

## STEPHEN VERONA – Brief Bio

While still in art school Stephen VERONA had one of his photographs selected by **Edward Steichen** for the Museum of Modern Art permanent collection in New York.

After graduating he eventually became co-creative director of **Ogilvy & Mather** advertising where he worked closely as Art Director and Producer with copywriter and Chairman **David Ogilvy**.

Having met **John Lennon** on location in England while directing TV commercials for Ford, Verona created what are now called **Music Videos**. **People Magazine** said that he was the **grandfather of Music Video**. He directed the first two for the **Beatles**. Then followed them up with videos for **Barbra Streisand, Chicago, Simon & Garfunkle, Johnny Cash, Leonard Bernstein, Liza Minelli, Mick Fleetwood, Natalie Cole, Boy George, Santana** and a hundred other world renown recording artists.

He was the famed acting teacher and actor **Lee Strasberg's protégé** at the **Actor's Studio** director's unit.

By the time he was 27 he was nominated for an **Academy Award** for his live action short film "**The Rehearsal**" which he created, produced & directed.

Not satisfied with commercials or videos Verona moved on to write, produce and co-direct his first feature film, "**The Lords of Flatbush**". This is the film that launched the careers of **Sylvester Stallone, Henry Winkler, and Richard Gere**, who were all discovered by Verona. And created the song writing career for **Paul Jabara**. And gave composer **Joe Brooks** his first film sound track. Both went on to wins Oscars for "Last Dance" and "You Light Up My Life" respectively.

He gave **Gladys Knight** her first acting role in "**Pipe Dreams**" which led to 2 Golden Globe Nominations, one for "New Star of the Year" and Best Original Song, "So Sad the Song". He came full circle with **Lee Strasberg** when **Lee and Ruth Gordon and Janet Leigh** starred in Verona's powerful motion picture "**Boardwalk**".

**All during his film making days, Verona always photographed and painted.**

His paintings and photographs are in important collections and Museums throughout the world. In 2008 the **Getty Museum** acquired his photography for their permanent collection. He has won over 100 Awards for his work. In 2009 he was invited to join an exclusive group of artists from around the world for an Audience with **His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI in the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican for His address to artists**. This is the first time a Pope has hosted artists in the **Sistine Chapel** since **the Renaissance**. This was a major validation of Verona's work.

Vanity Fair Magazine has said of his "Holy Men – Medicine Men – Mad Men gallery exhibit: "Stephen Verona's work recalls the greatness of Steichen and Weegee with all of the passion of Dorothea Lange and Walker Evans. A must see!" As he likes to say about himself:

"Sometimes I write my pictures, sometimes, I photograph my pictures, some times I paint my pictures, and some times I make a movie of my pictures. In the end I guess you could call me a picture maker".