CM 215 VISUAL STORYTELLING FROM YOUTUBE TO FILM FESTIVALS
IES Abroad Milan

DESCRIPTION:
Visual storytelling is a precious tool that is used extensively in several business fields: Cinema, Advertisement, Marketing, Music, Television, Journalism, Corporate and Documentary Production, etc. Digital videos have become crucial resources since the invention of the Web, social media and YouTube. It is essential now for every company and business to have a website to showcase its products and strengths, from corporate websites to social media marketing. Digital videos are also the new frontier for Cinema and Art, including tutorials and educational videos. This course will teach students how to create a video through the following steps: concept, outline, scriptwriting and pre-production; production; post-production; distribution. At the end of the semester there will be a screening of the students' projects.

CREDITS: 3

CONTACT HOURS: 45

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

PREREQUISITES: none

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:
Lectures, discussions, and hands-on video production. We will write, produce and shoot a short movie in indoor and outdoor locations. Field-studies will consist in shooting your video in indoor and outdoor locations.

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:
- Class engagement – 10%
- Periodic assignments – 30%
- Midterm – 30%
- Final exam – 30%

Script Preparation
Students will work individually or in teams, coming up with ideas, developing the concept, researching, and writing a script for the project. Any genre can be chosen, including but not limited to: Vlog, Documentary, Narrative, Commercial, Tutorial, Educational, Music Video, Experimental / Art Video, Résumé, Journal. Discussion will be crucial in the process of finding the right topic and developing ideas. In the process, students will learn about visual storytelling: how to create a story, how to write, how to visualize, how to see the world through a lens, how to frame and how to shoot.

Assignments
Students will be given periodic assignments during pre-production and production, including writing exercises, camera angles, shot list, storyboards, forum and so on.

Edited Project
In the second part of the course each student will produce, shoot and edit their project with the help of the instructors, who will guide them in the process through lectures on technique, practicing the techniques acquired, critique on work outside of class, shooting and editing exercises, readings. Students will work on writing, research, pre-production, production and post-production outside of class.

Final Exam
Final exam is a written, in-class exam, covering issues discussed during the course, based on the lectures, slides and readings. It will take place during finals week. Students will receive official notice of the exact date and time of the final exam as soon as all possible overlaps have been identified after add/drop deadline.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:
By the end of this course, students will be able to:
● Apply the concepts of visual storytelling by telling a story through images and sounds, from direction, to filming, to editing.
● Acquire the key skills of video making.
● Demonstrate competency in non-linear editing software.
● Use the terminology of storytelling, scriptwriting, video production and post-production competently.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:
As a member of our class community, you are expected to be present and on time every day. Attending class has an impact on your learning and academic success. For the reason, the IES Abroad Milan attendance policy allows for the following number of absences, which are intended to be used for physical and mental health reasons: THREE (3) absences in each Italian language course, TWO (2) absences in each Area Studies course, ONE (1) absence in each seminar course or course meeting 1 day a week, ZERO (0) absences in each course of individual music instruction. Every absence beyond this allowance will automatically result in a penalty of 2 percentage points off the final grade. SEVEN (7) absences will result in a failing grade in Italian language and Area Studies courses. FOUR (4) absences will result in a failing grade in seminar or 1-day-a-week courses. Failure to attend a scheduled exam, test, quiz, or presentation will automatically result in an F grade on that assessment. Students are expected to abide by the IES Abroad Code of Academic Integrity. All work submitted by a student for academic credit should constitute the student's own original work. Any work submitted for academic credit may be subject to review by a textual similarity detection service for the detection of plagiarism and AI usage.

