



For Immediate Release

THE TECH MUSEUM OF INNOVATION ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF THE VIRTUAL EXHIBIT CREATION CONTEST

Additional Awards Include "Best Of" \$1,000 Cash Prizes

SAN JOSE, Calif., April 17, 2008 -- The Tech Museum of Innovation (The Tech), one of the nation's premiere science and technology museums, announced the final group of winners of its virtual exhibit design competition in The Tech in Second Life®, also known as The Tech Virtual. Also announced were the special "Best of" \$1,000 cash prizes for Best in SL, Most Educational, Best Collaboration, Best Overall, Best Participant, and Best Teen SL virtual exhibits. The winners were announced in a virtual awards ceremony held at The Tech Island in a collaborative, open-source celebration. These awards are the culmination of a first-of-its-kind virtual exhibit creation initiative that is revolutionizing the exhibit conceptualization and development process.

Three additional virtual exhibits have been selected to be built and physically installed in the "real world" Tech Museum. These three exhibits join the first four winning "virtual-to-real" exhibits that were announced in March; all seven new exhibits will be unveiled at The Tech in conjunction with the O1SJ Global Festival of Arts on the Edge in June. The new exhibits will be the first in a new gallery at The Tech focused on the theme of the science and technology underpinnings of art, film and music. Previously announced virtual-to-real winners were "Wikisonic," "The Painter," "Musical Chairs," and "Connecting Point". The latest winners are:

- **Reprojecting San Jose** - Reprojecting San Jose was created by Richard Milewski, a San Jose-based photographer and former InfoWorld editor in chief. It explores the transformations involved in transforming flat photos into a 360 degree panorama.
- **Golden Age of MIDI** - Golden Age of MIDI was created by Nick Chen, digital musician and director of a music outreach program for schools. His design is an exploration of the Music Instrument Digital Interface, a standard that has lasted 25 years and is still going strong.
- **Tilty Table** - Tilty Table was conceptualized by Jason Nelson, digital artist and professor of digital poetics in Gold Coast, Australia. The exhibit lets visitors explore the artist's interpretation of "the spirit of Silicon Valley" with an intuitive mechanical interface.

The \$1,000 "Best Of" cash prize winners in the virtual museum include:

- **Rebirth (Best in SL)**
- **Soundscape (Most Educational)**
- **Characters Alive (Best Overall)**
- **Annie Obscure, Mars Voyager (Best Collaboration)**
- **Garvie Garzo (Best Participant)**

- **Rolling Ground of Color (Best Teen SL)**

For project descriptions, please visit www.thetechvirtual.org/projects.

“I have enjoyed this experience immensely,” said Richard Milewski, designer of Reprojecting San Jose. “The Tech Virtual in Second Life has provided a fun and revolutionary way for me to express my artistic abilities; I am still in disbelief that my design will be installed in such a prestigious museum gallery! This competition was truly groundbreaking and knocked down barriers for those of us who would never otherwise have the opportunity to exhibit in a museum.”

The Tech Virtual encompasses a replica of The Tech’s San Jose facility in Second Life, including a creative common area where people can work together on exhibit concepts (called Parkside Hall); and a collaboration website called The Tech Virtual Museum Exhibit Workshop (www.thetechvirtual.org), designed to facilitate projects and community connections. The Tech’s use of Second Life’s platform to build, test and launch new exhibition content serves as a model and a hands-on opportunity for other museums interested in experimenting with new methods for creating content and is open to everyone.

“This initiative has proven how successful the ‘open source’, collaborative design and development approach can be when applied to the creation of innovative new museum content,” said Peter Friess, president of The Tech. “We’ve been fortunate to attract an incredibly diverse community of creative people to this program; they have helped us validate a whole new way to undertake the exhibit design process. For us, the result has been seven new educational and interactive exhibits on a theme that represents significant Silicon Valley technological innovation—Art, Film & Music. For the museums community, I hope the result is a model for effectively using virtual worlds and the open source concept to develop new and provocative content.”

The international panel of judges involved in The Tech Virtual competition was comprised of an impressive group of international curators, exhibit designers, scientists and experts, including:

- Terry Beaubois, University of Montana
- Sarah Cole, Indianapolis Children’s Museum
- Steve Dietz, Zero1 Festival
- Paul Doherty, Exploratorium
- Jeremy Kemp, San Jose State University
- Henry Lowood, Stanford University
- Emily Ma, IDEO
- Alan Nursall, NextExhibits
- Dave Patten, London Science Museum
- Eric Siegel, New York Hall of Science
- Joseph Wisne, Roto Studios
- Denise Wood, University of South Australia

The Tech Virtual, which can be found at The Tech island in Second Life (slurl: <http://tinyurl.com/3x7bf7>), is no longer accepting new exhibits for this contest, but plans to continue the open source virtual community with new exhibition themes to be announced at the end of April.

The Tech has also initiated an identical competition within Teen Second Life, in conjunction with the Global Kids’ Digital Media Initiative, offering cash prizes for collaboration and participation. Winning Teen Second Life exhibits will also be invited to exhibit in the physical museum in June.

**THE TECH MUSEUM OF INNOVATION ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF THE VIRTUAL EXHIBIT CREATION CONTEST
PAGE 3**

The Tech's virtual exhibition creation initiative in Second Life is funded by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation.

About The Tech Museum of Innovation

The Tech Museum of Innovation is a hands-on technology and science museum for people of all ages and backgrounds. Located in San Jose, California - the Capital of Silicon Valley - its mission, as a public-benefit corporation, is to inspire the innovator in everyone. Through hands-on exhibits, educational programs, the annual Tech Challenge team competition for youth, and the internationally recognized Tech Museum Awards, presented by Applied Materials, Inc., The Tech Museum of Innovation honors the past, celebrates the present, and encourages the development of innovative ideas for a more promising future. For more information about The Tech Museum of Innovation, visit www.thetech.org.

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