

## **2012 USITT-SW Slate of Nominees**

### **President-Elect-**

**Kristina Hanssen:** At present I am the present President of USITT-SW. I have been a member since the mid 1990's and became very active in the region in the early 2000's. I have also been a member of National since 1975. I am the resident Costume Designer at Sam Houston State University and am also a free lance Costume Designer having designed costumes for over 150 professional and academic shows in Florida, Missouri, Iowa, Wisconsin, Colorado, Alabama, and Texas. In addition I have worked as a professional costumer (everything from cutter/drapers to shopper) for numerous shows in those states. Some of my notable places of employment are SHSU, Auburn University, Colorado State University, Missouri Repertory Theatre, Texas Renaissance Festival, American Repertory Theatre, Stages Repertory Theatre, Unity Theatre and Disneyworld. I hold a BFA from Stephens College, a MA and MFA from University of Missouri-Kansas City. I have discovered during my first year as your President that there are so many unwritten duties that the office holds that it takes a person some time to make a positive impact on the office. I would therefore appreciate the opportunity to continue in the office of President to be able to use my strong organization abilities to continue to make all aspects of the institute run smoother as we hopefully grow in number and active members across the 5 state region.

### **Secretary-**

**Carrie Barton** is a graduate of Sam Houston State University Dept of Theatre and Dance, and currently is the Technical Director of the School of Music at SHSU. She has been a member of USITT for three years and a member of USITT-SW for four years.

**Kristina Miller** received a BFA in Theatre from Tarleton State University (2005) and her MFA in Production Design from Michigan State University (2010). Her work in education ranges from in class instruction at elementary, secondary and university levels to artist in residence for the Acton Middle School, Acton Texas, production of *Oklahoma!* (2010). Most recent educational works include guest scenic artist for the Texas A&M production of *TH3 B3GGAR'S OP3RA* (2011) and costume designer for *Prelude to a Kiss* (Texas A&M, 2012). Kristina has designed for The Ohio Light Opera (Wooster, Ohio), The Williamston Theatre (Williamston, MI), Summer Circle Theatre (East Lansing, MI), The Renegade Theatre Festival (Lansing, MI), and Acton Middle School (Acton, TX). Currently she serves as an Assistant Lecturer in theatre for the Department of Performance Studies at Texas A&M University, where she teaches theatre history and script analysis. Kristina has been a member of USITT since 2007.

### **VP Communications-**

**Autum Casey** is an instructional assistant professor in the Department of Performance Studies at Texas A&M University. She received her BFA in theatre studies and her MFA in theatrical design with an emphasis in lighting design from the University of Texas at Austin. Before joining the faculty at Texas A&M she was an associate designer at Craig Roberts Associates, an architectural lighting design firm in Dallas, Texas. Her credits include architectural lighting design, theatrical lighting, scenic and costume design; including many international design credits. She is a designer interested in exploring the use of new technology in performance including digital lighting and scenery. Her research focuses on design as performance and the impact of performance as research as a teaching philosophy."

**Kevin Patrick** (BA-Southwestern University, Georgetown, TX; MFA-UNCG, Greensboro) serves as Technical Director and Professor of Theatre for Blinn College. He previously taught design and production at Columbus State University (Georgia) and Kingwood College (Texas). Professional and academic design credits in Texas, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Georgia, and New Hampshire. Kevin has been bringing students to USITT-SW since 2007, and they have submitted design entries since 2009. Kevin

was webmaster of the Georgia Theatre Conference, troubleshoots FUMCBrenham.org, and maintains the Facebook pages for the Blinn College USITT student organization and Blinn Theatre Arts.

## **Director-at-Large-**

**Rusty Cloyes** teaches theatre technology and management at the University of Texas at Austin, is the Technical Director for the American Ensemble Theatre, a company that combines live music, dance, and theatre, and annually stage manages for SXSW, an international live music conference. Acts on Rusty's SXSW stage have included Ice Cube, Jakob Dylan, and Emmylou Harris. Before coming to Austin, Rusty was an Associate Production Manager at the American Repertory Theatre in Cambridge, MA. While with ART, Rusty was the Production Manager for the Institute of Advanced Theatre Training and for the Zero Arrow Theatre, ART's second space, giving him the opportunity to work with up and coming artists and exciting cutting edge companies. Prior to ART, Rusty served as the Assistant Production Manager at the Fox Theatre in Atlanta, a historic 4500 seat theatre presenting entertainment acts from Broadway tours to musical concerts and everything in between.

Before turning to Production Management, Rusty was a professional Stage Manager in Seattle for 10 years, starting with the Seattle Repertory Theatre in 1991 and continuing with various Seattle companies including: the Seattle Children's Theatre, A Contemporary Theatre, the Intiman Theatre, the Village Theatre, and the Seattle Shakespeare Company. During that time, he also toured nationally and internationally, holding the title of everything from properties master to audio engineer to tour manager, with a band of comedic jugglers called the Flying Karamazov Brothers.

Current areas of study are scenic automation, for which Rusty recently attended elite training in Las Vegas with Cirque du Soleil and Stage Technologies, and the development of technical theatre training for Latin American students. Last year, Rusty was awarded travel and research grants from USITT and the American Embassy in Columbia to travel to Columbia, South America to teach high school and college age students about lighting and sound design and technology.

