



Rewarding Canada's finest at Rendez-vous 2016 in Winnipeg, Manitoba

Delegates gather for the 26th CITT/ICTS Awards presentation
All photos courtesy Eva Cherney

IN RECOGNITION OF THE TRADITIONAL INHABITANTS of the territory on which we held our event, CITT/ICTS Rendez-vous 2016 wishes to acknowledge that we met on Treaty #1 Territory and the homeland of the Metis Nation. Manitoba (where the Creator sits) encompasses the traditional territories of the Cree, Ojibwe, Dakota, Ojibwe-Cree, Dene peoples, and the Inuit. The opening and closing ceremonies were performed by Albert McLeod a Status Indian with ancestry from Nisichawayasihk (Knee-Sich-Awaya-Seek) Cree Nation and the community of Norway House in northern Manitoba.

It was an evening of recognition and celebration that took place on Saturday, August 20, at Fairmont Winnipeg. Delegates

from the 26th CITT/ICTS Rendez-vous gathered for cocktails and the annual awards banquet in the Midway Ballroom all jazzed up with black and gold linen. A large screen was set up for the award presentations, on which we would later watch the CBC live presentation of *The Tragically Hip – A National Celebration*. The special live broadcast became a huge cultural happening in Canada with screenings in hundreds of venues across the country as the nation came together to see the Canadian rock band simply referred as The Hip play in their hometown of Kingston, Ontario. Earlier this year, the band's frontman Gord Downie was diagnosed with terminal brain cancer and the band decided to undertake a summer tour of Canada with

their 13th album *Man Machine Poem*. The tour wrapped up in Kingston on Saturday, August 20, the same night as our awards banquet. We absolutely had to include this unique live broadcast of their show as part of the evening. But first, the awards.

Recognizing our peers

Created in 1998, the CITT/ICTS awards are designed to honour individuals and companies from a wide spectrum of the Canadian live performance community. The nomination of candidates for the CITT/ICTS awards is driven directly by the membership with the final selection made by the Awards Committee composed of the CITT/ICTS Section Representatives, the



Status Indian Albert McLeod offers the closing prayer at the awards banquet.

Vice-President, the Secretary, and either the Past President or President-Elect. The six CITT/ICTS awards are as follows:

The Honorary Membership Award is awarded to an individual or organisation not actively involved in the technical disciplines of the Canadian live performance industry, but who by virtue of their position has contributed significantly to the development of technical disciplines within Canada. This contribution can be seen through the recipient's decision-making, influence, and philosophy within the community or by showing themselves



The Honorary Membership Award presentation by President Adam Mitchell with Cole Alvis of IPAA.

to be a longstanding friend of the institute. The 2016 award was presented to the Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance (IPAA). The Indigenous Performing Arts

Alliance is a multifaceted organization with geographically and artistically diverse Indigenous performing artists, arts organizations, and ally institutions. They are being recognized for their work connecting Indigenous performing artists, opportunities, and communities across Canada, through a collective voice, generosity, and inclusion. IPAA Executive Director Cole Alvis accepted the award on behalf of IPAA (see sidebar for his acceptance speech).



Corporate (Supplier) Award recipients Marnie Style and Rachelle Robson from Ultratec Special Effects with President Adam Mitchell.

The Supplier (Corporate) Achievement Award is awarded to an individual, or a corporate entity, which has shown sustained commitment to providing excellent service and/or product(s) to the Canadian cultural industries community. The 2016 award was presented to Ultratec Special Effects.

Ultratec Special Effects, based in London, Ontario, is a manufacturer and distributor of special effects equipment including fog, haze, bubbles, snow, dry ice, and simulated flames. They are the leading provider of solutions for the entertainment industry worldwide. Ultratec is built on a simple combination of humbled culture, experience, outstanding creativity, and excellent customer service. Through these basic principles they have the capacity to

deliver some of the best products in the industry.

Over the years, Ultratec has become an avid supporter of CITT/ICTS. They participate at numerous events including the CITT/ICTS's annual trade show, Expo-Scène in Montréal, and have sponsored CITT/ICTS' awards banquet on many occasions. The leadership of Ultratec's Vice-President Marnie Styles contributed in strengthening the relationship with CITT/ICTS. With her positive outlook and charisma, she is always willing to offer the National Coordinator constructive feedback, sound advice, and share her knowledge. Ultratec has demonstrated a true and sustained commitment to the CITT/ICTS, its members, and the industry at large.

The Award of Technical Merit is awarded to a production company or theatre, or a combination thereof, for



The Technical Merit Award was bestowed by President Adam Mitchell to Rick Boychuk of Grid Well, Inc.

outstanding achievement in the use of theatre technology on a specific project or production. The 2016 award was presented to Rick Boychuk and his company Grid-Well, Inc.

