



Contact: Lynda Bramble 215.448.1176
Stefanie Cerulli 215.448.1152

THE FRANKLIN UNVEILS NEW CUTTING-EDGE THEATER ***New Theatrical Experience Features 3-D and Blu-Ray Digital Projection Capabilities***

Philadelphia, PA, -- **February 21, 2008** – The Franklin, Pennsylvania’s most-visited museum, has announced the completion of an extensive renovation of its auditorium. Previously a lecture hall, the space will be re-named **Franklin Theater**, and will feature **3-D and hi-def Blu-Ray digital projection capabilities**. The new theatrical experience and **ribbon-cutting ceremony will take place at 7:00 PM Friday, February 29**, with showings of the newly-released concert film, **U2 3D**, at 4PM, 5:45PM, 7:30PM (for press & public), 9:15PM and 11PM. The Franklin Theater’s core mission is to showcase educational films during daytime hours, both during the week and on weekends. Additionally, the Theater will be able to program a mix of technologically forward films geared towards the adult theater-going audience for weeknights and weekends, such as *U2 3D*. The Franklin Theater joins the science center’s cutting-edge Tuttleman IMAX giant dome theater and Fels Planetarium experiences.

“We are proud to be the home of three unique and immersive theatrical settings,” said **Dennis Wint**, President and CEO of The Franklin Institute. *“This newest renovation is part of The Franklin’s ongoing evolution as a cultural destination delivering exceptional experiences that educate and inspire.”*

The Franklin Institute now houses three cutting-edge theaters – the **Tuttleman IMAX Dome Theater**, **Franklin Theater** and the **Fels Planetarium**, each providing unique theater-going experiences. Additional elements of the Franklin Theater’s renovation include 11-speaker 5.1 surround sound, new seating, carpeting, energy-efficient lighting and acoustical treatments. The Theater décor, themed to resemble its original look from the early 1930s, will include newly re-furbished murals of historic scientists from The Franklin’s collections. Franklin Theater will be home to educational 3D short films during the day, premiering “Bugz” and “3DSun” when it opens for school groups on Friday, February 29th. Show times are as follows for that date: 12noon- 3D Sun/12:30pm Bugz/1pm 3D Sun/1:30pm Bugz.

About U2 3D

U2 3D is the first *live-action movie ever shot, produced, and exhibited in digital 3D*. Marrying innovative digital 3D imagery and multi-channel surround sound with the excitement of a U2 concert.

U2 3D places viewers within the pulsing energy of a stadium concert given by one of the world's most popular bands – while establishing a new standard in 3-D digital technology. Directed by **Catharine Owens**, U2's visual content director, and **Mark Pellington**, who directed U2's "One" video, *U2 3D* transforms a series of concerts from the band's *Vertigo World Tour* into a completely new entertainment experience. The film, produced by 3Ality Digital and distributed by National Geographic Entertainment, is rated "G" for general audiences with all ages admitted.

Opening Evening Events for Franklin Theater

One week following the official opening, on Friday evening, **March 7th**, the Franklin Theater will serve as the site for a special evening with **WMMR-FM's, Pierre Robert**, who will host a *U2 trivia contest*. Tickets are \$7.00 and are currently on sale. Check local listings or www.fi.edu for specific times.

Additional theater offerings

Beginning the **weekend of March 14**, The Franklin will offer special Sci-Fi programming in the Franklin Theater, that will run through May 9th, coinciding with the closing of the current exhibit, "Star Wars: Where Science Meets Imagination." Coupled with these films will be prominent guest speakers who has some connection: For example, author and renowned physicist, **Michio Kaku** will speak on the **weekend of March 21st** in tandem with the screening of "*Physics of the Impossible: A Scientific Exploration into the World of Phasers, Force Fields, Teleportation and Time Travel.*" Other film/dates will be announced in the weeks to come.

Press Screenings

Members of the press interested in attending special screenings on **Friday, February 29th at 10:00 AM and 7:30 PM** should contact Lynda Bramble at 215.448.1176 - L Bramble@fi.edu or Stefanie Cerulli at 215.448.1152 scerulli@fi.edu.

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Founded in honor of America's first scientist, Benjamin Franklin, The Franklin Institute is a renowned and innovative leader in the field of science and technology learning, as well as a dynamic center of activity. Welcoming 1.75 million visitors in 2007, it is dedicated to creating a passion for science by offering new and exciting access to science and technology in ways that would dazzle and delight its namesake. For more information, please visit www.fi.edu.