

# CINEMATIC ARTS NEWSLETTER

*The official newsletter of the Department of Cinematic Arts*



## ***A Message from the DEO***

### **WELCOME TO THE 9TH ANNUAL CINEMATIC ARTS NEWSLETTER (CAN)!**

We have new faculty to introduce, events to showcase, accomplishments to highlight, and more. I'm also particularly excited about this issue of our newsletter, since it will be the first to include a long overdue section on alumni news. I do hope everyone saw our call for alumni news this spring. It received a lively response, and we're sharing what we can here. But we're also aware that there are many more alums out there, and I would encourage people to get in touch with news. I've been both fascinated and delighted to read about such a diverse array of alumni career paths, and I hope you will be too as you read the list below. We're very interested in creating a more active alumni community, and we look forward to having more alumni share their journeys with our students and model all that one can do with a degree in Cinematic Arts!

I'm also excited about the present moment because Cinematic Arts is fast approaching its 10th anniversary as a stand-alone department this fall. Our majors have more than doubled during that time and are now approaching the 500-range. To be sure, this growth has posed challenges for a traditionally small department. But we have an amazing faculty team, and I'm also happy to report that the university is investing in Cinematic Arts. You can meet two new faculty below, Dean Bakopoulos (Screenwriting) and Laura Gede (Film Production). We will have several additional colleagues entering next year, and I'm certain that our team will continue to grow.

Alongside the 10-year departmental anniversary, this fall also marks the 5th anniversary for our Screenwriting B.A., one of the fastest-growing degrees at UIowa. Screenwriting is quickly becoming a key pillar of excellence in writing at UI.

You can read about our first Screenplay contest this year with Susan Kim, as well as a careers event with literary managers Elizabeth Newman and Britton Rizzo. Stay tuned for lots more developments in Screenwriting in the years to come! And there's yet another "first" to report year: On May 9th, we held our first department-specific graduation for undergraduates in our Cinema and Screenwriting BAs. This was a moving event, and we hope the photos can convey just a hint of the shared joy in the room.

Finally, for those interested, check out the ongoing overhaul to our website, including our new [Timeline of a Century of Film and Television at the University of Iowa](#).

Have a wonderful summer and keep in touch with Cinematic Arts!



Michael Cowan  
DEO, Department of Cinematic Arts

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# IN MEMORIAM



## **David Bordwell (1947-2024)**

**WRITTEN BY COREY CREEKMUR**

The Department of Cinematic Arts joins the global film studies community in mourning the loss of Iowa alumni, Professor David Bordwell, who passed away on February 29, 2024.

David was the Jacques Ledoux Professor Emeritus of Film Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and the author of over 22 books, including, with his partner Kristen Thompson (who earned her MA at Iowa in 1973), the groundbreaking textbook *Film Art: An Introduction*, first published in 1979, a work that significantly impacted the teaching of film at the college level. After retiring in 2004, David remained wildly prolific, maintaining a lively blog, regularly contributing video essays to The Criterion Channel, and continuing to produce books celebrated for their academic rigor as well as their general accessibility to film fans.

To launch his role as a highly influential teacher and scholar, David was a graduate student at the University of Iowa, where he earned his PhD in 1974 with a dissertation on French Impressionist Cinema directed by Dudley Andrew, who had only just received his PhD from Iowa in 1972. David later held a memorable visiting faculty appointment at Iowa in 1980. We remain exceptionally proud that his illustrious career had Iowa roots.

David was among the first generation of scholars to study and teach cinema as a primary focus and through professional training, and his eventual range of expertise was exceptional, extending from comprehensive studies of major directors like Dreyer, Ozu, Eisenstein, and global examples such as Hong Kong cinema to rich historical and theoretical studies on the Hollywood studio system, the rhetoric of film criticism, and cognitive approaches to the reception of films. Much of this work was grounded in decades of dedicated pedagogical practice, through David's training of generations of film scholars and more broadly via his widely-adopted textbooks on film style and film history. Just last year his final book, *Perplexing Plots: Popular Storytelling and the Poetics of Murder*, a witty study of popular crime fiction, appeared and was nominated for an award from The Mystery Writers of America. His influence on the discipline he first helped to craft at Iowa promises to play a long and lasting role both on our program and far beyond.

FRENCH IMPRESSIONIST CINEMA: FILM CULTURE,  
FILM THEORY, AND FILM STYLE

by

David Bordwell

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
in the Department of Speech and Dramatic Art  
in the Graduate College of  
The University of Iowa

December, 1974

Thesis supervisor: Professor J. Dudley Andrew





## ***First-Ever Cinematic Arts Graduation Ceremony***

On Thursday May 9th, Cinematic Arts held its first-ever in-person graduation ceremony. The event took place in Senate Chamber of the Old Capitol Building. Approximately 100 people—students, family, friends—were in attendance. Ca. 50 of our graduating seniors walked across the stage, receiving yellow roses and congratulations from faculty. Congratulations to all the new BAs in Cinema and Screenwriting. You make us so proud. Go Cine-Hawks!





