

One & Two-Year Conservatory Programs

The Most Hands-on Intensive Programs in the World

Filmmaking | Acting for Film | Producing for Film & TV | Photography | Cinematography

Screenwriting | Documentary | Broadcast Journalism | 3D Animation & Visual Effects

Game Design | Graphic Design | Illustration | Musical Theatre

*“Because you can’t do anything halfway,
you’ve got to go all the way in anything you do.”*

- Jerry Bruckheimer





LOCATION

**NEW YORK CITY;
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA;
SOUTH BEACH, FLORIDA**

*Locations are subject to change.
For start dates and tuition, please visit nyfa.edu*

One-Year Conservatory *in* FILMMAKING



Filmmaking students gain hands-on experience with a RED digital camera.

OVERVIEW

The Academy's One-Year Filmmaking Program provides students a one-of-a-kind educational experience in which they are able to dedicate a year to the practice of making films. **From the first day of class, students learn through doing and are behind the camera right off the bat, setting the tone for a year in which each student writes, shoots, directs, and edits eight films and crews on twenty-eight more.**

Over the course of this full-time program, students are immersed in the numerous facets of filmmaking through a combination of in-class instruction, instructor-supervised workshops, and student-led film projects. **Students study under our acclaimed, award-winning staff of professional filmmakers who remain active members of the entertainment industry.**

At the start of the program, students will learn the art and technique of visual storytelling. Students are given an introduction to 16mm film equipment and then continue on to the fundamentals of digital video production. Courses include Director's Craft, Cinematography, Screenwriting, and Editing using the industry standard Avid Media Composer software. Students will use this knowledge to write, direct, and edit four short films.

The Second quarter of the program is focused on working with dialogue and performance. Courses include Director's Craft, Acting for the Director, Documentary Filmmaking, Sound Recording and Cinema Studies. Topics that will be explored include Text vs. Subtext, how a character's point of view is conveyed through visual means, and working with dialogue. Students will complete three short films of their own and work on four production workshop shoots under the supervision of an acting instructor and a directing instructor.

In the Second semester, students are taught Advanced lighting and camera techniques using 16mm sync-sound film cameras and RED cameras. Full day Production Workshops will be organized by the Directing, Cinematography and Sound Recording instructors. All classes will be focused on the students' year one final thesis projects. Courses include Advanced Director's Craft, Advanced Cinematography, 35mm Camera Workshop, Sync-Sound Recording, Producing, Directing Actors, Color Correction and Sound Design. In Screenwriting class, students will develop a script for their year one final thesis film project. The goal of this thesis project is to enable students to make a fully conceived and executed film with dialogue. Students have the option of shooting in 16mm or 35mm film, or RED.

The remainder of the program is split across three phases as students go through pre-production (including casting, rehearsal, and location scouting) to production and finally post-production when they will edit and finish their films for a final group screening that is open to cast, crew, friends, family, and invited guests.

Please Note: curriculum and projects are subject to change and may vary depending on location. Students should consult the most recently published campus catalog for the most up to date course information.

Students learn to operate and shoot with RED HD camera



WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

After completing the One-Year Filmmaking Program, students will demonstrate the following skill sets and knowledge:

- The ability to work independently and collaboratively in a high-pressure creative environment.
- An in-depth knowledge of motion picture cameras and production.
- A working knowledge of 35mm cameras and 35mm film production.
- The ability to write and pre-visualize a screenplay.
- In-depth experience working as a director, producer, assistant director, director of photography, assistant camera person, gaffer, and grip on student productions.
- Mastery of Avid Media Composer digital editing software.
- Knowledge of film history and film studies.
- Knowledge of aesthetic film theory and experience with practical application of the same.

