, photography, poetry, fiction and playwrighting will be available in the Spring of 1977.

Composers, choreographers, filmmakers and video artists can obtain their applications - which must be completed and returned by October 15, 1976 - from the Artists' Fellowship office. Formerly called Creative Artists' Services, Artists' Fellowships is a program administered by the Massachusetts Arts and Humanities Foundation, Inc., a non-profit organization in Boston that provides financial and other assistance to individual creative artists in Massachusetts.

To be eligible for fellowships, artists must be Massachusetts residents over 18 years of age. Undergraduate and graduate students are not eligible. Each artist will be required to submit a representative body of recent work demonstrating a high level of accomplishment. Panels of out-of-state artists will select the fellowship recipients solely on the basis of the excellence of the work submitted. Project proposals are not required of applicants or recipients.

The Massachusetts Arts and Humanities Foundation programs are supported by funds provided in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities, and local public and private sources. Information and applications for Artist Fellowships are available at the Foundation office, Room 606, 14 Beacon Street, Boston, MA. 02108, (617) 723-3851.

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COSMAK'S CORNER

CORNERED BY COSMAK

Following is an interview with Professor Douglas Russell, USITT 1976 Design Competition Judge. Professor Russell is author of theatre costume design textbooks, past Costumer at Ashland and San Diego Globe Shakespearean Repertory Companies, and is currently a member of the Stanford University faculty. The questions and answers are not intended to discover how "to win" design competitions, but how "to win" as designers.

COSMAK: HOW DID YOU, AS ONE OF FIVE JUDGES, ELIMINATE AND DECIDE UPON WINNERS?

RUSSELL: It was a form of elimination. First, we all went around the whole exhibit and checked our lists of designers as to whether they were strong, medium or weak possibilities. This first time around, we were looking for something that made a strong impression; we didn't really analyze why, just "That strikes me", "That appeals to me", "I would like to see that on a stage". I wanted a very personal response -- a gut reaction. We then went back the second time to see why they made the impressions they did. The single most important point I was after was a recognition that the person had a strong, secure point of view about that play, even if it was the wrong one, even if it wasn't the way I would do it, even if it was a way in which I would never do the play. I want to see that the person has a secure understanding of the design, is inside of it, does not feel wishy-washy about it, hasn't lifted it out of the book, hasn't borrowed the idea from somebody else. I want to feel that it's his, he is ready to go with it and is carrying the ball with great confidence. I think that is what the judges all agreed was important. Beyond that, we had to decide how well it was rendered. Was it clear, easy to follow, confusing, "mushy", obscure? Whatever distracts you from the sketch is bad. Backgrounds, for example, can get in the way of the sketch. It was agreed that even though the sketch might not be the way we would do it, if we felt a secure sense in the rendering style, that the design was thought through, that there was a strong point of view, that it was going to make a clean-cut, unified, stylistic statement on the stage when carried out, then we tended to agree it was a possible winner.

COSMAK: CAN YOU TELL IF A RENDERING IS "A WORK OF ART" OR IF THE ARTIST HAS THE CAPABILITIES OF EXECUTING THE COSTUME?

RUSSELL: Not totally, but with experience you can tell when things are done with the human body and the clothes on that body that are not based in real knowledge of human proportions, human movement, sewing, etc. You can tell when a student not trained in dramatic literature, body movement, blocking on stage tries to do "pretty pictures" or marvelous diagrammatic designs. You know the designs are not going to work because they are artificially created from a mental abstraction without the appropriate background.

COSMAK: CAN YOU TELL THE OPPOSITE, IF THE ARTWORK IS INADEQUATE, BUT THE CAPABILITIES OF EXECUTING ARE THERE?

RUSSELL: No. Don't ever rely on a statement from a designer that says, "I build costumes beautifully, I am a very marvelous costumer, I understand actors' bodies and sewing". If they can't render it, nobody will know that.

COSMAK: HOW GOOD MUST THE RENDERING BE?

RUSSELL: It must be good enough to clearly make the point you are trying to get across. It's like writing. If you can write a clear, clean declarative sentence that everybody understands, that's all you need. You don't need a lot of big words, flourishes, a heavy style. Students come and say, "Oh, I felt it when I wrote my term paper, and you missed it." I say, "But you didn't make clear what you meant." Even though the designer builds the most beautiful costumes in the world, if he cannot make clear what he means because his rendering is inept (and therefore obscures his meaning), we cannot understand the idea or meaning he intends to convey.

