

REBIRTH:

A Guide for Individual, Family & Community Conversations



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**I have hope . . .
That it's all going to work.
It's all going to be good at the end of the day.
We'll teach our children what happened.
. . . and hopefully
. . . the world will be a better place when we finish.
That's all you can hope for.**

Brian Lyons, *REBIRTH*

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*“When we become aware that we do not have to escape our pains,
but that we can mobilize them into a common search for life,
those very pains are transformed from expressions of despair
into signs of hope.”*

Henri Nouwen (1932 - 1996)

We all take a journey of grief at some point in our lives. It is challenging and powerful, flooding us with shock and wrenching pain. Yet this passage has the potential, as you will learn from this film, to help us chart a new path, one filled with hope, resilience and rebirth.

INTRODUCTION

Viewing a film gives us opportunities to explore and talk about important issues in a way that no other medium can. It visually brings us into the lives and experiences of others and it allows us to witness history. This guide hopes to provide ways that you can understand the stories of five people with both heart and mind. *REBIRTH* explores complex narratives about loss, trauma and one of our greatest national tragedies, September 11, 2001. Using the words and images of the film, the following pages will contain suggestions for self-reflection and ways to begin conversations with family and friends. These suggestions are meant to begin a conversation not provide answers to these exceedingly challenging questions.

What can we learn from watching a film and then talking about it? The people or characters in a film sometimes remind us of people we know or ourselves. They are storytellers and can even become advisers. Through their journey there is an opportunity for self-revelation, problem solving and support. There are connections between the viewer and the people or characters in a film. You may find you are inspired to tell your own story, or to write, paint, photograph or film your own experience. When you watch a film such as *REBIRTH*, you may feel the urge to begin discussing and even debating the important issues.

REBIRTH chronicles the experiences of five people after September 11, 2001. Their stories are woven together to tell a larger story. We learn something very private about them, specifically their thoughts and emotions on that deadly September day and the months and years to come. They have dared to trust us, the viewer, with their own personal reactions and pain. We see them question, demand answers, get angry, feel sad and somehow learn to move forward and grow. We not only enter their world but we see how we have been changed as well. *REBIRTH* is filled with revelations, and you may be inspired to tell your own stories as well.

PREPARING TO WATCH THE FILM

While *REBIRTH* is a film of hope and resilience, it is also important to recognize that people will have different reactions to its emotional content. There are a variety of reasons and motivations for seeing this film; some want to honor those who lost so much on that day, others want to gain a better sense of the tragedy that will live on in our individual and collective memories. Bearing witness to the stories of those who have endured painful experiences can evoke a wide range of feelings in the audience. This is a natural response to such situations. *REBIRTH* does not replay graphic images of September 11, 2001, however, there are several audio reminders.

Regardless of why you have decided to see *REBIRTH*, there are some suggested guidelines that may be helpful. For families and friends of those who were lost in the terrorist attacks, for those who survived by escaping, for others who witnessed the events from near or far, or through the media and also for those who have experienced loss unrelated to September 11, we must exercise self-care and realize that we may relive and re-experience some elements of that day.

Caring for Others, Caring for Yourself

It is best to be with people -- friends, family, colleagues and others with whom you feel comfortable -- when watching any film that tells a real and very moving story, *REBIRTH* is no different. Take time to talk about the film before and afterwards, and share your thoughts and reactions.

Understand that some people will return to the feelings they experienced on September 11th: sadness, tearfulness, shock, or disbelief. We have heard many audience members say, "I still can't believe this happened." Current affairs can also cause shifts in our reactions. The recent events involving Osama bin Laden may evoke a sense of relief or justice but it can also reawaken feelings of sadness and loss. As one high school student told his widowed mother, "This week we are 9/11 kids all over again."

There are some special considerations for you to think about.

If you are still feeling very upset or overwhelmed by the events of 9/11; i.e. difficulty sleeping, trouble concentrating at work or school, or can't seem to get thoughts and images of September 11th out of your mind, it may be best for you to wait and view this film at a later time.

