

**In this Issue**

Midwest Design Competition

Regional Programming  
Something for Everyone!

A Note from the Section Chair

KCACTF Region III Festival  
Award WinnersLinda Janosko's Photo Essay:  
KC/ACTF

In Memoriam: Don Childs

Join us in Long Beach!

## Tennis Balls Were Flying at the Midwest Mechanical Design Competition

By: Verda Beth Martell, Univ. of Illinois

Cannons fired and tennis balls flew at the Fifth Annual Midwest Mechanical Design Competition last May. The annual competition, held at the University of Illinois' Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, highlights the mechanical skills of theatre technicians throughout the Midwest. This year 5 TDs designed and built unique designs for throwing tennis balls. The entries were varied and the competition exciting, but one cannon blew the competition away.

Andy Bevacqua took the USITT Midwest Section Best Design Award with his Tank Cannon Design. Although decorated like an Army tank, the highlight of this design was the air tank that he manufactured. By incorporating the compressed air tank into the design, he was able to increase the flow of air into the barrel, allowing his cannon to shoot farther. We estimate that the cannon shot over 250 ft, but were unable to confirm because the longest shot exceeded the length of the firing range.

To ensure the safety of his design, Mr. Bevacqua had it inspected by an engineer and included the inspection paperwork with the design.

The Bevacqua cannon design also proved the most accurate. This cannon has two different barrels, one for long-range shots and one for short-range accuracy. The barrel exchange worked beautifully. Once dialed in, the cannon was able to hit the target consistently.

This was a good year for unique cannon designs. Included in the competition were a crossbow, a traditional-looking (albeit pneumatic) ship's cannon, a pop-gun, and a design that incorporated two spinning wheels similar to the machine used in tennis practice. All entries were from University of Illinois students.

*Continued on page 2*



November 2011 Event at Chicago Shakespeare Theatre

## Regional Section Events!

By: Shane Kelly, DePaul University

There are three upcoming events in the USITT Midwest Regional Section that are open to anyone in the Midwest area. On Saturday February 18, from 9:30-4:30, we will be touring the newly opened The Center for Performing Arts in Carmel, IN a new three venue performing arts complex outside Indianapolis. The morning will consist of an extensive tour with Director of Production Kyle Lemoi and the afternoon will feature a discussion of the design, construction, and use of The Center with representatives from the companies that contributed to the creation of the three venues including the

Co





### Design Competition, Cont. from Pg 1

Numerous designs received awards. The best proposal, and winner of an acrylic trophy, went to Linda Esperance for the detail shown in her drafting. Best aesthetic design winner was Michael Susong's classic cannon, but Zach Tysinger's mysterious black box design intrigued the judges and came in a close second. Emily Brainerd's crossbow was second most accurate overall, which earned her the Overall Runner-up in the Best Design category.

It was an excellent showing with numerous interesting and functional designs, but Andy Bevaqua's tank clearly took the competition winning the runner-up in Best Proposal and overall winner in Accuracy, Longest Shot, and Best Design. Look for him at the conference in Long Beach, which he will be attending thanks to the Free Full Conference Pass that accompanies the USITT Midwest Section Best Design Award Trophy.

**Registration is now open for the 2012 Midwest Design Competition and has expanded to include opportunities for Scenic, Lighting, Sound, Projections, Properties, and Costume Designers. Go to [www.USITTMidwest.org](http://www.USITTMidwest.org) for details.**

### A Note from the Section Chair

By: Kathleen Donnelly, University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh

Welcome to 43<sup>rd</sup> year for the USITT Midwest Regional Section. The programming year has already kicked off its first event at the Chicago Shakespeare Theatre at Navy Pier on November 12<sup>th</sup>. More programs are planned for this year, and updated information will be posted to the website.

This year we are welcoming our new web master, James Wright, from Maranatha Baptist Bible College in Wisconsin. James has been working on adding features and making improvements to the website, so check out the new and improved website at [www.usittmidwest.org](http://www.usittmidwest.org), and feel free to make suggestions about what you would like to see added to the website.

We are also embarking on a new project to create a list of peer reviewers to provide outside evaluation for tenure, renewal and promotion files at universities. The list will be posted on the section website, and you would be able to provide the link to your Deans and Chairs so that they could find an appropriate evaluator for your work. If you are interested in adding your name to the list, contact MC Friedrich at

[mcfriedr@mtu.edu](mailto:mcfriedr@mtu.edu).

And last, but certainly not least, the countdown to the USITT Annual Conference and Stage Expo in Milwaukee, March 2013, has started. The national conference committee met, in Milwaukee in early August, with a group of board members and local section members who will be part of the local committee. We are very excited to have the conference come back to our region, and are working already to make it a success. LeRoy Stoner has been appointed the Local Programming Chair and if you have suggestions about possible programming ideas, send him a note at [lstoner@uwm.edu](mailto:lstoner@uwm.edu). I am collecting the names of people interested in serving on the local committee, and if you are interested in being a part of this group, please send a note to me at [donnelly@uwosh.edu](mailto:donnelly@uwosh.edu).

I look forward to seeing many of you during the year at Section programs and events.

