

## Winter/Spring 2018

### UPDATES

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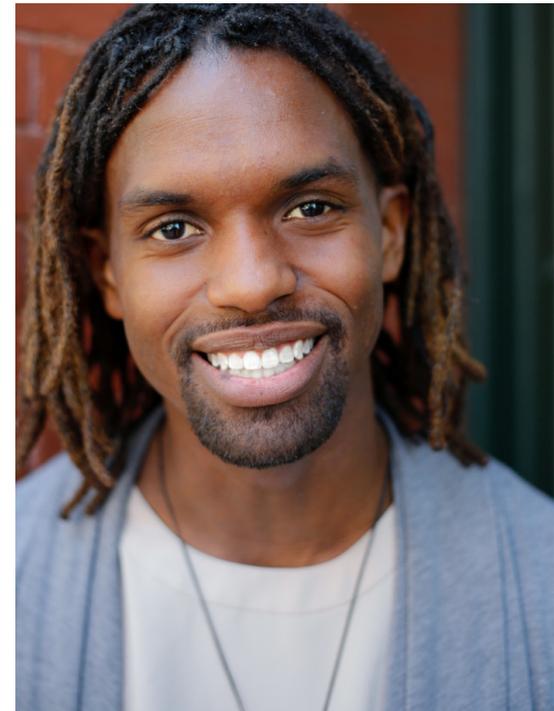
alumni

### SPOTLIGHT

B.J. Tindal, a second year MFA in Writing for the Screen & Stage, won the prestigious Alliance/Kendeda Competition with his play *Goodnight, Tyler*. The play had previously been one of four finalists. Tindal is the 16th competition winner and his work will have its world premiere on the [Hertz Stage of the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta, Georgia, from February 16 - March 10, 2019.](#)

*Goodnight, Tyler* is a contemporary and unexpectedly humorous drama. From the show synopsis, "Depending on whom you ask, Tyler Evans was a beloved best friend, grandson, mentor, and fiancée, or, Tyler Evans was a young Black man killed by a police officer. Desperate to control the contradicting narratives of his untimely passing, Tyler haunts his best friend as his other friends and relatives quibble over his legacy, seeking an elusive common ground."

As Tindal explained [to Northwestern](#), "I started writing *Goodnight, Tyler* shortly after the non-indictment of Darren Wilson in 2014. Every time a new photo of a dead Black person was plastered across my Facebook newsfeed, I immediately returned to push through the first draft." said playwright B.J. Tindal. "I want this play to validate the Black experience of loving and living. I want it to affirm the fact that Black people are here, choosing to love how we love freely, outside of violence."



# Northwestern

## SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION

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**Stephen Cone**'s latest film, *Princess Cyd*, won [The Chicago Award](#) at the 53rd Chicago International Film Festival. *Princess Cyd* was also featured in [The Best Movies of 2017](#) list in *Vanity Fair*.

**Chaz Evans** appeared in the *Chicago Tribune* in November, [discussing a show he co-curated](#) as one of the founders of the Video Game Art Gallery.

Interim Doc Media director **Kyle Henry**'s film *Rogers Park* played to a nearly sold out crowd back home in [the same neighborhood where the film was made](#). Henry was interviewed about the unique [devised/derived process](#) of making his feature, which received a great review from [Variety](#).

**J.P. Sniadecki** was [quoted in an article that appeared on Northwestern's website in November](#). His film *El Mar La Mar* has screened at IndieLisboa, AFI Docs Festival, Camden International Film Festival, the New York Film Festival, Chicago International Film Festival and recently at IDFA (International Documentary Festival Amsterdam) in November. The film also received a shout out in a [New York Times](#) article examining films inspired by Trump's proposal to build a wall on the US-Mexico border. In February, it played at New York's Museum of Modern Art and received a rave review from the [New York Times](#).

RTVF adjunct instructor **Kris Swanberg** and former RTVF lecturer/Kaplan Humanities Visiting Artist **Melika Bass** were included on [this list of 180 Essential Films by Female Directors](#).

