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**NINTENDO'S SHIGERU MIYAMOTO, "THE FATHER OF MODERN VIDEO GAMES,"
RECEIVES THE JIM HENSON COMPANY'S HIGHEST HONOR**

Four Honorees Cited with annual "Jim Henson Honors"

HOLLYWOOD, CA, January 15, 2009 – The four recipients of the annual Jim Henson Honors were announced today by Brian Henson and Lisa Henson, co-CEOs of The Jim Henson Company. Established in 2005, the awards program acknowledges organizations, individuals or products that reflect the core values and philosophy of the legendary Jim Henson and the company he founded. Criteria used in the evaluation process include: a commitment to creativity, innovative applications of art and technology, and inspiration of others.

The four Jim Henson Honorees are:

- *The Jim Henson Celebration Honor* – Shigeru Miyamoto, General Manager, Nintendo Entertainment
- *The Jim Henson Community Honor* – The Center for Puppetry Arts Distance Learning Center, a Non-Profit Arts Organization
- *The Jim Henson Creativity Honor* – Shepard Fairey, Artist
- *The Jim Henson Technology Honor* – Spore, Video Game

"The recipients of this year's Jim Henson Honors demonstrate true creativity and commitment to innovation," said Brian Henson. "They have raised the bar in their respective fields, from Shigeru Miyamoto's groundbreaking work fusing entertainment and technology at Nintendo, to the Center for Puppetry Arts' dedication to enriching lives through arts education, this year's honorees, who so strongly reflect the traditions of The Jim Henson Company."

"Each of this year's recipients inspired us in different ways," said Lisa Henson. "In addition to Shigeru Miyamoto and the Center for Puppetry Arts, we also honor the visual brilliance and topicality of street artist Shepard Fairey, who tapped into a generation's profound desire for change, and the incredibly imaginative and provocative world of Spore. Varied and vast in terms of their impact, this year's four honorees are true models of originality, innovation and ingenuity. It is a privilege to honor their outstanding work."

About the Honors and Recipients

- *The Jim Henson Celebration Honor: Shigeru Miyamoto, Video Game Designer, Nintendo*

The highest Henson Honor goes to an individual, organization or product that makes the world a better place by inspiring people to celebrate life. As the creator of some of the world's best-known video games such as Donkey Kong, Super Mario Bros. and the Zelda series (which have collectively sold more than 350 million copies), and the person who ultimately oversees every Nintendo game, Shigeru Miyamoto has reignited America's love for gaming with the creation of Nintendo's hugely popular Wii console. Taking the application of video games a giant step forward, Miyamoto recently developed the Wii Fit, dedicated to improving people's physical health and well being. The game not only serves to entertain and give players a workout, it is also being used as a rehabilitation tool – known as "Wii-hab" - by physical and occupational therapists to help patients with balance, endurance and core strengthening.

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- *The Jim Henson Community Honor: The Center for Puppetry Arts Distance Learning Center*

The Community Honor acknowledges an individual, organization or product who/which has increased goodwill or made a positive impact in a specific community or around the world. The Center for Puppetry Arts in Atlanta Georgia is a unique cultural treasure where children and adults are educated, enlightened and entertained as they learn about puppetry from all over the world. Since 1978, the Center has made it their mission to give students from all backgrounds and all locations the opportunity to learn about the fine craft of puppetry arts from the experts. With a variety of projects accompanied by study guides, teaching aids and live demonstrations presented via satellite, the CPA Distance Learning has introduced the art of puppetry and creative storytelling to school communities all over the US as well as the UK and has inspired thousands of children to discover their own creative voice.

- *The Jim Henson Creativity Honor: Shepard Fairey, Artist*

The creativity honor acknowledges a new creative voice or unique expression of an idea. The Los Angeles-based street artist Shepard Fairey, known for the international "Obey Giant" guerilla art campaign, is the creator of one of the most iconic political posters of the 2008 election: a stylized three-tone image of the then Democratic presidential nominee, Barack Obama. The wildly popular poster displays an image of Obama along with the single word "HOPE" emblazoned across the bottom. The image became a meaningful symbol in the election year and demonstrates the way that art can inspire and unite. Segueing between the worlds of graphic design, traditional illustration and graffiti, Fairey's unique images – and the methods he uses to exploit them—make him one of the most influential and celebrated artists of today.

- *The Jim Henson Technology Honor: Spore, Video Game*

The Technology Honor acknowledges an individual, organization or product who/which demonstrates groundbreaking technology in a creative way. Spore, the popular video game created in 2008 by celebrated game designer Will Wright and EA gives gamers their own personal universe in a box where players build their own galaxy from scratch. The game is meticulously conceived and executed with infinite detail, allowing a gamer to design and create his own character – a digital alter ego - providing for an unprecedented level of user creativity as his being evolves from a single-cell organism to a galactic god over hundreds of millions of years.



The Jim Henson Company has remained an established leader in family entertainment for over 50 years and is recognized worldwide as an innovator in puppetry, animatronics and digital animation. Best known as creators of the world famous Muppets, Henson has received over 50 Emmy Awards and nine Grammy Awards. Recent credits include the Emmy® nominated "Sid the Science Kid," "Dinosaur Train," "Wilson & Ditch: Digging America" and "Pajanimals." Features include "The Dark Crystal," "Labyrinth," "MirrorMask," and "Unstable Fables" and television productions include "Fraggle Rock" and the sci-fi cult series "Farscape."

With additional locations in New York and London, The Jim Henson Company is headquartered in Los Angeles on the historic Charlie Chaplin lot, complete with soundstage and postproduction facilities. Independently owned and operated by the five adult children of founder Jim Henson, the Company is also home to Jim Henson's Creature Shop™, a pre-eminent character-building and visual effects group with international film, television and advertising clients, as well as Henson Recording Studios, one of the music industry's top recording facilities known for its world-class blend of state-of-the-art and vintage equipment. The Company's Henson Alternative brand has recently announced the national tour of "Stuffed and Unstrung," a live puppet improvisational show named one of the top 10 "Best Stage Shows of 2010" by *Entertainment Weekly*.

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