

THE PROMISE

A SPECIAL NOTE OF THANKS

Dear Educator,

Throughout the history of cinema, historical and non-fiction feature films have served as one of our greatest educational tools. Remarkable films such as *Judgment at Nuremberg*, *Schindler's List*, *The Killing Fields*, and *Missing* gave audiences a unique understanding of the Holocaust, the Cambodian Genocide and the crimes of Chile's General Pinochet. Films such as these motivated me to dig deeper into the facts concerning those world-shattering events, and indeed led me to become a film maker and to seek to introduce audiences to the tragedy of The Troubles in Northern Ireland through *In the Name of The Father*, and the Rwandan Genocide with *Hotel Rwanda*.

So, when I was offered the opportunity to make *The Promise*, I felt I had been handed the chance to educate the world to one of the great catastrophes of the 20th Century; The Armenian Genocide, which occurred from 1915 to 1923 and claimed the lives of over 1.5 million innocent Armenians. This Genocide, perpetrated by the Ottoman Turkish government against its own citizens, has been buried in history, silenced behind a wall of political denial and suppressed in mainstream media to create a veil of ignorance. It was vitally important to get this important story out to the world.

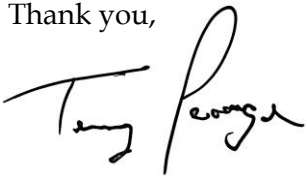
With great support, we were fortunate to make *The Promise* and become one of the first feature films to depict this tragic era in history which marked the beginning of 100 years of modern genocides. The Armenian Genocide launched the world into a cycle of violence and denial that has resulted in millions of lives lost, and entire people groups destroyed – in Ukraine, Eastern Europe, Guatemala, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Rwanda, Bosnia, Sudan. The atrocities of a century ago are sadly being repeated today in the same parts of the world through the conflicts in Iraq and Syria.

Indeed, attempts to conceal and deny the Armenian Genocide contributed to future genocides, in particular the Holocaust. Adolf Hitler when he was marshaling his generals to go into Poland and ordering them to show no mercy remarked that – "Who, after all, remembers the Armenians?" The lack of knowledge about the Armenian Genocide became a rallying call for slaughter.

Injustice is only enabled by silence, so let's start speaking up. Tell the world about the Armenian Genocide, and every genocide taking place across the globe. We owe it not only to the descendants of the Armenian Genocide, but all people who are vulnerable, to learn about and learn from our history so that it is never repeated again.

Like *Hotel Rwanda*, I was determined to have the film be PG13, so that this untold story could be accessible to younger audiences, particularly in classroom settings. Together, through education we can raise awareness so that future generations will never forget and never stay silent.

Thank you,



Terry George
Writer & Director
The Promise