

Rodney Evans
Curriculum Vitae

575 Ocean Avenue
Suite #5K
Brooklyn, NY 11226

rodneyevansfilm@gmail.com
www.rodneyevansfilm.com
ph-917-771-6589

Films

- 2023 *DAY DREAM* (currently in casting/pre-production)
90 minute HD Video/Super 16mm film, Narrative Drama
Writer, director and producer of a musical drama that follows jazz composer Billy Strayhorn as he travels to New Orleans to investigate the life of Buddy Bolden, the forefather of modern jazz who spent the last 24 years of his life in a mental institution. Producers- Oren Moverman, Ron Simons, Rodney Evans, Luca Borghese. Cast-O-T Fagbenle (The Handmaid's Tale), Charlie Barnett (Russian Doll)
- 2022 *REFLECTIONS AND PROJECTIONS* (currently in post-production)
11 minute HD Video, Documentary
Director, producer and editor of a documentary about the lack of touch for single people during the COVID-19 pandemic and how two, queer BIPOC friends sustain each other through communication and connection. Written by and featuring Rodney Evans and Homay King. Cinematographer-Kjerstin Rossi. Supported by the Ford/Mellon Disability Futures Fellowship.
- 2019 *VISION PORTRAITS*
78 minute HD Video, Documentary
*Director, producer and co-editor of a documentary feature that chronicles the experiences of several blind and visually impaired artists including John Dugdale (photographer), Kayla Hamilton (dancer) and Ryan Knighton (writer). It specifically focuses on the ways each artist was impacted by the loss of their vision and how their creative process thrives in spite of their blindness/low vision. Funding provided by The Ford Foundation-JustFilms Program. *World Premiere-SXSW-Documentary Feature Competition. *Winner-Frameline-Jury Award for Outstanding documentary. *Winner-Outfest-Award for Artistic Achievement. Distributed by New Day Films. National Broadcast, America Reframed-World Channel. U.S. Streaming: The Criterion Channel, The Whitney Museum, pbs.org, Kanopy, U.K. Streaming: True Story U.K.*
- 2016 *PERSISTENCE OF VISION*
11 minute HD Video, Documentary
*Director, producer and editor of an intimate documentary that chronicles the experiences of a blind photographer, John Dugdale, and the changes in his creative process after his loss of vision due to an HIV related illness. **Winner-Jury Prize-Ann Arbor International Film Festival. Additional Screenings Frameline, BAMcinemaFest*
- 2013 *THE HAPPY SAD*
86 minute HD Video, Narrative Drama
Director, producer and editor of a feature-length drama that follows two couples, one black and one white, whose lives collide as they navigate open relationships and sexual identity. Cast- LeRoy McClain, Sorel Carradine, Charlie Barnett, Cameron Scoggins, Maria Dizzia. Distributed by Sundance Artist Services/Cinedigm (iTunes, Amazon VOD)

- 2009 *BILLY AND AARON*
 10 minute digital video, Narrative Drama
Writer, director and producer of a short drama about African-American composer Billy Strayhorn and the personal and professional consequences of his decision to live as an openly gay man within the homophobic jazz milieu of the 1940's. Filmed on location in Amsterdam.
***Official Selection 2010 Tribeca Film Festival, BAMcinemaFest, Outfest*
- 2004 *BROTHER TO BROTHER*
 90 minute 35mm Film, Narrative Drama
Writer, director, and producer of a film that looks back on the Harlem Renaissance from the perspective of an elderly, black writer who meets a gay teenager in a New York homeless shelter. Cast—Anthony Mackie, Roger Robinson, Lawrence Gilliard, Jr., Aunjanue Ellis, Duane Boutte, Daniel Sunjata, Alex Burns and Ray Ford.
***Winner-Sundance 2004- Special Jury Prize - Drama.*
Distributed by Sundance Artist Services/Cinedigm (iTunes, Amazon VOD). 15th Anniversary Screening-2019 Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM). Currently streaming: The Criterion Channel
- 1999 *TWO ENCOUNTERS*
 7 minute 16mm film, Experimental Documentary
Producer, director, and editor of a film which utilizes hidden camera footage recorded by two gay men of different ethnicities in order to examine racial divisions within New York's gay male community.
- 1998 *CLOSE TO HOME*
 23 minute 16mm film, Experimental Documentary
Producer, director, writer and editor of a film which documents the filmmaker's journey as he comes out to a conservative Jamaican family and negotiates a painful relationship with a 21-year old heterosexual man. Distributed by Third World Newsreel
- 1996 *THE UNVEILING*
 58/80 minute 16mm film/Digital Video (broadcast/theatrical versions), Documentary
Producer, director and editor of a film which chronicles the lives and experiences of two present-day exotic dancers, one male and one female, who predominantly perform for Black and LatinX audiences and one former burlesque queen who performed during the 1950's. Distributed by Third World Newsreel
- 1995 *TELETOUCH DRIVE*
 14 minute 16mm film, Experimental Documentary
Producer, director and editor of a film which chronicles stories of wild abandon on America's highways. Selected for Tomorrowland: CalArts in Moving Pictures (MoMA, 2006)

