

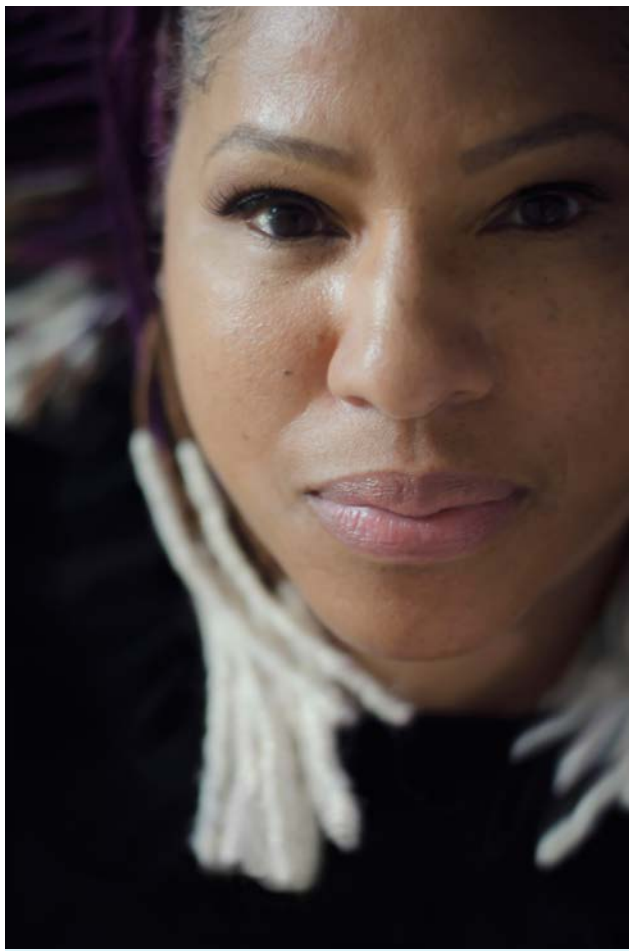
# AYO

AYOKA CHENZIRA

DIRECTOR  
FILM  
TELEVISION



ELECTRONIC PRESS KIT



# AYO

**BIOGRAPHY**

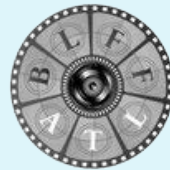
[www.ayomentary.com](http://www.ayomentary.com)

sundance  
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ACADEMY  
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ARTS AND SCIENCES



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**AYOKA CHENZIRA (Ayo)** is an award-winning filmmaker and a recognized pioneer in African American independent cinema. As a child, she was drawn to storytelling while listening to women's stories in her mother's beauty parlor and later trained in filmmaking at New York University.

Ayo is one of the first African American women to write, produce and direct a 35mm feature film, which made Billboard Top 40 Home Video, and is noted as the first African American woman animator. Her films span

fiction, documentary, animation, performance, and interactive cinema with game play and have been exhibited in festivals and theaters worldwide.

In 2018, Ayo was tapped by Ava DuVernay to direct a season three episode of *Queen Sugar* for OWN. At the request of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences her films will be archived and preserved in their collection.



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## CRITICS



*...raucous brash and exceedingly funny.*

**The New York Times**

*... risk taking filmmaking at its best.*

**Variety**

*... a marvel of social satire. An important change in the tradition of Black cinema with its ability to take the serious seriously but also laugh at the absurd.*

**Boston Globe**

*... a quest that changes from a third person film into a first person game in ways that may predict the future of interactive TV. Bravo!*

**Janet Murray,**

**Author, *Hamlet on the Holodeck: The Future of Narrative in Cyberspace***

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