



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**OMNI THEATER CELEBRATES 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY WITH ‘FLASHBACK’ TO 1983 TICKET PRICES**

Twenty five years ago, the “next big things” across the nation included Swatches, Cabbage Patch Dolls and the music video “Thriller.” But in Fort Worth in 1983, the “next big thing” thrilling audiences was a new, state-of-the-art IMAX® theater with an 80-foot dome – the first IMAX Theater in Texas.

The month, the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History will celebrate the 25th anniversary of its Omni Theater with a four-day “flashback” celebration, including a return to 1983 prices. From Thursday through Sunday, September 25-28, ticket prices will be \$4 for adults and \$2.50 for children (ages 3-12) and seniors (ages 60+). IMAX films showing at the theater include *Dinosaurs Alive!*, *Mummies: Secrets of the Pharaohs*, and *Deep Sea*. Guests may purchase their tickets – at 1983 prices – online at [fortworthmuseum.org](http://fortworthmuseum.org), by phone at (817) 255-9540 or in person.

During the celebration – sponsored by OmniAmerican Bank and XTO Energy – all theater guests will receive a commemorative piece of real IMAX 70 mm film and can enter to be one of 25 winners of \$25 VISA gift cards donated by OmniAmerican Bank. Guests will also be able to purchase a collectible Omni Theater 25th Anniversary 32-ounce beverage cup from the theater’s Reel Refreshments concession area. The cup, which can be refilled at a discounted price through December, lists the names of all 78 IMAX films that the theater has presented over a quarter century.

In April 1983, the first of those films – *Hail Columbia!* – helped generate an intense surge of public interest as the Omni Theater opened with 17 straight sold-out shows. The film, which documented the 1981 launch of Space Shuttle Columbia, was one of the top grossing movies in the Metroplex over six months – truly impressive, considering that the film was showing at only one theater: the Omni Theater.

Since that April 1983 debut, the theater has remained a popular North Texas attraction, admitting an estimated 14 million guests.

The very completion of the Omni Theater was a gigantic feat in 1983, the culmination of 2½ years of construction and an \$8.5 million campaign to fund the construction. The Museum broke ground on the theater in December 1980.

Museum officials actually put the process in motion in 1976 when they began exploring options for expansion of the Museum's Noble Planetarium. Their research eventually led them in 1978 to a decision to construct an IMAX dome in Fort Worth. Upon its completion, the theater was one of only five Omnimax® theaters in the world at the time.

"Our predecessors were unwavering in their determination to make Fort Worth one of the first places in the world where the IMAX film format could be regularly experienced on a giant dome screen," says Museum President Van A. Romans. "Failure was not an option for them, because they knew they were building no ordinary theater.

"This cutting-edge film technology immerses our guests in a truly extraordinary environment," Romans says. "Completely surrounded by the huge IMAX dome, guests today are still able to be part of exciting adventures by flying to the top of Mount Everest or understand the oceans by diving with dolphins to the depths."

The Omni Theater is more immersive than ever since completion of major upgrades to the theater in August. The theater had been closed since last September, as crews made renovations, including the installation of new theater lighting and a new digital sound system considered to be the "flagship" of IMAX® sound.

Construction also included the completion of a link between the theater and the main portion of the Museum's new 166,000-square-foot facility. The connecting structure – designed by the internationally renowned architectural firm of Legorreta + Legorreta – houses a new "Reel Refreshments" concession area and new restrooms, as well as space for temporary exhibits and a suite of museum staff offices.

### **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 history of Texas and the Southwest. Since the mid-1980s, the Museum has annually welcomed nearly a million 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 and feature a collection of new exhibits and programs developed by the Museum's staff and a team of nationally recognized designers.

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## GI-NORMOUS GIANT-SCREEN TRIVIA

**Beyond Omega Dome?** Throughout the Theater's planning and construction, it was referred to as "**The Science Theater.**" But the summer before the Theater opened, a survey of guest opinions determined the name was too intimidating and not enough fun. Other tested names: Omnisphere (judged boring and too hard to pronounce) and Omega Dome (which sounded "a little too show-biz.")

**Giant picture, giant film.** Each 40-minute IMAX feature requires 13,000 feet of film on a 200-pound reel. The film is 10 times larger than 35-millimeter film and, unlike other film, moves through the Omni projector horizontally. The 70-millimeter film used in the Omni Theater's projector is the largest film format in the world. The large image area allows for a brilliantly clear image, even when project on the Theater's 80-foot dome.

**Hold the elevator, please.** The Omni Theater's projector weighs 1,200 pounds and stands more than five feet tall. IMAX film is loaded into the projector on the lower level of the Theater, then lifted by elevator to the second floor for projection onto the dome.

**Up, up (over downtown) and away.** The first 45-second *Fort Worth Flyover* took guests on a flight over downtown Fort Worth and was part of a multimedia presentation about the history of Fort Worth called *The Legend of the Sleeping Panther*. Visitor requests brought the Flyover back as a permanent fixture that precedes every Omni Theater film. In 1992, a 90-second *Flyover II* was filmed in cooperation with CareFlight Fort Worth, with helicopters supplied by Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc.

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