In November, *The Coming of Age*, a short film written and co-produced by **Dave Tolchinsky**, [was an official selection/Finalist at the Meglio Matti Che Corti Festival in Modena, Italy](#).

**Dave Tolchinsky** completed production on the psychological thriller, *Cassandra*, he wrote and is directing, about a psychiatrist involved in memory recovery therapy during the 1990s. Via an SOC Innovations grant, RTF undergraduate **Genevieve Kane** was the set production assistant and will now be aiding Tolchinsky with the sound and music (which Tolchinsky is designing/composing) and she will be directing social media for the project.

The film, *Creature Companion*, produced by RTF professor

## FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS



**Dave Tolchinsky** and Dan Silverstein, directed by Melika Bass, will have its World Premiere at one of the world's top experimental film festivals – [Oberhausen International Short Film Festival](#), in Germany on May 7.

**Debra Tolchinsky**'s Oct 28, sold out [Chicago Humanities Fallfest/17: Belief](#) talk at the Block Museum concerning her in-process documentary, *True Memories and Other Falsehoods* was reviewed by Debra Davy in [Splash](#) magazine. "The audience saw a 15-minute excerpt from the upcoming full-length documentary. It was beautifully crafted and fascinating. After the viewing, [Milos Stehlik](#) (who moderated the discussion) exclaimed, 'It's so intimate!' Debra also presented at the Kaplan Institute for the Humanities on Nov 8.

Professor **Clayton Brown** also appeared at the Chicago Humanities Festival on November 4, 2017. He discussed his film with Monica Ross, *We Believe in Dinosaurs*, follows the construction of a life-sized replica of Noah's Ark by the Creation Museum in Kentucky, an enterprise claiming to provide scientific evidence for Biblical stories. The program was presented in partnership with the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. A student matinee featuring Clayton Brown and Monica Ross was underwritten by Baxter International.

In December 2017, Sound Arts and Industries associate director **Neil Verma** was awarded a Digital Humanities Advancement Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, along with Marit MacArthur of University of California, Davis and Mara Mills of New York University. The grant is to develop a set of digital tools for studying archival recordings of speech, including poetry readings, talking books and radio plays. These tools are designed to track pitch, speaking rate, dynamics and a variety of other measurable elements.

Lecturer **Zina Camblin** was named a "top teacher in film, TV, and more" by [Variety](#) on April 25, 2018.

Kaplan Visiting Artist/RTF Adjunct **Rohina Malik** was awarded a [Theatre Women Award](#) from The League of Professional Theatre Women in March.



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### MFA Writing for the Screen+Stage

**John Logan** (Class of 1983), a screenwriter known for *Gladiator*, *The Aviator*, and the James Bond films *Skyfall* and *Spectre*, [spoke to MFA in Writing for the Screen & Stage students during the fall quarter.](#)

The MFAs in Writing for Screen & Stage were also treated to a private meeting with Pulitzer prize-winning playwright and Academy Award-nominated screenwriter **Tony Kushner**, when he was in town for the Chicago Humanities Festival. It was an amazing discussion moderated by MFA Associate Director, **Zayd Dohrn**.

**Brett Neveu** was named one of "6 Theatre Workers You Should Know" in [American Theatre](#).

In the fall quarter, **Mimi Rothman Schapiro** visited with the first year MFA Writing students as part of RTVF 561: Foundations of Writing for Screen + Stage, taught by **Dave Tolchinsky**.

## DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS



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## DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

### MFA DOCUMENTARY MEDIA

In October 2017, Doc Media students met with Oscar nominated filmmaker [Raoul Peck](#) for a private masterclass where he discussed his work in documentary and his work in historical docudramas. Following the masterclass, the [Block Museum](#) played host to a capacity screening of Peck's [I Am Not Your Negro](#), followed by a Q&A with Peck, Professor Miriam Petty, and Professor Kyle Henry. Peck was the [School of Communication's 2018 Hoffman Visiting Artist](#) for Documentary Media, funded by a generous gift from Jane Steiner Hoffman and Michael Hoffman. Additional support came from Dwight A. McBride, James Baldwin Scholar and former Northwestern TGS Dean/Associate Provost.

