

# Attractions

## MANAGEMENT

@attractionsmag

Volume 28 Issue 3 2023

### Andreas Andersen

Celebrating  
100 years of  
Liseberg

### CHILD'S PLAY

How young  
people helped  
shape the  
Young V&A

*The evolving  
relationship  
between  
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International  
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*"It's special to reclaim this space" p42*


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# Learning to listen

The time of 'build it and they will come' is over - successful operators are really listening to their audiences, even when it's tough to hear



I recently visited the newly-opened Young V&A – a radical reimagining of the V&A's Museum of Childhood in East London. It was a real joy to watch children experiencing this space – gliding into the light-filled atrium on their scooters, crawling around happily in the sensory spaces and dancing and performing on the bright red stage built for that purpose.

It feels like the perfect museum for its audience and that's no accident. The V&A (page 54) didn't try to guess what young people might want from the new museum, instead it initiated a serious, wide-ranging process of consultation – engaging with more than 22,000 children, parents, carers and educators over a period of several years.

Local schoolchildren worked closely with the architects in a series of structured co-design workshops that informed the building's design. Kids are not patronised here and no-one is making assumptions about what they're interested in. For the exhibits, the team drew not just from V&A's National Childhood Collection, as was previously the case, but also from the V&A's huge collection of 2.8 million pieces. Paintings by David Hockney and Hokusai are displayed alongside vintage fashion, interactive toys and games and thought-provoking displays about climate change and sustainability.

It's clear from having experienced the museum that to deeply engage children and families, the V&A had to be prepared to be challenged and to let go of controlling all the outcomes.

Another project featured in this issue is the long-awaited International Museum of African American History – a further example of a project that was born out of serious collaboration (page 42).

Originally planned as a museum about slavery, it became clear though public consultation that



Young V&A – developed after consultation

PHOTO: DAVID PARRY/V&A MUSEUM, LONDON

**To really engage with audiences, you must be prepared to be challenged**

this wouldn't be enough – people wanted a place that told the whole story of the African American journey, not just part of it.

President, Dr Tonya Matthews, admits that the decades-long consultations with locals and community groups were, at times, extremely challenging. Difficult conversations were had; there were strong emotions, disagreements, and some serious tensions, but it was all absolutely necessary and ultimately positive.

The lesson from both these projects is that listening skilfully to the people you're aspiring to serve won't always be easy, but it will always be worth it.

Magali Robathan, editor  
magalirobathan@leisuremedia.com





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Håkon Lund is driving the green agenda at Lund Gruppen

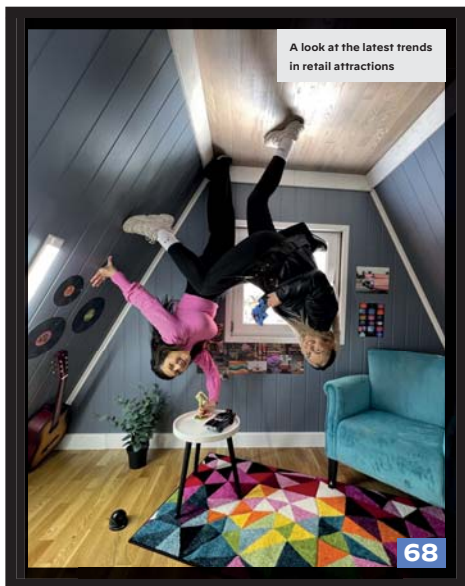
PHOTO: LUND GRUPPEN



New AMNH president Sean Decatur

PHOTO: ALVARO KEDING © AMNH

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PHOTO: UPSIDE DOWN HOUSE

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IAAM's Dr Tonya Matthews



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A celebration of the  
Architizer A+ Award winnersThe Young V&A opens  
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PHOTO: LUKE HAYES/V&amp;A MUSEUM, LONDON

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Liseberg's Andreas Andersen



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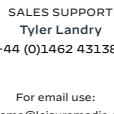
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# Attractions People

“ Tate Modern has always been a special place for me ”


Karin Hindsbo, outgoing director,  
The National Museum, Oslo and incoming  
director of the Tate Modern

PHOTO: NASJONALMUSEET / NA WISENBERG



Hindsbo became  
director of the National  
Museum Oslo in 2017





There were four  
million visits to the  
Tate Modern in 2022



ate has appointed Karin Hindsbo, director of The National Museum, Oslo, to take over as director of Tate Modern from September 2023.

Hindsbo has been director of The National Museum since 2017. The institution was created under her leadership, during which she finalised the consolidation of the former National Gallery, Museum of Decorative Arts and Design, Museum of Contemporary Art, Museum of Architecture, and National Touring Exhibitions.

The new museum, designed by Kleihues + Schuwerk and developed by Hindsbo and her team, was opened in June 2022 in a new 54,600sq m building housing a collection of 400,000 items, making it the largest museum in the Nordic countries.

Hindsbo has also worked as director of several art institutions and museums in Norway and Denmark, including Kode in Bergen, Sørlandets Kunstmuseum in Kristiansand, Kunsthal Aarhus (2009-11), and Den Frie Centre for Contemporary

► Art in Copenhagen. She was previously editor in chief of Danish cultural journal *Øjeblikket*, an external lecturer at the Institute of Art and Cultural Studies at the University of Copenhagen, and an assistant manager and curator at Overgaden, a contemporary art institute in Copenhagen.

"I'm beyond excited to join the skilled staff and to be a part of the whole Tate organisation," said Hindsbo. "Tate Modern has always been a special place for me and I have had some of my greatest experiences encountering art there."

"Tate Modern is a leading art museum and a ground-breaking institution. I'm eager to continue the magnificent work being done, creating a unique and inspiring museum for a wide and diverse audience."

Writing in Norwegian on her Instagram page, Hindsbo added that, "Initially, I'd thought that I would try something completely different from working with art museums, at least for a while. But when this opportunity presented itself, I had to take it."

Maria Balshaw, director of Tate, said: "I'm thrilled to welcome Karin as director of Tate Modern. The success of the new National Museum in Oslo – delivered in the midst of a global pandemic – is a testament to her skill as a leader. Her nuanced and diverse approach to expressing national and transnational artistic ecologies chimes with Tate Modern's ethos brilliantly."

Karin Hindsbo will step down from her current role this summer and will begin as director of Tate Modern in September 2023. ●



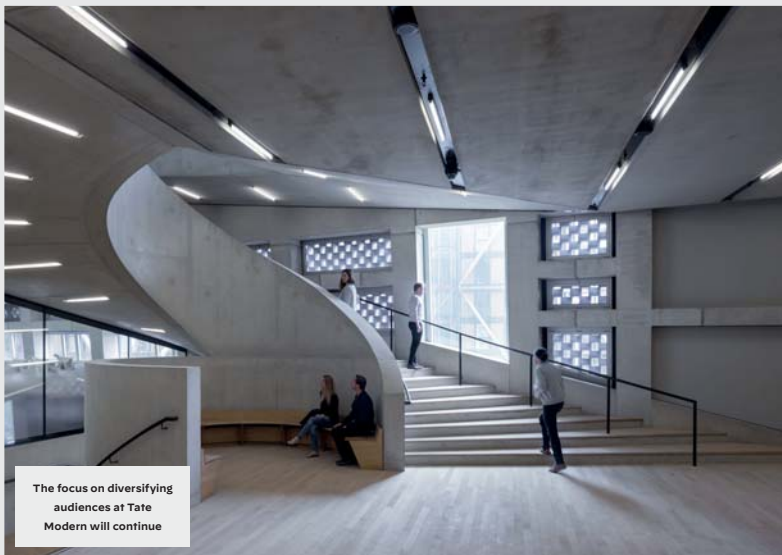
PHOTO: TATE PHOTOGRAPHY

Hindsbo will replace Frances Morris, who has been director since 2016

**“  
I have had some of my  
greatest experiences at  
Tate Modern. When this  
opportunity presented  
itself, I had to take it**



Tate Modern is one of the world's most popular museums



The focus on diversifying  
audiences at Tate  
Modern will continue

PHOTO: IWAN BAAN

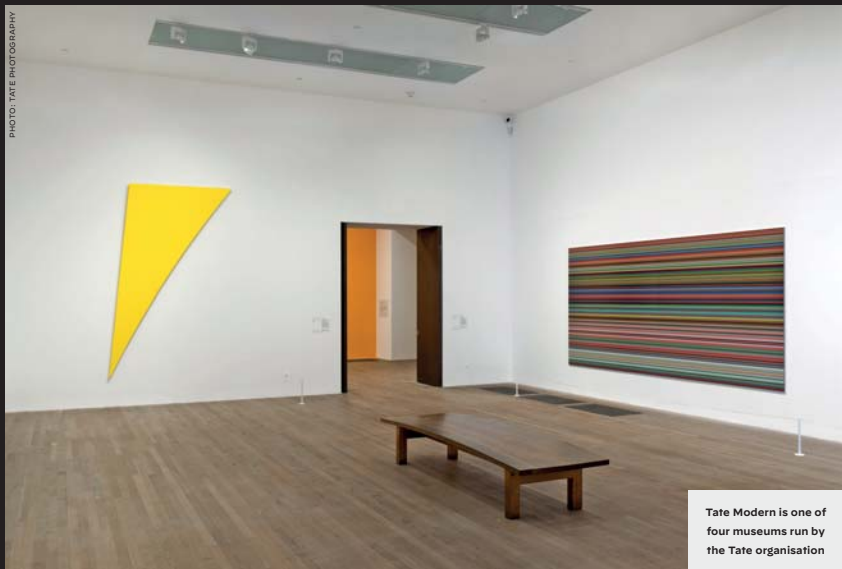


PHOTO: TATE PHOTOGRAPHY

Tate Modern is one of  
four museums run by  
the Tate organisation



“

Everything I've done in life has led  
up to this tremendous privilege

Sean Decatur, president, American Museum of Natural History

The new Richard Gilder  
Center for Science,  
Education and Innovation



Decatur took over  
as president of  
AMNH in April 2023



PHOTO: JENISENNINI/© AMNH

The Richard  
Gilder Center  
has been  
designed to  
spark curiosity



PHOTO: ALVARO KEDING/© AMNH

Sean Decatur has taken over as president of the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) in New York, as the museum launches its long-awaited Richard Gilder Center for Science, Education and Innovation.

Decatur succeeded Ellen Futter, who stepped down in March after 30 years as president.

The AMNH \$465m expansion opened in May, adding 230,000sq ft of space to the AMNH. Designed by Studio Gang, the building includes three floors of exhibits, with highlights including a 3,000sq ft butterfly vivarium featuring 80 species of live butterflies, a 5,000sq ft insectarium and a vertical collections facility featuring floor-to-ceiling exhibits representing every area of the museum's collections in vertebrate and invertebrate biology, paleontology, geology, anthropology, and archaeology.

It also features *Invisible Worlds*, a 360-degree immersive science-and-art experience, new classrooms and a four-storey civic space.

A biophysicist, Decatur was president of Kenyon College from July 2013.

"I feel as if everything I've done in life has led up to the tremendous privilege, responsibility, and opportunity of heading the

The new AMNH building was designed by Studio Gang

PHOTO: ALVARO KERING © AMNH



PHOTO: ALVARO KERING © AMNH



Decatur was previously a professor of biochemistry

PHOTO: ALVARO KERING © AMNH



► American Museum of Natural History," said Decatur. "This great institution is ready to take on the next crucial challenges in everything from scientific research to supporting public education, and to expanding access."

Speaking to *The New York Times*, Decatur said: "I've spent my career committed to access and opportunity for students, and also to an understanding of science. This feels like a natural evolution."

"There's a lot that translates from higher education to the cultural world, but there are also going to be a lot of new things to learn, both about this type of institution and about the museum in particular."

Decatur is the museum's first Black president, and follows Ellen Futter's role as AMNH's first female president. According to chairman of the museum's board Scott Bok, increasing diversity in leadership positions is "overdue among large institutions like ours."

"Look at the city that we live in," Bok said. "We clearly would like the museum to speak to more people."

With a background in academia, this is Decatur's first role leading a cultural institution; something he says could be an advantage.

"Maybe it's helpful that Sean Decatur isn't from a museum background when it comes to thinking about how we make the place great for the next 50 years," said Bok. ●

“

*I've spent my career committed to student opportunity and the understanding of science. This feels like a natural evolution*



PHOTO: ALVARO KEDING / © AMNH

The AMNH has  
committed to building  
a diverse community



“

## It's really important for the industry to be at the forefront of change

Håkon Lund, owner, Lund Gruppen



**N**orway's largest theme park, Kongeparken, is investing heavily in solar energy, as it looks to power the park's operations using more sustainable resources.

According to Lund Gruppen owner Håkon Lund, the park plans to source a third of its energy needs from solar power by the end of 2023.

As part of its energy strategy, Kongeparken has installed 1,100 solar panels on its land, which are being used to generate power for the park's operations, from popcorn stands and concessions to large rides.

The park's Zierer Wave Swinger carousel, for example, will be operated entirely on solar energy – the first of its kind in the world.

"We're very excited to unveil our Zierer Wave Swinger, which will operate on 100 per cent solar energy," Lund said, when they announced the project, adding that the park will also focus on promoting the need for more sustainable energy strategies.

"To raise awareness about the importance of green energy in tourism, Kongeparken will establish an information centre showcasing the industry's transition towards eco-friendly practices," he said.

"This initiative will inform and inspire our guests to support sustainable travel.

PHOTO: LUND GRUPPEN



Lund is the great grandson of Lund Gruppen's founder





Lund Gruppen's  
Skånes Djurpark  
Resort in Sweden

First opened in 1986, Kongeparken was acquired by the Lund family in 1997. A family attraction targeting children aged three to 12 years, the park has more than 50 rides.

Here we speak to Lund about lobbying government, supporting small businesses, and the unexpected effect the pandemic had on the company's approach to sustainability.

### Why did you decide to invest in solar power?

For a long time, electricity has been dirt cheap in Norway. Last year, electricity prices skyrocketed. Instead of waiting to see how this would affect us as a company, we said, Okay, if we're serious about our environmental footprint, we must also be serious about how we create energy. Even though we already have 100 per cent sustainable energy in Norway (from hydropower), we realised we could increase the production of sustainable energy and help the nation to export more green energy, and that would affect power prices for everyone.

Real estate is a big part of operating a theme park or attraction. We saw that we could activate our real estate in ways we hadn't done before, utilising spaces that wouldn't normally be used by putting solar panels on them. We didn't get any support from the Norwegian government – there were no subsidies ►

PHOTO: LUND GRUPPEN



Solar is used to generate power  
for the park's operations

1,100 solar panels  
have been installed  
on Kongeparken land

PHOTO: LUND GRUPPEN



- whatsoever – but as a family company that's been in business since 1895, we saw this as a long-term play. We now think our payback time will be around eight to 10 years for the solar panels we've installed.

### How is your approach to sustainability evolving?

I can divide our approach to sustainability into two; before COVID-19 and after COVID-19.

Before the pandemic it was all about recycling and energy consumption. During the pandemic, we came to the realisation that we could dramatically change our carbon footprint and create a win-win situation for us as owners and operators, for our guests and for the environment.

In Scandinavia we have very short seasons – we invest a lot for 100 days of operation. We've always worked on extending the season with Christmas and Halloween events, but during the pandemic it became evident that we had guests who wanted to spend longer in the park and experience more as part of their trip.

