

# THE WRAP

## TOP 50

### U.S. FILM SCHOOLS

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TOP INTERNATIONAL FILM SCHOOLS

THE 2021 INNOVATORS LIST

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# Back to Schooldays

**O**n the desk of my home office, there's the usual jumble of notepads, pens, cables, folders, papers and books, most of them of relatively recent vintage. And then there's a small "ARTS EDITOR" nameplate that I've somehow managed to hang onto for a very long time. It dates back to my college days, when I was a journalism major working on the Daily Forty-Niner, the student newspaper at California State University, Long Beach. I can't think of anything else I've hung onto since those days, except for a couple of friends. But that little desk sign has survived for what has been a 40-odd year career in entertainment journalism—and I'm not quite sure why, except that I guess I still get a kick out of it.

What does that have to do with TheWrap's sixth annual magazine devoted to the best film schools? Maybe this: I went to college knowing that I wanted to be a writer but having no idea of the dramatic changes that would transform my industry over the years; I worked for newspapers and magazines, saw print journalism nearly die and figured out how to do my work online—and now, strangely enough, I find myself spending much of my time at TheWrap editing our, you guessed it, print magazines. I have little doubt that the entertainment industry is transforming even more dramatically for today's film students, who may be heading to school knowing that they want to write or film or create but having little idea of how their creations will be read or viewed or consumed. To which I can only say: Hang onto your passion, be ready for it to take you in directions you aren't anticipating...and maybe find a souvenir from your college days to bring along on your trip.

And while you're at it, enjoy our latest look at today's top educational institutions—to which we've also added our 2021 Innovators List, a look at our recent leadership conference, TheGrill, and a nod to the awards season that will consume us for the next few months.



**ON THE COVER**  
Illustration by Jane Go

STEVE POND, ARTS AWARDS EDITOR

## THE WRAP

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TheWrap has won multiple awards for its reporting, columns, criticism and feature writing. In 2021 Waxman was honored as the Best Online Journalist at the L.A. Press Club SoCal Journalism Awards, as well as for her blog, Waxword. TheWrap was chosen as the best online news website at the National Arts & Entertainment Journalism Awards in 2018, 2019, and 2020, and best entertainment website at the National Arts & Entertainment Journalism Awards in 2018. In 2019, the site won two National Arts & Entertainment Journalism Awards for the multimedia package "AfterMeToo: 12 Accusers Share What Happened Next, From Firing to More Trauma." In 2021, the L.A. Press Club's SoCal Journalism Awards gave the site top prizes for feature photography as well as for its weekly podcast, "TheWrap-Up."

In 2020, Sharon Waxman was named one of the Top 100 Women Entrepreneurs by Inc. Magazine.

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—Max Barbakow (AFI Class of 2015)  
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# MORPHING AT THE SPEED OF LIGHT

When the pandemic hit, the entire entertainment ecosystem had to rethink how it did business—including film schools

BY STEPHEN GALLOWAY



**I**n March 2020, the world as we knew it came to an end—or at least it did for dozens of film schools across the country, many of which had long functioned as if nothing would rock the industry they served.

For decades, a film-school education was built on these enduring beliefs: that the entertainment business was divided along sharp lines separating film and television; and that each of these media could be sub-divided into comedy and drama, into tried-and-true formats such as the one-hour drama, the two-hour feature film and the 30-minute sitcom.

Many educators were aware that the old order was on the brink of collapse; but how and when it would reach a tipping point remained unclear. Then came the pandemic and, almost overnight, everything was sent spinning. Suddenly, the industry's center of gravity shifted toward streaming as movie theaters shut down and traditional TV began to seem out of date. The surge of Netflix and the emergence of its deep-pocketed rivals (Disney+, Amazon, etc.) didn't just mean a bunch of new buyers; it also meant new formats and new genres—like multipart series, comedies that resembled

dramas (and dramas that resembled comedies) and a host of programming unlike anything we'd seen—all of which could be binge-viewed whenever a consumer desired.

The entire entertainment ecosystem had to rethink how it did business. And so did most film schools.

That was the situation I faced a year and a half ago, when I left my job as executive editor of *The Hollywood Reporter* to become dean of Chapman University's Dodge College of Film and Media Arts. It was days into the pandemic, right after the Chapman campus had shut down and students scattered across the globe.

Along with the obvious challenges I'd anticipated (not least learning to navigate the quaint bureaucracy of academia) came the far bigger one of dealing with COVID. And that, in turn, came second to an even bigger issue: what education should look like when "normal" life resumed.

As I canvassed our faculty and students, along with industry insiders, one thing was clear: We could no longer teach film and TV as separate art forms or even think of categorizing things that way; streaming was the order of the day. Other film schools had taken





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steps to recognize this; but now we all had to go further and acknowledge it was just the dawn of rapidly cycling change.

On this, we agreed. But then came the matter of turning our agreement into a living, breathing and effective curriculum that would prepare students for a workplace quite different from the one we had known. We set up an interdisciplinary task force to address long-term changes, one of a handful of committees designed to analyze every aspect of what we were doing. Week in and week out, we explored existential questions about our courses and programs, which cover an unusually wide spectrum, from producing to public relations, from screenwriting to cinematography. In each case, we asked how they should connect with new technology as well as the new economics.



The old way of doing things no longer works, and film schools must find a new way—perhaps multiple new ways—if we wish to remain relevant”

Should we close down one of our programs (Television Writing and Producing) or simply alter its name and focus? Should screenwriting students be taught about features and TV or a host of other formats (web series, virtual reality, etc.)? Should we structure our school vertically (it was then divided between film and TV) or horizontally (between graduate and undergraduate programs)?

Universities move slowly, even glacially, when compared to the outside world. They adhere to a concept called “shared governance,” which means that the faculty and administration have an equal say in fundamental decisions, and that presidents and deans have no right to lord it over teachers. So whatever



Stephen Galloway

our film-school leadership felt, we had to get faculty buy-in. Because of this, it took a year and two months of weekly meetings before we reached a consensus.

The result was a new common curriculum for our production students, through which they would dip into all aspects of the business and many elements of new technology in their freshman year and part of their sophomore year. As they then choose to specialize and move down different paths (as directors, sound designers, etc.), they still have to gain experience in a multitude of arenas, from film to streaming to the web.

We’re still exploring a slew of other changes: whether to shoot pilots, when pilots seem to be becoming passé; how to balance the competing interests of writers, producers and directors, when power has increasingly tipped away from the director and toward the mega-writer-producer; and even the nature of filming, given that virtual production is already rising to the fore.

None of this is simple, even among a group of people who have the best interests of their students at heart.

Nor is there one solution that fits all; indeed, over the past few years, the members of CILECT (an international association of film schools) have been holding conferences exploring exactly the same questions as we have, with every school offering suggestions aimed to connect with its local industry.

What we all know for sure is that the old way of doing things no longer works, and that we must find a new way—perhaps multiple new ways—if we wish to remain relevant.

When I was in film school in the 1980s, an education seemed so much simpler: Each of us was given a 16mm camera, a roll of film and a Moviola, and then sent on our way. We learned about filmmaking just as George Lucas had once done, and so many great directors and technicians before him. But that static sort of education is long gone.

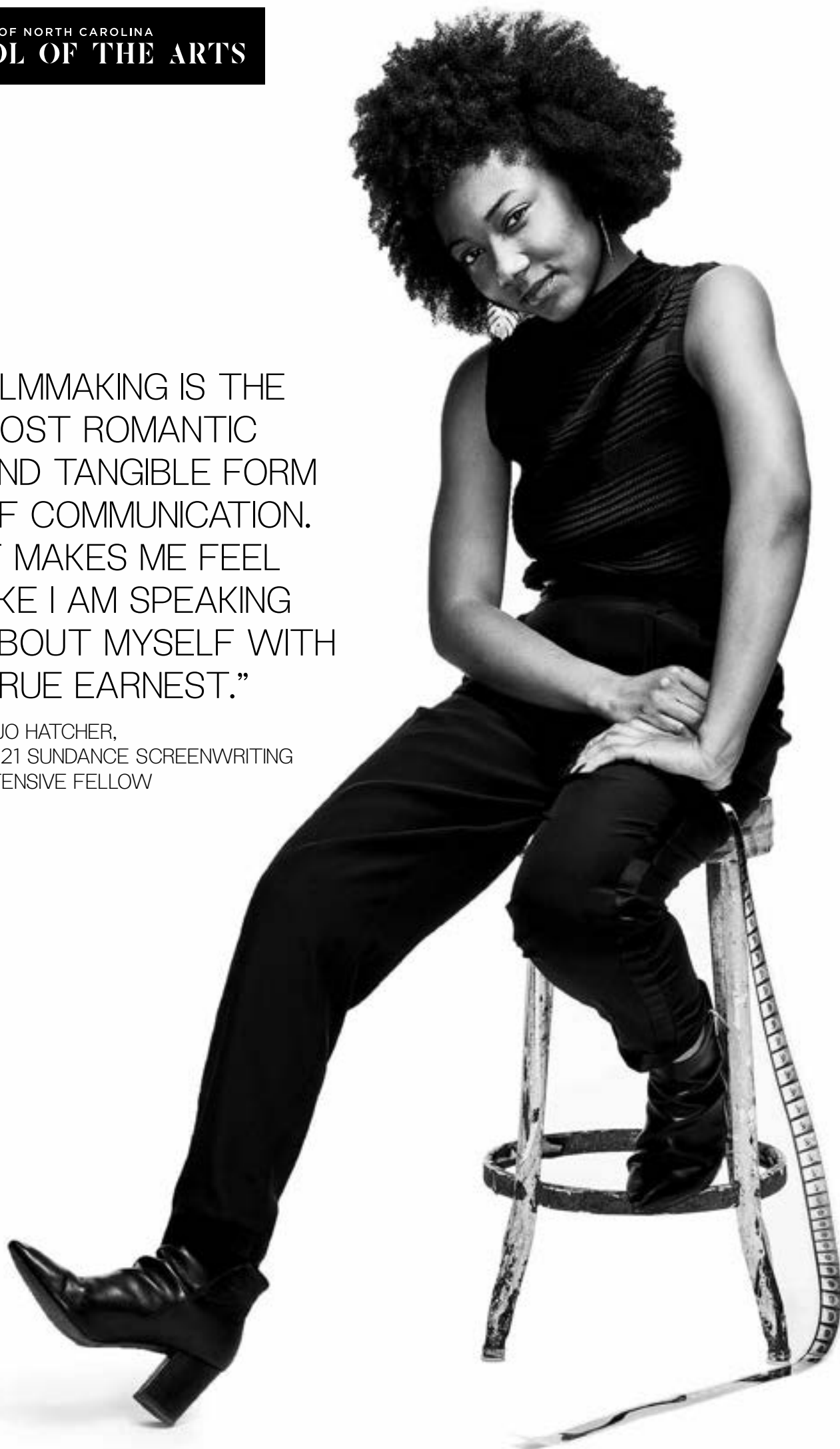
The industry is morphing at the speed of light, and so must we. **W**

*Stephen Galloway is the dean of the Dodge College of Film and Media Arts at Chapman University in Orange, California.*



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MOST ROMANTIC  
AND TANGIBLE FORM  
OF COMMUNICATION.  
IT MAKES ME FEEL  
LIKE I AM SPEAKING  
ABOUT MYSELF WITH  
TRUE EARNEST.”

—JO HATCHER,  
2021 SUNDANCE SCREENWRITING  
INTENSIVE FELLOW



# FILM SCHOOLS

## BY THE NUMBERS

\$\$\$

### Top 10 film schools' current annual tuition\*

<b>\$66,880</b>	Columbia graduate	<b>\$44,903</b>	USC graduate ( <i>depending on number of units</i> )
<b>\$63,196</b>	NYU graduate	<b>\$32,858</b>	UCLA graduate, out of state
<b>\$59,951</b>	American Film Institute graduate	<b>\$28,320</b>	LMU graduate ( <i>depending on number of units</i> )
<b>\$59,332</b>	NYU undergraduate	<b>\$26,516</b>	UCLA undergraduate, in-state
<b>\$59,260</b>	USC undergraduate	<b>\$26,440</b>	Emerson graduate (10 units)
<b>\$58,250</b>	Chapman undergraduate	<b>\$23,203</b>	University of North Carolina School of the Arts graduate, out of state
<b>\$56,270</b>	UCLA undergraduate, out of state	<b>\$23,040</b>	UNCSA undergraduate, out of state
<b>\$52,850</b>	CalArts	<b>\$17,756</b>	UCLA graduate, in-state
<b>\$52,577</b>	Loyola Marymount University undergraduate	<b>\$9,196</b>	UNCSA graduate, in-state
<b>\$51,264</b>	Emerson undergraduate	<b>\$6,497</b>	UNCSA undergraduate, in-state
<b>\$50,022</b>	Chapman graduate ( <i>depending on program</i> )		

\*TUITION ONLY—DOES NOT INCLUDE FEES OR ROOM AND BOARD

### Schools that have never been out of the Top 4 in our rankings

**3** USC, AFI, NYU

### Schools that have never been out of the Top 10

**9** USC, AFI, NYU, Chapman, CalArts, Columbia, UCLA, LMU, UNCSA

### HONOR ROLL



Here are the schools that have received the most nominations and wins in 2020-2021 at the Student Academy Awards, Television Academy's College Television Awards, American Society of Cinematographers' Student Heritage Awards, Directors Guild of America's Student Film Awards and GSA BAFTA Student Awards.

