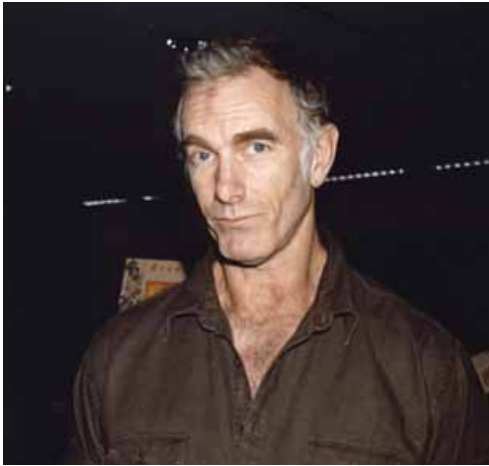


## John Sayles by Hannah Patterson



In 2007, John Sayles released his sixteenth film as writer-director. An affectionate and charmingly rendered story of rock 'n' roll coming to small-town 1950s Alabama, with its attendant themes of race, class and identity, *Honeydripper* is a reminder of why Sayles is still such an inspirational, singular filmmaker after thirty years working in the industry. Redolent of his best work, it is considered, thought provoking, touching, entertaining, character led, expertly acted, politically aware and socially engaged. And, like a great many of his projects, self-financed.

Hard to conceive that funding could prove so elusive for America's leading proponent of independent cinema, but for Sayles and his long-time producing (and personal) partner, Maggie Renzi, it was ever thus. 'There seems to be a kind of mutual understanding between Hollywood and me,' Sayles has said: 'Most of what they make I wouldn't be interested in directing, and most of what I make they'd have no idea how to sell.'

True enough, there are no easy hooks with Sayles' films. He isn't showy or hip like

Tarantino, cool like Soderbergh or Jarmusch, or quirky like Hartley and the emergent Mumblecore gang. Despite working across a host of genres, his themes, or more accurately concerns, have, by and large, remained constant. Whether drawing on and subverting the traditions of the melodrama (*Lianna*, 1983; *Passion Fish*, 1992), sci-fi (*The Brother From Another Planet*, 1984), western (*Lone Star*, 1996), thriller (*Limbo*, 1999) and noir (*Silver City*, 2004), much of his work focuses in on communities that function as microcosms of society, ranging every strata, from wealthy to poor, across myriad ethnicities and races. With each film set in a different region, from the bayous of Louisiana to the wilderness of Alaska, his body of work adds up to an extraordinary portrait of American life and culture.

Where Peter Weir, another director with a penchant for working across genres, draws the surface of a world only to reveal alternative, parallel realities, Sayles likes to show the one that's staring you in the face. He gives us the overview that we're incapable of seeing ourselves, a glimpse, or delve into the life of the person living down the street, or in a nearby neighbourhood. It's a world shaped by the forces of history and circumstance, and the past inevitably looms large in his work, often fraught with racial tensions, ancient feuds or painful personal memories. Interesting and complex, yes, but hardly concept driven, or an easy sell at the multiplex.

Consequently, throughout his career Sayles has chosen to sustain this unique brand of intelligent, non-studio filmmaking by keeping one screenwriting foot firmly planted in the mainstream. It's his work as a writer for hire, sometimes credited (*The Lady in Red*, 1979; *The Spiderwick Chronicles*, 2008), often not

(*The Quick and the Dead*, 1995; *Apollo 13*, 1995; *Mimic*, 1997), that has allowed him to make personal projects on his own terms; and when needs must, bankrolling them himself. He's an astonishingly versatile scribe, working across narratives with a studied ease, authenticity and enviable speed. It's as a writer that he really excels; as a writer, too, that he first entered the business.

