Department of Film and Media Studies

2017 Annual Student Recognition Ceremony and Tensie Awards

Thursday, May 4, 2017
(last day of classes)
All FMS students are invited and encouraged to attend.
Family members and friends welcome.
Watch your email for details.

The School of the Arts

Convocation Ceremony

Friday, May 12, 2017
6:30 p.m.
Crafton-Preyer Theatre, Murphy Hall
1530 Naismith Drive, Lawrence, KS 66045
Submit your RSVP or email sota@ku.edu no later than May 8 at 5:00 p.m.

Every May, the School of the Arts holds a recognition ceremony for its graduating students. This ceremony is for undergraduate AND graduate students who are graduating from a SOTA department during the current academic year (2016-2017). This includes fall, summer and spring graduates. This is a small event where each student will be recognized and will cross the stage to shake hands with the Associate Dean of the School of the Arts and the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences. We hope that you can join us!

Please note: This ceremony is in addition to, not taking the place of, the University of Kansas Commencement Ceremony on May 14, 2017.

University of Kansas

145th Commencement

Sunday, May 14, 2017
Beginning at 10:30 a.m. (CDT)
Memorial Stadium
Commencement Ceremony Info: http://commencement.ku.edu/
Coming Attractions

Film screening: Francofonia and Cinemuse: Selfie with Sokurov
Introduction by Dragan Kujundzic and a discussion to follow.

April 7 at 6:00 p.m.
Centennial Room, Kansas Union
This event is free and open to the public.
Francofonia [http://www.imdb.com/title/tt3451720/] (2015) is the latest film by prominent Russian filmmaker Alexander Sokurov and winner of the Best European Film in Competition at the 2015 Venice International Film Festival. Francofonia is an essay film made in and about the Louvre. Although often labelled a documentary, Francofonia goes beyond the opposition of fiction and non-fiction and features Napoleon and the Nazi official Franz Wolff-Metternich within its narrative. A thoughtful rumination on European history as well as on the museum’s function as a vessel of culture, the film is a spiritual sequel to Sokurov’s famous Russian Ark (2002), although the two films are very different in form.

The noted author, filmmaker, and Professor Dragan Kujundzic will join us to talk about Mr. Sokurov’s work and screen his recent documentary about the director, entitled Cinemuse: Selfie with Sokurov (2015). Professor Kujundzic is a professor of Eastern European Studies at the University of Florida, a philosopher in the tradition of Jacques Derrida, and an engaging filmmaker. Professor Kujundzic has written extensively on Sokurov and screened both of these films at several other venues including Yale University and the University of Chicago.

This event is co-sponsored by the Department of Film and Media Studies; the Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies; the Department of French and Italian; and by Museum Studies.
**Out & About**

Dr. Tamara Falicov and Professor Meg Jamieson took 11 students to the True/False film festival in Columbia, Missouri for three days of immersive film viewing, in-depth conversations with filmmakers, virtual reality experiences, and an excellent student symposium, where students were in small group conversations with professional editors, producers, directors and distributors.

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**Art in Focus: Experimental student filmmaker molds music and film into its own art form**

In a blend of traditional movie clips, rhythmic music and jarring edits, student filmmaker Hunter Harding uses clips and music beats as his canvas to create short films for his Experimental Production class.

Harding most recently created the films “Trippy Fire Dance” and “American, 21.” The two films are between one and two minutes each, and consist of various YouTube clips cut together to elevate the intensity of the video.

“It was a way to blend those YouTube meme, adolescent videos into something that is a bit more respected,” Harding said.

In “Trippy Fire Dance,” Harding opens the film with fans creating a column of fire, but the video progresses to volcanoes erupting and a forest fire.

To make his videos, Harding edits both his videos and the film he has chosen to work with the Adobe AfterEffects program.

Harding said AfterEffects allows filmmakers to be similar to DJs, in the sense that they can take any visual effect and put it into their film, similar to how DJs can take any sound and integrate it into a song.

Both “Trippy Fire Dance” and “American, 21” rely on the beat to the music within the films. Even the tick of a drum has Harding entering a new effect into the film, whether it be changing scenes or flipping the scene upside down.

