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**Whale Song, a Bestselling Novel by Canadian Author Cheryl Kaye Tardif, to be Gifted to Celebrities at Dallas Rocks 2008 Gala Benefit Dinner and Afterparty**

*Tardif's critically acclaimed novel Whale Song will be in 125 VIP gift bags that will be given to celebrities and special guests who attend Dallas Rocks 2008, a fundraising event in support of Russel Simmons' Diamond Empowerment Fund that helps bring education to people in Africa.*

DALLAS, TX, October 03, 2008 **/24-7PressRelease/** -- Canadian author Cheryl Kaye Tardif is thrilled to be donating 125 copies of her bestselling novel Whale Song to the VIP bags that will go to celebrities and special guests attending Dallas Rocks 2008. This fundraising event is in support of Russell Simmons' Diamond Empowerment Fund, which helps raise funds and bring education to economically disadvantaged people in Africa who are affected by the diamond industry.

Dallas Rocks will honor legendary basketball star Earvin "Magic" Johnson, who played for the Los Angeles Lakers. Johnson, now retired, was honored as one of the 50 Greatest Players in NBA History in 1996, and enshrined in the Basketball Hall of Fame in 2002. Since his retirement, he's been an advocate for HIV/AIDS prevention and safe sex, as well as a philanthropist.

The hosts of Dallas Rocks 2008:

\*Russell Simmons - In 2007, *USA Today* named Russell Simmons one of the "Top 25 Most Influential People of the Past 25 Years," calling him a "hip-hop pioneer" for his groundbreaking vision that has influenced music, fashion, finance, television and film, as well as the face of modern philanthropy.

\*Pat and Emmitt Smith - Pat (Laurence) Smith is an actress, and her husband Emmitt is the Dallas Cowboys star running back.

The MC for the evening is Fox News Anchor, Suzanne Sena. Other guests expecting to attend - celebrities, athletes, business leaders, social leaders, and national and regional media.

The goal of the evening is to raise awareness and funds for the Russell Simmons' [The Diamond Empowerment Fund \(D.E.F.\)](http://www.diamondempowermentfund.org) a non-profit international organization that raises money to support education initiatives for disadvantaged people in African nations where diamonds are a natural resource. D.E.F.'s first beneficiary is CIDA City Campus, a model for higher education in Johannesburg, South Africa. Every student at this higher education institution is on scholarship and comes from a background of extreme economic disadvantage.

Canadian author Cheryl Kaye Tardif contacted Rhonda Bunton, President of [Lush & Luxe PR](http://www.lushandluxepublicity.com), the company in charge of creating spectacular VIP gift bags for the celebrities attending this event and many others. Tardif arranged, with her publisher [Kunati Books](http://www.kunati.com), to have 125 copies of Whale Song added to the VIP bags because she was inspired by the event and it's worthy cause.

"I have many friends from Africa, and I am an advocate of education and literacy," Tardif says. "Since my novel Whale Song deals with youth, racial discrimination and forgiveness, I thought it would fit very well with the event. I'd love to hear from anyone who receives Whale Song in their bag, and I wish Russell Simmons the very best in reaching his goals and dreams."

Whale Song is an award-winning, critically acclaimed bestselling novel. *Booklist* calls it "moving...sweet and sad" and "Tardif, a big hit in Canada...a name to reckon with south of the border." Tardif's other novels *The River* and *Divine Intervention* are "darker, more suspenseful".

Whale Song makes the perfect Christmas gift for anyone 7-108, and a percentage of the author's royalties goes to three Canadian nonprofit organizations to help combat homelessness, poverty and addictions.

Dallas Rocks 2008 takes place on Friday, November 7th, 2008, from 6:30 pm to 1:00 am at Dallas Cityplace. Guests at the gala will enjoy a 'Diamond Dinner' created by award-winning chefs. The dinner will be held on the 39th floor of Cityplace,

with spectacular views of the Dallas skyline, and will be followed by an Afterparty. Dallas Rocks promises to be "one of the premier events of the year".

For more information, please visit [Dallas Rocks](#).

For information on Canadian author Cheryl Kaye Tardif, please visit her website at [www.cheryltardif.com](http://www.cheryltardif.com).

[Whale Song](#) (ISBN: 1601640072) is available at your favorite bookstore. If it's not in stock, you can have them order it in. Whale Song is also available at online retailers, including [Amazon](#), Chapters, Barnes and Noble and many more.