Born to schoolteachers on 28 September 1950, in Schenectady, New York, Sayles studied at Williams College in Massachusetts, majoring in psychology. He variously worked as a meat packer, construction worker, nursing home orderly, factory worker and stage actor, all jobs that would bring him into contact with a wide and diverse range of people, in particular blue-collar workers whose lives he chronicles so well and often. Starting out with fiction, and the novels *Pride of the Bimbos* (1975) and *Union Dues* (1978), the latter nominated for a National Book Award and National Critics' Circle Award, he subsequently moved to California and penned scripts for Roger Corman's New World Pictures: *The Lady in Red*, *Piranha* (1978) and *Battle Beyond the Stars* (1980). With gigs writing the B-movie *Alligator* (1980) and werewolf shocker *The Howling* (1981) to follow, Sayles was able to make his debut as director-writer-editor with *The Return of the Secaucus Seven* (1980), on his own money and a budget of US\$40,000.

A precursor to *Sundance*, often cited as one of the most influential indie films, the story of *Secaucus*, set in small-town New Hampshire, revolves around the reunion of a group of friends at the house of couple Katie and Mike, who function as a Greek chorus of sorts, commenting on the behaviour of their companions. They play volleyball and charades, swim naked in the creek, drink, argue, have sex and get arrested, leading them to reminiscence over their detainment ten years earlier on their way to a political demonstration. Now hitting their thirties, each is coming to terms with their evolving politics and shifting priorities, disillusionments and unfulfilled dreams.

The warm and affectionate tone throughout hints at several of Sayles' abiding preoccupations: the humanism that would go on to infuse all of his films, his interest in multiple-character narratives (he has cited *Nashville*, 1975, as inspiration), ability to create distinct voices and illicit great performances (Renzi, in particular, puts in a wonderfully droll turn as Katie) and an engagement with political issues of the day. Often mentioned as the antecedent of *The Big Chill* (1983) (though Lawrence Kasdan denies having seen it), it's certainly a lesson in how to go low budget: opt for simple settings, write a smart script and concentrate on character.

This choice of style, however, has – somewhat ironically – dogged Sayles' entire career. Probably the biggest criticism levelled at his work is that it lacks a sense of cinematography; that his films are in essence un-cinematic. There's certainly some truth in the accusation. If it's flamboyant visuals you're after, or obsessive attention to ocular detail, his films aren't for you. 'My main interest is making films about people,' he admits. 'I'm not interested in cinematic art.'



**The Return of the Secaucus Seven**

**Lianna**

His abiding interest in the human condition is evidenced in Sayles' subsequent film, *Lianna*, which shares something in common with chamber pieces such as *Ordinary People* (1980) and *Shoot the Moon* (1982), which were beginning to register the disintegration of the family unit. Sayles took it one step further in dramatising the problems for a married mother of two (movingly played by Linda Griffiths) living with an unfaithful husband, film professor Dick (John DeVries), who falls in love with her female tutor (Jane Hallaren) and embraces lesbianism. Released the same year as Robert Towne's lesbian-themed sports picture *Personal Best* (1982), Sayles never sensationalises his story, allowing Griffiths the time to register *Lianna's* every new emotion: the joy of sexual liberation, frustration with societal convention, the sting of her daughter's fearful rejection, and the pain of an ultimately unrealised love. The writing is naturalistic, the settings and emotions authentic in detail.

*Baby It's You* (1983), Sayles' first foray into studio filmmaking, though still of the low-budget variety, is a teen movie, but more grown up and philosophical than many of the decade. Based on actor-producer Amy Robinson's experiences of high school in the 1960s, Rosanna Arquette plays blue-collar, actress-hopeful Jill who's persuaded into a relationship with Vincent Spano's Sheik, an opportunist obsessed with his clothes, Frank Sinatra and her. With so much working against them, in particular their class divide, the romance is doomed from the start. Despite

some initial wrangles over the edit, the film is Sayles' final cut, but its attempts to show the realities of high-school life and the changes that come for Jill at college, means that it meanders along the way. Sheik is difficult to get a handle on, and consequently, for much of the film, hard to empathise with. Hampered by song rights issues, its video release was delayed and the film suffered from an almost non-existent marketing campaign.

In 1982, whilst in post-production on *Baby*, Sayles was awarded a McArthur Foundation 'genius grant': US\$32,000, tax free, for each of the next five years.

