

JAMES MAYCOCK

FACTUAL TELEVISION: DIRECTOR / PRODUCER / WRITER

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A dedicated, award-winning & award-nominated P/D with over 12 years experience of making acclaimed long-form factual films for national & international broadcasters. Some are considered the definite film on the subject.

My programmes have received excellent press previews & Picks Of The Day, with one BBC film achieving one of the highest Audience Appreciation Index (AI) ratings for the whole year across all BBC channels, while another opened the New York Irish Film Festival.

I'm most passionate about: Popular Culture / 20th Century History / Music / Society / Politics – and considered an authority on certain aspects within these areas.

I believe skilful, emotional & compelling storytelling, matched with inventive visual sequences, lies at the very heart of the best, most memorable & distinctive films – regardless of subject matter.

Some Pointers Regarding My Directing Career...

- I've often conceived the original ideas of my films.
- Have directed each project from pre-production to delivery – including directing all offline & online edits.
- I've directed numerous foreign shoots & reconstructions – also drone, car-rig & green screen shoots.
- Excel at script / comm writing. (I'm a former national broadsheet & magazine features journalist).
- Am skilled at bringing out the most powerful, emotional testimonies from a very wide range of contributors.
- Create multi-layered films – and when relevant, bring out the social, racial & political nuances.
- I'm signed to the UK's premier agency for factual directors.
- I can provide excellent references from various executive producers – see further below.

DIRECTING & PRODUCING EXPERIENCE:

VARIOUS PROJECTS (2019-2022) > ITV / VARIOUS INDIES / MASTER CLASSES / BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Directed short films for primetime ITV National Television Awards (2019); in the same year, Nottingham University curated a season of my films for Black History Month which I was fully involved with.

DR. VINCENT WILSON, BLACK HISTORY MONTH CURATOR: *"James' films allow us to reflect on the past without hiding from real problems. This is why his films are so important. They allow us to appreciate the connections we have with each other."*

During the COVID pandemic, I was busy developing projects for a number of top indies. This involved: directing taster-tapes/sizzles; negotiating; writing & pitching treatments for features & series. I also developed my own major film projects – some of which are still 'active'. I began a part-time PhD about film-making at University Of East Anglia (UEA) and gave Master Classes to undergraduates.

DETROIT: COMEBACK CITY (2018) / BROADCASTER > HISTORY CHANNEL (A&E – USA)

CREDIT > DIRECTOR & PRODUCER / LENGTH > 60 MINUTES / PROD. CO. > NUTOPIA

I directed this rollercoaster ride through Detroit, its industrial & cultural revolutions, revealing it as a city of dreams, broken dreams, but also dreams for the future, through the prism of the once glorious, now derelict, Michigan Central Station. Exec: Patrick Uden.

DETROIT FREE PRESS: *"Detroit: Comeback City' is personal. And that's a good thing."*

HISTORY CHANNEL (on this film): *"We at the History Channel love the past when it connects with the present."*

ROCK AND ROLL: WORSHIP (2017) / BROADCASTER > SKY

CREDIT > DIRECTOR / LENGTH > 70 MINUTES / PROD. CO. > PULSE FILMS

Second of 2 films I directed in this acclaimed landmark 10-part series. I conceived the narrative, exploring various aspects of worship in music, inc: rock star idolatry, eastern mysticism, New Orleans voodoo & mass transcendence. Sky Exec: Barbara Lee

THE TIMES: *"It's all thoroughly enriching"* (Pick Of The Day)

THE GUARDIAN: *"You have to lose yourself in this epic 10-part, themed rock-doc series. It will inspire."*

ROCK AND ROLL: EXCESS (2017) / BROADCASTER > SKY

CREDIT > DIRECTOR / LENGTH > 70 MINUTES / PROD. CO. > PULSE FILMS

First of 2 films I directed for this landmark series is an inventive exploration of excess, from 60's rebel youth to 70's theatrical overload, from 1980's glamour addiction to 1990's stoned hip-hop – and the art of cranking it up loud. Sky Exec: Barbara Lee.

DAILY TELEGRAPH: *"This superb series takes another entertaining tangent by examining those who have ramped it up, whether in volume, aesthetics, ambition or sheer scale... a very engaging hour."* (Pick Of The Day)

TOM WAITS: TALES FROM A CRACKED JUKEBOX (2017) / BROADCASTER > BBC TV (BBC4)

CREDIT > DIRECTOR & PRODUCER / LENGTH > 60 MINUTES / PROD. CO. > BBC STUDIOS

Very first film by a major broadcaster about one of the most fascinating musicians of the last 4 decades. It explores Tom Waits' work, his various artistic personas, self-mythologizing, and how he's created alternative American soundtrack – from noir to surreal cabaret.

THE TIMES CULTURE SECTION: *"A film that in most respects is exemplary"*

THE OBSERVER: *"James Maycock's film is an intelligently crafted portrait"*

PICK OF THE DAY / WEEK: Radio Times; Daily Mail; The Times; The Telegraph; Mail On Sunday; Arts Desk; Spectator & more.

