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Genius Brands International to Debut Galactic, Music-Driven Tween Girls Brand, SPACEPOP, in Summer 2016

100+ New Animated Shorts -- Featuring Original Music Created by Producer of Multiple Grammy Award Winners/Label Chief/A&R Veteran Ron Fair -- Deliver Tales of Fashion, Friendship and Adventure; Macmillan Children's Publishing Group to Be Worldwide Publisher for SPACEPOP

BEVERLY HILLS, CA -- (Marketwired) -- 01/14/16 -- Genius Brands International, Inc. ("GBI") (OTCQB: GNUS), the global brand management company dedicated to providing entertaining and enriching 'content with a purpose' for toddlers to tweens, is producing a new music and fashion-driven brand for tween girls, SPACEPOP, featuring original music produced by Ron Fair; original character and fashion designs created by Han Lee; and stories developed by head writer Steve Banks.

Created and developed by GBI to appeal to tween girls' (ages 7 - 12) passions for fashion, beauty, friendship and adventure, SPACEPOP, currently in production with an award-winning team, features 100+ animated shorts to be digitally distributed to align with tweens' mobile-driven world, a departure from the traditional broadcast based model. GBI Chairman & CEO, Andy Heyward, an Emmy Award-winning children's content producer responsible for over 5,000 episodes of children's entertainment (*Inspector Gadget*, *Strawberry Shortcake*, *Super Mario Bros*, *Sabrina the Teenage Witch*, to name a few) spearheads production efforts; Emmy Award-nominated Steve Banks, head writer and story editor of *Sponge Bob Square Pants*, serves as content writer; and producer of multiple Grammy Award winners and music veteran Ron Fair (*Fergie*, *Mary J. Blige*, *Black Eyed Peas*, *Pussycat Dolls*, *Christina Aguilera* and more) and singer-songwriter spouse Stefanie Fair, a founding member of RCA's girl group *Wild Orchid* with Fergie, will deliver original music. Additionally, GBI is creating a comprehensive, fashion-driven line of consumer products inspired by the designs of HLL design, the creator and lead designer for the Bobby Jack fashion brand, which generated \$450 million in retail sales.

GBI has appointed SPACEPOP's first licensing partner, Imprint, part of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group, as the global Master Publisher. Imprint is committed to launching the brand's book series. The first title, *Not Your Average Princesses*, is an original middle grade novel with graphic novel inserts written by author Erin Downing and illustrated by Jen Bartel. The first title will publish in July 2016, with the second novel, *Rocking the Resistance*, to follow in January 2017.

"Tween girls live in a world of their own, inspired by music and fashion and friendship," said Amy Moynihan Heyward, President, GBI. "SPACEPOP is a whole new galaxy for tweens, created by some of the most accomplished talent in music, fashion and storytelling, delivered in a way that naturally corresponds to how tweens consume media today. Two spirited, music driven segments will be released every week to tell the tales of four galactic space princesses, along with a comprehensive body of new original music that will also be distributed separately.

Erin Stein, Publisher of Imprint, said, "When I first saw SPACEPOP, I knew it was right for Imprint. There is so much storytelling potential and strong, empowered female characters. We are thrilled to be publishing the origin story for the brand, and to be highlighting the musical performances in each book with full-color graphic novel sections. Our SPACEPOP novels are going to rock!"

"When Macmillan Publishing launched its new division, Imprint, with a focus on tweens we knew that they were the perfect partner for us on the launch of SPACEPOP, particularly with talent like Erin Stein who was largely responsible for the success of Monster High. We're thrilled to be collaborating with her and to be working with Imprint on the development of the brand's master publishing strategy," says Stone Newman, President of Global Consumer Products for GBI.

SPACEPOP Synopsis

Original music will be woven through a narrative story, detailing how when the evil Empress Geela takes over the Planets of The Pentangle, five teenage princesses disguise themselves as musicians and form a band called SPACEPOP. Their mission: Spread the message of freedom and joy through music and join the rebel resistance force to vanquish Geela, who has taken over their home planets and enslaved the inhabitants.

