

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**SMITHSONIAN NETWORKS
ANNOUNCES PROGRAMMING SLATE**

Makes Co-Production deal with BBC for "Timewatch"

(Washington DC, January 29, 2007) An ambitious programming slate of over sixty programs from some of the industry's top non-fiction production companies will be the foundation of the Smithsonian Networks when it makes its Video On Demand service available to operators later this spring.

The announcement was made by David Royle, Executive Vice President for Programming and Production.

"It's a very exciting time for Smithsonian Networks," said Royle. "I think filmmakers recognize that we offer a unique opportunity to make quality, entertaining shows that are inspired by the Smithsonian and its broad interests. Their enthusiasm is infectious and we're delighted that so many have embraced the new opportunity the network offers as partners in production and distribution. The chance to take Smithsonian's collections and interests beyond the confines of Washington to a wider American public is a wonderful challenge."

The deals include a co-production deal with the BBC for their flagship history series, TIMEWATCH. *TIMEWATCH* is the BBC's longest running history series and regularly airs stories that change our understanding of world events.

Smithsonian Networks' programming, broadcast in high definition, will feature documentaries, events, and short subject exploration of the major scientific,

cultural, and historical events of the day. The projects will consist of original and acquired films that cover topics which reflect the broad scope of the Smithsonian Institution's resources from categories including Air & Space, Cool Collections, History & Mystery, More Smithsonian, Natural Wonders, Pop Culture and Smithsonian Kids. These include:

STORIES FROM THE VAULTS – from Caragol Wells Productions.

This series of six 30-minute shows is hosted by Tom Cavanagh (“Ed”). He’ll venture beyond the exhibit halls into the back rooms, high-tech vaults and cutting-edge labs of the world’s most renowned museum complex to showcase the Smithsonian’s rarely-seen treasures and the brilliant, fascinating people working behind-the-scenes who care for and unlock their secrets. And, in doing so, we tell some extraordinary stories of American culture and heritage.

THE HUNT FOR THE DOUBLE EAGLE – from Fulcrum TV.

The story of the 1933 solid gold Double Eagle is a mystery story about the intrigue and greed stirred by the world’s most valuable coin. Two examples of this coin, which last sold for \$7 million, exist in the Smithsonian’s coin collection, and our film will draw upon Smithsonian experts to tell this tale. Commissioned by President Theodore Roosevelt to reflect the growing glory of America in the early 20th century, the 1933 Double Eagle never entered legal circulation and was thought destroyed, except for the two at the Smithsonian. Mysteriously, a handful of the coins escaped the US Mint and led authorities on a decades-long chase. . Both beautiful and unattainable, the coin has been on the United States Secret Service’s Most Wanted list for over 70 years. This film will retrace the Secret Service investigation of the 1933 Double Eagle through nearly three-quarters of a century of American history. It’s a dramatic story that crosses continents and includes corruption at the US mint, illuminates the decadence and avarice of King Farouk of Egypt until it is finally recovered in a sting at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York.

AMERICAN TREASURES – from Big Fish Entertainment.

American Treasures is inspired by the National Museum of American History's special exhibit of 150 of the most unique objects in the Smithsonian's collection. From the hat that Abraham Lincoln wore the night of his assassination to Dorothy's ruby red slippers, these diverse objects combine to define the American experience over the last two hundred years. Smithsonian Networks tells the stories behind these objects, and how they have changed our lives and shaped our culture.

NATURE TECH – a three-part series from ORF (Austrian Broadcasting Corporation).

Amazing photography brings to life ways in which the natural world inspires the inventors of tomorrow's next breakthrough. Today's scientists and engineers are studying nature to sleuth out the secrets of superior design: how to apply the hydrodynamics of penguins to design vehicles with unparalleled fuel efficiency, how flowers' resistance to dirt can help create non-stick substances, and how bone structures can lead to better buildings. Cutting-edge science also helps us understand how to achieve high speeds, construct durable structures and save energy.

CUTTING LOOSE – from Dune Productions and Andrew Young and Susan Todd.

This winner of the 1996 Filmmakers Trophy for Best Documentary at Sundance has never been seen before on American TV. "Cutting Loose" chronicles an event that almost perished under the wrath of Hurricane Katrina - the vibrant life of Mardi Gras. Steeped in tradition, this New Orleans bacchanalia is a 24-hour party like no other in America. This documentary starts a month before the last feast day before Lent, and follows revelers from a variety of walks of life. It is a testament to the New Orleans that once was, "the city that care forgot."

CRITTER QUEST – from Tiger/Tigress Productions.

22-year-old naturalist Peter Schriemer introduces 5-12 year olds to the wonderful, icky world of creepies and crawlies that lurk just beyond their doorsteps. This program is full of projects that children can learn to do in their own backyards and teaches an appreciation of nature. It will have an important educational outreach component with links to Smithsonian initiatives.

Smithsonian Networks plans on making its first offering, Smithsonian On Demand, available later this spring.

ABOUT SMITHSONIAN NETWORKS

Smithsonian Networks (SN), a new venture between Showtime Networks Inc. and the Smithsonian Institution, was formed to create new a network that will host channels that will showcase scientific, cultural, and historical programming based largely on the assets of the Smithsonian Institution, the world's largest museum complex. The network will feature original documentaries, short-subject explorations, innovative and groundbreaking programs highlighting America's historical, cultural and scientific heritage.

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