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Contact: Naomi Goldman, NLG Communications
T: 424-293-2113 or 310-770-2765
naomi@nlgcommunications.com

**Visual Effects Society Announces Winners of the 21st Annual VES Awards
AVATAR: THE WAY OF WATER is Top Feature Film; GUILLERMO DEL TORO'S
PINOCCHIO is Top Animated Film; THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RINGS OF
POWER Gets Top Episodic Honors; FRITO-LAY Tops Commercials**

VFX Artists, Innovators and Industry VIPs Headline Celebration of Visual Storytelling

Los Angeles (February 15, 2023) – Today, the Visual Effects Society (VES), the industry's global professional honorary society, held the 21st Annual VES Awards, the prestigious yearly celebration that recognizes outstanding visual effects artistry and innovation in film, animation, television, commercials, video games and special venues.

Industry guests gathered at the Beverly Hilton Hotel to celebrate VFX talent in 25 awards categories and special honorees. *Avatar: The Way of Water* was named the photoreal feature winner, garnering nine awards. *Guillermo del Toro's Pinocchio* was named top animated film, winning three awards. *The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power* was named best photoreal episode, winning three awards. *Frito-Lay: Push It* topped the commercial field.

Comedian/actor Patton Oswalt returned as host for the 10th time. Academy Award- winning filmmaker James Cameron presented the VES Lifetime Achievement award to acclaimed producer Gale Anne Hurd. The Society's current and former Board Chairs presented the VES Board of Directors Award to former Executive Director Eric Roth; the group included Lisa Cooke, current VES Chair; Jim Morris, VES, President of Pixar Animation and founding VES Chair; and former Chairs Jeffrey A. Okun, VES; Mike Chambers, VES; Carl Rosendahl, VES; and Jeff Barnes. Award presenters included: Academy-Award nominated filmmaker Rian Johnson, Academy-Award-winning filmmaker Domee Shi; actors Tig Notaro, Jay Pharoah, Tyler Posey, Randall Park, Angela Sarafyan, Bashir Salahuddin, Josh McDermitt and Danny Pudi. Dara Treseder, Autodesk's Chief Marketing Officer, presented the VES-Autodesk Student Award.

"As we celebrate the 21st Annual VES Awards, we're honored to keep shining a light on remarkable visual effects artistry and innovation," said VES Chair Lisa Cooke. "In all of our colleagues honored tonight, we see best in class work that elevates the art of storytelling and exemplifies the spirit of adaptation and ingenuity -- talents that have kept audiences engaged and uplifted, now, more than ever. The VES Awards is the only venue that showcases and honors these outstanding global artists across a wide range of disciplines, and we are extremely proud of all our winners and nominees!"

Winners of the 21st Annual VES Awards are as follows:

