



Jayson Warner Smith

Press Kit



"I've had the pleasure of working on two projects with Jayson and, TV/Film Gods willing, they certainly won't be the last. Jayson is a consummate professional and a powerhouse of an artist. Someone who breathes complex humanity into all his characters; villains, heroes, and all those in between."



Micahel D. Fuller, Showrunner/Writer
Rectify (SundanceTV)
Murdaugh: Murder in the Family (Hulu)

“That’s just the power of Jayson’s acting.”

Scott Gimple

The Walking Dead (AMC)



“Jayson is a singularly talented actor. He makes you believe he is the person he’s playing. He can modulate as necessary and knows how to entertain without breaking the world of the story. I had a great time working with him and hope to do so again soon.”

Micahel Uppendahl, Director

Candy (Hulu)





“There are many times in our industry that we refer to someone having "that spark." I worked with Jayson on a film where he had roughly three lines, and I knew then that he was something special. Not just a character actor but a real artist with presence and talent. It's been a joy to watch his career grow.”

Craig Brewer, Director

Song Sung Blue (Focus Features)

Footloose (2011) (Paramount)

Fight Night (Peacock)



"I directed Jayson for two years on my show. He was fearless."

Raymond McKinnon, Director/Writer/Showrunner
Rectify (SundanceTV)

"Jayson is great to work with – his work has depth and nuance and he keeps it real."

Jim McKay, Director
Tulsa King (Paramount)
Rectify (SundanceTV)





“Jayson is a gifted actor and a true collaborator. He brings depth and authenticity to his characters while remaining flexible and easy to work with. There's a reason we continue to cast him; he elevates our work.”

Ruckus & Lane Skye, Writers & Directors
The Devil to Pay (Netflix)

“It is quite rare to find an actor who combines such natural talent with his overflowing spirit of collaboration. Jayson is a thoughtful performer, bringing depth, authenticity and an effortless sense of humanity. I truly enjoyed working with him and look forward to doing it again.”

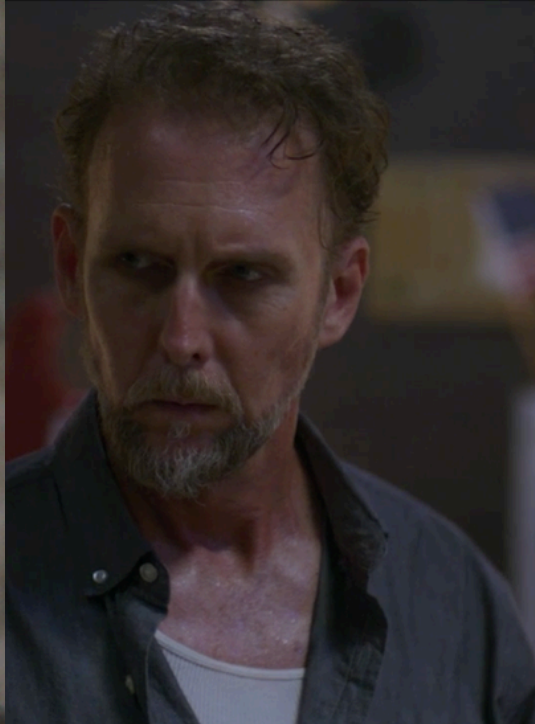
Takashi Doscher, Director
Only (Netflix)

