The MPS Directing program at SVA offers emerging filmmakers the opportunity to immerse themselves in the art and craft of directing film. Great directors are great storytellers. Our one-year masters program in film directing is designed to provide an extensive education in visual storytelling. Our program challenges you to articulate your artistic vision utilizing the multifaceted medium of film.

You will develop the intellectual and practical tools for directing film. You will learn the art of visual storytelling, working under the tutelage of industry professionals to learn how to develop stories from script to screen, direct actors, and employ an arsenal of cinematic tools to tell a compelling visual narrative. With the guidance of our award-winning faculty, you will cultivate original ideas for successful, inventive films that communicate a narrative in an aesthetically interesting and innovative manner. The course of study also addresses the historical and critical context of film as an art form, its political and sociocultural dimensions, and comparative study of theories for understanding film and video.

The MPS Directing program celebrates the truly independent art of filmmaking. Our students are outfitted with the creative, technical and critical tools needed to impart their artistic visions. With hands-on instruction from our award-winning faculty and New York City as your classroom, you will do things you can’t do anywhere else, and will graduate ready to jump into a career that could change your life, and quite possibly the world.

—Bob Giraldi, chair
In less than one year, each student in the MPS Directing program directs a professionally-produced short film and attains a master’s degree. Over the course of nine months, we empower our students to direct their own short films by providing them with the latest technology, instruction from award-winning filmmakers and an experienced film crew. High-level production values combined with strong storytelling equals success in the film industry; for this reason, the student films created in this program have gone on to be official selections at such prestigious institutions as Cannes Film Festival and Film Festival Internazionale di Milano.

Developed for the working professional, classes are held Monday through Thursday, 6:00 – 9:00pm, with Fridays reserved for studio time, guest lectures, critiques, demonstrations, and/or field trips.

Degree candidates must successfully complete 30 credits, including all required courses. Thesis films will be screened in a juried film festival at the SVA Theatre. Each thesis film must be reviewed and approved by the thesis committee and the department chair in order for the student to be eligible for degree conferral.

This studio-based program is chaired by Bob Giraldi, the director who played a major role in the music video revolution and who continues to be a prolific creative force. As one of America’s legendary commercial and music video directors, Bob uses his considerable expertise and experience to introduce each of our students to the film industry. Bob has directed some of the world’s biggest icons, including Michael Jackson, Paul McCartney, Pat Benatar, Lionel Richie and Will Smith.

Amanda Alvich, Class of 2017.
The MPS in Directing is a fast-paced program that focuses on learning by doing, preparing students for a career in filmmaking. Just ask Elisa-Sofia Fioretti. Graduating from the program in 2016, she has already completed work as a writer, director and producer; shown work in film festivals; and set up an L.A.–based production company called Curieyes with fellow MPS Directing alumnus Ji Hyun Kim.

Elisa-Sofia Fioretti on set with SVA alumnus Amaury Grullon.
Born and raised in Italy, Fioretti moved to the U.S. on her own at 17, eventually finding herself in SVA’s MPS Directing program. The quality of the faculty—and the ability to work closely with them—piqued her interest. And she liked that the program is so hands-on: working on real sets and covering different positions, developing stories and scripts, and receiving practical help from the teaching staff.

The 2016 film festival for the MPS Directing program was sponsored by GreatCall, a company that makes health and safety solutions for older adults, including easy-to-use mobile phones, apps and other products. They offered an opportunity to SVA MPS Directing students: a $50,000 grant to make a series of scripted shorts on aging in America to be featured on the GreatCall website. Fioretti submitted a detailed proposal, including a beat sheet of how the story would unfold, an outline of how the project could be realized from start to finish and an initial budget of how she would use the grant. Her idea: an Italian-American granddaughter heading off to college gives her technologically unsophisticated grandfather a smartphone so they can stay in touch by video chatting, and the technology ends up opening up his life in more ways than one. Her proposal, which would become a series of five shorts called Through Your Eyes, won.

