

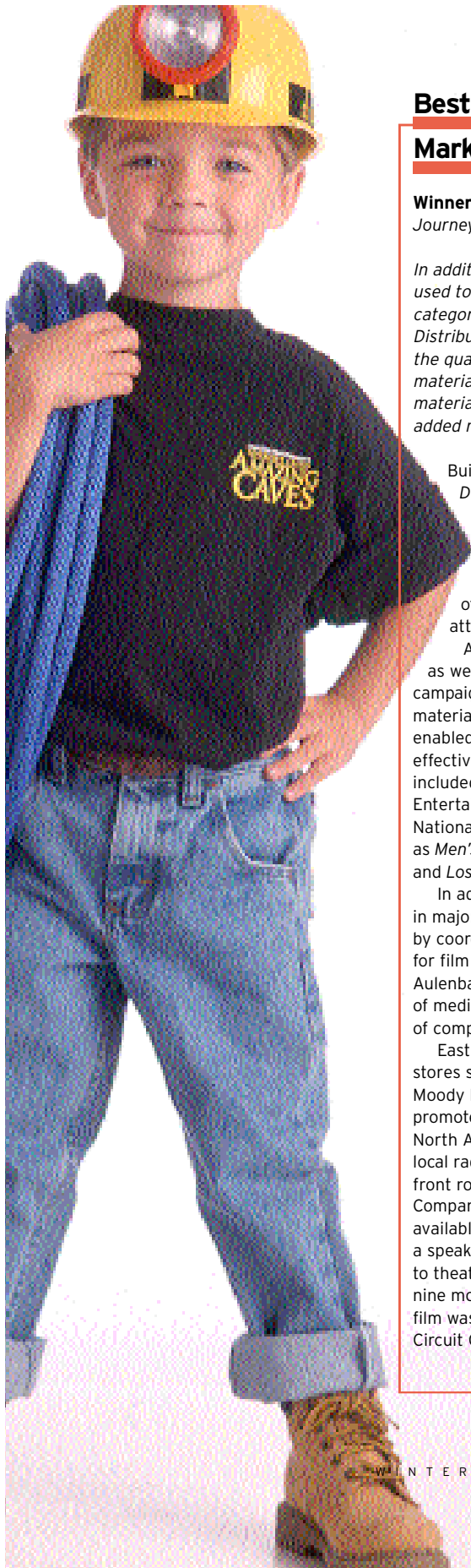
# 2001 GSTA Marketing, Achievement and Creativity (MAC) Awards

by Kelly Germain

## The MAC Awards

recognize marketing achievement and creativity in the giant screen industry, with the goal of encouraging industry excellence. Established in 1997 to create a forum for the exchange of ideas from members around the globe, the awards honor exceptional marketing campaigns which have been developed for both film and theater launches. Entries are judged on the campaign's goals, strategies, tactics and marketing components; the quality and creativity of the marketing materials, including advertising, publicity, promotions, sponsorships; and an evaluation of the program's results. Congratulations to the 2001 award winners.





## Best Film Distributor's Marketing Award

**Winner:** MacGillivray Freeman Films  
*Journey Into Amazing Caves*

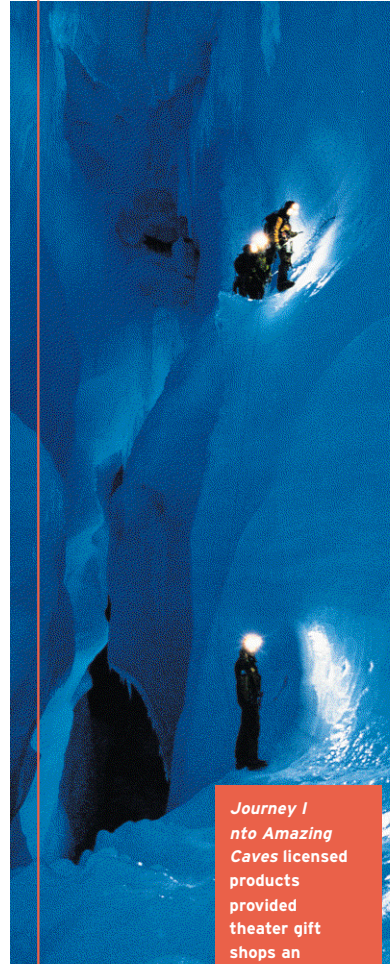
*In addition to the criteria used to judge the other categories, the Best Film Distributor's Marketing Award also is based on the quality and creativity of the educational material, the usefulness of the marketing materials, with bonus points given for value-added marketing support and sponsorships.*

Building upon the success of *Everest* and *Dolphins*, MacGillivray Freeman Films' (MFF) marketing goals for *Journey Into Amazing Caves* were to generate awareness before the film's opening; motivate attendance and generate box office revenue; and prompt school attendance bookings.

