

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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JIM HENSON, MUPPETS, GET STAMPS OF APPROVAL
Kermit the Frog, celebrating 50 years in entertainment, emcees ceremony

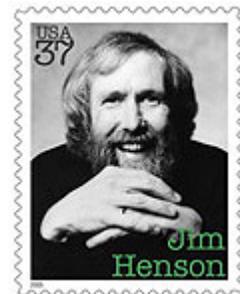
LOS ANGELES — Jim Henson and his beloved Muppets were immortalized on United States postage stamps today in Los Angeles at the Academy of the Television Arts & Sciences (<http://www.emmys.tv>), the same organization that bestowed several Emmy® Awards upon the extraordinary artist and visionary, and also inducted him into the Television Academy Hall of Fame. The first-day-of-issue dedication ceremony for the Jim Henson: The Man Behind the Muppets commemorative stamp sheet coincides with the 50th anniversary of Henson's most famous Muppet, Kermit the Frog, who emceed the event. The 11 stamp pane of 37-cent First-Class stamps is available in North Hollywood, CA, today and nationwide tomorrow.

"The strong legacy of family fun Jim Henson created still resonates around the world," said Anita Bizzotto, U.S. Postal Service Chief Marketing Officer and Executive Vice President, who dedicated the stamps. "When people see the stamps, they will be a reminder of the man who taught us to not take human flaws so seriously — a reminder that one person can make 'a difference in this world,' " she said, referring to Henson's quotation on the stamp selvage.

Joining Bizzotto in dedicating these stamps were Lisa and Brian Henson, children of Henson and Co-Chief Executive Officers of The Jim Henson Company (<http://www.henson.com>); and, Dick Askin, Chairman & Chief Executive Officer, Academy of Television Arts & Sciences (<http://www.emmys.tv>); and, Kermit the Frog and Miss Piggy (<http://www.muppets.com>).

Lisa Henson characterized the stamps as fitting her father's sense of humor. "We are honored that the U.S. Postal Service chose to recognize our father's legacy with this fun and irreverent stamp collection – a perfect reflection of his inspired silliness and creativity."

Her brother Brian welcomed the stamps as an homage to his father's work. "Our father created wonderful characters that continue to be



loved around the world. These stamps are also a tribute to his millions of fans who continue to support his work and believe in his vision," added Brian Henson.

Kermit the Frog viewed the stamps from the Muppets' perspective. "On behalf of the Muppets, it is a great honor to be featured on our own set of stamps," said Kermit the Frog. "These commemorative stamps couldn't have come at a better time – to celebrate my 50th Anniversary, I'm hitting the road next month on a 50-stop World Tour. I'll need to send a lot of letters home to Miss Piggy if I want to stay in her good graces!" The World Tour will begin October 14 in Kermit, TX. "Quote from Kermit, Lisa, Brian, or Dick."

The Television Academy's Dick Askin testified to Henson's legacy. "Jim Henson was a master storyteller and technical innovator who created unforgettable characters and entertainment," commented Askin. "He left us far too soon, but it's a testament to his unique talents that we still are captivated by his whimsical creations."

Uniquely Designed Autographed Stamps

This pane includes a 1986 Norman Seeff photograph of Henson accompanied by his visionary quote: "When I was young, my ambition was to be one of the people who made a difference in this world. My hope is to leave the world a little bit better for my having been here."

Ten additional stamps depict 13 famous Muppet characters: Kermit the Frog; Sam the Eagle; Statler and Waldorf; Animal; Rowlf the Dog; Fozzie Bear; Miss Piggy; Swedish Chef; Dr. Bunsen Honeydew and his assistant, Beaker; and the Great Gonzo and Camilla the Chicken.

When applied to a white envelope, each of the individually photographed Muppet stamps appear to burst through. This effect was created by photographing the characters and torn white paper separately to enhance highlights and shadows. The two images were merged and digitally enhanced to produce a fun and lighthearted stamp sheet.

