



Introduction to Phil Grabsky. 1:50 min. Interview: Raymond Elman. Post-Production: Sophia Bolivar. Music: Joseph Elguera. **Recorded via ZOOM** 10/27/2022, London + Miami.

# Filmmaker

# Phil Grabsky

## Presents the Arts

By Elman + Bolivar

**P**HIL GRABSKY is a BAFTA-winning British documentary filmmaker who has received multiple awards for his directing, writing, producing and cinematography.

He and his companies, **Exhibition on Screen** and **Seventh Art Productions**, are behind films such as “Muhammad Ali – Through the Eyes of the World,” “In Search of Beethoven,” “In Search of Mozart,” and the landmark “My Childhood, My Country – 20 Years in Afghanistan,” which won Best Single Documentary at the 2022 Television BAFTAs and was also nominated for its cinematography. **Grabsky has made over 250 films which have played in cinemas and on TV and digital platforms worldwide.**

Among the many films Grabsky has directed for television are multiple single episode films for Channel 4, ITV, the BBC, Discovery, A&E, PBS, Sky Arts and others, as well as major series such as “I Caesar – the Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire,” “The Great Commanders,” and “Spain – In the Shadow of the Sun.” Seventh Art has also made six enormously popular history films with Monty Python’s Terry Jones, and it has been the world’s biggest producer of arts film for cinema and TV over the last 20 years.

Phil Grabsky also made the first surround-sound documentary, “The Lost Temple of Java,” for the BBC and the world’s first 3D visual arts film, “Tim Marlow on British Sculpture at the Royal Academy of Arts,” for Sky Arts 3D.

Grabsky’s Great Composers series includes the four hugely popular “In Search Of films,” each exploring the life and music of a different classical composer (Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn and Chopin), as well as the ground-breaking feature “Concerto – A Beethoven Journey” which follows world-famous pianist Leif Ove Andsnes on his extensive journey through the five Beethoven piano concertos. “In Search of Mozart” premiered at London’s Barbican concert hall in front of 1000 people in 2006.

In 2007, Grabsky completed “Escape from Luanda,” which tells the tale of three students at Angola’s only music school. Other films cover a broad range of topics, from Brazilian footballer Pele and Muhammad Ali to “Heavy Water: A Film for Chernobyl” (2006), which explores the Chernobyl nuclear disaster through Mario Petrucci’s poetry. The Chernobyl film, which he worked on with director David Bickerstaff, won Best Short Documentary at the Cinequest Film Festival.

Grabsky has also written four history books, including “The Great Artists” – co-authored with Tim Marlow – and the best-seller “The Great Commanders.” He is regularly involved as a judge for the Emmys, BAFTAs, Grierson and One World awards, and has won numerous personal awards himself including Royal Television Society awards for both Best Director and Services to Television, and a Voice of the Listener and Viewer Award for Services to Education.

Grabsky also lectures and gives masterclasses and has been invited to talk on Radio 3 (In Tune), Radio 4 (the Today Show, Start the Week, The History Quiz), Radio 5, BBC Southern Counties (Breakfast show, Film Review, Music of my Life), Classic FM, LBC, TalkSport, Times Radio, BC World Service and many more internationally. He also frequently attends question & answer sessions with his films in the UK and around the world. He also has an art blog and hosts the popular podcast “Painting of the Week.”

In 2009, Grabsky and his colleagues began work on a new arts genre for the cinema: “Exhibition on Screen,” which brings major art exhibitions – and intimate biographies of the artists – to cinema, mainstream television and home entertainment platforms worldwide. The *Guardian* said of Exhibition on Screen: “Just occasionally something will crop up that restores your faith in humanity’s future. Exhibition on Screen is a global phenomenon.” Exhibition on Screen now plays in 1500 cinemas and 60+ countries worldwide and has produced 36 films on artists including Edward Hopper, Leonardo da Vinci, Vincent van Gogh, Rembrandt, Hockney, Frida Kahlo, Vermeer and many more.

