

15 September 2013

Mr. Michael McMackin, President, American Society of Theatre Consultants, P.O. Box 22,
La Luz, New Mexico 88337

MICHAEL, I am proud and honored to nominate William Conner, ASTC, for Fellow of the Society. Bill meets all of the eligibility requirements in that he has rendered conspicuous service and made notable contributions to the advancement of theatre consulting.

Since 1987 Bill has unhesitatingly and exhaustively represented the ASTC – and the professional theatre planning community – to the US code making authorities. He is primarily responsible for the enacting of dozens of building and life-safety code changes that have brought common sense and good design to the industry. Some examples of Bill's influence are:

- Antiquated requirements have been eliminated, and new requirements developed that respond more accurately to contemporary facility design, such as: construction type; enclosure; allowance for trap rooms; openings in stage walls and floors; and special structures within stages.
- Numerous specific details have been deleted, revised, or added to accommodate contemporary practice and construction, such as special guard (railing) configurations, unprotected (i.e., non-fireproofed) structure; and limited used of combustible materials (e.g., wood catwalk decks).
- Development of clear, performance-based standards recognizing alternate forms of theatres and alternate strategies for life and fire safety, particularly as regards natural and mechanical ventilation and proscenium opening protection if the form of fire safety curtains or deluge water curtains.
- Recognition that, since the Iroquois Theatre fire in 1903, there have been no significant fires in performing arts venues while occupied by an audience, but that performers and technicians are often exposed to hazards. This addressed issues of backstage fire compartments and minimum degree requirements for technical areas.

Throughout all of this exceptional work, Bill has often had to battle entrenched influences by self-serving manufacturers and vendors, and he has steadfastly conducted himself with assurance and composure. He has also meticulously kept close communication with all ASTC members to gather member input and to keep the members aware of pending and completed code changes.

PARTNERS

Duane Schuler
Robert Shook
Michael DiBlasi
Todd Hensley
Jim Baney
Jack Hagler

In short, no one in ASTC history has better promoted the interests of the ASTC than Bill Conner. And no one is more worthy of being elevated to Fellow of the Society.



Robert Shook, ASTC

Bill Conner ASTC

Education

Yale School of Drama
SUNY Potsdam

MFA 1979
BA drama with honors, 1974

Employment

Consultant and Owner, Bill Conner Associates LLC, Oak Park, Illinois
Principal Consultant, Schuler & Shook, Inc. Chicago, Illinois
Consultant, Jerit/Boys Inc. Oak Park, Illinois
Consultant, Systems Design Associates Inc. New Haven, Connecticut
Associate Professor, Bates College, Lewiston, Maine
Professor Adjunct, Colby College, Waterville, Maine
Professor Adjunct, SUNY Potsdam, New York

March 2005 to present
February 1999 to February 2005
June 1989 to February 1999
June 1982 to June 1989
September 1979 to June 1982
September 1978 to June 1979
September 1974 to June 1975

Awards

National Fire Protection Association Special Achievement Award

2008

Publications

Changes Proposed for the NFPA Life Safety Code"

USITT *Sightlines*, 1989

"Review of Fire and Building Codes for Stages"

USITT *Sightlines*, 1990

"The ADA is a Building Code"

Theatre Crafts, 1992

"Burning Issues in Fire Curtain Regulation"

Protocol, Spring, 2001

"Fire Protection for Stages without Reliance on the Fire Safety Curtain"

Theatre Engineering and Architecture, Volume 3, 2002

"Fusing Art and Science in Worship"

Church Executive, February, 2004

"Spotlight on Theater Accessibility"

Building Safety Journal, June, 2007

"The Top Ten Mistakes in Planning and Designing High School Theatres"

Lighting and Sound America, March, 2010

"Codes and Standards: Optional or Mandatory?"

