

Attractions

MANAGEMENT

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VOL 26 ISSUE 4

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is offering an
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Suspended Thrill Coaster 'Hals-über-Kopf'
Erlebnispark Tripsdrill, Germany


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Eco drivers

Two attractions operators with very different concepts show the value of embedding passionate environmentalism into the heart of the business and refining a strong operating model before going global



This issue, we reveal the latest updates from two dynamic and innovative organisations – Thermo Group and the Eden Project (pages 44 and 32).

Both have incubated groundbreaking concepts and are now in the thick of global rollouts, both spoke to *Attractions Management* from COP26 in Glasgow and both are focused on creating a sustainable future for people and planet.

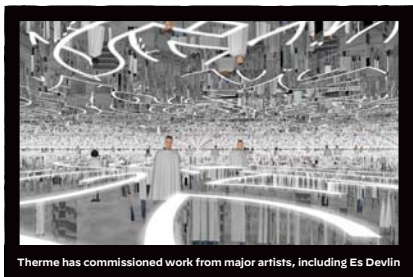
Thermo Group has the potential to be a category killer and disruptor across multiple sectors, blurring the boundaries between attractions, wellness, hospitality, fitness and art – via Thermo Art – creating new synergies between them.

Starting out as a thermal spa operator in Germany before diversifying, the company is building vast ecologically-based properties globally, with new developments underway in Canada and the UK, as well as plans outlined for additional facilities across the US, Asia and Europe.

Thermo Group's philosophy is that environmentalism must be the bedrock of any business and that wellbeing is about fun, culture and socialising, as much as it is about waterpark thrills, massages and steamrooms – its new carbon positive resorts will feature waterslides and wave pools, thermal spas, immersive art installations, vertical farms, sustainable food offerings and innovative technology.

The way Thermo is straddling sectors, coupled with its scale – locations will welcome 7k people a day – makes it a company to watch, as the boundaries between markets continue to blur.

The Eden Project is also going global, building on the success of the original UK attraction to reach a wider audience, with the message that individuals and governments must act now to protect the future of the planet.



Thermo has commissioned work from major artists, including Es Devlin

CREDIT: ES DEVLIN FOR THE THERMO GROUP

Sustainability contributes to commercial success by reducing operating costs

In addition to its work on geothermal power, Eden has seven locations underway globally, partnering with 'like-minded organisations' and CEO, David Harland, told *Attractions Management* it's vital they're built and operated in line with the Eden ethos. "You have to work with people, rather than just criticise from the outside," he says.

The way Eden's powerful environmental message is resonating with consumers, 20+ years since it was founded, shows how environmentalism is hitting the mainstream, while its growth illustrates how sustainability contributes to commercial success by reducing costs – something all attractions can work towards.

Magali Robathan, editor



Water World Hong Kong
Kong is making waves

PHOTO: WATERWORLD HONG KONG

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Dr Paul Rose

PHOTO: DR PAUL ROSE

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at Hauser & Wirth

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PHOTO: KEN AZUARO COURTESY THE ARTIST AND HAUSER & WIRTH

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A David Chipperfield extension has more than doubled the museum's exhibition space, making Zurich a major destination for the arts

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Suhanya Raffel
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PHOTO: ILLUSTRATION COURTESY OF M+ HONG KONG

Tim Smit is taking
Eden global



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PHOTO: EDEN PROJECT

ABBA's brandhouse
is behind the new
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PHOTO: © MATT CARVAL REBORN

John Lennon's
'Imagine' piano at
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PHOTO: JANA BARN/STRAWBERRY FIELD FIELD

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Tristram Hunt on Young V&A

PHOTO: © V&A



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Attractions **People**

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It's wonderful that the Salvation Army is going to cultivate youngsters in the precious soil of Strawberry Field.

John would have loved it

Julia Baird, John Lennon's sister and honorary president of Strawberry Field



Julia Baird in front of the famous red iron Strawberry Field gates in Liverpool, UK

PHOTO: GAVIN TRAFFORD



PHOTO: GAVIN TRAFFORD

The Strawberry Field visitor attraction – a unique addition to Beatles tourism in Liverpool – has reopened with a new nature-based wellbeing programme aimed at strengthening connections and addressing digital fatigue after years of lockdowns and home working.

Set in the grounds and gardens of the former Salvation Army children's home immortalised in John Lennon's song *Strawberry Fields Forever*, the visitor attraction first opened in September 2019, and then closed several times during lockdowns in 2020 and 2021, before reopening.

As a child, John Lennon lived with his aunt opposite the Strawberry Field children's home, and often scaled the walls to play in the gardens with the children.

The attraction features the iconic red gates that lead to the historic gardens, which now act as a sanctuary and tranquil space for reflection.

Inside the new visitor centre – designed by Hoskins Architects – an interactive exhibition tells the interweaving history and heritage of the original children's home, the Salvation Army, John Lennon's childhood and the writing and recording of the song *Strawberry Fields Forever*.

Exhibits include the original piano which John Lennon used to compose and record *Imagine*,

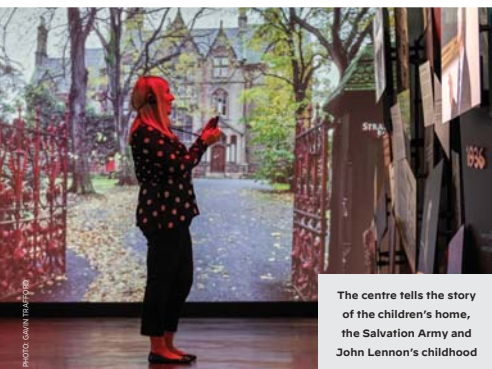


PHOTO: GAVIN TRAFFORD

which is on long term loan to the attraction from the George Michael Estate, as well as a selection of images and filmed interviews from witnesses to the story, including John's sister Julia Baird, honorary president of Strawberry Field.

"John and his friends used to climb over the walls of the Strawberry Field gardens to sit in the trees, to pick the fruit, to play and to watch the resident children at play," Baird told *Attractions Management*."

Money raised supports local young people via the Salvation Army's Steps to Work project



The centre tells the story of the children's home, the Salvation Army and John Lennon's childhood

"I think it meant an awful lot to him, becoming his go to place of sanctuary when he was younger....he actually called the song, *Strawberry Fields Forever* 'my only psychoanalytic poem.'

"The site has been a wasteland since 2005 when the government closed down the children's home – nobody could have envisaged this amazing, visionary, state-of-the-art building rising like a phoenix from the ashes," she said.

The Salvation Army – which still owns the site – runs a programme called Steps at Strawberry Field supporting local adults with learning difficulties and other barriers to work to help them with employment skills and work experience. All proceeds from the attraction are used to help with this work.

"I think John would have loved this," said Baird. "The Steps at Strawberry Field programme offers support, a safe place and help into the outside world for students. It's a wonderful idea that the



Visitors play the mellotron, an instrument used in the song *Strawberry Fields Forever*



Salvation Army is going to cultivate youngsters in the precious soil of Strawberry Field.

"The gardens are my favourite part of the attraction; there are strawberry beds, a peace/meditation garden featuring the original red iron gates. People can just go there to sit and think.

"Inside, the star attraction is the piano, which John used to write and record *Imagine*. Most people think the song was recorded on the white piano in the *Imagine* video, which was far more aesthetically pleasing than the Steinway that John bought directly from Germany in 1970.

"The White Room at Tittenhurst Park was prepared beautifully for the video, but Phil Spector – who was a perfectionist – said the acoustics weren't good enough, so they had to go back to John's studio to record it on the Steinway."

2022 will see the addition of a bandstand in the gardens, which will be used to host music events and performances. ●



The gardens that inspired John Lennon act as a meditative space

“

Our goal is for visitors to be inspired, deepen their digital knowledge and connect with the community

Åsa Caap
Head of Space

Stockholm-based entrepreneur Åsa Caap is head of Space Stockholm, which has global rollout ambitions





Sweden's new digital culture centre Space has opened in Stockholm, featuring the world's largest gaming centre with more than 400 gaming setups.

Described as: "A physical meeting place for the digital generation... that combines the most important ingredients in digital culture: gaming, music, esports and content creation for digital platforms," the centre was inaugurated by Anna König Jerlmyr, the Mayor of Stockholm and Åsa Caap, head of Space, at the end of November.

Designed by architects DAP, the 7,500sq m centre is located over seven floors close to Stockholm's Sergels Torg public square. It features Space Gaming, described by the operators as "the world's largest gaming centre," with more than 400 gaming set ups; and Space Arena – Northern Europe's largest permanent esports arena at the base of the building, created for esports tournaments, concerts, lectures and tech conferences, hybrid events in gaming, concerts and esports.

ATTRACTING TALENT

The centre also features restaurants, cafes and bars, co-working and conference spaces, education offers and content creation and music studios.

"Stockholm will finally have a central meeting place for gaming, esports and digital culture," said Anna König Jerlmyr, Mayor of the City of Stockholm. "Space will attract more talent to the city and contribute to Stockholm's continued development as a creative destination for culture, experience and tech industries."

The Avicii Experience – an immersive tribute exhibition honouring the Swedish DJ and music producer – will launch as part of Space at Stockholm in spring 2022.

"It is with great joy and anticipation that we now open Space at Sergels Torg in

Space features a huge gaming centre and a permanent esports arena, restaurants and cafes. The brand is linked to ABBA's Björn Ulvaeus



PHOTO: SPACE

Stockholm," said Caap. "We're the world's largest gaming centre and an open, dynamic and creative place in the middle of the city. Our goal is for visitors to be able to be inspired, deepen their digital knowledge and feel connection with the community."

The idea for Space was initiated in 2019 by Gustav Käll, global head of esports at Universal Music Group; investor Lars Blomberg; and Per Sundin, CEO of Pophouse Group.

Space is a subsidiary of Pophouse Entertainment which was founded by ABBA's Björn Ulvaeus and Conni Jonsson in 2014. In addition to Space, Pophouse Entertainment owns and operates ABBA The Museum, Cirkus, Hasselbacken, Pop House Hotel and Perfect Day Media.

The concept has been developed to be rolled out and exported internationally. ●

“

**The design of
Water World amazes me;
it's one of the main
reasons I came to
Hong Kong**

Bryan Fish, executive director,
Water World, Ocean Park, Hong Kong



Bryan Fish previously
worked at Yas
Waterworld, Abu Dhabi



cean Park's Water World in Hong Kong opened to the public in September 2021 with 27 new indoor and outdoor attractions. Featuring five zones – Splendid Reef, Torrential River, Thrill Valley, Adventure Coast, and Hidden Village – the attraction is billed as: 'Asia's first and only year-round, all-weather seaside waterpark.'

The experiences range from extreme white-knuckle water slides, such as Cyclone Spins and Daredevil Drop, to the Adventure Coast, where visitors can relax in the seafront cabanas. Ride suppliers include White Water West, ProSlide, AFP Technology and Barr + Wray.

The park's executive director, Bryan Fish, tells *Attractions Management* what the park has planned for the coming months.

How have the opening months gone at Ocean Park Water World?

During the pre-opening period, the park's operation and preparation went much more smoothly than many of those I'd experienced before. That was really down to the hard work and support that our team put in; for that I'm really grateful.

Since the opening of Water World, it's been really exciting for us to start seeing familiar faces again. People returning to the park for repeat visits is really inspiring for us. It shows that they enjoyed the facilities and were engaged. When I share the shuttle bus ride with the guests, I always hear them recapping their day. I also see people on the MTR checking on our website. ▶

Lazy Cruise is one of 27 attractions at the new Water World Ocean Park Hong Kong. WhiteWater, ProSlide and Barr + Wray worked on the project





PHOTO: WATERWORLD OCEANIA BRINK HK

The park features five zones and is billed as 'Asia's first year-round seaside waterpark'

- This is very satisfying especially when someone looks back at their memories and recalls the exciting moments they experienced with their family in the park, it proves our effort paid off and motivates us to keep up the good work.

What makes this park so different?

Well, there's a lot, but I think the most significant ones are the design and location. I don't think another park can compare with Water World's beauty, from the moment you arrive to when you wander through and marvel at the design.

The design of Water World amazes me; it's one of the main points that drove me to come to Hong Kong and work with the team.

Being located in such a wondrous natural area as Tai Shue Wan makes you feel as though you're in a secret oasis, yet it's just minutes from one of the busiest cities in the world.



PHOTO: WATERWORLD OCEANIA BRINK

Set among lush green mountains, the park is a wonderful vantage point from where you can take in all the splendours of the South China Sea.

If you look at other waterparks, especially those with indoor areas, they usually have an industrial look, whereas Water World buildings don't have hard angles. They were designed to merge into the landscape, along the contours of the natural environment.



Riders plunge headfirst down the Rainbow Rush waterslide in the Torrential River zone

PHOTO: WATERWORLD OCEAN PARK HK



PHOTO: WATERWORLD OCEAN PARK HK



PHOTO: WATERWORLD OCEAN PARK HK

White knuckle rides include Vortex! (pictured above) and Daredevil Drop

Another cool design element is that we have built unique conveyor systems for our attractions that require ride vehicles, even just transporting light mats at our signature Rainbow Rush. Conveying equipment from the endpoint back to the starting point means guests don't need to collect or carry anything around the attractions.

Do you have a personal favourite part of the park?

Vortex! is definitely my top ride. I like it not only because I'm an intense person, but also because it's an exciting attraction that you can enjoy with other people. We get to see each other's reactions and scream together while hurtling along the ride.

Because of the shape of the vehicle, we also have different experiences every time we ride, so it makes a great time for everyone. ●



PHOTO: WATERWORLD OCEAN PARK HK

“

I want M+ to be a major platform for fostering cultural exchange between Hong Kong and the rest of the world

Suhanya Raffel, Director, M+

M+, described as Asia's first global museum of contemporary visual culture, has opened in Hong Kong. Located in the city state's West Kowloon Cultural District, the museum features six thematic exhibitions housing more than 1,000 works.

Designed by architects Herzog & de Meuron, M+ acts as a cultural centre for 20th and 21st-century art, design, architecture, and the moving image. As well as the 33 exhibition galleries, the complex houses retail areas, restaurants, cafés, a research centre and multi-purpose halls. M+ is set to become a centrepiece of The West Kowloon Cultural District.

Director Suhanya Raffel spoke to *Attractions Management* about M+'s aims.

How would you sum up M+ offers?

M+ is special because it is Asia's first global museum of contemporary visual culture and it is located here, in the global city of Hong Kong.

Over the past few years, the art market has exponentially grown in Hong Kong, however to transform the city into an international cultural hub, it required a leading institution for visual culture.

M+ offers a brand-new centre for visual culture and a world-class landmark for a great

international city. Dedicated to collecting, exhibiting, and interpreting visual culture of the 20th and 21st centuries, the collections span visual art, design and architecture, and moving image. I want M+ to be a major platform for fostering cultural exchange between Hong Kong and the rest of the world.

M+ aims to offer an Asian perspective on contemporary visual culture.

Why is this important?

Great museums change global perceptions of cities and nations. A museum such as M+ can have a transformative effect by expressing the identity, creativity, and energy of the city.