About Genius Brands International

Headquartered in Beverly Hills, California, Genius Brands International, Inc. "GBI"(OTCQB: GNUS) is a publicly traded global brand management company that creates and licenses multimedia content for toddlers to tweens. Led by award-winning creators and producers, GBI creates "content and products with a purpose," providing enrichment as well as entertainment. The Company distributes its content worldwide in all formats, as well as a broad range of consumer products based on its characters. GBI's portfolio includes award-winning *Baby Genius*, recently re-launched with new entertainment and over 40 new products; adventure comedy *Thomas Edison's Secret Lab*®, available on Netflix, public broadcast stations and GBI's *Kid Genius* channel on Comcast's Xfinity On Demand reaching 21 million households; animated movie *Stan Lee's Mighty 7*, the first project from Stan Lee Comics, a joint venture with Stan Lee's POW! Entertainment and featuring an all-star voice cast led by legendary Stan Lee; and Warren Buffett's *Secret Millionaires Club*, created with and starring iconic investor Warren Buffett. The Company is also producing a new animated preschool series based on *Llama Llama*, the NY Times bestselling children's book franchise; and a tween adventure series *SPACEPOP*, featuring original music from renowned industry veteran Ron Fair and his singer-songwriter wife Stefanie Fair.

GBI's wholly owned subsidiary A Squared Entertainment is a brand management and licensing company that represents third-party properties across a broad range of categories

in territories around the world. The company currently represents *Psycho Bunny*, a luxury apparel line, *From Frank*, a humor greeting card and product line, and *Celessence Technologies*, the world's leading microencapsulation company.

For additional information please visit www.gnusbrands.com.

About Macmillan Children's Publishing Group and Imprint

In 2014, Erin Stein joined Macmillan Children's Publishing Group and launched Imprint, a publishing home for authors, illustrators and brands that fosters collaboration, finds ideas in unexpected places, and looks ahead to potential futures for creators, characters and series. Imprint publishes commercial fiction for ages 0-18, develops new intellectual property, and partners with existing brands to develop quality, original content.

Macmillan Children's Publishing Group comprises Farrar Straus Giroux Books for Young Readers, Feiweil and Friends, First Second, Henry Holt Books for Young Readers, Imprint, Priddy Books, Roaring Brook Press, Swoon Reads, and Square Fish. These imprints are home to award-winning, *New York Times*-bestselling authors like Madeleine L'Engle, Natalie Babbitt, Roald Dahl, Jack Gantos, Kami Garcia, Nancy Tillman, Catherynne M. Valente, Marissa Meyer, Paul Pope, Gene Luen Yang, Eric Carle, Leigh Bardugo, Lane Smith, Nick Bruel, Erin E. Stead, Philip C. Stead, and hundreds more popular authors and illustrators. Macmillan Children's Publishing Group is proud to publish many of the classics of children's literature, including *A Wrinkle in Time*; *Tuck Everlasting*; *The Black Cauldron*; *A Cricket in Times Square*; *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?*; and *The BFG*; as well as popular new classics like *Speak*, *A Sick Day for Amos McGee*, *Dead End in Norvelt*, *On the Night You Were Born*, and *Bad Kitty*.

Forward-Looking Statements:

Certain statements in this press release constitute "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the federal securities laws. Words such as "may," "might," "will," "should," "believe," "expect," "anticipate," "estimate," "continue," "predict," "forecast," "project," "plan," "intend" or similar expressions, or statements regarding intent, belief, or current expectations, are forward-looking statements. While the Company believes these forward-looking statements are reasonable, undue reliance should not be placed on any such forward-looking statements, which are based on information available to us on the date of this release. These forward looking statements are based upon current estimates and assumptions and are subject to various risks and uncertainties, including without limitation those set forth in the Company's filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC"), not limited to Risk Factors relating to its business contained therein. Thus, actual results could be materially different. The Company expressly disclaims any obligation to update or alter statements whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, except as required by law.

Image Available:

http://www.marketwire.com/library/MwGo/2016/1/13/11G078741/Images/SpacePop_Art_4x6-c958c67cabd8a3c1ad2e102748729473.jpg

GBI MEDIA CONTACT:

Three.Sixty Marketing + Communications

Michelle Orsi / Carol Holdsworth
310-418-6430; [Email contact](#)

805-252-1848; [Email contact](#)

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