## DEAN BAKOPOULOS

This past year, Dean Bakopoulos joined Cinematic Arts as Associate Professor and Head of Screenwriting. Professor Bakopoulos graciously agreed to answer a few questions for the Cinematic Arts Newsletter.

# New Faculty Spotlights

### CAN: Please tell us a little about yourself.

I'm the kid of immigrants—my mother is from Ukraine and my father is from Greece, and I grew up in the Detroit area. I attended the University of Michigan, and after college I worked a number of odd jobs—farmhand, warehouse worker, bookseller, journalist, and nonprofit director before publishing my first novel and winning a Guggenheim Fellowship nudged me into the direction of academic life. I've taught at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Iowa State University, and Grinnell College. I have a son in high school and a daughter who just finished her first year at Iowa!

### CAN: What drew you to the University of Iowa?

I really am excited about the way the University of Iowa builds on the rich literary tradition of the Iowa Writers' Workshop. We have a chance to expand this excellence to other genres and programs and truly make Iowa the best place in the world to study writing.

### CAN: How was your first year at Iowa? What did you teach and how are you enjoying Iowa City?

The students, in both my TV writing workshop and my advanced screenwriting seminar, have impressed me with their hard work, creativity, tenacity, and a real love of cinema and storytelling. There are so many great writers and artists teaching at the University of Iowa, as well as living and working in Iowa City. It feels like a magical little village where so many of my friends have found purpose and meaning in the creative life. And so many other friends pass through regularly to do events at venues like Prairie Lights and FilmScene. I also walk three miles a day at Kent County Park, which is near my house in rural Johnson County.

### CAN: Please tell us about your current work and any recent accomplishments.

I've just published an essay about the film *It's A Wonderful Life*, which is the first chapter of a memoir-in-essays about the intersection of cinema and mental health. I'm also at work on a comic novel titled *Moby Debt*, and I have three television projects in development at the studio level right now, which has kept me wonderfully busy in my first year at Iowa.





## LAURA GEDE

This past year, Laura Gede joined Cinematic Arts as Assistant Professor of Instruction for Film & Video Production, she kindly agreed to answer a few questions for the Cinematic Arts Newsletter.

# New Faculty Spotlights

### **CAN: Please tell us a little about yourself.**

I am an artist and filmmaker from Baltimore transplanted to Iowa City. I earned my honors Bachelors degree in Electronic Media and Film and Theatre: Design and Production from Towson University, studied at FAMU International in Spring of 2016, and received an MFA in Documentary Media from Northwestern University with certificates in Critical Theory and Education in 2023. As an Assistant Professor of Instruction in the Cinematic Arts Department, I teach Modes of Production and Nonfiction, and I just finished up running the Iowa City Documentary Film Festival with Cinema students. My work focuses on embodied approaches to material cinematic forms through the documentation of ecological processes, craft practice, and the internet.

### **CAN: What drew you to the University of Iowa?**

Iowa has a long history of experimental practice and film theory, which speaks to my main practice and work. The program seeks to create well-rounded filmmakers and doesn't require students to specify in any one role, which, in my opinion, creates much better filmmakers. There is an amazing artistic community outside of the university as well, which I

think vital to any community, especially a community with so many young artists and thinkers. Seeing spaces like FilmScene and PS1 really sold me on the community!

### **CAN: Please tell us about your current work and any recent accomplishments.**

One accomplishment was bringing back ICDOCS with 10 filmmakers in person, 15 virtual, and over 500 people in attendance over the course of the weekend was such an exciting experience. The students that worked all semester to pull off such an amazing event should be incredibly proud of what they accomplished with very little experience or prior understanding of film festivals. Personally, I screened new work at Scrapyard Screenings, a multi-screen, invite-only, festival in New York City and was published in a collection of academic works centered around post-internet art and internet archives, edited by Do Not Research and published through The New Museum. This summer, I'm finishing a single-channel iteration of my installation piece called *Passive Transport*, continuing work on a collaborative film about Chicago's Bubbly Creek, and working on completing production on one other new film before the start of next school year.

### **CAN: How was your first year at Iowa? What did you teach and how are you enjoying Iowa City?**

Being my first year as a full time teacher, it was definitely an exciting and overwhelming experience; but the passion of the students here and the intense desire for community collaboration made it an incredibly fruitful and fulfilling experience.

