

A Trip to Disneyland A Land of Fun, Thrill and Fantasy

by Prof Roushan Ara Hoque

Disneyland, the magic kingdom of Walt Disney, with the animated cartoon characters in its Adventureland, Fantasyland, Tomorrowland and ToonTown, and of course lots of laughter, still perhaps the world's most enjoyable tourist attraction, most warm honeymoon destination and, above all, the most cherished dreamland of the kids.

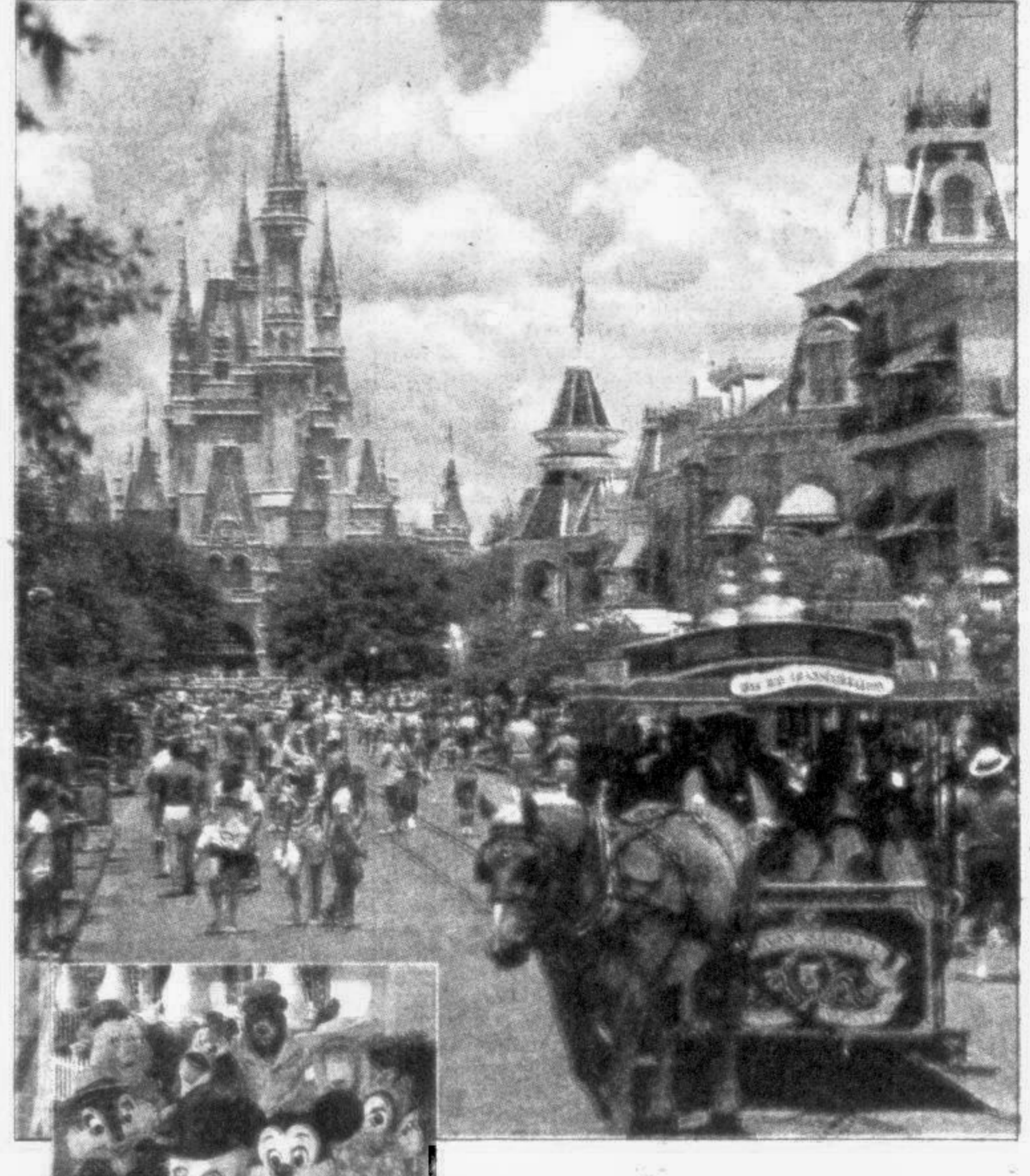
THIS Disneyland, is in the serene orange groves of stretching over 50 acres of land near Anaheim in southern California in the USA. I recently visited this wonder-world of Mickey Mouse, the brain-child of the great imaginer Walt. Fun and adventure are exuberated there to such extremity, and amusement and thrill are generated to such an extent that it has been properly designated as "The Happiest Place on Earth".

