



FILM SYNOPSIS

I Know a Man ... Ashley Bryan (2016, 73 min.) by Richard Kane and Robert Shetterly is about this 93-year-old creative wonder who skips and jumps in his heart like a child. Born in 1923, Ashley was raised in the Bronx, New York. Drafted out of art school into the segregated US army at age nineteen, Ashley preserved his humanity throughout World War II by drawing and stowing supplies in his gas mask when necessary. He served in an all-Black battalion and experienced the racism of a separatist Army and the carnage of D-Day. As a result he dedicated his life to creating beauty and joy, spreading love and awe through his art. He's a poet/illustrator of over 50 children's books, makes magical puppets and sea glass windows from found objects inspired by his African heritage.

Ashley lives on the remote Cranberry Islands, Maine, and has been using art his entire life to celebrate joy, mediate the darkness of war and racism, explore the mysteries of faith, and create loving community. The film explores his world from the time his father “*was given the mop and the broom*”, (a reference to the Gordon Parks famous photograph). He quotes Marian Anderson admonishing, “*to keep another down you have to hold them down, and therefore cannot ... soar to the potential within you.*” He spreads beauty through his linocut prints exhorting “*Let My People Go*”. His life story and the art he makes from this wellspring of experience is an inspiration to people of all ages.

Ashley’s art has been widely recognized with numerous prestigious awards including the New York Public Library Literary Lions (2008) the Coretta Scott King Book Award (2017, 2012, 2008, 2004, 1998, 1992, 1988, 1987, 1983, 1981)) and the Newbery Honor Award (2017).



ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

RICHARD KANE is an independent director whose work is focused on the intersection of art and contemporary American life. His previous film release, *Imber's Left Hand*, is the fifteenth in the Maine Masters collection, a New England Emmy-nominated series of



portraits that airs on public television and has received the commitment of American Public Television (APT) to market the series to the 365 public television affiliates. *Imber's Left Hand* continues on the festival tour and has to date won four BEST FILM Audience Awards. It is now represented by Film Movement, distributor of

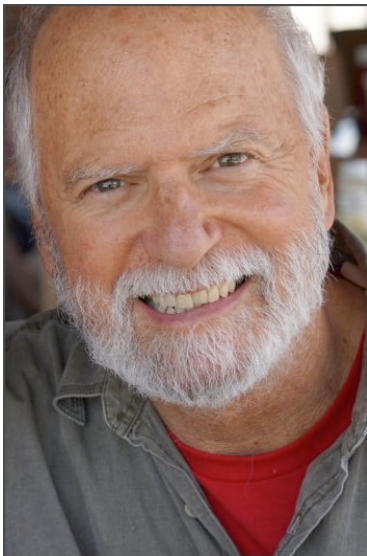
critically acclaimed independent films. The series is fiscally sponsored by the Union of Maine Visual Artists, a 501(c)(3) non-profit educational institution. With partner MELODY LEWIS-KANE, their company, Kane-Lewis Productions, has worked for National Geographic, The Discovery Channel, the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and the White House Office of Technology Policy among many others. Kane-Lewis produced the Natural Resources Council of Maine's 50th anniversary film *Protecting the Nature of Maine*, an indie doc *ROCK SOLID: The Schoodic International Sculpture Symposium* and the classic award-winning documentary *M.C. Richards: The Fire Within*. *J. Fred Woell: An American Vision* will be the 17th episode and will be released soon. From 2007-2016 Richard served as chair of the Maine Film & Video Association.



MELODY LEWIS-KANE is a potter, arts educator and filmmaker and is the primary consultant on all arts and education films produced by Kane-Lewis Productions. She is Richard Kane's partner in their production company and often acts as producer and interviewer.



For *Imber's Left Hand* Melody's role was co-producer, interviewing several subjects and participating in all editing reviews. She was the producer of the documentary *M.C. Richards: The Fire Within*, selected for 12 film festivals winning Best Film at the Image Gazer Film Festival, and produced a series of arts-in-education teacher training films for the John F. Kennedy Center Education Department. Melody produced and co-wrote *Arts & History: Storytelling* funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the Kennedy Center Education Department. She is the author of four arts-in-education curriculum guides including the guide that accompanies the Maine Masters film *Stephen Pace: Maine Master*, a film that was nominated for a New England Emmy Award.



ROBERT SHETTERLY is Richard Kane's primary collaborator on his films about art and artists. Robert was born in 1946 in Cincinnati, Ohio. He graduated in 1969 from Harvard College with a degree in English Literature. At Harvard he took some courses in drawing which changed the direction of his creative life -- from the written word to the image. Also, during this time, he was active in Civil Rights and in the Anti-Vietnam War movement. After college and moving to Maine in 1970, he taught himself drawing, printmaking, and painting. For twelve years he created the

editorial page drawings for **The Maine Times** newspaper, illustrated National Audubon's children's newspaper **Audubon Adventures**, and approximately 30 books. Since 2002 he has been painting a series of portraits titled "**Americans Who Tell the Truth**" that highlight citizens who courageously address issues of social, environmental, and economic fairness. The portraits now number over 250. The exhibits have been traveling around the country since 2003. Venues have included everything from university museums and grade school libraries to sandwich shops, the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in New York City, and the Superior Court in San Francisco. To date, the exhibits have visited 27 states. In 2005, Dutton published a book of the portraits by the same name. In 2006, the book won the top award of the International Reading Association for Intermediate non-fiction. Rob has been an extraordinary asset to our team in the making of this series of films on Great American Artists. He is our primary interviewer and consultant on all stages of postproduction.