Protocol, Winter 2013

"Stage Ventilation: Clearing the Heat and Smoke"

Protocol, Summer 2013

Codes and Standards

NFPA Life Safety Code - Assembly Occupancy Technical Committee

1987 to present

BCMC Stages, Platforms, and Sound Stages report

1988 to 1992

NFPA Fire Doors and Windows Committee

2003 to present

ADAAG sub-committee on Assembly Occupancies

2001 to 2003

ANSI A117.1 Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities committee

2002 to present

Personal

Besides attending plays as often as possible with his wife of 39 years, Kim Michel Conner, Bill is an avid outdoors adventurer, especially enjoying canoeing with his two sons, Will and James, in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area and camping wherever the Boy Scouts go including Philmont Scout Ranch."



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20 August 2013

Board of Directors

American Society of Theatre Consultants

Recommendation of William Conner as Fellow of ASTC

I am writing to recommend Bill Conner to be the second Fellow of ASTC. While there are many reasons that qualify Bill for the honor of Fellow, I will discuss in detail only two.

First, is Bill's service to the Society for his work on Codes and Standards. After becoming an ASTC member, Bill sought to influence the model building codes in ways that would be beneficial to our profession. This was not an easy task. Bill sought advice from members of the building code panels and learned that to become credible, it took years of participation and work with the code bodies. Bill made that long term commitment, and followed through. In a remarkable short span of 3 or 4 years, the building code and NFPA people developed respect for Bill, and his ability to analyze a code problem and craft language that would address it. One of Bill's first assignments was providing input to the committee tasked with coordinating sections dealing with stages in the three model codes in use in the US in the early 1990s. As many of these meetings were held in Washington, DC, I was able to attend them with Bill and observe him in his representation of ASTC. Later in the 1990s Bill was part of the public assembly sub-committee for ANSI 117.1A (the ANSI standard dealing with ADA requirements). Again, as many meetings were held in Rockville, MD, I was able to attend with Bill and observe his unique ability to work with code officials, clearly explain our problems, and craft language that was acceptable to the many interests around the table and be code enforceable. For his code and standard work alone I would highly recommend Bill to be a Fellow of the Society.

However, in addition to the above, Bill is also a very fine and creative theater consultant. It was my pleasure, for twenty years, to be involved with a preventative maintenance program at Alumni Hall, at the United States Naval Academy. This space is a 5000 seat basketball arena that was mechanized to convert to a concert hall; a performing arts center capable of dance, opera, and road shows; as well as serve the unique assembly and academic needs of the naval midshipmen. Bill was the lead designer for this facility during its planning when he worked for Systems Design. His success in achieving a useable, functioning multi-use space on this scale is incredible and is testified to weekly (often daily) by the hall staff as they change the configuration of the hall to accommodate the variety of scheduled events.

I have also had the change to see recent examples of Bill's work and am always impressed with the simple and inexpensive solutions he develops to the problems that vex us all.

In summary, Bill Conner, should be an ASTC Fellow based on the quality of his consulting work and the service to the Society of his work on codes and standards. Each member of the Society, benefits daily in our work because of the code and standards work Bill doggedly pursued in the 1990s and early 2000s.

My partner in George C. Izenour Associates, Jim Read, and I both concur that Bill should be the next Fellow of ASTC.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "R Duane Wilson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "R".

R Duane Wilson, ASTC

Theatre Consultants **Collaborative**, Inc.

9 September 2013

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TO THE ASTC BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

It is an honor to join my ASTC colleague Bob Shook in recommending that Bill Conner be considered for recognition as a Fellow of the American Society of Theatre Consultants. This recognition is well-deserved. As we all know, Bill has been instrumental in guiding the ASTC through years of challenging code work which has elevated the prestige of the ASTC organization and rationalized the code foundations of our performing arts facility and technology design industry.

Bill's tireless efforts, always on behalf of the ASTC organization, have had a profound impact on the collective quality of our work. We all owe Bill a hearty round of applause!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Long". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Robert Long, ASTC, Principal Consultant
Theatre Consultants Collaborative

NORTH CAROLINA
NEW YORK
CALIFORNIA
TORONTO

www.theatrecc.com