Some people chose to "move on" very quickly after 2001, seemingly unfazed by the fact that they may have been in harm's way on September 11th. These individuals tend to avoid or minimize any discussion about that day or quickly change the subject when it comes up in conversation. For these folks, it is possible to experience new feelings for the first time. This happened to some World War II veterans as they relived D-Day watching Steven Spielberg's film, *Saving Private Ryan*.

For those who have experienced loss or another crisis since September 11, 2001, viewing this film may not only reawaken feelings from September 11th but also the losses or crises that followed in the subsequent years.

Consider "self care" strategies to soothe, provide relief and counter-balance any uncomfortable feelings you may have. Self-care is the first step of healing and recovering from any traumatic event. There is no prescribed time frame or series of stages, people have different life experiences and deal with trauma and loss in a very different ways. Think of approaching self-care through the five senses: see, touch, smell, taste, and hear the comforts in the world around you. Share your thoughts and feelings, be with friends, read a favorite book before bed, enjoy a favorite food or drink, play peaceful or relaxing music, give and get physical contact, look at calming images, and depending on your beliefs, pray or meditate.

Find sanctuary in your world. Recovery after witnessing or experiencing loss or trauma begins with safety, and therein lies the significance of the word sanctuary. During the Middle Ages, sanctuaries were asylums, places of safety and protection for those in danger. They were

sacred spaces. They also provided physical places of refuge and respite. Look for your own sanctuary.

For Individuals or Small Groups

We hope you are viewing *REBIRTH* with friends, family or colleagues, people you know and are supportive of each other. Some viewers or screening facilitators may want to read the synopsis of the film ahead of time, others may choose not to. *REBIRTH* is about an hour and a half long and may have content that may be upsetting to you; if you feel you need some breathing room, please take care of yourself and take a short break if necessary.

Be mindful of how you are reacting to the film, and how others are responding around you. When the film ends, take a few minutes of silence, take some deep breaths and close your eyes.

AFTER WATCHING THE FILM

Common Reactions to the Film

First, think about the sensory experience of the film. What were you feeling, specifically in your body, a “gut” reaction? Some people experience upset stomachs, sweaty palms, tension, fast breathing and heart pounding at various points during the film, especially in the first 20 minutes. These are common bodily responses to fear or remembering a frightening experience. These sensations usually pass when the images or sounds on the screen change. You may find the Phillip Glass score comforting and even uplifting, especially towards the end of the film.

What about your emotions? Describe them. Did they shift or change at different points in the film? Again, people can experience a wide range of feelings, anger, sadness or disbelief. However, it is also common for viewers to laugh, experience joy and feel inspired by the experiences of the five individuals in the film.

What thoughts did you have as you watched *REBIRTH*? As you listened to the experiences of the five people in the film? In many cases, viewers will think back to that day in 2001, where they were, who was there, and what was happening. You may even find yourself retelling your own story, as if September 11 was yesterday. The exercise of re-telling a story helps us integrate an event into our life experience, much like we retell the story of a baby’s birth or a hospitalization.

Discussion and Journaling

Starting a conversation or writing about your experience after watching *REBIRTH* can be a healing process in itself. As you think about the film, what stands out in your mind? Perhaps there are one or two examples. Maybe it was one of the people in the film whose experience resonated with your own life experience.

What is your overall feeling after watching the film? Did you feel a shift in your emotions at any point during the film? If so, when did that occur and what was it about that scene that caused you to smile, or laugh or cry?

What did you learn from viewing this film that you did not know before? Maybe it is something about yourself or other people in your life. In our quest to be supportive of others we try to gauge their reactions so we can help them as best we can. But there is no single way to give or get support. We constantly search for the right words and actions, never sure if we are helping or hurting. As Toni Morrison wrote in her essay, *The Dead of September 11*, “And I have nothing to give either--except this gesture, this thread thrown between your humanity and mine.” The most important gift we can give to another person is our presence.

What did you learn about loss, grief, resilience and healing? In the pages that follow there will be additional discussion on the topics of grief, loss and traumatic loss. These concepts are difficult to discuss and even more difficult to experience.

Think about each of the people in the film: Tim, Tanya, Nick, Brian and Ling. What did you see as their defining characteristics and individual ways of healing? How did they differ? How were they similar?

