

Sightlines

USITT

april 1989

News of the United States Institute for Theatre Technology

SIGHTLINES

Conference Reminders:

- Remember to bring a proof of US citizenship (passport, voter registration card, birth certificate). You may not be asked for it—but then again you may.
- Canada is our neighbor, but it's also a foreign country. If you plan to make any phone calls back to the United States during your time in Calgary, bring your AT&T Calling Card *International* number. Many other phone credit cards (including MCI) do not work to call from Canada.



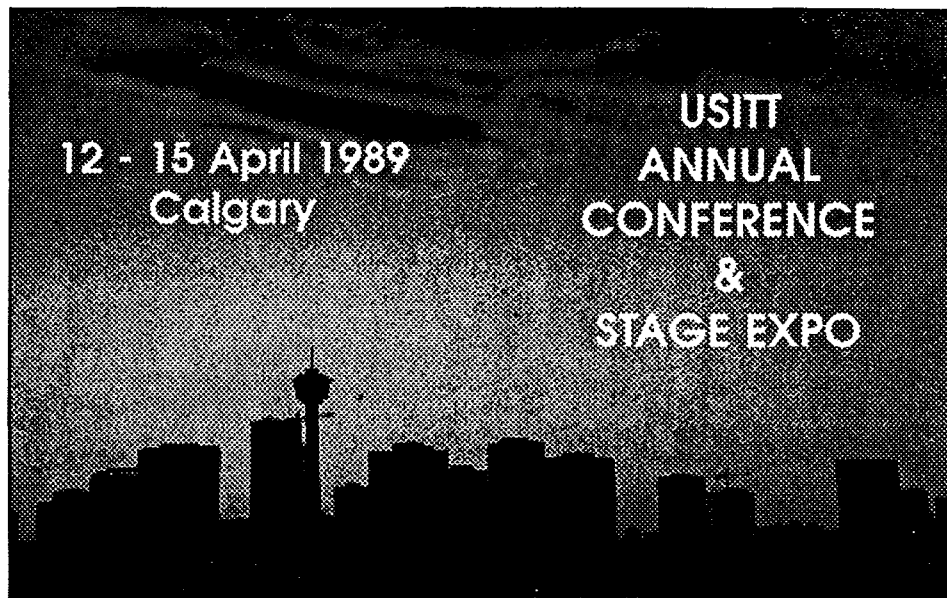
A request from the National Office Staff:

"We are constantly updating the members database and we want to make sure we have everyone's latest correct address. If you or someone you know has moved in the last few months and has not been getting newsletters or journals, let us know so we can make the appropriate changes."



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Calgary Conference Update

1989 USITT Conference & Stage Expo

As the final days count down towards the USITT's 29th Annual Conference, a sense of excitement is building among the members of the Conference Committee as we realize that it's actually all going to happen! This realization is strongest around the Section office, where Pat Christensen is busy handling telephone calls and FAX transmissions from all over the globe. Most of the scheduling is now complete, as are the majority of logistical arrangements, and the committee's focus is on managing the myriad last minutes changes and adjustments that seem inevitable. Here is a brief UPDATE on recent developments:

STAGE EXPO: As we go to press, it appears that Stage Expo '89 will be a sell-out, with a record number of Canadian exhibitors [23], and a number of new international exhibitors as well.

REGISTRATION: Both the National office and the Alberta Section are busy proc-

essing conference pre-registrations, and, as expected, there will be many delegates attending their first USITT Conference, particularly Canadians. As well, there will be a significant overseas presence, with registrations already confirmed from China, Japan, Hong Kong, Australia, New Zealand, the Soviet Union, France and Great Britain.

HOTELS: The Skyline Hotel is already full on most nights, but space is still available at the Palliser Hotel [403-262-1234] and Delta Hotel [403-266-1980] at the conference rate of CDN\$85. For persons who want cheaper accommodation, we have made arrangements with the Westward Inn [403-266-4611], which is five blocks away, and offers a convention rate of CDN\$42 per night (single or double)... that's about US\$35. For those who are really on a tight budget, the Calgary International Hostel is six blocks away, and offers dorm type accommodations for CDN\$10 per night [403-269-8239].

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REMINDER

Submission of material for *Sightlines*: If possible, please submit your material on a computer disk—Macintosh 3.5", IBM 5.25" 360K or IBM 3.5" 720K or 1.2M.

If you use MicroSoft Word for the Mac, please *Slow Save* the document. If you use WordPerfect 5.0, please save the document you send in 4.2 format. If you send files on a 3.5" MS-DOS disk, use a DD (double-density) disk for 720K formatting and a HD (high-density) or quad-density disk for 1.44MB formatting. If you use a DD disk formatted as a HD disk, our disk drive cannot read it.

Material for *Sightlines* can also be sent by "electronic mail" to CompuServe, 76526.3177; SourceMail, BDU307; GENie, E.Fielding1; or the Calgary Callboard, EFielding.

Send your disk and/or manuscript directly to our office address (see below). The deadline for inclusion in *Sightlines* is the 5th of the month prior to the desired publication date.

If you are sending a typewritten text and not a computer disk, please include a separate "ABC sheet." This sheet—which should contain all the letters, numerals, and characters (both lower and upper case) on your typewriter—will allow us to "teach" our OCR (optical character reader) to read your typewritten text.

Also, please feel free to submit visual materials: photographs, drawings, renderings, schematics, etc. Visual materials should be crisp, high-contrast and up to 8.5" x 14" in size.

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Editor • Cecelia Fielding

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News From The National

David Diamond, USITT General Manager

It's Conference time and we are getting ready to pack up and move across the border. If you have not registered yet, don't worry—you can still register on-site. Don't miss this exciting event! Look for Gary Miller and me at the National Office desk near the registration area. Stop by and say hello. We will be available to answer any questions you may have about your membership, our services and benefits, or how you can become more involved in your organization.

Look for your colleagues at the Conference wearing the hot new gold and red USITT logo pins. They are Professional Members of USITT. You can become a Professional Member, too. Return the enrollment form in the March *Sightlines*.

