

MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FIRST LADY CHIRLANE MCCRAY, DEPUTY MAYOR ALICIA GLEN, CITY COUNCIL MAJORITY LEADER JIMMY VAN BRAMER, AND OTHER SPECIAL GUESTS INAUGURATE 'THE JIM HENSON EXHIBITION' IN A NEW CITY-FUNDED GALLERY AT MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

The Jim Henson Exhibition opens to the public on Saturday, July 22

Astoria, Queens, New York, July 20, 2017—At a celebratory opening ceremony for *The Jim Henson Exhibition*, housed in a new gallery at Museum of the Moving Image funded by The City of New York, the First Lady of New York City Chirlane McCray, the Museum's Executive Director Carl Goodman, Deputy Mayor Alicia Glen, and City Council Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer were joined by Jim Henson's daughter Cheryl Henson, and special appearances by Abby Cadabby, Red Fraggle, and Fozzie Bear, among other guests. This major new exhibition is dedicated to the life and legacy of Jim Henson, who was a singular creative figure in the realms of television, film, and puppetry—and a New Yorker who made the City his base for family and work. *The Jim Henson Exhibition* opens to the public on Saturday, July 22.

The Jim Henson Exhibition features a broad range of artifacts from throughout Henson's remarkable television and film career. It reveals how Henson and his team of builders, performers, and writers brought to life the enduringly popular worlds of *The Muppet Show*, *Sesame Street*, *Fraggle Rock*, *The Dark Crystal*, and *Labyrinth*. It also includes material from Henson's lesser known and experimental film projects, presenting Henson as a restlessly creative performer, filmmaker, and technical innovator.

Among the more than 300 objects on view in *The Jim Henson Exhibition* are 47 puppets including Kermit the Frog, Miss Piggy, Rowlf, The Swedish Chef, Statler, Waldorf, Big Bird, Elmo, Cantus Fraggle, a Skeksis, and other popular favorites. Many of the artifacts in the exhibition are drawn from the 2013 donation by Jim Henson's family to the Museum's collection. The exhibition also includes sketches, storyboards, scripts, and other material on loan from The Jim Henson Company Archives. Archival video and photographic material was provided by The Jim Henson Company, Sesame Workshop, and The Muppets Studio.

The Jim Henson Exhibition is organized by Barbara Miller, Curator of the Collection and

Exhibitions. Wendell Walker is the Director of Production and Design. Creative Direction & Exhibition Design by COLLINS | NY & SF.

The exhibition was organized by Museum of the Moving Image in collaboration with the Henson family, The Jim Henson Legacy, and The Jim Henson Company, and in cooperation with Sesame Workshop and The Muppets Studio.

The exhibition is housed in a new gallery which received \$4.5 million in City funding, with over \$1.6 million from the City's Executive Budget, \$2 million from Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer, and \$500,000 from Borough President Melinda Katz.

Also attending the ribbon-cutting were NYC Department of Cultural Affairs Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl; James Padgett, President of the NYC Economic Development Corp; the Museum's Co-Chairman Ivan L. Lustig; the Museum's Vice Chair and Secretary Warrington Hudlin; Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment First Deputy Commissioner Kai Falkenberg; NYC & Company President Fred Dixon; Debbie McClellan, Vice President, The Muppets Studio; Betsy Loreda, Executive Editor, Sesame Workshop; Karen Falk, Archives Director, The Jim Henson Company; Craig Shemin, President, and Bonnie Erickson, President Emeritus, of The Jim Henson Legacy; Brian Collins, founder and CEO of COLLINS; and many of the Museum's staff and supporters who made the gallery and the exhibition possible.

"*The Jim Henson Exhibition* is a beautiful homage to an artist whose influence on our children's education and popular culture is immeasurable," said **First Lady of New York City Chirlane McCray**. "With warmth, a little bit of silliness, and a whole lot of love, Henson's characters will continue to teach and bridge cultural and education gaps for generations to come."

"I am delighted our beloved Muppets have a new home in the World's Borough, and fittingly, at New York's Museum of the Moving Image. I congratulate Council Member Van Bramer and Borough President Katz for their collaboration and dedication to America's most irascible monsters—and New York families," **Mayor Bill de Blasio** said.

"Today, the Muppets take Queens! Jim Henson's world is full of magic, humor and meaning. It's a Made in New York story that we are thrilled will be told to countless visitors at the Museum of the Moving Image. The City is proud to support this new exhibit," said Deputy Mayor Alicia Glen.