Walt Disney was a man who was a child at heart. It was typical of him that when he first bought his electric train set at the age of 46, he set it up in a room next to his office so that he could play with it in his spare time. Once he went to a park with his children who were feeling bored. There the idea came to his mind to make a place for them to play in. He said, "I want a land, to be most of all a happy place — a place where adults and children can experience together some wonders of life, of adventure, and feel better because of it".

The treasures he left will endure to enlighten and entertain many generations to come. He was original in creating laughter and probably did more to heal or at least to soothe more troubled human minds than all the psychiatrists of the world did. He had taught us that the Beast is also beautiful and his animated characters — the Mickey Mouse, his sweet-heart Minnie Mouse and many others with their exaggerated limbs and crunching voices have made them the most enjoyable play-mates of all the children.

Walt Disney first introduced a charming and playful character — Steamboat Willie, the first synchronised cartoon with sound, in his garage in Los Angeles. Willie was renamed as Mickey Mouse which won the hearts of all the kids. As the creator of this friendliest mouse, Walt had become the most popular legendary figure in the entertainment world. His vision of making a Wonder-World for the children came true with the opening of Disneyland in 1955. It was a media event of massive proportions for its time introduced to America through a live Television Special of 90 minutes. The enthusiasm thus created resulted to a daily line of visitors that topped the million mark only seven weeks after its opening. Walt soon realised that his dream of creating a special family-place had come true.

The Disneyland has many different types of entertainments from a Space Flight down to a Horse Drawn



Disneyland: Mainstreet
Inset: Mickey's friends greeting visitors at Toon Town

Street Cart, from a colossal acollie to a jazz band. It has the sounds of laughter and the sights of smiling faces of cartoons everywhere. This Magic Kingdom is divided into many sections, such as, The Main Street USA, The Adventureland, New Orleans Square, The Frontierland, The Fantasyland, The Tomorrowland and the last creation is The Mickey's ToonTown.

Main Street USA
This is the main entrance of the Disneyland. As I walked down the Main Street USA, I saw thousands of jolly children with special Donald Duck Hats and Minnie Mouse dresses on and coloured balloons in hands were playing. The parents were happy too sharing the magic spell of the Kingdom together. There the visitors enjoy the serenity of a small town way of life of America's past. The idea of Walt was to let the visitors a feeling of life from America's past to present and then to the future. The sights and

sounds were from a time when life was as leisurely as a ride on a Horse Drawn Street Cart. There we rode a shiny old-fashioned fire engine Railway manufactured in 1894 and rebuilt for Disneyland in the late 1950's and experienced the joy of recalling past American history. Along with many child-riders we enjoyed sugar plum lollipops and luscious chocolates with childhood memories. Its hanking horn, saxophone and marching band entertained at every street corners. Every sight and sound on this Main Street has made us all feel evergreen in mind, and every details of its architecture recreates a beautiful past.

The Adventureland
Adventure reigns supreme in this area. As we started on the famous Jungle Cruise through the rivers the beat of native drums and the cries of strange beasts echoed around. On our way we visited the Enchanted Tiki Room

where funny feathered friends and Tikis entertained us with sweet chirping sound of music. The whole scenario looked like a tropical paradise. The Swiss Family Tree House enchanted us with the spirit of adventure. It is like the treetop house of the Robinson family when they were shipwrecked on a deserted isle. This tree house fantasy has been cleverly equipped with an indigenous waterwheel as had been done by Robinson. This Tree House is a fanciful tribute to Robinson and to his kind of life style everybody dreamt of as a child and some even yearn in their adult lives. This Jungle Cruise is the highlight of the Disneyland experience where we had to be daring enough to brave charging hippos, hungry alligators and splashing elephants. Guide's funny comments were also no less enjoyable. There in the Aladdin's Oasis we enjoyed an animated live show of the hit movie 'Aladdin' and his Wonder Lamp which had won two Oscars and had earned a fortune at the box office. Then we watched the Live Show of another hit movie, Beauty and The Beast. It is the most lavish and spectacular musical presentation ever produced. In the Bengal Barbecue Centre we had a lunch with barbecued meats and eastern specialties, fresh fruits and vegetables with our fresh tropical sorbets and cold beverages.

