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**FORT WORTH MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND HISTORY EXHIBIT, 'CSI: THE EXPERIENCE,' RECEIVES EXPERIENCE INDUSTRY'S THEA AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN INNOVATION**

The Fort Worth Museum of Science and History has earned the Themed Entertainment Association's Thea Award for Outstanding Achievement for **CSI: The Experience**, an interactive exhibit and web-based learning adventure incorporating elements from the popular CBS television series "CSI: Crime Scene Investigation." The Thea Awards, considered the experience industry's highest honor, recognize excellence in the creation of outstanding guest experiences.

**CSI: The Experience** is a completely immersive exhibit that invites visitors to enter crime scenes where they identify and record evidence. It takes them inside laboratories for scientific testing and autopsy rooms for pathology analysis. Then it returns them to the office to build their case, based on the scientific evidence. The exhibit brings to life real scientific principles and the most advanced scientific techniques used today by crime scene investigators and forensic scientists.

From DNA and firearms analysis to forensic anthropology and toxicology, visitors are immersed in hands-on science in an exciting multimedia environment with dazzling special effects direct from the "CSI" TV series. Via videotaped messages, cast members from the TV show welcome guests into the exhibit, lead them through the experience and praise them for a job well done at the end. The exhibit is geared toward adults and youth age 12 and above.

"This project was extremely gratifying, because we had a strong collaboration between television producers and educators," says Van Romans, president of the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History. "There was always a strong motivation to use 'CSI' as a way to interest and motivate young people to get engaged in science and problem solving. It was a great example of the synergy that can happen when education and entertainment work hand in hand."

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“**CSI: The Experience** was the fruit of a truly unusual partnership,” says Charlie Walter, the Museum’s chief operating officer. “Our partners included the Science Museum Exhibit Collaborative, media giant CBS and the National Science Foundation, which provided \$2.4 million in funding for both the exhibit and a ‘CSI’ ‘Web Adventure’ targeted to underserved youth.

“The project also earned the American Academy of Forensic Sciences’ seal of approval and deep involvement,” Walter says. “Rice University’s Center for Technology in Teaching and Learning created the online experience, while Bob Weis Design Island Associates led the exhibit’s design.”

The exhibit made its national tour debut in May 2007 at Chicago’s Museum of Science and Industry before traveling to Boston’s Museum of Science last fall. It is currently on display at the Houston Museum of Natural Science and will continue to tour nationally, returning to Fort Worth in time for the opening of the Museum’s new facility in Fall 2009.

#### **About the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History**

Dedicated to life-long learning and anchored by its rich collections, the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History engages its diverse community through creative, vibrant programs and exhibits interpreting science and the stories of Texas and the Southwest. Since the mid-1980s, the Museum has annually welcomed more than 800,000 visitors, making it one of the most popular cultural attractions in North Texas.

The Museum is currently in the process of building a new facility in the heart of Fort Worth’s Cultural District. The world-class facility, designed by internationally renowned architects, Legorreta+Legorreta, will open in the Fall of 2009.

#### **About TEA**

The TEA (Themed Entertainment Association) is a nonprofit organization representing some 6,500 creative specialists, from architects to designers, technical specialists to master planners, scenic fabricators to artists, and builders to feasibility analysts working in nearly 500 firms in 39 different countries. TEA is an international nonprofit organization founded in 1991. It is dedicated to connecting organizations seeking to engage, enchant, educate and entertain their guests and visitors with the creators of compelling places and experiences worldwide. Its members have conceived, designed, fabricated and produced highly successful experience-based museum exhibits, science center interactives, corporate visitor centers, live events and live performance venues, themed entertainment and retail centers, casinos and resorts, themed restaurants, aquariums, zoos, heritage centers, theme parks and more. For more information, visit [www.TEAConnect.org](http://www.TEAConnect.org).

#### **About the Thea Awards**

Like the TEA, the Thea Awards 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 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 the association. This year’s Thea Awards Nominating Committee evaluated more than 120 nominations in order to recommend a slate of 17 Thea recipients.

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