

The Museum of Sex
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museumofsex

GO WILD THIS SUMMER! – NEW EXHIBITION *THE SEX LIVES OF ANIMALS* OPENS AT THE MUSEUM OF SEX ON JULY 24, 2008

New York, NY- - April 24, 2008 - - The Museum of Sex proudly announces its latest exhibition, *The Sex Lives of Animals*. Opening on July 24, 2008, this is the Museum of Sex's first foray into the exploration of animal sexuality and the first natural history exhibition in the United States to acknowledge pleasure and the universe of non-reproductive sexual behavior.

Following the success of *Against Nature?*, the 2006 pioneer presentation focusing on same sex animal pairings at the Natural History Museum in Oslo, Norway, *The Sex Lives of Animals* strives to illuminate that non-reproductive sex can serve an important, positive role within a multitude of animal communities.

"We all know sex is more than the drive to reproduce," said Sarah Jacobs, Museum of Sex curator.

"What we often fail to acknowledge is that *Homo sapiens* are not the only animals to engage in sex for pleasure. The expanding knowledge about sexual diversity in the natural world reveals that the sexual repertoire of many animals exceeds that of humans."

From genital morphology, mimicking and sex role reversal to multiple genders, autoeroticism, group sex and sexual cannibalism, this exhibition will give the public a unique opportunity to see nature take its course as they may have never quite seen it before.

“Ignoring the presence and prevalence of this diversity belies the true complexity of sexual behavior; involving pleasure, power relations and mitigating tensions in a social group,” added Jacobs. “This diversity may be physical, as in the case of hermaphrodites, or social, as in the case of multiple or same-sex partnerships.”

Based on the scientific research conducted by biologists, zoologists, behaviorists and primatologists, *The Sex Lives of Animals* not only explores a wider range of animal sexual behavior but also fuels the ongoing debates raging in our culture about sexual orientation and practice.

“Nature shows, magazines and museums in the US have not revealed the true diversity of gender expression in nature, fearing the public is not ready, and worrying about boycotts or protests,” noted Joan Roughgarden, Stanford University evolutionary biologist and author of *Evolution's Rainbow: Diversity, Gender, and Sexuality in Nature and People*. “As a result, nature has been misrepresented, allowing the public to think that heterosexual sex roles are universal throughout nature when they aren't.”

Roughgarden is serving as primary content advisor for this exhibition. A host of scientists, academics and experts are participating on the advisory board including Jonathan Balcombe, Niles Eldredge, Mark Elgar, Matt Groeber, Keith Kendrick, Ron Magill, C.W. Moeliker, Amy Parish, Nancy Solomon, Volker Sommer, Christian Sonne, Laurie J. Vitt, Linda Wolfe and Marlene Zuk.

Showcased in a gallery created by Pentagram Design Inc., *The Sex Lives of Animals* will include still photography and video as well as dramatic sculptures created by Rune Olsen that will convey the complexities, stark differences and related nuances of sexuality beyond our own species.

Over the last several years the Museum of Sex has established itself as a cultural institution interested in broadening the conversation surrounding sex and sexuality.

"*The Sex Lives of Animals* will expand public perception by re-conceptualizing what is thought of as natural and how this connects to humans," explained Jacobs. "This exhibition approaches the study of sex from a biological perspective and participates in a larger contemporary discourse surrounding sex, gender and same sex partnerships."

Sarah Jacobs and Joan Roughgarden are available for interview. To download high-res versions of the attached photos, please visit <http://www.museumofsex.com/info/press-releases>

About the Museum of Sex

When the Museum of Sex first emerged on New York City's Fifth Avenue in October of 2002, it was without precedent in the museum world. In the past five years, the Museum of Sex has featured thirteen exhibitions and five virtual installations, each in keeping with the Museum's mission of advocating open discourse surrounding sex and sexuality, as well as striving to present to the public the best in current scholarship unhindered by self-censorship.

With each new exhibition, lecture series and event, the Museum of Sex is committed to addressing a wide range of topics, while simultaneously highlighting material and artifacts from different

continents, cultures, time periods and mediums. In five short years, the permanent collection has grown to over 15,000 objects including artifacts, historical ephemera, media and a growing fine art collection.

The Museum is located at 233 Fifth Avenue at 27th Street, New York, NY 10016. Open 7 days a week: Sunday-Friday 11am-6:30 pm; Saturday 11am-8pm. Admission is \$14.50; \$13.50 seniors/students. Tickets may be purchased at the door or online at www.museumofsex.com.

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