



43rd National Conference and Theatre Tour
July 14-17, 2019 ✦ Philadelphia, PA

Last updated 5/3/2019; subject to change

EARLY BIRD INTENSIVES

Sunday, July 14, 2019

2:00 PM – 5:00 PM

(Cold drinks and light snacks will be provided)

At the Philadelphia 201 Hotel

See presenter biographies following session descriptions

#1: Historic Theatre Renovation 101: A Framework for Planning Successful Projects

Thinking about acquiring, restoring, and revitalizing a historic theatre? Already have one and need some help? This early-bird, in-depth session – featuring a team of leading experts in theatre planning, design, operation and tax credit financing – presents an overview of a historic theatre renovation project. Designed for historic theatre owners, community leaders, board members, senior staff and others who are considering, beginning or participating in the renovation of a historic theatre, this in-depth session will help you develop a clear understanding of your role in the process. Group who want to renovate a historic theatre are encouraged to attend as a team.

Presenters: **Alec Stoll**, **ASTC**, Principal, Stages Consultants, Highland Park, NJ (*moderator*) and **Michael Schnoering**, **FAIA**, Partner, Mills + Schnoering Architects, LLC, Princeton, NJ; *additional presenters will be added*

#2: In-House Promoting 101

You have saved and renovated your historic theatre, and now you need to do something with it. You're finding out the hard way that nobody cares about your perfect acoustics, or that you're a nonprofit, and artists don't actually like intimate shows in small theatres, because they don't like small and intimate paychecks. This 3-hour workshop is an introductory master class for owners and operators who want to start programming their venue themselves. The emphasis is on talent buying and the promotion of touring artists, but other programming options will be discussed, including film, theatrical producing, theatre rentals and co-promoting.

Presenters: **Numa Saisselin**, President, Florida Theatre Performing Arts Center, Inc., Jacksonville, FL; **Jeffrey Gabel**, Founding Executive Director, Gettysburg College's Majestic Theater, Gettysburg, PA; and **John Bell**, President & CEO, Tampa Theatre, Tampa, FL



Presenter Biographies

John Bell is an experienced historic theatre leader having successfully managed two different historic theatre projects over his career. He began his career in arts administration with the North Carolina Arts Council and later assumed duties as the Managing Director of the historic Carolina Theatre in Greensboro, NC in 1979. After he assumed management responsibilities in Tampa in 1985, Tampa Theatre revamped its programming to include a heavy mix of first run and classic films supplemented by concerts, education programs and special events. This successful formula remains in place today, as the Theatre presents approximately 535 film events, 20 major concerts, 45 educational field trips, four weeks of summer camp, and scores of corporate and community events a year. In spite of having a tiny stage with no fly capabilities, Tampa Theatre is one of the busiest historic theatres in the country. John has served on the Board of Directors of the League of Historic American Theatres, serving as LHAT's Chairman of the Board in 2014 and 2015. He is a member of the Florida Facility Managers Association, the Florida Professional Presenters Consortium, and the Tampa Cultural Executives Council. John holds a BA degree in Theatre Arts from Catawba College in North Carolina and was inducted into Catawba's Blue Masque Hall of Fame in 2012.

Jeffrey Gabel is the Founding Executive Director of Gettysburg College's Majestic Theater in the heart of historic, downtown Gettysburg. Hired in 2003, Gabel supervised the successful \$16.5 capital campaign and building project to fully restore the 1925 Colonial Revival vaudeville and silent movie theater and expand it into the 60,000 square foot Jennifer and David LeVan Performing Arts Center which includes the 800 seat historic theater and two cinemas, an art gallery, café, lobbies, backstage rehearsal hall and production facilities, and a roof top swimming pool for the adjacent Hotel Gettysburg. Gabel also created the center's business plan including branding, staffing, programming, marketing, fundraising and concessions. Since its grand re-opening in 2005, the center has presented over 1,400 live performances with leading artists from around the world, nearly 10,000 daily showings of first-run independent art films, raised \$1.4 million for local non-profits from fundraisers, and generated more than \$600,000 in new amusement taxes to support local government and schools. In 2015 on the theater's 90th birthday, Gabel launched the Majestic Centennial Endowment Fund which has raised \$3.8 million to enhance programming.

In 2016, Gabel was elected chairman of the League of Historic American Theatres, a national board on which he's served since 2011, the same year Gov. Tom Corbett appointed him to the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts and then Vice Chair in 2015. Before joining Gettysburg College, Gabel was Executive Director of the Portsmouth, NH 1876 Music Hall, the oldest opera house in New England. During his five-year tenure, he reversed the theater's negative financial position by increasing annual donations by \$200,000, launching the Telluride by the Sea Film Festival (now celebrating its 18th year) and securing a \$400,000 Save America's Treasures grant from the U.S. Department of Interior.

Gabel enjoyed a 15-year career in public television in Maine and Alaska as an award-winning quiz show host, producer, publicist, fundraiser, and station manager. His broadcasting career culminated with a seven-year appointment to the PBS national office in Washington, D.C. in 1984 where he served first as Associate Director of Cultural Programming in charge of Classical Music, and then as the national Director of Children's Programming. He is credited with helping to develop award-winning new series including *Where in the World is Carmen San Diego?*, *The Magic School Bus*, and *Barney the Dinosaur*. At PBS, Gabel served on national advisory and grant review panels for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the National Endowment of the Arts. In 1991, *Current Magazine* named him "One of the 10 most important people in public broadcasting" for his role in programming the Metropolitan Opera's epic 15-hour telecast of Richard Wagner's Ring Cycle.



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Gabel hails from Camp Hill, PA and holds a B.A. Degree in Opera from Mansfield University. He began his show business career in 1971 just outside of Gettysburg as a clown with a small student circus and was immediately hired to tour professionally for several seasons with Hoxie Bros., the 2nd largest big top circus in America playing 300 consecutive one night stands annually. As Chuckles the Clown, he appeared as a special guest on the national television series Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood in 1986.

Numa Saisselin is the President of the Florida Theatre Performing Arts Center, Inc., the nonprofit corporation that manages and programs the historic Florida Theatre in downtown Jacksonville, Florida in a public/private partnership with the City of Jacksonville, which owns the building. A 2,000 seat circa 1927 historic theatre presenting all forms of music, dance, theatre and film, the Florida Theatre is one of the Top 5 most attended theatres in the country under 2,000 seats according to attendance reported to Pollstar magazine.

Michael Schnoering, FAIA is a Partner with Mills + Schnoering Architects, LLC, a full-service architectural firm with broad experience in the planning and design of new buildings and historic preservation. He manages the firm's theater projects. In his work with historic theatres, he is particularly focused on project planning, budgeting and fundraising, program development, site design, and project scheduling. He is also interested in engaging with owners and managers of mid-century Modern theatres to help them understand and enhance their newly historic buildings, and he specializes in identifying and designing integrated solutions to accessibility challenges

Alec Stoll, ASTC has 15 years of nationwide experience backstage and a further 18 in theatre consulting. He is internationally respected as a theatre planner and designer. Alec has played integral roles in well over 100 academic, professional and community venues as well as historic renovation and restoration projects. Alec is a past board member of the American Society of Theatre Consultants, the League of Historic American Theatres and the RCHP Affordable Housing Corporation. Alec holds an MFA in Theater Production Management from Brandeis University and a BFA in Technical Theatre from Emerson College.