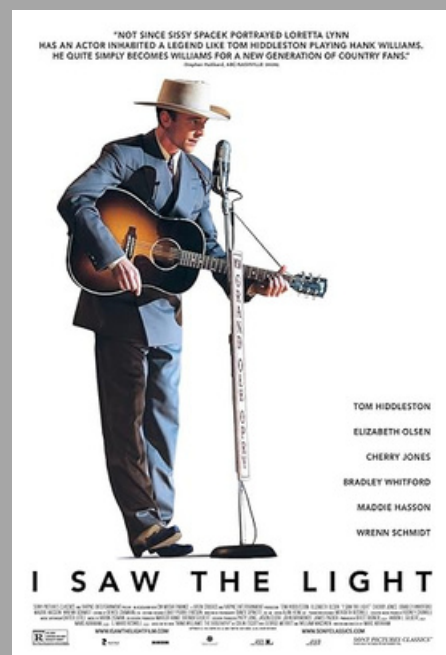
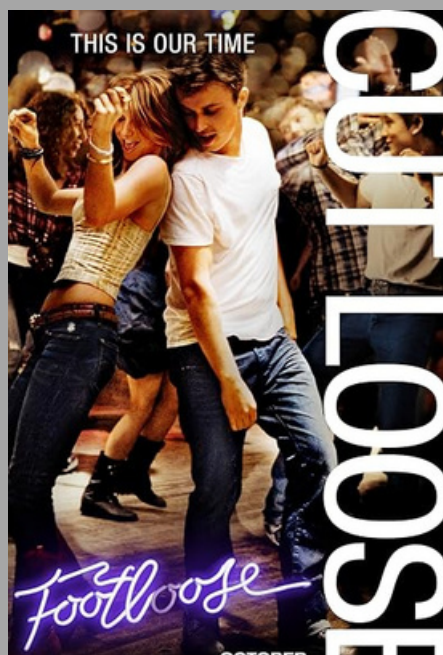
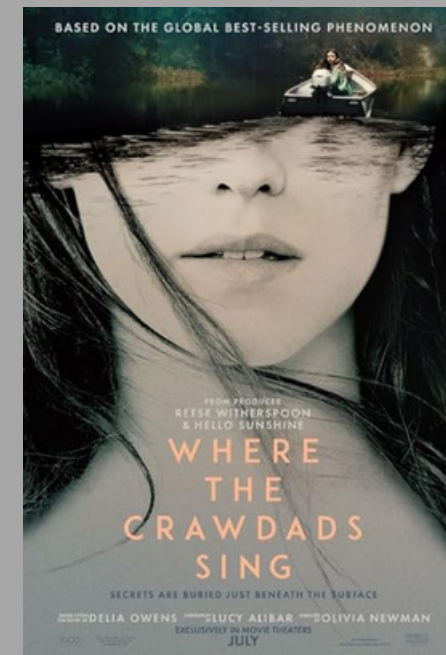
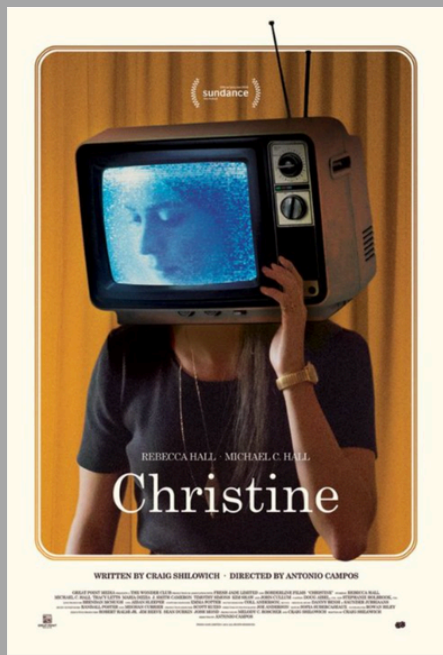
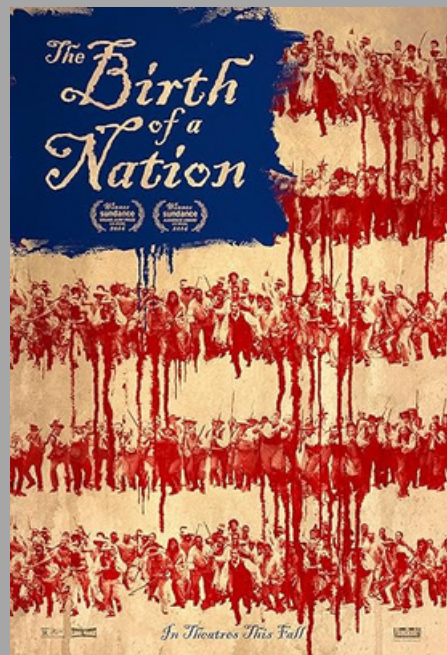