Where did they find sanctuary as they healed from their losses? What is your own experience finding sanctuary? You may remember places or activities that have been comforting and offered respite in your own life.

How did these five individuals memorialize and commemorate their loved ones? Did you think about memorials in your own life? Finally, which of the people in the film would you want to meet and what would you want to ask or say to them?

You may find yourself thinking about the film in the days and weeks ahead. Films that have an afterlife often make us think more deeply about the characters and our own lives. Jot down your thoughts or chat with a friend to reflect on the film images or words that have come into your mind.

Be mindful of your response to the film, if you find yourself dwelling on it or “stuck” in any way, it may be helpful to talk to someone about your reactions.

RESOURCES

THE BACKGROUND OF THE FILM

The Director's Story

Hello,

My name is Jim Whitaker, and I want to offer my thanks to you for watching *REBIRTH*. I'd like to tell you why I decided to make this film.

My grief story begins like many others, with the death of my mother. She had a very short bout with cancer and in those early months after she died, I was really going through a very intense period of grief. For six months I tried to figure out what had occurred and why. And then September 11, 2001 happened. It was a strange time, and people didn't know if they should move forward or not. A classmate from Georgetown was getting married in New York City just a few weeks after September 11th. He called me and said he didn't know if he should move ahead with the wedding at such a difficult time. He and his fiancée decided they would continue with their plans and I went to the wedding with my wife. It was a strange experience—beautiful and joyous but I also saw this group of guys at the wedding, Wall Street guys, who were drinking and crying. I was moved by their experience, and found myself wanting, in fact, needing, to go to Ground Zero.

When I was growing up my father worked in Washington, DC. During that time he often told me about historical events that were happening in our nation's capitol. One day in particular stands out. I remember he took his brown paper bag lunch and told me he was going to hear a speech at the Lincoln Memorial. Of course, it was Reverend Martin Luther King delivering the *I have A Dream* speech. He shared these historical events with me personally. He was there. I remember the power of history and wanted to share those important moments with my own children. After witnessing the emotional experiences of the wedding guests who worked near Ground Zero and the need to witness this moment in history, I went down to the site. It was everything you could imagine. I saw the wreckage, the smoke, and the workers. I felt the despair and anger and a great sense of dread and anxiety. I stared at the ruins. In the space of

those grief filled moments, I thought that maybe one day this place would look very different. And for a brief second I had this feeling of hope.

As a filmmaker, I asked how could I show an audience this sense of hope. I decided the way to do this was to simply show it. I wanted to place cameras around Ground Zero to record the actual history of the site as it was rebuilt. I reached out to college friends, their parents and colleagues and raised the money to place the cameras around Ground Zero. A month later I realized that this experience was so emotional and so human that it needed to be covered from a human perspective as well. I found ten people whose lives had been affected by the day. I began to interview them and met with them every year for four or five hours. The idea was to make a film combining the physical rebirth of the site using time-lapse photography with the emotional rebirth of the site, as it occurred through the lives of these people, who were also grieving their own personal losses.

One of the more important and powerful things for me is that this film is a story about grief. I personally was going through it after the death of my Mom. I was able to join with this group of subjects, almost in lockstep, who were coping with their own private losses, albeit on a very public stage. That is what I have been doing for the past nine years, traveling this journey with them. I wanted to explore the challenge of coping with grief – and it is not something that one ever overcomes -- to look at how we all grieve differently, specifically, through all the variations experienced by people affected by the day. I also saw these variations in my own life, on a smaller scale but there nonetheless. My brothers were also grieving the loss of our mother and I was curious. I wanted to know what was going on. How does this work? Is there a right way or a wrong way to grieve? We were all on our own personal journeys. I began this process by entering in conversations with our subjects, through and with them, as they told their stories.

Making this film gave me a sense of determination and resolve, not only to tell the story of the site and a small group of people who were personally affected by the events of that terrible day, but to reach out to the community, the first responders and volunteers who worked for so many years after September 11, 2001. This was more than just making a film but doing

something that would help others. I invite all of you to take the opportunity to go on the *Rebirth* journey with us and in so doing, explore and revisit this day in history as well as the moments in your own history, events that changed your life and ultimately transformed despair into hope.

