

**Robin Toyne**  
**RTS Award winning Director – Producer – Writer**  
**Member of Directors UK**

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studied at the School of Film and Television at Manchester Polytechnic, graduating in 1986 with a 1st Class BA (Hons) in Film and Television production.

set up production company, Quintessence Films, with a colleague in 1988.

**awards: "where in the world" - director of Peru films - children's programme of the year, 2017, Voice of the Listener and Viewer Awards**

**"brunel's big achievements" – director/writer – best children's programme, RTS, 2006**

**"watercolour challenge" – director/producer – best daytime programme, RTS, 2000**

## Profile

A filmmaker of 28 years' broadcast experience; I'm a Director/Producer/Writer with self-shooting and editing skills. A strong believer in everyone having their own story to tell, I've directed documentaries, factual, drama and children's programmes for BBC, Channel 4, ITV, UKTV and Teachers TV. I've led crews of many shapes, sizes and temperaments (!), and from tots to an octogenarian comedienne, from chaotic teenagers to presenters I've worked with a diversity of people in front of the camera. An eclectic mix but what unites my work is a feel for the personality of contributors on screen (and a sensitivity to them as individuals on and off screen), a sense of visual imagery and an enjoyment of telling stories in an engaging way. As a filmmaker (and as a viewer) I'm passionate about well-crafted films.

## broadcast work

**"mad about elvis"** (2017/18) Director HD, 30'

Elvis is alive and well and, every September since 2004, partying hard in Porthcawl, South Wales. With 35,000 visitors, the majority in costume, and fast becoming a Welsh institution, the Porthcawl Elvis Festival is the largest in the world. Meeting people who like to lose themselves as Elvis and people who like to lose themselves through watching make-believe Elvises, we explore why the lure of Elvis is still so intoxicating 40 years on from his death. Tx: **BBC1**, June 2018

**"where in the world?"** (2017) Director HD, 6 x 5'; 2 x 2'

Angel and his cousin Santiago live in rural Peru. Along with helping his great-grandfather on their smallholding and collecting Lucuma fruit to make ice cream, Angel loves to explore the mountain, play in the banana grove and to dance. His stories are part of a new children's documentary series, transporting viewers around the globe. Tx: 2017 **Evans Woolfe Media for Cbeebies**

**"the severn bridge at 50"** (2016) Director/Producer HD, 29'

Groundbreaking in concept, epitome of British 1960's engineering prowess, the iconic Severn Bridge made Britain world leaders in bridge design. Typical of the time though little thought was given to how it would be maintained. Battling the elements, today's specialist maintenance teams have to be every bit as inventive as the visionary engineers who built it, for to keep it safe every inch has to be in touching distance, not easy when suspended above the river with the highest tidal range in Britain. Tx: Sept 2016 **BBC2, BBC Wales and BBC West**

**"timeshift: the people's liners"** (2015) Director/Producer HD, 59'

A colourful voyage of high teas on the high seas, family pleasure trips and the original booze cruises in the company of passengers and crew of the steamers which plied between industrial cities and their nearest seaside and offered day trips from those resorts. Each ship attracted a devoted following, treating its passengers, whatever their pocket, to the trappings of an ocean voyage whilst rarely actually venturing out of sight of land. Tx: Nov 2015, **BBC4**.

**"on stage at the bristol old vic theatre school"** Director, 29'

Making it as an actor is tough. With a London showcase, two large productions and a gala, the months before graduation are a whirlwind. From read through to opening night the students give it their all, whilst trying to find work in a notoriously precarious profession. A film for the BBC "On

Stage" season. **Quintessence Films for BBC West** Tx: Nov 2015.

**"inside out west"** (2014/2010) Director/Producer, DV Cam/HD, 10 x 9'

Brunel's *SS Great Britain* the world's first luxury liner was shipwrecked on just her 7th voyage. Remarkably no one was killed and the ship saved. Archaeologist Mark Horton locates the shipwreck site on the lowest tide of the year... And in an eclectic series have also made an investigation into the future of the Library Service, a film on the future of county farms and a portrait of pierhead painter Thomas Chidgey. Produced by: **BBC West** Tx: **BBC1**, 2012/2010.

