PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION OFFERS A CONTEMPORARY VIEW OF OUR PLACE IN NATURE

Human Nature: The Photographs of Barbara Bosworth Opens April 19, 2008

PHOENIX (April 8, 2008) – From bird-banders and their fragile catch, to hunters and their prey, from lush green meadows marked by tire tracks to undisturbed champion trees, Human Nature: The Photographs of Barbara Bosworth explores the conceptual relationship between humans and the environment. Opening April 19 at Phoenix Art Museum, Human Nature draws together nearly twenty years of contemporary landscape photography, and demonstrates artist Barbara Bosworth’s ongoing interest in peoples’ presence in nature.

Nourished by her relationship with the environment, Bosworth’s stunning photography reflects the beauty she finds everywhere. Although her passion for the subject is evident, her pictures do not pass judgment, nor do they attempt to persuade. The photographer acts as an invested observer, taking a compassionate view of the intricate fabric her human and natural subjects have fashioned in collaboration.

“Bosworth’s sophisticated reading of our role in the wilderness recognizes oppositional forces in play: the desire to preserve competes with the necessity of accepting change, exploring the question of how do we simultaneously hold on and let go,” commented Rebecca Senf, Norton Family Assistant Curator of Photography. “At a time when the future of the earth’s climate is constantly under debate, Bosworth’s photography brings us back to the present moment. Her work reminds us of nature’s ability to sustain us – not just physically, but emotionally through the wonder and magic of our environment.”

Bosworth uses a large-format camera, typically with a tripod. This equipment promotes a slower, more meditative process than a hand-held camera, and suits Bosworth’s considered approach to her subject.
Barbara Bosworth – add one

By 1983, she had begun to experiment with the panoramic format. For these works, Bosworth creates two or three separate but adjacent 8x10-inch negatives. In the darkroom, she prints these negatives together on a single sheet of paper to create a continuous image.

*Human Nature* features four components within Bosworth’s larger body of work including:

- Photographs of birds, focusing on the relationship between natural (the fragile bird, momentarily held) and human (the bander, carefully and firmly grasping his catch).
- Images of people in nature, exploring the myriad of ways people interact with their natural surroundings.
- Panoramas of America’s national champion trees, listed on the National Registrar of Big Trees which are selected by the greatest combined measurement of the circumference of the trunk, the height of the tree, and the spread of the canopy.
- Color views of meadows, depicting transition grasslands maintained by human intervention in the form of mowing, grazing or fire.

Though the earliest works in the exhibition are gelatin silver prints, the standard type of black-and-white photograph, Bosworth has employed color from the early 1980s (sometimes even shooting the same scene with both types of film). Her vibrant birds seem on the verge of movement, and in her meadow series, the color green appears with great depth and dimension. These bodies of work demonstrate Bosworth’s sensitivity to nature’s palette, even as she continues to produce beautiful and sensitive gelatin silver prints in black and white.

*Human Nature* is Bosworth’s first exhibition in the American Southwest and features more than 40 prints, including both color and exquisitely printed gelatin silver photographs. In addition, *Human Nature* will debut a monumental 6 ft. x 7.5 ft print of an overgrown meadow; shown on such commanding scale it offers viewers a transporting experience immersing them in the brilliant scene.

This exhibition is organized by the Center for Creative Photography and Phoenix Art Museum and is presented in the Museum’s Doris and John Norton Gallery.

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Barbara Bosworth – add two

Major support for this exhibition is provided by Aon. Additional support is provided by Steve Woods Printing Company. Promotional support is provided by Bass Pro Shops Mesa.

Public Events:
The Museum is offering a full schedule of programs and events relating to the exhibition, including:

- Meet the Artist - Saturday, April 19, 11 a.m.
  Barbara Bosworth leads an informal gallery session, discussing her motivations and process, as well as answering questions.
- ArtBreak - Tuesday, June 24, 7 p.m.
  Norton Family Assistant Curator of Photography Rebecca Senf provides an overview of Barbara Bosworth’s work and explores the exhibition.


About the Artist
Barbara Bosworth was born in Cleveland, Ohio, and grew up in the nearby town of Novelty. She was a visiting instructor at Ohio University in Athens, and in 1984 began teaching at Massachusetts College of Art in Boston, where she is currently a professor of photography.

Exhibition Details
*Human Nature* will be on view in Phoenix Art Museum’s Doris and John Norton Gallery for the Center for Creative Photography April 19 thru July 27, 2008.

Admission to the exhibition is included in general museum admission, which is $10 for adults, $8 for senior citizens (65+), $8 for full-time college students with ID, $4 for children ages 6–17 and free for children under 6 and for museum members. Admission is also free on Tuesdays from 3:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m. and for everyone on First Fridays, 6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Phoenix Art Museum is located in downtown Phoenix at the corner of Central Avenue and McDowell Road.

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Museum hours are Tuesday, 10:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. and Wednesday – Sunday from 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. The museum is closed on Mondays and major holidays.

A Landmark Photography Partnership

In 2006, Phoenix Art Museum and the Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona in Tucson inaugurated a highly innovative and unprecedented collaboration to bring the finest in photography to Phoenix Art Museum visitors. It established a vibrant new photography exhibition program at the Museum, while bringing the Center’s world-renowned collections to new and larger audiences.

The Center for Creative Photography is one of the world’s largest repositories of materials chronicling photography. Founded in 1975, it now houses 3.8 million archival items and 80,000 fine prints by photographers including Ansel Adams, Edward Weston, Harry Callahan, Aaron Siskind, Frederick Sommer, W. Eugene Smith, Louise Dahl-Wolfe, and Garry Winogrand.

One of the nation’s leading art museums, Phoenix Art Museum presents international exhibitions of the world’s greatest art and features a collection that spans the centuries and the globe—American, Asian, contemporary, European, Latin American, and Western American art, and fashion design. Not to be missed are the Thorne Miniature Rooms, the interactive family gallery PhxArtKids, great shopping and dining, and a variety of public events.

For more information about this exhibition or Phoenix Art Museum, visit the Web site at: PhxArt.org, or call the 24-hour recorded information line at (602) 257-1222.

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