CONTENT:

Week	Content	Readings and Assignments
Week 1 *Session 1* FEB 10 - Pintor	Introduction to the art of shooting a scene. Proper shooting technique: camera operation and sound. The 5 phases of shooting: Block, Light, Rehearse, Tweak, Shoot.	**Readings:** ● Article from "Harvard business review" (6 pp.) **Assignments:** ● Shooting of a scene. Practice on different roles of a film crew on a set.
Session 2 FEB 12 - Pintor	Visual storytelling in marketing. In-class analysis of various marketing campaigns involving different storytelling techniques.	**Readings**: ● Teacher's slides. ● Godin's "All marketers tell stories", Step 1 (pp. 38-73). **Assignments**: ● Write and shoot your own advertisement.
Week 2 *Session 1* FEB 17 - Pintor	Visual storytelling on YouTube. In-class analysis on the most popular genres on YouTube and other platform. Transmedia storytelling.	**Readings**: ● Teacher's slides. ● Prior, Karen Swallow, The New, Old Way to Tell Stories: With Input From the Audience, The Atlantic, October 18, 2013 (article, 4 pp.).

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Session 2 FEB 19 - Pintor	Introduction to the phases of video making: Preproduction, Production, Post-Production and Distribution.	**Readings**: "Shot by shot", chapter 5: "The Production Cycle" (pp. 97-118)
Week 3 Session 1 FEB 24 - Pintor	Roles in a video production: Writer, director, DP, camera operator, first AC, producer.	**Readings**: ● Teacher's slides.
Session 2 FEB 26 - Pintor	Introduction to the art of scriptwriting. The structure spectrum. The story triangle. - In-class analysis of a location story short movie.	**Readings**: ● "Story", chapter 1: "The story problem" (pp. 11-28) ● "Story", chapter 2: The Structure Spectrum" (pp. 31-66)
Week 4 Session 1 MAR 3 - Pintor	Text and subtext. Concept, scenario, storyline, bible of the project.	**Readings**: ● "Story", chapter 18: "The text" (pp. 388-409)
Session 2 MAR 5 - Pintor	Scene analysis. Character and Structure. The script format.	**Readings**: ● Teacher's slides. ● "Story", chapter 11: "Scene analysis" (pp. 252-287) ● "Story", chapter 17: "Character" (pp. 374-387) **Assignments:** ● Tweak your location story script.
Week 5 Session 1 MAR 10 - Pintor	First session of screenwriting. Concept and structure of your short movie. First draft of the script.	**Assignments:** ● Write a location story script.
Session 2 MAR 12 - Pintor	Second session of screenwriting. Dialogue and fine tuning of your script.	**Assignments:** ● Tweak your location story script.
Week 6 Session 1 MAR 17 - Pintor	MIDTERM EXAM In-class written exam.	/

Session 2 MAR 19 - Pintor	Pre-production: pitch, breakdown, location scouting, casting, etc.	**Readings**: ● "Shot by shot", chapter 2: "Production Design" (pp. 85-96) **Assignments**: ● Breaking down of your script.
Week 7 Session 1 MAR 24 - Pintor	Film Glossary. Shots, camera angles, camera movements, lenses. Visualization tools and techniques: the shotlist. In depth analysis of a movie scene. - Film visualization: shotlist.	**Readings**: ● Teacher's slides. ● "Shot by shot", chapter 6: "Composing shots: Spatial Connections" (pp. 121-143) **Assignments**: ● In-class analysis of a movie scene. Write the shotlist of that scene.
Session 2 MAR 26 - Pintor	Script lining and storyboarding or your movie.	**Readings**: ● Teacher's slides. ● "Shot by shot", chapter 3: "Storyboards" (pp. 23-51) **Assignments:** Create a storyboard of your script.
Week 8 Session 1 MAR 31 - Pintor	Production: call sheet and general preparation to the shooting.	**Readings**: ● Teacher's slides.
Week 9 Session 1 APR 7 - Noonan	Basics of video shooting. Exposure, frame rate, depth of field, white balance and formats. Rules of composition and how to break them. Rule of thirds, balance, leading lines, blocking, aspect ratios.	**Readings**: ● Teacher's slides. **Assignments:** ● Shoot 3 correctly exposed and white balanced clips and following composition rules
Session 2 APR 9 - Noonan	Editing basics. Introduction to Davinci Resolve. What editing means, file management, basic sequence, cuts, transitions, the importance of continuity.	**Readings**: ● Teacher's slides. **Assignments**: ● Prepare to shoot your film.
Week 10 Session 2 APR 14 - Noonan	Lighting. The features of light, three points basic lighting. Camera filters.	**Readings**: ● Teacher's slides. **Assignments**: ● Shooting session 1 (in indoor or outdoor locations).
Session 1 APR 16 - Noonan	The importance of audio: Music, Sound Effects, Difference between diegetic and non-diegetic, how to record audio.	**Readings**: ● Teacher's slides. **Assignments**:

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		● Shooting session 2 (in indoor or outdoor locations).
Week 11 *Session 1* APR 23 - Noonan	Editing session 1.	**Assignments**: ● Edit your film.
Week 12 *Session 1* APR 28 - Noonan	Editing session 2. Finalizing the movie.	**Assignments**: ● Edit your film.
Session 2 APR 30 - Noonan	Film screening.	**Assignments**: ● Present your film to the class.

REQUIRED READINGS:
- Robert McKee, Story – Substance, structure, style, and the principles of screenwriting, Regan Books, New York 1997.
- Steven D. Katz, Shot by shot – Visualizing from concept to screen, Michael Wiese Productions, Studio City, CA, 1991.
- Laurent Tirard, Moviemakers' masterclass, Faber and Faber, New York , 2002 • Richard D. Pepperman, The eye is quicker – film editing: making a good film better, Michael Wiese Productions, Studio City, CA, 2004.
- Kaminsky, Michael Sean, Naked Lens: Video Blogging & Video Journaling to Reclaim the YOU in YouTube, Organik Media, Inc. 2010.
- Knut Lundby, Digital Storytelling, Mediatized Stories: Self-representations in New Media, Peter Lung Publishing, New York, 2008.
- Bernardo, Nuno (2011). The Producers Guide to Transmedia: How to Develop, Fund, Produce and Distribute Compelling Stories Across Multiple Platforms (Paperback). London, UK: beActive Books.
- Seth Godin, All the Marketers Are Liars. The Power of Telling Authentic Stories in a Low Trust World, Portfolio, New York 2005.
- Bronwyn Fryer, Storytelling That Moves People, Harvard Business Review, June 2003 (article interviewing McKee).
- Prior, Karen Swallow, The New, Old Way to Tell Stories: With Input From the Audience, The Atlantic, October 18, 2013 (article).
- David Kushner, Prime time for Vlogs?, CNNMoney, April 27, 2006 (article).

RECOMMENDED READINGS:
- Ed Catmull, Creativity Inc.: Overcoming the Unseen Forces That Stand in the Way of True Inspiration, Random House, 2014.
- Bernardo, Nuno (2014). Transmedia 2.0: How to Create an Entertainment Brand Using a Transmedial Approach to Storytelling (Paperback). London, UK: beActive Books.
- Pratten, Robert (2015). Getting Started in Transmedia Storytelling: A Practical Guide for Beginners (2nd ed.). London, UK.
- Steven Ascher and Edward Pincus, The filmmaker's handbook – a comprehensive guide for the digital age, Plume, New York, 1999.
- Christopher Kenworthy, Master shots – 100 advanced camera techniques to get an expensive look on your low budget movie, Michael Wiese Productions, Studio City, CA, 2009.
- Dara Marks, Inside Story: The Power of the Transformational Arc, Three Mountain Press, Studio City, CA, 2006.
- Chris Vogler, The hero's journey, Michael Wiese Productions, Studio City, CA, 1992.
- Richard D. Pepperman, Setting up your scenes, Michael Wiese Productions, Studio City, CA, 2005.