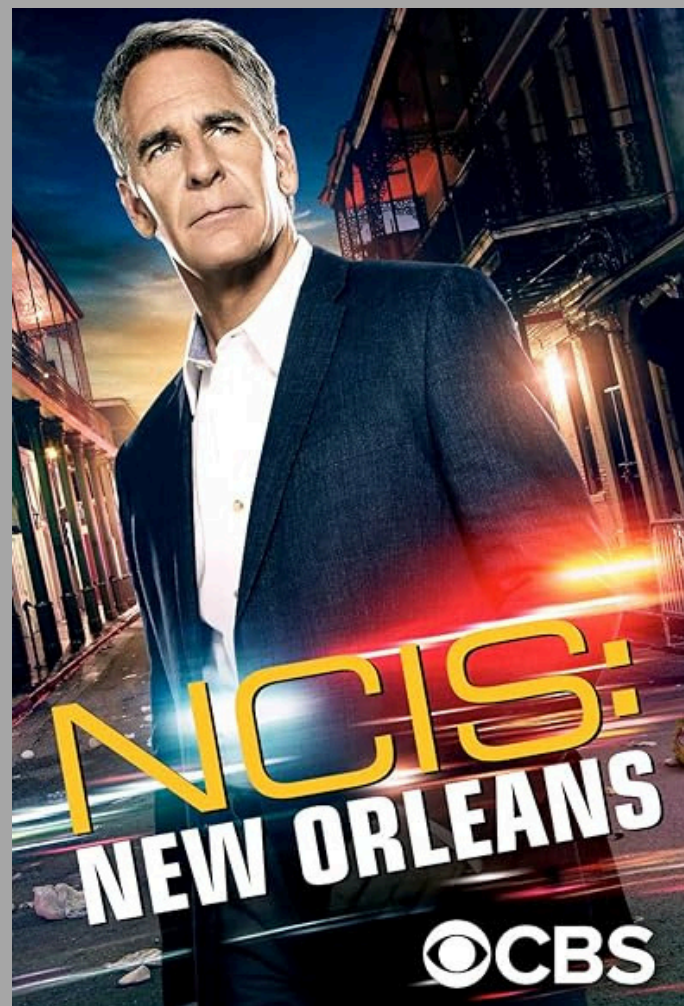
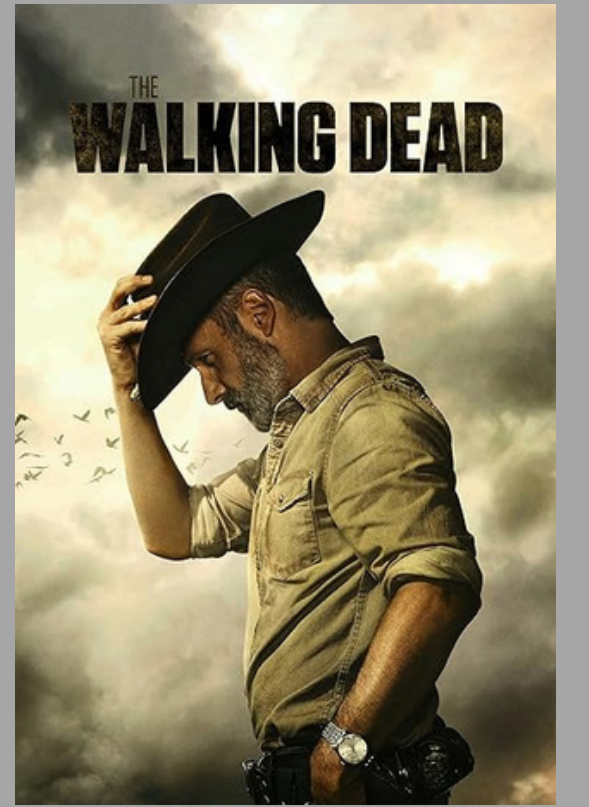
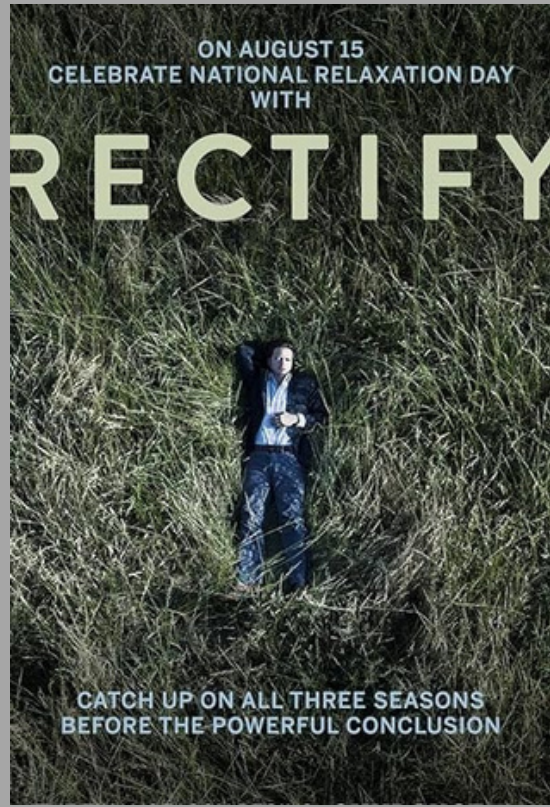