“I really like doing things that are rhythmically cut and rhythmically edited,” Harding said.

He added that he would like to produce music videos or commercials before diving into feature films. He said he loves to watch the video mold together with the music, creating its own art form.

“American, 21” displays Harding’s talent in creating unorthodox films around the rhythm of the music. The film features music created by Mark Robinson, a University senior from Tecumseh.

“American, 21” was the first collaboration between the two artists, but the two said it is not expected to be the last.

Harding said he believes he made the correct choice [to major in] film, as he has experienced more than he ever could have imagined at the University as he continues to produce short music-infused productions.

Out & About

FMS student Jacob Hood’s film, Flying, and Savannah Rodgers film, Sketches, have been accepted to be screened at the BisonBison Student Film Festival in Oklahoma. Congratulations, Jacob and Savannah!

Watch Flying here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DnUtNoaq0c4
Watch Sketches here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AMS92ECxS5M

New film shines light on overlooked KU basketball innovator

His name might not be as well-known as others on the University of Kansas basketball coaching tree, e.g., Naismith, Allen, Smith and Williams. But John McLendon is a two-time inductee into the Basketball Hall of Fame, and a new documentary directed by KU Film and Media Studies Professor Kevin Willmott shows why – for good and ill.

“Fast Break: The Legendary John McLendon” traces the title subject’s path from learning the game at the side of inventor James Naismith himself to coaching in college, the pros and the Olympics. And all along the way, in addition to his coaching innovations and successes, McLendon was a social trailblazer, becoming the first African-American to graduate from KU with a degree in physical education; to coach an integrated pro team; to coach at a predominantly white college; to coach the U.S. Olympic team and then to serve on the U.S. Olympic committee.

The film aired in March on PBS television station KCPT in Kansas City, Missouri, coinciding with the first week of the 2017 NCAA Men’s Basketball Tournament.

Willmott, who is best known for making such independent films as “Ninth Street,” “C.S.A.: The Confederate States of America” and “Jayhawkers,” said “Fast Break” was a horse of a different color for him.

“Some of my former students shot it and brought it to me to finish it,” he said. “They had access to an old documentary that had interviews with McLendon in it but which had been neglected. We put all new interviews around it, along with the research that Milton Katz had done for his book ‘Breaking Through: John B. McLendon, Basketball Legend and Civil Rights Pioneer.’” (Ed. note: published by University of Arkansas Press, 2007.)

Willmott said McLendon’s story has been “woefully neglected.”

“He was inducted into the Basketball Hall of Fame in 1979 as a contributor, but he was not inducted until just this year as a coach,” Willmott said. “He was not well-known by the larger world, but he was a huge presence in the basketball world.”

Willmott said that, as a part of the KU community, he is proud that he could and it is fitting that he should play a role in bringing McLendon’s story to a wider audience with the new film.

Read the full story: https://news.ku.edu/2017/02/23/new-film-shines-light-overlooked-ku-basketball-innovator
Watch “American Beauty”: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F5BWRcBDjpM&t=14s, created by Jaidan Royal in Cathy Joritz’s After Effects class.

Summerfield Hall renovation will bring Film and Media Studies students to the center of campus

The Department of Film and Media Studies will soon be moving from its home in Oldfather Studios to the former business school building, Summerfield Hall. Faculty in the department said the new facility will feature state-of-the-art spaces and technology for students, while giving students the added benefit of being near other buildings on campus.

Department Chair Michael Baskett said traditions of the old facility will be missed, but the new facility will make going to film and media classes easier for undergraduates.

Associate Professor of film studies Tamara Falicov said the new location will give film and media studies more visibility. “Sharing a building with the Career Center will benefit our students and will give other students a chance to see film and media studies,” she said.

“I think this will provide a chance for the four departments of the School of the Arts [Dance, Theatre, Visual Arts, and Film and Media Studies] to collaborate more often,” Baskett said. “We’re going to be right next door to Murphy Hall where theatre is, we’re right down the road from dance and from visual arts. It’s a huge deal for us to be located back on campus.”