For us it became a new thing – encouraging guests to stay with us not for one day, but for two or three days. That has been a huge success – feedback has improved immensely and we've found that guests are happier staying longer, paying more and experiencing more. It helps reduce our environmental footprint – guests are just making one journey, rather than coming for multiple short trips. Also it really

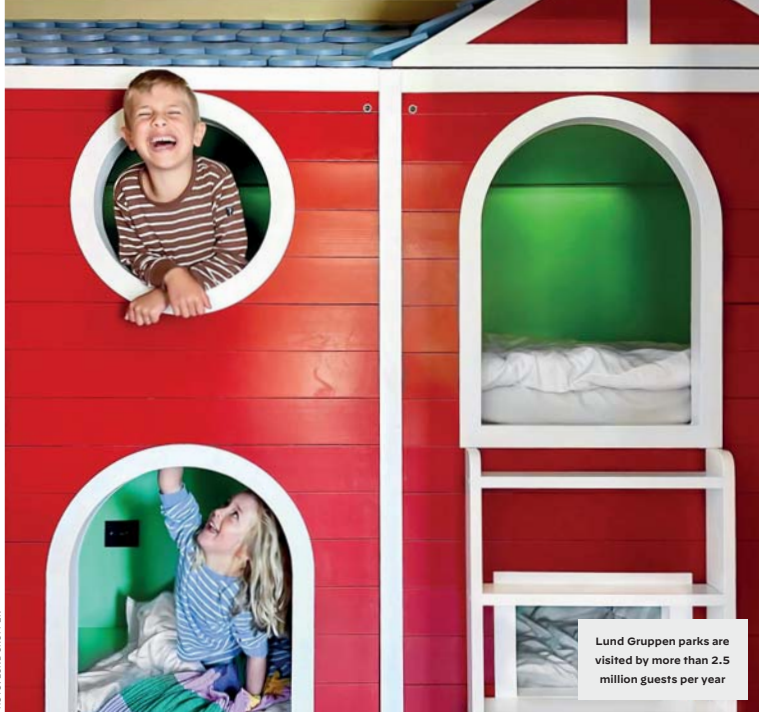


PHOTO: LUND GRUPPEN

Guests are encouraged  
to come for longer  
stays, says Lund



PHOTO: LUND GRUPPEN



Lund Gruppen parks are visited by more than 2.5 million guests per year

## “Encouraging guests to stay for longer and experience more has been a real success

helps us as operators – if guests spend longer with us, it means more optimal and longer use of our venue and all of our infrastructure – restaurants, staff and so on – that would otherwise have been used for just part of the day. That was a real awakening for us.

### What changes does the industry need to make?

It's really important for IAAPA and the industry to ensure we're not just reacting to new regulations, but that we're at the forefront of change.

A good example is the EU regulation around using disposable cups and containers. That's a huge challenge for us – attractions companies are big consumers of disposables. As an industry we need to help each other. Instead of scrambling to

see what new regulation means, the bigger parks need to take time to publish White Papers with best practices, and we need to work closely with the EU and the UN on our sustainability goals.

### Can you tell us about your lobbying work?

We're lobbying the Norwegian government for support on behalf of the tourism industry, particularly for small tourism attractions. Take solar power as an example. In Norway, tourist attractions are in full swing during the summer, at a time when we have sun for 24 hours a day. It's ironic that these companies have no support or grants for solar power, while farmers do. We'd like that to change.

We're looking at how we can support smaller operators to improve their sustainability. ●

US

## Universal unveils kids' business model for Frisco park

The planned Universal Studios theme park in Frisco, Texas, could open as early as 2026.

Currently in the planning stages, the park will be designed to be "more intimate" and sized for a regional audience – while also being more engaging for younger audiences.

According to Universal, the focus will be on family-friendly attractions, interactive and playful shows, character meet and greets, unique merchandise and food and beverage venues.

The as-yet-unnamed park is intended to have a completely different look, feel and scale from Universal's existing parks and will occupy an area within 97 acres of land purchased

by Universal. There are also plans for an adjacent themed hotel and room for expansion.

Page Thompson, president, new ventures at Universal Parks & Resorts, said: "Although smaller in size, it will still carry the same quality as Universal's other larger resort destinations.

"We're excited about the opportunity to partner with the city of Frisco and Mayor Cheney as we work to bring this innovative, new concept to life designed specifically for a younger generation of Universal fans.

"We think North Texas is the perfect place to launch this unique park for families given its growing popularity." More: [http://lei.sr/H9z6r\\_T](http://lei.sr/H9z6r_T)



PHOTO: UNIVERSAL STUDIOS

The as-yet-unnamed park will feature a new concept



PHOTO: UNLINKED/PAGE THOMPSON

“North Texas is the perfect place to launch this unique park”  
Page Thompson

SWEDEN

## Gröna Lund death coaster will remain closed this season

“

In the time leading up to the reopening, we have carried out extra checks on all of our attractions  
*Gröna Lund*

The Gröna Lund theme park in Stockholm, Sweden reopened its doors 10 days after a guest died and nine other were injured in an incident involving the park's Jetline rollercoaster.

One of the trains on Jetline – a ride which reaches a height of 30m (90ft) and a speed of 90km/h (55mph) – came partly off the rails, with three people reportedly falling out. One of the three who fell died, while two others were seriously injured.

In the aftermath, Gröna Lund officials said the Jetline ride would remain closed for the rest of the season.



PHOTO: GRÖNA LUND

Jetline was built by Zierer and BHS and modified in 1997

The rollercoaster and the circumstances around the incident are being investigated by the Swedish Accident Investigation Authority (Statens Haverikommission), which said the inquiry will take between 10 and 12 months. Following its reopening on 5 July, the park owner

said in a statement: "We are devastated by this terrible accident and it must never happen again. "For us, the safety of our visitors and staff is of the utmost importance." Jetline is a steel coaster which first opened at Gröna Lund in 1988. More: [http://lei.sr/j9N2H\\_T](http://lei.sr/j9N2H_T)



## SPAIN

### Atlético de Madrid plans huge urban surf park

Spanish capital Madrid is set to be the home of Europe's largest urban beach and surf destination.

A collaboration between football club, Atlético de Madrid, and two real estate investment companies, Stoneweg and Teras Capital, the facility will form part of the larger Sports City project, which is being developed by Atlético de Madrid on the land surrounding its Cívitas Metropolitano stadium.

Utilising Wavegarden technology, the as yet unnamed surf park has been in the works for a number of years.

It will feature a "sustainable and ecological design" and will create a "unique surfing

destination that brings the beach lifestyle and the sport of surfing to everyone".

The waves produced by the Wavegarden Cove technology are suitable for everyone, from beginners to experts, ranging in size and power from 0.5m to 2m.

Miguel de Lucas, the founding partner of Teras Capital, said: "After more than six years of hard work, we have finally found the perfect partners to make this dream a reality. We are excited to offer Madrid residents and visitors a beach experience without leaving the city."

"We thank Atlético for their trust and Wavegarden for their exceptional work."

More: [http://lei.sr/q6a7X\\_T](http://lei.sr/q6a7X_T)



PHOTO: WAVEGARDEN

The planned surf centre is part of the Sports City project



PHOTO LINKED/MIGUEL DE LUCAS

“

We have finally found the perfect partners to make this dream a reality

Miguel de Lucas

## GLOBAL

### Merlin launches new global conservation initiative

“

Initiatives include a breeding programme for endangered zebra sharks at Sea Life Sydney and a coral reef restoration project in Thailand

Merlin Entertainments has launched a new global conservation programme across its portfolio of Sea Life aquariums.

Merlin's network of more than 50 Sea Life sites will work in partnership with marine conservation charity, the Sea Life Trust, to deliver projects designed to make a positive impact on conservation in their local communities. The first phase will see seven projects, spanning across Asia, Australia, the USA and Europe, drive positive impact on marine and freshwater ecosystems, species, and



PHOTO: MERLIN ENTERTAINMENTS

The tiger shark conservation project at Sea Life Sydney

habitats across the globe. They include a breeding programme for endangered zebra sharks at Sea Life Sydney in Australia and a coral reef restoration project delivered in partnership with the team at Sea Life Bangkok in Thailand.

In Sydney, the Sea Life aquarium will play an integral

part in the rollout of the Star Project (Stegostoma tigrinum Augmentation and Recovery Project), a multi-national, collaborative initiative that aims to establish genetically diverse, self-sustaining populations of zebra sharks in marine protected areas of West Papua, Indonesia.

More: [http://lei.sr/2g6V6\\_T](http://lei.sr/2g6V6_T)



US

## Disney aiming for settlement in Magic Key lawsuit

Disney is looking to settle a lawsuit with Magic Key passholders over the alleged “deceptive practices” tied to the access programme.

Jenale Nielsen, a Magic Key passholder from Santa Clara County, California, filed a class-action lawsuit against Disneyland in Anaheim, alleging the park “misled and deceived” passholders by artificially limiting capacity and restricting reservations.

Court papers show that Nielsen’s claim is based on Disney advertising the Dream Key – which she had paid US\$1,399 for – as having “no block-out dates”.

This led to Nielsen believing she could visit the Anaheim theme park any day she

wanted. The pass required reservations, however, and Nielsen then discovered she couldn’t make a reservation for most of the days in November – with no weekend dates available all month.

Nielsen then filed the lawsuit with Orange County Superior Court after she and other Magic Key holders claimed to have found evidence that single-day ticket purchasers were favoured over them.

To avoid the class-action to progress further, Disney has now reached a preliminary settlement, which is expected to be concluded on 31 August.

Disney declined to comment on the ongoing case. More: [http://lei.sr/B7q4s\\_T](http://lei.sr/B7q4s_T)



PHOTO: DISNEYLAND RESORT/DISNEY

“

Court papers show that Nielsen’s claim is based on Disney advertising the Dream Key – which she had paid US\$1,399 for – as having “no block-out dates”

UK

## Therme Manchester’s new design submitted for approval

“

The new design features separate connected structures that are immersed and enveloped in a natural landscape, with a revised location for car parking and enhanced connectivity with public transport

Following a public consultation, Therme Manchester, the UK’s first city-based wellbeing resort, has submitted a refined new design for approval to Trafford Council.

The concept for the project has transitioned, from primarily a single building with zones and an undulating roofline, to a flowing pavilion-style concept and will contain wellness, health and fitness, a waterpark and attractions as well as arts installations and a hydroponic farm.

This new design features separate connected structures that are immersed



PHOTO: THERME GROUP

A rendering of the proposed new design

and enveloped in a natural landscape, with a revised location for car parking and enhanced connectivity with public transport.

At the heart of the new design lies an urban wellbeing garden, inspired by an English meadow.

The public consultation has shown overwhelming

support with 91 per cent of the responses towards the new design agreeing that it is even more impressive than the original, with the carbon footprint being an important consideration.

Therme Manchester has enlisted Fletcher Priest as collaborating architects.

More: [http://lei.sr/2d2G4\\_T](http://lei.sr/2d2G4_T)

UK

## Continuum reveals reimagined Loch Ness attraction

Continuum Attractions, which acquired the Loch Ness Centre in Scotland in January 2023, has officially reopened its doors following a £1.5m refurbishment.

The visitor attraction is located in Drumnadrochit near Inverness.

The 12-week redevelopment has reinvigorated the centre, which will now focus on telling the globally renowned story behind the legend of Loch Ness, exploring the myths – alongside the scientific research – that has turned ‘Nessie’ into one of Scotland’s most famous brand icons.

The one-hour experience offers guests the chance to immerse themselves in

seven interpretations of the legend and explores the real stories of Loch Ness.

“We’ve invested in a full upgrade to enhance the visitor experience, allowing people to explore the legend and myths of Loch Ness through immersive tours and also via trips aboard the attraction’s famous research vessel, Deepscan,” said CEO, Juliana Delaney.

“Guests will walk through 500 million years of history to explore the myths and examine the scientific research surrounding the monster. They can hear real people’s stories, discover artefacts, and hear debate on the existence of Nessie.”

More: [http://lei.sr/C4A8k\\_T](http://lei.sr/C4A8k_T)



Guests can immerse themselves in the story of Nessie

PHOTO: CONTINUUM



“

Guests will walk through 500 million years of history

Juliana Delaney

UKRAINE

## Ukrainian war museum wins Museums + Heritage Award

PHOTO: MUSEUMS AND HERITAGE AWARDS



“

This is the world’s first artefact-based museum exhibition on the full-scale war

Dr Yuri Savchuk

The winners of this year’s Museums + Heritage Awards have been revealed, with the National Museum of the History of Ukraine in the Second World War receiving a Judges’ Special Recognition Award for “documenting history in real-time”.

Since Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, the museum has collected more than 7,000 war artefacts, which have become the basis for exhibitions in Ukraine and abroad.

With the help of authentic materials and photos, the museum is charting the

ongoing war as it happens.

The museum’s director Dr Yuri Savchuk, who attended the ceremony and collected the award said: “In May last year, we launched a new exhibition in Kyiv titled ‘Ukraine – Crucifixion’.

“This is the world’s first artefact-based museum exhibition on

the full-scale war.

“In total, since the Russian attack and invasion began, we have organised 25 exhibitions featuring original artefacts and photos, in 14 countries around the world.

“This is our way to convey the reality of war to the world.”

More: [http://lei.sr/j3G9w\\_T](http://lei.sr/j3G9w_T)



The museum is located in Kyiv, Ukraine’s capital

PHOTO: THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE HISTORY OF UKRAINE / WWW.NAMUSEUM.KYIV.UA

## UK

### Resort and waterpark planned for Tashkent, Uzbekistan

A world-scale, integrated resort is being planned for Tashkent, Uzbekistan's capital city.

Featuring unique water attractions, a themed hotel, immersive dining, and live entertainment, the development will be located close to urban regeneration district, New Tashkent City and is being designed with both local and international audiences in mind.

US-based design firm Legacy Entertainment has been appointed to design and build the resort's waterpark, which will anchor the project. No name has yet been announced for the attraction.

A formal ceremony announcing the

development was held in Tashkent in July 2023.

Eric Carnagey, Legacy Entertainment's co-founder and chief business development officer, said: "World-class entertainment projects such as this can be transformational for a community."

"Once complete, this new resort will supercharge tourism, create hundreds or even thousands of jobs, and enrich the lives of the people of Tashkent and Uzbekistan, as well as Central Asia."

New Tashkent City will see parts of the old city demolished to house more than two million people over 20,000ha. The city will be designed as a 'twin'



PHOTO: LEGACY ENTERTAINMENT

Legacy Entertainment's Eric Carnagey (right) signing the deal

to the existing capital to 'revitalise' the region.

On March 18, the president of Uzbekistan formally launched the first phase of construction which will house a million people.

More: [http://lei.sr/t8A2T\\_T](http://lei.sr/t8A2T_T)



Legacy Entertainment has been appointed to design and build the resort's waterpark

## US

### Plans revealed for US\$2bn Oklahoma theme park



PHOTO: AMERICAN HEARTLAND / MANSION ENTERTAINMENT GROUP



We look forward to bringing unforgettable generational experiences to Oklahoma  
*Larry Wilhite*

Plans have been tabled for a huge, US\$2bn theme park and entertainment destination development in northeast Oklahoma, US.

The development is set to be built in phases, starting with a large-scale caravan/RV park with cabins scheduled to open as part of phase one in spring 2025.

The main development called American Heartland Theme Park and Resort, will then follow in 2026.

Spreading across 1,000 acres, the resort will be located close to Route 66, the famous highway which runs across the US.



PHOTO: AMERICAN HEARTLAND / MANSION ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

The 125-acre theme park will feature six distinct lands

It will include the 125-acre theme park, which is comparable to the size of Magic Kingdom Theme Park. Featuring an Americana-themed environment with a range of rides, live shows, family attractions and waterways, as well as restaurants and a 300-room hotel, the park is set to offer

a "unique visitor experience rivaling the world's top resort destinations".

American Heartland CEO and president of Mansion Entertainment Group, Larry Wilhite, said: "We look forward to bringing unforgettable generational experiences to Oklahoma."

More: [http://lei.sr/H3R5E\\_T](http://lei.sr/H3R5E_T)

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## UK

### Eden Project Dundee will celebrate myth-makers

The Eden Project has revealed new visuals for its planned Dundee project in the city's East Docks, with architecture by Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios.

The images show plans for an attraction which has been inspired by the Nine Incorporated Trades of Dundee – a group formed in the 16th century to bring professions from bakers to tailors into a single organisation with more bargaining power.

