

United Scenic Artists • Local USA 829, IATSE

• REPRESENTING •

Art Department
Coordinators

Art Directors

Computer Artists

Costume Designers

Lighting Designers

Production Designers

Projection Designers

Scenic Artists

Scenic Designers

Sound Designers

• FOR •

Major & Independent
Motion Pictures

Network & Cable TV

Broadway &
Regional Theatre

Opera

Ballet

Commercials

Industrial Shows

Special Events

• AND MORE •

GENERAL ENTRANCE INFORMATION — EASTERN REGION: IN NYC

Thank you for your inquiry concerning the United Scenic Artists, Local USA 829, IATSE. Joining the United Scenic Artists is a serious step that requires careful consideration. We hope the following information will help you with this important decision.

BACKGROUND

United Scenic Artists, Local USA 829, is a nationwide Local of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees that received its first charter in 1918 and re-affiliated with IATSE in 1999. Local USA 829 has regional offices in New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami, Boston, Washington DC and Philadelphia to serve members across the country. The members of Local USA 829 are designers, artists, coordinators and craftspeople working in film, theater, opera, ballet, television, industrial shows, commercials and exhibitions. Through the Union, they work together to protect standards, working conditions and wages. In an industry plagued by high unemployment, tight work schedules and loose payment practices, such protection is greatly needed.

Gaining membership in the Union is currently achieved by way of Professional Membership Application, the Scenic Artist Apprenticeship Program and individual Category Exam/Interviews, as described below:

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Local USA 829 currently has Collective Bargaining Agreements that cover employment in the following areas: Broadway, Network Television, Metropolitan & NY City Operas, Feature Films, Regional Opera, Major Ballet, AICP Commercials, Art Department Coordinators and Scenery Suppliers. Professionals who get a job in one of these areas must make application for membership by contacting the USA 829 Business Manager as soon as possible at 212-581-0300. A copy of the contract must be submitted **along with a prepayment of the full Initiation Fee** (currently \$3,500 for **all** categories). This prepayment is held in escrow until the application can be proposed to the General Membership for acceptance.

The applicant may be asked to present their portfolio for review by an Oversight Committee, at the discretion of the Business Manager. The Business Manager will then present the applicant's credentials and current job status at the next General Membership Meeting for an acceptance vote. Should the application be denied, the Initiation Fee is refunded.



29 West 38th Street
15th Floor
New York, NY 10018

tel: 212-581-0300
fax: 212-977-2011

www.usa829.org

EASTERN REGION SCENIC ARTIST APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

The Apprenticeship Program is a three-year (3-year) program that is sponsored by the Local and is registered by the New York State Department of Labor. Apprentice Exams will be offered periodically as dictated by the availability of work. All applications will be received without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex or sexual orientation. Interested parties must have the following minimum qualifications *before* making application to the program.

1. Applicant must show proof of being at least 18 years of age and have a valid Social Security number upon acceptance into the program.
2. Applicant must have earned a High School diploma or G.E.D. upon acceptance into the program.
3. Applicant must have reliable transportation or means of transportation to job sites and related training locations.
4. Upon acceptance into the program applicant must supply a physician's statement confirming the applicant's agility and physical ability to:
 - a. Lift 5 gallons of paint, joint compound and/or other materials on the job.
 - b. Work on ladders and scaffolding.
 - c. Work outdoors on locations under various weather and temperature conditions.
5. Applicant must be able to pass an aptitude test in English (read & write in English).

The program is looking for applicants with a working knowledge of art, theatre, film and related industries, but with less than three (3) years of experience. The Apprenticeship Committee reserves the right to reject applicants possessing too much experience as a working Scenic Artist, and would recommend the Scenic Artist TRACK A or the Scenic Artist TRACK B "OPEN" Exams (see page 3).

More specific information can be downloaded from the USA 829 website at www.usa829.org and can be requested by calling the Union office at **212-581-0300**, or by sending a written request to:

**The Scenic Artist Apprenticeship Committee
United Scenic Artists, Local USA 829
29 West 38th Street, 15th Floor
New York City, New York 10018**

ADMISSION INTERVIEWS AND EXAMINATIONS

The Union usually gives Exams or Portfolio Review/Interviews in seven categories of membership: Scenic Artist (Painters), Costume Designer, Lighting Designer, Scenic Designer/Storyboard Artist, Sound Designer, Art Department Coordinator and Computer Artist. The Exams look for specific skills required of each category. Getting experience in the profession is the best way to prepare, and applicants from academic or fine arts backgrounds are encouraged to work in the field before applying to the Union.

