

Richard Curson Smith

Director

Richard Curson Smith is a freelance director, writer and producer who has made a wide range of single television films and series; across documentary, drama, comedy and performance, with Bafta, RTS, Grierson, Broadcast, Celtic Media, Prix Italia and Emmy awards and nominations. His production company is Absinthe Film Entertainment.



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Credits

Television

Production	Company	Notes
URBAN MYTHS: F FOR FAKENHAM 2020	Sky	Creator and director of an episode in Sky's Urban Myths strand. A true-ish tale of when Orson Welles, seeking money to complete his documentary masterpiece F for Fake, came to Norfolk to host a mystery series for Anglia TV.. with surprising consequences. Stars Robbie Coltrane, Saoirse Monica Jackson and Craig Ferguson.
NOVELS THAT CHANGED US 2019	BBC	Producer of 3 part series for BBC celebrating 300 years of the novel. Also directed the dramatized readings filmed on location with a host of well known actors.

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THE SON OF SAM 2017	Cream Productions/Absinthe for Discovery Network	As series Producer. 3 part series about the panic that gripped New York in 1976-7 as a serial killer known as the Son of Sam stalked the city killing young women and couples late at night. The epic , flawed police investigation that finally led to his capture makes this one of the most extraordinary cases in 20th century crime. 40 years on the Son of Sam case still resonates and is told for the 1st time by the detectives, the surviving victims and the journalists who participated in the events.
FRANCIS BACON: A BRUSH WITH VIOLENCE 2017	IWC Media for BBC/ARTE ZDF	As producer/director. Francis Bacon was the greatest, rudest, drunkest and most sought after British artist of the C20th. He presented himself as Roaring Boy, Conveyor of Violence and Sensation, and Champion of figurative painting. All that was true enough, but behind it was a far more fragile world of love and loss that Francis Bacon sought to keep hidden, and which can now be revealed in a powerful feature-length documentary 25 years after his death.
END OF THE DREAM 2015	Cream Productions for Discovery Films US	Writer/producer. 2 hour dramadoc movie special about the manhunt to find the killer of Martin Luther King , following his assassination in Memphis in 1968. A fugitive on the run and the FBI desperate to track him down, through the US, Canada and London while the world suspects the FBI's own involvement. * Nominated for Canadian Screen Award: Best Biography
TED HUGHES. STRONGER THAN DEATH 2015	Matchlight for BBC	Producer/director. 90 minute documentary special. The 1st major documentary profile of this major, controversial poet's life and work. * Winner: Celtic Media Award 2016. * Grierson nomination, Scottish BAFTA nomination.
THE APARTMENT 2012	Raw TV for SyFy/NBC	Dramatised account of a real life American haunting. For the Paranormal Witness series.

Film

Production	Company	Notes
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THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING OSCAR 2018	BBC	As writer/director. Ambitious feature-length dramatized documentary film for BBC 2 exploring the career and the surprising life of Oscar Wilde in the period leading up to his notorious imprisonment and exile. Its focus is a selection of specially adapted and produced extracts from the diverse range of Wilde's oeuvre, with a cast that includes Anna Chancellor and Claire Skinner.
JOE ORTON LAID BARE 2017	BBC	As producer/director. Feature length documentary celebrating the work and meteoric career of comic playwright Joe Orton, who was murdered by his lover Kenneth Halliwell in 1967. Featuring new documentary testimony from friends and colleagues, and dramatized extracts from his plays starring Sir Anthony Sher, Freddie Fox, Jaime Winstone and Ben Miles.
RUDOLF NUREYEV: DANCE TO FREEDOM 2015	IWC Media for BBC/ARTE/ZDF/ABC	Writer/director. Feature length drama-documentary telling the extraordinary story of Rudolph Nureyev's defection in Paris at the height of the Cold war, during the Kirov Ballet's tour of 1961. And the KGB's attempts to return him to Moscow. * Nominated for 2016 specialist factual BAFTA. * Winner Dance Screen Best Film. * Special mention Prix Italia 2016.

Drama

Production	Company	Notes
THE MAKING OF A LADY 2012	Runaway Fridge for ITV1	Single feature length drama. A romance and psychological horror story set at the turn of the century, adapted by Kate Brooke from a novel by Frances Hodgson Burnett, and starring Linus Roche, Lydia Wilson and James D'Arcy.
THE MINOR CHARACTER 2012	Warp Films / Sky Arts	A 30min adaptation of a Will Self short story starring David Tennant. Critically very well-received, as well as breaking Sky Arts' viewing figures record by 300%!
MILIBAND OF BROTHERS 2010	Blink for More4/C4	Co-Writer & Director. Comic drama doc about the duelling Miliband brothers, made in time for the leadership battle. (Co-writer: David Quantick).
PRIMEVAL 2009	Impossible Pictures/ITV	Director. 2 Episodes in Series III.
WIRE IN THE BLOOD: 'Falls the Shadow' 2008	Coastal Productions/ITV	Director. Double Episode in the final series.

