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2007 USITT RISING STAR: JOHN HORAN, LIGHTING DESIGNER

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This year's USITT Rising Star is lighting designer John Horan, who hails from Chicago and has kept quite busy in theatre production these past few years. Having received his BFA in Theatrical Lighting Design and Production from State University of New York at Fredonia in December 2003, he is currently resident lighting designer at the Windy City's Emerald City Theatre Company, where recent lighting design gigs include *Seussical*, *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales*, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, and *A Nutcracker Christmas*. He has also recently designed lighting for *Mack and Mabel* and *An Ideal Husband* at the Circle Theatre, and *The Crucible* at Speaking Ring Theatre. Horan's work comprises designs for dramatic and musical theatre, opera, and dance, including *Macabaret* at Porchlight Music Theatre (2005), *All Through the Night* (world premier) at Chicago Jewish Theatre (2005), *Diaspora Drum and Dance* with Michelle Gigante at Buffalo Seminary (2004), *Die Fledermaus* at The Bay View Music Festival (2004), *Our Town* at State University of New York at Fredonia (2003), *A Night of David Ives* at The Performing Arts Company (2002), various concerts for Orchesis Dance Company, and too many others to list here. He also served as associate lighting designer for the summer dance seasons for Rockefeller Arts Center Fredonia from 2001 to 2004.



And not only is Horan busy, but the 26-year-old also manages to diversify his skills. While his primary focus is on lighting design, he also sports some sound control and programming experience, as well as having acted as graphic designer, art designer, sound and video technician, marketing/sales administrator, master carpenter, and master electrician. Oh, and he can sew, and paint, and draw.

"This is quite an honor," says Horan. "I never thought I would be awarded for something at this point in my career. I read *Live Design* from cover to cover every month, and I know that there is a lot of great work going on out there. I am humbled at the thought of industry professionals giving me this honor. I think it is so important to be influenced not only by the Broadway greats like Fisher, Eisenhower, Katz, Holder, and Taymor — to name a few of my favorites — but it's also important to be influenced by my peers because we are the future of this industry. It's great to feed off the energy of the young designers, as well as the seasoned ones. I know that I have a long way to go and a lot to learn. This is definitely a step in the right direction. I love what I do, and I will *always* consider myself a student of the craft."

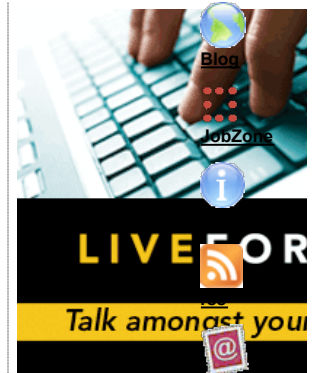


Associate producer Adam Fox works with Horan at Emerald City Theatre Company. "John understands the role of a lighting designer," he says. "He chooses palettes that bring out the best in his fellow designers' work and creates hues that enhance the telling of the story, never getting in the way of it. He is incredibly adaptable as a designer, equally comfortable working on cue-heavy, color-saturated musicals as on minimalist, atmospheric single locales. John's richly textured looks always create a distinct sense of place and time, but no matter how ambitious, always serve the story and not simply themselves." Fox says that Horan has become a key member of the production team, adding, "I want designers that don't feel pigeon-holed into their area of focus and instead embrace the collaborative process; John is a tremendous example of this philosophy."

Director Greg Kolack worked with Horan on *All Through the Night*, written by Shirley Lauro, at Chicago Jewish Theatre. Regarding working with Horan on this world premiere, Kolack says, "The production relied heavily on the lighting, and John constantly overcame the severe limitations of the system to create very different and beautiful lighting." For *Embedded* by Tim Robbins at Prop Theatre, which Kolack also directed, he describes Horan's lighting as "at times, another character in the show."

Horan will be presented with the award during the USITT 47th Annual Conference and Stage Expo ([www.usitt.org](http://www.usitt.org)), to be held in Phoenix from March 14 to 17. The Rising Star Award is sponsored in perpetuity by *Live Design* and LDI. Horan joins past award winners scenic designer Kelly Hanson (2005) and scenic, lighting, and sound designer Justin Townsend (2006).

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