**More information is available at <https://seventh-art.com/> and <https://exhibitiononscreen.com/>**

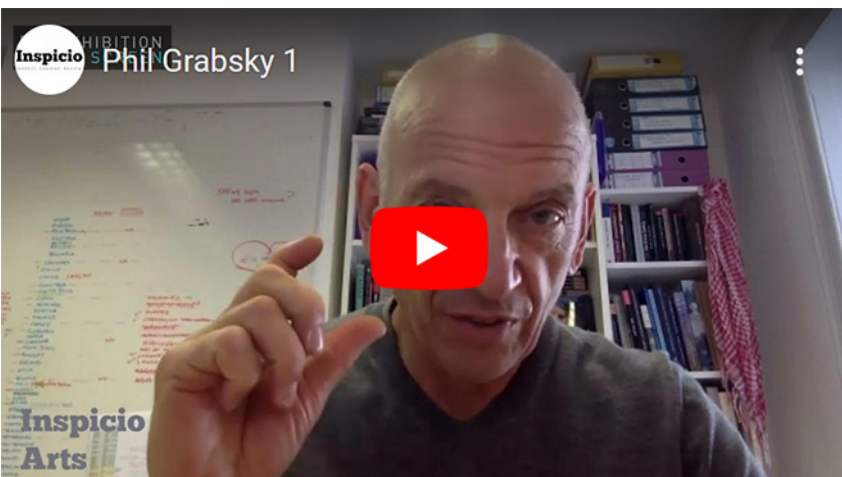
The videos below were **recorded via Zoom**, are organized by Success Factor, and run between 1 minute and 6 minutes. Click on any video. You must be connected to the Internet to view the videos.

Trailer for “Hopper: An American Love Story”: 1:22 min.



Trailer for “Hopper: An American Love Story” produced by Exhibition on Screen

EXPOSURE TO BROAD INFLUENCES: 1:34 min.



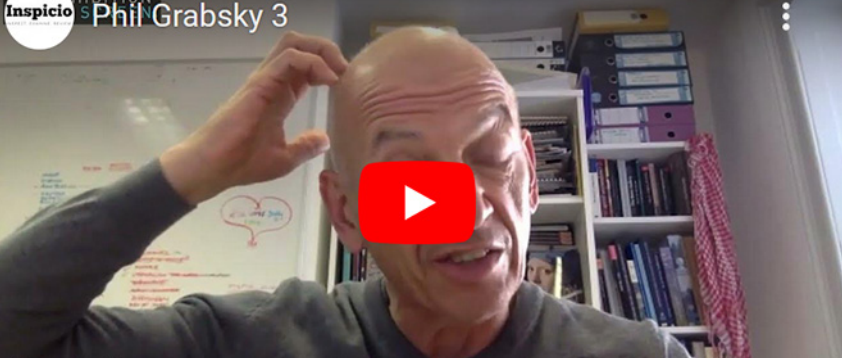
Where did you grow up and what was your first awareness of art of any discipline?

STRONG DRIVE FOR ACHIEVEMENT: 3:56 min.



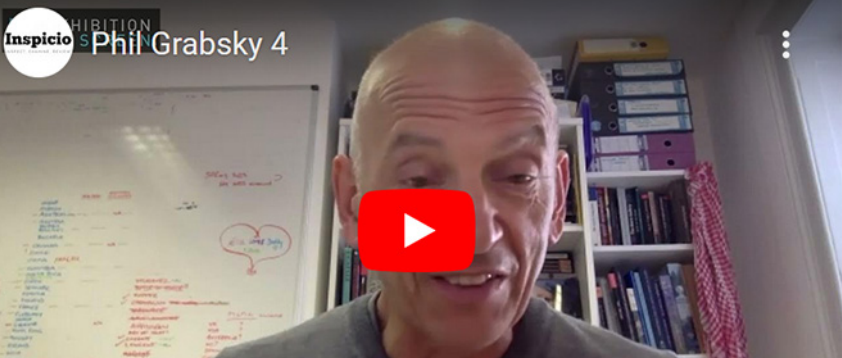
When did you become passionate about filmmaking?

SEIZES OPPORTUNITIES: 2:21 min.



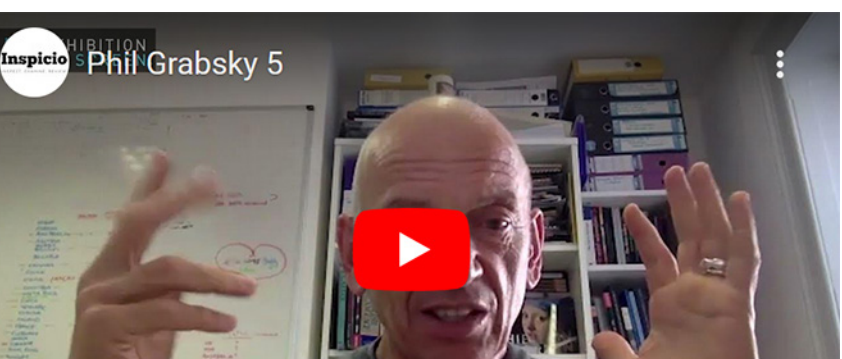
What is your first piece of advice to those who want to become documentary filmmakers?

