

Media release

2 January 2013

STARS ALIGN FOR NEW ZEALAND BIG PICTURE PREMIERE

Filmmaker Jamie Redford will host the New Zealand premiere of his acclaimed documentary on dyslexia at a special red carpet event in Arrowtown on Saturday January 5.

Redford, son of actor and film director Robert Redford and Lola Van Wagenen, drew on his own experience with son Dylan to make the film, titled *The Big Picture: Rethinking Dyslexia*. It features Dylan and Redford's wife Kyle and includes interviews with a number of high profile dyslexics including Sir Richard Branson and financier Charles Schwab.

World dyslexia authority Dr. Sally Shaywitz, co-director and co-founder of the Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity and a pioneer in the field of MRI imaging, provides her insights.

Arrowtown was selected as the premiere venue in recognition of the significant progress that schools in the area have made in supporting and empowering students that learn differently. Redford was already planning to be in New Zealand during the summer as Mum Lola now lives part-time in Northland.

Redford says his mission with *The Big Picture* was to make the film he wished he could have seen when Dylan was first struggling with dyslexia.

"Like many dyslexics, Dylan is intelligent, thoughtful and intellectually curious – a 'big picture' thinker. But at the age of ten, he was barely able to read and write. Now that he is grown and thriving, there are many things that I wish I had known about dyslexia at that time," Redford says.

"Creativity and entrepreneurship are some of the upsides that come with being able to see the big picture, and certainly the high achieving dyslexics interviewed for this film exemplify that.

"In terms of showing this film in New Zealand; that's a happy case of stars aligning with my being here and the Dyslexia Foundation taking up the baton to make this happen. From what I have seen, New Zealand appears to be forward thinking in viewing dyslexia as a learning difference rather than difficulty – and celebrating the creative gains that come from this," Redford says.

The Big Picture, first shown at the Sundance Film Festival in January this year and then on HBO, has received critical acclaim and excellent reviews in publications such as *The New York Times*, *Hollywood Reporter* and *San Francisco Chronicle*. Redford has an extensive list of credits as a documentary director. His first film, *Kindness of Strangers*, was about organ transplants following his own experiences in having two liver transplants in 1993.

Lola Van Wagenen, who was married to Robert Redford for 30 years, will attend the premiere with husband George Burrill, who is honorary New Zealand consul to the US. Star of the film Dylan Redford, who now runs his own Middlebury College radio show, will be in New Zealand for Christmas but commitments mean he will return home before the premiere.

The Big Picture will show to an invitation only VIP audience at luxury boutique cinema and bar Dorothy Browns, 9pm Saturday 5 January. Schools, parent, and other interest groups can arrange screenings throughout 2013 by contacting the Dyslexia Foundation of NZ by email: info@dfnz.org.nz

Ends

For further information visit www.thebigpicturemovie.com/news/ OR contact DFNZ Chair of Trustees Guy Pope-Mayell, 0275 449 496, guy@dfnz.org.nz