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Jim Henson's Creature Shop™ Wins Computerworld Honors 21st Century Achievement Award

HOLLYWOOD, CA, June 6, 2001 – Henson's Digital Performance Studio (HDPS), created by the Academy Award-winning Jim Henson's Creature Shop™, was awarded the Computerworld Honors 21st Century Achievement Award for Media, Arts and Entertainment Monday at a gala held in Washington, D.C. HDPS was one of five finalists for this very competitive honor. Since 1988, the awards program has honored individuals, organizations and institutions in 10 categories for their outstanding use of information technology to benefit society.

Developed by Jim Henson's Creature Shop™, the Henson Digital Performance Studio was nominated for its invention of a control system technology that enables puppeteers to physically manipulate the many movements of a computer-generated character in real time. The result is spontaneous, three-dimensional computer animation that can be broadcast live 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 digital character can perform live (as well as recorded) and interact with its audience in real time, regardless of either party's location. Such dynamic performances can be used for both entertainment and educational purposes. Character performances generate 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>

“The Jim Henson Company has a long and proud history of technological innovation and our Creature Shop is at the forefront of combining great entertainment and cutting edge technology,” said Charles H. Rivkin, President and CEO of The Jim Henson Company. “This award means a great deal to us all and we'd like to thank everyone associated with the Computerworld Honors Program.”

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“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 chosen for a Computerworld 21st Century Achievement Award.”

The prestigious Computerworld Honors Achievement Awards are presented annually. Past winners have included Pixar Animation Studios/Walt Disney Feature Animation, America Online and Avid Technology, Inc. Other nominees for this year’s award included Gutenberg 21st Century Association’s Bible Project and Digital Arts Facility’s OnRamp Art, among others.

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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.