Made with the money he had in the bank at the time, *The Brother from Another Planet* proved a generic departure, falling ostensibly into the sci-fi camp. The story of a mute alien landing in Harlem pursued by bounty hunters from outer space, on closer inspection its concerns are typical of his work. At heart it's a human-interest story. From the moment the alien lands on Ellis Island, his journey as he tries to make sense of this foreign country parallels that of the immigrant experience.

**The Brother from Another Planet**

Joe Morton is oddly endearing as the wide-eyed naïf wandering the streets, reading people's minds, healing their wounds and fixing their arcade games. Some scenes play straight out of silent cinema and Morton is physically up to the job. Sayles and David Strathairn strut their stuff as more simplistic

forerunners to Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones' *Men in Black* (1997). Despite a slightly confusing dénouement, it's notable for being shot by novice cinematographer Ernest Dickerson, who'd already shot Joe's *Bed-Stuy Barbershop* (1983) and would go on to become a regular Spike Lee collaborator, and bears all the hallmarks of a cult movie. The film was nominated for the Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival.

Further to making music videos for Bruce Springsteen for 'Born in the USA', 'I'm on Fire' and 'Glory Days' (money in the bank), Sayles' next three films, *Matewan* (1987), *Eight Men Out* (1988) and *City of Hope* (1991) are played out on the more ambitious, larger canvasses that he would return to later with *Lone Star*, *Silver City* and *Sunshine State* (2002).

Shot by Haskell Wexler and edited by Sonya Polonsky, who worked on *Baby It's You*, *Matewan* is more overtly political than Sayles' previous work. Set in the past – focusing on the fight between coal miners and their bosses in 1920s West Virginia – it's as relevant to the anti-union, Reagan America of the 1980s in which it was made. Chris Cooper, excellent as Joe Kenehan, doesn't play a typical western hero, but a union leader who wants to organise the miners – white, black and Italian – by peaceful means. As with Sayles' finest work, it's utterly absorbing, full of contradictions and shades of grey; here there are no clear winners, and in business somebody somewhere always compromises or loses out.



**Matewan**

Next came *Eight Men Out*, an adaptation of Eliot Asinof's book, which dramatised another historical subject laden with moral conundrum: 1919's infamous Black Sox scandal, when eight players on the Chicago White Sox agreed to throw the World Series. Notable for early performances by John Cusack and Charlie Sheen, with Sayles himself particularly good as Ring Lardner, it's hard to get a handle on if you're unfamiliar with baseball. Unusually for Sayles, its moral compass is a little off, making it difficult at times to fathom the real heart of the piece.



**Eight Men Out**

Taking time to write a successful TV series, *Shannon's Deal*, and publish Cuban-set novel *Los Gusanos* (1991), Sayles' subsequent film, *City of Hope*, plays in many ways as a precursor to *The Wire*. It's a complex piece of screenwriting told from myriad points of view, delving into the layers of corruption and power politics in a city where an old building stands in the way of a commercial development favoured by the local mayor and his cohorts. The film ends, contrary to its title, on a decidedly discouraging note, with David Strathairn's calls for 'help' echoing those of the dying son of the property developer, and we're left with an impression of society in need of some serious reform.

*Passion Fish* once again proved Sayles' versatility as a writer as he shifted seamlessly from a broad, complex narrative to a compact, hothouse drama. Mary McDonnell plays a soap star wheelchair bound following a car accident, who retreats to her now-empty

**Passion Fish**

Louisiana family home, with Alfre Woodard as the live-in nurse who brings along plenty of her own emotional baggage. Drawing on classic melodrama tropes, the film is very funny, extremely moving and utterly absorbing. Issues of race are always present but never overplayed, and the Cajun music and mood of mystery, the latter bolstered by an ever-appealing David Strathairn as the potential love interest, adds ample atmosphere. Mary McDonnell's excellent lead performance earned her an Academy Award nomination for Best Actress, alongside Sayles' own for Best Original Screenplay.

The Secret of Roan Inish (1994), pre-dating his magical screenplay for The Spiderwick Chronicles by over ten years, foregrounded his ability to appeal to children as much as adults. Shot in Ireland, it's a captivating story of a young girl who moves to a small fishing village and becomes convinced of the connection of the mythical Celtic selkie, part human, part seal, to her family's past. It was nominated for Best Director and Best Screenplay at the Independent Spirit Awards.

