

# TEACHING PORTFOLIO

## Rochester Institute of Technology

### COURSES TAUGHT

2015- 2017     **Production I SOFA 101**

A foundations course in the practice of moving image through the creative and conceptual exploration of 16mm film. Students work on creative projects exploring concepts of visual language and collaborate on creating a final short film. Technical concepts like film exposure, light sensitivity, image contrast as well as creative concepts like framing, composition and visual storytelling are taught.

2015- 2020     **Production II SOFA 102**

A foundations course in the practice of moving image through exploring sound-image relationships. Students build upon the creative and conceptual skills developed through 16mm film and apply it to working with emerging sound and video technologies. A comparative framework between film and video technologies in terms of image contrast, sensor response, exposure and light sensitivity are explored. Advanced concepts of framing, composition and visual storytelling are taught.

2021- present   **Documentary Field Practices SOFA 105**

A foundation course that introduces students to documentary film as a creative and socially engaging form. In addition to aesthetic and conceptual skills, production techniques focus on the ability to develop filming strategies, recording sound, filming to edit, and interviewing skills. The relationship between filmmaker and subject, is examined, including the ethical challenges of representing real life subjects. Critical thinking skills are employed as students analyze different styles of documentary film. Students work in small documentary crews learning the use of microphones, field lighting, handheld and other non-traditional camerawork, selecting/interviewing documentary subjects and capturing material with proper coverage leading into a final short documentary.

2018- present   **Directing SOFA 206**

The course is concerned with the creative decision-making process of the screen director: story & script analysis, casting, developing subtext, motivation & behavior, staging & rehearsal techniques, shot selection, screen conventions, directorial strategies, camera set ups, movement and cinematic structure. The coursework consists of a studio-exercise presented live in class; a field exercise directed on location leading up to a final project. Readings, lectures, demonstrations and shot-by-shot analyses of classic and contemporary films are used to explore the theory and practice of directing for screen.

2015-2020     **Spring Fiction Workshop SOFA 212**

This course involves the production of 8-12-minute films that evolve through stages of character development, visualization and creative collaboration. It is divided into three main categories- Pre-Production, Production and Post- Production. Modules

address production topics in class and relate to industry practices with a focus on developing the *creative voice*. A key concept of this class is to discover the sculptural and organic nature of cinematic storytelling- how words written in a screenplay are shaped and remodeled by directorial choices, actor performances, editing rhythms and other creative decisions. Structured like a Director's Lab, the class requires students to screen work in progress, reflect on the process and revisit the project based on class review and feedback. Students are encouraged to keep a personalized journal that documents the various formative stages of the project and helps them develop individual directorial styles.

2015- 2017 **Film Syntax SOFA 106**

Film Syntax is designed to provide students with an opportunity to trace the history of the practices and techniques in what constitute classic and contemporary cinematic forms across fiction, non-fiction and experimental film/video. Much like the multitude of languages in our lived experience, the different dialects and accents, students are introduced to cinema as a diverse art form that reflects the varied cultural, linguistic, socio-political influences that shape it, and continue to do so. This course is structured to familiarize students with the groundbreaking discoveries in cinema and related forms, highlight how these technologies, alongwith socio-political realities gave birth to the evolving aesthetic of cinema and equip them with critical perspectives. Film Syntax is a lecture course with short film/video examples, readings and short position papers that give an overview of the logic and language of practices in the moving image.

2015- 2017 **Film Viewings SOFA 111**

Taught as part of Film Syntax, Film Viewings is comprised of a feature length film screening with an introductory lecture. One film is projected each week. The course addresses the diversity of film languages and practices through a combination of introductory lectures, screenings and discussions that highlight the multiplicity of ideas and processes. The class is often my largest with about 80 students from the School of Film and Animation and Motion Picture Sciences.

2015- present **Fall Fiction Workshop SOFA 212**

This course involves the production of 8-12-minute films that evolve through stages of character development, visualization and creative collaboration. It is divided into three main categories: Pre-Production, Production and Post- Production. Modules address production topics in class and relate to industry practices with a focus on developing the *creative voice*. A key concept of this class is to discover the sculptural and organic nature of cinematic storytelling- how words written in a screenplay are shaped and remodeled by directorial choices, actor performances, editing rhythms and other creative decisions. Structured like a Director's Lab, the class requires students to screen work in progress, reflect on the process and revisit the project based on class review and feedback. Students are encouraged to keep a personalized journal that documents the various formative stages of the project and helps them develop individual directorial styles.