WHAT YOU WILL ACHIEVE

- Write, direct, produce and digitally edit four short films in HD focusing on visual storytelling - communicating the story through shot size, lens choice, camera movement, camera height and composition. The fourth film can be up to 10 minutes in length with multiple tracks of sound.
- Write, direct, produce and digitally edit three short films in HD, emphasizing the performance of the actors - communicating the story through the subtext, dramatic POV and character design. The third film may be up to ten minutes in length with multiple tracks of sound including dialogue.
- Write, direct, produce and digitally edit a final thesis project - a sync-sound narrative film of up to 15 minutes, highlighting everything that was learned throughout the year. This final film may be shot in HD video, 16mm or 35mm film.
- Participate as a crew member on over 28 of your classmates' films and group projects, performing all the roles on a film set including cinematographer, assistant cinematographer, gaffer, grip, sound mixer, boom operator, assistant director and producer.
- Shoot and edit a short film shot on 35mm film using Panavision equipment, professional quality dollies and lighting gear.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

DIRECTOR'S CRAFT I

This course introduces students to all major aspects of filmmaking. Students will learn concepts to help achieve maximum psychological impact through the study and practice of the directorial decisions in camera placement, blocking, staging, and visual image design. Students will take part in several in-class workshops and will be challenged to think comprehensively about their film projects in terms of the economic realities of low budget student productions. Using their own film projects as prototypes, students will learn to break down their film scripts in terms of story and emotional beats, shot selection and composition, and budgeting and scheduling. This course will be the forum for preparing, screening, and critiquing four short films.

CINEMATOGRAPHY I

In this course, students undergo intensive training in the use of the 16mm non-sync motion picture and video cameras and their accessories. Through hands-on workshops and film tests, they will also learn fundamental lighting techniques. As they progress through the workshop, they learn how to support the mood of the story with lighting choices and they experiment with expressive lighting styles.

EDITING I

This course presents students with multiple aesthetic approaches to editing film and video. Students will learn how to apply concepts such as temporal continuity and spatial continuity, as well as less traditional discontinuous editing techniques to their work. The course will also discuss the psychological and emotional effects of editing on the overall story. Additionally, students will learn to operate Avid Media Composer digital editing software, which they will use to edit their own films. Classes are supplemented with individual consultations at the computer.

PRODUCTION WORKSHOP I

Students are split into shooting crews of 3-4 people to shoot mise-en-scène, continuity, and montage exercises in the field. The instructor will screen and review the footage from previous workshops and discuss any outstanding issues of the production that the students have. These workshops are designed to facilitate the students' individual projects.

SCREENWRITING I

This course introduces the established tools and language used in writing a film project. Students will take a story from initial idea, treatment, and outline to a rough draft and finally a shooting script. Instruction focuses on the fundamentals of visual storytelling. The intersection of story structure, theme, character, tension, and conflict is examined through detailed scene analysis. In-class discussion provides students with constructive analysis and support. Students are encouraged to tell their stories visually, rather than rely on dialogue.

CINEMA STUDIES I

This seminar teaches students to identify the techniques used by cinematic innovators throughout the history of filmmaking. Through screenings and discussions, students will grow to understand how filmmakers have approached the great challenge of telling stories with moving images from silent films to the digital age. The course explores ways that the crafts of directing (particularly shot construction), cinematography, acting, and editing have developed. Students are then challenged to place themselves within that development with regard to their ongoing film projects.

INDIVIDUAL EDITING I

This course prepares students for the challenges inherent in cutting a more complex narrative film with dialogue and multiple sound tracks. Students are required to dedicate a large portion of their time to editing their projects with support from the Edit Lab teaching assistants.

SOUND RECORDING I

This is a comprehensive class that details the process of sound recording. It provides concepts, technical information, hands-on demonstration and practice. Students are introduced to various types of recording devices and taught when to use them. The class challenges the students to use sound as an additional tool for storytelling, and takes them through the complete recording process.

DIRECTOR'S CRAFT II

This course is a concentrated examination and analysis of the aesthetic elements of the director's toolkit as it applies to shot choice, composition, setting, point of view, character, and camera movement. Students learn how to cover complex dialogue scenes with a series of shots and practice different approaches to coverage by breaking down scenes from their own scripts. Drawing from the elements presented in this class, students are encouraged to develop their own directorial style.

