

The Void offers next-gen virtual reality experience

A multi-million dollar visitor attraction, coming in 2016, looks set to change the face of virtual reality, offering a first-of-its-kind, next-gen, immersive gaming experience.

Incorporating VR technology, motion simulators and real-world environments, The Vision Of Infinite Dimensions (Void) will allow visitors to fight dragons, explore enchanted forests, engage in space battles, explore haunted castles and much more.

Powered by the Unity gaming engine, The Void will use custom optics, head-tracking sensors, microphones for communication and 3D sound to provide an immersive experience.



The Void will send users to expansive fantasy environments

Custom-designed Rapture headsets, vests and gloves will provide haptic feedback to users, allowing real-life interaction.

While in The Void, guests will enter 60sq ft (5.6 sq m) gaming pods that can be configured to create an experience in-line with

the chosen game. In these pods, real and haptic environments will be employed, including elevation changes, air pressure and temperature changes, even simulated smells. The pods create the ability to explore miles of terrain without leaving the room.

Ken Bretschneider, creator of The Void, has so far invested US\$13m (€11.5m, £8.3m) into the project and development of the VR technology.

The Virtual Entertainment Centres will first debut in Utah in Q3 2016, with openings in "major cities throughout North and South America, Asia, Europe and Australia."

More: http://lei.sr?a=b3k3S_A

JAZA members vote to ban Taiji dolphin hunts

The Japanese member of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) looks set to remain a part of the global organisation after its members voted to stop using dolphins captured during highly controversial Taiji hunts.

The Japanese Association of Zoos and Aquariums (JAZA) was suspended last month after its decision to continue to take dolphins caught in the Japanese whaling town of Taiji, whose fishermen force the cetaceans into shallow waters before slaughtering them or catching them for public display in aquariums.

Continued on back cover

Justice League comes to Six Flags Over Texas

Justice League: Battle for Metropolis has made its long-awaited debut at Six Flags Over Texas, with the attraction offering a one-of-a-kind interactive DC universe experience.

The first 4D interactive motion-based dark ride to open in North America, the new attraction allows guests to team up with the likes of Superman, Batman and The Flash to battle Lex Luthor and The Joker in their bid to destroy the city of Metropolis.

Dark ride and animatronic manufacturing company Sally Corporation is behind the new development, with Alterface supplying the ride's interactive elements.

"[Warner Bros and DC] take great pride in their brands and have great trust in



Sally Corporation is behind the new ride

us to deliver them," said a spokesperson for Six Flags speaking to AM2. "They are a very engaged and hands-on partner in the truest sense of the word."

More: http://lei.sr?a=Y7x9w_A

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Tenerife's Loro Parque expands across Canary Islands with €30m aquarium

Ground has been broken on a €30m (US\$33.5m, £21.4m) aquarium development in the Canary Islands, which is set to open in 2017 as part of one of the Spanish islands' biggest attractions, Loro Parque.

To include 38 display tanks and 300 species of fish, birds, small mammals, amphibians and reptiles, the 12,500sq m (134,500sq ft) development in Las Palmas City, Gran Canaria, will be the first Loro Parque development not built on the island of Tenerife. Spanish architects VDR have masterplanned the development, which will be ecologically sustainable and focus on renewable energy.



Spanish architects VDR are behind the masterplan

"We decided we wanted to go to Gran Canaria and to continue operating Loro Parque exclusively in the Canary Islands because this is our home and a place we believe in," said Dr Patricia Delponti, director of commu-

nications at Loro Parque, speaking to *AM2*. "It's an opportunity to provide a new attraction to the port area and for tourists in Gran Canaria to have a new place to visit."

More: http://lei.sr?a=B3W4E_A

JRA reimagines Children's Museum of Atlanta for major redevelopment

Plans have been revealed for a large-scale renovation of the Children's Museum of Atlanta, with Jack Rouse Associates (JRA) providing complete planning, design and project management for the development.

Set to be completed in Q3 2015, the project will add two permanent exhibits, as well as a new 3,000sq ft (279sq m) mezzanine level. Renovations include four reinvigorated galleries, with the addition of a new permanent performance space.

The museum's new central exhibit "Gateway to the World" is a two-storey climbing structure, where children will climb through



Gateway to the World is a two-storey climbing structure

the layers of the earth before entering an interactive globe with six continent-shaped interactive tables.

The other new exhibit, "Step Up To Science", will include STEM-focused

activities. A permanent science bar for the exhibition will allow children to observe and conduct scientific experiments with a team of trained experts.