Jim Whitaker, Director and Producer, *REBIRTH*

Note: From personal communications and Jim's interview in NY, April 17, 2009

Telling their Stories: The People in the Film

Tanya was about to be married to Sergio, a New York City firefighter, when he was killed in the line of duty on September 11, 2001. A vivacious woman in her 30s, of Filipino and German background, Tanya's world was shattered when she lost the man she calls her "soul mate" as they were planning for their wedding and life together. Rocked by heartbreak and visions of what might have been, Tanya takes unforeseen turns as she begins to integrate her unflinching devotion to Sergio into a new life and unexpected new love.

Tim moved to New York to be part of what he considered to be the boldest and most revered Fire Department in the world, the FDNY. He soon became best friends with his much-admired mentor, Captain Terry Hatton of the elite Rescue 1. Although Tim had moved into the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management, both men were called to the scene of the World Trade Center on 9/11, where Terry greeted Tim with a warm hug before they went into separate buildings. Soon after, Tim saw World Trade Center One collapse knowing that Terry was on the upper floors, leaving him to grapple with survivor's guilt and memories of an incredible friendship.

Brian, a New York City construction worker, became engaged to his wife at the top of the World Trade Center and had beautiful memories of the soaring towers. But on September 11, 2001, all that changed. He lost his youngest brother, a firefighter, when the towers fell. Driven by the urgent need to do something, Brian immediately went down to the site to see if he could be of any help in the massive search and rescue effort. He stayed long past the clearing of debris, to begin the rebuilding. Over the years, the Ground Zero pit became a kind of second home to Brian, a place of both reverence and renewal. He was named a project manager for the reconstruction of the World Trade Center and discovered both the city's grit and his own hard-fought for resilience.

Nick was a high school student with a bright future of limitless possibilities ahead of him when he lost his mother, the woman he loved and respected as "the glue of our family." She was working in the financial industry on the 104th floor of the World Trade Center on 9/11. He is the eldest of three siblings and was one of the top squash players in the country, but his mother's sudden death sent Nick reeling and tore at the fabric of their family. Coming to grips with loss at the same time as he

was growing up, Nick set out on a personal search to find the best way to honor all that his mother meant to him – a journey that led him from anger to Yale to Wall Street and from unanticipated self-discoveries to family reconciliations.

Ling, a hard-working mother of Chinese descent, worked at the New York State Tax Department. She was on the 78th floor of the World Trade Center (which tower?) when a plane hit the building. Knocked unconscious by the impact, she felt blessed to be among those who escaped the tower with her life; only to later discover she had suffered extensive second and third degree burns across her body. After spending several months in the hospital, Ling began a challenging, unpredictable, roller-coaster process of recovery. As she endured more than forty operations, Ling learned to approach her newly altered body and precarious health with an inspiring sense of resolve and love of life in the moment.

The Transformation of Space

When Jim Whitaker first approached director of photography Tom Lappin with the idea of *REBIRTH*, it was unclear how such a massive photographic undertaking could even be approached. Although there exists a long tradition of innovative, time-lapse documentaries, including Walt Disney's 1950s classic *The Secret Of Life* and Ron Fricke's earth history, *Chronos*, the size and scope of *REBIRTH* were entirely unprecedented, becoming the largest project of its kind.

A 14-camera system was placed across the Ground Zero site and engineered to film 24 hours a day, enduring exposure to summer's heat and winter's freezes, and never interfering with activities in the construction site. When the project began in 2001, Lappin made the decision to use 35mm film, which at the time was the state-of-the-art choice for maximum quality and durability.

The cameras, originally designed in 1919 by the Mitchell Camera Corporation for military applications, shoots one frame every five minutes. Using specially designed electronic controls and multiple lenses; both close-up and wide-angle views can be captured.

To insure the cameras' functioning in all kinds of weather conditions their unique housings were outfitted with titanium-surface glass windows, miniature heaters and dehumidifiers. Four of the camera units were solar-powered.

Keeping the system operational required reloading the film every 20 days, a process that can take up to 8 hours. This is a significant amount of time considering that 20 days of filming translates into just four minutes of actual footage.

