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**VIVID SYDNEY AND SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL PRESENT EXCLUSIVE
IN CONVERSATION SESSION WITH ALEX GIBNEY, DIRECTOR OF
*GOING CLEAR: SCIENTOLOGY AND THE PRISON OF BELIEF***

Vivid Sydney and the 62nd Sydney Film Festival today announced Academy Award® winning American documentary filmmaker Alex Gibney will appear in an exclusive In Conversation session, as part of Vivid Ideas. The session will follow the Australian premiere screening of Gibney's controversial film *Going Clear: Scientology and the Prison of Belief*.

The Sydney-exclusive event will be held at Sydney Town Hall at 11:00am on Sunday 7 June and is presented as part of Vivid Ideas during Vivid Sydney, the world's largest festival of light, music and ideas.

Vivid Ideas Curator Jess Scully said the In Conversation with Alex Gibney discussion is an exciting addition to the Ideas program.

"As much as cinema can entertain us, it also has the power to offer rare insights by asking difficult questions and probing often taboo subjects. Filmmakers like Alex Gibney give us a chance to see behind the veils of secrecy and authority so we can make our own decisions about the subjects they investigate," Ms Scully said.

"I am delighted that Vivid Sydney, in partnership with the Sydney Film Festival, has secured Alex Gibney for this In Conversation session. Gibney's discussion about a career defined by telling complex, real-world stories is sure to be thought-provoking and insightful," she said.

Gibney's film *Mr Dynamite: The Story of James Brown*, will also premiere at Sydney Film Festival in 2015.

IMPORTANT TICKETING INFORMATION

Tickets to Vivid Ideas and Sydney Film Festival Present Alex Gibney: In Conversation, are on sale now.

Talk and Film \$40, including the Australian premiere Saturday screening. Talk only \$30.

For bookings visit: vivid Sydney.com/alexgibney

NOTES TO EDITORS:

Going Clear: Scientology and the Prison of Belief is an uncompromising exposé of the religious movement, its hold over devotees and the influence it wields in Hollywood. The Hollywood Reporter calls it 'a brave, timely intervention'.

Gibney collaborated with Lawrence Wright, author of the 2013 book *Going Clear: Scientology, Hollywood and the Prison of Belief* to examine the exponential growth of Scientology and its eventual sanctioning by the Internal Revenue Service as a bona-fide religion with tax exempt status.

The documentary debuted at Sundance Film Festival in January 2015 and shock waves are rippling through Scientology's members and the media as celebrity heavyweights like John Travolta speak out in defence of their faith.

Going Clear is the highly anticipated follow up to Gibney's celebrated documentaries *We Steal Secrets: The Story of WikiLeaks* (2013) and the Oscar® nominated *Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room* (2005).

In 2008, Gibney was honoured with an Academy Award® for Best Documentary for *Taxi to the Dark Side*. By focusing on an innocent taxi driver in Afghanistan who was tortured and killed in 2002, Gibney's film provides a searing look at US-led torture practices Afghanistan, Iraq and Guantanamo Bay.

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