

Ford Motor Company
News Bureau
New York World's Fair
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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MASTER SHOWMAN WALT DISNEY "IMAGINEERED" FORD WONDER ROTUNDA ATTRACTIONS

American industry and show business went to the New York World's Fair together. Walt Disney rode in a Ford.

Every industry or corporation with an exhibit at the Fair necessarily becomes involved in show business. Ford commissioned Disney, the master showman, to create major entertainment attractions for its Wonder Rotunda.

Curtain time at the Fair found Ford at center stage.

The Wonder Rotunda, aside from providing an enlightening and educational hour for Fair visitors, is good theater.

The Disney touch is almost everywhere in the Ford Pavilion. From the moment guests enter, they are surrounded by Disney-created "International Gardens" -- miniature reproductions gathered from 11 nations, with touches of animation that bring legends and landmarks to life. These and the other Disney attractions in the Ford Pavilion were designed by Disney's "imagineering" firm, WED Enterprises, Inc.

Chief among these is the "Magic Skyway" -- a ride in new Ford-built convertibles through time tunnels from the dawn of history to the threshold of tomorrow.

Scene after scene -- from the age of the dinosaurs to the cave man era and to the Space City made possible by today's technology -- all are animated with a new system Disney calls "Audio-Animatronics."

What is Audio-Animatronics? In the words of Walt Disney, it is "a new dimension and form of entertainment. The developments in recent years in space-age electronics gave us the opportunity to make our own break-through in entertainment."

A cave man in the Ford attraction, a Disney technician explained, will be driven by a magnetic tape machine from a control center. The sounds the cave man utters, the movements he makes with his lips, tongue and jaw, his brow contortions and hand gestures -- all are "programmed" onto magnetic tape.

As the tape plays the sounds through a speaker concealed in the cave men, each sound impulse triggers an air valve, shooting compressed air through plastic tubes connected to devices that work like muscles.

What looks like "instant evolution" required years of preparation and the combined talents of artists, researchers, sculptors, engineers, taxidermists and chemists.

"This isn't like putting a display in a store window," said Marc Davis, a WED art director. "These figures are 'working' a 14-hour day over a period of two seasons at the World's Fair. They almost have to 'stay alive' for two years. We had to make sure they would hold up under those New York tensions."

The Disney attractions introduce visitors to displays created by Ford stylists and scientists, and to showcases where Ford's collection of World's Fair dream cars are presented -- also in a theatrical atmosphere.

There's no business without show business at the Fair, and Ford and Disney get star billing.

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