Adjunct instructor [Lindsay Utz](#) won the Outstanding Achievement in Editing award at this year's [Cinema Eye Honors](#). In October, Doc Media was honored to co-host a screening of the documentary QUEST at the [Block Museum](#) with Utz talking about her experiences editing the film. **Timothy Fryett** (Class of 2017) was an assistant editor on Utz's film, *Quest*.

As noted in previous newsletters, Professor **Marco Williams** has joined the Department and will be fore faculty of [the MFA in Documentary Media](#). With a career of critically acclaimed and award winning documentary films, Professor Williams' newest film [Tell Them We Are Rising](#) (co-directed with Stanley Nelson), is currently screening across the country and had its broadcast premiere on [Independent Lens | PBS](#) on February 19th. His short doc, [Lonnie Holley: The Truth of the Dirt](#), premiered in January as part of the AfroPop series on [World Channel/PTV](#). The doc was also shot and co-produced by fellow new RTVF Assistant Professor **Danielle Beverly**.



### SCREEN CULTURES

In December, Professor **Natalie Bullock-Brown** presented a screening of an excerpt from her work-in-progress, *Baartman, Beyonce and Me*. It was presented by the Multicultural Filmmakers' Collective, with support from the Screen Cultures Program and the Gender and Sexuality Studies Program.

### NEW FACULTY

In September, **Jeb Stuart**, the screenwriter of *Die Hard* and *The Fugitive*, [will be joining the Department and will be affiliated with the Writing for the Screen & Stage program.](#)

Northwestern faculty members [Nick Davis](#) (Department of English), [Brent Huffman](#) (Medill), [Steven Reinke](#) (Art Theory and Practice), and [Domietta Torlasco](#) (Department of French and Italian) have been given courtesy appointments in Radio/Television/Film.

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### WINTER & SPRING ADJUNCTS

**Mickle Maher's** plays have appeared Off-Broadway and around the world, and have been supported by grants from the NEA, the Rockefeller MAP fund, and Creative Capital. They include *There is a Happiness That Morning Is*; *Song About Himself*; *An Apology for the Course and Outcome of Certain Events Delivered by Doctor John Faustus on This His Final Evening*; *The Hunchback Variations*; *The Strangerer*; *Spirits to Enforce*; *Cyrano* (translator) *The Cabinet*; *Lady Madeline*; *The Pine*; and *An Actor Prepares* (an adaptation of Stanislavsky's seminal book). He is a cofounder of Chicago's Theater Oobleck, and has taught playwriting and related subjects at the University of Chicago, Columbia College, and Northwestern University. He currently is writing the book and lyrics for a new musical about basketball commissioned by the Catastrophic Theatre of Houston and Daryl Morey, the General Manager of the Houston Rockets.

**Molly A. Schneider** joins the faculty as an adjunct instructor again this quarter, teaching a seminar on TV Showrunners and Writer-Producers. She is a media historian focusing primarily on American television culture, and her teaching focuses on media history, theory, and criticism in a cultural context. Her most recent research has been a study of the midcentury American television anthology drama, and her subsequent project will look at the ways television has served as a "cautionary" medium through programming like after-school specials and made-for-TV movies. She is an alumna of the Screen Cultures PhD program here at Northwestern, and she also earned her bachelor's degree at NU in Performance Studies. Between these stints as a Wildcat she earned her master's degree in the Division of Critical Studies



(now called Cinema and Media Studies) at the University of Southern California. She is very happy to teach at NU once again!

**Jennifer Rumberger** is a Chicago-based playwright and performer. Recent productions include *Night in Alachua County* with Wildclaw Theatre in Chicago, *Open Blue Sky* at Stella Adler/ Tisch School of the Arts and *The Bride* with the Living Room Playmakers and Chicago Fringe Festival. Jennifer's work has been developed or presented by The Lark Playwrights Center, id Theatre Company, The Gift Theatre Company, Black Box Acting Studio, The Living Room Playmakers, Commission Theatre Company, Wordsmyth Theatre Company, White Rose Miami, Northwestern University, The Seven Devils Playwrights Conference and Chicago Dramatists. She recently performed her nonfiction prose as a part of Hybridsalon3 with the Genesis Ensemble and as a part of TEN 2017 at the Gift Theatre Company. She was a 2015 nominee for the PoNY Fellowship and a 2015 semifinalist for the P73 Playwriting Fellowship, and a 2016 finalist for the Ingram New Works Playwrights Lab. She is a founding member and associate playwright with the Living Room Playmakers in Chicago. MFA: Northwestern University.