## Cinematic Arts Becomes a Regular at Prairie Lights

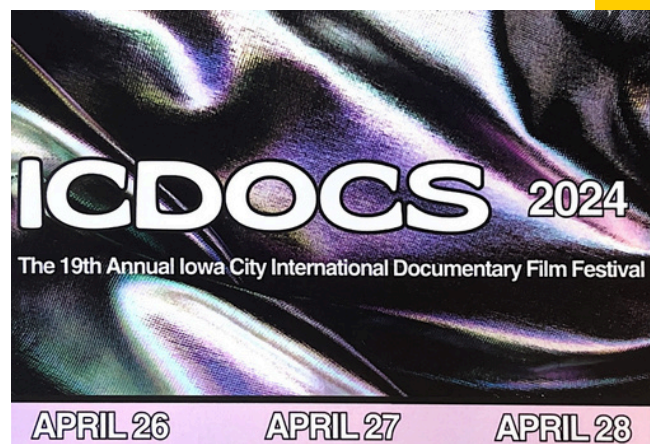
Cinematic Arts had a strong presence at Iowa City's iconic bookstore, Prairie Lights, this year. In the Fall, Dean Bakopoulos led a discussion with author Ben Percy, and Anna Morrison read from her award-winning poetry book *Long Exposure*.



In the spring, Chris Goetz read from his recently published book *The Counterfeit Coin: Video Games and Fantasies of Empowerment*, followed by a discussion with our very own Corey Creekmur.

## Welcome Back ICDOCS Film Festival!

This spring, ICDOCS came back, after a two-year hiatus, for its 19th year under the direction of faculty member Laura Gede. Students worked to bring 38 amazing films to Iowa City as well as programs from filmmakers and ICDOCS jurors, Brittany Gravely and Sara Sowell. The festival hosted 10 filmmakers in person, 15 virtual, and over 500 audience members over the weekend with screenings in the Adler Journalism Building, Film Scene, and Public Space One.







The festival had the privilege of inviting alumni Tristen Ives back to project their 16mm film *cloud film* during the fourth program block on Saturday. This year the festival collaborated with Bijou for their semesterly Open Screen festival and introduced an ICDOCS Experimental Nonfiction Award won by Anika Maculangan. Vertical Cinema co-sponsored an expanded cinema performance by Sara Sowell called *Dada's Daughter* on Saturday night and our new student organization CASO co-sponsored a showcase of Brittany Gravely's handmade 16mm films earlier that day. To cap off the weekend, ICDOCS did a joint screening with Out of the Archives, showing Professor Christopher Harris's newly restored feature film *still/here*.

The students of ICDOCS selected Dominick River's film *When the Seeds Say Enough* for the first annual Staff Pick award and the jurors awards went to:

#### Honorable Mentions –

*Datura's Aubade* by Jean-Jacques Martinod and  
Bretta C. Walker

*Parallel Botany* by Magdalena Bermudez

#### Sara Sowell's Juror Award -

*Spoils* by Luciana Decker Orozco

#### Brittany Gravely's Juror Award -

*Hey Sweet Pea* by Alee Peoples

#### Best in Show -

*Radio Jammer* by Jacob Kessler





## MIDWEST GRADUATE FILM STUDIES SYMPOSIUM



featuring keynote by **Maggie Hennefeld** and screening of *"Queens of Destruction"* from Kino Lorber's 'Cinema's First Nasty Women' collection at FilmScene at the Chauncey on March 29th at 6:30pm



"Expanding the Narrative" is an invitation to expand film scholarship beyond narrative and narrativity, reevaluate the historical narratives that dominate film and media studies, and pursue new approaches and underwritten subjects within the discipline.

**SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE**  
Friday:  
Mar 29, 2:00p-5:30p at E105 AJB  
Keynote:  
Mar 29, 6:30p at FilmScene @ Chauncey  
Saturday:  
Mar 30, 10:00a-5:00p at E105AJB

# Film Studies Graduate Students Launch New Research Symposium

On March 29th and 30th, the first annual Midwest Graduate Film Studies Symposium was held at the University of Iowa. The event was conceived and organized by our own Film Studies graduate students, with generous support from Cinematic Arts, the Obermann Centre, and various other sponsors. It included five roundtable discussions with twenty graduate student presenters coming from Indiana University, Marquette University, Michigan State University, University of Chicago, University of Illinois, University of Iowa, University Wisconsin-Madison, and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. On Friday evening at Iowa

City's local non-profit movie theater FilmScene, Dr. Maggie Hennefeld of the University of Minnesota delivered a keynote presentation that included selections from her award-winning educational Blu-ray boxset *Cinema's First Nasty Women* (Kino Lorber, 2022). The symposium organizers Andrea Schuster, Parker Stenseth and Zachary Vanes are currently working with graduate students at UW-Milwaukee to stage the second iteration of the symposium, which is planned to take place in Milwaukee in 2025. They hope that the symposium will continue to grow and become a yearly traveling event that connects graduate students researching film throughout the Midwest.