Fioretti was the writer and director of Through Your Eyes, but she describes making the GreatCall shorts as a highly collaborative project, with the cast and crew all contributing. GreatCall watched the project as it unfolded, but they left Fioretti and her team in full control of the creative process. Her partner at Curieyes and fellow alumnus, Ji Hyun Kim, produced the project. And the MPS Directing department offered the use

Elisa with actress Mathia Vargas.

Elisa’s series, created with a $50,000 grant, was featured on GreatCall’s website.
of their facilities for casting and post-production, which she says, “really helped me deeply in the making of those five shorts and to stay within the budget offered by the company.” She also worked closely with MPS Directing teacher Anelisa Garfunkel, who served as a line producer, and SVA undergrad Amaurys Grullon, who helped with design and offered his expertise about the Bronx, which is where the shorts are set.

Through Your Eyes was first screened at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas in January 2017. “It was very well received by the audience,” explains Fioretti. “Many people contacted me via Twitter and Facebook to talk about the project and how it touched them and their relatives.”

Fioretti has been working steadily since graduating. She describes her time at SVA: “The year was definitely a roller coaster, and of course full of difficulties like in any true hardworking master’s program.” As her mother used to tell her, “Sometimes obstacles are in your way to give you a push and make you stronger to face an even bigger obstacle. And I think this year prepares you to face the much harder real life of a filmmaker.”
Learn filmmaking in this unique nine-month program chaired by one of the legendary short-film commercial directors, Bob Giraldi.

### Curriculum/ Sample Program

**FALL**

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<tr>
<td>Lecture Series II</td>
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Thanks to the program, I gained my confidence back as an artist and also learned a lot. I also appreciate the no-BS, hands-on approach. Very cool way to teach.”

—Mika Orr, Class of 2017

Jaanelle Yee (Class of 2017) on the set of her thesis film, Sell Your Body.
Course Offerings

A sample of our course descriptions follows. All course descriptions can be found online at sva.edu/mpsdirecting/curriculum.

DIRECTING I & II
Students are offered firsthand experience in the creation and execution of a short film in the ever-changing world of media production. We will discuss and analyze Academy Award–winning films with the objective of studying various techniques. Students will learn how to employ the tools of cinema to tell their story. Each student will be required to examine the challenges of directing a short film—conceptual screenwriting, directing, cinematography, and working with a production team to achieve his or her vision. The second semester begins preproduction, moving forward with location scouting, shot lists and production of thesis films.

EDITING AS STORYTELLING
This course will focus on editing as a tool to tell stories. Using Final Cut Pro X, students will arrange and cut scenes to enhance narrative and the performances of the actors in their films, all with the goal of telling a story. Examples of professional editing techniques will be shown through weekly screenings of short films, commercials and music videos. The course will also cover postproduction workflow, HD formats, Ultra HD format (2.5K, 3K, 4K), Apple Compressor, workflow for various cameras, audio finishing, managing clips, metadata and media.

DIRECTOR’S TOOLBOX
This course explores a variety of methods for utilizing the many tools at the director’s disposal before production, during production and beyond. Students will have the opportunity to workshop scenes, exploring techniques to articulate the story through lens choice, lighting, camera position, blocking and composition, as well as optimizing the collaborative process to tell a compelling visual narrative. In the second half of the semester this course shifts to deconstructing the various platforms for engaging in social media and uniquely marketing the students’ films directly to their intended audiences.

FILM LANGUAGE, ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM I & II
Narrative filmmaking has been in the forefront of cinema for motion pictures’ 120-year history. Stories have played a critical part in the development and culture of film, from the earliest projected images made by the Lumière brothers in France in the 1890s to works being made today by amateurs on smartphones and transmitted globally on the Internet. This course will analyze the language of narrative filmmaking with examples of significant short films that have expanded the boundaries of cinematic expression around the world. The lectures, screenings, and class discussions will cover the various strategies of telling a story in film and will suggest a critical framework for thinking about the modes of narrative expressiveness in cinema. A broad range of narrative cinema will be featured including those films that mix fiction with documentary reality, and those works that even question the idea of narrative itself. The concentration in the first part of this course will be on American and European Cinema within a context of social responsibility. The second semester features short works, primarily from the East, and will focus on student-made films as well as digital works conceived in nontraditional modes.

