



**THE NOTEBAERT
NATURE MUSEUM**

The Museum of the Chicago Academy of Sciences

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Photo Attached

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CHASING NATURE'S PERFECT STORM THROUGH SKYSCAPES

Chicago Artist David Mayhew Opens Photo Exhibition April 5 at the Nature Museum

CHICAGO (Feb. 11, 2008) – The sky, with its spectacular sunsets and storms, is a continual source of fascination for us here on earth. Chicago photographer David Mayhew captures the allure of the skies in a new exhibition, *Skyscapes: Meteorological Phenomena*, on display at the Notebaert Nature Museum beginning April 5. This collection of photographs lends an artist's eye to the unique and diverse phenomena that demonstrate the beauty and sheer power of Mother Nature.

With the sky and weather as his primary subjects, Mayhew seeks unusual appearances, dramatic formations and abstract elements to develop his compositions. The severe spring weather in the plains of the Midwest provides the best opportunities for his work. The artist often travels 1,000 miles in a day searching for the perfectly photogenic storm.

"I may travel miles and miles without seeing a single, eye-appealing storm. But, the elements can come together suddenly for a result that's undeniably spectacular," Mayhew said. "The thrill of the chase is unbelievable, because the visual moment cannot be created. It's there and then it's gone. I hope those who experience this collection come away with a greater appreciation for the power of nature even in an urban environment."

"*Skyscapes* will be at the Nature Museum during one of the stormiest times of year, says Jill Riddell, vice president of exhibits and strategic initiatives. "It's a chance to take a look at natural phenomena through the eyes of an artist."

Skyscapes features more than 20 of Mayhew's images, which were created between 2004 and 2007 in Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, South Dakota and Texas. This is his first museum showcase.

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The temporary exhibition will be on display at the Notebaert Nature Museum April 5 through June 29, 2008 and is free with general admission (\$9 adult general admission; \$7 students and seniors; \$6 children; Thursdays free). Located at 2430 North Cannon Drive in Chicago's Lincoln Park, the Nature Museum is open weekends from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For more information, visit www.naturemuseum.org or call 773-755-5100.

About the Artist

Born in the UK, David Mayhew was raised in rural Suffolk in the east of England, close to where Constable created his paintings and where pictorial naturalist photography first came to be under the skillful hand of Emerson. After his private school education, David went on to obtain a Bachelor of Engineering in Product Design at Loughborough University. After traveling throughout the world, David abandoned a 9 to 5 environment to delve head first into photography, taking on studies in digital and film photography at the College of DuPage. His award-winning work has been on display in numerous exhibitions and publications in and around Chicago. In the future, David plans to make use of the new digital medium and continue to travel to capture remarkable images of landscapes, skyscapes and the abstract geometry that nature presents. For more information, visit www.davidmayhewphotography.com.

About the Notebaert Nature Museum

Celebrating 150 years of science exploration and education, the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum is the public face of the Chicago Academy of Sciences, founded in 1857 as Chicago's first museum dedicated to educating Chicagoans about nature and science through the preservation and display of native specimens, classroom activities, and dissemination of scientific knowledge.

Today the Museum continues the Academy's tradition of research, conservation and education about nature in the Midwest through participatory exhibits and programs, educational outreach and ongoing scientific activity. Its collections, due to their age and type, are among the most important in the region. The Museum distinguishes itself through extensive involvement in schools and the opportunities it provides for visitors to experience nature up close.

As one of the city's best examples of eco-friendly building technology with its lush outdoor nature trails and habitat, green roof, solar panels, and natural light sources, the Museum engages visitors, especially urban dwellers, in new ways to connect with and preserve the natural world. Since its opening in 1999, the Museum has welcomed more than 1.5 million visitors and provides hands-on exhibits and programs to 65,000 students annually and trains and provides resources for more than 2,000 Chicago teachers.

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