

CinéGroupe to produce
Lion of Oz, an all-original animated musical prequel
to the beloved classic 'The Wizard of Oz'

New Telefilm stars the voices of Jason Priestley, Jane Horrocks,
Lynn Redgrave, Kathy Griffin, Tim Curry, Bobcat Goldthwait and Dom DeLuise

MONTREAL, September 16 1999 – CinéGroupe is pleased to announce the production of *Lion of Oz*, a new animated musical tele-feature celebrating the 100th anniversary of the original publication of *The Wizard of Oz*. The new production, done in association with Sony Wonder, is a prequel to the original classic and is based on the book written by Roger S. Baum, the great-grandson of "The Wizard of Oz" creator L. Frank Baum. *Lion of Oz* is set to air on The Disney Channel in the U.S. in the Fall of 2000. The Special will be distributed by CinéGroupe and by Sony Wonder's subsidiary Sunbow Entertainment. It will be presented at the upcoming MIPCOM 1999.

The 75-minute tele-feature stars the voices of renowned Canadian actor Jason Priestley as The Lion and Lynn Redgrave as The Wicked Witch of the East. Other starring voices include Jane Horrocks, Kathy Griffin, Tim Curry, Bobcat Goldthwait and Dom DeLuise.

"We are committed to producing a telefilm that maintains the level of excellence and sense of wonder that marks the original," says CinéGroupe President and C.E.O. Jacques Pettigrew. "It's a rare opportunity to work with a story that is among the world's true classics and we are delighted to be a part of this fantastic legacy."

Lion of Oz tells the story of a young circus lion who is sent on a magical journey through the land of Oz. While there, he encounters the Wicked Witch of the East, who forces the young lion to find and bring her the magical Flower of Oz, the final obstacle in her quest for control.

With the help of a kind and gentle girl named Wimsik, along with a host of other lovable and outrageous characters, the Lion goes in search of the Flower and finds something else in the process – his own bravery. In a final heroic deed, the Lion saves the flower from the Witch's evil spell, but loses his Badge of Courage and is changed into a cowardly lion. That is, until he stumbles onto the yellow brick road and meets a young girl named Dorothy. But that's a story for another time...

With headquarters in Montréal and offices in Toronto and Los Angeles, CinéGroupe is a leading integrated entertainment company, involved in the development, the production, the postproduction and the distribution of hit animation and fiction programming as well as digital products for the worldwide market. Its productions are seen in 125 countries.

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