Another discount for Conference attendees will be provided by Budget Rent-a-Car. Mention that you are attending the USITT Conference and you will receive the discounted rate. As promised, Applause Theatre Books begins its special offering of design/technology books for USITT members. Every three to six months, different titles will be offered at a discount for a limited time only. To start off, Applause will be offering the following books at a 15 percent discount: *The Theatre Art of Boris Aronson* by Frank Rich and Lisa Aronson (which won USITT's prestigious Golden Pen Award last year), originally priced at \$75 and now available for \$64; and *Leon Bakst*, text and selections by Irina Truzhan (a beautifully illustrated "coffee table" book), originally \$35, now \$30. Please add \$2.50 per book for postage and handling. Send your orders directly to Applause Theatre

Books (not the National Office) at 211 West 71st Street, New York, NY 10023. Please state that you want the USITT discount on your order. Also, remember to ask for their current catalog, since USITT members get a 20 percent discount on all books published by Applause.

If you have not read it yet, get a copy of the March issue of *American Theatre* and read Todd London's article, "Opening A Door Up Left," about the relationship between designers and playwrights. TCG held a symposium to discuss this issue and some provocative ideas expressed are reiterated in the article.

The National Endowment for the Arts has announced new guidelines for the 1990 Design Arts Program. The National Theme this year is "Discover America Through Design." For a copy of the 1990 Guidelines, write or phone: Design Arts Program, National Endowment for the Arts, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC, 20506; 202-682-5437. Deadlines in certain categories are as early as 30 May 1989.

In other NEA news: the Theater Program has announced a new category of Distinguished Artist Fellowships in Theater. These awards will go to individuals who, throughout their careers, are making extraordinary contributions to American nonprofit theatre. Four \$25,000 grants will be awarded to designers, playwrights, actors, directors, or others. Individuals may not apply, but nominations may be submitted by the theatre community or the public to the Theater Program. Nominations must be postmarked by 15 April 1989. □

Swedish Technicians Visit USITT

Gustaf Kull, STTS Directors Committee

Greetings from snow-covered Härnösand! During the first week of February, the Directors Committee of the Swedish Theatre Technicians Society (STTS) met in New York City. With the assistance of USITT International Liaison Joel Rubin and Membership Services Manager Gary Miller, the delegation toured many of the city's performance facilities, from Brooklyn Academy of Music to Lincoln Center to Radio City Music Hall to ABC Television.

"The arrangements as organized were exemplary," according to the Directors Meeting minutes. "Gary Miller, Joel Rubin, and Samuel Scripps were the best hosts and guides." Indeed, if there was anything to complain about, it was too much to do in too short a time: it took a long time for us to heal our sore feet.

The purpose of the visit was twofold: first, to improve communications between STTS and USITT; and second, to help prepare a study trip to the States for the STTS membership. With the assistance of Sam, Gary, and Joel, we met a great many people we will want to stay in contact with, and we will of course be in touch with our friends at USITT as our plans for the study trip develop.

On behalf of the STTS Directors Committee, let me once again thank all those who showed us such wonderful hospitality, especially Patricia MacKay at *Theatre Crafts*, Steve Terry at Production Arts/Bach Lighting, Paul King at BAM, Rik Kaye at New York Opera, George DeVaris at the Beaumont Theatre, Bill Walker at Radio City Music Hall, Jim McHugh at McHugh/Rollins Associates, and Deet Jonker of ABC-TV. □

The President's Report

Richard Devin, USITT President

I was pleased to receive several responses to my comments and questions in this column in the February issue of *Sightlines*, all of them written on the day the newsletter was received. It seems that both the issue of minority representation in our profession and in the Institute and our concerns for greater service to our design members are areas of strong interest among many of our members. Some excellent suggestions came from members on both issues, and considerable interest has been shown by our commissioners and Membership Committee on pursuing the ideas.

We would still like to hear more of your opinions. Many of you will be attending the Conference in Calgary, and will have an excellent opportunity to be a part of brainstorming sessions in the Commission, Section, and Membership Committee meetings, where specific projects related to these and other issues will have their initial discussions and volunteers will be sought to carry them out. If you can't be there, please write to members of the Executive Committee and commissioners before 1 April, so we can put your ideas into action in those meetings.

Diane Berg was kind enough to inform us that the 1989 National Black Theatre Festival will be held in Winston-Salem, N.C. on 14-20 August 1989. Diane has already begun to arrange an exchange of programs and membership services between that Festival and the USITT Costume Symposium scheduled for the same week in Winston-Salem. We hope to have a number of USITT members present to discuss ways in which our

organizations can combine forces and increase awareness of each other's work.

A note of tribute to our National Office Staff: we are currently blessed with the most solid, creative, and talented office management staff that USITT has ever had. The late sixties—when our membership was much smaller and Herb Greggs did a superb job of running the office with occasional volunteer help—are long gone. At this time of year, when membership renewals, conference registration, publications orders, foreign theatre visitors, and many other membership services are pressing, David, Gary, Tina, Deborah, and Nora are responding to many requests with great efficiency.

Gary Miller is in charge of membership services, and is always anxious to know if you have a problem or suggestion. I also think you should know that General Manager David Diamond recently produced a near miracle for us. When David and I met in Washington with NEA officials on 3 February 1989, we learned of two grants for which USITT could qualify: one to help us with our publications, and another to help serve theatrical designers. One of the proposals was due on February 6 and the other on the 13. With some help from a handful of our officers, David produced two very complete and creative NEA grant applications in only eight days. We won't know the response of either proposal for some time, but I think it's important that you are aware of David's tireless work and expertise in serving your interests. We are fortunate to have such a talented and dedicated staff. □



Calendar of Events

Upcoming Theatre Design & Technology Activities

- April 12-15 • USITT Annual Conference & Stage Expo, Calgary, Alberta, Canada
- April 22-28 • Shanghai Festival of International Scenic Arts, China
- May 15-17 • Showlight '89, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- June 7-11 • OISTAT Scenographic Commission Meeting, Sydney, Australia

- July 9-15 • National Puppet Festival, Cambridge, MA
- Sept 27-Oct 1 • 8th OISTAT Congress, Warsaw, Poland
- Aug 6-10 • IES Annual Conference, Orlando, Florida
- Aug 5-6 • USITT Summer Board & Commissioners Retreat, New York, NY □

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 Strand Lighting
 Syracuse Scenery & Stage Lighting Co., Inc.
 Teatronics, Inc.
 Theatrical Dealers Association
 Theatrical Services & Consultants
 Wenger Corporation □

