

# BYRD

## UNOS POWER OF TWO

Stenzel twins, director Smolowitz attend Richmond premiere at historic theater



REVIEWED BY JILL FINNIE

Watching the documentary film “The Power of Two” helps someone with a healthy pair of lungs begin to understand what it is like for people with cystic fibrosis (CF) to struggle for every breath.

Twin sisters and double-lung transplant recipients Ana Stenzel and Isa Stenzel-Byrnes know that struggle firsthand. They have an inspiring story to tell and, in his directorial debut, Academy Award-nominated producer Marc Smolowitz helps them tell their story well.

With touches of both sadness and humor, the film takes the audience through the trials and triumphs of life with CF, showing Ana and Isa as they struggle with illness, repeatedly face death and still manage to live extraordinary lives.

Ana and Isa face every challenge together (the power of two), and that solidarity gives them great strength.

The film also depicts the physical and emotional roller coaster ride that transplant candidates experience when they’re on the waiting list for a lifesaving organ.

UNOS was honored to sponsor the Richmond, Va., premiere of “The Power of Two.” The event was held Sept. 13 at the Byrd Theatre, one of the nation’s grand movie palaces. Built in 1928, the Byrd Theatre is largely unaltered and has operated almost continuously as a movie theater since its opening.

At the Richmond premiere, audience members were thrilled to meet Ana, Isa, her husband Andrew Byrnes and director Smolowitz, who stayed after the film for questions and answers. UNOS employees in the audience also were thrilled to see UNOS’ National Donor Memorial in the film and catch a glimpse of UNOS’ own media relations specialist, Anne Paschke, who provided the memorial tour on the day the twins visited.

“Returning to Richmond was such an honor for all of us,” Smolowitz said. “Personally, I am very proud that the National

UNOS sponsored the Richmond premiere of “The Power of Two” on Sept. 13 the historic Byrd Theater. In photo are (from left) the Stenzel twins (on whose book of the same name the documentary is based), director/producer Marc Smolowitz and Isa’s husband, producer Andrew Byrnes.

Donor Memorial is beautifully featured in “The Power of Two,” and very grateful to UNOS for being such an incredible partner of the film at every stage.

“Our screening at the historic Byrd Theatre,” he added, “was a highlight of our 2011 screening events.”

Their stop in Richmond was one of many. The film held its world premieres in August in Los Angeles and New York, followed by premiere galas in September in San Francisco and Washington, D.C.

Since the visit to Richmond, “The Power of Two” has had its international premiere at the 24th Tokyo International Film Festival. Ana and Isa are Japanese American, and they hope the film will educate people in Japan about donation and encourage them to register as a donor. The rate of donor registrations in Japan is significantly lower than in Western countries.

Seeing this film will make you appreciate the perfect simplicity of a deep breath, teach you about people who are not only survivors but also strong advocates for a worthy cause, and show you some fine examples of the dedication and expertise of transplant professionals who save lives every day. [U](#)

**ONLINE** For more information and a schedule of upcoming screenings, visit [thepoweroftwomovie.com](http://thepoweroftwomovie.com). You also can keep up with Ana and Isa on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr and more by going to the “social media room” of the website.

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