



# in park MAGAZINE

iaapa 2011 • volume 7, issue 5

Charlotte  
Huggins

returns to  
special venue  
media production



EDG'S STEVE GUY  
ON INTELLECTUAL  
PROPERTY

legoland  
florida  
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EXPO  
2012

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**Cover:** Charlotte Huggins on the set. Photo by Adam Ellison

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At this year's IAAPA conference the Themed Entertainment Association (TEA) kicks off its 20th anniversary celebration. The association was begun by a group of entertainment companies who found themselves doing more and more projects for theme parks and other unique attractions. Founder Monty Lunde of Technifex began the group to help the members learn how to deal with the theme park giants like Disney and Universal. At the time, it was more or less uncharted territory.



That initial sense of camaraderie has persisted to this day in TEA. Member companies partner together just as much as they compete against one another, and everyone strives to create amazing and inspiring projects.

The association has done a lot to champion the industry to new markets. Even in the seven years InPark has been around, TEA and its member companies have helped to introduce themed interactive (educational) entertainment into the museum market and fought for the legitimacy of themed entertainment in a variety of venues.

TEA has also excelled at bringing people together, making connections for people and projects. But it's sort of like a 12-step group. You can't just sign up and expect a cure. It works, as the saying goes, if you work it. That means getting involved. TEA has a number of ways to get involved, from leadership positions and committees to local event participation.

Initially, TEA survived in mostly regional enclaves. Essentially if there was a Disney or Universal park nearby, there too were TEA members. But as the industry has grown and matured, the participants have spread out over the country and the globe. Thankfully, the technology used to connect people to one another has expanded and also allowed for the networking and communication to continue.

It's not surprising that the same people and companies that are applying state-of-the-art technology to visitor attractions can also be seen making the most of social media, mobile media and the latest video conferencing tools for doing business in today's world.

We now have webinars, virtual conferences and gatherings where some of the participants are present as avatars - but we also still look forward to seeing one another in the flesh every year at TEA's various events, and of course the IAAPA show.

It's going to be interesting seeing how our trade associations continue to adapt in order to keep doing what their members need them to do in this brave new shrinking world. Taking advantage of not only the social media channels but also the higher levels of technology allowing for webcasting and distance learning is imperative.

If you are reading this while at the IAAPA conference, be sure to include the TEA booth #1354 in your itinerary, and stop by InPark's #1858 also, just an aisle away.

Happy 20th birthday, TEA! And here's to at least another 20 more!

-Martin Palicki

# people

WEST SUSSEX, UK - Immersive experience innovator, **Global Immersion**, is pleased to announce the appointment of **Paul Isaacs** as Head of Operations, a role that marks the latest in an ongoing series of strategic developments which form a critical part of Global Immersion's rapid and ongoing international expansion plan.

Based at the Global Immersion UK head office and as the latest team member to join the company at the British headquarters, Isaacs possesses more than thirty five years experience in fields of engineering, programme management, senior management and leadership.

"I am delighted to welcome Paul to our team," comments Martin Howe, Global Immersion's Chief Executive. "His extensive experience will be leveraged to bring outstanding levels of understanding and practice to our growing business."



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inPark is now available for the iPad.

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# projects

HOLLYWOOD, CA - Gary Goddard and his company, **The Goddard Group**, world leaders in the concept, master planning, schematic design, and show design of mega resorts, casinos, retail destinations and theme parks, have announced their slate of projects in development across Asia and Europe.

These upcoming projects from The Goddard Group include:

**Magic World, Russia:** Projected to be one of the most unique and compelling entertainment destination resorts in the world, Magic World Russia will encompass over 600 acres and will be comprised of multiple theme park concepts as well as hotels, retail, dining and entertainment venues. The project represents a unique collaboration between Russia and a consortium of industry leading California based companies, including **Moschanko Investment Group (MIG 2000)**, **Gary Goddard Entertainment Design** (a division of The Goddard Group), **ProFun Management Group**, and **(it) Brand Studios**. Planned as a fantasy world filled with the most spectacular rides, resorts and experiences in the history of theme park development, encompassing multiple theme park concepts. Magic World Russia is being designed to attract 10-12 million visitors a year.

Gary Goddard Entertainment Design has been retained to provide design oversight of the entire Magic World Russia project. "We are thrilled to be a part of the Magic World Russia California consortium," Goddard says. "It has the kind of grand scale and unique creative concepts that drive our imagination and compel our involvement. To be at the center of Russia's first world class theme park is both an honor and an exciting challenge."

**Victory Park, Armenia:** Working closely with the Mayor of Yerevan, Armenia's capital city, the Goddard Group team is currently at work on the design and master plan of an extensive redevelopment that city's premier central park, transforming it from a run-down Soviet-era amusement center into a world-class family entertainment destination featuring a variety of rides and public attractions.

**Qingdao Theme Park and Resort, China:** On the northeast coast of China, the Goddard Group is currently at work designing a new oceanfront family entertainment resort in Qingdao that will ultimately feature over two-dozen ocean-themed rides and attractions, in addition to on-site hotel facilities, as well as expansive retail, dining, and entertainment components.

**Fushun DreamWorld Theme Park, Hotel & Resort, China:** Currently under-construction in Fushun, China, is a massive theme park designed and developed by the Goddard Group over a nearly three year period, featuring six lands and over 20 attractions based on the world's most beloved stories and genres.



**Shenfu New Town, China:** Also under construction near Fushun, China, is Shenfu New Town - an entire city designed and master planned by the Goddard Group in concert with the local government and development agencies. Wrapped around two massive lakes, at the heart of the city is the "Circle of Life" - a 100-meter stainless steel ring that serves as the city's icon.

# places

LONDON, UK – On the 14th July the **National Maritime Museum** opened its new £36.5m Sammy Ofer Wing, housing 'Voyagers, a permanent gallery dedicated to helping visitors gain a richer understanding of Britain's maritime heritage. **Electrosonic** was selected by the museum to supply, install, commission and provide warranty of the audio-visual hardware. The gallery was designed by **Real Studios**, with audio-visual creative direction by the **Light Surgeons**.

The new wing is the largest development in the museum's history and is the first step of a five year plan to revitalise and refresh its galleries and exhibitions. The Voyagers Gallery brings together hundreds of objects, innovative audio-visual presentations and newly-commissioned videos all in one space. The novel projection system will help the Museum to make maritime subjects relevant to visitors on a personal level, telling stories of adventures and discovery in a unique and imaginative way.

"The Sammy Ofer Wing creates a spectacular contemporary environment in which more people can appreciate the wonders of our world-class collections and their stories of human endeavour and discovery," commented Kevin Fewster, National Maritime Museum Director.

Anders Hall was Electrosonic's Project Manager and Simon George the sales consultant. **Bespoke** software was supplied by **Flightphase** and **The Hub** was the fit-out contractor



OVERLAND PARK, KS — **The 31st Annual WWA Symposium & Trade Show** held Oct. 3-7, took place in New Orleans, Louisiana for the first time and featured a re-envisioned structure and education program. This combination of a new location, restructured schedule and lots of new show features proved to be a terrific success for park attendees and trade show exhibitors alike.

"The water attractions industry has reinvented itself time and time again from concrete to fiber-glass, outdoor parks to indoor resorts, and now the amazing new attractions and water experiences we're seeing across the U.S. and around the globe," said WWA President, Rick Root. "The WWA has built its brand based on providing members in-depth, actionable information and the latest solutions to real world challenges to help them stay current and keep the industry fresh and relevant for today's leisure customer," said Root.

Thanks to the continued creativity of park designers and operators, the industry continues to grow throughout North America and international markets around the globe. Overall, the WWA Show welcomed more than 1,400 owners, operators, developers, suppliers and designers.

# products

RICHMOND, BC - 2011 continues to be an amazing year for **WhiteWater!** Not only is the award-winning Canadian company celebrating its 30th year in the global waterpark industry, but WhiteWater is also celebrating 30 years of innovation, especially this year with the introduction of several new products. Some key innovations include:

**Family Python™ & Python™** - Giving riders an unforgettable adrenaline-rush, Family Python™ builds anticipation with high banking turns and exhilarating speed before swallowing riders into its colossal 20 foot enclosed MEGAtube™ flume, where a series of sensational oscillations provide a multi-sensory overload! Python's™ 20 foot diameter flume strikes at the heart of excitement for single or double inner-tube riders.

**Anaconda™** - With gigantic twists, turns and a dramatic oscillating experience through its 30 foot diameter MEGAtube™, Anaconda™ delivers unstoppable thrills from start to finish!

**Family Constrictor™ & Constrictor™** - Family Constrictor™ offers a 10 foot diameter flume that accommodates 3-person family rafts, taking riders through a spine-tingling series of spirals! With a smaller flume, the Constrictor's™ 7 foot diameter flume provides single and double riders with the tightest, highest banking turns in the industry!

**Dueling AquaLoops™** are an exhilarating twist on the world's only near-vertical looping waterslide slide. With all the thrills of the original AquaLoop™, Dueling AquaLoops™ add another level of excitement thanks to side-by-side action. Side-by-side competition encourages repeat races and visits, increases capacity and gives riders and spectators something to talk about days after their visit!

**AquaPlay Giant RainFortress™** - AquaPlay Giant RainFortress™ truly is an "all-in-one" waterpark with 20 exciting waterslides - never done before on any play structure! This attraction can combine a variety of WhiteWater's award-winning signature waterslide including Family Boomerango™, 3-lane Mat Racer, SuperBowl and more, with over 300 additional AquaPlay™ elements!

**AquaPlay™ Eruption** - WhiteWater's gigantic water geyser surges water up 95 feet in the air above its AquaPlay™ multi-level interactive structure! The explosion of water then splashes down to an eruption of laughter and squeals, as guests get drenched below.

**AquaSplash™**- Designed to stimulate the imagination of younger children with vibrant, eye-catching colours and activities, AquaSplash™ offers a smaller footprint but the most interactivity per square foot than any other multi-level play structure. AquaSplash™ provides hours of splashing fun and activity with the industry's largest tipping bucket and a multitude of interactive spray elements!

