

THE PROGRESSIVE FORUM

Great Minds, Great Answers

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For Release

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Evolutionary Biologist, Richard Dawkins,
Will Appear at The Progressive Forum Tuesday October 5, 2010

Renowned evolutionary biologist, Richard Dawkins, will appear at The Progressive Forum Tuesday October 5, 2010, at the Wortham Center, Cullen Theater, at 7:30 PM. He is the author of *The Greatest Show on Earth: The Evidence for Evolution* (2009). All attendees will receive a complimentary paperback edition, and additional books will be on sale. Dawkins will greet fans and sign books at the end of the evening.

Tickets range from \$14 to \$54. A limited number of \$74 tickets are available which includes a pre-event reception with Richard Dawkins at 6:15 in the green room, a complimentary signed book, and center-front seating. Tickets are available at www.progressiveforumhouston.org or by calling 832-251-0706. There is no physical box office except at the theater on event night.

Randall Morton, Progressive Forum president, said, "It's exciting to be able to present Richard Dawkins, he regularly places in the top ten in *Prospect* magazine's list of the world's top intellectuals, voted by a worldwide public.

"Moreover, Dawkins book on evolution is deeply needed in a time when extremists are systematically trying to undermine the fact of evolution and the the status of science in the classrooms, especially in Texas."

The *Greatest Show on Earth* lays out the case for evolution, how we "know it's a

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fact” according to Dawkins, while launching a fierce counter attack against the proponents of “Intelligent Design.” The book is a fascinating journey through rich layers of evolutionary evidence in the scientific fields of domestication, fossil records, developing embryos, radioactive dating, plate tectonics, molecular genetics, and more. The *San Francisco Chronicle* called it, “Brilliant, detailed, immensely readable, funny.”

Dawkins’ current book, *The Greatest Show on Earth*, follows his blockbuster, *The God Delusion* (2006) which sold over 2 million copies in English alone. According to the book jacket of *The God Delusion*, Dawkins is an “outspoken atheist who delivers a hard-hitting, impassioned, but humorous rebuttal of religious belief.”

The author of ten books, Dawkins catapulted to fame with *The Selfish Gene* in 1976.

Richard Dawkins was born in Nairobi, Kenya, in 1941. His father, Clinton John Dawkins, was an agricultural civil servant in the British colonial service. Richard Dawkins was educated at Oxford University and has taught zoology at the universities of California at Berkeley and Oxford. Dawkins is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature which includes the most distinguished writers of the U.K., as well as the Royal Society representing the most distinguished scientists. In 2008, Dawkins retired from his position as the Charles Simonyi Professor for Public Understanding of Science at Oxford University, a post created for Dawkins. He remains a Fellow at New College at Oxford.

The Progressive Forum is a nonprofit 501(C)(3) civic speaker organization

presenting its events at The Wortham Center. It's the only civic speaker organization in America dedicated expressly to progressive values. Its purpose is to enrich our democracy and culture by striving to present the greatest minds from all the fields of human endeavor, the sciences and the humanities as well as politics and public affairs, great minds it believes are advancing the success of individuals, our species, and life on the earth.

This year of 2010 marks the fifth anniversary of The Progressive Forum.

The Progressive Forum premiered on June 13, 2005, with Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. and Houston Mayor Bill White in a program called "Our Environmental Challenges." Al Gore launched *An Inconvenient Truth* at The Progressive Forum June 7, 2006, his first U.S. book event for that title. On September 17, 2008, Gloria Steinem celebrated the 30th anniversary of the historic National Women's Conference held in Houston. On March 27, 2008, Robert Redford introduced a film he produced and narrated, *Fighting Goliath: Texas Coal Wars*, a documentary about 32 Texas cities banding together opposing coal plant permits. Last year June 12, 2009, Nancy Pelosi became the first sitting U.S. House Speaker to make a public appearance in Houston in modern times. More recently, December 7, 2009, The Progressive Forum produced the national launch event for the first book by premier climatologist James Hansen of NASA, *Storms of My Grandchildren: The Truth about the Coming Climate Catastrophe and Our last Chance to Save Humanity*.

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Other speakers have included Jared Diamond, Seymour Hersh, Molly Ivins, George Soros, Edward O. Wilson, Frank Rich, Garrison Keillor, Joe Klein, Tim Flannery, Anna Deavere Smith, Ken Burns, George Lakoff, Robert Redford, Bill McKibben, Elizabeth Edwards, Larry Wilmore, T. Boone Pickens, Lester Brown, Brian Greene, and Karen Armstrong.

The Progressive Forum originated a new model in civic speaker organizations in Houston to deliver a larger audience and a higher quality experience in a theater rather than a hotel luncheon with traditional speaker organizations. The Progressive Forum model is similar to a performing arts company by using the finest theaters, paying speaker fees to present the top intellectual stars, and marketing throughout the region. It offers convenient box office services through its website allowing ticket buyers to print tickets at their computer in addition to traditional phone sales.

Founder and president, Randall R. Morton has owned Randall Morton International, Inc. for 34 years, an advertising and public relations agency whose clients have included leading oil equipment in the U.S., Japan, Mexico, and Europe. Morton created, produced, and hosted the Oilfield Breakfast Forum from 1994 to 2003, a another speaker platform which is still the largest in the oil industry. While earning a degree in government from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., he served as an issue writer for the Democratic National Committee.