Lone Star, his next, is probably the best known of Sayles' films, his biggest box office success and certainly one of his most accomplished and satisfying, earning him a second Academy Award nomination for Best Original Screenplay. Chris Cooper is the reluctant sheriff Sam Deeds investigating a thirty-year-old murder he suspects was committed by his 'golden boy' sheriff father. Father/son conflict resounds, echoing in the relationships between black

club owner (Ron Canada) and his aloof military son (Joe Morton), and Sam's ex, played with heartrending humour by Frances McDormand, and her overbearing father.

Interweaving the Mexican, black and white Texan experience, drawing out the truths and falsehoods of the past that stranglehold the present, he uses a simple yet effective visual device to move seamlessly from the past into the present, panning the camera away from a scene in the present so that it alights on one in the past, and vice versa. One of Sayles' very best endings, it hits a wonderfully romantic, transgressive note with Sam discovering that Pilar, the woman he's loved most of his life, is his half-sister and the pair essentially agreeing to 'forget the Alamo' and embrace their future together despite the past.

**Lone Star**

Set in a non-specific country with characters speaking Spanish, Nahuatl, Tzotzil, Maya and Kuna, Men with Guns (1997), also known as 'Hombres armadas', is one of Sayles' least-seen films. It follows the fortunes of fictional character Dr Fuentes (Federico Luppi) who unwittingly discovers the dreadful things happening in his own country.

Limbo with its 'love it or hate it' ambiguous ending, is Sayles' most enigmatic film. Strathairn is appropriately inscrutable as the former high-school basketball star and salmon fisherman burdened with secrets who falls for Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio's worldly wise lounge singer. And Vanessa Martinez (the young Pilar in Lone Star) is heartbreaking

as her jealous and confused daughter. Both an enjoyable portrait of small-town Alaska undergoing a tourism transformation and a nail-biting thriller, it's worth repeated viewings.

With *Sunshine State*, Sayles once again returned to a bigger ensemble, this time with the backdrop of a Florida beachside community that includes both white and black enclaves. With predatory developers wanting to turn the community into an upscale resort, locals are divided on whether to take the money or stand firm. Sly references to the harnessing of nature and the packaging of the American dream abound. Edie Falco excels as the bored daughter of local motel owner as does Angela Bassett as the woman who returns to see her mother, having left years before as a disgraced pregnant teenager. Also worthy of note is Mary Steenburgen as organiser of the annual *Buccaneer Days*, a local pageant, who delivers one of the funniest performances as she complains to her suicidal husband about the ungrateful townspeople: 'They don't know how difficult it is to invent a tradition.'



**Casa de los Babys**

With shades of *Passion Fish*, *Casa de los Babys* (2003) boasts a host of great actresses – Maggie Gyllenhaal, Daryl Hannah, Marcia Gay Harden, Lili Taylor, Mary Steenburgen and Susan Lynch – as American women in a South American hotel each desperate to adopt a baby. Pleasingly low key, Sayles avoids unnecessary sentimentality, here showing the charmless realities of their situation and the implications for mothers giving up their babies.



**Silver City**

In 2004's *Silver City*, the character of the Colorado Republican hopeful running for governor bears more than a passing resemblance to George W. Bush: an inarticulate, political daddy's boy with no significant experience. More satirical than Sayles' other work, it conveys some of his angry disbelief at the Bush administration, and Chris Cooper plays the part to unnerving perfection. Drawing on film noir conventions, the mystery begins with a dead body and features a shambolic, down-on-his-luck private detective (a bemused, bear-like Danny Houston), who's hired by the wrong side and soon starts to smell the whiff of corruption, and his own road to redemption. Despite some longeurs, its twisting narrative intrigues, and its theme of corporate disregard for the environment feels timely and relevant.