**FlowRider® Stationary Surf Machine** - FlowRider® is a self-contained attraction that generates a thin sheet of fast-moving water that riders can surf on, just like being out on the open water!

# SCAD

## Offering Courses in Themed Entertainment and Attraction Design

Learn beside industry leaders including **GEORGE HEAD** and **MICHAEL DEVINE**. Professor Head spent 30 years at Walt Disney Imagineering, 12 of those as vice president of show quality standards. As an award-winning designer, creative director and consultant, Professor Devine has also worked for Walt Disney Imagineering, Universal Studios Creative, BRC Imagination Arts and more. He was the founding director of a renowned performing arts design and technology program and served as dean of a theater school. Enroll today and discover why SCAD is the university for creative careers in themed entertainment and attraction design.

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- Themed Entertainment Design
- Large Project Design Studio
- The Public Event: Concept and Collaboration
- Off-campus Disney Imagineering

### **Learn in graduate courses such as:**

- Design for Themed Entertainment
- Theme Entertainment and Attractions Industry
- Concept Design Studio
- Component Design Studio

# call of the interactive wild

zoos understand the benefits of play in learning

by Wendy Hernandez

As a kid, and now as an adult with kids of my own, the Zoo has always been a special place. Filled with memories of family and friends, and the wonder of animals and nature, zoos have always called to me to learn about and commune with wildlife. Zoos, like most things in life, have evolved and changed throughout the years with healthier habitats for the wildlife, better visitor experiences, and environmental education.

Zoos are seeking new ways to provide more exciting, hands-on interactive experiences that attract families with young children, pre-teens and teens. Like many leisure areas, Zoos have recognized the popularity and necessity for Interactive Adventure Experiences as being a key component to an increase in gate attendance and revenue.

That's where Serengeti Outpost Group ([www.serengetioutpost.com](http://www.serengetioutpost.com)) comes in - developer of a new participatory interactive zoo experience and adventure challenge "where learning comes alive!" for the entire family to enjoy, together. Digging a little deeper, I learned that Serengeti Outpost Group is comprised of Andrew Y. Grant, CEO of Grant Leisure ([www.grant-leisure.com](http://www.grant-leisure.com)), a leading zoo consulting firm, and Jim King and Jan Shaw, Principals of WyldBlue Entertainment ([www.AttractionWriters.com](http://www.AttractionWriters.com)), a leading themed creative design development and adventure attractions consulting company. Together, they merged their talents to design a unique family zoo experience, themed attractions based on animal-behaviors and focus on wildlife conservation education.

As former Deputy Director of the San Diego Zoo and Wild Animal Park, Managing Director of the London Zoo, and developer of attractions, zoological institutions, and aquariums in over 35 countries across five continents, Grant knows the Zoo Business well. At the forefront of interactive Adventuretainment, Shaw and King have over 40-years of specializing in master planning, attraction design development for theme parks, location-based entertainment venues and leisure around the globe. Together, Grant, Shaw and King have developed a Zoo specific Interactive Adventure Experience that takes the best of existing family interactives and new adventure challenge experiences, combined into a fun and frolicking animal behavioral package.

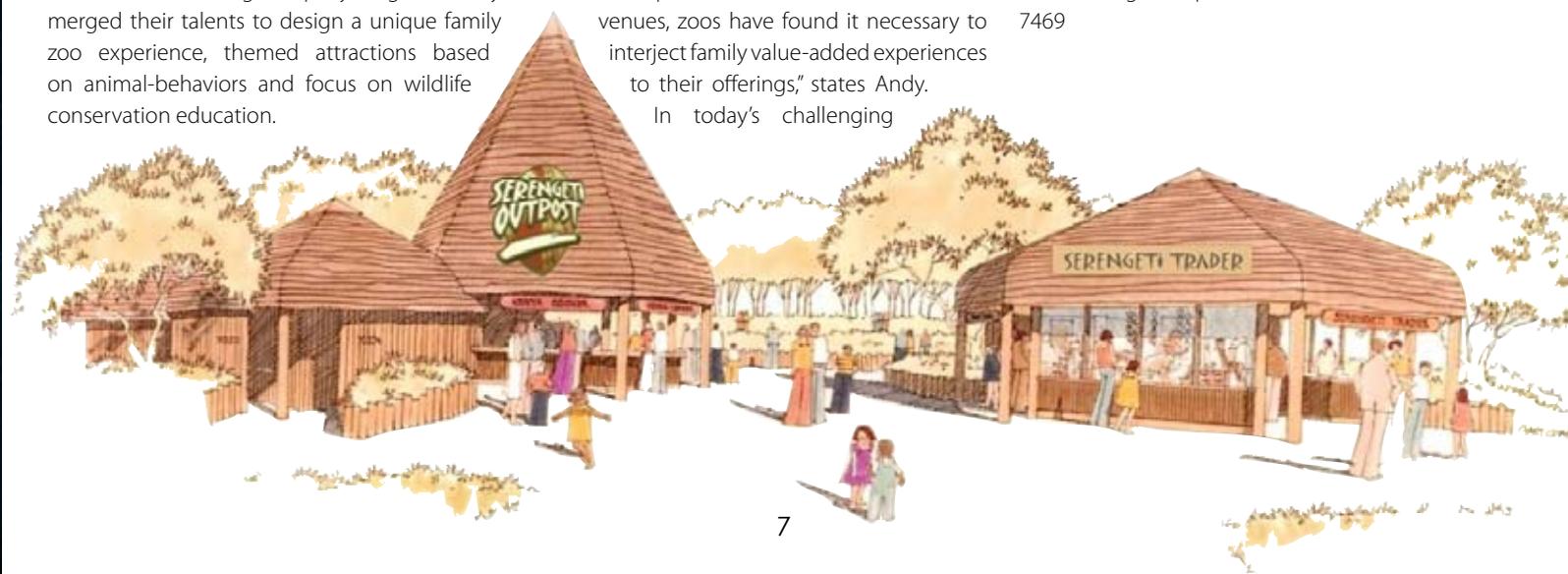
"The basic idea for Serengeti Outpost came to me many years ago," explains Andy, "I wanted an interactive attraction that allowed families to experience and learn about animals from a behavioral standpoint. While working with Jim and Jan on film and TV production projects, I became familiar with their development abilities and interactive adventure developing, and thought, this is a perfect fit. It all gelled." "Zoos and Adventure themed interactivities naturally tie-in with the zoo experience," exclaims Jan. "Families crave exciting experiences that the entire family can share, including children, teens, young adults, parents and grandparents," she continues. "Competing for family dollars against theme parks and other entertainment venues, zoos have found it necessary to interject family value-added experiences to their offerings," states Andy.

In today's challenging

economy, interactive experiences attract visitors. "We are providing the same interactive adventure impact and marketability that is used in Theme Parks, Destination Resorts and Mixed-use Entertainment, in a presentation package specifically designed for Zoos," Jim points out. "We design themed animal behavior-based attractions that meld with the natural Zoo environment and brand, targeting all ages, service-proven for the General Public, durable, time-tested, and built by leading U.S. and International manufacturers. What better way to learn about animals and how they behave, than by experiencing the world from the animal's perspective? Serengeti Outpost was designed to be expandable and scalable, so that zoos can put in the full second gate experience, or individual attractions to fit within their existing and/or future planning."

What is unique about Serengeti Outpost is the playful, clever approach, "learn-by-doing" hands on experience, that connects visitors with animals in a more interactive personal way. They learn to appreciate wildlife and the plight of endangered species. Best of all, Zoos have a superb opportunity to educate future generations through play, to help people continue to learn to care for the preservation of our planet.

For More information on Serengeti Outpost visit [www.serengetioutpost.com](http://www.serengetioutpost.com) or call 818-450-7469



# to the edge and back

braving the CN Tower's EdgeWalk takes guests to new heights

by Edward Wills

There's an expression my mother used to say when she thought an idea I had was risky, dangerous, or just out crazy - "So if a friend jumps off a cliff, you'll jump too?" That thought went through my head several times as I was preparing for my EdgeWalk at the CN Tower in Toronto. Am I crazy for doing this? Would my mother think I'm nuts?

We often seek experiences that can provide that adrenaline rush. EdgeWalk provides that opportunity, yet in a highly controlled and monitored environment. This is not a synthetic experience. You literally walk, sit, lean forward and lean backward over the edge at about 110 stories above the ground. This may not be the first experience of its kind, but it is definitely the tallest.

The adventure starts out in the Basecamp on first floor where you change into a one-piece suit, wiggle into your harness, and

remove everything that could potentially fall off and become a projectile hurtling toward the unsuspecting tourist below. All jewelry, watches and earrings must be removed - even your glasses are tethered so they can't blow off from the winds.

While getting dressed in the prep room, I wasn't prepared for the involuntary revolt my body was having against the experience. After hearing the others in my group talk about having gone sky diving and bungee jumping, I started to think...can this really be as risky as those experiences? I'm not relying on a chute or two to open up as I hurtle head first toward the ground, nor am I relying on the safety of a long rubber band to hold me as I stretch it to its maximum from a platform high above. When I finally caught myself hyperventilating from just thinking about bungee jumping and skydiving, I reminded myself, this is safe and far less risky.

I had to keep reminding myself that as I walked out onto the EdgeWalk platform and looked over the edge. I continued to remind myself of that each time we completed several of the exercises that had us suspending ourselves over the edge. At first, it didn't work. In completing the first exercise, my knees started knocking uncontrollably like a pair of cymbals in an orchestra and my back and legs refused to obey my command to straighten out. However, by the end of the walk I could comfortably extend my body out and over the edge.

In going to the edge several times, I had the opportunity to confront my fear of heights and work through it in a safe, controlled, highly monitored, and friendly environment. Finally I understood the essence of EdgeWalk - though other experiences may be designed to take you over the edge, EdgeWalk is designed to take you to it and back again.



# forward looking statements

what's ahead in themed entertainment? get a sneak peek at what will be discussed at IAAPA

by Christian Lachel, Vice President, BRC Imagination Arts

Twenty years ago, the TEA hosted a discussion with industry leaders where each predicted what the future held for the leisure and themed entertainment industries. In the years that followed, those leaders reached new heights with their businesses, opening doors for many of today's players.

