

Cars Land, Carthay Circle Restaurant and Lounge, Aulani Disney Resort & Spa in Hawaii Take Themed Entertainment Awards

TEA Honors Go to Disneyland Resort Attractions, New Hawaiian Resort and Former Disney Imagineer

The newly expanded Disney California Adventure park at Disneyland Resort in California earned three honors at the 19th Thea Awards announced by the Themed Entertainment Association (TEA). Also honored was Aulani, a Disney Resort & Spa, the unique themed Disney hotel on the island of Oahu.

Disney California Adventure expansion opened to the general public in June 2012 with extensive new Cars Land and Buena Vista Street areas. Thea Awards went to **Cars Land** in the category of New Theme Park Land, to the premiere Cars Land attraction **Radiator Springs Racers** in the Attraction category, and to **Carthay Circle Restaurant and Lounge** on Buena Vista Street. in the Theme Park Restaurant category.

A fourth award, in the Themed Hotel Resort category, went to the new **Aulani, a Disney Resort & Spa, Ko Olina, Hawaii**. In addition, Frank Stanek, a former Disney Imagineer who contributed to the development of Epcot at Walt Disney World in Florida, Tokyo Disneyland and Disneyland Paris, was recognized with The Buzz Price Award – Recognizing a Lifetime of Distinguished Achievements.

The awards, to be presented April 6, 2013, at the Disneyland Hotel, pay tribute to excellence in the creation of extraordinary experiences, attractions, exhibits and places around the world. While technology, interactivity and sophistication of themed environments are key factors in presenting the awards, storytelling is at the heart of the best themed attractions.

Cars Land, inspired by the “Radiator Springs” setting of the Disney/Pixar movie “Cars,” represents one of the largest expansion projects ever created for a Disney theme park, a 12-acre addition to Disney California Adventure park. In its award citation, TEA noted, “Every element has been thoughtfully considered to maximize its character and story content,” and said, “From Flo’s V8 Café, Fillmore’s Taste-In and the Cozy Cone Motel to Sarge’s Surplus Hut, Radiator Springs Curios and Ramone’s House of Body Art, each has been created as its own distinct experience, drawn from the films and further inspired by the lore and legend of Route 66.” Also singled out for praise was “...the overwhelming scale of the rockwork panorama which frames the land...”

Radiator Springs Racers, the indoor-outdoor family oriented thrill ride in Cars Land, won a Thea for demonstrating “...true excellence in design, technical innovation and execution...The animated figures break new ground in creating the illusion of ‘live animation,’ and the technical elements, including special effects, sophisticated in-vehicle sound, and a sophisticated ride system have all been transparently integrated into the highly enjoyable story and experience.”

Located in Buena Vista Street, another major new addition to Disney California Adventure park, **Carthay Circle Restaurant and Lounge** is set in a reproduction of the historic Carthay Circle Theatre, where “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs” had its world premiere. Its Thea Award citation notes, “The high quality service, distinctive setting and cuisine in an exclusive-feeling environment make Carthay Circle Restaurant a truly outstanding achievement in a theme park.”

In the Themed Hotel Resort category, a Thea Award went to **Aulani, a Disney Resort & Spa, Ko Olina, Hawaii**. Aulani celebrates Hawaiian culture, history and tradition with rich mixture of design, service, amenities and storytelling, and the award citation recognized, "...rather than providing lodging in support of a theme park, the resort itself is the destination...The Aulani resort experience is one-of-a-kind."

Frank Stanek, former Corporate Vice President of Research and Planning for the Walt Disney Company, will receive The Buzz Price Award – Recognizing a Lifetime of Distinguished Achievements. During his years with Disney, Stanek provided background and analysis in the original development of Walt Disney World and the expansion of Disneyland, as well as Epcot, Tokyo Disneyland and Disneyland Paris. His wide-ranging professional career also includes developments for the City of Osaka and Universal. He remains active in the industry through his consulting company, Stanek Global Advisors.

TEA is an international non-profit 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 countries.

Media Contacts:

www.theaawards2013.blogspot.com

Judith Rubin Public Relations

rubin.judith@gmail.com

Gene Jeffers, TEA executive director

gene@teaconnect.org

Kathy Oliver, TEA events producer

kathy@teaconnect.org

Frank Reifsnyder, Communications Manager, Walt Disney/ Imagineering

Frank.reifsnyder@disney.com

818-544-2142