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Animal Concern is a pressure group registered as a non-profit making Limited Company (Co. No.
SC109126) established in 1988 as Animal Concern (Scotland) Ltd.

It incorporates the Scottish Anti-Vivisection Society which was founded in 1876.

The four main cinema chains in the UK have been asked not to screen controversial film A Dog's Purpose, due for release in the UK later this year. Footage has emerged showing one of the canine stars of the movie being cruelly treated after he failed to dive into a tank of turbulent water while filming. The obviously terrified dog, a German Shepherd called Hercules, is eventually thrown into the water by his handler. Hercules quickly gets into difficulty in the water and when the current pulls him under the Director yells "CUT!" and panicking safety divers move in to find him. The leaked footage does not show the animal being rescued but the makers of the film have said he was pulled to safety.

Pressure group Animal Concern has written to the Chief Executives of the Cineworld, Empire, Odeon and Vue cinema chains asking them not to screen A Dog's Purpose when it is released in the UK on 21st of April.

John Robins, Chief Executive of Animal Concern said; "I thought cruelty to animals in film making ended years ago. It used to be commonplace to use trip wires to cause horses to fall in old Western films and it was claimed that when they made the TV series Skippy numerous stand-in kangaroos were tied up in hessian sacks ready to replace the "star" every time he hopped off into the outback never to be seen again. Footage taken on the set of A Dog's Purpose shows a terrified dog being forced into a tank of churning water and being sucked under by the current. It does not show the dog resurfacing. With special effects such as computer generated images or clever editing of a dog in a less dangerous situation, there is no need to subject animals to such cruelty in the name of entertainment. I hope cinema owners will refuse to screen this movie making it very clear to all film makers that cruelty to animals in the name of entertainment is not acceptable."

EDITORS NOTES: Our e-mail to the 4 CEOs is copied below as is a link to the leaked footage. Best numbers for John Robins are 07721605521 or 01389841111.

To Mooky Greidinger Esq, CEO, Cineworld; Justin Ribbons Esq, CEO, Empire Cinemas;
Paul Donovan Esq, CEO, Odeon U.K. & Tim Richards Esq., CEO, Vue Cinemas.
Sunday, 22 January 2017

Dear Sirs.

I write concerning the Amblin Entertainment movie "A Dog's Purpose", due for general

release in the UK through Universal Pictures on 21st of April this year.

As you are probably aware footage has emerged showing one of the dogs used in the movie being deliberately mistreated during filming.

The animal, a German Shepherd called Hercules, refused to enter a tank of agitated water. Obviously terrified, he does his best to evade attempts by his handler to get him into the tank. The handler eventually pushes the dog into the water and a few seconds later the panicking animal is sucked under by the current causing safety divers to panic and try to find him. The footage I have seen does not show Hercules being rescued but the makers of the film have said he survived his ordeal.

Had this been filmed in the UK and not Canada I would not be writing to you about it but to the police as the treatment of the dog would most likely have been a criminal offence under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and the Animal Health & Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006.

I thought we had seen the last of cruelty being inflicted on animals on film sets. The days of using trip wires to bring down galloping horses or carrying around a spare Skippy or two in hessian sacks were consigned to the history books long before movie makers had access to high tech special effects like Computer Generated Images. There was absolutely no need to treat this dog in this way.

I write to ask you to boycott "A Dog's Purpose" and not to screen it in any of your venues. Grass roots activists will no doubt picket cinemas which show the film but I think it would have a far greater impact on the whole industry if cinema owners made it clear to movie makers that mistreatment of animals simply will not be tolerated.

Below is a link to the footage showing the way Hercules was mistreated and nearly killed. After viewing this I hope you will agree that such cruelty is no longer acceptable in the film industry.

Yours faithfully,

John F. Robins,
Secretary to Animal Concern

<http://nypost.com/2017/01/19/leaked-footage-from-a-dogs-purpose-raises-animal-cruelty-concerns/>