More: http://lei.sr?a=H2A4n_A

Chicago wins right to host presidential library

US President Barack Obama has announced that the presidential library – a monument to his legacy as the nation's first black President – will be built in Chicago, Illinois.

A repository for preserving and making available the papers, records, collections and other historical materials of every President of the US since Herbert Hoover in 1929, the presidential library will be developed in partnership with the University of Chicago and is scheduled to open by 2021.

The university beat bids from the University of Illinois at Chicago, as well as Columbia University in New York, and the University of Hawaii in the President's home state. No architects have been chosen for the project as-of-yet, although several high-profile names including Renzo Piano, Jeanne Gang and Ralph Johnson have been mentioned for the development, which will be built on Chicago's southside.

The decision was likely boosted by a ruling at the end of April by state lawmakers to clear a path for the library. A bill was



President Obama's presidential library is expected to generate US\$220m in annual revenue

passed to counter a lawsuit filed by Friends of the Parks – the campaign group attempting to halt development of George Lucas' museum project and the presiden-

tial library – clarifying that the city has the right to build the facilities on parkland, including "formerly submerged land".

More: http://lei.sr?a=e8h6z_A

Indonesia's largest waterpark comes to Grand Wisata mega-development

Asian property giant Sinar Mas has opened a new US\$13.4m (€12.6m, £9m) waterpark at the centre of its new master-planned community in Jakarta, Indonesia.

With a capacity of 6,000 people, the 75,000sq m (807,200sq ft) Go!Wet waterpark is the largest in Indonesia and has been supplied by WhiteWater West. Special features include the world's first Kid's Boomerango and Kid's AquaSphere slides. Also fitted are two AquaPlay structures, Indonesia's largest wave pool and a wave river, as well as WhiteWater's signature SuperBowl, Boomerango,



The new development is the largest waterpark in Indonesia

Rattler, Constrictor and Python waterslides.

The Grand Wisata master-plan in Jakarta has been developed by global architecture firm AECOM with an ecologically friendly approach

in mind. The development also incorporates shopping, a lake, a communal district garden, housing districts and a business park, as well as a school and hospital.

More: http://lei.sr?a=2A4B9_A



The planetarium is part of a new centre

New planetarium by Sciss unveiled in Sharjah

The Sharjah Centre for Astronomy and Space Sciences has opened to the public, providing a new digital and hybrid planetarium for the Middle East.

The 200-plus seat planetarium is part of the brand new space centre, situated in Sharjah.

Swedish full-dome company Sciss worked with Dubai-based engineering partner Visuals Attraction on the installation, which is comprised of an 18.5m (61ft) hemispherical dome screen.

More: http://lei.sr?a=n6v3x_A

Academy museum one step closer to realisation

Hollywood bigwigs look to have gained the vital stamp of approval needed to proceed with the US\$300m (€263.5m, £190.4m) development of Los Angeles' Academy Museum of Motion Pictures.

Members for the Los Angeles City Planning Commission voted 6-0 in favour of the development, with an Environmental Impact Report addressing how the film museum will be run and how it will affect traffic, noise and local neighbours.

To be located next to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), which is currently undergoing an expansion, the Academy museum has been designed by award-winning architect Renzo Piano. Contemporary architect Zoltan Pali had been working on the project but has since left due to creative differences.

The museum has one final hurdle to jump before planning is approved, with the City Council to decide its fate next month – though the unanimous decision from the commission and lack of any public opposition is likely to



The Academy museum has been designed by award-winning architect Renzo Piano

carry weight with council members. Plans call for groundbreaking in Q3 2015, with a completion date of late 2017. The Academy museum will cover 290,000sq ft (26,940sq m)

and will include exhibition galleries, a cinema, storage space, educational space and an outdoor plaza to include a large Oscar statuette.

More: http://lei.sr?a=H6f4r_A



ABC Kids World opens on 27 June

Dreamworld and ABC Kids reach new IP deal

Dreamworld theme park on Australia's Gold Coast has announced plans to rebrand its Wiggles World to include ABC Kids IP's including *Bananas in Pyjamas*, *Play School*, and *Giggle and Hoot*.

Rebranded ABC Kids World, the Wiggles section will undergo a complete overhaul and extension, featuring several attractions themed around the IPs, including ride manufacturer Zamperla's Jumpin' Star and a Bananas in Pyjamas children's maze.

The attraction is due to open on 27 June.

