

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **“Whales: Giants of the Deep” New Traveling Exhibition Opening at Grand Rapids Public Museum on October 22nd**

**Grand Rapids, MI:** The Grand Rapids Public Museum (GRPM) announced today that tickets are on sale for the new exhibition *Whales: Giants of the Deep* opening on Saturday, October 22, 2016. Through a series of hands on components, life-size skeletons, models and more, this exhibition will bring visitors closer than ever before to the world’s largest mammals.

### **Opening Party**

*Whales: Giants of the Deep* will open on Saturday, October 22nd with a special Opening Party for families at the GRPM. Visitors of all ages will have first access to the exhibit on this day to experience the hands on family fun.

The *Whales: Giants of the Deep* Opening Party will take place from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. on Saturday, October 22nd at the Museum. Tickets to this event will include admission to the exhibit and a variety of hands-on activities and performances including live animals from the John Ball Zoo, performances by traditional Maori dancers, admission to *Dynamic Earth* in the Museum's Chaffee Planetarium and lunch!

Admission to the Whales Opening Party will be \$10 for member adults and FREE for member children. Non-members can purchase a year family membership and receive incredible savings for the Opening Party. Purchase a one year, basic family membership plus 4 tickets to the event for only \$80, saving \$57! Non-member adults are \$18 for event-only tickets and non-member children are \$13. To purchase tickets to the Opening Party visit [grpm.org](http://grpm.org), call 616.456.3977 or visit the Museum’s front desk. To purchase a membership package with tickets to the Opening Party non-members must call 616.456.3977.

### **The Exhibit**

In *Whales: Giants of the Deep* visitors will interact with a life-size replica of the largest living creature’s heart, the blue whale. While visiting you can tune into a range of whale sounds and discover how scientists and amateur trackers identify whales on their migration process.



The exhibit will include two fully-articulated sperm whale skeletons, including a 58-foot male. Visitors are able to see life-size and scale models of whales common to the South Pacific that include a beaked whale skull created by Weta Workshop as well as ancient and contemporary whalebone treasures including weapons and chiefly adornments.

Another interactive experience in *Whales: Giants of the Deep* includes video portholes that allow visitors to be transported into an underwater world via a large immersive projection. This unique opportunity allows visitors the chance to encounter whales in a different way than ever before.

Tickets are currently on sale for the exhibition, which runs through April 15, 2017. Members will be \$2 per ticket, and non-member adults will be \$13, non-member children will be \$8. Admission to *Whales: Giants of the Deep* includes general admission to the Museum. Tickets can be purchased by visiting [grpm.org/Whales](http://grpm.org/Whales) or calling 616.929.1700.

*Whales: Giants of the Deep* is sponsored by Meijer, David & Carol Van Andel Family Foundation, Williams Kitchen & Bath, WoodTV 8 and STAR 105.7.

#### **The Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa**

The Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (Te Papa), one of the largest national museums in the world, has attracted over 14.4 million visitors since it opened in 1998. Te Papa is recognised as a world leader in the new wave of innovative and interactive museum experiences and has quickly achieved an international reputation for excellence.

Te Papa, the largest cultural project in New Zealand's history, tells the stories of this young Pacific nation; its history, art and natural environment. It also regularly features a range of international touring exhibitions.

Te Papa is a bi-cultural museum operated in partnership between Māori and Pakeha (non-Māori, mainly of European descent). It includes a range of magnificent exhibitions featuring a number of New Zealand's most significant Māori treasures as well as a unique 21st century carved marae (gathering place), and a stunning historical whareniui (meeting house).

Visit [www.tepapa.govt.nz](http://www.tepapa.govt.nz) 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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