



Newark Boys Chorus School

Inspiring Excellence in Academics & Music Since 1969

*Rodney Gilbert*

*Lifetime Achievement in the Arts Honoree*

**Rodney Gilbert** is the founder and CEO of Yendor Productions, a Newark-based firm that consults, develops, and produces arts education programming and events. Yendor Productions was founded in 2003 to meet the challenges for the underserved artists and communities.

As a graduate of the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, Mr. Gilbert earned a BFA in 1989 and has been serving the arts community as an arts educator and administrator for various institutions and organizations. Mr. Gilbert has been a teaching artist for the education department at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC), Passage Theatre, and Arts Horizon to name a few. He acted as the performing arts coordinator for New Community Corporation, Arts Department and headed all of their arts programming until the founding of Yendor Productions. He is a professional actor and director having worked on stage, film and television. Mr. Gilbert is an Adjunct Professor at Drew University for the theatre department.

In his capacity of professional actor and director, Rodney has worked on stage, film, and television and recently directed the premiere of Aaliyah Habib's "Love Ya Like a Sister" in NYC, Chisa Hutchinson's new work; "New World Disorder" and commissioned Newark's 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary play "Down Neck" by Pia Wilson.

Mr. Gilbert has worked in professional theatre for over thirty years. He is a graduate of the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, where he earned a BFA. He presently oversees the theatre program for Newark Public Schools, Extended Day and serves as the lead teacher and liaison to its Drew University Theatre partnership (Advantage Arts) for which he co-created the curriculum. At Drew University he teaches acting, directing, and introduction of speech with a focus on extemporaneous speaking.

His love for theatre manifests in his on screen productions like "**Driver**" wherein he was the lead actor and Executive Producer. His latest project "**Beyond The Silence**" addresses the issue of mental illness. As Assistant Director and Acting Coach for the production, it is his hope that the viewers will walk away with the knowledge that "*Mental Illness is Real. Recovery is Possible.*"

He is the Senior Program Manager for the Newark Murals Program, which Yendor is the lead arts organization which manages this program. He co-teaches with Dr. Anne Englot at Rutgers University a mural course (Colloquium in Art, Culture and Media) under the Arts Culture and Media Dept. He has developed numerous workshops and curriculums on arts education including symposiums for Steve Adabato's Stand and Deliver program, co-developing their current curriculum. He has conducted workshops as far as Johannesburg, South Africa

Mr. Gilbert serves as a member of the **Actors Equity Association**, the **Co-Chair of the City of Newark's LGBT Commission**, a **Leadership Newark Fellow**, **Emerging Leader – Victoria Foundation**, **Executive Team Member of NAER** and was recently accepted to **Rutgers Newark Business School's "The Hubb"** and an **Audelco Award Nominee**. He was recently presented with an award in **Civic Engagement by Drew University** and the **Parent Arts Advocate Award** at the 2016 Governors Awards in Arts Education. In continuing his strive for success, Rodney Gilbert was selected to be a participant in The Rutgers Institute for Ethical Leadership and Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation's "new training program designed to increase the diversity of the leadership of arts and culture organizations."