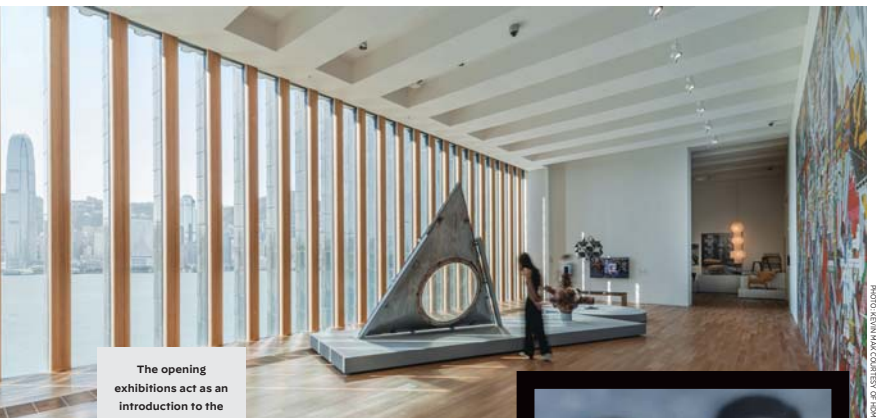
At M+, we represent the histories that emanate from this part of the world, so we can take purchase of these important discussions. We want to tell our stories through multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and interregional narratives. When we look at Hong Kong – the skyline, the art and design, the architectural histories of this city, its regional authenticity and international influences reflect a rich and entirely unique history.

How is the museum and its content rooted in its place?

For us, Hong Kong, its history, position and place in the world, is an integral part of many stories that are configured across various disciplines within the exhibitions in M+. One of the opening exhibitions is dedicated to Hong Kong and Beyond, which considers the transformation and unique visual culture of Hong Kong from the 1960s to the present.

The M+ museum was designed by Herzog & de Meuron





The opening exhibitions act as an introduction to the M+ art collection



PHOTO: KEVIN MAK, COURTESY OF M+



Zhang Xiaogang's artwork is on display

PHOTO: ZHANG XIAOGANG

Can you tell us about the opening exhibitions and what you have planned for the longer term?

Our six inaugural exhibitions will provide different avenues through which it's possible to enter our collections. By offering various approaches, we want to educate our visitors on the many paths that they can take to perceive the variety of histories on display. Some visitors will prefer observing clear chronologies, such as the M+ Sigg Collection: From Revolution to Globalisation, which explores the development of contemporary Chinese art from the 1970s through the 2000s. Others may find a much richer experience when looking from a thematic approach, as seen in *Individuals, Networks, Expressions* – a narrative of post-war international visual art told from the perspective of Asia.

Moving forwards, our plans for collaborations are well underway. We've already loaned our collections to institutions, such as MOMA, Tate and the Mori Art Museum; sharing our artwork is a way of sharing our stories. And, exhibitions are always being discussed with many institutions internationally. So watch this space! ●

Through our programming, we want to ensure that Hong Kong artists and designers are shown as equal to their international colleagues. We also take Hong Kong to the world, for example, we've worked with the Hong Kong Arts Development Council to present local artists in the Venice Biennale, while simultaneously bringing the international to Hong Kong. This two-way street lies at the very heart of M+.

How would you sum up the architecture? How does it support the content of the museum?

Herzog & de Meuron have created a superb and extraordinary museum building that extends that public space into and on top of the museum through a design that's porous and inviting.

It is truly a gift to Hong Kong that will become one of its most recognised architectural icons. Indeed, we regard the building itself as part of the M+ Collections.



USA

JRA becomes part of the RWS Entertainment Group

Experience design firm JRA has been acquired by live entertainment specialist RWS Entertainment Group.

The news was revealed in a press conference during the IAAPA Expo trade show held in Orlando, Florida in November.

CEOs Ryan Stana of RWS and Keith James of JRA announced the deal with an accompanying toast to celebrate James's 50th anniversary in the themed entertainment industry.

James said: "Selling JRA to RWS Entertainment Group is a natural evolution for the company, staff and clients I love so much.

"I could not be more thrilled that Ryan has invited our team

to join with his as we embark on a shared, expanded vision for themed entertainment.

"With Ryan's support, enthusiasm and energy, I can continue to do the work that excites me, lead our amazing team in Cincinnati and stay engaged with the University of Cincinnati's School of Design, Architecture, Art and Planning."

James will remain as president of JRA.

The combined business will have global reach, with offices in London, New York and Cincinnati and will bring together a wide range of disciplines, from design and production to performance and contract operations.

More: http://lei.rw/W8S8p_T



Keith James with Ryan Stana, CEO of RWS Entertainment



“
Selling JRA to RWS
is a natural evolution
for the company
Keith James

GLOBAL

US and Japanese attractions dominate Thea Awards

North America and Japan-based visitor attractions and businesses have picked up 14 of the 19 Thea Awards.

Organised by the Themed Entertainment Association (TEA), the annual awards celebrate excellence, innovation and leadership in the global visitor attractions industry. The winners were announced during the IAAPA Expo in Orlando, US.

Among the Technical Innovation winners for 2021 were the Mario Kart Augmented Reality Themed Ride at Super Nintendo World in Universal Studios in Osaka, Japan.

The other was Anaheim, US-based Stuntronics, developer of the aerial robotics technology behind the 95-lb Spider-Man robot that swings up to 85 feet in the air and performs up to nine shows per day at the Disney California Adventure Park.

Doris Hardoon, executive creative director and producer, Walt Disney Imagineering, was given the Buzz Price Thea Award for Lifetime Achievement.

This year's Thea Classic Award went to the Night Safari, Singapore – one of the world's first nocturnal zoos.



One of the rides at Super Nintendo World won a prize

The Secret Life of Pets: Off the Leash!, Universal Studios Hollywood, US won the best attraction award.

There were also two recipients for this year's Thea Catalyst Awards – Sina Bahram, founder of Prime Access Consulting, and Carmen Smith, senior VP at Disney Parks.

Although the TEA Thea Awards recipients are announced each November, they are formally awarded the following spring.

In 2022, the awards gala will take during the 'TEA's big weekend' for the industry at Disneyland Resort, Anaheim, US, from 21-23 April.

More: http://lei.rw/S2V4S_T

QATAR

M7 cultural hub and museum opens in Doha

A new creative hub in Doha looks to position itself as the new heart of Qatar's fashion and design industry – as well as a public showcase for innovation and entrepreneurship in the region.

The M7 Design and Cultural Hub, designed by John McAslan + Partners, is the architectural anchor of the 31-hectare Msheireb mixed-use development.

Established by Qatar Museums, under the leadership of Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani – the sister of Qatar's ruling Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani – M7 "empowers designers to explore, collaborate and develop successful

businesses". M7 was conceived as a diverse mix of cultural and education functions layered together around a central courtyard allowing interdisciplinary creativity to flourish and providing a vibrant and dynamic hub, for fashion, design and technology within Qatar and the region.

According to lead architect John McAslan, M7 demonstrates Qatar's aspiration to explore its own heritage while reaching out to other places and diverse cultures.

"In essence, we've striven to design a building that radiates a sense of shared discovery," McAslan said.

More: http://lei.sr/B3g6T_T



A rooftop restaurant overlooks the new Al Baraha square



JOHN MCASLAN + PARTNERS

“
In essence, we've striven to design a building that radiates a sense of shared discovery
”
John McAslan

CHINA

Eden Project Qingdao reaches construction milestone

Construction work on the Eden Project Qingdao visitor attraction in China has reached a major milestone.

The main trunk of the large, single biome of the project has now been topped out.

It will then be enclosed with triangular ETFE-pillows, similar to the hexagonal ones used at Eden Project Cornwall.

The £150m (US\$213m, €170.8m) attraction, designed by Grimshaw Architects, will follow the theme of water and will feature the world's largest indoor waterfall – roughly the same size as Niagara Falls at 50m (164ft) high.

Inside the domes, visitors will journey through landscapes of extreme aridity and water abundance, surrounded by theatrical performances and interactive installations.

These will explore different aspects of water – from the microscopic life forms in one drop of water to the thunderclaps of a storm cloud.

Eden Project said: "Eden Project Qingdao is all about water and the global water cycle.

"It focuses on the innumerable ways in which water, whether too much or too little,

affects the planet and the populations it supports."

Eden Project Qingdao is set to open in 2023 and is being built in Jiaozhou Bay, surrounded by water and defined by rivers and sea.

It is situated on a large area of reclaimed and environmentally damaged land originally used for salt

production and then prawn breeding and is located on the confluence of two rivers.

The Qingdao site was the first Eden Project to be announced outside Cornwall.

For further details of this project and other Eden projects, see interview with David Harland in this issue.

More: http://lei.sr/3K5G6_T



The visitor attraction is scheduled to open in 2023

EDEN PROJECT

UK

Museum operators using AR to take exhibits global

Two leading museum operators have partnered with an augmented reality specialist to present holographic exhibits and experiences for students around the world.

Imperial War Museum and the Science Museum Group, have teamed up with tech firm Perception to highlight their collections and stories to online audiences using 3D desktop AR hologram technology.

The museums have given access to Perception to parts of their internationally significant collections and stories.

The partnership will see the museums showcase their collections to a global

audience using technology.

John Stack, digital director at the Science Museum Group, said: "This project enables our audiences to view an object from our collection in an exciting new way.

"This technology makes us excited for the future possibilities for the museum and ways in which our audiences can enjoy this new type of access."

Among the exhibits to be included in the project include the Merlin engine – which powered the Spitfire aircraft – at The Imperial War Museum.

As part of the project, 13,000 sets of 3D glasses will also be sent to schools.

More: http://lei.sr/9y4M7_T



Exhibits will be presented in new, engaging ways



SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP

“
This technology makes us excited for future possibilities
John Stack

WORLDWIDE

Katapult, Simworx and Lagotronics create trackless ride

“

We wanted to create a truly unique experience using our industry knowledge and expertise
Katapult, Simworx and Lagotronics

Three themed attraction design and creation companies have collaborated to create a new dark ride described as “like no other”.

Called Torchlight, the ride is the result of a partnership between 3D/4D media-based attractions specialist Simworx, dark ride company Lagotronics and themed attraction design company Katapult.

The ride has been developed to primarily target the horror theme park market.

The ride utilises the Augmented Guidance Vehicle, as well as interactive effects, the 8-seater



The ride will target the horror theme park market

vehicles take guests on a journey which allows them to participate in the story using their own torch.

The storyline centres on the imaginary Shadow Pines National Park, where riders will join a search and rescue mission that soon turns into a desperate fight for survival as they come face to face

with a deadly presence lurking in the woods.

“We wanted to create a truly unique experience using our industry knowledge and expertise that pushes the boundaries of guest experiences,” the three companies behind the ride said.

More: http://lei.sr/P4H6e_T

USA

VR Studios and Creative Works launch 'Fury'

VR Studios and Creative Works have launched a VR-based multiplayer attraction.

Described as the world's first unattended, two-player VR esports attraction, Fury has been designed to deliver physically active experiences in a small footprint.

The VR gameplay options include "Hoops Madness," which utilises real-world physics to deliver a VR basketball experience with authentic shooting and ball-handling.

Fury made its debut at the IAAPA Expo in Orlando in November.

Kevin Vitale, CEO and chair of VR Studios, said: "With Fury, we're making it easy for location-based

entertainment operators to bring in a money-making, high-throughput attraction that combines the immersion of virtual reality gaming with community building, events and competition.

"Creative Works' experience with esports and impressive track record of promoting innovative VR attractions makes them a great partner for us."

The launch of Fury is part of a larger partnership deal between VR Studios, creator of free-roam multiplayer VR attractions and Creative Works, a turnkey attraction developer.

The companies plan to collaborate on future products.

More: http://lei.sr/r4x2R_T



Fury is a two-player VR esports attraction



VR STUDIOS

“

Fury combines the immersion of VR gaming community building

Kevin Vitale

NETHERLANDS

World Food Center Experience will be 'Silicon Valley' of food



LINEA/BRAD SHELTON

“

The world needs to have conversations about sustainability

Brad Shelton

Plans for the World Food Center Experience in Ede, Netherlands, have been given the final green light by the Provincial Executive of Gelderland.

The approval means that the project can now move ahead and is set to open to the public in 2023.

The visitor attraction will form part of the larger World Food Center (WFC) project, which will create an entirely new district in Ede.

Dubbed the "Silicon Valley of food," WFC will offer business spaces, research opportunities and services for food-related businesses.



The attraction is set to open to the public in 2023

BRC IMAGINATION ARTS

Sitting at the centre of the district, the World Food Center Experience will offer a visitor journey that will challenge what guests know about global food production and research, food security and safety.

Designed by BRC Imagination Arts, it will explore the impact of the

world's food choices and the importance of sustainable and healthy food production.

Brad Shelton, creative director at BRC, said: "The world needs to have conversations about sustainability and we're thrilled to be encouraging this dialogue."

More: http://lei.sr/C5b4p_T

JAPAN

Harry Potter Tokyo will have Fantastic Beasts

The Harry Potter Studio Tour attraction, planned for the Japanese capital city Tokyo, will span a total of 322,000sq ft when it opens to the public in 2023.

The size of the tour is among the latest details revealed for the attraction, which was first announced in late 2020.

The large-scale site – located on the grounds of the former Toshimaen Amusement Park in Nerima-Ku – will combine the worlds of the hugely popular Harry Potter films and books with the Fantastic Beasts universe.

Both Harry Potter and Fantastic Beasts are IPs created by author, JK Rowling.

Details of the exhibition space within the “sound stage” and “backlot” (outdoor filming area) zones have also been confirmed, with the area taking approximately half a day to walk through.

Takashi Goto, president and chief executive of Seibu Holdings, said: “This facility will serve as a base for new liveliness and cultural dissemination in the region, and along with the Nerima Castle Ruins Park, which is being gradually developed by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, will energise not only Japan and Asia but also Harry Potter fans and many other people around the world.”

More: http://lei.sr/B3T2U_T



Fantastic Beasts and Harry Potter were created by JK Rowling



SEIBU HOLDINGS

“

This facility will serve as a base for new liveliness in the region

Takashi Goto

GLOBAL

Winners of first-ever Surf Park Awards revealed

“

We're thrilled by the response of the inaugural Surf Park Awards

Surf Park Central

Australian surf park operator URBN Surf and wave generating specialist Wavegarden are among the winners of the inaugural Surf Park Awards.

The global awards, organised by Surf Park Central, were set up to gauge consumer sentiment on surf parks and to celebrate the best consumer experiences.

Winners were based on a global consumer opinion poll which attracted more than 2,000 votes.

The full list of winners was announced at the recent Surf Park Summit in La Jolla, California, US.



Australian park operator URBN Surf won two awards

- Most popular surf park for beginners: URBN Surf, Australia.
- Most popular high performance surf park: WSL Surf Ranch, US.
- Most appealing deep water standing wave technology: City Wave, Germany.
- Most appealing wave technology:

Wavegarden, Spain.

- Most appealing surf park destination: URBN Surf, Australia.
- Most appealing amenities: URBN Surf, Australia.

“We're thrilled by the response of the inaugural Surf Park Awards,” Surf Park Central said.

More: http://lei.sr/p8d3G_T

USA

Jacksonville Zoo reveals US\$50m masterplan

The Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens in Florida, US has launched a fundraising campaign to fund an ambitious US\$50m redevelopment and redesign project.

To be completed in phases over five years, the redevelopment will expand the number of animal habitats, introduce entirely new species and increase the number of conservation initiatives at the zoo, while also improving educational spaces and adding new guest services.

A masterplan for the development – under the working name of 'Rezoovenation: The Campaign to Inspire' – includes a new Manatee River

exhibit and the relocation of the main entrance to improve visitor flow.

Forming the first phase of the development, the two projects are scheduled to be completed by mid-2023.

