



MARYLAND INSTITUTE COLLEGE OF ART

CAREER track
2008 volume X

Leading the Competition: MICA photographers, filmmakers and video artists

Opportunities abound for artists in film, video, and photography. According to the US Department of Labor, “experience, talent, creativity, and professionalism are the factors that are most important in getting many jobs...

...in [the entertainment] industry,” where, **in 2006, there were 357,000 jobs, and where job growth over the next decade will approach 20 percent for producers, directors, art directors, sound technicians, camera operators, editors, and animators.** Demand for still photographers will also grow by at least 10 percent in the coming decade.

Of course, these are highly competitive fields, and **MICA prepares students to stand out from the crowd** with a curriculum that builds a balance of technical and conceptual skills, outstanding opportunities for hands-on, real-world experience, and a focus on engaging students in developing a unique vision and body of work.

Faculty are successful professionals with regional and national connections:

Alexander Heilner is a pioneering digital photographer who has shown internationally, and Lynn Silverman is internationally renowned for her work in traditional photographic

media; Allen Moore has extensive film credits, including as cinematographer on historical films such as *The Civil War* and *Baseball* by Ken Burns, and other video faculty, including Patrick Wright and Jane Cottis, have shown internationally in festivals.

Internationally renowned alumni like Jan Staller '75, known for his surreal and sometimes abstract photographs of barren industrial landscapes, and **Miami-based Naomi Fisher '98**, whose provocative nature photographs have been collected world-wide, have put MICA on the map for photography. **The College's long-time collaboration with the Maryland Film Festival has elevated MICA to an important national locale for the film industry**, bringing to campus a dazzling array of visiting artists, including filmmaker Barry Levinson, cinematographer Tim Suhrstedt (*Mystic Pizza*, *Little Miss Sunshine*, *Office Space*), documentary filmmaker D.A. Pennebacker (*Don't Look Back*), and many others.

ESTABLISHED ALUMNI PAVE THE WAY

Ramsey Naito '92 is vice president of long-form development at Nickelodeon Movies; **Deborah Johnson '99** has designed and performed video backdrops for Wilco and other internationally known music artists; **Rudy Grossman '98** has worked in “creature development” at industry giant studios including *Industrial Light + Magic* and *The Orphanage* (he worked on such films as *Hell Boy* and *Star Wars Episode II*) and is lead creature technical director for Weta Digital, the company that provided special effects for *King Kong* and *Lord of the Rings*. Other recent MICA graduates are finding their places in the worlds of film and entertainment, and finding success in indie film festivals and as video installation artists—paving the way for the next generation of MICA grads in these highly competitive fields. MICA photography graduates include **Paula Gillen '78**, photo editor for *The New Yorker*, and established art and commercial photographers including Jan Staller and Naomi Fisher. Young alumni are also leaving their mark—finding their own unique paths in the contemporary world of photography.

REAL WORLD EXPERIENCE

MICA video students have gained hands-on experience in professional filmmaking through a series of honors courses led by award-winning cinematographer and filmmaker Allen Moore. Recent projects have given students the chance to work in HD video to produce a documentary on charter schools in Baltimore, which was screened for local and state legislators in advocacy efforts for charter school funding; and in 16 mm film—a full-scale production including costumes, actors, and location sets to produce a short film encouraging audiences to “turn off your cell phone” which continues to be screened at The Charles Theatre, an important cinema venue in the Station North Arts and Entertainment District near MICA.