The New Orleans Square
This area has got the atmosphere of New Orleans Square, a place as beautiful as a moonlit night in an island full of Caribbean pirates. As the Jungle Cruise sailed by the twinkling lights of the famed Blue Bayou Restaurant we entered into a delightful danger of the pirates. As we voyaged through, the pirates tried to plunder us, but as we were guarded by grinning skeletons, dodge cannoballs and ferocious dogs we were made to believe to be saved. We watched one merry buccaner, ie, piratical adventure of the West Indies live-show on our way. The pirates instead of plundering, all the time tickled us to laugh. Then we went to The Haunted Mansion on the hill. This charming place was fully equipped with running hot and cold thrills which tickled our ribs. Ghostly voices guided us through a doorless

chamber past a ballroom full of transparent dressed dancers. We all shivered with fear in this show of horror. Then in the Splash Mountain we enjoyed the wildest and wettest experience as we passed by the area and dashed against the waterfalls. There suddenly we headed downward straight to a five-storey-splash-down and were thrilled.

The Frontierland
Here riding on the Big Thunder Mountain Railroad we had passed through mines and it was the wildest ride. Then we boarded on a Mark Twain Riverboat, a stately steam-powered stern-wheeler which gently cruised on the Rivers of America and gave us the adventures just like Mark Twain's young heroes enjoyed. We also saw the old American sailing ship Columbia which is a replica of the first one to circle the globe. In the Shooting Arcade one can shoot up the birds on the hill. In the Big Thunder Ranch we saw the old-west-homestead featuring a log cabin, horses' stables and pets' yard. Then boarding on rafts we enjoyed a short trip to Tom Sawyer Island across the river to the fun with balancing rocks, secret caves and a barrel-bridge.

Fantasyland
This enchanted realm is the heart of the Disneyland. This is a Small World where a child can satisfy all his childhood fantasies. Here all the Cartoon characters act as goodwill ambassadors, sing hopeful songs for the visitors of all ages to prove that little things can make a world of entertainment for all. Sleeping Beauty Castle is the centre of this Fantasyland, where every corner is full of magic and dream-come-true. In this Castle all the animated classic films of Walt Disney come to three dimensional life. There we enjoyed the famous film Alice in The Wonderland and saw the activities of her seven dwarfs. Then we rode the most magical ride on the Flying Elephant which turned and glided in ornately curved and painted splendour. The ornamented horses displayed there reminded us of the elegance of yesterday. Then we enjoyed a run-away fun on the Big Thunder Mountain Railroad. It took us racing through a collapsing mine, past rockslides, varmints and wild western scenery. After this rip-roaring ride we enjoyed frontier style live-



Walt Disney with daughters, Diane and Sharon



"I don't want the public to see the world they live in while they're in the Park, I want them to feel they are in another world."
— Walt Disney dedicating the Disneyland.



Walter Elias Disney passed away on December 15, 1966. The last photograph with Mickey, his lifelong friend.

shows of the Thunder Mountain Boys' banjo.

Tomorrowland
Then we rode a Sky Way Ride which carried us above all the pageantry of Disneyland to the Tomorrowland, which is a high-tech land of the future world. There we took a most sophisticated travel by submarines and starships which took us from the ocean depths to outer space. There we visited some famous places on 'Earth at Circle Vision' and toured the galaxies on Space Mountain.

STAR TOUR: Then we boarded on the Starspeeder-3000 for galactic gasps on Star Tours, based on George Lucas' famed film trilogy. The Pilot took us past pounding asteroids, spaceships, dog-fights and through the Death Star's Chasm. He did all these with a strong blast to our nerves.