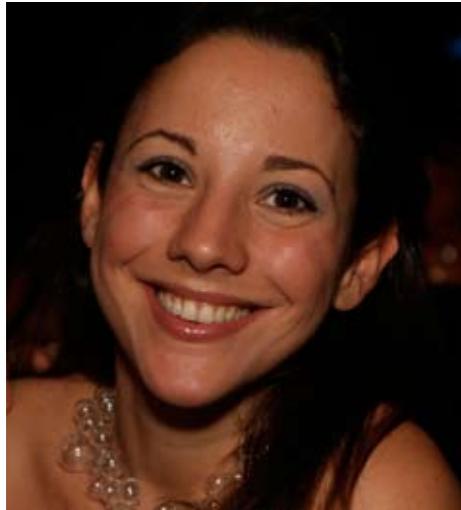
Fast forward twenty years: While our industry is perhaps at its most exciting stage ever, the approaches used to engage audiences today – and in the years ahead – are changing at warp speed. While storytelling and emotional engagement are still the basis of what we do, and great stories still draw the greatest audiences, the tools and the vocabulary for telling stories, creating content and designing experiences and spaces have changed drastically.

Social media, mobile devices, a digitally savvy audience, increased competition and new economic realities – all these factors are changing our industry. In anticipation of the FUTURE Legends 2011 – The Next 20 Years panel, presented by the TEA at IAAPA on Thursday, November 17, I've asked the panel members, who are all rising stars in their respective areas, to predict where experience design is heading.

Participants include:

- Tali Krakowsky, founder, Apologue. Tali has led the conceptual and strategic development of projects that seamlessly integrate storytelling, new media and physical environments. Clients include the MOMA, Chanel, HBO, and Victoria's Secret.

- Brian Morrow, Corporate Director of Creative Development, SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment. With a passion for developing original and enriching guest experiences, Brian most recently oversaw the development of SeaWorld's



Tali Krakowsky

acclaimed Manta, the first coaster in the world to blend animal habitats with coaster thrills.

- Robb Wagner, founder, Stimulated, Inc. With deep understanding of immersive storytelling and interactivity, Robb's work embodies once-in-a-lifetime, high-impact experiences. Clients include the Academy Awards, the MTV Video



Brian Morrow

Music Awards, and the film *Michael Jackson's This Is It*.

**Lachel:** The blurring of physical and virtual audience engagement has had a dramatic impact on the industry. Who's the audience you're designing for today versus several years ago?

**Krakowsky:** Today the audience we design for is often young, savvy and comfortable in the digital space. My philosophy is that as human beings we are dynamic creatures that can have simultaneous multiple thoughts and can move from different states of mind from one moment to the next. But despite this dynamism, our spaces are entirely static. The use of new media brings dynamism to our physical environment in the form of seamlessly integrated digital media. Designers are more savvy about how they think of integrated design, and technology is at a place where we can build the spaces in our imagination.

**Wagner:** We are always designing for tomorrow's audience. I have my own focus group at home: my 11-year-old daughter and 13-year-old son. I see how they interact with friends and participate in social media, and I know they represent our future. I extrapolate behaviors I see and think about experiences that will engage the audience. Everything we do for the future needs to be more adaptable so we can respond to what the audience wants at any given moment. This is the main difference between today's audience and earlier ones. All content needs to be more on-demand. And even if it's not, it has to feel like it is.

**Morrow:** The target audience for our parks has not changed. Rather, the manner in which we engage their imagination has expanded. Our parks inspire guests through up-close

animal encounters and real experiences, and technology has delivered new ways for us to entertain, educate and inspire. The new Turtle Reef attraction at SeaWorld San Diego features extraordinary up-close views of animals, as well as technology that engages guests. Things like interactive gaming, QR codes, and live tracking of sea turtles via multi-touch walls are getting rave reviews by visitors.

**Lachel:** The design tools and technologies used to engage audiences are rapidly changing, and each has its own learning curve. What tools and technologies are you investing in, and why?

**Krakowsky:** The most important tools are those that promote conversations, new media delivery systems that defy our tradition of thinking of a screen as two-dimensional and rectangular, and content that is driven by human logic but is self-generating. Ultimately, new media is heading towards seamless integration into architecture and complete personalization.

**Morrow:** We are exploring technologies that can be integrated into our park attractions to enhance the experience and allow guests to learn more. This combination of physical, immersive environments mixed with technology is a key focus in our new attraction development.

**Wagner:** I have found that investing in technology can actually be a trap. Obviously social media and interactivity will be a big part of all our designs and products. But we are focused on creativity before technology, and then we look for the tools to execute.

**Lachel:** The economy for many developing countries has exploded, and leisure travel is no longer just local. How are you approaching emerging markets and what do you think the future trends for travel will be?

**Krakowsky:** As every coordinate in the world seems to become closer, it's important to think of travel as something that begins and ends with a thought: today's travel begins in our mind with a plan and ends with a memory. By developing platforms and tools that help us to imagine all the things we can do, audiences can plan travel, build fantasies before departing and then bring those fantasies back home in digital form.

**Wagner:** We're developing concepts that transcend the boundaries of language and culture and speak to a global audience. More and more people are interconnected with each



**Robb Wagner**

other through content and communication. It doesn't matter where you're from. The content speaks to everyone.

**Lachel:** What have the ramifications - and opportunities - of the economic crisis been for your industry?

**Krakowsky:** In some ways, the economic crisis has been a gift. It has forced innovation, realization that the past hasn't been working, and built a desire to try something new. There's more courage to take risks and a much more open-minded attitude towards change. It also had an effect on the perception of youth. Silver hair used to be the only testimony to knowledge. Today, as a young entrepreneur, I feel like the world is willing to embrace new ideas about expertise.

**Morrow:** We've had an extraordinary year of growth. 2011 was the largest year of capital investment in our company's history, with 10



**Christian Lachel**

new attractions throughout our parks. This will continue and we are excited about the new experiences in store for guests.

**Wagner:** The state of the global economy has had an effect on our industry. Both television and concerts took big blows with canceled tours and slashed budgets. Yet, people still need to be entertained, and therein lies the opportunity. How do we approach entertainment in the future? I find myself thinking more about the next wave rather than the immediate challenges we face. I am excited about the future; there are many opportunities out there.

**Lachel:** If you could place one bet on a major shift that will occur in your industry in the next 20 years, what would it be?

**Morrow:** The appeal of immersive attractions at theme parks will continue to grow, with new extremes that envelop guests in amazing environments and experiences. Guest engagement will become a fundamental element - even today there is an increasing expectation that guests become a participant in the experience. There will always be a demand for a day of memory-making with family and friends, and theme parks will always provide this experience on an extraordinary scale.

**Krakowsky:** The future is in interactive environments. The seamless integration of intelligent new media into physical spaces is our inevitable and hopeful future. Bringing all the information, entertainment and fascination of mobile devices into our architecture so that we can continue to lead truly organic, dynamic lives is where I place my bet unequivocally.

**Wagner:** Entertainment will not be passive; the audience has to be part of the show. Everything will become on-demand, or have to feel like it is. This trend will continue as Facebook and YouTube users become our next generation of customers. The nature of entertainment will become more of a telemetric response, giving audiences what they want when they want it. It will be up to our industry to present it in a compelling manner.

#### **About Christian Lachel**

*For 15 years Christian has brought creativity, leadership, design expertise, business acumen, and strategic thinking to BRC's clients. Recent clients include China Mobile, China Telecom, and the Museum of Liverpool.*

# front row seats

with Rhythm & Hues, Charlotte Huggins plunges back into special venue media production

by Judith Rubin

Rhythm & Hues announced in September that Charlotte Huggins has rejoined R&H as executive producer of its Special Projects division, which will encompass Theme Park and Special Venue attractions.

With the addition of Huggins, Rhythm & Hues is poised to return to the attractions business in a big way. R&H has been a leader in the production of CG animation and visual effects for some two decades and was a leading attraction content producer during the 1990s (“It’s Tough to be a Bug!” for Disney; “Race for Atlantis” for Caesars Palace, among others).

Arguably the most experienced 3D producer on the planet, Charlotte Huggins developed and honed her skills in giant-screen, ridefilm and destination media – working with Boss Film Studio, Sony Pictures Imageworks and nWave Pictures. Virtually every one of her special venue productions is still playing somewhere in the world at a museum, theme park or world’s fair site.

Huggins is fond of saying that “we can all bake a bigger pie” as a metaphor for the untapped potential of special venue cinema. She will remain active in the feature film world – “Journey to Mysterious Island” (Warner Bros.)

opens in February and a third “Journey” film is rumored. Her intention is to leverage cross-platform and transmedia opportunities, and foster dialog and collaboration between the feature film and special venue camps. She sits on the New Media Council of the Producers Guild of America and the Board of Governors for the International 3D Society.

Working with Huggins on projects for Rhythm & Hues is another person familiar to the special venue community – Don MacBain, an independent producer who has collaborated with Huggins since 1990 and with R&H since 2007. MacBain’s recent credits include work on two R&H films for Ferrari World Abu Dhabi.

Rhythm & Hues’s feature work includes the “Alvin & The Chipmunks” and “Night at the Museum” franchises, along with 150+ additional film credits. R&H has won two Oscars® for Achievement in Visual Effects (“Babe” 1995 and “The Golden Compass,” 2008), along with four Scientific and Technical Awards from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS).

InPark co-editor Judith Rubin interviewed Charlotte Huggins and found her, as usual, animated and infectiously exuberant...





**"Honey, I Shrank the Audience" © 2011 The Walt Disney Company**

**IPM: How did this new career move come about?**

Charlotte Huggins: I was talking to Lee Berger [President, Rhythm & Hues Feature Film division] and naming all the things I love about special venue: the people, the room for experimentation, the technology, the creative storytelling, and the fact that special venue productions stick around for a long time. One thing led to another, and here I am... I'm honored to re-ignite the special

venue division that Sherry McKenna used to lead; she was my role model. We foresee three categories of projects: straightforward work for hire, partnerships and independent productions. We are looking to do things that are new and interesting – bigger, better, cooler - and tell great stories.

