



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oct. 4, 2010

Carolyn Belardo, 215-299-1043, belardo@ansp.org

Press Room: www.ansp.org/press

NEW EXHIBIT EXPLORES THE ART AND SCIENCE OF EVOLUTION AND EXTINCTION

Cruisin' the Fossil Freeway with Artist Ray Troll and Paleontologist Kirk Johnson **opens October 23**

PHILADELPHIA—A new exhibit opening Saturday, Oct. 23, at the Academy of Natural Sciences combines art with science to explore evolution, extinction and the treasure trove of fossil finds in the American West. Rarely seen specimens from the museum's vast fossil collection enhance the discovery experience.

The fanged skull of a saber-toothed cat (*Smilodon*) from California's LaBrea Tar Pits and the bizarre skull of a killer pig (*Archaeotherium*) that roamed the American West some 30 million years ago are among the tangible evidence of prehistoric life on display amid the imagined artwork that dominates *Cruisin' the Fossil Freeway with Artist Ray Troll and Paleontologist Kirk Johnson*. The exhibit, on view through Jan. 2, 2011, combines art with science to take visitors on a 5,000-mile adventure into the world of fossils.

Action-packed illustrations bursting with color recount what Ray Troll calls "the ultimate paleo road trip" that he and Kirk Johnson navigated through the expansive western states a few years ago. The exhibit features full-color prints, large-scale murals, and an entertaining video in which Troll and Kirk describe the collaborative process. Another video takes visitors on the road with acclaimed Academy paleontologist Dr. Ted Daeschler as he hunts for ancient life in rock formations in north-central Pennsylvania where he has made numerous important fossil discoveries along roadsides.

"The Academy has a long history of cruisin' for fossils dating back to the 19th century with the work of Philadelphia paleontologist Dr. Joseph Leidy and others," said Daeschler, vice president of systematics and library. "This exhibit celebrates the excitement and fun of paleontology and makes it accessible to a wide audience of adults and children."

-more-

Troll lives in Ketchikan, Alaska, where he draws and paints fish and fossil-filled images for books, magazines and museums around the world. In 2007 he received the Academy's gold medal for distinction in the natural history arts.

Johnson is a paleontology curator and vice president of research and collections at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. He studies fossil plants, stratigraphy, geochemistry and extinction.

Cruisin' the Fossil Freeway is **free** with museum admission. The exhibition was organized by the Burke Museum at the University of Washington, in collaboration with Ray Troll and Kirk Johnson. Major sponsorship for the traveling exhibit has been provided by Microsoft Corporation, Pendleton and Elizabeth Carey Miller Charitable Foundation, and Wells Fargo.

To download images: http://www.ansp.org/press/photos/changing_exhibits.php

###

The Academy of Natural Sciences, founded in 1812, is the oldest natural science research institution and museum in the Americas and a world leader in biodiversity and environmental research. The mission of the Academy is the encouragement and cultivation of the sciences.

HOURS: Monday–Friday, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Saturday–Sunday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. ADMISSION: \$12 adults; \$10 children 3-12, seniors, college students, military personnel; free for members and children under 3. \$2 fee for Butterflies!