**Dee Ryan** is back this quarter, teaching improv. Welcome back, Dee!

New face **Niv Klainer** has joined us as an adjunct this spring. As writer-director, Klainer specializes in narrative films. His first feature film, *BENA*, had its world premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2009 and his first live action short, *MR. KURZWEIL IS DEAD*, premiered at the Cannes Film Festival in 2006. He is currently working on a feature film, *SAINT PETE*, a comedy based on his short *DON'T THINK ABOUT IT*. Since its premiere in December 2016, this short has been selected for more than 50 festivals and received 13 awards.

As editor, Niv has been editing films of all genres and lengths. Films he has edited have been shown in festivals like Sundance, SXSW, TriBeCa and many more. The renowned editing lecturer, Susan Korda, has been using the before and after versions of his work as the subject of her celebrated lecture *Kill Your Darlings* on creative editing.

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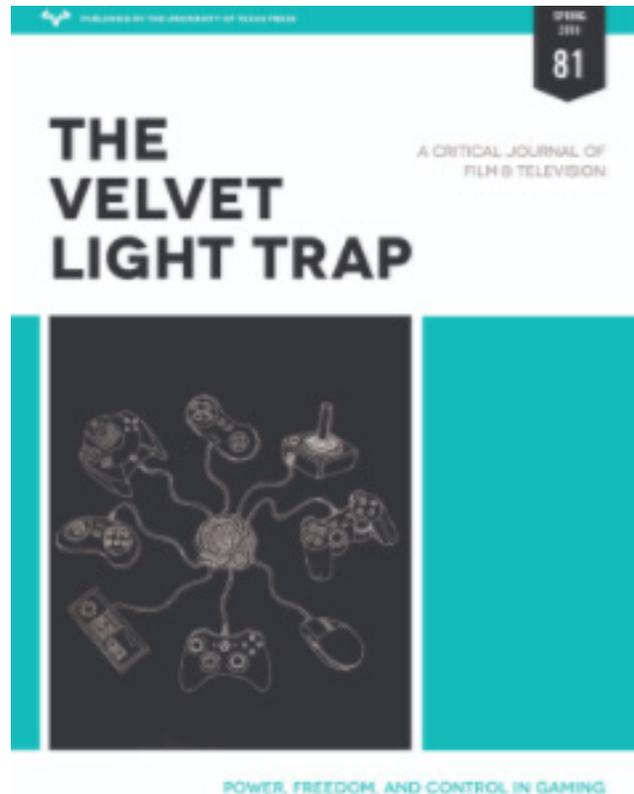
Department of Radio/Television/Film

## SCREEN CULTURES PHD

**Whitney Pow** has won an NU Presidential Fellowship for 2018-2020. This highly selective award is the most prestigious fellowship award for Northwestern graduate students, and less than 15% of nominated students are appointed to the Fellowship.

Whitney's article "Reaching Toward Home: Software Interface as Queer Orientation in the Video Game *Curtain*" was published in the refereed journal *The Velvet Light Trap* issue 81 in March 2018. Whitney is a Ph.D. candidate working in the field of queer video game studies whose dissertation focuses on experimental video games made by queer and transgender game designers. "Reaching Toward Home" examines *Curtain* (2014), a video game made by Laura McGee, also known as Dreamfeel. The game is about intimate partner violence in a relationship between two women, and the player, as the character Ally, cannot leave the relationship because she has been estranged from her family for being queer and transgender. The game simulates the experience of estrangement from space and alienation from home through rendering the apartment the player lives in with her partner as incredibly pixelated—so pixelated, in fact, that it is hard to make out the shape of familiar objects inside of a supposedly "safe" home. Whitney's article examines the

Social Sciences and Humanities  
Research Council



ways in which queer video games and interactive art like *Curtain* can simulate, rather than describe, the experience of structural and social disempowerment that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people experience in the United States.