The back of each stamp sheet features humorous autographed notes from each of the Muppet characters. The reverse of Miss Piggy's stamp reads, "Moi is thrilled...for all those lucky people who will get your letter with Moi's gorgeous face on the envelope. Don't even think of canceling moi, sweetie! Kissy, Kissy (signed Miss Piggy)."

The Man Behind the Muppets

Henson was born in Greenville, MS. On Sept.24, 1936. He moved to Maryland when he was in the fifth grade. In 1955, as a student at the University of Maryland, his own five-minute show, "Sam and Friends," made its debut on WRC-TV, an NBC affiliate in Washington, DC. The show featured a large cast of characters Henson dubbed "Muppets," including a green puppet named Kermit who would later become the world-famous Kermit the Frog (see attached Henson bio).

His creations continue to delight children and adults alike. And his legacy continues through The Jim Henson Company which continues to entertain audiences worldwide through creative excellence, technological achievements and inspired silliness with a wide range of television and film projects.

Current U.S. stamps, as well as a free comprehensive catalog, are available by toll-free phone order at 1-800-STAMP-24. A wide selection of stamps, other philatelic items, and licensed products are available at the Postal Store at www.usps.com/shop. Beautifully framed prints of original stamp art for delivery straight to the home or office are available at www.postalartgallery.com.



The image displays a collection of 13 US postage stamps, each valued at 37 cents. The stamps are arranged in a grid: a 5x2 grid of Muppet characters (Kermit the Frog, Fozzie Bear, Gonzo, Miss Piggy, Mr. Hoop, and Animal) and a 2x2 grid of other Muppet characters (Statler and Waldorf, Dr. Teeth and the Electric Blue Band, and Fozzie Bear and Gonzo). To the right of this grid is a larger stamp featuring a black and white portrait of Jim Henson, with his name 'Jim Henson' printed in green below the portrait.

Jim Henson
the man behind the Muppets

"When I was young, my ambition was to be one of the people who made a difference in this world. My hope is to leave the world a little better for my having been there."

Jim Henson



The bottom right portion of the advertisement features a silhouette of a person sitting in a chair, looking out a window at a cityscape. The window shows a view of buildings and a street.

How to Order the First-Day-of-Issue Postmark

Customers have 30 days to obtain the first-day-of-issue postmark by mail. They may purchase new stamps and at the Postal Store Web site at www.usps.com/shop, by telephone at 800-STAMP-24 and at their local Post Office. They should affix the stamps to envelopes of their choice, address the envelopes (to themselves or others), and place in a larger envelope addressed to:

JIM HENSON THE MAN BEHIND THE MUPPETS STAMPS
POSTMASTER
7035 N LAUREL CANYON BLVD
NORTH HOLLYWOOD CA 91615-9998

After applying the first-day-of-issue postmark, the Postal Service will return the envelopes through the mail. There is no charge for the postmark. All orders must be postmarked by October 27, 2005.

How to Order First-Day Covers

Stamp Fulfillment Services also offers first-day covers for new stamp issues and Postal Service stationery items postmarked with the official first-day-of-issue cancellation. Each item has an individual catalog number and is offered in the quarterly USA Philatelic catalog. Customers may request a free catalog by calling 800-STAMP-24 or writing to:

INFORMATION FULFILLMENT
DEPT 6270
US POSTAL SERVICE
PO BOX 219014
KANSAS CITY MO 64121-9014

Philatelic Products

There are six philatelic products available for this stamp issue:

- First Day Cover (Full Pane) \$6.57 (Item 458862).
- Canceled Full Pane \$6.57 (Item 458864).
- Digital Color Postmark Random Single Cover \$1.50 (Item 458865).
- Digital Color Postmark (Set of 11 Covers) \$16.50 (Item 458868).
- Mailing the Muppets (Stationery Set) \$16.95 (Item 458876).
- Cancellation Keepsake (FP w/CP Random Single) \$5.57 (Item 458899).