With *Honeydripper*, Sayles' most recent film, he places centre stage a passion for music which has been present to varying degrees in all his films. An adaptation of his own story, 'Keeping Time', which features in Dillinger in Hollywood (2004) (his other short-story collection *The Anarchists' Convention* was published in 1979), the movie stars Danny Glover as the proprietor of a club in 1950s Harmony, Alabama. Juggling his marriage and his livelihood, within an environment of segregation, he hires legendary musician player Guitar Sam, only to be landed with young pretender, Sammy, who fortunately knows how to play some good guitar and saves the day. Scored by regular collaborator Mason Daring, featuring a performance by

blues singer Mabel John, it's one of the director's most uplifting films to date.



Honeydripper

Sayles has long professed his discomfort with the moniker of political filmmaker and some of his strongest work – *Limbo*, *Passion Fish*, *Lone Star* – is the least overtly political. Yet

politics – of the personal, people kind – seems built into his DNA. 'He is the one,' film critic David Thomson has commented, singling him out amongst his contemporaries, after thirty years in the business, 'who has stood by his principles most defiantly and valiantly.' As comfortable writing for men as women, for middle class as blue collar, black as Mexican, he simply can't help but care, and that most of all is what his body of work conveys.

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### John Sayles filmography

[feature-film directing credits only]

1980

#### RETURN OF THE SECAUCUS SEVEN

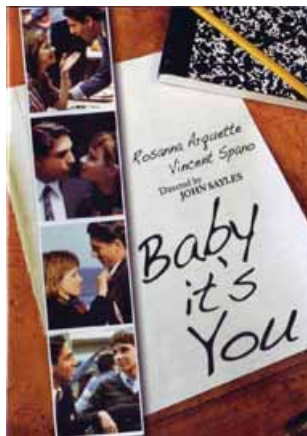
*Script: John Sayles. Photography: Austin De Besche. Editing: John Sayles. Players: Bruce MacDonald (Mike Donnelly), Maggie Renzi (Katie Sipriano), Adam LeFevre (J.T.), Maggie Cousineau (Frances Carlson), Gordon Clapp (Chip Hollister), Jean Passanante (Irene Rosenblue), Karen Trott (Maura Tolliver), Mark Arnott (Jeff Andrews), David Strathairn (Ron Desjardins), John Sayles (Howie), Marisa Smith (Carol), Amy Schewel, (Lacey Summers), Carolyn Brooks (Meg), Eric Forsythe (Captain), Nancy Mette (Lee). Produced by William Aydelott, Jeffrey Nelson. 110 mins*

1983

#### LIANNA

*Script: John Sayles. Photography: Austin De Besche. Production Design: Jeanne McDonnell. Editing:*

*John Sayles. Players: Linda Griffiths (Lianna), Jane Hallaren (Ruth), Jon DeVries (Dick), Jo Henderson (Sandy), Jessica MacDonald (Theda), Jesse Solomon (Spencer), John Sayles (Jerry), Stephen Mendillo (Bob), Betsy Julia Robinson (Cindy), Nancy Mette (Kim), Maggie Renzi (Sheila), Madelyn Coleman (Mrs. Hennessy), Robyn Reeves (Job Applicant), Chris Elliott (Lighting Assistant), Marta Renzi (Dancer). Produced by Jeffrey Nelson, Maggie Renzi. 110 mins*



1983

#### BABY IT'S YOU

*Script: John Sayles, based on a story by Amy Robinson. Photography: Michael Ballhaus. Production Design: Jeffrey Townsend. Editing: Sonya Polonsky. Players: Rosanna Arquette (Jill Rosen), Vincent Spano (Albert 'Sheik' Capadilupo), Joanna Merlin (Mrs. Rosen), Jack Davidson (Dr. Rosen), Nick Ferrari (Mr. Capadilupo), Dolores Messina (Mrs. Capadilupo), Leora Dana (Miss Vernon), Bill Raymond (Mr. Ripeppi), Sam McMurray (Mr. McManus), Liane Alexandra Curtis (Jody, High School Girl), Claudia Sherman (Beth, High School Girl), Marta Kober (Debra, High School Girl), Tracy Pollan (Leslie, College Girl), Rachel Dretzin (Shelly, College Girl), Susan Derendorff (Chris, College Girl). Produced by Robert F. Colesberry, Griffin Dunne, Amy Robinson. 105 mins*