“I cast Jayson as one of the leads in my feature *American Deadbolt*, and his command of the craft is evident in every frame. In a role demanding nuance, depth, and emotional complexity, Jayson delivered a performance layered with authenticity and precision. He is mesmerizing—effortlessly balancing humor, menace, intelligence, and vulnerability in a way that never feels forced or contrived.”

Bryan Redding, Writer & Director
American Deadbolt (Prime & Apple)







Jayson Warner Smith

IMDbPro

Vimeo/Reels

Actor's Access

Film (partial list)

<u>Chipper</u>	Star & EP		Shaun MacLean
Song Sung Blue	Supporting Lead	opp. Hugh Jackman	Craig Brewer
Heartland	Supporting Lead	opp. Jessica Chastain	Shana Feste
<u>Where the Crawdads Sing</u>	Supporting Lead	opp. David Strathairn	Olivia Newman
<u>American Made</u>	Supporting Lead	opp. Tom Cruise	Doug Liman
<u>The Birth of a Nation</u>	Supporting Lead	opp. Armie Hammer	Nate Parker
<u>Christine</u>	Supporting Lead	opp. J. Smith Cameron	Antonio Campos
99 Homes	Supporting Lead	opp. Michael Shannon	Ramin Bahrani
<u>Emancipation</u>	Supporting Lead	opp. Will Smith	Antoine Fuqua
Mississippi Grind	Supporting	opp. Ryan Reynolds	Ryan Fleck/Anna Boden
The Book of Love	Supporting Lead	opp. Maisie Williams	Bill Purple
<u>Only</u>	Lead	opp. Leslie Odom jr.	Takashi Doscher
You're Killing Me	Lead	opp. Dermot Mulroney	J. Lauder & B. Hanna
<u>The Devil to Pay</u>	Lead	opp. Danielle Deadwyler	Lane & Ruckus Skye
St. Agatha	Supporting Lead		Darren Lynn Bousman
Thank you for Your Service	Supporting	opp. Miles Teller	Jason Hall
<u>I Saw the Light</u>	Supporting	opp. Tom Hiddleston	Marc Abraham
Anchorman 2	Supporting		Adam McKay
<u>42</u>	Supporting	opp. Chadwick Boseman	Brian Helgeland
Footloose (2011)	Supporting	opp. Ray McKinnon	Craig Brewer

Television (partial list)

Salvage (pilot)	Series Regular	opp. Will Patton	Uta Brieswitz
<u>Murdaugh Murders</u>	Recurring Guest Star	opp. Pat. Arquette, Jason Clarke	Michael D. Fuller
The Good Daughter	Recurring Guest Star	opp. Rose Byrne, Brendan Gleeson	Steph Green
<u>Tulsa King</u>	Recurring Guest Star	opp. Sylvester Stallone/Robert Patrick	Jim McKay
<u>Fight Night</u>	Recurring Guest Star	opp. Don Cheadle	Craig Brewer
<u>Candy</u>	Recurring Guest Star	opp. Jessica Biel & Justin Timberlake	Michael Uppendahl
<u>The Walking Dead</u>	Recurring Guest Star	opp. Lenny James	Greg Nicotero
<u>Rectify</u>	Recurring Guest Star	opp. Aden Young	Ray McKinnon
<u>Queen America</u>	Recurring Guest Star	opp. Catherine Zeta-Jones	Alethea Jones
Outer Banks	Recurring Guest Star		Valerie Weiss
<u>One Mississippi</u>	Guest Star	opp. Tig Notaro	Nicole Holofcenor
<u>NCIS:New Orleans</u>	Guest Star		Tessa Blake
<u>The Vampire Diaries</u>	Recurring		Multiple
<u>Sleepy Hollow</u>	Co-Star		Paul Edwards

