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An award-winning writer/director actively involved in the industry and a dedicated professor of film with 8 years of experience teaching at undergraduate and graduate levels, from summer film camps to Ivy League programs.

EDUCATION

M.F.A. in Film Directing/Screenwriting, 2017 (*Honors*)
Columbia University, New York, NY

B.S. in Media, Culture and Communication, 2011 (*summa cum laude* and *honors*, GPA: 4.0)
New York University, New York, NY

A.A. in Liberal Arts and Humanities, 2009
Bergen Community College, Paramus, NJ

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Columbia University (MFA), 2021

Directing I

- Introducing students to the fundamentals of narrative film language.
- Exploring the basics of film directing – how to tell a visual story.
- Guiding students in the process of creating their first short film.

This is a practical course that explores the fundamental elements of directing, focusing on visual language, the use of camera and other tools pertaining to dramatic storytelling. Students complete 3 short exercises and prepare an in-class presentation for their 3-5 minute films. Students edit their own work and are required to participate in class to offer substantial feedback during workshops and breakdown of exercises.

New York University, 2019-2021

Storytelling Strategies (a two-part course on screenwriting)

- Lecture – Focusing on theories of screenwriting for film and TV, covering various storytelling topics, 3-act structure, 8-sequence form, the Hero's Journey, Poetics and Hegelian dialectics, and alternative structures.
- Recitation – a hands-on workshop where students apply elements learnt in lecture and work on various exercises that lead up to the final short film script.

Throughout this course students learn the most important elements of dramatic narrative and how to apply them in their writing. The class entails rigorous analysis and breakdown of both traditional and alternative film structures. Students learn how to utilize sequences, how to write a logline, synopsis and treatment, as well as how to write and pitch a short film.

Montclair State University, 2021

Story Analysis

- Teaching an introductory class on screenwriting for film and television. An exploration of the fundamental elements of visual storytelling for feature films and TV episode in theory and working towards writing a short film in practice.
- Preparing students for the second part of this course the following semester where they get to shoot their shorts written here. Learning the tools of a director in pre-production such as script breakdown, scene analysis, shotlist, floorplans and storyboarding.

This course offers an introduction to the art of screenwriting, focusing on the elements of dramatic narrative, visual storytelling and character building. It focuses on the practice of scene analysis and script breakdown, working backwards to further understand the craft. Midway through the semester, the gears switch to alternative narrative structures, both for shorts and features, as well as TV episodes.

Hunter College, 2017-2018

Screen Directing

- A hands-on production course that covers major aspects of filmmaking such as directing, cinematography, editing, screenwriting, sound, etc.

This course is designed to offer advanced tools and techniques for directing on screen. It is a hands-on production class, relying heavily on in-class practice and collaboration. Through exercises, readings and screenings students acquire a practical and creative toolbox to further develop their directorial skills. The course covers director's work and responsibility, director's creative vision and how to realize it, working with actors in rehearsal before and on set, as well as collaborating with production designer, DP and other members of the team.

Film Seminar

- A two-semester long seminar that focuses on two creative aspects of filmmaking: 1) screenwriting for short film form and 2) pre-production

This seminar is designed to explore the 3 stages (preproduction, production, and postproduction) of filmmaking as they pertain to the progress of each student's project. At the start of the course, we customize an individual timeline for each film and follow it throughout the semester. Students are likely to be in different phases of development, whether it's screenwriting, location scouting, shot-listing, or even editing, which is why this class fosters creative space for everyone to learn from each other, share ideas and experience.

Film Production II

- An advanced hands-on production course for graduating Seniors.

This class picks up where Film Production I ends. The main objective of this class is to go through the production of a simple sync sound film, step by step. The final product for this semester will be video dailies and sound material, which students will have the option of editing

in another class. Students learn how to operate a mid-level HD camera, a flash-based sound recorder, as well as pre-production and production logistics, scheduling and budgeting.