- 2016      **Writing the Short SOFA 526**  
 This course is structured towards developing the craft of narrative screenwriting with a focus on the short form. Applying concepts from Introduction to Screenwriting and Dramatic Structure; this class is structured like a workshop. Over the course of the semester, students develop an understanding of the short form cinematic narrative through a rigorous process of writing, critique and feedback. A range of screenwriting concepts are explored through analysis of professional scripts, additional readings, discussions and screenings in class.
- 2021      **Contemporary Film Practice SOFA 555**  
 This class explores the creative and collaborative processes in narrative filmmaking through the production of a semester-long film led by the instructor. Students gain an understanding into pre-production, production and post production collaborations with a focus on developing diverse stories and characters that combine live action, VFX and 3D animation. Student collaborate with the instructor and are at the centerstage of key professional responsibilities in all stages of production.
- 2015-present      **Senior Capstone I/II SOFA 406/407 (13 to date)**  
 Weekly one-on-one meetings focused on the entire film making production pipeline for capstone films.
- 2018- present      **Hybrid Forms: Theory and Practice SOFA 733**  
 This graduate seminar explores cinema across a multitude of hybrid forms. It proposes to do so in conjunction with exploring an array of fluid fictional and non-fictional strategies as organic form-content relationships that evolve through stages of observation, story, character development and form-content experiments. As means of exploring the potential interaction between fictional and non-fictional forms, the course focuses on theoretical perspectives and definitions of cinema. Studies from New Wave cinemas, personal narratives, self-ethnographic practices and various forms of independent, documentary and hybrid models inform class screenings and discussions. Conceived as a critical laboratory, the course features systematic readings that help students in articulating their creative influences and inspirations in preparation for the written component of the thesis requirement. Students develop a final artist statement and two position/reflection papers in response to the readings/screenings in class.
- 2015- present      **Undergraduate Independent Study SOFA 599 (10 to date)**  
 Weekly one-on-one meetings focused on the entire film making production pipeline for a semester long project.
- 2015-present      **Graduate Independent Study SOFA 799**  
 Weekly one-on-one meetings focused on the entire film making production pipeline for a semester-long project.

- 2015-present **Research and Thesis, I/II SOFA 790/890 (4 to date)**  
Weekly one-on-one meetings focused on the entire film making production pipeline for graduate thesis films.
- 2015-present **Thesis Committees (6 to date)**  
Meeting a minimum of once a semester, thesis committee members convene to discuss the progress of the MFA Thesis film and advise the progress as necessary.

### **Curriculum Development/ New Courses Designed at SOFA, RIT**

- 2017 Hybrid Forms: Theory and Practice SOFA 733
- 2019 Documentary Field Practices SOFA 102
- 2016-2020 Contemporary Film Practice SOFA 555
- 2019 RIT Study Abroad: Bollywood and Beyond: The Cinemas of India

### **Anwar Jamal Kidwai Mass Communication Research Center, New Delhi, India**

- 2012-2014 **Advanced Project Development Workshop for Thesis Projects**  
Weekly one-on-one meetings focused on the entire film making production pipeline for a semester-long thesis film. Spring.

#### **Graduate Screenwriting**

Advanced screenwriting workshop for graduate students that experiments with form, style and structures leading to the completion of a finished screenplay/treatment. Fall.

#### **Graduate Documentary Seminar**

A graduate seminar exploring documentary practices across traditional and contemporary forms. Students learn from critical reading, screenings, guest speakers and visiting artists and develop a final documentary project.

#### **Graduate Film**

Students learn the different stages of creative collaborations through making a semester long film.

- 2009 **Advanced Project Development Workshop for Thesis Projects**  
Weekly one-on-one meetings focused on the entire film making production pipeline for a semester-long project.

#### **Post Production Processes**

Students learn how to effectively media manage, set up and complete advanced editing projects that combine elements of effects and sound design.

- 2007-2009      **Graduate Production Processes**  
 Taught as a multicamera setup in a studio with live editing, students work in professional crews creating 10-minute short films that range from fiction, documentaries, experimental performances to interviews. Students learn how to produce, manage and direct a large set crew.
- Lighting**  
 Students learn concepts of three dimensionality through use of lights both in studio situations and outdoors. Leading industry lighting designers and cinematographers complement in class learning through a week-long end of semester workshop.
- Post Production Processes**  
 Students learn how to effectively media manage, set up and complete advanced editing projects that combine elements of effects and sound.
- Graduate Film**  
 Students learn the different stages of creative collaborations through making a semester-long film.
- 2003-2006      **Graduate Production Processes**  
 Taught as a multicamera setup in a studio with live editing, students work in professional crews creating 10-minute short films that range from fiction, documentaries, experimental performances to interviews. Students learn how to produce, manage and direct a large set crew.
- Lighting**  
 Students learn concepts of three dimensionality through use of lights both in studio situations and outdoors. Leading industry lighting designers and cinematographers complement in class learning through a week-long end of semester workshop.
- Post Production Processes**  
 Students learn how to effectively media manage, set up and complete advanced editing projects that combine elements of effects and sound design.
- Fundraising**  
 Graduate students with projects in advanced stages of development learn how to create a professional proposal alongwith elements of professional budgets and timelines.
- 2013              **Digital Videography Workshop for Journalists from Nepal and Bhutan**  
 Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India in association with AJK Mass Communication Research Center.