Eden Project Dundee will be themed around nine new Guilds – of Healers, Growers, Navigators, Myth-Makers, Noticers, Alchemists, Celebrators, Menders and Re-Sourcerors. Each Guild will

have its Guild Hall on the main Eden Project Dundee site.

The project will combine exhibits, performance, learning, play, immersive experiences, world class horticulture, live music, art and food, beverage and retail spaces, all integrated as essential parts of the overall experience.

Described as a "powerful symbol of regeneration", the Dundee site has been designed to echo the project's home in Cornwall which is located in a former clay quarry.

The proposed site – the former Dundee Gasworks – is located close to the Dundee waterfront on the bank of the River Tay and is



PHOTO: EDEN PROJECT

less than a mile away from the Kengo Kuma-designed V&A Dundee and the city's main train station.

Eden says the project will contribute £27m per year to the regional economy.

More: [http://lei.sr/x2E2g\\_T](http://lei.sr/x2E2g_T)

“

The project will contribute £27m per year to the regional economy

## UK

### Visitor centre for historic Welsh reservoirs

“

A brand new two-storey visitor centre has been built, offering views across the reservoirs and a cafe/restaurant featuring local produce

Two of Cardiff's iconic reservoirs have reopened to the public as a hub for health and wellbeing.

Lisvane and Llanishen Reservoirs reopened on 28 July, allowing open water swimming to take place for the first time.

In addition, the introduction of a wide-ranging watersports programme includes canoeing, stand up paddleboarding and kayaking.

Visitors can also enjoy 5km of circular paths around the reservoirs, a woodland Story trail and a bird hide.

A brand new two-storey visitor centre has been



PHOTO: WELSH WATER

built, offering views across the reservoirs and a cafe/restaurant featuring local produce. The café will be transformed into a 'restaurant by night' in September 2023, when an evening menu will be available three evenings a week. The project is driven by Welsh Water, which acquired the reservoirs in 2016.

Julie Morgan, Member of the Senedd for Cardiff North, said: "The new facilities that have been created by Welsh Water will create a hub for health, wellbeing and nature in the heart of Cardiff North."

Built in the late 19th century, the reservoirs are a Victorian landmark covering 110 acres.

More: [http://lei.sr/c9P4D\\_T](http://lei.sr/c9P4D_T)





UNFORGETTABLE ENJOYMENT  
- IN THEME PARKS.

## UK

### English attractions thriving on international tourism

VisitEngland has published its Annual Survey of Visits to Visitor Attractions for 2022, showing that while visitation numbers across England continued to recover through 2022, they were still down on pre-COVID levels.

Visits to the group of 1,519 attractions surveyed increased by 42 per cent last year compared to 2021 – 35 per cent down on 2019 on average.

The VisitEngland survey is not comprehensive, due to the limited nature of the sample, which is less representative of private sector attractions, however, the numbers contribute to the wider understanding of the sector. Researchers

make it clear that the sample can vary each year, so year-on-year comparisons provide indicative trends, rather than exact like-for-like comparisons.

The survey results highlight the impact of growing international travel, with overseas visits up 280 per cent when compared to 2021.

Meanwhile, domestic visits saw an increase of 24 per cent.

London experienced the biggest regional increase, driven by the return of international visitors, with numbers up 141 per cent, while other regions in England saw average growth of between 16 and 42 per cent.

More: [http://lei.sr/E6X8r\\_T](http://lei.sr/E6X8r_T)



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/PETROMALENOV

The Tower of London is the most visited attraction in England

“

The survey results highlight the impact of growing international travel, with overseas visits up 280 per cent when compared to 2021

## US

### Meow Wolf opens The Real Unreal psychedelic experience



PHOTO: LINKEDIN.COM/DALE SHEEHAN

“

The Real Unreal's narrative journey takes a leap through the spaces between universes

Dale Sheehan

Meow Wolf has opened its fourth permanent exhibition in Grapevine, North Texas.

Called The Real Unreal, the immersive art attraction is being described as a “psychedelic playground for adults and kids alike”.

Located at the Grapevine Mills mall, the attraction was created by Meow Wolf's in-house team of artists in partnership with 38 Texas-based artists.

After entering what seems like a normal house, guests are transported into a ‘realm of creativity’ in which they can explore intricate and otherworldly landscapes.



PHOTO: MEOW WOLF/PATRICIA RUSSELL

Guests enter what at first seems like a normal house

Speaking to the media, Dale Sheehan, senior VP and executive creative director at Meow Wolf, said: “We’re thrilled to reveal these first looks of our newest exhibition.

“It’s been in the works for four years and is an awe-inspiring self-guided experience for visitors to get

lost in. The Real Unreal's narrative journey takes a leap through the spaces between universes, and is the first major step in connecting the Meow Wolf story universe.”

Meow Wolf is an arts and entertainment company famed for creating large-scale immersive art installations.

More: [http://lei.sr/E4E8n\\_T](http://lei.sr/E4E8n_T)



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## AUSTRALIA

### Cairns Aquarium in Australia put up for sale

Cairns Aquarium in Australia has been put up for sale, as the visitor attraction's directors seek fresh investment.

Commercial real estate agents, Colliers, have been appointed to manage the sale process, which the directors hope will attract "global interest".

The three-storey, 10,000sq m (107,600sq ft) aquarium is home to more than 5,000 animals.

First opened in 2017 by co-developers Daniel Leipnik and Andrew Preston at an estimated cost of AU\$50m, the aquarium received substantial government funding and support throughout its development.

Designed by Australia-based Peddle Thorp Architects, in association with Ellick & Partners, the building's exterior is made up of a series of 'tectonic plates' symbolising the movement of the earth and subsequent creation of the Great Barrier Reef and Northern Queensland's rainforest covered mountains and hills.

Colliers said: "After six years in operation, with increasing profitable revenues and vigorous growth, the founding partners of Cairns Aquarium are seeking expressions of interest to become invested in this proven and successful business opportunity.

More: [http://lei.sr/C4U7Z\\_T](http://lei.sr/C4U7Z_T)



PHOTO: CAIRNS AQUARIUM

The aquarium has welcomed more than 1 million guests

“

After six years in operation, with increasing revenues and vigorous growth, the partners of Cairns Aquarium are seeking expressions of interest

Colliers

## GLOBAL

### Mountain tourism accounts for 16 per cent of tourist arrivals

PHOTO: UN/UNISCEB.ORG



“

The event was a rare opportunity to learn from industry leaders

Michael Shelton

Mountain tourism represents between nine and 16 per cent of all international tourist arrivals worldwide as people head for sport, health and wellbeing travel.

The figure comes from a report, by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), which shows that, in 2019 alone, there were between 195 and 375 million 'mountain tourists'.

The report, *Understanding and Quantifying Mountain Tourism*, is the first of its kind.

Mountains are home to around 1.1 billion people, some of them among the poorest areas in the world.



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/NEIRON PHOTO

There were up to 375 million 'mountain tourists' in 2019

Mountain tourism has the potential to boost the incomes of these local communities and help preserve their natural resources and culture – but the scarcity of data has made it difficult to assess the economic, social and environmental impacts of this important segment. According to UNWTO, measuring

the volume of visitors to mountains represents the first "vital step" towards unlocking the potential of the sector.

UNWTO secretary-general, Zurab Pololikashvili, said: "With the right data, we can better support planning and improve knowledge of visitor patterns."

More: [http://lei.sr/G417S\\_T](http://lei.sr/G417S_T)





Andersen joined  
Liseberg in 2011 when  
he was appointed CEO

PHOTO: LISEBERG AB/STEFAN KARLBERG



PHOTO: ANNA-LENA LUNDQVIST



# ANDREAS ANDERSEN



Liseberg first opened in Gothenburg in 1923 and was originally meant to be a temporary attraction

As Sweden's iconic theme park celebrates its centenary, Magali Robathan speaks to its CEO about Liseberg's brand new hotel and how plans are shaping up for its major new waterpark



PHOTO: CREATIVE COMMONS



n 8 May, 1923, Liseberg opened as part of the Gothenburg Exhibition, celebrating the Swedish city's 300th anniversary. Originally meant

to be a temporary attraction for the duration of the Exhibition, the amusement park – which featured pavilions and a number of rides including a carousel and a wooden 980-ft-long funicular – was such a success that it was kept open. In 1924, the City of Gothenburg bought the park, and it is now one of the City's municipal companies, meaning it effectively belongs to the people of Gothenburg.

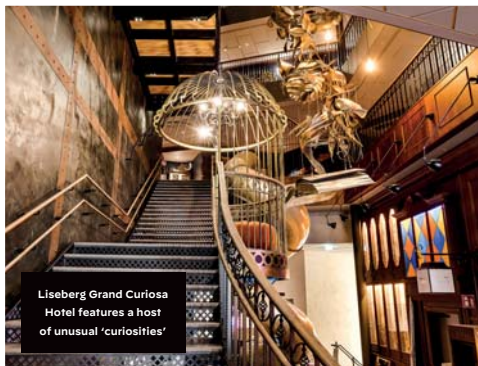
Part theme park, part fairground, part pleasure gardens, Liseberg is one of Europe's leading attractions, with more than three million guests per year. A century on from its launch, it has

evolved into a modern park featuring the latest rides and a brand new hotel, but it retains a number of historical features – including the 1923 carousel, which spins next to the restaurant in the new Liseberg Grand Curiosa Hotel – and CEO Andreas Andersen believes that's a big part of what makes it so successful.

"Liseberg's historical foundations make it special," says Andersen. "The park has evolved in a really interesting way – there are all these layers that you can sense when you visit.

"What makes it unique? It's the history, the downtown location; the fact that it's still a green park. We have 300-year-old trees here, and buildings from the 18th and 19th centuries. It's also very Swedish – the park is a reflection of Gothenburg and of Swedish culture.

"It's a unique place," he says.



Liseberg Grand Curiosa Hotel features a host of unusual 'curiosities'

## ► A YEAR OF CELEBRATIONS

I speak to Andersen midway through a year of celebrations, which sees the park host a range of parties, concerts and events.

Liseberg's board have invested heavily in a number of launches to celebrate the park's centenary. Highlights include the opening of Luna Park at the end of last year – a new themed area inspired by amusement parks of the past – the launch of a major new ride in the form of the Luna family 'boomerang' rollercoaster in April 2023 and the completion of the 457-room Liseberg Grand Curiosa Hotel in May 2023. Next year will see the completion of the £110m Oceana waterpark, part of a plan to extend the season of the park and develop a less weather-dependent business model.

"We've had a really good season so far," says Andersen. "We have a full programme celebrating the centennial, with events in the park and a new hotel. We've had great weather, and that's helped us. It's a big year."

## LISEBERG GRAND CURIOSA HOTEL

In 2013, the board bought a parcel of land south of the park and began development of a project that would become the Liseberg Grand Curiosa Hotel and the Oceana waterpark.

"It's a very data driven project," explains Andersen. "We did a lot of research into how we should develop. By 2015/2016 it was clear that a hotel/waterpark combo would be the best option for Liseberg."



Liseberg asked LDP to provide a feasibility study for the hotel and waterpark



PHOTO: LISEBERG AB QUARRY FOLD STUDIOS



Swedish architects  
Wingårds designed  
the Grand Curiosa Hotel

## “ *It's a theme park hotel crossed with a design or boutique hotel. It's rather chic*”

“We needed the hotel to drive attendance and increase our season length, and we needed the waterpark to feed into the hotel, especially during the off season.”

Once the financial modelling was done, the team could begin working on the concept for the hotel. With its central location, Liseberg has always been a park deeply rooted in its surroundings, and the team decided to look to the history of Gothenburg for inspiration.

“The town was founded on trade with China – the Swedish East India Company here in Gothenburg was one of the primary economic engines for Sweden for many years,” says Andersen.

“We picked from that history and added our own layer in the form of a storyline about a couple – a rich merchant who lives in Gothenburg and his crazy wife who brings back curiosities from her travels. The idea is that the hotel showcases her collection and the waterpark is her garden.”

The nine-storey hotel, which launched in May, is jam packed full of ‘curiosities’, from a giant birdcage and hanging suitcases to sculptures of mythical beasts. Each floor is themed differently and it features a restaurant, café/bar, rooftop bar and bistro and a small speakeasy-style bar.

One of the hotel's standout features for young visitors has to be the spiral slide that guests can use to travel from the second floor to the lobby – when I told my 12-year-old daughter about it, she thought it was the coolest thing she had ever heard.

While the hotel is clearly designed with families in mind, its design aesthetic feels perhaps more sophisticated than most theme park hotels. That was very deliberate, says Andersen.

“The funky thing is that it's a family hotel – all rooms have at least five beds – but it's also rather chic. It's a theme park hotel merging with a design or boutique hotel. That combination works very well.” ▶

PHOTO: LISEBERG/PETER FALSTROM



## ► THE OCEANA WATERPARK

"This project is also very data driven," says Andersen. "With a waterpark, you really have to make it right from the beginning. When you build a theme park, you can always add new rides or areas, because you're not limited by the building, but here, if you make a mistake, you have to live with it."

Planned for completion in spring 2024, Oceana is an indoor waterpark located next door to the Grand Curiosa Hotel. It can be accessed directly from the hotel, or via its own separate entrance, and will feature waterslides by Whitewater, sandy beaches, a family water play area, a wave pool and F&B.

"From a planning perspective, the waterpark has been extremely complicated to design," says Andersen. "We've got help from great consultants – WTI, Whitewater and the architects Wingårdhs, who also designed the hotel."

"It's all about making sure guest flow and capacity works, there's enough to do, enough seating and you can feed people – that's been quite challenging. I think we've done a good job of thinking everything through."

Andersen and the team travelled around the world visiting waterparks for inspiration. Favourites included Rulantica at Europa-Park and some of the newer Center Parcs, he says.

"Our waterpark will be a bit of a funky hybrid – like a themed waterpark meets a lush greenhouse meets a boutique spa."

"We tried to work with natural materials and lots of daylight, and we have a very extensive greenery programme. That was very important to us – Liseberg is in a green park in the middle of the city. Our waterpark has to be green too; it's in line with our DNA."

## A CAREER BUILT ON A LOVE OF THEME PARKS

Andersen has worked for the attractions industry since 2002, but he originally trained as a lawyer, before starting his career working in IT for the Danish Ministry of Finance. In his spare time, he travelled around the world visiting theme parks.

"I was one of those crazy theme park enthusiasts," he laughs. "That love of the industry has been a thread throughout my career, but what's interesting is that it has changed. In the early days, I was fascinated by the glitz and glamour of it all – the rides, the events, the music, the atmosphere."

"When you peep behind the curtain though, you find out that there's structure behind the magic. Today it's not the rollercoasters that drives me, it's the people."

In 2002, Andersen was appointed vice president of Tivoli in Copenhagen, where



PHOTO: LISEBERG, LISEBERG, ABRAHAM FOLDSTAD

Liseberg's Luna Park area features several new rides including the Tempus by Zamperla





The team travelled the world looking for inspiration for the Oceana waterpark



he worked until 2008, when he became IAAPA's executive director for Europe.

"Those were probably the three most rewarding years of my career," he says. "I was hired to open IAAPA's first real office outside of North America. When I arrived in Brussels it was me, a pen and mailbox address.

"Together with Karen Staley – and later, with [current IAAPA president and CEO] Jakob Wahl – we worked non stop.

"We worked from cars, planes, parking lots... wherever we were. When I got the job, IAAPA Europe had 350 members. Working with such a small product and community took a lot of entrepreneurial spirit. It was extremely intense and so much fun."

Today IAAPA Europe has 2,000 members and a lively programme of activities that includes the annual IAAPA Expo Europe show.

"I can't claim credit for all of that, but I'm really proud of the foundation we built and how it developed," says Andersen.