The footage from this extraordinary system leaves viewers feeling as if the new buildings at World Trade Center are rising around them. That is a crucial part of the *REBIRTH* story. And the cameras will continue to film the progress of the World Trade Center site until 2015.

LEARNING MORE ABOUT TRAUMA AND LOSS

“No one ever told me that grief felt so like fear. I am not afraid, but the sensation is like being afraid. The same fluttering in the stomach, the same restlessness, the yawning. I keep on swallowing. . . There is a sort of invisible blanket between the world and me. I find it hard to take in what anyone says. Or perhaps, hard to want to take it in . . . ”

C.S. Lewis, *A Grief Observed*, 1963, pg.1

The words of C.S. Lewis capture the feelings that so often accompany loss. There is a sense of losing one’s mind, of being alone and believing that no one else can understand or even appreciate one’s experience. Few things in life are as painful as the sudden, tragic death of a loved one. There is no opportunity to say goodbye. Traumatic losses can be untimely or violent, or surrounded by mass destruction and multiple deaths. Most of us will experience the sudden, traumatic loss of a loved one at some point in our lives; for thousands of family members and friends, September 11, 2001 was that point.

As you watch *REBIRTH* you will see how the individuals’ reactions to traumatic loss vary from person to person. Survivors experience the physiological, cognitive and emotional reactions to trauma and grief with great intensity. At times these reactions seem to exist almost simultaneously, rapidly shifting from grief to trauma. These reactions feel unpredictable and yet they seem to precipitate each other. This can further overwhelm our capacity to cope

It is the intersection of trauma and loss that defines this powerful experience.

Trauma precipitates feelings of horror and anxiety on the one hand and emotional numbness and a sense of disconnection on the other. Some people cannot remember significant aspects of the event, while others are flooded by memories that seem to replay painful images over and over. Because of their sudden occurrence, traumatic deaths represent an assault to humans, and some people can develop PTSD following a traumatic loss.

Grieving includes strong feelings of yearning or longing for a loved one. It is an attempt to fill

the empty space in hearts and minds. With traumatic loss this yearning often precipitates painful images and thoughts of the traumatic event as well, further complicating the grieving process. The bereaved often speak of a generalized pain or heaviness in their chest, feeling depressed and hopeless about the future, and finding that things which were once important do not matter any more. They may cry easily, lose interest in eating, or experience physical discomfort.

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 forced us to deal with the powerful intersection of trauma and loss in order to begin the healing process. There is not only the loss of people and places, but also a loss of our way of life...loss of income, loss of freedom, loss of security and trust. Things will not go “back to normal” – instead there will be a “new normal.”

Three Cautionary Tales

As you witness the journey of the five individuals in the film, be aware of the myths that surround grief and loss in our western society: the need to define stages or markers to gauge our recovery, searching for closure and erasing painful images.

Stages are not the markers of grieving. Phases or stages only suggest there is a prescribed, optimum way to work through the bereavement process. It also suggests that one can only move forwards or backwards. Resolving is another word frequently used to address the grieving process. Resolution implies that one is finding a solution. Grief is a journey that begins with loss and takes many twists and turns. Grief work, traumatic or otherwise, requires a holistic view of the world. There is no one starting point nor is there an endpoint. The grieving process is shaped by a number of factors: our previous experiences, attachment to significant others, the nature of the loss experience, age, and the support of people in our lives. The process is circular, more like a feedback loop than a linear path.

Closure is a word often used to define an event or occurrence that leads to “the act of closing or condition of being closed.” We hear media reports pronounce that families search for “closure” when remains are found, bodies are identified, or when justice is served. Is such a

physical event really the end of the painful mourning process? And does it really facilitate moving forward? It is human nature to seek a way to end our pain, but the identification of a signature event that pronounces “no more suffering” may be wishful thinking. Mourning is one of the greatest human challenges. As we are confronted with our mortality, we must acknowledge that someone who is an important part of our lives is no longer there. We want to end the discomfort to “move on” and purge the pain from our lives. But it is not that simple. We want to be guided, we want someone to tell us how to make it better, and then when we are not better, it is confusing. Grievors may ask, “Why can’t I feel better? What is wrong with me?” Dwindling expressions of support from friends and family who expect us to bounce back and “move on” may complicate the healing process.

