

Associate of Fine Arts

- Two-Year Degree Programs -

Filmmaking | Acting for Film | Producing for Film & TV | Screenwriting | Game Design

*“When I’m making a film,
I’m the audience.”*

- Martin Scorsese



A NYFA student gets hands-on instruction on RED camera.



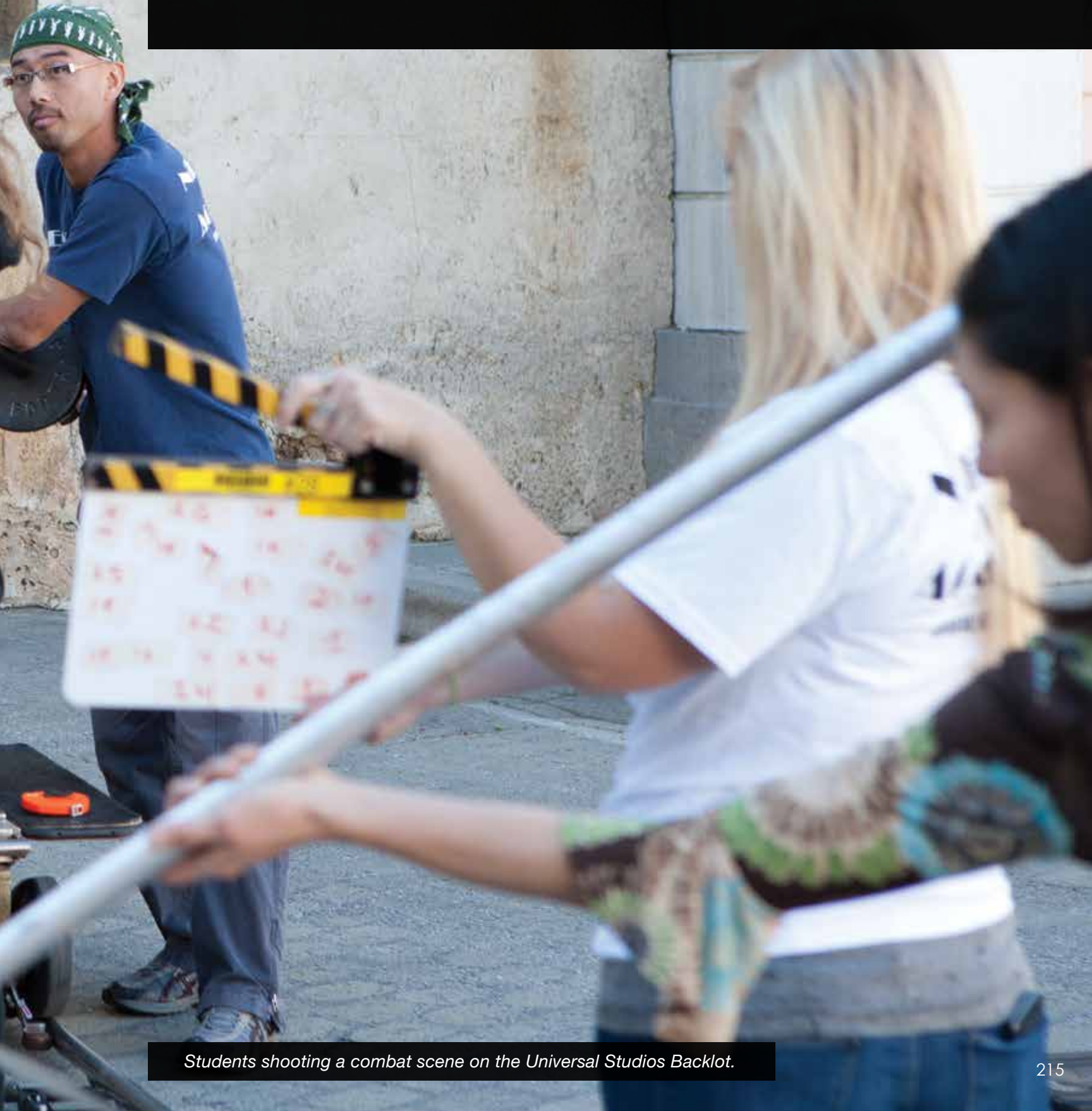
LOCATION

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Location is subject to change.

For start dates and tuition, please visit nyfa.edu

Two-Year Degree Program
ASSOCIATE OF FINE ARTS
in FILMMAKING



Students shooting a combat scene on the Universal Studios Backlot.

OVERVIEW



Filmmaking is not something that is simply learned. Being confined to a classroom where one is taught the basic criteria for bringing a story to life will ultimately limit one's development as a filmmaker.

