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from the  
**Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences**  
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### **Creatures, Monsters and Things to Inhabit the Academy**

**Beverly Hills , April 19, 2006** – Aslan, Yoda, Mr. Tinkles, Audrey II, Mighty Joe, and the Mystics, along with a puppy, a T-Rex dinosaur and several aliens, will be among the fantastical creatures, unearthly characters, hideous monsters and memorable icons that will come to life at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in “It’s Alive!: Bringing Animatronic Characters to Life on Film,” an original exhibition opening to the public on Friday, May 12, in Beverly Hills.

Presenting the work of many of the film industry’s leading animatronics professionals, the Academy’s Fourth Floor Gallery will showcase numerous models, both small and large, maquettes, and animatronic creatures and their mechanisms, accompanied by video clips of the final product.

“Animatronics have played a key role in creating some of film’s most memorable and beloved characters. We are excited to be a part of this exhibit giving the public a rare opportunity to see their favorite creatures up close,” said Brian Henson, co-CEO of The Jim Henson Company, which will provide exhibits of well-known characters from ground-breaking films including “The Dark Crystal” and “Labyrinth.”

The Grand Lobby’s installation will focus on the extensive design process such characters undergo. That section of the exhibition will present concept drawings, storyboards and photographs from the workshops and sets where the characters are built and operated.

“Animatronics is a real combination of art and technology, making it possible to manufacture creatures that can perform in front of the camera and interact with actors, in real time,” said Ellen Harrington, the Academy’s exhibitions curator and special events programmer.

The films represented in “It’s Alive” will include “102 Dalmatians,” “Alien3,” “AVP: Alien vs. Predator,” “An American Werewolf in London,” “Beetlejuice,” “Cats & Dogs,” “The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe,” “The Dark Crystal,” “Doctor Dolittle,” “George of the Jungle,” “Ghostbusters,” “Gremlins,” “Harry and the Hendersons,” “The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy,” “Labyrinth,” “Little Shop of Horrors,” “Jurassic Park,” “Men in Black II,” “Mighty Joe Young,” “Predator,” “Robocop 2,” “The Santa Clause 2,” “Short Circuit,” “Snow Dogs,” “Spider-Man 2” and “Star Wars: Episode V – The Empire Strikes Back.”

Lending to the exhibition are leading animatronics artists and companies including The Jim Henson Company, the Walt Disney Company, Amalgamated Dynamics, Inc., Eric Allard, Rick Baker, Dave Barclay, Lyle Conway, Richard Edlund, Ray Harryhausen, Robert Short and Phil Tippett.

With its roots in the early years of fantasy films, animatronics became widely used in the 1970s through the 1990s, making possible characters like Yoda of "The Empire Strikes Back," Harry, the giant ape of "Harry and the Hendersons" and, most recently, Aslan, the lion of "The Chronicles of Narnia." Even though the advent of CGI has given filmmakers a different range of options, such recent films as "Herbie Fully Loaded" and "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy" have elected to use animatronics to allow for real-time performances.

"It's Alive!: Bringing Animatronic Characters to Life on Film" will be on display through Sunday, August 20, 2006, at the Academy. Gallery viewing is open Tuesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and weekends, 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences is located at 8949 Wilshire Boulevard in Beverly Hills. For more information call (310) 247-3600.



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 launched 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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