‘Street Gang: How We Got to Sesame Street’ Acquired by Chicken Soup for the Soul Entertainment's Screen Media for North America

December 18, 2020

Film to Have World Premiere at the 2021 Sundance Film Festival

COS COB, Conn., Dec. 18, 2020 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Chicken Soup for the Soul Entertainment (Nasdaq: CSSE), one of the largest operators of streaming advertising-supported video-on-demand (AVOD) networks, announced today Screen Media’s acquisition of North American rights to HBO’s Street Gang: How We Got to Sesame Street, inspired by Michael Davis’ New York Times best-selling book. Directed by Marilyn Agrelo (Mad Hot Ballroom) and produced by Trevor Crafts (Experimenter 2015) and Ellen Scherer Crafts, the documentary chronicles the improbable origins and expansion of the groundbreaking show that not only changed children’s television programming, but had real-world effects on equality, education, and representation worldwide. The film will premiere at the 2021 Sundance Film Festival in January in the World Premieres section.

Screen Media will release in theaters and into the home entertainment market in Spring 2021. The HBO Documentary Film will have its television debut on HBO and will be available to stream on HBO Max later in the year.

Inspired by the activism of the late 1960s, socially conscious television executive Joan Ganz Cooney and Sesame Workshop co-founder Lloyd Morrisett conducted a revolutionary experiment: to harness the burgeoning power of television and create an educational, impactful, uplifting and entertaining show that could reach children nationwide, especially those living in urban areas. Cooney recruited trailblazing Muppets creator Jim Henson and acclaimed children’s television writer and director Jon Stone to craft the iconic and beloved world of “Sesame Street.”

Street Gang: How We Got to Sesame Street reintroduces this visionary “gang” of mission-driven artists, writers, and educators that audaciously interpreted radical changes in society and created one of most influential and impactful television programs in history.

With more than 20 interviews with original writers, cast, and crew, and never-before-seen behind the scenes footage, Street Gang is told from the inside with humor and emotion, weaving together personal narratives and eyewitness accounts. The film explores the original mission of the “gang” that created this cultural phenomenon, now spanning 51 years and reaching more than 150 countries.

“We were inspired to make this film because of our love for ‘Sesame Street.’ What we hope people will take away is a deeper understanding of the amazing people who made the show,” said Producer Trevor Crafts. “That ‘gang’ rose to a challenge in their time, to change things for the better for children. They created such a significant impact in education, access, and representation for so many people – all with love and laughter,” added Producer Ellen Scherer Crafts.

“The ‘Sesame Street’ gang inspired us with their passion to make the world a better place. Chicken Soup for the Soul Entertainment is committed to changing the world one story at a time and we are delighted to share this incredible story with the largest audience possible,” said William J. Rouhana Jr., chief executive officer of Chicken Soup for the Soul Entertainment.

The deal was negotiated by Seth Needle, SVP of Global Acquisitions and Co-Productions, for Screen Media with Brian O’Shea, CEO at The Exchange on behalf of the filmmakers. The Exchange is handling foreign sales for the film and financing was provided by Bondit Media Capital LLC. Screen Media, a Chicken Soup for the Soul Entertainment company and HBO Documentary Films presents a Macrocosm Entertainment production, in association with the Exchange, Bondit Media Capital, and Citizen Skull Productions. It is directed by Marilyn Agrelo; produced by, Trevor Crafts, Ellen Scherer Crafts; producer, Lisa Diamond; executive producers, Brian O’Shea, Nat McCormick, Matthew Helderman, Luke Taylor, Mark Myers, Heather Kenyon; co-executive producer, Michael Davis; editor, Ben Gold.

ABOUT CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE SOUL ENTERTAINMENT

Chicken Soup for the Soul Entertainment, Inc. (Nasdaq: CSSE) operates streaming video-on-demand networks (VOD). The company owns Crackle Plus, which owns and operates a variety of ad-supported and subscription-based VOD networks including Crackle, Popcornflix, Popcornflix Kids, Truli, Pivotshare, EspañaFlux and FrightPix. The company also acquires and distributes video content through its Screen Media subsidiary and produces original long and short-form content through Landmark Studio Group, its Chicken Soup for the Soul Originals division and APlus.com. Chicken Soup for the Soul Entertainment is a subsidiary of Chicken Soup for the Soul, LLC, which publishes the famous book series and produces super-premium pet food under the Chicken Soup for the Soul brand name.

ABOUT SCREEN MEDIA VENTURES, LLC

Screen Media Ventures, LLC, a Chicken Soup for the Soul Entertainment (Nasdaq: CSSE) company, acquires the rights to high quality, independent television series and feature films. Screen Media Ventures acquires worldwide rights for distribution through theatrical, home video, pay-per-view, free, cable and pay television, video-on-demand, and new digital media platforms. The company acquires AVOD rights for third party networks and is the main supplier of content for Crackle Plus and other Chicken Soup for the Soul Entertainment properties. With a library of over 1,500 television series and motion pictures, Screen Media Ventures is one of the largest independent suppliers of high-quality tv series and motion pictures to U.S. and
ABOUT MACROCOSM ENTERTAINMENT

Trevor Crafts and Ellen Scherer Crafts created Macrocosm to bring dynamic engaging content to global audiences by building and showcasing unique worlds. Films include Sundance Film Festival World Premiere “Street Gang: How We Got To Sesame Street” (2021), “7 Splinters in Time” (2018) Manson Family Vacation (SXSW 2015 premier), and Experimenter, a 2015 Sundance Film Festival hit and critical darling. Creators of transmedia property Lantern City (lanterncitytv.com). Macrocosm published the illustrated novel Rise in 2013 and in 2014 partnered with BOOM! Studios, to create the Lantern City comic book series, one of UPROXX Top Ten Comics of 2015, In 2017 Macrocosm created another new world for young readers with the Not-So Secret Society graphic novel. For more information, please visit: www.macrocosm.tv.

FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This press release includes forward-looking statements that involve risks and uncertainties. Forward-looking statements are statements that are not historical facts. Such forward-looking statements are subject to risks (including those set forth in the Company’s Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2019 and Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the nine-month period ended September 30, 2020) and uncertainties which could cause actual results to differ from the forward-looking statements. The Company expressly disclaims any obligations or undertaking to release publicly any updates or revisions to any forward-looking statements contained herein to reflect any change in the Company’s expectations with respect thereto or any change in events, conditions or circumstances on which any statement is based. Investors should realize that if our underlying assumptions for the projections contained herein prove inaccurate or that known or unknown risks or uncertainties materialize, actual results could vary materially from our expectations and projections.

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