**IPM: One of the major gratifications of special venue is the long shelf life of a production?**

Huggins: Yes - there's the joy of having it stay onscreen for 5-10 years rather than 6-12 weeks. There's no doubt that in feature films I get to do new and interesting things, tell good stories, work with amazing people who are at the top of the industry - but a movie comes out, and - unless it's one of only a few in history - it will never go back into theaters. "Honey, I Shrank the Audience" which I worked on with Boss Film for Dlsney in 1993 was running at the Imagination! pavilion at Epcot up until about a year ago (when it was replaced by Captain EO).

Even "Journey to Technopia," which I produced for the Lucky Goldstar [now LG] pavilion at Taejon Expo 93, was still playing in the original theater on the original site the last time I was there a few years ago. Creating a unique piece for a particular venue or type of venue and knowing people will enjoy watching it for years is inspiring to me.

Another thing I really value about the special venue industry is that no matter what sector you are in - whether producer, distributor, or operator - you have to be involved in everything from creation through display, from the beginning to the end. And so, you get to innovate. If your innovation catches on beyond the initial platform, it can end up influencing bigger venues or even the broader entertainment industry. That's exactly what happened with 3D.



**Left: "Driving with Champions" at Ferrari World Abu Dhabi. Photo courtesy of Ferrari World Abu Dhabi. Right: "Journey to the Center of the Earth" : The 4D Adventure. Attraction Media & Entertainment**





©1988 Bob Talbot

"Dolphins: The Ride" IMAX RideFilm

**IPM: What are you doing to jump-start yours and the company's renewed focus on special venue?**

Huggins: We're reaching out to the community in a number of ways. We'll be at trade events, conferences and on all the PR and media channels. I'm going to the IAAPA Attractions Expo in Orlando this November and setting myself up there as a co-sponsor of the TEA (Themed Entertainment Association) booth to meet with designers, operators, distributors, producers, project managers and other potential creative partners. I'm excited to learn what projects are out there and to help create some great new guest experiences.

We want to work with science centers, FECs, giant-screen theater owners, and theme parks large and small on computer generated, live action and hybrid projects, using a variety of business models. I want to collaborate with people rather than compete. There is a lot of room for growth and experimentation, creatively and in business.

The Giant Screen Cinema Association (GSCA) and Euromax are holding a joint film expo at Futuroscope in March 2012, and I hope to be there as well. Interestingly, the last time GSCA met at Futuroscope was when Sony and IMAX

announced making the 3D feature "Wings of Courage" with director Jean-Jacques Annaud in 1995, which I had the pleasure of working on.

**IPM: What did you bring to the world of features, and what are you bringing back to special venue?**

Huggins: I think I can be somewhat controversial and provocative to both worlds as one of the few people who has done both.

Primarily, what I believe I took into features was the acceptance and expansion of 3D. I wasn't the first to do 3D, nor the first to do what amounted to a ridefilm element. But to combine the two: a 3D film and a ride/ attraction film essentially embedded in the feature – "Journey" was one of the first to ever do that. [The "Journey" ride/attraction films came out through Jon Corfino's company, Attraction Media & Entertainment.] Now I see it happening more and more. I hear people in Hollywood all the time describing their feature film projects as "a thrill ride." That makes me very happy. 3D has seriously taken off, and I think the idea of creating a ride-type experience in a movie has a real place now; it's fun and kids like it. We are definitely doing it in "Journey to Mysterious Island."

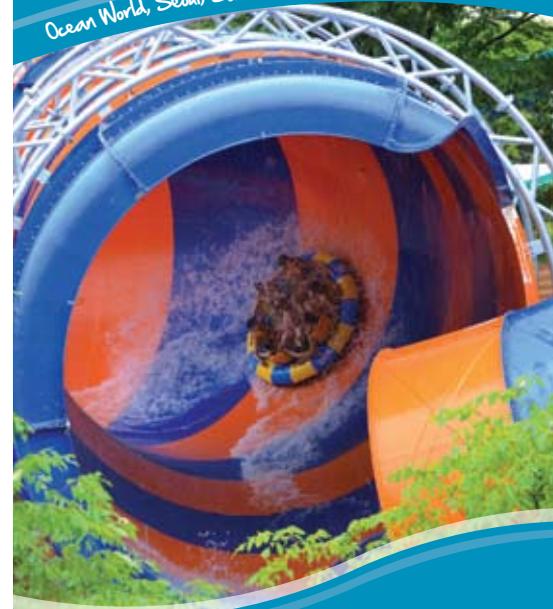


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"Wings of Courage" Sony Pictures Classics

What I hope to take back into special venue... First I need to say that I think the feature film world may have a lot more to learn from special venue than the other way around! The feature business has been around for a long time, and is large and established. Therefore, it has a lot of layers to it, a lot of people involved and a lot of conventions. The special venue business has neither the hierarchy nor the deep pockets. It is lighter on its feet. You are forced to be experimental and that has led us to create things that are innovative and immersive. There is a lot that I want to try in special venue that I have been watching from afar the last couple of years – such as producing for the digital dome, and creating new 4D experiences.

Obviously the feature business is phenomenal in terms of talent: I would like to connect some of that from one world to the other. That would include onscreen talent, writers, directors, costumes, wardrobe, set design, and camera work.

Collaboration is another great strength of the feature business, and very important it is to

creating a better movie. That's one lesson I will definitely bring. In special venue, the budgets are low, the profit potential is relatively low, and so people work more in isolation, which can be counterproductive. How do you resolve that? Make a bigger pie! Create projects that have longer legs, are more diverse and have expanded distribution potential. That means multi-platform and bigger projects. Obviously, the production budget is a direct reflection of distribution potential. No matter what industry you are in, if you can create a bigger distribution potential, you can create a bigger project. A feature film can now be seen on everything from the biggest IMAX screen to traditional theatrical exhibition to TV, HD video and your smartphone. I believe we can do that with special venue – it's a matter of knowing how to cook up these kinds of deals.

**IPM: Is there a place for going back to something like "Wings of Courage"? It was a very different kind of 3D picture from the titles you worked on later with nWave Pictures, such as "3D Mania!" and "Haunted Castle?"**

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**Top:** Don MacBain

**Left:** "Race for Atlantis"  
Caesars Palace

Huggins: As visual effects producer for Sony on "Wings of Courage," I had the pleasure of working directly with Peter Guber and the great Jean-Jacques Annaud. It was an extremely complicated and innovative movie at the time and is still groundbreaking today. I was not involved in the live action, which was captured in 1570 right- and left-eye photography with actors, in the mountains, on location and scripted. It was unheard of in its day and still extremely rare.

But I don't think that people would shoot that way now; it was never easy enough or practical to work in that format. Now we have very high-resolution digital capture – 4K is coming on line as we speak – promising the ability to shoot what might be a good substitute for 1570. Meanwhile, we are creating many feature films in hi-res 2K and up every day, for giant-screen and theatrical release.

It is the giant-screen industry that brought 3D to the table. We don't get to take credit for much because the world moves so fast, but we can say - a few dozen of us – that we were there in the early 1990s, working in 3D and creating stories and movies in 3D. That includes Sony Pictures and IMAX with "WOC" and "Across the Sea of Time," Ben Stassen and nWave Pictures with so many titles, then and now, for a wide range of venues, and directors like John Weiley and Stephen Lowe. I give a lot of credit to the people selling IMAX 3D theaters in that time with virtually no product. We knew the power and the fun of 3D. We were creating 3D films that led directly to the feature films in 3D we are doing now.

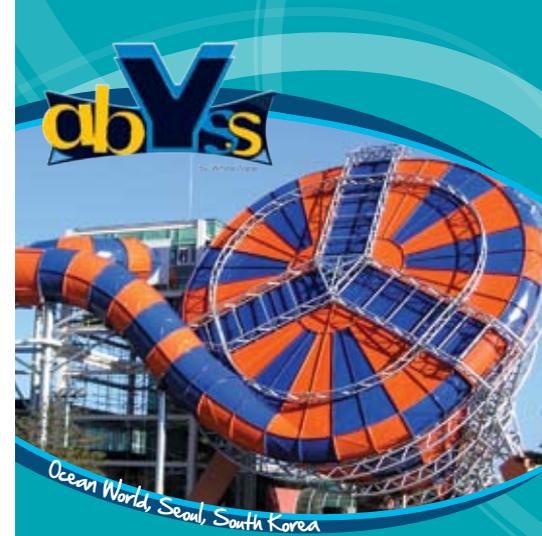
**IPM: What are some other innovations in filmmaking that have roots in special venue?**

Huggins: CGI – it's ubiquitous now, and has made a huge difference in so many films. At Boss Film, which was a big feature film effects company in its day, one of the first fully CG films they ever did was "Journey to Technopia," and in 1993 that was very rare. We were innovating in both format and resolution. James Cameron and others in the feature world are talking about adopting 60 frames per second now, but in special venue, we have been doing 48 and 60 fps for the last 20 years. Similarly, for the past 20 years special venue has been experimenting and innovating with really tricky immersive sound systems and those are now incredibly important to the feature film experience.

Digital capture and projection were pushed forward by special venue people and system providers such as Iwerks, ETI, Electrosonic, Barco and Christie in the 1990s - all innovators.

I remember sitting with Peter Guber around 1997, talking about 3D experiences. He said, "Charlotte, you're sitting on a surfboard and the wave is gonna come in and you're gonna ride that wave." I sat on my surfboard and produced a lot of interesting things, and finally, the wave did come in. It's been the ride of my life.

*Charlotte Huggins is currently writing a book about 3D pop culture, with David Cohen of Variety.*



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# to ip or not to ip

figuring out the world of intellectual property

by Steve Guy, President, edg

What makes an idea an intellectual property? And, for that matter, what is an intellectual property? I've seen plenty of official definitions, and I've boiled it down to this: An intellectual property [IP] is what happens to a good idea when money and lawyers get involved. I don't mean this in a negative way; in fact, I love IPs (and lawyers, sometimes) – particularly when they're mine, or I at least get permission to use them.