## Cinematic Arts Undergraduates Inaugurate a New Screenplay Competition

On April 12, we celebrated the winners of the inaugural Golden Corn Screenplay Competition, selected by alumna Susan E. Kim and sponsored by the new Cinematic Arts Student Organization (CASO)—also inaugurated this year—with a table reading and awards ceremony. Isobel Perez's script, “Amá”, took home first place, “Monster Under the Bed” by Lydia Meth placed second, Carter Stark's “Sky Burial” and Gerardo Sanchez's “Intruder” tied for third, and Jonathan Hernandez's “DOL” was named honorable mention. Congratulations to the winners!

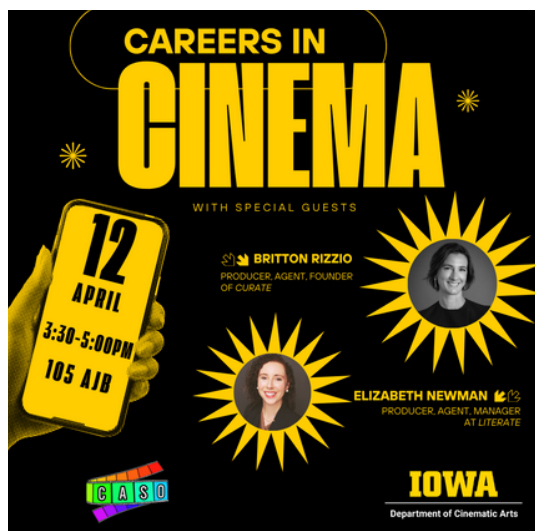
### And the winner of the McLaughlin Scholarship is...

A huge thank you to Cinema Studies alumni Clark Bender and Kim Kerbis for their generous support of the James McLaughlin Scholarship for Film Studies graduate students. Outgoing McLaughlin scholar Zach Vanes passed his comprehensive exams this year and will embark on a dissertation on film and slide shows. Our new McLaughlin scholar is incoming MA student Ariana Martinez, who works on 1980s film and culture, queer theory, and death. Congratulations, Ariana!



## Careers in Cinema Spring 2024

The Cinematic Arts department hosted “Hollywood 101: from Page to Screen (The Business & Creative Aspects of Literary Adaptation),” a talk by literary manager Elizabeth Newman of Literate Management for all creative writers on campus and in the Iowa City community. Elizabeth's talk was aimed at all screenwriters, as well as novelists, scholars, essayists, and journalists interested in adapting written material for the screen. Later that afternoon, Elizabeth Newman of Literate Management and Britton Rizzo, an Iowa alum and founder of Curate Management, hosted an in-depth panel discussion with a lively Q&A about the screenwriting industry moderated by Associate Professor Dean Bakopoulos. Students asked about query letters, portfolios and writing samples, and trends in the industry.



## Out of the Archive Series at FilmScene

In 2023-24, the Department of Cinematic Arts collaborated with FilmScene to co-sponsor a monthly film and discussion series, Out of the Archive: Envisioning Blackness. Dedicated to celebrating the vibrant tradition of Black cinema and showcasing lesser-known work, the series provided a public platform for work that has, for too long, been overlooked. The films ranged across genres (from horror to comedy to coming-of-age films), and several films had not been shown publicly since the early 1990s. Highlights included: a return of the Alvin Cobb Jr. Trio, who provided live jazz accompaniment for the 1925 film *Body and Soul* starring Paul Robeson; a visit from Oakland-based filmmaker Aarin Burch who shared work from her own personal archive about mixed-race identity and queer belonging; and a

conversation with filmmaker Tracy Heather Strain about her decades-long quest to make a documentary about Lorraine Hansberry. In collaboration with ICDOCS, “Out of the Archive” concluded with a screening of the acclaimed film, *still/here*, by Associate Professor Christopher Harris. The program was co-curated by Assistant Professor Hayley O’Malley and FilmScene programming director Ben Delgado. It was made possible through a grant from Humanities Iowa and the generous contributions by more than 25 different departments, schools, and centers at the University of Iowa, including the Obermann Center for the Humanities.





## Iowa Native Jean Seberg Celebrated at FilmScene

WRITTEN BY ELI GARSIDE AND BRYCE BERNARD, PHOTO BY SAMUEL ROSS

In April this year, students in Professor Paula Amad's "Paris on Film" course organized a screening of *From the Journals of Jean Seberg*, directed by Mark Rappaport, at FilmScene. The event featured an introduction by Blake Kellinger and Angelica Toro, and a closing discussion led by Evan McNeley-Phelps and Louis Ramirez. Jean Seberg was born in Marshalltown, Iowa, and briefly studied at the University of Iowa before beginning her career in film. Rappaport's film is an informative video essay, presented from the point of view of Seberg, who is played by Mary Beth Hurt (another Marshalltown native). The film discussed the life and controversy surrounding Seberg, as well as the experiences of other actresses with similar backgrounds. Along with Seberg's career, the film critiques the sexist nature of the film industry in the late 20th century. The FBI also makes an appearance, as Jean Seberg became politically active backing the Black Panther party at the height of the civil rights movement. Over half of the audience for the screening was made up of Marshalltown residents, who shared stories of seeing Seberg's films in theaters. Recently, Marshalltown residents worked to restore the Orpheum Theatre, the home of the United States premiere for Seberg's debut *Saint Joan*. The theater was dedicated to Seberg upon its reopening in 2010 and now serves as a museum and community center for film screenings, lectures, and various art forms. The organizers would like to thank FilmScene, as well as the University of Iowa Special Collections and Archives team, and the Department of Cinematic Arts.

