



## PRESS RELEASE

**Contact:** Judith Rubin  
+1 314 853-5210  
rubin.judith@gmail.com

Gene Jeffers  
+1 818-843-8497  
gene@TEAConnect.org

### **Photos & resources:**

**Barnas Brannstasjon at Kongeparken**

<http://bit.ly/s9kFU5>

**Arthur, L'Aventure 4D at Futuroscope**

<http://press.futuroscope.com/photos.php>

**Star Tours - The Adventures Continue**

<http://bit.ly/sDexJp>

**Fernbank NatureQuest**

<http://bit.ly/sEjSKk>

**House of Dancing Water**

<http://bit.ly/uwvOOC>

**Crane Dance**

<http://bit.ly/ryOyDn>

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# Themed Entertainment Association (TEA) Announces 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Thea Award Recipients

*Annual awards for the themed entertainment industry seek, gauge and celebrate excellence in storytelling that supports the creation of compelling places and guest experiences*

Orlando, USA Tuesday, Nov. 15, 2011 -- "The annual Thea Awards, presented by the **Themed Entertainment Association** (TEA), recognize and honor excellence in the creation of extraordinary visitor experiences, attractions, exhibits and places," says TEA president Rick Rothschild of FAR Out! Creative Direction. "As this year we commemorate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of TEA, we can reflect on how much has changed: the tools and techniques our industry employs, the use of digital media and interactivity, the sophistication of themed environments and the international expansion of the business, especially into Asia. At the same time, storytelling and teamwork remain the bedrock of the Experience Design Industry and its projects.

"The Thea Awards honor teamwork at its very best – the creative handshake between the visionary project owner and the multidisciplinary collective of designers, artisans and technicians who realize the vision. TEA's Thea Awards celebrate storytelling across the globe - educational and entertaining stories of heritage, history, fiction, fantasy, magic and even hard science – delivered with artistry and the appropriate use of technology at museums, theme parks, world expos, special events and other settings. TEA looks forward to the next 20 years of leading the visitor attractions industry."

The Thea Awards Nominating Committee (listed below) recommended the current slate of 16 Thea recipients, with final approval by the TEA International Board of Directors. The Awards will be formally presented March 17, 2012 at the 18th Annual Thea Awards Gala, a black-tie dinner affair, open to the public, at the Disneyland Hotel, Disneyland Resort, Anaheim Calif. USA. Tickets/more information: [www.TEAConnect.org](http://www.TEAConnect.org). Download this release at [www.TEAConnect.org/pdf/18TheaPR.doc](http://www.TEAConnect.org/pdf/18TheaPR.doc)

## **18<sup>th</sup> Annual Thea Award Recipients - List**

### **The Buzz Price Thea Award – Recognizing a Lifetime of Distinguished Achievements**

(formerly the Thea Lifetime Achievement Award)

**Joe Rohde, Walt Disney Imagineering**

### **Thea Classic Award**

**Puy du Fou: Le Grand Parc and Cinéscénie, Vendée, France**

### **Thea Awards for Outstanding Achievement**

**Space Fantasy The Ride at Universal Studios Japan (Attraction)**

**Barnas Brannstasjon (Children’s Fire Station) at Kongeparken**  
(Attraction on a Limited Budget)

**Arthur, L’Aventure 4D at Futuroscope (Attraction)**

**Star Tours – The Adventures Continue at Disneyland and Disney’s Hollywood Studios at Walt Disney World (Attraction Refresh)**

**NatureQuest at Fernbank Museum of Natural History, Atlanta (Museum Exhibit)**

**YOU! The Experience at Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago (Museum Exhibit)**

**The Changing Climate Show at Science North (Science Center Attraction on a Limited Budget)**

**Ghost of the Castle at Louisiana’s Old State Capitol**  
(Cultural Heritage Attraction on a Limited Budget)

**Crane Dance at Resorts World Sentosa (Show Spectacular)**

**The Magic, The Memories, and You! at Walt Disney World’s Magic Kingdom**  
(Show Spectacular)

**Yo México, Celebration of the Century of the Mexican Revolution, Mexico City**  
(Live Show Event Spectacular)

**The House of Dancing Water at City of Dreams, Macau (Live Show Spectacular)**

**FoodLoop at Europa-Park (Themed Restaurant Experience)**

**Animation Magic in the Animator’s Palate Restaurant aboard Disney Cruise Line’s Ship – Disney Fantasy (Ingenious use of Technology)**

