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POV's 'Neurotypical' Looks at the World Through the Eyes of the Autistic, Monday, July 29, 2013 on PBS

**New Film Reverses the Mirrors of Perception to Reveal Autism Spectrum—
And a Lot of Questions About What Constitutes “Normal”**

“Neurotypical shatters any preconceived notions about autism and autistics. It’s a documentary that doesn’t overstep its intelligence and makes a statement without a soapbox.” —Daniel Engelke, *Film Monthly*

MEDIA ALERT – FACT SHEET

National Dates: Adam Larsen’s **Neurotypical** has its national broadcast premiere on **Monday, July 29, 2013** at 10 p.m. (check local listings) during the 26th season of the award-winning PBS documentary series **POV (Point of View)**. The film will stream on POV’s website, www.pbs.org/pov/, from **July 30-Aug. 28, 2013**.

American television’s longest-running independent documentary series, POV is the recipient of a 2013 MacArthur Foundation Award for Creative and Effective Institutions.

The Film: **Neurotypical** is an unprecedented exploration of autism from the point of view of autistic people themselves. Four-year-old Violet, teenaged Nicholas and adult Paula occupy different positions on the autism spectrum, but they are all at pivotal moments in their lives. How they and the people around them work out their perceptual and behavioral differences becomes a remarkable reflection of the “neurotypical” world—the world of the non-autistic—revealing inventive adaptations on each side and an emerging critique of both what it means to be normal and what it means to be human.

Filmed predominately in North Carolina and Virginia, **Neurotypical** reveals the wide spectrum of autism and the creative adaptations people use to “pass” in the normal world. It throws a searching, on what defines the “normal” mind and calls attention to the subject of neurodiversity as an urgent and multi-layered issue within the 21st-century civil rights debate.

Neurotypical is a production of Hum-Bar, LLC in association with American Documentary | POV.

Embed a trailer, download press materials and learn more at www.pbs.org/pressroom.

Online: POV’s website for **Neurotypical** – <http://www.pbs.org/pov/neurotypical/> – offers a broad range of exclusive online content to enhance the PBS broadcast. Watch the full film online for free for a limited time following the broadcast (July 30–Aug. 28, 2013), view a video interview with the director, download a discussion guide and other viewing resources, find out what’s happened in the participants’ lives since the cameras stopped rolling and explore myths, facts, a timeline and new research about autism.

Outreach: POV works with educators, public television stations and national and community groups across the country to foster dialogue around the issues presented in our films. For a list of screening events, go to www.pbs.org/pov/outreach. POV and nationally recognized media educator Dr. Faith Rogow develop discussion guides and lesson plans to facilitate conversations. The **Neurotypical** discussion guide includes information on the autism spectrum and neurodiversity movement, prompts for dialogue and action steps and a list of resources. The materials are available free of charge at www.pbs.org/pov/neurotypical. Education consultant Michele Israel has also developed a lesson plan to accompany the film. Event organizers may email events@pov.org to request a free loaned DVD to screen.

Filmmaker's Statement: "**Neurotypical** originated in the shared experiences of my family and the autistic community in western North Carolina," says director Adam Larsen. "My father has worked in the field of autism for more than 20 years; my mother is an artist. Today they design and manufacture learning materials for children and adults with special needs.

"I began to feel a growing rebellion against what I saw as society's double standard—either a pervasive need to make people into a rendition of something 'normal,' or a tendency to sensationalize the extremes of autism. Documentaries at the time were either clinical, focused on cause and cure, or dramatic, looking at the 'tragedy' of autism or the brilliance of the savant.

"I grew determined to make a film from the viewpoint of autistics. Making **Neurotypical** provided a wonderful opportunity for me to explore more fully the richness of humanity and to bring the concept of neurodiversity into the mainstream."