**"the mayor with the red trousers"** (2013) Director, HD, 29'

George Ferguson: architect, social entrepreneur and now Bristol's first directly elected mayor. He took on the machines of the main political parties... and won. From independent outsider to establishment insider this observational film follows the mayor who always wears red trousers through his first year in power as he strives to implement his ambitious vision in a time of austerity. **Quintessence Films for BBC West** Tx: November 2013.

**"ricky valance: my voice is my life"** (2011/12) Director, HD, 40'

The first Welshman to reach Number 1, Ricky Valance's life has been defined by one monster hit: *Tell Laura I Love Her*. But what is like to be known for just one song when personally and professionally you feel you are so much more? His fans may be aging and the venues may be smaller but, whilst he has his voice, he still takes to the stage 51 years on, determined to dispel the one hit wonder label. **Quintessence Films for BBC1 Wales** Tx: April 2012.

**"pint sized or super sized?"** (2011) Director, HD, 29'

With the industry in crisis dairy farmers face a fundamental choice: cut the crippling feed bill by returning to pasture farming or, chasing economies of scale, to expand massively. We meet three farmers, each striving to stay afloat, one who has chosen grass, a second who plans a 1,000 cow mega-dairy and a third who already keeps 1,650 cows in sheds all year and has applied for full planning retrospectively. High intensity or low intensity, global or local: how do we want our milk produced? **Quintessence Films for BBC1 Wales** Tx: 2011.

**"park life"** (2008) Director, DV Cam, 6 x 23'

"What type of people become zoo keepers?" muses Assistant Curator Jamie Craig, "it's a wide range from the glamorous, the handsome to anoraks who study one species of thrush for their entire lives". 259 species, (but sadly no thrushes) 24 keepers, 8 gardeners, this observational documentary series, set within the community of the Cotswold Wildlife Park explores the changing roles of zoos, observing relationships between people and animals in captivity and sharing in the passions and dedication of those who make the life and death decisions in a modern wildlife park. Produced by: **Quintessence Films**. Tx: **ITV West**, July/August 2008.

**"the 9 lives of dudley sutton"** (2008) Director, DV Cam, 23'

"What's life about if it's not about friendship, children, grandchildren, mates?" Some people think they know him as Tinker in "Lovejoy" but actor Dudley Sutton has played more parts than cats have lives and, in this film, we meet Dudley as his friends know him. Dudley is writing a comic poem celebrating the lively lives of a high-living tomcat. Private life and performing life mix as he persuades his friends to appear in a film version of the poem. Produced by: **Quintessence Films**. Tx: **ITV Westcountry**, May 2008.

**"building wonders"** (2007/2008) Director/Camera/Writer, DV Cam, 2 x 23'

What do iconic structures tell us about the history of the time? Historian Julian Richards investigates the story of Gloucester Cathedral and the Fosse Way, trying to get into the minds of the people who designed and constructed them, searching for clues in the field and walking the CGI plans. Produced by: **Available Light**. Tx: **ITV West/BBC World**, March 2008.

**"building britain"** (2007) Director/Camera, DVC Pro 29'

You can build striking buildings but without consideration for the people who live there and the way the public spaces around them are used, they are no more than empty shells. A polemic on inner city regeneration and where it so often goes wrong by architect George Ferguson. Produced by: **Available Light**. Tx: **BBC1**, June 2007, **BBC2**, August 2007.

**"bring on the dancing girls"** (2005) – Director/Producer – DV Cam 29'

88-year-old Betty Hockey was the forces "chin up girl", dancing the can-can to troops on the eve of D-day. Wanting to do her bit for the war effort, Betty was founder, impresario and risqué lead dancer of the Non Stops; an amateur company who performed over 1000 troop shows. Produced by: **Touch Productions** for "Peoples' War" season. Tx: **BBC1**, May 2005.

**"the forgotten pilots"** (2004) – Producer – Digi-beta 3 x 23'

"All we'd take were pyjamas and a map..." The story of the Air Transport Auxiliary, a unique civilian airforce of women pilots, disabled men and those thrown out of the RAF for dangerous flying who

delivered planes from factory to the front line during the Second World War. Told through the first hand testimonies of those who'd take "anything to anywhere", this is a story of heroines, heroes and mavericks. Produced by: **Quintessence Films**. Tx: **ITV West**, 2005.

