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Global News Blog

Port-au-Prince, Haiti: From George Clooney to Lance Armstrong, celebrities tap star power to urge giving

To boost donations after the Haiti earthquake, MTV and George Clooney are teaming up to host a two-hour telethon on Jan. 22, while magician David Blaine will conduct a 72-hour Magic Marathon in Times Square.



Magician David Blaine, left, performs a card trick for Michael Sharpe, of Manhattan, Friday, in New York's Times Square. Blaine is performing a 72-hour magic marathon in Times Square to raise money for Haiti earthquake victims.

Mary Altaffer/AP

By Tyler Maltbie Contributor / January 15, 2010

As the first wave of international aid reaches Haiti's shores, Hollywood is mobilizing its own "Help Haiti" juggernaut. Celeb tweeting, benefit concerts, and even round-the-clock street magic shows are helping to make the current fundraising effort the most successful post-disaster response in years.

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Celebrities across the fame spectrum have harnessed social-networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook to rally support for the Haitian people, announcing their personal donations or directing their fans to contribute to deserving aid groups.

Haitian-born musician Wyclef Jean has become the unofficial face of this celebrity humanitarian movement. Jean has been tweeting news updates regularly – sometimes minute-by-minute – and urging his more than 1.3 million followers to

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make \$5 donations via text messaging to his Yéle Haiti charity (text 'Yéle' to 501501).

More than \$1 million has flooded in to Yéle Haiti since Tuesday, according to the charity's fundraising organizers. The Hollywood Foreign Press announced it would donate \$100,000 to Yéle, while figures such as Lindsay Lohan, MC Hammer, and Haitian-born soccer star Jozy Altidor have tweeted their support for Jean's cause.

MTV announced Wednesday that it will team up with actor George Clooney to produce a celebrity-studded telethon on Friday, Jan. 22, to raise funds for Haitian relief efforts. The two-hour event will air on all of the worldwide MTV channels, along with ABC, NBC, HBO, and CNN.

But George isn't the only celeb tapping his golden connections. East Coast nightlife guru Unik Ernest, whose Edeyo Foundation supports community-building projects in

Haiti, has begun organizing a telethon and benefit concert. While the date of the event is yet to be released, celebrities said to be featured include: Rihanna, Usher, Mariah Carey, Kanye West, Mark Wahlberg, Jay-Z, Susan Sarandon, Leonardo DiCaprio, and others, according to Tonic.com.

These star-studded events could mean millions more dollars for Haiti. Shortly after Hurricane Katrina ravaged the Gulf Coast, the "Shelter From the Storm" one-hour benefit concert reached viewers in nearly 100 countries and raised an estimated \$30 million for Bayou relief.

Several other celebrities are using their social clout and talent to direct attention to Haiti.

Cyclist Lance Armstrong announced to his 2.3 million Twitter followers that his Livestrong foundation had pledged \$250,000 to two humanitarian aid groups.

Actors-turned-philanthropists Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt have donated \$1 million to the Doctors Without Borders organization; Oprah began her talk show Wednesday by asking viewers to contribute to the Red Cross; Coldplay front man Chris Martin is urging his fans to donate to Haiti via Oxfam; and even Paris Hilton promoted the efforts of the Red Cross via Twitter.

Meanwhile, magician David Blaine is taking a slightly more hands-on approach. At 9 a.m. Friday, Blaine started what will be a 72-hour, nonstop "Magic Marathon" in Times Square. Benefits of the event and all proceeds from his online store will be given to the Red Cross.

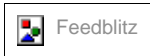
Celebrity support of the Haitian people has contributed to the success of this week's aid efforts. The American Red Cross reported Wednesday evening that in the 48 hours following the quake some \$35 million in donations had poured in – more than it had received in the two days following Hurricane Katrina and the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunamis. (To donate to the Red Cross, text "HAITI" to 90999.)

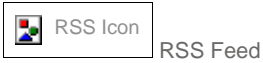
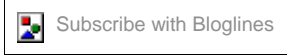
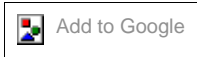
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Poor Person · 2 weeks ago

When people are so poor and live in shacks with no water or electricity and very little food, WHY do they keep having children to bring into this world to suffer. ? ? ? I don't understand it. The children do not deserve to come into the World to suffer so much !!!

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phoebe · 1 week ago

at this point in time....we need to be untied and offer lots of prayers for our brothers and sisters in Haiti....watch out this video...it is really

an inspiring video and the song really fit into it....

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6fPjDcDGuGk>

please offer your helping hand and donate to: www.standwithhaiti.org

any help will be appreciated...God speed!!!

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iraniam · 1 week ago

why do u say thats? Im from dominican rep very close from haiti, and this poor girls the sell their body for food, they sleep in the street,they dont have education so dont say why they keeping having baby is not because they want . is hard the life there. God bless haiti

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