NEW C&S MEMBERS

Sightlines welcomes new Sustaining Members—Hollywood Lights, Inc.; Lighting Methods, Inc., and Product Sales Associates. Our Contributing & Sustaining Member Profiles series continues on page 7. □

SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Adirondack Scenic
 Alberta Stage Lighting, Ltd.
 Peter Albrecht Corporation
 Alcone Company, Inc.
 American Seating
 Artec Consultants, Inc.
 Ariflex Corporation
 Artsoft, Inc.
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 B.N. Productions
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 Chicago Scenic Studios, Inc.
 Cinemills Corp.
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 Clear-Com Intercom Systems
 Columbine Fabricators
 Custom Rigging Systems
 DesignLab Chicago
 Design Line, Inc.
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 FM Productions
 Fox-Rich Textiles, Inc.
 Foy Inventerprises, Inc.
 Gagnon Laforest
 General Electric Lamp Division
 Peter George Associates, Inc.
 Goodspeed Opera House

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1989 USITT Conference & Stage Expo

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FREE FLIGHT WINNERS: The draw for free airline tickets was made on March 1, and two students won free air tickets to Calgary. The winners are: Susan Hawley, a junior lighting design student at Cal State/Long Beach City College, who will fly on Delta Airlines; and Nancy Canning, a 3rd year costume design student at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, who will fly Air Canada to Calgary.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: To highlight the first day of the conference, Richard Pilbrow, noted British theatre consultant, lighting designer, and author will be joined by British scenic designer William Dudley for a unique joint Keynote Address. Richard Pilbrow is well known to USITT conferences, most notably as a theatre consultant, and the founder of Theatre Projects. As a lighting

designer, Pilbrow has designed throughout Britain, as well as on Broadway. He now lives in Ridgefield, Connecticut, and is working on projects in Canada and the United States. William Dudley has designed for major opera houses throughout the world as well as the Royal Shakespeare Company and the National Theatre of Great Britain, and has won the Society of West End Theatres Design Award three times, most recently for his production of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. He collaborated with Pilbrow in a stunning production of Boucicault's *The Shaughraun* that used the National Theatre Olivier Stage "Theta" stage revolve for the first time ever. These two distinguished guests will jointly address the entire conference in the magnificent Jack Singer Concert Hall on Wednesday, April 12 at 2 pm. □

Education Commission

Harvey Sweet, Commissioner

The **Research Project** under the direction of Paul Brady at the University of Illinois has come on line. It is designed to collate on computer (with modem access) an annotated bibliography of masters and doctoral theses on theatre technology and design subjects. The project does not include production theses but does include such things as materials and processes research, biographical theses, etc.

Paul is in the process of developing promotional material to announce the service and publicize the means to access it. He is also collecting additional material to include in the data bank. Contact Paul at the University of Illinois if you have materials to include in the project.

The **Internship Project** under the leadership of David S. Flemming, Southwest Texas State University, has come to an exciting new life, and is now available on software at STSU and the USITT National Office. As new listings are received, they are added to the directory, and old listings are being updated. Directories are printed on demand, including the most current information available.

David continues to collect additional listings for the directory. If you have internships to list, contact David, and if you wish to have a copy of the directory, contact the National Office.

The **Directory of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs in Theatre Technology and Design** under the direction of Adel Migid at Akron University is still being processed into computer data, and the project is

progressing steadily.

Bias in the Profession is both a research and an informational project under the combined leadership of William B. Hekner of San Diego State University and Chris Frankeberger. The first segment of the research project was initiated last fall, and is intended to collect data about commensurate wages and perks for men and women working in theatre tech and design. A report on the research project will be featured at the 1989 USITT Conference, along with an educational session on the project's work.

Model Curricula in Theatre Tech and Design BA/BFA/MA/MFA chaired by Elbin Cleveland at the University of South Carolina has developed an extensive document to be reviewed and edited at the 1989 conference. It supercedes the exit standards for the BFA/MFA project and will perhaps lead to the development of entrance guidelines, advanced placement testing, and exit standards for these degrees. The project has made rapid progress since its initiation at the 1989 conference.

The **Portfolio Evaluation Review Committee** under the leadership of Herb Lamburn will complete the first stage of developmental work at the Calgary conference. The project will hopefully lead to the creation of a panel of industry professionals who will be available to provide a juried review of portfolios by designers and technicians to use in tenure and promotion reviews.

This is my last report as Education Commissioner. At the end of the 1989

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Profile: Ken Hewitt

Cecelia Fielding, Editor

In coping with the massive responsibility of chairing this year's USITT Conference and Stage Expo in Calgary, Ken Hewitt drew heavily on his 15 years of experience as manager of University Theatre Services at the University of Calgary.

Hewitt and his 11 fulltime staff members provide technical and administrative support for all theatre users at the university, particularly in the fine arts.

"Our performance load covers the full spectrum of events, from the purely academic to campus and off-campus touring performances," explained Hewitt, who received both a BFA in dramatics and an MBA from the University of Calgary.

"It's a fascinating experience, because we are able to deal with a wide variety of events. And the theatres are extremely busy—260-290 events a year," he said, noting that he still has time to teach an occasional course in theatre administration.

Such a schedule has its obvious drawbacks. "The danger of it is that one can get lost in the ivory tower bureaucracy of an institution this big (20,000 students), so that's where USITT comes in," he said. "The Institute offers me a perspective on elements of the rest of the performing arts, and I can also stay in touch with people in similar occupations."

Hewitt—former chair of USITT's Alberta

Section, former Commissioner of Theatre Production and Management, and a current Board of Directors member—is particularly pleased with the Canadian element of this year's conference, noting that it will be the first exposure to USITT for many Canadian theatre professionals.



He's also hoping that the conference will alert Stateside members to some of the "Canadian questions" facing the Institute's northern constituency in working with the Institute. "For example, there's always the Canadian French language component, so there's always the need for dual languages," he explained.

"Foundations and government agencies play a major role in the arts here—they're far more significant than in the States," he continued. "And our legal framework is different as well, and that affects code granting, accrediting, licensing, etc."

Although the conference is only a few weeks away, Hewitt is surprisingly serene. "At this point it's going very well," he said. "This close to the conference my work is basically done—I'm just troubleshooting right now."

But he will admit to a few butterflies. "I'm a little nervous at the instant because my desk is reasonably clear!"