PRODUCING

Producing leads students through the entire process of pre-production, including scouting and securing locations, permits, and casting. The producing instructor and students design a production schedule for the entire class. The instructor encourages students to form realistic plans to successfully make their films. Using script breakdowns, students learn how to plan and keep to a schedule and budget for their productions. They use their own finished scripts in class as they learn how to take advantage of budgeting and scheduling forms and methods.

CINEMATOGRAPHY II

This class immerses students in the technical and creative demands of cinematography. They will learn to go beyond simply "getting an image" and focus on the nuances of visual storytelling. Topics include the Arriflex 16SR camera and accessories, HD Cameras, use of Color and Light, and 35mm Cameras. In addition to being trained to operate advanced camera equipment, students study basic color theory and learn to control the color palette of their projects. Special attention is given to the emotional attributes that can be assigned to an image by changing the hue, saturation, and contrast. Students gain a greater understanding of aesthetic image control as they learn to incorporate these theories into their projects.

SOUND RECORDING II

This hands-on course challenges students to interpret and apply all theory and practice of the first semester curriculum in a series of sync-sound production exercises. Students shoot complex dramatic scenes on 16mm film and high definition video from their own scripts with the guidance and critique of the instructor. Students use this practice to determine what adjustments must be made to their scripts and shooting plans before entering into production. These practice scenes are expected to be fully pre-produced (storyboarded, cast, scouted, rehearsed, and pre-lit) and executed at a professional level.

EDITING II

This course teaches students to edit their sync-sound projects. Students are encouraged to expand upon previously mastered techniques to establish a consistent editing design, dialogue rhythm, and sense of pacing and continuity that complements the story as a whole.

SCREENWRITING II

In addition to providing an in-depth study and exploration of dialogue in film, Screenwriting II focuses on the writing, rewriting, and polishing of the One-Year Final Film scripts. Students will conduct live readings of their screenplays and engage in instructor-led discussions of the work. The goal of this seminar is to increase the writer's mastery of those aspects of screenwriting as outlined in Screenwriting I.

PRODUCTION WORKSHOP II

Students stage and shoot complex dramatic exercises under the guidance of the instructor. They design shots to heighten the emotion of a sequence, then shoot the sequence on digital video in a supervised environment. The relationship between text and subtext is explored in depth through classroom sessions, screenings, and critiques and in the field production exercises.

INDIVIDUAL EDITING II

This course prepares students for the challenges inherent in cutting a more complex narrative film with dialogue and multiple sound tracks. Students are required to dedicate a large portion of their time to editing their projects, including their Final Film, with assistance from the Edit Lab teaching assistants.

CINEMA STUDIES II

Aimed at developing their analytical skills when it comes to an historical and international range of film works, students discuss aesthetic and social aspects of notable films. Cinema Studies II is designed to help students become more fluent in film vocabulary. This course involves story analysis in which the instructor guides scene by scene analysis of the various approaches to visual storytelling in different genres.



FILM PROJECTS

**MISE-EN-SCÈNE**

In their first film, students are introduced to mise-en-scène, or directing a shot to visually tell a story. Once they create a dramatic moment, they concentrate on the dynamics of the shot that will best express it. **This project teaches students how the relationship of the subject and the camera creates drama.** Each student designs and shoots a scene that has a beginning, middle, and end. Students will learn to pay close attention to the choice of lenses, distances, and angles.

Since the story will be told within one long shot, it must be staged to express as much as possible about the characters and their actions. Students should rehearse the shot for blocking of actors and camera until the scene works without needing to stop; only then should they roll film. Students shoot their film in high definition video, then edit and screen their projects for critique and discussion.

