

'The Science of Rock 'n' Roll' rocks Science Museum Oklahoma

The new traveling exhibition at Science Museum Oklahoma features hands-on elements such as vocal booths, instrument stations and Reactables.

By Brandy McDonnell (<http://newsok.com/brandy-mcdonnell>) (?rel=author) Modified: February 7, 2014 at 4:00 pm • Published: February 6, 2014

New Wave one-hit wonder Thomas Dolby was blinded by science back in 1982, but a new traveling exhibit at Science Museum Oklahoma eagerly peers into “The Science of Rock 'n' Roll.”



(/gallery/articleid/3931216/1/pictures/2339258)

Interactive “interview totems” are part of the new traveling exhibit “The Science of Rock & Roll” at Science Museum Oklahoma. Photo by Paul Hellstern, The Oklahoman **PAUL HELLSTERN - Oklahoman**

While the playful and tuneful exhibition pays due homage to the Beatles, Blondie and the Rolling Stones, it favors framing the development of modern music through technological milestones like eight-track tapes, compact discs and iPods.

“Basically, the whole idea of the show was to try and tell the story of how we’ve gone from wax cylinders back in the early 19th century to now you literally have millions of songs in your pocket,” said Bryan J. Reinblatt, managing director of Elevation Productions, which produces exhibitions for museums and science centers.

While “interview totems” allow visitors to hear Canadian DJ Red Robinson’s interviews with the likes of the Beatles, Ray Davies and Elvis, “decade pods” showcase the bands, fun facts and music delivery systems of each 10-year period from the 1950s to today.

“What’s really, really cool is when Mom and Dad take their young ones through and they’ve never seen a tape deck, they’ve never seen a CD, they’ve never seen an eight-track,” Reinblatt said.

Not just history

While album covers and band T-shirts are tucked into the glass cases, Reinblatt said the exhibit goes well beyond the usual displays of mementos.

“This is not really about memorabilia that you might find at the Hard Rock Cafe or the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. This is a hands-on, interactive exhibition that tries to tell the story of rock ‘n’ roll through the lens of science and technology,” he said, adding the Experience Music Project in Seattle was another place the production team visited for inspiration.

“They’ve got some great memorabilia, some amazing stuff, but everyone ultimately wants to go to their jam room to play instruments. Everyone’s attracted to the hands-on stuff.”

Among the 10,250 square feet of rock ‘n’ roll in the exhibit are stations where people can try their hand at electric guitars, keyboards and drums.

“Without a doubt, our most popular exhibition is the drums. This goes back to our caveman days, I’m convinced,” Reinblatt said with a grin.

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