Education Commission

conference I shall be resigning. The years I have served as vice-commissioner for Technical Production and for Education and as Commissioner of Education have been exciting and gratifying. The Commission has attempted a broad array of projects to serve the needs of the membership, especially in the academic community.

Some of the projects have had minimal success and some never got off the ground, but a few have had some serious impact on the profession. No project could have succeeded with the very hard work of the project directors and (where appropriate) the committee members.

I wish to formally thank them all for their

time, their commitment, and their efforts. I would also like to express my thanks to each of the vice-presidents and presidents under whom I have served for their support, encouragement, and direction. To each of the people this Commissioner has cajoled, coerced, and otherwise eked support, effort, and energy from, thank you.

Deborah Bell and Jack Carr shall assume leadership of the Education Commission upon my retirement. I am excited for them and for the Institute, for they shall bring new blood, new energy, and new ideas to the Commission. I look forward to continued growth and success from this important unit of USITT.

SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Grand Stage Lighting
Grosh Scenic Studios
GTE/Sylvania, Inc.
Harris Consulting
Haussmann International
H & H Specialties
HM Electronics, Inc.
Hoffend and Sons, Inc.
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Holzmüller Productions
Hudson Scenic Studios, Inc.
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JCN
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Norcostco, Inc.
NSI Corporation
Ben Nye Cosmetics
Olesen Company
Pantechon
Phoebus Manufacturing

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SUSTAINING MEMBERS

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• Our thanks to all the Contributing
 and Sustaining Members of USITT!



Computer-Controlled Sound Interface

John Bracewell, Sound Design Commissioner

I'd like to pose a question for general exploration: **What constitutes an appropriate operator interface for a computer-controlled theatre sound system?**

The interface between a computer and the sound system operator should not be a topic with which only manufacturers need to be concerned. Designers and operators have to live with the equipment, and they should have input to designing the tools they use.

Just like the lighting industry before us, we're moving toward instruments which act as command interpreters and away from

those which control signal directly. The lighting world began its transition to computerization by trying to make the control interface hold the same relationship to the operator as direct control. Discarding manual faders and presets in favor of software-defined channels and patching took more than a decade of development.

Computerization in the world of musical instruments also grew from a traditional operator interface. One obvious use for computerization in music is as a substitute for performance training and skill. With a keyboard or a mouse, a computer offers a non-traditional interface that permits amateurs to dictate a sequence of pitches, dynamics, and tempo changes for the computer to store.

For the skilled performer, however, the traditional interface—keyboard, mouthpiece and valves, drumsticks, strings and frets, etc.—is essential. Using the computer to enhance one of the traditional performance interfaces extends the skills of an accomplished performer. The manufacturer need only add to the traditional interface some practical and accessible command keys and a compact and efficient command set.

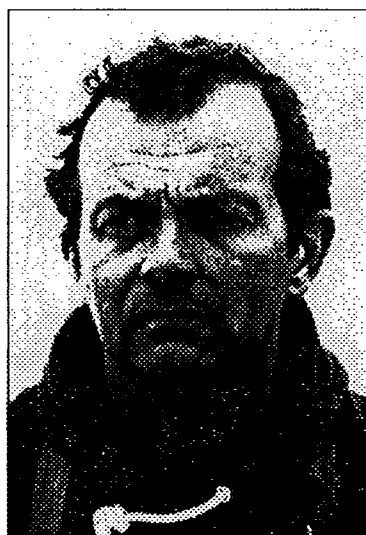
The experience of the music industry affords a particularly useful example for theatre audio to consider: first, system designers had to provide for both real-time and process-time modes of use; and second, systems designers had to provide a natural and intuitive operator interface for users who, whether professional musicians or amateurs, would have little expertise in audio technology.

The exercise of similar considerations in approaching the design of theatre sound equipment would be of immense value. We

engage in some operations that are best done in process-time, and we have a few critical functions that can only be done satisfactorily in real-time. We also encounter circumstances that demand that operators understand audio technology. While we probably don't want to reduce theatre sound equipment to something as simple as a pre-packaged home stereo system, we should be able to provide an operator interface that makes it relatively easy for available personnel to run a show on the equipment.

Real-time control is a matter of considerable importance. In performance situations, response delays are not just minor inconveniences;

they are critical increments of time during which significant problems may develop. One of the obvious problems in computerized lighting control is the time required to call up a channel and execute a change. During rehearsal, quick adjustments to a scene often seem impossible to execute and record before the immediate composition has dissolved into a new stage picture. And neither familiarity



with the system nor skill in using its interface can completely overcome the problem.

Some recent lighting control systems have retraced the path of evolution, working backward toward consoles that provide preset-like ranks of individual controllers. Since the function of those controllers can be defined by the operator, the practice constitutes redefinition rather than regression. Lighting manufacturers are trying very hard to put a more direct form of control back into the operator's hands without sacrificing the benefits of computerization.

The lesson we need to learn here is clear: complete abandonment of direct control in an operator interface exacts its costs. Systems that reflect—and to some degree retain—traditional control devices provide an intuitive method of operation. Traditional control devices were designed to work within normal reflexive patterns of human visual-spatial coordination. Control structures defined exclusively in software too often impose an intermediate layer of logical activity between perception and responsive action. On the other hand, slavishly retaining direct control inhibits full development of the possibilities inherent in computeriza-

Computer-Controlled Sound Interface

tion. The tradeoffs must be considered with great care.

One significant concern in designing control for theatre sound, although one not often addressed, is that theatre sound really involves three distinct functions: reinforcement, playback of cues to enhance the auditory atmosphere and environment, and recording to build the cues used for performance playback.

Each function of theatre sound needs a different control arrangement. Recording requires a straightforward mixing system.

Reinforcement needs a mixing console, but one that can also provide several different output balances, each possibly requiring its own equalization and delay. Performance playback of environmental sounds and

music requires a system that can distribute a few inputs to a large number of outputs and needs the capability to change output configurations smoothly, sometimes keeping one distribution pattern constant while varying others.

Using traditional hardware, theatre sound should therefore entail three complete control systems. That's not often practical, of course, but some theatres do have two control consoles—one for recording and reinforcement and one for complex output distribution.