Consider replacing “closure” with the more appropriate concept of “integration.” To integrate is “to make into a whole by bringing parts together,” “to unify.” The rituals, and memorial events are starting points. These events help to confirm the reality of a loved one’s death, but the real work of weaving the loss into the tapestry of one’s life is just beginning.

Be cautious of others who may be eager to erase history. We do not want to eliminate or eradicate the images of the person or place who is no longer with us. Society wants us to feel better by editing sights and sounds that serve as painful triggers. Think of the many skyline photos of New York City that no longer contain the World Trade Center. There is a danger in hiding or removing reminders of those we have lost; it feels as if the people and places “never existed,” as a result we deny our own history. When a death occurs in a family, we should not hide or discard photographs or videos of our loved ones. In fact, many of us are fearful we will not remember the faces or voices of those who have died. Think of the many family photos and video clips you saw in *REBIRTH*, they were important but bittersweet moments of the healing process.

PROJECT REBIRTH

When production of *REBIRTH* began, it was clear to all involved that this film had the potential to make a greater contribution, one that would specifically address how human beings can not only cope with but also grow in the wake of disaster and loss. Simultaneous to the start of filming, a Board of Directors was recruited and the group formed a non-profit entity known as Project Rebirth, to manage both the production and a broader philanthropic mission of honoring and addressing the vital living history of those coping with disaster.

Brian Rafferty, co-founder of the global investor relations firm Taylor Rafferty, joined the Project Rebirth team as Chairman of the Board. He not only focused on completing the film, but also generated as much positive social impact as possible from the film and Project Rebirth's unique film library. Rafferty and Whitaker met in intensive sessions over six months to develop a long term strategy that would best respect the events of 9/11 and resonate most powerfully with the film and the filmmaker's vision. Project Rebirth's strategy and tactics were the outcome of these sessions, and since then, have served as a clear map for steadily advancing the overall project, which includes:

- The creation of *REBIRTH*, the not-for-profit feature film that tells the story of the resilience of the human spirit in the face of the damage and destruction of 9/11, the proceeds of which would be reinvested to advance projects that educate people about the lessons learned from our response to 9/11
- The preparation of a permanent, multi-screen installation at the National 9/11 Memorial & Museum and short films about all nine of the subjects filmed by Project Rebirth
- Founding the Project Rebirth Center to develop and provide new multi-media tools to aid the therapists, academics, First Responders and others working with people recovering from disasters and violent conflict, as they confront the trauma of the past and build new futures.

The profits from the film will be reinvested into helping people, specifically younger generations to help them remember and learn the lessons that emerge from responding to 9/11. The *REBIRTH* team began looking into professional groups that were trying to better understand mass traumas similar to 9/11– psychologists, doctors, nurses, firefighters, law enforcement, researchers, the military, and educators. They learned that although people and communities were recovering from the trauma and grief of mass disasters, there was not enough information being shared about what had been learned.

The *REBIRTH* team saw that they had a great opportunity to help people dealing with loss and trauma by combining the powerful narratives of the film with the professional expertise of first responders, health professionals, researchers, and educators. The Project Rebirth Center offers unique multi-media tools and access to fellow professionals that will be delivered directly to the affected communities, tools that add to the knowledge base and skills of the professionals and people that will be there with them over those years.

In addition, to help develop the Project Rebirth Center, the team has partnered with the NYPD Executive Training Unit and the Arlington County Virginia Fire Department, along with two renowned New Media Teaching and Learning Centers at Columbia University and Georgetown University. The goal is to explore the film’s potential to inform, enlighten and help professionals prepare for future disasters and better understand the impact of wide-scale trauma on human lives, communities, society and culture.