1984

#### THE BROTHER FROM ANOTHER PLANET

*Script: John Sayles. Photography:*

*Ernest R. Dickerson. Production Design: Nora Chavooshian. Editing: John Sayles. Players: Joe Morton (The Brother), Rosanna Carter (West Indian Woman), Ray Ramirez (Hispanic Man), Yves Rene (Haitian Man), Peter Richardson (Islamic Man), Ginny Yang (Korean Shopkeeper), Daryl Edwards (Fly), Steve James (Odell), Leonard Jackson (Smockey), Bill Cobbs (Walter), Maggie Renzi (Noreen), Olga Meredith (Noreen's Client), Tom Wright (Sam), Minnie Gentry (Mrs. Brown), Ren Woods (Bernice). Produced by Peggy Rajski, Maggie Renzi. 108 mins*

1987

**MATEWAN**

*Script: John Sayles. Photography: Haskell Wexler. Production Design: Nora Chavooshian. Editing: Sonya Polonsky. Players: Chris Cooper (Joe Kenehan), James Earl Jones ('Few Clothes' Johnson), Mary McDonnell (Elma Radnor), Will Oldham (Danny Radnor), David Strathairn (Police Chief Sid Hatfield), Ken Jenkins (Sephus Purcell), Gordon Clapp (Griggs), Kevin Tighe (Hickey), John Sayles (Hardshell Preacher), Bob Gunton (C.E. Lively), Josh Mostel (Mayor Cabell Testerman), Nancy Mette (Bridey Mae), Jace Alexander (Hillard Elkins), Joe Grifasi (Fausto), Gary McCleery (Ludie). Produced by Mark Balsam, Ira Deutchman, James Glenn Dudelson, Ned Kendall, Amir Jacob Malin, Peggy Rajski, Maggie Renzi, Jerry Silva. 135 mins*

1988

**EIGHT MEN OUT**

*Script: John Sayles, based on the book by Eliot Asinof. Photography: Robert Richardson. Production Design: Nora Chavooshian. Editing: John Tintori. Players: John Cusack (George 'Buck' Weaver), Clifton James (Charles 'Commie' Comiskey), Michael Lerner*

*(Arnold Rothstein), Christopher Lloyd (Bill Burns), John Mahoney (William 'Kid' Gleason), Charlie Sheen (Oscar 'Hap' Felsch), David Strathairn (Eddie Cicotte), D.B. Sweeney (Joseph 'Shoeless Joe' Jackson), Michael Rooker (Arnold 'Chick' Gandil), Don Harvey (Charles 'Swede' Risberg), James Read (Claude 'Lefty' Williams), Perry Lang (Fred McMullin), Gordon Clapp (Ray Schalk), Jace Alexander (Dickie Kerr), Bill Irwin (Eddie Collins). Produced by Barbara Boyle, Jerry Offsay, Sarah Pillsbury, Peggy Rajski, Midge Sanford. 119 mins*

1991

**CITY OF HOPE**

*Script: John Sayles. Photography: Robert Richardson. Production Design: Dan Bishop, Dianna Freas. Editing: John Sayles. Players: Vincent Spano (Nick Rinaldi), Stephen Mendillo (Yoyo), Chris Cooper (Riggs), Tony Lo Bianco (Joe Rinaldi), Joe Morton (Wynn), Charlie Yanko (Stavros), Jace Alexander (Bobby), Todd Graff (Zip), Scott Tiler (Vinnie), John Sayles (Carl), Frankie Faison (Levonne), Gloria Foster (Jeanette), Tom Wright (Malik), Angela Bassett (Reesha), David Strathairn (Asteroid). Produced by Sarah Green, Maggie Renzi, John Sloss, Jo Throckmorton, Harold Welb. 129 mins*