One component of our discussion of operator interface needs to address the question of function and the time constraints under which operations take place. A good operator interface makes primary operations easy to perform, whether they take place in real time or in process time. Reinforcement and performance playback require real-time operations. Building cues on tape is usually done in process time. In both reinforcement and rehearsal of sounds and music, operators need to be able to identify and access control function very quickly. Storage and recall of control information needs to happen without seriously distracting the operator from the processes of cue operation. If the control interface takes the operator's attention off the production, the computer is not doing its job.

So far, only two theatre sound consoles have been marketed. One uses a software-defined control layout represented in a graphic display. The operator uses a mouse and the computer's keyboard to set levels, store and edit cues, and run the show. No faders, command buttons, or other sepa-

rate hardware controls exist for this system.

The other console was similar in concept to a computerized recording console, and consisted of faders and output assign switches, all in hardware, using its computers to store and recall fader and switch actions. Neither system has presented a completely satisfactory operator interface. The software-defined controller is a very well-designed system that provides a multitude of desirable functions, but it may well be too extensive to operate comfortably within the limits of a graphic display. The other

system, however, was almost certainly too hardware-bound to be flexible enough to adapt to more than a few limited applications. Since the latter system is no longer in production, we can assume

that its direction has already received a negative vote from the theatre sound community. So we wind up having only the former to discuss.

The software-defined system is a flexible and widely adaptable sound controller, capable of customization for just about any circumstance, and capable of handling any cue configuration from the absurdly simple to the staggeringly complex. Because the operator must work through the graphic interface to change the control setting, the time required to access any single control element is relatively long. Modifications in rehearsal can therefore become tedious.

Most critics of this console always suggest that some amount of hardware implementation would speed up the interface. The manufacturer's answer is that a control interface that is independent of hardware is more open to future developments, a statement that is very hard to refute.

Of course, one other problem always requires some attention: cost. How much are we willing to pay for the optimum? Good design, especially in software, is rarely cheap. The lighting industry developed most of its computerized controllers because a market was available in the concert-lighting and theme-park industries, not because of a demand in the legitimate theatre.

We in theatre sound are extremely fortunate to have a manufacturer who addresses our needs in particular, and perhaps even more fortunate that the manufacturer's computerized sound system is finding applications beyond theatre. Otherwise, a computerized theatre sound system might

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C&S PROFILES

Gerriets international

Gerriets International

RR1 950 Hutchinson Road

Allentown, NJ 08501

Phone: 609-758-9121

FAX 609-758-9596

Contact: Trudy Bryson, Vice President
In business for 8 years

USITT C&S Member for 6 years

Gerriets International manufactures and supplies projection screens, portable dance floors, wide width muslins, scrims, bobbinets, and velours. It also manufactures the PROCYC cyclorama and supplies the TRIPLE E loose pin hinge. Its parent company is Gerriets GmbH in West Germany, which has supported theatres and opera houses worldwide for more than 40 years.

□

PCI

PRECISION CONTROLS INC.

Precision Controls, Inc.

14 Doty Road

Haskell, NJ 07420

Phone: 201-835-5000

FAX: 201-835-3305

Contact: Phil Arnold, President

In business for 33 years

USITT C&S Member for 1 year

Precision Controls, Inc. produces standard and custom designs for worldwide commercial and industrial applications of electronic control technology, including lighting control and dimming products, motor and elevator controls, precision motion and speed controls, custom integrated circuit designs, and signalling technologies.

□

C&S PROFILES



peter albrecht
corporation

Peter Albrecht Corporation

325 East Chicago Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202
Phone: 414-272-2811
FAX: 414-272-5381
Contact: Ted Reitz, Systems Estimator
In business for 32 years
USITT C&S Member for 20 years
Peter Albrecht Corporation creates motorized rigging, orchestra lifts, turntables, wagons, orchestra shells, and other specialized stage machinery.



ArtSoft, Inc.

37 Soundview Road
Guilford, CT 06437
Phone: 203-453-1718
FAX: 203-453-0809
Contact: Larry Schwartz, President
In business for 5 years
USITT C&S Member for 2 years
ArtSoft, with its Management Information System, provides completely integrated software modules for the arts and entertainment industry.



J. R. Clancy, Inc.

7041 Interstate Island Road
Syracuse, NY 13209
Phone: 315-451-3440
FAX: 315-451-1766
Contact: Jack Suesse, President
In business for 104 years
USITT C&S Member for "a long time"
J. R. Clancy is the oldest US manufacturer of theatrical rigging—motorized winches, computerized controls, shells, platforms, turntables, and lifts.



Electronic Theatre Controls, Inc.

3002 West Beltline Highway
Middleton, WI 53562
Phone: 608-831-4116
FAX: 608-836-1736
Contact: Mike Griffith, Sales Director
In business for 12 years
USITT C&S Member for 3 years
Electronic Theatre Controls designs and manufactures memory lighting control systems for use in theatre, television, and architectural applications.

International Liaison

Joel E. Rubin, Committee Chair

Preliminary arrangements are now being made for the Institute's delegation to the **8th OISTAT Congress** to be held in Warsaw, Poland from 27 September-1 October 1989. [For further information on the Congress, see the February 1989 *Sightlines*.]

The USITT tour will be a 10-day visit to Europe, with stops planned for Sweden [Stockholm, Drottningholm, and Gothenburg] and Poland [Warsaw and Cracow]. The dates for the tour will be Saturday, 23 September to Monday, 2 October 1989 with a package cost of \$2,375 [which includes round-trip airfare from New York City, transfers, hotel accommodations, breakfasts, and some sightseeing and theatre tickets. At slight additional cost, you travel could be extended to include a stop in London. The price is based upon double occupancy and the dates, itinerary, and costs are all subject to change. The tour enrollment is limited.

If you are interested in joining us as a member of the USITT delegation to the OISTAT Congress, please send your name, business affiliation, address and phone numbers to the vice-chair of the USITT International Liaison Committee:

Eric Fielding
966 East 1030 North
Orem, UT 84057.

A reminder to those interested in the **Soviet Design Master Classes** planned for Spring 1990 during the time period immediately surrounding the Milwaukee Conference: it is essential to our planning that we receive a preliminary indication of your interest in sponsoring one of the master classes in your area. [For further information on the Soviet Design Master Classes, see the February 1989 issue of *Sightlines*.] To express interest in booking the Soviet designers for your educational institution, USITT regional section, or other organization, write to:

Joel E. Rubin
US Centre OISTAT
119 West 57th Street, Suite 911
New York, NY 10019.

We wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge and extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to **Samuel H. Scripps**—a Contributing Member of the Institute and a major benefactor to the success of the Golden Trigue Award-winning American entry to the 1987 Prague Quadrennial—for his gift of \$20,000 to aid and encourage the international activities of the Institute. His generous gift will provide considerable support for a variety of activities, including assistance for American participation in foreign conferences and visits to the US from foreign guests who might not otherwise be able to come. Again, our thanks to Sam for his kindness and generosity.

Student Travel Grants: This Scripps gift to international activities raises the possibility of the availability of partial stipend and travel grants for a couple of students to accompany the US delegation to the OISTAT Congress in Poland. Students interested in participating in this unique learning experience are requested to prepare a letter of application consisting of:

(a) A letter describing the student's present level of training and areas of specialization in theatre, any foreign language ability, indication of why their attendance at the OISTAT Congress would benefit their studies, and any other material which the student feels would aid in the selection of applicants.

(b) A letter of endorsement/recommendation from a full-time faculty member from the college or university that the student attends. To be eligible, the applicant must be enrolled full-time in an undergraduate or graduate program. And the applicant must presently be a student or regular member of USITT.

Letters and accompanying materials should be sent at the earliest opportunity (no later than May 15) to Eric Fielding at the address listed above.

The number of students to be selected and the exact grant amount are still to be determined and will be announced at a later date. □

Computer-Controlled Sound Interface

—continued from page 7

not remain a viable product to market.

So we return to the crux of the matter: what constitutes a desirable operator interface for a computerized theatre sound system? We've had two good starts at finding out; and I would guess the manufacturers of both systems would probably be the first to say that present-day systems and operator

interfaces can be improved. However, nothing will happen without useful ideas.

It's time to talk about what we need and want. It's time for us to hear what the manufacturers see as barriers to implementing the interfaces we need. Maybe in process we'll find useful compromises and new possibilities that will serve the needs of both manufacturers and users. □

Costume Design & Technology

Kevin L. Seligman, Commissioner

You all should have received your complimentary copy of the new **Cutter's Research Journal**; in order to continue to receive the publication, you must subscribe. One-year subscriptions are available and commence with the first issue published after you submit your subscription. If you have not already done so, send in your subscription form and money to Janice Lines today. She welcomes any comments and suggestions for the journal as well as manuscripts, articles, pattern drafts, etc. Also, if you are interested in serving as the publication's Book Review Editor, please contact Janice. I hope you all decide to take advantage of this publication.

Betty Williams and I are looking for any materials which could assist in dating **New York Patterns 1941-1956**. If you have any catalogues, flyers, or other information, would you please send us the materials (which we will gladly return to you) or photocopy the materials (for which we would gladly reimburse you). Also, I am trying to get a handle on dating the *Cutter's Practical Guides*, which were mostly authored by Vincent. If you have a copy of any of these works in your library or your university library, I would appreciate it if you would send me a copy of the title page with the date of publication, if available.

Joy Emery will soon be expanding the **Commercial Pattern Exchange** to include overprinted pattern sheets from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. If you have any in your collection, please let Joy know. She can then send you the forms to fill out, and she will enter the information on com-

puter just as she is doing with the information on blueprint masters.

Nancy Steele, chair of the **Out-of-Print Books Project**, is preparing a questionnaire to help guide the project which she hopes to have available in Calgary. If you will not be in Calgary and would like a copy of the questionnaire, or if you are interested in helping with this project, please contact Nancy.

Anne Thaxter Watson, chair of the **Portfolio Review Project**, will hold a planning session in Calgary that I hope all of you will attend. It has been scheduled as one of our regular conference sessions. Also, remember that a room has been set aside for the entire conference where you can sign up to have informal reviews of your portfolios.

Judy Tucker Snyder, vice commissioner for **Program Planning for the 1990 Milwaukee Conference**, will be in Calgary to gather program proposals, so bring your ideas and proposals with you. The second Commission meeting [Friday] will be devoted to conference planning and Commission projects.

If you are interested in chairing a symposium, working on a conference, or if you have an idea for a new project, please let me know. This is one way to become actively involved in the Commission and the Institute. Our Commission exists to work with you and offers support and assistance as needed. I look forward to seeing you all in Calgary for four days of exciting programs, workshops, and informal get-togethers to share information and catch up on what has been happening during the past year. □

Software for Technical Theatre

Patrick Finelli, Project Coordinator

The second edition of the *Directory of Software for Technical Theatre* is well underway. Mac fanatics have closed the gap with the IBMers and the submissions attest to Mac's increasing popularity among theatre practitioners.

As of February we have received 39 new reviews, including several theatre-specific programs such as *Lightworks* for the Mac, *Lightwright* for the IBM, and the *Pattern Maker* costume construction program. We are waiting patiently for reviews of *Excel*, *VersaCad*, and *AutoCad v. 10* for the Mac, as well as more audio programs that work as sequencers, editors, and acoustic analyzers.

I recently spoke with a publisher about the need for a primer dedicated to computer-assisted theatre design. He disagreed and said that all of the people using CAD in

the theatre would probably fit in one room. The number may be small right now, but it seems to be growing.

I would like to encourage all theatre practitioners working with computers to comment on their experiences and explore the possibility of conducting an open forum on CAD and a variety of other issues in *Sightlines* or *TD&T*. Topics might include the pros and cons of CAD; Macintosh vs. IBM, Bus Wars-EISA or Microchannel; computer instruction for designers, or any other items you think should be discussed.

Please submit any ideas to the publication editors or directly to:

Patrick Finelli
Department of Theatre
University of South Florida
Tampa, FL 33620

□

C&S PROFILES



FOX-RICH TEXTILES

Fox-Rich Textiles, Inc.

6232 Fountainhead Drive
Raleigh, NC 27609

Phone: 919-872-7508

FAX: 212-249-0568

Contact: Kimberly Harding, Sales

In business for 15 years

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Fox-Rich sells a wide range of topically flame retarded, inherently flame retardant, and untreated fabrics in widths from 36 inches to 36 feet.



Irwin
Seating
Company

Irwin Seating Company

3251 Fruit Ridge Avenue NW

Walker, MI 40501

Phone: 616-784-2621

FAX: 616-784-5819

Contact: Paul Winchester, Vice Pres.

