

U.S. INSTITUTE FOR THEATRE TECHNOLOGY, INC.

# USITT Newsletter

Editor:  
Tina Margolis

SUMMER 1983

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## Contributing Memberships

**Associated Theatrical Contractors**  
307 West 80th Street  
Kansas City, MO 64114

**Goodspeed Opera House**  
East Haddam, CT 06423

**Kliegl Brothers Lighting Co., Inc.**  
32-32 48th Avenue  
Long Island City, NY 11101

**Mendenhall & Associates**  
1275 Minnesota Street  
San Francisco, CA 94107

**Rosco Laboratories, Inc.**  
36 Bush Avenue  
Port Chester, NY 10573

**Samuel Scripps**  
1 West 72nd Street  
New York, NY 10023

**John B. Staley**  
Apartado 14294, Candelaria  
Caracas, 1011A, Venezuela

**Strand Century, Inc.**  
18111 South Santa Fe Avenue  
P.O. Box 9004  
Rancho Dominguez, CA 90224

**Theatrical Services & Consultants**  
9010 Pillsbury Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55420

**Wenger Corporation**  
90 Park Drive  
Owatonna, MN 55060

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## Sustaining Memberships

**Peter Albrecht Corporation**  
325 East Chicago Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

**Alcone Company, Inc.**  
575 Eighth Avenue, 22nd Floor  
New York, NY 10018

**American Stage Lighting Co., Inc.**  
1331-C North Avenue  
New Rochelle, NY 10804

**Artec Consultant, Inc.**  
245 Seventh Avenue  
New York, NY 10001

**Automatic Devices Company**  
2121 South 12th Street  
Allentown, PA 18103

**Baer Fabrics**  
515 East Market Street  
Louisville, KY 40202

**Barbizon Electric Company, Inc.**  
426 West 55th Street  
New York, NY 10019

**Belden Communications, Inc.**  
534 West 25th Street  
New York, NY 10001

**J. R. Clancy, Inc.**  
7041 Interstate Island Road  
Syracuse, NY 13209

**Colortran, Inc.**  
1015 Chestnut Avenue  
Burbank, CA 91502

**Costume Crafters, Inc.**  
2979 Peachtree Road, N.E.  
Atlanta, GA 30305

**Design Line, Inc.**  
6204 Benjamin Road, Suite 209  
Tampa, FL 33614

**Electro Controls, Inc.**  
2975 South 300 West  
Salt Lake City, UT 84115

**Electronics Diversified, Inc.**  
1675 N.W. 128th Street  
Hillsboro, OR 97123

**Gagnon La Forest**  
930 Wellington  
Montreal, Quebec H3C 1V1  
Canada

**General Electric Company**  
Nela Park  
Cleveland, OH 44112

**Peter George Associates, Inc.**  
420 Lexington Avenue  
New York, NY 10017

**W. Gerriets International, Inc.**  
Box 950 Hutchinson Road  
Allentown, NJ 08501

**Grand Stage Lighting**  
603 West Lake Street  
Chicago, IL 60606

**Great American Market**  
P.O. Box 178  
Woodland Hills, CA 91364

**Grosh Scenic Studios**  
4114 Sunset Boulevard  
Hollywood, CA 90029

**GTE/Sylvania**  
Sylvania Lighting Center  
Danvers, MA 01923

**H & H Specialties, Inc.**  
2210 North Merced Avenue  
South El Monte, CA 91733

**Hoffend and Sons, Inc.**  
34 East Main Street  
Honeoye, NY 14471

**Imagineering, Inc.**  
234 West 44th Street  
New York, NY 10036

**Ingenieria Teatral, J.B.**  
Apartado Postal 14294  
Candelaria  
Caracas 101, Venezuela

**Irwin Seating**  
P.O. Box 2429  
Grand Rapids, MI 49501

**Jones & Phillips Associates, Inc.**  
910 Highland Avenue  
Lafayette, IN 47905

**Joyce-Cridland Company**  
P.O. Box 1630  
Dayton, OH 45401

**Lawrence Kellermann Associates, Inc.**  
P.O. Box 268  
Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522

**Lehigh Electric Products Co.**  
Route 222 (RD 1, Box J1)  
Wescoville, PA 18106

**Lighting Associates Templates**  
P.O. Box 299  
Chester, CT 06412

**Lighting Dimensions**  
31706 S. Coast Hwy., Suite 302  