1992

**PASSION FISH**

*Script: John Sayles. Photography: Roger Deakins. Production Design: Dan Bishop, Dianna Freas. Editing: John Sayles. Players: Mary McDonnell (May-Alice Culhane), Alfre Woodard (Chantelle), Lenore Banks (Nurse Quick), Vondie Curtis-Hall (Sugar LeDoux), Will Mahoney (Max), David Strathairn (Rennie), Leo Burmester (Reeves), Nelle Stokes (Therapist #1), Brett*

*Ardoin (Therapist #2), Nora Dunn (Ti-Marie), Michael Mantell (Dr. Kline), Mary Portser (Precious), Angela Bassett (Dawn / Rhonda), Daniel Dupont (Therapist #3), Chuck Cain (Attendant). Produced by Sarah Green, Maggie Renzi, John Sloss. 135 mins*

1994

**THE SECRET OF ROAN INISH**

*Script: John Sayles, based on a book by Rosalie K. Fry. Photography: Haskell Wexler. Production Design: Adrian Smith. Editing: John Sayles. Players: Jeni Courtney (Fiona), Pat Slowey (Priest), Dave Duffy (Jim), Declan Hannigan (Oldest brother), Mairéad Ní Ghallchoir (Barmaid), Eugene McHugh (Bar Patron 1), Tony Rubini (Bar Patron 2), Mick Lally (Hugh), Eileen Colgan (Tess), Richard Sheridan (Eamon), Micheal MacCarthaigh (Schoolmaster), Fergal McElherron (Sean Michael), Brendan Conroy (Flynn), John Lynch (Tadhg), Frankie McCafferty (Tim). Produced by Sarah Green, Glenn R. Jones, R. Paul Miller, Peter Newman, Maggie Renzi, John Sloss. 103 mins*

1996

**LONE STAR**

*Script: John Sayles. Photography: Stuart Dryburgh. Production Design: Dan Bishop. Editing: John Sayles. Players: Stephen Mendillo (Sgt. Cliff), Stephen J. Lang (Sgt. Mikey), Chris Cooper (Sheriff Sam Deeds), Elizabeth Peña (Pilar Cruz), Oni Faida Lampley (Celie), Eleese Lester (Molly), Joe Stevens (Deputy Travis), Gonzalo Castillo (Amado), Richard Coca (Enrique), Clifton James (Mayor Hollis Pogue), Tony Frank (Fenton), Miriam Colon (Mercedes Cruz), Kris Kristofferson (Sheriff Charlie Wade), Jeff Monahan (Young Hollis), Matthew McConaughey (Buddy Deeds). Produced by Jan Foster, R. Paul Miller, Maggie Renzi, John Sloss. 135 mins*

1997

**MEN WITH GUNS**

*Script: John Sayles. Photography: Slawomir Idziak. Production Design: Felipe Fernández del Paso. Editing: John Sayles. Players: Federico Luppi (Dr. Fuentes), Damián Delgado (Domingo, the Soldier), Dan Rivera González (Conejo, the Boy), Tania Cruz (Graciela, the Mute Girl), Damián Alcázar (Padre Portillo, the Priest), Mandy Patinkin (Andrew), Kathryn Grody (Harriet), Iguandili López (Mother), Nandi Luna Ramírez (Daughter), Rafael de Quevedo (General), Carmen Madrid (Angela, Dr. Fuentes' Daughter), Esteban Soberanes (Raúl, Angela's Fiancé), Alejandro Springall (Carlos, Dr. Fuentes' Son), Maricruz Nájera (Rich Lady), Roberto Sosa (Bravo). Produced by Jim De Nardo, Peter Gilbert, Lou Gonda, R. Paul Miller, Bertha Navarro, Jody Patton, Maggie Renzi, Eric Robison, Doug Sayles, John Sloss. 127 mins*