Warm regards,

Kathleen Donnelly, Chair  
USITT Midwest Regional Section  
[Donnelly@uwosh.edu](mailto:Donnelly@uwosh.edu)



*Regional Section Events! Continued from page 1...*

theatrical and acoustical consultants Artec Consultants; design architects Pedcor Design Group; construction management company Shiel-Sexton Co.; lighting system vendor Indianapolis Stage Sales and Rentals, lead architects CSO Architects and resident company Booth Tarkington Civic Theatre. Contact Shane Kelly, Vice-Chair for Programming, at skelly19@depaul.edu to register for this event.

On April 14, the Midwest Section will gather at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, MI for a day of hands-on workshops in rigging, digital media and management. In the morning, participants will have the choice between a workshop that explores how to use digital media in theatrical productions or a Production Management Roundtable featuring production managers from around the Midwest Section. The afternoon will have a continuation of the digital media workshop where participants will shoot live-action video and green screen session in preparation for using them on stage. Also in the afternoon will be a hands-on bridle and spot rigging workshop—bring your calculators! Look for registration materials on the USITT Midwest webpage, [www.usittmidwest.org](http://www.usittmidwest.org) in February.

Also in April, USITT Midwest is co-sponsoring with Chicago Spotlight, a two day scenic painting workshop taught by professional scenic artist, USA member and paint products manager for Rosco Laboratories Jen Knott at the College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn, Illinois. This is an intensive workshop for intermediate to advanced scenic painters where participants will be able to complete a number of projects while learning new tips and tricks. Space is very limited and you must register for this event before March 23. To register for this event or for more information contact Steve Jacobs, Director of Training Workshops at Chicago Spotlight, [steve@chicagospotlight.com](mailto:steve@chicagospotlight.com)

On Saturday, November 12, the membership of USITT Midwest gathered on Chicago's Navy Pier for a day of tours and workshops at Chicago Shakespeare Theater. The production staff at CST, led by Director of Production Chris Plevin and Technical Director Edward Leahy, started the day by generously welcoming 20 section members to tour the extents of all the production spaces at CST. The group began in the 500-seat Courtyard Theatre, the primary thrust theatre at CST, which at that time was the home for the critically acclaimed production of *Follies*. Chris and Ed led the group through the modifications made to the Courtyard Theatre to accommodate the musical needs to *Follies* as well as the tight backstage spaces

that have been transformed to use every square inch to support the production and serve as storage for the company. The drawback of having such a great location such as Navy Pier for CST is that they have a finite amount of space to work with to house the production support spaces for two theaters including a prop shop, costume shop, wig and make-up shop, lighting workshop, and sound workshop. It was fascinating to see how they overcome the possible handicap of space to create such huge, magical productions.

After our extensive tour, the group split off to workshops in millinery and flying. Melissa Bochat, the CST Costume Crafts Supervisor discussed with participants the design, construction and finishing techniques used on many of the hats that were built for *Follies*. The group discussed different material choices and cost-cutting options. Mark Witteveen from Chicago Flyhouse discussed with participants the methods and protocols his company uses to safely fly performers at CST and other venues. This included what items to include on a pre-show checklist, how to inspect the flying equipment, and how to make sure effect runs safely and consistently.

In the afternoon, the day's workshops continued with Ed Leahy and Chris Plevin working with the participants on how to create a risk assessment process for theatre. Ed and Chris have adopted a system from the UK for judging the risks at each step of the process as well as judging the possible severity of those risks. This information is then used to create action items to assure that everyone working on the show form staff to over-hire is working in an environment without undue risks. James Savage, CST's Sound Master walked participants through how he and the sound design team created an aural environment to support the orchestra and singers in *Follies*. The Courtyard Theater at CST is a thrust space built to reinforce the spoken voice and create an intimate environment. The sound team employed over 150 speakers, acoustic mapping, and a variety of delay techniques to balance the band and singers to fit the sound and feel of a Sondheim musical into the intimate thrust space. Overall it was a very informative and enjoyable day with many options for learning and networking. ☺





## Summer Board Meeting



The USITT Midwest Regional Section holds two Board Meetings each year, and the summer meeting most often takes place in August. Among other activities, the Treasurer and Vice-Chair for Membership present their annual reports. Also, recent programming and section activities are reviewed while programming and training events for the coming year are discussed and scheduled.

The Board consists of a Chair, a Vice-Chair for Programming, a Vice-Chair for Membership, a Vice-Chair for Communication, a Treasurer, a Secretary, and eight Director's at Large who represent the Section Membership.

The Board is populated by active and passionate persons from academic and professional theatre as well as sales and service businesses. The overarching goal is to serve the Section members with quality programming. If you'd like to become more involved, please contact Kathleen Donnelly, Chair, at [Donnelly@uwosh.edu](mailto:Donnelly@uwosh.edu), or Shane Kelly, Chair-Elect, at [skelly19@depaul.edu](mailto:skelly19@depaul.edu).



At the 2011 USITT Nation Convention, Bernhard Works presents an award. Learn more about student awards at [www.usittmidwest.org](http://www.usittmidwest.org).