# Faculty Accomplishments

**Paula Amad** received a grant from the P3 Project “Closing the Gap: Experiential Education for All Undergraduates at Iowa” to revise her Moviegoing Histories course into a community-engaged and experiential-learning course. Paula will also present a paper titled “‘A Matter of Making Images Seen’: Modern Media, the View from Above, and ‘Long’ History” at the conference of Domitor International Society for the Study of Early Cinema in Vienna in June.

**Dean Bakopoulos** gave a reading from his new book, *Down & Out in Bedford Falls: It's A Wonderful Life and The Dream of Small-Town America*, at the Switchyard festival in Tulsa in May. An excerpt from the book will also be published in the summer issue of Switchyard. Dean is also working on various TV and film projects, including an adapted feature that he finished this semester.

**Michael Cowan** published a co-authored article titled “Useful Animation: Iconography, Infrastructure and Impact” in *Animation: An Interdisciplinary Journal*. He is also co-organizing the annual Domitor conference to take place in Vienna in June.

**Corey Creekmur** has a forthcoming article on archival collections of Jack Kirby’s comics in an anthology on his work. Kirby is the original creator and artist of almost all of the Marvel characters. Corey also gave a talk at the Media Inside Out conference at the University of California, Santa Barbara in April focused on the psychoanalytic concept of transference in relation to teaching.

**Bruce Elgin** finished a screenplay this year. He also earned a BUILD certificate from the University of Iowa (Building University of Iowa Leadership for Diversity).

**Laura Gede** relaunched our IC-Docs film festival, which featured over 25 filmmakers and over 500 people in attendance. Laura also had new work screened at Scrapyard Screenings, a multi-screen, invitation-only, festival in New York City.

**Anahita Ghazvinizadeh** finished the editing for her film, *My Life is Wind*, which is currently being viewed by festival programmers. Anahita also won an Arts and Humanities Initiative Grant last spring for work on the film.

## Faculty Accomplishments

**Chris Goetz** was invited to serve as an Honors Examiner for Swarthmore College's Honor program. Chris was also invited to take part in a panel about Game Studies at UC-Berkeley with fellow game studies alumni Alenda Chang, Bo Ruberg, and Irene Chien.

**Chris Harris** is one of the selected artists for the Whitney Biennial 2024: Even Better Than the Real Thing. Chris also had a recent solo screening, *Black Ecstatic Cinema*, at REDCAT, the CalArts' center for contemporary arts in downtown Los Angeles.

**Auden Lincoln-Vogel's** film No Exit screened in the "Film Lounge" of Iowa PBS. In addition, Auden's film  
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LOOKLOOKLOOKLOOKLOOKLOOKLOOKLOOKLOOKLOOK was screened at the Milwaukee Underground Film Festival.

**Anna Morrison's** first book of poems, *Long Exposure*, was published in November with Moon City Press after winning the Moon City Press Poetry Award for 2022. Anna is currently in post-production on her second short film, *Mammoth*, produced with Arman Hodasefat and with cinematography by Auden Lincoln-Vogel and Philip Rabalais.

**Hayley O'Malley** published an essay on African American literature and visual culture in *The Cambridge Companion to Contemporary African American Literature*. Hayley was also awarded a fellowship at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture to work on her book project, *Dreams of a Black Cinema*.

**Andy Owens** was elected Secretary on the Executive Board of the feminist media studies organization Consoleing Passions, and recently signed on to edit *The Handbook of Queer Media and Popular Culture*, forthcoming from De Gruyter.

**Philip Rabalais** completed production of a feature film he co-directed titled *The Tower of Invincibility*. Philip's work was also featured in the "Filmmaker Spotlight" at FilmScene in a program called "Lost Boys, Stolen Trucks" on May 4th alongside work by Auden Lincoln-Vogel.

# Graduate Student Accomplishments

**Dana Alston** presented original research at the first annual Midwest Graduate Film Studies Symposium and contributed a review of the documentary film, *Rojek*, to *Cineaste* magazine. He also won a Graduate College Summer Fellowship and made progress on his dissertation.

