



Launch of International Art Exhibition To Benefit Wildlife Conservation

Leaders in Nature Art and Wildlife Conservation Converge From Around Globe in Oradell, NJ for Official Opening of World-Class Show and Environmental Fundraiser.

Vancouver, B.C., CANADA — September 19, 2008 —

Sunday, September 28th will mark the official opening of a new annual international juried exhibit – "The Art of Conservation - An International Exhibit of Nature in Art" – featuring the art of leading nature and wildlife artists from around the globe. The exhibition was created to celebrate artistic excellence in the depiction of nature, raise awareness of conservation issues, and directly support organizations dedicated to addressing them.

The exhibition is being produced by the Artists for Conservation Foundation (AFC) – the world's leading artist collective dedicated to the environment. The show is being hosted by the Hiram Blauvelt Art Museum – one of the world's premiere museums for nature and wildlife art – situated half an hour from New York City in Oradell, NJ. A share of the revenues resulting from the sale of artwork in the show will benefit the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) – one of the world's largest and most respected conservation organizations, based at the Bronx Zoo.

The show represents an important milestone for the AFC as it is being launched in the AFC's 10th anniversary year. The AFC's membership represents a by-invitation-only roster of nearly 500 artists from 27 countries, who focus primarily on nature and wildlife subjects. The organization represents a "Who's Who" of nature art, and includes many top names in the field, such as Robert Bateman, John Banovich, Guy Coheleach, Pip McGarry, Pollyanna Pickering, John Seerey-Lester and David Shepherd.

The exhibition features 112 original artworks selected by an independent jury and includes 96 paintings and 16 sculptures. Most artworks are for sale, ranging in price from \$500 to \$59,000 US. A total of 89 artists are represented in the show, from 8 countries, including Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Japan, Kenya, Sweden, UK and USA. Many of the exhibiting artists will be present to meet collectors and media during a special invitation-only opening reception at the Blauvelt Museum on Sunday, September 28th between 2pm and 5pm.

President and Founder of the AFC, Jeffrey Whiting, comments: "We are enormously proud to have developed a top-notch show with some extraordinary partners and artists to celebrate our natural heritage in art, and to help raise funds to protect it. The Blauvelt Museum has been instrumental in helping us to realize our goal of establishing a major annual event that supports a highly relevant artistic genre [nature art] while raising funds to support wildlife and habitat conservation internationally. I also could not think of a more worthy conservation beneficiary for our first show – the Wildlife Conservation Society."

Accompanying the exhibition is a beautiful hardcover coffee-table book reproducing in color all the works selected for the exhibition. The book also features chapters about the three organizations involved directly with the show – the AFC, HBAM and WCS.

The HBAM will host the opening leg until December 21st, 2008 along with an associated celebratory weekend in September, 2008. Following this, approximately half of the artworks will be assembled for a tour through 2009.

About the Artists for Conservation Foundation (AFC): The Artists for Conservation Foundation (AFC) is a non-profit, international organization dedicated to the celebration and preservation of the natural world and is the world's leading artist collective, and dedicated to the environment. Based in Vancouver, Canada, the Foundation has a membership spanning five continents and twenty-seven countries.

The AFC's mission is to support wildlife and habitat conservation, biodiversity, sustainability and environmental education through art that celebrates our natural heritage. The AFC fulfills its mission through programs and exhibitions that raise funds for conservation. The AFC also operates a unique fellowship program supporting artistic field study and rendering of unique, threatened habitats, and rare or endangered species in remote parts of the world. For more information about the AFC's innovative initiatives, visit www.natureartists.com.

About the Hiram Blauvelt Art Museum: The Hiram Blauvelt Art Museum was established in 1957 by the Blauvelt Demarest Foundation, a legacy of the late Hiram Blauvelt, philanthropist, conservationist and collector. Through the contribution of his private wildlife art and big game collections, he hoped to promote the cultural value of wildlife art and the need for the conservation of its subjects.

Located in an 1893 cedar shingle and turret-style carriage house in Oradell, NJ, the museum is one of only five museums in the United States dedicated solely to wildlife art. The Blauvelt's collection, while focusing on the works of contemporary artists, also includes works from deceased masters, and an Audubon folio.

The entrance to the Museum is through a curving stone and slate terrace, framed by large oak trees and other indigenous foliage, which serves as a natural sculpture garden. A natural history section is housed in a special area on the second floor of the museum. An Artist-in-Residence program offers demonstrations in wildlife painting, lectures and artist round-table discussions.

The Blauvelt museum is 45 minutes by car from downtown Manhattan, LaGuardia and Newark Liberty International Airports, and 90 minutes from John F. Kennedy International Airport.

About the Wildlife Conservation Society : The Wildlife Conservation Society saves wildlife and wild places worldwide. We do so through science, global conservation, education, and the management of the world's largest system of urban wildlife parks, led by the flagship Bronx Zoo. Together, these activities change attitudes towards nature and help people imagine wildlife and humans living in harmony. WCS is committed to this mission because it is essential to the integrity of life on Earth.

They uniquely combine the resources of wildlife parks in New York with field projects around the globe to inspire care for nature, provide leadership in environmental education, and help sustain our planet's biological diversity. Today WCS is at work in 60 nations across Africa, Asia, Latin America, North America and the world's oceans, protecting wild landscapes that are home to a vast variety of species from tiny toads to tigers.

Their pioneering environmental education programs reach millions locally, nationally and internationally. They also produce the magazine Wildlife Conservation six times per year, which is distributed widely.

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For further information:

- Artists for Conservation (AFC) www.natureartists.com
- Hiram Blauvelt Art Museum www.blauveltartmuseum.org
- Wildlife Conservation Society www.wcs.org

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