

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Something BIG is Coming to the Virginia Aquarium this September**

A new changing exhibition with colossal trolls connects humans to nature

Virginia Beach, VA - The Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center invites guests to discover the whimsical outdoor art exhibition which debuts September 13, "TROLLS: Save the Humans" created by artist Thomas Dambo. This exhibit, featured on the Aquarium's Nature Trail, will include six signature folklore-inspired troll sculptures built from reclaimed materials. Open until January 20, 2025, this art installation will inspire guests to create new adventures in nature while demonstrating how trash can be turned into something beautiful and unique.

Produced by Imagine Exhibitions in collaboration with recycle artist Thomas Dambo, "TROLLS: Save the Humans" blends art, nature, poetry, folklore, and sustainability messages in a unique outdoor art installation. In this new traveling exhibition, the trolls have a message to share with humans about listening and tending to nature.

In the exhibit, six young activist trolls have noticed humans are disconnected from nature and have started harming the planet. These young trolls set out to help humans learn how to live in harmony with the planet. Full of personality and activism, each troll has a name and plays a distinctive role in the tribe, becoming role models for humans to learn from.

Guests can expect appearances from troll, Ronja Redeye, who is the leader of the group and has a voice like whistling leaves in the wind. When she speaks, everyone listens. Kamma Can is a creator, teaching humans to create with colorful plastics instead of throwing it away. She exemplifies this by adorning her necklaces made from recycled items. Another featured troll is Rosa Sun finger who places flowers in an improvised flower planter made of a real car to watch the garden grow, showing how plants can make items come back to life. One troll, Ibbi Pip, hangs up birdhouses to bring wildlife closer and to awaken humans' compassion for their natural surroundings.

There are 101 larger-than-life trolls that co-exist in various locations around the world, including Denmark, France, Germany, China, South Korea, Chile and more.

"Imagine Exhibitions is proud to partner with Thomas Dambo to bring the creative vision of TROLLS: Save the Humans to the Virginia Aquarium," said Tom Zaller, President and CEO of Imagine Exhibitions. "We're delighted to collaborate with the Virginia Aquarium to offer a new outdoor exhibition for guests."

Admire the colorful creations on display along the Nature Trail. "TROLLS: Save the Humans" is included with general admission. Tickets are available to purchase at [VirginiaAquarium.com](http://VirginiaAquarium.com).

### **Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center**

The [Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center's](#) mission is to connect people to the marine environment, inspiring a more sustainable future. The Aquarium aspires to be a driver in conservation, education, tourism, and sustainability, leading the charge to save wildlife and their ecosystems. Owned by the City of Virginia Beach, the Aquarium operates as a city department in partnership with the Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center Foundation. The Aquarium is proud to be an accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums, and the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums.

The [Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center Foundation](#), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, supports the work of the Virginia Aquarium. The Foundation procures and maintains the Aquarium's exhibits, including the animals and habitats. It is also responsible for annual and capital fundraising, administration and funding for the Virginia Aquarium Stranding Response Program, conservation and scientific research efforts, and the Aquarium's mission-related education programs. You can be a part of our mission by making a [tax-deductible donation](#) to support our programming.

### **About the artist Thomas Dambo**

Born in Odense, Denmark in 1979, Artist Thomas Dambo's mission is to create art that inspires people to explore, have adventures in nature, and show that recycled good can be turned into something beautiful. Before embarking on the path of building larger-than-life troll sculptures, Thomas led a multi-faceted life that allowed him to express his creativity via music, street art, and scenic design. After graduating from the Kolding Design School in Kolding, Denmark, with a master's degree in interactive design, Thomas began his journey of using recycled materials to create colorful art installations, building the foundation for his artwork today. He currently lives and works in Copenhagen, Denmark.

### **About the Trolls**

Dambo is best known for his colossal troll and 'live' as permanent or semi-permanent installations in parks, greenspaces, industrial parks, and in other site-specific locations around the world. Each folklore-inspired sculpture is imbued with expression and character and is built entirely from reclaimed materials. Driven by a mission to inspire people to explore our relationship with the planet, many of Dambo's works have an associated folk tale written by Dambo himself that addresses the complex problem of our world in a fun and approachable way. In the spring of 2018, Dambo unveiled a temporary exhibition of trolls at The Morton Arboretum just outside of Chicago, IL. The exhibition was an enormous success, leading to the garden's two highest attended years in its nearly 100-year history. During the run of the exhibition, 1.26 million people visited the arboretum. Inspired by the enthusiasm of the visitors and compelled to find a way to enable Dambo's work to have a longer lifespan in the spirit of reducing, reusing, and recycling, Imagine Exhibitions is delighted to partner with Dambo to develop this evergreen traveling exhibition.

### **About Imagine Exhibitions**

Atlanta based world leader in narrative-driven, immersive experiences, Imagine Exhibitions, Inc. creates, markets, and operates sophisticated, high-quality experiences for gardens, museums, zoos, brands, venues, and integrated resorts across the globe. From ideation to operation, Imagine's team of industry pioneers draws upon decades of success in the fields of immersive design, storytelling, and entertainment to consistently create and implement memorable and thought-provoking environments. The company's custom experiences deliver focused messaging and serve to increase attendance wherever they are presented.

A global pioneer in traveling entertainment, Imagine Exhibitions has created many internationally recognized exhibitions such as Harry Potter™: The Exhibition; Titanic: The Exhibition, The Hunger Games: The Exhibition, Angry Birds: The Art & Science Behind a Global Phenomenon, Jurassic World: The Exhibition, and Downton Abbey: The Exhibition. Imagine currently presents and operates more than 40 unique exhibitions in museums, science centers, aquariums, integrated resorts, and non-traditional venues worldwide. Imagine also designs, opens, and operates its own venues and creates and implements permanent and semi-permanent museums, brands, and entertainment properties.

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