



## **Theatre Over Advanced Networks Wins Canadian Partner an International Award**

**April 29, 2008, OTTAWA** -- ORION and CANARIE congratulate the University of Waterloo and its partners in Illinois and Florida on winning the prestigious Internet2 IDEA Award for their ground-breaking collaborative live theatre production.

The experimental performance of the 1923 Elmer Rice play "The Adding Machine", over high-speed networks, enabled by advanced digital video technology, was one of three projects recognized at the Internet2 spring meeting in Arlington, Virginia.

"We are proud that we were able to help make this breakthrough cultural experiment so successful" said ORION President/CEO Phil Baker.

"Artistic collaborations such as this demonstrate the power of Canada's advanced networks and their potential to share with new audiences the experiences that the imaginations of our artists can create," said CANARIE President and CEO, Andrew Bjerring.

The project was a collaboration between Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois, the University of Waterloo in Waterloo, Ontario and the University of Central Florida in Orlando, Florida. It used virtual scenery, recorded video, avatar performers, photographs, graphics and sound, made possible by the partners' interconnectivity over the ORION, CANARIE and Internet2 advanced networks.

"The award is quite important to us," said Prof. Gerd Hauck, Chair of the Department of Drama and Speech Communication, University of Waterloo and co-director of the performance. He expects the award will help secure support for ongoing research.

Prof. Hauck and some of his colleagues at the University of Waterloo recently received a \$222,000 Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) grant to pursue further research in this emerging technology, looking at commercializing a Canadian digital display technology within the theatre industry.

"The purpose is to make the technology invisible to the audience," said Prof. Hauck. "To hide the cameras and projectors, to create an illusion of the tech elements so that the audience focuses on the story and the characters of the play – that the technology would only enhance this instead of draw attention to itself."

The performance utilized DVTS (Digital Video Transport System) software and relied on the networks' low-latency capabilities. Viewed by live audiences at Bradley and Waterloo, the play featured the interaction of live actors, include a performer from Waterloo.

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The project also set the stage for an ambitious performance of “Alice (Experiments) in Wonderland”, in January and February of this year in which three groups of performers acted live and in real time in the same play in front of three separate audiences.

For additional information, visit <http://addingmachine.bradley.edu> and [www.internet2.edu/idea](http://www.internet2.edu/idea), and [www.orion.on.ca/newsletter/dec07/alice.html](http://www.orion.on.ca/newsletter/dec07/alice.html).

#### About ORION

The Ontario Research and Innovation Optical Network (ORION), a not-for-profit organization, is Ontario’s ultra high-speed research and education network which connects all of Ontario's universities, most colleges, several medical and other public research facilities and a growing number of school boards to one another and to the global grid of research and education networks. Stretching 5,800 kilometres over 21 communities throughout Ontario, ORION connects over one million Ontario researchers, scientists, students, teachers and staff to critical infrastructure for research, education and innovation. [www.orion.on.ca](http://www.orion.on.ca).

#### About CANARIE

CANARIE Inc., based in Ottawa, is a not-for-profit corporation funded by Government of Canada to facilitate the development and use of next-generation research networks and the applications and services that run on them. CANARIE's advanced network serves universities, colleges, schools, government labs, and research institutes and organizations in a wide variety of fields in both the public and private sectors. By promoting and participating in strategic collaborations among key sectors, and by partnering with peer networks and organizations around the world, CANARIE stimulates and supports research, innovation and growth, bringing economic, social, and cultural benefits to all Canadians. [www.canarie.ca](http://www.canarie.ca).

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