SOCIETY OF ANIMAL ARTISTS 50th ANNIVERSARY ANNUAL EXHIBITION AND 2010–2011 ART AND THE ANIMAL TOUR BEGINS AT THE SAN DIEGO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

San Diego: June 9, 2010—The 50th Anniversary Annual Exhibition of the Society of Animal Artists (SAA) and the ART AND THE ANIMAL tour will premiere at the San Diego Natural History Museum from September 4 to October 31, 2010, with approximately 150 flatworks and sculptures on display. The Society of Animal Artists is regarded worldwide as the most prestigious artist-membership organization dedicated to the theme of animals in art. Admission to the exhibition is included in general admission to the Museum.

ART AND THE ANIMAL is the flagship exhibition of The Society of Animal Artists, and refers to both the Annual Exhibition of the SAA, and the traveling exhibition and tour that is generated from it. Only the best animal art is selected for ART AND THE ANIMAL. Consequently, it is extremely difficult, and therefore prestigious, for artists to have artwork accepted into the exhibition. http://www.societyofanimalartists.com/exhibits.html

Combining natural history and fine art in creative ways, SAA members compete to have their work included in annual exhibitions selected by a jury comprised of SAA members. In addition, an awards jury, comprised of distinguished experts with the highest possible qualifications who are not members of the SAA, are charged with the difficult task of selecting the top flatworks and sculptures and bestowing a variety of annual exhibition awards to respective artists.

Artists who have won five or more awards are given the special status of “Master Signature Membership,” which qualifies them to by-pass the jury and automatically have their work included in future annual exhibitions. Current “Master Signature Artists” include: Charles Allmond, Chris Bacon, Gerald Balciar, Robert Bateman, Burt Brent, Carel Pieter Brest van Kempen, Guy Coheleach, Walter Matia, Leo Osborne, Sherry Salari Sander, Morten Solberg, and Kent Ullberg.

Noted wildlife art scholar and author of AMERICAN WILDLIFE ART, Dr. David J. Wagner, serves as Tour Director for ART AND THE ANIMAL. He is responsible for arranging tour venues and managing the traveling exhibition. ART AND THE ANIMAL has been featured at more than 50 venues including museums and zoos, and art, cultural and science centers throughout North America.
Following the opening at the San Diego Natural History Museum, the exhibition will travel to:

BACKGROUND:

Founded in 1960, the Society of Animal Artists is headquartered in the historic Salmagundi [Art] Club on Fifth Avenue in New York City. Society members come from Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America, and South America.

The mission of the SAA is to promote excellence in the portrayal of animals, domestic and/or wild, in art. Over the past 50 years, works created by members of The Society of Animal Artists have established new standards of artistic excellence in fine art.


The general membership of the SAA is made up of its artist members who, as its voting membership class, control and participate in the Society’s functions and goals. Artist members of the SAA are accepted through the approval of the membership jury, which meets twice a year. Aside from the distinction of membership in the foremost organization of its kind and the fellowship of many of the most distinguished animal artists working world-wide today, artist members receive a wide range of benefits.

Each fall, the Society holds its annual membership exhibition. The earliest exhibitions were held in New York City. The locations of subsequent annual exhibition were varied to afford artists wider exposure and audiences and collectors opportunities for viewing throughout the continent.

The SAA also serves as a referral resource for art organizations, museums, commercial galleries, other corporations, and collectors interested in animal art in general or specific artists or the sources of their art. SAA members are invited to attend the previews, openings, and receptions for the Society’s Annual Exhibition and other exhibitions, and are invited to special events and presentations and to the Annual Meeting held in the Fall of each year in conjunction with the Annual Exhibition. The Society invites and encourages individual artists to apply for membership.

The Society also invites and encourages other individuals and corporations to support its mission and participate along with its Artist Members in various events and functions by becoming Patron or Sponsor Members. Patron or Sponsor Members receive Society information and are invited to attend exhibition previews, openings, receptions, and other events. They may also
attend the annual meeting. In addition, Patron and Sponsor Members are listed in the Annual Exhibition catalogue and may, if they choose, underwrite specific or continuing art awards for which they will be recognized at the Annual Exhibition.

For membership information, visit www.societyofanimalartists.com or contact the Society of Animal Artists, Inc., at 970.532.1489 or societyofanimalartists@gmail.com

For further information about the ART AND THE ANIMAL tour, contact David J. Wagner, L.L.C., ART AND THE ANIMAL tour office 414.221.6878; davidjwagnerllc@yahoo.com

ABOUT THE SAN DIEGO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

Celebrating its 135th 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 at the intersection of Village Place and Park Blvd., the Museum is open daily from 10 AM to 5 PM except for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Phone: 619.232.3821. Website: www.sdnhm.org.

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