More: http://lei.sr?a=t6y4s_A

Science and industry is main focus in latest round of UK heritage funding

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has awarded a share of £98m (£152.2m, €136.9m) to nine heritage sites across the UK in the latest round of donations from the charity.

Preservation of scientific and technological history is a running theme in this latest funding round, with one of the largest individual funds – worth £12.1m (US\$18.8m, €16.9m) – going to Jodrell Bank in Cheshire, the home of the Lovell Telescope and the only site in the world which showcases the story of the development of radio astronomy.

London's Science Museum, which is partway



Jodrell Bank in Cheshire, England, will receive £12.1m

through a £60m (US\$93.2m, €83.5m) expansion, will receive £8m (US\$12.4m, €11.1m) towards its £24m (US\$37.2m, €33.5m) medicine galleries, while the Great Central

Railway – one of the UK's most prominent heritage railways – has been given £10m (US\$15.5m, €14m) to build a new heritage railway museum in Leicester.

More: http://lei.sr?a=x6T4w_A

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Van Gogh masterpiece turned into VR world

A Brooklyn-based animator has taken Vincent Van Gogh's *The Night Café* and recreated the work as an explorable three-dimensional piece via a virtual reality headset.

Animator Mackenzie Cauley used certain features in Van Gogh's painting to maintain the art style as seen in the original piece, but he has added a third dimension, opening up the possibility for use on other famous works.

The 3D world was created over the course of 400 hours by taking specific elements of *The Night Café* and digitising them using 3D software. Some parts of the room which aren't seen in the picture have also been added. The design also softens the distorted perspective of the piece, so as to prevent users from feeling nauseous, and it also includes visual and sound effects.

"While creating the environments of these paintings in 3D, I've had to expand on areas that can't be seen – rooms behind doors, objects hidden from view and people turned away from the viewer," said Cauley speaking to *AM2*. "It's been an interesting process in using reference



The recreated virtual image is fully explorable in 3D and even includes Van Gogh himself

material from Van Gogh and imagining what might be there, just off the edges of the canvas.

After unveiling his work, Cauley told *AM2* that he has further plans in

the works for other VR paintings and expressed his eagerness to work with galleries and institutions in the future.

More: http://lei.sr?a=g7k4m_A



The State's last execution was in 2006

Active execution chamber could be tourist attraction

Tourists may be able to visit an active execution chamber after state legislators recently passed a bill to open a museum in Nevada State Prison.

"If we did have tourists, we'd shut [the museum] down several weeks prior, because it is still an active execution chamber," said Republican assemblyman PK O'Neill. "We want to be, and we will be, respectful of that."

Since 1976, 12 people have been executed by the state. There are currently 83 people on Death Row.

More: <http://lei.sr?a=M7V8BA>

Proposed underwater TV studio to be aquarium after 2022 World Cup

Qatari officials are looking into the possibility of building a first-of-its-kind underwater TV studio for use during the 2022 World Cup, after which it will be turned into a public aquarium.

Speaking to *Arabian Business* Patric Douglas, CEO of artificial reef and aquarium design firm Reef Worlds, revealed it is in the process of creating plans for a US\$30m (€27m, £19.3m) underwater broadcast studio, which will be housed inside a carved out area of rock on the ocean floor.

Douglas added that Qatar World Cup authorities liked the preliminary designs and also enjoyed "the notion



The studio be an underwater aquarium after the World Cup

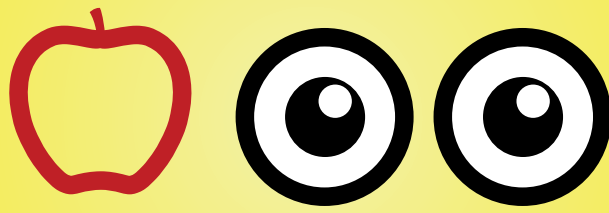
of doing the World Cup underwater with sharks swimming around."

Funding will be covered by broadcasters eager to use the unique filming location as a base when the emirate

hosts the World Cup in 2022, according to Douglas.

A decision on whether or not the project will become a reality will be made in July or August of this year.

More: http://lei.sr?a=Y8A9x_A



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Leading Middle East theme parks and waterpark project owners will be speaking at the first ever theme park and entertainment development summit. The event, organised by global events company IQPC Middle East, will be a unique opportunity for theme park developers and suppliers to discuss key strategies to develop world-class theme parks in the region through robust planning, innovative design and successful partnerships.