In business for 80 years

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Irwin Seating provides fine public seating for arenas, stadiums, concert halls, auditoriums, movie theaters, lecture rooms, and classrooms.



LYCIAN
STAGE LIGHTING

Lycian Stage Lighting, Inc.

P.O. Box D, Kings Highway

Sugar Loaf, NY 10981-0214

Phone: 914-469-2285

Fax: 914-469-5355

Contact: Lou Farina, Director of Sales/Marketing

In business for 25 years

USITT C&S Member for 5 years

Lycian Stage Lighting, Inc. manufactures high-quality high-intensity follow spotlights.



Natural Resources

Unnatural Resources, Inc.

4 Byron Road

North Caldwell, NJ 07006

Phone: 201-228-5384

Contact: Steve Eisenberg, President

In business for 3 years

USITT C&S Member for 3 years

Unnatural Resources, Inc. manufactures all kinds of thermoplastics and other materials for masks, props, costumes, scenery, and visual displays.

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

SCENIC DESIGNER/INSTRUCTOR

Teach classes in beginning and advanced scene design within the BA Theatre Program. The candidate will also serve as a scene designer for a typical season of two mainstage and a number of studio productions each year.

Qualifications: MFA with teaching experience or significant professional theatre experience is preferred.

Contract Date: 1989-90 academic year.

Submit: Letter and resume to:

Henry I. Schvey, Chairman
Performing Arts Department
Washington University
Campus Box 1108
St. Louis, MO 63130



USITT

CONFERENCE MANAGEMENT/
MEETING PLANNER

USITT is seeking proposals from firms or individuals specializing in professional conference and trade exhibits management. For RFP, contact:

USITT
330 West 42nd Street, Suite 1702
New York, NY 10036.



LOOKING FOR SOMEONE?

Consider advertising your job opening in either *Sightlines*, or *Theatre Design & Technology*. For information on rates and deadlines, contact:

Tina Margolis
USITT Advertising Manager
Phone: 212-563-5551
FAX: 212-563-5582



SUBSCRIBE NOW!!

CUTTERS RESEARCH JOURNAL

A new project of the USITT Costume Design & Technology Commission is off and running! Four issues a year for \$10 (\$11 in Canada).

Subscriptions begin with the Spring 1989 issue. Remit payment (payable to USITT) to:

Janice Lines, Editor
Cutters Research Journal
KCPA, 500 S. Goodwin
Urbana, IL 61801



Your First USITT Conference?

Ken Hewitt, Conference Chair

Yes? If so, you may be excited, or curious, or a bit of both. With any luck at all, your experiences in Calgary will be positive and useful for you and/or your company.

Surprisingly however, I have talked to a few people whose experiences with their first USITT Conference were not positive. Instead, these persons reported that, while they may have found one or two attractions such as the Stage Expo quite interesting, they were for the most part generally bored. They spent their time wandering about the conference site, dropping in on various sessions that caught their eye, and never found the opportunity to meet or talk with anyone that interested them.

Personally, I can sympathize with these people, because I know that it took me two or perhaps three conferences to learn how to really make the most of my time and expense. At the core of this is the understanding and the appreciation that a USITT conference (or any conference, for that matter) is really a two-way process.

You will benefit and enjoy a USITT Conference in proportion to the energy and time you put in to it. This is not to say that conferences aren't fun! They are and should be enjoyable events with a great deal of socializing and free time. But you can avoid that post-conference feeling of emptiness or lack of reward by preparing and organizing yourself to maximize your gain.

Here are a couple of personal suggestions:

(1) **Before the conference**—perhaps even on the plane—take the time to consider your own work environment and especially those aspects of your work that cause you the most concern, problems, frustrations, etc. This might involve specific pieces of theatrical equipment or production processes, or it might focus on work-related relationships. Make some notes and focus on a half dozen or so specific areas, with a view toward using the conference to seek solutions to these problem areas. If you have the time, share these thoughts with colleagues or others who might help you expand or improve on your list.

(2) **During the conference**—

• Take time out at least once a day to review the day's conference activities and compare it with your "shopping list." Not every problem can be matched with a scheduled conference session, but I guarantee

that there will be someone at the conference who can help you. The trick is to find him or her.

• Attend at least one commission meeting. These often appear as "closed" meetings, but they are in fact "doorways" into the inner workings of the Institute, and area good way to approach and talk with some very talented people.

• If, like most delegates, you've gone through the program and flagged the various sessions and tours that interest you, then stick with it! Just because a session is late in the conference schedule doesn't mean it isn't worthwhile. And try not to be put off by bad sessions. It is regrettable but probably unavoidable that some sessions will be duds. The only way to find out is to go, and if it isn't what you wanted, then make better use of your time and go elsewhere.

• Again, make notes. Highlight those things that you liked or found useful. Make sure you have recorded names and addresses of speakers or other individuals that you might want to get in touch with again.

• Above all, enjoy yourself! Spend time in the bars and restaurants. I believe that this is where some of the most valuable and relevant "work" of the conference is done. Join in the conversations and you'll inevitably find that the talk will be about theatre and the performing arts. Share your experiences with others and allow others the opportunity to share their experiences with you. LISTENING is probably the most valuable skill to possess at a conference.

(3) **After the conference**—

• Don't let it all die! This is without doubt the most important (and the most difficult) part of ensuring conference benefit. After all, you get back to work having been away for a week, and things have piled up, right? So you dump your conference stuff in a corner and maybe look at it again in six or seven months. Maybe.

• Find the time. One of the best ways to do this is in your staff lounge or green room, perhaps at lunch or the end of the day. Take your pile of conference handouts, brochures, and stuff, and sort through it when other people are around. Share the materials and your experiences. One of the side effects of this is that people in your own workplace start to believe in the value of the conference—and it gets easier to find money for next year!



Conference Program Updates

1989 USITT Conference & Stage Expo

Following are updates on several sessions planned for the Calgary Conference:

• TD PORTFOLIO REVIEW

The "Portfolio Reviews for Technical Directors" session at the Calgary Conference needs volunteers who would like to present their work to the review panel. Any members interested in showing their work or any instructors with students that they would like to see present their work should please contact:

Patrick Gill
Cornell University
Center for the Performing Arts
430 College Avenue
Ithaca, NY 14850
Phone: 607-254-2716.

