



## **BIOGRAPHY**

### **Rudy Valdez** Director

Rudy Valdez is an Emmy Award-winning Michigan-raised, New York City-based filmmaker committed to creating social, cultural, and political stories through a cinematic and meaningful lens. He got his start in film as a Camera Operator on the Peabody Award-winning, Sundance series "Brick City" and went on to direct a true passion project, "The Sentence" (HBO). Shot and directed by Valdez over the course of a decade, this feature documentary tells the very personal story of his sister's plight in the criminal justice system while tackling subjects like mandatory minimums and sentencing reform. For this work, the filmmaker won the 2019 Primetime Emmy Award for Exceptional Merit in Documentary Filmmaking, US Documentary Audience Award at the 2018 Sundance Film Festival and was a 2018 Critics Choice Documentary Awards Best New Director nominee.

Prior to "The Sentence," Valdez has worked as a Cinematographer on a multitude of projects including: "The Last Patrol" (HBO), directed by Academy Award-nominated Director Sebastian Junger; "Whoopi Goldberg presents Moms Mabley: I Got Something To Tell You" (HBO) produced and directed by Whoopi Goldberg, premiering at the 2013 Tribeca Film Festival; "Remembering the Artist, Robert De Niro, Sr.," (HBO), premiering at the 2014 Sundance Film Festival; "The Conversation Series, a New York Times OpDoc;" the series "Second Coming?: Will Black America Decide the 2012 Election?" (BET); "Prison Dogs," directed by Primetime Emmy Award-winning Director Geeta Gandbhir and Perri Peltz, premiering at the 2015 Tribeca Film Festival; "Buried Above Ground," directed by Ben Selkow, premiering at the Woodstock Film Festival; as well as, "The Talk" (PBS), directed by Academy Award-nominated Director Sam Pollard.

Valdez's most recent project, "ReOpening Night," a feature film about The Public Theater's staging of a beloved New York City institution, Shakespeare in the Park, following the COVID-19 pandemic. It premiered on HBO Max in December. This past summer, "Breakaway," a feature film following WNBA superstar, Maya Moore and her fight for criminal justice reform, premiered on ESPN in July 2021 (produced by Rockin' Robin Productions); and its complementary short, "Make Him Known," premiered at the 2021 Miami Film Festival and made appearances at the Sarasota Film Festival, The Brooklyn Film Festival, Minneapolis Film Festival, and Nantucket Film Festival. His four-part docu-series, "We Are: The Brooklyn Saints" (produced by Imagine Documentaries), is currently streaming on Netflix. He also co-directed the premiere episode of "Through Our Eyes" (HBO) alongside Academy Award-winning director, Geeta Gandbhir, a four-part docu-series from Sesame Workshop that explores the lives of American families from the perspective of children; how they navigate their circumstances with their families and the world at large. He is also in production on the definitive feature documentary of Carlos Santana (produced by Imagine Documentaries) and Disney+'s "CHOIR", a docu-series following the Detroit Youth Choir after their star turn on America's Got Talent (also produced by Imagine Documentaries). Valdez's repertoire now extends into the scripted arena as he recently sold a genre TV series he created to Amazon that is loosely based on his family and life experiences.