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**Hudson Opera House presents legendary lighting designer,
Howard Brandston, and his new book *LEARNING TO SEE: A Matter of Light***

HUDSON (September 5, 2008) – The Hudson Opera House presents legendary lighting designer, Howard Brandston as he reads from his new book, *LEARNING TO SEE: A Matter of Light* (The Illuminating Engineering Society of North America, May, 2008) on Saturday, September 13 at 2 p.m. Well-known to lighting designers, the author brings to his book over 50 years of experience designing illumination for more than 2,500 commercial, institutional, governmental, and residential projects worldwide. Books will be available for purchase and signing.

In writing for lighting designers and the educated reader, Brandston uses an easy-to-understand writing style to talk about lighting as an art form. He writes to inspire and to challenge, emphasizing the need to go beyond being literate about the science of lighting. To the designer he asks, “What is it that you wish to see? Is the lighting creative? Innovative? Does the lighting enhance our quality of life?”

Brandston uses these questions to weave together a discussion of four elements to execute designs: Learning to See, Taking Responsibility, Creativity and Communicating. These sections are as much about the art of lighting design as they are the art of thinking. Supplemented with color photographs and hand-drawn illustrations from the author’s many sketch books, they also provide valuable insights into how Brandston approached his projects. Where possible, illustrations of concepts are positioned next to photographs to compare concept with reality. Vignettes from luminaries such as Oliver Sacks, Dan Ciampa, and Peter Boyce enrich the discussion. The book closes with Explanations of Popular Lighting Terms, Ethics and Design, and Wit and Wisdom.

Howard Brandston studied theatrical illumination at Brooklyn College and began his career in lighting in the New York theatre. Prior to founding his own firm in 1966, he was a designer at several manufacturing and lighting design firms including Century Lighting, Inc., where he served as assistant to Stanley McCandless, one of the pioneer figures in lighting design.

He has more than fifty years experience in lighting design, engineering and electronics, designing illumination for more than 2,500 commercial, institutional, residential and governmental projects. For his contributions to architecture, he was awarded the AIA Institute Honors award. Also, for his outstanding leadership in the lighting industry, he received the Illuminating Engineering Society Medal, its highest honor - he is the just the fourth designer to be so recognized by the IES. In 1992 he was included in the Interior Design Hall of Fame, the only lighting designer ever to be awarded this honor.

Mr. Brandston was honored as an initial inductee of the Lighting Design Hall of Fame and also received the International Association of Lighting Designers Lifetime Achievement Award. In 2006 Mr. Brandston received the IES Louis B. Marks award for Exceptional Service to the Society. He is one of six people in the 100-year history of the IES who has received all the highest honors awarded by the Society. Also in 2006 the Richard Kelly Award was presented to Mr. Brandston for his outstanding contributions to education.

Mr. Brandston is a past president of the Illuminating Engineering Society and has addressed forums of the American Institute of Architects, the Illuminating Engineering Society, the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers, the Producers Council, the United States Institute of Theatre Technology, and others. He has been a guest lecturer or visiting professor at Ohio University, City College of New York, Cooper Union, Temple University, Hofstra University, Washington University, and other institutions. He was formerly Adjunct Professor of Architecture at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and worked at the Lighting Research Center there. He held the Feltman Chair in Lighting at Cooper Union and was adjunct professor of Social Science and Humanities.

His light sculptures have been shown in art galleries throughout the United States and are permanently installed in museums and university collections. Articles by Mr. Brandston have been published in over 70 publications, including the Sight Saving Review, Progressive Architecture, Lighting Design and Application, and Architectural Lighting, the latter of which he serves as contributing editor. He has served on committees for the National Academy of Sciences, and was IES representative to the Architectural and Engineering Federal Energy Committee during the energy crisis. His work on energy conservation helped set the initial standards for lighting from 1975-85. He was one of the founding members of the Ad Hoc Committee of Lighting Research and Education Funding Entities, the Lighting Research and Education Fund, the Lighting Research Institute and The Lighting Research Center.

Mr. Brandston is a member of many organizations, including the Architectural League of New York, the Municipal Arts Society, the Illuminating Engineering Society, the International Association of Lighting Designers, and Britain's Chartered Institute of Building Services Engineers, where he is an Honorary Fellow. This is an honor limited to twenty-five living persons.

The Hudson Opera House, a multi-arts center in downtown Hudson, offers numerous programs for adults and children, including readings, exhibitions, concerts, lectures, workshops and a Junior Membership Program which provides access to free performances and other art making activities for children. For further information about this or future programs, please call the Opera House at (518) 822-1438. The Hudson Opera House is located at 327 Warren Street.

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