Rusty received his M.F.A. in Theatre Technology from the University of Texas at Austin. He is a member of Actor's Equity Association, the United States Institute for Theatre Technology, and the American Institute of Steel Construction.

**LaLionie Lehman**, Professor of Theatre at Texas Christian University, has been teaching and designing costumes for theatre, opera, dance and theatre for children for 37 years. At TCU she recently designed costumes for *Oklahoma!*. She is Costume coordinator for the Ft. Worth Opera Festival Season, costume designer for Ft. Worth Opera Children's Opera Tour season (most recently design of costumes for *The Town Musicians of Bremen*) and costume designer for the Boar's Head and Yule Log Festival at University Christian Church (36 years). Credits Upstream Theatre in St Louis, University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee (Professional Training Program), Marquette University, Togliatti Russia, University of Nevada Reno, Casa Manana (Ft. Worth) and Circle Theatre (Ft. Worth). She is a member of the regional and national United States Institute for Theatre Technology and Costume Society of America.

**Benjamin Shurr** received his BA in Theatre from The Ohio State University in 2001. He worked as local roadie for Proton Productions in Columbus, OH working over 100 concerts as a deck hand and/or spot light operator for 3 years. Upon moving to Texas he received his teaching certificate in 2004 and began work as head of the theater program at Lancaster High School in Lancaster, TX. He worked there for 2 years until moving to Frisco, TX. He is currently in his 7<sup>th</sup> year as the TD of Frisco High School in Frisco, TX. In 2007 he was the TD of the UIL One-Act Play State Finalist *David's Mother*. In 2008 he established a student chapter of USITT and it is thriving, going from 7 members in 2008 to nearly 30 in 2011-2012. In December of 2010 Frisco High School hosted the SW USITT Symposium being the first high school to host such an event, Mr. Shurr was co-organizer of the event. In 2010, he was the co-recipient of the Mildred & Glenn Martin Service Award for his services to the SW USITT region. In 2011, his student was a state finalist in the UIL Design category for costuming, a first for Frisco ISD. His most recent production of *The Wizard of Oz* set records for both attendance and revenue at Frisco High School. In 2012, Frisco

High School received the award for Excellence in Collaboration at the SW USITT student design competition. He is currently working on *Medea* for the spring UIL One Act Play competition.

**Elizabeth Shurr** received her BA in Theatre from The Ohio State University in 2001. She worked as local roadie for Proton Productions in Columbus, OH working over 50 concerts as a deck hand for 3 years. Upon moving to Texas she received her teaching certificate in 2005 and began work as head of the theater program at Lancaster Middle School in Lancaster, TX. She worked there for 1 year until moving to Frisco, TX. She is currently in her 7<sup>th</sup> year as a theatre teacher in Frisco, TX. In December of 2010 she was the co-organizer of the SW USITT winter symposium held at Frisco High School. In 2010, she was the co-recipient of the Mildred & Glenn Martin Service Award for her services to the SW USITT region. In the spring of 2011 she served as the assistant to the VP of Development of SW USITT. That fall she moved from Staley Middle School to Frisco ISD's newest high school, Lone Star High School. At the helm of the new school she is both the acting and technical director. Her first production of *Damn Yankees!* received rave reviews throughout the community. She is currently working on *White Room of my Remembering* for the spring UIL One Act Play competition and a masters degree in Fine Arts Curriculum writing from Texas Women's University.

**Michael Skinner** is an Associate Professor of Theatre and the Resident Lighting Designer at TCU. Michael has designed the lighting and/or scenery for over 100 productions of theatre, opera, and dance over his 20 year career. Michael has had the pleasure of designing in Italy, Germany, and Russia, including the Russian premiere of the American musical The Fantasticks at Theatre Koleso in Togliatti, Russia. Michael has designed for Contemporary Ballet Dallas, the William Inge Theatre Festival, as well as Amphibian Productions. He has also designed scenery for A Lesson Before Dying, and scenery and lighting for Permanent Collection, The Bluest Eye, From The Mississippi Delta, and most recently lighting for Shakin The Mess Outa Misery at Jubilee Theater. He received DFW Critics Forum Awards for the Trinity Shakespeare Festival shows Romeo and Juliet and most recently Macbeth. Michael's work outside the theatre also includes corporate event design, production, and consultation.

## **Student Director-at-Large-**

**Jim Rodgers** -A bit about myself, I am a Junior at Texas Christian University studying theatrical design. I have been an active member of USITT and USITT southwest, attending both the southwest and national conference each year since I became a member in 2010. I see an importance in the organization and connecting students, educators, and professionals at all levels to further the future of theatre.

**Connor Toups-** I am currently a two-year member of USITT Southwest and will be a two-year member of USITT Nationals after this year. I am a sophomore at Sam Houston State University. I am earning my degree in Theatre with a Design and Technology emphasis. Here at Sam Houston State University I work in our scene shop as the shop's sound engineer and as one of their electricians. Also, I have worked professionally at Stages Repertory Theatre and Unity Theatre here in Texas.