

Rob Epstein Short Biography

Rob Epstein is a director, writer and producer who has achieved an international reputation for crafting moving, thought-provoking and socially relevant content for over three decades. He has been honored with two Academy Awards, five Emmy Awards, three Peabodys and both a Guggenheim and Rockefeller Fellowship for a body of work that has screened worldwide, in cinemas, on television, home video and digital platforms, at museums, and at leading film festivals such as Sundance, Berlin, Venice, Telluride, Toronto and New York. In 2008, Rob was recognized with the Pioneer Award from the International Documentary Association (IDA) for distinguished lifetime achievement, and has received career achievement awards from Frameline, OUTFEST, and the Provincetown International Film Festival. Since 1987, Rob and his producing partner Jeffrey Friedman have worked under the Telling Pictures banner, traversing the worlds of non-fiction and scripted narrative to cultivate a unique brand of socially relevant and pioneering storytelling.

Rob began his career working on the landmark documentary *Word Is Out*, released in theaters in 1977, airing nationally on prime-time public television, and recently restored for DVD. Rob's next project was the Oscar-winning feature documentary *The Times of Harvey Milk*, which he conceived, directed, co-produced and co-edited. The film became an international festival sensation, winning the Academy Award for Best Feature documentary as well as the New York Film Critics Award for Best Non-Fiction Film of 1985. In 2013, the Library of Congress selected it for the National Film Registry, and the film is now also part of the prestigious Criterion Collection. *Harvey Milk* was recently named as one of "25 most influential documentaries of all time" by the Cinema Eye Honors.

Rob won his second Oscar for the documentary *Common Threads: Stories from the Quilt*, made with Jeffrey Friedman. Rob's other films with Jeffrey include the box office hit *The Celluloid Closet* (Emmy Award for directing), the HBO documentary *Paragraph 175* (Sundance Film Festival jury award for directing), *Where Are We?*, and most recently, *And the Oscar Goes to...* for Turner Classic Movies, and *Killing The Colorado* for Discovery. Moving from documentary into scripted narrative, Rob and Jeffrey collaborated on the feature film *HOWL*, starring James Franco, which received the Freedom of Expression Award from the National Board of Review; followed by *Lovelace*, starring Amanda Seyfried, Peter Sarsgaard and Sharon Stone. Both films premiered at the Sundance and Berlin Film Festivals.

In addition to his filmmaking career, Rob is a professor at California College of the Arts, where he also serves as Co-chair of the Film program. He has also been a visiting professor at the Graduate Film Program at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. He currently serves on the Sundance Institute's Board of Trustees. He is a member of the Directors Guild of America and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, where he served on the Board of Governors, representing and chairing the Documentary Branch for three terms.