



For Immediate Release
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News Release

Minnesota Children's Museum Goes *Out on a Limb* to Encourage Nature-Play

Minnesota Children's Museum is proud to announce the arrival of *Out on a Limb*, a new traveling exhibit opening September 19 that promotes nature-play through a sculptural, interactive design. It incorporates nostalgic settings, such as a tree house and a fort-building area. The 1,200 square foot imaginative environment is designed to inspire children and their caregivers to learn to explore nature by using their senses. More than simply seeing the beauty of a tree, the exhibit encourages visitors to hear the sounds of the forest, use leaves to make beautiful art, and build big and little structures from bark and limbs.

The whimsical atmosphere of *Out on a Limb* is created in part by children's nature-themed artwork that makes up the faux bark and leaf canopy of the centerpiece tree. The individual exhibits, *Whirlwind*, *Light Play*, *Forest Jam* and *Gnome Home*, further enhance the magical scenery and are tools to enhance exploration. For example, individual activities encourage children to experiment with light and shadow, patterns of leaves, music of the forest, and the effects of the changing seasons. The exhibits also provide practice with the physical skills of climbing and balancing, which helps children to develop self-confidence in outdoor play.

For children, *Out on a Limb* provides a unique space for unstructured play, where they can create a connection with nature on their own; while for parents and caregivers, the exhibit represents an opportunity to reminisce about their own childhood experiences in the outdoors and to re-connect with nature exploration with their children. For visitors of all ages, there are places for building, climbing, listening and exploring -- all designed to inspire a love of nature.

Inspired in particular by works from environmentalist Rachel Carson, philosopher Henry David Thoreau, and author Richard Louv, *Out on a Limb's* distinctive design delivers on its promise to use natural artistic materials and full-sensory activities to nurture children's inborn curiosity about and love for nature. It was created by Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose for the Youth Museum Exhibit Collaborative, a consortium of nine museums across the United States and in Canada. It will be on display at the Museum through January 24, 2010.

MINNESOTA CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

Minnesota Children's Museum is a non-profit community educational organization committed to smart play: sparking children's learning through play. Infants ages six months through children age 10 discover their world through hands-on exhibits in five permanent galleries: *Our World* connects children to people and places in their community as they role play "grown-ups" in a child-size environment; *World Works* encourages creativity and problem-solving through investigation and experimentation; *Earth World*

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immerses children in lifelike Minnesota habitats to nurture an understanding of the natural world; **Habitot**[®] enables infants and toddlers to safely explore four developmentally designed learning landscapes; and **Rooftop ArtPark** brings nature and art together in an outdoor gallery on the Museum's fourth floor. Two special galleries offer exciting traveling exhibits from around the world. Fun, interactive activities, such as Story Time and Big Fun! take place daily. Kid Spark, the Museum store, is located in the first floor lobby. Minnesota Children's Museum has been providing children and adults with a fun, educational environment since 1981.

The Museum is located at Seventh and Wabasha streets in downtown St. Paul. For 24-hour information, visit www.MCM.org or call 651-225-6000.

MUSEUM HOURS

Monday (Memorial Day through Labor Day)	9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday, Sunday	9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Friday	9 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Closed Easter, July 4, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day	

ADMISSION

Ages 1 – 101	\$8.95
Members	Free

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Editor's Note: Visit www.MCM.org/newsroom/ for downloadable news releases, photos and information.

ABOUT CHILDREN'S DISCOVERY MUSEUM OF SAN JOSE (CDM)

Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose (CDM) has been ranked by Child Magazine as one of the top 10 children's museums in the U.S. and ranked by the London Observer as one of the top 5 science centers in the world. Since opening its doors in 1990, CDM has welcomed over 5 million visitors and has offered new interactive exhibits each year that respond to children's diverse educational needs. The striking 52,000 square foot purple building was designed by Mexico City-based architect Ricardo Legorreta and is a beacon of discovery. Encompassing the broad themes of community, connections and creativity, 150+ interactive exhibits invite self-directed, open-ended explorations, while flagship programs, such as BioSITE and Discovery Youth, provide facilitated, focused, and sustained learning.

For more information about the Museum, visit www.cdm.org

