



Magical and Mythical Animals in Human Imagination
April 2 – July 24, 2021

Fantastical creatures through the eyes of children around the world come to life with *Magical and Mythical Animals in Human Imagination*, opening April 2 at the Global Village Museum of Arts and Cultures. The exhibit showcases extraordinary drawings by youth ages 5-16 from 13 different countries. “The visions of non-human creatures are vivid and intense in most children,” said Seraina Gessler, a long-term Museum docent. “The children’s drawings of unicorns, griffins, and other mythical creatures are colorful, inventive, and quite striking. The fire-breathing dragons seem to be eyeing you for breakfast.”

Seraina is curating the exhibit along with her husband, Johannes Gessler, retired Professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Colorado State University. The two collected more than 160 creative artworks from children in Australia, Austria, Bolivia, China, Germany, Iceland, Japan, Panama, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, and the United States. About 70 of the drawings will be showcased. Visitors to the exhibit will have the opportunity to draw their own magical animals.

The exhibition will also feature alebrijes, a Mexican folk art of brightly colored wood carvings of astonishing creatures. The stylized animal figures were carved by contemporary artists using copal wood in Oaxaca, Mexico. Finally, local artist Diane Findley and Denver artist Stefan Geissbühler will contribute pieces of animal artwork.

The Global Village Museum is open with free admission by appointment Wednesday through Saturday, 11 am to 4 pm. Appointments are available for up to five people in a group. For reservations, please email admin@globalvillagemuseum.org or call 970-221-4600.





YULE CAT

A monster from Icelandic folklore.

The huge and vicious *yule cat* is said to lurk about the snowy countryside during Christmas, waiting to eat children who don't have anything warm and new to wear on Christmas Eve.



Where does this Christmas-related folk tale come from?

The origin of this legend may be Celtic and derived from stories of goddesses. Goddesses and witches are frequently accompanied by a black cat.

The threat of being eaten by the *yule cat* was used by farmers as an incentive for their workers to finish processing the autumn wool before Christmas. The ones who succeeded were rewarded with new clothes; those who failed to succeed would get nothing, thus becoming potential prey for the monstrous *yule cat*.

In Iceland, it is still a tradition to give children a little something new to wear before Christmas – so the vicious cat with the yellow eyes doesn't get you!

The *yule cat* drawings were created by eight-year-old children in a class taught by Guðrún Elva Sverrisdóttir in Reykjavík, Iceland.