**13** USC  
**7** NYU  
**6** AFI  
**4** Columbia  
**3** Chapman

**2** Ringling College; University of California, Berkeley  
**1** Biola; Brigham Young University; CalArts; California State University, Fullerton; Hofstra; Loyola Marymount University; Rhode Island School of Design; Savannah College of Art and Design; School of Visual Arts; UCLA; University of Miami; UNCSA





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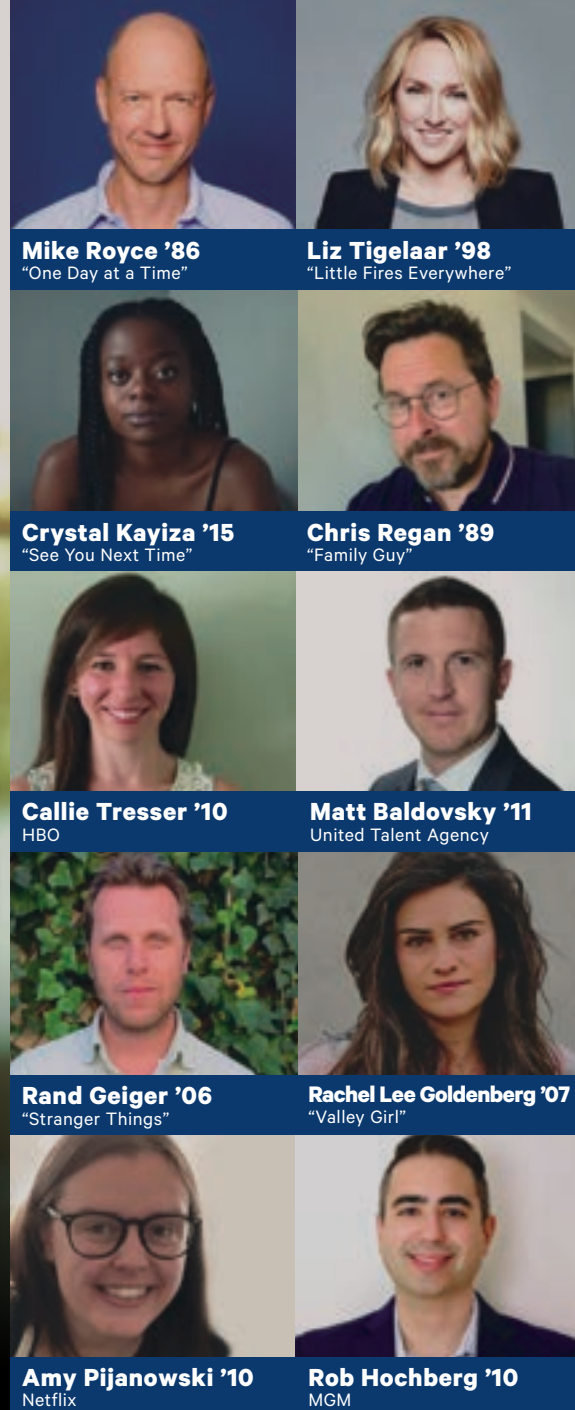
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# Film Schools in the Time of COVID:

Just when schools were thinking about getting back to normal, the Delta variant threw a wrench into everybody's plans

BY JASON CLARK

**O**ne year ago, the word *Delta* uttered within a film university's halls might have meant you were referring to the fraternity house where John Belushi's Bluto wreaked havoc in *National Lampoon's Animal House*. But something far more troubling was on the horizon, even more ominous than Bluto's infamous "zero point zero" grade-point average.

After several high-efficacy vaccines became widely available to adults and COVID-19 temporarily loosened its grip on the international public in the spring, things appeared to be getting back to a place of seminormal management for those in higher education. Film students started returning for in-class learning, high-tech university facilities were utilized again and shrewd protocols were in place for students who were finally working with crews, actors and instructors to get their dreams laid out in a visual format once and for all. And then a more contagious





Far left, UNCSCA students in cinematography class; this page, UNCSCA professor and screenwriting chair Ron Stacker Thompson teaches by Zoom.

# The Sequel

variant made its way through the U.S. in the summer of 2021, and all bets were off.

"We're navigating those waters (of the Delta variant) just as much as anybody else," American Film Institute Conservatory's Dean Susan Ruskin said. "I think this new crop of students has gotten so accustomed to rolling with the punches in the middle of a pandemic and appreciating every moment. It was interesting, because when we opened the library under limited circumstances, some of some of our fellows walked in there and literally started to cry. Just for being able to be there and get their work done, and to be in a place that was always a bit of a sanctuary for them."

Stephen Galloway, dean of the Dodge College of Film and Media Arts at Chapman University (see essay, page 4), found similar emotions when the

school resumed in-person screenings of student work. "We have a state-of-the-art 500-seat theater, and when we started showing their films again only weeks ago, it was like going to a rock concert," he said. "They haven't had that for a year and a half." And yet the Delta variant, he added, "threw fall plans into turbulence. It doesn't mean any slowdown in our actual production; it just means we will maintain some of the pretty strict protocols that we introduced." Those protocols include a COVID officer, a COVID specialist on every film set and available testing anytime it is needed.

Deborah LaVine, dean of the film department at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts (UNCSCA), found herself jumping directly into this brave new world. "I've only been here literally about 10 minutes," said LaVine, who came to UNCSCA in July 2021 from Cal Arts, where she was a graduate film program director. "I think students have even more to express right now. I would also say it's exciting because 50% of our filmmakers here are going to be women. Plus, we had our new-student orientation with parents, faculty and staff, and more than one parent got up and said, 'Thank you for taking care of our students and giving them an opportunity to go forward with their dreams.'"

A common theme going into the fall semester is not an overriding feeling of anguish or anxiety, but rather one of hope and excitement. And it's being reflected in the students' output as well. "The fellows at AFI have always

had a social consciousness about the work that they've been doing," Ruskin said. "But because they had to limit what they could do, it really made the storytelling itself more intimate. And I think that's helped them tell more personal stories."

Galloway feels similarly about Chapman's students: "I actually think we've had advantages [in this time]," he said, adding that the school mandated "shorter films and simpler films." The pandemic also made guest lecturers and alumni more readily available, as they were not working at the fever pitch they once were. "When you go simpler, you're really forced to think of story and character, as opposed to what a lot of students do, which is 'Let's go big!' I've heard from a lot of faculty members that scripts are actually getting better."

Edoardo Novello, a 25-year-old Chapman graduate student who admires neorealist cinema and the work of directors Terrence Malick and Richard Linklater, said he was finally able to make it to the United States from his native Italy in February after studying remotely during the first year of the pandemic. "Because of the time difference, I often couldn't speak with my peers during the day," he said. "Now you're able to actually present yourself to pitch your stories and to see with your own eyes how people work, which I think is a key element of this industry. Also, the opportunity to be in class was incomparable. I can actually go to a location scout, which is incredible."

Undergraduate screenwriting major McKenna Thurber, a 21-year-old who adores the works of Greta Gerwig and Miranda July, is also in awe of the optimism of Chapman's student body. "COVID inspired us to think of new ways to connect with our classmates," she said. "And all the professors as well as the students have been so adaptable. It really hasn't been as tough as we thought it was going to be. Young filmmakers like us realize how lucky we are to be able to be making these productions and still collaborate, even though there are a million obstacles to get to that point."

Some international students have had difficulty coming to the U.S. to study because of COVID restrictions, but that problem is diminishing; UNCSA, for example, had four international students on the books this semester in their combined programs, only one of which has not been able to make the trek. Ruskin estimates that AFI is comprised of roughly 50% international students. "One of my staff just said to me, 'We may have less than a handful of people who are from L.A.,' which is quite unusual."

As one can surmise, vaccines helped



A UNCSA film composition student works in a booth on the film scoring stage.

immeasurably with creating a breather for incoming and returning students, even in the case of a state-run school like UNCSA. "We take our guidance from the UNC system, which sets the primary guidance on how we're handling COVID," LaVine said. "And we've had lots of ways to incentivize students to get the vaccine, but there is not a mandate." At press time, 85% of UNCSA's students and 83% of its staff had offered proof of vaccination, an encouraging number that is significantly higher than the country at large. "I've actually been really impressed with the consistency of the enrollment," she added. "I think we've lost only one, and it was due to strain in their family because of the pandemic."

Dropouts that could reduce enrollment numbers were on the minds of administrators prior to this school year, but most schools are reporting no significant declines. "We did have a few dropouts," Galloway said, "but remember that most universities are dependent on the income from room and board which many people don't realize. We had empty dorms or sparsely populated ones over the past year, and the financial hit to this university and others was considerable. How is that going to affect the dorms going forward? We don't know yet."

But as film schools have been welcoming new and returning filmmakers-in-training, and even with the industry constantly being threatened with disarray due to declining box-office sales

and same-day streaming seemingly taking a bite out of cinema proceeds, the fervor to make films has not waned, according to those interviewed.

"There are so many fascinating stories here in our community," UNCSA's LaVine said. "And we want to put some emphasis on community-service learning, and that will reflect back into the stories. Our thrust this year is to allow space for our students to really practice finding an authentic voice and not a one-size-fits-all voice. They're

going to be students who are going to want to do more experimental work."

"The students are really wrestling with some profound issues," she added. "The skill set that is being shown in terms of editing, cinematography, production design is incredible. And then the pandemic kind of pushed forward tabletop filmmaking and the thought was 'Let's add it to the language of cinema and filmmaking and storytelling.'"

But that dreaded phrase *the new normal* is still on everyone's mind as administrators and students alike wonder if the lingering pandemic can ever be crushed as easily as *Animal House* rabble-rouser John Blutarsky once smashed an

acoustic guitar. "I mean, we're all hopeful," said Ruskin. "I think we're learning how to live with this, which is an unfortunate thing to have to say. But I think that's what's necessary. Really, we've got to accept this as part of our lives now. It's time for us to figure out how to do it well and do it safely." **W**

“  
When we  
opened  
the library  
under limited  
circumstances,  
some of our  
fellows walked  
in and literally  
started crying.”

—SUSAN RUSKIN, AFI





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\* According to a recent study, 99% of Spring 2020 graduates were employed, pursuing further education, or both within 10 months of graduation.







**By Mark Rahner | Illustration By Eric Hernandez**

**T**heWrap's sixth annual ranking of film schools was assembled through an anonymous poll of more than 1,200 entertainment-industry insiders, educators, deans, filmmakers and film pundits, along with experts tasked with evaluating each school. (And yes, our poll has ways to ferret out and account for attempted ballot-stuffing, which does happen on occasion.)

This year, USC regained the No. 1 spot it had lost in 2020, while Emerson crashed the Top 10, Wesleyan and Stanford took double-digit jumps and a few perennial powers fell slightly. Those jumps meant that Stanford returned to the Top 20 after two years outside it, while Wesleyan joined Cal State Northridge in making the Top 20 for the first time.

As always, it's important to note that ranking film schools is an inherently flawed proposition. We're comparing graduate programs with undergraduate ones and putting huge schools up against small ones. A student perusing this list may well find the perfect match in the 40s rather than the Top 10—and with the entertainment industry in turmoil, who knows which of these schools will have the key to prepare students for the stormy times ahead?

# FILM SCHOOLS OF 2021







## University of Southern California

There are movie studios that wish they had the filmmaking resources of the USC School of Cinematic Arts, and no film school can rival its impact on the industry. In fact, it's part of Hollywood—if you can make it through SCA's brutal Darwinian microcosm, you'll be equipped to do battle in the larger movie world. Its First Jobs Program claims to have nabbed employment for more than 800 grads, and USC ruled this year's Student Academy Awards with four winners, plus hogged all but two Western regional honors in the DGA Student Film Awards. In response to COVID, incoming Chair of Production Gail Katz's team created Making Virtual Production: An SCA Faculty Demonstration, a step-by-step tutorial on producing TV and film virtually.

Innovating to make on-set production safer, SCA's Entertainment Technology Center (ETC) partnered with Universal, Warner Bros., Amazon and others on The Ripple Effect, using tech throughout preproduction to minimize the amount of time and people on set. Games are increasingly overtaking film in job opportunities, and the Princeton Review has ranked SCA's game-design program No. 1 for a decade. USC Games Expo is Earth's biggest university-sponsored gaming and esports event, and its Gerald A. Lawson Endowment Fund, financed partly by Take-Two Interactive Software and Microsoft's Xbox Game Studios, supports Black and Indigenous students interested in game design.

So what's the downside? USC made headlines with recent scandals and several student suicides. It wasn't SCA's fault, but it couldn't help but besmirch the USC brand. And SCA is notorious for being much nicer to its successful grads. But you know what? So is Hollywood.



Above, AFI Conservatory dean Susan Ruskin moderates a post-screening conversation with Sean Penn and the filmmakers of *Citizen Penn* at the 2020 AFI Fest; below, the USC School of Cinematic Arts



## AFI Conservatory

Small, elite AFI and gargantuan, elite USC perpetually duel for top honors on best-film-school lists—last year AFI came out on top here—and the fact is that the David to USC's Goliath actually does just fine in bridging the gap between the academy and the industry. AFI grads have earned more than 140 Oscar honors, including nine nominations and two honorary Oscars since 2016, and 98 Emmy nominations with 14 wins. No other school has swept the Student Academy Awards twice. Thesis films have copped 10 Oscar noms and two shiny gold men. AFI cinematographers earned 34 Oscar nominations and seven wins. This year's *CODA* scored grad Sian Heder the top audience and jury prizes at the Sundance Film Festival and \$25 million from Apple TV+. Most first- and second-year students are women, and almost half are people of color. New dean Susan Ruskin, who previously put the University of North Carolina School of the Arts on the national cinematic map, called AFI “a community that feels like a family.” You'll be seated at a long family table that includes grads David Lynch, Carl Franklin, Patty Jenkins, Ed Zwick, Darren Aronofsky, Terrence Malick, Julie Dash and Paul Schrader.



## New York University

Sure, NYU's film program (now Tisch School of the Arts' Kanbar Institute of Film and Television) brought you Cannes jury president (now NYU prof) Spike Lee, Martin Scorsese, Joel Coen, Chris Columbus, Morgan Spurlock, Ryan Fleck (*Captain Marvel*), cinematographer Rachel Morrison (*Black Panther*), Vince Gilligan (*Breaking Bad*), Damon Lindelof (*Watchmen*), and *Pulp Fiction* editor Sally Menke. But what have they done for us lately? Jon Watts' *Spider-Man: No Way Home* joins his tingly billion-dollar franchise. *Nomadland* made alum Chloé Zhao the first woman of color, first Chinese woman and second woman ever to win an Oscar for Best Director (plus Best Picture and Frances McDormand's Best Actress win), plus Golden Globes for director and picture. Nia DaCosta, the first Black woman to direct a Marvel film (*Captain Marvel 2*), rebooted *Candyman*. At the Emmys, 66 Tisch alumni got 64 nominations. At Tribeca Film Festival, there were 138 NYU alumni with 58 projects.