South Laguna, CA 92651

**Lighting Methods, Inc.**  
691 St. Paul Street  
Rochester, NY 14605

**Little Stage Lighting Company**  
10507 Harry Hines Boulevard  
Dallas, TX 75220

**Lycian Stage Lighting**  
P.O. Box 68  
Sugar Loaf, NY 10981

**Musson Theatrical, Inc.**  
582 Stockton Street  
San Jose, CA 95126

**Mutual Hardware**  
5-45 49th Avenue  
Long Island City, NY 11101

**R. E. Nicholson, Inc.**  
75 West Main Street  
East Bloomfield, NY 14443

**Oden Theatrical Enterprises**  
5743 South Curtice Street  
Littleton, CO 80120

**Olesen Company**  
1535 North Ivar Avenue  
Hollywood, CA 90028

**Paramount Pictures Corp.**  
1651 Gardena Avenue  
Glendale, CA 91204

**Production Arts Lighting**  
636 Eleventh Avenue  
New York, NY 10036

**Richmond Sound Design, Ltd.**  
1234 West 6th Avenue  
Vancouver, BC V6H 1A5  
Canada

**Rose Brand Textile Fabrics**  
517 West 35th Street  
New York, NY 10001

**Jean Rosenthal Associates**  
765 Vose Avenue  
Orange, NJ 07050

**Sanders Lighting Templates**  
5830 West Patterson Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60634

**Secoa**  
P.O. Box 27429  
2731 Nevada Avenue North  
Minneapolis, MN 55427  
and  
1204 Oakland Avenue  
Greensboro, NC 27403

**Donald Shulman & Associates, Inc.**  
2520 Grand Avenue, Room 303  
Kansas City, MO 64108

**Stage Engineering & Supply**  
P.O. Box 2699, 825 Karen Lane  
Colorado Springs, CO 80901

**Stage Equipment & Lighting**  
12231 N.E. 13th Court  
P.O. Box F  
Miami, FL 33161

**Stagecraft Industries**  
P.O. Box 4442  
Portland, OR 97208

**Syracuse Scenery & Stage Lighting Company, Inc.**  
1423 North Salina Street  
Syracuse, NY 13208

**Teatronics, Inc.**  
101-D Suburban Road  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

**Texas Scenic Company, Inc.**  
5432 Jackwood Drive  
P.O. Box 28297  
San Antonio, TX 78238

**Theatre Projects, Inc.**  
6758 Eddinghill Drive  
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90274

**Theatre Techniques Inc.**  
60 Connolly Parkway  
Hamden, CT 06514

**Theatrical Service & Supply Company**  
170 Oval Drive  
Central Islip, NY 11722

**Tiffin Scenic Studios, Inc.**  
P.O. Box 39  
Tiffin, OH 44883

**Union Connector Company, Inc.**  
149 Babylon Turnpike  
Roosevelt, NY 11575

**Universe Stage Lighting**  
326 West 47th Street  
New York, NY 10036

**Weststar Corporation**  
2665 Shell Beach Road  
Shell Beach, CA 93449

## Costume Commission Adds To Success Of Conference '83

Over 10 sessions by the USITT Costume Commission, on subjects as diverse as pattern tailoring and construction, costume history and the effects of lighting on makeup in the 19th century, to the state of the costume industry, new dying techniques, and the compilation of professional portfolios, added to the success of the Corpus Christi Conference program.

For example, Diane Berg shared tailoring shortcuts in her session on "Men's Tailoring Techniques for the Theatre." Bob Kelly demonstrated wig-making in his class on "Wig and Mustache Ventilation," and a step-by-step demonstration of Tutu construction was presented by Ray Zander of the Cleveland Ballet.

Complementing these demonstrations was a session on "Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain," by Betty Edwards, who shared her insights on how to draw better. Also, in "Kinesthesia and Plasticity: Costume for Modern Dance," the

relationship between movement and form and how to translate that into visual design was explained by Pamela Shaw Huth and Valerie Kaelin.