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# 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Thea Award Recipients – Details

## The Buzz Price Thea Award – Recognizing a Lifetime of Distinguished Achievements (formerly the Thea Lifetime Achievement Award)

### Joe Rohde, Walt Disney Imagineering

Joe Rohde is a 30-year veteran of The Walt Disney Company, starting his career as a model designer on Epcot, and continuing with projects for Disneyland Park in Anaheim, Calif.; Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Fla.; and Disneyland Paris. Joe led the team that conceptualized, designed and built Disney's Animal Kingdom at the Walt Disney World Resort. He continues to oversee new attractions for that park and is also responsible for the creative design and content of Aulani, A Disney Resort and Spa, at Ko Olina, O'ahu, Hawai'i, which debuted in August 2011.

The challenge of creating Disney's Animal Kingdom, a park with a strong wildlife conservation message, involved years of research and negotiation with constituents from the scientific community, the world of zoos, and representatives of indigenous communities involved in the stories created in the park. In the process of developing the park itself, Joe was instrumental in the development of the Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund, which has allocated more than \$10 million to projects around the world.

Joe speaks regularly about design and narrative and has appeared at NASA, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, the TED conference, Portland Creative conference, and has been the keynote speaker at SIGGRAPH in Boston and Yokohama, Japan, as well as many other venues.

### Thea Classic Award

#### Puy du Fou: Le Grand Parc and Cinéscénie, Vendée, France

Technically, Puy du Fou includes two independent attractions:

- **Le Grand Parc** is an assembly of picturesque villages based on the history of the region, each with a spectacular live story presentation, each running approximately 30 - 40 minutes:
  - **The Secret of the Lance** is set in front of the battlements of a Medieval Castle. It relates the story of a young shepherdess who must defend alone her *donjon* [tower] from the English knights, helped by a lance with supernatural powers. The huge castle moves, turns and spits fire. A giant castle wall disappears into the ground.
  - **The Vikings** is set in a reconstructed 1000 year old fortress that is attacked by a Viking Longship. The story begins with a marriage in the village, just before the arrival of a Viking Longboat. Special effects include the emergence of a Longboat from underwater (with live Vikings aboard!), and a saint walking on the water.
  - **Triumph's Sign** is set in a replica of an amphitheater that is 115 meters long and 75 meters wide. It recreates the time when this region of France was occupied by Rome and there was great unrest. It features a traditional parade of people and animals, gladiatorial combat, chariot racing and executions. Highlights include a Ben Hur style chariot race, four lions loose at once, a hyena chasing a victim, and more.
  - **The Ball of the Phantom Birds** – Dozens of birds of prey surge from the ruins and swoop low over the heads of the visitors. The falconers place some birds on the heads of some visitors wearing hats. Many of the larger birds are released from a balloon floating far overhead. This ends with around 100 birds flying at once around the audience, including dozens of birds of prey and five or six giant vultures with wing spans of 6 to 7 feet, all swooping low, often within reach of the audience.
  - **Richelieu's Musketeers** in an indoor stadium, with a show featuring Musketeers performing swashbuckling sword fighting and Gypsy girls Flamenco dancing in water. Horses also perform

special trotting/ jumping techniques. Performed in complete light control, this is the only show that is staged indoors.

• **Cinéscénie** is a nighttime spectacular involving over 800 cast members, hundreds of animals, and just about every nighttime special effect known to our industry including, but not limited to, programmable fountains, projections on buildings and on water screens, pyrotechnics, programmed lighting, live fire effects, lighting, moving sets some of which emerge from under water, stunts, horsemanship, fencing, mock battles and more. The show takes place in the evening on a huge outdoor stage in front of the ruins of an authentic castle. It tells the story of the 700 years of history in the area. All of the dialog is in French, but English and Dutch dialog are provided via headphones. All of the actors and actresses (even the children) come from the local villages and are volunteers. In a single season, Cinéscénie involves over 3,000 volunteers ranging in age from under one to over 80 years old. It plays only 28 nights per year, each time to a sell out crowd of 14,000 every night.