"The opening of *The Jim Henson Exhibition* is a major milestone for the Museum. This moment is the result of the tireless work of our staff and collaborators, generous support from The City of New York, especially our representatives from Queens, the family of Jim Henson, and the expertise and selflessness of the many talented artists

who worked with Jim and continue to carry the Henson legacy forward,” said **Ivan L. Lustig, Co-Chairman of the Museum’s Board of Trustees.**

“*The Jim Henson Exhibition* is a place to reconnect to the creative spirit of Jim Henson. My father and his many collaborators took great joy in making innovative television and film productions that featured these beautiful puppets. It is our pleasure to share them with visitors to the Museum of the Moving Image,” said **Cheryl Henson**, daughter of Jim Henson and President of The Jim Henson Foundation. My family is thrilled to see this exhibit become a permanent destination here in New York and hope Jim Henson's story will inspire future generations to celebrate their own creative hopes and dreams.”

MoMI Executive Director Carl Goodman said, “*The Jim Henson Exhibition* opens at a time when the world could use a little reminder of the values embedded in and embodied by Jim Henson’s work: respect for difference, the value of collaboration, creativity, open-mindedness, unity amidst diversity, and kindness—all conveyed through a potent combination of art, film and media, and humor. We hope visitors from all over the world will discover this when they walk through the doors of the exhibition.”

“The opening of the Jim Henson Exhibit at the Museum of the Moving Image presents a new, creative way to interact with the unique history of New York City through media,” said **New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito**. “The Council has been a staunch supporter of the Museum of the Moving Image, having provided nearly \$7.9 million in funding for various projects since 2010. We greatly appreciate the contributions all of the countless cultural institutions across our City, and look forward to continuing to support the arts.”

“Jim Henson was a treasure whose characters continue to ignite imaginations and delight children and adults throughout the world,” said **Queens Borough President Melinda Katz**. “Queens is proud to permanently host the Jim Henson gallery here in ‘The World’s Borough.’ Congratulations to the Henson family, the New York City Economic Development Corporation and the Museum of the Moving Image for making this exhibit a reality.”

“From *The Muppet Show* to *Sesame Street*, the work of Jim Henson touched the hearts of millions across our globe,” said **Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer**. “The volume and originality of Jim Henson’s work is truly astounding, and I’m proud to have secured \$2 million in funding for a permanent exhibit at the Museum of the Moving Image so that hundreds of his personal artifacts including puppets, storyboards, and sketches can find a permanent home in Western Queens. For generations to come, this exhibit will tell the story of his work and inspire all who visit.”

"Jim Henson's body of work shows us the incredible power of creativity, transforming

inanimate materials into a universe of characters beloved by people across the globe," said **Cultural Affairs Commissioner Tom Finkelparl**. "The City is proud to support this extraordinary new gallery, which will allow New Yorkers of all ages to enjoy the Muppets, Fraggles, Sesame Street residents, and other characters for years to come, and develop a deeper appreciation of the artistry it takes to bring something as simple as green felt to life on the screen. We applaud the Henson family, the staff and leadership of the Museum of the Moving Image, Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer and our partners in the City Council, and everyone else who has contributed to this remarkable project."

"After years of hard work, we couldn't be prouder to unveil this permanent home for *The Jim Henson Exhibition* right here in Queens, where his work will be forever cherished. Special thanks to Council Majority Leader Van Bramer and Borough President Melinda Katz for their efforts in bringing this idea to life," said **New York City Economic Development Corporation President and CEO James Patchett**. "So to Red Fraggle, Fozzie Bear, Abby Cadabby, and the rest of the iconic characters, in the words of Miss Piggy, 'Start out perfect and don't change a thing.' Welcome home!"

"The opening of the long anticipated Jim Henson exhibition at the Museum of the Moving Image gives visitors and locals another compelling reason to explore Queens and discover its world-class cultural scene," said **Fred Dixon, NYC & Company's President and CEO**.

"Jim Henson's work is the stuff of legend in American culture, with iconic characters who have delighted fans of all ages for decades," said **Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment Commissioner Julie Menin**. "We are thrilled that the Museum of the Moving Image will be home to a permanent exhibit honoring the special work of this talented artist, and that New York's many Muppet fans will have a place to celebrate all that they love about his work."

