



**CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES CELEBRATES
OPENING WEEKEND WITH ECO-FRIENDLY FLAIR SEPTEMBER 27-28**
**Presented by Pacific Gas and Electric Company, Opening Weekend festivities will
celebrate science and commemorate the culmination of the Academy's
decade-long rebuilding project**

SAN FRANCISCO (August 19, 2008) — After years of anticipation, the doors of the new California Academy of Sciences will open to the general public for the first time on the weekend of September 27-28 in Golden Gate Park. A weekend-long celebration of science will mark the occasion, presented by Pacific Gas and Electric Company. The main attraction will be the Academy itself and the innovative exhibits and animals inside, but the celebration will also spread out onto the Music Concourse in front of the Academy, with science and art activities for visitors of all ages, and food and entertainment from around the world. Admission will be free on Saturday the 27th, and the museum will be open with extended hours on both days.

A Momentous Occasion

Architect Renzo Piano, Executive Director Greg Farrington, Mayor Gavin Newsom, and other officials will commemorate the completion of the new Academy with an opening ceremony at 8:30 am on Saturday, September 27th. Following the hour-long ceremony, the doors will open, allowing visitors to explore the Rainforests of the World, the outer reaches of the Universe, the depths of a Philippine coral reef, the remote islands of Madagascar and the Galapagos, and numerous other exhibits for the first time.

Saturday, September 27

Opening Ceremony: 8:30am

Hours of Operation: 9:30am-9:00pm

Admission is free

Sunday, September 28

Hours of Operation: 9:30am-5pm

General admission rates apply

Tickets can be purchased in advance at www.calacademy.org or at the door

Celebrating with Eco-Friendly Flair

Just as the Academy's mission to explore, explain and protect the natural world informs all of the exhibits inside the Academy, it is also the guiding concept behind the activities on the Music Concourse. A bottle-free drinking water system will make free water available at stations throughout the concourse, along with biodegradable cups, eliminating plastic water bottles from the event entirely. Additionally, booths requiring generator power will use biodiesel fuel as a cleaner burning alternative to traditional fuels.

The Academy's lead corporate sponsor, PG&E, will be on-hand in the Music Concourse to share everyday green living tips with visitors. PG&E recently awarded \$1.5 million to the Academy to support the museum's ongoing climate change and sustainability exhibits and programs. Over the next four years, PG&E will help educate Californians about what they can do to protect our state's natural heritage by participating in public programs, providing timely energy-related exhibit content, and sponsoring the Academy's *Altered State: Climate Change in California* exhibit.

At recycling and composting bins throughout the Music Concourse, volunteers from SF Environment will be standing by, helping people toss their items in the proper bins, and offering helpful tips for remembering what can be recycled and composted.

Music Concourse Activities

Visitors can enjoy interactive activities, as well as top-notch entertainers and food offerings, inside the Music Concourse all weekend long. Booths staffed by conservation organizations and energy experts will tie the themes being explored inside the Academy to ongoing efforts to help build healthier habitats for people and animals alike.

In the concourse band shell, musicians and dancers representing cultures from around the world will perform throughout both days. A full schedule of events will be available at www.calacademy.org in advance. Children will be able to make science-themed arts and crafts projects, enjoy jugglers and face painters, climb a rock wall, and watch kid-friendly musicians and performers on-stage.

A diverse group of food vendors was hand-selected for both their high quality offerings and their sustainable practices. Offerings will include tamales, fresh baked goods, fair-trade coffee, vegetarian cuisine, gourmet sandwiches and salads, wood-fired pizza, and Ben & Jerry's ice cream. By featuring organic and sustainable ingredients, using biodegradable packaging, and minimizing the use of disposable items, these vendors will help reduce the event's environmental impact.

Getting There

The San Francisco Bike Coalition will provide a parking area for 2,500 bikes on Opening Weekend. Visitors arriving by public transit can follow the webbed footprints of the Penguin Path from 9th & Irving or 8th & Fulton right to the front of the Academy. Walking, biking or taking public transit to the Academy is encouraged year-round, and is good for \$3 off of a general admission ticket. For visitors arriving by car, parking will be available in the Music Concourse Garage on a first-come, first-serve basis; drivers will be directed to alternative parking sites as needed.

Opening September 27, 2008, the California Academy of Sciences is home to Steinhart Aquarium, Morrison Planetarium, Kimball Natural History Museum, and world-class research and education programs—all under one living roof. Admission to the Academy is: \$24.95 for adults; \$19.95 for youth ages 12 to 17, Seniors ages 65+ and students with valid ID; \$14.95 for children ages seven to 11; and free for children ages six and younger. The Academy is free to the public on the third Wednesday of each month. Admission fees include all exhibits and shows. Hours are 9:30 am – 5:00 pm Monday – Saturday, and 11:00 am – 5:00 pm on Sunday. The Academy is closed on Thanksgiving and Christmas. www.calacademy.org. (415) 379-8000.

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