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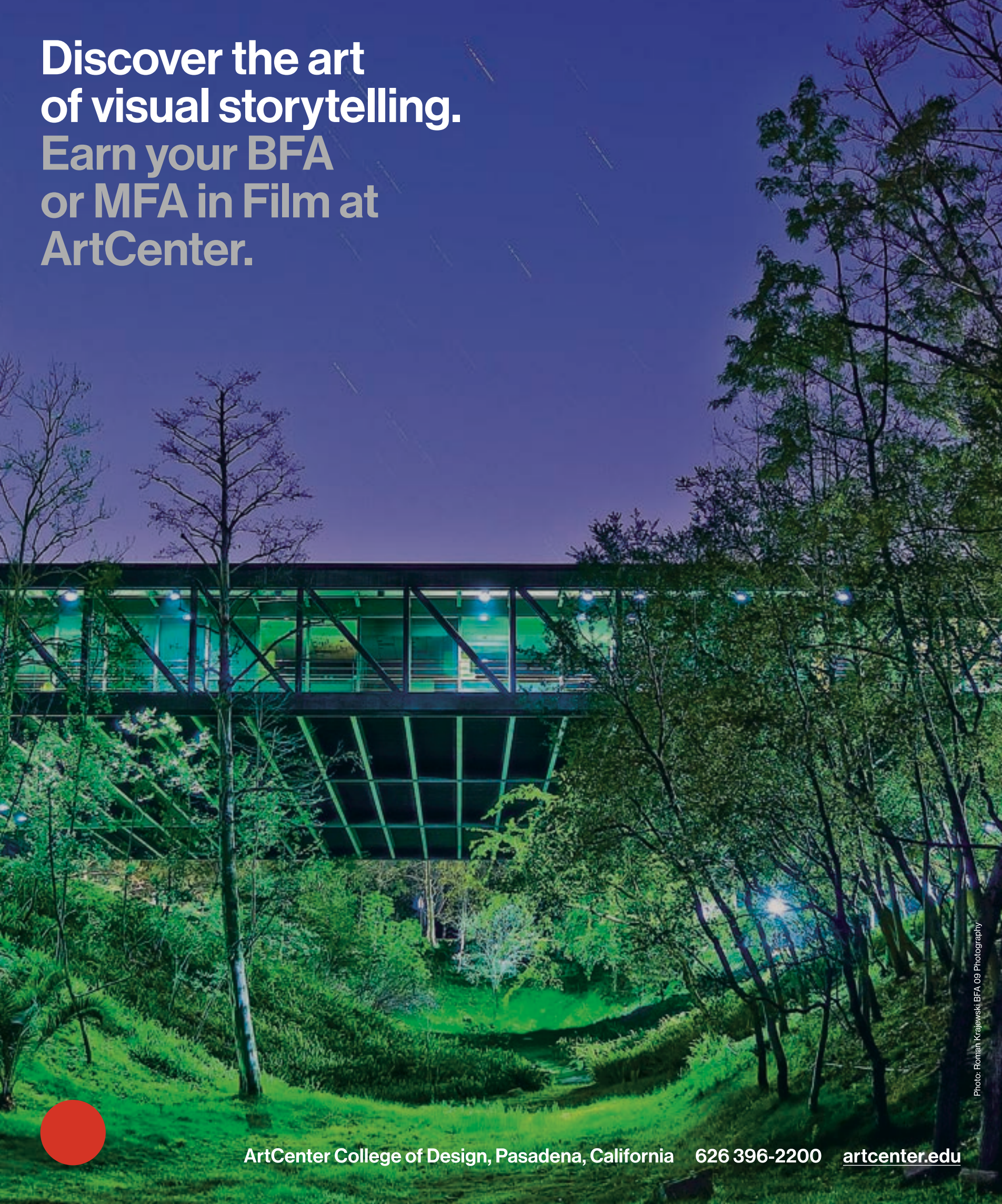


Photo: Roman Krajewski BFA 09 Photography

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## Chapman University

Plenty of schools gave the pandemic lip service, but Chapman University's Dodge College of Film and Media Arts recently spent \$4 million upgrading classrooms and \$750,000 on COVID protections, compliance supervisors and a full-time COVID officer. The better to sustain Dodge's run of good fortune—after years getting less than its due thanks to its Orange County location, it's blossomed (and shot up in several film-school rankings) under dean Stephen Galloway, ex-Hollywood Reporter executive editor and longtime expert in mentoring programs. Stacey Abrams, Eva Longoria, Dana Walden, Samantha Bee and Jennifer Salke talked to students, and trustee-professor Scott Feinberg ran master classes with Bong Joon Ho, Ted Sarandos, Lena Waithe, Pete Doctor and Bryan Cranston. Those classes are open to students at historically Black colleges in a program with Morehouse College. Dodge's multimillion-dollar virtual production studio is in the works, starting with the new LED wall where students shoot in an environment worthy of *The Mandalorian*. Over the past year and a half, Dodge has hired 25 part-time professors of color and increased the number of full-time Black professors from one to four.



Top, Emerson graduate Erik Messerschmidt receives an Oscar for his cinematography on *Mank*; above, the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television



## CalArts

CalArts' School of Film/Video, enriched by its multi-art school context, has programs in film/video production, directing and character and experimental animation. Its Hollywood rep rests on the 900-pound gorillas it unleashed on animation: Tim Burton, Brad Bird, Andrew Stanton, John Lasseter, Henry Selick, Rich Moore and Pete Docter, head of Disney's Pixar Animation, who collected his ninth Oscar nomination and third win this year for *Soul*. Grad Tariq Tapa said CalArts taught him "to think 10 moves in advance when staging action for the camera." It moves careers right along: Stop-motion animator Kirsten Lepore won SXSW and Slamdance prizes; landed clients from Google to Facebook; directed an Emmy-winning Cartoon Network episode of *Adventure Time*; and co-directed (with Lena Dunham) the Planned Parenthood animated short *100 Years*, featuring Jennifer Lawrence, Meryl Streep and Constance Wu. Grad Daron Nefcy zoomed from Cartoon Network's *MAD* ("I got to make my own mini-films!") to Nickelodeon to a full-time gig at Disney's *Star*. "I think the reason so many alumni are running shows is that all animation students at CalArts have to make their own films every year," Nefcy said. "Producing a TV show is like making a bunch of mini CalArts films. You graduate with four films and, of course, your final film is much better than the first."



## Emerson College

During COVID, alum Norman Lear and Bob Newhart Zoomed in to instruct Emerson's 1,700 Visual and Media Arts students. Lear was one of five Emerson Emmy winners this year, and Erik Messerschmidt won the cinematography Oscar for *Mank*, on top of his first Emmy nomination in 2020 for Netflix's true-crime drama *Mindhunter*. Emerson undergrads studied at the Boston home campus, at Emerson L.A.'s big, gorgeous Sunset Boulevard building, at Emerson's medieval castle in the Netherlands and in

programs at Paris College of Art (some virtually, most in-person) and Prague's famed FAMU. While the Boston campus opens a new Emerging Media Lab and a Visual and Media Arts directing studio this term, Dean Robert Sabal said Emerson is looking beyond production: "It's an undergrad program in a liberal arts context. We absolutely want students to have skills and networks to be employed, but also to have a broader range of habits and education that's going to serve them for a whole lifetime." It worked for alums Jay Leno, Richard LaGravenese, Adele Lim (who wrote *Crazy Rich Asians*) and two who made the 2021 Forbes 30 Under 30 list, music PR agent Lydia Liebman and games growth strategist Maddy Wojdak.



## Columbia University

For a small film program, Columbia University School of the Arts looms remarkably large on the New York and national film scenes. Students make impressive films, the writing programs are extraordinary and grads report that when they walk into a Hollywood writer's room, they fit right in and prosper. Roar-ee the Lion (Columbia's mascot) had much to get loud about in 2021, like the Emmys collected by alums for high-profile hits (*The Handmaid's Tale*, *Dick Johnson is Dead*, *Lovecraft Country*), four alum Oscar nominations, and top noms and wins by recent grads at Toronto, Cannes and Venice film fests. But Columbia dropped one slot in TheWrap's rankings, no doubt thanks to a Wall Street Journal exposé noting that recent Columbia film alumni had the highest debt compared with earnings among graduates of any major university master's program in the U.S.—this at the nation's eighth-richest private college. The problem is obviously not unique to Columbia, but the Journal's report still stung. Even so, Roar-ee will keep roaring for grads in the successful footsteps of alums Kathryn Bigelow, Jennifer Lee, Phil Johnson, James Mangold and the countless grads making history at Amazon, Disney, Hulu, Netflix, HBO, ABC, CBS, NBC and abroad.



## UCLA

UCLA's School of Theater, Film and Television accepts just 4% of undergrad applicants and 14% of grad applicants. They're all aiming to become iconic, like grads Francis Ford Coppola, Alexander Payne, Alex Gibney, Allison Anders, Charles Burnett and Justin Lin, whose ninth *Fast and Furious* film made \$592 million. Four alums got 2021 Oscar noms, 14 took films to Sundance and 20 got Emmy noms. But UCLA's reputation took a beating after an eight-year review by its academic senate found that TFT was plagued by feuding factions and "chronic operational and procedural problems." And instead of hiring a new dean to replace departing longtime chief Teri Schwartz, the school named an interim dean, Brian Kite. He's a leading light of American theater who won the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Joel Hirschhorn Award—but since he's interim, the factions obviously aren't peacefully on the same page yet. Ominously, TFT suspended all 2021 applications for master's programs while it does a comprehensive curriculum review. Still, UCLA remains a powerhouse, and that devastating report on TFT's political strife also found that student-faculty advising relationships are wonderful. At UCLA, your thesis film can win Sundance glory like Patricia Vidal Delgado's coming-of-age movie *La leyenda negra*. She called TFT "a filmmaking boot camp,

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12 hours a day, six days a week,” and also a bonding experience with faculty and fellow students. “You really feel like they’re your family.”



## Loyola Marymount University

LMU’s hot School of Film and Television hit a bump when film dean Peggy Rajski, who helped prepare the report on UCLA TFT’s strife, was herself sacked after reports of abrasive behavior. She was replaced by interim dean Bryant Keith Alexander, who remains as overall dean of LMU’s College of Communication and Fine Arts. He’s a big-deal educator with a sixth book out this year, but he’ll likely breathe easier when a new film dean arrives. In better news, LMU SFTV added the 24,000-square-foot Howard B. Fitzpatrick Pavilion, with screenwriting and AR/VR facilities and, soon, a Student Success Center to propel 700 budding film talents per year to careers as brilliant as such LMU luminaries as Bond producer Barbara Broccoli, auteur Brian Helgeland, and Imagine Television president Francie Calfo. LMU launched a new minor in Interactive, Gaming and Immersive Media, and new faculty Rosanne Korenberg, the ex-Miramax and Twentieth Century Fox exec who brought you *I*, *Tonya* and *Boys Don’t Cry* and launched Ryan Gosling and Elliot Page, leads the new joint program with SFTV and LMU’s business school. Also new or recent: a Film Independent story-development residency, the SFTV Emerging Talent Lab with Village Roadshow and a PA Bootcamp with Ryan Murphy’s Half Initiative and Ghetto Film School.



## University of North Carolina School of the Arts

Judging from UNCSA’s illustrious record of success, the film world would benefit by giving women more power. UNCSA’s last two incoming film classes were majority female, and with longtime film dean Susan Raskin off to AFI, she’s succeeded by new dean Deborah LaVine, who ran CalArts’ grad directing program and developed European exchange programs. “There is a unique opportunity at UNCSA with five arts conservatories on one campus for cross-collaborative experiences that mirror the way the industry is evolving,” said LaVine, who’s co-directing a new project with CODA co-star Troy Kotsur. Eminent alums include David Gordon Green and Danny McBride, plus the hordes of UNCSA talent working in Atlanta’s film scene, including 11 alums who worked on *Jungle Cruise*. Grad Zach Seivers got a BAFTA nom as sound editor on Oscar-winning *Nomadland*. UNCSA covers the cost of senior thesis films and charges significantly lower tuition than most other premiere film schools.

SCAD TV chair D.W. Moffett



## Savannah College of Art and Design

With more than 6,000 students, 31 degree programs, 345,000 square feet of filmmaking facilities in historic Savannah and national film-production hotbed Atlanta and 63,000 annual visitors to its film festival, SCAD stands tall in the movie world. It’s led by Peabody and SAG Award-winning film and TV chair D.W. Moffett (*Traffic*, *Chicago Med*, *Bosch*) and School of Entertainment Arts dean Andra Reeve-Rabb, ex-director of casting at CBS Primetime, New York. “We do it just like the pros,” said Moffett. “We emphasize story over everything else.” More than 70 SCAD grads and students worked on Barry Jenkins’ *The Underground Railroad*, and 130 worked on 21 Oscar-nominated films in 2021. Half of the films in the Best Picture category and 100% of the films in the Best Visual Effects category had SCAD grads working on them. Thanks to its impact and its autumn film fest—a major stop on the awards circuit—SCAD attracts more A-list celeb visitors than most West Coast film schools. New faculty this year: Emmy-winning producer/director/writer James Sadwith, whose shows have nabbed 35 Emmy and Globe noms, and Alan Caso, whose *George Wallace* miniseries won ASC’s Outstanding Achievement Award.