Television

- 2005 *SIX FEET UNDER*
 Season 5, Episode 9 -“Ecotone”
Observed pre-production and ten-day shoot on one of the final episodes of the acclaimed HBO series. Worked closely with director Daniel Minahan and writer Nancy Oliver.
Executive Producers-Alan Ball and Alan Poul

Select Awards

- 1999/2002/04 NY State Council on the Arts Grant (Individual Artists Program)
- 1999 Jerome Foundation – NYC Film and Video Grant
- 2000 IFP’s Gordon Parks Award for Screenwriting
- 2000/2004 Vito Russo Award and Showtime Vanguard Award (NewFest)
- 2000 MIX Emerging Innovator Award (NY Experimental Gay/Lesbian Festival)
- 2002 Finalist for the IFP’s Gordon Parks Award for Directing
- 2003/04 Rockefeller Foundation-Media Arts Fellowship
- 2004 Sundance Film Festival (Special Jury Prize, Dramatic Competition)
- 2004 Best Fiction Feature (Miami Gay and Lesbian Film Festival)
- 2004 Audience Award, Best Fiction Feature (San Francisco Gay and Lesbian Film Festival)
- 2004 Audience Award and Grand Jury Prize, Best Feature (Outfest LA)
- 2004 Audience Award, Best Feature (Roxbury Film Festival)
- 2004 Audience Award, Best Feature (Wash. DC Gay and Lesbian Film Festival)
- 2004 Best New Director (Seattle Gay and Lesbian Film Festival)
- 2004 Nominee for IFP Gotham Award, Breakthrough Director
- 2004 Nominee for 4 Independent Spirit Awards including Best First Film and Best First Screenplay
- 2005 NY Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in Film/Video
- 2005 Winner-HBO’s Director To Watch Award, Black Movie Awards
- 2006 Recipient of development financing from ITVS-Diversity Development Fund
- 2008 Recipient of research and development funds from NBPC
- 2008 Creative Capital Foundation Grant
- 2008 Guggenheim Fellowship

2008 Tribeca All Access Program-Honorable Mention-Creative Promise Award

2008 Winner-NewFest Screenplay Competition

2009 Binger Film Lab Fellowship-Director's Coaching Programme

2011/13 NY State Council on the Arts Grant (Individual Artists Program)

2012/19 Frameline Completion Fund Grant

2012 Philadelphia Independent Film and Video Association Grant

2016 Swarthmore Faculty Research Grant

2017 Recipient of funding from The Ford Foundation-JustFilms Program

2019 Frameline Award for Career Achievement in LGBTQ+ Representation

2019 Frameline-Jury Award for Outstanding Documentary

2019 Outfest-Award for Artistic Achievement

2020 Recipient of The Sundance Institute's Momentum Fellowship

2020/21 Recipient of the Ford/Mellon Disability Futures Fellowship

Teaching

Associate Professor- August 2015-Present-Swarthmore College
 (Undergraduate Courses: "Advanced Digital Production", "Screenwriting",
 "Digital Production Fundamentals", "The Director/Actor Collaboration"
 "(Auto)biography and the Archive: Experimental Digital Production")

Lecturer-Fall 2015- Princeton University
 (Undergraduate Course: "Fall Film Seminar")