COSMAK: HOW INNOVATIVE SHOULD DESIGNERS BE IN COMPARISON TO THE EXPECTED?

RUSSELL: Somewhere in between. You can't be so innovative that what you design is distracting. If something is so far out, so new, so different that you miss its meaning, then obviously it is not good. We're collaborative people in the theatre. We're working with a director, a playwright and actors. If we, in any way, obscure the work of those other people by doing something spectacular, flashy, different, not expected, then nobody watches the actors or the direction of the play. It is interesting art, but not costume design. On the other hand, too much of what you learn in class -- historical knowledge, stylistic borrowings from other designers, second-hand liftings out of pictures in books -- that will show up too. It will not have become the designer's own. It will be undigested costume information. Even though it may be all borrowed, it must be digested inside the designer's imagination and given back as a secure statement of his or her stylistic approach -- a personal statement.

COSMAK: IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT IS THE BIGGEST MISTAKE MADE BY COSTUME AND SCENIC DESIGNERS?

RUSSELL: The biggest mistake is to borrow too much from other designers ... to be too close to the historic facts of the period ... to be too self-conscious in trying to make a sketch that will be impressive, interesting and get somebody's attention without the designer really believing in it. If the designer believes in his design and has made his decisions with confidence, he does not have to manipulate judges into liking his work with fancy backgrounds and flashy rendering techniques. Too much ornament obscures the silhouette; the costume outline can be lost in the background. Even a painting technique for the costume can be cancelled out by background washes. If too many things are going on, if the set and costumes are going to cancel each other out, then both designers have failed. The designer must be clear, direct, clean-cut and confident in his final results. He must not let himself get caught up in a lot of borrowing he hasn't made his own. He must make what he borrowed part of himself.

COSMAK: WHAT IS YOUR COSTUME PHILOSOPHY?

RUSSELL: The simple, cleanest, clearest, most direct statement that will get across the visual ideas of your director, that will let you forget the costume and allow you to concentrate on the play -- that's the best costume. I have always believed that the greatest art is the sim-

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COMMISSIONS

equipment, to facilities, fatigue, toxics, we have to concern ourselves. (Working with the Codes Commission would be one way to gain some knowledge.)

We have discussed conducting Master Classes in Safety and its application, but it seems not a popular topic. You will be hearing more about this in the future. Your injuries are welcomed.

The Commissioner's Retreat was a beginning. It is necessary that the Codes Commission form strong bonds and liaison with all the other Commissions. The work of the Codes Commission cuts across and deeply into all the Commissions. I am requesting copies of back reports. Please copy them and send them to me. Many of you have files that are complete, and we are anxious to read all of them and formulate some copy dealing with the Safety aspects. We have had some input from some Commissions, but not nearly enough. We know there is a desire to cooperate. Please, go back over the years and send me copies of all past directives and meetings and reports. This will make the work of the Codes Commission easier and render some quality cooperation.

Accidents, injuries, fires, deaths -- in the Entertainment Industry are our concern. Reports, clippings, letters, daily new items, TV comments, night club fires, stadiums, amusement parks, opera, etc., would gratefully be received by the Commission.

We are continuing our contact on a personal basis with State and Federal Agencies. We are anxious that they know of the work that is being done by the Institute and of those interested in safety in Entertainment. If you wish, we would be pleased to write or talk to your government officials. We are working with the British Theatre Institute, and the Association of British Theatre Technicians. It is necessary that we share with others our knowledge and also gain from them. Our interest is to reduce losses and it needs the help of all of us.

UNIONS: Those that participate in a professional union are extremely important to the Commission. We need their knowledge and practice to aid us in developing information for all of us. If you are a member of a union in the Entertainment Industry, you can contribute much information.

DRAFT OF ENTERTAINMENT ACT (CODE) #10: Copies are selling and we are backlogged now. Please be patient. We are seeking information on cost reduction. Requests are coming from many quarters and we will ship them within a month. Please continue to send revisions and new information. Our most recent acquisitions have come from Allan Gross on plastics, Bernard Grossman on energy, and Robert Johnson on fabric retardation.

TRAVEL: We are traveling a great deal this year and look forward to more, depending upon expenses. If you, or your Section, or local theatre or State groups wish to use us for your yearly program, as did six groups last year, please write or call, and we can arrange a meeting, a date, a communication.