My company, edg, got started a little more than 21 years ago when I, along with a few fellow upstarts at Six Flags Theme Parks, decided to go out on our own in the world of entertainment design and production. At that time, I don't think any of us gave much thought to the potential impact that IPs might have on how we

conducted business or how successful we would become. We were always inundated with IPs at Six Flags, and using them was an everyday occurrence (which is likely why we enjoyed continued success at the park). It was not until we were out on our own that we truly learned the value of IPs – once we had to work to incorporate them into projects and productions without the power of a major corporation behind us! Now, with 21 years and thousands of projects and events now under our belts, I have found it to be an interesting exercise to take time to reflect on the role that IPs have played in our company's history.

In the world of entertainment, IPs are hard to avoid. Whether they take the form of a themed character, a movie, TV show, song, a piece of

artwork, or even just a catch phrase or simple logo design, IPs are everywhere. Given this fact, folks in our industry have only two viable options:

- Create programs, events and experiences in partnership with (and permission from) the owner of a particular IP
- Create programs, events and experiences that avoid the use of an IP altogether

A third option – Using an IP without permission and hoping you don't get caught – is not something I'd recommend trying. I'll leave it at that. Of the two viable options, we have had our fair share of both examples over the years – each with their own sets of pros and cons. Through two recent examples, I'd like to briefly illustrate how companies can find success through either option.

## To "IP"

Working with the right IP is like walking into a crowded room with a celebrity on your arm: You're sure to get noticed. The level of success you create for yourself depends on what you do once you get the attention.

We've worked with some great IPs, including characters from movies and TV shows, including Shrek, Chronicles of Narnia, Batman/Batman Forever, Peanuts, Dr. Seuss' "How the Grinch Stole Christmas," South Park, Hole-in-the-Wall, etc. Each property lends its own personality – and its own intrinsic value – to our scenic projects, whether they are part of a stunt show, holiday décor display or interactive experience.

We typically create IP-leveraged programs for third-party companies, like theme park operators or entertainment networks (both of which often own the IPs), as well as museums, malls and other retail clients. Recently we were able to work on a project that was a combination of all of these.



Lady Rainicorn at the Cartoon Network Store. Photo courtesy of edg

## CARTOON NETWORK CASE STUDY

I've always been of the opinion that – if given the choice – I would rather work with an IP (versus without one) 99 times out of 100. Working with Turner to create a larger-than-life Lady Rainicorn character for its Cartoon Network retail shop in Atlanta's CNN Center embodies the two key reasons I love working with IPs.

For one thing, IPs (the right ones, anyway) offer instant recognition. The Lady Rainicorn character from CN's "Adventure Time" series has become a big hit in a relatively short time. The character is quirky and engaging, and its unique shape and vibrant colors are unusual and easily recognizable. Working with such an appealing character helps ensure a level of success in whatever program we build with or around it.

Second, IPs – as closely guarded "brands" in and of themselves – typically come with a distinct set of guidelines (brand standards) for every aspect of design, including size, dimensions and color usage. Having the exact "blueprints" and style guides for designing themed environments or a themed element makes our job much easier, as it takes the guess-work out of the design.

The CN project allowed us to take a well-known character, complete with its own "assembly instructions," and let our imagination take it from there. With the help of – and ultimate approval from Jacob Escobedo, VP, Design/Creative Group for Cartoon Network and Adult Swim, we came up with a visually stunning result that they were happy with and we are extremely proud of.

### Not To "IP"

Sometimes, leveraging an IP is not an option for us in working for our clients. Often the subject matter for a client project is compelling enough on its own, without having to go through the added expense of leveraging an IP. Often a client may not have the budget to accommodate an IP. Sometimes, clients want to partner with us to create something that might become an IP in its own right.

Getting around using an IP is harder than it sounds. It's like trying to write a column without using the letter "e." Simply put, they're hard to avoid...but not impossible. Creating compelling content without IPs is a matter of creativity and a bit of cunning.

## CHRISTMAS ON PEACHTREE CASE STUDY

Earlier in 2011, edg was approached by the ownership team of 200 Peachtree – a Downtown Atlanta special-event/exhibition facility and retail/restaurant hub located in the footprint of a former department store building on Peachtree Street. The goal: to help them create an annual attraction that draws visitors and Atlanta natives alike to dine, shop and experience the recent resurgence of the Downtown area. Based on this request, and after several brainstorming sessions, "Christmas on Peachtree" was born.

The Christmas on Peachtree concept allows 200 Peachtree to leverage a highly recognizable theme (Christmas and Santa Claus and all that goes along with it), and avoid bumping up against an IP. Christmas and Santa are a few of the remaining popular-culture icons that can't be co-opted as an IP. Complete with the tagline, "Everything Christmas should be," Christmas on Peachtree would include holiday shopping (including classic holiday displays for window shopping), games and rides, a holiday music and light show, and – of course – visits with Santa.

Over the past six months, Christmas on Peachtree has evolved from concept to reality, with a launch date in Atlanta of November 25, 2011. And while it is likely that Christmas on Peachtree may leverage IPs as trade-in-kind from early sponsors of the event, the concept was created to stand alone if necessary.

Christmas on Peachtree has its own brand and logo (soon to be IPs??), both developed by 200 Peachtree's marketing team at Creaxion, Inc. Based on the success of Christmas on Peachtree, the annual holiday event is likely to grow, and it's even possible that other annual events "on Peachtree" will be developed as well.

With IPs or without, there are never any absolute guarantees for success. Picking the right IP at the right time to engage audiences and drive sales is a rare skill, as is creating a compelling concept without using an IP. Learning to generate success with or without IPs is what ensures staying power in this business.



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# eco-media

engaging museum visitors with interactive game technology and authentic built environments at Discovery Science Center's "Eco Challenge"

by Martin Palicki & Judith Rubin

**Exhibit Producer Cinnabar Inc. and Media Producer Mindi Lipschultz add a noteworthy new success to their respective museum portfolios with Eco Challenge.**

Discovery Science Center (DSC), the popular children's museum in Santa Ana, Calif., called on seasoned exhibit producer, artisan and fabricator Cinnabar Inc. to realize its concept for "Eco Challenge" - a technology-rich, immersive experience that uses interactive video game technology to educate kids about eco-friendly choices. The exhibit, open since September, has already hosted thousands of children and been hailed as a success.

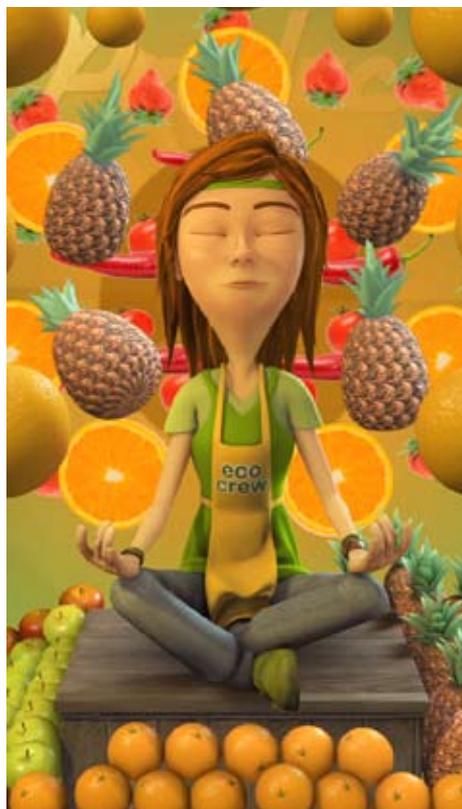
"The children are immersed in an amazing environment full of realism and technology," says Joe Adams, DSC President. "We're already hearing from parents that the message from the experience is being driven home." The project was born when Orange County Waste & Recycling (OCW&R) approached the museum with the idea for the exhibit.

"We were brought in and given the creative vision," explains Cinnabar President Jonathan Katz. "With the museum's guidance, we completed the design/build work and assembled a team to accomplish the completely integrated project, including longtime Cinnabar collaborator, Emmy and Thea Award-honored Mindi Lipschultz as media producer, and BBI Engineering for AV systems and mechanical interfaces."

As visitors navigate the three zones of Eco Challenge (Discovery Market, Race to Recycle and Eco Garage), they are greeted and addressed by the "Eco Crew" - six unique, digitally animated, 3D-rendered characters that appear, reappear and interact with visitors throughout the experience - showing up on a variety of digital displays from 52" vertical monitors down to 15" shopping cart screens. Mindi Lipschultz's role included developing and creating these characters.

## The zones and the Crew

Discovery Market is a life-size grocery store environment complete with computer-enhanced shopping carts and authentic replicas of products (Cinnabar-fabricated) on the shelves. Animated clerks help guide shoppers through making the most ecologically friendly decisions while navigating the store. The shopping carts, scaled to the museum's younger visitors, are each equipped with computer, touchscreen, handheld scanner, and a battery system with a full day's power. The visual playback introduces Eco Crew member "Sandra," who explains how to choose a shopping list, and offers hints and comments as they proceed.



**Produce clerk Courtney waits in a meditative pose until called upon to share her tips for eco-conscious shopping. Photo courtesy of Mindi Lipschultz**

The carts use an intuitive game play interface. The fun and positive reinforcement - and the learning that comes with it - are never hindered by the system itself. The carts are engineered to be extremely durable, able to take the daily wear-and-tear dealt out in a supermarket and a hands-on science center.

Race to Recycle turns the concept of carnival-style horseracing into a trash and recycling sorting adventure. After meeting Eco Crew member Zac, who appears on the screen console for each gaming station, kids select items off a moving conveyor belt and sort them into the proper bins to advance their waste trucks along the racecourse.

Eco Garage recreates three typical household garages, along with the bevy of toxic items contained within. Armed with scanners, kids race the clock to pick items they think are hazardous waste. At the end, Eco Crew member Justin directs them to the nearest real-life hazardous waste processing facility.

## Memorable media personalities

The museum allowed Mindi latitude in developing the personalities and looks of the Eco Crew characters. "I wanted quirky, memorable characters that kids could identify with," she said. "Courtney," for example, awakens from her Zen-like, kaleidoscopic meditation of floating fruit when visitors summon her by pushing the "Help" button in the produce department. "Suzy," a forceful young clerk with purple-streaked hair, emphasizes her points with a meat cleaver in hand and rails against Styrofoam packaging. Mindi brought Artifact Design onto the team to provide character animation.