These will be followed by a new lion habitat with a scenic overlook, an expanded and immersive elephant exhibit, and the addition of orangutans in a space with extensive room to climb.

The zoo's executive director, Tony Vecchio, said: "At its core, Rezoovenation is about inspiring the future.

"We've cast a bold vision: we want to welcome Florida visitors and become the number one zoo in the US."

More: <http://lei.ir/>



The Rezoovenation project will transform the zoo

JACKSONVILLE ZOO AND GARDENS



FACEBOOK/JACKSONVILLE ZOO AND GARDENS

“

We want to become the number one zoo in the US

Tony Vecchio

SWEDEN

Liseberg's Underlandet wins Europe's Best New Ride award



CL CORP

“

Our goal was to create the illusion of moving down underground

Deborah Attal

The Underlandet family attraction at Swedish theme park Liseberg has won the European Star Award for Europe's Best New Ride 2021.

Created in partnership by CL Corp, Gosetto, Quarry Fold Studio and P&P Projects, Underlandet – Swedish for “Wonderland” – extends Liseberg's existing Kaninlandet area, which is themed around a green rabbit, the park's mascot.

The dark ride features an immersive motion cabin that takes visitors on a journey underground, immersing them in a magical world of Liseberg rabbits.



The dark ride features an immersive motion cabin

TRIOTECH

CL Corp – the European division of Canada-based multisensory ride specialist Triotech – was responsible for designing the entire preshow for the attraction.

Deborah Attal, MD at CL Corp, said: “The preshow is important to bring visitors into the universe of the ride. Our ultimate goal was to create

the illusion of moving down underground so that visitors are 100 per cent immersed in the story from the first second of the experience.”

The non-profit European Star Awards, organised by Kirmes & Park International, celebrates Europe's amusement industry.

More: http://lei.ir/V8K6T_T

CHINA

Universal Beijing reveals expansion plans

Universal Beijing Resort in China is preparing to embark on the second phase of its construction programme.

The project will add around 2.2sq km to the total park area and will include a second theme park, a waterpark and five more resort hotels.

This means the second phase will more than double the current size of the 1.8sq km park.

An opening date for this phase has not yet been revealed.

The announcement came less than three months after the park opened its doors to the public, becoming the fifth Universal Studios-branded theme park in the world – and the seventh Universal-built park overall.

The park has seven themed lands – The Wizarding World of Harry Potter, Transformers Metrobase, Kung Fu Panda Land, Hollywood, WaterWorld, Minion Land and Jurassic World Isla Nublar.

Across the seven zones, Universal Beijing houses a total of 37 rides and attractions.

In addition, the park features a Universal City Walk and two hotels – the vast Universal Studios Grand Hotel, with 800 beds – and the first Nuo-branded resort hotel of Beijing Tourism Group, with 400 beds.

Some of the shows, attractions and experiences, such as the Lanterns of



The park currently has seven themed lands and 37 attractions

Legendary Legends ride, have been designed to reflect China's cultural heritage and to cater for local visitors.

The CN¥50bn (US\$7.4bn, €6.7bn, £5.9bn) Universal Beijing Resort is owned by Beijing International Resort

Company, a joint venture between Beijing Shouhuan Cultural Tourism Investment Company and Universal Parks & Resorts, a business unit of Comcast NBC Universal.

More: http://lei.sr/Z4V5J_T

GLOBAL

Jakob Wahl appointed IAAPA chief operating officer



IAAPA

“

Jakob is a dedicated and passionate leader
Hal McEvoy

Jakob Wahl has been named executive VP and chief operating officer of global attractions industry body IAAPA.

In the role, Wahl – who has spent nine years at IAAPA during two stints – is overseeing the regional operations of the global association.

He reports directly to CEO Hal McEvoy and leads the operation of IAAPA's regional offices, global sales, three global Expos, and additional member events around the world.

Wahl is also overseeing the hiring and onboarding of a new vice president

and executive director for IAAPA EMEA.

Hal McEvoy said: “Jakob is a dedicated and passionate leader who has increased membership and consistently expanded attendance and participation in the EMEA region's events, including IAAPA Expo Europe.

Wahl first worked at IAAPA as a programme manager, serving the association for four years in its office in Brussels.

He left IAAPA for Europa-Park in Germany, as director of communications, before returning in 2017 as VP of IAAPA EMEA.

More: http://lei.sr/Z7r2A_T



Wahl has spent nine years at IAAPA during two stints

IAAPA



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UK

Ad Gefrin set to open to the public in late 2022

A new £10.4m cultural visitor experience, bringing to life what has been dubbed as one of the 20th century's most remarkable archaeological finds, will open to the public in late 2022.

Called Ad Gefrin and designed by Richard Elphick of Elphick Associates, the attraction will recreate the Great Hall of the Royal Court – an Anglo Saxon site located in the north Northumbrian hills near Wooler, UK.

The site was discovered in the 1950s, when archaeologists uncovered a huge complex of large timber halls and a unique wooden grandstand that made up the royal summer palace of the 7th century Northumbrian

Kings and Queens – including Aethelfrith, Edwin and Aethelburga.

Ad Gefrin will recreate the Great Hall of the Royal Court – a destination for international trade and cultural exchange with connections to people from across Europe and as far as north Africa.

For a century it became the stage for some of the most momentous events in early northern English history, including the first conversions to Christianity.

Dr Chris Ferguson, Ad Gefrin's head of operations, said: "We have the opportunity to bring the story of this site to life for a wider audience."

More: http://lei.sr/p9p8w_T



LINKEDIN CHRIS FERGUSON



“

We have the opportunity to bring the story to life for a wider audience

Dr Chris Ferguson

UK

W5 Science Centre re-opens following redevelopment



LINKEDIN ALEC HAWKINS

“

The focus is on facilitating young people's learning in a fun way

Alec Hawkins

W5 Science Centre in Belfast, Northern Ireland, has re-opened to the public following a £4.5m redevelopment which has added a number of new exhibits and galleries.

The redevelopment works – designed by experience designers, Mather & Co, and interactive design specialists, Aivaf – included two new gallery floors of exhibits, interactives, and AV installations to stimulate science learning.

The re-imaged W5 Science Centre now offers learning by using real tasks and scenarios, allowing visitors to discover the problem,

design, and experiment how to overcome it and develop a solution and understand why.

The new additions link to Belfast, so that visitors are working with real-life tasks that are relevant to their lives – rather than abstract concepts.

The interactives, designed by Aivaf, aim to include

“open-ended interactivity”, allowing visitors to design and be creative without restriction.

Alec Hawkins, graphic designer at Mather & Co, said: “It was really rewarding to design a whole experience where the focus was on facilitating young people's learning in a fun way.” ●

More: http://lei.sr/Y5u8w_T



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the Eden Project,
doing no harm
was good enough.
Now we need
our buildings
and operations
to do good***

“

DAVID HARLAND

With plans to open on every inhabited continent on earth, the Eden Project hopes to inspire change and encourage a more sustainable future, CEO David Harland tells Magali Robathan



Grimshaw Architects designed the Eden Project Qingdao in China, which broke ground in September 2021

PHOTO: EDEN PROJECT GRIMSHAW

PHOTO: BEN FOSTER/EDEN PROJECT



hen I speak to Eden International CEO David Harland, he's at the COP26 United Nations Climate Change

Conference in Glasgow, UK, where the Eden Project Pavilion aimed to be a 'showcase of, and call to arms for, the actions needed to regenerate our fractured planet.'

"I might be biased, but I think it's the most beautiful thing at COP26. It's very visually appealing and it gets people thinking and talking," Harland tells me, in between announcing new projects, speaking to news crews and scouting for funding.

Designed by Grimshaw, the pavilion is reminiscent of the geodesic design of the Eden Project biomes in Cornwall, but features collapsed panels to reflect the current planetary crisis.

Just before I speak to Harland, the Eden Project team used the pavilion as a backdrop to announce plans to open the first South American site, in Colombia's Meta region. It's the latest in a string of international 'New Edens,' with projects planned for Costa Rica, China, New Zealand, Australia, Africa, the US and the UK.

Meanwhile, at the original site in Cornwall UK, which opened in a disused clay pit in 2001, Eden Geothermal – a groundbreaking project aiming



The Eden Project has announced plans for a site in Colombia

to harness sustainable energy from the rocks deep underground – is progressing fast. At the start of November 2021, the partners announced the project it had reached a critical point, with the completion of its first well five kilometres underground. The plan is to use the heat to produce electricity to power the Eden Project and the equivalent of around 5,000 homes.

"When we built the Eden Project in Cornwall, doing no harm was good enough. Now we need our buildings and operations to do good," says Harland.

The Eden Project organisation has pledged to be carbon positive by 2030. "Actually, we should do better than that," Harland says. "We'll be carbon positive for scopes 1 and 2 [direct emissions and indirect emissions – owned] at Eden Project Cornwall by the end of 2022. Geothermal will help us to go further and deal with visitors coming to us and that element of the carbon counting. And of course that pledge must relate to all of our future sites as well."



The Eden Project Qingdao was the first site to be announced outside the UK

“

“You have to engage in dialogue and work with people rather than just criticise from the outside”

Plans have been submitted for the Eden Project North in Morecambe, UK



NEW EDENS

■ Eden Project North in Morecambe, Lancashire

Where: Morecambe, Lancashire
Working with: Lancashire Enterprise Partnership, Lancaster University, Lancashire County Council and Lancaster City Council
How much: £125m
When: 2024

■ Eden Project Qingdao, China

Where: Qingdao, Shandong province, China
Working with: China Jinmao Holdings Limited
How much: £150m
When: 2023

NEW EDENS

Since opening in 2001, the original Eden Project has attracted more than 22 million visitors.

Now, Eden is keen to reach a greater audience around the world; to influence individuals, corporations and governments to change their behaviours in order to protect the planet.

"We feel you can only do that by connecting with people," explains Harland. "The physical sites are really important to tell those stories about how we live and how dependent we are on the natural world.

"It's about giving people the tools and capability to take action. The way we want to do that in part is by creating exemplar projects that show that the future remains ours to make – that you can take something apparently hopeless, sterile and derelict that had been used up by humans, such as a clay

pit or a mine, and breathe new life into it."

Eden Project International was launched in 2017, with the aim of driving the establishment of new Eden projects worldwide, partnering with "like-minded organisations to deliver social and ecological benefits."

EDEN PROJECT QINGDAO

The first location to be announced outside the UK was the Eden Project Qingdao in China, which broke ground in May 2020 and topped out in October 2021. Themed around water, it's situated on 66 hectares of reclaimed, environmentally damaged land that was used

- for salt production and then prawn breeding.

Eden Project partnered with China Jinmao Holdings Limited on the £150m (US\$213m, €170.8m) project, which is due to open in 2023. "The site has water on three sides. We're telling the story of water abundance, water scarcity and the power of water," says Harland.

Designed by Grimshaw Architects, who were also responsible for the design of the original Eden Project, it will be made from triangular ETFE domes or 'pillows' and have the world's largest indoor waterfall at its centrepiece. Rising to a height of 50m (164ft), it will be roughly the same size as Niagara Falls.

Visitors to Eden Project Qingdao will journey through dramatic landscapes of extreme aridity and water abundance, surrounded by theatrical performances and interactive installations. These will explore different aspects of water – from the microscopic life forms in one drop of water to the thunder claps of a storm cloud.

WORKING IN CHINA

How have Harland and the rest of the team found working in China, I ask.

"It's not easy," he says, "that's not about them

being difficult; it's just that there are cultural differences and different ways of working.

"What we did find is a real commitment to wanting to look at things afresh and push the envelope, from a sustainability point of view."

China's rapid urbanisation and construction boom has had a high environmental cost; it's vital that the Qingdao project is constructed sustainably and helps demonstrate a different way of doing things, adds Harland. "You have to engage in dialogue and work with people rather than just criticising from the outside. We spent a lot of time looking for the right partner – they recognise there's been fantastic advancement over the past 30 years, but there's also been a cost to that.

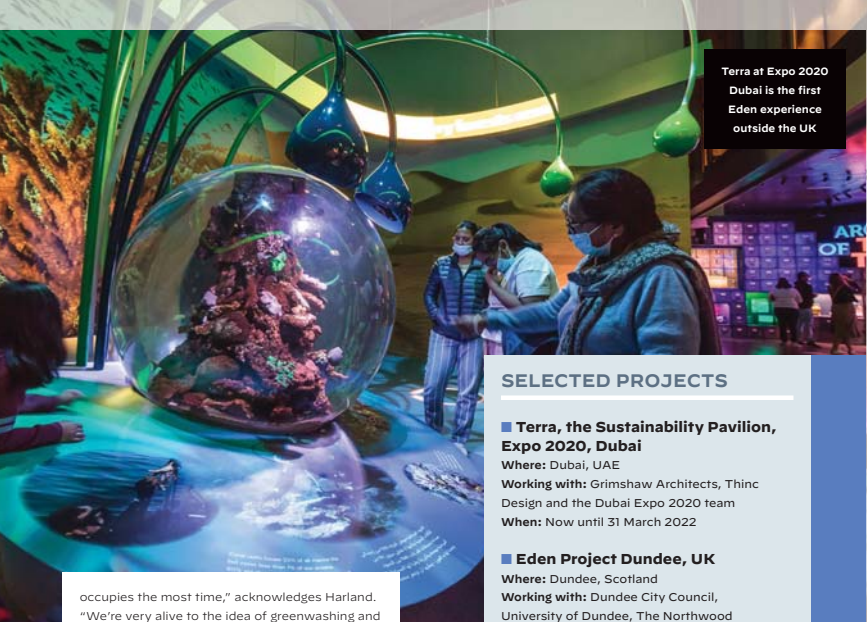
"We're challenging construction methods at Eden Project Qingdao," he says. "For example our partner would have happily put peat into the project. We said, you can't do that and we worked through the reasons, gave them the evidence, and they agreed they absolutely didn't want to use it."

Eden's projects are all being run through partnerships – how do they ensure partners share their values and don't tarnish the Eden brand?

"This is our biggest risk, and it's the thing that



Eden's Terra – The Sustainability Pavilion is now open at Expo 2020 Dubai



Terra at Expo 2020
Dubai is the first
Eden experience
outside the UK

occupies the most time," acknowledges Harland. "We're very alive to the idea of greenwashing and other traps we could fall into if we're not careful. The key is to spend a lot of time researching our partners and finding out about them. We say to people, if you want to work with us, there's a cost to that, and also we want to do a feasibility study. That allows us to assess if they're really serious about the project. Feasibility is part of the due diligence we do, and it seems to work well."

EDEN PROJECT NORTH

Plans to build a northern version of the Eden Project in Lancashire, UK, were submitted to Lancaster City Council in September 2021.

If approved, the £125m project would be situated on the site of the former Bubbles leisure complex on the seafront at Morecambe Bay. Eden has teamed up again with Grimshaw Architects to create 'shell-like' domes, with a mix of indoor and outdoor attractions designed to connect people with the natural environment of Morecambe Bay. It's projected to attract around one million visitors a year, and employ around 400 people.

"The concept comes from the idea of tides and rhythms and their effect on our lives," says Harland. "There's a pulse, or a rhythm to life, and when things are out of rhythm, that's when they start to go wrong. We want visitors to understand and experience this rhythm."