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www.themeparksmee.com

11-13 JUNE 2015

TEA - SATE Academy Day

Europa Park, Rust, Germany

The Themed Entertainment Association's (TEA) Europe and Middle East Division will hold a SATE (Storytelling, Architecture, Technology, Experience) Academy Day in June. Following the theme of storytelling, the member-only three-day event costs €50 (US\$54, £36).

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<http://lei.sr?a=x9i7J>

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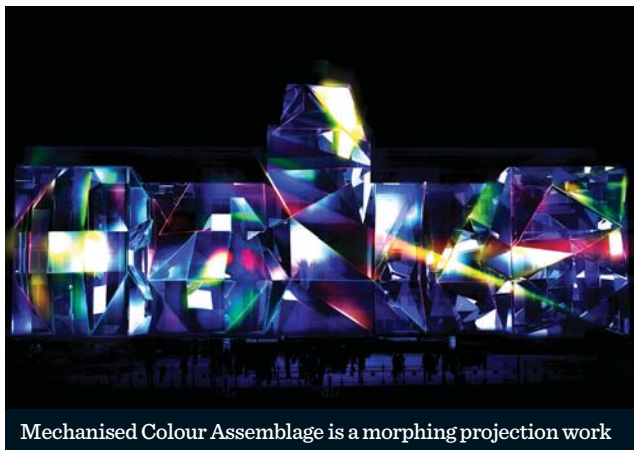
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Mechanised Colour Assemblage is a morphing projection work

Danny Rose offers installation of sound and colour

Paris-based art collective Danny Rose has created a large-scale digital installation at a festival of light, music and ideas in Australia.

Visitors to Vivid Sydney 2015 will be able to see, hear and experience true “synaesthesia” in the continuously morphing projection work, ‘Mechanised Colour Assemblage’, according to the group.

The art installation, which was developed in partnership with Australian artist Rebecca Baumann, will be projected onto the sandstone façade of the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia.

The 3D projection technology used for the installation is being supplied and supported by TDC – Technical Direction Company.



Opening day at the themed area in Kolmården Wildlife Park

Jora Vision creates Bamse-themed area at animal park

Jora Vision has created a fully themed world at Sweden’s Kolmården Wildlife Park, based on the popular comic book character Bamse.

Taking more than two years to design and build, the 22,000sq m (236,806sq ft) area opened on 1 May.

The Dutch company created all of the designs in the new area, in close collaboration

with Kolmården. The themed area features four attractions, a theatre with a Bamse show, a restaurant, a water play area and shops. A specialist team from Jora Vision worked on-site for over a year to construct the themed area.

The theming of the rides was co-ordinated with ride suppliers like Zierer, Zamperla and Metallbau Emmeln.



Children aged up to 12 can enjoy Empex’s new installation

Simworx’s Dino Island coming to Langkawi, Malaysia

Simworx has signed a deal to supply a dino-themed immersive tunnel to a cable car and adventure park attraction on the popular Malaysian island of Langkawi.

The attraction will be a 30-seater version of Simworx’s tracked tram ride, which will be accompanied by an original ride film called *Dinosaur Island*. The media-based ride manu-

facturer also makes 60, 90 and 120-seat versions of the ride.

The contract has been signed with Panorama Langkawi. Panorama Langkawi includes the island’s famous SkyCab cable cars, a sky bridge, 6D cinema and adventure park, amongst other attractions.

In the Simworx installation, a jeep-like ride takes visitors on an immersive 3D adventure.



Riders at a special preview run of Voyage to the Iron Reef

Triotech dark ride opens at Knott’s Berry Farm

Triotech’s largest media-based interactive dark ride – Voyage to the Iron Reef – has opened at California’s Knott’s Berry Farm theme park.

In the new Steam-punk-inspired ride, Triotech designed and deployed the projection and interactive gaming systems, as well as the content which allow guests to experience a 3D adventure

enhanced with 4D effects. Guests climb aboard four-person submarine-inspired ride vehicles and embark on a media-based gaming adventure. An interactive ‘freeze ray’ device is used to combat the Kraken Queen and other enemies. The ride features 600ft (183m) of track and eleven scenes featuring an array of special effects.

Texas aquarium files lawsuit against supplier

Representatives for Texas State Aquarium, which recently lost more than a tenth of its fish after a lethal chemical was introduced to its tanks rather than a parasite treatment, have filed a lawsuit against the company that provided the mislabelled carcinogen.

