

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Contact: Deanne Draeger****deanne@urbanswim.org****(646) 408-5843**

## **BIG RIVER MAN MARTIN STREL SWIMS FROM STATUE OF LIBERTY TO FREEDOM TOWER IN MEMORY OF 9/11**

On September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2012 Martin Strel, one of the leading long distance swimmers in the world, swam from the Statue of Liberty to the Freedom Tower in New York City.

Strel's "Liberty to Freedom Swim", dedicated to the victims and heroes of 9/11, connects the symbol for a future of liberty from oppression to the symbol for future free from terror, and symbol of peace.

The Swim began under stormy skies at 9:20 AM in front of the iconic Statue of Liberty. Strel, accompanied by two kayakers and two motorboats, headed north past Ellis Island, crossing the Hudson River to the southern tip of Manhattan near Battery Park.

Proceeding up the shoreline of Manhattan, Strel approached the Freedom Tower construction site from the south, passing an esplanade of intrigued spectators near Battery Park City.

Strel completed the 2.2 mile Swim at 10:29 AM at the southern entrance of North Cove, in the shadow of the Freedom Tower.

Martin Strel holds numerous long distance world records and firsts including swimming the length of the Amazon, The Mississippi and the Yangtze Rivers. The Liberty to Freedom Swim on September 5<sup>th</sup>, Strel's first organized Swim in New York Harbor, commemorates the 10 year anniversary of his swim down the Mississippi.

"This September will be 10 years since I finished my Mississippi River Swim - 2360 miles. I dedicated this Swim to the people that died on 9/11."

Strel worked closely with Urban Swim, a New York City based organization focused on safe access to urban waterways for swimmers and clean water, in the development and planning of the Liberty to Freedom Swim.

“Martin and Urban Swim share the goal of raising awareness of the importance of clean water through open water swimming. “ states Deanne Draeger, founder of Urban Swim. “We are proud to have worked with him on creating the Liberty to Freedom Swim as a personal commemoration, and as an event for open water swimmers in the future.”



Martin Strel at end of “Liberty to Freedom Swim” from the Statue of Liberty to the Freedom Tower in New York City.

Photo by Ed Dutchmazz

Please see attached document for additional photos of this event by Jennifer Rupnik.

For more information, photos, and video for this event, please contact: Deanne Draeger 646-408-5843 / [deanne@urbanswim.org](mailto:deanne@urbanswim.org).