SELECTED PROJECTS

■ Terra, the Sustainability Pavilion, Expo 2020, Dubai

Where: Dubai, UAE

Working with: Grimshaw Architects, Thinc Design and the Dubai Expo 2020 team

When: Now until 31 March 2022

■ Eden Project Dundee, UK

Where: Dundee, Scotland

Working with: Dundee City Council, University of Dundee, The Northwood Charitable Trust, National Grid, SGN

When: 2024

■ Eden Project Costa Rica

Where: Nicoya Peninsula, Costa Rica

Working with: Matambú Forest Nature Reserve, Costa Rican Ministry of Environment and Energy

How much: fundraising for \$15m

When: Ongoing

■ Eden Project New Zealand

Where: Christchurch, New Zealand

Working with: Christchurch City Council, Eden Project NZ Trust

When: 2025

■ Ecological restoration of Lake Chad

Where: Republic of Chad

Working with: UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation), University of N'Djamena

When: ongoing project

■ Eden Project Foyle, UK

Where: Derry~Londonderry, UK

Working with: Foyle River Gardens charity

How much: £67m

When: 2025



Powering the Eden Project using renewables is a long-held dream, says Sir Tim Smit

“

Our projects are often public, private and philanthropically funded with capital, but they stand on their own two feet once they're built

► FUNDING CHALLENGES

Harland recently spoke about the need for government funding for the Eden Project North, and speaking to potential funders for Eden projects is a big part of his role.

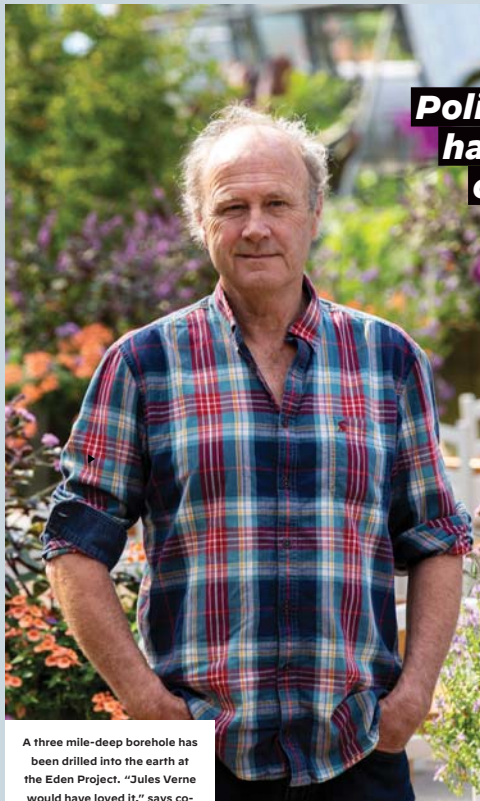
“It’s a challenge and I spend a lot of my energy trying to raise funding,” he says. “Our projects are often public, private and philanthropically funded with capital, but they stand on their own two feet once they’re built. We have a sustainable business model – the exciting thing is that we can make a return both commercially and also for the public sector on these developments, which is why these partnerships work.

“Is it easy? No. Truthfully, it’s a slog, but we know that these things are worth doing because they have real impact on people’s lives and that’s why we keep doing what we’re doing,” he says.

As our conversation comes to a close, I ask Harland whether he feels optimistic or pessimistic about the future of our planet.

“I feel entirely optimistic for the future of the planet – this is a human-made problem and the planet will be absolutely fine without us,” he says. “If you ask me if I feel optimistic for the future of humankind, yes I do as well, but we’ve got to take action. We’re an optimistic organisation, I’m an optimist by nature and we know that the future remains ours to make.” ●

Politicians and planners have no excuses not to commit to the future for it is here...now



A three mile-deep borehole has been drilled into the earth at the Eden Project. "Jules Verne would have loved it," says co-founder Sir Tim Smit (above)

Eden Geothermal

For the team at Eden, the idea of tapping into the resources underground to generate renewable power has been a long held dream.

"We've been chasing the geothermal project for more than 10 years, because we happen to be located with the right geological conditions," David Harland says. "We've sent a drill down and the good news is that we have the right conditions down there and we're going to be able to generate all the electricity we need for Eden, and probably about 5,000 homes equivalent."

Drilling deep into the granite at the Eden Project in Cornwall started in May, and the first well was completed in November 2021, with the team reporting promising results, with high temperatures and good permeability at depth.

"The Holy Grail of renewables is constancy so that we get heat and power even when the sun don't shine and the wind don't blow," Eden Project co-founder Sir Tim Smit said, at the announcement of the successful completion of the well.

"This is base load...the key to unlocking Britain's fossil fuel dependence for energy.

"Jules Verne would have loved it. Brunel would be dancing a jig at the dawning of a green industrial revolution. Now politicians and planners have no excuses not to commit to the future for it is here...now."

Eden Geothermal Ltd has been set up by three partners: Eden Project, EGS Energy Ltd, and Bestec (UK) Ltd, and has funding from the European Regional Development Fund, Cornwall Council and institutional investors. Phase one, currently underway, involves drilling and testing the first well of a geothermal energy demonstration system at the Eden Project, and the supply of heat to the Eden Project.

Phase two involves drilling a second well to bring further heated water to the surface to provide power for the local community.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, LONDON



Tristram Hunt has been director of the V&A since 2017

PHOTO: PICTURE PLANE / COURTESY OF VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, LONDON



A new £13 million museum in London will serve the audience which needs it the most: children for whom COVID-19 has stripped out so much creative learning from critical years, writes V&A director Tristram Hunt

Getting Creative



Exhibits will include the Hero Arm by Open Bionics and work by London designer Bethany Williams



PHOTO: BUTH OSSAU/COURTESY OF BETHANY WILLIAMS

In the very heart of Bethnal Green, London, there sits a wonderhouse that has grown tired. The V&A Museum of Childhood, first opened in 1872, is a sumptuous, red-brick Victorian warehouse beloved of parents and grandparents, revelling in the nostalgia of Playmobil and Cabbage Patch Kids, Action Men and Pac Man consoles locked away in glass cabinets.

But it no longer serves the audience which needs it the most: the children for whom COVID-19 has stripped out so much creative learning from their critical years. That's why we're creating a new £13 million museum – called Young V&A – to ensure London remains the most creative city on the planet.

From the gaming industry to graphic design, from diplomacy to healthcare systems – we need creative people. Museum collections are there to be used, by all, as a sourcebook to feed the imagination. So, we must stop talking down a 'lost' generation and start providing the tools that young people need to shape fulfilling lives.

Our plan is to create a museum in Tower Hamlets – still the borough bearing the highest rates of child poverty – where children aged 0-14 can flex their cultural muscles. Levelling Up is not just about Mansfield and Stockton, it's also about ensuring our capital provides decent opportunities for young people battling generational disadvantage. And building back

► better should not just encompass more catch-up maths and English lessons. Museums and schools need to work together to ensure that the strengths which kids need – teamwork; emotional literacy; oracy; and mental health resilience – are nurtured alongside a knowledge-rich curriculum. And the V&A, like all museums, has a role to play in this.

Our plan is to display 2,000 of the V&A's most stunning artefacts – from objects in our collection such as the Japanese samurai suits to acquisitions, such as Team GB Olympian Sky Brown's skateboard and a bionic 3D-printed Hero Arm, to kickstart the power of creativity. New galleries will focus on the practice of play in the early years, getting parents off their phones and on all-fours with their toddlers. Our Imagine gallery will use the legendary V&A Theatre and Performance collection – from Joey the Warhorse to original Superman costumes – to encourage aspiring actors, playwrights, poets, and dancers. It will also contain our stunning Rachel Whiteread installation of 150 dolls houses – always a highlight for role-playing

youngsters. And then in our Design studio, we'll give teenagers the skills and tools to become the next generation of makers and fashion-shapers – the Grayson Perrys, Stella McCartneys and Yinka Iloris – our country so clearly needs. Alongside it, a gaming space where digital tech will act as a convenor for creative teenagers, rather than a source of isolated, bedroom scrolling.

We'll achieve all this in the footprint of our iconic iron-framed building (dating back to the Great Exhibition of 1851), with its beautiful mosaic floor. This has been a special place for so many east Londoners: a toddler's first steps, a multi-generational day



Designs for the 'Town Square' at Young V&A, which is set to reopen in Bethnal Green, London in 2023



out, a Year-7 hang-out. When we reopen in summer 2023, we want the museum to be the public square, the shared space, for young Londoners and their creative ambitions.

The challenge is now. COVID-19 has severed too many young people from their outlets for social expression, play and connection to others. And the impact of the pandemic comes on the back of a terrible collapse in creative education, with ever fewer students taking arts subjects and a terrifying 67 per cent drop in Design and Technology GCSEs between 2010-2019. But as economist Andy Haldane has repeatedly stated, the jobs of the accelerating Fourth Industrial

“**“Young V&A’s mission is to inspire the creative child of post-COVID London”**

PHOTO PICTURE PLANE / COURTESY OF VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, LONDON



Plans for the Play Gallery (above); The stage in the Imagine Gallery (below)



PHOTO PICTURE PLANE / COURTESY OF VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, LONDON

Revolution will demand creativity as a ‘future skill,’ and yet only 34 per cent of the public feel the creative industries are for them. We need to give our communities the cultural confidence to flourish and succeed in such fast-moving times.

Great museums are as much about curating the future, as preserving the past. Pablo Picasso famously reflected that, ‘It took me four years to paint like Raphael, but a lifetime to paint like a child.’ Young V&A’s mission is to inspire the creative child of post-COVID London – which should exist in all of us. ●

Tristram Hunt opinion published with the kind permission of The Evening Standard newspaper



Land joined Therme Group UK in 2017. He became CDO in 2020

PHOTO: THERME GROUP

RICHARD LAND

With forthcoming resorts in Toronto, Manchester and Glasgow set to feature next generation waterparks, immersive art, vertical farms and a fresh approach to wellbeing, Therme Group is thinking big. Magali Robathan speaks to the group's UK chief development officer



Therme Group's wellbeing resort concept, originally seen in Germany and now being taken worldwide, was born from a strong belief that wellbeing should be accessible for everyone, and that thermal facilities should be about fun and leisure as well as relaxation.

Therme Group's wellbeing resorts have been described as waterparks, water theme parks and thermal spas, but the truth is they combine all of those elements – with forthcoming resorts also set to feature vertical farms, immersive art installations, health and fitness and innovative technology – to create a new genre of attraction.

"At a basic level, we all connect with water; we find it incredibly calming to be in and

around,” says Richard Land, Therme Group UK’s chief development officer. “Whether it’s children playing or adults bathing, there’s been lots of research showing the significant wellness benefits that come from these activities. We’re looking to bring all of that together and create amazing environments where people can enjoy and connect to water.”

The Group currently has four resorts – three in Germany and one in Romania – and is working on new projects across the world, with resorts underway in Toronto, Canada and Manchester, UK and plans outlined for four more in the UK and further destinations across the US, Asia and Europe.

As we speak, the Group has just announced plans for its second UK wellbeing destination, on the waterfront in Glasgow, Scotland.

“We’re creating urban oases, where we bring together fun and relaxation to nurture mental and physical health,” explains Land, speaking to me from Glasgow. “We’re looking to embed ourselves in communities; to be a catalyst for greener, healthier, more liveable cities and provide wellbeing for all.”

ONTARIO PLACE, CANADA

In Toronto, Canada, Therme Group is developing a family-friendly attraction featuring indoor and

**“
We’re creating
urban oases,
where we bring
together fun
and relaxation
to nurture
mental and
physical health**”



Theme Group recently announced new sites for Toronto and Glasgow (above)

PHOTO: THERME GROUP



Thérme Canada
Ontario Place

- outdoor pools, waterslides and a wave pool, natural relaxation spaces, sports performance and recovery services, and botanical gardens.

The future of the Ontario Place site – which was built for the 1967 Montreal Expo – has been a topic of debate since the Ontario Place theme park closed down in 2012. The masterplan for the new resort, designed by Diamond Schmitt in partnership with Thérme Group's in-house design team Thérme ARC, aims to reconnect the public to Lake Ontario. The glass and steel main building will be clad in energy-efficient, triple layer, bird-friendly glass

THERME GROUP PROJECTS

■ BADEPARADIES SCHWARZWALD TITISEE, GERMANY

This resort opened in 2010 in Germany's Black Forest in collaboration with Wund Holding – the leisure operator credited with revolutionising Germany's thermal resort sector. It features a family zone with 25 water attractions, a relaxation area and a 'sauna world' with 12 themed sauna pools, mineral pools and whirlpools.

■ THERMEN & BADEWELT SINSHEIM, GERMANY

Opened 2012

■ THERME EUSKIRCHEN, GERMANY

Opened in 2015

■ THERME BUCHAREST, ROMANIA

The first Thérme Group resort outside Germany, this facility marked the start of the group's global ambitions when it opened in 2016.

The 30,000sq m facility has LEED Platinum certification and features a wide range of water-based activities and treatments.



on a steel structure and will house the aquatic pools and botanical gardens. The building will be surrounded by parklands and beach areas.

A new bridge will connect the mainland and West Island, providing public access to the island park and a new public beach. As part of the group's mission to bring immersive art to the public outside of traditional spaces such as museums and galleries, the Thérme Entrance Pavilion will host a series of site-specific art installations by local artists.

"What's special about Ontario Place is that it really brings back the connection to the waterfront," says Land. "Part of the concept is to bring together the public realm – there will be walkways around it so people can come and walk and feel the building is part of their space without necessarily paying to enter."

THERME MANCHESTER

In Manchester, UK, the £250m+ Thérme Manchester destination is taking shape. Due to open in 2023, on a site owned by Peel

Therme Bucharest
offers wellbeing
activities as well as
waterslides and pools



L&P, the huge 28-acre attraction will feature a family zone with indoor and outdoor swimming pools including a wave pool, water slides, steamrooms and palm tree relaxation areas. The venue will also feature a dedicated adults' area with swim up bars, therapeutic mineral baths, warm-water lagoons set in botanical gardens and steam rooms and saunas.

Other features include a two acre wellbeing garden in the shape of a rose, a range of bars,

cafes and restaurants, and vertical gardens which will grow salad and herbs for the restaurants.

As with Therme's other projects, art will play a central role in Manchester.

"Art is one of the many new features we're bringing into our facilities," says Land. "Artists love the idea of their work being immersive and people spending time in their art without the constraints of traditional galleries, and we hope it will encourage dialogue and discussion."

"We have several projects running with various artists – one that we've already done was with Jeppe Hein – he's an amazing artist who ran a large-scale public participatory artwork in Central Park in New York called *Breathe With Me*. He adapted that for schools around Manchester, which enabled us to reach out to them and engage local students. It encouraged the students to create art by focusing on their breathing, which helped them to relax. The artwork created will be made into tiles which will go into Therme Manchester. That brings the community with us and gives them something to relate to when they come."

"We have lots of other ideas and collaborations which we'll use in the design – they'll create a rich tapestry of colour and experiences that will make us unique."



**The resorts feature
family zones and
adults-only areas**

The 30,000sq m
Therme Bucharest
has LEED Platinum
certification

WORLDWIDE EXPANSION

Over the past two years, the Group has announced plans to expand around the world. A regional division has been set up in the US, and plans have been outlined to introduce urban wellbeing centres to five US cities, likely to include New York, Los Angeles and Washington, DC.

Co-founder of New York's High Line, Robert Hammond, has been appointed as president and chief strategy officer for Therme Group's US expansion plans.

"We've now got a very strong team in the US, who are making good ground quite quickly. North America is a huge market, and is key to us," says Lund.

"We've also been open about the fact we're looking at Asia as well, and we have a good pipeline of many very well progressed discussions around the world.

