



## **Kickstarter Campaign Launching to Bring "Free Willy" Star Back to Hollywood**

*Blue Carpet Event Will Celebrate 20th Anniversary of the Hit Film "Free Willy" and the World Premiere New Documentary About Orca at Historic Egyptian Theater*

Los Angeles, CA, February 25, 2013 --([PR.com](http://PR.com))-- Filmmaker Theresa Demarest will launch a Kickstarter campaign this week to raise funds for a world premiere screening of the new HD version of her award-winning documentary "Keiko the Untold Story of the Star of Free Willy". Set to coincide with the 20th anniversary of the hit film Free Willy, monies raised will be used to mount the celebratory event; so far plans include a screening of the original Warner Brothers film, the world premiere screening of the documentary and a star-studded "Blue Carpet" ceremony and reception to be attended by the film's producers and to-be-announced cast members from both films.

The event will also be heavily promoted to local schools, not only to educate youngsters on the importance of preserving the orca, but offering them a chance to compete against other area schools to win a class trip to the Hollywood event. A copy of the documentary will be donated to participating schools along with a comprehensive Teacher's Guide to enhance learning.

Four years in the making, "Keiko the Untold Story of the Star of Free Willy" presents never-before-seen footage of Keiko, the original Free Willy star and the first and only captive orca to be released back into the wild. The film provides compelling insights into the unique culture of orcas, and how the impact of being taken from his pod affected Keiko's survival instincts. The film shares the exclusive accounts of Keiko's day-to-day existence by his last two caretakers, Colin Baird and Thorbjorg (Tobba) Valdis Kristjansdottir.

"It seems like everything I've ever done, everybody I've ever known, every piece of music and poetry I've ever written, has gone into making this film," states first-time filmmaker Theresa Demarest, a celebrated singer/songwriter from the Pacific Northwest. The former Catholic nun is also a retired critical care nurse, single parent and two-time breast cancer survivor. "It has been a phenomenal journey," she says of her experience.

Keiko first swam into Demarest's life in 1996, while she was recovering from several major surgeries related to her second battle with cancer. The day the ailing whale arrived in Oregon, Demarest found herself mesmerized by his spirit after an eleven-year ordeal surviving in a tank that was never designed for anything larger than an eight-foot bottlenose dolphin.

"There was something about the story," she recalls, "something about the people involved in the story, something about him and his spirit got me going after his story."

Demarest wore many other hats on the film as producer, singer, songwriter, composer, and executive producer (along with executive producers Nola Wilken and Jay Schornstein). The film's expert advisors include caretaker Baird, Director of Field Operations, the Free Willy-Keiko Project; Dr. Naomi Rose of the Humane Society International; Mark Berman, and Dr. Paul Spong of OrcaLab.



The event will also launch a campaign for Keiko to be awarded a star on the Hollywood Walk-of-Fame in 2014 and to obtain worldwide distribution of the documentary.

See you on the Blue Carpet.

More at:

Kickstarter -

<http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/255614217/bring-keiko-the-star-of-free-willy-to-hollywood>

Blog post -

<http://www.keikotheuntoldstory.com/?p=2815>



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[www.keikotheuntoldstory.com/?p=2815](http://www.keikotheuntoldstory.com/?p=2815)

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