The chemical – believed to have been trichlorfon – actually turned out to be hydroquinone, a toxic substance used primarily for film processing and as an additive for paint and motor fuel. The container came from Florida-based supplier Fishman Chemical, a wholesale outlet for tropical fish pharmaceuticals.

Attorney Craig Sico, with the firm Sico White Hoelscher Harris & Braugh, said the civil suit had been filed in federal court, with the aquarium seeking damages that could potentially amount to millions of dollars.

The problem reaches beyond Texas State Aquarium, with Albuquerque BioPark Aquarium also considering a lawsuit after it lost around 200 fish in October. Upon hearing the news of the mass death at Texas



Texas State Aquarium lost more than a tenth of its fish after the poison was introduced

State Aquarium, BioPark officials tested its trichlorfon container, discovering the batch which had killed the fish was also made up of hydroquinone. Sico said his firm is looking

into a total of five mass fish kills involving Fishman Chemical trichlorfon, the supplier has questioned the claims of mislabelling.

More: http://lei.sr?a=C9F7n_A



The walkway is the longest in Africa

Record-breaking walkway Nigeria's latest attraction

The Nigerian Conservative Foundation (NCF) and the Lagos State Government (LASG) have teamed up to construct Africa's longest canopy walkway in an effort to boost tourism in the area.

The canopy walkway is 401m-long (1,315ft), 0.6m-wide (1.9ft) and sits 22.5m (73.8ft) above the jungle floor.

Lagos governor Babatunde Fashola said at the opening that the innovation was built to "keep tourism in the country" and to reduce outside spend and levels of foreign exchange.

More: http://lei.sr?a=Q5B6b_A

Disney Institute courses available for the first time in the state of Hawaii

The Disney Institute is bringing its professional development training programme to Hawaii at its Aulani, A Disney Resort & Spa in

Ko Olina, Oahu, will offer the same course available at Walt Disney World Resort in Florida and Disneyland Resort in California. With sessions taking place in September over three days, attendees will learn key business practices that have led the Walt Disney Company to become a worldwide brand across multiple sectors.

Three one-day courses will be available between 15 and 17 September. The first will



Disney Institute sessions are led by experts in their field

look at Disney's approach to leadership, while the second will look at selection, training and engagement. The final session on 17 September will look at the company's approach to quality service.

Each eight-hour session will include an instructor-led workshop, with an on-site experience taking participants out of the classroom and into the resort.

More: http://lei.sr?a=h6r9s_A

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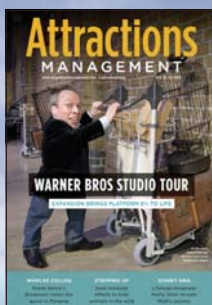
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JAZA prohibits Taiji dolphin hunts but denies drive fishing practice is 'cruel'

Continued from front cover

In a statement, the Japanese Association of Zoos and Aquariums (JAZA) has said the body will prohibit its members from acquiring wild dolphins caught by drive fishing in Taiji.

Speaking at a press briefing, JAZA chair, Kazutoshi Arai said after the member vote – which was won by an overwhelming majority – that the Japanese body does not regard the technique as “cruel” and that various aquariums and zoos will have to cooperate to promote proper breeding among Japan’s captive dolphins.



JAZA will no longer play a part in Taiji drive fishing

“The drive hunt is a sustainable fishing [method] under appropriate control by the government with scientific foundations, and is being carried out carefully so that dolphins are not hurt,” said Yoshihide Suga,

chief cabinet secretary for the Japanese government. Suga added that the government would be taking measures to “avoid any ramifications” for Japan’s aquariums.

More: http://lei.sr?a=k3X6s_A

Hologram standups to perform at US\$18m National Comedy Center

The standup routines of legendary comedians could soon be brought back to life after the US’s National Comedy Center (NCC) announced plans for a new US\$18m (€16.1m, £11.6m) campus in Jamestown, New York State, which will include the world’s first and only hologram comedy club.

Masterplanned and designed by Jack Rouse Associates (JRA) and interactive specialists Local Projects, the NCC will look at comedians and contributors from across history, offering personally customised experiences featuring top names across the comedy industry.



Famous comedians will take to the stage in hologram form

Offering 35,000sq ft (3,251sq m) of attraction space, the centre will include a number of interactive experiences unique to the NCC.

Developed by Hologram USA, the virtual comedic

performances will use the same technology which brought back Tupac at Coachella in 2012. The centre is set to open in 2016, with work starting 1 August. *More: http://lei.sr?a=g8U2z_A*

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