OUTSTANDING VISUAL EFFECTS IN A PHOTOREAL FEATURE

Avatar: The Way of Water

Richard Baneham
Walter Garcia
Joe Letteri
Eric Saindon
JD Schwalm

OUTSTANDING SUPPORTING VISUAL EFFECTS IN A PHOTOREAL FEATURE

Thirteen Lives

Jason Billington
Thomas Horton
Denis Baudin
Michael Harrison
Brian Cox

OUTSTANDING VISUAL EFFECTS IN AN ANIMATED FEATURE

Guillermo del Toro's Pinocchio

Aaron Weintraub
Jeffrey Schaper
Cameron Carson
Emma Gorbey

OUTSTANDING VISUAL EFFECTS IN A PHOTOREAL EPISODE

The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power; Udûn

Jason Smith
Ron Ames
Nigel Sumner
Tom Proctor
Dean Clarke

OUTSTANDING SUPPORTING VISUAL EFFECTS IN A PHOTOREAL EPISODE

Five Days at Memorial; Day Two

Eric Durst
Danny McNair
Matt Whelan
Goran Pavles
John MacGillivray

OUTSTANDING VISUAL EFFECTS IN A REAL-TIME PROJECT

The Last of Us Part I

Erick Pangilinan
Evan Wells
Eben Cook
Mary Jane Whiting

OUTSTANDING VISUAL EFFECTS IN A COMMERCIAL

Frito-Lay; Push It

Tom Raynor
Sophie Harrison
Ben Cronin
Martino Madeddu

OUTSTANDING VISUAL EFFECTS IN A SPECIAL VENUE PROJECT

ABBA Voyage

Ben Morris
Edward Randolph
Stephen Aplin
Ian Comley

OUTSTANDING ANIMATED CHARACTER IN A PHOTOREAL FEATURE

Avatar: The Way of Water; Kiri

Anneka Fris
Rebecca Louise Leybourne
Guillaume Francois
Jung Rock Hwang

OUTSTANDING ANIMATED CHARACTER IN AN ANIMATED FEATURE

Guillermo del Toro's Pinocchio; Pinocchio

Oliver Beale
Richard Pickersgill
Brian Leif Hansen
Kim Slate

OUTSTANDING ANIMATED CHARACTER IN AN EPISODE, COMMERCIAL OR REAL-TIME PROJECT

The Umbrella Academy; Pogo

Aidan Martin
Hannah Dockerty
Olivier Beierlein
Miae Kang

OUTSTANDING CREATED ENVIRONMENT IN A PHOTOREAL FEATURE

Avatar: The Way of Water; The Reef

Jessica Cowley
Joe W. Churchill
Justin Stockton
Alex Nowotny

OUTSTANDING CREATED ENVIRONMENT IN AN ANIMATED FEATURE

Guillermo del Toro's Pinocchio; In the Stomach of a Sea Monster

Warren Lawtey
Anjum Sakharkar
Javier Gonzalez Alonso
Quinn Carvalho

OUTSTANDING CREATED ENVIRONMENT IN AN EPISODE, COMMERCIAL, OR REAL-TIME PROJECT

The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power; Adar; Númenor City

Dan Wheaton
Nico Delbecq
Dan Letarte
Julien Gauthier

OUTSTANDING VIRTUAL CINEMATOGRAPHY IN A CG PROJECT

Avatar: The Way of Water

Richard Baneham
Dan Cox
Eric Reynolds
AJ Briones

OUTSTANDING MODEL IN A PHOTOREAL OR ANIMATED PROJECT

Avatar: The Way of Water; The Sea Dragon

Sam Sharplin
Stephan Skorepa
Ian Baker
Guillaume Francois

OUTSTANDING EFFECTS SIMULATIONS IN A PHOTOREAL FEATURE

Avatar: The Way of Water; Water Simulations

Johnathan Nixon
David Moraton
Nicolas James Illingworth
David Caeiro Cebrian

OUTSTANDING EFFECTS SIMULATIONS IN AN ANIMATED FEATURE

Puss in Boots: The Last Wish

Derek Cheung
Michael Losure
Kiem Ching Ong
Jinguang Huang

OUTSTANDING EFFECTS SIMULATIONS IN AN EPISODE, COMMERCIAL, OR REAL-TIME PROJECT

The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power; Udûn; Water and Magma

Rick Hankins
Aron Bonar
Branko Grujic
Laurent Kermel

OUTSTANDING COMPOSITING & LIGHTING IN A FEATURE

Avatar: The Way of Water; Water Integration

Sam Cole
Francois Sugny
Florian Schroeder
Jean Matthews

OUTSTANDING COMPOSITING & LIGHTING IN AN EPISODE

Love, Death and Robots; Night of the Mini Dead

Tim Emeis
José Maximiano
Renaud Tissandié
Nacere Guerouaf

OUTSTANDING COMPOSITING & LIGHTING IN A COMMERCIAL

Ladbrokes; Rocky

Greg Spencer
Theajo Dharan
Georgina Ford
Jonathan Westley

OUTSTANDING SPECIAL (PRACTICAL) EFFECTS IN A PHOTOREAL PROJECT

Avatar: The Way of Water; Current Machine and Wave Pool

JD Schwalm
Richard Schwalm
Nick Rand
Robert Spurlock

OUTSTANDING VISUAL EFFECTS IN A STUDENT PROJECT (AWARD SPONSORED BY AUTODESK)

A Calling. From the Desert. To the Sea

Mario Bertsch

Max Pollmann

Lukas Löffler

Till Sander-Titgemeyer

EMERGING TECHNOLOGY AWARD

Avatar: The Way of Water; Water Toolset

Alexey Stomakhin

Steve Lesser

Sven Joel Wretborn

Douglas McHale

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 4,500 members in 45 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.vesglobal.org and follow us on Twitter @VFX Society. Read our award-winning signature publication *VFX Voice* at www.vfxvoice.com.

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