

PRESS RELEASE

Alaska State Museum

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: to April 29. **FOR MORE INFORMATION:** Mark Daughhetee, 465-2901

Watchable Whales Are Here for the Summer

The whale watching season in Juneau will get off to an early start this summer with the opening of the exhibit *Alaska's Watchable Whales* at the Alaska State Museum on Saturday, April 29. The exhibition features the work of popular Juneau photographers Mark Kelley and John Hyde and presents an intimate look at the humpback and killer whales that many visitors identify with Southeast Alaska.

An opening reception will take place from noon to 3 p.m. on Saturday, (April 29) sponsored by The Friends of the Alaska State Museum. Admission will be free that day. The photographers will be available to discuss their work and sign books. The exhibit will be on display all summer and close on October 14, to allow time for school groups to view it in the fall.

The exhibition is based on Kelley and Hyde's 2004 book, *Alaska's Watchable Whales: Humpback and Killer Whales*. The show features large-format photographs of some of the stunning imagery of whales that the two photographers have captured over the years and also provides information about the science and behavior of whales. Life-size silhouettes of the whales will adorn the gallery walls to provide a sense of scale.

Kelley and Hyde are both full-time professional photographers with extensive outdoor experience in Alaska. Kelley has eight photo books to his credit and his work has appeared in hundreds of other publications. Hyde's images of North American wildlife are published regularly in magazines and commercial publications worldwide.

Kelley began his career as a photojournalist, working as staff photographer for the Juneau Empire, before embarking on a career as photographer and publisher. In addition to his numerous photo books and photo assignments, Kelley publishes annual calendars featuring images of Juneau and Southeast Alaska, as well as a line of note cards.

Hyde also works as a freelance photographer and has extensive editorial, commercial and stock photo credits. He has also taught photography at the University of Oregon and the University of Alaska, Anchorage. He is one of Alaska's best-known wildlife photographers.

Since the 1970s Southeast Alaska has become an outdoor laboratory for the study of humpback and killer whales. Although much has been learned, there is still a great deal of mystery surrounding the behavior of whales. As the public's interest in whales has grown, whale-watching tours have become a major component of Alaska tourism, especially in the Juneau area.