1999

**LIMBO**

*Script: John Sayles. Photography: Haskell Wexler. Production Design: Gemma Jackson. Editing: John Sayles. Players: Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio (Donna De Angelo), David Strathairn ('Jumpin' Joe Gastineau), Vanessa Martinez (Noelle De Angelo), Hermínio Ramos (Ricky), Kris Kristofferson ('Smilin' Jack Johannson), Dawn McInturff (Audrey), Casey Siemaszko (Bobby Gastineau), Kathryn Grody (Frankie), Tom Biss (Baines), Rita Taggart (Lou), Leo Burmester (Harmon King), Michael Laskin (Albright), Jimmy MacDonell (Randy Mason), Mérit Carlson-van Dort (Stacy), Monica Brandner (Corky). Produced by Sarah Connors, Maggie Renzi. 126 mins*

2002

**SUNSHINE STATE**

*Script: John Sayles. Photography: Patrick Cady. Production Design:*

*Mark Ricker. Editing: John Sayles. Players: Alex Lewis (Terrell), Alan King (Murray Silver), Cullen Douglas (Jefferson Cash), Clifton James (Buster Bidwell), Eliot Asinof (Silent Sam), James McDaniel (Reggie Perry), Angela Bassett (Desiree Perry), Edie Falco (Marly Temple), Amanda Wing (Krissy), Timothy Hutton (Jack Meadows), Perry Lang (Greg), Miguel Ferrer (Lester), Gordon Clapp (Earl Pinkney), Kyle Meenan (Dick Yordan), Mary Steenburgen (Francine Pinkney). Produced by Maggie Renzi, Nancy Schafer. 141 mins*

2003

**CASA DE LOS BABYS**

*Script: John Sayles. Photography: Mauricio Rubinstein. Production Design: Felipe Fernández del Paso. Editing: John Sayles. Players: Daryl Hannah (Skipper), Lili Taylor (Leslie), Mary Steenburgen (Gayle), Marcia Gay Harden (Nan), Maggie Gyllenhaal (Jennifer), Angelina Peláez (Doña Mercedes), Lizzie Curry Martinez (Sor Juana), Vanessa Martinez (Asunción), Amanda Álvarez (Blanca), Said Martínez (Eusebio), Abel Salas (Bus Driver 1), Marco Mondragón (Bus Driver 2), José Reyes (Van Driver), Claudia Benitez (Woman on Bus), Ignacio de Anda (Tito), José Reyes Jr. (Grande), Emmanuel González (Chico), Dave Baez (Rufino), Blanca Loaria (Socorro). Produced by Caroline Kaplan, Melissa Marr, Jonathan Sehring, Alejandro Springall, Lomore Syvan. 95 mins*

2004

**SILVER CITY**

*Script: John Sayles. Photography: Haskell Wexler. Production Design: Toby Corbett. Editing: John Sayles. Players: Chris Cooper (Dickie Pilager), Richard Dreyfuss (Chuck Raven), Cajardo Lindsey (Lloyd), John C. Ashton (Director), Elizabeth Rainer (Leslie), Donevon*

*Martinez (Lazaro Huerta), James Gammon (Sheriff Joe Skaggs), Benjamin Kroger (Deputy Davis), Charles Mitchell (Henry), Danny Huston (Danny O'Brien), Alma Delfina (Lupe Montoya), Roslyn Washington (Hilary), David Clennon (Mort Seymour), Mary Kay Place (Grace Seymour), Tim Roth (Mitch Paine). Produced by Suzanne Ceresko, Robert Lansing Parker, Maggie Renzi, Sam Tedesco. 128 mins*



2007

**HONEYDRIPPER**

*Script: John Sayles. Photography: Dick Pope. Production Design: Toby Corbett. Editing: John Sayles. Players: Danny Glover (Tyrone Purvis), Lisa Gay Hamilton (Delilah), Yaya DaCosta (China Doll), Charles S. Dutton (Maceo), Vondie Curtis-Hall (Slick), Gary Clark Jr. (Sonny), Mable John (Bertha Mae), Stacy Keach (Sheriff), Nagee Clay (Scratch), Absalom Adams (Lonnie), Arthur Lee Williams (Metalmouth Sims), Ruben Santiago-Hudson (Stokely), Davenia McFadden (Nadine), Daryl Edwards (Shack Thomas), Sean Patrick Thomas (Dex). Produced by Ira Deutchman, Susan Kirr, Maggie Renzi, Mark Wynns. 124 mins*