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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FORD'S "INTERNATIONAL GARDENS" A LITTLE FORD WORLD'S FAIR IN THEMSELVES

If New York World's Fair visitors saw nothing but the "International Gardens" in Ford's Wonder Rotunda, they would leave with the feeling of having seen a truly international exposition.

Here, in an air-conditioned oasis, they are free to wander among delightful, miniature "villages" and scenes that capture the essence of 11 nations of the world.

The gardens were created by Walt Disney, on commission from Ford Motor Company, to emphasize the company's expanding role as a worldwide enterprise. They form the first major attraction in the glass-walled Wonder Rotunda.

Ford guests walk hand-in-hand with history and legend. Authentic reproductions of buildings from five major periods of French architecture -- Roman Invasion to Republic -- look eastward across the Rhine to the castles of Germany.

In Colonial America, visitors see the Hasbrouck House of Newburgh, N. Y., where General Washington once made his headquarters, the Dutch Reformed Church near North Tarrytown, N. Y., of "Sleepy Hollow" fame, and many other reminders of America's past.

From the Aztec temples and conquistadors' homes of old Mexico to the 19th Century penal colonies of Australia, from the fishing villages of Malaya to the desert outposts of North Africa and the ruins of Ancient Rome, from the quaint churches of French Canada to the farmyards of Denmark -- the International Gardens illustrate the traditions of nations where Ford products are made or sold.

The authenticity of this portion of the Ford exhibit is due to months of diligent research by the staff of Disney's WED Enterprises, Inc., of Glendale, Calif. Researchers headed by John Hench, director of design, and archeologist and architecture student Ted Rich pored over volumes of source material. Then they designed the miniature villages just as modern city planners might do -- plot by plot.

For each of 11 countries they created a capsule village, using landmarks and typical buildings from many localities, in an attempt to capture the history and romance of an entire nation. Flowing streams, chiming clocks, spinning windmills and other animated elements add to the charm and realism.

Meanwhile, specially composed music by George Bruns is heard within each area, played in the style most familiar to that nation. Current model cars built by Ford in England, Germany, Canada, Italy, Australia, Mexico, and the United States are incorporated into each miniature nation.

Producing the International Gardens was a transcontinental operation.

In California, WED Enterprises draftsmen and illustrators drew up individual plans and painted full-color sketches. These, plus photographs of actual landmarks and buildings to be reproduced, went to model makers at Display and Exhibit Company in Detroit. Here, skilled craftsmen set about the meticulous task of rebuilding, by hand, the landmarks of the ages and duplicating the architecture in miniature.

Craftsmen laid half a million tiny "bricks" (cut from vinyl tile) on the streets of Europe. Cobblestones and castle steps were formed from alabaster quarried in northern Michigan.

More than 300,000 miniature shingles were formed from polyester plastic. Tiny panes for stained glass windows were colored through the action of alcohol on clear polyester. Delicate filigree for 19th Century Australian homes was etched on brass with hand-drawn patterns.

Plaster apples ripened in the orchards of early America. Autumn spangled the French Canadian countryside with gold and vermillion as leaves of crushed mica were sprayed with luminous paint.

The "gardens" were transported to the New York Fair site with delicate care befitting fine works of art. They were among the last displays installed in the Ford Wonder Rotunda, to keep their infinite detail fresh and immaculate for the enjoyment of Ford Fair guests.

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