



## PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

August 28, 2008

# Haunting Documentary *The Dolphin Dealer* to Kick off CBC's New Season of *Doc Zone*

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Vancouver, B.C. –Five years in the making and featuring unprecedented footage, *The Dolphin Dealer* is the exclusive story behind the largest and most lucrative dolphin export deal in history, masterminded by former Vancouver Aquarium trainer, Christopher Porter. This powerful, thought-provoking documentary gives viewers a gritty look at the controversial capture and export of wild dolphins, and examines the issues and ethics behind the billion dollar dolphin entertainment industry.

Operating out of the Solomon Islands, a beautiful yet brutal nation in the South Pacific, Porter and his American colleagues capture and sell wild dolphins for about \$100,000 a head to marine parks as far away as Dubai. Porter believes that the swim-with-dolphin programs their dolphins are bound for, provide people with an educational and intimate hands-on experience they would not otherwise have.

To Porter's opponents, most notably former Flipper trainer, Ric O'Barry, the trafficking of these dolphins is a nothing more than a money-making scheme. O'Barry claims that the practice of capturing wild dolphins - many of whom die en route to 'dolphinariums' halfway around the world - and forcing them to live out their lives performing tricks in pens is immoral, unethical and cruel.

Porter counters with the fact that by selling dolphins to marine parks, not only does he help humans and animals bond, he's also transforming attitudes in the Solomon Islands where dolphins are slaughtered by the thousands in traditional hunts, their teeth used to buy a bride. Now many islanders prefer to catch dolphins live and sell them to foreigners.

This powerful program will leave viewers pondering the question of whether it's okay to use dolphins for human entertainment.



*The Dolphin Dealer* is set to lead off the fall line-up of documentaries on CBC's critically acclaimed *DOC ZONE* on October 2, 2008 at 9 p.m. in all time zones (9:30 p.m. in Newfoundland).

For Director Brad Quenville, this story is not black and white. "There are no real heroes or villains here—just people on two very opposing sides of the 'dolphins in captivity' debate. We've tried to make a balanced film that allows viewers to decide for themselves where they stand."

"Having *The Dolphin Dealer* placed as the premier episode of this fall's *CBC DOC ZONE* is exciting," says Leigh Badgley, Producer. "*DOC ZONE* explores and expands on the major issues of our time and *The Dolphin Dealer* is a highly charged emotional documentary with global reach. It's a story that absolutely had to be told."

For 29 years Vancouver-based **Omni Film Productions Limited** ([www.omnifilm.com](http://www.omnifilm.com)) has produced over 200 hours of award-winning documentaries, factual and lifestyle series, drama and comedy series. Their success has been, in part, due to their ability to consistently produce a diverse slate of quality and entertaining programming. Together with sister companies Water Street Pictures and Water Street Releasing, Omni is a complete film and television production and distribution entity. A few shows currently in production are *Word Travels*, a travel series for OLN and National Geographic International; *Pure Design*, a green design series for HGTV; and *Shock Wave*, a two-hour documentary for CBC. *Robson Arms*, the critically acclaimed dramatic comedy series for CTV, is now airing its third season.

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For more information on *The Dolphin Dealer* or to set up an interview, please contact Paul Holman of AHA Creative Strategies via email at [paul@ahacreative.com](mailto:paul@ahacreative.com) or at 604-303-1052.