These products will be available while supplies last at postal stores, online at www.usps.com, and by telephone at 800-STAMP-24.

Since 1775, the Postal Service has connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. It is an independent federal agency that visits 142 million homes and businesses every day and is the only service provider delivering to every address in the nation. The Postal Service receives no taxpayer dollars for routine operations, but derives its operating revenues solely from the sale of postage, products and services. With annual revenues of more than \$69 billion, it is the world's leading provider of mailing and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world. The Postal Service delivers more than 46 percent of the world's mail volume—some 206 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year—and serves seven million customers each day at its 37,000 retail locations nationwide.

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Jim Henson Biography

Jim Henson, an extraordinary artist and visionary, invented unique worlds and characters that remain just as vivid, original and fresh today as when they were created. A television pioneer, an innovator in puppetry, technology and visual arts, and a performer who literally brought to life some of the most memorable characters ever—including the world's most famous frog, Kermit™, Jim Henson's impact on entertainment, education and culture continues to this day.

Born September 24, 1936 in Greenville, Mississippi, Jim was the second son of Paul and Betty Henson. Jim spent his early years in Leland, MS where his father worked with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Throughout his youth, Jim had an interest in art and, later, television. He was particularly close to his maternal grandmother, an avid painter, quilter, and needleworker, and he visited her often. She was supportive of Jim's artistic efforts and encouraged him to use his imagination and to take delight in the world around him.

When Jim was in the fifth grade, the Henson family moved to Maryland. There Jim, often with his older brother Paul, experimented with a variety of artistic techniques— experiments which eventually led Jim to the very latest visual media, television. In 1954, while still in high school, Jim began his television career with performing puppets on a local Washington, DC Saturday morning program on WTOP-TV. The following year, as a freshman at the University of Maryland, he was given his own twice-daily, five-minute show, *Sam and Friends*, on the local NBC affiliate, WRC-TV. Jim along with his assistant, fellow University of Maryland student and future wife, Jane Nebel, introduced many Muppet mainstays—music, snarky humor and innovative technical tricks (such as eliminating the puppet stage and using the television itself as the proscenium). Perhaps most memorably, the show featured an early version of Kermit the Frog.

The success of *Sam and Friends* led to guest appearances on such national network programs as *The Steve Allen Show*, *The Jack Paar Show* and *Today*. Jim also began making hundreds of humorous commercials for sponsors throughout the country. In 1961, as *Muppets, Inc.* grew, Jim and Jane brought on puppeteer and writer Jerry Juhl, who would become one of Jim's major collaborators. The demands of national television appearances brought Jim and his family to New York in 1963. With weekly appearances on *Today* and an ever-growing list of commercial clients, Jim sought out the talents of master puppet builder, Don Sahlin and young puppeteer, Frank Oz. Together, they helped develop the Muppets' first nationally known character, Rowlf the Dog, who appeared regularly on *The Jimmy Dean Show* from 1963 to 1966. Having established a group of talented collaborators, including producer David Lazer, Jim continued to pursue his career in puppetry and filmmaking. Between 1964 and 1969, Jim produced several experimental films including the award-winning *Time Piece*, *Youth '68*, and *The Cube*. These projects expanded Jim's knowledge of film techniques, leading to greater innovations with the Muppets.

In 1966, a public television producer named Joan Ganz Cooney, began work on a groundbreaking educational children's television show called *Sesame Street* that would premiere in 1969. Based

on Jim's creative reputation, Cooney asked him to create a family of characters to populate Sesame Street. These characters—Ernie and Bert, Oscar the Grouch, Grover, Cookie Monster, and of course the 8-foot-2 Big Bird—continue to entertain and educate today, more than 35 years later. Working with Children's Television Workshop (later renamed Sesame Workshop) on Sesame Street, Jim also had the opportunity to continue experimenting with film techniques. Together with his talented team, Jim produced more than two dozen live action and animated shorts that are still teaching children how to count, learn the alphabet and master other educational concepts.