Columbia University, 2015

A Lab in Fiction Filmmaking

- Teaching a hands-on production lab focusing on narrative filmmaking.
- Assisting with administrative responsibilities and final film production

This class is a practical lab that focuses on major aspects of narrative filmmaking. Students learn basic tenants of film directing, as well as cinematography, editing, screenwriting and other creative and practical tools that will help them create their own films from start to end, i.e. from preproduction to postproduction. The lab introduces students to film grammar and language and helps them identify the building blocks of films.

(Nominated for Columbia University Presidential Award for Outstanding Teaching)

William Paterson University, 2017-2020

Filmmaking I

- A hands-on workshop focusing on developing fundamental skills such as directing, writing, editing, lighting, use of sound as well as production design to create cinematic narratives.

This class is a practical course that focuses on major aspects of filmmaking. You will learn basic tenants of film directing, cinematography, editing, screenwriting and other creative and practical tools that will help you make your own films from start to end, i.e. from preproduction to postproduction.

Film and Civic Engagement

- A theory class on social power, responsibility and other possibilities of cinema.
- Engaging students through cinema with critical issues in our societies, such as race, gender, ethnicity, religion, immigration and other politics.

This course serves to expose students to the capabilities of cinema to bring awareness to social activism and civic engagement. Students become familiar with new ways of thinking about film as a potential medium of positive change. Through weekly viewings of movies that deal with the pressing sociocultural issues, both on global and local levels, as well as corresponding weekly readings, students acquire different analytical tools for reading cinematic texts not only for social values, but for their aesthetic qualities as well.

Northwestern University, 2014 – 2019

National High School Institute Film Program

- Restructuring and updating the entire film program.
- Serving as a resident film faculty in charge of the overall film production program.
- Teaching Film Directing, Screenwriting and Editing.
- Teaching elective courses such as:
 - o **Psychoanalysis and Cinema**
 - o **History of Film Noir**
 - o **Women in Cinema**
 - o **The French New Wave**

Columbia University, 2014 – 2016

Cinema History

- Assistant Teacher to Professor **Richard Peña**.
- Teaching a recitation to accommodate the overall class.
- Grading students work, facilitating discussions, analyzing films, reviewing the readings and giving weekly assignments. Meeting with students one-on-one.

American Cinema

- Assistant Teacher to Professor **Annette Insdorf**.
- Teaching a recitation to accommodate the overall class.
- Grading students work, facilitating discussions, analyzing films, reviewing the readings and giving weekly assignments. Meeting with students one-on-one.

Bergen Community College, 2008 – 2009

Learning Assistant at Henry and Edith Cerullo Learning Center

- Assisted students in learning about mathematics, writing and religions of the world.
- Developed practice tests using course curricula to boost students' scholastic performance.
- Created tutoring programs for students based on their academic challenges and progress.

FILMOGRAPHY

[Panopticon](#) (2023, feature, written and directed)

Script Development:

- **Cannes Film Festival Cinéfondation Writing Residency, 2019 (Paris, France)**
- **Torino Script Lab, 2019 (Greece, Italy)**
- **Torino Feature Lab, 2020 (Online)**

Pitching/Presentations/Awards:

- **Cannes Film Festival Pitching Forum**
- Rotterdam International Film Festival (Cinemart)
- Sofia Meetings Pitching Sessions
- Torino Script Lab Pitching
- Arras Film Days Pitching Award (France)
- Odessa Best Pitch Award (Ukraine)
- Cinemed Montpellier Film Festival Pitching Award (France)

Funds Received (a three-way European co-production)

- France: Aide aux Cinémas du Monde (CNC)
- Italy: MiBACT (Italian Ministry of Culture Fund)
- Romania: Center of National Cinematography (CNC)
- Georgia (country of production): Georgian National Film Center Fund

Official Interest from Sales:

- Wild Bunch
- MK2

Fatherland (2018, short, written and directed)

World Premiere:

- **Sundance Film Festival Official Selection**

Distribution:

(official distribution company OUAT MEDIA, Canada)

- Festival Scope Pro Online Platform
- Kanopy Streaming
- Criterion Collection Streaming
- Sundance TV/AMC Networks

A New Year (2017, short, written and directed)

World Premiere:

- **Toronto International Film Festival Official Selection**

Distribution:

