



NEWS

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Magical Spectacles Appear at San Francisco Airport Museums

New Exhibition Focuses on Optical Entertainment of the Precinema Era

SAN FRANCISCO -- A new exhibition on view at San Francisco International Airport, *Magical Spectacles: Optical Entertainment of the Precinema Era*, explores the various optical devices used for entertainment prior to the birth of cinema.

Featuring approximately 70 objects from the 1700s through the early 1900s, the exhibition traces the development of precinema optical entertainment. The earliest device featured, a Miniature Theatre from the 1700s, exemplifies early efforts to create three-dimensional perspective. Later apparatuses such as the folioscope, praxinoscope, zoetrope and stereoscope demonstrate the technological advances of sequential visual media and projection.

The exhibition also includes a number of nineteenth century magic lanterns and slides. One of the most popular forms of visual entertainment from the mid- eighteenth century onward, these devices consisted of a projection light, lenses and slides - simple mechanisms by today's standards - to create images that viewers often considered magical. Animation in the form of hand-drawn lantern slides was a popular theme later incorporated into the world of cinema.

Magical Spectacles is on exhibit through April 2003. Located pre-security in Gallery F-9 on the Arrivals/Baggage Claim Level of Terminal 3, the exhibition is free of charge and open to the public twenty-four hours per day.

The San Francisco Airport Museums program was established by the Airport Commission in 1980 for the purposes of humanizing the Airport environment, providing visibility for the unique cultural life of San Francisco, and providing educational services for the traveling public. Today, the San Francisco Airport Museums features twenty galleries throughout the Airport terminals displaying a rotating schedule of art, history, science, and cultural exhibitions. A permanent collection dedicated to the history of commercial aviation, the San Francisco Airport Commission Aviation Library and Louis A. Turpen Aviation Museum, is located in the International Terminal, open Sunday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., closed Sundays and holidays.

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