Addressing historical interests, Don Stowell, Doug Russell and Jean Druesedow participated in a panel on "Romanticism in Costume Design." This event focused on Romanticism in dress. A panel on the "Effects of Lighting on Makeup in the 19th Century" along with methods to create makeup solutions was presented by Gerilyn Tanberg and colleagues at LSU. In addition, the *Heritage Series*, a joint-commission venture, focused on the accomplishments of Frank Poole Bevin. Zelma Weisfeld and John Ezell presented both background and personal anecdotes about this admired teacher/artist, while David Schooner, curator of the American Archives at Yale, displayed many examples of Bevin's work from the Yale collection.

New techniques as well as recent data

on the costume industry were issues that were addressed at the conference, too. A new dye that colors polyesters, developed by Rosco labs, was demonstrated by Janine Jessup. Many experimented with these "polydyes" at the session. Although these dyes are not handled in traditional ways, they produce remarkably vivid hues.

The session "The Costume Industry: The State of the Current Profession," profiled the prevailing attitudes and perceptions of people in the industry. The findings were culled from a survey of academic, regional, and professional costume shops, by Jan Scarlata and Dottie Marshal. The subjects of the survey included money, burnout, skills, age, curricula, etc.

In conclusion, Costume Commissioner Joy Emery conducted two business meetings, and further plans for the Costume Symposium in August and the agenda for the conference in Orlando were discussed.

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## Retreat Focuses On Commission Planning

The short- and long-range goals of USITT commissions will be the focus of the annual Institute retreat for officers, commissioners, and vice-commissioners. Set for Aug. 5-6, topics on the agenda will include budgeting priorities, the coordination of the 1984 scenographic exposition, program-planning for the 1984 annual conference in Orlando and the 1985 conference in New York, plus the administration of several jointly-sponsored commission projects.

Scenic Design Commissioner Tom Bliese will serve as host of the conclave, which will be held on the campus of Mankato State University, Mankato, Minn.

Anyone wishing to propose a topic for discussion at the retreat should contact: Dick Devin, Colorado Shakespeare Festival, Box 261, Univ. of Colorado, Boulder, CO 80309.

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## Grayson Appointed Liaison Chair

President Olson recently appointed Phillip Grayson to serve as liaison Chairman between USITT and IATSE. In addition to his long-standing membership in USITT, Grayson recently served as the official representative of the IATSE to the OISTT in Prague.

Grayson's specific duties will be to establish open lines of communication with IATSE and discover common ground in matters that directly concern both organizations.

Those members who wish to participate in this activity should contact: Mr. Phillip Grayson, Director of Technical Production, Theatre-Department of Communication Arts, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA 22807, Tel. (703) 433-6559.

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## National Office Needs Typewriter

Would some firm or individual be willing to donate an electric typewriter to the USITT national office? Our staff has expanded, but our budget for equipment has not, and we need another machine.

Not only would it be a good deed, but it is **tax deductible**. Call us in New York at (212) 563-5551.

## American Theatre Company Seeking Technical Director

American Theatre Company is seeking a technical director/designer for a full-time permanent position with the company.

Responsibilities include supervision of the technical crew in the scene shop; supervision of volunteer help and student interns; scheduling, inventory and purchasing; scenic design of four major productions of the season.

Candidates must hold an M.A. or M.F.A. in technical theatre, with emphasis on scenic and lighting design.

Salary is negotiable. Send resumes and three letters of recommendation to: **American Theatre Company, P.O. Box 1265, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74101.**

## Burt Reynolds Keynote Speaker At ATA

The ATA annual convention, focusing on the theme "Renewed Unity, Renewed Strength," will be held Aug. 7-10 at the Minneapolis Hyatt Regency. The keynote speaker will be Burt Reynolds, who will address the topic "New Challenges: New Approaches to Theatre in Florida and the Nation."

Other featured speakers will include Ellen Burstyn and Joshua Logan.

USITT members have the privilege of paying ATA member rates for the ATA convention.

For a complete schedule of panels and registration forms, contact the American Theatre Association, 1010 Wisconsin Ave. N.W., Washington, DC 20007.

