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DinoGlow: A Jurassic Experience in Science, Technology and Art

Museum Debuts 3-D Mapping Stegosaurus Designed to Inspire and Educate

Fort Worth, TX - What did dinosaurs look like when they roamed the earth millions of years ago? Did they have scaled skin in muted colors that provided exactly the right kind of camouflage? Did they have feathers? Were they brightly colored and vivid? Science tells us the answer is yes!

These questions inspired the newest installation at the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History: DinoGlow, the first collaborative, interactive 3D mapping dinosaur, which opens to the public on Friday, June 22. "When I was growing up, I remember my mother talking about a lesson she used in her first-grade classroom," says Amy Romans, conceptual designer of DinoGlow. "She encouraged her young students to use their creativity as they imagined what dinosaurs might have looked like, then drew and colored their dinosaurs. DinoGlow is the 21st-century version of that lesson with a large dinosaur and projectors."

DinoGlow is a three-dimensional Stegosaurus sculpture, a blank canvas surrounded by six projectors upon which imagination takes flight. Guests work together or individually to paint with a variety of textures and colors to create a unique Stegosaurus every time. It's a process that prompts users to contemplate how scientists and paleontologists might search for clues to the past. "It is technology, science and fun," said Romans.

"DinoGlow started with the idea of a guest experience, which was brought to life by a team of designers, educators and technology experts," said Dr. Doug Roberts, astrophysicist and Museum chief technology officer. "The combination of innovative technology and creative design is so novel that the Museum will be looking into patenting the experience."

DinoGlow represents a new chapter in exhibition development for the Museum. Software developers and technicians with Arlington-based Inside Image Design worked with Museum team members to take the dinosaur from concept to installation. "DinoGlow is the first of its kind as a collaborative, interactive 3D reverse mapping sculpture," said Mike Cocanower, principal of Inside Image Design. "This project was unique for us because it utilizes six projectors that seamlessly cover an organic structure. These are six individual UI interfaces that actually work together."

"This innovation makes the case that STEM learning is interactive and fun," said Dr. Anthony Edwards, board member and chair of the Museum's Technology Committee. "For the Fort Worth region to remain competitive, we need to continue to develop a pipeline of workers with STEM skills. Exhibits like DinoGlow are a great way to keep students interested in STEM. The exhibit also engages those who enjoy art and creativity, highlighting the arts in the STEAM acronym."

DinoGlow completes the exciting transformation of the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History's DinoLabs, which began with the move of Paluxysaurus jonesi, the official State Dinosaur of Texas, to a prominent spot near the Museum entry in 2016. The 20-ton dinosaur now greets guests as they arrive at the Museum. DinoDig remains part of the Museum's dinosaur experience where budding paleontologists can dig for replica fossils and uncover dinosaur 'bones'.

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About the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History

The Museum was established in 1941 and is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. Anchored by its rich collections, the Museum is dedicated to lifelong learning. It engages guests through creative, vibrant programs and exhibits interpreting science and the history of Texas and the Southwest. The Museum is open daily, except Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Visit www.fortworthmuseum.org for more.

Other interactives in DinoLabs include DinoStomp, a multi-screen interactive featuring creatures of the Mesozoic Era. Motion recognition cameras follow and mimic the action of users as they come within range of the screen, prompting the dinosaurs to roar and leap in an imaginary 3D landscape. DinoLand is a mixed reality experience that offers multiple layers of interaction. It is an immersive theater space where guests of all ages can draw and color dinosaurs then use scanners to incorporate their artwork onto a vibrant prehistoric scene projected on a massive wall. It is creative and playful, and it evokes an aesthetic of paper dolls, dioramas, puppetry and origami.

"For the past decade, the Museum has been exploring ways to move deeper into the digital age," says board member Dick Russack. "Our current Planetarium show is a great example of our effort. Another is DinoGlow, which takes us back to our roots with a digital spin to create interactivity with our guests."

"The Museum's vision involves creating 21st-century learning environments," said Dr. Edwards. "The Museum has to continue to lead the conversation around new ways technology can be used to facilitate learning inside and outside the classroom. DinoGlow is a sign of great steps to come in showcasing the Museum as a leader among museums in integrating technology into exhibits."

The DinoLabs experience fosters an understanding of earth sciences, geology and even conservation through the story of the dinosaur, which plays a vital role in learning and discovery. DinoGlow complements the gallery as a collaborative experience that encourages social learning among generations.

"DinoGlow and the renovation of DinoLabs as a whole represent our future," said Van Romans, Museum president. "It is really a way to enhance learning. It provides a new kind of guest experience that is an artful use of technology to explore science and encourages guests to work together and explore new ways of looking at and thinking about the Museum's inspiring collections."

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