JOIN A COMMISSION

COSMAK

plest and most direct; therefore, I know, in my own mind, that in the theatre when you are watching a play, with actors against a set in movement, the costume must be read, understood and, in a way, forgotten. You must get the point, understand the characters, see the play, but you must not be distracted from the acting, playwrighting and directing. Costumes you have to keep puzzling through, wondering about, and learning about, may be fascinating to the costume student, but in the final analysis you are not concentrating on the play. You are concentrating on the costume and obstructing the direction, action and movement of the play. The simple, direct, clear, clean-cut, immediate statement is the right one.

CRAMPED QUARTERS

THE CASE OF THE SHRINKING COSTUME SHOPS

Some of us have new completely-planned costume shops, others of us are thankful for the closet at the end of the hall converted into a sewing room with cardboard sign identifying ... "COSTUME SHOP". What we all have in common is that our shops seem to shrink with every show produced. Like mobile homes, every inch of space must be utilized. How we organize our shop and the equipment we purchase and use is vital. The mechanical necessities of the job should never destroy the creativity -- only assist it. Friends and new acquaintances shared with COSMAK the following thoughts and ideas.

REFERRALS

Save time looking up phone numbers and trying to remember names and companies by keeping a card file with persons often called, equipment repairmen, replacements, et al.

CUTTING TABLES

Use moveable tables placed together, or fold-down leafs on tables when larger than table width is required. Make use of wasted SPACE under tables with drawers or shelves for patterns, projects, costumes to be worked on, measurement cards with muslin basics of semester, actors, materials, scraps, etc.

SCISSORS FREQUENTLY LOST?

Chain a pair at each corner of the table with adequate reach.

THE SHORT AND THE HIGH

For short costumers battling high cutting tables, build a wooden ramp wide and long enough to walk back and forth at least half the length of the table.

MEASURE FOR MEASURE

Costumers are always needing a tape or yardstick. Attach at least one yardstick on each end and side of the table. Two or three yard lengths on at least one side of the table is helpful when dealing in excessive yardage. A vertical yardstick or measuring tape from floor up the table leg is helpful when dealing with hem and length discussions. (Cloth tape or measuring tape up to seven feet against wall or doorway area is helpful when deciding proportions and measurements of headgear and heels in comparison to actor's proportions and height.)

SEWING MACHINES

In key-ring/key-chain fashion, chain small scissors or seam ripper on each sewing machine or ripping station. Many thread spools can be displayed in small area via ferris wheel or carousel racks of wood and nails. Note: Some save time and money avoiding matching colored

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COSMAK

threads by using only white, grey, black, tan. At times, time and energy warrant changing machines rather than changing thread colors.

EQUIPMENT

Hand steamer for quick and difficult pressing jobs. Check out local millinery shops (especially if going out of business) for hat blocking equipment. Use Opaque Projector to project and enlarge authentic patterns on materials - then paint same. Carpet scraps are ideal for under ironing board for long or light-colored garments. Carpeting is more stationary than material or paper. Additional or inexpensive ironing boards: Cut ironing board shape of wood (size determined by width of counter drawers available), cover with padding and cloth. Wedge wider end into open drawer (a la camper ironing boards). Store between cabinets, behind or on doors via hook or string (loop and string from used hanging soaps are great).

CEILING IDEAS (That's a lot of unused space.)

A hook from ceiling (a la cleaners) to aid in ironing or steaming costumes. If placed strategically, a hook or hooks over sewing machine area would aid in sewing hems or trim on voluminous skirts and capes with garment in control above instead of on machine deck, lap or floor. An overhead hook aids in encasing costumes in protective bags for storage and touring. Slide bag up pipe beyond hook; hang several costumes on hook; pull bag down over costumes. Pipe rack also originating from ceiling near ironing or constructing areas leaves room on floor for equipment, storage, or worker's movements. A number of overhead free-hanging electric plugs avoids wall-plug confinement and congestion. This also affords ease in visual check of plugs in use before leaving the area. (Wouldn't it be great to flick one switch and turn all equipment off at night?)

DRESSING ROOMS

Dressing rooms or area in/or around shop saves time and walking. Create between two cabinets or a cabinet and wall with curtain across front, mirror on wall. Check out-used stall shower cabinets or round portable shower curtain pipe as possibilities.

