

*Imagining*

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November 1, 1963

Mr. Ralph Newman, Chairman  
Illinois Commission on the New York World's Fair  
18 East Chestnut Street  
Chicago, Illinois  
60611

WED

Dear Ralph:

Jim Algar has advised us that you and your associates have given telephonic approval of the scripts to be used in the State of Illinois Exhibit at the New York World's Fair. It is our understanding that those specifically approved are identified as follows:

- A. Narration Script for "Great Moments with Mr. Lincoln", dated August 23, 1963, and amended October 9, 1963.
- B. "The Story of the Gettysburg Address" for the Prologue Show, dated October 8, 1963.
- C. The special script for use on patriotic holidays, dated October 18, 1963.

While we certainly appreciate your expediting matters by telephoning approval of these documents, we must, nevertheless, have such approval in writing. We are, therefore, enclosing an additional copy of this letter, upon which you may indicate your approval of the scripts outlined heretofore, so that we may proceed with all phases of the work pursuant to completing the show.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Very truly yours,

*F. V. Schumacher*  
Frederic V. Schumacher  
Projects Manager

The above mentioned scripts  
are approved.

*Approved  
WED  
11/6/63*

cc: Jim Cassin

PROFILE

"GREAT MOMENTS WITH MR. LINCOLN"

An "Audio-Animatronic" Show For  
The Illinois State Pavilion  
New York World's Fair 1964-1965

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Introduction

Walt Disney has long held the belief, shared by many Americans, that more of us should recognize the extraordinary influence of historical events on our lives today. He has constantly searched for new and inviting ways to help Americans become more aware of history's significance in the future development of their nation.

His efforts have been recognized officially on several occasions, more recently by the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge. Last February 22, former President Dwight D. Eisenhower presented Walt Disney with the Foundation's coveted George Washington Award as "Ambassador of Freedom for the U. S. A." The citation reads in part:

"For his educational wisdom and patriotic dedication in advancing the concept of freedom under God.

"For his unfailing professional devotion to the things which matter most -- human dignity and personal responsibility.

"For his masterful, creative leadership in communicating the hopes and aspirations of our free society to the far corners of the planet."

Here, Walt Disney tells in his own words how he hopes to further these goals with his "Great Moments with Mr. Lincoln" show.

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"Most Americans will agree with me that no man has had more of a positive impact on a nation than Abraham Lincoln has on our country. He is venerated not only in our land but in many other parts of the world. Yet I have always felt that too few people realize that Lincoln's concepts and philosophies are as useful, as necessary, as applicable today as they were when he pronounced them a century ago. His analysis of freedom and its true meaning, his approach to justice and equality, his own courage and strength -- all are as vital in the 1960's as they were during the mid-1800's.

"There are many fine statues of the great Civil War President and an even larger number of Lincoln portraits and photographs. Many of us have spent memorable moments in theaters as some of our best actors have brought him to life on the stage or motion picture screen. Hundreds of volumes have been written about the man Lincoln, and some of his speeches and writings are still among history's most often quoted passages.

"Each of these has contributed to our knowledge of Lincoln and has given us some insights into his character. I felt, however, that there must be some way... some undeveloped means of communication... perhaps some new art form... that could combine the best of traditional media to capture the real countenance, the warm sincerity and the contagious dedication of Abraham Lincoln.

"Such a medium, I realized, would have to offer the three-dimensional authenticity created by a talented sculptor, as well as the color and life left on canvas by the genius-painter's brush. The drama and personal rapport of the theater were indispensable. This technique must have the artistic versatility and consistency of the motion picture. From the best literary sources must come the

proper atmosphere which this medium must create. And, finally, Lincoln's own pen must supply the most important element of all -- the message.

"For more than a decade our staff of artists, sculptors, engineers, architects, researchers and other technicians have spent thousands of man-hours and more than \$1 million to develop and perfect the system we call "Audio-Animatronics." Recent improvements in this system now make it possible for us to utilize and combine the qualities of all of these more familiar art forms. It permits us to come as close as possible to capturing the true spirit and personality of Lincoln, which we can convey to so many people.