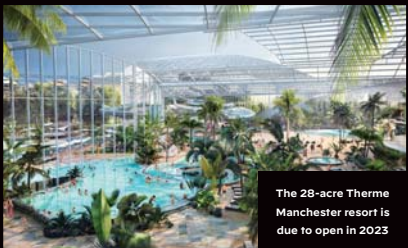
"We're looking at urban destinations, as people will continue to move towards cities and they will become mega cities of the future. We're looking to see how we can embed ourselves within those cities to create spaces of wellbeing where you can focus on that pre-emptive health element and support the cities in providing a wellbeing and health offer."

How many Therme resorts would they like to open globally? I ask Lund.

**“
At a basic level,
we all connect
with water**

"Who knows?" he replies. "We're not really constrained by fixed targets and timelines. We're able to adapt when opportunities arise. We're quite specific about what we're looking for – we don't want to be 20 miles out of town in a field, we really need to be embedded within the cities we're in. That depends on what land's available, and how open the authorities are to working with us. We really feel the time is right to be creating these kinds of wellbeing spaces."

In the UK, in addition to Manchester and Glasgow, the group has announced it's looking at sites in Wales and London. In November 2021, it was announced that Therme Group had signed a deal with Peel L&P to construct a resort on the 21.5 acre Glasgow Waters site next to Glasgow's



The 28-acre Thermo Manchester resort is due to open in 2023

Riverside Museum. The resort – set to be the group's second in the UK – will feature a next-generation waterpark, thermal pools and spa, a health and wellbeing centre and a vertical farm.

A CATEGORY OF ITS OWN

With Thermo Group resorts described variously as 'wellbeing destinations', 'waterparks and spa resorts', 'wellness centres' and 'wellness theme parks', I ask Land how Thermo Group would describe its own facilities.

"We've discussed our elevator pitch, but because we're so complex, it's hard to sum up in one simple sentence," he acknowledges. "That's part of our challenge – helping people to understand what we're about. It's a new concept – kind of a new market. It's about leisure and spas, but we're more than all of that – we have our own category. It's actually quite nice that people will have a sense of reveal once we open our new facilities."

"Basically our resorts are places where people can come, and whatever wellbeing means for them, they can find it within our facilities – whether that's relaxing in a spa or sauna, enjoying the waterslides, having a treatment, or having good, nutritious food. There's something for everyone."

"It comes back to mixing fun with relaxation, and being affordable and accessible from a wellbeing perspective." ●

FUTURE THERME PROJECTS

■ BAD VILBEL, FRANKFURT-RHEIN-MAIN, GERMANY

Thermo Group's strategic partner Wund Holding, operating as ThermenGruppe Josef Wund, has unveiled plans for the creation of Germany's largest wellbeing resort in Bad Vilbel, part of the Frankfurt Rhein-Main metropolitan area. It will be built to LEED Platinum Standard and will feature a family area with more than 30 waterslides, expansive thermal and mineral pools, relaxation areas and more than 1,800 palm trees.

■ THERME MANCHESTER, UK

Thermo Manchester, the UK's first city-based wellbeing resort, will combine hundreds of water-based activities with wellbeing treatments, art, nature and technology. Created by Thermo Group, Thermo Manchester will be located in Peel L&P's Trafford City.

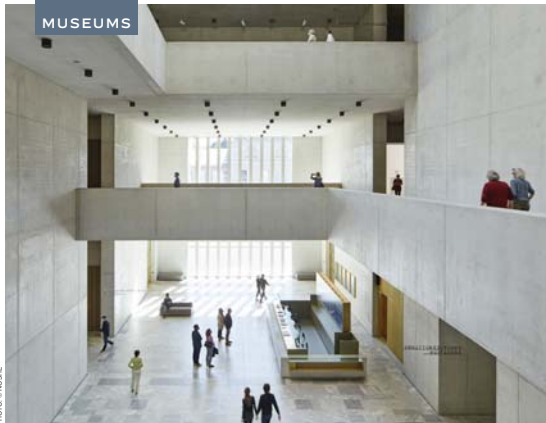
■ THERME CANADA ONTARIO PLACE, CANADA

Designed by Diamond Schmitt and Thermo Group's in-house design team, this resort will be located in Ontario Place and aims to reconnect residents of Toronto to the waterfront. It will feature a range of pools and waterslides, as well as nature-inspired relaxation spaces and botanical gardens and will offer treatments, as well as sports performance and recovery services.

■ THERME SCOTLAND, UK

In November 2021, Thermo Group announced it had inked a deal with Peel L&P for a new location in Glasgow called Thermo Scotland. Thermo has announced it aims to submit planning permission to Glasgow City Council in 2022 for the 320,000sq ft facility which will be home to extensive thermal pools and spa, a health and wellbeing centre and an indoor water park. The organisation anticipates the project will cost roughly £100m (€118.2m, US\$134.3m) to create.

A new wellbeing resort is planned for Bad Vilbel, Germany



The central entrance hall (left) has been designed to host a range of community events



Kunsthhaus Zurich completes

After 12 years of planning and construction, the new Kunsthhaus Zurich extension has opened, more than doubling the Swiss museum's exhibition space and making it the country's biggest art museum



cross from the Kunsthhaus Zurich's main museum building, a major new SFr206m (\$223m) extension has opened, housing the collection of classic

modernism, the Bührle collection, temporary exhibitions and art from 1960 onwards.

The new building was designed by David Chipperfield, and sits on the northern side of Heimplatz Square opposite the original 1910 Moser building. It connects with the existing Kunsthhaus via an underground tunnel.

Chipperfield's goal was to turn Heimplatz Square into an urban hub for arts and education in a move that Zurich's authorities hope will see the city rival Basel as a destination for art lovers.

A large central entrance hall – reportedly inspired by Tate Modern's Turbine Hall –





PHOTO © MOSE

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“This brings together the fundamental concerns of museum design with the responsibilities created by the urban context and relationship with the existing museum”

David Chipperfield



David Chipperfield has been working on the project for 12 years

PHOTO: BENJAMIN KCHAMON

- creates a link between the square and the new Garden of Art sculpture garden to the north of the site, which features pieces by Pipilotti Rist and Auguste Rodin.

The art is displayed on the two upper floors of the new building, while the public functions, including the cafe/bar, events hall, museum shop and museum education services are arranged around the entrance hall on the ground floor.

According to the architects, "The diversely dimensioned exhibition spaces are defined by a calm materiality and an abundance of daylight, placing the immediate experience of art at the centre of the visitor experience."

"The project for the extension of Kunsthaus Zurich brings together the fundamental concerns of museum design with the responsibilities created by both the urban context and the relationship with the existing museum," explains David Chipperfield.

"We hope that the quality of the architecture, its spatial, formal and material resolution will guarantee that the extension, like Karl Moser's original building, becomes an integral part of the physical, social and cultural infrastructure of the city of Zurich." ●



The ground floor cafe/
bar features a large
piece by Max Ernst (left)

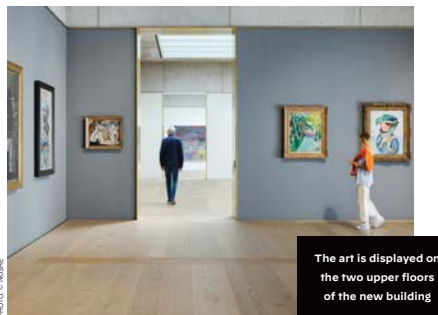
PHOTO © MOSER

PHOTO © MOSER



The light, airy museum shop is accessed off the central hall on the museum's ground floor

PHOTO © MOSHE



The art is displayed on the two upper floors of the new building

PHOTO © MOSHE



PHOTO © MOSHE

Julien Kauffmann

As Middle East leisure and theme park operator Farah Experiences, subsidiary of Mirral Asset Management, prepares to open SeaWorld Abu Dhabi on Yas Island, CEO Julien Kauffmann speaks to Dave Camp



Dave Camp is senior partner at D & J International Consulting



Kauffmann previously worked for Disneyland Paris

Set up in 2008 as a management company to operate the leisure assets being developed by Miral Asset Management on Yas Island in Abu Dhabi, Farah Experiences has grown strongly. The theme park operator runs Ferrari World Abu Dhabi, Warner Bros World Abu Dhabi, Yas Waterworld, CLYMB Abu Dhabi and Qasr Al Watan, and in 2021 expanded internationally to take on the management of Saraya Aqaba Waterpark in Jordan.

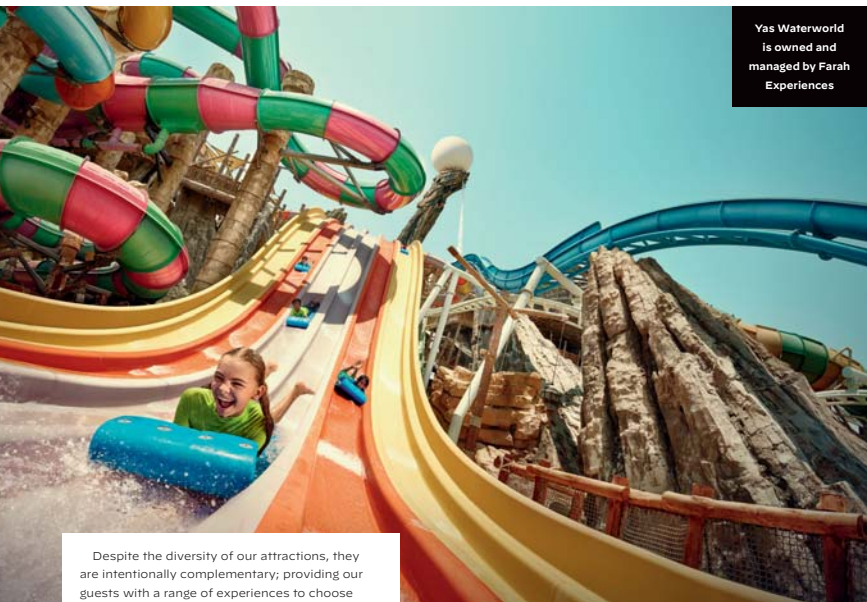
With huge visitor numbers across Farah Experiences' parks, and construction on SeaWorld Abu Dhabi due to be completed by the end of 2022, Farah Experiences is the most active group within the Middle East. Julien Kauffmann joined as CEO in 2021 and has ambitions to grow the business further, as he reveals here.

How would you sum up the philosophy of Farah Experiences?

As a leading operator of world-class leisure and entertainment attractions, our philosophy is centered around delivering exemplary experiences for our guests.

Our portfolio is extremely diverse – encompassing theme parks, leisure and cultural attractions.

What all of our attractions have in common is that they are powered by a passionate team of people who pride themselves on delivering best-in-class guest experiences.



Despite the diversity of our attractions, they are intentionally complementary; providing our guests with a range of experiences to choose from. This is coupled with the fact that our Yas Island-based attractions are located just minutes away from one another, resulting in holistic and accessible experiences for our guests.

Do you see the company overlaying the Farah Experiences brand on other attractions – as Merlin is doing – and focusing on external branding?

We've long seen the value of being the manager and operator of leading attractions under global IPs, starting with the launch of Ferrari World Abu Dhabi more than 10 years ago.

Because we operate from a guest-focused perspective, we believe there's greater value in letting our brands speak for themselves when it comes to external consumer-facing branding and communications. From a strategic perspective, our parks and attractions will continue to lead the way with their respective brands and IPs that guests have come to know and love. Farah Experiences will remain our voice for corporate communications among B2B partners and stakeholders, as well as Corporate Social Responsibility opportunities.


What are you currently working on?

We're working on rolling out tailored events such as 'ladies' nights', as well as other on-ground

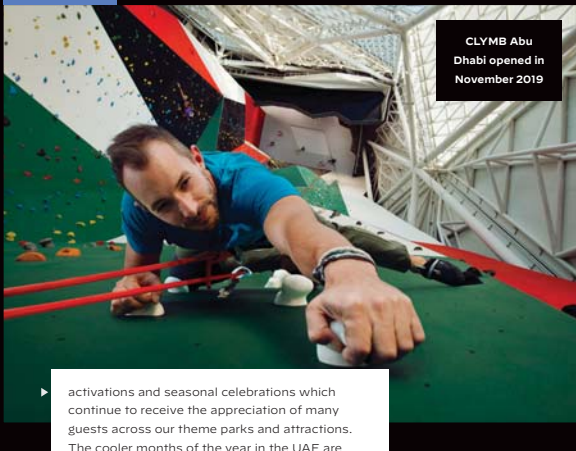
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**SeaWorld Abu Dhabi
will be the epitome of
the next generation of
marine life theme parks**







Ferrari World Abu Dhabi
opened in 2010. The Benoy-
designed building was inspired
by the form of a Ferrari car



▶ activations and seasonal celebrations which continue to receive the appreciation of many guests across our theme parks and attractions. The cooler months of the year in the UAE are also considered high season from a tourism perspective. As such we're working closely with our partners to attract more visitors to Yas Island and our attractions by extension.

SeaWorld Abu Dhabi will not house orcas. What else will make it different?

The marine life theme park will also include the Yas SeaWorld Research and Rescue Center, which will be the first dedicated marine research, rescue, rehabilitation and return centre in the UAE. This is a hugely important component as it will act as an advanced knowledge hub focusing on indigenous Gulf and marine life ecosystems and will serve an important role from a research and education standpoint.

SeaWorld Abu Dhabi will be the epitome of the next generation of marine life theme parks. The park will feature the world's largest and most expansive marine aquarium containing 25 million litres of water and housing more than 68,000 marine animals.

There are a myriad of unique features within the upcoming attraction, but the key differentiator is that it will offer guests the opportunity to interact with one of the most diverse populations of animals featured in any marine life theme park, globally.

How is tech being used in innovative ways across Farah Experiences' attractions?

Technology is a vital component of our business and is constantly being integrated in new ways, with the end goal of enhancing our guest experiences. Most recently, Yas Theme Parks

(Ferrari World Abu Dhabi, Yas Waterworld and Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi) became the first theme parks in the MENA region to adopt contactless technology through the introduction of the FacePass system.

FacePass delivers cutting-edge contactless technology to streamline the guest experience using facial recognition. The technology allows guests to avail contactless access at theme park turnstiles and payment solutions across dining and retail outlets.

Not only does the technology provide convenience and quick queue-free access to guests, it also eliminates the need to physically interact with turnstiles and points of sale. Needless to say, this technology contributes to a more seamless guest experience while also safeguarding the health and wellbeing of guests.

What makes Yas Waterworld Abu Dhabi special and different?

Yas Waterworld has made a name for itself over the years as one of the region's leading waterparks – this is owed in large part to the waterpark's special offerings.

Firstly, the waterpark stands as the world's first and only Emirati-themed waterpark inspired by the UAE's heritage and culture – this is a huge draw for guests both at home and beyond. Secondly, the waterpark is home to over 45 slides and attractions, five of which can't be found anywhere else in the world.

Another key factor behind the waterpark's success is its seasonal programming. Our





PHOTO: FARAH EXPERIENCES

plans for Yas Waterworld are always evolving – we’re constantly introducing new events, activations and partnerships to keep things fresh and exciting for guests. This includes Yas Waterworld’s signature events such as Neon Nights and Mermaid Adventures, which have become fan-favourites amongst guests and continue to grow in popularity year-on-year.

How have the first couple of years gone for Abu Dhabi adventure sports hub, CLYMB Abu Dhabi? What have you learned?

As an adventure hub, CLYMB Abu Dhabi was a new type of attraction for us to operate, but we’ve seen it exceed expectations.