A high level of publicity and promotion, as well as the availability of advertising campaign elements and educational outreach materials well in advance of the film's release enabled theater exhibitors to market the film effectively. A national publicity campaign included exposure on CNN, NBC, E! Entertainment Television, Fox News Channel, National Public Radio, and in publications such as *Men's Journal*, *Wired*, *The New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times*.

In addition, MFF worked with exhibitors in major media markets to generate publicity by coordinating a 27-city promotional tour for film talent Hazel Barton and Nancy Aulenbach. The cavers conducted hundreds of media interviews and signed thousands of companion books.

Eastman Kodak and Galyan's Outdoor retail stores supported the film with promotions. The Moody Blues, who provided music for the film, promoted the soundtrack during their 17-city North American tour, and theaters could offer local radio stations a giveaway package of two front row seats to a Moody Blues concert. Companion books and licensed products were available at theater gift shops and bookstores, a speaker series program was made available to theaters, an official web site was launched nine months prior to the film's release and the film was featured for the month of May at Circuit City and Sears stores.



*Journey Into Amazing Caves* licensed products provided theater gift shops an opportunity to increase sales while offering audiences a souvenir of the film.



## Best Theater Launch



**(Top)** IMAX Auckland's themed gala event included appearances by Aracelli Segarra, Lady June Hillary, Sir Edmund Hillary and a Dalai Lama representative to coincide with the opening film, *Everest*.

**(Above)** Dalai Lama representatives, Aracelli, Suzie Cameron, and delegates from Friends of Tibet helped make the event Auckland's social event of the year.

**(Left)** The theater also established a retail outlet at the theater entrance, offering both generic and film-branded merchandise.

**Winner:** IMAX Auckland, New Zealand

With virtually no existing giant screen brand awareness in their part of the world, the biggest challenge for IMAX Auckland, New Zealand, was educating the public on what all the fuss was about. In addition, their goals were to build a management team capable of delivering expected results, deliver on the fiscal goals and establish the theater as part of the fabric of the community.

The campaign involved developing the tourism and education markets, implementing a word of mouth preview program, establishing a retail outlet and launching the theater with Auckland's social event of the year. Opening with the film *Everest*, the themed gala event was attended by many prominent New Zealanders and included an appearance by native New Zealander Sir Edmund Hillary, who, in 1953, along with Sherpa Tenzig Norgay, was the first to reach the summit of Mt. Everest.

The results? Nearing the launch date it was generally agreed that the average Aucklander could not get through a day without being exposed to some mention of IMAX; IMAX had become a media darling.

In January 1999, IMAX had zero brand awareness in New Zealand. Three weeks after the theater launch in August, 92% of respondents to a poll taken at an annual New Zealand sports expo had heard of IMAX Auckland. At the conclusion of the launch phase, theater admissions exceeded targets by 43%, revenue exceeded targets by 44%, there were over 71,000 paid admissions in the first month of opening, and IMAX Auckland held 13% of the New Zealand box office.





## Best Film Launch by a Theater



**Winner:** Louisville Science Center,  
Louisville, Kentucky, USA  
*Michael Jordan to the Max*

Launched by the Louisville Science Center IMAX Theatre in January 2001 during college basketball season, *Michael Jordan to the Max* was a natural fit for the Louisville market, but it also provided an opportunity for the theater to introduce itself to new audiences and more diverse demographic groups.

The overall marketing objectives were to achieve attendance and revenue goals by positioning *Michael Jordan to the Max* as an entertaining film with important messages and educational value and to promote it as a “must see” at the Louisville Science Center IMAX Theatre.

The advertising campaign included original work using most of the graphics provided by Giant Screen Films. Local NBA and NCAA basketball celebrities participated in opening events; community leaders rallied to support the film; a premiere opening committee raised \$11,000, which was used to underwrite 2,400 students, giving them the opportunity to experience *Michael Jordan to the Max* and the messages the film has to offer. Promotions continued through March, including a special visit from Evander Holyfield, world heavyweight boxing champion, during which he spoke to a group of 200 students about values and goals following a private showing of the film.

The campaign achieved impressive, measurable results. Revenue for IMAX ticket sales totaled nearly \$25,000 more than budgeted during January, February and March; evening attendance on Friday and Saturday increased 22 percent over the prior year; and there was a dramatic increase in attendance from audiences not typically drawn to the institution.

