

PRESS RELEASE

October 10, 2012

Hollywood filmmaker Jim Whitaker to discuss opportunities in the United States for future filmmakers in Japan and present his award-winning film at the Tokyo International Film Festival

The Embassy of the United States of America, UNIJAPAN, and the 25th Tokyo International Film Festival are pleased to co-host the "U.S.-Japan Film Academy," a film screening and discussion event, at Roppongi Hills on October 22, 2012.

Jim Whitaker, executive producer of *ROBIN HOOD* and other acclaimed films, will present an insider's perspective on various aspects of filmmaking. Drawing on his experiences, he will discuss what it takes for a filmmaker to succeed in the United States, how to produce a competitive film and manage funding and distribution, and what opportunities U.S. film schools have to offer for future filmmakers. The discussion will be followed by a screening of *REBIRTH*, a documentary film directed by Mr. Whitaker, which captures the healing processes of those affected by the September 11, 2001 attacks. We invite all film enthusiasts and future filmmakers to join this rare opportunity to meet and discuss with one of Hollywood's most prominent filmmakers.

Event title: U.S.-Japan Film Academy

Date: Monday, October 22, 6:30pm - 9:30pm

Venue: Roppongi Academyhills 49F, Tower Hall

Hosted by: Embassy of the United States of America/UNIJAPAN/25th Tokyo International Film Festival

Admission: Free (RSVP required)

Online registration (for participants): <https://fofa.jp/tiff/a.p/157/> (Japanese only)

*Simultaneous interpretation will be provided.

For press registration and further inquiries, please contact; Hideko Saito/TIFF Publicity and Advertising Division
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Rebirth <http://projectrebirth.org/>

Director/Producer: Jim Whitaker http://projectrebirth.org/bios/jim_whitaker.html

Project Rebirth's Peabody Award winning film, *REBIRTH*, is a full-length documentary that premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in January of 2011. It is the result of a decade-long process by director Jim Whitaker and is a riveting journey into living history. It is also an act of personal witness to one of the most profound events in American history and the healing that has come in its wake. From early 2002 through 2009, the *REBIRTH* film crew chronicled the lives of five people directly affected by 9/11. The participants include a survivor from an impact floor of the South Tower of the World Trade Center (WTC); a firefighter who survived the collapse of the WTC but lost his best friend; a high school student who lost his mother; a young woman who lost her fiancé; and a construction worker who lost his brother, assisted with recovery efforts, and is presently helping to build the Freedom Tower. Their narratives are the thread of recovery and resiliency from grief, loss and trauma that comprise the unique message of the film. *REBIRTH* also simultaneously tracks – via unprecedented multi-camera time-lapse photography with 14 cameras – the evolution of the former WTC and the entire rebuilding of the site. Philip Glass composed the *REBIRTH* original score.



For further information or inquiries, please contact Hideko Saito or Sanae Koyama/TIFF Publicity and Advertising Division
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*Images and press release are available through the Internet Download service at www.image.net/

25th TIFF

TOKYO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

東京国際映画祭

The Power of Films, Now!

October 20-28, 2012 www.tiff-jp.net

About the Director

Jim Whitaker is the founder and director of [Project Rebirth](#). When he visited Ground Zero shortly after September 11, 2001, he was struck by the determination and resolved that he witnessed in the first responders and volunteers, and felt strongly that the process of rebuilding and recovery should be captured on film. He hopes *REBIRTH* can help audiences to understand and appreciate how people cope and recover from trauma and disaster. Mr. Whitaker is currently the Chairman and Producer of Whitaker Entertainment at Walt Disney Studios. Previously, he was the President of Motion Pictures at Imagine Entertainment and completed notable films, including *8 MILE*, *AMERICAN GANGSTER*, *FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS*, and many others. He 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.



[American Film Showcase](#), a partnership between the U.S. Department of State and the University of Southern California's School of Cinematic Arts, brings award-winning American films, including documentaries, feature films and animated shorts, to foreign audiences through events worldwide. Filmmakers and film experts will discuss the films and conduct workshops and master classes on a variety of issues related to filmmaking and film scholarship. Mr. Whitaker's visit and the screening of *REBIRTH* in Japan will be carried out as part of the American Film Showcase.

The 25th TIFF will take place **October 20-28, 2012** at Roppongi Hills and other venues in Tokyo.
<http://www.tiff-jp.net/en/>

TIFFCOM 2012 will take place **October 23-25** at a new venue in the Tokyo Bay area.
<http://www.tiffcom.jp/2012/en/>

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