The attraction has been well received by guests since opening in 2019. Guests in the UAE are always looking for new experiences and adventures to conquer and CLYMB Abu Dhabi scratches that itch in a big way. It offers not one, but two record-breaking experiences – the region’s tallest indoor climbing wall, as well as the world’s biggest indoor flight chamber. The fact it’s a totally indoor attraction works

well in the UAE’s hot climate as it gives guests and climbing enthusiasts a safe and purpose-built attraction to enjoy adventures typically operating in the outdoors year-round.

Farah Experiences has expanded into different types of attractions it runs with Qasr Al Watan in Abu Dhabi and Saraya Aqaba Waterpark in Jordan. What have you learned?

We’ve learned a great deal from the management and operations of both of these attractions, but perhaps the most pertinent takeaway has been the need to study and adapt to the needs of our unique and diverse audiences.

Based on the expertise we’ve acquired managing and operating Yas Island-based attractions, we employed the same deep-dive approach to best understand the audiences for Qasr Al Watan and Saraya Aqaba Waterpark.

It’s crucial to understand our guests’ needs for both these attractions and ensure we offer the same guest experiences we pride ourselves in delivering in our other attractions. ►

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We're seeing guests favouring family-friendly experiences they can share with their loved ones

► **Tell us about your expansion plans**

Expansion into other markets and domains is something we're always keen to explore. Naturally, our portfolio and cumulative expertise across the visitor attractions industry would lend itself well to managing and operating similar attractions to the ones we already have under our belt. However, our ambitions don't stop there. Our team is constantly on the lookout for new avenues of expansion both regionally and internationally.

What will the next few years bring for the attractions and entertainment sectors in the Middle East?

We're seeing players across the region recognise the value of investing in IP partnerships with globally recognised leisure attractions and entertainment brands.

The key challenge that we, as well as our peers, will face is how to successfully localise and integrate these brands and experiences to appeal to our local market and international travellers alike.

Another one of the trends we're observing is the shift towards contactless payments. Guests in the region are all about convenience and seamless experiences. Additionally, we're seeing guests favour family-friendly experiences and attractions over those that are more niche. Guests are also favouring memorable experiences that they can share with all of their loved ones.

We're seeing this manifest through the increasing popularity of our family-friendly rides, attractions and experiences across all of Yas Theme Parks and attractions.




How has the pandemic affected your company?

The pandemic has impacted countless businesses worldwide and Farah Experiences is no exception. Our efforts were in line with the UAE's robust response and regulations in the face of the pandemic. Across the board, we implemented stringent precautionary measures to keep guests and colleagues safe, including increased sanitisation, thermal screening, mandating social distancing and mask-wearing, reducing guest capacities as well as modifying some of our shopping and dining experiences.

These measures have been openly accepted and adopted by guests. Above all, we prioritise the health and wellbeing of our





guests and colleagues. These measures have also provided our guests and employees with peace of mind, so they're able to enjoy an attraction or come to the office, knowing that their environment is as safe as possible.

In the most recent TEA/AECOM Theme index, the impact of COVID on the world's top 25 parks was shown to have reduced attendance from 254 million in 2019 to 83 million in 2020. What impact did the pandemic have on your attendance levels?

Following the re-opening of our parks and attractions in 2020 after a government-mandated closure during the pandemic, we enjoyed a huge uptick in visitation from the local resident market.

We believe our commitment to health and safety, as well as our value-added offerings such as annual passes, were major contributors to this.

How would you describe the attractions market in the Middle East right now?

The Middle East is an exciting region for the visitor attractions industry. Leisure, entertainment and retail experiences are booming, with several markets including KSA and Kuwait investing heavily in exciting new consumer offerings.

Likewise, the UAE is on an upwards trajectory with Expo 2020 taking place in Dubai and a number of new developments taking shape. ●

Seasonal planning is key to Yas Waterworld's success, says Kauffmann

MAKING PRE-BOOKING WORK

Encouraging customers to pre-book can mean the best of both worlds: higher revenue and a closer relationship with the guest, says Jon Young



PHOTO: ANNE ARMITAGE / BDRC

Jon Young is a research director at BVA BDRC

Many attractions moved to pre-booking in response to the pandemic, but doing so risks missing out on spontaneous and disorganised visitors in an age where customers want flexibility.

At consumer and business insight consultancy BVA BDRC, we conducted research among the UK population, as part of our ClearSight survey, to offer insight into visitor and attractions operator attitudes to pre-booking.

Attractions were drawn to pre-booking as lockdowns lifted, because of the need to control numbers under COVID-19 restrictions. The strategy did, however, come with its own issues around no shows. For some operators, these were as high as 30 per cent of all bookings (anecdotally – those that were free and with membership), while fifteen per cent of visitors across the attractions market had 'no-showed' in the previous six months.

The true number is likely to be higher, as even in an anonymous survey environment, people will feel bad about sharing undesirable behaviour.

When asked why they hadn't turned up, the vast majority stated they were not committed to visiting in the first place. Notably, seven in 10 stated that 'they had booked more than one place to visit and would decide on the day' or that their intention to visit was 'always 50/50'.

The remainder gave more understandable reasons such as government restrictions (a higher percentage for indoor attractions), unsuitable weather (higher for outdoor





PHOTO: REBECCA WORTH/PHOTOGALLERY

The Roman Baths in Bath, UK, is highlighted as an example of how to make pre-booking work



PHOTO: BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

- attractions) and ill health on the day. Some blamed poor organisational skills.

Reducing no shows

While some reasons are unavoidable, there's potential to reduce 'no-shows' among people who were not committed to visiting in the first place. Ideas include communicating the negative impacts of 'no-shows' at an attraction and trying to change attitudes, as well as sending reminders – which also builds excitement – leading into the visit.

As we've seen in the wider hospitality sector, there's also been growth in flexible booking software, allowing for last-minute cancellations. Some – such as the Roman Baths, in Bath, UK – allow you to cancel your visit up to the last minute. Others don't allow cancellation at all. It's no surprise, therefore, that the likes of the Roman Baths have comparatively low 'no-show' rates – although the price point will also be a driver.

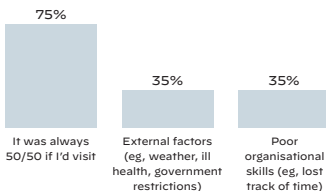
The power of 'yes shows'

While some people are no shows, there are also yes shows – people that would not have turned up if they hadn't pre-booked. Eleven per cent of our market stated they'd been a 'yes-show' at some point in the previous six months, which statistically puts them level with the 'no-shows'. There's an argument that, on the day, the 'no-shows' and 'yes-shows' balance each other out. If steps can be taken to reduce the 'no-shows' these might even be a net gain as a result of pre-booking.

15%
of visitors
have booked but
not shown up

The vast majority of 'no-shows' were never fully committed to visiting, despite pre-booking

Reason for no-show



*Figures shown are for indoor venues – outdoor venues reflect similar results.
Source: BVA BDRG

PHOTO: BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

Pre-booking secures bookings in advance of the visit day, and allows venues to plan accordingly to stay in line with government restrictions. These numbers are then skewed by no shows, forcing operators to make assumptions about how many visitors will actually walk through the gates.

Increasing secondary spend

When it comes to revenue, pre-booking increases secondary spend by making visitors feel they have more disposable income on the day and evens out the pattern of visitor arrival throughout the day, increasing availability in catering outlets and enabling a better experience while making retail spend more likely. Many attractions also report growth in donations and Gift Aid using this method.



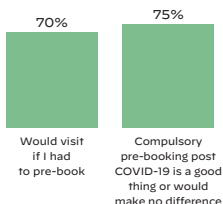
PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/ANANDON

The benefits of pre-booking for visitors include reduced queuing times and less crowds

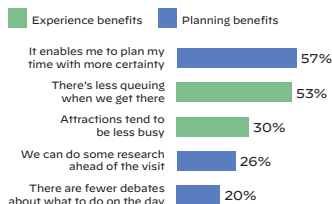
“Pre-booking makes visitors feel they have more disposable income on the day

The majority see pre-booking as a good thing – the ability to plan a leading benefit

Impact of pre-booking on visit likelihood

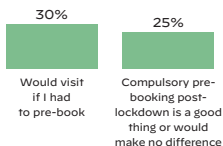


Benefits of pre-booking to the visitor

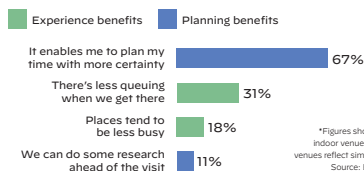


A significant minority see pre-booking as a bad thing – for these people, spontaneity rules

Impact of pre-booking on visit likelihood

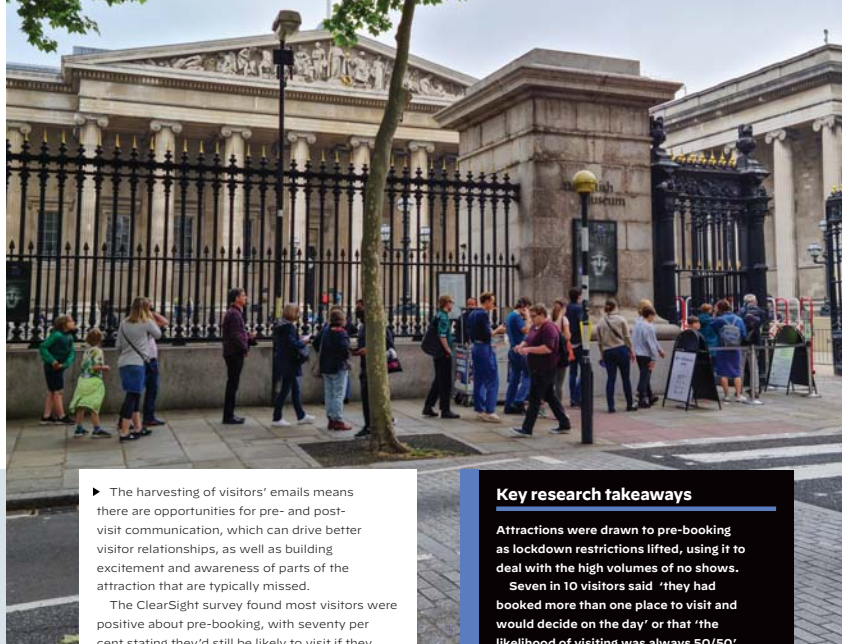


Drawbacks of pre-booking to the visitor



*Figures shown are for indoor venues - outdoor venues reflect similar results. Source: BVA BDRC

Pre-booking represents clear advantages, but a hybrid model is optimal



► The harvesting of visitors' emails means there are opportunities for pre- and post-visit communication, which can drive better visitor relationships, as well as building excitement and awareness of parts of the attraction that are typically missed.

The ClearSight survey found most visitors were positive about pre-booking, with seventy per cent stating they'd still be likely to visit if they had to pre-book. The main advantages were the ability to plan, as well as the incentive of reduced queuing on arrival and a less busy experience.

Despite majority support, however, a significant minority – 25 per cent – see pre-booking as a bad thing, with 30 per cent of people less likely to visit if pre-booking is required.

With fewer international visitors expected in 2022, attractions will need to maximise the number of domestic visitors. Although 25 per cent is a minority, it still represents lots of potential visitors, so – combined with our knowledge of the spontaneous visitor – these findings raise a red flag for a 100 per cent pre-booking model.

There are clear advantages to maintaining pre-booking post COVID-19. However, there's almost certainly a need for a hybrid approach that allows for walk-up visits.

Key research takeaways

Attractions were drawn to pre-booking as lockdown restrictions lifted, using it to deal with the high volumes of no shows.

Seven in 10 visitors said 'they had booked more than one place to visit and would decide on the day' or that 'the likelihood of visiting was always 50/50'.

The main advantages were the ability to plan, as well as the incentive of reduced queuing on arrival and a less busy experience.

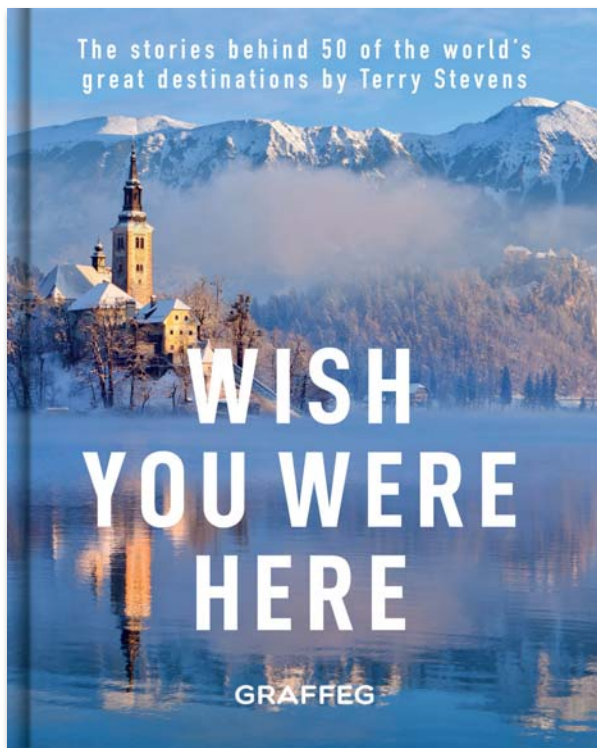
There is almost certainly a need for a hybrid approach that allows for walk-up visits too.

Clever messaging and booking software that allows for last-minute cancellations will reduce 'no-shows', but regardless of how well this is done, there will always be spontaneous, disorganised visitors who would rather just turn up on the day.

Fail to cater for them and you may lose them as a visitor. Flexibility is all. ●

Jon Young is travel and culture director at BVA BDRC www.bva-bdrc.com

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All creatures great and small

With zoo enrichment efforts focusing too heavily on large popular animals, it's time our approach was widened to benefit all species, says Dr Paul Rose

Zoos have made great advances in 'environmental enrichment' – making changes to encourage natural behaviour and improve animal wellbeing.

But researchers from the University of Exeter and the University of Winchester in the UK say efforts disproportionately focus on large, 'popular' animals – with less focus on creatures such as invertebrates, fish and reptiles.

The study, based on interviews with zoo professionals, revealed support for enrichment, but a lack of evaluation and evidence to measure the effectiveness of changes.

Here the University of Exeter's Dr Paul Rose explains why it's important that zoo improvements benefit all creatures.

Dr Paul Rose is a
zoologist and a lecturer
at the University of
Exeter in the UK

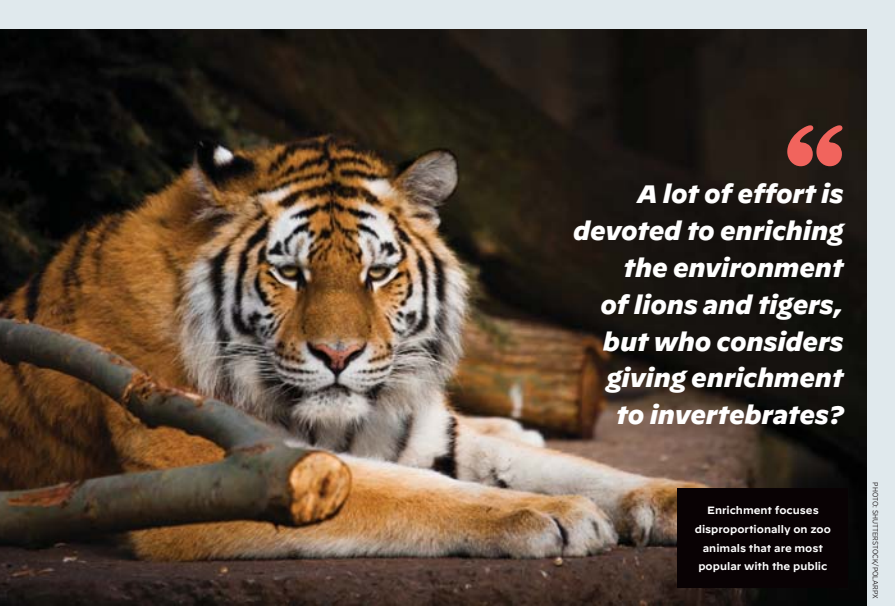


PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/POULABRY

“

A lot of effort is devoted to enriching the environment of lions and tigers, but who considers giving enrichment to invertebrates?