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## Commission Costume Symposium "A Minneapolis Mosaic" Set For Aug. 11-13

The seventh annual USITT Costume Commission Symposium, scheduled for Aug. 11-13 at the University of Minnesota-Minneapolis, will offer a variety of sessions on costume design and construction as well as tours of area costume shops and historical collections.

Among the conference sessions are: Hats: Renovation and Alteration, Costumes for Non-Human Body Shapes, Costume Properties, Costuming the Opera, Costuming a New Play, New Techniques in Using Rosco's Polydye System, Unitard and Dance Wear Construction, and Research and Process of Making Shoes.

In addition, site visits are arranged to the Guthrie Theatre, the Minnesota Opera, the Minneapolis Children's Theatre, and the Goldstein Gallery and Costume Collection at the University of Minnesota.

On the 13th, an open Costume Commission meeting will be held, and a farewell wine and cheese party will cap off the events.

For a brochure, registration form, and hotel information, contact: Diane Berg, Purdue University Theatre, Stewart Center, W. Lafayette, IN 47907.

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## A Salute To The American Musical

"Show Stoppers," a multi-media salute to the American musical, is the current exhibition at the Theatre Museum in New York City. Among the features are a display of original costumes worn by stars such as Barbra Streisand in *Funny Girl*, Zero Mostel in *Fiddler*, and Mary Martin in *Leave it to Me*. A taped interview with Ethel Merman, a sound and light show narrated by Alfred Drake, and paintings by LeRoy Neiman of variety of hit shows, are also on view.

The Theatre Museum, located in the Minskoff Theatre Arcade, 1515 Broadway, was established in 1982 to celebrate the history of the New York

stage. It is operated by the Museum of the City of New York, and exhibitions change approximately every six months. For more information call (212) 534-1672.

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## Bookings Available For Scenography Exhibition

A limited number of dates in 1983-84 are still available in the tour of the Juried Section of the Second Biennial Scenography Exposition. Members interested in booking the exhibition for local museums and galleries should contact tour coordinator: Forrest Newlin, USITT 2nd Biennial Scenography Exposition, 2107 53 St., Lubbock, TX 79412, Tel: Off.: (806) 742-3601, Home: (806) 762-5779.

# National Rigging Safety Year

by Randall W. A. Davidson,  
Health and Safety Commissioner  
*The first of a two-part article on safety*

We are grateful to those USITT sections and individual companies that have already conducted seminars and hands-on workshops dealing with rigging safety. To date there have been eight. This year, however, we are requesting that each section hold at least one workshop of its own.

We are also requesting that these seminars be very well prepared. Of concern is not only the number of people involved, but the quality of information disseminated. Look for top notch personnel to participate and lead these sessions.

The seminars should focus, in depth, on specific elements of safety in rigging. The following are suggestions on ways to organize these meetings and subjects to address.

1. Bring in an outside expert from industry. Call upon architects, fabricators, installers, and designers. Invite those who specify rigging components. Invite consultants. Topics could include wire rope, hemp, fabrication, ball bearings, sheaves, etc.

2. Develop, prepare, and institute a panel of experts or knowledgeable technicians to discuss safety practices in using rigging, in flying, loading counterweights, conducting repairs, providing preventive maintenance, queueing, and staff training.

3. Invite equipment manufacturers and theatrical supply companies as well as rigging companies to hold product-information classes. Have a section attend a lecture at their plant. Make a day of it.

4. Call upon individuals who work with touring shows and concerts. Request the aid of university-based professionals. Have speakers discuss the movement of concert shells, stages, balconies, etc. Call, write, request, and cajole. But get personnel involved in actual hands-on exercises.

In addition, the announcement and documentation of workshops is critical. Send notices to newsletters such as this publication, the ATA newsletter, Theatre Times (the publication of the Alliance of Resident Theatres/New York), Theatre Communications (the publication of TCG), COSMEP (in S.F.), the New England Theatre Conference, and to local radio stations. If necessary pay for advertising in TD&T and other journals.

Document sessions with audio and video tapes. These will be useful as a resource for those who attended the

workshop as well as those who could not attend on the date scheduled.