The Louisville Science Center also obtained over \$150,000 of in-kind advertising sponsorship through three media partners. The original commitment was for \$100,000 (net) total, but in the end they received \$100,000 in television spots from WDRB, a local TV station; \$40,000 in radio spots from Blue Chip Broadcasting; and \$10,000 from the *Courier-Journal*. In addition to these advertising commitments, each partner provided other promotions as well.



**(Top)** The campaign utilized graphic images provided by Giant Screen Sports to create pieces such as the bus tail shown above.

**(Above)** Media sponsorships included \$40,000 in radio spots.

**(Below)** Sports heroes and local celebrities made appearances during the campaign, including World heavyweight boxing champion Evander Holyfield.



## Special Judges' Award for Outstanding Promotion

**Winner:** Johnson IMAX Theater, National Museum of Natural History, Washington, D.C.  
Friday Night Holiday Festival



With the objective of generating incremental attendance and revenue, the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History Friday Night Festival was deemed a success, with over 200,000 people attending over the course of five Friday evenings during the 2000 holiday season. During the festival, the museum stayed open late so guests could visit the exhibitions, shop, enjoy special entertainment, dine in the Atrium café and see the film *Cirque du Soleil: Journey of Man*.

In addition to the permanent collection, visitors were able to visit the special exhibits *Buccellati: Art in Gold, Silver and Gems* and *Dresden Green Diamond*. Museum stores were filled with seasonal and gift merchandise, and craftspeople and authors were available to explain and personalize their work.

**(Above) Cirque du Soleil: Journey of Man served as the centerpiece to the Smithsonian's Friday Night Festival, with 9,000 people viewing the film during the course of the festival.**

Entertainment included jazz bands, choral groups, student bands, magicians, clowns and Chinese lion dancers. Children were able to decorate a giant gingerbread Smithsonian castle, and the completed

castle was donated to the Children's Inn at the U.S. National Institutes of Health.

The highlight of the evening was *Cirque du Soleil: Journey of Man*. All three scheduled shows sold out each night, so a fourth show was added, which also sold out. In total, 9,000 people attended the film during the festival. In addition, ticket prices for the festival were \$8 instead of the regular \$6.50.

The festival was sponsored by Discover Card, which offered excellent promotional opportunities and additional advertising coverage.

The extensive campaign, which included media coverage and advertising in addition to the sponsorship, generated over 9 million impressions.



**(Right) Children decorated a gingerbread Smithsonian Castle, which was donated to charity after the festival.**

## Special Judges' Award for Outstanding Advertising

**Winner:** Maloka Science Center  
Bogota, Colombia  
Everest Promotion

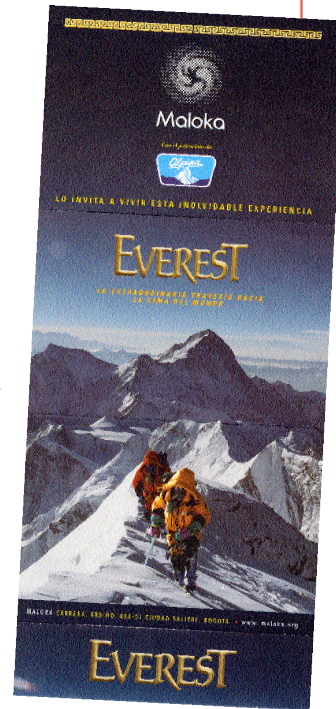
The principal objectives of the Maloka Science Center's promotion of *Everest* were twofold: to inspire the Colombia community that it is possible to achieve challenging goals and to provide support to the team of Colombian mountain climbers attempting to reach the summit of Everest in May 2001.

With the theme "Reaching Everest is as easy as going to Maloka's Dome Cinema," the campaign featured television commercials, radio spots, print ads and a premiere event with a mountain climbing theme that was carried by local news broadcasts and covered by 30 members of the media. Guests included Colombia's First Lady, India's ambassador to Colombia, the Colombian Everest 2001 Expedition team, as well as many political and industry leaders.

Maloka's public square was decorated with high-mountain camping tents that simulated the base camp of Everest, and the stairs leading to the theater were decorated with phrases that motivated people to set challenging goals. In addition to conferences and workshops related to the film, restaurant and workshop areas were adorned with artificial snow, mist, mountain animals, climbing equipment and Tibetan prayer flags.

Attendance at the event exceeded expectations. Originally planning three screenings with a total of 942 attendees, Maloka added a fourth show to the night's schedule. By the end of the evening, 1,500 viewers had seen the film.

