



SMITHSONIAN CHANNEL™ AND SKYWORKS TO PRODUCE BIGGEST AERIAL SERIES IN TV HISTORY

Fifty US States to be filmed in HD "Bird's Eye View"

New York, New York - (December 8, 2008) – A high definition "birds eye view" of the visual splendor of each of the 50 states will be the focus of a new series, ***Aerial America***, commissioned by Smithsonian Channel.

The channel is co-producing ***Aerial America*** with Skyworks, one of the world's top high definition aerial filming specialists, to profile the USA in 50 distinct one-hour programs. The series will be the most expansive aerial television series ever produced.

Aerial America will capture the wonders of the entire country as never seen before: Swoop over California's Hearst Castle, around Alcatraz and under the Golden Gate Bridge. Watch bears catching salmon in Alaska's rivers, surge over a mountain ridge and see one of the largest volcanoes on the North American continent. Covering every state in the union, *Aerial America* will also reveal fascinating stories seen in a whole new way from the air. Follow Bonnie and Clyde's escape route through the Ozarks of Arkansas, and find the unexpected home of the original London Bridge – on a lake in Arizona. The variety of spectacles is never ending, and evocative music tracks and insightful commentary will complement the eye popping visuals.

Principal photography will be shot in a Smithsonian Channel - branded helicopter equipped with a gyro-stabilized Cineflex HD camera system, the same rigging used for "Planet Earth". The helicopter crew will criss-cross the nation on an epic journey, spending about 6 months airborne. By the end of their journey they will cover approximately 60,000 total miles, a distance comparable to two and a half trips around the planet.

"This show represents the biggest aerial series ever attempted and the most ambitious project the channel has produced. We are embarking on a voyage of discovery and revelation, and who better to show America our nation in a new way than Smithsonian Networks. Skyworks is a perfect partner for us on this." said David Royle, Executive Vice President of Production and Programming for the Smithsonian Channel.

Richard Mervyn, Founding Director, Skyworks, adds: "The idea of *Aerial America* is to tell the complex and intriguing history of the country but in a way never before attempted. Skyworks brings the expertise in capturing all the elements that makes this great story and from a view rarely before seen. This is a great commission for Skyworks and cements our relationship with the Smithsonian Network."

Aerial America is directed and produced by Richard Mervyn, founding director of the British-based Skyworks, and executive produced by Damian Keogh. The series is anticipated to premiere in summer 2009 on Smithsonian Channel.

Smithsonian Networks programming celebrates the American experience with branded original content drawn largely from the assets of the Smithsonian Institution, the world's largest museum and research complex and features original documentaries, short-subject explorations and innovative and groundbreaking programs highlighting America's historical, cultural and scientific heritage.

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ABOUT SMITHSONIAN NETWORKS

Smithsonian Networks (SN) is a joint venture between Showtime Networks Inc. and the Smithsonian Institution. It was formed to create new channels to showcase scientific, cultural and historical programming based largely upon the assets of the Smithsonian Institution, the world's largest museum complex. Smithsonian Channel features original documentaries, short-subject explorations and innovative and groundbreaking programs highlighting America's historical, cultural and scientific heritage. Visit Smithsonian Networks on the Internet at www.smithsonianchannel.com

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About Skyworks

Skyworks is a UK based independent production company that has produced well over 100 factual programmes for international broadcasters including the BBC, ITV, Discovery and the Smithsonian Network.

In the UK, Skyworks is best known for its *Wainwright Walks* programmes for BBC2 and *Railway Walks* for BBC4, as well as numerous regional productions for ITV. Skyworks'

imagery has been used in many well-known productions, such as Simon Schama's *History of Britain*, BBC2's *Restoration* and BBC1's *Mountain*.

Skyworks specialises in aerial filming in HD, and is a world leader in the production and supply of top-end aerial footage and operates the world's largest HD aerial archive. By matching the latest technology with some of the most experienced aerial Directors/Cameramen Skyworks is able to deliver some of the best quality Aerial HD footage available.

www.skyworks.co.uk

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