PROJECT STATION

Assign one area for unusual projects (painting, armor, jewelry, etc.) Create a miniature shop within your shop. Gather and organize materials and tools, all available to reach in utility boxes, pegboards and hoods. Be aware of need for water source and ventilation (paints, glues). A vice (the tool) can be very helpful! This assigned area will help protect costumes, materials of main shop plus assures unusual projects' working space.

WALLS CLOSING IN?

Mirrors anywhere and everywhere are functional plus make a small shop seem larger. Bulletin boards to tack up sketches, notes, articles. If boxes or storage cabinets are in shop, paint or cover with colorful material. One windowless friend wallpapered one wall with outdoor scenic mural. 'Twas great!

Thanks, friends, for all your help. Next issue: STORAGE AREA ORGANIZATION IDEAS. Share individual storage ideas or master plan with us. Write: COSMAK'S CORNER, USITT FRESNO SECTION, c/o 2405 North Millbrook, Fresno, California 93703.

Cosmak's Corner is an arm of the USITT Costuming Commission.

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Bambi Stoll
Bernice Ann Graham

Chairman
Vice Chairman
COSMAK

SECTIONS

there), and the members found that everyone they came in contact with during the tours was more than willing to cooperate in giving them a little more than the standard tour.

MIDWEST ELECTIONS

The results of the Midwest Section's election of new officers for 1976-77 is as follows:

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S.A.I.T.T.

JOHANNESBURG CONGRESS

"THE FUTURE OF THE THEATRE -- as a business, as an industry, as an entertainment" was the subject of the International Symposium sponsored by the South African Institute of Theatre Technology (S.A.I.T.T.), held at the Civic Theatre, Johannesburg, South Africa, August 23rd through August 28th. International speakers included Miss Dorothy Tenham, Director of the Stage Management Course at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, London, England; Mr. Ron Swartz, Entertainments Manager of Disneyland, Anaheim, California; and Helmut Grosser, Technical Director of the Civic Theatre Complex in Koln, Germany.

A safari in conjunction with the symposium was planned for American members. It included a three-day wing safari to world-renowned Kruger National Park, and a four-day visit to Cape Town and the Cape of Good Hope.

The South African Institute of Theatre Technology is an Organizational Member of U.S.I.T.T. President Edward F. Kook sent a congratulatory cablegram to the attention of Director Michael Grobbelaar (member, USITT), expressing our Institute's sincere wishes for a successful program. The cablegram, as follows, was read at the Johannesburg Congress on the morning of August 25th:

"IN THE NAME OF THE UNITED STATES INSTITUTE FOR THEATRE TECHNOLOGY, WE HAIL YOUR NEW ORGANIZATION AND LOOK TO YOUR FUTURE FOR ITS SUCCESS. WE EXTEND A COLLABORATING HAND IN MEETING YOUR HIGH AND INSPIRED PURPOSES TO FORWARD THE ARTS OF THE THEATRE".

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POSITION AT PURDUE

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Coordinate and administer three-section department: Theatre, Music, Art and Design. Fifty full-time faculty; undergraduate and graduate programs. Qualifications: record of creative or scholarly achievement; breadth of interest in the arts; at or appointable as full professor. Begin on or before July 1, 1977. A/D November 15, 1976. Equal opportunity/equal access employer. Kingsley Wu, Chairman, Search Committee, Department of Creative Arts, Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana 47909.

CONTEMPORARY STAGE DESIGN USA

SHOW TO TOUR COUNTRY

CONTEMPORARY STAGE DESIGN, U.S.A., is the first comprehensive exhibition of American scene and costume design ever assembled in the United States. It includes three-dimensional set models and 147 paintings, sketches, renderings and collages of set and costume designs of the past decade. Encompassing designs for opera, ballet, musicals and drama, it includes productions on Broadway, Off-Broadway, and in regional, experimental and university theatres. In January 1976, the show represented the United States in the Prague Quadrennial, a worldwide scene design exhibition.

The show was organized by the International Theatre Institute of the United States, Inc., and is circulated by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES). Selections were made from over 2000 entries submitted by designers from New York to Honolulu. The final choices--representing 53 professional and student designers, from graduate students to veterans of 25 years on Broadway--were made by a committee consisting of designers Howard Bay, Eldon Elder, Ming Cho Lee, the late Donald Oenslager and Carrie Robbins; and directors John Houseman and Ellen Stewart.