**Hannah Spaulding** has received a postdoctoral 2-year fellowship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (a Canadian government funded postdoc). She will be working at The Media History Research Center at Concordia University.

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## MFA IN DOCUMENTARY MEDIA STUDENTS

**Pam Austin** is a 2nd year Doc MFA student from Calgary, Canada. Like most RTVF students, she has a number of exciting projects on the go: For her thesis film, she is working on a hybrid-documentary following a 13 year-old boy growing in an apocalyptic Christian church in rural Indiana. In August, she was selected as one of fifty students to attend the Telluride Film Festival Student Symposium, an intensely creative weekend of watching and discussing films with fellow filmmakers, film scholars, and film students. This past summer she worked as an Associate Producer at Guy Bauer Productions in Chicago, producing branded content for companies around the Midwest including Walgreens, Weebly, ELKAY and others. After graduation she will be producing a feature fiction film with fellow Northwestern student, Ryan Lough, about immigration to Chicago.

**Benjamin Buxton's** 1st Quarter film, *On the Rink*, will screen at April's CommFest [RTVF Student Film Screening](#) as part of the BONDS screening starting at 9:30 AM on Saturday, April 21st.

**KB Lee's** thesis film, *The Fountain of Tears*, was named a semi-finalist for the Hollywood [Just4Shorts Film & Screenplay Competition](#).

**Jung Ah Kim's** film *Gundudugi* screened at Indiespace in Seoul, South Korea. The film premiered at the [17th Seoul Independent Documentary Film Festival](#). The Indiespace screening is an encore presentation of some of the top films from this year's festival.

In January, filmmaker **Chris Brown** brought his documentary *The Other Kids* to Block Cinema. The film follows six teens as they struggle through their final days of high school in the gold rush town of Sonora, CA. The screening was featured in [The Daily Northwestern](#).



In February, filmmaker **Penny Lane** screened her award-winning doc *Nuts!* The feature length documentary tells the story of an eccentric genius who built an empire in Depression-era America with a goat testicle impotence cure and a million watt radio station.

Also in February, Canadian filmmaker **Dominic Gagnon** screened his films *Of the North* and *Going South*.

Closing out the Winter NEW Docs series was a Shorts Program featuring films by local Chicago filmmakers **Rachel Pikelny** (*Grace*) and **Milad Mozari** (*Standing Nymph and Man*). Austin-based filmmakers **Patrick Bresnan** and **Ivette Lucas** screened three of their short docs including recent CIFF Best Documentary Short, *The Rabbit Hunt*.

On March 1st, artist-filmmaker **Tala Hadid** screened her films *Your Dark Hair Ihsan* and *House in the Fields*.

For the 3rd consecutive year, the MFA in Documentary Media traveled to Columbia, MO, for the True/False Film Festival to see some of the finest in documentary film. Highlights from this year's festival included features on Mister Rogers, the NYC police corruption doc *Crime and Punishment*, and a screening of **Sebastian Pinzon's** (Class of 2017) thesis documentary, *Palenque*.

Coming this spring, Block Cinema will host the 3rd Annual MFA in Documentary Media Showcase Thesis Showcase, June 13th – 15th. The three day event will feature documentary films and non-fiction interactive pieces from the MFA in Documentary Media Class of 2018.

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### MFA IN WRITING FOR THE SCREEN+STAGE

**Liam Fitzgerald's** play, *Peg*, is being [developed by Broken Nose](#) as part of its developmental program The Paper Trail. The play is "an exploration of contemporary gender roles and the inequality that permeates, and in many ways defines, heterosexuality."

*The Holiday Radio Show*, co-written by **Dolores Diaz**, ran through December 30, 2017 at the Berger Park Coach House. The show was named one of the top 40 holiday shows for the 2017 season by the [Chicago Tribune](#). In addition, Diaz's latest full-length play, *Man of the People*, was selected for the 2018 Chicago New Work Festival with Three Cat Theatre. The play received a development workshop and a public staged reading in February.

