



Directed and produced by Beth Harrington

World Premiere – SXSW 2026, Visions section



2026, USA, 93 minutes, in English

<https://www.beyondduplexplanet.com/>

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FILM BACKGROUND

Beyond the Duplex Planet features David Greenberger as the practitioner of the almost-lost arts of conversing and listening. The isolation of senior citizens is increasingly well-recognized and bemoaned. Many feel technology is moving us all, both old and young, into silos of passivity and loneliness, even as we are inundated with communiqués - emails, posts, tweets and texts from vast numbers of flesh and blood human beings we mostly don't see.

Though much of David Greenberger's work predates the virtual world we seem to inhabit much of the time now, it seems to have presaged a need that our technological environment helped create. He seems almost uniquely able to address this disconnect by modeling the simple yet increasingly unfamiliar skill of active listening. Fans of *The Duplex Planet* (and the related work that has emerged from it) often point out that its power resided in an openness and authenticity coupled with a sense of being invited out of one's own solitariness to engage in the simple act of conversation.

Another underlying theme of the film is that of having an artistic vocation, pursuing and nurturing it. David seems to organically live and breathe his artistic practice. It's just what he does. The ways in which he goes about documenting the world seem very fluid and spontaneous. But all this is the result of a lifetime of artistic intentionality and that's a dynamic we portray in this film as well.

And while *Beyond the Duplex Planet* explores notions of aging and its intersection with art and community, we also believe that it presents a slightly ironic look at the life of an artist devoted to documenting the elderly who is himself moving into his senior years. The knowledge David has gleaned talking to seniors over the last 40 years informs his own understanding of the aging process in his loved ones and, most notably, in himself.

Lighthearted and profound, humorous and compassionate – these are the tonal gradations of *Beyond The Duplex Planet*. Ultimately, we wanted to make a film that is a joyful and sometimes offbeat celebration of what it means to be human, to be connected in conversation, and to find creative expression in all walks of life.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I have known David Greenberger for four decades and have a long view of his art and an understanding of his personality, I think the reason I wanted to tell this story is that David's work reflects, in no small part, the kind of work I've been exploring in my own (admittedly different) way all these years. My goal has been to make my documentary interviews feel like conversation. To whatever degree my films have been successful, I believe it is due to those moments of authenticity in an interview, bringing with them surprise and spontaneity. I admire David's approach and have tried to illuminate that for the viewer. David enters his work with almost no preconceived notions and goes on a verbal journey with the people he encounters. I have worked to incorporate that vibe in this film. I also believe that as one of David's peers, I relate to and am curious about the stage we're both entering in our lives – standing on that threshold of being "elders." It's something we're alternately intrigued by and surprised about. As an important addendum to all the above, it should be noted that a big part of David's story is connected to music and musicians. His collaborations are deeply rooted in his own musical past, some of which I share as a musical peer from that period (we both connected in the Boston rock scene of the late '70s/early '80s). The combination of this shared musical history along with my track record of making music-based film are strong undercurrents that have been brought to bear on this film. -Beth Harrington

BIOGRAPHIES

Beth Harrington- director

Beth Harrington is an Emmy-winning, Grammy-nominated independent producer, director and writer, born in Boston and transplanted to the Pacific Northwest. She most often focuses on work that explores American history, music and culture. Harrington's independent production *Welcome to the Club – The Women of Rockabilly*, a music documentary about the pioneering women of rock and roll, was honored with a 2003 Grammy nomination. This and other work reflect a long-standing love of music. She's been a singer and sometimes guitarist, most noted for her years as a member of Jonathan Richman & The Modern Lovers on Sire Records. In 2015 her film *The Winding Stream – The Carters, the Cashes and the Course of Country Music* premiered at SXSW, later appearing in over 30 film festivals in the U.S. and abroad.

Her latest projects include the documentary *Beyond the Duplex Planet* about artist David Greenberger, and *Our Mr. Matsura*, a historical film about a Japanese photographer's unconventional work documenting the people of Washington State in the early 1900s.