In 2005, Rick created Grid Well, Inc., through which he has helped sell, design, and install counterweight rigging systems in performing arts centres across the US and

Acceptance speech on behalf of IPAA for the Honourary Membership Award by CITT/ICTS

I had the privilege of representing the Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance (IPAA) at the Canadian Institute for Theatre Technology (CITT/ICTS) by accepting their Honourary Membership Award on behalf of IPAA. Here is my acceptance speech:

I would like to begin by acknowledging the traditional caretakers of this land: the Anishnabeg, the Cree, the Oji-Cree, the Dakota, the Dene, the Inuit peoples and that this is the homeland of the Métis Nation.

My name is Cole Alvis and I am proud of my Métis-Irish/English heritage from the Turtle Mountains, just southwest of here. These lands and waterways are where my parents grew up and where my Chippewa ancestors can be traced to the Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation in what is now called North Dakota.

I am here today to accept the Honourary Membership Award on behalf of the Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance as an acknowledgment of our contribution to the development of technical disciplines within Canada.

IPAA's mandate is to claim space for all Indigenous performing artists and with that in mind I offer this framework for how the action of awarding our Indigenous organization with an Honourary Membership can be meaningful and forward moving.

I will begin by speaking one of the 94 calls to action from the Truth & Reconciliation Commission (TRC):

Commemoration 83

We call upon the Canada Council for the Arts to establish, as a funding priority, a strategy for Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists to undertake collaborative projects and produce works that contribute to the reconciliation process.

As you may know, the Canada Council for the Arts accepted this call and are in the process of implementing their new funding model which includes a program called Creating Knowing & Sharing: The Arts & Cultures of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples.

At this time, I am compelled to address white supremacy within the performing arts. I understand it is an uncomfortable phrase because I too have white privilege.

In order to survive my Indigenous ancestors assimilated, choosing to marry out of their Nation as a result of Boarding School (as they were called in the US). I am proud of my Métis heritage and yet I, too, benefit from white privilege in this industry.

To clarify, white supremacy is the belief that white people are superior to those of all other races and should therefore dominate society. An example within the performing arts can be understood by examining the "nation-building" period when Canada was celebrating its centennial by building the regional theatres [that many of us work in] across this land, Indigenous peoples were just being given the right to vote.

The very structure of the arts in Canada are predicated on Eurocentric notions of art and excellence, lacking severely in Indigenous worldviews.

Returning to the TRC commemoration calling for collaboration that contributes to the reconciliation process, I invite you to consider how you will accept this call to action. At the Brown Bag Lunch yesterday, I spoke of the necessity for relationship building and meaningful engagement in any cross-cultural collaboration. Inspired by the work of the Canada Council, I encourage the Canadian Institute for Theatre Technology to establish a strategy that supports this framework. In accepting this Honourary Membership I encourage CITT to support all of us in the work of engaging with the local Indigenous artists and communities upon which we live and work.

This summer, I had the opportunity to attend Q2Q: A Symposium on Queer Theatre and Performance in Canada co-sponsored by Simon Fraser University and the frank theatre company on Coast Salish territory.

During this landmark gathering an affinity group of artistic leaders made up of Queer Trans Indigenous and People of Colour (QTIPOC) circled up and developed these four recommendations for the conference and for the performing arts:

1. Acknowledge that Two Spirit people have been performing here since time immemorial and should be looked to for leadership in the creation of queer futures on these lands and waterways.

2. Build meaningful relationships with artists [and technicians] who are QTIPOC and engage them in decision-making roles.
3. Actively collaborate with artists [and technicians] who are QTIPOC from the Deaf, Disability, and Mad communities.
4. Educate yourselves about white supremacy and join artists [and technicians] who are QTIPOC in the pursuit of equity.

This is long work and it needs to start right now.

As an Honourary Member of the CITT/ICTS, IPAA is an ally in this work. If you are interested in becoming a non-voting, non-Indigenous Ally Member of IPAA, the commitment is threefold:

- Pledge to be an equity-seeking organization
- Pay a fee to IPAA [sliding scale on par with CAPACOA]
- Make an in-kind donation to an IPAA member artist or organization in your community

On behalf of the Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance, I would like to say "Gitchi Meegwetch" to Canadian Institute for Theatre Technology for their acknowledgment of our work in the performing arts.

Cross-cultural collaborations that acknowledge historical inequities and place Indigenous leadership at the centre is how we can all do the work and move forward together.

I will leave you with a quote from Lilla Watson, a Gangulu Elder in what is now called Australia: *"If you have come to help me you're wasting your time. If you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together."*

Marsi,
 Cole Alvis
 Executive Director
 Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance
<https://www.facebook.com/ipaaonline/>

Canada. Seeking to improve safety and user ergonomics in technical theatre, Rick invented the Front Loading Arbor in 2008. It is now patented in Canada and the United States with systems installed in Canada, the US, South America, and the UK. Last year, he applied for a patent for an Arbor Trap, which is designed to prevent runaway arbors. Grid Well products are licensed by and available through select manufacturers and dealers in North America, including J. R. Clancy, Thern Stage Equipment, BellaTex, Blackwell, and Peter Albrecht Company in the US. The Canadian license is held by Joel Theatrical Rigging.