"Interactive media production isn't just about compelling images or unusual formats," noted Mindi. "The producer's role extends beyond the media per se to the entire visitor experience." Mindi oversaw the development of custom



Children seek help from Suzie in the meat & seafood department, whose digital “home” created by Mindi Lipschultz blends in seamlessly with the real environment created by Cinnabar. Photo courtesy of Mindi Lipschultz

software (provided by Wall Street Productions) for the Super Eco-Shopper Game. The custom software integrates automatic responses to visitor activity into the experience such as triggering a camera to photograph players and instantly transmit their pictures – so that those who excel appear on the Super Shopper Wall (a bank of monitors), and if they get all the questions right, the system also directs a token dispenser to reward them with a custom coin. The tokens are embossed with the faces of the six characters and kids are encouraged to play numerous times and collect them all.

### Connecting the built environment with the digital world

Beyond the personality of the characters, much time and attention were given to the digital environments in which the characters reside. The digital environment needed to blend seamlessly with the built environment in order to make the experience feel as real as possible. Cinnabar and Lipschultz collaborated closely, passing digital images back and forth to ensure the animation mirrored the Cinnabar-fabricated physical products kids see and touch in the store. Additionally, the walls, countertops and environments were recreated in the digital environment to flow into the real ones (also fabricated by Cinnabar).

Cinnabar and Mindi’s past collaborations in their respective roles of exhibit producer and media producer include the California Academy of Sciences which reopened to great acclaim in 2008. Cinnabar produced 35,000 square feet of exhibits for the Academy, primarily those for the Kimball Natural History Museum, collaborating closely with the museum’s architect Renzo Piano. A lifelong conservationist, Jonathan Katz has strong “green” credentials that are clearly in play on DSC’s Eco Challenge and which also helped inform the highly acclaimed, 10,000 square foot “Altered State” exhibit about climate change at the Academy for which he was executive producer. Cinnabar was honored with a SEG Design Award for its work on the Academy project.

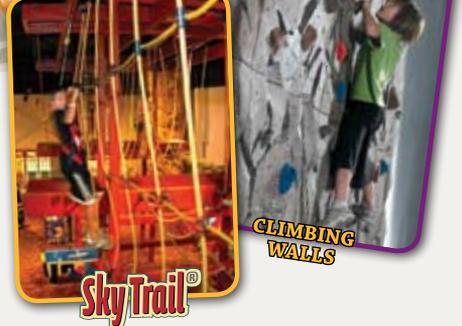
Under contract to Cinnabar for the Academy exhibits, Mindi produced some 31 pieces of digital media, including the Insect Collecting Game in which visitors use a handheld wand interacting with images onscreen to learn how a field scientist works. “The Insect Collecting game was an important example of how gaming technology can be applied for educational exhibits that appeal greatly to children,” says Mindi.

### A body of museum work

Other recent museum projects for Cinnabar include fabrication of the “Age of Mammals” exhibit at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County; fabrication services and design

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development consulting to the Autry National Center of the American West for the traveling exhibition Home Lands: How Women Made the West and fabrication of the renovation of the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) von Karman Visitor Center.

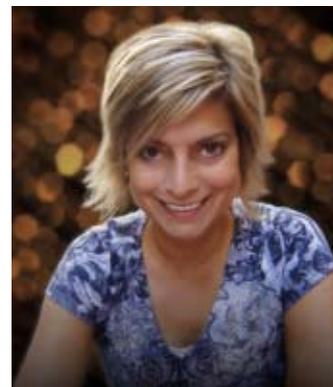
In 2010, Mindi worked with BRC Imagination Arts to develop media for a handheld interactive device for the Information and Communications pavilion at the 2010 Shanghai World Expo. Members of the audience used the devices to make individual choices and also to interact with large screen projections, experiencing the show on both a personal and a group level in what is termed "mass customization." The "ICT" device was honored with a Thea Award for Outstanding Achievement by the Themed Entertainment Association.

Mindi sees her work on Eco Challenge as building upon her 20+ years of pioneering media production. "Eco Challenge takes the interactivity of the Insect Collecting game at the California Academy and makes it mobile, allowing kids to move around the store, scan items and receive

instant feedback on their progress. Moving through the different levels at Eco Challenge at their own pace and ability, visitors enjoy a mass-customized experience – shades of what we did at Shanghai. And Eco Challenge's high-quality digital characters hearken back to my work as a television animation producer."

### **A model for getting things done**

Eco Challenge was completed in less than a year - a feat which Katz credits to a clear vision from the museum and a cohesive team. "A key part of our Integrated Creative Management (ICM) approach is to bring all the participants to the table at the beginning of a project. By identifying all the roles and our expectations at the onset, the project was able to move at a quick pace," said Katz. "Additionally, ICM results in additional value and savings for the client - enhancing the risk/reward attractiveness of this production model."



**Mindi Lipschultz**



**Jonathan Katz**

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# growing kidzania

Mark Snell talks about KidZania's next-generation rollout

by Judith Rubin

Opening early 2012 in Cuicuilco, a southern suburb of Mexico City, is a new twist on the KidZania concept: an outdoor park, more than triple the size of the existing, eponymous indoor facilities, on a 150,000 square foot site.

And that's just the beginning. The privately held KidZania Inc. currently operates eight parks and is on schedule to double that over the next two years. Altogether about a dozen new KidZanias are in various stages of development around the world, including two in the US. The company recently created two new executive positions to help steer the growth and realize the next generation of KidZanias. Mark Snell is now Chief Experience Officer, and Philip Sandhaus is Vice President Global Business.

The first KidZania opened in Mexico City in 1999. The seven other locations – all indoors – are Monterrey, Mexico; Tokyo; Jakarta; Osaka; Lisbon; Dubai; and Seoul. The company reports that more than 18 million kids and family members have visited the parks globally.

WithineachKidZaniaaremultiple“establishments” that reflect an urban community, each with a range of role-playing activities based in the real world and tending toward the vocational. The facilities' themed environments are detailed with a view toward authenticity. KidZania also makes the most of corporate branding and sponsorship, which further contribute to making the places and experiences look and feel authentic to the young visitors.

As Chief Experience Officer, Snell, based at the company headquarters in Mexico, leads KidZania's "Ministry of Culture," focused on creating superior guest experiences through entertaining and engaging content, themes, architecture, programming, and operations. He was first exposed to KidZania about 11 years ago when he was with Jack Rouse Associates, and CEO Xavier López Ancona invited a JRA team to visit the flagship facility.

The new property in Cuicuilco will reflect an expanded concept as well as a larger facility

and the first outdoor KidZania. "It is the "next evolution of the KidZania experience," says Snell. Laid out as a scaled-down city complete with a downtown, suburbs, landscaping and architectural landmarks, and looped by a roadway for driving education, its activities revolve around the themes of driving safety, community, health, civics and the environment. "We are taking our motto of 'Get Ready for a Better World' and putting it into practice through the medium of leisure entertainment," says Snell.

The backstory of the "Better World" motto is that KidZania was formed by kids who wanted to experiment with running the world and see how they could improve things. They even have their own currency: the "kidZo."

The new park will open with around 85 establishments including over 200 activities. The primary demographic is ages 4-12. The facility will be 100% accessible and include specific activities to help able-bodied children empathize with the disabled, such as grocery shopping in



At KidZania, children learn how to bake in a realistic professional kitchen environment. Photo courtesy of KidZania.

darkness guided by blind attendants, or being fitted with a leg cast and wheelchair and sent out to perform tasks in the park.

By empowering children to try on a variety of activities and roles, KidZania seeks to build skills, nurture creativity and develop values in ways that will positively affect the real future of their young visitors and where they live. "If we can encourage this experimentation and flexibility in kids now, when they become adults imagine how they might do things better than we currently do," explains Snell.

The outdoor setting of the Cuicuilco park accommodates an extensive driving course and fulfills an important KidZanian goal: to train better drivers for Mexico's streets. "This will emphasize the importance of driver's education to the kids," explains Snell.

Snell points out that almost every major urban area faces certain kinds of issues that touch the children who live there, such as housing and population growth, accommodation for the disabled, nutrition and, with the rise of personal technology, a decline in the level of physical activity and face-to-face socialization. To address such issues and help build that better world, KidZania activities are designed to help instill a sense of the workings of a city: infrastructure, zoning and planning, civic awareness, limited natural resources - with the new, larger park offering more choices than ever.

"To really understand how a city works you have to have all the roles: police officers, dentists, bus drivers, cooks, clerks, judges, trash collectors, teachers, radio announcers and so forth," says Snell. "Additionally, national, state and international curriculum standards are being built into the activities; we have strong relationships with top universities in Mexico and are building similar relationships with other US and global institutions centered on early childhood education."

That's heavy stuff, but it's still "Entertainment first," says Snell, whose professional background includes an education in theatre, the creation of attractions for SeaWorld, LEGOLAND and other major theme parks and the design of online educational experiences for school curricula. "It has to deliver a fun and engaging mix of entertainment along with the educational/ socialization component for kids and their parents to be motivated to visit and return. KidZania isn't a school, although we host many



**Kids can be adventurers, such as this boy climbing a building. Photo courtesy of KidZania.**

school groups: It's a place for kids to come and have fun, and the supervisors role-play right along with the kids."

Snell works with a creative team of about 50 people in Mexico City covering the full range of disciplines for designing and producing themed environments. Once a site is established, it's a rapid process: "We can turn out a park in about 18 months," he says. Industry members interested in working on future KidZanias should send inquiries to [kzinformation@kidzania.com](mailto:kzinformation@kidzania.com).



**Mark Snell**

# haunting china

establishing a Halloween haunt in mainland China is a maze of business risks and rewards, competition and thrilled customers

by *Quan Gan, President, Darklight*

In the fall of 2009, my wife and business partner Charlie Xu and I decided to create "Shanghai Nightmare": what we believe was mainland China's very first Halloween haunted attraction. We were confident on the commercial viability, granted we would be allowed to open such an event; in a country where media is monitored and censored, bringing in a haunted attraction full of frightening ghosts and ghouls may meet some government resistance. We had to find a fine balance between what customers would like versus what can be allowed; therefore we favored technology and surreal experiences (with a few good scares in between) more than blood, gore, and violence.

