Summer 2023 Classes & Workshops

Registration: www.filmnorth.org/education/classes  (Or click on course title.)

Covid Safety Policy for In-Person Classes
FilmNorth is following CDC's current COVID-19 variant guidance for Ramsey County:

- People may choose to mask at any time. Masks are recommended for those who are unvaccinated, immunocompromised, or at high-risk for complications associated with COVID-19 variants.
- People with any COVID-19 symptoms, a positive test, or exposure to someone with COVID-19 should stay home.

Online Classes
Participation in FilmNorth online courses requires that you use Zoom, the free cloud-based video conferencing service. For optimal performance we recommend that you install Zoom on your computer rather than running it from a web browser. We will e-mail students a course reminder and Zoom link a few days prior to the first session. Click here for a Zoom tutorial.

Scholarships
FilmNorth offers a limited number of scholarships to attend classes and workshops. Click here for info and application.

SCREENWRITING

Elements of Screenwriting
Instructor: David Grant
Section 1: Tuesdays, July 11-August 29, 6:30-9:30 pm
Section 2: [Virtual] Thursdays, July 13-August 31, 6:30-9:30 pm
Tuition: $345 regular | $260 member | $200 low-income

This course serves as a solid introduction to the craft of screenwriting. The objective is to provide the beginning screenwriter with the tools and information necessary to get started on a first-draft screenplay, the pages of which will be workshopped in class, beginning with the third session.

This course is built on master-teacher Frank Daniel’s system of eight story sequences, spending each weekly session on deep analysis of a scene sequence from a film that offers something useful to learn about structure and cinematic storytelling, in addition to writing exercises and, as the class progresses, the sharing out loud of new pages. This latter part of our core process is the “secret sauce” that helps students get to the most important part of the rewriting process: a full and satisfying exploration of whatever it is that lies at each story’s emotional center—its heart. The perspectives gained on story and structure will forever change and enhance every student’s enjoyment of film and television.

Note: Zoom is required to attend the virtual section.

David Grant is a Twin Cities-based screenwriter and playwright. As a playwright, he has been commissioned to write new work for the Minnesota Science Museum, the Minnesota Historical Society, Mixed Blood Theater, VocalEssence, The Playwrights’ Center, and Great American History Theatre. As a screenwriter, he has written drama for Twin Cities Public Television, Russell Simmons’ Def Pictures, HBO New York, Davis Entertainment, and the Showtime Network. Grant has been a recipient of screenwriting fellowships from the Minnesota State Arts Board and the McKnight Foundation, and was a finalist for the 1999 Gordon Parks Award and the Heathcote Arts Foundation Fellowship at the Independent Feature Film Market in New York for his screenplay Trouble. He has taught screenwriting at The Loft, Playwrights’ Center, and S.A.S.E., as well as basic writing skills for The Center for Non-Profit Management at the University of St. Thomas. Grant is a graduate of Antioch College and president emeritus of Screenwriters’ Workshop, member of The Loft board of directors, a core alumnus member of The Playwrights’ Center, and a member of the Writers’ Guild of America, West.
**Advanced Screenwriting**

Instructor: David Grant

8 sessions: Mondays, July 17-September 11 (no class 9/4), 6:30-9:30 pm

Tuition: $345 regular | $260 member | $200 low-income

It’s been said, “Scripts aren’t written… they’re rewritten.” A quality rewrite can lift a script from pretty good to very good... maybe even great. **But how to get there?**

You’ve rewritten your script, and now you’ve got the killer opening you envisaged when you started. But somewhere in the middle, the power and the energy of your story noticeably sag, and the Big Finish toward which you were groping your way never quite materialized as planned. Or worse yet, it’s as if some forbidding stretch of act two seems to have turned out to be quicksand, and your story has gotten lost in there, never to be seen again. Not only does this scenario continually undermine potentially great rewrites – it’s what keeps many initially promising scripts from ever being completed at all!

As with Elements of Screenwriting, this course is built on master-teacher Frank Daniel’s system of eight story sequences, spending each weekly session on deep analysis of a scene sequence from a film that offers something useful to learn about structure and cinematic storytelling, in addition to writing exercises and the weekly sharing out loud of new pages. This latter part of our core process is the “secret sauce” that helps you get to the most important part of the rewriting process: a full and satisfying exploration of whatever it is that lies at your story’s emotional center – its heart.