Enrichment focuses disproportionately on zoo animals that are most popular with the public

“

There are many different types of enrichment, and it seems that only certain types are used for certain species in zoos.

For example, enrichment for large predators will often focus on the way they're fed. But nutrition is only one of the five categories of enrichment – along with the physical environment, sensory stimulation, occupation (activities) and social structure.

It's common to see a lot of effort devoted to enriching the environment for lions or tigers, but who considers giving enrichment to invertebrates?

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

We wanted to investigate what enrichment exists out there in the market for the 'less exciting' species that are housed in zoos.

As there is little published information on how well enrichment works, we need to keep researching what animals 'get' out of the enrichment they are provided with.

Zoos work hard to enrich environments, but they need to further evaluate their effectiveness.

The research we carried out argues that environmental enrichment must be underpinned by an evidence-based approach.

Invertebrates, birds, reptiles and fish are all complex beings and each species has

evolved for a particular niche, so it's possible to enrich their environments to reflect their natural habitats and social structures, however, this does not always happen.

Different planting and features can make enclosures rich and varied, and not just to human eyes. By considering natural history and a species' social structure we can increase the appeal of this enriched environment to the animals themselves and also to the zoo's visitors.

What's great to see is that zoo professionals appreciate that a species' natural behaviour and its ecology are the driving force behind the design of enrichment, so we're giving enrichment to zoo animals that enables them to behave in a natural way. We just need to measure the effect of this.

The more we can encourage people to do science at the zoo, the more information we will have on how zoo animals like or enjoy the enrichment they are provided with. ●

Source: *Concepts, Applications, Uses and Evaluation of Environmental Enrichment: Perceptions of Zoo Professionals*

”

More: www.attractionsmanagement.com/zooenrichment



Gorillas are popular with scientists carrying out research

PHOTO: JEFF M. ARNETT

Popularity game

Research on zoo animals focuses more on ‘familiar’ species such as gorillas and chimpanzees, rather than less well known ones such as the waxy monkey frog, scientists say

Globally, fish and birds outnumber mammals, reptiles and amphibians in zoos, but a study by scientists at the University of Exeter in the UK says mammals are consistently the main focus of research on zoo-housed animals.

This ‘mammal bias’ also exists in wider research, including in the wild, but lead author of the *Zoo Animal Research Skewed towards Popular Species* study Dr Paul Rose says zoos offer wonderful opportunities to study other species.

The study looked at the last decade of research on zoo-housed animals, both by zoo staff and visiting scientists, and noted the growth and value of such studies.

“Some species, such as chimpanzees, are popular with scientists because we know a lot about them, they are accessible and humans can relate to them,” says Rose.

“As well as being found in zoos, many of these species are relatively easy to find and study in the wild. By contrast, it would

be hard to find a waxy monkey frog in the rainforest to conduct your research.

Zoos offer a fantastic opportunity to study a vast range of species, many of which would be very difficult to observe in their natural habitat, adds Rose.


“Our findings can teach us about conservation, animal health and how best to house them in zoos. Despite the mammal bias, the output from zoo research has diversified and zoo animals are being used to answer a whole range of important scientific questions.”

The study also examined whether research on different animals tended to focus on different topics. “Lots of mammal studies are about animal welfare, which is great, but we should

More inaccessible species, such as waxy monkey frogs, are harder to study

PHOTO: ERIC JOSELEE
SHUTTERSTOCK





Zoos and aquariums
should broaden
their collections

“

**At the moment, we're
publishing on the same
few species, rather than
broadening our scope**

also research the welfare of fish, birds and anything else we keep in zoos,” Rose says.

“At the moment, we're publishing on the same few species, rather than broadening our scope. Obviously we have lots to learn about every species, but opportunities to study many other zoo-housed animals are currently being missed.”

Ten years ago, published research identified the need for studies about a range of species beyond much-loved animals such as elephants and primates. ●

Source: University of Exeter. 'Zoo animal research skewed towards 'popular' species'

More: www.attractionsmanagement.com/species

Study recommendations

The Exeter study reviewed zoo-based research in the decade since this recommendation and found:

- Zoo-focused research output increased from the start to the end of this study.
- Trends in species held by zoos do not reflect which species are studied.
- Zoo-based research makes meaningful contributions to science. For example, it led to ground-breaking insights into the reproductive biology of the critically endangered Sumatran rhino and bolstered conservation efforts.
- Researchers should diversify both the species chosen and the aims of studies to address 'persisting research gaps'.



“

***An established,
successful winter light
show can see margins
upwards of 30 per cent***

Enchanted Christmas at
Westonbirt Arboretum
achieved record ticket sales

PHOTO: JOHNNY HATHAWAY

LIGHT IN THE DARK

Dazzling winter light events are enabling attractions operators to generate vital income during the cold, dark months.

Kathleen LaClair and Yael Coifman examine the economics of these increasingly popular events



Kathleen LaClair



Yael Coifman

Each year, as Halloween costumes are cast aside, winter light shows come to life, providing us with an opportunity to enjoy magical evenings in immersive environments.

You've likely experienced one of these illuminated events, whether at the city centre riverfront, public parks or gardens, the city zoo, or the local theme park, providing fun selfie backdrops of larger-than-life animals, Chinese lanterns, and high-tech projections.

Winter light shows have seen increasing popularity as an off-season attraction or destination in recent years, due to guests' desire to enjoy safe, outdoor experiences and now is the time to be planning for next winter if you're keen to explore this opportunity.

There are ultimately two categories of winter light events: those that operate within existing attractions, and those that are held more publicly, often by a city organisation. While there are different operating models, depending on the host, many of these events have the same goal: to drive visits and spending to an intended target – and they do. With total visits ranging from 25,000 up to 2 million, and average per person spending anywhere from US\$5.00 to US\$50.00 (£4.30 to £43.00), these events can contribute significantly to operators, local businesses and the larger community.



Winter light shows within existing attractions

We looked at a range of light shows in researching this article. These included LumiNature at The Philadelphia Zoo, US; Magical Lantern Festival at Chiswick House, UK; Christmas Town at Busch Gardens Williamsburg, US; and Christmas at Longleat Safari Park, UK, but specifics of their individual operations cannot be divulged, due to confidentiality.

Globally, winter light shows have become increasingly popular over recent years at a variety of established attraction types,

Longleat Safari Park's Christmas light event has become a key part of its annual calendar

including theme parks, zoos, stately homes and botanical gardens. Depending on latitude, these attractions are generally in their low season, and would otherwise be closed in most cases; the light shows drive visitation and revenues where it previously did not exist, or when it was not very robust. Winter light shows typically begin after the Halloween seasonal events, sometime around the Thanksgiving holiday in the United States or generally as the winter holiday season is starting, worldwide. Shows usually run until the end of December, but in some cases extend into January.

While some attractions will include admission to the light show with the general ticket, typically, there's a separate ticket required to enter the evening event. In some cases, members or season pass holders can enter for free, in other cases they pay a discounted or full ticket price. Ticket prices vary, with attractions basing pricing relative to the general admission, and specific market conditions, such as weather and the competitive environment. For attractions that charge for the winter light show, the ticket price is usually between 80 and 100 per cent of the standard general admission.

Overall attendance at winter light shows is highly variable and depends on the location and available markets, number of nights the show runs and weather conditions. For these existing attractions, visitation to winter light shows can represent 5 to 10 per cent of total annual attendance, sometimes more.



Christmas Town at Busch Gardens, Williamsburg, Virginia, US



“

In addition to ticket revenues, most attractions benefit from visitors spending on f&b and retail



In addition to ticket revenues, most attractions benefit from guests spending on food, beverages, and retail purchases. Depending on the offering available, per capita revenues for these purchases can be upwards of US\$10.00 to US\$20.00 (€8.59 to €17.18). Some attractions also offer upcharge experiences during winter light shows, creating additional revenue opportunities. At a zoo, this could be an animal interaction or photo opportunity; at a theme park there can be VIP carriage or golf cart rides through the experience.

The initial capital cost for a light show can be significant and many attractions gradually ramp up the geographic footprint and level of experience over time, to manage the cost and ensure the expenditure matches market demand. While capital cost can vary widely, the initial expense usually runs between US\$0.5 million and US\$1.5 million (€0.4m to €1.3 m), with additional investments or reinvestment in subsequent years to upgrade and maintain the asset. Other significant costs include installation, staffing, utilities and marketing,

which can be anywhere from 30 to 50 per cent of gross revenues. Net margins vary by year, with initial years lower, due to the higher capital costs and subsequent years typically more robust when those costs are lower. An established, successful winter light show can see margins upwards of 20 to 30 per cent.

Winter light shows in public spaces

These are often held in public spaces – town centres, waterfronts or urban parks are typical settings. Shows are often funded by a variety of sources, including local government (taxpayer dollars), sponsorships via regional businesses, grants and other donations. Public light shows are typically free to enter (but not always), with the goal to drive footfall and spending to a targeted area for local businesses, both existing and pop-up in nature, in addition to providing an immersive experience to residents and tourists. Here we'll discuss two winter light events, Baltimore's Light City, held in late winter over eight days and Lumiere London, held in January.

The City of Baltimore, Maryland hosts Light City, an event with open-air light exhibitions and sculptures, interactive light displays, and video projections. The event costs the city US\$2.9 million (€2.5m) to produce and is funded primarily by sponsorship dollars and the sale of merchandise during the event. The event is free and the goal is to generate spending and associated impacts within the city and state.

The Baltimore Office of Promotion and The Arts conducted an economic impact study in 2018 to assess the impacts from the event to both the city and state. In 2018, Light City hosted 442,500 visits, with almost 40 per cent from city residents, 23 per cent from the larger metropolitan area, 18 per cent from the remaining area of Maryland, and 20 per cent from out-of-state visits.

In 2018, Light City had a total economic impact on Baltimore's business volume of US\$33.5 million (€28.8m). Light City visitors spent an estimated US\$6.44 million (€5.5m) at local restaurants and overnight visitors accommodated over 10,700 room nights resulting in a direct impact of US\$2.24 million (€1.92m) for hotels and other accommodations.

In addition to revenues received by local businesses and organisations, Light City generates significant tax revenues for the city and state – estimated US\$1.26 million (€1.08m) for the State of Maryland and US\$0.38 million (€0.33m) for the City of Baltimore. This



The inaugural year of the Lumiere London light event attracted 1.3 million visits

includes taxes on retail sales, alcohol, hotel rooms, parking, and gasoline excise tax.

Lumiere London was held under a similar structure in 2016 and 2018 in central London, bringing together an array of artists whose work illuminated the city with light installations. In the inaugural year, this free event welcomed 1.3 million visitors and footfall in central London increased by 44 per cent when compared to January in the prior year, when there was no event.

In 2018, visits increased to 1.5 million. The geographic footprint of the event was increased by 30 per cent for the second year, adding additional locations and installations. Lumiere London is funded by a combination of support from sponsors, grants, donations, and government contributions – totaling £5 million (€5.9m) in 2018, compared to £2.2 million (€2.6m) in 2016, which reflects the expanded footprint, associated operational costs and increased creative content to elevate the visitor experience.

In addition to offering a world-class arts engagement experience for residents and tourists,



Christmas at Kew Gardens, UK, has become a highly popular annual event

PHOTO: RICHARD GILBERT / CHRISTMAS AT KEW



Lumiere London attracted millions to central London

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/ALFRED FROBERG

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/TOMAS ALVENS

Lumiere London's goals include leveraging spending across the business sector in central London, increased spending in the targeted retail area during the post-Christmas sales surge, creating increased pedestrian-friendly passage, school outreach programming and providing hundreds of volunteer opportunities.

Economic impacts from the event are significant with the 2016 event generating £6.2 million (€7.4m) in direct economic impact and £22.2 million in spending overall (€26.1m).

The event is orchestrated by the Artichoke Foundation, producers of outdoor arts events.

Conclusions

The performance and impacts of the winter light shows discussed here have been proven in the past, and are likely to continue, as more attractions and cities understand the benefits of such events. As we look to the future, there is a next generation of standalone or traveling events being developed by companies such as Moment Factory (Foresta Lumina, AURA) or at Universal with Harry Potter (Nighttime Lights at Hogwarts), where intellectual property is being incorporated

into the experience. Some of these events work as a partnership and revenue share with the creative company developing the concept and some are built bespoke for the location.

Perhaps most important are the non-financial benefits of these events – the commitment of operators and cities to provide engaging and immersive experiences to be enjoyed safely together, especially in these challenging times. Surveys conducted during such events typically report satisfaction levels greater than 75 per cent, and indications on return visits are also high. In 2016, 79 per cent of Lumiere London's surveyed visitors stated that the event "made them feel happy" and 86 per cent strongly agreed that the event made a positive contribution to London's cultural offer. And let's not forget the benefit of a great selfie background, illuminated in millions of lights. ●

Kathleen LaClair and Yael Coiffman are with Leisure Development Partners.
www.leisuredevelopment.co.uk

“
**Let's not forget
the benefit of
a great selfie
background**

MUNCH MUSEUM OPENS IN NORWAY

Planned following the theft of two of Edvard Munch's prized works in 2004, the long-awaited Munch museum has opened in Oslo. Magali Robathan investigates

The museum contains the world's largest collection of works by Edvard Munch

Edvard Munch in his
living room at his
Ekely home in 1943



PHOTO: RAGNVALD VEBERIS

“

**The new building
is five times
the size of the
previous Munch
Museum**

The new Munch museum has opened on Oslo's waterfront, with 13 floors dedicated to the works of Edvard Munch.

Designed by architecture practice Estudio Herreros, the new building is five times the size of the previous Munch Museum, and is one of the world's largest museum's dedicated to a single artist. Eleven new exhibition halls give visitors the chance to experience the world's most extensive collection of works by Edvard Munch, with more than 26,700 pieces in the collection. Highlights include several huge mural paintings including *The Sun* (1909), which stretches nearly 8m, as well as several versions of Munch's iconic work, *The Scream*.

The building, which appears to lean towards the iconic Snøhetta-designed Oslo Opera



Architects Juan Herreros
(left) and Jens Richter

PHOTO: PABLO G. TRIBELLIO



PHOTO: ESTUDIO HERREROS

House, is wrapped in a facade finished in perforated aluminium panels with different degrees of transparency. The new museum was planned in accordance with FutureBuilt, an Oslo-wide initiative to halve greenhouse gas emissions across the city – recycled materials have been used throughout, and the interior spaces were designed to conserve energy and reduce the museum's carbon footprint.

The museum offers a wide-ranging programme of events and experiences, including concerts, literature readings, performance and art workshops. Research and conservation facilities are accessible to the public, giving visitors the chance to learn about work taking place to preserve and celebrate Edvard Munch's legacy. It also features a 13th floor restaurant with views overlooking the city and Fjord.



