



PRESS RELEASE



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Themed Entertainment Association Announces 15th Annual Thea Awards Recipients

Orlando, Florida Nov. 18, 2008 – “The prestigious Thea Awards recognize and honor excellence in the creation of outstanding visitor experiences, attractions, exhibits and places,” said Themed Entertainment Association (TEA) President Nick Farmer of Farmer Attraction Development, Leicester, UK. “Truly international in their recognition of outstanding productions, the Thea Awards focus international attention on innovation within the Themed Entertainment and Experience Design Industry.” The Awards will be formally presented March 7, 2009 at the 15th Annual Thea Awards Gala sponsored by Economics Research Associates, a lavish, black-tie dinner event at the Disneyland Hotel in Anaheim, CA.

As TEA continues to rise in stature – the association is an increasingly valuable resource to the entertainment development community and its many intersecting lines of business – the Thea Award becomes more prestigious. The Thea Awards Nominating Committee evaluated more than 120 nominations in order to recommend the current slate of 17 Thea recipients, with final approval by the TEA International Board of Directors.

Recipients – 15th Annual Thea Awards

Thea Lifetime Achievement Award: Robert L. Ward

Thea Classic Award: EPCOT, Walt Disney World, Orlando, FL

Thea Awards for Outstanding Achievement (AOA)

Attraction: The Simpsons Ride, Universal Studios Hollywood CA & Orlando, FL

Attraction Limited Budget: BeWILDerwood, Norwich, Norfolk, UK

Attraction Limited Budget: The Forgotten Mine, Molenheide, Belgium

Museum: The Newseum, Washington DC, USA

Museum: National Museum of the Marine Corps, Quantico, VA, USA

Museum Exhibit: Operation Spy, International Spy Museum, Washington DC, USA

**Museum Exhibit, Limited Budget: Forces of Nature, Arizona Science Center,
Phoenix AZ, USA**

**Learning Experience: Air Force One Discovery Center, Ronald Reagan Presidential
Library & Museum, Simi Valley CA, USA**

Technical: Muppet Mobile Lab, Hong Kong Disneyland, China

Science Center: Audubon Insectarium, New Orleans LA, USA

New Theme Park Land: Jungala, Busch Gardens, Tampa FL, USA

Event Spectacular: 2008 Summer Olympics, Opening Ceremonies, Beijing, Chiina

Live Show: Finding Nemo, The Musical, Walt Disney World, FL, USA

Live Show: Legend of Mythica, Tokyo DisneySeas, Japan

Casino Attraction: Tree of Prosperity, Wynn Macau, Macau, SAR, China

Details – 15th Annual Thea Awards Recipients

MUSEUM

The Newseum, Washington DC , USA

The Newseum is an interactive museum of news and journalism centrally located in Washington, D.C. Prior to reopening in its new, seven-story, \$450 million incarnation on April 11, 2008, the Newseum operated out of Rosslyn, VA. With a stated mission "to help the public and the news media understand one another better," the Newseum presents media in every possible format from panoramic, multi-screen and interactive, to large and small theaters, a 4D presentation, do-it-yourself telecasting and reproductions of daily newspapers' front pages.

The overall message of the content is to underscore the achievements of journalists in creating awareness of current events and issues, point out the need for a free press and transparency in reporting, and mark and celebrate great moments in history as documented through the media. There are pieces of the Berlin Wall and other artifacts, a 9/11 presentation, a Pulitzer gallery, an early printing press display and an archive of news stories through the centuries.

The project's generous budget afforded the opportunity for this institution to push the limits, and its mainly technology driven contents do an exceptional job of holding their own in the midst of an impressive and massive architectural envelope with open, light-filled spaces that presented special challenges for theater and exhibit design, acoustics and audiovisuals. Collections are exhibited in elegantly composed casework, and presented in a storytelling context – supported by multiple small film galleries as well as the multiple larger showcase theaters. Immersion is achieved through thoughtful and complex execution, and the grand display of current day technology, anchored in personal and emotional moments of our times as captured by the press.

The Newseum sets a new bar for large cultural institutions in major metropolitan areas. One comes away having also learned a tremendous amount about the history of news making and media technologies.

About TEA

The TEA (Themed Entertainment Association) is a nonprofit organization representing some 7,000 creative specialists, from architects to designers, technical specialists to master planners, scenic fabricators to artists, and builders to feasibility analysts working in more than 600 firms in 39 different countries. TEA is an international nonprofit organization founded in 1991. It is dedicated to connecting organizations seeking to engage, enchant, educate and entertain their guests and visitors with the creators of compelling places and experiences worldwide. Its members have conceived, designed, fabricated and produced highly successful experience-based museum exhibits, science center interactives, corporate visitor centers, live events and live performance venues, themed entertainment and retail centers, casinos and resorts, themed restaurants, aquariums, zoos, heritage centers, theme parks and more. For more information, visit www.TEAConnect.org.

About the Thea Awards

Like the TEA, the Thea Awards, sponsored by Economics Research Associates, were created to bring recognition to achievement, talent and personal excellence within the themed entertainment industry. From a modest beginning in 1994, the Thea Awards have become

internationally recognized as a symbol of excellence. The public is welcome to attend the black tie 15th Annual Thea Awards Gala, which will be held March 7, 2009 at the Disneyland Hotel. Tickets may be ordered online at www.teaconnect.org. The name of the award is a play on three words: the first is "Thea," the Greek goddess from whom all light emanates. Thea was the mother of Helios (the sun), Eos (the dawn), and Selene (the moon). The second key word is "Theater," a word derived from the goddess Thea. The third word, of course, is TEA, the name of our association.

About Economics Research Associates

Economics Research Associates is an international consulting firm focused on economic analysis for the entertainment and leisure industry, real estate development, public-policy analysis, tourism, and economic development. Since its founding in 1958, ERA has completed over 15,000 assignments yielding unmatched experience in land use economics. In the process, the firm has made important contributions to some of the world's most innovative and successful development projects. Their projects span the globe and range from repositioning single land uses to New Towns planned over 30 years. In broad terms, ERA assists private developers and public agencies in assessing the future economics and outcomes of real estate projects and economic development plans. ERA offers a diverse array of economic analysis and tools to answer complex problems. Website: www.econres.com.

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