Filmmaker Bio: Adam Larsen (Director, Cinematographer, Editor)

Adam Larsen is an artist, projection designer and filmmaker. He has designed video projections for nearly 100 stage productions both in the United States and abroad. As a cinematographer, he has shot numerous television pilots (from cooking shows to programs on extreme sports), independent films and commercials. He also produced, shot and edited two short films for TEACCH, North Carolina's state autism program, and two films for the Organization for Autism Research (OAR). Larsen holds a bachelor of fine arts degree in cinematography from the North Carolina School of the Arts. **Neurotypical** is his first documentary.

Related Stories: "Autism study indicates new approach to treat condition," by Shari Rudavsky, *The Indianapolis Star*, July 25, 2013. <http://usat.ly/17EmQ2O>

"Mercury and Autism Not Linked, Again." by Emily Willingham, *Forbes*, July 25, 2013. <http://onforb.es/12kbgeN>

"6 Corporate Heroes of Autism Research," *The Motley Fool*, July 24, 2013. <http://www.dailyfinance.com/2013/07/24/6-corporate-heroes-of-autism-research/>

"Drake Apologizes For Autism Lyric on 'Jodeci Freestyle,'" *The Huffington Post*, July 24, 2013. <http://huff.to/19hQU8g>

"New, better workers on the autism spectrum," by Joshua Kendall, *Fortune*, July 23, 2013. <http://management.fortune.cnn.com/2013/07/23/autism-employment/>

“Q&A with Temple Grandin on *The Autistic Brain*,” by Scott Barry Kaufman, *Scientific American*, June 26, 2013. <http://bit.ly/17CCHCU>

“Autistic, and on the Airwaves,” by Corey Kilgannon, *The New York Times*, April 13, 2013. <http://nyti.ms/ZNDnfJ>

“New study finds no link between ‘too many vaccines’ and autism,” by Linda Carroll, NBC News, March 29, 2013. <http://nbcnews.to/ZIC0lv>

“Autism Diagnoses Rise Among U.S. Children, CDC Finds,” by Elizabeth Lopatto, Bloomberg, March 20, 2013. <http://bloom.bg/ZJkzRH>

Credits: Director/Cinematographer/Editor: Adam Larsen
Executive Producers: Ronald Sigurd Larsen, Linda Iraggi Larsen
Original Score: Michael Wall, Darren Morze

Running Time: 56:46

POV Series Credits:

Executive Producer: Simon Kilmurry
Co-Executive Producer: Cynthia López
VP, Programming & Production: Chris White
Coordinating Producer: Andrew Catauro

Festivals: World Premiere, Thessaloniki Documentary Festival, 2011
Rooftop Films Summer Series, 2011
DOXA Documentary Film Festival, 2011

Visit <http://www.neuro-typical.com/> for a complete list of screenings and events.

Pressroom: Visit POV’s pressroom, www.pbs.org/pov/pressroom, for press releases, downloadable art, filmmaker biographies, transcripts and special features.

POV: Produced by American Documentary, Inc. and now in its 26th season on PBS, the award-winning POV is the longest-running showcase on American television to feature the work of today’s best independent documentary filmmakers. POV has brought more than 365 acclaimed documentaries to millions nationwide. POV films have won every major film and broadcasting award, including 32 Emmys, 15 George Foster Peabody Awards, 10 Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Awards, three Academy Awards® and the Prix Italia. In 2012, POV achieved a new milestone, winning five News & Documentary Emmy® Awards. Since 1988, POV has pioneered the art of presentation and outreach using independent nonfiction media to build new communities in conversation about today’s most pressing social issues. Visit www.pbs.org/pov.

Major funding for POV is provided by PBS, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, the desJardins/Blachman Fund and public television viewers. Funding for POV’s Diverse Voices Project is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Special support provided by The Fledgling Fund and the Lucius and Eva Eastman Fund. POV is presented by a consortium of public television stations, including KQED San Francisco, WGBH Boston and THIRTEEN in association with WNET.ORG.



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