The reason for this intense information-sharing campaign is to prevent many major accidents each year. Within the entertainment industry, there are formidable injuries connected with rigging systems and their separate components. Some of these are reported. Others are swept under the rug. These accidents and injuries occur because of some of the following problems:

1. Shoddy and cheap materials
2. Poor professional specifications
3. Unfinished or poor installations
4. Poor equipment design
5. Lack of rigging standards in the industry
6. Abuse of equipment: taxing equipment beyond its capabilities
7. Poor or no training of operators and crews
8. No preventive maintenance on old and new systems
9. Shoddy repairs
10. Lack of specific procedures for safety and operation
11. Jerry rigging of equipment
12. Directors requesting and crews complying with unsafe use of equipment and exotic setups
13. Corrosion of materials
14. Defective equipment
15. Incorrect choice of equipment for a type of operation
16. Deliberate bypassing of safety components in the system
17. Criminal neglect: using equipment that is known to be or has been verified as unsafe and hazardous.

Some of the following precautions should be taken in order to avoid disaster.

1. Examine equipment thoroughly. Use the Instructional Manual provided by the rigging company that installed the equipment. For each piece of equipment in a system, there should be a handbook that illustrates and details its operation. Refer to this handbook again and again. If you do not have the manual, request it immediately. Have firm representatives verbally repeat or demonstrate procedures after initial installation, if necessary.

2. Test each piece of equipment completely and regularly. For older systems, look for wear and tear throughout the whole system. Observe it in every aspect of flying and loading. Have several professionals observe it in operation.

3. If you can, provide destructive and non-destructive tests of parts of the system. This equipment is supposed to pass very specific metallurgical tests. Submit some of the material to a testing lab. Do recall that lives are working with and under this material.

4. Carefully examine the operation of the rigging system and any strange practices. Observe all the operations from different vantage points: grid, stage, loading platform, lock rail. In the house. Don't get under operating scenery or rigging. Do wear a hard hat.

5. Do not let one inch of wire rope or hemp go unexamined.

6. Check every sheave, nut, bolt, screw, saddle, and every wire clip. Check the torque, the position.

7. Listen for strange noises. The equipment does talk to you.

8. Look for malfunctioning parts and corroded parts.

9. Examine all safety components and see if they work.

10. Note preventive maintenance scheduling. Record.

11. Request annual maintenance records.

12. Create a portfolio on the system. For example, document each component with a photo and note as to its efficiency, condition, use. Keep a record of this notation. Keep a record of recommendations and of corrections, inspections, people who did it, dates, companies, repairs, maintenance.

13. Determine training operations. Evaluate and adjust to reality.

14. Observe the procedures of crew operation.

15. Rigging is part of a system involving equipment and personnel. Examine it in light of a total system. It is a moving system. Anything can and does go wrong. The demands on the system are heavy. Check and double check. Train staff thoroughly.

If one follows these minimal practices, at least once per year, and takes the time to record his or her comments, you can ferret out many poor and unsafe practices, and find hazardous equipment.

The USITT's Health and Safety Commission urges you to participate in your own voluntary safety standards. Save your own skin. Conduct workshops. Collectively sponsor them, if necessary, but do them. Do them in depth.

Ask for union support. Ask for industry support. Ask for consultant support. Have **your** section lead the way. Involve everyone, at all levels. Let me know if you need contacts. PLEASE STOP NEGLECT AND SERIOUS ACCIDENTS. Write or call me: Dr. Randall Davidson, Commissioner of Health and Safety, USITT, P.O. Box 907, Claremont, CA 91711, Tel: (714) 624-7286, and (213) 385-5211, X 387.

*The second half of this article, on chemical hazard identification and safety, will appear in the next newsletter, or contact Dr. Davidson.*

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# Education Activities

by Harvey Sweet, Education Commissioner

When do you cease to learn? In theatre, it seems, actors, designers, technicians, directors and everyone else involved never stop learning. The education may occur in a formal classroom setting, but often it occurs in the more casual moments of theatre production when a student "discovers" how to drape a costume, or a designer discovers a new texture that requires the technical director or carpenter to invent scenery from new materials. All of these events are challenges for our individual growth.