Puy du Foy (both Le Grand Parc and Cinéscénie) were created and are operated without any government aid. Reaching to the future, Puy du Fou has also created an “academy” that teaches the skills necessary to guarantee the availability of trained volunteers. Children and young adults can study dance, horsemanship, acrobatics, fencing, fire eating, falconry, and many other skill sets involved in putting together the spectacular offerings of the park and Cinéscénie.

Comments from the Thea Awards Committee:

The difficulty in describing the experience of Puy du Fou to people who have not seen it is that almost every individual show is as good or better than almost any stunt spectacular or lake show in another theme park – so much better that when you describe it, your description does not seem plausible.

Since its creation 33 years ago, Puy du Fou has become a unique, world-class destination and an international leader in its field. Anyone who has experienced either the park or the nighttime spectacular has been amazed by the creativity of the theming, the quality of the achievement, the daring of the performance, the amazing music and the excellence of the services and technology. Each attraction within the park is completely unique, totally home-designed, mixing history-based content with smart technologies and fabulous performances by humans, animals and behind the scenes wizards. All of this is infused with passion, talent, volunteerism and inspired leadership. Accordingly, these two separate attractions that collaborate to form a single, compelling, world-class visitor experience are profoundly deserving of the Thea Classic Award.

### **Thea Awards for Outstanding Achievement**

#### **Space Fantasy The Ride at Universal Studios Japan**

(Attraction)

Space Fantasy The Ride is an interior spinning roller coaster, featuring 19 solar shuttles that each seat eight. Riders are propelled through stunning, colorful vistas and fun encounters with such fanciful characters as GBOT, your guide, the playful Sun Fairies and The Princess of the solar system, Cosmia. Our mission is to gather positive energy and re-energize our sun.

Comments from the Thea Awards Committee:

This spinning roller coaster was retrofitted into an existing building and features a highly themed queue, engaging effects and charming characters. The ride is a whirl of dazzling color light and thrills, delivered by a technical potpourri of 3D cameras, scanning lasers, violet fibers, and fiber optics as well as video walls, to create star fields, stardust clouds, star falls, dusty nebulas & a sonic boom blast into the sun! It's a thrilling experience that delivers an engaging story using advanced effects in a meaningful way, making an on-the-spot connection with its target audience.

### **Barnas Brannstasjon (Children's Fire Station) at Kongeparken**

(Attraction on a Limited Budget)

What child does not, at some point, dream of being a fireman? In this free-standing attraction at Kongeparken, a regional theme park in Stavanger, Norway, children live the fantasy. They receive training as recruit firemen and are then called upon to put on fire fighter jackets, slide down a fire house pole, board a giant toy fire truck, and power the fire truck, making it go faster by pumping as it races to the 'fire.' The fire is safely created by fog in a charming giant doll house-like structure. Children then pump and aim water cannons to put out the "fire." At the conclusion, everyone gets a certificate declaring them to be a fire inspector. On the back of the certificate is a list of items to be inspected in their own home. Children come away with new knowledge and a new personal identity linked to fire safety.

Comments from the Thea Awards Committee:

This adorable, free-standing attraction combines playful fun with a serious and important educational experience. Although created on a limited budget, the artistry and craftsmanship of Barnas Brannstasjon is both excellent and charming on a world class level. And yet it conveys deadly serious information about fire safety with fantasy play in a way that treats children with respect, by giving them adult responsibility. The experience transforms its young participants into empowered leaders and authorities on fire safety. And in the process, they had a ton of fun. This experience, combining serious education with world-class entertainment, exemplifies the highest standards of themed entertainment.

