

MacGillivray Freeman's

HURRICANE^{on} the BAYOU

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“Hurricane on the Bayou” Offers A Dramatic Portrait of Hurricane Katrina’s Powerful Effects And The Vital Importance of Louisiana’s Vanishing Wetlands

Narrated By Meryl Streep

Film to Make its West Coast Premiere September 8, 2006 at the California Science Center IMAX Theater

Los Angeles -- *HURRICANE ON THE BAYOU*, opening at the California Science Center IMAX Theater September 8, 2006, carries audiences behind today’s news headlines on a journey deep into the heart of Louisiana. Filmed before and after the unprecedented devastation of Hurricane Katrina and featuring state-of-the-art computer generated special effects depicting the storm’s fury, *HURRICANE ON THE BAYOU* brings into focus the startling loss of Louisiana’s rapidly disappearing coastal wetlands—New Orleans’s first line of defense against deadly storms. Tragically, these wetlands are eroding into the sea at the speed of one acre every thirty minutes, or a land area the size of Manhattan every year

Produced and distributed by MacGillivray Freeman Films (*Everest, Coral Reef Adventure*) with executive producer Audubon Nature Institute, directed by two-time Academy Award®-nominee Greg MacGillivray, and narrated by Academy-Award-winning actress Meryl Streep, *HURRICANE ON THE BAYOU* stars legendary New Orleans music producer, songwriter and Rock n’ Roll Hall of Fame inductee, Allen Toussaint, blues singer/guitarist and long-time wetlands activist Tab Benoit; 14-year-old fiddling prodigy Amanda Shaw; and zydeco accordion master Chubby Carrier. Through their eyes audiences will see the tragedy the city faced during Katrina and its burning hopes for a revitalized future unfold.

The film will be released in New Orleans on August 29 to coincide with the anniversary of Katrina, in Los Angeles on September 8 at the California Science Center IMAX Theater, and in select giant screen theatres worldwide on December 22.

“*HURRICANE ON THE BAYOU* is an emotional giant screen document of Katrina’s powerful effects as well as a profound musical celebration of a city that has been called the ‘soul of America’ and a call to restore New Orleans and the vital wetlands from which the city’s unique identity first arose,” says director/producer Greg MacGillivray.

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Originally conceived as a cautionary tale about Louisiana's wetlands and the consequences of a *hypothetical* hurricane hitting New Orleans, ***HURRICANE ON THE BAYOU*** began production in early 2005. The filmmakers simulated an apocalyptic hurricane, complete with recreated scenes where flooded homeowners burst through rooftops to get to safety. When Hurricane Katrina hit just four months after production wrapped, the MacGillivray Freeman filmmakers were forced to switch gears, just as they did in the wake of tragedy while filming *Everest*, and raced to New Orleans to record the powerful giant screen images of Katrina's aftermath.

Hurricane on the Bayou is now a larger-than-life look at what the nation would stand to lose without the rollicking music, rich culture and astonishing natural beauty of New Orleans and its surrounding areas. The film features breathtaking aerial views of Louisiana's bayous and swamps, playful underwater scenes with a family of alligators, state-of-the-art computer generated special effects depicting Katrina's fury, and startling images of Katrina's devastating impact including never-before-seen aerial images of the flooded city of New Orleans. The film's soundtrack features songs from such lauded Louisiana musicians as Dr. John, Aaron Neville, Fats Domino, Charles Brown, Allen Toussaint, Marva Wright, Tab Benoit, Amanda Shaw, the band Zydeco Force and the Rebirth Brass Band.

"HURRICANE ON THE BAYOU is not just the moving story of how four remarkable musicians survived Katrina and are facing the future, nor it is just the story of how the destruction of the wetlands is wreaking devastation for both humans and wildlife," Greg MacGillivray summarizes. "I think it is really about the tremendous value of New Orleans and Louisiana to our nation. We try to reveal what a treasure this city is – a wild swampland that turned into a fantastic center for music, cuisine and the enjoyment of life itself. To lose New Orleans would be an unthinkable tragedy."

HURRICANE ON THE BAYOU is produced and distributed by MacGillivray Freeman Films and executive produced by Audubon Nature Institute with major funding from the State of Louisiana and in association with MacGillivray Freeman Films Educational Foundation.

Note to Editors/Reporters:

Preview screenings of *Hurricane on the Bayou* will take place at the Entergy IMAX® Theatre in New Orleans at 1 Canal Street on Friday, August 25, 2006 at 11:00 a.m. and 12 noon. *Hurricane on the Bayou* screenings in Los Angeles will take place at the California Science Center IMAX Theater on Tuesday, August 29 at 7:30pm (reception starts at 6:45pm) and Thursday, August 31 at 7:30pm. If you are interested in attending one of these events or in interviewing director/producer Greg MacGillivray please call Paula Wagner or Shell Amega at 213-744-7446. Production notes and high resolution images are available at www.hurricaneonthebayou.com.

The **California Science Center** and **IMAX Theater** are located in historic Exposition Park, Los Angeles. Open daily from 10am to 5pm except Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. Admission to Science Center exhibits is free. IMAX tickets vary from \$8.00 for adults to \$4.75 for children 4-12. For recorded information on show times, phone (213) 744-7400. Tickets are available at the Box Office or online at www.californiasciencecenter.org. For advance ticket purchases, group rates, or to make reservations for any visiting group of 15+ (*required*), call (213) 744-2019. Parking is available in the guest lot at Figueroa and 39th/Coliseum Street at \$6 per car. Both the Science Center and IMAX Theater are wheelchair accessible. ***Proceeds from the IMAX Theater support California Science Center exhibit and education programs***