In 2011, Andersen started a new chapter of his career when he was appointed CEO for Liseberg. It was the start of a period which saw him help build the company with new rides and launches. It also saw him leave Liseberg for Tivoli – in 2019 – before realising very quickly that he wasn't ready to move on at all. "This is a job that's quite difficult to leave!" he laughs.

While his success as CEO is most frequently measured in terms of the company's financial results and new launches and projects, Andersen says those only tell part of the story.

"I'm very proud of our financial results and everything we've built, but I'm prouder still of the organisational journey we've been on," he says.

"One of the challenges you have when you operate an established organisation like Liseberg is that the company culture can feel quite set in stone. A strong culture is great when it's positive and dynamic and guest-orientated, but that wasn't quite the case when I arrived. We've been on a journey to redefine the culture as more agile, guest-

► focused and forward-thinking. Oh, and kinder too – it's a very kind and accepting culture here."

When I ask Andersen how this was achieved, he says the answer is simple: "If you hire – and retain – the right people, everything else follows."

## HIGHS AND LOWS

What have been the highs and lows over the past 12 years, I ask Andersen?

"The pandemic has been the most challenging period we've faced," he says. "Sweden's strategy was to keep everything open except for large music festivals, large concert venues and amusement parks. We were closed for 17 months, until June 2021, and even then we opened with such harsh restrictions we could barely make ends meet.

"When you have a big company that's used to being in motion and that halts for so long, there are consequences. We lost about €170m in turnover and €60m in lost profit, and that obviously has consequences for our ability to invest in the future. We refinanced very quickly, so we could make it work, but it was tough, and the consequences for the organisation were quite large – we lost about 30 per cent of our employees. You also lose confidence as a company when you're not operating for that long.

"When I look back, I'm not sure how we made it through, but we did. Hope is the last thing that dies, and that kept us going, but there were times when it was very, very stressful."

## NOT READY TO LEAVE

In 2019, Andersen shocked the industry by leaving Liseberg for a job as executive vice president of Tivoli in Copenhagen. After just

PHOTO: LISEBERG AB/STEFAN KARLBERG



Because of its varied offer, Liseberg has visitors of all ages

“

**While the day-to-day logistics were easier in Copenhagen, I'd left my heart in Gothenburg**

The Helix rollercoaster by Mack Rides at Liseberg



PHOTO: LISEBERG AB/STEFAN KARLBERG

## LISEBERG'S LATEST RIDES

In 2022, Liseberg launched Luna Park, a new themed area that pays tribute to the history of amusement parks. Situated on top of Liseberg Hill, Luna Park features two new rides – Turbo, an interactive motorcycle ride manufactured by Technical Park, and Tempus, a family spinning tower ride manufactured by Zamperla.

Earlier this year, Liseberg launched its latest ride, Luna, within the Luna Park area.

Manufactured by Vekoma, Luna is a 'boomerang' rollercoaster that carries guests forwards then backwards over a 225m-long track at speeds of up to 68kph. Promising to 'fly guests to the moon' Luna is 33.5m high –reportedly the 'tallest and fastest ride of its kind in the world'.

a few months, he surprised everyone again when he announced his return to Liseberg.

"There were many good reasons for my decision to go to Tivoli," says Andersen. "My family lives in Denmark, my mother isn't getting any younger, my daughter is a teenager now. I felt it was time for me to move home.

"It very quickly became apparent to me, though, that while the day-to-day logistics of my life were much easier in Copenhagen, I'd left my heart in Gothenburg. I realised that I wasn't finished at Liseberg.

"I learned a lot from that little adventure. It wasn't fun, but I now know I am where I'm meant to be. And I'm very glad I made that decision – I returned to Liseberg in the autumn of 2019, just a few months before the pandemic hit. Although it was tough, it was lucky I was here and not a new CEO. They wouldn't have stood a chance."

Enough about the challenges, what have the highlights been for Andersen during his time with Liseberg?

There have been many, Andersen tells me, including the launch of the Helix rollercoaster in 2014 – "one of the best rides we've ever built" – and the opening of the Liseberg Grand Hotel Curiosa this year. The real high points though, he says, can often be found in the quieter moments.

"It's the summer's evenings, when I'm duty manager, and I'm walking through the park. The guests are leaving, we're turning down the lights and it's been a good day. That's what I call a 'pinch pinch' moment – when I just go, I can't believe I'm part of this. This is the best job in the world." ●

Turbo launched last year as part of the new Luna Park area at Liseberg



PHOTO: LISEBERG, LISEBERG, AB/ALVARO FOLIO STUDIOS

“

*It's very special  
for us to be able to  
reclaim this space*

# AND STILL WE RISE

After 20 years of planning, the International African American Museum has launched, reclaiming one of the US's most sacred and traumatic historic spaces. President Tonya Matthews tells Magali Robathan why the launch is so significant





The museum is on the site of Gadsden's Wharf where enslaved Africans entered the US

**G**adsden's Wharf, in Charleston, South Carolina, was one of America's most prolific slave trading ports. It is estimated that as many as 45 per cent

of enslaved Africans entered the US via Gadsden's Wharf, and it has been estimated that up to 80 per cent of African Americans can trace their ancestry to the enslaved men and women that passed through the port.

Now, after 20 years of planning, the International African American Museum (IAAM) has opened on the site with a mission to reclaim the space. Opened on 27 June, IAAM tells the 'unvarnished story of the international African American experience via storytelling, interactive exhibitions, artefacts and the power of place'.

"When I'm standing in our African American Memorial Garden on the edge of Gadsden's Wharf, looking at the port of entry, I feel joyful," Tonya Matthews, president of the IAAM, tells me.

"When I stand in that space and the waters are rising, I am joyful because I know that someone survived out of that place, and had a baby, who had a baby, who had a baby, who had a baby, who had me. Now I'm here, and I'm in a position to help reclaim this site.

"Not everyone will feel that way, but for me it's a place of joy, because I feel like I'm doing something that was dreamed and hoped for there."

The International African American Museum explores the African American experience and its impact across the world via nine permanent galleries and one special exhibitions gallery – a 3,000sq ft space dedicated to temporary, rotating exhibits.

The museum is currently showcasing a travelling exhibition from the Smithsonian entitled *Men of Change: Power. Triumph. Truth*.

The IAAM building has been designed by architecture firms Pei Cobb Freed & Partners and Moody Nolan. The exhibition designers were Ralph Appelbaum Associates.

The single storey structure is held 13 feet above the ground by 18 columns. The African Ancestors Memorial Garden – designed by landscape designer Walter Hood – features the Tide Tribute, a water feature that depicts engraved outlines of enslaved people packed together on a slave ship. Based on the 18th century Brooks map, the outlines are covered and revealed as the tide changes, emphasising the 'fluidity of the past, present and future'.



*Here, Tonya Matthews shares the highs and lows of the journey to opening:*

### Can you sum up what the International African American Museum is about?

The mission of the museum is to honour the untold stories of the African American journey at one of our nation's most sacred sites.

When we talk about honouring the African American journey, it's important to honour it in its full context. We talk about origin stories at IAAM, about the places and communities that we came from on the continent of Africa, and we also talk about our connection to the African diaspora, modern and historical – the similarities, challenges and cultural connections that still remain.

Within the museum, we talk through what we call truth, trauma and triumph – we've got all of it woven together. We do that through art, historical exhibitions and multi-media interactions.

### Why is the site so significant?

The museum has been constructed at the former site of Gadsden's Wharf, our nation's most prolific transatlantic slave trading port. When it was built in the 1800s, it was the largest port complex in North America and became the primary entry way for enslaved Africans coming to the US on the transatlantic slave trade. It's very special for us to be able to reclaim that space.



PHOTO: IAAM

**Dr Tonya Matthews was appointed president and CEO of IAAM in 2021**

A lot about our design is intentional. When I say we're at Gadsden's Wharf, we're literally there, right on the water, facing the Atlantic Ocean. Charleston Port is still an active port, with big boats coming through. To be able to watch that is ironic, but also grounding and freeing. The theme of water and being in conversation with the ocean as a point of both separation and connection is something that also lends itself to the museum.

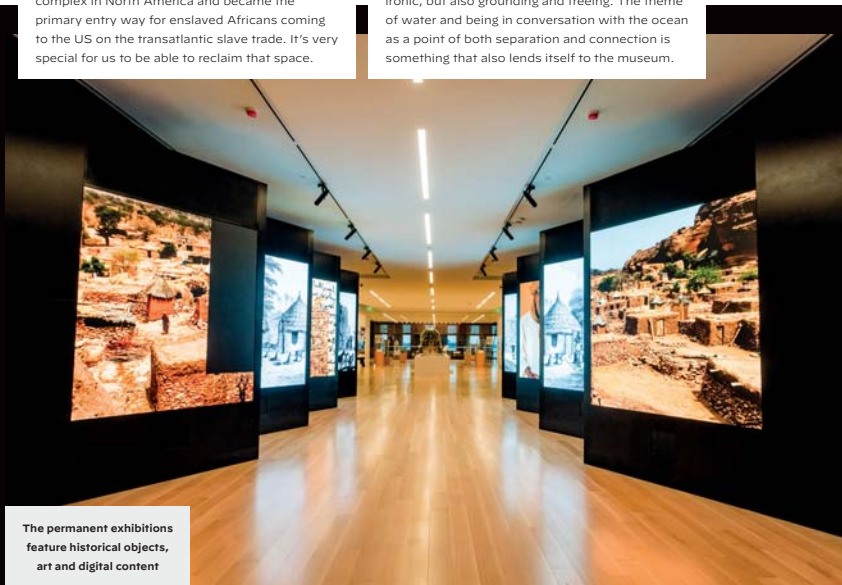


PHOTO: GREG NOIRE

The permanent exhibitions feature historical objects, art and digital content



The building was designed  
by Pei Cobb Freed &  
Partners and Moody Nolan

### What have been the biggest challenges of getting to this point?

Some of the biggest challenges were political buy in – convincing the community that this was possible. We're in the United States, in the Deep South, in South Carolina – we don't talk about these stories in public. The idea that we could build something extraordinary that told these kinds of stories in the way that folks would want to listen was kind of beyond belief 20 years ago.

In our earliest days, this began with the idea of creating a museum that told the story of slavery and enslavement, but as the conversation broadened and more people came to the table, it was clear that that wasn't enough. We didn't want to just tell the middle of the African American story – we wanted to include the past and the present. Curating those ideas has been quite a journey.

We've had some technical construction and supply chain issues, but those physical things are in the 'this too shall pass' category. There are blueprints for how to build a building, but there are no blueprints for how to build a

culture, bring the community to the table and how to steward and shepherd stories that are not your own. Those have been some of the most challenging things we've dealt with.

### Your staff have all had to undergo cultural competency and empathy training so that they can support visitors to the museum. Why is this important?

When we say we want to be able to welcome all folks, all ages, all backgrounds, all knowledge bases and cultures to the museum, we have a responsibility to be ready for when people answer the call.

We want to be prepared to welcome visitors no matter where they're coming from, to recognise, invite and welcome people with different ranges of emotions and experiences. It was important to be intentional about that level of preparation.

Some of our first training was internal; about trying to figure out where our own triggers were and how 'culturally competent' we were. The next stage was book club. There's something special about reading a book together –



*There are blueprints for how to build a building, but there are no blueprints for how to steward and shepherd stories that are not your own and bring the community to the table*

learning the art of conversation and listening is essential as we're welcoming visitors.

As we continue, we'll be leaning into some of our own trainings, and we're considering some partner trainers.

**Can you pick out one of your favourite areas of the museum?**

One of the spaces that's particularly meaningful to me is in the African Ancestors Memorial Garden outside the museum. When we were doing the pre-archaeological dig for the space, we found archaeological foundations of a storage house on the wharf. Historic records show that on a particularly cold winter, 700 enslaved individuals died while being held in storage, and it turns out that our building was one of those storage houses.

In that space, there's a one-dimensional brick outline of the foundations of the warehouse

with two black granite walls cutting across the outline, almost like a doorway. The outside of the wall is rough, the inside is polished so smoothly, it acts like a mirror. Inside the two walls are a series of kneeling, hunched figures, representing those that died there.

As the figures get closer and closer to the water, they appear to be emerging from the concrete, and on the outside of the walls, we've inscribed the Maya Angelou poem, *And Still I Rise*.

It's one of my favourite spaces because it provokes so many different emotions simultaneously.

**Can you highlight the story of a particularly significant exhibit?**

In our Carolina Gold Gallery – which talks about the industry of slavery – we exhibit Ashley's Sack, one of our most significant artefacts. It's a mid 1800s cloth sack given

Because the museum is on a floodplain, it's elevated on 18 concrete columns



PHOTO: GREG NOIRE

Ralph Appelbaum  
Associates worked on  
the exhibition design

PHOTO: GREG MOORE



by an enslaved woman named Rose as a parting gift to her nine-year-old daughter Ashley. The story of the sack is embroidered on the outside by Ashley's grand-daughter.

It's a gentle way of reminding visitors that we're talking about an institution that separated families again and again. One of the embroidered lines reads: This sack is filled with my love, always. It's a very interesting reminder of the lengths people would go to in order to hold on to their humanity. It was important for those children to know: You didn't come from nothing. You didn't come from a plantation, or off a ship. You came from love.

I really appreciate the way we're juggling these kinds of conversations within the museum.

#### How are you using technology in the museum?

One of the things we're trying to do is create an energy, so people understand that history is not just the past, it's the present too. Technology allows things to move, and change – we've got lots of mini videos and clips and images which convey emotion.

We also use technology's ability to hold a lot of information in small spaces. We have a digital engagement table that has hundreds of historic sites across South Carolina that people can consider visiting. It's a geographical oriented interactive map that also allows us to add more spaces as the museum evolves.

We also have a ground-breaking genealogy and ancestry research centre, the Center for Family History. We're connected to the largest genealogy databases in the world, as well as our own archives, and technology allows us to help people dig into their history and to work with people virtually. A lot of our systems testing was happening during the pandemic, which taught us a lot. We'll continue to work in a hybrid way.

#### Can you pick out a particularly joyful part of the museum?

When you first enter the museum, we have a gallery called Transatlantic Experiences, which features a series of eight 12ft screens programmed together but not identically. It covers the entire storyline of the museum

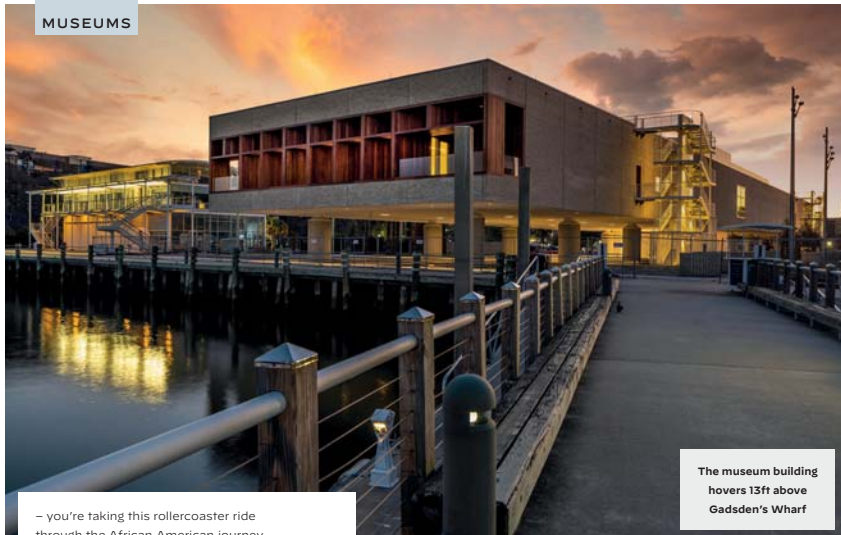


PHOTO: JIM SINN PHOTOGRAPHY

– you're taking this rollercoaster ride through the African American journey. You feel the joy and the sadness, the connection, the rhythm and the energy.