Recent MICA graduates in photography and video...

photography

- *Benjamin Hill (photography '00)* is a freelance photographer for the fashion and entertainment industries. **His clients include Rolling Stone, Tom Scott New York, AT&T, Verizon Wireless, VISA, the White Stripes, Damien Rice, Matt Nathanson, and Scrap Daddy.**
- *Elena Volkova (photography '02)* set a gallery record for the **shortest amount of time an artist's work hung at Randall Scott Gallery before the show sold out.** The collector was the director of the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, D.C. Elena's work received a strongly positive review in *The Washington Post*.
- *Corrine Botz (photography '99)* was awarded a residency at the Akademie Schloss Solitude in Stuttgart, Germany. **She has published a book of her work, *The Nutshell Stories of Unexplained Death*, and was included in the collection *Blur of the Otherworldly*.** Corrine has taught photography at Johns Hopkins, New School, School of Visual Arts, Cooper Union, and MICA.
- *Ina Cabrera (photography '99)* is a **photo studio/archive manager at Sotheby's** in New York City.
- *Colleen Ryan (photography '95)* works as an **architectural photographer in New York City.**
- *Rose Cromwell (photography '05)* received MICA's **Meyer Traveling Scholarship Fellowship**, awarded to one graduating photography senior each year, and a **Fulbright to travel to Panama** for a project that culminated in an exhibition at the Diablo Rosso Gallery in 2007. She was included in **25 under 25: Up-and-Coming American Photographers to Watch.**

film and video

- *Yaeri Song (video '07)* interned at **MTV in New York** for two summers, and made connections that led her to work for the **Tribeca Film Festival** while still a student. After graduation, she embarked on her own film project, a documentary on the experiences of young artists in New York. **Entry Level was screened at the 2007 Asian Pacific American Film Festival.**
- *John Kinhart (general fine arts '01)* has shown his documentaries at film festivals throughout the U.S. His most recent project,

Blood, Boobs & Beast, a portrait of B-filmmaker Don Dohler, **won Best Documentary at the Coney Island Film Festival and the B-Movie Film Festival, and four-star review from FilmThreat.com.** John's day job is editing interviews and short-form documentaries for the National Visionary Leadership Project.

- *Parker Gindele (general fine arts '03)* had his film *Gray*, an experimental narrative referencing American culture, **screened at the Maryland Film Festival** the year he graduated. Parker is art director at DRAFTFCB in Chicago, where **he has worked on many campaigns, including "Got Milk?"**
- *Armando Salas (general fine arts '00)*, a cinematographer based in Los Angeles, has worked on music videos for Jason Mraz and others and commercials for Virgin Cola. In 2002, he **won the Refreshing Filmmaker Award from Coca-Cola.** Armando, who did his **MFA at the Florida State University Film School**, has also worked on the independent films *Shut In*, *Cocaine Cowboys*, and *Valley of Angels*. salasfilm.com
- *James Favata (video '04)* and *Chris Kelly (general fine arts '04)* had their movie *Northeast Southwest*, a **60-minute film they created as students at MICA, accepted in the 2004 Asheville Film Festival.**
- *David Skrabulis (photography '03)* directed and co-produced the films *Yard Sale* and *Two Front Teeth*. He studied film production at the New York Film Academy and The University of Maryland. He **runs an independent film production company**, Roast Beast LLC, and has won several awards.
- *Matthew Thomas (illustration '02, MA in digital arts '03)* received the **Canon Digital Creators' Gold Award** in the Digital Movie Division for his short film *That Day*. The film was screened at the 2004 Sundance Film Festival, **won First Prize and Best Screenplay in the Red Bull Independent Film Festival**, and has gotten him a distribution contract with a DVD maker. *That Day* examines the artist's conflict between his identity as an art student and his African-American identity.
- *Ean McNamara (illustration/experimental animation '05, MAT '06)* was hired to do **prop design, set design, and storyboarding for the 2008 Henry Selick feature-length stop-motion film, Coraline.**



MICA

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A weekly workshop series focused on professional development offered by MICA's Joseph Meyerhoff Center for Career Development includes a range of topics of special interest to photographers and others who choose to run their own businesses. Here's a sampling: **Expanding Your Connections, Starting Your Own Business, Pricing Your Time and Work, Contracts for Artists, and Legal Dos and Don'ts for Artists and Designers.**