### **Arthur, L'Aventure 4D at Futuroscope**

(Attraction)

From the moment after the guests enter Arthur, L'Aventure 4D, they find themselves immersed in the charming underground world of the mythical Minimoy creatures. The stunning two story sets cover all surfaces of the queue area – walls, floors and ceilings creating an organic, underground world of soil, tunnels, roots and creatures. From the queue, our quest leads us to the 4D sensory experience aboard a 25 seat, insect-shaped motion base vehicle, which mimics the flight of a ladybug as we fly through the world of the Minimoy. The 3D, the tactile effects, and the story surprises are excellent creating, among other things, the feeling of flying through the threads of a cobweb, being brushed by a frog's wet tongue, or colliding with an angry bee. Arthur, L'Aventure 4D was specifically created for Futuroscope.

Comments from the Thea Awards Committee:

Arthur, L'Aventure 4D achieves an excellent story, excellent interior placemaking, excellent 3D imagery and imaginative simulation movements. The attraction is perfectly adapted to the Futuroscope audience and is the number 1 attraction of the park, and achieving extremely high rates of satisfaction, as rated by the mostly French visitors. The queue area is especially outstanding. Inside the queue area the miniature underground world is beautifully created, completely plunging guests into the story. The photographs don't do justice to the constantly curving walls, ceilings, floors and props, which together with excellent theatrical lighting, convincingly hide fire sprinklers, convenience outlets, air registers, etc. thus putting guests completely into the story. The craftsmanship and artistry of the queue area are absolutely worldclass, fanciful and completely charming in conception and execution. The overall guest experience demonstrates world-class technical, artistic and storytelling excellence.

### **Star Tours – The Adventures Continue at Disneyland and Disney's Hollywood Studios at Walt Disney World**

(Attraction Refresh)

This nomination recognizes the complete reimagining of Star Tours, the first simulator experience installed in a themed environment. The original attraction had been in operation since 1987; new technologies were available that could enhance the experience. At the same time, the Star Wars mythology has remained ever relevant to succeeding generations of fans. The challenge was to remain true to the vivid stories while making use of new technical tools and guest interactive capabilities.

The refreshed attraction has succeeded both operationally and with the extremely loyal Star Wars fan base. For the guests, the most compelling feature is the variable content that affords multiple storylines,

locations and characters. This element of surprise is driving multi-generational audiences to return again and again to get a shot at exploring different vistas into many realms of the Star Wars Galaxy.

Comments from the Thea Awards Committee:

Today's audience expectations for a high tech science–fantasy world as renowned as Star Wars far surpass the analogue entertainment world that existed back in 1987 when Disney originated this granddaddy of simulators that became an industry template. To achieve a breakthrough experience, all new “state of the art” 3D digital media systems were a given, but what really brings Star Tours-The Adventures Continue to life is a unique branching story structure employing multiple destinations and characters. This non-traditional storytelling device evokes curiosity by providing 54 potential show experiences resulting in a dramatic increase in attraction repeatability. To bring a layer of personalization and relevance, image capture systems are used to integrate riders into the varied story branches. All of this is fed into multiple motion programs designed for each random sequence, creating a multiplicity of kinetics for the 54 distinct profiles and unique real-time guest integrations. While the major components create the guest “wows”, every nook and cranny along the pre-show queue likewise received new story elements and advanced special effects. This has extended the experience of this “galaxy far, far away” way beyond the doors of the Starspeeder 1000 and repositions the total experience firmly in a new century.

### **NatureQuest at Fernbank Museum of Natural History, Atlanta**

(Museum Exhibit)

NatureQuest is a new exhibit at the Fernbank Museum of Natural History. The exhibit recreates various natural environments of Georgia including mountain ranges, forests, swamps, estuaries, caves, and underwater all connected by a virtual river teeming with fish that runs through the entire exhibit, originating at an interactive fog screen waterfall. The various environments contain remnants of scientific field research and interactives for guest “scientists” to continue the research. These include an archaeological dig site, spelunker's tools in an explorable cave and researcher notes in the swamp. The swamp and river have animal habitats that visitors can engage with. The center of the attraction contains a clubhouse with exhibits where objects come to life and kid play features themed to the environment which provide active play experiences.