Assistant Professor- August 2010-December 2014-Temple University
 (Graduate Courses: "MFA Thesis Development", "MFA Colloquium",
 Undergraduate Courses: "Senior Projects", "Screenwriting II", "Experimental
 Media Workshop", "Media Arts 1", "The Director/Actor Collaboration")

Adjunct Professor-Fall 2014-NYU-Tisch School of the Arts
 (Undergraduate Course: "Directing the Actor")

Visiting Professor-Spring 2010-Bryn Mawr College
 (Undergraduate Course: "Advanced Video Production")

Documentary Lab Instructor-September 2009-August 2010
Reel Works Productions
(Teen Filmmaking Program for At-Risk Youth: “Documentary Production”)

Visiting Professor-Fall 2007-School of Visual Arts
(Graduate Course: “Video Development, Preparation and Production”)

Adjunct Professor-Fall 2007-New Jersey City University
(Undergraduate Course: “Literature and Film”)

Visiting Professor-Fall 2006-Cooper Union
(Undergraduate Course: “Advanced Film and Video Production”)

Education

1996 California Institute of the Arts, MFA, Film and Video
1993 Brown University, BFA, Modern Culture & Media/Film Production

Professional Training

2016 Union Docs-Summer Documentary Intensive
2009 Binger Film Lab-Director’s Coaching Programme
2001 Black Nexxus-Acting Classes taught by Susan Batson
2000 Gotham Writer’s Workshop-Advanced Screenwriting
1996 Writer’s Boot Camp-Screenwriting Intensive

Artist Residencies / Visiting Artist Engagements

1998/2000/06/15-17 Yaddo
1998/2006/14/15/21 The Virginia Center for the Creative Arts (VCCA)
2000/05 The Edward Albee Colony
2004/05/06/08/17 Macdowell
2004 Harvard University
2004/16/20 Brown University
2004 Wesleyan University

2004	UCLA
2004	Howard University
2004	The California Institute of the Arts
2004	The School of the Art Institute of Chicago
2005/20	Bryn Mawr College
2005	Bard College
2008	Chateau de La Napoule Artist Residency
2012/21	New York University
2013	Princeton University
2014	University of Nebraska at Lincoln
2016	Barnard College
2018	Villa Lena Residency Program
2019/20	Yale University
2019	Bowdoin College
2019	City College of New York
2020	Haverford College
2021	SUNY Purchase
2021	Lesley University-College of Art and Design
2021	Montclair State University

Grant Panels/Lectures

2005/07	Independent Television Service (ITVS)
2005	The IFP's Gordon Parks Awards
2005-2007	The Jerome Foundation
2005	Guest Lecturer, The University of Cape Town

2005/14	Guest Lecturer, The University of Nebraska at Lincoln
2008/09	Independent Spirit Awards – Someone To Watch Award Panelist
2011	Guest Lecturer, McGill University
2013	Guest Lecturer, Princeton University
2013	Finalist-Creative Arts Fellowship – Princeton University
2016/20	Guest Lecturer, Brown University
2017	Guest Lecturer, Bates College
2021	Macdowell, Advisory Committee for Artists with Disabilities
2021	Sundance Institute-Accessible Futures, Program Mentor
2021	Guest Lecturer, The California Institute of the Arts
2021	Toronto International Film Festival, Accessibility and Inclusion Panelist
2021	The Gotham Filmmaker Week, Film Festivals: Spotlight or Silo? Panelist

Select Screenings/Exhibitions

1998	The Metropolitan Museum of Art
1998	The Brooklyn Museum
1999/04/13/19	Frameline-The San Francisco International LGBT+ Film Festival
2004/10/13/19	OUTFEST Los Angeles
2004	Sundance Film Festival
2004	The Berlin International Film Festival
2004/2019	South by Southwest Film Festival
2004	Chicago International Film Festival
2004	San Francisco International Film Festival
2004	Seattle International Film Festival
2004	FESPACO
2004/13	Out in Africa
2004	The London Gay and Lesbian Film Festival