We built Shanghai Nightmare in a 107-year-old cotton warehouse that had not been occupied for years. The building was established as a cultural relic so no permanent renovation could occur. Perfect for a haunted attraction - as the building already looked haunted, and our installation was only temporary. We built animatronics, Pepper's Ghosts, fake elevators, spinning tunnels, fog curtains, projections, and mirror mazes just to name a few and dazzled (and frightened) our guests with never seen before (in mainland China) special effects. The end result was a profitable business from year one with over 20,000 guests in October 2009.

Many Western people have asked us, "What's scary to Chinese people? Are chainsaws scary? Are zombies and vampires scary?" The answer is ABSOLUTELY YES! It doesn't matter where you're from: the sights and sounds of approaching blades, gnarled teeth and blistering skin are scary to anyone! The cultural differences are in the way people react.

A few differences we observed between our Chinese guests and their Western counterparts :

1. Chinese guests, overall, had smaller reactions to scares. It may be an inappropriate gauge of "success," but a typical American haunt will have a handful of guests claiming to have soiled themselves in the haunt each season; we had none. Perhaps they had a higher tolerance, or the culture teaches them to be more reserved

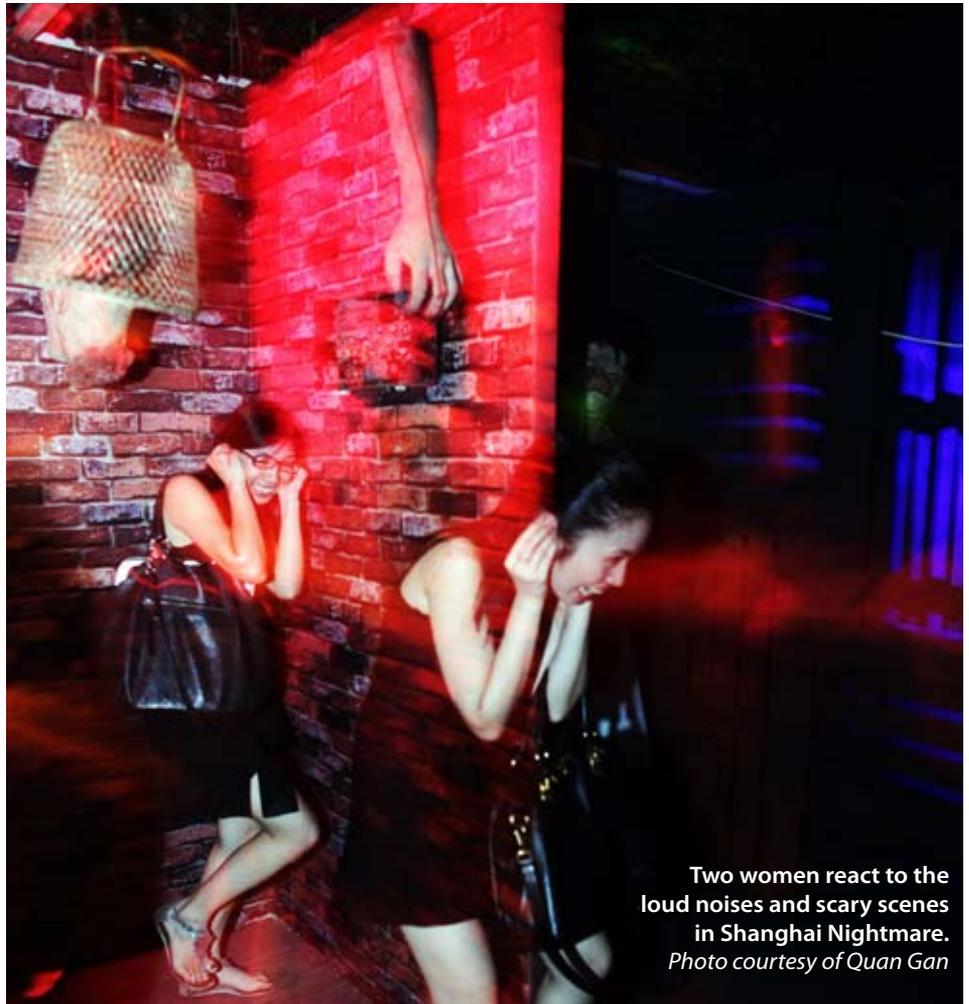
in their expressions (or they just don't publicly share such mishaps).

2. Contrary to our expectations, a larger percentage of Chinese guests couldn't complete the haunted house and bailed out in the first few scenes than Western guests.

3. The overall response from Western guests was more positive than our Chinese guests. Many Westerners thought it was one of the most thrilling haunts to which they'd ever been while many Chinese guests wanted it to be scarier and bloodier - and even wanted us to touch them! (Perhaps the Westerners were also really happy to see a familiar event in an otherwise unfamiliar environment.)

Seeing those interesting results allowed us to hone our tactics for year two. We made more interactive guest-triggered experiences such as path choices and big unknown buttons that looked very tempting. The logic was, if we can't scare you, at least let us entertain you.

Beyond the content and the guest reactions, what was more important than the show itself was the process of getting the show opened. Because there was no haunted house industry per se in China, there exist no applicable laws or safety regulations for such an event. This makes for an "interesting" process to get the proper licenses to legally open the show. No one department (fire dept, police dept, business bureau, cultural bureau) wants to deal with you



**Two women react to the loud noises and scary scenes in Shanghai Nightmare.**  
*Photo courtesy of Quan Gan*

because a "haunted house" isn't listed under their jurisdiction - so it sounds like you don't need a license, right? Wrong! If you just opened up shop, every one of those departments would come after you asking why you didn't get their approval. At times it felt like getting a round peg to fit into a square hole. Our haunted house was finally approved to be a "theatrical performance"... close enough, right?

### Charlie Xu and Quan Gan

For our second season, following the success of 2009, we decided to expand and make the event larger and more thrilling by partnering up with Erebus, the former world record holder for the largest haunt (in Pontiac, Michigan USA). On paper, the event would have been very successful, however, the nature of the beast changed during 2010. A copycat haunted attraction sprang up during the summer, a few months before we were set to open. Concerns about safety and crowding led to the venue being shut down on opening night. This put a nasty stain on the reputation of a newly sprouted business genre in the eyes of the local government. When we went to apply for our licenses, the government resistance (or lack of support) was even stronger

due to the World Expo taking place in the same city. No department wanted to take responsibility for a haunted house during the operation of an international event, especially after what happened with the one that was shut down.

We eventually trudged through the bureaucracy and were allowed to open, but our media outlets for publicity were muted by the overwhelming coverage of the Expo. We survived year two, but it was a tough season.

Shanghai Nightmare is dormant for 2011 while we refocus our energy on a spinoff venture and think about possibilities of re-opening the venue in the future. The Chinese market is one of high fluctuations; to survive, you have to think quickly on your feet. Haunted houses in China are liable to come and go as an independently operated seasonal business, but the theme parks are sure to have Halloween related events as their attendance is more stable, they have more government support, and their Halloween marketing can piggyback onto their existing campaigns for the rest of the year - things we wish we had had, but survived without.

IPM guest writer and haunted attraction specialist Quan Gan is President of Darklight, a manufacturer of precision lighting systems. He actively conducts business in China and the US.



Groups in Shanghai Nightmare encounter gruesome scenes of horror and the ever-popular chainsaw-wielding madmen. Photo courtesy of Quan Gan



# expo 2012

## USA Pavilion for Yeosu Expo 2012 begins to take shape

by Judith Rubin

On 13 October, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton officially announced that the United States will participate in the next World Expo, in South Korea: Yeosu Expo 2012. The announcement, made during a state luncheon at the US Department of State in honor of Republic of Korea President Lee Myung-bak, formalized the USA pavilion planning and development process that has been underway for several months.

The USA Pavilion producer is USA Pavilion 2012, LLC, a nonprofit organization headquartered in Virginia led by Philippe Cousteau Jr, son of Philippe Cousteau Sr, and grandson of legendary explorer Jacques Yves Cousteau.

Featuring the themes of "Diversity, Wonder and Solutions," the USA Pavilion will bring to life the

colorful mosaic of American life, sharing the voices and hopes of the American people with friends and partners in Korea and throughout the global community.

USA Pavilion Chief Spokesperson is Philippe Cousteau Jr who is also President of EarthEcho International; pavilion CEO Andrew Snowwhite is advisor to EarthEcho International and Cousteau's business partner at Azure Worldwide LLC, a strategic environmental design and development firm. COO of the pavilion is Mark Germyn; Executive Producer is Robert L Ward and The Hettema Group is exhibit designer. Fundraising is administered by the US Department of State with support by Norm Elder on the pavilion team side.

In awarding the project to this team, the US government selected a group and entity

with a lot of legs, and whose members have worked together before. Philippe Cousteau Jr's organizations and his work have an existing international reputation, an instant connection to the theme and passion for the issues involved, an extensive media presence through relationships with CNN and Discovery Communications and relevant academic ties with the University of Virginia. Robert Ward, a creative executive who was recently honored with the Buzz Price Award for Lifetime Achievement by the Themed Entertainment Association, brings to the table a showmanship background that includes 2 decades with Universal Parks & Resorts, including the co-founding of Universal Creative. Ward has collaborated with Philippe Cousteau Jr on various projects since 2006.



Artists rendering of the International Pavilion for Yeosu Expo 2012.

Having been COO of the USA Pavilion at Shanghai Expo 2010, Mark Germyn has on-the-ground experience both relevant and recent. His international background includes top management roles at Legoland California and Warner Bros parks in Germany and Australia, as well as operations roles with pavilions at AmeriFlora 92 and Vancouver Expo 86. Norm Elder is a leader in strategic marketing and brand development whose credits include raising corporate sponsors for major Disney parks and for the USA Pavilion at Shanghai Expo 2010. The Hettema Group is a top design and master planning firm in themed entertainment and has received both awards and accolades recently as creator of "Beyond All Boundaries," a 4D multimedia educational experience for the National World War II Museum in New Orleans. Prior to founding his own company, Phil Hettema was SVP of attraction development for Universal Recreation.

