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## USITT Names 2016 Distinguished Achievement Winners

Sound designer John Leonard, scene designer Anna Louizos, costume designer Joy Emery and theatre safety educator Monona Rossol will be honored with USITT Distinguished Achievement Awards at USITT's 2016 Annual Conference & Stage Expo in Salt Lake City next March.

USITT's Board of Directors approved the awards at a recent meeting in Salt Lake City.

Every year, USITT recognizes a few people whose careers have advanced the performing arts and live entertainment industry.

John Leonard will receive USITT's 2016 Distinguished Achievement Award in Sound Design & Technology. Leonard, a freelance designer and former Head of Sound for The Royal Shakespeare Company, is the author of *Theatre Sound* (2001). His credits include many West End productions and several that went to Broadway – such as *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, and *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*. He also has designed sound systems for venues around the world, elevated the art of 3D sound effects recording, and is one of the few non-Americans invited to join Broadway Entertainment Technicians Union IATSE Local 1.

Anna Louizos will receive USITT's 2016 Distinguished Achievement Award in Scene Design. She was one of the first female Broadway set designers in what is still a male-dominated field. Last season, of 51 shows on Broadway, six had sets designed by women, and three were by Anna Louizos. Her artistry has earned her Tony nominations for best scene design for *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, *High Fidelity*, and Lin-Manuel Miranda's *In the Heights*. Other Broadway credits include *Avenue Q*, *Golda's Balcony*, *Cinderella*, and Irving Berlin's *White Christmas*.

Joy Spanabel Emery will receive the 2016 Distinguished Achievement Award in Costume Design. She is a costume designer, educator, author, and curator of the *Commercial Pattern Archive* at the University of Rhode Island, the world's largest collection of sewing patterns documenting the history of everyday fashion from the 1840s on. She is a professor emerita at URI who took on the archive as a retirement project in 2000 to preserve the history of the home pattern industry. She recently published a new book on the subject, *A History of the Paper Pattern Industry*.

Monona Rossol will receive the 2016 Distinguished Achievement Award in Education. Rossol calls herself an industrial hygienist, but that doesn't begin to describe the work

she has done to make the arts safer for practitioners and patrons alike. She is a chemist, theatre artist, ceramicist and glassblower, and an expert on industrial safety. She is president and founder of Arts, Crafts and Theater Safety, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation dedicated to providing health and safety services to the arts. She also is Health and Safety Director for Local 829 of the United Scenic Artists, International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE). She is the author of *Pick Your Poison: How Our Mad Dash to Chemical Utopia is Making Lab Rats of Us All* and *The Artist's Complete Health and Safety Guide*.

The USITT Distinguished Achievement award winners will be honored with special presentations on their work and several chances for fans to meet, interact with and learn from them at USITT 2016 in Salt Lake City next March 16-19.

They'll also participate in USITT's popular *Distinguished Achievers in Conversation* session on Friday, March 18 at the Salt Palace Convention Center.

"This group of honorees is a testament to the diverse, groundbreaking, important, and inspiring work that's going on in the theatrical design and technology industry," said USITT Executive Director David Grindle. "We are proud to be able to recognize these geniuses in our midst, who are making the field a better place for all of us."

USITT, the United States Institute for Theatre Technology, is the nonprofit serving the performing arts and live entertainment design and technology industry. For info, visit [www.usitt.org](http://www.usitt.org).

USITT's Annual Conference & Stage Expo is the Institute's largest annual event, drawing some 5,000 members of the backstage industry for networking, education, recognition, inspiration, and a trade show featuring nearly 300 exhibitors of the latest industry products and resources. For info on the show, visit [www.usittshow.org](http://www.usittshow.org).