

‘Muppet Vision 3-D’ Attraction Explodes With Excitement at Disney’s Hollywood Studios

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — She’s coifed, bejeweled and snout-to-nose with her “captive” audience. He’s lean, green and close enough to reach out and touch. Together, Miss Piggy and Kermit star in the three-dimensional film of the century: “Muppet Vision 3-D” at Disney’s Hollywood Studios in Walt Disney World Resort.

The innovative “Muppet Vision 3-D” film puts Disney guests smack in the middle of the Muppets’ knee-slapping adventure, thanks to an astonishing array of special effects. Disney has combined 70mm film featuring the most advanced 3-D action and animation, a series of spectacular live effects and Disney’s famous Audio-Animatronics characters.

The 584-seat grand theater, adorned with plush red velvet drapes and gilded columns, was renovated by those zany Muppets to showcase the 3-D technology perfected at the “Really Really Super Tippy Top Secret MuppetVision 3-D Research Labs” by Dr. Bunsen Honeydew and his assistant, Beaker.

Promises Kermit as the show begins: “It’s going to be a great demonstration and at no time will we be stooping to cheap 3-D tricks.”

Statler and Waldorf aren’t above stooping to a few cheap Muppet jokes, however, as the caustic Muppet critics review the show from their right-hand mezzanine perch.

In the orchestra pit, Nicki Napoleon and his Emperor Penguins tune up for the show’s musical numbers, and at the rear of the theater, the Swedish Chef commandeers the projection paraphernalia assembled haphazardly in time for the show’s debut.

And what a show it is. Miss Piggy pushes her musical talents to the limit and Fozzie Bear takes a pie in the face as Kermit delivers guests into a new 3-D realm. His tour into the top-secret 3-D research lab puts audience members face-to-face with Waldo, a new character who’s prone to devilishness with a capital “3-D.”

When the Muppet antics get messy, VacuuMuppet takes the stage to sweep temporary control of the situation. But when Sam the Eagle launches his patriotic parade of Americana, sparks fly once again.

Before the theater “explodes” in a grand finale, all 584 guests will thrill to show-stopping effects that include squirting boutonnieres, bubble showers, high winds, musket fire, cannon fire and a patriotic fiberoptics fireworks “Salute to All Nations But Mostly America.”

As The Great Gonzo sees it, “Now this is entertainment.”

The show is a joint effort by Jim Henson Productions, Walt Disney Studios and Walt Disney Imagineering (WDI) — the design and engineering division of The Walt Disney Co.

To create the ideal setting for “Muppet Vision 3-D,” Imagineers designed a theater that brings the show directly into the audience. Muppet touches abound as part of the architecture’s ornamentation, including the Jules Verne-style projection contraption operated by the Swedish Chef.

By combining the authentic Muppet-theater atmosphere with animated figures, advanced 3-D technology and special effects, Imagineers were able to make the audience become part of the film.

Prior to the show, guests visit the theater’s “warehouse” antechamber, where entertainment includes Muppet musical numbers projected on a dozen screens rigged overhead. Guests also can browse among prop boxes filled with goodies that belong to Miss Piggy, Kermit and other Muppet stars.

Disney’s Hollywood Studios immerses guests in the glamour of show business 365 days a year with thrilling attractions, incredible Broadway-style shows, world-class atmosphere entertainment and interactive film, television and radio production facilities. The theme park is part of the 25,000-acre Walt Disney World Resort near Orlando, Fla.

For more information, call 407/824-4321 or visit disneyworld.com.