

A PERICLES FILMS PRODUCTION

On Richard's Side

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Media kit



Wiseman's brutally raw, intimate documentary reveals just what it means to care for someone who needs care for life.

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Thirty Years. One Story. Time to Care.

Director and Producer

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01 | **film synopsis** *sentence*

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01 | **film synopsis** *paragraph*

35-year-old Richard has lived with a severe intellectual disability since birth, having relied on the care and love of his parents, Deirdre and Charlie, friends, family and support workers. A few years ago there was a major change in Richard's life and now his mother Deirdre is fiercely committed to finding answers to the questions: who will care for Richard in the future and what will happen to her son when she is no longer around?

01 | film synopsis *extended*

“If we have a notion that there is something in humanity that is intrinsically worthwhile and valuable and that people who call forth our caring and our love and our compassion are doing a service to us because those are qualities that enrich our humanity...then without people who are vulnerable, without people who need us, how do we practise our caring and our compassion?”

—*Deirdre Croft*

This remarkable story charts the life of Richard, a young man with a severe intellectual disability since birth. The documentary begins by stepping back in time, revealing through home movies and footage from the previous films how Richard’s mother Deirdre coped caring for him as a lovable child, who also had highly erratic and often violent impulses. It also reveals the strong bond that grew between a father and son when Richard’s dad Charlie, became his sole carer for eighteen years.

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The film presents Richard’s story but it’s not only about people with complex disabilities; it’s about society at large; it’s about all of us. The film gives a stark insight into the world of just one of the 2.8 million Australians who are currently providing care to someone with a disability or long-term health condition. We witness the extraordinary day-to-day effort required to look after Richard and Deirdre’s resolve in performing the role of carer after three decades. Deirdre wants to build a circle of friends and carers for Richard in case

anything happens to her. Critically, she needs to try and find a suitable, long-term accommodation solution for Richard, but can she?

The leading voice of this film is Deirdre. Fearless and impassioned, her voice, and only one of many, tells us that to care for someone means to care for life. Amidst the immense struggle, the film reveals moments of humour and great tenderness and how, in many ways, Richard gives to others even as he receives their care.

Three decades in the making, *On Richard’s Side* is the moving and eye-opening final chapter in filmmaker Andrew Wiseman’s trilogy of films about Richard’s life, beginning with *Driving with Richard* (1992) and *Wonder Boy* (2001). Offering a piercing insight into the everyday trials and joys of living with and caring for someone with a severe disability – as well as shining a much-needed light on the conditions faced by Australia’s 2.8 million carers – *On Richard’s Side* is a film of uncommon warmth and understanding that may shred your preconceptions about what it means to live with a disability.

02 | about the film maker

Andrew Wiseman – Director/Producer

Andrew has worked as a producer and director for over thirty years. Combining drama and documentary work he has created award-winning productions for Australian and international audiences. With a particular interest in the interplay between historical events and the present, recent drama titles include *Parer's War* (2014), *Sisters of War* (2010) and *Curtin* (2007). Andrew's documentaries focus on health-related stories and include *Driving with Richard*, (1992) *Wonder Boy* (2001) and *Shake Rattle and Roll*.

"It is my view that stories, in a variety of media that shine a light on tales about caring and disability might help all of us consider what we think are the really important elements that make for a just and fair society," shared Wiseman.

About Good Pitch Australia

On Richard's Side was one of six documentaries selected to be a part of Good Pitch Australia 2015.

Good Pitch brings together filmmakers with foundations, not-for-profits, campaigners, philanthropists, policymakers, broadcasters and key players in the film industry, around leading social and environmental issues, to forge coalitions and campaigns that are good for all these partners, good for the films and good for society.

03 | media alert

Creating a Culture of Caring Communities

On Richard's Side

“A powerful, raw documentary with compelling messages about humanity”

*Mr Graeme Innes AM,
former Disability Discrimination Commissioner*

Filmed over three decades, *On Richard's Side* is a feature length documentary that charts the life-story of Richard, a young man with an intellectual disability since birth. The film provides intimate and poignant insights into his parents' determined quest to establish a quality life for their son and themselves.

This latest film is the third in a trilogy of documentaries about Richard and his family - *Driving with Richard* (1992) and *Wonder Boy* (2001). The leading voice in the film is the fearless and impassioned voice of Deirdre and that voice, just one of many, tells us that to care for someone means to care for life. On a specific level the film presents Richard's story but it's not just about people with disabilities. The fact is every person in our community is either a carer, being cared for or will become a carer at some stage in their life. The film gives a stark insight into the world of just one of the 2.8 million Australians currently providing care to someone with a disability or long-term health condition. We are honoured to bring this story to light and help raise awareness of the need to create a more inclusive and caring community. Interdependence is in our DNA.

“We live in a society where we need to accommodate and consider the rights and needs of others. My motto in life is do unto others as you would have them do unto you so for Richard, I would like people to look for

Richard's humanity rather than just to see his disability. His heart and his love and his playfulness are there if you want to see it.”

– Deirdre Croft (Richard's mother)

On Richard's Side breaks new ground, as described by Cath Hogan, Disability Programs Manager, YMCA, “This is the most remarkable, moving, incredibly impactful documentary capturing all perspectives of living with disability that I have ever witnessed in my (30 years) in the disability sector. I rate it 5/5.”

Over twenty-five organisations are in partnership at a community level to ensure the impact and positive change, activate conversations and help decrease stigma against disabilities.

Director / Producer Andrew Wiseman is available for media comment.

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