Harrington has also worked with public television stations WGBH in Boston and OPB in Portland producing, researching, and developing shows for both national and local air on series such as Nova, Frontline, History Detectives, Oregon Art Beat and Oregon Experience. Her film *Fort Vancouver* received a NW Emmy for Best Historical/Cultural Program in 2019 and her piece *Once Upon a Time in the Northwest – The Music of Federale*, a NW Emmy for Best Arts/Entertainment - Long Form Content in 2021.

David Greenberger- film subject

Born in Chicago and raised in Erie, Pennsylvania, David Greenberger made his post-art school mark as the activities director of the Boston area Duplex Nursing Home, spawning the celebrated periodical *The Duplex Planet* (1979 to 2010). With the publication of his book *Duplex Planet: Everybody's Asking Who I Was*, he expanded his work to include a comic book series, multiple albums of songs by a wide range of musicians using the writings of Duplex resident Ernest Noyes Brookings, three additional books, and his first foray into the realm of spoken word with music, *The Duplex Planet Hour* with music by Terry Adams. This led to commissions and residencies with the Portland Institute for Contemporary Arts, California Council for the Humanities, San Francisco Contemporary Jewish Museum, University of Wisconsin, Kohler

Museum, Erie Art Museum, Grand Central Art Center in Santa Ana, Skidmore College's Tang Museum, and Proctors Theaters.

Greenberger has been a commentator on NPR's *All Things Considered* and for their series *This I Believe* and *Lost & Found Sound*, written reviews and essays for many music and cultural publications. With Phil Kaplan, he was a founding member of the band Men & Volts.

Notable works in more recent years have included exhibitions of his visual art, a performance at the Tang Museum, and the debut of a new ensemble at the Big Ears Festival. Major new projects created in collaboration with composer Tyson Rogers include the three-hour *Everybody's Home*, *How Vowels Endure Winter*, and the continuing series *My Autobiography*.

TYSON ROGERS- composer

Pitchfork magazine once described Tyson Rogers as a "wayfaring keyboard wrangler," recognizing his multi-faceted work as a recording and touring musician. His musical life spans worlds that rarely intersect: poetic avant-garde jazz with Joe Maneri and Han Bennink; American song traditions with Tony Joe White and Don Williams (including Williams' Grammy-nominated duet with Alison Krauss); experimental indie rock with Chris Stamey and Yo La Tengo; and nearly a decade of spoken-word collaboration with David Greenberger.

Rogers' original music has earned multiple "Best CDs of the Year" selections from DownBeat and other publications, and his composition work includes placements for National Geographic, The North Face, and the Tokyo Olympics.

Across genres, his work emphasizes listening, restraint, collaboration, and quiet experimentation.

This is Tyson's fourth appearance at SXSW.

SELECT FILM CREDITS

PRODUCED AND DIRECTED BY

Beth Harrington

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Jay Rooney

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Scott Ballard

ADDITIONAL CINEMATOGRAPHY

Jeff Economy

Kevin Forrest

Edward Davee

SOUND RECORDISTS

Jordan Eusebio

Thomas Morrison

EDITOR

Emily von W Gilbert

MUSIC COMPOSER

Tyson Rogers

SOUND DESIGN

Jordan Eusebio

ART DIRECTOR

Brenda Rose

FEATURING

David Greenberger

and

the Residents of the Duplex Planet Nursing Home

Including

Ernest Noyes Brookings

Herbie Caldwell

John Colton

Ken Eglin
Albert Entzel
Harole Farrington
John Fay
William "Fergie" Ferguson
Albert Fleming
Larry Green
Charlie Hewis
John Hooker
Harry Katz
Bill Lagasse
Andy Legrice
John Lowthers
Francis McElroy
Walter McGeorge
Ed Poindexter
Bernie Reagan
Ed Rogers
George Stingel
Abe Surgecoff

INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Louie Pérez
Penn Jillette
Ed Ruscha
Wayne White
Mimi Pond
Jan Findley
Jay Rooney

Phil Kaplan
Patrice Macaluso
Norabelle Greenberger
Kristine Reynolds
Barbara Price
George Brantley
Tyson Rogers

John Spiak
Francine Harris
Jose Magana
Tish Leon
Don Foster