It is the goal of the Education Commission to aid all members of the profession in their personal as well as program development (whether the program is academic or not). At the moment the Commission is involved in a number of projects that may directly aid in the teaching of students, the work and growth of young professionals, and the quality of communication and production of senior members of the theatre design and technology professions. Some of these projects and publications include:

**1. A Course Guide In Design And Technology Grades K-12.** This publication was developed by members of the Institute in cooperation with the American Theatre Association and the International Thespian Society. It is a teacher-resource book with activities and exercises on seven major technical fields. It provides instructors with how-to strategies in teaching technical theatre at the beginning, intermediate and advanced levels. The manual will be available in the fall from the International Thespian Society.

**2. USITT Recommended Scenic Graphics Standards.** Under the leadership of J. Michael Gillette (University of Arizona), the Graphics Standards Board of the Commission has researched and developed a set of scenic graphic standards which were adopted by the Board of Directors and published in the spring 1982 THEATRE DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY. The Graphic Standards Board is now in the process of obtaining an American National Standards Institute (ANSI) designation. Other work is being done to license the manufacture of templates bearing these symbols.

**3. USITT Recommended Lighting Graphics Standards.** Under the leadership of Steve Zapytowski, Sr. (University of Iowa) this Graphics Standards Board project is in the process of researching and

developing contemporary and consistent standards for use by lighting designers. The presentation of a **draft** of the standards is planned for the 1984 national conference.

**4. USITT Recommended Sound Graphics Standards.** This project, which is in the development stage, is the work of the Graphics Standards Board in collaboration with the Lighting and Sound Commission. An initial report and working meeting of the sound graphics subcommittee is scheduled for the 1984 conference.

**5. Theatre Design And Technology Internship Clearinghouse (TDTICH).** This project, initially under the leadership of Harvey Sweet and Don Stowell, is now headed by co-chairs Fred Bock (Mankato State University) and Jack Miller (Florida State University). The group has compiled a "living library" of internships available in all areas of theatre of interest to the Institute. Information about obtaining the listings of "Internships Available" and how to list internship positions with TDTICH will be found elsewhere in the Newsletter.

**6. Theatre Artists and Craftspersons Bureau (TAC Bureau).** This new project is currently under the leadership of Harvey Sweet. Its goal is to create a "living library" of speakers, guest artists, designers, architects, consultants, engineers, technicians, and other theatre practitioners who are available for lectures, workshops, residences, etc. The listings will be categorized and placed on computer to keep the information current. Educators, convention planners (e.g. ACTF festivals), theatre managers, etc. will be able to use this listing to obtain the names of people and a brief description of the programs they offer. This is NOT a placement service.

The project is just being developed and **seeks interested persons to work on it.** If you wish to become involved in the work of the TAC Bureau, contact Harvey Sweet.

**7. Projects For Elementary And Secondary School Educators.** When Tom Beagle stepped down as Commissioner of Education to become a Vice-President of the Institute, the Education Commission lost the active participation of educators from the elementary and secondary levels. This void must be filled. The Commission is seeking persons working in primary and secondary schools to develop projects and programs of interest to this body of the membership of the Institute. We seek conference programs as well as on-going projects (e.g. the Course Guide). Persons with interest should contact Harvey Sweet ASAP.

**8. Project To Publish Supplementary Teaching Materials.** The Education Commission is seeking members of the Institute who would be interested in developing some research projects leading to possible publication of supplementary materials to aid in the teaching of graphics, lighting design, costume design, etc. It might even be possible for the Education Commission to provide some minimal assistance with the project. If interested, contact Harvey Sweet.

IF YOU HAVE READ THIS FAR, you certainly must be interested in the activities of the Education Commission. We would like YOU to be a part of these projects. If you are interested in becoming involved, write: Harvey Sweet, Commissioner, Education Commission, Strayer-Wood Theatre, University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, IA 50614.

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## Women's Theatre Conference Aug. 4-6

Productions, workshops, panels, and a keynote address by actress Ruby Dee will be the highlights of the Jane Chambers Memorial Conference for Women in Theatre. The event, scheduled for Aug. 4-6 at the University of Minnesota-Minneapolis, is the fourth annual conference of the Women's Program of the ATA.

Among the groups performing will be the Women's Experimental Theatre, the Omaha Magic Theatre, and Mischief Mime. Critics such as Marilyn Stasio and Sylvie Drake will hold open post-performance discussions.

