



February 7, 2019

Max

Via website: maxhellskitchen.com

Dear Max,

I am writing to you regarding the decision to feature Crystal the capuchin in your video for the song "Worship." While performing monkeys may seem amusing on the surface, exotic animals exploited for entertainment are victims of a highly unnatural life that negatively affects their wellbeing. Training and living conditions for animal "actors" can be incredibly stressful and even abusive. The simple fact that animals are not living in social groups with other monkeys and are forced to perform on cue in disorienting environments is reason enough to raise animal welfare concerns.

The exotic pet trade is deeply intertwined with the use of animals in entertainment. People who see your video and the close contact you have with Crystal will receive the message that it's easy, fun, and normal to have a monkey as a pet. This impression could not be further from reality. Primates are not domestic animals and should not be owned as pets because of the risks posed to both the non-human primates and the humans (just look up "pet monkey bites" to see the harm monkeys are capable of inflicting).

The use of performing primates is waning due to growing public awareness of the issues. The top ten advertising agencies in the U.S. have all pledged not to use apes in their campaigns, with some forswearing the usage of all nonhuman primates. A growing number of sports teams have also pledged to not use primates in "monkey rodeos", including the Williamsport Crosscutters, the Lexington Legends, the Sugar Land Skeeters, the Long Island Ducks, the Hartford Yard Goats, the Kalamazoo Growlers, the York Revolution and the Madison Mallards. Fairs are also reconsidering such events, including those in Cecil County, MD, Northport, NY and Alachua County, FL.

The North American Primate Sanctuary Alliance is a coalition of nine of the leading primate sanctuaries on the continent. In our sanctuaries, we care for over 800 primates, many of whom were formerly used in entertainment and the pet trade. So that you may learn more about the harms of the use of primates in entertainment, our advocacy position statement on this topic is attached.

I hope you will seriously consider this information. It's not too late to correct your decision. If you pledge to no longer use performing monkeys or apes in your work, the primate sanctuary community would be happy to publicly commend you for this choice (with your permission, of course. This can also be kept private.) The use of exotic animals in entertainment is inhumane, archaic, and definitely *not* something to "Worship."

Sincerely,

Erika Fleury

Program Director



Advocacy Position Statement Performing Primates

The North American Primate Sanctuary Alliance (NAPSA) is opposed to the use of trained primates for entertainment. As experts in the field of primate care, we respectfully ask the public not to support public events featuring trained monkeys and apes.

While such performances may seem amusing on the surface, the primates used in these spectacles are poorly treated. Although the records of many animal rental operators are generally less than stellar, and training and housing conditions can be incredibly stressful (and often abusive), the simple fact that primates are forced to dress up and perform on cue in a terribly unnatural situation is reason enough to avoid such events.

The entire lifetime of a primate is negatively affected when they are exploited for entertainment. As infants, they are removed from their mothers at a very early age – years before they would naturally separate. They are trained using methods that intimidate and inhibit their innate behaviors. Even then, the intelligence and unpredictable nature of these wild animals means that they often can only be used for a short time as actors before they become too independent, unmanageable, and dangerous. Primates are then deemed useless to the entertainment industry, and sold into situations that range from uncomfortable to downright harmful. The lucky ones are able to spend the remaining years of their life in a primate sanctuary.

NAPSA is a coalition of nine of the leading primate sanctuaries on the continent. In our member sanctuaries, we care for over 800 primates, many of whom were formerly used in entertainment. We see how primates are forever damaged by the work forced upon them, and we look forward to the day when such archaic practices are no longer permitted.

For more information:

["The Use of Primate "Actors" in Feature Films 1990–2013," Brooke Catherine Aldrich](#)

["Apes in Media and Commercial Performances," Association of Zoos & Aquariums](#)

["Bengals Shocking Half-Time 'Cowboy Monkey' Has a Cruel History," The Dodo](#)

["Chimpanzees in Entertainment," ChimpCARE](#)

["Apes in Entertainment," Jane Goodall Institute Australia](#)

["Opposition to the Use of Nonhuman Primates in the Media," International Primatological Society](#)

["Atypical Experiences of Captive Chimpanzees \(Pan Troglodytes\) Are Associated with Higher Hair Cortisol Concentrations as Adults," S.L. Jacobson et al.](#)

["Impact of Visual Context on Public Perceptions of Non-Human Primate Performers," K. A. Leighty et al.](#)