Though stories are ultimately about problem solving—we sit in darkened theaters to watch compelling characters solve whatever fix they’re in—the value and the power of stories is all about **how they make us feel**. Roll up your sleeves and come complete that first draft or that rewrite you’ve been meaning to finish!

[See Elements of Screenwriting for instructor bio.]

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**Introduction to Writing for TV [Virtual]**

Instructor: Bo Kaprall

8 sessions: Wednesdays, July 26-September 13, 6:30-8:30 pm CDT

Tuition: $305 regular | $235 member | $180 low-income

This online course is designed for creative aspiring writers with no prior experience—as well as those with screenwriting experience—who seek to break into television writing. Learn in an interactive environment the basics of creating, writing, and presenting your first television script for both drama and/or comedy, including how to take your idea to the next step and create a complete half-hour or one-hour television script. The course will cover: structure, character development, how to find an agent and get your script read, outlets for new shows and ideas, the Writer’s Room, overview of winning past and current TV show scripts, feedback on your work, and more.

**Bo Kaprall** has been a television show creator, creative director, writer, producer, executive producer, and actor for thirty years. Starting in Chicago as a writer/producer in the advertising business (Post, Keyes, & Gardner), he also worked as an actor at Chicago’s Second City. He is currently executive producing his new television series *Outlaw Country* for WGN America, and developing reality shows for everyone from A&E to Discovery. Bo recently completed two original half-hour web series for General Mills. Bo has recorded, written, and produced over 5,000 radio commercials, winning several Cleo and Radio Best Awards. He has appeared as an actor on over 75 television shows, the latest being *Law & Order* and *Third Watch*.

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**Advanced Screenwriting – TV Pilots [Virtual]**

Instructor: Jake Yuzna

8 sessions: Tuesdays, July 18-September 5, 6:30-9:00 pm CDT

Tuition: $335 regular | $250 member | $190 low-income

The blueprint to any TV show or limited series, pilots are a challenging and unique form of screenwriting. Not only
does the writer have to establish a complex cast of characters and multiseason story arcs, but they must also do so while simultaneously telling a compelling, single story. Focusing on strengthening skills in the art and craft of writing pilots, this workshop-based course gives students the opportunity to write and refine a pilot screenplay for an original series of their creation. From avoiding common pitfalls to breaking into the industry, students will learn real-world tools to help bring their screenwriting to the next level of sophistication as they balance long-form storytelling within a single, self-contained episode. By the end of the course, each student will have completed an original drama or comedy pilot television script for their original TV show or limited series. Previous screenwriting experience recommended.

Jake Yuzna is a Minneapolis based writer, director, and genre curator. Their films have screened at the Cannes Film Festival, Berlin Film Festival, London Film Festival, New Museum of Contemporary Art (NYC), and the British Film Institute, among others. Yuzna is the first American feature director to win the Teddy Jury Prize at the Berlin Film Festival and has received additional awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, Creative Capital Foundation, Frameline Foundation, McKnight Foundation, IFP, and FilmNorth, as well as a Richard P. Rogers Spirit of Excellence Award from the American Film Institute. Yuzna founded the cinema program at the Museum of Arts and Design in NYC where they curated the first American retrospectives on Italian Zombie Films, Alejandro Jodorowsky, Dario Argento, Sion Sono, and the medium of VHS. In addition, Yuzna has curated retrospectives on Andrei Tarkovsky, Crispin Glover, H.R. Giger, and Science Fiction cinema of the 1990s. His curatorial work on genre filmmaking has been collected by the libraries at Yale University and NYU.

FILMMAKING

Indie Film Financing with Stu Pollard
1 session: Saturday, June 17, 9:00 am-3:45 pm
Price: $220 regular | $175 member | $140 low-income

Taught by filmmaker Stu Pollard (Rust Creek, Plus One, Bass Ackwards), who has raised more than $10 million in production funds over the course of his career, this workshop is ideal for both narrative and documentary filmmakers preparing to write independent film business plans targeting angel investors.

Focused on the key elements that should be in place prior to creating a film business plan — as well as structure, layout, research, and presentation — this workshop will also provide insights on the ethics and psychology of selling high-risk investments, tools for making your deal more attractive, guidelines for identifying prospects and tips for maintaining long-term relationships with financial partners.

Participants will leave with a clear, real-world strategy for writing a coherent, thoughtful and powerful business plan. Space is limited so reserve your spot now. This is a rare chance to experience the course in person outside of Los Angeles. There is a lunch break.