MICHAEL JACKSON SHOW: Then we watched a 3-D musical spectacular with dazzling photography and special effects done by Michael Jackson. He as Captain EO led a hilarious crew who brought colour and music to a dark planet. This Show was really exceptional and most enjoyable one.

After Dark Fantasmic
When the sun sets, the soft dusk lights bloomed twinkling along Main Street, casting a futuristic glow over the whole Disneyland. The colourful lights of the Space Mountain high above, candle lit tables of New Orleans' Square and the Electrical Parade on the Street transfixed our eyes with thousands of tiny coloured lights. Bouquets of fireworks blossomed over the Sleeping Beauty Castle. Before our eyes Disneyland revealed another beauty touched with unforgettable enchantments. Moon light and the hot sound of music filled the air of Tomorrowland. On the Rivers of America boat lights glimmer, while lights twinkle as the big bands play. Disneyland at night is a celebration of music and light beckoning the visitors to explore its magic and enticing all its kids to linger longer to watch the Fantasmic at 10:00 pm. It is a most fantastic and thrilling spectacular combining all the Disney characters, music, dances and state-of-the-art illusions for the most elaborate presentation in the history of human imagination. Lasers, black lights, fireworks, and images on huge

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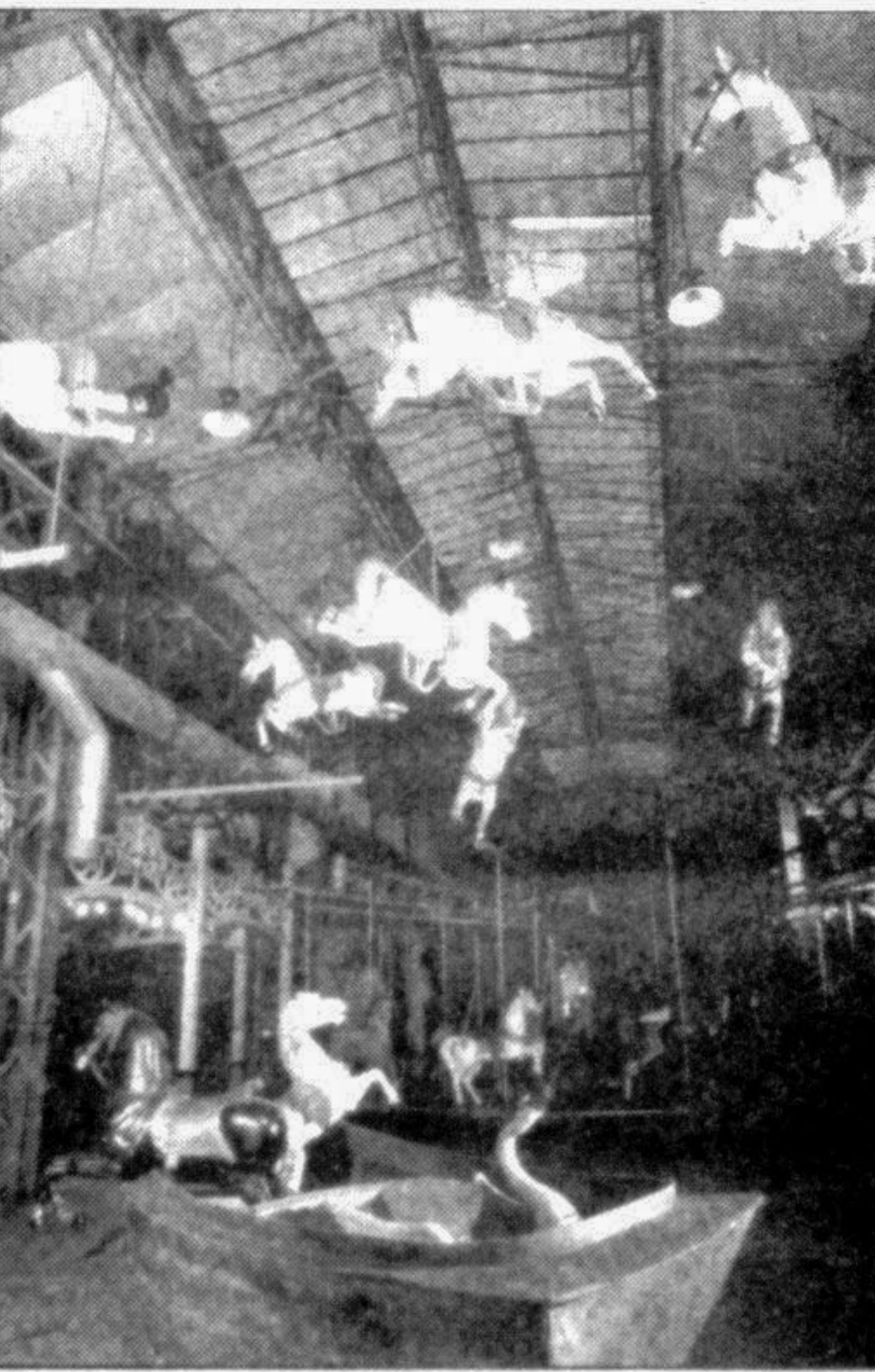
A Museum for Fairgrounds