**Negar Torabi Soufi Amlashi** completed a short experimental film titled *Portrait of the Poet* and received an MFA summer fellowship for a new animation project titled *Who is Eating You*. She also developed two additional projects, one titled *Melancholia* and inspired by Chris Marker's *La Jetée* and the other titled *Self Portrait*, a poetic piece on social conflict that integrates original writings, translations of Iranian poems, found-footage film, video and paper stop motion.

**Sam Bowden** successfully defended his MA thesis on the representation of women's desire after MeToo and received the top prize at the Bijou Open Screen for his colloquium short film, *Chat is this Real?* Sam also received the title of "all-star" volunteer pre-screener for IC Docs from the event's lead organizer.

**Lydia Brubaker** successfully defended her MA thesis on representations of stuttering in cinema and gave her first conference presentation at our own Midwest Graduate Film Studies Symposium. She also joined SPACE, a non-profit stuttering organization, where she has been doing video editing, captioning, and youth mentoring services.

**Malik Ford** finished his first year in the program and received the Iowa Arts Fellowship. He has been working on a short film titled *Detained*, to be completed and submitted to festivals soon. He also has another work in process called *Flush*, which began in Iowa City and will be filmed throughout the Midwest.

**Yuqin He** finished her first year in the MA program and presented original research at the First Midwest Graduate Film Studies Symposium. She is currently developing an MA project focused on public film screenings and film criticism practices in Maoist China during the 1960s.

**Will Hella** completed his first year in the PhD program and successfully presented his Plan of Study. He also presented original research at the Midwest Graduate Film Studies Symposium.



# Graduate Student Accomplishments

**Arman Hodasefat** made two short films over the last year: *Home No Return* and *Mammoth* (co-directed with Anna Morrison). He also created a 5-episode miniseries, *Doors*, in collaboration with over 40 undergraduates from Cinematic Arts and Theater Arts. Arman's short film *Golden Hour* was accepted to festivals in India, Slovakia, Nigeria, Canada, and US. He has been an organizer and active member of Vertical Cinema and a Pre-screener for ICDOCS.

**Moin Kadir** successfully defended his thesis short film *The Escapist*. The screenplay for the film was a finalist at M Film Lab, a program for empowering minority filmmakers. Moin has also been working on other projects, including a science fiction animation project and a screenplay for a historical feature film based on a famous Bangala novel, *The Sepoy of the Attic*.

**Jonathan Lack** published an essay with the Criterion Collection on Makoto Shinkai's *Voices of a Distant Star*. He also chaired a panel at SCMS 2024 and presented a paper titled "Tactility, or Why We Love the Humanity of Hand-Drawn Images." In addition, he independently published a collection of 200 film reviews he has written as a film critic and podcaster and served as a Public Good Consulting Fellow for the Obermann Center.

**Andrea Schuster** presented original research at SCMS, A Century of 16mm Film (at Indiana University) and at the Midwest Film Studies Graduate Symposium, which she also co-organized. She also published a book review of Cinema Ann Arbor, and she passed her PhD Comprehensive Examinations.

**Parker Stenseth** successfully defended his MA thesis on animation in oil industry promotional films and co-organized the Midwest Graduate Film Studies Symposium. He also published a book review in *Film Quarterly* and played the role of Twitch streamer Zest in Sam Bowden's award-winning short, *Chat Is This Real?* Next year, Parker will start a PhD in Cinema and Media Studies at the University of Chicago.

**Getong Wang** had works selected for multiple festival screenings including the Beijing International Short Film Festival, the COSMIC RAYS Film Festival (Chapel Hill, NC), Light Matter Film Festival (Alfred, NY), and our own ICDOCS. He also curated two retrospectives of filmmaker Larry Gottheim in Shanghai and Wuhan, China. Getong's latest short experimental piece *July Twenty-Seventh, Tour of Suzhou Gardens* (2024) will be submitted to film festivals in the following months.

## Graduate Student Accomplishments

**Christopher Wei** made progress on his dissertation and created promotional designs for the Midwest Graduate Film Studies Symposium as well as Cinematic Arts events.

**Zachary Vanes** presented original research at SCMS, the Public History Summer School in Poland, and the Century of 16mm Conference (Indiana). He also received a Travel Research Fellowship from Smith College's Special Collections, as well as a Graduate Ambassador Leadership Award from the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. In addition, he co-organized the Midwest Graduate Film Studies Symposium and successfully completed his Comprehensive Exams.

## A Few Highlights from our Undergraduates

Abbie McClaren will start a production internship at Iowa PBS this summer.

Emma Pech will join the MFA program in Screenwriting at UT Austin this fall.

Mackenzie Reyes will join the MFA Program in Directing at Florida State University in the fall.

Many undergraduates were recognized at Open Screen Film Festival in the fall and spring.



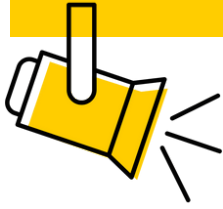
## Calling All Alumni!

