

## EXPERING THE MOST INNOVATIVE ACTIVATIONS FROM THE PAST YEAR

LAST YEAR, IT WAS A BIT OF A STRUGGLE to honor innovative and breakthrough IRL campaigns, given that the world was still largely hunkered down during the pandemic. But for our fourth annual Experiential Awards, there was no shortage of outstanding activations to highlight as consumers began to adapt to the new normal—and were champing at the bit to once again embrace out-of-home offerings. This year's impressive roster of winners includes everything from a pizza shop that simulated the effects of gerrymandering to shoelaces that smelled like cooked bacon to an interactive AR version of Pac-Man on pizza boxes. Here are the brands and campaigns that more than met the challenge of making their mark in a forever-changed world.

BY KENNYATTA COLLINS AND SARA CENTURY

## **RESY** Experiential BRAND OF THE YEAR

For many, a major part of the joy of a meal is the shared experience it can bring, which is just one reason why the Covid-19 pandemic forced many to rethink the way they interacted with food. For restaurant reservation platform Resy, that reimagining involved its six-person in-house team and AOR Shiraz Creative looking into new ways of providing the dining experiences consumers were craving. Creating a yearlong slate featuring top chefs and moving the events to safer venues like parks, parking lots, fields, hilltops and even a floating barge, the programming centered on meeting consumers where they were during an apprehensive time.—Sara Century