by Sylvie Thomas

THE story of this museum began with a passion. For twenty-five years, Jean-Paul Favand, an antique-dealer specialised in fairground objects, patiently put together a collection of wooden horses, swings ghost-trains, stands, shops, games, puppets, rides and other curiosities in a kind of shed in the suburbs. This made him realise the great variety of fairground art. Thousands and thousands of merry-go-rounds had been manufactured before 1900. "This art had been neglected for a long time, as fairground folk were not very well considered," Jean-Paul Favand notes. "Yet, fairground businesses were one of the biggest industries of the 19th century. Some merry-go-rounds, which were enormous, required twenty railway wagons to move them!"

A Strange place for Fantastic Creations
He became obsessed with the idea of finding a museum for the finest of these no-mad monuments. Today, he has succeeded. Complete merry-go-rounds in working order, lottery stands, shooting ranges, the facades of special attractions and huge sculptures, 1,522 items in all, have been perfectly integrated in a former factory 3,500 m² whose rough stone walls and high ceilings add to the strangeness of the place. They attract the public and the media and even drew Japanese television. There are plans for exhibiting part of the collection abroad. "Merry-go-rounds were built in India, in China and in Mexico and there are similar museums in many countries such as the United States, Germany, Belgium and Holland. But what distinguishes us is the particularly extensive and meticulous restoration that we have carried out," Jean-Paul Favand explains.

Ladies and gentlemen, the first French fairground museum has opened in Paris. You will be able to admire the most original stands and the strangest merry-go-rounds which were the star attractions in fetes for a century. It takes us back to the nostalgic history of a world of play, poetry and dreams.



which was also a European art before it was considered as such. In 1900, fairground artists worked in firms employing several hundred people. Bayol in Angers, Frederich heyn in Neustadt, Alexandre Devos in Gand and Savage in Kings Lynn took up the great stylistic features of architecture such as columns

The 19th Century, the Heyday of the Fairground

The fair originated in the market fairs of the Middle Ages at which tumblers, jugglers and actors performed on raised platforms. For a long time, the calendar of fetes was based on that of the Saints and religious commemorations. The French Revolution broke this monopoly by creating the Fete of Liberty, of Fraternity and of Progress, and then the Republic, which gradually introduced secularity, encouraged funfairs. In the middle of the 19th century, the influx of peasants into towns cut people off from their roots. Workers and the lower middle classes were separated from their traditional values and discovered a new world of leisure with the fair, its gilt, its lights and its splendour.

Even today, according to a survey by the Ministry of Culture, the fair is the favourite leisure activity of 92% of French people. In France, there are still 200,000 fairground folk running 50,000 businesses. However, nothing is the way it used to be. The giddiness of speed has replaced plastic beauty. Fairground art has become technological rather than poetic with light being used in a futuristic way (for instance, the Foire du Trone, which is the most famous fairground, has become a veritable laser show). All the more reason for a journey into the past through this museum which recreates the magical atmosphere of childhood.

— L'Actualite En France