Comments from the Thea Awards Committee:

This modest scaled and budgeted attraction (\$8 million) is exceptionally well-themed and seamlessly integrates entertainment technology into a highly educational and interactive environment. Scientific content is artfully embedded into various aspects of the exhibit such that the interactions with elements are very intuitive and interesting for its young audience (for example the fish in the river which are regionally accurate dart away or swim up for a look as the children wade through, night vision viewers allow visitors to look at nocturnal animals moving about the swamp area). There are over 50 interactive elements in the exhibit. The scenery and lighting are well-designed to create a sense of wonder and discovery and many of the exhibits can be easily rotated with additional content provided by the designers.

### **YOU! The Experience at Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago**

(Museum Exhibit)

This 15,000 square foot exhibit is a celebration of body, mind and spirit which explores many aspects of personal health and well being. It showcases the extraordinary workings of our bodies, the effects of lifestyle choices we make, the impact of the environment in which we live, and the role of medical technology. Over 50 interactive elements, each unique in character, engage the audience across a diverse spectrum of topics, from birth and reproduction and individual organ systems to lifestyle choices, diet, medical innovation and ultimately aging and life expectancy.

A sampling of the many exhibits include a giant, interactive 13' heart, a human-sized cardio “Hamster Wheel,” “Stay Active,” which demonstrates how the physically challenged overcome barriers, “Mirror, Mirror,” demonstrating the expression and perception of emotions, “Your

Appetite,” a series of lighthearted interactives about healthy eating choices, “iStan,” a human patient simulator that presents symptoms and can be diagnosed, and “Face the Future” which captures the guest’s image and demonstrates the process of aging.

A wide array of media segments, each sensitively designed for its specific topic, supplement the experience, and guests can swipe their admission ticket throughout the exhibit to aggregate additional data and links to access when they return home. The exhibit is supported by a rich program of educational programming for guests, students and teachers.

Comments from the Thea Awards Committee:

“*YOU! the Experience*” presents its subject matter at an unprecedented scale and does so with imagination, creativity, excellent design and, most of all, with sensitivity in its presentation. It covers an ambitiously broad range of subject matter, but the developers of the project looked at each facet of the story individually, selecting presentation modes and designing interactives which engage and communicate for that specific piece of the story. The exhibit can be experienced on a “macro” level, focusing on the largest and most obviously dynamic exhibits, but each topic presented also has considerable depth which can immerse the visitor in the exhibit for many hours and multiple visits. Appealing and engaging across the full demographic range, “*YOU! The Experience!*” is a thoughtful and memorably engaging exhibit presentation that demonstrates the best of compelling design and execution.

### **The Changing Climate Show at Science North**

(Science Center Attraction on a Limited Budget)

“The Changing Climate Show” at Science North, a science center in Sudbury, Ontario is a brand New, multimedia presentation that combines media technologies, theatrical effects and purpose-built environments creating an experience that communicates a difficult topic in a memorable, educational and very entertaining way. This show leads the audience on an exploration of the ongoing effects of climate change on humans and natural habitats and looks for ways humans can meet these challenges with creative and innovative ideas. Drawing on the success of an earlier show, the design intent and execution is whimsical and unexpected. Audiences are greeted by a loveable, original and expanded cast of animated sheep. As the story unfolds on multiple video screens, it is punctuated by creative set elements that are revealed by carefully timed lighting and motion at related moments in the show.

Comments from the Thea Awards Committee:

Creating an approachable show about climate change is a difficult task. The Changing Climate Show achieves that through the use of approachable characters and appropriate media and theatrical technologies cleverly integrated to tell a compelling story. Audiences are treated to an educational and highly entertaining show that breaks down one of the most complex science topics of our time. All for less than \$600,000!

