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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CELEBRATING THE THEATER OF THE PAGE Eric Carle Museum Opens Quentin Blake Exhibit

Amherst, Mass. (October 24, 2006) - The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art has announced the opening on Tuesday, November 7 of the exhibition **Quentin Blake: The Theater of the Page**. Considered to be a national treasure in Great Britain, Blake is best known in America for his devilishly exquisite illustrations for Roald Dahl's children's books. The exhibit will run through March 11, 2007 and is generously underwritten by the Triad Foundation.

"This exhibition, while concentrating on his children's book illustration, hopes to heighten awareness of Blake's broad range of talent," states Museum Director Nick Clark. "Whether probing the ludicrous or the profound, the artist accomplishes so much with an economy of means, yet he can be as precise and detailed as his hand wishes."

Quentin Blake was still a schoolboy when he first had some drawings accepted for *Punch* magazine in 1949. Now with hundreds of books to his name, he has not only become a "British Institution," but also is known across the world, both for his own books and for his celebrated collaboration with Roald Dahl, which began in 1978, with his illustrations for *The Enormous Crocodile*.

Using pen and ink, the freedom and spontaneity of Blake's work speaks to adults and children alike. As an illustrator he moves with ease between the different worlds of children's books, newspapers, and magazines. He has illustrated many of the classics – including Dickens, Aristophanes, and Cervantes, and he has produced posters and greetings cards, as well. Daring and unconventional, but always accessible, Blake's work explores many aspects of the human condition and has widened the scope of the picture book. Particularly with his Roald Dahl illustrations, he has helped to maintain the traditional use of black and white line drawings in children's fiction.

The exhibition will reflect many aspects of Blake's work: from the high comedy of *Mr. Magnolia* and many of the Roald Dahl books, to the reflective, atmospheric mood that prevails in *The Green Ship* and Michael Rosen's *Sad Book*. Illustrations from his own books

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will include *Mister Magnolia*, *Cockatoos*, *The Green Ship*, and the wordless book, *Clown*. Illustrations on exhibit from Roald Dahl's books will be: *The Enormous Crocodile*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *The Twits*, *Danny the Champion of the World*, and *Matilda*. There will also be illustrations taken from collaborations with Russell Hoban, John Yeoman, Joan Aiken, and Michael Rosen. To articulate the process involved in creating a book, there will be a number of roughs, dummies etc., as well as a variety of posters, prints, and assorted ephemera. The exhibition will also show works by a range of other artists, such as Honoré Daumier, George Cruickshank, and Pablo Picasso, who, in different ways, have influenced Blake .

ABOUT THE MUSEUM

Founded in part by Eric Carle, the renowned author and illustrator of more than 70 books, including the 1969 classic *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, and his wife Barbara, The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art is the first full-scale museum in this country devoted to national and international picture book art, conceived and built with the aim of celebrating the art that we are first exposed to as children. Through the exploration of images that are familiar and beloved, it is the Museum's goal to provide an enriching, dynamic, and supportive context for the development of literacy and to foster in visitors of all ages and backgrounds the confidence to appreciate and enjoy art of every kind.

The Museum—which houses three galleries dedicated to rotating exhibitions of picture book art, a hands-on Art Studio, a Reading Library, an Auditorium, a popular Café, and a Museum Shop—is located at 125 West Bay Road, Amherst, MA. Museum hours are Tuesday through Friday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday 12 noon to 5 p.m. Admission is \$7 for adults, \$5 for children under 18, and \$20 for a family of four. For further information and directions, call 413-658-1100 or visit the Museum's website at www.picturebookart.org.

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