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**Grand Rapids Public Museum Announces New Exhibit**

**Coming this Fall: Dragons, Unicorns & Mermaids**

**Grand Rapids, MI** – The Grand Rapids Public Museum (GRPM) just announced a new exhibit, *Dragons, Unicorns & Mermaids,* opening this November! *Dragons, Unicorns & Mermaids*, organized by the American Museum of Natural History in New York, traces the natural and cultural roots of some of the world’s most enduring mythological creatures from Asia, Europe, the Americas, and beyond.

Opening on Saturday, November 11, visitors will explore the various mythical creatures of the world. *Dragons, Unicorns & Mermaids* features models and replicas of preserved specimens as well as cast fossils of prehistoric animals to investigate how they could have, through misidentification, speculation, fear, or imagination, inspired the development of some legendary creatures.

*Dragons, Unicorns & Mermaids* offers many interactive stations throughout the exhibition. Visitors can build their own dragon on an engaging touch-screen and watch it come alive before their eyes in a virtual environment.

The exhibition will include imaginative models, paintings, and textiles, along with other cultural objects from around the world. The exhibit will bring to light surprising similarities and differences in the ways people around the world have been inspired by nature to envision and depict these strange and wonderful creatures. *Dragons, Unicorns & Mermaids* is great for all ages.

Visitors will touch casts of a narwhal tusk to discover how they lent credence to the centuries-old belief in the unicorn. Hands-on stations also include the lower jaw of *Gigantopithecus* (extinct group of apes) and a life-size reproduction of the talon of a Haast’s eagle***.***

Admission to *Dragons, Unicorns & Mermaids* will be $12 for adults, $7 for children, $9 for Kent County resident adults, $4 for Kent County resident children, and $2 for all Museum members! Tickets will include general admission to the Museum. This exhibitwill be located on the Museum’s third floor and run from November 11, 2017 to May 20, 2018.

*Mythic Creatures: Dragons, Unicorns & Mermaids* is organized by the American Museum of Natural History, New York (amnh.org), in collaboration with the Australian National Maritime Museum, Sydney; Canadian Museum of History, Gatineau-Quebec; Fernbank Museum of Natural History, Atlanta; and The Field Museum, Chicago.

*Dragons, Unicorns & Mermaids* is sponsored by The Steve & Amy Van Andel Foundation, David & Carol Van Andel Family Foundation, Lighthouse Insurance Group, Adventure Credit Union, The Jant Group, Chris & Kim Branoff and Hope Network.

This exhibit is brought to you by the citizens of Kent County and the voter approved 2016 millage.

**American Museum of Natural History**

The American Museum of Natural History, founded in 1869, is one of the world’s preeminent scientific, educational, and cultural institutions. The Museum encompasses 45 permanent exhibition halls, including those in the Rose Center for Earth and Space and the Hayden Planetarium, as well as galleries for temporary exhibitions. It is home to New York State’s official memorial to Theodore Roosevelt, a tribute to Roosevelt’s enduring legacy of environmental conservation. The Museum’s approximately 200 scientists draw on a world-class research collection of more than 34 million artifacts and specimens, some of which are billions of years old, and on one of the largest natural history libraries in the world. Through its Richard Gilder Graduate School, the Museum grants the Ph.D. degree in Comparative Biology and the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) degree, the only such program at any museum in the United States. Annual physical attendance has grown to approximately 5 million, and theMuseum’s exhibitions and Space Shows can be seen in venues on six continents. The Museum’s website, digital videos, and apps for mobile devices bring its collections, exhibitions, and educational programs to millions more around the world.Visit [**amnh.org**](http://www.amnh.org/) for more information.

**Grand Rapids Public Museum**

The Grand Rapids Public Museum is an invaluable, publicly-owned institution that is home to more than 250,000 unique artifacts that tell the history of Kent County and beyond, houses the only planetarium in the region, and is responsible for protecting the Norton Indian Mounds, a national historic landmark. The Grand Rapids Public Museum is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, with its main location in downtown Grand Rapids, MI at 272 Pearl Street, NW. For additional information including hours of operation, admission fees and exhibit/event listings, please visit [www.grpm.org](http://www.grpm.org/).

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