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CONSENTING ADULTS 2007	BBC	Director. Wr: Julian Mitchell. Single drama about Jack Wolfenden, who steered the most significant piece of sexual legislation of the 20th century - the report that bears his name and decriminalised homosexuality in England. Starring Charles Dance. Won 2 Scottish BAFTA Awards.
PINOCHET IN SUBURBIA 2006	Tiger Aspect/BBC/HBO	Writer & Director. Feature-length dark comic drama about General Pinochet's arrest and 18 month detention in the UK at the end of the 1990s. Stars Derek Jacobi, Anna Massey, Peter Capaldi and Jessica Stevenson.
AGATHA CHRISTIE	BBC	Writer & Director. Drama exploring the real-life mystery of Agatha Christie's disappearance in 1926, the nationwide manhunt that followed, and the profound affect upon the woman who became the nation's foremost creator of mysteries. Stars Olivia Williams and Anna Massey. Nominated for a Rose d'Or Drama Award and a Grierson Award. Shown & repeated on Showtime in the US.
HOME	BBC	Writer & Director. A single drama based on a story by JG Ballard. An executive suffering from PTS vows never to leave his suburban home again. Thus begins a unique and disturbing social experiment. Stars Antony Sher. Nominated for an RTS Award. Nominated for 'Best Single Drama' at the Broadcast Awards.
SURREALISSIMO! The Scandalous Success of Salvador Dali	BBC	Single comic drama about Dali's rise to fame and his extraordinary adventures with the Surrealist group. Made for the launch night of BBC4, and simulcast on BBC2. Starring Ewen Bremner, Stephen Fry, Vic Reeves, The Mighty Boosh and Matt Lucas.
THE PRIVATE LIVES OF POMPEI	Illuminations/C4	As co-Writer and Director. Feature-length drama documentary following the fictional stories of inhabitants of Pompei in the run-up to the destruction of the city in AD79. Filmed on location in Southern Italy with a Neopolitan cast. Extensive CGI work.
IF	Blast Films for BBC	Writer & Director. A futuristic drama documentary exploring the growing epidemic of obesity, set in a treatment clinic.

Documentaries

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SEVEN DWARVES	C4	Series Director. A comic observational documentary series. In PP.
BLUE DIAMOND	Afro-Wisdom Films for C4	An observational documentary following an undercover police operation attempting to crack a major ring of diamond smugglers in South Africa.
BEYOND THE FATAL SHORE	Oxford Films for BBC/PBS	Two films in the series with the art critic and historian Robert Hughes returning to explore his native Australia. A journey which is completely transformed when Robert was nearly killed in a car crash at the start of filming.
ANATOMY OF DESIRE	Optomen for C4	A series of four documentary films examining the science, history and psychology of human sexual behaviour; using case study stories and behavioral experiments.
MILLENNIUM	Jeremy Isaacs Productions for BBC/Turner Broadcasting	A series of dramatised short films in Mexico, India, Japan and Russia for this EMMY winning season about the last thousand years. Shown globally.
PANDEMONIUM	BBC Arena	Performance film about the body and the machine, capturing amazing and terrifying mechanical spectacles staged by a range of artists and technicians. Shown and awarded at various international film festivals, including New York film festival.
SPENDING THE KIDS' INHERITANCE	BBC	An RTS/BAFTA nominated observational documentary film for 'Under the Sun' about America's travelling population of retirees, as over a million of them converge on their winter HQ in the Arizona desert.
THE LAST MACHINE	BBC/BFI	A series of five dramatised films in collaboration with Terry Gilliam as presenter, about the birth of the cinema and the modern world. Featuring Terry, Paul Rhys, Fiona Shaw and others. Screened on BBC and shown and awarded at various film centenary festivals.
HORIZON: NOAH'S FLOOD	BBC	The world's 2 most eminent earth scientists search for a genuine flood catastrophe in early human history as the source for the flood myths in the bible and Gilgamesh.
DEAD PRESIDENTS	C4	EMMY nominated 3 part film essay with Gore Vidal, about the American Presidency, staged as an anti-presidential address.
INSIDE VICTOR LEWIS SMITH	BBC	Six part cult comedy series featuring Victor in a coma, trapped in a very unusual hospital. Directed all episodes. Featured Roger Lloyd Pack, Nickolas Grace etc.

10 x 10: WITH BOUNCING SOLES	BBC	The 1st season of BBC new directors scheme. A short comic film about Dr. Martens boots. Written with and starring Patrick Marber.
BURNING MAN	MTV/C4	Filmed as a documentary record of the astonishing Burning Man festival in Nevada