## Wesleyan University

Why did a liberal arts college located 2,889 miles from Hollywood jump way up the best film schools list this year? It has to be the hoopla over the new \$27 million, 16,000-square-foot Jeanine Basinger Center for Film Studies. Retiring half a century after founding its celebrated College of Film and the Moving Image, Basinger is arguably America’s most beloved film teacher—along with Martin Scorsese, with whom she’s working to bring film studies to U.S. high schools. Her eponymous edifice contains a production studio, cyclorama, green screen and

archives with the papers of Scorsese, Clint Eastwood, Ingrid Bergman and Frank Capra. “We aren’t a film school in the traditional sense,” Center director Scott Higgins said, “yet more than 400 Wesleyan graduates have careers as writers, directors, producers, actors, editors, directors of photography, acquisitions and development executives, agents, critics and archivists.” Thank Wesleyan for Michael Bay, Joss Whedon, Akiva Goldsman, Dana Delany, Lin-Manuel Miranda, Bradley Whitford and *Nomadland* producer Dan Janvey. Higgins added, “The philosophy is this: Don’t teach the skills of filmmaking only, don’t teach history of cinema only, don’t train students to become film professionals or academics. Teach the art of thinking cinematically.”



## ArtCenter College of Design

“Where better to learn how to write visual narratives than at a film program inside an art and design college?” said film chair Ross LaManna, who just added screenwriting to the directing, cinematography and editing tracks. “Our teaching philosophy doesn’t just level the playing field, it tilts the field toward the talented and resourceful. Our mission is to prepare students not just to be the best narrative visual storytellers, but to be prepared to step into jobs that don’t exist yet.” Alums: Michael Bay (who did his graduate work here) and Alex Gilbert, director of 2021 Cannes Young Director Award-winning documentary *Balloon Boy*. Alum and board trustee Zack Snyder headed a fundraising drive to refurbish the Ahmanson Auditorium, turning the aging theater into a state-of-the-art cinema with 4K digital, 35mm, Dolby Atmos and HDR color grading.



## University of Texas at Austin

The UT Moody College of Communication’s Department of Radio-Television-Film (RTF) is for serious film scholars: George Christian Centennial Professor and RTF Chair Noah Isenberg, founding director of the New School’s film program, is the author of the definitive *We’ll Always Have Casablanca* plus the terrific new *Billy Wilder on Assignment*. But RTF’s 1160 students also participate in the nationally noted SXSW fest and impact the industry. Matthew McConaughey is an RTF professor and an alum who infused Hollywood with Texas movie moxie—sort of like Wes Anderson, Renée Zellweger, the Duplass brothers, Tommy Schlamme, Jordan Levin, Jennifer Howell, Michael Barker and *Get Out* executive producer Raymond Mansfield. Mary Steenburgen, Keith Carradine, Edie Falco and Blake Lively have come to Texas to make movies with UT students. “RTF is by far the most affordable top production program in the country,” documentary prof Paul Stekler said.

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Behind the scenes on the set of *Where We Go*. Directed by Christina Yoon  
and produced by Jungyoon Kim. Photograph by Linhao Zhang.



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Ringling College  
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15

## Stanford University

Massive fires turned the sky an eerie orange and COVID raged when Stanford's six incoming students arrived for its renowned, ultra-elite MFA documentary program this year. "Filmmaking is quite a challenge during COVID," said program director Jamie Meltzer. "Documentary filmmakers have been struggling with how to connect and create during a time when the very nature of what we do has to be changed and reinvented." But Meltzer got inventive and produced a doc, and so did his MFA students like Azza Cohen, who said the virus "really forced us to be extremely creative and push our boundaries. We can deal with any other possible hurdles that Hollywood can throw at us." Stanford film alums have won dozens of Student Academy Awards, 20 NATAS awards, eight Fulbrights, two DGA awards and exposure from PBS to HBO. Along with Berkeley's strong doc program, it makes for a dominant nonfiction bloc in the Bay Area.

16

## Florida State University

Sometimes regarded as a factory that trains students who pay remarkably low tuition to work for remarkably low salaries in Florida's booming showbiz industry, FSU has been getting more and more prestigious lately. Four of Barry Jenkins' fellow FSU grads earned Oscar noms for *Moonlight* along with him, and when Jenkins got two Emmy noms for *The Underground Railroad*, his FSU cinematographer pal (and Oscar-nominated cinematographer) James Laxton again also got honored. So did four other 2021 FSU Emmy nominees. The highbrow DGA has hailed FSU's "distinguished contribution to American culture through the world of film and television." With a 5-to-1 student/faculty ratio, FSU grads master live-action, animation or VFX, and each makes five films and works on dozens by graduation. FSU pays all student film production costs. "And after they graduate," head of admissions Paige Robert said, "they can return to our Torchlight Center, where they can make a feature film using our full

production package and postproduction facilities for free. Most film schools' support stops at the graduation ceremony, ours is a lifelong commitment to our filmmaking family." Alums: producer Jonathan King (*Spotlight*, *Green Book*, *Roma*), actress Kelsey Scott (*12 Years a Slave*), producer Stephen Broussard (*Iron Man 3*), and writer T.S. Nowlin (*Maze Runner*).

17

## California State University, Northridge

CSUN's Department of Cinema and Television Arts (CTVA), with programs in film, narrative and documentary TV, VR and emerging media, recently added screenwriting and an upcoming masters in Entertainment Industry Management. Chair Dianah Wynter, DGA, launched a new course in immersive sound, forging partnerships with Epic Games and top visualization company Halon Entertainment. Besides a shiny new Panavision Millennium DXL2 and RED EPIC S-35, CTVA acquired new profs: producer Christina Sibul (*Sideways*, *House of Sand and Fog*, *Thirteen*) and Patricia Carr (*The Good Doctor*). Senior Román Zaragoza was cast in the CBS comedy pilot *Ghosts*, alum Ami Cohen is Lionsgate TV VP of Physical Production, LaTanya Newt is BET VP of Original Programming and recent grad Laura Gonzales is director of operations & events at Disney Television Animation. CTVA recently joined AFI, USC, NYU and eight other schools in the Green Film School Alliance, committed to sustainable production practices.

18

## Columbia College Chicago

Thelma Vickroy, the chair of Columbia College Chicago's Department of Cinema and Television Arts Department, raised the profile of Northridge's film program, and now she's running a program connected to Chicago's considerable production scene. One undergrad and one grad student film were recent semifinalists in the Student Academy Awards, and 10 alums were recognized at the 2021

NAACP Image awards, with Keith Walker and the late Diane Weyerman honored for their work on the documentary *John Lewis: Good Trouble*. Alum Daniel López Muñoz worked on Pixar's *Soul*. CCC's CTVA undergrads routinely nab Internships with Ava DuVernay's Array collective.

19

## Ithaca College

Film is one of the fastest-growing majors in Ithaca's 1,700-student Roy H. Park School of Communications. Students get to connect with folks like Disney's Bob Iger, who with his wife Willow Bay just gave \$1 million to fund the Iger-Bay Endowed Scholarship, aimed at historically underrepresented and underserved talents. Grads include David Boreanaz (actor/director of *Bones*, *SEAL Team*), Lauryn Kahn (writer, Netflix's *Ibiza*), Bill D'Elia (producer, *How to Get Away with Murder*, *Boston Legal*), Liz Tigelaar (writer/executive producer, *Little Fires Everywhere*), Rand Geiger (producer, *Stranger Things*) Larry Teng (director, *Criminal Minds*), Chris Regan (writer/producer, *Family Guy*, *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*), and Callie Tresser (HBO manager, original programming strategy & planning). When Katy Perry wanted a director to make her "Roar" video roar, she chose FSU's Aya Tanimura.

Boston University's Booth Theater



20

## Boston University

You'd think COVID would've shut down production and shrunk enrollment at BU College of Communications' high-profile film program, but thanks to a strict university reporting/tracking/testing system, all courses were taught in person and enrollment significantly increased. BU thinks the traditional labels "Film" and "Television" are obsolete, so students in screenwriting, studies, producing/management and production are trained to work across multiple formats and mediums. The film department is collaborating with BU School of Theater in new ways, including a 2023 TV pilot at the new Booth Theater, written by screenwriting students, with actors from the School of Theater and studio production students shooting with a mobile

Stanford student Azza Cohen's  
*Nothing left to do but marvel*

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# UNCSA'S 13 FILMS TO WATCH BEFORE COMING TO FILM SCHOOL

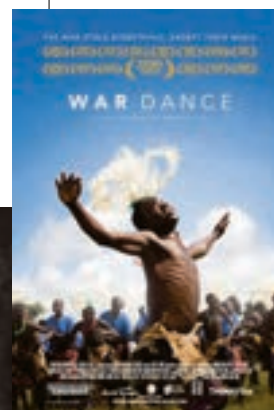
**S**pike Lee hands his graduate students at NYU a list of 95 films they should see. Martin Scorsese produced a roster of 82 films when asked by Fast Company magazine which movies should be watched by filmmakers-to-be. But the University of North Carolina's School of the Arts is more targeted: Cinema Studies professor and assistant dean of academics Renata Jackson has recommended this slate of 13 films that incoming students should see "before you step foot in the classroom or on the sound stage."

*For editing, sound and message:*  
**8 1/2**, Federico Fellini (1963)  
**BlackKkKlansman**, Spike Lee (2018)

*For historical context:*  
**The Wizard of Oz**, Victor Fleming (1939)  
**Wild**, Jean-Marc Vallée (2014)



*Because you should be open to "old" movies and "long" movies:*  
**Metropolis**, Fritz Lang (1927)  
**Children of Paradise**, Marcel Carné (1945)



*Because you should know documentaries:*  
**War Dance**, Sean Fine and Andrea Nix Fine (2007)  
**Crooked Beauty**, Ken Rosenthal (2010)

*Because you should embrace international cinema:*  
**Pather Panchali**, Satyajit Ray (1955)  
**Black Girl**, Ousmane Sembene (1966)  
**Ida**, Pawel Pawlikowski (2013)  
**Roma**, Alfonso Cuarón (2018)  
**Parasite**, Bong Joon Ho (2019)



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Rhode Island School of Design

multicam set-up in front of a live audience. Did you like the look of *The Last Kingdom*, *Doctor Who* and *Killing Eve*? Their cinematographer Tim Palmer, BSC, is one of four new faculty members.

## 21 Ringling College of Art and Design

One of the first to utilize computer technology in making art, Ringling's Computer Animation program began in the early 1990s and literally grew up alongside industry titans Pixar and DreamWorks, and in 2020, Animation Career Review rated it America's No. 1 school. Ringling's Film program, which followed in 2008, aims for high standards for an undergraduate, production-based film school, with five soundstages, 15 private editing suites, a recording studio, a Foley stage, color grading suites, a professional dubbing stage and three fully equipped grip trucks — tough to find at many schools. Production designer Aaron Osborne was Ringling's artist-in-virtual-residence this year, but usually the bigwigs come to the Sarasota campus: Werner Herzog three times, editing one of his features with students, and cinematographer-director Wally Pfister twice, holding master classes and lighting demos. Dylan McDermott and Justin Long have made series promos there, and Kevin Smith and Beau Bridges made features. In 2016, Tim Sutton's Ringling-made *Dark Night* went to Sundance to rave reviews. Students can get professional credits before they graduate.

## 22 Northwestern University

NU's Department of Radio/Television/Film didn't slow down amid COVID restrictions, with

the department's faculty reporting "some of the best examples of student-directed work in recent memory" despite the limitations of the past year. The MFA in Writing for Stage and Screen program started a remote writers room; the MA in Sound Arts and Industries built a podcasting curriculum; and the MFA in Documentary Media did well in film festivals. NU's full return to in-person learning this fall includes the addition of playwright/screenwriter/producer Thomas Bradshaw (*When They See Us*) as department chair. NU's also shoring up its video game/interactive media curriculum with the addition of digital artist/game designer Derrick Fields (Waking Oni Games). Alum Jenny Hagel got an Emmy nom for her writing on *The Amber Ruffin Show* and *Desus and Mero* writer Ziwe Fumudoh launched her own show, *Ziwe*, on Showtime in May. Plus the school has some other alumni you might have heard of: for starters, Stephen Colbert, Zach Braff, Seth Meyers, Kathryn Hahn and Julia Louis-Dreyfus (who also happens to be the mother of Charlie Hall, '19, who has a hit web series, *Sorry, Charlie*).

## 23 Rhode Island School of Design

Your classmates at RISD art school are mostly not in film—and if they are, they're apt to also work as a painter/photographer, like alum Gus Van Sant. RISD's mix of future influencers influencing each other can be fruitful, as when pre-fame Van Sant encouraged his classmate David Byrne, or Ryan Cunningham befriended alum Geoff Adams of WGBH, who helped her land a gig at *The Electric Company*. Cunningham, who later added producing Emmy noms for Amy Schumer, Louis C.K. and Amy Sedaris specials, chalks it up to RISD's teaching her about the whole shebang: costumes, set design, props, cinematography, visual effects, graphic de-

sign, title design and photography. "It took 10 years of hard work to get my foot in the door," she said. "No one is going to walk up and offer you a million dollars to direct a film right after graduation." But she hires a RISD intern every summer.

## 24 Syracuse University

Syracuse actually boasts two film programs: BFA and MFA degrees in the College of Visual and Performing Arts, and BS and MA degrees in television, radio and film through the illustrious S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications. The BFA/MFA programs focus on independent filmmaking and offer hands-on education in the production process from development to post-production. (That includes scriptwriting, budgeting, pre-production, storyboarding, cinematography, directing, sound design and post-production, including 2D and 3D animation.) The BS/MA programs let students customize their own degrees in screenwriting, scripted series, documentary, sports, music or media innovation. Syracuse has a great drama department, too, which gave us Frank Langella, Ted Koppel, Aaron Sorkin, Ben Stiller and Taye Diggs. Recent film students got into Amsterdam's IDFA and the Slamdance, Palm Springs, Outfest, Toronto, Garden State and New York festivals.

