

# MEDIA RELEASE



Museum Victoria receives one of the highest honours for interactive media at the AIMIA (Australian Interactive Media Industry Association) Awards in Sydney.

## National accolade for Museum's state-of-the-art exhibit

**SYDNEY, 6 February 2004** - Australia's leading industry body for interactive media, the Australian Interactive Media Industry Association (AIMIA) this evening announced Museum Victoria has won the Best New Digital Content category for *The Virtual Room* at its tenth annual awards.

*The Virtual Room*, a world first visualisation laboratory, is an octagon of screens that gives visitors to Melbourne Museum a three dimensional insight into a range of complex systems and scientific principles. It is one of the few displays in the world where people can experience what it's like to be transported to other times, places and realities. The popular exhibit serves to captivate the imagination of young people, enhance their learning experiences and encourage them to pursue careers in science and technology.

One of the unique aspects of the display is it allows visitors to experience a changing perspective as they walk around the content of *The Virtual Room*. The audience is provided with the illusion that the entity (such as a dinosaur or an ancient city) is physically contained within the confines of the eight screens. An exciting soundscape ensures visitors feel as if they are completely immersed in the environment they see before them. It also gives the public the chance to see cutting edge Victorian research results in areas as diverse as nanotechnology, medical imaging and astronomy. Future developments include the configuration of the system to an interactive state through the use of wands and motion tracking devices.

Mr Tim Hart, Director, Information Multimedia and Technology, Museum Victoria said "We are delighted to receive such an acknowledgement from AIMIA, Australia's leading industry body for interactive media. *The Virtual Room* is a unique development and has tremendous educational, export and technology diffusion potential. It is an opportunity to provide a state of the art showcase of Victoria's virtual reality abilities to a broad audience and represents the latest in scientific visualisation technologies which we are pleased to present to the public at Melbourne Museum. It is a tremendous acknowledgement of a collaborative approach by a number of partners resulting in the creation of a unique and exciting product."

The Virtual Room has established Museum Victoria and its project partners as world leaders in the development of educational visualisation. *The Virtual Room* project is a partnership between Adacel Technology, Monash University, RMIT, Swinburne University, Melbourne University and Museum Victoria.

The AIMIA Awards recognises Australia's leading interactive media companies across 16 award categories. Recognition by the Australian Interactive Media Industry Association Awards cements Museum Victoria's position as a world-leader in multimedia exhibits within the museum sector and educational institutions.

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