

AMERICAN SWEDISH HISTORICAL MUSEUM

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-- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE --

Excitement is building for *The Art of the Brick*[™] exhibition coming to The American Swedish Historical Museum August 2008

Philadelphia The special exhibition of artwork by Nathan Sawaya entitled *The Art of the Brick*[™] is the only major museum exhibition in the United States to focus exclusively on the use of the popular LEGO[®] building block as an art medium. *The Art of the Brick* debuts at the American Swedish Historical Museum Saturday, August 23, 2008 and will be on view through November 30, 2008. *The Art of the Brick* Preview Party on Friday, August 22, 6-8 p.m. features a book signing by Nathan Sawaya. *The Art of the Brick* opening on Saturday, August 23, from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. includes family activities and an appearance by the artist.

Nathan Sawaya is a 35-year-old New York artist exhibiting two dozen works created solely from standard LEGO bricks, with several new sculptures created specifically for this exhibit's tour. Nearly one million colorful LEGO pieces transformed into a new collection of whimsical and awe-inspiring images will be on display at the American Swedish Historical Museum in South Philadelphia this fall. According to the artist, "The museum exhibit is accessible because it engages the child in all of us..."

Sawaya's ability to transform these popular toy building blocks into something meaningful, his devotion to spatial perfection and the way he conceptualizes action enables him to elevate a toy for children into art. "I really love this group of sculptures and portraits because it mixes whimsy with thought-provoking" said Sawaya. "My hope is that families will come to see the art, and then leave with discussions of complex concepts."

Sawaya also said that he believes his job as an artist is to "captivate you for as long as I can keep your attention." In addition to the viewing of Sawaya's exhibit, the American Swedish Historical Museum will captivate and keep the attention of museum goers with a special interactive room that will be available during the run of the exhibition for children of all ages to build with fun materials.



The sculpture *Sing* is featured in *The Art of the Brick*



Artist Nathan Sawaya with one of his larger-than-life sculptures built out of LEGO® bricks.

The American Swedish Historical Museum also features 12 permanent galleries which promote Swedish and Swedish-American art, culture and history. For more information about the special exhibition *The Art of the Brick* and its associated programs and events at the ASHM please visit www.americanswedish.org, call 215-389-1776 or email info@americanswedish.org

The American Swedish Historical Museum is open 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Tuesday-Friday; 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Saturday-Sunday during the run of *The Art of the Brick*. Admission rates are Adults: \$8, Seniors/Students: \$6, Children ages 5-11 years: \$4, Children under 5 years are admitted free of charge.

The American Swedish Historical Museum is located in scenic Franklin Delano Roosevelt Park at 1900 Pattison Avenue in South Philadelphia near the Sports Complex. Free parking is available. ASHM is accessible from Interstates 95 or 76, Broad Street Subway or bus #17.

[Editor's Note: The artist, Nathan Sawaya is also available for phone interviews. High res. images are available via e-mail. PR contacts: Tricia Davies, tdavies@americanswedish.org or 215-389-1776, or Cathy Larkin, Artful Communications, Cathylarkinpr@comcast.net, or cell 484-802-7576.]

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