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ROBERT BATEMAN – CANADA’S MOST BELOVED ARTIST OPENS EXHIBITION IN BANFF

The Art of Robert Bateman

Produced by David J. Wagner, L.L.C.

May 3 - September 7, 2009

Banff, Alberta – The **Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies** is pleased to present the exclusive western Canadian engagement of ***The Art of Robert Bateman***, a touring exhibition organized by David J. Wagner, Ph.D., curator/tour director. Although best known around the world as a wildlife artist, Bateman’s subjects also include landscapes, portraits, and still life scenes. As one of only two Canadian institutions to host this exhibition, the Whyte Museum invites you to experience this magnificent display showcasing the breadth, depth and versatility of Bateman’s artistry.

“This exhibition weaves the wonderful story of Bateman’s spectacularly diverse and inspiring career,” said Michale Lang, the Whyte Museum’s chief curator and executive director. “Visitors will have a chance to explore the entire scope of his creative output, from his early, more abstract works, to his sculpture, to his representational wildlife. Simply put, this exhibition is a feast for the eyes.”

The Art of Robert Bateman boasts over 50 of Bateman’s original artworks, including oils and acrylics, bronze sculpture, pen and ink drawings, plus the artist’s personal sketchbooks, books and videos. Opening on May 3, 2009, the exhibit runs throughout the entire summer and is set to become both a local and tourist favourite.

“A lot of us have already seen Bateman’s artistry translated in books or as prints. But there is nothing quite like seeing an original Bateman artwork - the layers and intensity of the brushstrokes, the vibrancy of the colours. The originals are mind-blowing,” enthused Lang.

The Whyte is thrilled Bateman will be attending its semi-annual museum fundraising gala during the evening of May 2. ***A Brush With Nature: An Evening with Artist Robert Bateman*** will give safari-gear wearing gala-goers the first viewing of the exhibition with the artist himself giving a memorable trek through the gallery. A treasure hunt, a silent auction and a succulent selection of fine Canadian wines and hors d’oeuvres prepared by Banff’s award winning Bison Restaurant and Lounge will complete the journey. All proceeds will support the long-term care of the Whyte’s exquisite collection, ensuring these objects are available for the study and enjoyment of future generations. The Whyte sincerely appreciates Mr. Bateman’s support of the gala and of the museum.

In addition to being an artist, Bateman is also a naturalist who devotes much of his time and effort to environmental concerns, especially the preservation of the natural habitats of the birds and animals he portrays so beautifully in his art. Through his art, actions and words, Bateman leads a life committed to the environment, advancing causes in ways few other artists have done. Affiliated with several environmental organizations, he is also the recipient of many honours and awards, including the Roland Michener Conservation Award presented by the Canadian Wildlife Federation in 2003 and Amnesty International’s Human Rights Defender Award in 2007 for his fundraising efforts.

The Art of Robert Bateman will be on display at the Whyte Museum until September 7, 2009. It debuted in Canada on September 1, 2007 at The McMichael Canadian Art Collection and in the United States on November 24, 2007 at The Joslyn Art Museum in Omaha. The exhibit has traveled to Denver, Jackson Hole and San Diego. Serving as Curator/Tour Director is Dr. David J. Wagner, a noted author/curator/lecturer on the subject of American wildlife art (american-wildlife-art.com).

The Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies gratefully acknowledges the support of this exhibit by BMO Financial Group, BMO Nesbitt Burns and the Alberta Foundation for the Arts.

The Art of Robert Bateman, produced by David J. Wagner, L.L.C., David J. Wagner, Ph.D. Curator/Tour Director. Visit american-wildlife-art.com and robertbateman.ca

EXHIBITION RELATED EVENTS

OPENING GALA

A Brush With Nature: An Evening With the Artist Robert Bateman

Saturday, May 2, 7 PM

\$125/per person, for more information please call 403.762.2291 extension 300

Join the Whyte Museum and world-renowned artist Robert Bateman for this special museum fundraiser. Come and enjoy the evening and be the first to see a retrospective exhibition of Bateman's magical artworks - with the artist himself.

The Art of Robert Bateman, Public Opening and Curator's Talk

Sunday, May 3, 2 PM

Admission by donation

Come experience this new exhibit! Join us for this special event featuring a presentation by David J. Wagner L.L.C., curator of *The Art of Robert Bateman* and author of *American Wildlife Art*. Stay to enjoy an afternoon tea and book signing. Wagner's book, along with select Robert Bateman publications, is available to purchase in the Museum Shop.

Art Gallery Tour – Conservation on Canvas

Daily from June 1 to September 6, 1:30 PM

40 minutes, included with Museum admission/FREE for Museum members

This tour will guide you through Canadian wildlife painter Robert Bateman's impressive collection of artwork. Discover the powerful messages of both hope and despair that are portrayed in his paintings. Gain insight into some of the issues facing the featured wildlife, both in Banff National Park, and beyond. Appreciate how Bateman's impeccable style has captured the realism of his subjects and how his success as an artist has created awareness for the natural world.

About the Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies

The Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies welcomes those who are drawn to the power and inspiration of these mountains. We are the gateway for experiencing and enjoying its art, culture and history in order to inspire and cultivate knowledge and the exchange of ideas. Visitors from near and far experience the Museum's galleries, programs, archives and library, heritage homes, museum shop, guided walks, tours and special events.

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For additional exhibition information, images and interviews with Robert Bateman, please contact:

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