(official distribution company OUAT MEDIA, Canada)

- Criterion Collection Streaming (coming 2023)
- Amazon Prime Streaming

Red Apples (2016, short, written and directed)

World Premiere:

- **Toronto International Film Festival Official Selection**

Distribution:

(official distribution company OUAT MEDIA, Canada)

- France 3
- Virgin Atlantic
- Air Canada
- Kanopy Streaming
- Ale Kino+ (Canal+ Poland group of channels)
- Shorts TV (North American)
- Vimeo Staff Picks
- Short of the Week

Submarine (2016, short, edited)

World Premiere:

- **Cannes Film Festival Cinefondation Official Selection**

Distribution:

(official distribution company Premium Films, France)

- Vimeo Staff Picks
- Talking Shorts
- Firstshowing

PROJECTS IN DEVELOPMENT

Wish I Didn't Know Now, What I Didn't Know Then, (a feature film, written and directed)

- 20 Steps Productions Development Grant
- Moulin d'Andé Centre Artistique et Culturel (writing residency)

ACADEMIC SERVICE WORK

Columbia University Admissions Committee

MFA Film Directing and Screenwriting Program

- Reviewing prospective student applications
- Interviewing shortlisted applicants.
- Final analysis and scoring.

Columbia University Admissions Team

MFA Film Directing and Screenwriting Program

- Annual Q and A with newly admitted MFA students.
- Answering questions about the program: what to expect, how to prepare, etc.
- Following up with admitted students for further support.

Northwestern University

National High School Institute

- Building a 5-week pedagogical plan for the core and electives curriculum of the film program.
- Designing the film directing and overall film production program.
- Continued support of the students leading up to their applications for college.

Bergen Community College

Henry and Edith Cerullo Learning Center

- Tutoring and mentoring students within the college's learning program.
- Designed assisted learning programs to support underrepresented students' scholastic performance.
- Engaged in academic advising for prospective and graduating students.

PUBLISHED WORK

“Rethinking *Russian Ark*” (2012) *Film International*

An excerpt:

“Because Sokurov mainly selects only those parts from Russian history that pertain to the country's flourishing era, history in *Russian Ark* is in Nietzsche's terms 'beautified'. He arbitrarily selects and condenses Russian history to those beautified and celebratory fragments that together grant it a monumental quality, distorting and manipulating certain historical nuances along the way. This is then particularly problematic if we consider the concerns of Walkowitz and Rosenstone, which are quite valid and relevant concerns, about the power of visual history.”

“Rediscovering *You Are Not I: An Interview with Sara Driver*” (2011) *Senses of Cinema*

An excerpt:

“It was in 2008, while in Tangier to present a paper at a conference, that Poole was contacted by Abdelouahed Boulaich, Bowles' heir and assistant. He wanted to show him the remaining belongings of the author in which Poole was particularly interested, as he had worked with Boulaich before on acquiring Bowles' personal items for the University of Delaware's library collection. This time it was an abandoned apartment containing additional possessions. Poole was amazed by the find and began to photograph scattered letters and other items. Among them, all covered with insecticide, he noticed a square cardboard case which Boulaich explained contained some film. Poole photographed the case and later, without knowing exactly what was inside, brought it to the United States. In 2009, at the University of Delaware, he finally screened the film and realized what he had found.”

“Theorizing Postproduction Sound Effects in Cinema: the Art of Foley” – forthcoming

An excerpt:

“Most scholarship on sound in cinema focuses on three aspects: voice, music and noise, with the first two categories receiving disproportionately more critical attention than the third one. A close scrutiny of the practice of foley reveals the role of sound in an audiovisual context. For example, this art illustrates how sound can not only evoke images, but also define them. Ingeniously coded foley can sometimes determine the genre of a film more efficiently than its images. Foley can authenticate and realize images by transforming artificial film sets into realistic (not “real”) spaces. Foley is partly what allows cinema to claim a certain kind of realism; it creates cinematic phonorealism.”

