

## **News Release**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **In Celebration of Earth Day and the Vernal Equinox**

### **“Congo Warrior Gorilla - Life Out of Balance”**

**March 21, 2009 | Two Events - 2:00 - 4:30 pm / 6:30 - 9:00 pm**

Laguna Beach Calif., March 12, 2009 — Endangered Planet Gallery and Endangered Planet Foundation will be hosting an Earth Day celebration on March 21, 2009. The event is held in conjunction with the Vernal Equinox, and to celebrate the birthday of Earth Day Founder, John McConnell (who turns 94 on March 22nd.) Surfrider Foundation, South Orange County Chapter, Akeena Solar, and Pure Water Technology are sponsoring the event.

Works by acclaimed photographer, Tish Lampert “Images of Congo Gorillas” will be on display at the gallery. The exhibit coincides with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) declaration of 2009 as the “Year of the Gorilla” (YOG), an effort to raise money for primates threatened with extinction from disease, hunting and deforestation.

As part of the Earth Day celebration, an afternoon of creative fun and learning will take place from 2:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Children will be able to participate in an Art Miles Mural Project (AMMP) painting/mural 5’x12’ - The Environmental Mile, also a project known as “Patching the Environment” – small canvas squares that attendees paint with environmental themes. Youth groups that are actively involved in writing letters to Congolese rangers and their families will be in attendance and asked to put on their scientist- environmental hats and to give their input. Entertainment by Kristofor Szasz - AMMP Poet Laureate and Yinka from Nigeria. Guest presentations from Akeena Solar, Pure Water Technology, and a Congo film screening will round out the afternoon.

\* As the events feature a potluck, guests are requested to bring a dish and/or a beverage to share of their choice. The exhibit featuring Tish Lampert’s extraordinary images will be shown through May 10, 2009.

In the evening from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., a reception for artist Tish Lampert will be held; and she will give a presentation on her experiences in Africa. Special guest musician is the noted violinist Scarlet Rivera, who has performed with Bob Dylan, Indigo Girls, Tracy Chapman, among others.

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Sean Carasso will be speaking at the reception and he will bring a new film on the Congo strife and wildlife for viewing. Carasso is the founder of Falling Whistles, a foundation to aid in and raise awareness of the plight of youth in war-torn Congo. After co-founding two youth camps, he traveled extensively working alongside groundbreaking organizations such as Invisible Children and Toms Shoes. The name Falling Whistles is derived from the practice of sending Titu boys to the frontline of battles armed only with whistles. Carasso currently lives in Los Angeles and is soon to release a book covering his experiences in the Congo.

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Originally from New York, Lampert began her work as a photojournalist in London where she freelanced for numerous publications, including The Times, the Evening Standard, and Time Out. She covered a variety of topics, from rock 'n' roll to the Queen's garden parties; and distinguished herself as one of the only women to photograph inside the mines at Abergavenny. Her photographs are in numerous private collections, including The Lake Tahoe Association, The Luckman Collection, Lord and Lady Worsley, Herbie Hancock, Joan Javits, Pauletta and Denzel Washington, Martin Sheen, Effortless Activism, The Human Rights Foundation, to name a few.

Lampert recently worked with the UN on a project in Rwanda, Burundi and the Congo. She is currently mounting a campaign to raise world awareness for the Congolese Gorilla. On display are the many remarkable photographs and giclee prints on canvas that highlight her journey working in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The photojournalist found the experience breathtaking, one that opened her heart and left her questioning how living beings can survive the trauma and devastation of a decade-long war and yet still have the fire to live on. This was particularly true of the Lowland Gorilla in Eastern Congo. According to Lampert, they had been habituated to trust man, and then were at the mercy of rebel soldiers who have crossed the line of decency, mutilating and killing countless of this species.

Endangered Planet Foundation is the producer of the one earth | one dream environmental festivals. The next festival is October 2-4, 2009 at the Festival of Arts grounds, Laguna Beach, California. Sponsors and exhibitors please call (949) 497-5690 or go to: [www.1E1d.org](http://www.1E1d.org). Endangered Planet is located at 384 Forest Avenue, Gallery 13 in Laguna Beach. For further details, membership or volunteer opportunities please visit [www.EndangeredPlanet.org](http://www.EndangeredPlanet.org) or telephone (949) 497-5690.

Written by: Denise Morrison

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