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**GENNDY TARTAKOVSKY TO DIRECT
*POWER OF THE DARK CRYSTAL***

**Orphanage Animation Studios Also Comes Aboard as Production Partners of
Classic Fantasy Sequel**

***Odyssey Entertainment to target distributors at
European Film Market in Berlin***

Hollywood, CA, February 1, 2006 – Award-winning animation director Genndy Tartakovsky, who created the hit series *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*, *Samurai Jack* and *Dexter's Laboratory*, will direct *Power of the Dark Crystal*, the much anticipated sequel to The Jim Henson Company's 1982 classic fantasy film. The announcement was made today by Lisa Henson, co-CEO of The Jim Henson Company and a producer on the film.

Additionally, Tartakovsky's newest venture, Orphanage Animation Studios, has been brought on board as a producing partner to head up the CG animation elements that will be incorporated with the film's live-action animatronic characters. Legendary fantasy artist Brian Froud, designer of the original film, will return to design the new characters. Odyssey Entertainment is representing worldwide sales and distribution on the film.

Set hundreds of years after the events of the first movie when the world has once again fallen into darkness, *Power of the Dark Crystal* follows the adventures of a mysterious girl made of fire who, together with a Gelfling outcast, steals a shard of the legendary Crystal in an attempt to reignite the dying sun that exists at the center of the planet.

"As an auteur of such exciting and fantastical adventure projects, Genndy is the perfect director to bring to life *Power of the Dark Crystal*," said Lisa Henson. "I am sure that his visualization of Brian Froud's designs will thrill fans of the original film as well as audiences who are meeting these beloved characters for the first time."

Genndy Tartakovsky said, "The original *Dark Crystal* was one of the most inspirational and imaginative pictures of its time, so it's a real honor for me to be able to bring the world of *The Dark Crystal* to a whole new generation."

The sequel is only one of several projects exploring the world of *The Dark Crystal*, a fan favorite that has remained consistently strong with worldwide home video and DVD sales. Other projects include an animated television series, a manga series from Tokyo Pop, and myriad licensed products such as books, apparel and collectible sculptures.

Power of the Dark Crystal is a production of The Jim Henson Company in association with Orphanage Animation Studios. With a screenplay by Annette Duffy and David Odell, the film will be produced by Lisa Henson and Orphanage Animation Studios Chairman Scott Stewart. Executive Producers will be Brian Henson with Ralph Kamp and Louise Goodsill of Odyssey Entertainment.

Ralph Kamp and Louise Goodsill commented, "The original film remains a classic and it's an honor to add *Power of the Dark Crystal* to our strong family line up. With Genndy and Orphanage Animation Studios joining The Jim Henson Company, the final creative elements are in place, and we know Berlin will be busy for us as we start the process of bringing this long-awaited sequel to its many fans around the world."

About Orphanage Animation Studios...

Launched in late 2005, Orphanage Animation Studios (OAS) is a new CG feature animation studio formed by three-time Emmy-award-winning animation writer/director Genndy Tartakovsky, creator of the Cartoon Networks' hit animated series' *Star Wars: Clone Wars*, *Samurai Jack*, and *Dexter's Laboratory* and The Orphanage, a leading visual effects company known for its work on such blockbuster films as *Sin City*, *The Day After Tomorrow* and *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. With a creative team of some of the top animation talent in the industry and an exciting slate of feature projects in development, OAS is poised to become a leading force in CG animated feature production.

About Odyssey Entertainment.....

Odyssey Entertainment is an international film sales and finance business based in London. It was founded by Ralph Kamp, previously CEO of Icon International, and Louise Goodsill, an independent producer and financier. Other current projects for Odyssey include the Oscar and Golden Globe nominated *Andrew Lloyd Webber's The Phantom of the Opera* (a \$83m big screen adaptation of the worlds biggest single entertainment franchise directed by Joel Schumacher, produced by Andrew Lloyd Webber and distributed in North America by Warner Bros.), *Valiant* (a \$40m animated feature from John H. Williams; producer of Oscar winning billion-dollar box office hit *Shrek* and *Shrek 2*, distributed in North America by Walt Disney), *Renaissance* (a visionary animated feature from the Academy Award winning director Christian Volckman, Executive Produced by Jake Eberts and to be distributed in North America by Buena Vista Pictures Distribution), *Happily N'Ever After* (Sarah Michelle Gellar, Freddie Prinze Jr. and Sigourney Weaver lend their voices to an animated comedy from producer John H. Williams and Berlin Animation Film / Berliner Film Company), *The Libertine* (Johnny Depp, John Malkovich and Samantha Morton star in a \$22m adaptation of Stephen Jeffrey's award winning play), *Then She Found Me* (Helen Hunt's feature directorial debut in collaboration with Christine Vachon's Killer Films), (*Lassie* Peter O'Toole and Samantha Morton star in a remake of Eric Knight's classic novel), *Space Chimps* (From John H. William's Vanguard Animation, a unique comedy adventure about two chimps that are sent into the furthest reaches of the galaxy) and *Fade to Black* (Danny Huston, Paz Vega, Diego Luna and Christopher Walken in a taught thriller that sees Orson Welles investigating political intrigue in post war Rome).



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" and "Pa-janimals." 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 is currently in production on "Wilson and Ditch: Digging America," a webisode series for PBSKIDS.org featuring the Company's Emmy-winning animation technology, and the Company's Henson Alternative brand continues to produce "Puppet Up! - Uncensored," a live puppet improvisational show that runs monthly at the Avalon Hollywood. The Company has also announced the creation of The Hub, a third party licensing banner established to acquire and service global consumer products programs for external brands and entertainment properties.

<http://www.henson.com>