YEHUDI MENUHIN: WHO'S YEHUDI? (2016) / BROADCASTER > BBC TV (BBC4)

CREDIT > DIRECTOR & PRODUCER / LENGTH > 60 MINUTES / PROD. CO. > 1212 PRODUCTIONS

With home movies & intimate family interviews, this film explores the 20th century's greatest classical violinist's fascinating journey through life – from child prodigy to political agitator – and his huge ambitions for the world. BBC Exec: Greg Sanderson.

THE GUARDIAN: *"Wonderful film... joyous... beautiful"* (Pick Of The Day)

PICK OF THE DAY in: Financial Times (Pick Of Week); Telegraph; The Times; TV Times; Mail On Sunday; Sunday Times.

MASTERS OF THE GUITAR (2015) / BROADCASTER > SKY

CREDIT > DIRECTOR & PRODUCER / LENGTH > 60 MINUTES / PROD. CO. > SOMETHIN' ELSE

A film specially commissioned for Sky Arts re-launch night. 10 great players, from Black Sabbath's Tony Iommi to Roxy Music's Phil Manzanera, Sonic Youth's Thurston Moore to Richard Hawley, reveal the guitarist who inspired them. Sky Exec: Barbara Lee

NORTHERN SOUL: LIVING FOR THE WEEKEND (2014) / BROADCASTER > BBC TV (BBC4)

CREDIT > DIRECTOR & WRITER / LENGTH > 60 MINUTES / PROD. CO. > SOMETHIN' ELSE

Universally-acclaimed film & major ratings hit about the most exciting underground British club movement of the 70's, revealing how disenchanted white working class youth created a dynamic culture of fashion, dance, drugs & vinyl. Exec: Jez Nelson

THE GUARDIAN: *"A glorious documentary"*

THE TIMES: *"A vibrant film"*

PICK OF THE DAY in: Radio Times; Observer; Telegraph; Daily Mail; OK Magazine; Independent; Sunday Times; Express & more.

DANNY BOY: BALLAD THAT BEWITCHED THE WORLD (2013) / B'CASTER > BBC TV (BBC1 NI / BBC4) / RTE

CREDIT > DIRECTOR & WRITER / LENGTH > 60 MINUTES / PROD. CO. > TYRONE PRODUCTIONS

Award-nominated film ('Best Documentary' at the IFTA's / Irish Film & Television Awards). This epic tale reveals the life of this world-famous ballad, via World War 1, Elvis, the IRA, Johnny Cash, 9/11, boxing fights & the Coen Brothers. BBC NI Exec: Justin Binding.

THE IRISH INDEPENDENT: *"Very entertaining, engaging TV. Told with wit & genuine passion."* (Pick Of The Day)

SUNDAY TIMES CULTURE SECTION: *"An enjoyably offbeat documentary."* (Pick Of The Day)

BOBBY WOMACK: ACROSS 110th STREET (2013) / BROADCASTER > BBC TV (BBC4)

CREDIT > DIRECTOR & PRODUCER / LENGTH > 60 MINUTES / PROD. CO. > BBC FACTUAL

With this celebrated musician's participation, the film travels with Bobby in a vintage 1972 Buick through his rollercoaster life, from 1950's gospel to stardom, addiction, tragedy and his spectacular Damon Albarn-aided comeback. BBC4 Controller: Richard Klein

THE TIMES: *"Brilliant documentary."* (Pick Of The Day)

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH: *"Captivating documentary."*

SWEET HOME ALABAMA: THE SOUTHERN ROCK SAGA (2012) / BROADCASTER > BBC TV (BBC4)

CREDIT > DIRECTOR & PRODUCER / LENGTH > 60 MINUTES / PROD. CO. > BBC MUSIC ENT.

Starting with the assassination of Martin Luther King, this film reveals how 1970's southern white rock musicians rejected their redneck inheritance, transforming the region's identity & giving the poor white southerner a voice. BBC4 Controller: Richard Klein.

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH: *"This encapsulates racism, tragedy & Jimmy Carter – all entertainingly told."* (Pick Of The Day)

THE GUARDIAN: *"Maycock's film more than does Southern Rock justice."*

SOUTHERN ROCK AT THE BBC (2012) / BROADCASTER > BBC TV (BBC4)

CREDIT > PRODUCER & WRITER / LENGTH > 60 MINUTES / PROD. CO. > BBC MUSIC ENT.

Produced & wrote the script for this programme to accompany my film, Sweet Home Alabama: The Southern Rock Saga.

GERSHWIN'S SUMMERTIME (2011) / BROADCASTER > BBC TV (BBC4)

CREDIT > DIRECTOR, PRODUCER & WRITER / LENGTH > 60 MINUTES / PROD. CO. > BBC ARTS

Part of BBC's All America season, I conceived this universally-acclaimed film, revealing how 'Summertime' became the world's most covered song. It investigates how it's been culturally re-imagined throughout the 20th century. BBC Exec: Jonty Claypole

SUNDAY TIMES CULTURE SECTION: *"Maycock's gem of a profile is an unalloyed pleasure."* (Pick Of The Day)

TIME OUT: *"Maycock's splendid documentary is a model of its kind, made with real visual imagination"*.