The Admissions Committees of each category determine what skills they need to see from each applicant and how to best reveal those skills, based on current trends in the industry and the requirements of members working professionally. Some categories use a practical or written Exam while others use an Interview and/or Portfolio Review process. In addition, each region of the country has its own individual set of requirements for their categories of membership. Applicants are asked to inquire of the nearest regional office for Exam information **specific to their category and their region**.

NOTE: The following describes current general requirements & admission practices of the Eastern Region (in NYC) ONLY:

Scenic Artist Membership:

There are five ways to gain admission to the Scenic Artist Category of Local USA 829. Methods A and B are initiated by the Business Office, while individual applicants can choose between C, D or E as appropriate:

A) **Professional Review**—Artists found working under an existing collective bargaining agreement will be asked to join as Professional Members, and will be required to apply according to the guidelines of the TRACK A Exam (see below).

B) **Organizing**—Artists working at a job site that is organized under a new bargaining agreement will be admitted for membership based on that organizing effort.

C) **Scenic Artist Apprenticeship**—As outlined on the previous page, this method should be chosen by persons who have less than 3 years of practical Scenic Artist experience.

D) **The TRACK A Exam**—For applicants who have had at least 3 years of professional non-academic experience as a Scenic Artist in the entertainment industry. The Exam consists of a 20-minute interview, portfolio review, and evaluation of several assigned samples. The interview will cover employment experience and those productions listed in the applicant's Qualifying Questionnaire. Interviews are offered each Spring and Fall.

E) **The TRACK B "Open" Exam**—For anyone with on-the-job or academic experience in art, theatre, film, television, and related industries. The Exam is designed for those who do not have the professional experience to apply for TRACK A but who may be overqualified for the Apprentice Program. The Exam consists of a written General Aptitude Test, a Home Project, a 20-minute interview and a Practical Studio Skills Test. The Open Exam is offered every two (2) years.

Interview and Exam dates, application deadlines, as well as specifics on required work samples and portfolio guidelines may be downloaded from the website at www.usa829.org or by calling the office at **212-581-0300** to request SCENIC ARTIST ENTRANCE INFORMATION—EASTERN REGION.

Computer Artist Exam/Interview:

This category has been established for persons who work with computers for design and production of illustrations, signage, VR, 3D graphics, television graphics and more. The Exam consists of a 20-minute Interview/Portfolio Review, at which you may present your work in hard copy or video format; the judges cannot view electronic files or slides. Interested applicants can download further information and an application by visiting the USA 829 website at www.usa829.org and can request the same by calling the Union office at **212-581-0300**.

Art Department Coordinator Exam/Interview:

The Art Department Coordinator Exam is a screening process for admitting those individuals who earn a living by working as coordinators in the Art Departments of professional film and television projects. The Exam consists of a 1-hour written practical exam, followed by a 20-minute Interview. During the 20-minute Interview, a panel of working coordinators will review and discuss your résumé and application materials with you, and will discuss your work-related experience. Interested applicants can download further information and an application by visiting the USA 829 website at www.usa829.org and can request the same by calling the Union office at 212-581-0300.

Costume Design Admission Interview:

The Costume Design category uses one Interview for all applicants. Applicant evaluation is based on a 20-minute Interview at which the applicant presents his/her portfolio, which must include two fully produced projects for which the applicant was the principal designer or first assistant. These projects will be reviewed by a panel of judges, allowing them a common ground to evaluate the work.

Lighting Design Exam/Interview:

The Lighting Design category uses one Exam/Interview for all applicants. The Exam consists of a comprehensive 40 minute Interview, a 45 minute problem-solving exercise, a review of the applicant's portfolio and application materials (Résumé, four (4) Letters of Recommendation and the Production Questionnaire) and a discussion of the applicant's work-related experience. For the portfolio, **you must present three complete lighting designs**, at least *two of which were produced*. Of this production work, at least two (2) designs must have been produced in a non-academic situation, and at least one must be designed for a proscenium stage. Each design presented must provide all necessary information for an electrician to pull the show from a rental shop and hang and cable it in your absence.

