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Visual Effects Society Announces 2018 VES Fellows *Distinguished VFX Practitioners to be Recognized at Exclusive Celebration*

Los Angeles (September 26, 2018) – Today, the Visual Effects Society (VES), the industry’s global professional honorary society, announced the 2018 class of VES Fellows. The Fellows distinction, bestowed by the VES Board of Directors, signifies that the individual has maintained an outstanding reputation and has made exceptional achievements and sustained contributions to the art, science or business of visual effects, as well as enabling members’ careers and promoting community worldwide and by providing sustained service to the VES which has significantly advanced the Society, its membership and its mission statement for a period of not less than 10 years within the last 20 years.

This year’s venerated VES Fellows who will be bestowed with the post-nominal letters “VES” are: Craig Barron, Joyce Cox, Dan Curry, Paul Debevec and Mike Fink. The honorees will be recognized at a special reception in Beverly Hills on October 11.

“Our VES Fellows represent a group of exceptional artists, innovators and professionals who have made significant contributions to the field of visual effects,” said Mike Chambers, VES Board Chair. “We are proud to recognize those who helped shape our shared legacy and continue to inspire future generations of VFX practitioners.”

Craig Barron – Barron has been an innovator in the cinematic illusion of creating visuals for the past two decades and has contributed to the visual effects on more than 100 films. He began his career at Industrial Light + Magic, where he worked on such classic films as *THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK*, *RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK* and *E.T. THE EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL*. Barron’s visual effects company, Matte World Digital, conjured environments for such films as *TITANIC*, *ZODIAC*, *ALICE IN WONDERLAND* and *HUGO*. Barron received an Oscar nomination for his work on *BATMAN RETURNS* and an Oscar for Best Visual Effects for *THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON*. He is the co-chair of the Science and Technology Council for the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, and an Academy Governor representing the Visual Effects branch. He is the Creative Director at Magnopus, a Los Angeles-based new media company.

Joyce Cox - In the mid 90’s Cox transitioned from producing commercials into the role of VFX Producer for feature films. Since then she has produced thousands of visual effects shots. Her credits include *HARRY POTTER AND THE SORCERER’S STONE*, *X-MEN 2*, *THE DARK KNIGHT*, *AVATAR*, *MEN IN BLACK III*, and most recently Jon Favreau’s *THE JUNGLE BOOK*. Cox has been the recipient of VES Awards for her work on *AVATAR* and *THE JUNGLE BOOK*. In addition, she teaches *PRODUCING VFX* at the USC School of Cinematic Arts and is working with UST Global Media Services to create Curó, a web-based application for organizing and simplifying the complex process of managing the finances of VFX.

2018 VES Fellows

Dan Curry - A veteran of over 100 feature films and television productions, Curry's career spans over three decades working with some of the industry's most influential and respected filmmakers. Among other awards, his work has been recognized with seven Emmys (15 nominations) and a VES Award for Best Broadcast Visual Effects. Curry is a past VES Board member and a past Visual Effects Peer Group Governor of the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences. He is also a member of DGA, ASC, and PGA. Curry is a former Peace Corps Volunteer in Community Development, designing and supervising construction of small dams and bridges in rural Thailand. He subsequently directed a Thai language television series, taught architectural drafting at Khon Kaen University and did freelance art, architecture, and production design for clients ranging from the United States Information Service to the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand. Returning to the U.S., he taught Fine Arts, Film, and Theatre at the university level prior to entering the entertainment industry.

Paul Debevec – Debevec is a Senior Scientist at Google VR and Adjunct Research Professor of Computer Science in the Viterbi School of Engineering at USC, working with the Vision and Graphics Laboratory at the USC Institute for Creative Technologies. His Ph.D. theses presented Façade, an image-based modeling and rendering system for creating photoreal architectural models from photographs. He led the creation of virtual cinematography for his 1997 film *THE CAMPANILE MOVIE*, whose techniques were used to create virtual backgrounds in *THE MATRIX*. Subsequently, he pioneered high dynamic range image-based lighting techniques and led the design of HDR Shop, the first high dynamic range image editing program. At USC ICT, Debevec has led the development of a series of Light Stage devices used to create photoreal digital actors in film including *SPIDER MAN 2*, *SUPERMAN RETURNS*, *THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON* and *AVATAR*. Debevec received ACM SIGGRAPH's first Significant New Researcher Award. In addition to serving as a longtime VES member, he is Vice President of ACM SIGGRAPH and a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and the Academy's Science and Technology Council.

Michael Fink – Fink began working in film on *CHINA SYNDROME*. He was hooked, and worked on films such as *STAR TREK – THE MOTION PICTURE* and *BLADE RUNNER* before becoming a Visual Effects Supervisor on *WAR GAMES* (BAFTA Nomination). He has since worked on *BUCKAROO BANZAI*, *BATMAN RETURNS* (Academy Award nomination, BAFTA nomination), *BRAVEHEART*, *MARS ATTACKS!*, *X-MEN*, *X-MEN 2*, *THE GOLDEN COMPASS* (VES nomination, Academy Award, BAFTA Award), *AVATAR*, *TRON: LEGACY*, *TREE OF LIFE* and *LIFE OF PI*. Fink directed the first Coca Cola Polar Bear spot in 1993, which was one of the earliest widely seen examples of 3D fur on a CG creature. Fink is a founding member of the Visual Effects Society and a former VES Board Member. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the Visual Effects Branch of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. He is currently a Professor at the School of Cinematic Arts at the University of Southern California, and Chair of the Division of Film and Television Production. He holds the George Méliès Endowed Chair in Visual Effects at the USC School of Cinematic Arts.

As previously announced, VFX archivist and longtime Board member Gene Kozicki was named recipient of the 2018 VES Founders Award. The Society designated venerated visual effects innovator Jonathan Erland, VES with a Lifetime VES Membership and CEO of Tippett Studio, Jules Roman with an Honorary VES Membership. This year's VES Hall of Fame honorees include: L.B. Abbott, Richard "Doc" Baily, Saul Bass, Ray Harryhausen, Derek Meddings, Eileen Moran, and Gene Roddenberry.

About the Visual Effects Society

The Visual Effects Society is a professional global honorary society dedicated to advancing the arts, sciences and applications of visual effects and to upholding the highest standards and procedures for the visual effects profession. It is the entertainment industry's only official organization representing the extended global community of visual effects practitioners, including supervisors, artists, producers, technology developers, educators and studio executives. VES' nearly 4,000 members in 35 countries worldwide contribute to all areas of entertainment – film, television, commercials, animation, music videos, games and new media.

To learn more about the VES, visit www.visualeffectssociety.com and follow us on Twitter @VFX Society. Read our signature publication *VFX Voice* at www.vfxvoice.com