THE FILMMAKERS

JIM WHITAKER (Director/Producer) founded Project Rebirth shortly after the attacks of September 11, 2001, and placed the first 35-millimeter time-lapse film cameras at the WTC site on March 11, 2002 – the six-month anniversary of the attacks. Project Rebirth now has 14 cameras documenting the historic rebuilding of the World Trade Center site. Jim has also interviewed nine people who were impacted by the event and has recently spent more than a year and a half completing the Project Rebirth documentary, which combines the minute-by-minute redevelopment of the site with the first long term film record of people coping with grief and trauma. He is currently the Chairman and Producer of Whitaker Entertainment at Walt Disney Studios.

Previously, Jim was the President of Motion Pictures at Imagine Entertainment and completed such notable films, such as *8 Mile*, *Friday Night Lights*, *Cinderella Man*, *American Gangster*, *The Changeling* and many others. Jim began his career as a documentary filmmaker to raise money for nonprofit organizations. He wrote and directed *Loaded*, an award-winning public service announcement against drinking and driving, in memory of a Georgetown University classmate.

DAVID SOLOMON (Producer) has spent the past ten years working at Forest Laboratories, a New York based pharmaceutical company, where he is currently the Senior Vice President, Corporate Development & Strategic Planning.

Prior to joining Forest, he spent ten years working in the film business in New York and Los Angeles. David spent three years practicing entertainment law at Paul Weiss Rifkind Wharton & Garrison. In 1995, David moved to Los Angeles to work as Director of Creative Affairs at Paramount Pictures, overseeing development and production of feature films for the studio. He left Paramount in 1997 to work as an independent producer with Davis Entertainment, based at 20th Century Fox, and in 2003, David produced the feature film *Paycheck*, directed by John Woo and starring Ben Affleck and Uma Thurman. David serves on the Board of Directors of Lincoln Center Theater and the Municipal Art Society and on the Executive Board of the Yale Dramatic Alumni Association. David has also served as a member of the Yale University Council Committee on Theater at Yale and has participated in the National Advisory Council for Fine and Performing Arts for Horace Mann School

in New York City. David graduated *summa cum laude* from Yale College and received his J.D. from Yale Law School, where he was a Senior Editor of the Yale Law Journal.

TOM LAPPIN (Director of Photography) is a New York-based cameraman and has been making films for more than 25 years. He has worked on numerous feature films such as Martin Scorsese's Academy Award® winning *The Departed* and *Gangs Of New York*. Tom's career has included a variety of films from Meryl Steep's *The Devil Wears Prada* and Jodie Foster's *Flightplan* to Terry Gilliam's *12 Monkeys*. His most challenging film project has been *REBIRTH*, on which he has been working with director Jim Whitaker since the film's inception.

KEVIN FILIPPINI (Editor) began his career working on commercials and a variety of short films, including the Oscar®-nominated short *MOST*. Inspired by his award-winning community service work in Chicago, he transitioned to editing socially and environmentally conscious projects for organizations such as Global Green USA, the Democratic National Committee, and the Brent Shapiro Foundation for Drug Awareness. Documentary credits include: *The Dance*, *Kiss Symphony*, *Nihi* (A biography of Titus Kinimaka), and *Jimi Hendrix: The Last Experience*.

BRAD FULLER (Editor) began his career as Associate Editor on Errol Morris' first film, *Gates of Heaven*. He has worked with Morris several times since including *Vernon, Florida; A Brief History Of Time; Fast, Cheap and Out Of Control* and *Standard Operating Procedure*. Fuller's other credits include Gary Oldman's *Nil By Mouth*, Nathaniel Kahn's Oscar®-nominated short *Two Hands* as well as *Every Little Step* and *Countdown To Zero* which screened last year at Sundance. Brad was the final editor for *REBIRTH*.

DANIELLE BEVERLY (Field Producer) began her career at a Chicago's PBS affiliate, after graduating with an MFA in Filmmaking from Columbia College, Chicago. She has since worked as a Producer and Director for PBS and cable, an independent filmmaker, a Professor in Filmmaking, and a cameraperson on national social issue documentary projects.