Among the exhibition's set designs are those by John Conklin for "The Hostage", Tony Walton for "Pippin", Sandro La Ferla for "The Knack", Ming Cho Lee for "Boris Godunov", Anthony J. Straiges for "The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny", and Lester Polakov for "The Life and Times of Joseph Stalin". The costume designs include those by Florence Klotz for "A Little Night Music", Thomas F. Rasmussen for "The Waltz of the Toreadors", Shadow (a.k.a. Bruce Harrow) for "Horatio", and John Doepp for "Treemonisha".

The exhibition celebrates the unique and remarkable achievements of American stage designers. The schedule for the national tour of CONTEMPORARY STAGE DESIGN, USA through February 26, 1978 is as follows:

SEPTEMBER 18 - OCTOBER 17, 1976
Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas

NOVEMBER 6 - DECEMBER 5, 1976
Spingold Theatre, Brandeis University, Waltham, Mass.

JANUARY 1 - JANUARY 30, 1977
Trisolini Gallery, Ohio University, Athens, Ohio

FEBRUARY 19 - MARCH 20, 1977
University Art Museum, University of Texas, Austin, TX.

APRIL 9 - MAY 8, 1977
Watson Gallery, Wheaton College, Norton Massachusetts

MAY 28 - JUNE 26, 1977
Midland Center for the Arts, Midland, Michigan

JULY 16 - AUGUST 14, 1977
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Virginia

SEPTEMBER 3 - OCTOBER 2, 1977
Museum of Art, Pennsylvania State University,
University Park, Pennsylvania

OCTOBER 22 - NOVEMBER 20, 1977
Museum of Art, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon

DECEMBER 10 - JANUARY 8, 1978
Unannounced(Watch for Nov/Dec. Newsletter)

JANUARY 28 - FEBRUARY 26, 1978
Seattle Art Museum, Volunteer Park, Seattle, WA.

COMPETITION CONTEST

The SECOND ANNUAL TECHNICAL THEATRE COMPETITION FOR INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS IN TECHNICAL THEATRE PRODUCTION, a contest sponsored by Theatre Crafts Magazine, Rosco Laboratories, Inc., and the Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster College, is now open to practicing theatre technicians and designers, including students. Entry blanks and presentation regulations are available by writing to the Conservatory of Theatre Arts, Webster College, St. Louis, Missouri 63119.

The contest solution must use materials, techniques or processes not previously published, and have been used in actual production. Categories include Set Construction, Lighting/Electronics, Costume Construction, Prop Construction, and Special Effects. A First Place Winner and Honorable Mention will be selected in each category, the winners to be announced in the Jan/Feb 1977 issues of Theatre Crafts. \$100 cash will be awarded to First Place Winners, and the most outstanding entry will be published in Theatre Crafts.

AMERICA ON STAGE

"America On Stage" is the current exhibit on display at the John F. Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. Funded by IBM, the exhibit was created to feed the Bicentennial appetites of both theatre specialists and the general public.

The exhibit is not an historical survey, though it has a lot of historical and very valuable material in it. Instead, project director Gene Baro wanted to create an atmosphere of the performing arts, an environment in which people could have a "Sense" of what the theatre and its arts are all about. Designers Robert Staples and Barbara Charles, assisted by technicians from the Smithsonian, have set up the exhibit handsomely, with sets of self-supporting display panels and cases which look as if they could be packed for a nation-wide tour quite

Continued on page 11

I wish to both receive information and actively contribute to project activity in these Commission(s). [] [] [] [] [] [] []

ATA MEETS IN LOS ANGELES

ANNUAL CONVENTION HELD
AUG. 8-11 AT BILTMORE HOTEL

BROOKS ATKINSON IS KEYNOTE SPEAKER

On Sunday, August 8th, the keynote speaker for the Annual Convention of the American Theatre Association was the distinguished theatre critic Brooks Atkinson. Mr. Atkinson spoke about his career of thirty-five years, (from 1925-1960) and expressed his gratitude for being associated with the theatre most of his life.

He began as a writer with the Boston Transcript and early in his career came to the New York Times as a writer for the Book Review Section, and soon chose to become a theatre critic.

Among many points of his speech he related his observations that good works sometimes have short runs on Broadway, and that Broadway has always been an enigma to him, but he considered it a place of beauty, humor and imagination. He is concerned that playwrights are not writing now, and that some new serious works should have come out of a rather despondent period of assassinations, economical crisis and political scandals such as Watergate.