Poster for UA student Faye Ruiz's *The Lights Are On, No One's Home*

## 25 University of Arizona

Is the University of Arizona School of Theatre, Film & Television Hollywood's best-kept secret? Despite COVID, enrollment jumped 42% this year, and student films set a record for film festival invitations. *The Lights Are On, No One's Home* by Faye Ruiz got national distribution through Dedza Films/Kino Lorber. Alum Scott Silver became Searchlight's VP



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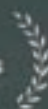
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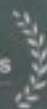
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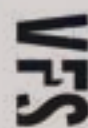
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Artwork: Lukruk by 3D Animation alumnus Benjamin Edd



# GREAT INTERNATIONAL FILM SCHOOLS: 21 FOR '21

WHILE OUR FILM-SCHOOL RANKINGS ARE DEVOTED TO U.S. SCHOOLS, THE VIBRANT GLOBAL FILMMAKING COMMUNITY IS NOURISHED BY HUNDREDS OF ACADEMIC ESTABLISHMENTS AROUND THE WORLD. HERE'S AN UNRANKED LIST OF SOME OF THE BEST.

## AUSTRALIAN FILM, TELEVISION AND RADIO SCHOOL

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

Directors Jane Campion, Gillian Armstrong, Phillip Noyce and Cate Shortland and cinematographer Andrew Lesnie are among the alumni of this school that was established by the Australian parliament in 1973. Since 2008, the school has been located at a campus that includes studios, postproduction facilities and an extensive library, all near the Fox Studios in Sydney.

## BEIJING FILM ACADEMY

BEIJING, CHINA

The only higher-education film school created by the state in China, the 71-year-old Beijing Film Academy has produced many of the country's great filmmakers, including Zhang Yimou, Chen Kaige, Jia Zhangke and Ai Weiwei. It just opened a huge new campus in the Haidian District, though its appeal to its relatively small number of non-Chinese students may have taken a hit this year when officials told its incoming students that their chief job is to develop a "moral cultivation" that will help lead to "the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation."

## CENTRO DE CAPACITACIÓN CINEMATOGRÁFICA

MEXICO CITY, MEXICO

The 46-year-old CCC is a public institution run by Mexico's National Council for Culture and Arts. Alumni include cinematographer Rodrigo Prieto and director Carlos Carrera, while the school's Ópera Prima project involves students in the production of debut features from young filmmakers. CCC is one of the two major Mexican film schools, the other being the Centro Universitario de Estudios Cinematográficos, whose students have included director Alfonso Cuarón and cinematographer Emmanuel Lubezki.



## CENTRO SPERIMENTALE DI CINEMATOGRAFIA

ROME, ITALY

The oldest film school in Western Europe was founded in 1935 by Benito Mussolini's head of cinema, Luigi Freddi. It has numerous facilities in Italy, with headquarters in Rome near the historic Cinecittà studios. Over the years, its students have included everyone from directors Michelangelo Antonioni and Marco Bellocchio to iconic actresses Sophia Loren and Claudia Cardinale.

## ECAM (Escuela de Cinematografía y del Audiovisual de la Comunidad de Madrid)

MADRID, SPAIN

One of the newest schools on this list, ECAM (referred to in English as The Madrid Film School) was founded in 1994 and offers 20 different degree areas for students. It recently launched The Screen, which is designed, according to the school, "to promote the production of feature films, support emerging talent and invigorate the audiovisual fabric."

## FAMU (Film and Television Academy of Performing Arts in Prague)

PRAGUE, THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Established in the 1940s just after World War II, FAMU had such a profound effect on Central European film in the 1960s and '70s that a group of young Yugoslavian directors who attended the school became known as Praški talas ("Prague wave") or Praška filmska škola ("Prague film school"). One of three branches of the Academy of Performing Arts (the others being devoted to theater and to music and dance), its alumni include Miloš Forman, Agnieszka Holland, Milan Kundera, Jiří Menzel and Jan Svěrák. Most of its courses are taught in Czech.

## LA FÉMIS (École Nationale Supérieure des Métiers de l'Image et du Son)



PARIS, FRANCE

Initially founded as IDHEC in 1943 and restructured and relaunched as La Fémis in 1986 under the French Ministry of Culture, this school has a formidable roster of former students, including Jean-Jacques Annaud, Claire Denis, Costa Gavras, Louis Malle, Alain Resnais, Céline Sciamma and this year's Palme d'Or winner, Julia Ducournau (*Titane*). The chairman of the board responsible for continuing that line of accomplishment is Michel Hazanavicius, Oscar-winning director of *The Artist*.

## FILM AND TELEVISION INSTITUTE OF INDIA

PUNE, INDIA

Along with the Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute in Kolkata, FTII is one of the premiere schools in the country that produces more films than any other. Since its founding 60 years ago, instructors have included David Lean and Satyajit Ray, while director-producer-actor Shekhar Kapur (*Elizabeth* and *Elizabeth: The Golden Age*) currently serves as president of the FTII Society.

## FILMAKADEMIE BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG

LUDWIGSBURG, GERMANY

This school near Stuttgart offers courses in collaboration with La Fémis and the National Film and Television School and also holds a workshop for students at UCLA. With highly regarded animation and visual-effects programs, it has won more international Student Academy Awards than any school outside of the NFTS.

## FILMAKADEMIE WIEN VIENNA, AUSTRIA

*Amour* and *The White Ribbon* director Michael Haneke is a faculty member at this school in Austria, where the film students produce about 80 short, medium-length and feature-length films each year. Those films are featured at more than 250 international festivals annually, with Patrick Vollrath's "Everything Will Be Okay" winning a Student Academy Award and landing an Oscar nomination in 2016.

## ŁÓDŹ FILM SCHOOL ŁÓDŹ, POLAND

During the post-World War II period in Poland, the Łódź Film School became a cultural center for artists and students who didn't follow the Communist Party line. The school also produced Oscar winners in directors Roman Polanski, Andrzej Wajda and Zbigniew Rybczyński. These days, according to the school, its curriculum "puts special emphasis on practical work in its teaching programme."

## LONDON FILM SCHOOL LONDON, ENGLAND

The UK's oldest film school is located in a former brewery in Covent Garden and caters to a student body that largely comes from outside the U.K. Alumni include Michael Mann, Mike Leigh, Ann Hui, Danny Huston and Duncan Jones. During the summer of 2021, the school joined forces with The Yard Covent Garden to host outdoor screenings of curated films from LFS students and alumni.



## NATIONAL FILM AND TELEVISION SCHOOL BEACONSFIELD, ENGLAND

Students from NFTS are a who's who of British cinema talent: directors Julien Temple, Terence Davies and Lynne Ramsay, animator Nick Park, cinematographer Roger Deakins, composer Dario Marianelli, documentarian Nick Broomfield, writer Krysty Wilson-Cairns... No other film school has won more Student Academy Awards in the international categories, and BAFTA gave it a special award for Outstanding Contribution to British Cinema. The school celebrated its 50th anniversary in September.

## NATIONAL FILM SCHOOL OF DENMARK COPENHAGEN, DENMARK

Located on the island community of Holmen in Copenhagen Harbor, the National Film School of

Denmark is supported by the Danish Ministry of Cultural Affairs. It offers eight different programs to a student body of about 100. Thomas Vinterberg, who directed *Another Round*, the reigning Oscar winner in the Best International Feature Film category, is among the graduates of this school. So are Bille August (*Pelle the Conqueror*), Lars von Trier (*Antichrist*) and Susanne Bier, co-chair of the committee that oversees the Oscars international category (and an Oscar and Emmy winner herself).



## PRAGUE FILM SCHOOL PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC

While FAMU is designed for Czech-speaking students, the Prague Film School is aimed at a small student body of international students who are taught what the school calls "a mix of European art-house and American independent cinema." It offers instruction in screenwriting, directing, cinematography and postproduction, along with special programs in film acting and documentary.

## RTA SCHOOL OF MEDIA AT RYERSON UNIVERSITY TORONTO, CANADA

"The field of media is always changing, and platforms we take for granted today did not exist a decade ago," runs part of the mission statement at Ryerson University's RTA School of Media. Formerly known as the School of Radio and Television Arts, it has expanded to cover all media and media theory.

## SAE INSTITUTE ZURICH, SWITZERLAND

Beginning with a handful of schools in Australia, SAE now runs institutes in more than 20 countries around the world, including multiple ones in the United States. The Zurich campus is particularly known for programs covering below-the-line crafts, 3D animation, game design and digital filmmaking.

## STOCKHOLM FILM SCHOOL STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN

Directors Espen Sandberg and Joachim Rønning (*Kon-Tiki*, *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales*) and Oscar-winning cinematographer Linus Sandgren (*La La Land*, *No Time to Die*) are among the former students at this school that was founded in 1984 and focuses on practical filmmaking and acting.

## TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY TEL AVIV, ISRAEL

NYU's Tisch School of the Arts was given its name after a 1982 gift from Laurence A. and Preston Robert Tisch—and Preston's son Steve, a film producer and football executive, gave the donation that resulted in Tel Aviv University's film program being named the Steve Tisch School of Film and Television. TVU, the largest university in Israel and the largest Jewish university in the world, has relationships with dozens of other international schools, NYU Tisch among them.

## UNIVERSITY OF TELEVISION AND FILM MUNICH (Hochschule für Fernsehen und Film München) MUNICH, GERMANY

Established in 1966 by the Bavarian government, this school teaches all aspects of filmmaking to a group of about 350 students in seven different degree programs. Graduates include Wim Wenders (*Paris, Texas*), Roland Emmerich (*Independence Day*), Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck (*The Lives of Others*) and Maren Ade (*Toni Erdmann*).

## VANCOUVER FILM SCHOOL VANCOUVER, CANADA

It's a long way from Kevin Smith's hometown of Red Bank, New Jersey, to scenic Vancouver, but Smith was attending the school while conceiving *Clerks*, and he has since created the Kevin Smith Scholarships in Acting Writing and Film Production. Other alum include Neill Blomkamp, director of *District 9*, and Emily Bett Rickards, one of the stars of *Arrow*—which, like many other television series and films, shot in Vancouver and helped make it a hotbed of production.

## VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND

There's more to New Zealand filmmaking than Peter Jackson, but it certainly helps that this school is located close to Jackson's studio, post-production and visual-effects facilities. While the 124-year-old school has a worldwide reputation for law, its roster of former students also includes Taika Waititi, Sam Neil, Jane Campion, Fran Walsh and both halves of *Flight of the Conchords*, Jemaine Clement and Bret McKenzie. —STEVE POND





of visual effects. Producer Christina Oh got an Oscar nom for *Minari*. Director Paul Pennolino got an Emmy nom for *Last Week Tonight With John Oliver*. Sierra Teller Ornelas premiered *Rutherford Falls*. UA profs Lisa Molomot and Jacob Bricca earned the Les Blank Award for Best Doc Feature at Ashland. And the Netflix feature division run by Scott Stuber scored the most Oscar nominations of the season.



Cocaine Cowboys from University of Miami grad Billy Corben

## 26 University of Miami

Miami's Department of Cinematic Arts students win multiple Sundance honors, and two sold their thesis films to HBO. Grads are making inroads in the industry: Kyle Patrick Alvarez directed Disney+'s *Crater*, while Billy Corben was the producer/director of Netflix's *Cocaine Cowboys*. Others include Netflix's Julian Malagon and Apple's Adam Green. Students have an L.A. semester program, partnerships with Sundance and Prague film institutes and, starting in 2022, an MFA documentary program. UM profs published landmark books: Terri Francis' *Josephine Baker's Cinematic Prism* and Christina Lane's *Phantom Lady: Hollywood Producer Joan Harrison, the Forgotten Woman Behind Hitchcock*, winner of the 2021 Edgar Award for Best Critical/Biographical Work.

## 27 The Los Angeles Film School

It doesn't get much more Hollywood than a film school located on Sunset Boulevard. Opened in 1999 in the historic RCA Building across the street from the Cinerama Dome, LAFS offers degrees in animation, audio, entertainment business, film, graphic design, media communications, music production and writing for film & TV, and includes the L.A. Recording School as a division. The school has updated its main production stage and recording studio. Recent visiting heavy hitters have included Oscar-nominated screenwriters Rian Johnson, Krysten Wilson-Carins and Taika Waititi and songwriters Cynthia Erivo, Bernie Taupin, Diane Warren, Kristen Anderson-Lopez and Robert Lopez.

## 28 Pratt Institute

Located in facilities in Brooklyn and Manhattan,

Pratt nurtures students as "total filmmakers" who create, write, direct and edit. In 2021, Pratt named video artist Kara Hearn as chair of its noted Film/Video Department to oversee its 190 students and 30 faculty and also launched a new mentorship program, Pratt>FORWARD. Recent Pratt grads' work has been featured at the Cannes, Toronto and Tribeca festivals, and alumni have gone to work at media outlets including MTV, USA Networks and Entertainment Weekly.

## 29 San Francisco State University

Located in the heart of San Francisco, the School of Cinema touts its founding "amid the political activism and artistic experimentation of the '60s." Distinguished SFSU alumni include Oscar winners (screenwriter Steve Zaillian, sound editor Ethan Van der Ryn) and plenty of working industry pros, with actor Delroy Lindo named 2021's Alumnus of the Year.

## 30 Rutgers

Founded in 2011, the Rutgers Filmmaking Center in the Mason Gross School of the Arts is a relative baby of a program in one of the nation's oldest colleges. Rutgers' BFA program features a Documentary Film Lab run by Oscar-winner Thomas Lennon, intensive production classes and advanced technical workshops. Its conservatory-style model makes for a low student-teacher ratio of about 12-to-1. Graduates

have gone on to top-tier grad programs including AFI, Columbia and Oxford University. Recent visiting filmmakers have included Robert Eggers (*The Lighthouse*, *The Witch*).



The Eyes of Tammy Faye New York premiere at the SVA Theater

## 31 School of Visual Arts

Founded in 1947 and located in film and TV industry hub Manhattan, SVA boasts that its students are often working before they graduate. As an undergrad in its immersive program, SVA promises, "You can create a body of work that rivals most graduate schools." Distinguished alumni include SNL's Fred Armisen, composer Michael Giacchino, actor Jared Leto and directors Ti West and Bryan Singer.