PITCHING, WORKSHOPS, INTERVIEWS, CONFERENCES AND TALKS

- **Cannes Film Festival Cinéfondation Writing Residency, 2019 (Paris, France):** selected among 6 filmmakers worldwide to write my first feature *Panopticon*.
- **Cannes Film Festival Pitching Forum:** pitching my feature *Panopticon* at the Cannes Film Festival in front of an audience of leading European producers, distributors, sales agents and programmers.
- **Torino Script Lab, 2019 (Greece, Italy):** selected among 20 projects worldwide to participate in script workshops with leading European script doctors.
- **Torino Feature Lab, 2020 (Online):** selected among 10 projects worldwide to participate in workshops for the preparation of a feature film with leading European filmmakers.
- **Rotterdam International Film Festival (Cinemart):** holding meetings with leading European producers for a feature film during the prestigious co-production market.
- **Sofia Meetings Pitching Sessions:** pitching *Panopticon* for European industry professionals.
- **Torino Script Lab Pitching:** pitching *Panopticon* for European industry professionals.
- **Arras Film Days Pitching Award (France):** winning pitching award fund for *Panopticon*.
- **Odessa Best Pitch Award (Ukraine):** winning a pitching award fund for *Panopticon*.
- **Cinemed Montpellier Film Festival Pitching Award (France):** winning a pitching award fund for *Panopticon*.
- **Criterion Collection:** In the Shadow of the Dictator: A Conversation with George Sikharulidze

- **Sundance ShortsCast Podcast:** a talk with George Sikharulidze on *Fatherland*
- **Bozar 2019:** East of West Film Days Conference Talk: The Future of Georgian Cinema.
- **Cinemed Montpellier International Film Festival:** Short to Long Film Platform.
- **Sundance Talent Forum**
- **Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Market:** Nespresso Conference with a Filmmaker.
- **Debordements:** The Return of the Monsters – an interview with George Sikharulidze
- **Masterclass:** Immaculate Conception High School – a meeting with young students.
- **Masterclass:** A meeting with film students at the Georgian National University for Film
- **Palm Springs International Film Festival:** Roundtable meeting with the filmmakers on the rise – a discussion of filmmaking practices in a given cultural environment.
- **CUFF LA:** Roundtable meetings with HBO, Paramount, Sony, Tristar regarding their filmmaking practices.
- **National Board of Review Recipient:** a special screening of *Red Apples*

PARTICIPATION AT FESTIVALS AND AWARDS

(abridged list)

- Oscar Qualification – Best Short Film Award Florida Film Festival
- Cannes Film Festival Cinefondation Official Selection
- Sundance Film Festival Official Selection
- Toronto International Film Festival Official Selection
- Clermont-Ferrand International Film Festival Official Selection
- Palm Springs International Film Festival Official Selection
- Cinemed Montpellier International Film Festival Official Selection
- New Orleans Film Festival Special Mention
- Audience Award Austin Film Festival
- Best Film at Columbia University Film Festival
- Winner National Board of Review Student Grant

- Artist Award at Odense FF
- Best Film Award Tbilisi International Film Festival
- Best Narrative Short Film Santiago Independent Film Awards
- Best Short Film Innsbruck Film Festival
- Best Student Drama at Et Cultura
- Katarina Otto-Bernstein Production Grant
- Calgary International Film Festival Official Selection
- Uppsala Short International Film Festival Official Selection
- Interfilm Berlin Short Film Festival Official Selection
- San Francisco Film Festival Official Selection
- Newport Beach Film Festival Official Selection
- Filmets Badalona Film Festival Official Selection
- Santa Fe Independent Film Festival Official Selection
- Rio de Janeiro Int'l Short Film Festival Official Selection
- Arras Days Film Festival
- Les Arcs Film Festival Official Selection
- Svaneti International Short Film Festival Official Selection
- Bosphorus Film Festival Official Selection
- Encounters Film Festival Official Selection
- Guanajuato International Film Festival Official Selection
- Golden Apricot Film Festival Official Selection
- Duhok International Film Festival Official Selection
- Newport Beach Film Festival Official Selection
- Lviv International Film Festival Official Selection

(All syllabi, student evaluations and peer reviews available upon request)