



The Harbor Cruise on the eve of NATEAC is a spectacular networking event that sets the tone for a collaborative and enlightening conference.

# The North American Theatre Engineering and Architecture Conference returns in July

BY EDDIE RAYMOND

The 2016 event brings together the designers, creators, and end users of performing arts spaces to promote a higher level of interaction to benefit all.

## PREPARATIONS FOR THE THIRD

North American Theatre Engineering and Architecture Conference (NATEAC) are well under way for July 17 – 18 in New York City. This quadrennial event looks to be the best yet with a wide variety of interesting and

relevant panels taking shape.

The Mission Statement of NATEAC is to “promote communication between the architects, engineers, consultants, and manufacturers responsible for designing and building new theatres and renovating

existing facilities in North America.” And, “to promote a higher level of interaction between these professionals and the end users of their facilities.”

The 2012 NATEAC conference was a great success with 280 attendees and 26 sessions over two days covering subjects as varied as the history of Broadway to Client/Consultant relationships.

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Since our last meeting we have experienced some significant economic recovery around the North American region, and it will be interesting to see the effect that has had on the theatre building and renovation industry. NATEAC is a great opportunity to spend time with your colleagues in this exciting and ever changing world of performing arts buildings. What



Panel discussions at NATEAC, led by a wide cross section of professionals, are informative and thought-provoking for all.

## The sessions scheduled for the 2016 NATEAC Conference (as of publication):

- Keynote address: Reynold Levy
- And One for All: Making Road Houses and Multifunction Rooms Work
- Greening Initiatives in Theatres: Construction and Facility Management
- The Return of the Kings: Restoring a Movie Palace's Glory and Transforming Its Function
- Gender Identity Accommodations in Performing Arts Facility Planning
- Immersive Environments and the 21st Century Audience
- Networks on Shows and in Venues: What Do You Need to Know?
- Hoist Mechanical Design Using *ANSI E1.6-1 – 2012*
- The Lobby: Public Space, Private Club, or Part of the Show?
- Adapting Facilities for Use as Performance Spaces
- Who's Scope is it Anyway? (The Designer/ Contractor Dating Game)
- Stage Design – Go Modular and Avoid Resonant Frequencies!
- What You Already Know: It's All About the Programming!
- The Joy of Flex: Measuring the Value of Flexible Theatres
- Liability and the Design Professional: What Are the Exposures, Real and Imagined?
- Core Values: What Makes a Great Theatre?
- Theatre Design Compliance Issues: OSHA, EPA, LEED, ASHRAE, and More
- Changing Electrical Infrastructure in the Transition to Solid-State Lighting
- Multi-Use Hall Acoustics
- 3D Video Mapping Technology
- Systems Integration – It's More than Just Two Words!
- Plenary: The Way Forward. What Does the Future Look Like for Performance Spaces in North America?

For more detailed information on sessions go to [www.nateac.org](http://www.nateac.org).

has changed over the past four years about how we perceive the role of our work? What new challenges do we face? What are our deepest concerns and expectations?

We design and construct the pre-show environment audiences occupy, and that in turn helps set the tone for what they subsequently experience. What an audience sees, hears, and feels when they enter a building and then in the performance space is dependent on how well we understand the programming and the intentions of those who create the product. Our understanding of how people experience their surroundings is paramount to the success of these spaces. NATEAC 2016 will facilitate an exchange of ideas about that understanding.

We dream up new technologies or new ways to incorporate existing technologies in these spaces. The technologies we incorporate into a theatre and the way we do so informs the work that will eventually be done there. Chasing the ethereal target of “getting it right” becomes the challenge of the perfect marriage between form and

function, and perfection can be ever so subjective. It changes with the tastes of the times and the people creating the art. NATEAC 2016 will explore how the changes in tastes and times inform our definition of perfection.

We define the parameters that designers work within, providing them with the infrastructures they need and expect in order to execute their art—hopefully flexible and complete enough to let them realize their visions, but at the same time serving the needs and wishes of those who pay for the art—another challenge for us. At NATEAC 2016 there will be much discussion of those challenges.

The manner in which these buildings are executed sets the tone for the manner in which technicians execute their crafts. The efficiency and safety of the crew depends heavily on how well we understand their work. A building with all of the latest bells and whistles can be fraught with a variety of hazards if these challenges aren't addressed in meaningful ways as the buildings are designed, constructed, and commissioned.

Much of this task is dependent on infrastructures that are incorporated into the design and not easily addressed in a finished building. NATEAC 2016 will allow us to better understand that task.

Our understanding of the environment and our effect on it has grown exponentially in the last four years. New choices have emerged for the products we use in our buildings, the way we execute our work and the waste we produce. Today, we better understand potential global effects of our choices. At NATEAC 2016 we will talk about ways to more responsibly embrace and facilitate those choices.

The only sure thing in life, and thus in art, architecture, and engineering is that things will change. The world we experience today is not the same as the world we experienced in 2012, nor the world we will see in the future. The rules of physics may be the same but the tools we use to harness them and the environment in which we use those tools have changed. The history of art and architecture has grown and evolved and continues to inform our work as does greater knowledge about our world.

The founders and advisors of NATEAC 2016 hope that this conference, much like the 2008 and 2012 conferences, will allow us to meet new people and form new friendships. We hope that this opportunity to share information and opinions about our work leads us all to ask hard questions and look for solutions to the myriad challenges we all share. We have every confidence that you will find the NATEAC 2016 conference rewarding and satisfying. I look forward to seeing you there.

For the latest information and registration, go to [www.nateac.org](http://www.nateac.org). ■



**Edward L. Raymond** is President of ESTA. Eddie is VP of IATSE Local 16 in San Francisco. He also serves as a member of the NATEAC Planning Committee and the ETCP Certification Council. Eddie can be reached at [eddierr@local16.org](mailto:eddierr@local16.org).