## 32 University of California, Santa Barbara

UCSB's Department of Film and Media Studies undergrad program has been a model for many

San Francisco State University's 2021 Alumnus of the Year, Delroy Lindo, in *Da 5 Bloods*





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programs in North America, and its faculty includes Filmmaker Allison Anders and *RoboCop* screenwriter Michael Miner. It's closely associated with the Carsey-Wolf Center, a theater and support structure for faculty, whose recent events have included a *Deadwood: The Movie* screening with Calamity Jane herself, Robin Weigert, and *Law & Order* mogul Dick Wolf talking about writing. Notable grads include filmmaker Gregg Araki and singer-songwriter Jack Johnson.

### 33 Hofstra University

Lawrence Herbert School's Department of Radio, Television, Film lists its top 10 reasons to study film there: 1. Learn the craft. 2. Get a real education. 3. Study the greats. 4. Learn to work like the pros. 5. The best back lot in the world (New York City). 6. Great faculty. 7. The heart of independent film. 8. Internships. 9. Get the best of both worlds (campus living and the attractions of NYC). 10. Do your own thing—i.e., drama, comedy, horror, action, experimental, documentary. The private university in Hempstead, New York, has cranked out alumni that include Marvel producer Avi Arad, director Francis Ford Coppola and actor James Caan.

### 34 University of California, Berkeley

U.S. News & World Report ranked Berkeley second among all public universities for 2019-2020, and the Bay Area institution has already given us Film Quarterly, critic Pauline Kael, Bill Bixby and costume designer Edith Head, to name a scant few. It's also home to the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, which puts on more than 20 gallery exhibitions and 450 film programs annually. Recent distinguished alums of the Department of Film & Media (established in 2010) include *Watchmen* and *Aquaman* actor Yahya Abdul-Mateen II and *Star Trek* actors Chris Pine and John Cho.

### 35 Stony Brook University

Entering its sixth year, Manhattan-based Stony Brook's MFAs in Film and TV Writing reports a continuing increase in applications and their quality. Their MFA in TV writers swept the TV Academy Writing Fellowships, and their Dogme collective won a lucrative SUNY PACC Prize. The school has launched one-on-one mentoring internships with industry showrunners including Bash Doren (*Traitors*, *Looming Tower*) and Jason Kim (*Barry*, *Girls*). Big-name guest speakers include director Todd Haynes and indie-label NEON founder Tom Quinn. Stony Brook's artistic director Christine Vachon's productions of Haynes' *Velvet Underground* doc and the

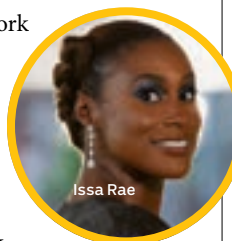
Ewan McGregor *Halston* miniseries were test cases in her master class in Independent Film Production.

### 36 DePaul University

The Chicago-based private Catholic research university's School of Cinematic Arts has rolled out new initiatives aiming to grow as a premiere film/TV/animation program, including a Creative Producing MFA program in Los Angeles. DePaul's 32,000-square-foot production facility at Cinespace Chicago Film Studios is home to *The Chi*, *Southside* and Dick Wolf's *Chicago* shows. Alexis Auditore, a member of SCA's first graduating class, directs physical production at Marvel Studios Streaming; alum Daniel Willis grew up on the South Side and now directs for *Grey's Anatomy*. CNN recently featured alum Roberto Larios as an up-and-coming TV agent.

### 37 New York Film Academy

Founded by producer Jerry Sherlock (*The Hunt for Red October*) in 1992 as an affordable school where students learn by doing, the for-profit film and acting school based in New York City, Los Angeles and Miami also has campuses in Paris, Shanghai, Beijing, Moscow, Florence and Gold Coast, Australia. Notable alumni include actor Paul Dano, *The Walking Dead*'s Alanna Masterson and actor/writer/producer Issa Rae—who told Filmmaker Magazine the experience on the L.A. campus was her first time “around people who lived and breathed moviemaking. It really motivated me to be DIY about my material—it showed me that all I really needed was a camera.”



Issa Rae

### 38 School of the Art Institute of Chicago

SAIC's Film, Video, New Media and Animation department (FVNMA) is alive and well after taking a hit from COVID-19, and still “endorses and encourages experimentation with radical form and content.” Likewise, SAIC's Gene Siskel Film Center (named af-



SAIC graduate Jennifer Reeder

ter the late critic) is a going concern after being shuttered for 17-month pandemic hiatus. The Film Center replaced its retiring longtime programming head Barbara Scharres with Rebecca Fons and reopened in August. *Parasite* director Bong Joon Ho recently named alum Jennifer Reeder as one of 20 filmmakers who will shape cinema over the next decade.

### 39 University of Pennsylvania

The University of Pennsylvania's Cinema & Media Studies is the country's oldest film program, with roots all the way back to pre-film pioneer Eadweard Muybridge in the 1880s. UPenn offers a full curriculum in production, animation, screenwriting, virtual reality, game design and history and theory. The program sends students to Cannes annually, offers summer internships and has an annual screenwriting contest whose winners get to pitch their scripts. Notable alumni include directors Jon Avnet and Morgan Neville, former studio heads Stacey Snider and Rich Ross, actors Bruce Dern, Elizabeth Banks and Candice Bergen, producers Dick Wolf, Marc Platt and Fred Berger and *The Simpsons* writer Matt Selman.

### 40 American University

The Washington, D.C.-based private research university's School of Communication Film and Media Arts division sits on 90 acres of land in the pricey Spring Valley neighborhood. AU emphasizes “social purpose filmmaking” at nonprofits, NGOs and such government agencies as the World Wildlife Fund, Smithsonian Institution and National Park Service. The program sets up its bachelor's and master's students with internships at bigtime media outfits, including USA Today, National Geographic Television and PBS. Distinguished alum include filmmakers Barry Levinson and Nancy Meyers, as well as Judge Judy—who may not be a filmmaker but is most certainly in the entertainment business.

### 41 University of Michigan

UM's Department of Film, Television and Media in its college of Literature, Science and the Arts contrasts itself with traditional film or art schools by integrating critical studies and creative production in film, TV and new media. It boasts a state-of-the-art production studio on its Ann Arbor campus. Along with undergrad and doctoral degrees, FTVM offers a sub-major in screenwriting and a minor in Global Media Studies. Some grads doing real-world work: Director Davy Rothbart has released a feature doc *17 Blocks*; Justin Powell sold supernatural thriller *The Djinn* to IFC Midnight and signed with ICM; Daniel Pipski co-wrote the upcoming George Clooney/Julia Roberts movie, *Ticket to Paradise*; and Kevin Tocco

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is wrangling audiences in the Ed Sullivan Theater for *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*.

## 42 Full Sail University

The private, for-profit institution in Winter Park, Florida, balances the creative aspects of world-building and storytelling with practical aspects of running a production. A relatively young university that was founded in 1970 and moved to Florida in 1980, Full Sail had 30 grads credited on 11 winners and 85 grads on 21 nominees at the 2021 Oscars. Gary Rizzo ('09) won sound mixing Oscars for Christopher Nolan's *Inception* and *Dunkirk*.

## 43 University of Colorado, Boulder

The Department of Cinema Studies & Moving Image Arts recently shared a \$187,585 grant to create advanced "experiential" classes focused on media archiving and preservation for cinema-studies undergrads, one of the only programs of its kind in the country, let alone at a public university. That includes analog tapes, which are more endangered than film, according to assistant prof Sabrina Negri. CU also features the Stan Brakhage Center, named after the late, prolific filmmaker, who was also a film studies prof there. Director Alex Cox is a retired professor. We can also thank CU for *South Park* creators Trey Parker and Matt Stone.

## 44 Colorado Film School

Denver's Colorado Film School has grown from a single program at Red Rocks Community College to a school that offers Associate of Applied Sciences degrees in acting/directing, writing/directing, writing/producing, screenwriting, cinematography and postproduction. It's notable for its low tuition costs: a two-year certificate is \$9,500 for residents and \$31,500 for non-residents; three-year associate degrees are \$14,700 for residents and \$49,000 for non. CFS director Brian Steward worked as assistant director with Steven Spielberg, David Lynch and Robert Rodriguez.

## 45 Biola University

At the border of L.A. and Orange counties in La Mirada, Biola's School of Cinema and Media Arts offers a B.A. that trains students in film production, screenwriting and media management "to tell stories that matter," spokesperson Jenna Loumagne said. Founding Dean Tom Halleen walked from his executive VP job at AMC Networks—where he helped launch *The Walking Dead*, *Mad Men* and *Breaking Bad*—to join the private evangelical Christian university. In the past few years, Biola's joint has grown

from a stand-alone major to a multi-program school, with plans for a new \$76 million building underway. Grads include *Doctor Strange* director Scott Derrickson, Scientific and Technical Achievement Oscar winner Brian Hall and social media star Zach King.

## 46 Arizona State University

In January, ASU named its film school after actor Sidney Poitier: The Sidney Poitier New American Film School. It'll move from Tempe to a new state-of-the-art facility in downtown Mesa in the fall of 2022, also expanding to a new downtown L.A. facility in the renovated Herald Examiner building. (See facing page.) ASU's all about diversity and boasts that more than 40% of its undergrad film majors are from under-represented backgrounds.

## 47 Pepperdine University

Located in celebrity-packed Malibu, the private Christian university offers a film major and minor but doesn't consider itself a film school. Still, Pepperdine's film program was singled out for its diversity even while other departments in its Humanities and Teacher Education Division were undergoing overhauls for their lack thereof. Pepperdine co-sponsors the City of Angels Film Festival and has hosted such big-name guests as Dick Van Dyke, Garry Marshall, Lester Holt and Morgan Freeman.

## 48 Mount St. Mary's

Small class size and access to a production studio in the heart of Hollywood are two selling points of the private Catholic liberal arts university. Another element sets MSM apart, Film, Media & Communication chair Charles Bunce explained: "Our students own all rights to any work produced while a student, even if it was created 100% with school resources." The program also has a new professional

studio facility overlooking the TCL Chinese Theatre on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Students are immersed in a writers room environment, create episodic content, then film it on historic locations and studio backlots. Programs include undergrad degrees in film, journalism and professional photography; a BS in Film, Media and Social Justice with an emphasis on advocacy-based content; an MFA in Film, Television and Photography; a new MFA in Producing for Film & Television; and an MFA/MBA combined degree in Producing and Entertainment Management.

## 49 University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee

The Peck School's Department of Film, Video, Animation and New Genres offers undergrad degrees in film and animation and an MFA in cinematic arts. The program has partnerships with the Milwaukee Film Festival, Wisconsin Film Festival, Milwaukee Art Museum and UWM Union Cinema—one of 23 theaters nationally recognized as a local community-based independent theater by the Sundance Film Institute Art House Project for its high cinematic standards. Notable grads include Willem Dafoe, *American Movie* director Chris Smith and *RuPaul's Drag Race* winner Trixie Mattel.

## 50 Johns Hopkins University/MICA

The prestigious old private research university and the Maryland Institute College of Art run four academic film programs noted for small, hands-on courses that combine theory and practice. The JHU/MICA Film Center in Baltimore's renovated Centre Theatre Building houses faculty offices, a screening room, a recording studio co-designed by JHU prof Thomas "She Blinded Me with Science" Dolby, a 2,000-square-foot cyclorama green room soundstage, and lots more. Alumni include screenwriter Zach Baylin, whose *King Richard*, starring Will Smith, opens in November. **W**



*King Richard*, written by Johns Hopkins graduate Zach Baylin

# NEW YORK FILM ACADEMY

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A large, dark silhouette of a person's head and shoulders in profile, facing right. They are holding a professional video camera with a microphone attached. The background is a gradient of blue and green.

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# STUDENT ACADEMY AWARDS

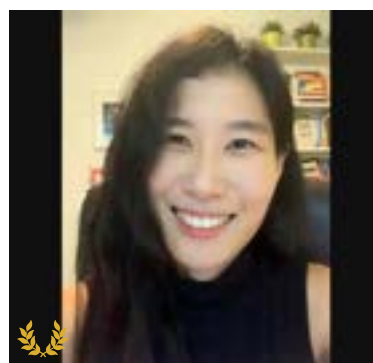
The 2021 Student Academy Awards were launched on Oct. 21, in a virtual ceremony that for the second straight year replaced what is usually a week in Los Angeles for the winning filmmakers. The 17 winners came from 14 different schools and 11 different countries, with old standbys like USC, NYU and NYU but also such relative newcomers to the SAA as the Cleveland Institute of Art and the University of Iowa.

## *Alternative/Experimental*



GOLD: **Frozen Out**, Hao Zhou (University of Iowa)

## *Animation – domestic film schools*



GOLD: **Unforgotten**, Sujin Kim (CalArts)

SILVER: **Barking Orders**, Alexander Tullo (Ringling College of Art & Design)

BRONZE: **Slumber With Snakes**, Teagan Barrone (Cleveland Institute of Art)

Animation—international film schools



GOLD: *Les Chaussures de Louis*, Théo Jamin, Kayu Leung, Marion Philippe (MoPA)

Documentary—domestic film schools



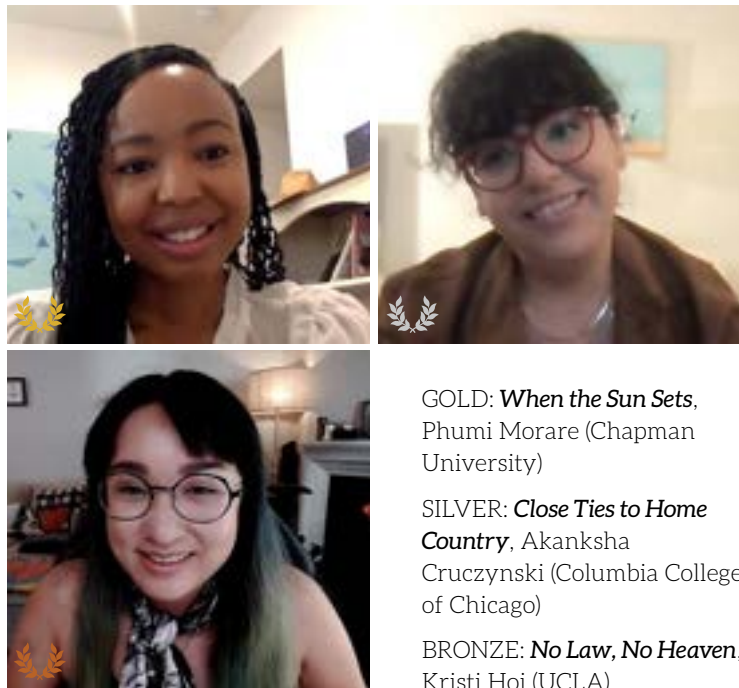
GOLD: *When They're Gone*, Kristen Hwang (UC Berkeley)  
SILVER: *Eagles Rest in Liangshan*, Bohao Liu (NYU)  
BRONZE: *Not Just a Name*, De'Onna Young-Stephens (USC)

Documentary—international film schools



GOLD: *Why Didn't You Stay for Me?*, Milou Gevers (Nederlandse Filmacademie)

Narrative—domestic film schools



GOLD: *When the Sun Sets*, Phumi Morare (Chapman University)  
SILVER: *Close Ties to Home Country*, Akanksha Cruczynski (Columbia College of Chicago)  
BRONZE: *No Law, No Heaven*, Kristi Hoi (UCLA)

Narrative—international film schools



GOLD: *Tala'vision*, Murad Abu Eisheh, (Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg)  
SILVER: *Adisa*, Simon Denda (Hochschule für Fernsehen und Film München)  
BRONZE: *Bad Omen*, Salar Pashtoonyar (York University)



# Like It or Not, Awards Season Is Here

In another strange year of streaming premieres and virtual events, the 2021-2022 awards season is nonetheless showing a few signs of life. We'll be covering the whole thing over the next five months and six issues—but for now, here's an appetizer.