### UNDERGRADUTE

**Applause for a Cause** has wrapped production on their feature film "Vanishing Act", written by Taylor Beck, directed by Joy Kim, and produced by Rachel Fimbianti and Scarlett Machson. Their premiere is scheduled for Friday, May 25th. Proceeds will go to Portlight Inclusive Disaster Strategies, a Chicagoland non-profit.

**CatToonz**, an animation production group co-founded by Yadid Licht and Dasha Gorin in the fall, has just been awarded B-status recognition by the Associated Student Government, meaning they are now eligible to apply for funding. They co-premiered an animated short in the fall, partnered with Niteskool to design their opening sequence, led two software workshops, and have three projects currently in production. They also hosted an event with Nickelodeon casting director Lyberti Nelson over winter quarter.



Junior **Linkon Pickus**, MFA Writing 2nd year **Lars Steier**, and junior **Lily Labovitz** traveled to Los Angeles in March as part of the 2018 RTVF Sitcom Production Award. Steier's winning "Cinerama" script was shot in April.

**NSTV** is currently in spring production and will have their end-of-the-year premiere Friday, June 8th.

**Niteskool's** first episode of "One Takes" premiered in February. "One Takes" is a live concert series devoted to highlighting Northwestern University, Evanston and Chicago-land talent.

**Studio 22's** annual premiere will fall on Saturday, June 9th this year. They awarded a plus-up grant to "At the Crossroads Down Yonder", directed by Peter Colbert and produced by Siddhant Gupta and Lily Labovitz, which will be shooting spring quarter. They sponsored 4 films that shot over winter quarter: "Feet", "Crush", "Freehand", and "The Yards". Their second Bindley grant, "Men of Clay", will be shooting spring quarter. Their New Student Grant was awarded to "Sonic Doom", written/directed by Rhett Hoskinson and produced by Michael Iannaconi.

**NUWFA** co-hosted a film screening and Q&A with Penny Lane, director of "NUTS!" at the Block Cinema. Last quarter, they also hosted an internship panel for undergraduates and co-hosted Lena Waithe. Their sponsored production, "Zenobia in Chains", written/directed by Erin Gregory and produced by Dasha Gorin and Lily Labovitz, has wrapped production and will premiere as part of the senior directing lineup on Friday, June 8th.

**NU Channel One** has two webseries pilots currently in production, Zury Cutler's "Wild Things", produced by Drew Foster and David Gordon, and Daniel Sardinias's "DSMAL", produced by Diego Abraham. They also screened the pilot episode of "YUP", written/directed by Yadid Licht and produced by Dasha Gorin; a second episode is in production currently.

Last quarter, **MultiCulti** hosted a script workshoping, co-hosted Lena Waithe, and organized an Oscars viewing party. Their sponsored production, "The Yards", written/directed by Angel Martinez and produced by Annika Weinberg, has wrapped production and will premiere as part of the Studio 22 lineup.

**URSA** has partnered with ten Media Arts Grant recipients this year, including six that are in production this quarter. They will host a MAG premiere on Thursday, June 7. Additionally, their board has authored a handbook for first-time student producers at Northwestern. Lastly, they have partnered with A&O to bring in a spring speaker, to be announced soon.