It has an amazing soundtrack and when you're watching and we're drawing comparisons between carnival and historically Black college and university marching bands, or beautiful pictures of kids come up – you can't help it, you're smiling. It's very joyful and energetic.

The gallery offers multiple doorways into the stories we're telling within the museum. The superpower of IAAM is that we can meet you where you are – maybe you're into art or history or music. We've got it all.

### What does this project mean to you personally?

This is a powerful career moment for me. I see a lot in my background that trained me for this moment, although I had no idea at the time. I've been in the museum field for more than a decade, but I originally trained as an engineer.

This was not an obvious career path, but when I think about it, I was trained to be a problem solver and to ask the questions no one had asked before. I was trained to make the scary, unscary, as I began teaching in that space. People are tentative around higher math, calculus, algebra and technology. Part of my job was making those subjects manageable, and less intimidating and scary. It's actually very similar in this space where we're now talking about racial equity and social justice and history.

The museum building hovers 13ft above Gadsden's Wharf

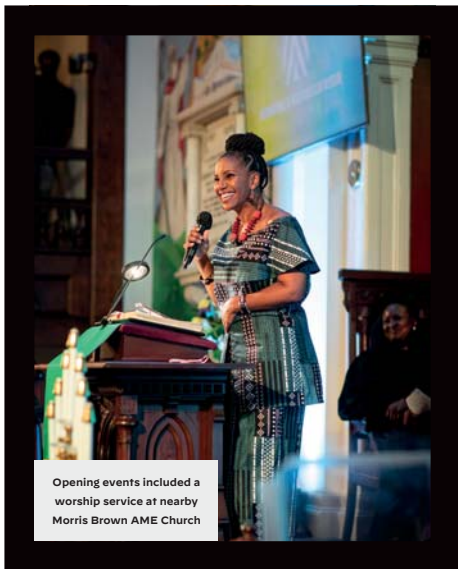


PHOTO: CLAY WILLIAMS

Opening events included a worship service at nearby Morris Brown AME Church



## THE GALLERIES

### ● **African Roots / African Routes**

African Roots presents the diverse empires, cultures, historic figures, knowledge systems, and technologies of West and West Central Africa — the origins of Africans forced to the Americas. Key artefacts include an 18th century Islamic Astrolabe as well as masks, currency, and jewellery from West and West Central African ethnolinguistic groups.

### ● **American Journeys**

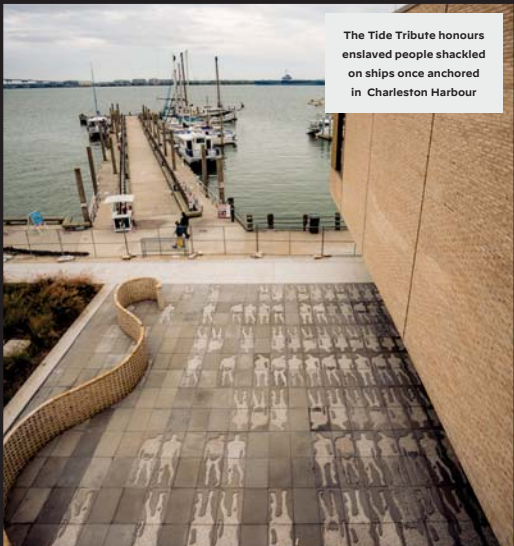
The American Journeys Gallery presents key moments, figures, and movements in African American history that are interconnected with South Carolina, showing how they shaped, and were shaped, by local, national, and international cultures, politics, and economies.

### ● **Atlantic Worlds**

The Atlantic Worlds Gallery explores the nuanced historical connections throughout the Black Atlantic World. Focusing on the major themes of resistance, revolution, creolization, immigration, and the Middle Passage, this gallery explores the deep interconnectivity between Africa, the Americas, and Europe.

### ● **Carolina Gold / Memories of the Enslaved**

By examining the roots of the plantation system, the skills and knowledge of Africans from rice-growing regions of Africa, and how enslaved Africans and their descendants created community, kinship, and cultivated resistance, the Carolina Gold Exhibit demonstrates the transformative impact of enslaved people who laboured on plantations in South Carolina and helped build the lucrative rice industry.



The Tide Tribute honours enslaved people shackled on ships once anchored in Charleston Harbour

### ● **Creative Journeys**

The Creative Journeys exhibit consists of artwork, poems, films, and creative materials placed throughout IAAM. These works of art on walls, pedestals, and screens exist in conversation with the historical content of each gallery and provide alternative vantage points for understanding history and the role that creative expression plays in both shaping and reflecting its arc.

### ● **Gullah Geechee**

With a focus on the Lowcountry of South Carolina and Georgia, the Gullah Geechee Gallery provides an introduction to Gullah Geechee history and culture. Through the exploration of themes including activism, organisation, and cultural practices and preservation, this gallery examines the history of the community as well as contemporary issues facing Gullah Geechee communities.

### ● **South Carolina Connections**

This gallery focuses on African American and African diasporic history that is within and historically

interconnected to South Carolina. Featuring key artefacts and an interactive map table powered by Google, the South Carolina Connections Gallery provides insight into known and lesser-known South Carolinians, as well as relevant places and events from early colonial settlement to the present.

### ● **Theater Gallery**

The Theater Gallery features films and video-based installations, which provide broad historical context and further orient the visitor to the overall museum experience through a narrative storytelling format.

### ● **Transatlantic Gallery**

The Transatlantic Gallery provides visitors with a large-scale immersive media experience. Situated as the entry point to the east wing of IAAM, this installation features eight large video screens, which take visitors on a historical journey through hundreds of years of history, from African cultural roots to the tragedy of the Middle Passage and into local and international diaspora scenes and traditions. ●



# ***We're teaching young people to love the environment***

PHOTO: ESKEDUMEZRIPPLE



PHOTO: AUDUBON NATURE INSTITUTE



PHOTO: CAMBRIDGESEVEN



**Left to right: Haley Robinson, Ron Forman and Peter Sollugub**



**The design is by  
EskewDumezRipple and  
Cambridge Seven**

# A FRESH START

Audubon Aquarium and Insectarium used closures during the COVID-19 pandemic to rethink its building and update its message. As it reopens following a major renovation, we take a look at the new offer

**N**ew Orleans' Audubon Aquarium and Insectarium has opened its expanded building, following a major \$41m renovation that has seen the relocation and redesign of the insectarium, and an expansion and renovation of the aquarium itself.

Designed by architects EskewDumezRipple (EDR), in collaboration with architects and exhibit designers CambridgeSeven, the project saw the insectarium moved from its previous home on Canal Street to join the aquarium in the heart of New Orleans' downtown. Visitors to the new insectarium now end their visit in a spectacular new butterfly garden featuring hundreds of free flying butterflies, lush flowers and a panoramic view of the Mississippi River.

"We're teaching young people to love the environment," Ron Forman, president and CEO of the Audubon Nature Institute told New Orleans news channel NOLA.com.

"Bugs and fish and reptiles and mammals are all an important part of the Earth that we need to protect for the next generation."

## REFLECTING THE MISSION

Visitors to the aquarium now enter via a glass atrium with plant-covered walls fed by a hidden hydroponics system, leading onto a new lobby that tells the story of Audubon's conservation work around the world. The aquarium's exhibits have all been redesigned and updated, with new additions including Amazon Encounter, a walk-through exhibit that features a two-toed sloth, wading birds, an armadillo and a giant tortoise. The Mississippi River Gallery has been transformed into a bayou-themed gallery, and a new experience has been introduced offering visitors wider access to the aquarium's 450,000 gallon Gulf of Mexico tank.

Two new gift shops have been added and the exhibit flow through the aquarium spaces has been reversed. Beyond the renewed exhibit spaces, a creative infill and reimagining of the former large-screen, immersive theatre allows for additional programming space to support Audubon in its mission. The second-floor has been transformed to house an open expanse portion of the insectarium, and the first floor hosts a new multi-purpose event.



Audubon's insectarium and aquarium are now under one roof

"This project reflects Audubon's mandate to reach for the stars and reflect the overarching message and mission of conservation," said Peter Sollogub, CambridgeSeven design principal on the project.

"Its vision and completion represent commitment and collaboration at its finest, using creativity, storytelling and exploration to transmit nature's wonder and wow its community."

"This project provides a new window into the exceptional work of Audubon, its environmental stewardship mission, and is also a key component of the ongoing revitalisation of the New Orleans riverfront," said Haley Robinson, project architect from EskewDumezRipple. ●



Exhibit space has increased from 13,000sq ft to 17,000sq ft





The 2,500sq ft glass lobby has been designed to immerse visitors in nature

#### DESIGN TEAM

Architect: EskewDumezRipple  
 Exhibit designer: CambridgeSeven  
 Landscape: Spackman Mossop Michaels  
 Structural/civil engineering: Morphy Makofsky, Inc.  
 MEP Engineering: Moses Engineers  
 Media design: Cortina Productions  
 Lighting design: Eos Lightmedia  
 Graphic design: Natalie Zanechia Design  
 LSS Design: Andy Aiken  
 Exhibit fabricator: 1220 Exhibits  
 Mural artist: Patrick Maxcy

#### CONSTRUCTION TEAM

Construction consultant: Dupont-LeCorgne  
 Contractor: Broadmoor LLC



Education programmes for young people are a key part of the attraction's mission



# POWER OF YOUTH

The transformation project cost £13m and took three years to complete

The long-awaited Young V&A has launched in London and it heralds a shift in the way museums are designed for young people. Magali Robathan takes a look



Dr Helen Charman, director, Young V&A



When the V&A made the decision to update its Museum of Childhood – which has been operating in East London since

1872 – it decided to let young people help design the new museum themselves.


“From the outset, we’ve really worked with young people to think about their needs and their perspectives. That’s informed every aspect of the museum,” Dr Helen Charman, director of Young V&A, tells *Attractions Management*.

The Young V&A, which opened in July in Bethnal Green, is a free museum exploring art, design and performance created for and with young people aged up to 14 years. It’s the product of a seven-year project that involved

“

***A museum that promotes creative confidence in young people is very much needed right now***





The Stage allows young visitors to dress up and perform their own plays

detailed consultation with more than 22,000 children, young people, parents and teachers.

The result is a spacious museum housed in the renovated 150-year-old Grade II listed building that was home to the Museum of Childhood. Revamped by architecture studios De Matos Ryan and AOC, it features three major new galleries where visitors can make noise, interact with the exhibits, design their own creations and learn while having fun.

There are no fusty statues or 'don't touch' signs here – instead it features a striking red performance stage, a giant marble run, a spiral staircase informed by optical illusions, an open design studio and exhibits that range from a Syrian rattle dating back to 2300 BC to Team GB medallist Sky Brown's old skateboard.

### Boosting creativity

Young people's input can be seen throughout the museum, from the colour scheme developed with children to storytelling displays and a self-portrait-making station proposed by local pupils. Exhibits include a patchwork quilt made by students using sustainable practices to communicate their thoughts on fast fashion.

"We know creativity is a vital life skill," says Charman. "Global organisations such as the World Economic Forum and the OECD have been making calls for 21st century skills – creativity, collaboration, communication, critical thinking and confidence. A museum that promotes creative confidence in young people – which is at the very heart of the Young V&A – is very much needed right now."

"It's about young people having confidence in their ideas; feeling they can bring their ideas into the world and that those ideas can effect change."



The museum is divided into three galleries broadly aimed at different age ranges (although all children can explore all areas): **Play**, designed for pre-walkers, featuring a Mini Museum focusing on how small children learn in a sensory environment; **Imagine**, which has a focus on imaginary worlds and features a stage with props and costumes for children to create their own performances; and **Design**, which invites older children to think like designers. See overleaf for more details.

### Collaborative working

For many museums aimed at children, learning programmes are designed once the museum is already operational. At the Young V&A, curatorial and learning teams worked together from the

outset to think about which objects to include in the museum and how to present them.

The displays and exhibitions address topics that children said were important to them, and there are plenty of inspiring stories of creative acts by young people around the world.

Object labels are kept short; instead there's a focus on encouraging children and their adults to think creatively and collaboratively. Galleries have been designed to be as dynamic and interactive as possible, with things to do to help visitors act on the inspiration they take from the collections around them.

"Young people's voices and creativity are embedded throughout the museum," says Charman.





"There was a very structured process of co-design, with local children working with the architects to create the museum that they wanted. Over the past two years, we also carried out a massive outreach programme working with schools, children's centres, libraries and adventure playgrounds in Tower Hamlets.

"Every interactive in the Young V&A has been co-designed and tested with young people. Children have interviewed some of our featured artists, and you can hear those interviews on recordings throughout the museum.

"It's such a playful, optimistic and uplifting environment. Children come running and gliding in on their scooters; they point, and say 'wow, look at that!' It's a joy to see."



In the Factory gallery, children can see design processes in action

## THE GALLERIES

## PLAY

In the Play Gallery, the Mini Museum is inspired by the ways babies and toddlers first experience the world with a sensory landscape in which objects are placed at children's eye level height, where they can discover colours, textures and shapes as they explore the space.

Further parts of the collection are displayed within an alphabet running the length of the gallery, helping little ones build communication and oracy skills. Elsewhere a rainbow of cases shows objects by colour, appealing to early learners. A construction zone encourages children to use their problem-solving and design skills with a large marble run, and to have fun building dens and architectural structures in the Imagination Playground.

A large magnetic marble run allows children to collaborate to build new tracks

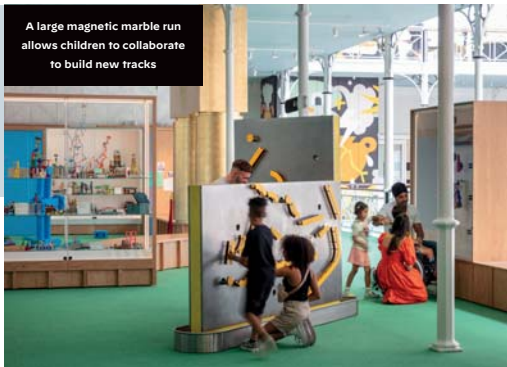


PHOTO: DAVID PARRY/V&amp;A MUSEUM, LONDON



PHOTO: DAVID PARRY/V&amp;A MUSEUM, LONDON

Pre-walkers are encouraged to explore

## IMAGINE

The Imagine Gallery includes a variety of spaces to inspire creative expression through performance, storytelling, imagination and community. Children can choose their own adventure and create their own stories inspired by the collections – including the life-size Joey the War Horse puppet in the Adventure Display.

A performance space, The Stage, hosts programmed activity, while a dressing up box and shadow puppets encourage children to enact their own performances.

A new display called This Is Me by photographer Rehan Jamil, co-curated with young people from the Mile End Community Project, features portraits of local children expressing what creativity means to them. The photo series is presented alongside self-portraits by creatives including Chila Kumari Singh Burman, Quentin Blake, Kenneth Branagh, Dapo Adeola, and Linda McCartney, as well as an interactive self-portrait-making station.

The much-loved dolls' house collection can be explored within a new streetscape, alongside a commission by Emily Queenie created with local schoolchildren.



The Adventure Display in the Imagine Gallery

PHOTO: DAVID PARRY/V&amp;A MUSEUM, LONDON



The Joey puppet from War Horse is on display

PHOTO: DAVID PARRY/V&amp;A MUSEUM, LONDON



The Design Gallery was conceived for older children to explore creativity

## DESIGN

The Design Gallery, conceived for older children, showcases innovative objects and case studies that explore how things are designed, made and used, and the ways in which design can change the world. Hands on activities, workshops and collaborations with contemporary designers introduce young people to different design processes and help develop critical thinking, ideas creation, and problem-solving skills.

