Scott Fisher receives the ESTA Lifetime Technical Achievement Award

SCOTT FISHER was honored as the second recipient of the ESTA Technical Lifetime Achievement Award on March 14th in Fort Lauderdale, FL. The award was presented at the conclusion of the New World Rigging Symposium at the Hilton Marina Hotel to a large and supportive crowd.

The ESTA Board of Directors and Technical Standards Council created this award in 2017 to recognize individuals whose technical contributions have had a significant impact on our industry. The criteria include significant and sustained technical contributions to the entertainment industry over at least 25 years.

Scott began his career in automation in the late 1980s in Las Vegas with Siegfried and Roy, the first of the mega-shows at the first of the Las Vegas mega-resorts, The Mirage. From this vantage point at the crest of the wave of huge Las Vegas productions and attractions of the 1990s and 2000s, he had the opportunity to see what stage automation could be and just how far it had to go to get there. For the next decade, Scott worked in a wide variety of venues and jobs, from rock and roll and Broadway touring shows to performer flying to special effects to rigging automation to large scale attraction design and construction, building a knowledge base along the way for what worked and what didn’t. In 1997, he founded Fisher Technical Services (FTSI) with the goal of making a truly integrated automation system specifically for live entertainment shows and attractions of all types.

Scott explained, “The basic idea was to make a system where everything is actually aware of everything else in the theatre, can talk to and control literally anything in the theatre, and that’s built from the ground up to be an entertainment automation system. The whole concept of getting everything to talk together on the same system regardless of what language the gear spoke sounds intuitive now, but at the time it was a new thing and it took a tremendous amount of hard work to actually implement it safely and reliably.”

For the next decade and a half, Scott and the talented team at FTSI developed the Navigator automation system, which was the first large scale system to move away from the limited foundation of industrial automation products and into a purpose-built, entertainment-specific, and fully integrated system of safety, motion control, show control, and operator interface products and devices. After an initially rocky start to convincing the entertainment world at large that this level of integration and capability was the way to go, FTSI and FTSI and the Navigator system broke through old barriers and reset the bar for safety, quality, and capabilities for live entertainment automation machinery and controls.

Scott Fisher accepts the ESTA Lifetime Technical Achievement Award from Bill Sapsis at the New World Rigging Symposium.