NATIONAL OUTREACH CAMPAIGN

After very successful premieres at the Maine and Camden International Film Festivals and a standing room only hometown premiere in Bar Harbor, Maine, we are launching our Impact and Community Outreach Campaign that will take us to venues nationwide throughout 2017.

Through the film, the campaign seeks to bring forward the extraordinary life of artist Ashley Bryan and to engage individuals in changing the conversation about race in America to one based on love, community and art. The film is a project of the Union of Maine Visual Artists in collaboration with The Ashley Bryan Center.

I Know a Man...Ashley Bryan will travel to film festivals, schools, organizations, and other venues across the United States sparking conversations and inspiring action that help bridge the current racial divide, acting as a platform for education and positive change.

As part of the campaign, we are actively seeking local, regional and national partners that join us to further the following efforts:

- Host public screening and Q&A programs.
- Host school dialogues and screenings for children K-12 and college students.
- Underwrite a companion discussion and educational guide for the film to be offered online at no cost to schools across the country.
- Underwrite theatrical premieres in major cities.

We are always interested in bringing *I Know a Man...Ashley Bryan* to new audiences. To learn more about this national outreach campaign visit www.ashleybryanfilms.org



FILM FESTIVALS

Providence Children Film Festival, 2017

Portland Youth Film Festival, 2017

Camden International Film festival, 2016

Maine International Film Festival, 2016

PRAISE FOR *I KNOW A MAN...ASHLEY BRYAN*

"This is such an important project. I think that the film is essential to chronicling the life of this man who goes beyond being an artist. Ashley Bryan is a gentle activist, and I believe that history will remember him as one of the more important humanitarians of our time. Good work, Richard!"

- Mary Laury, Schoodic Arts for All, Executive Director

"A major achievement ... the film flew by so quickly mostly because of Ashley's remarkable energy, love of life, spiritual and social aspects, and most of all, his lifelong devotion to the arts which have sustained him. You captured it all."

- Bruce Brown, Curator Emeritus of the Center for Maine Contemporary Art

"I Know a Man ... Ashley Bryan, whose art has been a beacon of light in a much needed world where people of all ages can enjoy the message of hope and joy that we see in graphic form. We learn and laugh with the characters his puppets present and we rejoice when seeing the colors that comprise his beautiful paintings. Ashley's art lives on in our minds even when it is not before us."

- David Driskell, Artist/Curator/Scholar

"800 hundred years from now we're still gonna have Ashley Bryan puppets...and paintings because he's opened up the world"

- Nikki Giovanni, Poet



FILM CREDITS

Kane-Lewis Productions and the Union Of Maine Visual Artists Present *I Know A Man ... Ashley Bryan*:

Director	Richard Kane
Director Of Photography/Editor	Richard Kane
Producers	Richard Kane and Robert Shetterly
Executive Producers	Alan and Jacqueline Stuart
Co-Executive Producers	Philip and Richard Grausman, Henry and Donna Isaacs, Dan and Cynthia Lief and Charlene and Tony Marshall
Co-Producers	Emily and Ron Axelrod, Nora Gleason Leary and Robert Leary, Melody Lewis-Kane and Rick Sonder and Susan Monserud
Music	Kim and Reggie Harris with Bernice Johnson Reagon, Barney Balch and Mickey Felder, Alexandre Lecarme, Shizue Sano, Toma Popovici, Artur Lukomyansky, and Jan Müller-Szeraws
Additional Videography	Jeff Dobbs, Rich Entel, Jacob Kane, Ken Woisard



OUTREACH AND DISTRIBUTION TEAM

Marga Varea, Outreach & Engagement Director, has worked in the film and television industries for almost twenty years. Earlier in her career she was a screenwriter, script supervisor, and producer and was the founding partner of a thriving production company in Madrid, Spain (Great Ways), and the co-founder of a film festival (Cortogenia). She was the line producer of a student category Emmy Award winner "Dos Mas" (2001).

After relocating to the US in 2003, Marga focused her work on independent documentary films designing and implementing impact and engagement campaigns and consulting for film/arts related happenings. She also writes, researches and fundraises for film projects. Marga has led outreach efforts for great films and festivals, including Emmy-nominated, POV/PBS documentary "Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North" (Katrina Browne, 2008), award-winning historical documentary "Rebel" (Maria Aguí Carter, 2013) groundbreaking "1913 Seeds of Conflict" (Ben Loeterman, 2014) and the Nation's Capital Environmental Film Festival *on Tour* Boston. She believes in the power of stories to inspire change and encourage action. She understands the importance of reaching wide audiences and to extending the life of documentary films through well-designed, multi-platform strategies.

Marga holds a masters' degree in Journalism and Media Studies from Complutense University (Madrid, Spain).



FILM SPECS

Running time: 73 min.

Educational version running time: 30 min.

Aspect ratio: 16x9 (1.78)

LTRT stereo

Available in NTSC

SCREENINGS & PRESS

Marga Varea: mgvarea@gmail.com

<https://ashleybryanfilms.org/contact/>

DVD PURCHASES

DVD for home use only available in the summer of 2017

www.ashleybryanfilms.org