

Foreword

BY THOMAS SCHUMACHER

Neighborhoods are part of us; the ones we grew up in, the fantasy ones we came to love on television as children and the ones we learn about in the pages of books. And yet in recent times, under confusing and rapidly changing conditions, we came to wonder if the world outside our doors was still what we knew.

The delightful Mary Lea Carroll opens her door and takes a walk through a neighborhood I once knew well and makes it all more heartwarming, reassuring, truthful and genuinely wonderful than I could have imagined.

Having known Mary Lea for over 40 years, including an all too brief time as her actual neighbor, I have always enjoyed seeing the world through her particular lens. Reading *Across the Street Around the Corner* filled my heart with hope and joy and confidence that just outside my door is a world I still very much want to join.

Few folks who are old enough to get a discount at the movies can say they literally live in the neighborhood that was the setting for their childhood, but this intimate relationship to the streets, houses and even some of the characters makes this reflection on our relationship to our environment all the more delicious.

The best hosts open their doors to welcome us in and make us feel right at home. Mary Lea opens her door and says, "Let's take a walk," and don't you know it, she makes you feel right at home there too.

THOMAS SCHUMACHER, producer of *The Lion King*, is the chief creative officer of Disney Theatrical Group.