COLLABORATION: 4:29 min.



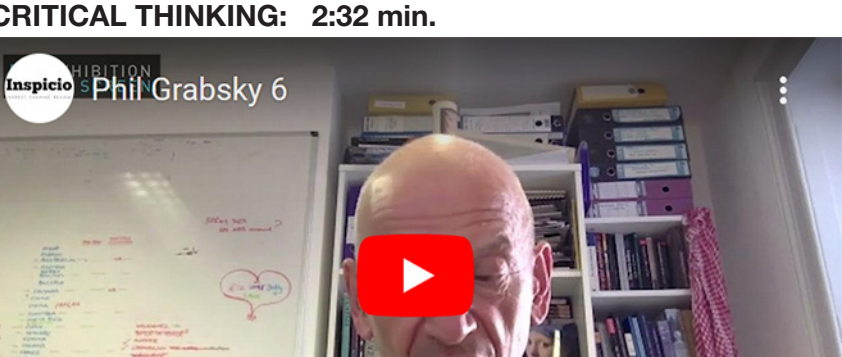
How often do you develop friendships with the people you interview for your documentaries?

RESPECTS OTHER POINTS OF VIEW: 4:55 min.



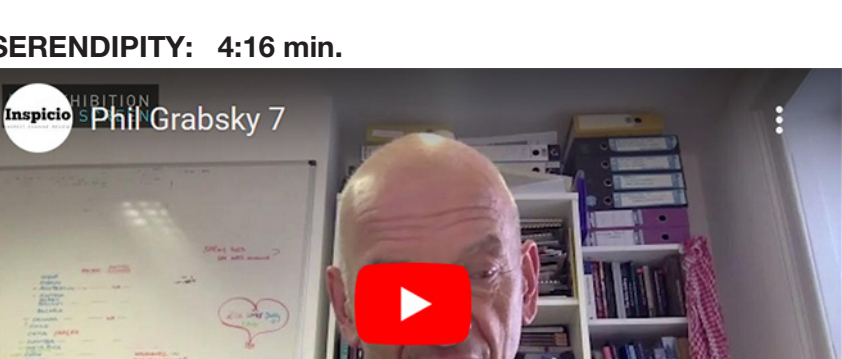
How do you address creating high-quality films about art disciplines that you are not as well versed in as you are in visual arts?

CRITICAL THINKING: 2:32 min.



What are your thoughts about critics who use scholarly jargon in their reviews?

SERENDIPITY: 4:16 min.



What role does serendipity play in your work?

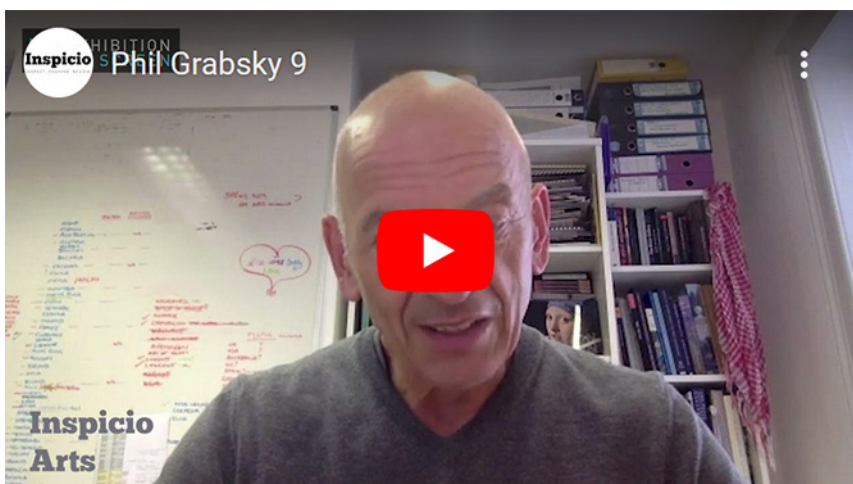


**UNDERSTANDS THE BUSINESS OF ART: 5:33 min.**



*Who are some documentary filmmakers that you admire?*

**CREATES A UNIQUE PERSONAL BRAND: 1:27 min.**



*Because I have known Chris McCarthy, the CEO of the Provincetown Art Association & Museum, for many years, I particularly enjoyed when some of her comments made the audience laugh.*

**CRITICAL THINKING: 6:00 min.**



*Did the movie and play "Amadeus" have impact on your documentary "In Search of Mozart?"*