Theatre

<u>Our Town/Laramie Project</u>	Ensemble	Theatrical Outfit (ATL)
Blackbird	Ray	Right On Productionins (ATL)
Glengarry Glenn Ross	Roma	Pinch 'N' Ouch Theatre (ATL)
Tigers Be Still	Joseph	Aurora Theatre (ATL)
Speed the Plow	Gould	Pinch 'N' Ouch Theatre (ATL)
Body Awareness	Frank	Pinch 'N' Ouch Theatre (ATL)
1940's Radio Hour	Johnny Cantone	Theatre in the Square (ATL)
The Three Sisters	Vershinin	Synchronicity Performance Group (ATL)
Closer	Larry	Rogue Planet (ATL)
The Illusion	Matamore	Actor's Express (ATL)
Violet	Ensemble	Actor's Express (ATL)
Game of Love and Chance	U.S. Three roles	Alliance Theatre (ATL)
The Weir	Jack	Theatre Gael (ATL)
Six Characters ...	Stage Manager	Synchronicity Performance Group (ATL)
Miss Firecracker Contest	Delmount	Aurora Theatre (ATL)
The Tempest	Sebastian	Atlanta Shakespeare Tavern
Ice Glenn	Peter Woodburn	Essential Theatre (ATL)
Working	Ensemble	Neighborhood Playhouse (ATL)
Cactus Flower	Igor	Dunwoody Stagedoor Players (ATL)
1776	Richard Henry Lee	Onstage Atlanta
Chekhov in Yalta	Stanislavski	Onstage Atlanta
Equus	Nugget	Onstage Atlanta
Jesus Christ Superstar	Ensemble	Onstage Atlanta
The Elephant Man	Ensemble	GSU Players
West Side Story	Action	GSU Players
The Boyfriend	Bobby	GSU Players
Runaways	Lazar	GSU Players
The American Dream	The Young Man	GSU Players
A Streetcar Named Desire	Stanley	Jacksonville State Univ.
Who's Afraid of Virginia Wolff	Nick	Anniston Community Theatre
The Music Man	Charlie Callas	Jacksonville State Univ.

Jayson Warner Smith: From smooth and subtle to edgy and evil

POSTED MARCH 30, 2015 BY DAVID SOMERSET FILED UNDER OPINION

He may have a showreel that stretches back to 1991 and a short film entitled *Last Breeze of Summer*, but Jayson Warner Smith's career really hit a high in 2013.

Thanks to a recurring role in *Rectify*, Smith was able to etch his name into the TV audience's brains and continue this momentum onto the silver screen.

Today, with his stock seemingly at an all-time high and his time in *Rectify* at an end, the natural question to ask is what is the next logical step for JWS? We already know he's appeared in [Mississippi Grind](#) in 2015, but where else can we expect to see the man from Atlanta in the coming months?



Full Article

Review: “The Laramie Project” a profound moment for Atlanta theater, Theatrical Outfit

KATHY JANICH × SEPTEMBER 18, 2019

Each performance is imbued with authority. Each actor owns every person he or she portrays. Subtle changes — the putting on or taking off of a hunting cap, knit hat, newsboy cap, a hijab, a red blazer, a judge’s robe or priest’s collar; an accent, the turn of a wrist, the realignment of a shoulder, the deepening of a voice, a stooping posture — delineate who’s who and where we are in the telling of the story.

Among the standouts:

- Smith as no-nonsense Tectonic interviewer Greg Pierotti, Laramie’s gay and fey Jonas Slonaker, compassionate hospital CEO Rulon Stacey and Matt Shepard’s broken father.



“Working with Jayson is always such a pleasure. His keen intellect and years of experience aligns with an unassailable honesty to deliver consistently powerful and relatable performances. I especially enjoy rehearsals with Jayson. He can take virtually any idea, good or not-so-good, and somehow make it work. There is a real sense of curiosity and bravery in his work that serves both the material and the process.”