### **Ghost of the Castle at Louisiana’s Old State Capitol**

(Cultural Heritage Attraction on a Limited Budget)

“Ghost of the Castle” is an experiential, multi-media presentation which brings the colorful history of the Louisiana Old State Capitol building (the “Castle”) to life for the audience. The venerable building has been burned, captured in war, abused, looted and repeatedly allowed to fall into disrepair, and yet, each time the building has risen from the ashes and been rejuvenated through the determination and spirit of the Louisiana people.

The “ghost” of the title is Sarah Morgan, a former resident of the castle who unexpectedly “appears” to the audience in a large mirror. As a spectral witness to the life of the building, she relates the history of the castle in a deeply moving and motivating way. The show appears as if from nowhere, eventually surrounding the audience completely through the use of three-dimensional effects, hidden projection, sound and lighting, transporting the audience back through time to relive key moments in the life of the castle. The entire production was installed on a limited budget in a heritage building without disturbing or modifying any of the historic elements of the structure.

Comments from the Thea Awards Committee:

This project demonstrates excellence and creativity in the application of the arts and sciences of themed entertainment. It combines a wide variety of techniques in new ways, and the result is a memorable, story based experience which fosters an emotional connection to the “Castle.”

In addition to conceiving and creating the entire project on a limited budget, due to the preservation classification of the structure itself, the entire production had to be installed without modifications or structural changes which would disturb the classic elements of the building. The ingenious approach of the design team completely disguises the technical elements of the show, hiding projectors, lighting instruments and speakers within false walls, soffits and ceiling panels, behind mirrors and within chandeliers. The results are transparent to the guests who are only aware that they have been engaged, entertained and educated in a magical and compelling way.

### **Crane Dance at Resorts World Sentosa**

(Show Spectacular)

What weighs 160 tons stands over 90-feet tall and is, well, in love? It's the two cranes that perform every evening at Sentosa Island in Singapore. These mechanical marvels are the largest animatronic creatures in the world. Located on a man-made island in the channel between Resorts World Sentosa and the Singapore mainland, the cranes “dance,” flap their watery wings and, via digital screens, bless Resorts World guests with love, long-life and good fortune. Through the use of ultra-sophisticated computer and motion controls, similar to those used on Japanese bullet trains, the cranes are able to move with a grace and precision that is patterned after the mating rituals of real cranes.

Additional character and personality are expressed via the crane's specially designed digital eyes. Each 6-foot diameter eye can blink, squint and react to movements, while expressing wonder, amazement and affection. The large, 26-foot by 26-foot digital screen on each crane shows video images, illustrating the inner workings of each crane and their affection for the other. The motion control system is so precise, the two independent screens can become one contiguous screen as the cranes “project” their love to the audience. The wings of each crane incorporate multiple jets of streaming water that spray thousands of gallons of sea water up to 40-feet in pulsing arcs, thus creating the crane's enormous flapping wings. Accentuated with pyro, theatrical lighting and audio effects, The Crane Dance is a technical marvel that crosses cultural boundaries and amazes guests of all ages.

Comments from the Thea Awards Committee:

It's big! Really, really big! Beyond the sheer scale, it is the careful blending of design, engineering and advanced technologies that make this production truly unique and exemplary. The imaginative use of modern industrial and mechanical systems conveys emotion and captivates all who stop to watch this spectacle. The presentation is only capable through the use of the most sophisticated power, hydraulic, motion control and digital imagery systems, but these technical wonders are virtually transparent to the audience as they are taken in by the magic and grace of The Crane Dance and the love they express.

### **The Magic, The Memories, and You! at Walt Disney World's Magic Kingdom**

(Show Spectacular)

A new nightly show at Cinderella's Castle in the Magic Kingdom, Florida. “The Magic, The Memories and You!” is a richly emotional and spectacular 10 minute show presentation. Using classic Disney icons and images, the show uses “mapped projection” to transform the castle into an ever-changing and magical canvas. In preparation for this nightly event, photographers have spent the day out in the park, capturing thousands of images of that day's guests having fun. Five hundred of these images are selected and incorporated into the show that night. The result? A show that is different at every performance and engages the audience in a unique way, and at a whole new level.

