

Director and Visual Effects Supervisor Phil Tippett Receives the Visual Effects Society (VES) "George Melies Award For Artistic Excellence"

Los Angeles, August, 2008 - Founder of Tippett Studio and two-time Academy Award® and Emmy winner, Phil Tippett, has been selected by the VES Board of Directors as the recipient of the "George Melies Award for Artistic Excellence." The award will be presented at the 7th Annual VES Awards, which will be held at the Century Plaza Hotel in Beverly Hills on Saturday, February 21, 2009.

The Melies Award is designed to honor individuals who have "pioneered a significant and lasting contribution to the art and/or science of the visual effects industry by a way of artistry, invention and groundbreaking work." Phil Tippett is the embodiment of this award, holding an iconic place as the stop-motion animator of the Imperial Walkers in *The Empire Strikes Back* and former head of the ILM creature shop. Tippett was also at the forefront of digital animation, having supervised the dinosaur animation in Steven Spielberg's groundbreaking blockbuster *Jurassic Park*.

"Phil Tippett has functioned as one of the major engines pushing the visual effects industry further than it was ever thought possible," said VES Executive Director Eric Roth. "Phil has become one of the giants of our industry by pioneering new ways to make the fantastical a practical reality. Much of what we see on our screens today would not have been possible in decades past and Phil has certainly led the way during that time," added Roth.

"It is always nice to receive recognition for doing something that you love. I have been doing exactly what I have always wanted to do - making movies and bringing impossible creations to life," said Phil Tippett. "I am honored to accept this award and am humbled that my work has been so recognized by my peers."

Tippett who is the founder of Tippett Studio, has contributed significant visual effects to more than 60 feature films and commercials of multiple genres. After starting Tippett Studio from his garage in 1984, Tippett grew his company into a crew of artists, animators, engineers and production staff occupying five buildings in Berkeley, California. Over the years Tippett has won an Academy Award® for his work in *Jurassic Park* and a Special Achievement Award for *Star Wars: Episode VI - Return of the Jedi*.

Previous winners of the George Melies Award were Robert Abel and John Lasseter.

Tippett Studio is currently in production on Sam Raimi's *Drag Me to Hell* and *X-Men Origins: Wolverine* for 20th Century Fox and have recently wrapped production on stereoscopic commercials for Electronic Arts' game *Spore* and Texas Instruments' DLP Projection, as well as the marketing campaign and feature film work for Disney's *Beverly Hills Chihuahua*

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About the VES

VES is a professional, honorary society, dedicated to advancing the arts, sciences, and applications of visual effects and to upholding the highest uniform standards and procedures for the visual effects profession.

VES is the entertainment industry's only official organization representing the extended community of visual effects practitioners including supervisors, artists, producers, technology developers, educators and studio executives. Its 1,800 global members contribute to all areas of entertainment from film, television and commercials to music videos, games and new media. VES strives to enrich and educate its members and the entertainment community at large through many domestic and international events, screenings and programs. Visual effects professionals constitute a vital creative force in content creation and are literally shaping the future of entertainment