

NEWS RELEASE

November 17, 2021

For Immediate Release



Fort Edmonton Park Indigenous Peoples Experience receives accolades with Thea Award

Recognizing outstanding themed entertainment and experience design worldwide

EDMONTON, AB - Fort Edmonton Park is thrilled to receive a *Thea Award for Outstanding Achievement - Heritage Center* for the new Indigenous Peoples Experience. The Thea Award program is internationally recognized for celebrating outstanding work on educational, historical and entertainment projects.

President and CEO of Fort Edmonton Management Company, Darren Dalglish says, "We are truly honoured with this award recognition, but without the support of our MOU partners none of this would have been possible. We want to express our deepest gratitude to the many Indigenous voices from the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations and the Métis Nation of Alberta for their partnership and collaboration in bringing this amazing experience to life. This transformative experience is a result of years of partnership, cooperation and deeper understanding between all parties. The Indigenous Peoples Experience at Fort Edmonton Park is a one-of-a-kind, immersive experience that engages our guests in Indigenous customs, and traditions and highlights the inspirational stories of First Nations and Métis people, who have resided on these lands for hundreds and thousands of years."

The Indigenous Peoples Experience was created through consultation with MOU Partners, the Métis Nation of Alberta and the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations, alongside Elders and community members. The exhibit explores the rich cultures of local First Nations and Métis Peoples while encouraging guests to seek out truths lived by Indigenous Peoples before and after Canada's founding. This opportunity to uplift Indigenous communities comes at a critical time in Canada's reconciliation with Indigenous people. It is the first exhibit of its kind in Canada.

"When I learned of the Thea award recognition for the Indigenous Peoples Experience at Fort Edmonton Park, I was not surprised at all," says Edmonton Mayor Amarjeet Sohi. "This exhibit is a breathtaking reflection of Indigenous communities in the sacred territory of Treaty Six. It is such an honour to have a space to share the rich history and legacy of the First Nations and Métis peoples who originally called this land home. Collaborative and inclusive leadership were the heart and soul of this project, and the committed partnership between the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations, the Métis Nation of Alberta and Fort Edmonton Management Company were the cornerstone. The Indigenous Peoples Experience at Fort Edmonton will continue to be a place of learning, of hope and of

reconciliation. Congratulations on the Thea Award and to everyone involved.”

Deep conversations with over fifty Indigenous Elders, historians, educators, and community members informed the content shared in the exhibit. The stories and artwork come directly from Indigenous perspectives gathered through engagement with over forty local Indigenous nations, historical documents, and research. Music was written and composed by local, award-winning, Indigenous musicians and performers through an artist residency. Local Indigenous interpreters greet guests and impart their own personal stories and history, adding unique depth to the experience. This shared knowledge does not just exist in the past, it is here today.

Stantec was appointed the portfolio project manager, representing the project owner to manage the design and construction of the Fort Edmonton Park expansion project portfolio. Stantec also performed work as the local Architect of Record under Nassal-nFusion, who was the Prime Consultant for the Indigenous Peoples Experience.

“We are so excited to have played a role in such an important project, for so many reasons,” says Heidi McGurk, Major Projects Lead, Stantec. “To see the Ingenious Peoples Experience at Fort Edmonton Park receive a Thea Award that honors heritage and history is a true honour. At the outset of this project, we focused on a collaborative approach to the creation of a space that would educate, spark conversation, and most importantly, recognize and celebrate the knowledge, culture and experience of Indigenous Peoples. We are humbled to have been provided an opportunity to listen to the stories of the Elders who contributed content to this important project.”

Martin Zurauskas, Managing Director of Nassal - nFusion stated “The Indigenous Peoples Experience demonstrates the timeless power of storytelling and empowering people to speak about their own culture. As Prime Consultant, our team was focused on developing and designing a platform to share this knowledge and culture in an engaging and accessible way and we are thrilled to be recognized by the Themed Entertainment Association.”

About the Thea Awards

The Thea Awards were created by the Themed Entertainment Association (TEA) to help realize a key mission of the association: bringing recognition to achievement, talent and personal excellence within the themed entertainment industry. From a modest beginning in 1994, the Thea Awards have become internationally recognized as a symbol of excellence. www.teaconnect.org.

About Fort Edmonton Park

Fort Edmonton Park began as a Centennial project in 1967 and has since been a mainstay of Edmonton’s river valley. Operated by Fort Edmonton Management Company for over ten years, Fort Edmonton Park is a multi-attraction space providing a gathering place for visitors and offering an immersive cultural experience. After closing for renovations in 2018, Fort Edmonton Park reopened in 2021 with multiple enhancements, including the addition of the Indigenous Peoples Experience.

The Indigenous Peoples Experience is open to the public until December 19th on Saturdays and Sundays from noon – 4 p.m. Streetcar transportation is available to and from the area. All other areas of Fort Edmonton Park will remain closed for the season including the midway, 1920 Street, 1905 Street and 1885 Street. For tickets visit fortedmontonpark.ca.

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