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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**The Eric Carle Museum Presents PICTURE BOOK THEATRE**

The Eric Carle Museum is pleased to present *A House for Hermit Crab* and *Mister Seahorse*, two fall productions by the popular PICTURE BOOK THEATRE company: Monday, October 25, Saturdays; November 7, 14, 21, 28; Friday, November 27. The 45-minute performances are at 2:00 pm and 3:00 p.m. The Museum also will have an exhibition of these popular books in its West Gallery.

PICTURE BOOK THEATRE, directed by Therese Brady Donohue with music by Karen A. Tarlow of Shutesbury will present Eric Carle's *A House for Hermit Crab* with recorded narration by WFCR's Walter Carroll, a local actor. A cast of eight, in combination with large puppets and young dancers from Amherst Ballet, will bring this picture book alive with costumes, masks, scenery and props. Attracting audiences of all ages, this story teaches the months of the year and addresses the problem of finding a new home. In the process, Hermit Crab decorates his new home with a sea anemone, starfish, coral, and a sea urchin. The double cast features Anna Plummer and Anna Lally in the title role with Isabel Wardlaw and Mina Liang as the Little Crab who introduces each month of the year.

*A House for Hermit Crab* will feature large string puppets worked behind a backdrop on a raised platform while puppeteers work live on stage dressed in white to enable the starfish and lantern fish to interact with Hermit Crab. Director Therese Donohue is known for her realistic rendering of book illustrations in costumes, props, and scenery winning Eric Carle's stamp of approval in adapting his stories. The cast's youngest members, Isabela Gomez and Rachel Oram-Brown, share the role of the Sea Urchin with the oldest dancers Julia Fissore-O'Leary and Nicole Hill sharing the role of the beautiful Sea Anemone.

Donohue is premiering in the first show (10/25) Carle's story of *Mr. Seahorse* with stick puppets. They will perform in an elaborate puppet theatre Donohue has designed and built. The recorded story narration is by Matthew Roerhig known locally for his prominent roles in Valley Light Opera. The Company of six puppeteers, double cast, will join Donohue on rolling stools manipulating the puppets above them. Puppeteers include Joan Hanson, Frances Caporella, Margaret Arsenault, Vivienne Carey, Diane Westfall and Carolyn

Holstein. *Mr. Seahorse* explores the story of the different male fish that carry and care for their fish eggs as Mr. Seahorse himself carries the next generation of seahorses. This book won the Laura Ingalls Wilder Award when it was published in 2004. Donohue's stick puppets exactly replicate the beautiful collage illustrations in Carle's book.

PICTURE BOOK THEATRE is in residency at the Museum for rehearsals September through October with its premiere performances on Sunday, October 25<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 and 3:00. Week-end performances continue through Thanksgiving weekend. General admission is \$5 (does not include Museum admission but visitors can enter for the show only). Advance tickets are recommended and are available at the Museum's Admissions Desk or by calling (413) 658-1136.

**THERESE BRADY DONOHUE**, founder of Amherst Ballet in 1971 retired in 2004. She founded Picture Book Theatre in 2006. She is known internationally for her creativity, choreography, masks, and costumes. She created public programs in dance for the National Gallery of Art based on *Joan Miro* and the paper cutouts of *Henri Matisse*. At the request of the Smithsonian Hirshhorn Museum, she created a program based on *Jean Dubuffet*, performed during a retrospective exhibit of his work. She produced *The Very Lonely Firefly* and *The Honeybee and the Robber* for The Eric Carle Museum while Special Projects Director at Amherst Ballet. Her first post-retirement productions for her new company include Eric Carle's *A House for Hermit Crab*, Leo Lionni's *Tico and the Golden Wings*, and last year's Carle's *The Very Lonely Firefly* and *Rooster's Off to See the World*. Her 2007 *Tico* production was awarded the Massachusetts Council of the Arts Gold Star Award for excellence in community arts and culture.

Composer **KAREN A. TARLOW** has collaborated with Therese Brady Donohue for almost thirty years since their first ballet *Uncle Wiggily and the Duck Pond* written by Mabel Garis for Amherst Ballet Theatre Company in 1979. Recent collaborations include the music for Eric Carle's *The Very Lonely Firefly* and *The Honeybee and the Robber* with Amherst Ballet, and Picture Book Theatre's *A House for Hermit Crab*, Leo Lionni's *Tico and the Golden Wings*, and Carle's *Rooster's Off to See The World*. Since 1977 Ms. Tarlow has written for a wide range of vocal and instrumental forces, including solo and chamber works, ballets, choral music, and music for orchestra. She was Assistant Professor of Music Theory at UMass Amherst before her retirement. Karen holds a Doctorate of Musical Arts degree in Composition from Boston University, and is a member of ASCAP. Her music is published by E.C. Schirmer, the Seesaw Press, and Treble Clef Music.

#### **ABOUT THE MUSEUM**

Together with his wife Barbara, Eric Carle, the renowned author and illustrator of more than 70 books, including the 1969 classic *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, founded The Eric

Carle Museum of Picture Book Art as 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 Café, and a Museum Shop—is located at 125 West Bay Road, Amherst, MA. Museum hours are Tuesday through Friday 10 am to 4 pm, Saturday 10 am to 5 pm, and Sunday 12 noon to 5 pm. Admission is \$9 for adults, \$6 for children under 18, and \$22.50 for a family of four. For further information and directions, call 413-658-1100 or visit the Museum's website at [www.carlemuseum.org](http://www.carlemuseum.org).

### **IMAGES ARE AVAILABLE FOR REPRODUCTION**

For additional press information and/or images,  
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