*From TheWrap's virtual Toronto studio*  
**Portraits by Noah Asanias**

1. *Last Night in Soho* co-writer and director Edgar Wright  
2. *The Starling* star Melissa McCarthy  
(Continued on next page)



The Steve Tisch  
School of Film and Television  
The Yolanda and David Katz  
Faculty of the Arts  
Tel Aviv University

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HAGAI LEVI, WRITER, DIRECTOR  
AND CO-PRODUCER  
*SCENES FROM A MARRIAGE*, HBO

STUDIO NERUBAY

*University of Miami School of Communication*

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3.



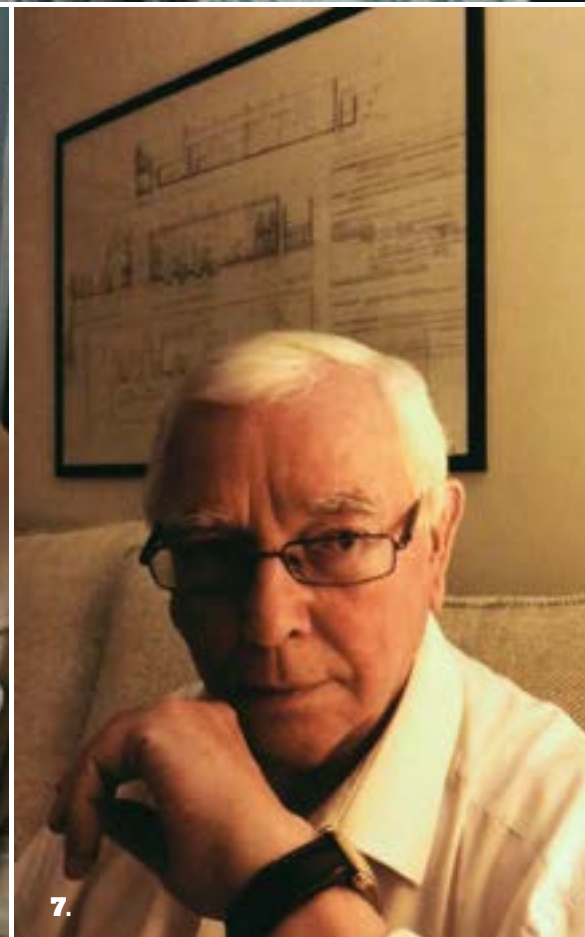
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*From TheWrap's virtual Toronto studio*

**Portraits by Noah Asanias**

- 3. Belfast star Jamie Dornan
- 4. Encounter star Riz Ahmed
- 5. The Survivor star Ben Foster
- 6. The Survivor star Vicky Krieps
- 7. Benediction director Terence Davies





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Joel Coen's dark and stylish Shakespeare adaptation *The Tragedy of Macbeth* premiered at the New York Film Festival in January, and star Denzel Washington wasn't nearly as grumpy as he appears in this shot from the post-screening Q&A.



Who are those masked stars? In this case, they're Benedict Cumberbatch and Kirsten Dunst, hitting Venice on behalf of Jane Campion's *The Power of the Dog*.



Team Diana takes a break: *Spencer* director Pablo Larraín and star Kristen Stewart, who plays Princess Diana in the critical favorite, find a place to sit before the Venice International Film Festival premiere of their film.



The Academy Museum of Motion Pictures has been in the works for a decade and in the minds of the Academy for nearly a century, and it finally opened to the public on Sept. 30, preceded by a gala whose guests included Oscar winner and *House of Gucci* star Lady Gaga.

A graphic for the Power Women Summit. The background is a light pink color. On the left and right sides, there are vertical bands of repeating text in a darker pink color. The left band repeats the word "SAVI" and the right band repeats the word "DATE". In the center, the words "POWER WOMEN SUMMIT" are written in large, bold, white, sans-serif capital letters. Above this text is a small logo consisting of three overlapping triangles. Below the main title, the dates "DEC 7-9, 2021" are written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font, flanked by two horizontal white lines. Below the dates, the word "Represent" is written in a large, elegant, white script font. At the bottom center, the text "PRESENTED BY" is written in a small, white, sans-serif font. Below this, there is a logo for "WRAP | WOMEN", which includes a circular icon with a stylized "W" and the text "WRAP | WOMEN" in a white, sans-serif font.



# Represent

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At the Toronto Film Festival, Jessica Chastain sat down with TheWrap's Steve Pond to talk about her two TIFF premieres, *The Eyes of Tammy Faye* and *The Forgiven*, as well as her HBO limited series with Oscar Isaac, *Scenes From a Marriage*.



Rebecca Ferguson, one of the stars of Denis Villeneuve's mammoth adaptation of the sci-fi classic *Dune*, stops in front of the IMAX dome where the film had its TIFF premiere.



Director Pedro Almodóvar and actress Penélope Cruz have made seven films together and walked countless red carpets, and they went to Venice (and later to New York) to do it again on behalf of his new Sony Classics release, *Parallel Mothers*.

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# THE GRILL 2021

PANELS MODERATED BY SHARON WAXMAN, TIM BAYSINGER, DIANE HAITHMAN, ROSS GERBER, OLIVIA CHARMAINE MORRIS, JANINE RUBENSTEIN, STACEY SHER, VAN TOFFLER AND CHANEL WARD.

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TheGrill, TheWrap's leading business conference focused on the convergence of entertainment and technology, was held in September 2021 and brought together thought leaders and innovators to debate change in the industry. Here are some highlights.

**State of the Industry and Beyond With Casey Wasserman & Kevin Merida**

Wrap editor-in-chief Sharon Waxman pressed new Los Angeles Times executive editor Kevin Merida (right) on how he intends to lead the paper to the renaissance it has long promised after two decades of decline. Merida mentioned community-based events and local initiatives, but then turned to empowering the newsroom. “First is culture, who you work with every day,” he said. “You want people to feel great about their work.”



**Keynote Interview With Scott Stuber**

Netflix's Scott Stuber (left) told Waxman that he wants every one of the 70 or 80 movies the company makes each year to be great, and then added a disclaimer: “You have to decide who it is great for... We're trying to hit people with lightning. That's really the job.”



**Producers Roundtable: Navigating the COVID Era**

Jeff Clanagan of Kevin Hart's Laugh Out Loud productions offered an interesting COVID-era case study when he appeared on a producers panel (right) and talked about the difficulty of doing a Netflix special for Hart. “We rented a rooftop, open-air restaurant on top of a hotel in Hollywood that seated about 25 people, so we did about 75-80 shows over 30-40 days,” he said. “We only had 20-25 people in the audience, and everybody had to wear masks so the laughs were muffled.”



**Record Labels Today: Powering the Modern Music Business**

Getting noticed on TikTok or Instagram may be a start, but it's not a workable long-term path to success, Warner Music Nashville's Cris Lacy said on a panel about the modern challenges for record labels (above). “There's a big difference between having a viral moment and turning it to a long-term career,” he said. “Spotify is not a marketing plan.”



## Acquire or Die: Navigating the Era of Mega-Mergers and SPACs

Eagle Equity Partners' Jeff Sagansky (middle of the top row, right), who led the way on creating the model on Special Purpose Acquisition Corporations (SPACs) years ago, offered a number of predictions about the continuing consolidation of the media business: NBCUniversal will be spun off from Comcast, ViacomCBS will have to merge with another company and the upcoming Warner Discovery merger will create a company too small to survive as a standalone company. The big buyers, he said, will be Apple, Amazon, Netflix and maybe Google, with a second tier consisting of Spotify and Activision.



## Spotlight: Strauss Zelnick and Phil Spencer

"It's not lost on me that there are two white men on this panel," Xbox head Phil Spencer said of the panel on gaming (left), which featured Spencer and Take-Two Interactive CEO Strauss Zelnick. "I think our team should represent the players and customers. I look at the planet as our opportunity. So if we talk about a grade...I think a C might be generous."



## Monetizing Innovation: Science + Creativity in Marketing

"Fish where the fish are, right?" said Sony Pictures Distribution's Elias Plishner (left)—meaning that marketers shouldn't push content down consumers' throats, but should instead use computer-driven intelligence to match product and audiences. "The idea is to make our decisions as robust as possible and use data-driven tools to give us confidence in those decisions."

## Streaming Platforms: What's Next for Content Distribution in a Fragmented World

If you're a streamer and you're going up against the Netflix behemoth, what do you do? According to our panelists, you look to do a better job serving a smaller audience. "They try to be everything to everybody and there's a place for that," said Pantaya and Pantelion Films CEO Paul Presburger (right, bottom left). "I don't look at them as competitors, I look at them as path leaders."



## Amplifying Diverse Voices in Hollywood

At a panel about diversifying Hollywood (left), Marginal MediaWorks' founder and CEO Sanjay Sharma said the key is to make changes on your own terms. "This isn't a game we win by playing by [the system's] rules," he said. "We have the opportunity to expand the ecosystem and change the culture of the industry itself."

FIND FULL VIDEOS FROM THE GRILL AT [thewrap.com/the-grill-2021-welcome](http://thewrap.com/the-grill-2021-welcome)



# THE 2021 INNOVATORS LIST

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Even as the entertainment landscape continues to be disrupted by streaming and pandemic fallout, the artists, entrepreneurs and pioneers on TheWrap's 2021 Innovators List have seized the opportunity to orchestrate their own sort of disruption, opening new doors to cultural inclusion and expansion in Hollywood. Congratulations to them all—and we expect them to keep innovating.

## Chloé Zhao, filmmaker

Zhao is arguably the hottest director in Hollywood, in April becoming only the second woman in history to win the Best Director Oscar. And she's following her Academy Award winner *Nomadland* by continuing the story that *The Avengers* began with Marvel's *Eternals* before she heads to Universal to put a sci-fi Western spin on *Dracula*.

As she makes the jump from indies to the industry's biggest studios, Zhao is bringing with her a style that is contemplative and intimate. Whether it is Lakota Sioux ranchers at the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation (*Songs My Brother Taught Me*) or Frances McDormand as a woman traveling across the American West searching for the next temp job (*Nomadland*), Zhao and her cinematographer Joshua James Richards place their subjects amidst the vast American landscapes, depicting poor communities in a way that digs beyond the poverty of their lives and finds the quiet moments of dignity and grace that still shine despite the hardship. If she can bring that approach to major-studio filmmaking, she'll be innovating on a huge scale. —JEREMY FUSTER



Chloé Zhao

## Chris Best, Jairaj Sethi and Hamish McKenzie, Substack co-founders

Best, Sethi and McKenzie founded their online newsletter-publishing startup in 2017 out of San Francisco, and the venture has quickly climbed its way to the top of the media world. Substack newsletter writers have the freedom to offer their work for free or charge a subscription fee—and so far, that model seems to be working out well both for the company and its writers and content creators, who range from Glenn Greenwald and Michael Moore to Andrew Sullivan and Tan France.



Hamish McKenzie, Jairaj Sethi and Chris Best



Paul Davison



Rohan Seth

Substack claims its top 10 publishers currently make more than \$20 million a year between them. (Substack takes a 10% cut of subscription fees.) Just four years in, the start-up was recently valued at some \$650 million and inspired social-media giants such as Facebook and Twitter to release similar newsletter products. —ANTOINETTE SIU

## Paul Davison and Rohan Seth, Clubhouse co-founders

When Davison and Seth started the social audio platform in 2019, it was originally meant to combine a podcast and social platform. But when they rebranded as Clubhouse the following year (just as the pandemic hit the U.S.), the platform exploded as its invite-only Rooms became the new medium for many users in lockdown. The app introduced a new way for people to connect and engage with audio content, and Facebook, Twitter and Spotify jumped into the live-audio space with their own Clubhouse clones.