**Curriculum Development/ AJK MCRC, New Delhi, India**

- 2013              Graduate Screenwriting  
 Introduction to New Media  
 Digital Image Arts-I, II

Digital Cinema Arts Program, syllabi development workshop in collaboration with Prof. John Greyson, York University, Canada. AJK Mass Communication Research Center, Jamia University, January 2013.

2013 **Practice Based Ph.D.** for Artists in India, collaborative workshop with Professor Joram Ten Brink and Professor David Bates, University of Westminster, UK. AJK Mass Communication Research Center, Jamia University, February 2013.

**Lady Shri Ram College for Women, Delhi University, New Delhi, India**

2006/2008 **Post Production Workshop**  
Students learned editing and project management from digitization to finished masters on Final Cut Pro.

## LIST OF COURSES TAUGHT

### Rochester Institute of Technology

Spring 2014/15	Production II Spring Fiction Workshop
Fall 2015	Production I Fall Fiction Workshop Film Syntax Film Viewings
Spring 2015/16	Production II Spring Fiction Workshop
Fall 2016	Production I Fall Fiction Workshop Film Syntax Film Viewings
Spring 2016/17	Production II Writing the Short Film Undergraduate Independent Study
Fall 2017	Production I Film Syntax Film Viewings Senior Capstone 1
Spring 2017/18	Production II Spring Fiction Workshop Senior Thesis II Hybrid Forms: Practice and Theory Graduate Independent Study
Fall 2018	Research and Thesis I
Spring 2018/19	Production II Spring Fiction Workshop Hybrid Forms: Theory and Practice Senior Thesis II Undergraduate Independent Study Research and Thesis II
Fall 2019	Directing

	Fall Fiction Workshop Senior Capstone I Continuation of Thesis
Spring 2019/20	Production II Spring Fiction Workshop Hybrid Forms: Theory and Practice Senior Thesis II Undergraduate Independent Study Continuation of Thesis
Fall 2020	Directing Fall Fiction Workshop Senior Capstone I Research and Thesis I
Spring 2020/21	Documentary Field Practice Contemporary Film Practice Hybrid Forms: Practice and Theory Senior Thesis II Research and Thesis II
Fall 2021	Directing Fall Fiction Workshop

(Please notice details regarding courses taught at previous institutions are included in the Teaching Portfolio).

## **SELECTED STUDENT WORK: LINKS**

The Making of Sultana's Dream: <https://sofatube.cad.rit.edu/videos/show/38484>  
Class Project

Sentinel: Or Mythology or Methodology: <https://sofatube.cad.rit.edu/videos/show/36254>  
Senior Thesis I & II James Abrams, Jacob Mallin, 2018

Baby You're a Rich Girl: <https://sofatube.cad.rit.edu/videos/show/36862>  
Senior Thesis I & II: Reuben Van Hoeve, 2019

The Malignant Ramblings of a Boy in Decline: <https://sofatube.cad.rit.edu/videos/show/34133>  
Production II: Reuben Van Hoeve, 2016

What a Night: <https://sofatube.cad.rit.edu/videos/show/36890>  
Jose Hidalgo Thormann, Research & Thesis I & II, 2019

Documentary Field Practices: <https://sofatube.cad.rit.edu/videos/show/38482>  
2021

Cleaner: <https://sofatube.cad.rit.edu/videos/show/36923>  
Fiction Workshop: Matthew Guarnaccia, Cinematography: Sierra Wilhoit

Brown Paper Bags: <https://sofatube.cad.rit.edu/videos/show/36918>  
Hebrew Campbell, Production II

## TEACHING HIGHLIGHTS

Ambarien Alqadar, Assistant Professor, School of Film and Animation, RIT



On set with students, crew and NTID staff for the production of Sultana's Dream. Photo: Daniel Bacon, RIT, 2021. Additional details attached.



Documentary Field Practices Lab. Students film Professor Madeline Smith in her glass studio during a lab exercise designed to learn vérité filming.



