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**The Eric Carle Museum Announces Summer Gallery Exhibition:
Tomi Ungerer: Chronicler of the Absurd**

The Carle is pleased to announce the forthcoming exhibition featuring award-winning Alsatian artist and author, Tomi Ungerer. *Tomi Ungerer, Chronicler of the Absurd* will open in Amherst, Massachusetts on June 21, 2011 and remain on view until October 9, 2011. Organized by guest curator Michael Patrick Hearn, the exhibition celebrates Ungerer's 80th birthday. A trilingual author, Ungerer has published over 140 books ranging from his much-loved children's books to his controversial adult work.

Selected from archives and private collections, the exhibition documents Ungerer's career as a writer and illustrator of children's books in America, and focuses on his pen and ink and watercolor illustrations. It will reflect the vast variety of styles, techniques, and media he has employed in the art for his picture books. Included in the exhibition, will be work from Ungerer's first book, *The Mellops Go Flying* (1957), as well as from *Cricitor* (1958), *The Three Robbers* (1962), *Moon Man* (1967), and other favorite titles. Ungerer's irrepressible humor and sense of the absurd are in evidence throughout, providing visual high jinks that entertain young and old alike. In 1998 he was awarded the Hans Christian Andersen Medal, the highest international award given in the field of children's literature and illustration. Phaidon Press has begun to re-issue Ungerer's books in English.

According to Hearn, the title of the exhibition, *Tomi Ungerer, Chronicler of the Absurd* refers to the artist's description of himself. A native of Strasbourg, France, Ungerer grew up under the Nazi occupation, and this experience conditioned a deep-seated defiance of authority. During his schooling, one headmaster referred to him as a "willfully perverse and subversive individualist." He has never changed. Ungerer's formidable contrarian ways are matched by his prodigious talent with both word and picture. Fascinated by America, he headed for New York in 1956. He remained there for nearly sixteen years before immigrating to Canada and finally returning to Europe to divide his time between Strasbourg and Ireland.

In New York, his career, like that of his contemporaries Leo Lionni and Eric Carle, was multi-faceted, encompassing advertising and political commentary. The legendary children's book editor, Ursula Nordstrom, launched his picture-book career at Harper & Row. Prior to leaving America, Ungerer donated a substantial portion of his work up to that point to the Free Library of Philadelphia; they have lent generously to this exhibition.

Ungerer is also renowned for his iconic advertising campaigns and political cartoons and posters. To this day he has dedicated his satirical art to combating racism and fascism, and supporting nuclear disarmament, ecology, and numerous other humanitarian causes including important initiatives for European integration and in particular for better Franco-German relations.

In 2003, the European Council chose Ungerer as their first Ambassador for Childhood and Education. In 2007 the Tomi Ungerer Museum in Strasbourg opened its doors to the public and has since been voted one of the 10 best museums in Europe by the European Council. Related programming and events will further expand Ungerer's exhibition, including guided gallery tours from the curator Michael Patrick Hearn. The members' opening will take place June 18th at 5:30 p.m. Visit www.carlemuseum.org for more information.

About The Eric Carle 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. The Museum is open Mondays in July and August. 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.

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