2006 The Museum of Modern Art (Tomorrowland: CalArts in Moving Pictures)

2010 The Tribeca Film Festival

2010/16/19 BAMcinemaFest

2013 The Hong Kong Lesbian and Gay Film Festival

2013 COPENHAGEN | LesbianGayBiTrans Festival

2013/16 Reeling-Chicago LGBT Film Festival

2013 Retrospective at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture

2013 Seattle Lesbian and Gay Film Festival – Closing Night Selection

2014 Roze Filmdagen-Amsterdam Gay and Lesbian Film Festival

2014 UCLA Film and Television Archive/The Hammer Museum

2014/16/19 Frameline-The San Francisco International LGBT Film Festival

2017 Ann Arbor International Film Festival-Jury Prize Winner

2019 BFI Flare London LGBTQ+ Film Festival

2019 American Black Film Festival

2019 Sydney International Film Festival

2019 Inside Out: Toronto International LGBT Film Festival

2019 Melbourne International Film Festival

2019 Blackstar Film Festival

2019 Out on Screen:Vancouver Queer Film Festival

2019 Scottish Queer International Film Festival

2019 New Orleans Film Festival

2019 IndieMemphis Film Festival

2019 Dallas Museum of Art

2019 Illusion Cinema Theater, Moscow

2020 Whitney Museum of American Art-VISION PORTRAITS-A week of Virtual Screenings and Panel Discussion in honor of the 30th Anniversary of the passing of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Other Featured Panelists: Judy Heumann- activist/writer-BEING HEUMANN, participant-CRIP CAMP and Kayla Hamilton-dancer/choreographer/educator, participant-VISION PORTRAITS)

Theatrical Engagements

New York-IFC Center, Metrograph, Los Angeles-Sundance Sunset Cinema, Laemmle Royal, Berlin, San Francisco, Chicago, Boston, Atlanta, Washington DC, Austin, Portland, St. Louis, Denver, Baltimore, Dallas, Houston

National Broadcast/Streaming

PBS Series - Independent Lens, Netflix, Starz, Logo, America Reframed-World Channel, The Criterion Channel

Biography

RODNEY EVANS is an award-winning fiction and documentary film writer, director and producer. His debut fiction feature *Brother To Brother* won the Special Jury Prize in Drama at the Sundance Film Festival. The film had its European premiere at the Berlinale and garnered four Independent Spirit Award nominations including Best First Film, Best First Screenplay, Best Debut Performance for Anthony Mackie and Best Supporting Male Performance for Roger Robinson. Evans has received funding from The John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, The Ford Foundation's JustFilms Program, The Creative Capital Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation, The NY State Council on the Arts (NYSCA), The Independent Television Service (ITVS) and Black Public Media (BPM). His second narrative feature, *The Happy Sad*, has played at over thirty film festivals throughout the world and had its U.S. theatrical premiere in August 2013 at the IFC Center in NYC and the Sundance Sunset Cinema in Los Angeles. Evans has taught at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, Princeton and Swarthmore. His latest feature length film, *Vision Portraits*, had its World Premiere in the Documentary Feature Competition at the 2019 SXSW Film Festival. It was released theatrically at the Metrograph in NYC in August 2019 and went on to play to universal critical acclaim in eight major U.S. cities. The film screened virtually at the Whitney Museum for a week in honor of the 30th Anniversary of the passing of the Americans with Disabilities Act in July 2020. Evans was recently honored with the 2019 Frameline Award for Career Achievement, a Sundance Momentum Fellowship for 2020 and Ford/Mellon Disability Futures Fellowship for 2021. He is a member of The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS). Evans holds an BFA in Modern Culture and Media from Brown University and an MFA from The California Institute of the Arts (CalArts) in Film/Video Production.

Critical Reviews for THE HAPPY SAD

“The cast is terrific--a uniformly perfect combination of eye candy and talent--and the script is filled with wonderfully raw, discomfiting conversations.”

Ernest Hardy, LA Weekly

“An engaging look at a pair of New York couples whose love lives intersect, crisscross, circle and backtrack in hip and provocative ways.”

Gary Goldstein, LA Times

“A gem. Director Rodney Evans maneuvers us through the spiced-up interminglings of two attractive New York couples -- one gay, the other ostensibly straight. The result is a resonant adult drama that explores our sexual desires with candor, insight and, of course, melodrama.”

