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## **THE CITY WILL RISE: A PUBLIC RADIO DOCUMENTARY**

Commemorating the centennial of the earthquake and fire that nearly destroyed San Francisco a century ago, **The City Will Rise** explores the aftermath of three catastrophic events: 1906 in San Francisco, 2001 in New York, and 2005 in New Orleans. The program focuses on how cities, communities, and individuals deal with disaster. The events of each place and time are relayed through gripping personal stories, told by the people who lived them. Their accounts are further illuminated by commentaries from leading scholars, scientists, planners, businessmen, authors and researchers. **The City Will Rise** is a graphic, thought-provoking portrait of human society stretched to its limits, and then beyond.

The program is enhanced by early recordings of Enrico Caruso, who sang in San Francisco the night before the earthquake; by popular music of the day composed in response to the catastrophe, by sounds from Ground Zero on 9/11, and from this year's Mardi Gras in New Orleans.

In the 60-minute documentary for public radio, producer Jesse Boggs (Radio Smithsonian, Soundprint, Hearing Voices) examines the political conflicts, community controversies, financial concerns and health issues that are part of the struggle to recover. **The City Will Rise** takes its title from a 1906 newspaper headline, reflecting the spirit of undaunted optimism that characterized media coverage in the wake of the calamity that destroyed three-quarters of the San Francisco. The city did rise, with astonishing speed. San Francisco's rebirth was hailed as a miracle of human ingenuity and determination, and in many respects it was. But the show also asks:

- What was the true cost of reconstruction, beyond the \$400 million (in turn-of-the-century dollars) price tag?
- Who benefited from the process, who was displaced, and why?
- Who determined the shape and face of "new" San Francisco?
- What role did insurers play?
- Where did the money, raw materials, manpower and initiative come from?
- What were the issues and tensions that surfaced in the rush to rebuild?

The answers to these questions reveal a sequence of events in 1906 that has been repeated, with remarkable consistency, in the aftermath of 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, and many other disasters. What lessons have we learned from catastrophes? What lessons have we lost? What can we take into the future, the next time a city must rise?

**The City Will Rise** is made possible with generous support from Lloyd's, the London insurance market.