Stories illustrating the power of children's agency are highlighted here, including the invention of the Elephant Detector by 14-year-old Chinmayi Ramasubramanian in India to reduce human-elephant conflict and the UK's first magazine for Black girls designed by Serlina Boyd, inspired by her daughter Faith. The Factory uncovers some of the many processes and materials used in making familiar and unfamiliar objects, where children can see design processes



The Design for Change display

in action. The Shed is home to Young V&A's on-site studio resident – and is a space where children can experience the work of a contemporary artist or designer firsthand and take part in design challenges in the adjoining Open Studio. ●  
**Find out more at [www.vam.ac.uk/young](http://www.vam.ac.uk/young)**

# Axel Hüttinger

**As Luanda's first science centre gets ready to open in Angola's capital, the MD of Hüttinger Interactive Exhibitions tells Magali Robathan why he's on a mission to make science more accessible**

In 1921, Emanuel Hüttinger founded engineering consultancy firm Hüttinger Interactive Exhibitions in Furth, near Nuremberg, Germany. The firm evolved over the coming decades from a focus on the design and fabrication of technical models to the design and fit out of exhibitions and information centres. Today it is a 'one-stop shop for exhibition planning, design and fabrication,' working across museums, science centres, themed attractions, visitor centres, product presentations and art projects.

Clients include the Aberdeen Science Center, UK; the National Museum of Qatar; the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum, Washington, US; and CosmoCaixa, Barcelona, Spain.

Here Axel Hüttinger shares details of some unique projects due for completion and tells us why he's not interested in presenting science topics as a 'finished project'.

**You're working on the creation of a new national science centre in Angola. What can you tell us about the project?**

The Luanda Science Center in Luanda, Angola is one of the biggest projects we're working on right now. Our client is Mitrelli/Athena Swiss AG and it is due to open next year.

We're the general contractor to design and build the exhibition for the new centre. We started fabricating a year ago, and installation started this spring.

The idea of the museum is to stimulate interest in science and technology, particularly among young people. It will include exhibitions on maths, computer science, natural science and technology, the human body and Angola. It will also feature a children's playground, a cinema, planetarium, laboratories and temporary exhibitions.

We're trying to tailor the content to the region as much as possible – the building housing the

A portrait of Axel Hüttlinger, a man with wavy brown hair and glasses, smiling. He is wearing a light blue button-down shirt. The background is a blurred indoor setting with large windows.

Axel Hüttlinger became MD  
of Hüttlinger Interactive  
Exhibitions in 2002

“

***Our exhibits are designed to act  
as the start of inquiry and exploration  
– to pique visitors' curiosity and  
lead to further questions***





***It's not about looking at a model aeroplane in a wind tunnel. It's about being in the wind tunnel and feeling the forces with your own body***

museum itself used to be a soap factory, so one of the installations allows visitors to make their own soap, and that installation will be connected to a maker space open fabrication lab.

One of the really interesting things about this project, is that the operator has put an outreach programme in right from the very beginning. In Angola, everything is concentrated in the capital – in rural areas, there's very little in terms of infrastructure and education. The Luanda Science Center will act as a hub of science communication, using interactive science kits to run science programmes in rural communities across Angola. It's going to be brilliant – you'll load these kits onto trucks and lorries and go out into the communities.

**You're helping the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum in Washington, US, transform its East Wing. What is happening there?**

The National Air and Space Museum reopened its West Wing in October 2022 following a redesign, and we worked with them on the exhibits.

We're over the moon to be working with them

again; this time, on another project to design and build interactive exhibits for the East Wing of the museum together with US fabrication firm Design and Production Incorporated and Toronto based design firm Reich + Petch.

The East Wing includes a huge gallery called How Things Fly, which we're designing exhibits for. One of the exhibits will see visitors put on airfoils – like wings – and play about in a walk-in wind tunnel, to allow them to experience the forces of flight with their own bodies.

This illustrates our whole approach to learning – it's not about just pushing a button, or looking at a little model of an aeroplane in a wind tunnel, it's being in that wind tunnel yourself and feeling the forces with your own body. It's the opposite

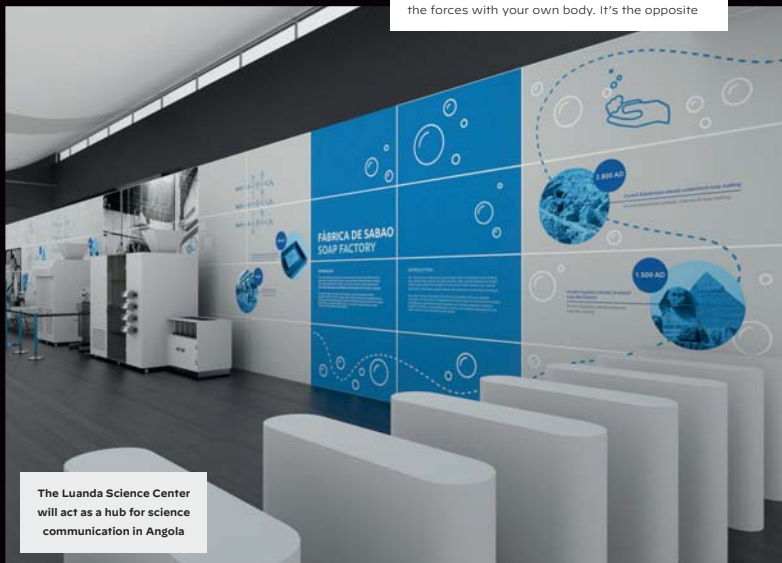


PHOTO: HÜTTINGER INTERACTIVE EXHIBITIONS

The Luanda Science Center will act as a hub for science communication in Angola



**Kits are being developed to run science programmes across Angola**

of reading about a process, or watching it – it's actually being part of that process. It's a far more powerful way of connecting to visitors and helping them to understand a subject.

#### **What else are you working on?**

We won the design and build contract for a new children's gallery for CosmoCaixa science museum in Barcelona, which I'm very excited about. We're helping to create a new indoor/outdoor gallery, which should open by the beginning of next year. It will be an interactive science exhibition for children, featuring a wide range of exhibits, including ones exploring fluid mechanics and physics.

The beauty of the space is that it will be half indoors and half outdoors, which is a great idea – many parents don't want to go into museums in the summer with their children, because who wants to be inside when you could be outside?

It will feature an outdoor play area and a range of exhibits.

#### **You designed the recently opened Climate Change and Us gallery and exhibition for the Goulandris Natural History Museum in Athens. What's the aim of this exhibition?**

The aim was to present climate change not as an inevitable disaster, but as a feasible human challenge.

The great strength of Climate Change and Us is its regional focus – local expertise was used to create an exhibition tailored to the target group – schoolchildren from across the region. All exhibits are linked to the curriculum.

Greece is one of the few countries in Europe that's managed to cover its electrical energy consumption almost entirely with renewable energy sources. We worked to make this clear via the central exhibit, Renewable Energy City, where visitors can interactively generate electrical energy at individual 'power stations' to keep the power grid stable.

The treatment of waste is another topic explored in the exhibition. The idea of a circular



***We try to create exhibitions that act as providers of experiences – we want those experiences to be as rich, meaningful and memorable as possible***

economy is communicated in a playful way with the Sort It! exhibit. The aim is to raise awareness that waste is made up of valuable raw materials.

**You also recently completed the Electricity and Magnetism Gallery at the Hong Kong Science Museum. What makes this gallery exciting?**

The beauty of the topic of energy is that it's relevant to everyone. With this in mind, the Electricity and Magnetism gallery shows what's behind the power socket, the principles of electric circuits and the effect of magnetism in a simple and vivid way. We designed and manufactured a ferro-fluid magnetoscope, a diamagnetic levitation exhibit and a 10m magnetic levitation train for this new gallery.

**How would you sum up the philosophy of your company? What unites all of your work?**

There are two types of science exhibition, which I describe as 'about science' and 'of science'. 'About science' exhibitions present a scientific topic as a finished product – visitors can learn about the topic, press buttons and read panels. In this type of exhibition, visitors tend to be faced with simulations or diagrams with large amounts of explanatory text.

'Of science' exhibits encourage visitors to explore topics and create their own experiences and ideas. At Hüttinger Interactive Exhibitions, we try to focus on the exhibitions we create as providers of experience, and we direct our efforts toward making those experiences as



Visitors learn best when they can experiment and create their own experiences



Luanda Science Center will explore scientific phenomena via a range of exhibits



rich, meaningful, and memorable as possible. These types of exhibits are designed to act as the start of inquiry and exploration – to pique visitors' curiosity and lead to further questions.

Swinging pendulums, for example, develop knowledge of simple harmonic motion. Using tools develops knowledge of simple machines. Playing with solar powered model cars develops knowledge of electrical circuits.

**You also work with artists to realise their visions. What are you working on in this part of the business right now?**

We have just been awarded a new contract to create a huge sculpture with the Austrian artist André Heller in Prague in the Czech Republic. We're at the very beginning of the process, so I can't say too much, but it will be an interactive piece exploring emotions.

We have worked with Heller before, when we helped to create the world's largest walk-

PHOTO: HÜTTINGER INTERACTIVE EXHIBITIONS



Visitors are invited to make their own soap

in kaleidoscope as part of the multimedia show *Zeiträume* that Heller curated in Taggenbrunn Castle in Carinthia, Austria.

We have also worked with US artist Anthony Howe on the creation of *Azlon II*, a large stainless steel sculpture that displays a unique spectacle of reflections and floating patterns as it moves in the wind. ●

# MIXED BLESSINGS

From Meow Wolf's Omega Mart in Las Vegas' Area 15 to KidZania in London's Westfield shopping centre, attractions are driving retail footfall, but which experiences work best? LDP partner Kathleen LaClair summarises the trends

Leading economic advisory firm Leisure Development Partners (LDP) authored a White Paper for MAPIC and the LeisurUP retail conference titled *Established and Emerging Concepts in a Retail Setting*.

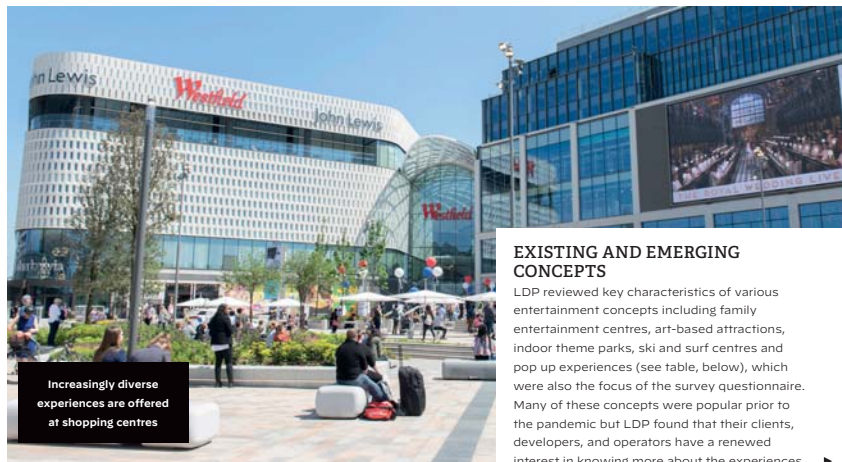
Looking at which attractions work well in retail environments and help arrest the decline in footfall that's plagued retailers pre and post the COVID-19 pandemic, LDP reviewed the different attraction types, their key characteristics and performance metrics. LDP also highlighted several case studies, and together with leading primary research company A Different View, carried out a UK survey to gather data on people's past and anticipated consumer behaviour in relation to the different attraction types in retail centres.



Role play experiences at KidZania drive footfall to Westfield shopping mall










PHOTO: KIDZANIA





## EXISTING AND EMERGING CONCEPTS

LDP reviewed key characteristics of various entertainment concepts including family entertainment centres, art-based attractions, indoor theme parks, ski and surf centres and pop up experiences (see table, below), which were also the focus of the survey questionnaire. Many of these concepts were popular prior to the pandemic but LDP found that their clients, developers, and operators have a renewed interest in knowing more about the experiences. ►

TYPE	EXAMPLE	TARGET MARKET	
FEC	KidZania Main Event		Indoor attraction typically geared towards families with a range of games and activities, typically including bowling, video games and laser tag
Indoor theme park	Nickelodeon Universe		Large indoor venue incorporating thrill and family rides, games, and F&B
Competitive socialising	Flight Club Pinstripes		Entertainment centre focused on activities such as darts, ping pong and crazy golf with a quality, high-end F&B experience
Artainment	Team Lab Meow Wolf		Immersive art + technology entertainment experience, usually incorporates music and lights in various rooms/ installations
Pop-Up	Friend's Experience		Temporary entertainment experiences focused on a range of concepts from favorite tv shows, food, music and more
Adventure/ action	The VOID, Autobahn Indoor Speedway		Separate or clustered activities such as high ropes course, climbing walks, skydiving
Indoor waterpark/surf	DreamWorks		Indoor water play ranging from a full scale park to a specialty surfing experience
Indoor ski/snow	Ski Dubai		Indoor snow elements ranging from a cluster of simple play structures (igloos) to multiple ski slope runs, tubing trails and lifts
Garden/eco	Green Planet		Indoor garden or eco-walkthrough experience, sometimes with birds or other animals

Meow Wolf's immersive art experience Omega Mart at AREA15, Las Vegas

## ► CATCHING UP OR GETTING OUT AHEAD?

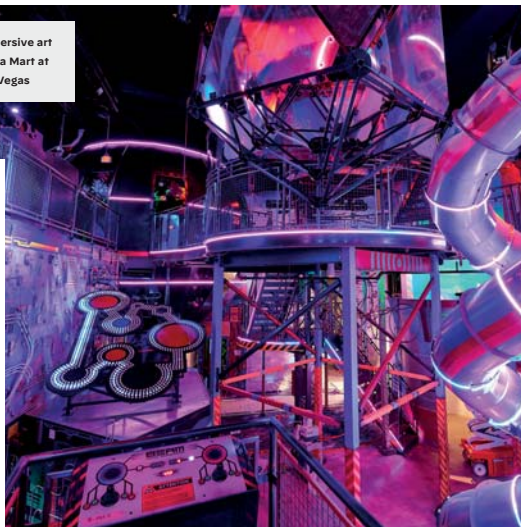
Various challenges facing retail owners and developers across the globe spurred the 'retailtainment' trend in traditional shopping centres. Anchor tenants and national brands were vacating large spaces due to downsizing of the portfolio during economic downturn and the ramp up of online shopping, which created less footfall in retail centres. The first wave of this trend tended to be reactive in nature, a response to these challenges. Developers figured out that adding entertainment tenants complemented and refreshed the existing offering, extended consumer stay, attracted new customers and brought previous shoppers back into the fold.

## THE REACTIVE APPROACH – WESTFIELD, LONDON

Westfield London is a prime example of a traditionally planned retail centre adding entertainment tenants, in some instances into large spaces previously leased by major retailers, to increase footfall and spending.

Westfield opened in 2008; the original development was a traditional mall with a mix of anchor and secondary tenants and purely focused on retail. Opening at the onset of the recession was a significant challenge and the shopping centre struggled for the first few years of operation. Developers began to plan the next chapter for the centre, and expansion plans developed in 2012. With retailtainment an established trend, developers added KidZania and other entertainment tenants including a 20-screen Vue Cinema, All Star Lanes, Puttshack, City Boulderling and Upside Down House, as well as a multitude of bars and restaurants.

The second trend of entertainment tenants in retail started a bit later – proactively thinking about new ways to incorporate entertainment into new retail destinations. These purpose-built developments are typically heavily focused on entertainment, with complementary food, beverage and more traditional retail offerings. Developers are rethinking traditional mixed-use or RDE (Retail, Dining, Entertainment) districts to be focused on the latter, as younger generations continue to look to the experiential activities as their chosen way to spend time and money.