"The secret of its effectiveness, regardless of its amazing flexibility and efficiency, lies in its application. That is why we set the highest standards for our guidelines in preparing the show for the Lincoln Theater in the Illinois State pavilion. Imagination would have to be tempered with authenticity. Drama must intertwine with serenity. Fantasy would be entirely abandoned since its presence would defeat our purpose. Reserve was demanded, but it would have to take the form of subdued excitement. And dignity would have to be the constantly sounded keynote.

"When we set out to select the speeches and writing for the monologue, we decided to bypass the "Gettysburg Address," even though its poetic qualities and poignant message are unexcelled. Because it is so familiar to nearly every American, we felt that it would not contribute significantly to our purpose -- an in-depth, fresh presentation of Lincoln's principles, ideals and philosophies.

"We hope the audiences in the Lincoln Theater will agree that we have achieved these goals. They will find it much more than a new entertainment medium or art form; this approach will be a new and exciting way to stress

history's importance to each of us and the applicability of its lessons to our everyday lives."

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### DESCRIPTION OF THE "GREAT MOMENTS WITH MR. LINCOLN" SHOW

Created by Walt Disney and designed by WED Enterprises, Inc.,

"Great Moments with Mr. Lincoln" will bring to the theatre stage a unique dramatization of our American heritage. At its heart is the president who saved our code of laws, the Constitution, in its greatest hour of crisis a century ago.

Special Disney techniques of three-dimensional animation ("Audio-Animatronics"), projection, staging and stereophonic sound will be combined to create the Lincoln show. At times, through the use of sound speakers located throughout the auditorium, the audience itself will seem to participate in the proceedings ... as though they were in the crowd at one of Mr. Lincoln's speeches.

Highlight of the show will be excerpts from Abraham Lincoln's famous speeches and writings, delivered from the stage by Walt Disney's life-like Lincoln figure. Lincoln will first appear seated in thoughtful dignity. But as the narrator introduces his address, he "will come to life." Apparently immobile moments before, he will rise to his feet and speak, delivering his address with complete coordination of movements and speech ... and many mannerisms of the 16th President. Present plans call for the presentation of different Lincoln speeches, some relating to holiday or historical observances occurring during the Fair season.

An emotion-stirring finale will find Lincoln again seated, now silhouetted against the imposing dome of the Capitol building in the early light of dawn.

Mr. John G. Trezevant, Managing Editor  
CHICAGO SUN-TIMES  
401 North Wabash Avenue  
Chicago 11, Illinois

Dear Mr. Trezevant:

Thank you very much for your phone call last week regarding the "Abraham Lincoln" figure planned for the Illinois State Pavilion at the New York World's Fair 1964-1965.

In accordance with your request, I am forwarding all available material on the Lincoln figure and on our present plans for the "Great Moments with Mr. Lincoln" show. Enclosed you will find four color transparencies, four black-and-white glossies (captioned), our fact sheet and the release distributed by the State of Illinois. "Great Moments with Mr. Lincoln"

In all fairness to you, we must stress that all of the enclosed photos deal with the prototype Lincoln figure, developed four years ago. The new figure -- the one to be used in the pavilion -- will be remarkably more sophisticated in movements and versatility. As I mentioned on the phone, it will not be completed until very late this year or even in January, 1964. Also, plans for the show are still somewhat tentative and are subject to change.

Perhaps, then, you might want to hold your story until the new figure is completed and show plans finalized. Whatever your decision, however, we shall very much appreciate your returning the enclosed photos when they have served their purpose.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if any questions arise. As you know, Al Weisman, Public Relations Director for Foote, Cone & Belding, can also assist you.

Progress on the show of Lincoln figure development has reached the stage at this time. Most cordially,  
are listed.

Don't hesitate to call if we may be of additional help.

WED ENTERPRISES, INC.

Best regards,  
Robert Jackson  
Public Relations Director

RJ:mmm  
encls. (11)  
cc: Mr. Albert P. Weisman