Scenic Design and Storyboard Artists Admission Interview:

The Scenic Design category (which includes designers for the stage as well as Film/TV Art Directors and Production Designers) uses one Interview for all applicants. Everyone is asked to submit copies of a current Résumé and secure three (3) Letters of Recommendation. The Résumé should clearly outline your professional experience. Recommendations should come from **producers, directors and/or other Union members with whom you have worked**. Applicant evaluation will be based on a review of these application materials, as well as an Interview at which your portfolio will be discussed in detail. The portfolio should contain a range of subject matter which displays your skills and abilities, but be small enough to be shown comfortably within the short (20 minute) Interview. The main focus of the Interview will be discussion of a **Main Project**, which you are free to choose within

the parameters specified by the committee. The Main Project (either for the stage or for video/film) can be something produced or not, existing in the portfolio or created specifically for the Interview, but in all cases ***there is a specified list of required presentation elements that you must bring***. We do not assign the Main Project, but we tell you what elements of your chosen project you must show us.

The Scenic Design Exam Committee will also review the portfolio of **Storyboard Artists**, who would fall under the Scenic Designer category, and who might work as Assistant Art Directors on Film and Television projects. A Storyboard Artist applicant will be asked to submit a portfolio featuring hard copies and/or digital files of graphic work they have done, along with copies of a current Résumé and three (3) Letters of Recommendation.

Sound Design Admission Interview:

The Sound Design category uses one Interview for all applicants. The Exam consists of a comprehensive 40 minute Interview and review of the applicant's portfolio and application materials (Résumé, four (4) Letters of Recommendation and the Production Questionnaire) and a discussion of the applicant's work-related experience. For the portfolio, you must present three complete sound designs, at least two of which were produced. Of this production work, at least one (1) design must have been produced in a non-academic situation. Included with each design must be a:

- | | |
|---|--|
| [A] Ground Plan w/ Speaker and Microphone Placement | [D] System Block Diagram |
| [B] Section with Speaker Placement | [E] Shop Order (Equipment List) |
| [C] Sound Cue List | [F] CD of Sound Score (Music Cues/Effects) |

Projection Design Special Membership Program

USA 829 is accepting Projection Designer applications for a Special Membership Program that continues through **December 7, 2010**. The purpose of this special program is to accept applications from designers **working professionally on Projection Design for live performance and events** who wish to be part of this new category of membership. We would like to welcome all qualified working designers who desire membership into the Local so that they may begin to share in the advantages of Union membership, as do their colleagues in the other design disciplines.

To be eligible for this program, **you must have a minimum of two (2) years' professional experience working on Projection Designs for live performance or events**. Applicants must submit 5 copies of a **résumé** and a minimum of **three (3) letters of recommendation** from persons with whom they have worked and who are willing to recommend them for membership. Two (2) recommendations must come from **designers with whom applicants have worked** (current members of USA 829, preferably) and one (1) recommendation may come from industry professionals outside of USA 829, such as a **Producer, Director or other employer**. Find Projection Design application materials & information online at www.usa829.org.

A **reduced Initiation Fee of \$500** plus additional IATSE dues and fees totaling \$297 will be granted to applicants entering the Local via this special program.

APPLICATION FORMS AND EXAM FEES

If you requested it by phone, you should find enclosed with this letter specific category requirements for the Exam(s) you are interested in, as well as an Application Form, a Date Schedule, a Production or Qualifying Questionnaire (for all categories except Scenic Design & Art Dept. Coordinator) and Recommendation Forms. All forms (*excluding* mailing labels & envelopes) are also available for download as Adobe Acrobat PDF files from the Local USA 829 web site at <http://www.usa829.org>. Click on MEMBERSHIP > EXAMS > EASTERN REGION: IN NYC.

