



Smithsonian Institution
Traveling Exhibition Service

August 15, 2013

The Presidio Trust
Attn: Commissary Project
103 Montgomery Street, P.O. Box 29052
San Francisco, CA 94129

Dear Members of the Presidio Trust:

It gives me great pleasure to express my excitement for the Lucas Cultural Arts Museum proposed for the Commissary site at Crissy Field. I know the site well from a much earlier time when, in working with the late Smithsonian Secretary I. Michael Hayman, I had many engaging conversations about the uniqueness of the Presidio property as a national treasure. Today, still with the Smithsonian as its director of traveling exhibitions, I write with special enthusiasm for the plans in development for LCAM.

While I'm hardly alone in directing an operation that has collaborated with George Lucas and his team on exhibitions and other large-scale museum projects, I take pride in having led Smithsonian initiatives in three major traveling exhibitions showcasing the art, history, and science central to the Lucasfilm oeuvre. Beginning in 1995, the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) developed and circulated across the country and internationally *Star Wars: The Magic of Myth*, an exhibition of iconic *Star Wars* characters that combined classical mythology, Jungian archetypes and the scholarly work of Joseph Campbell to explore the elements of storytelling and artistry of filmmaking. To this day, *The Magic of Myth* remains one of the Smithsonian's most visited exhibitions of all time. When it closed in 2001 it was followed by another high-visibility exhibition, *Art of the Starfighter*. That project looked at science, engineering, innovation, and the industrial drawings and illustrations with which George Lucas' renowned Industrial Light & Magic pioneered special effect technologies. It too carried the enormous popular appeal of *The Magic of Myth*. But equally important, it drew young audiences eager for museum presentations that highlighted both technological innovation and iconic artifacts.


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Today SITES is at work on one of the most ambitious traveling exhibitions in its 60 year history. Slated to open in November 2014 and entitled *Rebel, Jedi, Princess, Queen: Star Wars and the Power of Costume*, this exhibition engages visitor imagination in the interplay between Mr. Lucas' creativity and visual manifestation of characters that have shaped *the Star Wars* experience. Through 61 iconic costumes, drawings, interactive learning stations, and three dimensional settings, Smithsonian curators explicate the diversity of costume and character, addressing mask and other world culture traditions; jewels and gems; tribal dress; military history; and emblems and insignia. In a consideration of the breadth and depth of imagery, detail, and knowledge used in the costume design process *Rebel, Jedi, Princess, Queen* takes visitors beyond the chronological, literary, and filmic order so often used to discuss *Star Wars*. In the nuanced dynamism of these three Smithsonian projects is a preview of the enrichment that the Lucas Cultural Arts Museum is prepared to bring to the Presidio Trust.

The three large scale projects in which SITES has been engaged up until now may have involved *Star Wars* but my enthusiasm for LCAM is by no means rooted in the *Star Wars* experience alone. Rather, my interest in LCAM at Crissy Field is based on the unique combination of creativity, imagination, innovation, artistry, and transcendent appeal to people of all ages and backgrounds that are the hallmarks of the Lucas vision. I have no doubt that a Lucas Cultural Arts Museum would enrich beyond measure the Presidio Trust and San Francisco's dynamic cultural identity and I look forward to counting myself as one of its repeat visitors.

With best regards,



Anna R. Cohn
Director