

**Rodney Evans**  
Curriculum Vitae

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**Films**

- 2022 *DAY DREAM (currently in development)*  
90 minute 35mm 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.*
- 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/lowvision. 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.*
- 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*
- 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)*

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. Distributed by Frameline*

1998 *CLOSE TO HOME*

24 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 (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 perform for gay and lesbian 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)*

## **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

Visiting 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  
1998/2006/14/15/16 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 New York University  
2013 Princeton University  
2014 University of Nebraska at Lincoln  
2016 Barnard College  
2017 Bates College  
2018 Villa Lena Residency Program  
2019/20 Yale University  
2019 Bowdoin College  
2019 City College of New York  
2020 Haverford College

### **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

### **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 MIX 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  
2016 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

## **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**

PBS Series - Independent Lens, Starz, Logo, America ReFramed

## **Biography**

**RODNEY EVANS** is the writer/director/producer of the feature film *Brother To Brother* which 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/Mellow Disability Futures Fellowship for 2020-21.



## Press Quotes for THE HAPPY SAD

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“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***

## Press Quotes for BROTHER TO BROTHER

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“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***

## Press Quotes for VISION PORTRAITS

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“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***