

News

HARPERCOLLINS ANNOUNCE PUBLISHING DEAL FOR CBEEBIES PRE-SCHOOL SENSATION, *BIG & SMALL*

London, 16 March 2009

HarperCollins today announced the acquisition of tie-in rights for the popular CBeebies TV programme, *Big & Small*. The publishing deal for world rights was concluded by Richard Haines, Category Manager TV and Film, at HarperCollins and Ian Downes at Start Licensing on behalf of Kindle Entertainment.

First broadcast in October 2008 on the Cbeebies channel, the UK's most watched and loved channel for the under 6's, *Big & Small* follows the comic adventures of two unlikely best friends, featuring the voices of Lenny Henry and Imelda Staunton. Through funny, fast paced, entertaining and engaging stories, with a song in each episode, young viewers are encouraged to laugh aloud whilst seeing the world from very different perspectives.

Targeted at 3-6 year olds, the show was an immediate hit and quickly became one of the top five most popular shows on CBeebies, consistently matching and beating all other pre-school shows in the same time slot with ratings peaking at a 25% audience share.

The HarperCollins tie-in publishing programme will be inspired by humour, fun, songs, opposites, contrasts and perspectives. Launching in autumn 2009 the programme will include storybooks, sing-a-long books, colouring, activity and sticker books. The launch will be supported by a high profile marketing and PR campaign. Other licensees already confirmed include Jumbo Toys for plush, jigsaw and games, ITV for DVDs and a CBeebies magazine. Other categories include music downloads and interactive games with more toys and apparel to follow.

Commenting on the deal, Richard Haines said "We are delighted to be publishing *Big & Small*. The series is a real success with both children and adults and we feel that the humour, stories and lessons learned will translate brilliantly into books. We have a very exciting range of publications lined up that will encourage the imagination, humour and singing talents of *Big & Small* fans, whether they are small...or big!"

Claire Harding, Brands and Properties Director at HarperCollins added "*Big & Small* is a key acquisition for us to enhance our existing preschool portfolio. TV brands are the biggest category in character publishing with growth of 49% YoY** We are also excited how the brand, its characters and values are translating into a strong publishing programme that parents and children will enjoy reading."

Anne Brogan of Kindle Entertainment said "HarperCollins' love of the *Big & Small* stories and characters together with their understanding of the brand qualities have made them a perfect partner. The ambition and imagination that they bring to books featuring *Big & Small* is very exciting. Children love the characters of Big and Small and want to be friends with them. Our goal is for the brand to firmly establish itself in young children's hearts and imaginations, and so become an enduring pre-school property."

* Figures from Barb w/c 02.02.09

**TNS 2008

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Note to Editors:

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- HarperCollins Children's Books is one of the leading publishers of children's books, recognised for nurturing new talent as well as boasting a reputable list of established best-selling authors. Respected worldwide for its tradition of publishing quality, award-winning books for young readers, HarperCollins is home to many children's classics, including The Chronicles of Narnia, Noddy, the Paddington stories, The Cat in the Hat and The Tiger Who Came to Tea, and to some of the biggest names in children's literature past and present, including J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S.Lewis, Dr. Seuss, Louise Rennison, Darren Shan, Judith Kerr and former Children's Laureate Michael Morpurgo.
- HC UK and International is responsible for the UK and Ireland, India, Australia and New Zealand and is a division of HarperCollins Publishers, one of the leading English-language book publishers in the world, with operations in the US, Canada, the UK, and Australia. HarperCollins Publishers is a wholly-owned division of News Corporation, the media conglomerate and parent of Times Newspapers Ltd, British Sky Broadcasting and Twentieth Century Fox.
- Big & Small interactive website www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/bigandsmall
- Kindle Entertainment (www.kindleentertainment.com) London based independent production company produces top quality entertainment for audiences across the world. The company was founded in 2007 by industry experts Anne Brogan, formerly Head of Programming Granada Kids, and Melanie Stokes formerly, Head of Development at Granada Kids. Kindle Entertainments portfolio includes live-action comedy, *My Spy Family* which launched on Boomerang UK in September 2007 and feature film *Journey through Midnight* due to go into production in 2009. The company also produced the highly acclaimed family drama, *Dustbin Baby*, for BBC One based on the novel by best-selling author, Dame Jacqueline Wilson, which premiered in December 2008. Kindle has a very exciting development slate including *Jinx* a live-action comedy pilot for Nickelodeon UK drama series for both Channel 4 and BBC. Pre-school property, *Big and Small*, began airing on CBeebies from October 2008 and is a co-production between Kindle and the 3J's Productions for CBeebies, produced in association with Treehouse TV and Studio 100.