For more information and registration, contact: Berenice Weiler, Coordinator, Women's Program Theatre Festival, 1540 Bway., Rm. 704, NYC 10036.

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## Architecture and Design Lectures

The University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Fine Arts announces two September lectures:

Sept. 14, at 6:30 p.m., in Alumni Hall: "1984 World's Fair in New Orleans," by R. Allen Eskew; Sept. 21, at 6:30 p.m., in Alumni Hall: "Why Has Classicism Survived," by Dr. William L. MacDonald.

## Costumes of a Gilded Age: "La Belle Époque"

by John E. Hirsch

The darkened galleries of The Costume Institute at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, panelled in rosewood and goldleaf Art Nouveau motifs, create an atmosphere that is both elegant and decadent — a mixture that echoes the rest of the show. And it is a show as much as it is a costume exhibition — a show of an era that was both elegant and formal to a fault, decadent, dangerous, and exotic... *La Belle Époque*.

One gallery in the exhibition seems dominated by the sensuous Clairin portrait of Sarah Bernhardt, a reclining, uncorseted odalisque in white satin and ostrich. In another gallery the Duchess of Marlborough and her son (in that famous Boldini portrait) stare at us from one wall; Cleo de Merode, the infamous dancer from the *Folies Bergere* seduces us from another; Queen Victoria sits silently in a corner in her omnipresent widow's weeds. All the while, we are enveloped in the most colorful display of dinner, evening, and ball gowns made by the most celebrated couturiers of Europe. Among the fashions are several magnificent sequined evening gowns worn by Queen Alexandra during the coronation year; a spectacular black velvet evening gown worn by the Countess Greffulhe extravagantly appliqued with white satin Art Nouveau lillies, all outlined in tiny gold sequins; and the gold peacock gown whose feathered motif was embroidered by the fingers of numerous Indian women for the wife of the Viceroy of India, Lady Curzon.

There are a few male mannequins scattered throughout the exhibition, wearing the appropriate dinner clothes or evening capes; their presence is just enough to tell us that women's clothing dominated this era.

The exhibition displays not only the breathtaking silks and satins of evening wear, but daytime attire as well. One area is given over to a parade through St. James Park, Central Park or the Bois. There is one white linen, cotton and lace dress after another. One more intricate than the next — nearly 30 years of a tradition in daytime summer clothing.

The final gallery, indeed the final days of *La Belle Époque*, shocks us into an awareness of one of the most abrupt fashion changes in the history of costume. Here we find an amazing array, including Poiret's lampshade dress and Fortuny's Renaissance printed velvet cape over Grecian drapery. Vionnet and the Callot Soeurs are represented; a new generation and a new aesthetic have emerged.

## Regional News

The ALBERTA SECTION of the USITT concluded the 1982-83 year with its Fourth Annual Conference, May 13-15, at the University of Calgary. This year's gathering stressed using local resources and expertise to attain "so much for so little."

Over 15 seminars on topics such as scenery construction, contract law, and lighting design to income tax, noise protection, and architecture were offered. These panels were headed by Alberta-based professionals from the University of Calgary, Alberta Government Culture, Revenue Canada, and Alberta Occupational Health and Safety commissions.

One highlight of the conference was the exchange of information between users of computer support in theatre operations. An outgrowth of their brainstorming was the creation of an Alberta Section "computer users group."

New officers were also elected at the conference, and the 1983-84 executive of the Alberta section is: Chairperson: Ken Hewitt, Calgary; Vice-chair: (north) Ross Hill, Edmonton; Vice-chair: (south) Mike McPhee, Calgary; Treasurer: Murray Palmer, Calgary; Secretary: Pat Christensen, Carstairs; Members-at-large: Chris Olin, Calgary, Alan Welch, Edmonton, Wayne Hudson, Calgary.

The executive met in June to begin programming and planning for the fall, before they adjourned for the summer.

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The OHIO SECTION is holding its Fall Conference Oct. 14-16 at the Hollenden House Hotel, Cleveland.

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Planning has begun for the 1985 national convention in NEW YORK. Anyone wishing to become involved with the convention committee should contact Martin Moore, at (212) 620-7165.

