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# msk brokers deal between breakthrough entertainment and daniel h. birman productions for new documentary series

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October 29, 2015

**LOS ANGELES** (Oct. 29, 2015) – James F. Guerra, partner with Mitchell Silberberg & Knupp LLP, orchestrated an agreement between Daniel H. Birman Productions and Breakthrough Entertainment – two significant names in the production of award-winning documentary and non-fiction programming. The two companies have joined to co-produce a multi-part documentary project based on the *Hinges of History* book series written by renowned historian and author, Thomas Cahill.

Cahill has studied with many of the world's most distinguished literary and biblical scholars. He is both respected and admired for his storytelling brand that distills complex themes in history into accessible, illuminating and engaging narratives for readers everywhere.

Translated into numerous languages, Cahill's past six best-selling books in his *Hinges of History* series – as well as his much-anticipated September 2016 release of *How The Americans Saved Civilization* – will serve as the springboard for the Birman-Breakthrough documentary series, which revisits the beginnings of Western civilization through the little-known stories of those who had the greatest impact on its evolution. It's a version of history that has never been told.

"Thomas Cahill's books are enlightening and entertaining, placing the reader inside each moment in history to provide an immersive reading experience. Cahill's writing style gives us a deep understanding of the people he brings to life, intertwined with historical developments that have shaped our culture. But even more, Cahill gives us a greater understanding of who we are and our role in the Western world. His extraordinary historical perspective is the basis for a relevant and altogether unprecedented series," said Birman.

"Thomas Cahill ranks among the most important scholars and historical writers

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of our era. At the same time, Daniel Birman brings to this extraordinary and compelling project a distinguished career in documentary filmmaking. We are excited to work with both author and producer alike in bringing the genius of Thomas Cahill to broadcasters and audiences worldwide," said Ira Levy, partner at Breakthrough Entertainment.

"I've known Dan Birman for many years now, ever since writing *How the Irish Saved Civilization*. My long association with him gives me confidence that the series will represent my work," says Cahill. "I'm looking forward to working with Birman Productions and Breakthrough Entertainment to bring my series to television."

Dan Birman, Nat Abraham, Ira Levy, Michael McGuigan and Peter Williamson serve as Executive Producers. Megan Chao, head of development and production for Birman Productions, will serve as Producer. Writer Angus Fraser worked with Birman Productions and Breakthrough Entertainment to develop the series. Nghia D. Nguyen, Vice-President and General Counsel for Breakthrough Entertainment, represented Breakthrough in construction of the agreement.

Thomas Cahill's *Hinges of History* books include:

- How the Irish Saved Civilization: The Untold Story of Ireland's Heroic Role from the Fall of Rome to the Rise of Medieval Europe
- The Gifts of the Jews: How a Tribe of Desert Nomads Changed the Way Everyone Thinks and Feels
- Desire of the Everlasting Hills: The World Before and After Jesus
- Sailing the Wine-Dark Sea: Why the Greeks Matter
- Mysteries of the Middle Ages: And the Beginning of the Modern World
- Heretics and Heroes: How Renaissance Artists and Reformation Priests Created Our World
- How the Americans Saved Civilization (available September 2016)

### **About Mitchell Silberberg & Knupp LLP:**

For more than 100 years, Mitchell Silberberg & Knupp LLP has maintained a reputation for excellence by providing sophisticated legal and business solutions for its clients in areas that include: Entertainment & New Media, Labor & Employment, Intellectual Property & Technology, Litigation, Immigration, Corporate Transactions, Homeland Security, Tax, Trusts & Estates, Real Estate, and International Trade. On July 1, 2015, MSK merged with Richardson Patel LLP, a boutique firm concentrated largely on corporate finance, securities, mergers and acquisitions, private equity, and general corporate matters. The combined firm has more than 130 lawyers and offices in Los Angeles, New York, and Washington, D.C. For more information, visit <http://www.msk.com>.

### **About Daniel H. Birman Productions:**

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Based in Los Angeles, Daniel H. Birman Productions is a television production company specializing in nonfiction and documentary programming. The company's works can be seen in the U.S. on such networks as TLC, Discovery Channel, Science, Nat Geo and PBS, as well as internationally. The company is responsible for the award-winning documentaries *Me Facing Life: Cyntoia's Story* and *Brace for Impact: The Chesley B. Sullenberger Story*.

**About Breakthrough Entertainment:**

Headquartered in Toronto, Breakthrough Entertainment Inc. (BEI) is a world class studio, being a leading global producer and distributor of acclaimed primetime comedy and drama series, as well as factual entertainment, documentaries, television movies, feature films, family entertainment and children's animation. As one of Canada's largest television production and distribution companies, BEI has licensed programs to major broadcasters worldwide. A vertically-integrated entertainment studio, Breakthrough is involved in worldwide distribution as well as pre-sales, co-productions and third-party acquisitions. In addition, Breakthrough's digital media division ranks among one of the industry's most respected producers of high quality digital entertainment including ebooks, webisodes and online and mobile games.