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 public screening of the students' projects which also will be published online.

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 45 hours

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

PREREQUISITES: None

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:
Lecture, discussions, and hands-on video production. Site visits will be an integral part of the course. We will go to MIC (interactive museum of cinema) and visit its Archives with special Epson Moverio BT-200glasses (for an augmented reality experience!).

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:
Class participation: 10%
Script preparation: 15%
Periodic Assignments during pre-production and production (writing exercises, camera angles, shot list, storyboards, forum): 15%
Edited project: 30%
Final exam (written, in-class exam, on the issues discussed during the course and the readings at home): 30%

Script Preparation
Each student will work on their individual idea and write 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.

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
The final exam - based on the lectures, the slides and the readings - 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:

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- 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:
Regular class attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to attend classes each day, including course-related excursions.

IES Abroad Milano allows a maximum of two excused absences per semester. Each further absence will automatically result in a penalty of two points off (2/100) on the final grade. Seven absences per course (including 2 excused absences) will result in a failing grade for that course. Furthermore, an absence on the date of scheduled tests, presentations or quizzes does not entitle you to recover/reschedule such tests. Failure to attend your midterm and/or final exam will result in an F grade on that paper/exam.

CONTENT:

Lesson	Content	Assignments
Week 1 *Session 1*	Introduction. Proper Shooting Technique: camera operation and sound.	Practice with the camera. • Article from "Harvard business review" (6 pp.)
Session 2	Guidelines to visual storytelling. Clear Vision.	First exercise on scriptwriting: location. • From McKee's textbook "Story", chapter 1: "The story problem" (pp. 11-28) • Kaminsky's "Naked lens", part 1 (pp. 1-43)
Week 2 *Session 1*	The story triangle. Feedback on your first exercise on scriptwriting.	Second exercise on scriptwriting: conflict. • "Story", chapter 2: The Structure Spectrum" (pp. 31-66) • Godin's "All marketers tell stories", preface, Highlights, Got Marketing? (pp. 1-37)
Session 2	Text and subtext. Feedback on your second exercise on scriptwriting.	Third exercise on scriptwriting: script format. • "Story", chapter 18: "The text" (pp. 388-409) • Prior, Karen Swallow, *The New, Old Way to Tell Stories: With Input From the Audience*, The Atlantic, October 18, 2013 (article, 4 pp.)
Week 3 *Session 1*	Editing your footage. Basic editing: file management and the basic sequence.	• Godin's "All marketers tell stories", Step 1 (pp. 38-73)

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Session 2	Character and Structure. Feedback on your third exercise on scriptwriting.	• "Story", chapter 17: "Character" (pp. 374-387)
Week 4 *Session 1*	Introduction to the phases of video making: Pre-production, Production, Post-Production and Distribution. Discussion on your projects.	• From Katz's textbook "Shot by shot", chapter 5: "The Production Cycle" (pp. 97-118)
Session 2	Scene analysis. Discussion on your projects.	• "Story", chapter 11: "Scene analysis" (pp. 252-287)
Week 5 *Session 1*	Film glossary: shots, camera angles, camera movements, lenses. Visualization: tools and techniques.	• "Shot by shot", chapter 2: "Production Design" (pp. 85-96) • Kaminsky's "Naked lens", part 2, 3 (pp. 47-65)
Session 2	3-point lighting. Frame composition.	Camera angles assignment. • "Shot by shot", chapter 6: "Composing shots: Spatial Connections" (pp. 121-143)
Week 6 *Session 1*	Revision of script: problem solving in scriptwriting. Go over camera angles assignment.	Deadline for script for individual project. • David Kushner, *Prime time for Vlogs?*, CNNMoney, April 27, 2006 (article) • Godin's "All marketers tell stories", Step 2, 3, 4 (pp. 75-103), Step 5 (pp. 147-9); Bonus Part 2 (pp. 185-93); "So, what to do now?" (pp. 204-7)
Session 2	Feedback on scripts.	Shot list and storyboard assignment.

	Script analysis. Make a shot list and storyboard.	• "Shot by shot", chapter 3: "Storyboards" (pp. 23-51) • Bernardo's "The producer's guide to transmedia", Forward-Intro (pp. XIII-XXV)
Week 7 *Session 1*	Go over shot list and storyboard assignment.	• "Shot by shot", chapter 3: "Storyboards" (pp. 51-84)
Session 2	Acting and directing actors.	• "Moviemakers' Master Class", chapter 6: "Martin Scorsese"
Week 8 *Session 1*	Critique on footage.	• Bernardo's "The producer's guide to transmedia", chapters 1, 2, 3 (pp. 1-31)
Session 2	Elements of continuity in style.	• "Shot by shot", chapter 7 "Editing: Temporal connections" (pp. 145-156) • "The producer's guide to transmedia", chapters 5, 6 (pp. 47-74)
Week 9 *Session 1*	Re-writing your story in post-production.	• "The eye is quicker", chapter 1 "The eye is quicker" (pp. 1-4) • "The eye is quicker", chapter 1 "The eye is quicker" (pp. 1-4)
Session 2	Post-Production: technical assistance to film editing. Obtaining smooth transitions.	• "The eye is quicker", chapter 2 "Mind watching the cuts" (pp. 5-12)
Week 10 *Session 1*	Post-Production: technical assistance to sound editing (including voice-over narration if needed).	• "The eye is quicker", chapter 3 "Editing with 2 left feet" (pp. 13-24) • "Digital storytelling. Mediatized story", Mediatized lives (pp. 105-122)
Session 2	Course-related trip to the museum of cinema (mandatory)	• "Digital storytelling. Mediatized story", Narrative strategies in digital age (pp. 177-194)

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Week 11 *Session 1*	Post-Production: technical assistance to titles, uploading digital videos in a variety of formats, and how to publish them to a range of social media platforms.	• "The eye is quicker", chapter 7 "Cutting emotional attachments" (pp. 65-72) • "Digital storytelling. Mediatized story", Identity, aesthetics, and digital narration (pp. 161-176)
Week 12	Final Critique: students will discuss the edited films in class and share with their peers the skills acquired during the production and post-production journey.	

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.

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