In last year's CAN, we asked for our alumni to tell us what they're up to, and we received so many amazing responses! The Department of Cinematic Arts would love to hear from more of you, so please reach out to our DEO, Michael Cowan at [michael-cowan@uiowa.edu](mailto:michael-cowan@uiowa.edu).

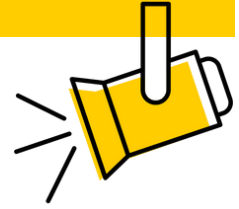
Examples of relevant alumni news can include (but are not limited to):

- A mention of where you are today (e.g. an academic position, work with a production company, work in a different field...)
- Mention of a major accomplishment from the past five years related in some way to cinema (a film, a published book, etc.)
- Mention of other accomplishments since 2020 (articles, chapters, film work, etc.)

Check out just some of the many profiles we have so far!



# Alumni Spotlight



## **Bryce Anderson**

graduated in 2011 with a BA in Cinema. He is a cofounder of the company Lightswitch Video, which produces video content for companies ranging from Rolex to the mass media company Gannett. Last year, Lightswitch won a Suncoast Regional Emmy award for their work on the video *Mardi Gras for All Y'all*.

## **Marc Bauer**

graduated with a BA in Cinema in 2015. Since then, he has made short films and written screenplays, which have won awards at various festivals. He also wrote, produced, and edited a feature film, *Remote*, shot in Iowa.

## **Stephen Blakesley**

earned his MA in Film Studies at Iowa in 1975, followed by a career in broadcast television. He now lives in California and is at work on a project to digitize over twenty thousand 35mm b/w and color negatives and slides. He and his wife also enjoy walking and hiking coastal beaches.

## **Hannah Bonner**

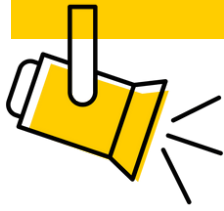
received her MA in Film Studies in 2017. She has published extensive film and literary criticism and is currently finishing an MFA in Creative Nonfiction at the University of Iowa. She is also a 2023-24 NBCC Emerging Critics Fellow.

## **Sarah Abele Caputo**

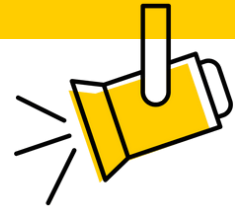
graduated in 2009 with a BA in Cinema. She now teaches multimedia and arts integration in Oklahoma City, which includes a yearly film festival put on by her elementary students. They learn the basics of film, animation, acting, and editing starting in first grade, and the curriculum currently runs up through seventh grade.

## **David Gilane**

graduated with a BA from Cinema and Comparative Literature in 2014. Currently he is an Executive Producer for Media 360 LLC, a multi-media production company specializing in outdoor recreation and conservation. He has published multiple features and produced a mini-series for the company on understanding wildlife conservation.



# Alumni Spotlight



## Josh Guffey

graduated in 2007 with degrees in Cinema and Economics. He has worked in reality TV, fashion stills, advertising and corporate video. After serving as Executive Producer at the in-house agency for Edward Jones Investments, he recently took on a new role as Senior Director for Content at Nine PBS St Louis. He also wrote and directed the 2023 feature thriller *All Gone Wrong*.

## Tommy Haines

received his BA in Cinematic Arts from University of Iowa in 2005. He currently resides in Iowa City and is the Co-Founder/Creative Director of Northland Films. He also directed the acclaimed documentary *Hockeyland* (2022) set in the competitive hockey sphere of Minnesota's north country.

## Stephanie Jaques

graduated in 2014 with BAs in Cinema and Health and Human Physiology. Since then, she has held various positions in both medicine and the entertainment industry, including serving as a 911 dispatcher and starting her own production company. Currently, she is Production Coordinator and Staff Accountant with High Noon Entertainment, which produces reality content for channels such as Hulu.

## Kathryn Kane

earned her MA in Film Studies in 1972, followed by a PhD in Film Studies in 1976. She subsequently had a 30-year career as an award-winning Marketing and communications executive. She also published her dissertation as *Visions of War: Hollywood Combat Films of WWII*. After retiring, she took up painting, where she has won awards and showed in various exhibitions.

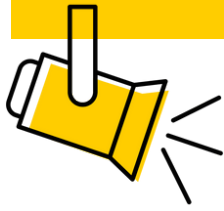
## Susan E. Kim

graduated with a BA in 2000, focusing on filmmaking, creative writing, and theatre. She went on to earn her MFA at the California Institute of the Arts and then to work as an editor on numerous acclaimed series, including *Little America*, *A Small Light*, and *Panchenko*. In 2021, she was awarded the Sally Menke Fellowship from the Sundance Institute, and she has served as a Junior Mentor in the Ace Diversity Mentorship Program.