CONTINUITY

Continuity is one of the fundamental principles of modern filmmaking. By making a “continuity film,” students learn the way cuts can advance the story while sustaining the reality of the scene, and the difference between “film time” and “real time.” Students are challenged to make a film that maintains continuity in story, time, and space. The action in these films unfolds utilizing a variety of shots (10–15) in a continuous sequence (no jumps in time or action). In the Continuity Films, students must produce a clear, visual scene while maintaining the authenticity of the moment. Students write, direct, shoot, edit, and screen a film of up to three minutes. Students must thoroughly pre-plan and complete a series of essential pre-production elements including script, location scouting, shot list, floor plan, storyboarding, and schedule.

MUSIC & MONTAGE FILM

The third project introduces students to the relationship between sound and film, as well as to narrative tools like montage and jump cuts. In this project, students are encouraged to explore a more personal form of visual storytelling. For this film, students choose a piece of music, and in the editing room, they cut their images to work in concert with, or in counterpoint to, the music. Students should experiment with rhythm and pacing. Each student writes, directs, shoots, edits, and screens a film of up to four minutes. In addition to storyboards, students may use a still camera to plan their films to assist them in their choice of locations, angles, and lighting.



QUARTER FILM

From the first week of the program, students begin developing their scripts in Writing Class for their fourth film.

This fourth film is more ambitious in scope than the previous exercises. It builds upon the foundation of skills and knowledge gained in the first part of the semester. Students may use sound effects, music, voiceover, and ambient sound to help tell their stories. The final project may be 3-10 minutes in length, keeping in mind, “less is more.”

Each student must complete a production book that includes the following:

- Statement of Objective: Idea of the film and stylistic approach in a concise statement.
- Scenario: Shooting script, storyboards and floor plan.
- Analysis: Intention, realization, mistakes, crew work.

Films may be of any genre, and can be narrative, documentary, or experimental.

THE CHEKHOVIAN

This project challenges students to explore the relationship between dialogue and dramatic action. It serves as the student's first foray into directing a film with dialogue recorded on set. Students are provided with short dialogue-only scripts with no description of physical detail or action. The student director determines the "who, what, where, when, and why" of the story. Above all, each student director must identify the characters' objectives and dramatic beats of the scene.

Students will learn how these elements determine the meaning of the dialogue and should deepen their understanding of text versus subtext. When the finished projects are screened in class for critique, students will discover how different directorial interpretations of the same scene reveal the characters and the impact and meaning of the story.



POV

Each shot in a film expresses a point-of-view, and in narrative film, the point-of-view changes often, sometimes with each new shot. For the most part, point-of-view—which is often called narrative stance—is largely invisible to the audience; though the accumulated effect of the changes profoundly affects the way the audience interprets any scene. Students will analyze different ways to create a point of view through visual means: the POV shot, shot size, eye-line, camera height, movement, over-the-shoulder shots, lighting, color and contrast.

The POV project teaches students to visually reinforce the dramatic point of view initiated in the screenplay. Students are given a short scene containing two characters with conflicting objectives. Each student will choose one of the characters to be the main character and then direct a short film using the visual tools explored in class to present the viewer with a clear and distinct point-of-view.

SEMESTER ONE FILM

The Semester One Final Film is a narrative digital film project of up to ten minutes. This film should showcase all the lessons and techniques students learned in the first semester, emphasizing the Acting for Directors classes, production workshops, and individual exercises of the second quarter. Ideally, the Semester One Film should be a performance driven film with no more than three characters and one or two locations. However, students always have the option of shooting a documentary, music video or experimental film for this project.

YEAR ONE THESIS FILM

This project is the culmination of the year's work. Each student's goal is to produce a fully realized short film that demonstrates his or her own artistic vision and point of view. Students work with larger crews and with more time allotted for pre-production, production, and post-production than the previous projects. Students prepare for this project with the assistance of all classes in the second semester, including the producing class, which is specifically designed to guide students through the pre-production of this project. Students must prepare detailed production books and receive a "green light" from the faculty to check out equipment for their shoots. Each student can choose to shoot this film in one of three formats—HD digital video, 16mm film, or 35mm film.