

Alice In Wonderland,  
Pittsburgh Ballet

# 5Qs

## Herrick Goldman, *HG Lighting Design Inc.*

/// By Meghan Perkins

Lighting designer and philanthropist Herrick Goldman, principal of HG Lighting Design, is now Behind The Scenes' first Pledge-a-Service Partner. As such, he makes history as the first designer to promise an ongoing pledge of a portion of design fee profits to the charity, which provides financial support to entertainment technology industry professionals who are seriously ill or injured, or to their surviving family members. This is not his first act of charity, nor will it be his last by any means. Besides his previous years with the Harrison, NY Volunteer Ambulance Corps, Goldman has been donating to BTS and attending its fundraisers for years. His company, HG Lighting Design (HGLD), which he started in 2006, has also designed benefits for The Actors Fund and the Path Fund. Goldman will present his first check to BTS at LDI 2017 in Las Vegas in November.

*Live Design* chatted with Goldman on his generous donation and upcoming designs.





**H**ow does it feel to be the first designer to make an ongoing pledge to Behind The Scenes? Do you think others will soon follow your example?

I'm proud to be the first, but I hope dozens more jump in. Our industry is unique in that we gain friends and coworkers on every gig and in every venue. These people all rely on their ability to get to work and do physical labor. One minor malady and your rent can't get paid. BTS is such a great charity, and it cuts through the usual red tape that comes from other supports like unions and healthcare. It covers things that can affect the lives of freelancers in our industry that aren't covered by normal means.



Brooklyn Ball for  
Brooklyn Museum



Chita Rivera at  
92nd Street Y Benefit

# Sweet Charity



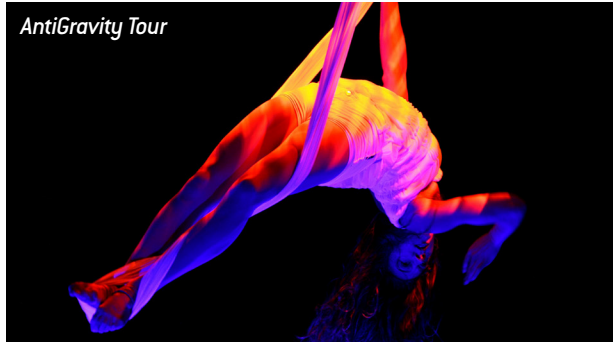
**Y**ou have a history as a charitable donor. Tell us a little about your past efforts and what drove you to take it one step further with Behind The Scenes.

I've been working for good causes all my life. I used to work with the Kiwanis Club in my hometown, raising money for children's trauma centers. I became a lifeguard and then in college joined a volunteer ambulance corps as well as started an emergency response team at SUNY Purchase. I paid my way through college working as an EMT on an ambulance in Hartford.

As a lighting designer, I've always been available to work on good causes. For one thing, these events bring the theatre community together, and you always meet new collaborators. The charities that HGLD has supported in this manner include Covenant House for at-risk youth; we've been lighting their concerts for more than a decade in NY, NJ, GA, FL, and PA. If I can't make it to one of these, my associates Susan Nicholson, Lois Gordon, or Diana Kesselschmidt will go and design it. We love doing them, and we've made lasting friendships. Covenant House has raised millions at these events, and we're proud to have helped. We've also designed a few benefits for The Actors Fund, which covers all theatre professionals, shows like *The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas* and *The Who's Tommy*, both at the August Wilson. These events are frenetic, as you create a design for a full-length musical in 10 hours. You can't do that without an incredible level of support from your team and the venue staff, who really enjoy doing these events. We've also supported *Rockers On Broadway* over the last decade, raising money for the Path Fund. So when BTS approached me, I was honored to be able to say yes to supporting them.

2

3



WILLIAM SCOTT SLOAN

### What trends in the industry do you currently see or foresee? Where might they be in the next few years?

I hear LEDs are the next big thing! I'm seeing the cost of fixtures decrease, and that means larger rigs will be more readily available to everyone. I think management of many universes of DMX is paramount. I also see manufacturers jamming so many options into a fixture that some of them are trying to do everything at once. I'm not sure that is a good thing. Generally, they have to sacrifice something for each thing they add. It's nice to have a Swiss army knife, but when you're cooking something special, you need that one beautiful chef's knife to do it. That knife doesn't need a corkscrew.

### What's your favorite piece of gear in your toolbox, and why?

My experience and imagination. There's a skill to looking at things from many angles. My experience in so many lighting disciplines helps me approach designs with a variety of points of view. That might mean putting LED strips on dance booms or designing a fashion show with large film-style fixtures. Working in so many areas of our industry, I get exposed to many different techniques, and I value the opportunities I've had to do that.

I make it a point to know about all the tools in our industry. I have many good friends who I can call for advice about fixtures or other gear. This helps me create designs and solve problems before they occur. I go to LDI every year for just that reason. I get to see new equipment and have direct conversations with manufacturers so that when I have an intricate design or even a budgetary hurdle, I can call on these resources and figure out ways to solve things. I should also mention that my rental shops and the manufacturers I know are absolutely collaborators in my art. I can't do my job without them.

4

The Who's Tommy  
for The Actors Fund





## What are some upcoming projects that we can expect to see from your team at HG Lighting Design?

Recently, I designed *Alice In Wonderland* for the Pittsburgh Ballet. I spent some time on a very large boat with Bob Bonniol, Pablo Molina, and Butch Allen assisting Mode Studios in the creation of *Fantastic Journey* for Princess Cruise Lines. I recently worked on *Puffs Off-Broadway*; it's about some kids in a school of magic. I'm also collaborating with some old friends on new streaming technology to create content to bring the theatre and the stage to your cell phone from [thestagenetwork.com](http://thestagenetwork.com). I'm designing *The Wizard Of Oz* at Syracuse Stage this fall. Illusionist Jason Bishop returns to the New Victory Theatre this holiday season, and we're supporting him once again. In the meantime, there are always corporate events and some time in the schedule to discover new projects and collaborations.

LD