



Two-Year Accelerated  
**MASTER OF FINE ARTS**  
*in* **PHOTOGRAPHY**

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## LOCATION

**LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA;**

*Locations are subject to change.*

*For start dates and tuition, please visit [nyfa.edu](http://nyfa.edu)*

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*Peter Hurley, renowned photographer, giving a master class to our Photography students.*

A DSLR camera and lens that allows you to shoot stills and video is included in the full enrollment tuition fee for the MFA Photography program.

MFA Photography students have the option to join a special one-week photography expedition to an exciting locale.\*

The MFA Photography program is designed to train a new generation of visual artists whose work is grounded in a thorough awareness of the history of the medium, who are masters over a broad array of photographic tools both old and new, and who are equipped with the creative and business skills to succeed in a competitive marketplace. Accordingly, students extensively practice and complete assignments across the many photographic genres, including fashion, commercial, documentary, photojournalism, fine art, and many more.

Students are treated as professionals in the program and are expected to behave as such by quickly and effectively turning in high-quality assignments at a quick and constant pace, effectively mirroring the professional realities of the industry.

In addition, students in the MFA Photography program work with a wide range of photographic equipment and software, shooting both digitally and with film to give them a solid grounding in the foundations of photography. Furthermore, students learn how to explore the full range of technological options provided to them by such industry standard software programs as Adobe Photoshop and Lightroom. Students not only learn how to use these programs as a digital darkroom to

improve the quality of an image, but are also encouraged to experiment with the many options afforded by the software, creating wholly new images out of their source material. NYFA's photography department embraces all lens-based media, offering a unique curriculum that includes not only still digital and film photography, but also video production.

The MFA Photography program is overseen by our faculty of professional photographers who remain active in the industry and are thus able to impart their unique and practical insight to students to ensure that our students graduate as well-rounded photographers who are able to successfully navigate the industry.

Offered at the New York Film Academy's Los Angeles and Miami campuses, the MFA Photography degree program is a four-semester graduate program that focuses on training photographers in the fundamentals and advanced techniques of the craft, while also actively preparing them for a successful career as a professional photographer. **College graduates wishing to earn a MFA in Photography who do not have the necessary photography experience may enter a three year sequence whereby they will complete the One Year Photography program first and then enter the two-year MFA in Photography degree program.**

*\*The photography expedition is planned and supervised by NYFA faculty and staff. Please note, participants pay for the costs of their transportation, accommodation, and food. The trip is scheduled during a school vacation or semester break. It is offered as an optional experience, students are not required to participate.*

Legendary photographer **Ralph Gibson** is committed to helping students realize their artistic and professional ambitions.



## WHAT MAKES OUR PHOTOGRAPHY PROGRAM UNIQUE

Photography students at New York Film Academy will be introduced to the tools and develop the skills necessary for researching, composing, and capturing Digital Photographic Projects. **Students are encouraged to be creative, but are also taught to think of each project as a concise statement of artistic, documentary, and/or journalistic intent.**

## WHAT YOU WILL LEARN AND ACHIEVE

- Detailed understanding of digital and analog cameras and optics from 35mm to large format.
- In-depth experience with numerous digital and wetlab image creation, processing, and printing techniques.
- Expertise of contemporary business practices.
- Comprehensive awareness of light and expertise with lighting.
- Mastery of Adobe Photoshop and Lightroom.
- Extensive knowledge of the history of photography, aesthetics and technology.
- Thorough understanding of aesthetics and technical theories of photography and experience in the practical application.
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively in a high-pressure creative environment.
- Excellence in technical, conceptual and production of the final exhibit work and image portfolio.
- Articulate, verbally and in writing the technical, formal, and conceptual issues in personal creative work and the works of others.

### SEMESTER ONE

- Engage in an artistic community where peers share feedback and critique work.
- Explore and develop a personal visual style.
- Create, produce and edit a series that defines your personal narrative.

### SEMESTER TWO

- Broader knowledge of digital, analog medium and large format cameras.
- Greater proficiency with film capture and digital output.
- Consistently produce quality images that accurately illustrate a concept.
- Produce a body of work showing technical understanding and creative vision.

### SEMESTER THREE

- Compose a thorough, detailed thesis proposal.
- Construct a working business plan.
- Develop a marketing strategy for self-promotion.

### SEMESTER FOUR

- Refine and print a portfolio of well made photographs.
- Create promotional materials for targeted markets.
- Demonstrate a technical, conceptual and rigorous production for final thesis.
- Produce a final thesis exhibition.