He also stated that the youthful audiences respond favorably to the classics, and that audiences in the theatre are not easily shocked, but they are easily bored!

Mr. Atkinson announced this speech as his last public address and ended with a hopeful note for the future of the American Theatre. A standing ovation was evidence of the high regard to which he is held by the theatre community.

ROSCO PRESENTATIONS

Among the interesting and exciting technical sessions at the Convention were workshops presented by Rosco Laboratories dealing with "New Ideas in Scene Paint," led by USITT member Nick Bryson. "A New Range of Scenic Materials" included a discussion and demonstration of the various new surfaces for front and rear projection. Some of these new screens have very high resolution for projected images even when the stage lights are on around and near them. Rosco's newly acquired product "Glame", a woven mylar is an exciting, shimmering, scenic material which replaces gold lame metallic fabric at a much lower cost.

Gilbert Hemsley led the session "Color Is Alive and Well and Living in Theatre Lights". He showed slides of his recent productions, mostly operas, and demonstrated the range of Roscolux color media one-at-a-time in front of a spotlight on dimmer control. He discussed his personal preferences and uses for specific colors, and commented on the magenta range as being particularly appropriate for Las Vegas!

COSTUMES BY HEAD

Edith Head, winner of many awards for her costume designs, brought the audience at the closing session of the Convention, a parade of her favorite costumes originally worn by such stars as Carole Lombard, Mae West, Marilyn Monroe, Clark Gable, Douglas Fairbanks Jr., Rudolph Valentino, and Robert Redford. This display of valuable, historical, original costumes proved her point that "you are what you wear".

Many other interesting sessions were held, but there is not space to report them here.

During the Convention the USITT Board of Directors held their August meeting and discussed old and new business concerning the continued growth of the Institute. This concern was evident too, in a meeting of the USITT Commissioners.

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easily. And, speaking of touring, one exhibit item is the project for a "Porto Theatre," designed for proposed State Department-sponsored global tours, by the team of Jo Mielziner, Donald Oenslager, Cyril Harris, and Edward F. Kook. Lighting and recorded sound -- of American music -- have been most effectively orchestrated to highlight the displays. A vast, but miniature circus and a reconstruction of a Chautauqua Tent are important components of this show.

"America On Stage" runs daily until the end of 1976, at the Kennedy Center. Admission is free. Show hours are from 10:15 a.m. until 8:15 p.m., just before show-time downstairs in the Eisenhower Theatre, or the Opera House.

FEDERAL THEATRE PROJECT

PRODUCT MATERIALS AVAILABLE FOR THEATRE RESEARCH

The largest gathering anywhere of product materials from the Federal Theatre Project of the 1930's is now available at the Research Center for the Federal Theatre Project at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. The Center was established in 1974 when two English professors, Lorraine Brown and John O'Connor with the help of John Coe, Library of Congress reference librarian, recovered the material stored for nearly thirty years in an airplane hangar/warehouse in Maryland.

Appropriately housed in the newest major university in metropolitan Washington, D. C., this archival collection from the Federal Government's first large-scale program for the arts contains more than 7,000 scripts (2,500 of which are radio plays) including unpublished early plays, Living Newspaper plays, classical plays, vaudeville plays, and black plays. There are over 500 silk-screen posters, fifteen cubic feet of original, signed set and costume designs and thousands of photographs and negatives. The records also contain approximately 600 production bulletins. A register of the estimated 40,000 items will be completed by June, 1978 through a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Adding to the value of the original materials is the Research Center's oral history collection of interviews with former Federal Theatre personnel -- administrative staff, playwrights, directors, and other artists associated with the Project. Eventually, a data retrieval system will provide researchers with easy access to information on a particular play, person, region, or bureau. The collection will also be coordinated with Federal Theatre Project collections across the country, particularly with the National Archives, since it contains the administrative records of the Federal Theatre. Curator Elizabeth D. Walsh is interested in locating people who worked for the Federal Theatre. If you know of any people you feel the Federal Theatre Project should contact or if you would like to be added to their mailing list to receive the Project's Newsletter, FEDERAL ONE, write to Diane Bowers, Coordinator of Oral History, Research Center for the Federal Theatre Project, c/o English Department, George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia 11020.

