

**OFF BROADWAY'S**  
**"SWIMMING WITH THE POLAR BEARS"**  
**TO PERFORM AT**  
**UN SUMMIT ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

*with a special introduction by*  
**THE CLIMATE PROJECT**

**SWIMMING WITH THE POLAR BEARS**  
*a survival story*

Written and Performed by  
**MEL ENGLAND**

with a special Introduction and Presentation  
by The Climate Projects'  
**RICHARD WHITEFORD**

Stills and Video by  
**TRISTAN BAYER**

Music by  
**THOMAS SILCOTT**

Directed by **JILL ANDRÉ**

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION**  
**UN Summit on Climate Change, KLIMAFORUM09**  
December 11, 2009 7:00 pm at DGI byen, Copenhagen, Denmark

The Off-Broadway production of Mel England's **SWIMMING WITH THE POLAR BEARS**, directed by Jill André will perform at the **UN Summit on Climate Change** in Copenhagen as part of the **Klimaforum09 Festival** of Cultural Events, hosted by the **Government of Denmark**. **SWIMMING WITH THE POLAR BEARS** originally performed Off-Broadway in April 2009 as part of a 3-day Earth Day benefit for The Climate Project, and is being introduced at the UN Summit in Copenhagen by Richard Whiteford of Al Gore's **Climate Project**.

*One-man Off Broadway show **Swimming With the Polar Bears** explores the convergence between polar bears and performer Mel England's battles with AIDS and cancer. "In discussing or talking about the polar bears, I realized ... that I am one of the polar bears," said Mr. England. "That the idea of extinction and survival is something I've been dealing with my whole adult life ... the earth has cancer and I have cancer." – Observer, April '09*

**Jenny Clad**, Executive Director of **The Climate Project** says, "The Climate Project and *Swimming with Polar Bears* share a common goal - raising awareness of climate change.

*Swimming with Polar Bears* will shine the spotlight on the urgency of this global issue in its own unique way."

**Mel England** added, "It's thrilling and an honor to be invited to perform at this Summit. Artists from around the world are coming to Copenhagen to take on our vital role in addressing the most important issue of our age. Time is running out, and we have to do our part. We're so happy to have Richard Whiteford of the Climate Project, who was part of our Off Broadway production, join us as an ambassador on this journey."

*Swimming with the Polar Bears* is a funny, poignant, and devastatingly personal look at the dangers of global warming. Actor **Mel England** returns to the autobiographical one-man arena, with director **Jill André**, to explore the parallels between contemporary life, ancient Eskimo mythology, and the tragic loss of endangered species.

In the tradition of Spaulding Grey, **England** takes an introspective examination of his battles with extinction – from surviving childhood abuse to overcoming Cancer – as a backdrop for larger questions of how we all can survive on our precious planet. A 20-year AIDS survivor, **England** struggles against the odds—to understand our own denial, grasp justifications, and ultimately accept responsibility to save oneself.

**England** takes us on a fantastical journey bringing *Polar Bears* to life -- with video and images by National Geographic's **Tristan Bayer** and original music by **Thomas Silcott** – and, in the end, we find we are all *Swimming with the Polar Bears*.

### **SWIMMING WITH THE POLAR BEARS**

December 11, 2009 at 7pm,

DGI-byen

Tietgensgade 65

DK - 1704 Copenhagen V

DGI-byen is located in the heart of Copenhagen, right behind the Central Station.

75 minutes, no intermission. Tickets are free, and open to the public.

More information available

[http://www.visitcopenhagen.com/content/us7/green\\_events?EventID=1123](http://www.visitcopenhagen.com/content/us7/green_events?EventID=1123)

<http://www.klimaforum09.org/Off-Broadway-theater-play-guests>

<http://www.swimmingwiththepolarbears.com>

*Swimming with the Polar Bears* is officially sponsored by Kampfire PR  
([www.kampfirefilmspr.com](http://www.kampfirefilmspr.com)).

### **BIOGRAPHIES**

**JILL ANDRÉ** (*Director*) is a Director and Actress. As an actress she has an impressive set of film credits including *Ghosts of Mississippi*, *Lost in America*, *Twin Falls*, *Idaho*, *Return of the Living Dead III*, *True Vinyl*, *Milo*, *Land of Mile and Money*, *And the Band Played On*. On Broadway she appeared in *Children of a Lesser God*, *The Trip Back Down* and *The Great White Hope*. TV credits include "The Practice", "Grounded for Life", "NYPD Blue", and "The Addams Family". As a Director her credits include *Bus Stop*, *Bodies Unbound*, *Last Summer At Bluefish Cove*, *Navajo Memoirs* and *Three Weeks After Paradise* (NY, LA, Edinburgh & Kansas).

