



FREDDIE HIGHMORE SIGNED FOR IMAGI STUDIOS'

"ASTRO BOY"

For Immediate Release

Los Angeles (February 27, 2008) – Freddie Highmore has been signed for the title role in Imagi Studios' CG-animated motion picture *Astro Boy*, it was announced by producer Maryann Garger and director David Bowers.

The announcement of the casting of the award-winning actor as the voice of Astro Boy follows the release of *The Spiderwick Chronicles*, Highmore's latest starring vehicle.

Maryann Garger said: "I am very thrilled that Freddie has accepted this role. He is one of the most talented and acclaimed young actors today, and absolutely ideal to portray the iconic Astro Boy."

Commented David Bowers: "It's terrific that Freddie has agreed to play Astro. He's a remarkably skilled young actor, whose freshness and vitality make him perfect for the role. Astro Boy is a beloved superhero and has captured hearts around the globe for more than 50 years. I can't wait to see where Freddie takes him."

Just having turned 16 on Valentine's Day (February 14), Highmore has worked with celebrated directors such as Tim Burton, Ridley Scott and Luc Besson, and has starred alongside such top talent as Johnny Depp, Kate Winslet, Dustin Hoffman, Russell Crowe and Robin Williams, among others. Highmore's credits span live action and animation, including *The Golden Compass*, *August Rush*, *Arthur and the Invisibles*, *A Good Year*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and *Finding Neverland*.

Created by the "god of manga" Osamu Tezuka, *Astro Boy* has enjoyed great acclaim and success throughout the world, with the original animated television series airing in the 1960s and followed by subsequent versions in the 1980s and again in 2003.

Set in futuristic Metro City, *Astro Boy* is about a young robot with incredible powers created by a brilliant scientist to replace the son he has lost. Unable to fulfill the grieving father's expectations, our hero embarks on a journey in search of acceptance, experiencing betrayal and a netherworld of robot gladiators, before he returns to save Metro City and reconcile with the man who had rejected him.

Astro Boy will be released worldwide in 2009.

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Imagi International Holdings Limited ("Imagi") is a listed company (Stock Code 585) on the main board of the Hong Kong Stock Exchange. Imagi's principal business is the development and production of computer graphics ("CG") animated theatrical feature films. Imagi's first theatrical movie *TMNT* was released in March 2007, opening #1 in U.S. box office revenue, only the third time in history that an Asian-made film has achieved that honour. Imagi has development operations in Los Angeles, California, and CG production studios at its Chai Wan (Hong Kong) headquarters.

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