LECTURE SERIES I & II
The technical aspects of filmmaking will be examined in this course through lecture and workshop formats. Lectures include a range of specialized, relevant topics designed to coincide with each to coincide with each phase of production that students undertake. Workshops offer students additional hands-on experience in the filmmaking process.

SCREENWRITING
Serving as an intensive exploration of the basic principles of dramatic writing, this course will explore the practice and theory of storytelling through a wide range of contexts—from the ancient Greeks to contemporary Hollywood. With a focus on the elements common to all narratives, each student will develop a short screenplay (8 to 12 minutes). Students have the choice of writing their own screenplay, collaborating with a professional writer, or optioning an original script from a professional writer. Each of these processes will lead to developing a shooting script under the guidance of the instructor. Students will submit numerous revisions until the screenplay is approved for the next phase of production.

PRODUCING FOR FILM ARTISTS
The practical and creative information needed by film artists to realize their artistic vision and find the appropriate media outlets for their completed works will be the focus of this course. While it is important to push the aesthetic boundaries in our field of the moving image, it is also invaluable to have an understanding of production and distribution options, and general business information that is key to the independent media maker.

Serving as an intensive exploration of the basic principles of dramatic writing, this course will explore the practice and theory of storytelling through a wide range of contexts—from the ancient Greeks to contemporary Hollywood. With a focus on the elements common to all narratives, each student will develop a short screenplay (8 to 12 minutes). Students have the choice of writing their own screenplay, collaborating with a professional writer, or optioning an original script from a professional writer. Each of these processes will lead to developing a shooting script under the guidance of the instructor. Students will submit numerous revisions until the screenplay is approved for the next phase of production.
Alumni

Nadia Bedzhanova
class of 2012, director and photographer, clients include Vogue Russia, Dazed, and Metal

Ed Caban
class of 2011, filmmaker, faculty at St. John’s University, media arts teacher at All Hallows High School, New York

Alon Gelnik
class of 2014, editor at Vice Media

Dawn Han
class of 2015, director, producer, director of the award-winning film Cork Man

Ji Hyun Kim
class of 2016, producer and director at Cuneeyes

David Munz-Maire
class of 2014, producer, director, head of Airebedd productions specializing in short form content, director of the award-winning short Chateau Sauvignon

Katie Staab
class of 2012, freelance writer/creative development, formerly head of video production at Talent Inc. Worldwide, video producer at Facebook Live, writer/producer, People Now magazine

Alcee Walker
class of 2015, director of the award-winning film Inferno, which won the jury prize from the Director’s Guild of America

Notable Faculty

This program has been the best thing I’ve chosen to do in my life. I’m glad to have met the chair and the wonderful faculty here. I learned a lot.”

—Miguel J. Soliman, Class of 2017

Faculty

To learn more about the faculty members and to read their biographies visit: sva.edu/mpsdirecting/faculty.

Bob Giraldi
chair, MPS Directing; president, film director, Giraldi Media

Megan Hessenthaler
writer, director

Joshua James
screenwriter

Kamil Dobrowolski
editor

Laurence Kardish
film curator

PREVIOUS PAGE: Tian Tang (Class of 2017) on set. RIGHT: Mika Orr (Class of 2017), production still from Professional Cuddler.
Below is just a sample of guest lecturers who have spoken with our students.