Check the **Date Schedule** to see when the next Application Deadlines are. **As the Exam and Interview processes and specifics are revised monthly, please call for or download the *very latest* Application and instruction materials before applying. Do not assume any information you downloaded or were sent for a previous Exam will still be valid for current or upcoming Exams... things change!**

There is a Filing Fee of \$75.00 for each Application you make, regardless of when you make them or in what combination. This fee covers the administrative costs and is not refundable! In addition, there is an Exam Fee of \$125.00 for each Interview Exam (\$225.00 for the Scenic Artist TRACK B "Open" Exam) scheduled, making the total expense \$200.00 for each Exam taken (\$300.00 for Scenic Artist TRACK B "Open" Exam). Once you have paid your fees, it's assumed you are completing that Application, and the \$75 Filing Fee covers *that Application only*; it is not transferable. Under special circumstances, if the Committee (*not the Union office, but someone on your Committee*) is informed early enough of an unforeseen conflict, an applicant may postpone the Exam/Interview for which he/she has already fully paid. Only under such circumstances, *and with prior approval of your Committee*, will the Filing and Exam Fees and paperwork be honored later. Notice of the results of an Exam/Interview will not be sent to an applicant until all fees have been received by the Committee. Specific category requirement letters will include phone numbers of Committee members to call if you have questions or need to postpone an Exam/Interview. Please read those for more details.

REMEMBER: Check all dates on the Date Schedule, as deadlines for the receipt of all forms and fees must be adhered to.

Please understand that the Union and the Exam Committees *can not and will not be responsible for delayed receipt of forms or fees caused by Post Office negligence*. The Union's office hours are 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM Monday through Friday (closed Holidays) for hand delivery of items. *Make sure you ask for and get a Xerox copy of any personal check for fees that you hand deliver to the office, as a receipt and proof of payment.*

**All fees provided to the Union MUST be paid with a Personal Check only,
Made payable to: United Scenic Artists Local USA 829, please!
Write your Exam Category on the check's "Memo" line for office reference.**

IN SUMMARY: You must return the following items before the appropriate deadlines, as specified on the Date Schedule:

FOR COSTUME, LIGHTING, SCENIC & SOUND DESIGN, ART DEPT. COORD. AND COMPUTER ARTIST APPLICANTS:

- 1—Completed Application Form
- 7—Copies of Current Résumé (only 5 for Lighting, Scenic & Sound Design or Computer Artist applicants)
- 7—Copies of completed Production Questionnaire (only 5 copies for Lighting Design or Computer Artist applicants; 4 copies for Sound Design applicants – none required for Scenic Design or Art Dept. Coordinator applicants)
- x—Self addressed Adhesive Mailing Labels (number per category instructions)
- x—Letters of Recommendation (number per category instructions) to be sent directly to the Committee by each reference (not required for current USA 829 members adding the Computer Artist category)
- 1—\$200.00 Personal Check for combined Filing & Exam Fees (for all Design Category Exams)

FOR SCENIC ARTIST TRACK A AND TRACK B “OPEN” EXAM APPLICANTS:

- 1—Completed Application Form
- 1—Scenic Artist Qualifying Questionnaire
- 1—Current Résumé
- 5—Self addressed Adhesive Mailing Labels
- 3—Letters of Recommendation to be sent directly to the Committee by each reference
- 1—\$75.00 Personal Check for separate Filing Fee (for both TRACK A & TRACK B “Open” Exams) and
- 1—\$125.00 Personal Check for separate Exam Fee (for TRACK A Exams only)
- or 1—\$225.00 Personal Check for separate Exam Fee (for TRACK B “Open” Exams only)

PROJECTION DESIGN APPLICANTS: PLEASE SEE SEPARATE APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS & DUES DOCUMENTS ONLINE.

MEMBERSHIP DUES AND FEES

The **full Initiation Fee for all categories** is \$3,500.00. There is an “Exam Rebate” of \$2,000.00 for any applicant who is admitted through the Exam process, making the actual Initiation Fee for someone passing an Exam \$1,500.00 (this also includes Scenic Artist Apprentices). There are additional IATSE fees plus your first quarter's dues which total approximately \$280.00 for everyone. All fees are to be paid before initiation, and must be paid *within three (3) months of being notified* of the recommendation for membership. After three months the applicant's membership recommendation will be forfeited. *Please do not apply if you cannot afford to pay the full USA 829 initiation and IATSE processing fees within three (3) months of being recommended for membership.* Should you pass an Exam/Interview in more than one category (*at any time*), your *maximum total initiation fee remains \$1,500.00.*

Mail above items and/or any correspondence concerning applications to:

(**Your Category Name**) Admission Committee
United Scenic Artists, Local USA 829
29 West 38th Street, 15th Floor
New York City, New York 10018

Thank you for your interest in United Scenic Artists, Local USA 829, IATSE.

Sincerely,

The Eastern Regional Admissions Committee