

BIOGRAPHY

Director and Producer James Kicklighter

Director James Kicklighter was born in 1988, where he spent the first eighteen years of his life in Bellville, Georgia, population 123. Since then, he has gone on to become an award-winning director and producer of narrative films, documentaries and advertising.

His work has been recognized by the world's press, including *The Hollywood Reporter*, *The Times of India*, *Film Courage* and *FilmInk Australia*. Kicklighter has served as a panelist at the Oscar®-qualifying Hollyshorts Film Festival, taught filmmaking courses on Stage32.com, and his interview series with the popular YouTube channel Film Courage has over 250,000 views. He resides in Los Angeles, California and still can't believe he gets to work across the country and around the globe.

Upcoming Work

In 2022, James Kicklighter will release his multi-year documentary, *The American Question*, filmed from December 2016 – 2021. Following ordinary citizens in the swing states of Pennsylvania and Michigan, the film examines the root of American polarization and the repercussions of eroded civic institutions, public trust and leadership, providing solutions to solve the problem. Guided by an all-star lineup of experts, including Amy Chua (*Day of Empire*), Colin Woodard (*American Nations*), Yuval Levin (*The Fractured Republic*) and Yascha Mounk (*The People vs. Democracy*), we examine the broader arc of history and discover new revelations about the shared values system that binds society together.

Kicklighter directs and produces *The American Question* with a creative team including producer Guy Seemann, an international political consultant, director of photography Jonathan Pope (Emmy® Award Nominee, *The Social Dilemma*), editors Mohamed El Manasterly (Emmy® Award Winner, *The Square*), J.D. Sievertson, a.c.e. ("Cosmos") and Carlos Puga (Emmy® Award Winner, "True Life"), featuring original animation from Filmograph (*Ghostbusters: Afterlife*, *Candyman*, *Promising Young Woman*).

Previous Work

In June 2021, Kicklighter released *The Sound of Identity*, now streaming on STARZ and rated 91% fresh on Rotten Tomatoes. In the spotlight of global media coverage, Lucia Lucas, the first transgender woman to perform as Don Giovanni in a professional opera, makes her historic debut in one of the reddest states in America. From director James Kicklighter, *The Sound of Identity* is produced by Emmy Award-winning producers Russ Kirkpatrick & Andy Kinslow and is executive produced by Golden Globe®-winner and Academy Award®-nominated Josh Bachove (*Minari*, *The Little Hours*), with Jonathan Pope (Emmy® Award Nominee, *The Social Dilemma*) as Director of Photography.

Kicklighter produced, edited and co-wrote the directorial debut of youth advocate and novelist Jim St. Germain ("A Stone of Hope"), *Every 9 Hours* (2019), a modern-day exploration of skin color and identity in society. Starring Philip Smithy ("Switched at Birth"), Elizabeth Ferrera ("Lethal Weapon"), Kahyun Kim ("American Gods") and Danny Trejo (*Predator*, *Machete*) the film debuted at numerous film festivals across the country, now streaming on Amazon's Prime Video.

Returning to the director's chair, *Angel of Anywhere* (2018) is the story of an empathetic stripper who plays therapist to his many damaged clientele and co-workers. *Angel of Anywhere* stars Briana Evigan (*Step Up Movie 2: The Streets*), Ser'Darius Blain (*Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle*, "Charmed"), and introduces Axel Roldos as Angel. Streaming on multiple platforms, *Angel* screened at over a dozen global festivals, including the Oscar® qualifying Hollyshorts and Sidewalk Film Festivals, winning Best Narrative Short at the 2018 Macon Film Festival. The film was distributed domestically by Hewes Pictures on ShortsTV.

His first feature film, *Desires of the Heart*, was released theatrically across India in November 2015. Kris Sharma (Val Lauren, *Medal of Honor*, *Sal*) leaves a budding romance with an artist (Alicia Minschew, "All My Children") in Savannah for a marriage arranged by his parents in India. There, he discovers centuries old secrets that may determine the fate of his destiny. Shot in Savannah and Rajasthan, India, *Desires* was an official selection of numerous festivals across the United States and around the world, including the Cannes Marché du Film and was the winner of Best Foreign Film at the Los Angeles Femme Film Festival.

He was the for Film Director for Hillary Clinton's 2016 Presidential Campaign in Virginia, directing content featuring Sen. Tim Kaine, Sean Astin, Lena Dunham ("Girls"), Kate Walsh, ("Grey's Anatomy") Bellamy Young ("Scandal"), Constance Wu ("Fresh off the Boat"), Miley Cyrus, Olympic figure skater Michelle Kwan, former secretary of state Madeleine Albright, amongst other public, private and political figures.

Philanthropy

Director James Kicklighter is on the Advisory Board for AMBITION, a Los Angeles-based entrepreneurial program for disadvantaged youth that fosters innovation, solution-driven thinking, confidence and positive work ethic through collaborative hands-on participation, real-world business experience and powerful, consistent connections with successful business leaders, entrepreneurs and special guests.

He also serves on the Advisory Board for the Department of Communication Arts at Georgia Southern University, his alma mater. He was chosen out of over 30,000 living graduates to be listed on the inaugural Georgia Southern 40 Under 40 Alumni, selected for "impact in business, leadership, community, educational and/or philanthropic endeavors."