PICK OF THE DAY in: The Observer; Radio Times; Evening Standard; Daily Telegraph; The Times; Independent.

ROLL OVER BEETHOVEN: THE CHESS RECORDS SAGA (2010) / BROADCASTER > BBC TV (BBC4)

CREDIT > DIRECTOR & PRODUCER / LENGTH > 60 MINUTES / PROD. CO. > BBC FACTUAL

The epic tale of this hugely influential Chicago rock 'n' roll & blues record label, bringing to life each historical & cultural period from the 1940's to the 60's, connecting them to the sweeping social & racial changes of the times. BBC4 Controller: Richard Klein.

THE GUARDIAN: *"Superb documentary and a terrific only-in-America story of assimilation and enterprise."*

RADIO TIMES: *"This documentary thrillingly evokes a time & place"* (Pick Of The Day)

THE MOTOWN INVASION (2009) / BROADCASTER > BBC TV (BBC2 PRIMETIME & BBC4)

CREDIT > DIRECTOR & PRODUCER / LENGTH > 60 MINUTES / PROD. CO. > BBC FACTUAL

Conceived / directed this award-winning film (FOCAL International) & ratings hit about Motown's chaotic 1965 UK tour. Full of social history & period detail – as black America met provincial Britain on the cusp of the swinging 60's. BBC4 Controller: Richard Klein

REFERENCES:

PATRICK UDEN (EXECUTIVE PRODUCER ON 'DETROIT: COMEBACK CITY'): *"James is a classic documentary Director. He has a deep knowledge of story structure & the language of film. After first viewing his impressive back catalogue of documentaries, I hired James to direct Nutopia's History Channel feature documentary, 'Detroit: Comeback City'. I found James likeable, industrious and easy to work with."* (Patrick Uden was also the exec on the UK's first season of 'The Apprentice'.)

SAM BRIDGER (SERIES DIRECTOR ON 'ROCK AND ROLL' SERIES): *"I am Executive Producer of Music Documentaries at Pulse Films. James's approach to directing and producing his 2 films in the series was both rigorous and imaginative in execution. He worked under some tight time constraints and created films that were brimming with ideas and fresh narrative approaches. He is an excellent collaborator and also a clear leader with a distinct vision who's able to deliver a well-crafted film on budget and on time. I look forward to working with James again soon."*

JEZ NELSON (CEO AT SOMETHIN' ELSE / EXEC ON 'NORTHERN SOUL' & 'MASTERS OF THE GUITAR' FILMS):

"James is a hugely knowledgeable, hard-working and talented Director / Producer. His strong journalistic background gives him an obsession with making the story strong and accurate. He has a knack of gathering great material and an eye for detail. He is a good collaborator and takes feedback and input well. A great programme maker."

PATRICIA MOORE (PRODUCER, TYRONE PRODUCTIONS): *"I worked as a producer with James when he wrote & directed Tyrone Productions' BBC/RTE film 'Danny Boy: The Ballad That Bewitched The World'. From pre-production right through to delivery, he demonstrated impressive storytelling skills. The film was really well received by viewers all over the world, and was shortlisted for a prestigious Irish Film & Television Award. James is a highly creative director with clear vision, unsurpassed knowledge of his subject & will be an asset to any project he undertakes."*

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

TELEVISION AWARDS: Winner of the FOCAL International Award (2010); Nominated for 'Best Documentary' at the IFTA's (The Irish Film & Television Awards) (2014).

TELEVISION INTERVIEWEES: I've interviewed a v. wide range, including: a 9/11 fireman; an Auschwitz survivor; iconic political revolutionaries like Angela Davis; top CEO's in corporate America; world famous cultural figures like Yoko Ono, Paul McCartney & Public Enemy's Chuck D. (Chuck later emailed me: "*James, fantastic doc as expected. Glad you made me a part of it.*")

TELEVISION (Before Directing Career): I was an AP & Co-Producer for a number of acclaimed factual productions – single films (inc. working with TV historian Michael Wood), as well as landmark factual series – for BBC TV, Channel 4, PBS.

PRINT JOURNALISM: A substantial career, writing 70+ features for all British broadsheets plus Guardian Weekend Magazine, Observer & Mojo. Subjects inc: the Vietnam War, 1960's civil unrest, to my personal experience of a bus heist in Mexico.

RADIO BROADCAST: I've produced, scripted & narrated 10 radio documentaries for BBC Radio 1, 2 & 3. I've also been an invited guest on radio shows (inc. LBC and Robert Elms' show on BBC Radio London).

INTERESTS: photography; off-road mountain biking; reading; travel; culture & politics; cinema; concerts & exhibitions.

ALSO: Full UK Driving Licence

For more info, previews, details, including video clips, please visit my website: [James Maycock](#)