Upside Down House opened at Westfield London in 2021

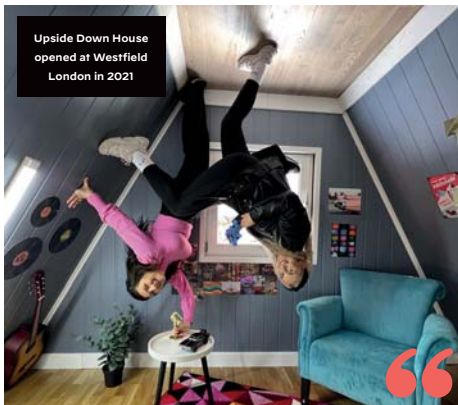


PHOTO: UPSIDE DOWN HOUSE

**Developers began to plan the next chapter for the shopping centre**



PHOTO: KATE RUSSELL/MEOW WOLF

PHOTO: AREA15



## THE PROACTIVE APPROACH – AREA15, LAS VEGAS

Originally a Mercedes Benz dealership, the land that is now AREA15 was initially re-planned as a traditional mixed-use development that failed to come to fruition after the Great Recession. Developers Fisher Bros. and Beneville Studios saw an opportunity to build something that could compete with the entertainment giants along the Las Vegas Strip, and they proactively focused on experiential entertainment and science fiction.

The first anchor was Omega Mart, an interactive art installation by Meow Wolf. Omega Mart is essentially an alternative reality game, where guests attempt to solve the plot using clues, both online and within the supermarket physical setting. The second major tenant, Lost Spirits, is an interactive, immersive show set within a working distillery. The size of an American football field, guests at the attraction wander around mazes, stages and lounges, interacting with cast members and becoming a part of the show.

## AND THE SURVEY SAYS...

Among those surveyed, family entertainment centers (FECs) were the most visited in recent years among the different attraction types in retail centres. In looking at more detail, adults that have children out-visited all the attraction types including indoor gardens and artainment, when compared to those that do not have children, in the surveyed group.

The popularity of FECs can be attributed to the varied level of offering and wide appeal, ranging from a KidZania which is geared more towards families with young children to those like Dave and Busters which appeals to friend groups and couples and has elevated levels of food and beverages including alcohol. While not shown in the chart, men and women responded in general alignment, though with men reporting somewhat higher visits to competitive socialising and adventure/action experiences and women reporting higher visits to pop-up experiences and indoor garden attractions.

## Visited experiences, last three years

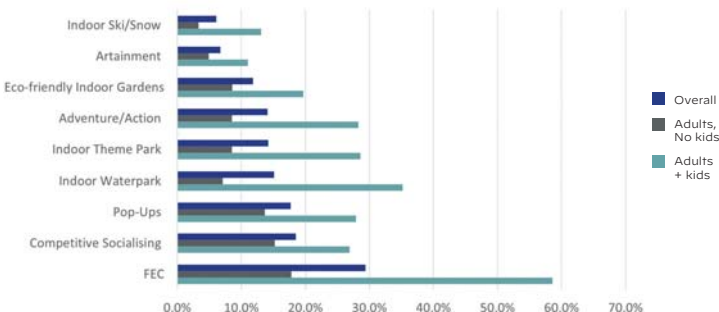


PHOTO: LDB, A DIFFERENT VIEW

## Preference for type

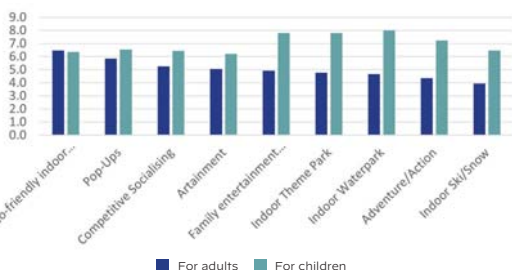


PHOTO: LIDS, A DIFFERENT VIEW

► Survey respondents were asked to rate their preference for each attraction type on a 0 (no interest) to 10 (strong interest) scale, both for themselves and for their children (if applicable). Adults alone were most interested in visiting indoor gardens, pop-up experiences and competitive socialising – aligning to the responses on past visited attraction types. Those with children indicated that the more physical or adventurous activities were preferred, including indoor theme and water parks, and adventure/action experiences in addition to FECs.

In thinking of how long they would plan to stay at the different entertainment concepts, indoor theme or water parks and adventure/action concepts have the longest anticipated dwell times, between three and four hours. These are closely followed by FECs, indoor ski/snow and competitive socialising concepts, where survey respondents said they would plan to spend about three hours.

Arrival patterns vary by the type of concept and target market; those targeting families or kids (FEC, indoor theme or water park) tend to have higher percentages of people coming in the morning or early afternoon versus those geared to adults (competitive socialising), which see higher volumes arriving in late afternoon or evening. The survey responses on anticipated arrival times aligned with that established trend.

Entertainment concepts with longer dwell times, which typically offer more types of experiences or rides, dictate higher levels of admission ticket spending, at or higher than £25.00 per person for an adult, as reflected in the anticipated spending data (see chart on opposite page). Across all concepts, survey respondents indicated that they planned to spend an additional £40.00 to £60.00 per party on food and beverage, retail, and photos.

“

**New entertainment concepts will continue to evolve and grow**

TeamLab transformed  
La Grande Halle de la  
Villette in Paris

PHOTO: TEAMLAB AU-DELÀ DES LIMITES, 2018







PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/ROD CRANDALL

### Anticipated spend

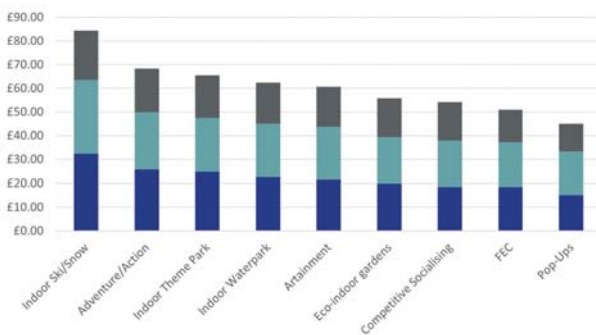


PHOTO: LDP A DIFFERENT VIEW



### WRAP UP

Based on the level of interest from industry clients and developers, tried-and-true and new entertainment concepts will continue to evolve and grow, representing a larger percentage of tenant types in a retail centre or destination in the coming years. LDP expects that well-established operators will rebound from challenges faced during the pandemic and expand into new locations. New concepts should be tested to find ideal markets and locations within existing and new retail destinations. Shopping centre operators will continue to seek out entertainment concepts to drive footfall and increase spending, especially as the online retail industry continues to evolve. ●



ANOHA – The Children's World of the Jewish Museum aims to give visitors hope

# Good Lookers

Architizer has celebrated the best of museum and culture architecture at the 11th annual A+ Awards. We check out the winners



Imaginative design was celebrated

PHOTO: ANOHA - THE CHILDREN'S WORLD OF THE JEWISH MUSEUM, YVES SUCKSDORFF



Online architecture platform Architizer has highlighted culture and museums as part of its 2023 A+ Awards, which honour the best buildings and spaces around the world.

Several museums and cultural buildings were celebrated in the awards, including ANOHA – The Children's World of the Jewish Museum, which was opened in the former flower market hall across from the main Jewish Museum Berlin in 2020, and the \$94m Orange County Museum of Art, which opened to visitors in Costa Mesa, California, at the end of 2022.

For 2023, the awards programme welcomed 11 new categories focused on sustainable design. This decision was taken to emphasise the pivotal role designers have in confronting climate change and to shine a spotlight on those architects striving to improve the built environment for generations to come.



A 7m-tall wooden ark lies at the centre of the Berlin children's museum

**CATEGORY:**  
Cultural – Gallery & Exhibition Spaces

**JURY WINNER:**  
**ANOHA – The Children's World of the Jewish Museum**  
Berlin, Germany

**ARCHITECT:** Olson Kundig

Inspired by the pioneering vision of Noah's Ark at the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles, which underscores the importance of diversity, collaboration and second chances, ANOHA – The Children's World of the Jewish Museum Berlin seeks to give young guests a sense of hope and possibility. Located across from the Jewish Museum Berlin, the heart of ANOHA is a 7m-tall (23ft-tall) circular wooden ark.

More than 150 sculptural animals populate ANOHA's ark, each created from found objects by a team of 18 German artists. This approach encourages children to consider the importance of recycling and adaptive re-use, while supporting ANOHA's core philosophy of creativity and imagination. Interactive exhibits placed along an intuitive visitor pathway teach children how to solve problems independently and as a group, while exploratory spaces modelled after unique habitats allow children to experience the



More than 150 'animals' populate the museum

diverse perspectives of the various animals.

Sustainable strategies are embedded in the architectural design as an integral part of the user experience. Mechanical system needs are reduced thanks to the environmental buffer of the existing hall, significantly lowering energy loads. Ceiling fans and operable windows in the ark allow for air exchange and natural ventilation. The ark's windows support this passive daylighting approach, while visually connecting ANOHA with the existing structure of the hall.

The exhibition designer for the project was IGLHAUT + von GROTE, and the lighting design was by Blieske Architects Lighting Designers.

## CATEGORY

Cultural – Museum

## JURY WINNER:

**Orange County Museum of Art**  
Costa Mesa, United States

ARCHITECT: **Morphosis Architects**

With flexible exhibition galleries, dedicated space for educational programming, and areas for public gathering, Orange County Museum of Art's new building provides expanded access to the museum's permanent collection, which comprises important works of modern and contemporary art from Southern California and the Pacific Rim, and to its world-class special exhibition programme.

Designed by Morphosis Architects, the museum's new home was completed in 2022. The main floor is dedicated to reconfigurable open-span exhibition space, complemented by mezzanine, black-box, and jewel-box galleries that can accommodate temporary and permanent collection exhibitions spanning a variety of scales and mediums.

PHOTO: MIKE KELLEY

Glazed sections allow plenty of natural light

A spacious roof terrace, equivalent in size to 70 percent of the building's footprint, serves as an extension of the galleries with open-air spaces that can be configured for installations, a sculpture garden, outdoor film screenings and events. A grand outdoor public stair curves toward the museum's entry, creating dialogue with Connector, the monumental sculpture by Richard Serra at the heart of Segerstrom Center for the Arts. Linking the museum to the arts complex's



PHOTO: MIKE KELLEY

Orange County Museum of Art's new home was designed by Morphosis

The design encourages a rich visitor experience, according to the Architizer judges



PHOTO: JASMINE PARK

Argyros Plaza and adjacent performing arts venues, the stair was designed to be an inviting gathering space for pedestrians and visitors.

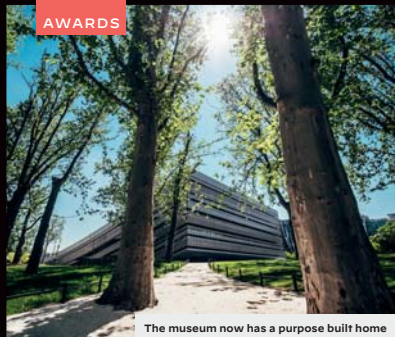
The design strategy choreographs a rich visitor experience, from approach and entry, to procession through the galleries, and finally, an invitation to linger on the steps, in the café, or in the museum store. The building's relationship between indoor and outdoor space encourages visitors to "immerse themselves in the celebrated climate of southern California, where light, air, and space have influenced generations of artists," according to the architects.



PHOTO: JOSHUA WHITE

The museum is clad in white terracotta tiles





The museum now has a purpose built home

## CATEGORY

Cultural – Museum

## POPULAR CHOICE WINNER

**Museum of Ethnography**  
**Budapest, Hungary**

ARCHITECT: Napur Architect Ltd

**T**he new home for the Museum of Ethnography, designed by Napur Architects, opened in May 2022. Realised as part of the Liget Budapest Project – a major redevelopment of Budapest's 100-hectare City Park – the museum joins Sou Fujimoto's House of Hungarian Music, which also opened in City Park last year.

The Museum of Ethnography opened in 1872 – it explores ethnographic science, European ethnology and cultural anthropology. The collection, which comprises 250,000 items, has been exhibited in various locations, but has never had a purpose built facility designed specifically to meet its needs.

According to the Architizer judges, the new building is distinguished by a "dynamic yet simple design harmonised with the natural environment of the park while communicating with the urban texture of its surroundings.

"The gently curving lines enable the building to function as a gateway linking the city and the park. The spectacular trademark of the building is the glass curtainwall surrounding the landscaped roof garden, consisting of nearly half a million pixels inserted into a laser-cut aluminium grid by a special robot.

"The building's design hides a number of technological solutions, with its arched wings supported by a post-tensioned structure used in the construction of bridges."

Curving lines link the city and the park, which houses the museum's new home







## Presidents and explorers were welcomed to Locust Grove to rest, campaign and duel

### CATEGORY

**Cultural – Pavilions**

### JURY WINNER

**Locust Grove Event Pavilion**

**ARCHITECT: De Leon & Primmer  
Architecture Workshop**

Completed in 2022, this project is a new multi-use, open air pavilion located on the grounds of Locust Grove, a 55-acre 18th-century farm site and National Historic Landmark in Louisville, Kentucky.

Locust Grove operates as a historic interpretive site and museum on the remaining William Croghan estate that consists of a Georgian farmhouse and outbuildings built by enslaved African Americans, emphasising the legacy of George Rogers Clark – Revolutionary war hero and the founder of Louisville – who lived at the property.

Presidents James Monroe and Andrew Jackson, John James Audubon, Cassius Marcellus Clay, and explorers Lewis and Clark were welcomed to Locust Grove

by its owners to rest, campaign and duel. Now a National Historic Landmark, Locust Grove is a unique example of early Kentucky architecture, craftsmanship, and history.

When designing the new event pavilion, the architects took inspiration from the property's collection of historic buildings, using a predominant material palette of stone and timber to create the single storey building.

Drawing on a key feature of Locust Grove's 18th century Georgian mansion, the pavilion's form evokes the idea of a large-scale porch. Limestone is combined with a spectacular timber roof canopy – profiled glulam beams are infilled with decorative secondary framing to create a coffered ceiling that recalls the sinewy texture of the black locust tree bark.

The pavilion has been designed for a range of events, including performances, musical events, weddings and celebrations.

Access to the pavilion is multi-directional and site-specific, reinforcing a porous threshold from the west and forming a broad open canopy to the east.

Careful positioning of the pavilion minimises its visual impact in the landscape and frames important views.







Modus Studio's Osage Park Pavilion acts as a gateway for Osage Park in Arkansas

#### CATEGORY

Cultural – Pavilions

#### POPULAR CHOICE WINNER

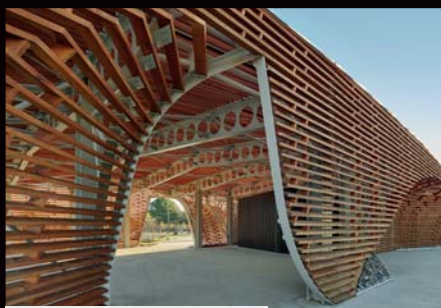
**Osage Park Pavilion**

ARCHITECT: **Modus Studio**

**T**he Osage Park Pavilion is a gateway and centerpiece for Osage Park, a scenic green space located at the northern end of a small municipal airport in Bentonville, Arkansas.

The airport is seen as a destination as well as transport hub, attracting unique, small aircraft and featuring a restaurant, flight school, flying club and store. Taking this as inspiration, the architects have designed a pavilion that derives its playful form and structural expression from aircraft wing design. The simple, fluid form lifts seamlessly out of the ground, evolving into a light, airy structure that celebrates natural light pouring through repetitive structural elements and the dynamic, undulating Arkansas-sourced cypress facade.

The pavilion acts as a hub within the larger park and contains a covered gathering space, restrooms, green room, and an outdoor stage and amphitheatre that anchors the eastern edge of the 55-acre recreational area. As the pavilion rises out of the park, the green roof becomes a viewing platform for visitors to watch planes take off and land.



The design was inspired by airplane wings

The existing wetlands at Osage Park remain and play several roles, including water purification, water storage, and processing of carbon and other nutrients. Boardwalks are used for circulation throughout the park to preserve existing wetland and riparian areas. Other green infrastructure includes wetland buffers and the introduction of native plants to help clean contaminated land and restore a more natural aquatic environment.



