

Nickelodeon Taps Patrick Creadon and Christine O'Malley to Produce First-Ever SpongeBob SquarePants Documentary

Acclaimed Filmmakers of Wordplay and I.O.U.S.A to Make TV Documentary about Porous Pop Culture Icon

PARK CITY, Utah, Jan. 19 -- Nickelodeon has inked a deal with production company O'Malley Creadon to produce the first-ever SpongeBob SquarePants documentary in celebration of the series' 10th anniversary. Acclaimed filmmaker Patrick Creadon (Wordplay and I.O.U.S.A) will co-produce, direct and write the documentary, along with co-producer Christine O'Malley. The one-hour original television documentary (title TBA) will chronicle the ascent of the absorbing character's journey to pop culture stardom. It will be telecast across MTV Networks' various TV platforms in July to commemorate the anniversary of the series' first episode.

"Patrick and Christine have a talent for finding a greater cultural significance in their film subjects," said Marjorie Cohn, Executive Vice President, Development and Original Programming, Nickelodeon and executive producer of the project. "We're excited to see how they will explore SpongeBob's ten year evolution from a cartoon character to an international pop culture phenomenon."

"After spending two years examining the financial health of the United States, Christine and I were ready to tackle something a little more upbeat," said Creadon. "Telling the SpongeBob story feels like the perfect fit. Plus, our three young children think this is the coolest thing ever."

Creadon (director) and O'Malley (producer) have been twice nominated for the Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival for their work, including Wordplay (2006) and the recent I.O.U.S.A (2008). Wordplay, Creadon's feature-length directorial debut, is a documentary film about The New York Times crossword editor and National Public Radio personality, Will Shortz. It became only the fourth documentary ever to be awarded the "Golden Tomato" from Rottentomatoes.com for "Best Reviewed Documentary of The Year," and went on to become the second-highest grossing documentary of 2006, nominated for both a Critics' Choice Award and a National Board of Review Award for "Best Documentary of 2006." I.O.U.S.A., Creadon and O'Malley's second documentary, had its World Premiere at the 2008 Sundance Film Festival in the American Documentary Competition. The film examines America's current financial situation and explores ways to avoid a financial breakdown for the country. Kenneth Turan of the Los Angeles Times called it "the most unexpectedly frightening film at Sundance."

Over the last 10 years, SpongeBob SquarePants, the porous brainchild of creator Steve Hillenburg, has grown from a single Saturday morning kids' show to a certified pop culture maverick that has inspired nothing less than fun and frenzy around the world. Soaking up everything from clothing to controversy, the show has inspired people to deeply identify with the characters, to adorn themselves with SpongeBob tattoos, to use SpongeBob products to save lives and even, occasionally, to vandalize and politicize the character; but most of all, to kick back, laugh and relax. The series receives 70 million viewers monthly, and has been the number-one animated program with Kids 2-11 for more than seven consecutive years. The show is seen in 171 markets in 25 languages and is the most widely distributed property in MTV Networks' history.

Patrick Creadon began his career as one of the youngest cameramen in the history of PBS, shooting and producing cinema-verite style stories for the critically acclaimed series The 90's. He earned his Master's Degree in Cinematography at the American Film Institute, where his thesis film (on which he served as Director of Photography) was nominated for a student Academy Award. As a cameraman his work has appeared on every major network, including NBC, CBS, ABC, MTV, VH1, and ESPN. He has also done work for Paramount Pictures, Warner Brothers, Sony, Universal Studios, and Disney.

Christine O'Malley studied film and video production at Columbia College, Chicago. Her first job was as a researcher at Van Ness Films on several A&E Biographies and later, she teamed with Producer/Director Scott Goldstein to produce several critically acclaimed documentaries for the Museum of Tolerance. In 2004, she served as Associate Producer on the Academy Award-nominated documentary film Enron: The Smartest Guys In The Room. Wordplay was the first feature length film she has produced through her production company O'Malley Creadon Productions.

In addition to the documentary, Nickelodeon celebrated the top-ranked kids' show with the first-ever SpongeBob live cast performance in Park City, Utah during the 2009 Film Festival on Jan. 18; a new fan website for all things SpongeBob (<http://www.spongebob.com>); a SpongeBob and water conservation-themed element to the network's The Big Green Help pro-social campaign in partnership with the Natural Resources Defense Council and the National Wildlife Federation; special TV events; and new lines of apparel, jewelry, toys, games and DVDs.

SpongeBob SquarePants is executive produced by creator Stephen Hillenburg, who previously worked as a writer, director and creative director on Nickelodeon's animated series Rocko's Modern Life. Hillenburg graduated from the California Institute of the Arts with a master's degree in experimental animation and studied marine biology and art as an undergraduate.

Paul Tibbitt served as a director and writer on SpongeBob SquarePants in its first three seasons and is currently executive producer. He wrote some of the show's most memorable episodes such as "Ripped Pants" and "Mermaid Man & Barnacle Boy." Tibbitt was one of the co-writers and storyboard artists on The SpongeBob SquarePants Movie. SpongeBob SquarePants is a Nicktoons Production and is produced at the Nickelodeon Animation Studios in Burbank, Calif.

Nickelodeon, now in its 30th year, is the number-one entertainment brand for kids. It has built a diverse, global business by putting kids first in everything it does. The company includes television programming and production in the United States and around the world, plus consumer products, online, recreation, books, magazines and feature films. Nickelodeon's U.S. television network is seen in more than 98 million households and has been the number-one-rated basic cable network for 14 consecutive years. For more information or artwork, visit <http://www.nickpress.com>. Nickelodeon and all related titles, characters and logos are trademarks of Viacom Inc. (NYSE: VIA, VIA.B).

SOURCE: Nickelodeon

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NOTE TO EDITORS: For downloadable photos and additional information visit: www.nickpress.com/

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Company News On-Call: <http://www.prnewswire.com/comp/583050.html/>

Web Site: <http://www.spongebob.com>