Over 750 design professionals in architecture and lighting in the greater LOS ANGELES area gathered for cocktails and a presentation by renowned lighting designer and consultant Imero Fiorentino, on June 29, in Long Beach, at the exhibit of the Howard Hughes airplane, the Spruce Goose.

In a speech, Fiorentino discussed the challenge of lighting this display of the world's largest aircraft in the world's largest dome. A cue-by-cue run-through of each lighting look emphasized to what extent theatrical and architectural lighting were used to heighten the dramatic impact

of the plane. Mr. Fiorentino also covered the process by which original design concepts evolved into the completed project.

In addition to USITT members, professionals from the American Institute of Architects, the American Society of Interior Designers, the American Society of Lighting Directors, the Designer's Lighting Forum, the Illuminating Engineering Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers, were present.

## Next Wave Festival

A festival of avant-garde performance will take place at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, New York City, from Oct. 4 - Dec. 4, 1983. The series, entitled the "Next Wave," will feature premieres of: "The Photographer," a theatrical exploration of the life and work of Victorian photographer Eadweard Muybridge, whose pioneering sequential studies of locomotion made him known as 'the father of the motion picture,' created by Philip Glass and Rob Malasch; "The Way of How," a visual opera, by the George Coates Performance Works; "The Gospel at Colonus," Sophocles' classic drama transformed into a contemporary gospel/theatre piece, by Lee Breuer (a founder of Mabou Mines) and Bob Telson; "Victory Over the Sun," a recreation by Robert Benedetti of this first Russian Cubo-Futurist opera; plus works by choreographers Trisha Brown, Carolyn Carlson, Lucinda Childs, Melissa Fenley, Rina Schenfeld and Nina Wiener. An evening of contemporary jazz by the Art Ensemble of Chicago is also planned.

Other works in the festival will include "Einstein on the Beach," the Robert Wilson and Philip Glass opera first performed at the Metropolitan Opera House.

Many of these pieces will tour the United States, such as "The Photographer," Lucinda Childs' dance works, and "Einstein on the Beach."

## Polish Scene Designer Seeks U.S. Contacts

Polish scene designer Marek Dobrowolski, in the U.S. as part of the Fulbright Exchange Program, is eager to make contact with American lighting and scenic designers. In his native country, Dobrowolski designed for the theatre, ballet and opera. He has delivered seminars on contemporary European design at universities throughout the nation. He may be reached at 156 Clinton St., Apt. 1A, Brooklyn, NY 11201.

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## Edward Gordon Craig Documents

by Katherine White

Arnold Rood of New York, a Professor of Dramatic Art at Dowling College, has collected upwards of 3,000 pieces of historical material relating to Edward Gordon Craig. He considers it a working collection in that he welcomes designers, scholars and others with a specific research project, to work with and utilize the collection.

The collection consists of books by, about, formerly belonging to, or referring to Craig. There are also unique and rare designs, drawings, letters, manuscripts, audio tapes, notebooks, programs, photographs, posters, prints and proofs, as well as personal memorabilia.

One of the most notable items in the collection is Craig's own copy of *Montaigne Essays*. It is heavily annotated and illustrated. There is also the Cranach Press *Hamlet*, in all variants plus appropriate prints; the Notebooks which Isadora Duncan wrote for Craig early in their relationship; and a number of original Craig drawings of Duncan. Moreover, the collection contains about 35 letters of Craig-Duncan correspondence.

Rood was a personal friend of Craig's, and in addition to the documents, he has many memories and anecdotes to relate.

For more information, contact Arnold Rood, 32 West 82 St., NY, NY 10024.

## Submissions/Deadlines to Newsletter

**September 25** is the deadline for submissions to the Fall Newsletter. Let's hear from *YOU*.

Upon receipt of newsletter articles, etc., a form will be mailed to contributors. If you do not receive this form, please send another copy of your material. Or mail material certified with return-receipt postcard. This should ensure that your article is printed.

## TD & T Index on Sale

An index to TD&T, organized by subject headings from acoustics to unions, is currently available from the national office. Compiled by Patrick Atkinson, the index is \$2.50 for members and \$10.00 to libraries and non-members. Prepayment is required.

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