The Research Center is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and on Thursday evenings until 9:00 p.m. Appointments for using the materials can be made with the Curator by calling (703) 323-2251 or by writing to

Elizabeth D. Walsh, Curator
Research Center for the Federal Theatre Project
c/o English Department
George Mason University
Fairfax, Virginia 22030

DEMS SUPPORT ARTS

Strong support for the arts has been included among the priorities of the nation by the 1976 Democratic Platform Committee. The Arts and Humanities section of the Democratic Platform reads:

"We recognize the essential role played by the arts and humanities in the development of America. Our nation cannot afford to be materially rich and spiritually poor. We endorse a strong role for the federal government in reinforcing the vitality and improving the economic strength of the nation's artists and arts institutions, while recognizing that artists must be absolutely free of any government control. We would support the growth and development of the National Endowment for the Arts and Humanities through adequate funding, the development of special anti-recession employment programs for artists, copyright reforms to protect the rights of authors and performers, and revision of the tax laws that unfairly penalize artists. We further pledge our support for the concept and adequate financing of public broadcasting."

In another recent development, Democratic Presidential candidate Jimmy Carter responded to an inquiry by Joseph Papp, Director of the New York Shakespeare Festival and also a board member of the Associated Councils of the Arts, concerning support of the arts. The New York Times reported (July 9, 1976) that Mr. Carter wrote to Mr. Papp: "I have long been an enthusiast of the arts, as persons such as Robert Shaw, the conductor of the Atlanta Symphony, will attest. Moreover, I believe it is important that the Federal Government help subsidize the performing arts. Arts in America are not simply a luxury; they are a vital part of the fiber of American life and deserve strong support from the Federal Government. If I am elected President, they will receive this support. We are now in the formative stages of organizing a task force on the arts and I would be very pleased if you would not only serve on this task force, but suggest the names of others who might be interested."

VICE PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEE'S WIFE PLEDGES SUPPORT

Joan Mondale, wife of the Democratic candidate for Vice President, said at her first news conference following her husband's nomination that she intended to make the arts a major concern while she is on the campaign trail and as the wife of the Vice President if her husband is elected. Mrs. Mondale is a member of the Associated Councils of the Arts, and is author of the book Politics in Art. For nine years she has given weekly tours at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.

US NEW IIT MEMBERS WELCOMED

USITT welcomes the following new members who have recently joined the Institute. The code numbers and letters in the right-hand margin indicate the class of membership and Commission participation

- | | | |
|---|---|--------------------|
| 1 | PATE (Performing Arts Training and Education) | I - INDIVIDUAL |
| 2 | CODES | S - STUDENT |
| 3 | PRESENTATION COMMISSION | O - ORGANIZATIONAL |
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3-S
S
If you belonged to a USITT Section and moved away from the geographical boundaries of that Section, you may wish to join a Section in the area you currently reside in. The following is a listing of USITT Sections whose

45-I programs and projects may be of interest to you. Active participation in a Section is not limited to those who "belonged". New members are invited to contact the Section Chairman in his or her area to find out how they can become active participants in the aims and purposes of the USITT, and how they can benefit.

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JOIN UP NOW!

Continued on page 14

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(Areas that have shown interest in
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SEPTEMBER

- 15th USITT Engineering Commission Meeting,
Board Room, Metropolitan Opera House,
Lincoln Center, New York, NY. 6:00 p.m.
- 15th - 18th ... NATIONAL CONGRESS ON DESIGN TECHNOLOGY
AND THE PERFORMING ARTS
Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana

DECEMBER

OCTOBER

- 15th DEADLINE date for receipt of materials for
USITT November/December Newsletter.
- 15th - 17th ... NEW ENGLAND THEATRE CONFERENCE 25TH ANNUAL CONVENTION
"The Evolving Theatre"
Waltham High School, Waltham, Massachusetts

15th DEADLINE date for receiving materials for
USITT January/February Newsletter.

JANUARY

NOVEMBER

- 10th USITT Engineering Commission Meeting,
Board Room, Metropolitan Opera House,
Lincoln Center, New York, NY. 6:00 p.m.
- 12th - 14th ... F.E.D.A.P.T. 5TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE/SEMINAR
"Theatre Administration" New York, New York

5th USITT Engineering Commission Meeting,
Board Room, Metropolitan Opera House,
Lincoln Center, New York, NY. 6:00 p.m.



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