Recently, the app ditched its invite model and opened up the platform to everyone. Clubhouse continues to see downloads in the millions, and the company has jumped from eight employees to 58 at the start of 2021. "We believe the future is created by optimists—and we're excited to keep working to build a different kind of social network," the co-founders said in their blog. —AS

**Morgan DeBaun, Blavity co-founder and CEO**

Based in Los Angeles, Blavity is a media company geared toward black millennials, with a mission to feature Black voices and stories. Founded in 2014, its name combines the words *black* and *gravity* and was inspired by DeBaun's experience at Washington University as an undergrad: She remembered eating lunch with her friends and attracting more Black students to engage on intellectual topics together. The verticals cover everything from politics and Aftrotech to travel and Hollywood. The company has recently partnered with brands including Bumble and Coca-Cola to engage black singles during the pandemic and create a project debunking Gen Z stereotypes. —AS



Morgan DeBaun



Fewocious

**Fewocious, digital artist**

Fewocious is an 18-year-old, Seattle-based NFT artist who first started making art at the age of 13 in his hometown Las Vegas. The transgender teen sold his first piece at 17 and has since made several successful NFT drops, including the recent *Fabricated Fairytales*, in collaboration with his friends parrott\_ism, Odious and Jonathan Wolfe. The NFTs, which come with a real physical pair of shoes or fashion, generated more than \$3 million in sales in their initial release. Fewocious' recent auction with Christie's auction house brought in a whopping \$2.16 million, and to date the artist has grossed more than \$20 million in NFT sales. —AS

**Bela Bajarla, Netflix head of global TV, and Scott Stuber, Netflix head of global film**

Stuber joined Netflix in early 2017 when major Hollywood filmmakers were resisting having their movies shown on the small screen. But since then, the company has led the shift

towards streaming, winning both Oscars and Emmys as it makes 80 original films a year. In a recent interview, Stuber told TheWrap that he plans to make Netflix "the best film studio in the world."

While Stuber fights to make sure Netflix films reach global audiences on the big and small screen, Bajarla—born in England to parents of Indian descent—oversees all non-English content around the world. She spearheaded Netflix' highly popular docuseries *Indian Matchmaking*, presented in English and Hindi—and was also involved in bringing in the platform's latest global sensation, the Korean series *Squid Game*. —DIANE HAITHMAN

**Alex Cooper Call Her Daddy host**

Alex Cooper's year has been defined by her persistence and her last three years have been defined by her success. She skyrocketed to podcasting infamy when she and Sofia Franklyn launched *Call Her Daddy* with Barstool Sports in 2018. The two young women captivated listeners with raunchy, explicit talk of their sex and dating lives, being totally open with millions of strangers about topics that are typically reserved for the confidence of a few close friends.



Bela Bajarla



Scott Stuber



After a well-publicized 2020 dispute with Barstool founder David Portnoy, Cooper signed a \$60 million three-year deal with Spotify—which, on the show's new landing page, says, "*Call Her Daddy* started as a podcast and evolved into a global movement. Alex Cooper bulldozed a lane of her own, spitting in the face of misogyny and putting a modern twist on feminism."

—LINDSEY ELLOFSON

**Sally Buzbee, Washington Post executive editor; Alessandra Galloni, Reuters editor-in-chief; and Kevin Merida, Los Angeles Times executive editor**

Journalism is in turmoil these days: The COVID-19 pandemic has slashed the staffs of major newsrooms and put extreme strain on journalists, to say nothing of the tumultuous presidential election and national reckoning over racism and police brutality that took place last year. Major outlets are now facing the challenge of informing the public at a time when information sources are under fire and cultures, norms and practices are changing, both in the communities journalists cover and the newsrooms in which they work.

Buzbee succeeded the legendary Marty Baron when she became executive editor of the Washington Post earlier this year and promised "a greater number of career paths across the newsroom and [increasing] the number of journalists of color in editing roles." Galloni, the former global managing editor named Reuters editor-in-chief



Sally Buzbee, Alessandra Galloni, and Kevin Merida



last spring, became the first woman to lead the news agency in its 170-year history. And Merida, formerly of ESPN, was enlisted by the Los Angeles Times to be its new executive editor in May after a months-long search for Norman Pearlstine's successor, after the Los Angeles Times Guild sent a letter to the paper's owners saying, "a fresh perspective is key to reaching our potential and securing sustainability for generations of readers to come." —LE



**Marie Donoghue, Amazon vice president of global sports video**

For years, we've been waiting for one of the tech giants to disrupt the sports world. That happened this year, when Amazon signed a deal to take over sole control of the National Football League's *Thursday Night Football* in 2022, representing streaming's biggest push by far by into the world of sports and involving the biggest sport in the country.

But while the deal is the biggest feather in Donoghue's cap, the former ESPN executive has been doing this for the last few years, as Amazon has quietly amassed an impressive roster of sports rights, including local rights for the New York Yankees and Major League Soccer's Seattle Sounders, along with a slew of international rights for soccer's Premier League, Champions League and tennis' U.S. and French Opens. Her plan, she told TheWrap in May, is simple: "Start with the customer, start with fans and innovate." —TIM BAYSINGER

**Dolly Parton, artist and philanthropist**

Parton could easily rest on her laurels—and her millions—in peace, but she's not content to do that. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Parton took her outreach and goodwill to new heights. The country music icon helped fund the research for the Moderna vaccine with a \$1 million donation last year, then got a job of her own



medicine on camera this year to demonstrate its safety and effectiveness for her millions of fans. She knows her base is demographically different from those of other top-charting musicians, and she's on a mission to reach them, whether she's single-handedly beating down vaccine hesitancy or embracing the LGBTQ community and Black Lives Matter. —LE

**Sterlin Harjo, Reservation Dogs co-creator and showrunner**

Oklahoma native Harjo, a member of the Seminole Nation with some Muscogee heritage, is bringing it home as co-creator of the FX comedy *Reservation Dogs*. Created by Harjo and Taika Waititi (*JoJo Rabbit*, *What We Do in the Shadows*), the series is a TV first in that it

features all Indigenous writers and directors, as well as an almost entirely Indigenous cast and production team.

The goal of *Reservation Dogs*, Harjo told TheWrap, is to continue to expand on what he called the entertainment industry's re-examining of Indigenous culture beyond the "soulless zombie" native characters of old Hollywood Westerns. "There was such a narrow view of what a native story is, and that was because they were not letting us tell them," Harjo said. "They are realizing how rich and unexplored our stories are, how diverse and how expansive they are." —DH



**H.E.R., recording artist**

Six weeks after winning the Song of the Year Grammy for "I Can't Breathe," the 24-year-old singer H.E.R. added a Best Original Song Oscar for "Fight for You," which she wrote for *Judas and the Black Messiah*. If "I Can't Breathe" encapsulated the rage, despair and demand for justice of the Black Lives Matter movement in 2020, "Fight for You" did so for 2021, even as it played in a film set in 1969. "The song connects me to that time, and to the fact that what they were fighting for then is a struggle that we are continuing today," she told TheWrap.

And the success of "I Can't Breathe" and "Fight for You" have been life-changing for the young woman born Gabriella Sarmiento Wilson to a Filipino mother and an African-American father. "I think they've changed my perspective because of the impact that they've had," she said. "It's made me take on even more of a responsibility to be an advocate for change. To represent both my cultures, particularly young Black women." —JF



Jen Statsky, Lucia Aniello, and Paul W. Downs

### Paul W. Downs, Jen Statsky and Lucia Aniello, *Hacks* showrunners

Jean Smart has been TV's best kept secret for years, but her starring role as fading comic Deborah Vance on HBO Max's *Hacks* won her the Emmy and represents the Zenith of Smart's career. And for that, we have Paul W. Downs, Jen Statsky and Lucia Aniello to thank. The three co-created and co-crafted the show—which, like many good stories about comedians, began on the road.

"We were actually on a road trip many years ago," Statsky told TheWrap. "Paul was shooting a special for Netflix, and Lucia and I were there to help out. And we just started talking about female comedians and women in the arts in general—women of a certain age who hadn't really gotten their due, while their male coun-

terparts had a seemingly much easier path and got recognition. These iconic women nevertheless kept pounding the pavement, got knocked down 1,000 times and got back up 1,001 times. And we became fascinated with telling that story." —TB

### Olivia Rodrigo, singer, songwriter and actress

Olivia Rodrigo has done more before her 19th birthday than most have done in their entire lives. After starring in Disney+'s TV series remake of *High School Musical*, she kicked off her music career with three consecutive No. 1 songs with "Driver's License," "Good 4 U" and "Deja Vu," becoming the first artist to ever accomplish that feat. Her debut album, *Sour*, broke Spotify's global record for biggest opening week by a female artist ever. If that's not enough, Rodrigo appeared at the White House as part of an effort with the Biden Administration to get young people vaccinated against COVID-19. —TB

### Cary Joji Fukunaga, director

Over six decades, 10 men were called upon to direct a James Bond film. With the exception of Maori filmmaker Lee Tamahori, who directed *Die Another Day* in 2002, all of those directors have been white. But the 11th Bond director is Asian-American filmmaker Cary Joji Fukunaga, whose work on *No Time to Die* comes at a critical period for the Bond saga, and not just because Daniel Craig is holstering his Walther PPK for good. Craig's tenure as Bond has been defined by its deconstruction of 007 and its exploration of how masculinity in both its normal and toxic forms shapes him as an agent and as a man. In doing so, Bond has kept its

relevance well into the 21st century.

Fukunaga, known for his work on *Beasts of No Nation* and the limited series *True Detective* (where he became the first Asian director to win an Emmy), had only a fraction of the usual prep time as he was brought on late to replace a departing Danny Boyle. But his film, the longest in Bond history, was met with a standing ovation at its Royal Albert Hall premiere and with relief from a global movie theater industry looking for an event film that can break the box office out of the COVID doldrums. —JF W



Olivia Rodrigo



Cary Joji Fukunaga



# LISTEN UP, FILM STUDENTS

Barbara Stanwyck would like a word with you

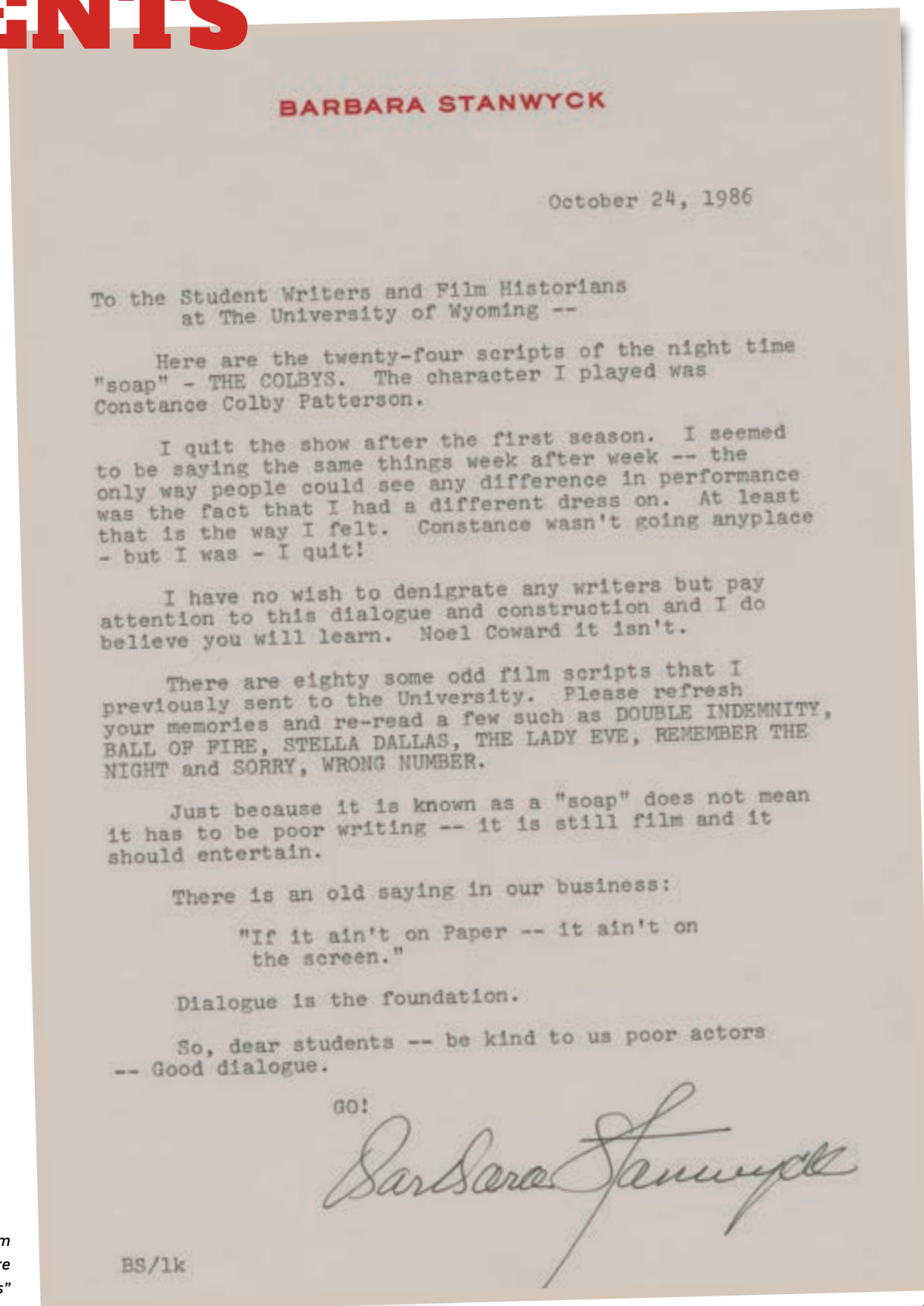
BY STEVE POND



**B**ack in 1986, the legendary Hollywood actress Barbara Stanwyck was a few decades removed from classics like *Double Indemnity*, *The Lady Eve* and *Stella Dallas*. She'd just finished work on the first season of the primetime potboiler *The Colbys*, one of a variety of serialized nighttime dramas about powerful, beautiful and despicable people that followed in the pulpy footsteps of the smash sensation *Dallas*. But Stanwyck wasn't impressed by what the show was asking her to do, so she quit—and then to pass along what she'd learned, she wrote a letter to film students and historians at the University of Wyoming.

That university's American Heritage Center now owns the letter as part of an extensive Stanwyck collection, and we thought it would make a fine last word for any aspiring filmmakers who may be perusing this magazine. **W**

*"The Colbys, copy of letter from Barbara Stanwyck to future AHC researchers"*



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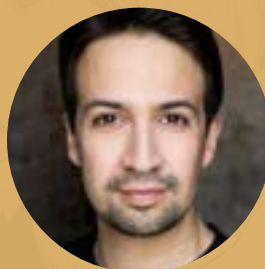
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