The Estudio Herreros-designed building appears to lean towards Oslo's famous Opera House building

PHOTO: ENAB ASLAKSEN



► OPENING EXHIBITIONS INCLUDE:

TRACEY EMIN / EDVARD MUNCH

■ THE LONELINESS OF THE SOUL

In her first major Nordic exhibition, British artist Tracey Emin shows how Edvard Munch has influenced and shaped her work over several decades.

EDVARD MUNCH

■ INFINITE

This new journey through the art of Edvard Munch enables guests to experience famous works such as *The Scream* and *Madonna*, as well as unknown major pieces, while getting unexpected insights into Munch's diverse artistic career.

EDVARD MUNCH

■ MONUMENTAL

Visitors can experience some of the largest paintings ever created by Edvard Munch, in a dedicated double-height space.

They're invited to take an inside look at Munch's creative process for this first major project for a public space, showing how he succeeded in realising these works through a combination of energy, resourcefulness and persistence. Major work, *The Sun*, is presented as a new departure in Munch's career, symbolising the power and ingenuity of life, and as a work that encompasses a number of narratives linked to the natural sciences, religion and the birth of the universe.



Summer Night is currently on display at the new museum

EDVARD MUNCH

■ SHADOWS

This exhibition seeks to reveal more about Edvard Munch via an interactive museum experience.

Munch spent the last 30 years of his life at Ekely, his villa just outside Oslo. The house was demolished in 1960, but in this exhibition the museum has reconstructed his home via a multimedia installation that uses light, sound and moving images to tell stories from his life.

Visitors gain insights into Munch's private life, memory and ideas. A specially-designed exhibition wall enables visitors to come close to things he used in his everyday life. ●

More: www.munchmuseet.no/en

PHOTO: COURTESY OF MUNCHMUSEET

“
**Visitors can experience
some of the largest paintings
created by Munch**



Paintings on display at the museum include *The Sun*, which is almost 8m wide

GALLERIES & GOURDS

Hauser & Wirth
Somerset has put
Bruton on the map

On a long-awaited visit to
Hauser & Wirth Somerset,
Magali Robathan finds herself
impressed by the art, food
and beautiful surroundings



Magali Robathan in the Roth Bar with her father

PHOTO: BRIAN ROBATHAN

It was an article in the weekend paper that finally prompted me to take a trip to Hauser & Wirth Somerset UK – a place that's been on my wish-list for a long time. A write up of an exhibition by the multi-disciplinary artist Thomas J Price caught my eye, and I decided it was time to see if the gallery lived up to its hype.

It was something of a surprise when art power couple Iwan Wirth and Manuela Hauser chose the quiet West Country village of Bruton to open their new gallery back in 2014 – previous outposts were located in Zurich, New York and London's Mayfair. Hauser & Wirth Somerset has been a huge success though, and has helped put Bruton firmly on the map. Since then, Hauser & Wirth have opened galleries in Hong Kong, St Moritz, Menorca, Los Angeles and Monaco and have also bought a new flagship space in London's Mayfair.

In their Somerset outpost, contemporary art is showcased in restored farm buildings, with an acclaimed restaurant and gardens created by the designer of the High Line gardens in New York.

It was something of a surprise when art power couple Hauser & Wirth decided to open a gallery in Somerset



BOOKING AND ARRIVAL

I arranged to visit with my father as a belated birthday treat. Booking was simple – entry is free, but you have to book a timed slot online via the website. They emailed me confirmation and a booking number to use on the day.

I also booked to go for lunch at the Roth Bar & Grill, which can be done online, but I phoned up to ask some questions, and they were friendly and helpful.

We drove from Bristol. When we got to Bruton, Hauser & Wirth was signposted on brown tourist signs through the village, although the signage on the entrance is not very visible, and we drove past it and had to turn around and go back.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

The buildings housing Hauser & Wirth Somerset comprise renovated farm buildings dating back to the 1760s with new purpose-built galleries added by architect Luis Laplace and designed to complement the original buildings.

Thomas J Price explores attitudes to identity in his exhibition



As soon as you get out of the car, you feel you've stumbled on somewhere special. The site is set in beautiful Somerset countryside; the entrance leads to a courtyard surrounded by the stone farm buildings, and featuring large public sculptures – currently there

are two large-scale pieces on display by Spanish sculptor Eduardo Chillida.

In the soft autumn sunshine, it all looked stunning; the dramatic artwork, displays of squashes and gourds outside the Roth Bar & Grill, the restored stonework and huge floor to ceilings windows in the main barn.

At the reception, which is next to the gift shop, we showed our online tickets and were directed to the galleries via a pretty courtyard.

THE EXHIBITION

I walked into the first gallery showing Thomas J Price's sculptures, and stopped dead. His contemporary sculptures of people of colour range in scale from small figures to a monumental 12ft bronze artwork called All In. Seen together, against a simple backdrop of white walls and stone flooring, the figures have an immediate and dramatic impact. I instantly wanted to know who these people were, what had inspired the artist to create them, and what he was trying to explore with his art.

“

Set against a simple backdrop, Thomas J Price's sculptures had an immediate and dramatic impact



The artist Thomas J Price and his sculpture 'All In' (2021), part of his solo exhibition at Hauser & Wirth called 'Thoughts Unseen'

As luck would have it, there was a guided tour taking place, led by a curator, who explained that he had spoken at length to Thomas J Price so he could translate his ideas. He talked very knowledgeably about the artists' ideas, processes and techniques, explaining that the exhibition aims to confront preconceived attitudes towards representation and identity. The tour really made the exhibition for me; I felt I had a much deeper understanding of the work and the artist.

THE GARDENS

I've read a great deal about the gardens at Hauser & Wirth Somerset, and about landscape designer Piet Oudolf, who is also responsible for the landscaping on New York's High Line. On an early autumn day, 'Oudolf's Meadow' looked absolutely beautiful – soft sunlight falling onto the meadow-style planting, with bursts of late colour from the grasses and wild flowers. It has been planned very cleverly, so it flows harmoniously, and the decaying seed heads and plants added to the beauty of the landscape.



The gardens have been designed by Piet Oudolf

We stumbled on a talk by one of the gardeners, who outlined Oudolf's approach and spoke about what's involved in the maintenance of his vision. The white cocoon-like Radić Pavilion – bought from the Serpentine Gallery in 2015 – perches on boulders at the far end of the field, looking somehow perfectly at home in its Somerset landscape.

THE ROTH BAR & GRILL

The Orangery tent opened in September 2020 to provide a safe, well ventilated space for diners; it's light and welcoming, with large olive trees in pots and red metal tables and chairs.

There's a focus on sustainable produce at the restaurant, sourced where possible from Durslade Farm. We drank local craft beer, and I had roast chicken with miso breadcrumbs and charred hispi cabbage, while my father had Chermoula spiced mackerel. For pudding we had Bakewell tart with custard and good coffee.

The food was absolutely delicious, and the service was excellent – it feels like a special occasion, standalone restaurant, more than a visitor attraction food offer.

The prices were on the higher end of the scale – this is more of a special occasion eatery than a place for everyday lunches – but the food and the attention to detail are so good that it really feels as though it's worth it.

OVERALL IMPRESSION

I've been meaning to visit Hauser & Wirth Somerset for absolutely ages and I'm so glad I finally made it. Everything about it just works – the art is well displayed in beautiful surroundings, and it makes for a whole day out. They put on family events, and I'm definitely going to return with my children for some art followed by cake and drinks in the cafe. ●



WHAT'S THE SCORE?

Staff	9/10
Cleanliness	9/10
Experience	9/10
Value for money	9/10
Toilets	9/10
Overall experience	9/10

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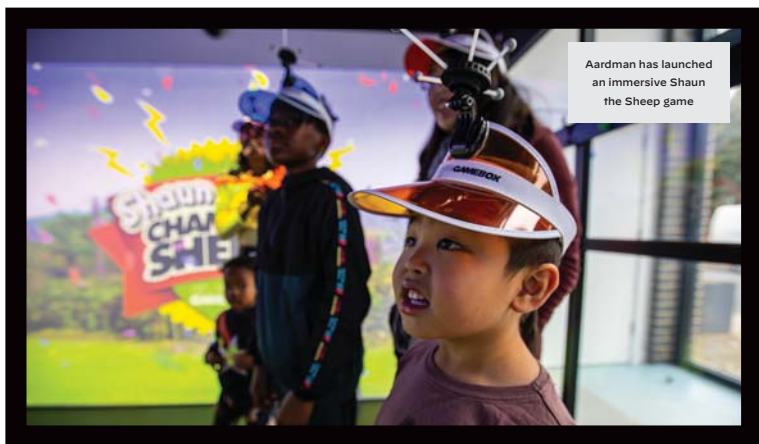


PHOTO: AARDMAN ANIMATIONS, ELECTRIC GAMEBOX 2021

Aardman collaborates with gaming venues to launch immersive Shaun the Sheep experience

Animation studio Aardman has announced a partnership with immersive group gaming experience providers Electric Gamebox to launch a game featuring Shaun the Sheep.

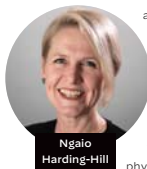
Launching into Electric Gamebox's London, Manchester and Lakeside Essex attractions in the UK, the Shaun the Sheep: Championsheeps game marks the company's first collaboration with official franchise developer Aardman to create its first immersive gaming experience specifically developed for younger children to enjoy.

Players step into the immersive world of Shaun the Sheep, and join the animation favourite and his farmyard friends by competing

in the Mossy Bottom Farm Championsheeps. The 30-minute immersive game, suitable for children aged five and above, will challenge players to take on sporting events with a farm-tastic twist - from 'Sheepy Uppy' to lifting 'Baah Bells'.

The latest Shaun the Sheep game promises to deliver the full Electric Gamebox experience, with "no heavy wearables or equipment, just a cool motion tracking visor given upon arrival, touch screens and surround sound that belts out fans' favourite Shaun the Sheep tunes."

Ngaio Harding-Hill, head of attractions and live experiences



Ngaio Harding-Hill

at Aardman, said: "This exciting new partnership with Electric Gamebox provides fans of all ages with a completely unique Shaun the Sheep interactive digital event experience that celebrates the fun and physical humour of the characters in a fully immersive event."

Will Dean, CEO and founder of Electric Gamebox, commented: "Shaun the Sheep is such an iconic character. It has been a pleasure to work with Aardman in bringing him to life."

attractions-kit keyword
Aardman Animations

PHOTO: AARDMAN ANIMATIONS

The 288-seat Ted Mann Theater utilises an acoustically 'box-in-box' construction



PHOTO: JAFFE HOLDEN

Jaffe Holden helps bring Academy Museum of Motion Pictures alive

Acoustical consulting firm Jaffe Holden provided architectural acoustics and audio/video design services for the recently opened Academy Museum of Motion Pictures in LA, US.

Working closely with the project team that included Renzo Piano Building Workshop, Gensler, Buro Happold, Why Architects (exhibit design), and Paratus Group, Jaffe Holden spent several years working with the museum team on the 300,000sq ft venue, which features the 1,000-seat David Geffen Theater, 288-seat Ted Mann Theater, Shirley Temple Education Studio, and a range of exhibition spaces.



Mark Holden

In the 1,000-seat Geffen Theater, the design directive of Renzo Piano was to express and celebrate the functionality of audio/video systems and to "reveal the machine."

All equipment is exposed in plain view and contrasted by the red theatre, which features a double-curved baffled wall and tall columns of speakers for more articulation and control of the sound. Jaffe Holden worked with Dolby to develop a custom Atmos system that accommodates the non-traditional architecture of this space. According to the acoustic team: "This highly advanced system is more complex than any other



PHOTO: JAFFE HOLDEN

in existence, with more than 40 surround speakers and subwoofers mounted on overhead beams and catwalks and placed behind the curved screen to bring full bandwidth reproduction around the audience."

The Ted Mann Theater has many of the same technical features as the Geffen Theater, including double-paned glass surrounding a large plenum space housing any noisy mechanicals and air distribution systems. "Because these theatres had to be designed to the same standard as world class concert halls, sound isolation was crucial in our design," said Mark Holden, chairman at Jaffe Holden. "These spaces are designed so that every nuance of a film's sound is audible."



PHOTO: JAFFE HOLDEN

Jaffe Holden provided architectural acoustics for the new museum

attractions-kit keyword

Jaffe Holden

Eden Project uses drones to spell out climate change warning

Almost 300 drones were used to signal an environmental message above the Eden Project's biomes, during the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26).

The Eden Project collaborated with drone display company Celestial and Volvo to create a 90-second film imploring world leaders to Act Now to combat climate change.

The film can be viewed at www.attractionsmanagement.com/eden

The story is told from the viewpoint of a visiting alien and was created by almost 300 drones soaring over the Eden Project's famous biomes.

The one-off film shows the illuminated solar-powered drones forming kaleidoscopic 3D patterns. The film starts with the appearance of a small blue sphere surrounded by orbiting stars. It then transforms into a tree, a fish, a bird, and then a human, conveying the idea that, "all



David Harland

living things are connected in a dynamic dance, morphing and dependent on one another."

In the film's closing scene, the human, disconnected from the other life forms, breaks apart into hundreds of dots of light and transforms back into the Earth, as stars swirl around it. The galaxy of stars then come together one final time with a command from the alien: "Oi, Earthling! ACT NOW!"

The film is backed by music by Sigur Rós and narration by broadcaster Gemma Cairney.

Nick Kowalski, co-founder & chief operating officer of Celestial, said of the project: "We are incredibly proud of what we've produced – a body of work that fuses art, cutting-edge

technology, and a powerful message.

"World leaders must act to tackle the climate and nature crisis, to inspire and accelerate action critical to saving the planet.

"We hope this is the first of many collaborations with the Eden Project and Volvo."

David Harland, chief executive of Eden Project International, said: "With our film we've chosen a dramatic way to convey to world leaders that they must Act Now. To back this up, we'll continue to do everything in our powers to rebuild relationships between people and the natural world."

● David Harland is profiled on p32.

[attractions-kit keyword](#)

Celestial



Display company Celestial helped create the display using almost 300 illuminated drones

Guide-ID aims to offer the world's easiest audioguide



Amsterdam Museum uses Guide-ID's product

Audio guide specialist Guide-ID is helping museums improve their visitor experience, with venues using their audio guides including Tivoli Museum in Denmark and the Amsterdam Museum in the Netherlands.

Guide-ID's Podcatcher is described by the company as 'the world's easiest audioguide' – designed so visitors can just enter a museum, point towards the art object and listen to the stories.

Tivoli Museum approached Guide-ID with the brief of creating a social experience. They were looking for a solution to target a new audience, to stop relying on text panels and

to focus on audio stories with different language options.

Together, they created an audio tour with theatrical scenographies and videos that allows visitors to immerse themselves in 212 stories.

According to Guide-ID: "The Podcatcher platform makes it possible for the Tivoli team to have the entire audio tour process in house. The system is used for multiple exhibitions, and decisions made about content editing or choosing new audio tour languages are being helped by the analytics provided by the system." ●

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Guide-ID



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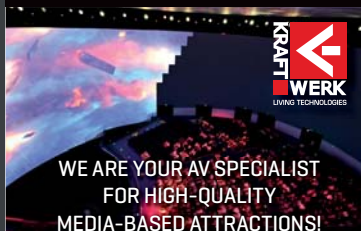
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