



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**SMITHSONIAN CHANNEL SPRINGS INTO
ACTION THIS APRIL WITH ALL NEW SERIES AND SPECIALS**

WASHINGTON, DC, March 31, 2010 – This April **Smithsonian Channel** offers up a lineup of premieres that look at some of nature's most amazing creations. In addition, a new *The Real Story* special examines one of the most talked about motion pictures ever.

Smithsonian Channel April Premieres:

BABY PLANET – SERIES PREMIERE Friday, April 2 at 8pm ET/PT

Filmed across four continents, in stunning high definition, *Baby Planet* chronicles the birth and early life of twenty species of cubs, pups and other baby animals. With incredible access and unique behind the scenes footage, we detail the trial and tribulations of those first days, often marred by illness and abandonment. We also follow the determined individuals who rescue, rehabilitate and re-release these beloved babies in order to save both their lives and their species.

THE HITTITES – Premieres Sunday, April 4 at 8pm ET/PT

A thrilling look at a civilization once forgotten but now considered the most influential power of the Bronze Age. Based on the Hittites' own words, extracted from 25,000 tablets, their violent history and personal stories are told. Over 3,500 years ago, a dynasty vanquished armies, toppled empires and became the first great kingdom of the ancient world. The Hittites influenced language, modern legal systems, mythology and even the Bible, yet have somehow slipped through the cracks of history, until now.

PANDA BREEDING DIARY – Premieres Sunday, April 11 at 8pm ET/PT

This is the story of the gentle giants of China's Wolong Panda Research and Conservation Center and the dedicated researchers who've cracked the code to keep this species alive. These are the rarest bears in the world. The efforts of the devoted Center staff are remarkably breeding them faster than ever. They monitor each pregnancy, celebrate each birth, and brave a natural disaster to keep their mission alive. The staff has bred over 100 pandas and even released the first captive-bred panda into the wild.

SOUTH SEA PEARLS – Premieres Sunday, April 18 at 8pm ET/PT

Beneath the surface of the South Seas, divers risk their lives to pursue miraculous gems. This is an in-depth look at the romantic industry of pearl farming in Northern Australia and the well-guarded and highly proprietary technique of cultivating the only precious jewel made by nature.

Pearl farming is a major export earner for Australia and other nations of the Pacific Rim. The delicate process of harvesting and cultivating the Giant Oyster is a team effort as divers, scientists and technicians work tirelessly to produce nature's gift to humankind.

AMAZING PLANTS – Earth Day Premiere Thursday, April 22 at 8pm ET/PT

They say it's good to talk to your plants. If only they could talk back. The stories they would tell. See how the seemingly peaceful world of plants is actually a battlefield...a constant struggle for survival. See how predatory plants use trapdoors and enticing beautiful flowers to trap their prey, while others shrivel up or emit odors to fend off their enemy. Experts investigate these traits and detail how human intervention affects these living organisms, for better and for worse.

THE REAL STORY: THE EXORCIST – Premieres Sunday, April 25 at 10pm ET/PT

Perhaps the scariest part of the 1973 blockbuster "The Exorcist" is that it's not a work of complete fiction. This is the story of the ritual that took place in 1949 to rid a boy of demons, culled from witness accounts and written records, and how these rare archives inspired the landmark film. The events that inspired the film are detailed along with interviews of top neuroscientists who try to determine whether the forces at work were supernatural or psychological.

ABOUT SMITHSONIAN NETWORKS

Smithsonian Networks (SNI/SI Networks L.L.C.) is a joint venture between Showtime Networks Inc. and the Smithsonian Institution, formed to create channels featuring programs largely inspired by the assets of the Smithsonian Institution, the world's largest museum complex. Smithsonian Channel features award-winning original documentaries, series, and groundbreaking programs highlighting America's historical, cultural and scientific heritage. Smithsonian Channel brings the American experience home in high definition and Dolby Digital 5.1 and is currently available to customers of DirecTV, Time Warner Cable, Charter Communications, Cablevision, Verizon, AT&T, and more. Learn more at www.smithsonianchannel.com.

###

For information, contact:

Josh Gross
Seldin Gross Communications
347-432-8300
jgross@seldingrosspr.com

Drew Seldin
Seldin Gross Communications
917-608-6786
dseldin@seldingrosspr.com