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World-renowned wildlife artist Robert Bateman to display exhibition at San Diego Natural History Museum

October 15, 2008; San Diego—From **November 1, 2008** through **February 1, 2009**, the San Diego Natural History Museum will present *The Art of Robert Bateman*. Widely regarded as one of the world's top wildlife artists, Robert Bateman captures the depth and intricacies of the natural world through his paintings and artwork. The exhibition, organized and directed by Curator/Tour Director David J. Wagner, Ph.D., will feature over 50 pieces from this well-honored and acclaimed artist.

Bateman says, "I can't conceive of anything being more varied, rich, and handsome than the planet Earth. And its crowning beauty is the natural world. I want to soak it up, to understand it as well as I can, and to absorb it...and then I'd like to put it together and express it in my painting. This is the way I want to dedicate my life."

The exhibition's lifelike and realistic wildlife depictions are on loan from numerous private and public institutions and are sure to captivate visitors of all ages. Bateman's work reflects not only his commitment to ecology and preservation, but his ability to capture the artistic drama of the natural world. Quark Expeditions, the leader in polar adventures, chose to be title sponsor of *The Art of Robert Bateman*, because Bateman will be the special guest aboard the company's *Emperors & Kings: Snow Hill and South Georgia* expedition in Antarctica in 2009.

Robert Bateman has been a keen artist and naturalist from his early days. He has always painted wildlife and nature, beginning with a representational style, moving through impressionism and cubism to abstract expressionism. In his early 30s he moved back to realism as a more suitable way to express the particularity of the planet. It is this style that has made him one of the foremost artists depicting the world of nature.

In the 70s and early 80s, Bateman's work began to receive critical acclaim and to attract an enormous following. His work is in many public and private collections, and several art museums,

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including the National Museum of Wildlife Art in Jackson Hole, WY. He was commissioned by the Governor-General of Canada to create a painting as the wedding gift for HRH Prince Charles from the people of Canada. His work is also represented in the collection of HRH Prince Philip, the late Princess Grace of Monaco, and Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands.

His honors, awards, and honorary doctorates are numerous: he was made Officer of the Order of Canada, the country's highest civilian award, in 1984. He has also been given the Rachel Carson Award (1996), the Golden Plate from the American Academy of Achievement (1998) and the Order of British Columbia (2001); he was named one of the 20th century's Champions of Conservation by the U.S. National Audubon Society (1998).

Born in Toronto, with a degree in geography from the University of Toronto, Bateman taught high school for 20 years, including two years in Nigeria. Since leaving teaching in 1976 to paint full-time, he has traveled widely with his artist/conservationist wife Birgit to many remote natural areas.

Celebrating its 134th year, the San Diego Natural History Museum is the second oldest scientific institution in California, third west of the Mississippi. Its mission is to interpret the natural world through research, education, and exhibits; to promote understanding of the evolution and diversity of southern California and the peninsula of Baja California and to inspire in all a respect for nature and the environment. Located in Balboa Park, the Museum is open daily except for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Phone: 619.232.3821. Website: www.sdnhm.org.

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