Comments from the Thea Awards Committee:

This show demonstrates excellence for the artistic and creative way that technology was utilized to create a memorable and compelling experience. Impressive as the technology is, the show is ultimately successful because it uses that technology, along with visual creativity, adept directorial pacing and showmanship together with a stirring musical score in an innovative and compelling way to create a most memorable, unique and emotionally fulfilling experience for its audience.

## **Yo México, Celebration of the Century of the Mexican Revolution, Mexico City**

(Live Show Event Spectacular)

Yo México was a 90-minute live multimedia show that celebrated the “Century of the Mexican Revolution.” At a cost of approximately USD\$20,000,000, the show ran from November 10th to 14th, 2010 in El Zocalo, Mexico City’s main square and was attended by over 3 million spectators.

Comments from the Thea Awards Committee:

The committee selected Yo México because: It succeeded in breaking the mold for arena spectaculars by placing the audience *within* a three hundred and sixty degree theatrical environment of the show. The five main stages, connected by walkways, ensured that all guests would be able to enjoy a front seat at various times during the performance. Yo México sustained the clear and definitive historical narrative throughout the 90-minute show, a difficult challenge for large arena spectacles. By the technique of architectural texture mapping on the surrounding buildings as well as the artful use of poetry, music and dance, the audience was taken on a poetic journey through a hundred years of Mexican history.

Apart from the innovative broad concept, Yo México’s production team used architectural texture mapping, a projection system that is becoming more and more popular around the world this year because of its dramatic effect. The production team used it to support the narrative rather than using it being the narrative as an “effect.” The show flow graph was masterful. There were huge moments of spectacle and drama yet the production was able to create intimate moments of poetry and dance without losing any intensity, energy or focus.

## **The House of Dancing Water at City of Dreams, Macau**

(Live Show Spectacular)

The perfect storm of Franco Dragone’s artistic vision, Lawrence Ho’s business acumen, cutting edge technology bring to life a classic Chinese tale of love triumphant over evil with the assistance of 80 performers and 120 support staff in a live show that extends the visitor stay in Macau. House of Dancing Water is all things compelling—on steroids. Spectacular scenes and storms, audio visuals and special effects are set against the backdrop of dramatically innovative water-based staging. Taking their seats the audience is unaware they are suspended on cantilevered seating over the pool. During the show eight principal lifts and three secondary lifts convert the performance area from a 26-foot deep pool to a solid-floor, dry stage in less than 60 seconds. Over head, 40 winches and assorted other flying gear enables acrobatic aerial displays. The show is housed in a 2000 seat purpose-built theatre, designed by Pei Partnership, featuring 3.7 million gallon swimming pool -- if you’re wondering, that makes it 5 times larger than an Olympic pool and the largest commercial pool in the world.

Other statistics for this USD \$250million attraction are almost mind-boggling:

- 239 automated fountains
- A boiling water effect delivers c. 125,000 liter of air per minute.
- The rain effect delivers c. 6,000 gallons of water per minute
- Fog covers the pool surface in 10 seconds
- 400 costumes
- 2000 pieces of lighting gear and 1500 cues

Comments from the Thea Awards Committee:

Transforming what could have been just a lot of technology into a live experience that surpasses all benchmarks in the field was a creative team that included associate artistic director Giuliano Peparini, set designer Michel Crete, costume designer Suzy Benzinger, lighting designer Luc Lafortune, and sound designer Francois Bergeron. The House of Dancing Water not only raises the bar for immersive destination live events, it also stands as a beacon of excellence embodying the best of design, technology and execution in our business.

### **FoodLoop at Europa-Park**

(Themed Restaurant Experience)

Parents often tell their kids to stop playing with their food. FoodLoop Restaurant at Europa-Park has created an innovated theme park experience where your food has as much fun as you. This restaurant employs a dual-loop rollercoaster to serve cooking pots and bottles to your table. Guests order their meal from interactive touch screens at their table. When the food is ready for delivery, it is loaded onto the steel coaster track that loops, corkscrews and winds its way from the kitchen on the upper floor through the dining room to your table. The experience is visual entertainment as diners watch their food being served.