At the Academy, our philosophy is learning by doing, something students will experience from the second they step into our fantastic facilities. Whether potential students are interested in creating feature-length films, shorts, music videos, or documentaries, the Academy's diverse filmmaking courses will fit each student's specific needs.

The Associate of Fine Arts (AFA) Filmmaking degree program allows students to focus exclusively on their professional and artistic development. Unlike a standard undergraduate program, students are able to focus on the field they wish to pursue immediately. It is a stand-alone program rather than a component of a longer bachelor's degree program structured for transfer.

No education in film is complete without directly experiencing the highly collaborative environment that filmmaking requires. **Students work with each other and with faculty members to develop their own particular interests, while getting hands-on training in all of the elements at work on a film set.** From the start, students are placed behind the camera to learn the many visual, dramatic, and technical challenges a director faces. This includes assisting their crews in the roles of director of photography, assistant cameraperson, and gaffer/grip, so that each student receives extensive set experience.

In creating the curriculum that makes up our film school, we worked directly with filmmakers, producers, screenwriters, and many more to foster an environment that promotes success at every level. By adapting the techniques and ideas from the leading university film programs to a set of courses that focus on in-depth practical training, our students receive not just an education, but a set of experiences that give them the hands-on experience necessary to actually realize their goals as filmmakers.

Over the course of the six-semester, two-year full-time program, students learn the art and technique of visual storytelling and gain experience shooting in 16mm, 35mm, HD, and with the RED Epic Dragon through a combination of lectures, seminars, and total immersion workshops.

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.

The semesters are strategically broken down into phases, each phase acting as a foundation to the next. AFA candidates will first complete a series of short but intensive projects that will expose them to a variety of skills and techniques. After completing several short films in the first year, students will enter the second year ready to focus on their final film projects. **This sequential arrangement allows students to progressively gain experience as visual storytellers, and to continuously build on their knowledge and understanding of filmmaking as an art form.**

In addition to working in state-of-the-art facilities with cutting-edge equipment, students study under faculty members that have extensive experience making their own films, and are currently active as filmmakers in the industry. Above all, the Academy's teachers are brilliant instructors who consistently inspire our students and communicate their passion and knowledge for their art. **Our award-winning faculty guides students through the essentials of shooting, writing, directing, and editing film, and provide one-on-one critiques of the student film projects to help them progress on their journey.**

The AFA in Filmmaking program is offered exclusively at the Academy's Los Angeles campus. **QUALIFIED STUDENTS HAVE THE OPTION OF COMPLETING COURSE WORK AT THE NEW YORK FILM ACADEMY IN NEW YORK CITY IN A ONE-YEAR NON-DEGREE PROGRAM AND THEN APPLYING THEIR COURSE WORK TO BE ACCEPTED FOR ADVANCED STANDING IN THE AFA FILMMAKING DEGREE PROGRAM.**

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

Upon graduating from the AFA in Filmmaking program, students will exhibit the following skill sets and knowledge:

- Students will understand the fundamentals of visual storytelling.
- Demonstrate capabilities with video production and digital editing.
- Exhibit confidence with acting and directing actors.
- Demonstrate advanced filmmaking craft including directing, screenwriting, producing, sync-sound production, cinematography, and digital editing.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the various stages of film production, including pre-production, physical production, and post-production.
- Apply the fundamentals of sound design.
- Identify and produce films in alternative formats, such as music videos and commercials.
- Examine enhanced directing, camera, and producing techniques.

WHAT YOU WILL ACHIEVE

SEMESTER ONE

- Write, direct and edit three short nonsynchronous projects. One will be on 16mm and three may be either 16mm or video.
- Direct or DP a short nonsynchronous group project exploring pacing.
- Direct a short project, with dialogue, emphasizing a character's Point of View.
- Explore acting and subtext through Instructor-supervised Digital Production workshops, serving as either a director or actor.
- Write, produce, direct, and edit a short film with dialogue of up to 10 minutes in length.
- Crew as Cinematographer, Gaffer, and/or Assistant Camera on approximately 15 additional projects.

SEMESTER TWO

- Direct, Assistant Direct, or serve as Cinematographer on at least one Instructor-supervised Synchronous Sound Production Workshop.
- Serve as crewmember on three other production workshops, shot on various formats ranging from 16mm to HD.
- Develop proficiency with the second semester equipment package.
- Shoot exercises on 35mm film as part of Camera and Lighting II.

SEMESTER THREE

- Direct, produce, and edit a film of up to 15 minutes (shot on 16mm film, 35mm film, or High Definition Video).
- Participate as a principal crew-member on fellow students' films.
- Workshop a concept for a feature screenplay.