## KCACTF Region III Festival Awards

By: Kathleen Donnelly

The USITT Midwest Regional Section would like to congratulate the recipients of the following awards at the KCACTF Region III Festival, held at the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign, January 4-7<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

### KCACTF Theatrical Design Excellence Awards

Scenery:	Moon Jung Kim, University of Illinois Urbana Champaign
Costumes:	Delena Bradley, Ball State University
Lighting:	Robert Brown, University of Illinois Urbana Champaign
Sound:	Mark Caspary, Illinois State University

National Stage Management Fellowship Award: BJ Brooks, University of Evansville

Allied Design and Technologies Award: Keely Brown, University of Michigan – Flint

Respondent Award of Merit for Collaboration: Adriana Saia, Andrea Schoening, Madelyn Yee, Nic Trapani, Raquel Garces, Lex Gernon, Carissa Saia - Marquette University

### Regional Design Awards

Scenic Design Project:	Catherine Cornell, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor
Costume Design Project:	Patrick Hayes, Sinclair Community College
Lighting Design Project:	Aaron Tacy, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor
Makeup Design Project:	Katie Mikula, Central Michigan University
Sound Design Project:	Duane Puuri, Michigan Technological University

Respondent Award of Merit for Research: Nicholas Osenberg, Ripon College

### Design Storm Award Recipient Team:

Director:	Chelsea Jackson, Ball State University
Dramaturg:	Courtney Jonsson, Monmouth University
Scenic:	Will James Stacey, Western Illinois University
Costume:	April Townsend, Michigan State University
Make-up:	Caitlin Daley, Concordia University- ChicagoAp
Sound:	Sarah Karsten, Michigan Technological University

### Tech Olympics:

- 1st. Jalina Olhren and Tyler Weldon from Northern Michigan
- 2nd Charlie Jauquet and Andrea Knoll from Northern Michigan
- 3rd Sara Vansteenbergen and Amanda Herrman from Ripon College

Stagecraft Institute of Las Vegas Award: Rachel Buechel, Oakland University

Prop-a-Palooza: Presented by Society of Properties Artisans Managers (SPAM): Haley Borodins, Ball State University

Focal Press/Rafael Jaen Award: Delena Bradley, Ball State University



# Indianapolis Event, April 2011

By: Paul Brunner, Indiana University-Bloomington

On Saturday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, Indiana Repertory Theatre and the Children’s Museum of Indianapolis hosted a USITT Midwest event. The day started with a light breakfast at the Children’s Museum before attendees embarked on a “back stage” tour including the carpentry and paint shops with Jay Ganz. Jay shared his process and work while attendees got a glimpse into an entirely new field of employment for theatre artisans.

After lunch, the group (round 30) drove a few brief minutes to downtown Indianapolis (roughly a 15 minute drive) to meet with Joel Markus (then Production Manager at IRT) for a tour of Indiana Repertory Theatre.

We look forward to returning to the Indianapolis area for an event this spring! See pg 1 & 3 for further details!



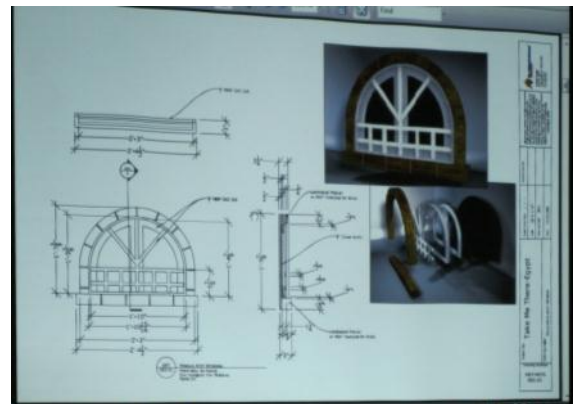
Raymond Oster (of Minnesota) far center, talks with Steve Jacobs, far left, prior to the day’s events.



Below, Joel Markus shares information about IRT and the main rehearsal hall. Lower-right, a design drafting from the Children’s Museum.



Above, exhibit design and construction was presented to attendees by Jay Ganz.



## More Photos from Indiana Repertory Theatre



Thank you to the entire staff of the Children's Museum of Indianapolis and Indiana Repertory Theatre for a wonderful day!

Above, during our discussing in the IRT Scene Shop, the topic clearly involved the ceiling.  
Below, the Costume Shop proved to be an extremely well organized space.



### In Memoriam: Don Childs

Mr. Childs was a well known educator and theatre artisan. A recent article in the February edition of USITT's *Sightlines* share his story.

<http://www.usitt.org/sightlines/archive/2012/02/DonChilds.asp>



## KCACTF Photo Essay

By: Linda Janosko, Indiana State University

Linda Janosko was a Faculty Fellow at the 2011 KCACTF. Below is a sample from her wonderful photo essay which can be found at the USITT Midwest web site under the “News” tab.

Thank you for sharing Linda!

### Midwest Regional Section Annual Meeting

Join your fellow USITT-Midwest members for light breakfast at 8:00am, Thursday at the USITT National Convention. Learn about upcoming events and programs, or get more involved!

**SEE YOU THERE!**