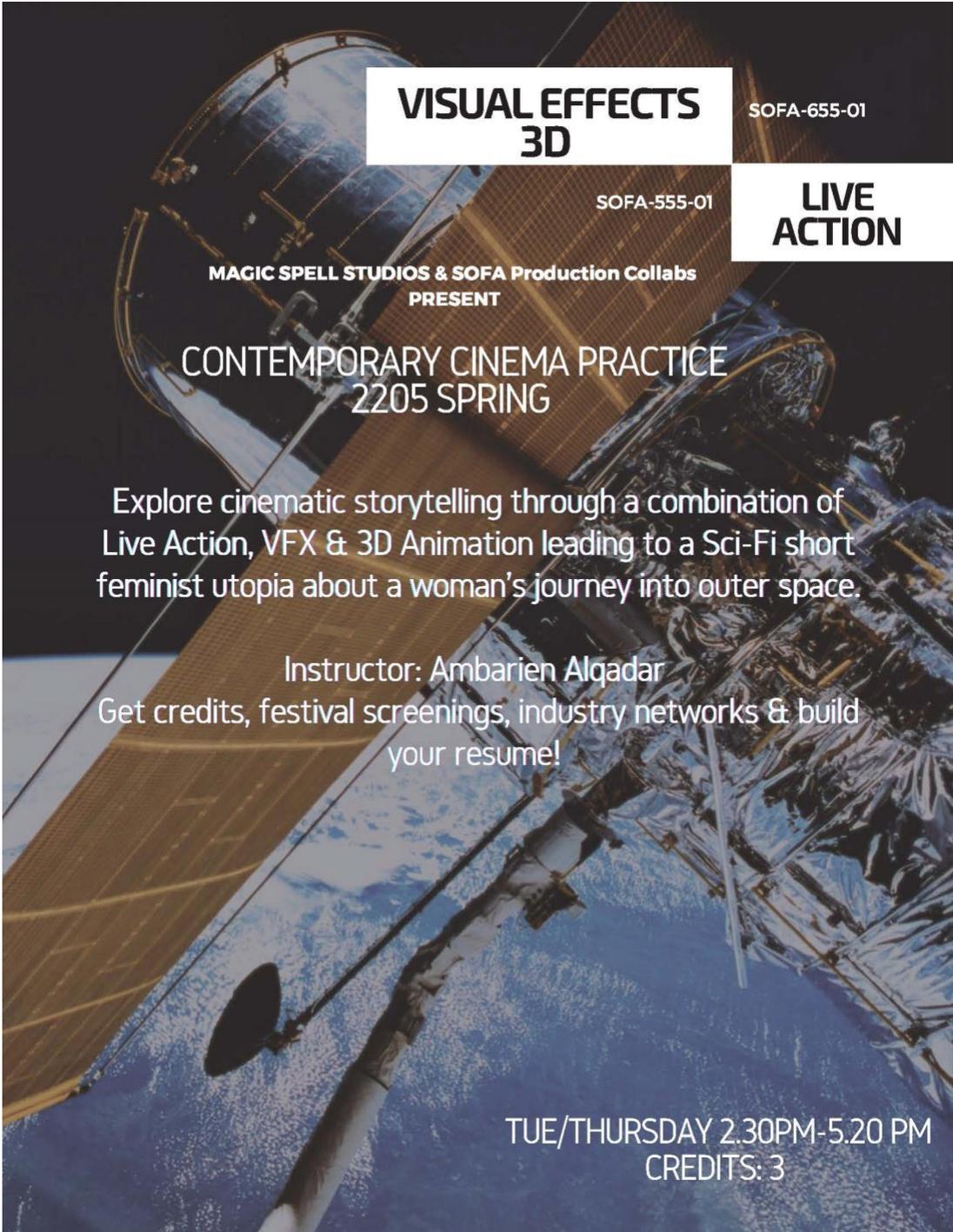
Directing students work with award-winning, Rochester based director Skip Greer, Geva Theater, 2017 (above) and Professor-Filmmaker Howard Lester, 2020 (below).



Facebook 360 Imaging Workflow Project led by Professor Nitin Sampat, School of Photographic Arts and Sciences, 2017. Location: The Chai Guy, Rochester Public Market.



Recording a virtual reality video for A Letter Home, Frameless Labs Symposium, 2016.



**VISUAL EFFECTS  
3D**

SOFA-655-01

SOFA-555-01

**LIVE  
ACTION**

**MAGIC SPELL STUDIOS & SOFA Production Collabs  
PRESENT**

**CONTEMPORARY CINEMA PRACTICE  
2205 SPRING**

Explore cinematic storytelling through a combination of Live Action, VFX & 3D Animation leading to a Sci-Fi short feminist utopia about a woman's journey into outer space.

Instructor: Ambarien Alqadar  
Get credits, festival screenings, industry networks & build your resume!

TUE/THURSDAY 2.30PM-5.20 PM  
CREDITS: 3