

PEOPLE FOR  
THE ETHICAL  
TREATMENT  
OF ANIMALS

Dear Ms. Olmstead,

Netflix's *Tiger King* is calling critical attention to the abuse and neglect endured by big cats and other wild animals used for entertainment—progress that will be undone if *real* wild animals are used in Universal Content Production's upcoming *Joe Exotic* series.

When wild animals are used for entertainment—whether by roadside zoo operators like those featured in *Tiger King* or for the film and TV industry by trainers—they suffer. Most wild animals do everything that they can to avoid humans, but those used by trainers are forced into close proximity with their captors and are also deprived of their families, their freedom, and anything remotely natural to them.

Animals used in the entertainment industry are routinely separated from their mothers prematurely and denied the maternal care that they need for normal development, which can result in extreme physical and psychological distress. When no longer deemed "useful," many animals used for film or TV are dumped at seedy roadside zoos, including the chimpanzees seen in *Tiger King*. Investigations have uncovered animals [being whipped](#) and [kept in deplorable conditions](#) by animal suppliers.

Wild animals are exactly that—they're wild, and no amount of training can ever completely override their natural instincts, making them extremely dangerous. They belong in their natural habitats or otherwise at reputable sanctuaries—not in animal training compounds, on green screen stages, or at roadside zoos. Reputable sanctuaries never breed or sell wild animals, never allow public encounters with them, and never cart them to and from film and TV sets.

We hope you'll agree that using technology such as CGI or animatronics or existing footage is the only conscionable way of depicting animals for your series. **While we don't anticipate that a story about wild-animal abuse would feature *real* animals who suffer when used for film or television, would you please confirm that real animals won't be forced to perform in your series?**

Thank you for your time and consideration.

All the best,

Lauren Thomasson  
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