

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Jim Henson's Creature Shop™ Selected as Computerworld
Smithsonian Laureate for Special Recognition**

HOLLYWOOD, CA, April 10, 2001 – Jim Henson Creature Shop's™ Digital Performance Studio (HDPS) has been selected as a Laureate for Special Recognition in the 2001 Computerworld Smithsonian Awards program in the category of Media, Arts and Entertainment. Since 1988, the awards program sponsored by the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History and Computerworld has honored individuals, organizations and institutions in 10 categories for their outstanding use of information technology to benefit society. Award finalists will be chosen from a group of Laureates and announced in June.

Developed by Jim Henson's Creature Shop™, The Henson Digital Performance Studio was nominated for its invention of a control system technology that enables real-life puppeteers to physically manipulate the many movements of a computer-generated character. The result is spontaneous, three-dimensional computer animation in real time that can be broadcast or streamed into many mediums, including web-broadcasting, computer games, television and film with a new level of quality and interactivity.

Through this technology, a CG character can actually converse live with people, even if those people are across the world. Such dynamic, interactive performances can be used for both entertainment and educational purposes. Character performances can be broadcast live or recorded, generating a very high yield of animation per minute while using digital puppets to communicate ideas. To experience HDPS technology firsthand, log onto <http://www.muppetworld.com/cyberama/muppettoons/index.html>

“HDPS brings live characters to the virtual world of film, television and computers by allowing a non-technical performer to puppeteer and control a CG character with complete spontaneity,” said David Barrington Holt, Creative Supervisor of Jim Henson's Creature Shop™. “We are thrilled and honored to have our HDPS technology nationally recognized by Smithsonian and Computerworld.”

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The prestigious Computerworld Smithsonian Awards are presented annually at a gala event held at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C. Past winners have included RealNetworks Internet Media Innovations (2000) and Starbrite Foundation Starbrite World (1999).

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Jim Henson's Creature Shop™ provides performed digital visual effects, animatronic creatures, animation and soft puppets to the international film, television and advertising industries. Based in Los Angeles and New York with satellite shop capabilities internationally, the Shop is known for designing and building some of the world's best-known characters including Elmo from "Sesame Street," Miss Piggy from "The Muppet Show," the Baby from "Dinosaurs," Rygel from "Farscape," and the Skeksis from "The Dark Crystal." Other credits include "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy," "Are We There Yet?," "Five Children and It," the critically acclaimed television series "Farscape," "The English Patient," "101 Dalmatians," and "Cats and Dogs."

A recipient of more than 9 Emmy Awards for its outstanding work building puppets for "Sesame Street," the Shop also received an Academy Award for its visual effects work on the film "Babe." Other awards include a Scientific and Engineering Academy Award for the Henson Performance Control System, a powerful custom-based interface for puppeteers as well as the Computer Graphics World Innovation Award and the prestigious Computerworld Honors 21st Century Achievement Award, which recognizes innovative applications of technology that benefit society. Both computer awards were given to the Shop for its work in developing the Henson Digital Puppetry Studio, a patented control system technology that enables puppeteers to physically perform computer generated (CG) characters in real time.

Jim Henson's Creature Shop is currently in production on "Sid the Science Kid," a 40 episode animated preschool series to air on PBS in the fall of 2008 featuring Henson Digital Puppetry Studio technology and Season 38 of "Sesame Street" for Sesame Workshop.