Baskett said the addition of a media library will be a welcome addition to the new soundstage and recording studios. “We’ve never had a media library before, so this is something new for film and media students,” he said. “This will be like nothing we’ve ever had before. It’ll kind of be a multi-use space for classes or for students.”


FMS doctoral student, Najmeh Moradiyan Rizi, was interviewed by the University Daily Kansan reflecting on her experiences of being an Iranian immigrant in the U.S. and how the recent executive orders have impacted these experiences.

Summerfield Hall shaping up to become new home of KU film and media studies

$10 million renovation of former business school building includes mechanical upgrades and space for a few other KU offices and classrooms.

A home on campus — instead of blocks beyond the border — is just one of the new things University of Kansas film and media students and teachers will enjoy come fall.

A $10 million project is well underway to renovate Summerfield Hall to house KU’s department of film and media studies and several other KU offices.

Construction is expected to be complete later this spring, in time for the department to move in before hosting its first classes there this fall, said Michael Baskett, department chair and associate professor of film and media studies. He said the move will include installing specialized equipment in a number of spaces constructed specifically for film and media.

“The types of work that our students can do will be greatly expanded,” Baskett said. “This is really a great time to be studying film and media.”

The department of film and media studies has been located at Oldfather Studios since the 1990s.

At Summerfield, in addition to a proximity to the heart of campus it hasn’t had in around 20 years, the film and media department will enjoy:

- A new and improved soundstage. The two-story room has catwalks for lighting and observing from the second level, an exterior door large enough to drive in vehicles for shoots and moveable partitions to allow up to three projects working at a time. There’s also an adjacent “green room” where performers can dress, prepare and wait for their cues.
- A recording studio, which Oldfather Studios does not have. It will enable students to bring in and record live musical groups, Baskett said. “We can partner with other schools on campus that we’ve never really been able to do here.”
- Production classrooms. Baskett said the classrooms, painted black and equipped with measures to control acoustics, will enable students to practice production tasks before moving to the soundstage. “More students can work on more projects at the same time,” he said.
- A larger computer lab and more editing bays, which also will allow more students more time on the equipment, Baskett said.
- Department offices and a media library.

There is one major feature of the Summerfield renovation that is not a reality right now but that Baskett hopes will be at a future phase: a screening facility.

Baskett said the department hopes to raise funds to eventually convert an existing multi-level classroom, with a capacity of roughly 170, to a theater for KU film events, other cultural events and exhibitions in partnership with the community.

“I think KU film at Summerfield is a natural place for those types of things to be centered,” Baskett said. “If you open that up to the community, it really makes connections.”

Recent Guest Speakers

Dr. Stuart Hanson, Senior Lecturer in Media and Communication at De Montfort University (DMU) in Leicester, UK visited FMS on March 6 to discuss ongoing research for his current book on global history of the multiplex cinema. Dr. Hanson spoke about his work and a discussion followed.

Dr. Hanson teaches on a number of modules at the undergraduate level and supervises postgraduate students in a number of fields relating to film and media.

He is the author of From silent screen to multi-screen: A History of cinema exhibition in Britain since 1896 (Manchester University Press, 2007) and a number of book chapters and articles on multiplexes and other contemporary cinema developments. He is currently working on a new book about the global history of the multiplex cinema to be published by Palgrave Macmillan and was in Kansas undertaking research for the first section of the book on developments in the USA.

Dr. Jerry Carlson participated in a conversation via Skype with students in the FMS 585 Capstone in Film and Media Studies class on March 2. He talked about his creative projects that include his feature film Dirt and his regional television series CITY Cinematheque and Nueva York, as well as other projects. The Skype conversation was facilitated by Capstone instructors Meg Jamieson and Ron Wilson.

A specialist in narrative theory, global independent film, and the cinemas of the Americas, Professor Carlson is Director of the Cinema Studies Program in the Department of Media and Communication Arts at The City College CUNY. Moreover, he is an active producer, director, and writer with multiple Emmy Awards.