As Field Producer for *REBIRTH* since its inception, Beverly first located the film's subjects, and then worked with the filmmaking team to document the unfolding events in their multi-year journey. Beverly's first documentary feature as Director/Producer/Cameraperson, titled *Learning To Swallow* (2005), follows an artist with bipolar disorder, as she struggles to rebuild her life after a suicide attempt destroys her digestive system. The film premiered in competition at The Silverdocs Documentary Film Festival, and went on to screen internationally, as well as travel to small rural communities on the Southern Circuit film series. Beverly also produced the ITVS International Global Perspectives documentary series *True Stories: Life In The USA* hosted by Danny Glover, which airs in Bahrain, Colombia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malawi, Peru, and other developing countries. Beverly is currently directing and shooting her social issue documentary that follows a changing Georgia neighborhood over the course of 3 years. She is a Visiting Professor in Filmmaking at The University of Notre Dame, and lives in Chicago.

JOHN ZECCA (Production Sound) has traveled the world recording sound for documentary films for nearly 30 years. He's worked on films exploring topics as varied as China's "open-door" policy, hemophilia in Africa, and the American Ballet Theatre's recent visit to Cuba. His work has appeared on PBS, the BBC, and ARTE France. A member of the Cinema Audio Society, John has taught sound and video workshops in India and lectured in sound design at the New School in New York City. He considers his work on *REBIRTH*, in which he followed those profiled in the film for nearly a decade, to be one of the great privileges of his career.

PHILIP GLASS (Composer) has, through his operas, his symphonies, his compositions for his own ensemble, and his wide-ranging collaborations with artists ranging from Twyla Tharp to Allen Ginsberg, Woody Allen and David Bowie, had an extraordinary and unprecedented impact upon the musical and intellectual life of our time.

The operas – “Einstein on the Beach,” “Satyagraha,” “Akhnaten,” and “The Voyage,” among many others – play throughout the world’s leading houses, and rarely to an empty seat. Glass has written music for experimental theater and for Academy Award®-winning motion pictures such as *The Hours* and Martin Scorsese’s *Kundun* while *Koyaanisqatsi*, his initial filmic landscape with Godfrey

Reggio and the Philip Glass Ensemble, may be the most radical and influential mating of sound and vision since *Fantasia*. His associations, personal and professional, with leading rock, pop and world music artists date back to the 1960s including the beginning of his collaborative relationship with artist Robert Wilson. Indeed, Glass is the first composer to win a wide, multi-generational audience in the opera house, the concert hall, the dance world, in film and in popular music -- simultaneously.

Glass was born in 1937 and grew up in Baltimore. He studied at the University of Chicago, the Juilliard School and in Aspen with Darius Milhaud. Finding himself dissatisfied with much of what then passed for modern music, he moved to Europe to study with the legendary pedagogue Nadia Boulanger (who also taught Aaron Copland, Virgil Thomson and Quincy Jones) and worked closely with the sitar virtuoso and composer Ravi Shankar. He returned to New York in 1967 and formed the Philip Glass Ensemble – seven musicians playing keyboards and a variety of woodwinds, amplified and fed through a mixer.

The new musical style that Glass was evolving was eventually dubbed “minimalism.” Glass himself never liked the term and preferred to speak of himself as a composer of “music with repetitive structures.” Much of his early work was based on the extended reiteration of brief, elegant melodic fragments that wove in and out of an aural tapestry. Or, to put it another way, it immersed a listener in a sort of sonic weather that twists, turns, surrounds, and develops.

There has been nothing “minimalist” about his output. In the past 25 years, Glass has composed more than twenty operas, large and small; eight symphonies (with others already on the way); two piano concertos and concertos for violin, piano, timpani, and saxophone quartet and orchestra; soundtracks to films ranging from new scores for the stylized classics of Jean Cocteau to Errol Morris’s documentary about former defense secretary Robert McNamara; string quartets; a growing body of work for solo piano and organ. He has collaborated with Paul Simon, Linda Ronstadt, Yo-Yo Ma, and Doris Lessing, among many others. He presents lectures, workshops, and solo keyboard performances around the world, and continues to appear regularly with the Philip Glass Ensemble.

FILM CREDITS

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Director of Photography	THOMAS LAPPIN
Edited by	KEVIN FILIPPINI BRAD FULLER
Field Producer	DANIELLE BEVERLY
Production Sound	JOHN ZECCA
Original Music Composed by	PHILIP GLASS
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