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New documentary exposé on fur, fashion industry 'Skin Trade' now on DVD

Los Angeles, CA, September 21, 2010 – [Skin Trade](#), a documentary feature on the fur industry, was released on DVD today. The film has earned multiple awards since its June premiere, including Best Documentary and Best Director for filmmaker Shannon Keith at the [Los Angeles Movie Awards](#), Award of Merit for Feature Documentary from [The Indie Fest](#), silver medal at the 2010 [Colorado Film Festival](#), and Media of the Year from the [Institute for Critical Animal Studies](#).

Skin Trade includes archival and new undercover footage exposing cruelty, fraud and deception by fur farmers, trappers, and retailers including hidden-camera footage from Los Angeles and New York fur salons. The film features interviews with U.S. Congressman [Dennis Kucinich](#), environmental attorney Jan Schlichtmann, designer [Todd Oldham](#), former fashion journalist Julia Szabo, bestselling author Rory Freedman (*[Skinny Bitch](#)*), PETA president [Ingrid Newkirk](#), [Overstock.com](#) CEO Patrick Byrne, and actors/activists such as [Alexandra Paul](#), [James Cromwell](#), and [Jorja Fox](#).

Multiple sides of the industry and issues are represented in *Skin Trade*, from the history of the North American fur trade and its connection to native peoples, to the environmental toll of tanneries plus truth-in-labeling legislation that aims to close loopholes that allow cat, dog, raccoon or wolf fur, labeled "faux," to be used in goods imported from China.

“Whether you are a fan of fur or repulsed by the thought of it, there is a dark, ugly world behind the glamour and beauty, and the fashion industry is complicit,” said Keith, who is also an L.A.-based attorney who specializes in animal rights law. “Caring consumers are routinely misled by retailers who assure them that animals used for fur are humanely euthanized, intentionally hiding the reality behind fur production. We hope the film will help people learn what it will take to change it.”

Despite industry claims that fur is “green,” its processing uses vast amounts of water, chemicals, metals, dyes, solvents and acids, according to Schlichtmann, whose high-profile case against corporate polluters was dramatized in the feature film [A Civil Action](#). In *Skin Trade* he explains that leather and fur tanneries use hundreds of toxic chemicals that end up in the soil and water. Also debunked by several experts is the marketing claim that the industry supports the preservation of Native American culture and provides aid to North American tribes.

The DVD includes special features such as additional interviews, resources for cruelty-free fashion, how to take action, and updates on the political developments since the film was made.

The film took almost three years to complete, in part because the producers demanded the most accurate, updated information on the practices used in obtaining and raising animals for fur. The filmmakers deployed their own investigators and used undercover tactics when necessary to obtain key never-before-seen footage.

The DVD is available for sale on Overstock.com, at [Skintradethemovie.com](#), and a preview trailer is available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uQHx8NQ2bKU>

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About ARME and Uncaged Films

Founded in 2004, Animal Rescue, Media & Education (ARME) is a nonprofit advocacy group and Uncaged Films is its production company. ARME was founded to rescue and place homeless and abandoned animals, as well as stop the problem at its roots through public education and outreach. Its first documentary feature, *Behind the Mask*, covered individuals who face jail, devastation, and even death for their activism through groups such as the Animal Liberation Front, Earth Liberation Front, Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, and Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty USA (SHAC USA). *Behind the Mask* has won best documentary feature in three festivals and multiple other awards. Filmmaker Shannon Keith is a Los Angeles-based animal rights attorney whose full-time work includes representing animal rights activists in the courtroom, defending dogs on death row, and prosecuting animal abusers. For more information please see www.arme.tv and www.uncagedfilms.com.

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Editor's Note: Media screeners are available. Please contact Gary Smith, Evolutus PR, gary@evolotuspr.com or call 818-783-0569.