• HEALTH CLINIC

During the "All-day Walk-in Health Clinic" on Friday, 14 April 1989 at the Calgary Conference, Dr. Michael Pejsach will administer a stress test from 8 am-1 pm. Computerized results will be provided by 5 pm that same day.

Members taking the tests need to provide current cholesterol and blood pressure information; if you're interested, you should bring that information to Calgary with you. The stress tests involves a 20-minute written examination that measures your health risks, and the test results can predict your risk of ill health. Suggestions and counsel-

ing to enhance your stress resistance and lifestyle will be part of the results.

• COMPUTER ACTIVITIES

All persons interested in contributing their time and talent to the "Walk-in Computer Clinic" at the Calgary Conference should contact Tim Clinton at the Alberta Chapter of USITT as soon as possible. Tim can be reached by telephone or FAX at 403-220-4905 or on the Calgary Callboard [TClin-ton].

Thanks to Tim's efforts, this year's clinic promises to have increased technical support and so will require more volunteers to make it work. People who have a particular interest in IBM/MS-DOS or Macintosh systems and who can bring their own software are especially needed. Please help make this clinic a step forward from its outstanding beginning at Anaheim.

• STENCILING

John Larrance and Dan Ettinger will present a session on "Stenciling for the Theatre" at this year's Calgary Conference. Since they would like this program to be something more than a presentation, Dan and John are encouraging Institute members and Conference attendees to share their unique stenciling techniques.

If you are interested in contributing to this session, please contact John at 315-379-5182 for information about the appropriate format. □

C&S INDUSTRY NEWS

News items from USITT Contributing and Sustaining Members:

• Robert W. Wolff has been named president of **Artec Consultants, Inc.**, the theatre design and acoustics consulting firm headquartered in New York. The announcement was made by Russell Johnson, the chairman and founder of the 19-year-old firm.

• **Osram Corporation** has announced a number of promotions within its staff: Thomas B. Kerr, vice president for general lighting; Paul Caramagna, vice president for photo optic lighting; Lutz Klein, vice president of manufacturing; and Fred Caesar, business group director. In addition, Osram President Henry Peters has announced plans for a \$50 million expansion of the company that includes new construction, additional production lines, and employee growth.

• The board of directors of **Theatre Projects Consultants** has announced the appointment of Louis K. Fleming as its new president. Fleming is a CMC (Certified Management Consultant) and has been a member of the Theatre Projects team since 1982. □

ARTS GRANT CALENDAR

Please consider the following dates for various upcoming arts grants and other fundraising activities:

- April 14
Federal Advisory Committee on International Exhibitions
- April 24-25
NEA Design Arts Program (Challenge III)
- May 12-14
National Council on the Arts
- May 17-19
NEA Design Arts (Design Advancement/Individuals)
- May 17-19
NEA Expansion Arts (Theatre)
- May 18-19
NEA Arts in Schools Basic Education Grants
- May 19
NEA Inter-Arts (FY1990 Challenge III)

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ANNUAL CONFERENCE & STAGE EXPO

12 - 15 April 1989

usitt

89

CALGARY, CANADA

Check Points

Stress & Wellness Strategies

Biofeedback: A Review of Stress—

Biofeedback is a highly specialized way of providing us with information about certain internal physiological responses that we are normally unaware of. We can then use that information to increase our ability to relax and better manage the effects of stress—two very important components in maintaining our physical and mental wellness.

From a biological point of view, stress is a neurohormonal response involving the pituitary gland which stimulates the adrenal and thyroid glands. Secretions from these glands prepare us for vigorous activity: breathing becomes shallow, hearts thump, stomachs churn, muscles tense, and palms feel cold and sweaty. This physiological reaction has been called the *fight-flight* response because it prepares us to fight or flee. It is estimated that, when the mind perceives a stressor, more than 1400 responses occur in the body.

Such stress responses may be invoked by life-threatening events or potentially dangerous situations. However, in most individuals it is frequently triggered by commonplace stressors such as too little time or money, slow-moving traffic, job pressures, family strife, etc. Stress responses can be called up by *eustress* (positive stress) as well, including job promotions, important social occasions, and exciting new life experiences. Stressors, either good or bad, can be either brief or chronic.

Although the body is biologically prepared to react quickly, it cannot fight or flee from most stressors. Some of these stressors are chronic, forcing our bodies to continually react with a stress response. When this happens, our bodies overload, and we feel fatigued, anxious, and/or depressed.

Allowed to continue unchecked, such stress will lead to serious physical symptoms, such as high blood pressure, headaches, muscle stiffness, and gastric problems. In addition, illnesses not directly caused by stress—asthma, angina pain, diabetes, epilepsy—can be aggravated by it. In fact, one researcher found a relationship between environmental stressors and diseases ranging from Asian flu to coronary disorders to activation of dormant cancer.

Chronic stress depletes the body's natural resources and interferes with its ability to maintain healthy functioning. We can benefit greatly in our careers by eliminating some stressors and by learning to cope in a healthy way with the remaining stress.

In the future, this column will feature many approaches to this problem: supportive friendships, proper nutrition, regular exercise, satisfying leisure time, relaxation, etc.

The next issue of *Sightlines* will feature a column on biofeedback training, a method of instruction and practice which facilitates the acquisition of relaxation skills.

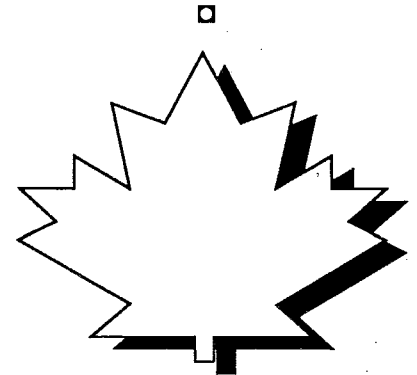
—Stan Abbott □

CURTAIN CALL

Deadline for next issue of *Sightlines*:

The next issue of the newsletter will be a combined May/June edition and will feature coverage of the activities of the 1989 USITT Conference in Calgary. The issue is scheduled to arrive during the latter part of May.

The deadline for submission of materials for the May/June issue is **Monday, 24 April 1989**. Commissioners, officers, and others wishing to include reports on conference activities will need to submit them *during the week immediately following the Calgary Conference*.



**See you in
Calgary!**

□

Sightlines

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