David Crowe, director
Our Town (Theatrical Outfit)



“As a director (for theatre) who's worked with Jayson, I find him to be incredibly prepared, passionate, flexible, and team-oriented. He played multiple roles in my Atlanta production of The Laramie Project, and each character was nuanced, grounded, utterly specific, and incredibly moving. As a casting director for on-camera projects, I can always count on Jayson to turn in creatively crafted tapes with bold but believable choices that never feel like acting. He excels at realism and is, I find, immensely watchable and wonderful.”

Clifton Guterman, CSA
The Laramie Project (Theatrical Outfit)



Chipper



Omeleto

20,368 views

1.1K | 17

[Watch the film](#)

A multi-award winning short film



Executive producer and star



[Full Article](#)

MOTORCYCLE.COM

Learning To Fly: Cross-country on a Triumph Bonneville + Video

Kevin Duke

Watch: Learning to Fly

Smith, who you might've seen in 2012's *Coma*, 2011's *Footloose* or the AMC/Sundance series *Rectify*, does a stellar job at capturing the spirit of a road journey on two wheels. His work becomes even more admirable when you realize that it was shot almost entirely on an iPhone 5s.

"I figured I could only watch it for a minute before getting bored and switching-off, but that wasn't the case," says Editorial Director Sean Alexander about the meandering 40-minute film. "Its rhythm nicely echoes my own recollections of cross-country road trips. It's great escapism for those of us stuck behind a keyboard."



Biography

Jayson Warner Smith has been in demand throughout 2024, 2025 and 2026, appearing in Peacock's **Fight Night: The Million Dollar Heist**, Hulu's **Murdaugh: Death in the Family**, and **The Good Daughter**, premiering on Peacock in November 2026. Audiences may also recognize him as Earl/TCB in Craig Brewer's **Song Sung Blue**, now streaming on Netflix.

His upcoming projects include **American Deadbolt**, arriving on Apple TV and Amazon in July 2026, **Heartland**, a Netflix feature starring Jessica Chastain, and **The Rescue**, slated for a theatrical release in January 2027.

Jayson holds the rare distinction of appearing in two films at both the 2015 and 2016 Sundance Film Festivals. In 2015, he appeared in 99 Homes and Mississippi Grind. The following year, he returned to Sundance with Christine and The Birth of a Nation, the latter earning both the Audience Award and the Grand Jury Prize. He has also appeared in two films that premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival: The Book of Love (2016) and **Only** (2019). The independent feature **The Devil to Pay** (originally titled Reckoning), starring Danielle Deadwyler, made its world premiere at the 2019 Atlanta Film Festival, where it won Best Georgia Film.

Jayson is perhaps best known for his recurring roles as Wendall Jelks on SundanceTV's **Rectify** and Gavin on AMC's **The Walking Dead**. His extensive television credits also include Netflix's **Outer Banks**, Amazon's **One Mississippi**, CBS's **NCIS: New Orleans**, FOX's **Sleepy Hollow**, The CW's **The Vampire Diaries**, **Being Mary Jane**, and **Coma**.

His film work spans studio productions and acclaimed independent cinema, including American Made opposite Tom Cruise, Where the Crawdads Sing, Christine alongside Rebecca Hall, Tracy Letts, and J. Smith-Cameron, The Birth of a Nation, The Book of Love, 99 Homes, Mississippi Grind, Only, Heavy Water, and Northfield. In 2023, he appeared in Antoine Fuqua's Emancipation and You're Killing Me, starring Dermot Mulroney and the late Anne Heche. Additional credits include I Saw the Light, Anchorman 2: The Legend Continues, 42, Footloose (2011), and numerous stage productions.

Continued 

Further details:

Jayson has had the opportunity to collaborate with an impressive roster of acclaimed filmmakers and showrunners, including Craig Brewer, Olivia Newman, Doug Liman, Nate Parker, Antonio Campos, Ramin Bahrani, Ray McKinnon, Ryan Fleck, and Anna Boden. Along the way, he has shared the screen with many of Hollywood’s most respected actors, including Tom Cruise, Don Cheadle, Leslie Odom Jr., Frieda Pinto, Maisie Williams, Michael Shannon, Andrew Garfield, Ryan Reynolds, Ben Mendelsohn, Laura Dern, James Woods, Lauren Ambrose, Cuba Gooding Jr., Demi Moore, and David Duchovny.