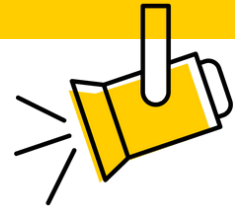
## Daniel Larson

graduated with a BA in Speech and Dramatic Art in 1978. He then worked at Green Bay TV stations before starting his own production company. Alongside his business, he has made four solo film documentaries that were broadcast on PBS Wisconsin and other public stations. Currently in retirement, he is working on production for his 5th documentary on the Bay of Green Bay.





# Alumni Spotlight



## Pete Machalek

received an MA in Film Production and Communication Theory in 1991. He later co-founded SagePresence, a company specializing in helping professional service firms grow by building the confident presence of its client-facing team members. He also delivered a Ted Talk on how to use story in leadership in 2015.

## Gabrielle McNally

graduated with an MFA in Film & Video Production in 2014. She is currently Associate Professor of Digital Cinema in the School of Art & Design at Northern Michigan University. She is currently working on a feature-length documentary titled *Nos Disparus (Our Missing)*.

## Cassie Moeller

graduated with a double major in Cinema and Screenwriting, with a minor in Spanish, in 2022. Currently, she works at UIowa as Graduate Coordinator for the Departments of Cinematic Arts, Communications and Journalism and Mass Communication. Last year, she was a Production Assistant for faculty-member Anahita Ghazvinizadeh's second feature film, *My Life is the Wind*.

## Ben Palmer

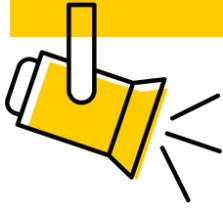
graduated with a BA in Cinema in 2021. For the past two years, he has worked in L.A. for companies such as A24, Paramount and Netflix, including work on series such as *Dream Scenario* (2023), *Mean Girls* (2024) and *The Secret World of Sound with David Attenborough* (2024). He is now a member of the International Cinematographer's Guild as a 2nd Assistant Camera.

## Mike Plewa

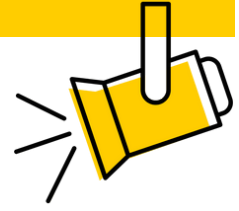
graduated with a BA in Cinema in 2005 and completed an MFA in Documentary Directing from the UCLA School of Theater, Film, and Television in 2024. His documentary short, *How to Make a Film About My Son, Jack*, has shown at festivals across North America. Currently, he is in post-production on his first feature documentary film and pre-production on his first narrative feature. He lives in Los Angeles with his wife and son.

## John Harper Philbin

graduated in 1979 with a B.A. with concentration in Broadcasting and Film. He subsequently worked as an editor in Chicago, New York, and Hollywood, before earning his MFA in Film Production from Grand Valley State University in Michigan in 2020. Among other creative work, he directed the feature film drama *Driftless*, which won several festival awards and is currently streaming on Amazon Prime, Tubi and other streaming services.



# Alumni Spotlight



## Shane Simmons

graduated in 2007 with a BA in Cinema and a minor in Theatre Arts. He is currently Executive Director of Elevated Films, a Chicago-based non-profit dedicated to raising awareness for independent film and creating opportunities for youth arts in the city. He recently completed an independent pilot titled *Bettendorf Talks*.

## Andrew Stahl

After graduating from the University of Iowa, Andrew attended graduate school at the University of Newcastle in England for Literature & Film studies. From there he started in the film industry as a Production Assistant, then worked his way up to varying degrees of Assistant Director works, on projects such as *Oppenheimer*, *Madame Web*, and *Top Gun: Maverick*.

## Taylor Edelle Stuart

graduated with a BA in Cinema and Comparative Literature in 2017. She currently directs and designs video installations for live events, including productions for Broadway. Among other recent projects, she designed the video for the national tour of *R.E.S.P.E.C.T.*, a concert series celebrating Aretha Franklin.

## Brian Tremml

graduated in 2012 with a BA in Cinema and was also a member of the Ulwa swim team. After graduating, he created the feature documentary *The Water Is My Sky* focused on competitive swimming, with collaboration from Cinema graduates and support from Iowa alumni. He currently works as a mental health professional specializing in supporting athletes.

## Clay Westervelt

graduated in 1995 with a BA in Communications, emphasis in Cinema, followed by MFA in Film Production from USC. Since then, he has built an independent production company, Imaginaut Entertainment, and directed and shot projects appearing on HBO, Netflix, and more. Recently, he worked on two prominent documentaries: *Rebel Hearts* (2022) and *Giants Rising* (2024).

## Craig Wyrick-Solari

received his BA in 1984 with a focus on Film & Broadcasting. He then moved to Los Angeles where he currently works as a Producer, Director and Unit Production Manager in television comedies. His credits as a Producer include *Coach*, *The Wayans Bros.*, *The Closer*, *Mad About You*, and *Austin & Ally*, among other series and pilots.