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**Victory Theater is high tech, history and Hollywood  
Immersive theatrics, digital effects and star power combine to convey the  
authentic epic of WWII in *Beyond All Boundaries***

**NEW ORLEANS** (May 7, 2009) – When it opens November 6, The National World War II Museum’s new Victory Theater will be unlike any other venue, showcasing an experience unlike anything else on the planet.

The theater’s 120-foot wide immersive screen will show *Beyond All Boundaries*, a 4-D cinematic experience, eight times daily. Created and crafted with 21st-century technology, it plunges viewers into the 20th-century’s most titanic struggle. It tells the tale of the Greatest Generation’s journey from Pearl Harbor into the fire of epic battles to America’s final victory in the War That Changed the World in the words of the veterans themselves. The exclusive production features the voices of some of Hollywood’s top stars.

True to history it is, but to appeal to the broadest possible audience – from the Greatest Generation to Gen Y – the Museum brought in Hollywood technicians to create a jaw-dropping experience in 4-D, a technique that engages all the audience’s senses with digital effects, life-sized props, animation, and atmospherics as well as film and sound. Audiences will feel the tank treads rumbling across North Africa’s deserts, brush snow from their cheeks during the wintery Battle of the Bulge, and flinch as anti-aircraft fire tries to bring down their B-17 on a bombing run over Nazi Germany.

*Beyond All Boundaries* was produced by Phil Hettema, onetime Senior Vice President, Attraction Development for Universal Studios and President of the Hettema Group. The Los Angeles-based studio specializes in crafting immersive entertainment for Hollywood movie studios and dynamic museum exhibits such as those at Chicago’s Museum of Science and Industry and the Constitution Center in Philadelphia. When approached by The National World War II Museum, the heralded production team eagerly agreed to work with the New Orleans institution. The reasons were as personal as they were professional.

"From the moment we became involved with this project we knew it was a really important story to tell," Hetteema said. "Most of the team had personal connections to the war. My dad flew a B-17 over Germany and practically everyone had a relative or friend who was involved in it. *Beyond All Boundaries* is really the story of how America came of age and became the nation we know today. It's vital we make sure the story gets told in a way that will live on for future generations."

In the quest for historic accuracy, the Museum and the *Beyond All Boundaries* team researched the world's great film archives to uncover rare footage. "Viewers will be excited to see that we've gone beyond the typical World War II footage," said Seth Paridon, Manager of Research Services for The National World War II Museum. Paridon and his staff spent years going through film archives to secure rarely viewed footage that has been often overlooked by filmmakers and documentarians for a truly unique experience. Leading historians, such as Don Miller, also consulted on the historic production.

This project challenged Hetteema's skilled technicians to incorporate authentic props into the experience. To broadcast news of Pearl Harbor, for example, the script called for a 1940s radio. Hetteema's subcontractors located a manufacturer who produced a vintage speaker pattern fabric from the World War II era to use in its construction. A concentration camp guard tower is based on the design of actual towers at Buchenwald and Auschwitz.

Other props were painstakingly researched, constructed, and then coordinated by banks of computers to merge seamlessly with the action unfolding on screen. Some even rise, literally, from the floor, hidden in an 18-foot-deep pit, or descend from the Theater's ceiling. The result is an armchair seat to history told in a way far removed from history books. And this armchair rumbles when the tanks come through.

"What the audience will see in front of them really happened," says Gordon H. "Nick" Mueller, President and CEO of The National World War II Museum. "Be it digital animation, a celebrity voiceover in the first person, or actual historical video and audio, visitors can't get any closer to the actual war experience than inside The Victory Theater."

As thrilling as *Beyond All Boundaries* is, the experience is only one part of the Museum's quest to educate their patrons' senses. The complex also houses the 150-seat Stage Door Canteen entertainment venue and a full-service restaurant and bar called The American Sector by Chef John Besh, a James Beard award-winning talent.

The Museum will be opening three new attractions on November 6 as part of their overall expansion plans: The Victory Theater; The American Sector, a Chef John Besh restaurant; and The Stage Door Canteen, a dining and entertainment venue that salutes the stars of the war years and the Home Front. The opening weekend red carpet extravaganza will be attended by Hollywood celebrities led by Tom Hanks and Tom Brokaw, and many World War II military veterans and their families, active military, and others.

**The Hetteema Group** team consists of experienced designers, illustrators, master planners, architects, engineers, project managers, and producers. Under the guidance of 30-year industry

veteran Phil Hetteema, The Hetteema Group provides full design services including program development, project analysis and feasibility, concept development, detailed design, and on-site design supervision. The Hetteema Group specializes in uniquely creative design in the world of experiential entertainment for museums, visitor centers, theme parks, and resort developments, as well as breakthrough, out-of-the box solutions –combined with top quality design for museum and exhibit design, destination resorts and parks, retail, dining and entertainment lifestyle destinations and shows, entertainment and attractions.

**The National World War II Museum** tells the story of the American Experience in the war that changed the world – why it was fought, how it was won, and what it means today. Dedicated in 2000 as The National D-Day Museum and now designated by Congress as America’s National World War II Museum, it celebrates the American Spirit, the teamwork, optimism, courage and sacrifice of the men and women who fought on the battlefield and the Home Front. For more information, call 877-813-3329 or 504-527-6012 or visit [www.nationalww2museum.org](http://www.nationalww2museum.org). Follow us on Twitter at [WWIImuseum](https://twitter.com/WWIImuseum) or visit our [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/WWIImuseum) fan page.

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