Read more about Dr. Carlson here: https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/profiles/jerry-carlson

A lecture titled “Images of World War One: the Films of Pioneer Kansas Photographer Donald Thompson” was presented by Ohio University professor emeritus and University alumnus David Mould (Radio, Film, TV MA 1980) on March 13. Thompson was a photographer from Topeka who documented much of the Eastern Front during World War I. The first major war to be covered by motion pictures raised issues that media, governments and audiences have faced in every subsequent conflict. Should photographers be allowed in the war zone? Is censorship justified? Are our images of war real—or are they staged? What is the impact of a “mediated war” on the public and policy agendas?

Mould’s presentation included excerpts from Thompson’s films, “Somewhere in France and With the Russian Army” (1915) and “War As It Really Is” (1916) and stills from “Petrograd” in 1917 and the “Allied intervention in Siberia” in 1919.


Read the full story in the University Daily Kansan: http://www.kansan.com/arts_and_culture/crees-to-host-lecture-on-world-war-i-photographer-donald/article_beeb4586-0474-11e7-884e-f7b61cc1f448.html
Alumni News

Congratulations to Barry St. John, the VFX Associate Producer on this year’s Academy Award winning film for Best Visual Effects, *The Jungle Book*! Barry graduated in 2004 with a BGS in Theatre and Film, with an emphasis in film.

For more information: [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm2749960/](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm2749960/)

Putting Kansas 'on the map': University alumna brings major film and TV projects to the Midwest

Audiences all over the world saw the Kansas City skyline last year in “American Honey.” The film, which received six nominations at the Independent Spirit Awards — including Best Feature and Female Lead — stars actor Shia LaBeouf [and Laura Kirk, a lecturer in FMS]. It was filmed in Kansas City, mostly on the Missouri side, in 2015.

Kansas City Film Commissioner Stephane Scupham, a 1999 graduate and University alumna, worked with the crew of “American Honey” for the duration of its stay in Kansas City. As film commissioner, Scupham said she ensures that productions that choose to film in one of the office’s municipalities run smoothly. The production may need a hotel recommendation, information on state child labor laws or film permits, or help finding a location to film. Location scouting was most of Scupham’s job when “American Honey” was in town.

“When you get a good film like that, it has life, so we keep being seen,” Scupham said.

The Kansas City Film Office, which is part of the Visit KC tourism organization, is the primary point of contact for film projects coming to the area. It is one of more than 300 officially sanctioned film offices around the world. Scupham, along with a board of advisors and local film festivals and projects, assists various productions that choose to film in the region, including feature films, short films, reality television and commercials. The office aims to help the Kansas City economy and bring the region recognition in the entertainment industry.

Scupham graduated from the University with a communications degree and an emphasis in film. During her time in Lawrence, she helped found video production club KU Filmworks, along with several original members of the entertainment business networking group called the Hollywood Hawks.

Scupham said that at the end of the day, her job is about forming and maintaining relationships with filmmakers and other people who bring business and recognition to Kansas and Missouri.

“‘We’re very conscious of creating an environment where people can work, where we can create and sustain jobs in this industry,’” she said.

The Department of Film & Media Studies
The University of Kansas
April 2017

Academic Calendar
Thursday, May 4 — Last day of classes
Monday, May 5 — Stop Day
Monday, May 8 — First day of Finals
Friday, May 12 — Last day of Finals
http://www.registrar.ku.edu/calendar/

Equipment Check-in: 10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m., Monday, Wednesday, and Friday
Equipment Check-out: 1:00 p.m.—3:00 p.m., Monday, Wednesday, and Friday
Sign-up to check-out equipment in the binder on the table near the equipment room.
Sign-up for editing rooms by signing the edit room schedule posted on the editing room doors.
The computer lab is available for use during the following times:
  Monday: 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.
  Tuesday: 9:00 – 4:00 p.m.
  Wednesday: 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.
  Thursdays: 9:00 – 5:00 p.m.
  Friday: 9:00 – 5:00 p.m.
Check with your instructor or John McCluskey, Assistant Technical Director, for more information.

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Are you a Film & Media Studies (or Theatre & Film) alum? We’d love to hear from you. Click https://film.ku.edu/alumni-submissions to update your information with us, so we can add you to the impressive ranks of our alumni.

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