### **"the big monster dig"** (2002/2003) – Director – Digi-beta 2 x 49'

Take one palaeontologist, one sedimentologist and one palaeobiologist, introduce them to a team of hardy fossil hunters and set them the task of investigating the life and times of a creature from the pre-historic world. In these 2 programmes we are on the trail of an iguanodon in Hastings and a pterosaur on the Isle of Wight. **RDF** for **Channel 4**. Tx: Sept '03

### **"the queen of camborne"** (2001) – Director – Digi-beta, 24'

From young farmers clubs to Funeral Directors' dinners, Cornwall's legendary stand up comedienne Mrs. Rosewarne has played them all. The creation of octogenarian Lilla Miller, Mrs. Rosewarne is Cornwall's colloquial first lady! Keeping young in spirit through her comedy, this is the story of a remarkable 86-year-old and the alter ego that has given her a second lease of life. Produced by: **Quintessence Films**. Tx: **Carlton/Westcountry**, 2002.

### **"porlock calling rockall"** (2001) – Director & Writer – Digi-beta/35mm, 22'.

Life is full of mysteries and codes to crack and that's not easy when you're not from round here and you're ten (especially if your parents have split up and you're receiving messages from alien galaxies!) Cinema short – on outsiders, an 'alien' and the shipping forecast, funded through The South West Production Fund. Production Company: **Quintessence Films**. Tx: **HTV** Aug 2001. **Short-listed** for the Prix Jeunesse, Munich Film Festival, June 2002.

## **theatrical**

### **"acting my age"** (2010) Director, Co-Producer, DV Cam, 35'

As a child, actor Dudley Sutton was forever being told to act his age. Now 77 he challenges the roles that, as an actor and an individual, he is expected to play. Documentary, drama, animation, polemic and poetry intertwine as Dudley questions and subverts the prejudices and preconceptions of age. Commissioned to open the 2010 Celebrating Age Festival in Bristol and entered for film festivals internationally. Produced by: **Quintessence Films**.

## **& in the archives...**

My early work encompasses documentaries **"brought up on oysters"** (1989) - devoured by connoisseurs, dredged by oystermen (**Channel 4**), **"a place of heaven"** (1991) - a film looking at attitudes towards physical disability as experienced by the residents of St. Teresa's Cheshire Home - (**TSW**), **"weekend warriors"** a film about people who prefer to live in the iron age - (**HTV**) and **"a step across the water"** (1996) a documentary following 16 year olds from the Isles of Scilly as they leave the islands to continue their education on the mainland (**Arts Council**). I've worked on 3 series of **Channel 4's "watercolour challenge"** (1999 - 2001), 25 programmes as Producer/Director, 5 as Series Director; I've also been a Producer/Director on 2 series of **BBC1's** series on fostering and adoption **"a family of my own"** (1999 - 2000). I have directed a devised drama **"not fair"** (1990) with a class of Manchester 10 year olds - and in their eyes life wasn't! - (**BBC Schools**), have directed and self shot a cross selection of films for **"teachers tv"** and have also been responsible for directing (or guilty of depending on your viewpoint) 28 episodes of the pre-school children's puppet series **"tots tv"** (1992-94) - **Ragdoll** for **ITV network**!

## **other interests/work**

I have led filmmaking workshops and been a visiting lecturer at UWE, Bristol Old Vic Theatre School, Bournemouth & Poole Film School and Manchester Metropolitan University. And I have a passion for boats! I'm the proud owner of a 15' cornish rowing skiff and have crewed on sailing boats in the Westcountry, New Zealand, the Canaries and on a passage from the Azores to Penzance. I also have interests in music, cinema, theatre, art, natural history, travel, current affairs, and history. And, embarrassed by my Spanish being so bad that when I asked for stamps I received a fruitcake I have been learning Spanish for the last 10 years and can now order both! (And direct 7-year-olds in Spanish!) Other jobs include teaching, crew on a pleasure boat, Christmas postman, gardener and burger taster. I lasted 8 days and haven't touched one since!