

## *Pioneer Hall of Fame Award*

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# *Karl Eigsti*

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The University High School Alumni Association honors Karl Eigsti, class of 1956, as a 2016 Hall of Fame Alumni Award Recipient for his contributions to his profession and civic service.

Eigsti was a 1956 graduate of University High School, where he enjoyed participating in the following school events: Thespians, Debating Team, Basketball, and State Dramatic Reading.

After high school, Eigsti attended both Indiana University and American University (Washington D.C.), where he obtained his Bachelor of Arts Degree in 1962. He was a recipient of the prestigious Fulbright Scholarship to England that same year, and later went on to earn a Master in Theatre from the University of Bristol (England) in 1964.

During his career, Eigsti has worked as a designer in the American theater for five decades. After spending two years on a Fulbright Scholarship to England, he returned to America in 1964 and became resident designer at The Arena Stage in Washington D.C.

Since then, he has designed at many of the leading resident or non-profit theaters in the country including: The Arena Stage, The Guthrie Theater, The Mark Taper Forum, Lincoln Center, The Kennedy Center, The Public Theater in New York, The Delacorte Theater in Central Park, The Circle Rep in New York, The Manhattan Theater Club, Long Wharf Theater, The Pittsburgh Public Theater, The Cincinnati Playhouse, and the Milwaukee Repertory Theater.

Eigsti has designed twenty productions on Broadway and numerous plays off-Broadway that include: the original productions of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Arthur Miller's American Clock*, *John Guare's House of Blue Leaves*, *Athol Fugard's Boesman and Lena*, and *Isaac Basheva Singer's Yentl*. He was nominated for a Tony Award for his designs for *Knockout* on Broadway, for which he also won the Joseph Maharam Award. An interesting fact is that Eigsti is currently a voter for the Tony Awards.

In addition, he has collaborated with many of the leading directors in the American Theater including: Alan Schneider, John Dexter, Michael Kahn, Frank Corsaro, Ed Sherin, Tony Tanner, John Dillon, Marshal Mason, Mel Shapiro, and Michael Murray.

Throughout his design career, Eigsti has taught in graduate programs throughout the country. He was appointed an adjunct to the design faculty of The NYU School of The Arts at its inception, and continued teaching there for 19 years. Eigsti left to become Head of the Graduate Design Program at Brandeis University, a position he held for 21 years. At Brandeis, he was awarded the Leonard Bernstein Creative Arts Award for significant contributions to the Arts at Brandeis. Eigsti was promoted to Professor Emeritus at the presentation of the award. After his tenure at Brandeis, he was appointed The Visiting Professor of Theater Design at Ohio University and taught in that capacity for two years.

Eigsti's design work in theater is the subject of one chapter of Arnold Aronson's book, *American Set Design, Volume 1*. Examples of his designs also appear in many textbooks and publications on the subject of set design in America. Retrospective exhibitions of his design work have been seen in cities such as Boston, New York, Pittsburgh, and New Orleans. In addition, a retrospective of his scenic design work was exhibited at the Illinois Shakespeare festival throughout the 2014 Summer Season. At the close of the exhibit, all of the drawings and paintings were donated to Illinois State University, where they now reside in the university's archive as the Karl Eigsti Theater Design Collection.

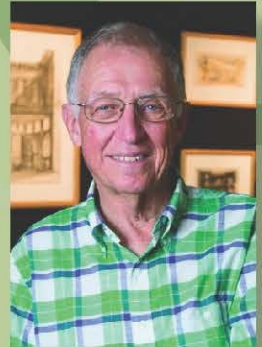
In addition to his professional accomplishments, Eigsti has also given back to the community through his work on the following: Board of Trustees for Grace Church School, College of Fellows of the American Theatre, and Harvard Musical Association.

Eigsti has been married to his current wife, Amela, since 2006. He has one son, Chris, from a previous marriage.

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## *University High School*

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# 1956 EIGSTI