SEMESTER FOUR

- Pitch, develop, produce, and direct a Spec Commercial or Advanced Music Video.
- Collaborate with classmates on a series of on-location exercises using advanced cinematography techniques.
- Create a treatment for a feature screenplay.

SEMESTER FIVE

- Write, produce, direct, and a thesis film of up to 30 minutes in length.
- Serve as principal crewmember on classmates' projects.

SEMESTER SIX

- Write, produce, direct and finally edit a thesis film of up to 30 minutes in length.
- Serve as principal crewmember on classmates' projects.
- Write draft #1 of an original feature screenplay.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

YEAR ONE OVERVIEW

In Year One, students undergo a thorough regimen of classwork and film production that lays the groundwork for a professional life in the film arts. From the first day of class, students experience a hands-on education in an environment that empowers them to artfully tell their stories. They rapidly learn the fundamental creative and technical skills they need to make films.

SEMESTER ONE

DIRECTOR'S CRAFT I

This is the first part of an in-depth study of the methods used by the great directors to affect their audiences and to trigger emotional responses. In this course, students study the fundamentals of the director's palette, including camera placement, blocking, staging, and visual image design.

CAMERA & LIGHTING I

In the first week of the course, students are trained to use the 16mm Arriflex-S motion picture camera and its accessories. Within the first week, they perform test shoots to learn about the latitude of the film stock, how to get a correct exposure, the effect of different lenses, focus pulling, and in-camera effects. As students transition to dialogue projects on the Canon 5D, they are taught the principles of shooting and lighting high-definition video.

DIGITAL EDITING I

In Digital Editing, students study the fundamental theories and technical aspects of nonlinear editing. Each student edits his or her own film.

PRODUCTION WORKSHOP

Production Workshop is a hands-on class in which students stage and shoot exercises under the supervision of their instructors. Through this in-class practice, students incorporate the rules and tools of framing and continuity learned in other classes.

ACTING FOR DIRECTORS

This course adheres to the philosophy that, in order to direct actors, one must understand and experience acting as art and methodology. Directing students will become actors. Students learn how to identify a screenplay's emotional "beats" and "character objectives" to communicate effectively with and help improve their actors' performances.



SCREENWRITING I

This course introduces students to the foundations of screenwriting, as students workshop ideas, write loglines, treatments, rough drafts, and shooting scripts. Instruction focuses on the essentials of visual storytelling, dramatic structure, and character development. The scripts students write become the basis of all class work in the first semester.

SEMESTER TWO

DIRECTOR'S CRAFT II

Starting where the first semester directing class left off, students learn how to cover scenes with a series of shots as well as the fundamental uses of moving cameras.

CAMERA & LIGHTING II

Continuing where Camera and Lighting I left off, students work with sync-sound 16mm cameras before tackling the full capabilities of HD using the RED Scarlet.



SEMESTER THREE

INTERMEDIATE FILM PRODUCTION

Each student receives five shooting days to produce a script of 15 pages. Students work on their classmates' films in the principle crew roles.

INTERMEDIATE FILM POST-PRODUCTION

After the production period, students build their films in the editing room. They screen rough-cuts of their films for their directing and editing instructors and receive feedback from their peers before presenting their finished films to an invited audience at the end of the semester.

COLLABORATION WORKSHOP

A course designed to further expand upon the etiquette of the film set, students explore the importance of the actor/director relationship required for a successful and professional film shoot.

DIGITAL EDITING II

Students learn to sync and edit with dialogue, and work with post-production sound techniques.

SCREENWRITING II

Students develop, write, and workshop scripts for their Year One Intermediate Films.

PRODUCING THE SHORT FILM I

This course leads students through pre-production, introducing them to the essential processes of location scouting, permitting, and actor releases.

INTRODUCTION TO FILM

Through screenings and discussion, this class charts the 120-year history of the medium, from early silent shorts, through various international movements, the rise and fall of the Hollywood Golden Age, to the birth of the modern cinema.

ELEMENTS OF FEATURE SCREENWRITING

This course introduces students to the craft of feature screenwriting through script-to-screen examinations of classic features.

SOUND DESIGN

Students receive instruction in fundamental post-production sound techniques such as Sound Effects and Sound Mixing. In the process, they learn the significance of sound design in improving the look of their Intermediate films.

MARKETING THE SHORT FILM

Students learn the various outlets for exhibiting their short films. As they learn about film festivals and markets, students develop a portfolio, including a website and press kit, intended to market their completed films most effectively.