Nicolás Giacobone
writer

Denis Hamill
writer

Russ Hollander
national executive director, DGA

Alexander Lasarenko
composer

Doug LeClaire
director, Asbury Shorts Festival

Barry Markowitz
director of photography

Beth Melsky
casting director

Eva Minemar
producer

Fred Murphy
director of photography

Chris Newman
sound engineer

Calliope Nicholas
director, FilmColumbia Festival

Richard Pepperman
editor

John Rivoli
designer

Gillian Robespierre
writer, director

Sofia Sondervan
producer

Bruce Van Dusen
director

Tim Van Patten
director, actor

Chris Walters
director of photography

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS
For detailed instructions, visit: sva.edu/grad/howtoapply

- Online Application and $80 Application Fee: sva.edu/apply
- Statement of Intent/Personal Statement
- Résumé
- Letters of Recommendation
- Official College Transcript

Some applicants may be required to submit the following:
- Proof of English Proficiency
- Copy of Permanent Residency Card
- Declaration of Finances
- Verification of Finances
- Foreign Transcript Evaluation

DEPARTMENTAL REQUIREMENTS
For specific guidelines about these requirements, visit: sva.edu/grad/deptreq

Portfolio—accepted at svagrad.slideroom.com

DEADLINES
For information on application deadlines, visit: sva.edu/grad/timeline

IMPORTANT LINKS
- FAQ: sva.edu/grad/faq
- International students: sva.edu/grad/intl
- Tuition and fees: sva.edu/tuition
- Visit SVA: sva.edu/grad/visit
We encourage applicants to visit our department. Contact us directly to schedule a department tour or sign-up to attend an Information Session. For more information and to register, go to: sva.edu/grad/visit.

If you have any questions about the application process, contact Graduate Admissions at 212.592.2107 or email: gradadmissions@sva.edu.

Bob Giraldi, chair
Megan Hessenthaler, director of operations

Tel: 212.592.2705
Email: directing@sva.edu
Site: sva.edu/mpsdirecting
Department site: directing.sva.edu
facebook.com/svadirecting
instagram.com/svadirecting
vimeo.com/svadirecting

“Personally, I’m very happy that I enrolled in this program. I never would have made a film on my own without the structure, resources and guidance I was given by everyone at SVA. I’ll be leaving here feeling confident that I can write, direct, and produce more films on my own. I got exactly what I wanted out of this program.”

—Rebecca Halfon, Class of 2018

ACCREDITATION
The School of Visual Arts has been authorized by the New York State Board of Regents (www.highered.nysed.gov) to confer the degree of Bachelor of Fine Arts on graduates of programs in Advertising; Animation; Cartooning; Computer Art, Computer Animation and Visual Effects; Design; Film; Fine Arts; Illustration; Interior Design; Photography and Video; Visual and Critical Studies; and to confer the degree of Master of Arts on graduates of the programs in Critical Theory and the Arts; Curatorial Practice; Design Research, Writing and Criticism; and to confer the degree of Master of Arts in Teaching on graduates of the program in Art Education; and to confer the degree of Master of Fine Arts on graduates of programs in Art Practice; Art Writing; Computer Arts; Design; Design for Social Innovation; Fine Arts; Illustration as Visual Essay; Interaction Design; Photography, Video and Related Media; Products of Design; Social Documentary Film; Visual Narrative; and to confer the degree of Master of Professional Studies on graduates of the programs in Art Therapy; Branding; Directing; Fashion Photography; Directing; Fashion Photography. Data required by the U.S. Department of Education on “Gainful Employment” for each of the above programs may be found on each individual program page at sva.edu/ge.

The School of Visual Arts is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (msche.org), 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, 267.284.5000. The Commission on Higher Education is an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Council on Higher Education Accreditation.

The School of Visual Arts is an accredited institutional member of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (nasad.arts-accredit.org).

The Interior Design program leading to the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Interior Design is accredited by the Council for Interior Design Accreditation (accredit-id.org), 206 Grandville Avenue, Suite 305, Grand Rapids, MI, 49503-4014.

The Master of Arts in Teaching in Art Education program is accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).

The Master of Professional Studies in Art Therapy degree program is approved by the American Art Therapy Association, Inc., and as such meets the Education Standards of the art therapy profession.

CREDITS
© 2018, Visual Arts Press, Ltd.
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Creative director: Gail Anderson
Design: Ryan Durinick
Editorial: Sheilah Ledwidge, Abby Kreh
Case study writer: Rachel Leff

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