Randy Myers, San Jose Mercury News

“A tantalizing picture of some contemporary conundrums....Carradine makes an especially strong impression. McClain and Barnett give adroit performances, and Scoggins, who also wrote and performs several songs in the movie, has unmistakable rapport with McClain.”

Stephen Farber, The Hollywood Reporter

“While you might think THE HAPPY SAD will turn out to be just another in a long line of films where a straight person has a same-sex affair, then decides its not for them, leaving a queer lover in the lurch, you’ll be pleasantly surprised. At its heart, it’s a film about the politics of open relationships and the sociality of bisexuality.”

Diane Anderson-Minshall, The Advocate

“Full of warmth and refreshingly matter-of-fact sexuality....Acting is sensitive and well directed all around.”

Andrew Barker, Variety

“One of 2013's Best LGBT Films”

Richard Knight Jr., Windy City Times

Critical Reviews for BROTHER TO BROTHER

“Breathtaking....a fascinating and absorbing tale...heralds the emergence of an exciting new voice in filmmaking”

Kirk Honeycutt, The Hollywood Reporter

“A captivating drama....Tremendously accomplished filmmaking by writer/director Rodney Evans”

David Germain, The Associated Press

“The story Evans tells of the spiritual link between a contemporary black gay New York artist and the trailblazers of the 1930’s Harlem Renaissance is an excitingly ambitious one, conveyed with guileless passion of purpose”

Owen Gleiberman, Entertainment Weekly

“BROTHER TO BROTHER brings depth and intelligence to black politics and sexuality”

David Rooney, Variety

“Excellent...a gifted cast brings to vibrant, sexy life the likes of Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, James Baldwin and Eldridge Cleaver, and in the process conjures the neatest hat trick of all — making the loves and woes of the past resonate with those of the present”

Chuck Wilson, LA Weekly

“Heartfelt. Filled with ideas and nice acting, especially from Mackie and Robinson”

Manohla Dargis, NY Times

Critical Reviews for VISION PORTRAITS

“Evans has made a touchingly honest ode to the inner life of all artists”

-Robert Abele, *Los Angeles Times*

“A moving meditation about our unwavering need for creativity and finding ways to express it ...There is not a whiff of self-pity or self-indulgence here just a desire to tell a story from a viewpoint that rarely reaches the screen.”

-David Lewis, *San Francisco Chronicle*

“Quietly wondrous to behold.”

-Joe Morgenstern, *Wall Street Journal*

“has the power, however briefly, to alter your perception.”

-Ben Kenigsberg, *New York Times*

“Endlessly thought-provoking...consistently fascinates the mind and activates the senses.”

-Beandrea July, *The Hollywood Reporter*

“The film’s inspiring and evocative power should resonate with viewers across the cinematic spectrum.”

-Nick Schrager, *Variety*

“Personal, insightful, and well-crafted, *Vision Portraits* is a giving look at the process of expanded creativity by four fascinating artists.”

-John Fink, *The Film Stage*

“Extraordinarily moving... a truly transcendent, out-of-body experience that is quite affecting.

-Stephen Saito, *The Moveable Fest*

“This is an inspiring film, a funny and informative feature whose subjects were creative kindred spirits I’d never seen onscreen before.”

-Odie Henderson, *RogerEbert.com*

“This is not a movie about loss and despair, but the celebration of what is possible.”

-Christopher Llewellyn Reed, *Hammer to Nail*

“*Vision Portraits* educates its audience while taking them on an emotional roller coaster with brave, engaging artists.”

-Bobby LePire, *Film Threat*

“*Vision Portraits*—an omnibus documentary about several artists who have lost their sense of sight and work in partial or full blindness—will touch vast, diverse audiences interested in the creative process, disability, healthcare, and alternate modes of sensory knowledge. The section about photographer John Dugdale, who became blind due to complications from the AIDS virus, connects these issues to LGBTQI+ communities. Evans’ brilliant and highly personal film reveals something crucial about perception: that what we call “vision” is far more complex and heterogeneous than is commonly thought.”

-Hoday King

***Professor, Chair, Director of Graduate Studies, and Eugenia Chase Guild Chair in the Humanities
Department of History of Art, Bryn Mawr College***