VISUAL EFFECTS

Students can elect to take a course on the fundamentals of visual effects, including using green screen, animation, and other effects in the visual representation on screen.

YEAR TWO OVERVIEW

Coursework in the second year includes a series of highly specialized classes and workshops designed to further develop students' knowledge and skills as professional filmmakers. The final thesis is intended to reflect the student's strengths as a filmmaker, and should demonstrate an understanding of all of the elements learned throughout the course of study.

SEMESTER FOUR

DIRECTOR'S CRAFT III

Students increase their comprehension of visual expression and directorial style through a series of in-class exercises, assignments, and lectures. These skills will help prepare students for Advanced Production Workshop, which runs concurrently as the students, in crews, produce commercial spots. Preparation of a director's journal will assist students in defining their style and vision for projects in later semesters. Each student will direct her or his own advanced music video, in addition to collaborating as crew on their classmates' projects.

CAMERA & LIGHTING III

This hands-on course continues to explore the RED Camera and a range of more professional lighting and grip equipment. In a hands-on environment, students will work with dollies, flats, and green screens on a professional sound stage, replicating shots from their favorite films.

PRODUCING COMMERCIALS & MUSIC VIDEOS

Students will learn the fundamentals of commercials and music videos to expand their production knowledge and apply these lessons to producing their own Thesis Project. This course continues to examine the role of the producer by matching tasks and challenges with ways of approaching them. As students produce their own projects, the challenges will become clear, and some class time will be devoted to specific production "hurdles." Students will hone group problem-solving skills, as well as learn through sharing real-world examples.



FEATURE SCREENPLAY I

The goal of this workshop is to fully immerse each student in the foundations of feature screenwriting, providing a solid structure for of an overall idea and scripted setup. Students work with instructors and peers to write a feature film treatment and first act.

SCREENWRITING III

Students develop, outline, and write treatments and a first draft of their thesis scripts. As these young filmmakers develop a unique directing style, their writing instructors encourage them to "write it in" to these scripts, giving them a unique and specific vision.

ADVANCED PRODUCTION WORKSHOP

Students film spec commercials using the advanced equipment package. This experience gives students an arsenal of techniques and practical tools that they can use to successfully complete their Thesis Project.

SEMESTER FIVE

THESIS FILM DIRECTING

This class helps students define a visual style and approach to their thesis projects. Working alongside their peers, and under the guidance of a directing instructor, students prepare a presentation that details their directorial choices with regards to character, color, production design, locations, music, and tone.

THESIS FILM PREP

As their thesis scripts are polished and completed, students will apply their knowledge of production management to their projects.

SCREENWRITING IV: SHORT THESIS SCREENWRITING

Under the guidance of screenwriting instructors, students workshop their scripts with their peers, lead table reads, and lock their scripts.

DIGITAL EDITING III

This course seeks to increase students' proficiency as editors and develops their knowledge of complex post-production elements such as color correction, sound mixing, and both electronic and traditional film finishing.

PRODUCTION DESIGN

This workshop helps students prepare for the design requirements of their thesis film projects. Topics covered in this hands-on workshop include the collaboration between cinematography and design, set construction, creating the visual language of the film, costume design, and prop choices.

THESIS FILM PRODUCTION I

The final six weeks of semester five begin the Thesis production window. A single project of up to thirty minutes in length, the Thesis project is filmed using the entire advanced equipment package—including RED Epic Dragon cameras, HMI lighting and industry standard advanced dollies. Each student is allotted a block of thirteen shooting days, and must work on three of their classmates' films to complete the requirements of the degree.

“

Everyone finds it so easy to be a director - how come I find it so difficult? ”

- Louis Malle

SEMESTER SIX

THESIS FILM PRODUCTION II

The first eight weeks of semester six complete the 14-week Thesis production window. Every two weeks during the production period, students reconvene with their directing and producing instructors to discuss each production, and prepare for the upcoming projects.

THESIS FILM POST-PRODUCTION

The ability to receive creative notes during post-production is an essential skill for all filmmakers. Ultimately, this process helps students create more concise and powerful short films, as well as prepare them to enter the editorial process on future films when they will receive extensive, and at times, contradictory notes from producers, cast, financiers and other creatives.

ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY SEMINAR

There is no single path or formula for creating a career in filmmaking. During the last weeks of the AFA Program, students explore the many different possible roads to a life in film. Guest filmmakers and industry professionals share their experiences with students, and mentors work individually with students to discuss the next steps in their careers.

FEATURE SCREENPLAY II

Students can elect to workshop and complete the feature script developed in semester four. Students will also learn the essentials of marketing and selling a feature screenplay.