

THE TRADESMEN

Making an Art of Work



A RICHARD YEAGLEY DOCUMENTARY

www.thetradesmendocumentary.com



These are the men who build the foundations for our lives.

The Tradesmen: Making an Art of Work is an eighty eight minute exploratory social documentary. It will engage the viewer as they watch the vocational lives of several tradesmen and will discuss the issues encompassing the trades in contemporary America. The documentary is a real and unflinching look at the lives and work of the modern tradesman and is an exposition into the socioeconomic topics relating to the modern blue-collar craftsman.

The documentary examines the work, idiosyncrasies, and personal convictions of a multitude of working professionals, including two plumbers, two painters, a stone/brick mason, several carpenters, two auto mechanics, and numerous other craftsmen. Interspersed with the capturing of the documented tradesmen, will be interviews with academic subjects on issues pertaining to the socioeconomic, intellectual, and philosophical aspects underlying many aspects related to modern trade work. The hybrid presentation includes a balance of academic analysis as well as observational and direct documentation.



**FOR MEDIA INQUIRIES,
PLEASE CONTACT**

**RICHARD YEAGLEY
(443) 629-4195**

RYEAGLEY3@YAHOO.COM

Interview Subjects and Participants



Mike Rose is currently on the faculty of the UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies. He is the author of ten books including *The Mind at Work: Valuing the Intelligence of the American Worker*.

Judith Lombardi has an extensive career in social services and education. She is a social worker by trade, and has a Ph. D. from the Union Institute in Human Relations and Cybernetics.



Joe Lamacchiardi is the owner of a million dollar landscaping company, creator of the website *bluecollarandproudoft.com*, and author of the book, *Blue Collar & Proud of It*.

Mike Rowe is a Baltimore native and host of the television series, *Dirty Jobs*. The EG conference in which Mike discusses many of the themes linked to his nascent company, *Mike Rowe Works*, will be included as a predicate for many elements addressed in the documentary.



Director's Statement

Richard Yeagley - Director, Producer, Writer, Editor

I was raised in a place called "Charm City" - most know it as Baltimore. Growing up, I vividly remember the blue-collar nature of the individuals and the city itself. At this point in my life I no longer have a daily connection to the blue-collar worker, and I have lost touch with the very essence of my upbringing and the people who occupy my childhood and adolescent memories. After graduating from college, moving away from my hometown, and entering the workforce, I began to notice a pervasive bias against work that required any form of manual labor and described as blue collar. In principle, this sentiment without any firsthand experience was unfair and disparaging towards tradesmen and their work. But why are such attitudes ubiquitous within our current cultural landscape? Where does the current cultural bias come from? Is it influenced by technological advances and novel opportunities in other occupations? Or opinions of limited financial prosperity in trade-work, and the potential for higher wages in other fields? Or is it inherent in the current educational curriculum and paradigm? I set out to produce a documentary which sets out to explore these questions.



Crew Personnel

Jeff Cannon Director of Photography

This is Jeff Cannon's first feature length production. He has worked on several short form narratives including, Stranger (Ind. Short, 16mm, 2008), Living Classrooms (Ind. Short, 16mm, 2008), and The Brothers War (Ind. Short, HD, 2007).

Michael Archacki Re-recording Mixer & Sound Designer

Michael has tackled diverse projects ranging from commercials for Adidas and Monster.com, to the acclaimed reality series, Hell's Kitchen. Feature film credits include Not the One (2007) and Save the Pirates (In production, 2010). His television film credit includes, Luke 11:17 (2008) and The Resolve (2010).

Jon Jacobsen Associate Producer & Music Supervisor

Jon has an extensive career in the post-production realm. He has worked as a Post Production Supervisor and Motion Graphics Producer for commercials, television, and films. He has worked for such companies as Digital Domain, A52, and Sony Pictures.



Production Notes

Every subject that was captured during the documentary process was both engaging and immensely appreciative of the recognition they were receiving. Documenting the average day of a trade worker, I lucidly witnessed the antithesis of the white collar disposition and workplace environment. The construction site is not smothered with standard operating procedures or rigid protocols, but it is a place where experience, trust, and specialization allow for a fully functioning and fun workplace. The fact that many of the individuals I documented were either independent contractors or a small business with one or two employees, created a shooting atmosphere that was sincere, authentic, and absent of bureaucratic and micromanaged control mechanisms.

Another conspicuous aspect I discerned during the production was the level of extreme passion and absolute focus these men and women exhibited when immersed in their work. It was a true joy and exceptionally easy to capture the subjects in their natural state. When I would arrive at a job site and state to the subjects that “I just want to observe, and further explained, “pretend we are not here”, the tradesmen would then proceed with unperturbed concentrated involvement in their work. Jeff Cannon, director of photography, and I, Richard Yeagley, who doubled as director and field audio recorder, captured stunning visuals and auditory elements of actuality because of the understood arrangement we, the documentary crew had with the subjects. The ease in which the workers immersed themselves in their work, even though there was a camera present, proved to me the necessary levels of cognition, focus, and fundamental craftsmanship that is inherent in the work of a specialized trade worker.



Production Notes (Con't)

Of course, just like in any industry, there are differences of skill and experience of the individuals in the workforce. Luckily, through diligence, research, and preliminary conversation, I was able to find suitable subjects who I felt would be interesting to capture and who, as I often say, will produce a “micro-story”. My approach was to scout and meet as many trade workers as needed and to create a vignette for each individual or company I met. After a while, I did not need to scout out potential subjects. All of the subjects I met and shot were through word of mouth. The theme song on set became, “one tradesman leads to another tradesman, and another tradesman leads to another.” As the principal photography transpired, there was a thread effect that was pervasive, in which all of the subjects’ stories would invariably tie-in in some way to the another subject’s story. The documentary story was forming. This created a path for approaching a linear representation during the editing process. Like most documentaries that are devoid of a script, the moment a linear path to telling the story becomes salient, there is a satisfaction that is ineffable to anyone who has never tried to work in the documentary medium. This process of discovery and story threading is what I recognize as the most attractive part to producing a documentary film.

After copious amounts of observing, I would typically engage the individuals through subtle prodding or through direct inquisition. All of the subjects were more than willing to verbally participate. Although they were all completely transparent, I would generally get a sense that most were unsure why they were selected to be a participating subject in a documentary film. This was an absolute display of the modesty and humility that exists in the blue collar individual.