Comments from the Thea Awards Committee:

The integration of historic and modern theming in a dining environment along with the coaster design and engineering make this a “wow” experience. The concept required that rare combination of idea and detailed execution in the development of the coaster track, cooking pots and carrier system. The menu includes healthy and light fare with regional and seasonal influences. Rather than making the food preparation visible to the guest, at FoodLoop the food delivery is the attraction giving new meaning to the concept of culinary delight.

### **Animation Magic in the Animator’s Palate Restaurant aboard Disney Cruise Line’s Ship – Disney Fantasy**

(Ingenious use of Technology)

Animator’s Palate on the Disney Fantasy brings the visual joy of Disney animation into the dining room with a new show called “Animation Magic.” Guests are invited to draw a character of their own using a simple template on their placemat. After dinner, animated curtains are opened on screens and Sorcerer Mickey conjures guests’ drawings – now fully animated and brought to life side-by-side with characters such as Mickey Mouse, Jiminy Cricket, Cinderella and Snow White in scenes from beloved Disney movies. At the conclusion of the show, Mickey returns to say “so long” to the guests and, as he does, credits roll onscreen showing each guest’s name listed as a guest animator.

Comments from the Thea Awards Committee:

Delightful image capturing and video magic have made it possible for a guest’s sketch to come to life moments after being drawn. The amazing animation, from a simple face expression to a complicated dance step, is made possible in this ingenious use of technology. Everyone from Grandpa to a child can be an “Animator” and see their drawings come alive. A refreshing new take on “interactive” without the typical monitor screen.

### **Thea Awards Nominating Committee**

Brad Merriman (Management Resources), Chair  
John Robinett (Economics at AECOM), Vice-Chair  
Steve Thorburn (Thorburn Associates), Board Liaison  
Karen McGee (BRC Imagination Arts), Coordinator  
Marty Sklar (Marty Sklar Creative Inc.)  
Monty Lunde (Technifex)  
Bob Gurr (GurrDesign)  
Tony Baxter (Walt Disney Imagineering)  
Don Iwerks (Iwerks Entertainment founder)  
Barry Upson (Barry Upson Company)  
Yves Pepin  
Bob Rogers (BRC Imagination Arts)  
Bob Ward (Strategic Insights & Creative Imagination)  
Kim Irvine (Walt Disney Imagineering)  
George Wiktor (The GW Group)  
Jeremy Railton (Entertainment Design Corp.)  
Steve McIntyre (Anitech Systems)  
Phil Hetteema (The Hetteema Group)  
Dawn Hollingsworth (Zuzink)  
Patricia MacKay (Ones and Zeros)  
Larry Wyatt (MSI Design)

### **About TEA**

The [TEA](#) (Themed Entertainment Association) is an international nonprofit alliance founded in 1991 and based in Burbank, Calif. TEA represents 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 680 firms in 30 US states and 40 different countries. TEA presents the annual Thea Awards and the TEA Summit and hosts the annual SATE Conference (Storytelling, Architecture, Technology, Experience). TEA also produces a variety of print and electronic publications, including the TEA/AECOM Theme Index, TEA Project Development Guidelines, TEA Annual & Directory and Thea Awards Program magazine. [www.TEAConnect.org](http://www.TEAConnect.org). Visit TEA on [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

### **About the Thea Awards**

Like the TEA, the Thea Awards, sponsored by Economics at AECOM, 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 18th Annual Thea Awards Gala, which will be held March 17, 2012 at the Disneyland Hotel, Disneyland Resort, Anaheim Calif. USA. Tickets may be ordered online at 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. A listing of Thea Awards and project credits from 1994-2011 and instructions on how to submit a project for a Thea Award are on the TEA website.

### **About Economics at AECOM** (Thea Awards Gala sponsor)

Economics at AECOM (formerly ERA/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, Economics at AECOM 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, Economics at AECOM assists private developers and public agencies in assessing the future economics and outcomes of real estate projects and economic development plans. Economics at AECOM offers a diverse array of economic analysis and tools to answer complex problems. Website: [www.aecom.com](http://www.aecom.com)