*Photo by Ralph Gibson*

“ Every photographer has his or her unique way of seeing. This can be discovered and this is what we develop with our NYFA students. ”

*- Ralph Gibson*

Ralph Gibson is an acclaimed photographer whose awards include fellowships from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts, as well as the Leica Medal of Excellence, the Lucie Lifetime Award and the Silver Plumb Award. He is a Commandeur de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres of France, and holds honorary doctorates from the University of Maryland and Ohio Wesleyan University.

*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.*

## YEAR ONE OVERVIEW

In the first year, MFA Photography students are immersed in a rigorous schedule of classroom learning, hands-on instructor supervised workshops, and outside projects. Throughout the program, this combination provides a challenging environment allowing students to develop their technical skills and artistic identities.



Photos by New York Film Academy Photography grads (from top to bottom): Bryan Kong, Aric Coppola, and Veselina Tsankova

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## SEMESTER ONE

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### PHOTOGRAPHY ESSENTIALS

Students investigate concept-driven photography by conceptualizing and producing a body of creative work, which represents the themes and iconography that interest them most.

### CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN PHOTOGRAPHY

This course examines works of art from a diverse range of social and political roots to personal and narrative imagery through the study of artists and opens the discussion of content versus form. Artists, critics, and curators will be invited to participate in class discussions.

### THE CRITICAL EYE

This course is designed to help students develop and refine their analytic sensibilities. Reviewing a wide range of historic and contemporary artworks along with the writings of art critics and historians, students will investigate the ways in which society processes and assesses images.

### IMAGING ESSENTIALS I

This immersive course explores the theory and practice of post-production techniques for still photography. Students are trained in digital and analog techniques so they are equipped with all the relevant tools for effective workflow and final high quality output.

### PROFESSIONAL LIGHTING PRACTICES I

In this hands-on course, students develop their lighting skills in all aspects of available and artificial lighting. Students further their understanding of the intricacies and importance that light has to the photographic process and how mastering these concepts will lead to effective solutions.

### PHOTOGRAPHY PRACTICUM I

Students' skills in visual perception are refined as they embark on a series of shooting assignments in studio and/or on location using large format camera systems. Students receive valuable direction and feedback in technique and aesthetics via a series of in-class critiquing sessions.

## YEAR TWO OVERVIEW

In the second year, students are encouraged to work more independently and are challenged to produce the highest caliber work. They conceptualize and develop their final thesis project under the guidance of instructors, participate in academically challenging theory courses as well as being immersed in digital darkroom practices for final print output.

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### SEMESTER TWO

#### **HISTORICAL & CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES I**

Through lectures, discussion, guest presentations, readings, and hands-on projects, students will examine various forms of nonfiction storytelling, both moving and still. This course explores the narrative through a range of traditional disciplines that include documentary, journalism, fine art, anthropology, and science. Students examine how storytelling has changed both historically and with modern technology.

#### **PROFESSIONAL METHODS I**

This course offers a forum for discussion of various topics such as how the tools you use affect the outcome of a project, contemporary print aesthetics, the new color, a return to black-and-white, the power of the edit, and whether analog post-production is still a viable method in a digital arena.

#### **IMAGING ESSENTIALS II**

An in-depth follow up to Imaging Essentials I, this lab-based course enables students to further their mastery of RAW processing, color management, and workflow practices while developing advanced perceptual skills. Students will also explore a range of possibilities for printing images and composite entirely new visual worlds.

#### **PROFESSIONAL LIGHTING PRACTICES II**

This course provides students with a constructive forum in which they are encouraged to take stock of their current skill set and further develop their professional objectives. Students refine their lighting practice further with individually directed assignments. Instructors offer a mentored environment for students to initiate and produce assignments in their specific areas of interest.

#### **PHOTOGRAPHY PRACTICUM II**

This practical course further develops students' skills in medium and large format digital and analog systems. Students work extensively with digital backs on all their assignments so that they are thoroughly versed in digital capture and output. Towards the end of the semester, students work with instructors in their particular area of interest to complete an original body of work.

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### SEMESTER THREE

#### **PROFESSIONAL METHODS II**

This course expands on students' knowledge of the Professional Photography business. Portfolio development, self-promotion strategies, and essential business practices are emphasized in students' fields of interest.

#### **HISTORICAL & CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES II**

The integral and increasingly fluid relationship between the photograph and the moving image in contemporary arts practice will be explored in this course. Special attention will be paid to the critical and historical discourses that have shaped cinema practice and tradition as well as the significance of editing and the treatment of time. Included are examination and discussion of the shared histories of the still and moving image.

#### **THESIS PREP**

Students will write a proposal of 10–20 pages outlining what their final project will be about, why they chose it as their body of work, and how they will go about completing it. Students will be expected to thoroughly research their chosen genre, explaining its historical precedents and influences.