Mr. Pollard will offer a limited number of individual 25-minute consultations to participants with film projects to be scheduled to occur following the workshop between 4:00 and 6:30 pm. Application is required; consultation fee is $25. Click here to apply. If you’re approved, a link will be emailed to complete payment.

Stu Pollard’s popular Business Plan/Private Equity class is one of Film Independent’s most enduring and successful courses. With 20 plus years of filmmaking experience, Stu has plenty of production knowledge to share. His producing credits include Rust Creek, And Then I Go, Men Go to Battle, True Adolescents, Dirty Country, Ira & Abby, and the just released Going Nowhere. Stu’s Lunacy Productions has numerous projects in development, including the riveting two-hander The Man Who Knew Belle Starr (based on the award-winning Richard Bausch short story); the uproarious southern political satire Wonderdog (based on the novel by Inman Majors); and Alas, Babylon, a post-apocalyptic survival parable based on Pat Frank’s classic Cold War era novel. Stu has directed two features: the rom-com Nice Guys Sleep Alone and the suspense drama Keep Your Distance. In his spare time, he teaches at Film Independent and on his online platform LunacyU. He holds a degree in business from Georgetown, an MFA in film from USC, and is a member of both the PGA and DGA.
Cinema Production Basics
Instructor: Pam Colby
9 sessions: Thursdays, July 20-September 14, 6:30-9:30 pm
Tuition: $390 regular | $295 member | $220 low-income

This course is designed for students with little or no previous production experience and a keen interest in developing their skills in moving image arts. In addition to providing hands-on experience through production exercises and projects, the course places considerable emphasis on visual literacy and the application of film language. This includes the basics of storytelling, cinematography, lighting techniques, directing, and audio recording. Students work together to create cinematic scenes, covering the basic crew positions, and having the option of acting on-camera. Basic nonlinear editing with Adobe Premiere Pro CC is demonstrated and practiced to complete class projects. For the final four sessions bring a hard drive or 32GB USB flash drive, plus headphones or earbuds.

Pam Colby has worked in television and film for over thirty years. Pam’s most recent narrative short, Perennial (2022), premiered at the Roze Filmdagen: Amsterdam Film Festival and the Minneapolis St. Paul International Film Festival. It has been a finalist in 12 international online festivals and has won two Best of Fest Awards. Pam’s film, Not in My Lifetime (2018), a feature-length documentary film won the Audience Choice Award for Best Minnesota Made Documentary Feature at the 2018 Minneapolis St. Paul International Film Festival. Pam’s love of storytelling led her to the Moth Storytelling competition where her GrandSLAM-winning story was featured on National Public Radio. Pam works as a freelance producer and director and has taught both narrative and documentary classes at FilmNorth since 2013.

Psychology of Cinema
Instructor: Brenda Varda
2 sessions: Tuesdays, July 11-18th, 6:30-9:30 pm
Tuition: $185 regular | $140 member | $105 low-income

This introductory workshop translates basic psychology concepts, research, and neuroscience into techniques for screenwriting, development, and production. The information and exercises serve as tools to expand ways of developing characters, creating new worlds, and increasing audience engagement.

These two sessions build a framework for individual filmmaker to expand strategies for different formats, genres, and styles. Using your instinct and personal journey coupled with current research, the workshop increases options that resonate with dynamics of human response, both onscreen (in characters) and in front of the screen (audience).

Learning objectives:
- Expanded Psychological Possibilities for Characters & Interactions
- Uses for Current Neuroscience Research for Media Impact
- Mapping Techniques for Visual, Dialogue & Audio Psychological Components
- Evoking Diverse Emotional Responses for Heightened engagement

Participants will use their own understanding of psychology while incorporating new approaches to expand development and aesthetic choices.

Brenda Varda is a recent Twin Cities transplant from Los Angeles where she founded Wordspace, a studio for writers in media and live performance, and was also development lead for Element Media. She has taught a variety of arts and psychology courses at the New York Film Academy and UCR including Psychology of Performance, Media Psychology, Psychology of Cinema, and Creative Writing.