The centre aims to showcase the biocultural heritage of the Valley of Mexico

CATEGORY

**Unbuilt Cultural**

JURY WINNER

**Pabellón Centro de  
Cultura Ambiental  
Mexico City, Mexico**

ARCHITECT:

**A-001 Taller de Arquitectura**

**T**his planned pavilion, designed by Mexico-based architecture firm A-001 Taller de Arquitectura, aims to help visitors enjoy the biodiversity of the local region while raising awareness of the challenges and solutions around climate change.

The key element is an ethnobotanical garden surrounding the pavilion, in which the biocultural heritage of the principal local plant species are exhibited and divided into five categories according to their uses: edible, toxic, religious, medical, and those used for building.

The garden works as an extension of the pavilion's layout, with rectangular plots set on a series of platforms that follow the natural slope of the land and integrate harmoniously as a 'reminder of the pyramidal foundations of Mexico's native culture'.

The irrigation system takes advantage of the height differences between the platforms, allowing gravity to transport the water from the bio-pond fed by water from Lago Menor to each plot, reducing operating costs and returning excess water to the subsoil by an infiltration wetland.



Visitors will learn about local biodiversity



The planned pavilion features a green roof



Studio Fei's design aims to turn a heritage townhouse into a vibrant arts hub

#### CATEGORY

**Unbuilt cultural**

#### POPULAR CHOICE WINNER

**Maison Sedimentation**  
Montreal, Canada

ARCHITECT: **Studio Fei**

Located in the historic harbour of old Montreal, Maison Sédimentation by Studio Fei seeks to vitalise a historical townhouse while maintaining its authenticity.

Currently owned by a local art foundation that plans to convert it into a contemporary gallery and cultural centre, it was built around 1770 onto the foundations of an older building, and is clad in Montreal graystone. It features a characteristic sloped roof meant to discourage snow build up and raised end walls that serve as firebreaks.

Taking inspiration from the concept of sedimentation, the architect decided to celebrate the 'layer upon layer of the construction, demolition and partial recycling of physical boundaries and foundations' to create a new space for displaying art and hosting cultural events.

"The rich history has resulted in complex circulations and varying elevations in this building. Thus deciding on a strategy of intervention required an honest assessment of what was feasible. It is impossible to



PHOTO: STUDIO FEI

The building is owned by a local art foundation

meet the basic needs of an exhibition space while completely preserving and restoring the current structure," said the architect.

Studio Fei's proposal sees new and old come together, with an all-white extension added to the original building, keeping elements of the old structure including the topography and "slat-like organisation of spaces".

The aim, according to the architect, is to create "a palimpsest of physical building layers that can accommodate the programme of a contemporary art museum while preserving the authenticity of the original."

The space will serve as an exhibition venue, hosting a range of art and cultural events. ●

# CREATING EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCES

Red Raion has emerged as an industry leader in the realm of digital attractions, captivating audiences worldwide with its CGI movie experiences. We take a look at the firm's recent achievements

**F**ounded in 2014, Red Raion is a CGI studio specialising in media-based attractions. With recent accomplishments including the launch of its highly-acclaimed movie for licensing, *Around the World in 80 Days – Journey of Wonders*, and an exciting collaboration with renowned screenwriter Lorien McKenna for Red Raion's upcoming film, *Van Helsing – Rise from the Dark*, Red Raion continues to assert its position as an authority in the global visitor attractions industry.

## **Around the World in 80 Days – Journey of Wonders**

Red Raion's latest release, *Around the World in 80 Days – Journey of Wonders*, takes audiences on an unforgettable adventure. Using cutting-edge CGI technology and captivating storytelling, the film immerses viewers in a whirlwind journey across the globe, following the footsteps of Phileas Fogg. The meticulously crafted visuals and seamless integration of motion seats and special effects transport spectators into the heart of the action, creating an unparalleled sensory experience.

This ground-breaking movie has received widespread acclaim from both visitors and industry professionals, solidifying Red Raion's position as a leading provider of immersive content.

The movie is available for licensing in VR, 5D, Dome, and Fly formats, expanding the company's catalogue of CGI titles in the most requested formats in the industry.

## **Collaboration with Lorien McKenna**

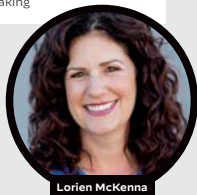
Building on the momentum generated by its recent successes, Red Raion has announced an exciting collaboration with Emmy-nominated screenwriter, Lorien McKenna, for its upcoming CGI movie *Van Helsing – Rise from the Dark*, which was first announced at this year's Saudi Entertainment and Amusement Expo.

McKenna's extraordinary storytelling prowess – as showcased in notable projects such as the Oscar-winning *Ratatouille*, *Up*, *Brave* and *Inside Out* – adds an exceptional dimension to Red Raion's immersive experiences.

*Van Helsing – Rise from the Dark* promises to captivate audiences with its thrilling narrative, breathtaking



**“Red Raion has announced an exciting collaboration with Emmy-nominated screenwriter, Lorien McKenna, who worked on Ratatouille, Up, Brave and Inside Out”**



Lorien McKenna

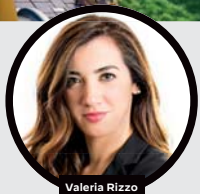
PHOTO: LORIEN MCKENNA

Audiences can follow  
Phileas Fogg as he flies  
over global landmarks

*Van Helsing, Rise from the Dark* is the latest  
film from Red Raion



**“Our focus on combining  
cutting-edge CGI technology  
with compelling storytelling  
is resonating with  
audiences worldwide”**



Valeria Rizzo

PHOTO: RED RAION

visuals and innovative use of technology. Red Raion's partnership with McKenna demonstrates its

commitment to pushing the boundaries of CGI storytelling, as the company strives to redefine the attractions industry and deliver unforgettable cinematic adventures to visitors worldwide. You can enjoy the movie's teaser trailer at: [www.attractionsmanagement.com/vanhelsing](http://www.attractionsmanagement.com/vanhelsing)

Red Raion's accomplishments demonstrate its exponential growth and ascent as a leading authority in the industry. With each new release, it raises the bar for immersive entertainment, captivating audiences with its visually stunning and emotionally engaging experiences.

#### Trusted leader

"We're thrilled with the positive response to our recent projects," says Valeria Rizzo,

business development director at Red Raion. "Our focus on combining cutting-edge CGI technology with compelling storytelling is resonating with audiences worldwide.

"We have many projects in our pipeline and we're further defining our company structure by expanding our professional roster with valuable new roles and key people, such as our new commercial manager and the COO.

"Also, our collaboration with industry experts, such as Lorien McKenna, further reinforce our commitment to delivering exceptional experiences and cement our position as a trusted leader in the attractions industry."

As the company forges ahead, its commitment to innovation and storytelling excellence ensures its presence in the industry will only grow stronger, delighting audiences worldwide for years to come. ●

**More:** [www.attractionsmanagement.com/RedRaion](http://www.attractionsmanagement.com/RedRaion)

# Product Innovation

Suppliers tell *Attractions Management* about their latest product, design and technology news

For the latest supplier news and company information, visit [attractions-kit.net](http://attractions-kit.net)

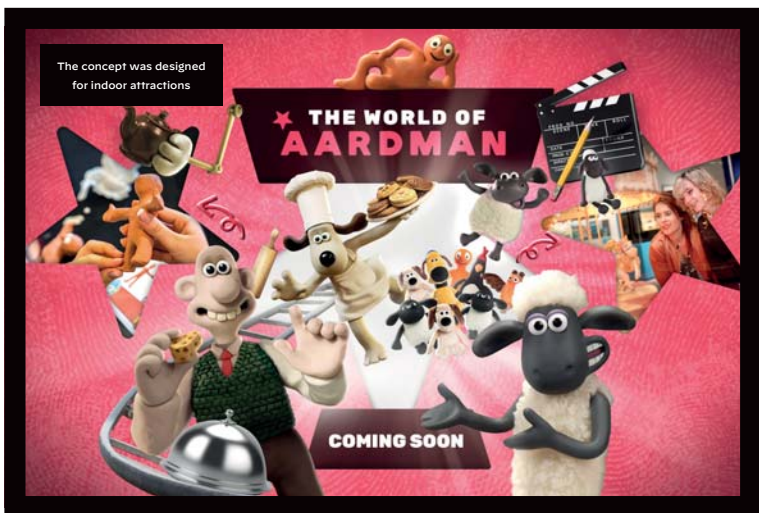


PHOTO: AARDMAN ANIMATIONS

## Aardman and Katapult launch new attraction concept at IAAPA Expo Asia 2023

International themed attraction and experience designer Katapult and animation studio Aardman launched a new themed attraction concept at IAAPA Expo Asia in Singapore, featuring Aardman's much-loved characters.

*The World of Aardman* is a hands-on visitor attraction concept, featuring an interactive studio experience, a themed cafe, experiential retail, and photo opportunities with guests' favourite characters.

Designed to suit pre-existing retail mall units and indoor destinations, the attraction can also be used to

showcase exclusive seasonal events and product releases, as well as tying in with promotional initiatives across Aardman's studio schedule.

"We're delighted to bring to market a truly unique and authentic Aardman experience, alongside Katapult," said Aardman's head of attractions & live experiences, Ngalo Harding-Hill.

"From Shaun the Sheep to Wallace and Gromit, our characters are globally recognised and beloved. The opportunity to bring our fans closer to their favourite IPs is what we want to achieve with this visitor attraction.

"We're really excited to be launching 'The World of Aardman' in Singapore at IAAPA Expo Asia, where we also shared more insights with delegates on the design and operations of the attraction."

Co-founder and CEO of Katapult, Dawn Foote, said: "It's been a pleasure to collaborate and create this exciting project with Aardman. We share the ambition to inspire people through creativity and we welcome conversations with interested parties."

[attractions-kit](http://attractions-kit.net) keyword

Aardman



Triotech has teamed up with SEVEN

## Triotech to design Transformers dark rides for SEVEN

Interactive attractions creator Triotech has announced that it is designing and building multiple dark rides for Saudi Entertainment Ventures (SEVEN), a wholly owned subsidiary of the Public Investment Fund (PIF), based on the Transformers IP.

The deal sees Triotech developing Transformers-based dark rides for

SEVEN's flagship venue in Riyadh city, as well as for several other entertainment destinations across the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

According to the creators, "The Transformers attractions will feature thrilling state-of-the-art rides and captivating environments that will have guests fully immersed in the action-packed world of the iconic

brand. To complete the overall visitor experience, there will be branded retail, including specially developed merchandise, and themed food and beverage venues, leaving guests feeling as though they have stepped into the Transformers universe."

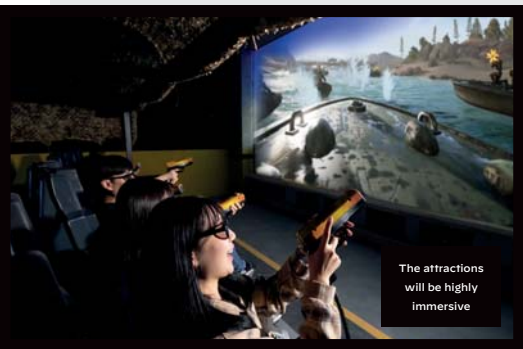
"We have an extensive track record in adapting global iconic IPs to interactive attractions which positions us as a partner of choice for SEVEN's Transformers projects in Saudi Arabia," said Ernest Yale, president and CEO of Triotech.

"Triotech will leverage its global leadership in immersive experiences to make this an experience that will bring the guests into the Transformers world."

Triotech, together with BoldMove Nation, recently launched a new interactive dark ride at the Le Pal theme park in France. The Champi'Folies ride is a compact interactive dark ride featuring the cutting-edge Smash & Reload attraction with TooMush theming.

attractions-kit keyword

Triotech



The attractions will be highly immersive

PHOTO: SEVEN



Maurer Rides staff  
tested the new  
Spike Fun coaster



PHOTO: MAURER RIDES

## Maurer Rides tests Spike Fun prototype at Germany's Skyline Park

Rollercoaster designer and manufacturer Maurer Rides gave its staff the chance to take part in an exclusive test run of the Spike Fun prototype at Skyline Park.

The Spike Fun, described by Maurer as "the world's first roller coaster with 45° rearward tilting seats," was put through its paces as test riders tried out its innovative tilting function and different seating positions, while recording their impressions of the ride.

Maurer reported that test riders were, "Impressed by the versatility and new riding experience offered by Spike Fun, especially the wheelie effect during acceleration – and in both forward and reverse directions."

During the wheelie, the seat tilts back during the launch, enhancing the sensation of acceleration. The testers were also reportedly impressed by the jump over the Camelback – during the jump,

the seat tilt compensates for the respective slope of the Camelback, so that the seat remains horizontally aligned during the descent. The passenger thus feels as if he or she is "jumping over the crest," and the rail is no longer visible to them.

The Spike Fun allows riders to interactively adjust their seat position, meaning each ride is experienced differently. The adjustment of the seat tilt can also be programme-controlled, for passengers that prefer a pre-tailored ride.

"The test run at Skyline Park was the first opportunity to explore the potential of the Spike Fun prototype while immersing ourselves in an invaluable learning experience," said a Maurer spokesperson. "These findings will fuel the ongoing evolution and optimisation of the product." ●

attractions-management keyword

Maurer Rides



PHOTO: MAURER RIDES

The Spike Fun's  
seat position  
can be adjusted



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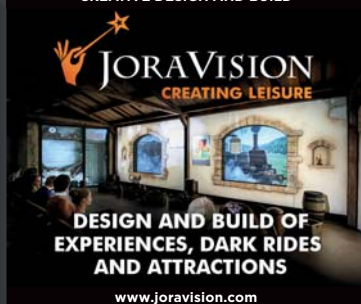
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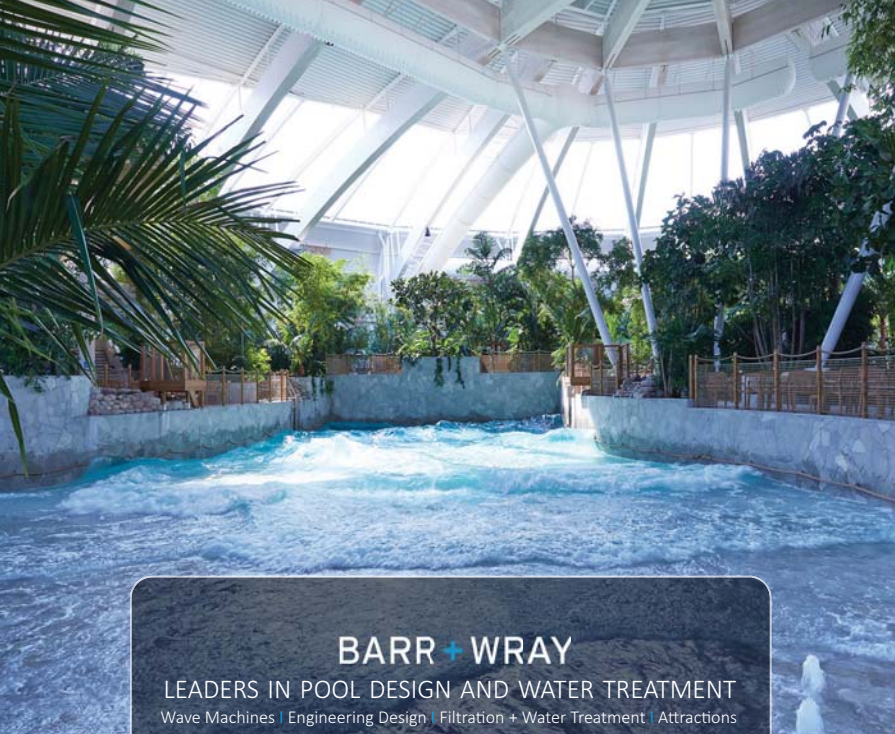


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