In recent years, Jayson has expanded into producing. After several smaller projects, he launched his passion project, the award-winning short film Chipper, written by Ruckus Skye and Lane Skye (The Devil to Pay, Becky, Rattle the Cage). Jayson stars as Reese, a prodigal son called home by his father, where a long-buried family secret and an urgent plea for help await. Chipper premiered at the 2023 Poppy Jasper International Film Festival before screening at more than thirty festivals throughout 2023 and 2024, earning multiple jury and audience awards along the way.

A native Georgian, Jayson divides his time between Athens and Atlanta’s historic Kirkwood neighborhood with his wife, Lisa.

Jayson is repped by The Alexander White Agency. Atlanta & Los Angeles.
Management by Tamer Ahsan at Zero Gravity Management.

"... But if you can say you worked with this incredibly talented and professional actor who was also an absolute gem of a human with a heart of a lion and a soul of a poet, then you can say you worked with Jayson Warner Smith."

Bill Purple – Director/Writer/Producer

The Book of Love



"Jayson is a Swiss Army Knife when you are lost in the woods, a scene saver, a character actor with a leading man's gravitas and just a lovely, lovely person to boot. He is one of those actors that you want to see in everything and can do anything and is interesting every time. Jessica (Biel) and I had admired his previous work and we were so excited to cast him in our first film "The Book Of Love" and again in our Hulu series "Candy". We are already excited about what we'll do next with him!"

Michelle Purple – Producer – Iron Ocean Productions

The Book of Love

Candy (Hulu)



*The Birth
of a
Nation*



ONLY



A SCENE FROM BLOOD MERIDIAN
RED WEST



EMANCIPATION



"If I could do nothing but theater for the rest of my life and make the kind of money I make in television, I'd do only theater," says Atlanta stage/film actor Jayson Warner Smith. His credits include "Our Town" and "The Laramie Project" at Theatrical Outfit, AMC's "The Walking Dead" and Sundance TV's "Rectify."

20 by 2020: “Every once in awhile, they let me act,” says versatile Jayson Warner Smith

KATHY JANICH × NOVEMBER 1, 2019

Our 20 by 2020 series will profile 20 theater artists, administrators and innovators by the end of the year. All are shaking up the city’s stages. This is no. 15. To see the others, search “20 by 2020” from the homepage.

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These days, Atlanta-based stage and film actor Jayson Warner Smith — seen recently in Theatrical Outfit’s *Our Town* / *Laramie Project* repertory — jokingly considers himself bicoastal. He spends half the week in Athens, where his wife owns a home, and half in a Kirkwood condo. Wife Lisa Strzelecki prefers the Classic City. Kirkwood keeps Smith close to his work at [Pinch ‘N’ Ouch Theatre](#), where he teaches acting fundamentals with a “serious emphasis” on the Strasberg method (in which actors strive for realism by using their emotional memories).

You may recognize Smith as despicable death-row inmate Wendall Jelks from the Sundance TV series *Rectify* (2013–14) or as bad guy Gavin on AMC’s *The Walking Dead* (2016–18). That two-season stint ended when he was stabbed in the neck with a stick from behind by an 11-year-old boy. “It was a wonderful death,” Smith says. “Half the episode was devoted to my last day on Earth.”

The boy born at the corner of Highland Avenue and Boulevard, when Atlanta Medical Center was called Georgia Baptist Hospital, grew up as a theater kid in Smyrna, doing shows with the South Cobb Arts Alliance, Cobb Children’s Theatre and Cobb Teen Theatre. His middle name — Warner — comes from those years, added when one of the actors’ unions told him he couldn’t use simply “Jayson Warner” because there were too many others. The name honors Joy Warner, a neighbor and an artistic director at the Cobb theaters. He considers her a second mom.



Jayson Warner Smith played opposite Heather Rule in the two-character thriller “Blackbird” at the Robert Mello Studio.

For fun, Smith takes out his 2001 Triumph Bonneville motorcycle. For his 50th birthday, in fact, he rode it solo on a five-week cross-country trip — from Atlanta to Yellowstone to Taos, New Mexico, to Los Angeles and back to Atlanta. “Definitely a life-changing moment,” he says. He turned the odyssey into the 40-minute travel documentary [Learning to Fly](#).

In his downtime, he hangs out with wife Lisa; they cook and eat and watch HBO together. And he goes to the gym, teaches and auditions.

“Every once in awhile,” Smith says, “they let me act.”

Full Article







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