Her own works for stage and film have been supported by the Center for Cultural Innovation, SOSE, UCIRA Emerging Artist Fund, the L.A. History Project, Edge Fest, the Mellon Foundation, and the Gluck Foundation. As a playwright and composer her works have been presented at Sacred Fools, the Industry, CalTech, the Broadwater,
Neutral Scene: On-Camera Scene Study
Instructor: Erin Roberts
8 sessions: Mondays, July 17-September 11 (no class 9/4), 6:00-9:00 pm
Tuition: $335 regular | $250 member | $190 low-income

This on-camera acting course is designed for beginning and newer actors, plus stage actors looking to make the transition from stage to screen. Each participant will examine relationship, circumstance, and conflict with a scene partner, infusing a neutral text with stakes and intention. Using moment to moment work, we’ll analyze the essential and vital skills of powerful, confident acting, while applying it to the physical constraints and intimacy of the camera. Practically, we'll explore on-camera auditions, self-tapes, and also discuss the technical vernacular and responsibilities of being on an actual set.

Erin Roberts is an actor, teacher, and coach. Locally, Erin won a Broadway World Nomination and an Audience Pick Award for her performance in My 4 Bodies, a one-woman show in the 2018 MN Fringe Festival, and stars in the web series Fem 101 featured on Seeka.tv. Highlighted and award-winning credits include: Thirst (Best Actress, 2022 Kathmandu Independent Film Festival); (mis)placed (Audience Choice Series, 2022 MN Webfest); The Corn Maiden (Favorite Supporting Actor, 2008 New York International Fringe Festival); ESPN’s The Bronx Is Burning; Law and Order SVU; The Good Wife; Lady Dynamite; The Royal Tenenbaums; Celebrity; and MLB Fan Cave’s Boston Ink. Erin holds a BA in Directing from Smith College, an MFA in Acting from Penn State University, and has studied with The National Theatre Institute, The Royal Shakespeare Company, and York University in Toronto Canada. She is a proud member of Actors’ Equity Association.

Advanced Directing
Instructor: Jake Yuzna
2 Sessions: Friday, August 11, 6:30-9:00 pm [virtual] & Saturday, August 12, 10:00 am-5:00 pm [in-person]
Tuition: $185 regular | $140 member | $105 low-income

One of the most prominent positions in filmmaking, the director is the nexus of all creative decisions made during the creation of any feature film, television series, short, or documentary. Although every director relies on core tools, the expectations and challenges facing them vary greatly between projects and formats.

Whether you’re just starting out or an established director, someone working in narrative filmmaking with an interest in documentaries, or vice versa, this workshop opens up the art and craft of directing to novices and experts alike. Outlining the real-world tools and expectations of the professional director, participants discover and hone new skills in directing feature films, television/serialized programming, documentaries, new media, and more.

From blocking to collaboration, visual storytelling, working with actors, unions, and strengthening one’s voice, this workshop will prepare each student to tackle any directing situation – whether it’s your first short or a studio feature. Familiarity with production—whether narrative, documentary, or new media—recommended, but not required.

Minneapolis based writer/director Jake Yuzna has been professionally directing feature films, television, commercials, and new media projects for over fifteen years. Their films have screened at the Cannes Film Festival, Berlin Film Festival, London Film Festival, New Museum of Contemporary Art, Walker Art Center, and the British Film Institute, among others. Yuzna is the first American feature director to win the Teddy Jury Prize at the Berlin Film Festival. In addition, they received additional grants and awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, Creative Capital Foundation, Frameline Foundation, McKnight Foundation, IFP, and FilmNorth, as well as being recognized by the American Film Institute with the Richard P. Rogers Spirit of Excellence Award in Directing. Yuzna has also directed projects for a range of clients including SONY USA, Adobe, L’Oréal, and the Standard Hotel Group.
**Production Audio**
Instructor: Owen Brafford
1 session: Saturday, August 19, 10:00 am-5:00 pm
Tuition: $185 regular | $140 member | $105 low-income

Filmmakers say that sound is 50% of your movie, but what does that mean in practice? This workshop will bolster your knowledge of best practices for capturing excellent production audio, whether you’re a one-person doc crew or seeking a career in the sound department. Activities emphasize hands-on exercises with gear and practical setups on a film set, and we’ll include some lecture time on the physics of sound. We’ll also cover some of the tools available for post-production and how to best prepare on-set audio for a smooth post. Some prior filmmaking experience is preferred but not essential. Bring a pair of good headphones. There is a lunch break.

