

TEA Honors Disney with Thea Awards

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla., Nov. 16, 2011 – The Themed Entertainment Association (TEA) recently announced recipients of its 18th annual Thea Awards, and Disney Theme Parks and Resorts received four honors, including a lifetime achievement award for Walt Disney Imagineer Joe Rohde.

The awards, which will be presented at a gala in March, recognize and honor excellence in the creation of extraordinary experiences, attractions, exhibits and places.

Rohde will receive the Buzz Price Thea Award, which recognizes a lifetime of distinguished achievements. Rohde, senior vice president and creative executive at Walt Disney Imagineering, has a Disney career spanning 30 years and most recently managed the creative development of Aulani, A Disney Resort and Spa, at Ko Olina O'ahu, Hawai'i, which opened in August. Rohde also led the team that conceptualized, designed and built Disney's Animal Kingdom.

Star Tours – The Adventures Continue, which opened at Disneyland Park and Disney's Hollywood Studios this summer, won an award for Outstanding Attraction Refresh. According to TEA, Disney successfully refreshed the attraction using new technology and Guest-interaction capabilities while remaining true to the fan-adored story of *Star Wars*.

The Magic, The Memories, and You!, the new projection show at Cinderella Castle inside Magic Kingdom Park, was named Outstanding Show Spectacular. The awards committee said the show is impressive on many levels, including its technology, visual creativity, adept directorial pacing and stirring musical score, which combine to deliver a "unique, emotionally fulfilling experience for the audience."

Lastly, TEA recognized Animation Magic in the Animator's Palate restaurant aboard the Disney Fantasy with an award for Ingenious Use of Technology. The Disney Cruise Line ship, which will set sail on its inaugural cruise in March of next year, will feature a one-of-a-kind experience for diners in which they will see their own hand-drawn characters come to life and interact with animated Disney characters on a screen.

TEA is an international nonprofit alliance founded in 1991 and based in Burbank, Calif., that represents some 7,000 creative specialists, including architects, designers, technical specialists and scenic fabricators, who work in more than 650 firms in 40 different countries.