**The invitation to Maloka's Everest event invited attendees to take part in an expedition and come wearing winter clothing.**



## Special Judges' Award for Outstanding Promotion

**Winner:** Entergy IMAX Theatre  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
Heroes to the Max Event

Playing off the theme "Up Close Some Heroes Get Even Bigger," the New Orleans' Entergy IMAX Theatre VIP event "Heroes to the Max," hosted in conjunction with the film *Michael Jordan to the Max*, recognized real life heroes within the community. The event combined public relations, marketing and community relations to recognize athletes, community leaders, volunteers and representatives from local nonprofit organizations, with community leaders invited to bring a hero from within their ranks to be part of the evening.

Honorary co-chairmen for the event were New Orleans Mayor Marc Morial and Archie Manning, former quarterback for the New Orleans Saints football team. Keeping with the sports theme, special honored guests for the evening were New Orleans athletes and coaches who have made an impact as players, coaches and students. While focusing on minority groups, the invitation list was broad based and community wide.

Each guest was treated as a VIP for the evening, greeted by staff upon entering the theater and given a medallion commemorating the event. Special guests of honor were given plaques with their names and the catch phrase from the movie promotion: "Up Close Some Heroes Get Even Bigger," plus the name and date of the event. A corporate sponsor, HCA Healthcare, underwrote a portion of the event.

The VIP event was not designed as a media event, but rather an awareness-building event for the community. While some local television sports reporters covered the evening, news editorial coverage was not the primary driver for the event.

However, *Michael Jordan to the Max* received outstanding news editorial coverage, which increased the exposure of the film and the theater to the key influencers who were targeted for the VIP evening event.



**Entergy's Heroes to the Max event combined public relations, marketing and community relations, resulting in a highly visible, extremely successful VIP event. Guests were given medals to commemorate the event. New Orleans athletes and coaches who serve as role models and community leaders were also recognized.**



## Special Judges' Award for Outstanding Advertising

**Winner:** St. Louis Science Center  
Omnimax, St. Louis, Missouri  
*Whales* Promotion

On September 8, 2000, the film *Whales* opened at the St. Louis Science Center Omnimax. At the same time, whales invaded the St. Louis area. The people of St. Louis started seeing six-foot whales in the fountains of downtown and in the lakes of the popular St. Louis attraction, Forrest Park. They also couldn't help but notice the whale wearing a St. Louis Science Center T-shirt walking around downtown, appearing at various St. Louis locations. The St. Louis Science Center marketing department planted over 50, six-foot inflatable whales displaying the Science Center logo in prime locations of St. Louis. A member of the marketing team also wore a whale suit and appeared at various locations downtown. In addition, one of the most popular radio stations in town broadcast from these whale appearances and distributed passes to the film, plush whale toys and other whale prizes. A television and radio spot, complete with whales discussing the film, rounded out the campaign.

[Add scan of  
Whales  
collateral]

**Whales popped up in various St. Louis locations during the promotion of the film *Whales* at the St. Louis Science Center Omnimax.**

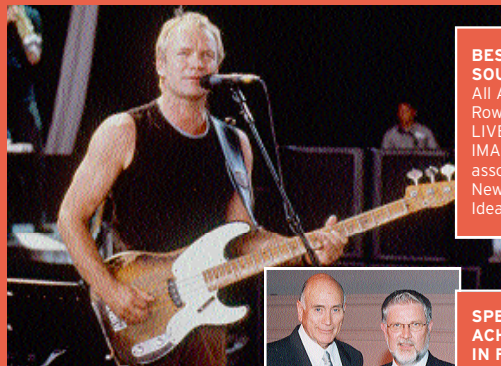
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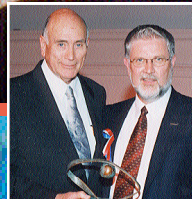
**BEST FILM**  
*Shackleton's Antarctic Adventure*  
A presentation of Morgan Stanley White Mountain Films and NOVA/WGBH Boston



**BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY**  
Reed Smoot for *Shackleton's Antarctic Adventure*  
A presentation of Morgan Stanley White Mountain Films and NOVA/WGBH Boston



**BEST SOUNDTRACK**  
All Access. Front Row. Backstage. LIVE!  
IMAX Corporation in association with NewMarket and Ideal Entertainment



**SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT IN FILM AWARD**  
David Keighley, DKP 70mm Inc.



**LIFELONG LEARNING AWARD**  
*Dolphins MacGillivray Freeman Films*

This is the first year this category has been included in the GSTA film awards and is presented to the film best representing the development and presentation of giant screen film experiences from a lifelong learning point of view.