The gear to be demonstrated and utilized includes:

- Mixers/Recorders: Sound Devices 633/MixPre3 ii, Lectrosonics PDR
- Power supply options: timecode slate and sync boxes, K-Tek K102/K202 boom poles, plus mixer bags and harnesses

**Owen Brafford** has worked in media production for over 10 years. He’s worked in many fields, including narrative, documentary, broadcast, corporate, event, music videos, and avant-garde and experimental material. He’s worked on nearly 30 features—more than half of which has been in the sound department—and copresented a seminar on filmmaking at several Minnesota community colleges. Before settling into audio, he worked in the production, art, grip, and camera departments. He writes and performs music, listens to too much metal, and loves to geek out.

**Introduction to Adobe Premiere [Virtual]**
Instructor: Beth Peloff
3 sessions: Mondays, July 10-24, 6:30-8:30 pm CDT
Tuition: $185 regular | $140 member | $105 low-income

This online course covers basic nonlinear editing with Adobe Premiere Pro CC through demonstrations and hands-on instruction using footage provided by the instructor. Topics include media management and archiving, editing vocabulary and concepts, importing and organizing your media, trimming clips and building your rough cut, using a variety of editing tools to fine-tune your edit, working with sound, applying transitions, adding titles, and exporting your project. The material covered is applicable to Premiere Pro for Macs and PCs. This course is hands-on and interactive; students need to use a computer with Adobe Premiere Pro CC to participate.

**Beth Peloff** is a filmmaker who works in both documentary and animation with over ten years of experience making short films about people coming together to make art and community. Her films have played at festivals both locally and nationally. She has taught video production classes since 2004 and co-owns with animator/filmmaker John Akre Green Jeans Media, a video production and animation company that uses documentary storytelling to showcase the work of nonprofits. Since 2015, Beth and John have co-taught film classes to persons undergoing rehabilitation for a variety of complex medical conditions at the Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute in Golden Valley, MN.

**Introduction to Adobe Premiere**
Instructor: Khalid Ali
2 sessions: Saturday-Sunday, August 5-6, 10:00 am-4:00 pm
Tuition: $245 regular | $185 member | $140 low-income
This course explores the craft of film editing through teacher-led demonstrations and hands-on experience. Students will learn to edit picture and sound with Adobe Premiere Pro using footage provided by the instructor. Topics include history of film editing, editing vocabulary and concepts, and common editing approaches for narrative and documentary film. Students will learn skills in importing and organizing footage, trimming clips, assembling rough cuts, working with sound, adding titles, and creating visual effects. Equipment is provided (sessions are conducted on iMac computers). Bring headphones or earbuds for lab time, plus a hard drive or 32GB USB flash drive to back up course files. There is a lunch break each session.

Khalid Ali is a filmmaker and educator from Baltimore, Maryland. Originally trained as a commercial filmmaker in Los Angeles, Khalid developed an interest in documentary film when he began traveling to China with his older brother. Intrigued by the ability of his camera to bridge cultural differences, his experiences there evolved into a series of documentaries about Chinese urban culture, particularly on the margins of society. Since returning home Khalid has applied the same approach to filmmaking in his native Baltimore. Whether in China or the US, his films follow people toiling in humble jobs but who aspire to greatness. Together, their stories show how work can define or defy one’s identity. Before relocating to the Twin Cities, Khalid taught filmmaking for 11 years at Carver Center for Arts & Technology in Baltimore County. He became the Cinematic Arts Instructor at Perpich Arts High School in 2022.

Collage Animation with Adobe After Effects [Virtual]
Instructor: John Akre
2 sessions: Saturday-Sunday, September 9-10, 9:00 am-12:00 pm CDT
Tuition: $185 regular | $140 member | $105 low-income

Unleash your inner Terry Gilliam or Martha Colburn and learn tools and techniques to animate with mixed media in Adobe After Effects! We’ll explore masks, keying, puppet tools, 2.5D sets, effects and animation presets, and more. You’ll try out a wide variety of techniques to bring your found media and photographs to life in After Effects. Students need a computer with Adobe After Effects CC installed. The workshop is open to all levels.

John Akre practices, studies, teaches, and lives animation. He is working on his fifth animated feature and has made over 100 animated shorts using a wide variety of animation techniques. His films have won several awards and have shown around the world. Working with his partner Beth Peloff, he has also created animation for several Minnesota-made documentaries. He is always on the look-out for interesting things he can appear to bring to life.

www.filmnorth.org/education/classes