#### **ADVANCED IMAGING 1**

This course encompasses application of advanced printing techniques. Students are immersed in advanced color correction techniques for digital prepress including CMYK and LAB modes, framework-based tone and color manipulation to orchestrate visual attention, advanced printing techniques, scanning, spotting, sharpening, and digitally printing film negatives using high-end dedicated film scanners.



*Photo by our MFA Photography grad, Joseph Bornilla documenting the aftermath of Super Typhoon Yolanda in the eastern Philippines.*

## SEMESTER FOUR

### THESIS PROJECT

Students execute and complete their thesis projects, culminating in an end-of-program group exhibition.

Following their clearly stated thesis objectives from Semester Three, each student refines his or her body of creative work in the following ways: through peer and instructor feedback, rigorous critiques, an artist's statement, editing sessions, planning and designing the exhibition, sequencing images to achieve the desired viewer impact, mounting, framing, hanging techniques, and the installation itself.

### ADVANCED IMAGING II

A practical course where students are guided through their specific projects in specialized techniques such as compositing, advanced workflow, mastering high-resolution files with Smart Objects, and learning professional masking and high-end retouching. The goal of this course is to augment and refine each student's Photoshop skills for a wide range of applications both in the studio and the workplace.

### NAVIGATING THE INDUSTRY

As students transition to the professional world beyond the academic environment, this course provides practical guidance on the myriad ways photographers' skills are utilized in the industry. The class includes guest lectures as well as guidance in preparing a final marketing package photographers will need once they finish the program.

### DIGITAL PRINTING METHODOLOGIES

Under the guidance of instructors, students will produce exhibition quality prints for the graduation show. Expanding on existing skills from Advanced Imaging, students fine-tune the technical controls required for professional level printmaking and workflow. Students also experiment with input and output variances that affect their final print including modifying tonal adjustments to match the proofs, appropriate sharpening techniques and understanding proofs in relation to size, substrate, and color. Whether using black-and-white or color printing, students will be expected to analyze and adjust their own prints every step of the way.

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## ELECTIVES

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### BOOK DESIGN FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

The photo book is currently one of the most popular methods for presentation and marketing of one's work within the photographic industry. Starting with the subject matter and visual concept, this course will cover editing, photo sequencing, and all aspects of design and final output as well as self-publishing or working with a publishing company.

### PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT

A student's portfolio consolidates the use of the photographic image as a means of expression and communication, demonstrating technical ability, creative vision, and personal aesthetic brought together in a cohesive body of work.

Through a process of self-reflection, peer review, and lecturer feedback, students will produce and fine-tune a portfolio to a standard that is ready for presentation to the professional sector in their chosen area of the industry.

### INTERNSHIP/SELF-PROMOTION

As students continue to review and refine both their print and online work, this course prepares them for a career in professional photography in which they will present and target their portfolios to specific markets.

Students learn how to distinguish themselves through branding, develop strategic marketing plans and identify themselves through marketing their portfolios to meet the needs of different clients. This course also includes techniques for market-specific portfolios and promotional materials including business cards.

For the internship component of this course, students receive valuable hands-on experience in a variety of areas in the industry, from assisting photographers to working with a production company. Students are assisted in finding a position, and have approval from the Faculty Chair of Photography in order to receive credit. Students unable to secure an internship must complete an alternative project in order to meet this course requirement.

### ALTERNATIVE PROCESSES

In this course, students will explore alternative silver processes including lith printing, chromoskedastic, and liquid light. Students are encouraged to explore the myriad creative uses of a variety of processing and printing techniques as a way to expand their photographic vocabulary and personal work.

### MOTION CAPTURE FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

Today's photographers are expected to be equally as skilled at using video as they are the still image. This course offers students a solid introduction to time-based media, allowing them to practice core skills in cinematography, using continuous light sources, directing, screenwriting, location sound recording, directing actors, producing, and nonlinear editing. Students produce two projects during the semester.

### ADVANCED FILM PHOTOGRAPHY

This hands-on class covers medium and large format film photography, the Zone System for exposure and development, and black-and-white photochemical printing. Using mechanical cameras and lenses, students will learn the technology and processes involved in photochemical photography, from the mechanics of the cameras themselves to traditional darkroom techniques for developing film and making silver prints on both RC and fiber paper.

Students will gain hands-on experience in black-and-white printing and develop their own creative vision by making images in a variety of genres and lighting conditions, including landscape, architecture, portrait, and still-life.

### CURRENT PERSPECTIVES IN PHOTOGRAPHY

In this course, students consolidate their knowledge of the image as a means of expressing ideas, emotions, and experiences. Students will have the opportunity to freely explore a range of critical, aesthetic and practical issues relevant to contemporary photographers. Engaging in readings, lectures, discussions, research, and writing will expand critical thinking and expressive skills.