**TRISTAN BAYER - EARTHNATIVE** (*Background Projections / Cinematographer*) experienced his first overseas wildlife film production when he was one year old. His parents

traveled with him on location to East Africa, making a film on elephant poaching. As Tristan grew older, he would take the opportunity to travel and work as a crew member making nature films for television with his father, the world-renowned wildlife cinematographer, Wolfgang Bayer. At age 19, Tristan was hosting wildlife documentaries, which aired on Turner, Fox, and National Geographic. At 29 Tristan was nominated for an Emmy in cinematography for his work on the Animal Planet series, "Caught in the Moment", which he created and hosted. Since 1996, Tristan has spent six seasons living on the tundra filming polar bears as they journey north, awaiting the sea ice to freeze and allow the world's largest land carnivores to begin their annual seal hunt -- after fasting for more than half a year. The father/son team captured these wild polar bears on 35mm film and digital video near the Hudson Bay in Canada during their expeditions as part of an upcoming feature film project. Tristan is currently directing a short film on *Ocean Acidification* 'the other carbon problem' for the NRDC (<http://www.nrdc.org>) and will be narrated by Sigorney Weaver. EARTHNATIVE is a film production company founded by Tristan Bayer to bring awareness of global issues to the masses through multimedia campaigns. For more go to (<http://www.earthnative.com>)

**MEL ENGLAND** (*Playwright/Actor*) premiered "Swimming with the Polar Bears" Off Broadway's Bleecker Street Theatre in April 2009. He is no stranger to one-man land: he starred in the NY premiere of Israel Horovitz's One-Man play about September 11th *3 Weeks After Paradise* at the Cherry Lane (also Los Angeles premiere), and his own one-man show *Navajo Memoirs* was seen at the NY Fringe and Los Angeles. Also Off-Broadway, Pearl Theatre's *Hecuba*, *The Invalid*, and *The Proposal*. He's the recipient of the NY Fringe Festival's "Best Acting Ensemble Award" for *Lucky Man*, and "Best Play of the Year" in Denver for the Regional Premiere of *A Shayna Maidel*. He's been a proud part of several original New York productions, including *Midsummer Night's Dream* in Washington Square, "Honeysuckles", developed for television by FOX, and *King of Connecticut* with Phillip Seymour Hoffman. On the big screen, he starred opposite legendary character actor Sid Haig in *Little Big Top*, starred in *Highlights* (nominated for the Moviefone Film Fest's dramatic competition) and as Mr. Ghouden in the dark comedy *Persona Au Gratin*.

**THOMAS SILCOTT** (*Music*) Thomas hails from Boston, MA. He graduated from NYU Tisch Graduate Acting School. Since, he has performed in *To Kill A Mocking Bird* at the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta, *Broken Jug* at Lincoln Center in New York and a national and international Broadway tour of *Bring in Da Noise/Bring in Da Funk*. While on the east coast, Tom has also appeared in *Hamlet* and *As You Like It* at The Colorado Shakespeare festival and *Raisin In The Sun* at the Salem Theatre Festival. Tom has performed in *Othello* at Kingsmen Shakespeare Co. and *Twain and Friends* with the Interact Theatre Co. Tom's television and film credits include *God's and Generals*, *The Others*, *Get Real*, "Entourage", "Stand Off", "Desperate Housewives", "Girl".

**RICHARD WHITEFORD** (*TCP Presenter*) is one of The Climate Project's top presenters, and the presentation in Copenhagen marks his 105th presentation with The Climate Project. Most notably, Whiteford spoke on Climate Change at the United Nation on April 16, 2009, and gave the Climate Project presentation as part of "Swimming with the Polar Bears" Off Broadway debut, in April 2009, as part of a three day Earth Day benefit for The Climate Project. Richard serves as an Outreach Representative for Defenders of Wildlife, to increase public support for wildlife conservation. Richard worked in 2005 as the Director of the Important Mammal Areas Project. Other positions have included Northeast Region Conservation Organizer for the National Sierra Club; Outreach Coordinator for the Highlands Coalition, focusing on watersheds in the northeast; and Mid-Atlantic Campaign Manager for the Wilderness Society's Land Water Conservation Fund campaign. Richard has written over 500 environment-related articles, including a three-year series about endangered species for the Sunday Philadelphia Inquirer.

His book, *Wild Pennsylvania*, was published in 2006 by Voyageur Press.

**THE CLIMATE PROJECT (TCP)**, Al Gore's climate change leadership program, is a non-profit organization founded in 2006. TCP's mission is to educate the public about the harmful effects of climate change and to work toward solutions at a grassroots level worldwide.

TCP has more than 3,000 diverse and dedicated volunteers internationally. These volunteers are known as TCP Presenters and have been personally trained by Nobel Laureate and former Vice President Al Gore to deliver an updated version of the slide show featured in the Academy Award-winning documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*. TCP Presenters have delivered 70,000 presentations and have reached a combined global audience of 7.3 million people. Presentations are customized and frequently revised to include the latest climate science and can be requested free of charge by any size group or organization.

Official TCP branches are located in the United States, Australia, Canada, India, Spain, the United Kingdom, Indonesia, and Mexico. TCP's global headquarters is located in Nashville, Tennessee.

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