"It's great news that the Museum of the Moving Image will have a permanent gallery dedicated to the charming, whimsical, imaginative work of Jim Henson, one of the most creative and innovative performers/developers in the history of television. From *The Muppet Show* to *Fraggle Rock*, Jim Henson's creations have delighted and inspired us," said **U.S. Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney (NY-12)**. "The Muppets lived in New York and have a particularly New York ethos, which is why it is so important for them to be on display here to enthrall new generations of fans. We all owe a debt of gratitude to Mayor de Blasio and City Council Cultural Affairs Chair Jimmy Van Bramer for helping the Jim Henson collection find a permanent home at New York's Museum of the Moving Image."

"Jim Henson's Muppets are truly an American treasure and it's wonderful that one of Astoria's many treasures—the Museum of the Moving Image—will now be home to this

exhibit,” said **NYS Assembly Member Aravella Simotas**.

The Museum acknowledges the significant role played by COLLINS in creative direction and exhibition design, the results of which are an environment that embodies the playful, inventive, and sophisticated spirit of Jim Henson’s creations. In addition, COLLINS designed the two interactive experiences and conceived of *The Muppet Show* video installation, which features all 120 episodes in the series showing simultaneously.

“We were beyond honored when the Museum invited us to bring our expertise in creative direction, environmental design & interactive technology,” said **Brian Collins, founder and Chief Creative Officer of COLLINS**. “And our collaboration with their amazing people was the best kind of collaboration, inspired by the ethos of Jim Henson himself—creative people coming together to make something extraordinary. This amazing exhibition will be a great, permanent addition to our city's creative life.”

The Jim Henson Exhibition is made possible by major support from Brian Henson, Cheryl Henson, Heather Henson, Lisa Henson, Joan Ganz Cooney and Peter G. Peterson, Bill Prady, Booth Ferris Foundation, The Jane Henson Foundation, George S. Kaufman, Institute of Museum and Library Services, George Lucas Family Foundation, Stavros Niarchos Foundation, and Herbert S. Schlosser. In addition, a Kickstarter campaign resulted in more than 2,000 individuals helping to fund the exhibition.

A traveling version of the exhibition, *The Jim Henson Exhibition: Imagination Unlimited*, opened on May 20 at the Museum of Pop Culture in Seattle, Washington.

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About Museum of the Moving Image

Museum of the Moving Image (movingimage.us) advances the understanding, enjoyment, and appreciation of the art, history, technique, and technology of film, television, and digital media. In its stunning facilities—acclaimed for both its accessibility and bold design—the Museum presents exhibitions; screenings of significant works; discussion programs featuring actors, directors, craftspeople, and business leaders; and education programs which serve more than 50,000 students each year. The Museum also houses a significant collection of moving-image artifacts.

About COLLINS

COLLINS is an independent brand and experience design company based in New York and San Francisco. Founded by Brian Collins, the firm has 60 designers, strategists, writers, coders and experimenters dedicated to creating brands, experiences and technologies that shape companies and people for the better. COLLINS works globally with clients including Spotify, Facebook, Instagram, Target, Nike, Coca-Cola and The Guggenheim Museum, among others.

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MUSEUM INFORMATION

Hours: Wednesday-Thursday, 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Friday, 10:30 to 8:00 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, 10:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Beginning July 25, the Museum will also open on Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Museum Admission: \$15 adults (18+); \$11 senior citizens (65+) and students (18+) with ID; \$7 youth (ages 3–17). Children under 3 and Museum members are admitted free. Admission to the galleries is free on Fridays, 4:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Film Screenings: Friday evenings, Saturdays and Sundays, and as scheduled. Unless otherwise noted, ticket are \$15 adults / \$11 seniors and students / \$7 youth 3–17 / Free for members at the Film Lover and Kids Premium levels and above. Advance purchase is available online. Ticket purchase may be applied toward same-day admission to the Museum's galleries.

Location: 36-01 35 Avenue (at 37 Street) in Astoria.

Subway: M (weekdays only) or R to Steinway Street. W (weekdays only) or N to 36 Avenue.

Program Information: Telephone: 718 777 6888; Website: movingimage.us

Membership: movingimage.us/support/membership or 718 777 6877

Museum of the Moving Image is housed in a building owned by the City of New York and has received significant support from the following public agencies: New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; New York City Economic Development Corporation; New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature; Institute of Museum and Library Services; National Endowment for the Humanities; National Endowment for the Arts; and Natural Heritage Trust (administered by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation). For more information, please visit movingimage.us.