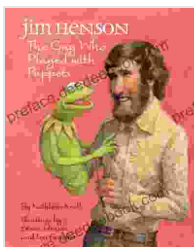


# Jim Henson: The Puppeteer Who Changed the World of Entertainment

James Maury Henson, lovingly known as Jim Henson, was an American puppeteer, animator, cartoonist, screenwriter, and film director. Born on September 24, 1936, in Greenville, Mississippi, Henson's life was a testament to the power of creativity and imagination.



## Jim Henson: The Guy Who Played with Puppets

by Kathleen Krull

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 12719 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting: Enabled  
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Print length : 40 pages



## Early Life and Influences

Jim Henson's passion for puppetry began at an early age. Inspired by his grandmother's puppets, he started creating and performing his own puppet shows as a child.

Henson's puppetry skills were influenced by a variety of sources, including:

- **The Muppets:** Henson's most famous creation, the Muppets, were a group of lovable and eccentric characters that captivated audiences worldwide.
- **Sesame Street:** Henson was the puppeteer behind many of the beloved characters on the iconic children's show, including Big Bird, Bert, and Ernie.
- **The Dark Crystal:** This 1982 fantasy film showcased Henson's talent for creating elaborate and realistic puppets.

## The Jim Henson Company

In 1958, Henson co-founded the Jim Henson Company, a production company that specialized in puppetry. The company produced a wide range of projects, including:

- **Television shows:** The Muppet Show, Sesame Street, Fraggle Rock, and The Dark Crystal.
- **Films:** The Muppet Movie, The Great Muppet Caper, The Muppets Take Manhattan, and Labyrinth.

## Innovative Techniques

Henson was a master of puppetry and developed several innovative techniques to bring his characters to life. These techniques included:

- **Muppetry:** Henson created soft, furry puppets that were operated by puppeteers hidden within the puppets.
- **Animatronics:** Henson combined traditional puppetry with animatronics to create complex and realistic movements.
- **Fozzie Bear's Stand-Up Routine:** Henson made Fozzie Bear's comedy routines even more hilarious by having him tell jokes while walking backwards.

## Cultural Impact

Jim Henson's work had a profound impact on popular culture. His characters and stories resonated with audiences of all ages, transcending language and cultural barriers.

Henson's creations not only entertained audiences but also educated and inspired generations of children. Sesame Street's focus on education made learning fun and accessible.

The Muppets' humor and wit appealed to adults and children alike, fostering a sense of community and shared experiences.

## **Legacy and Recognition**

Jim Henson died tragically at the age of 53 from complications of pneumonia. Despite his untimely passing, his legacy lives on through his enduring creations and the countless lives he touched.

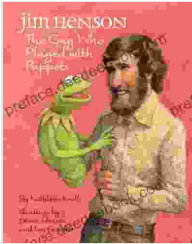
Henson received numerous awards and accolades throughout his career, including:

- **Emmy Awards:** 19 Emmys for his work on Sesame Street and The Muppet Show.
- **Academy Awards:** 1982 for The Dark Crystal and 2004 for his honorary lifetime achievement award.
- **Kennedy Center Honors:** 1990 for his significant contributions to American culture.

In addition to his awards, Henson's work has been recognized by cultural institutions around the world.

- **The Jim Henson Muppets:** The Muppets have been inducted into the National Toy Hall of Fame and have a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.
- **Jim Henson Exhibits:** The Center for Puppetry Arts in Atlanta, Georgia, houses the world's largest collection of Jim Henson puppets. The National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C., also has a permanent exhibit dedicated to Henson's work.

Jim Henson was a visionary artist who transformed the art of puppetry and left an enduring mark on the world of entertainment. His creations continue to entertain, educate, and inspire audiences of all ages, ensuring that his legacy will live on for generations to come.



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