



Press Information

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Who We Are

The Institute of Outdoor Drama was founded in 1963 as an organization dedicated to serving the American historical outdoor theatre movement. In the ensuing years, its scope expanded and grew internationally to include Shakespeare festivals, religious plays, musicals and all other types of plays always with the shared characteristic of outdoor performance. To reflect this growth, the organization changed its name in 2014 to the **Institute of Outdoor Theatre (IOT)**. We are based in the College of Fine Arts and Communication at East Carolina University in Greenville, North Carolina. Our scope includes a wide variety of international professional and community theatre organizations. These organizations are united by their dedication to producing outstanding theatre and their unique roles in providing exceptional entertainment and tourism attractions for their regions.

Now in its 50th year of service to the field and in recognition of the vibrant and wider world of outdoor theatre, the Institute has approved a plan to expand its membership to embrace the international community of theatre practitioners.

The services provided by the Institute to its members include:

- The annual national conference
- The *Mentor Consultation Program* providing free consulting services to our member
- Unified Auditions for member companies
- Research and publications on matters of interest to the membership, including attendance statistics, audience surveys, economic impact studies, technological developments, cultural tourism and marketing trends
- Feasibility studies for new theatres provided by teams of professional consultants and ongoing development assistance for communities wishing to establish outdoor theatres

Institute of Outdoor Theatre
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www.outdoor-theatre.org

- Consultations to member companies in all areas of theatre management, strategic planning, board retreats, executive search and special projects
- Public information and promotions of the outdoor entertainment experiences provided by our members
- Liaison with other national and international arts services and tourism organizations, government agencies and unions
- Assistance in executive search
- Awards programs for Lifetime Achievement and Volunteer of the Year

Perhaps the most valued benefit of membership in IOT is the network it provides of theatre professionals sharing common challenges, expertise and aspirations.

History

On August 1, 2010, the Institute of Outdoor Drama became a public service agency of the College of Fine Arts and Communication at East Carolina University. It was established in 1963 at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. It is the only service organization providing leadership in fostering artistic and managerial excellence and expansion of outdoor theatre through training, networking, research and advisory programs. The Institute serves as a clearinghouse for its member theatre companies in North America and has launched a program of international expansion. In 2014 the name of the organization changed to the Institute of Outdoor Theatre to reflect its growth in representing outdoor theatre performance internationally.

The Institute gathers information related to outdoor writing, management, and production and distributes that information to production companies, planners, the news media and artists in the field. It works with writers, lawyers, directors, architects, managers, promoters, performers and designers, and experts in marketing and travel.

In 2012 Dr. Michael Hardy became the Director of the Institute. Hardy's Ph.D. in Theatre is from the University of Michigan, and he has worked in the field for over 35 years. In addition to his career as the CEO of several major arts centers, Hardy served as executive director of the International Society for the Performing Arts (ISPA) for seven years and led that organization's transformation from a largely North American institution to a vital international society with members from 50 nations and congresses in most of the world's cultural capitals.

Communications

- Our **web site** www.outdoor-theatre.org is a comprehensive source of information about the Institute and our members. Recent press releases, photos and member announcements are regularly updated.
- Follow us on **Twitter** @outdoor_theatre
- And on **Facebook**: Institute of Outdoor Theatre

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