



“MAKING THE MONKEES” REVISITS RISE AND FALL OF 1960s

MUSICAL PHENOMENON

Premieres Saturday, January 10, 2009 on Smithsonian Channel™

Washington, DC – (December 12, 2008) – In 1965, Michael Nesmith, Peter Tork, Davy Jones and Micky Dolenz came together to form The Monkees, a fictional band created by Bob Rafelson and Bert Schneider for a television pilot with the goal of capitalizing on the success of 1960s Beatle-mania. The group quickly became a phenomenon as their catchy singles like “Daydream Believer” rose to the top of the hit-lists, ultimately out-selling The Beatles and Elvis Presley combined in 1967.

The complete story of the rise and fall of The Monkees – including recent interviews with many of the principals and key figures who guided the creation and direction of the group – is depicted in **Making the Monkees**, an hour-long documentary premiering **Saturday, January 10 (2009) at 8 p.m. ET/PT on Smithsonian Channel™**. (Check listings for frequent repeats.)

Auditions held at Columbia Pictures in Los Angeles brought 437 kids into the city to try for the four open spots. The legendary Don Kirshner was hired as Music Supervisor after the final boys were chosen. Kirshner, a record hit maker, oversaw The Monkees’ first record, “Last Train to Clarksville,” which was released prior to the series’ debut and drove ratings to record levels.

Season 1 aired on NBC in 1966 and the show was a surprise hit. The boys became teen sensations and began to perform before live audiences of their mass of teen fans. Monkee-themed toys, clothing, lunchboxes and dolls were designed, and the revenue poured in.

The Monkees television show aired for two seasons, but by 1968 the phenomenon was drawing to a close. It was revealed the group was man-made and the resulting publicity was resoundingly negative. The Monkees became known as “fake” and began to argue over their creative rights with music man Don Kirshner. After filming their final project, a movie called “Head,” the band separated.

The full story of The Monkees’ exploits will air on **Smithsonian Channel** on **January 10, 2009 at 8 p.m ET/PT**.

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Series Credits

Narrator: Roger Rose. Produced by Diarmuid Lavery. Directed by Brian Henry Martin. Editor: David Gray. Cinematographer: David Banker. For DoubleBand Films: Michael Hewitt, Executive Producer. For Smithsonian Networks: Joy Galane, Executive Producer. Charles Poe, Vice President of Production. David Royle, Executive Vice President of Programming and Production. A DoubleBand Film Production for Smithsonian Networks and Channel Four.

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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