Sesame Street demonstrated the Muppets' undeniable appeal to children, but Jim strongly believed these characters could entertain a much wider family audience. After years of trying to sell the idea for The Muppet Show in the U.S., Jim finally received backing from a London-based television producer, Lord Lew Grade. In 1975 production began at Grade's ATV Studios, and soon the world was introduced to a new family of unforgettable characters, such as Miss Piggy, Fozzie Bear and Animal (performed by Frank Oz); The Great Gonzo (performed by Dave Goelz); Scooter (performed by Richard Hunt); Lew Zealand (performed by Jerry Nelson); and Rizzo the Rat (performed by Steve Whitmire). Hosted by Kermit the Frog, accompanied by the musical meanderings of Doctor Teeth and the Electric Mayhem Band, the Muppets were joined each week by an international pantheon of guest stars, from Gene Kelly and Rudolph Nureyev to Steve Martin and John Cleese. The success of The Muppet Show naturally led to Hollywood, where the Muppets starred in six feature films: The Muppet Movie, The Great Muppet Caper, The Muppets Take Manhattan, The Muppet Christmas Carol, Muppet Treasure Island and most recently Muppets From Space.

During the 1980s, in addition to making Muppet movies, Jim brought two remarkably original fantasy films to the big screen, The Dark Crystal and Labyrinth. Inspired by the exquisite and intricate artwork of British illustrator Brian Froud, these films challenged Jim to create new kinds of three-dimensional characters with advanced movement abilities. In development for five years, The Dark Crystal utilized the talents of scores of designers, builders, technicians, and performers from across the globe. The result: a phenomenal showcase of puppetry and animatronics. Jim and Brian Froud collaborated again on the feature film, Labyrinth, which was produced by George Lucas, and starred David Bowie and future Oscar®-winner Jennifer Connelly. Like The Dark Crystal before it, Labyrinth gave Jim a unique opportunity to take animatronics and performance to a new level. The multi-talented staff that helped create these two films formed the basis for what is now known as Jim Henson's Creature Shop. Founded in 1979, with offices in London and Los Angeles, Jim Henson's Creature Shop continues to set industry standards in animatronics, performance and performance technology.

Throughout the 1980's, Jim also created memorable television series and specials, including: Fraggle Rock, Muppet Babies, Jim Henson's The Storyteller, and Jim Henson's Greek Myths.

- Fraggle Rock's Fraggles, Gorgs and Doozers sang songs celebrating friendship, brotherhood and peace, and was one of the world's first international television co-productions. The show continues to have a devoted fan following around the world.
- Muppet Babies was awarded four consecutive Emmys® for "Outstanding Animated Program".
- Jim Henson's The Storyteller and Jim Henson's Greek Myths were two original series conceived by Jim to convey the metaphoric richness of ancient stories. Based on authentic folk tales and myths, many of the episodes were written by Academy Award®-winning writer/director Anthony Minghella. With strong literary richness and magical visual effects and animatronics by Jim Henson's Creature Shop, Jim Henson's The Storyteller and Jim Henson's Greek Myths are a rare combination of ancient tradition and modern technological artistry.
- Jim's last project was MuppetVision 3*D, a short multi-media film and interactive attraction, which he directed and which currently runs at custom-made theaters at Disney/MGM Studios theme park at the Walt Disney World Resort in Florida, and at Disney's California Adventure in Anaheim, California.

On May 16, 1990, after a brief illness, Jim Henson died in New York City. With his keen ability for drawing together a strong team of performers, artists, and collaborators who shared his vision and creativity, Jim ensured that his work and unique creative vision would continue. Through The Jim Henson Company, his work continues to captivate and entertain a global audience.