### Funding & design challenges

At the time of this writing (late October 2011) Robert Ward's mood was optimistic but sober. Most international pavilions at the World Expo

are funded by their governments but in the case of the USA, all the funds must be obtained from private sources. The \$61 million budget for last year's USA Pavilion at Shanghai Expo 2010 covered design, building, staffing, operations and, after closing day, tear down and removal. Travel costs were eased by having an official airline sponsor. Fundraising was challenging but outside support and encouragement from Hillary Rodham Clinton and the U.S. State Department helped achieve the goal.

The situation for the Yeosu expo is somewhat different. Korea is a major trade and political partner to the USA; however Yeosu itself, on the southernmost tip of the country several hours' drive from Seoul, is remote and the interests for corporations to back the pavilion are less obvious than they were with China and Shanghai. Yeosu's being a 3-month regional expo, all 100+ participants including the USA occupy tenant spaces within one International Pavilion rather than raise their own structures. But even the modest USA Pavilion target budget of \$10 million to \$13 million is elusive. "We have minimum threshold funding at this point," said

Ward. "The clock is running and we are working diligently to finalize a concept that can roll within the funding we do have and deliver a memorable and inspiring story."

The USA Pavilion is being developed within a 12,000 square foot space that will be mostly devoted to public areas but also include a VIP hospitality room. Exhibits will focus on US coastal areas, with an emphasis on environmental sustainability and stewardship. "The USA probably has one of the most diverse coastlines in the world, from the fishing communities of New England, to the surf of the West Coast, the unique Gulf Coast, Hawaiian islands and Alaska," notes Ward.

The pavilion will be staffed by student ambassadors through a program with the University of Virginia. Corporate sponsors include Chevron; Citi; Boeing; Corning Incorporated; Hyundai Motors America; Kia Motors America; Lockheed Martin; and Samsung Electronics America, Inc.

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Standing left to right: Kurt Campbell, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Kim Sung-hwan, Republic of Korea Foreign Minister, Philippe Cousteau, Chief Spokesperson, USA Pavilion, Hilary Rodham Clinton, U.S. Secretary of State, Lee Myung-bak, President of the Republic of Korea, Joe Biden, Vice President of the United States, Ann Stock, Assistant Secretary, Andrew Snowwhite, CEO, USA Pavilion, Glenn J. Barbi, Vice President, Office of Global Sustainability, Becton Dickinson

Seated left to Right: Orit Frenkel, Senior Manager for International Trade and Investment, GE, Chuck Jones, Director, Asia-Pacific Corporate International Business Development, Lockheed Martin, Kim Yong-hwan, Vice Chairman, Hyundai Motor Company, James B. Flaws, Vice Chairman and Chief Financial Officer, Corning Incorporated, Lewis B. Kaden, Vice Chairman, Citigroup, Michael K. Wirth, Executive Vice President Downstream and Chemicals, Chevron, Ahn Byung-mo, CEO, Kia Motors America & Kia Motors Manufacturing Georgia, Tim Keating, Senior Vice President, Government Operations, Boeing

This will be Ward's first expo pavilion but the seasoned producer doesn't see it as a notch in his belt – he exudes genuine passion about the topic and dialog. "The US is a world leader in marine science and Yeosu is a unique opportunity," he points out. "We want our presence to be a platform to inspire visitors with visions of a shared future where protecting and restoring our oceans' resources are realized through international collaboration and innovation. It's not just about us – it's about all of us. The takeaway for the visitor is not just to be amazed and touched by the exhibits themselves (as we trust they will be) but to feel empowered, and want to participate. We'll build in ways for that to happen and for the conversation to continue beyond the Expo itself."

*InPark Magazine co-editor Judith Rubin has been reporting on world expos since 1987.*

## Yeosu Expo 2012

**Theme:** The Living Oceans and Coast

**Expected attendance:** 8 million to 10 million, mostly from within Korea

**Venue:** New Port area in Yeosu, Korea

**Dates:** May 12 – August 12, 2012

**Site: Area:** 1.74 million ㎡ (Includes exhibition area of 250,000 ㎡ and auxiliary facilities) The site overlooks Hallyeosudo Marine National Park and Odong Island, and is surrounded by 317 islets.

**Website:** <http://eng.expo2012.kr/main.html>

**USA Pavilion website:** <http://www.pavilion2012.org/>.

# brick by brick

legoland florida delights kids of all ages

photo essay by *Lucina Selva* , text by *Martin Palicki*

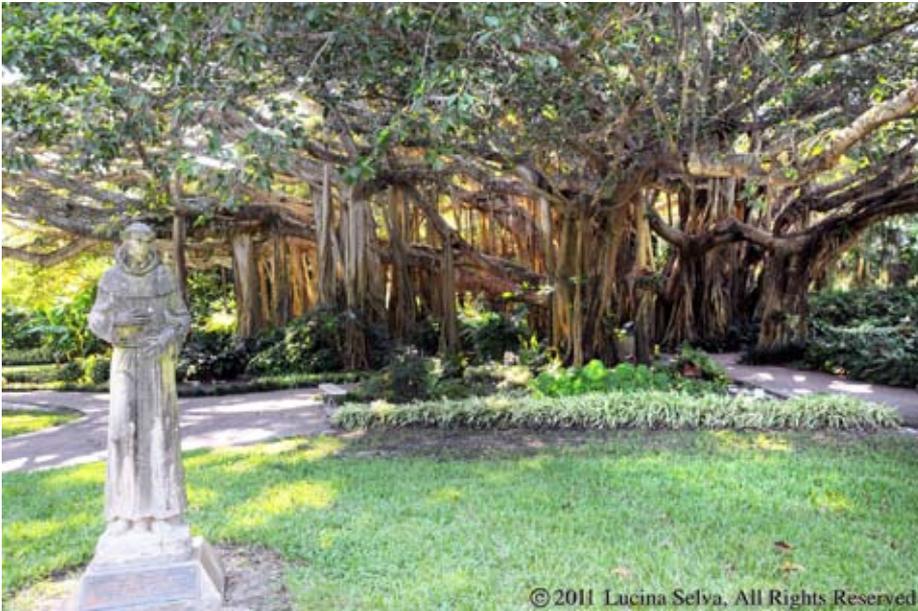
**L**egoland Florida has a lot going for it. The former Cypress Gardens property provided a good base for the folks at Merlin to build their second major US Legoland park. And while converting the former grounds into a Lego property was done in quick fashion, the conversion seems mostly complete. Here are some observations from their media preview and grand opening.

- Aside from the Lego branding, the park's biggest asset seems to be the employees. Outgoing and sincerely friendly, they are great ambassadors for the Lego brand. They are still getting used to their roles and focusing on things like throughput and not screaming into microphones, but overall, a very impressive bunch.

- The centerpiece of the park is Miniland, the collection of Lego cities writ small. There are plenty of "hidden" items to look for, including a "thinker" in the bathroom, Pee Wee Herman, and the Obama family.

- There are a good variety of food options in the park. Healthy options, locally sourced food, and the standard burger-fare is all available and at reasonable prices. \$12 for a pizza buffet? Not bad! \$9 for a 1/2 roasted chicken with fresh vegetables and roasted potatoes, sign me up!





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• Lego men on skis are a sight to see. A little slow-moving at time, the Lego version of the classic Cypress Gardens waterski show is still delightful and engaging for kids in the stands.

• There's water everywhere in Legoland Florida. In the shows, on the rides and even randomly in some Lego sculptures. Plus, a Legoland waterpark is on the way. Be prepared.



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• Legoland made the right decision in deciding to keep the historic gardens of Cypress Gardens intact and even maintaining the name (see photo on next page). If the wind is blowing the right way, you can't even tell there's a theme park 500 feet away. And the Lego Southern belles are the perfect homage.



ATTRACTIONS • CONCEPT • EXECUTION

*Lucina Anderson, president*

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- There's room for growth. I think most families would be able to see the whole park in about a half a day with average crowds. But there is plenty of space for more attractions in the future, and in the highly competitive Orlando market, continued development is required.

- The park is decidedly geared for children. While there's plenty to do as a family, there isn't much to stimulate older kids (or adults for that matter) that aren't "into" Legos.

While Legoland Florida has the components to be a very successful addition to the central Florida landscape, there still is the lingering concern of "location." At 45-60 minutes from Orlando, and well off the beaten path, will families make the trek down to spend a day at the park? Shuttles will help, but it will be a challenge. How much fun would it be to have a Lego-themed train run from Orlando down to Winter Haven? Perhaps some of the money the Florida governor foolishly turned away for high speed rail in the state could be re-allocated to the Legoland Express!

Train or no train, Legoland will still have to work hard to attract visitors to leave Orlando. Merlin has developed a great park to create the draw, now they have to market themselves like crazy to bring in the people. It might take longer to build that base of customers than it did to build Miniland, but once established Legoland Florida will be well positioned for success.

*Lucina Selva is a Creative Consultant with experience organizing projects and events, participating in brainstorming sessions to create uniquely memorable venues and experiences. Ms. Selva has worked on large scale and international themed, resort, and mixed use projects to develop their own brand identity.*



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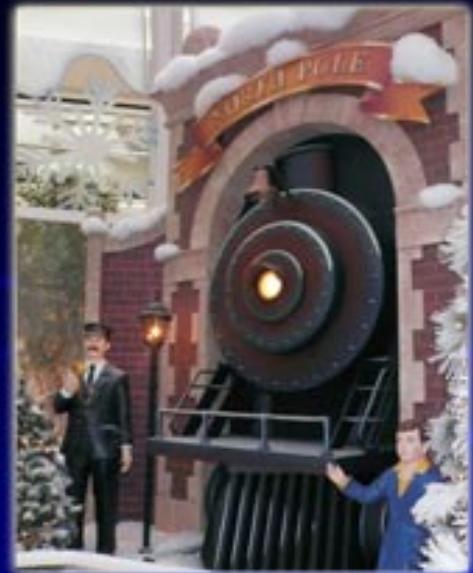
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