Ron Epp Memorial Award for Professional Achievement recipient was Rick Boychuk.

The Ron Epp Memorial Award for Professional Achievement is awarded to an individual, in recognition of longstanding career achievement in a technical or related discipline within the Canadian live performance industry. The 2016 award was presented to Rick Boychuk.

R.W. (Rick) Boychuk has been a teacher of technical theatre, technical director, IA stagehand (Local 300 in Saskatoon), set and lighting designer, and continues as a consultant in the area of theatre safety, a rigging inventor, and an author. He has worked in the industry for over 40 years.

Rick graduated from University of Saskatchewan in technical theatre in 1977 and began his career as TD at Persephone Theatre, working rock and roll, ballet, etc. In 1979, he took a position teaching tech theatre at U of S. He moved to Ontario in 1984 where he worked at Jack Frost Ltd. as a systems integrator. In 1994, Rick launched Theatre Safety Consultants, filling a much-needed niche in stage safety in Ontario schools. Over a 12-year period as a consultant, Rick inspected and oversaw the remediation of safety issues, including rigging systems, in over 600 schools for 40 school boards across Ontario.

In 2014, Rick offered to do a presentation at the CITT/ICTS conference in Ottawa. That presentation spun off to become a book – *Nobody Looks Up, The History of the Counterweight Rigging*

System, 1500-1925 (2015 and reviewed in the Spring 2015 issue of *Protocol*). The book was nominated for the 2016 USITT Golden Pen Award. The book uncovers the real story of the development of the counterweight system. Rick has started research on the second installment of the story, which will complete the history to the present.

Rick has also started to collect complete historical counterweight line sets that will be donated to a museum for future generations to study. He is either in possession of, or has commitments to receive, line sets from various manufacturers from 1909, 1926, 1931, 1938, 1955, and 1961.

He is the president of Grid Well, Inc., a company that he created in 2015 allowing him to contribute to the live performance industry with his conceptual idea and practical realization of the front-loading counterweight arbor system. All those realisations make Rick worthy of the Ron Epp Memorial Award for Professional Achievement.

many conferences, especially the student-focused ones. He truly believed in his students and he tried to make the conference fun and engaging for them as well as encourage them to be involved and contribute to the organization. Work colleague and close friend Tim Johnson shared a poignant tribute to Mike and accepted the award on his behalf.



The Education Achievement Award was accepted by Tim Johnson on behalf of Mike Taugher.

The Education Achievement Award is awarded to an individual, in recognition of longstanding career achievement as an educator. This individual is engaged in the teaching of a technical or related discipline, while preparing students for work within the Canadian live performance industry. The 2016 award was presented posthumously to Mike Taugher.

Mike was a mentor to not only his students, past and present, but to anyone he came in contact with in the industry. At the time of his passing on August 18, 2015, Mike was the chair of the Theatre Department at Vancouver Island University. Since starting his tenure at the University (Malaspina College) in 1991, Mike has had a profound effect on students who went on to become technicians working across the country. Prior to working at the Malaspina College, Mike worked in the theatre department at the University of Calgary. An ardent supporter of CITT/ICTS, Mike attended



President Adam Mitchell with Shawn Hines who accepted the Dieter Penzhorn Memorial Award on behalf of Don Parman.

The Dieter Penzhorn Memorial Award is awarded to an individual who has provided significant and sustained service to the Canadian Institute for Theatre Technology / Institut canadien des technologies scénographiques, while playing an active role in the development of the greater Canadian cultural community. The 2016 award was presented to the Don Parman.

Based in British Columbia, Don has been extensively involved



Gord Downie, lead singer of The Tragically Hip

in the Vancouver theatre scene for 25 years and was the technical director of the Massey Theatre in New Westminster for 12 years. A member of the board of Actsafe and Interim Executive Director during their transition period, he now works as a consultant concentrating on backstage safety and education. Don has had a great personal effect on countless members of the BC Section

years and the BC CITT Section would not exist in its current form without the influence of Don Parman. Don could not attend the conference this year; BC CITT Section board member Shawn Hines accepted the award on his behalf.

A national celebration

As the closing words of the awards presentation faded, we all turned to the screen. The first notes of the song “Fifty Mission Cap” resounded in the room, on stage the lights illuminating the band with Gord leading The Hip, and all of us, on an epic and unforgettable three-hour journey.

For more information about the CITT/ICTS awards and the list of prior recipients, please visit our website: citt.org/citt_awards.html. The deadline to submit nominations for the 2017 Annual CITT/ICTS Awards is March 31, 2017. ■



The Tragically Hip live broadcast across Canada

and their careers. His contribution to the section and the national organization was recognized because of his unselfish dedication to the local, regional, and national CITT/ICTS organization over many



After studying fine arts and theatre production, **Monique Corbeil** became involved in the performing arts industry in Quebec and has worked in almost every aspect—from technical production and touring to management and marketing. Based in Montréal, Québec, she is known as Mo, the CITT/ICTS National Coordinator, a position she has occupied since 2005.