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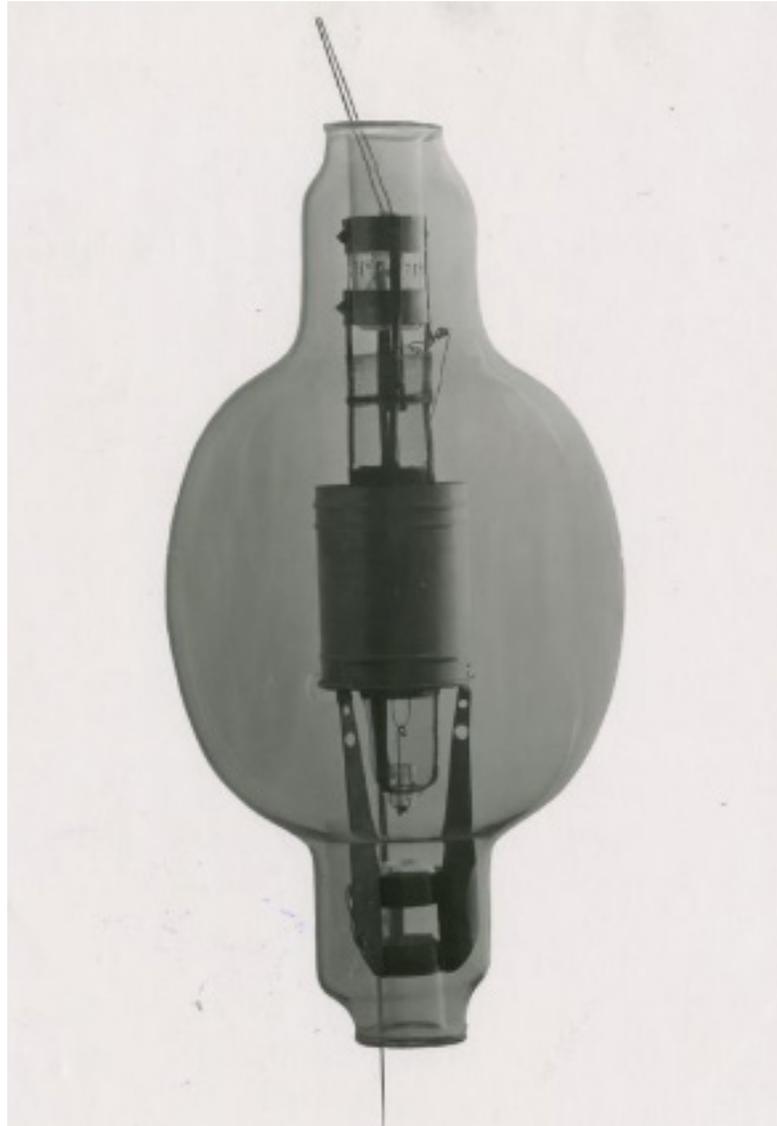
Department of Radio/Television/Film

## MASTERS IN SOUND ARTS & INDUSTRIES

Sound artist **Gregory Whitehead** visited the core "Introduction to Sound Studies" class on November 17, 2017. Whitehead discussed his career working in sound media since the 1980s, and focused on a recent trilogy of works about radio and the war on terror, including a brand-new radio composition "Nothing Like Us Ever Was," based on the work of Carl Sandburg, which he debuted just that week. Students learned aspects of his process and the philosophy of radiophonic sound that he brings to sound production. Whitehead fielded questions about the future of radio, podcasting and other forms of creative audio, and met one-on-one with students to help them develop their creative process.

Radio producers **Chris Hoff** and **Sam Harnett** visited Northwestern on October 17, 2017 as part of "The World According to Sound Live Tour." During the one-hour event hosted by the MA in Sound Arts and Industries, Hoff and Harnett set up a ring of speakers, passed out eye masks, turned out the lights, and surrounded the audience with sound. Hoff and Harnett are co-creators of the 90-second podcast [The World According to Sound](#), an audio show that airs on NPR's All Things Considered.

**Steve Milton** led a collaborative experiential workshop on sonic branding on October 13, 2017, reuniting the MA



in Sound Arts and Industries and the [MS in Engineering Design Innovation](#). After a lecture on sonic branding from Milton, students from both programs broke into small groups to create and present their own sonic brands for Northwestern University.

On September 28, 2017 the MA in Sound Arts and Industries held its third annual **Noise-Water-Meat Cookout** at the patio outside the Northwestern SoundTank. Students and faculty interacted in a social setting while taking in the beautiful weather and delightful food.

The MA in Sound Arts and Industries was thrilled to welcome back seven-time Academy Award-winning sound designer **Gary Rydstrom** on September 19, 2017. Rydstrom gave a guest lecture as part of the course "Sound and Vision: Narrative" exploring his own and historical methods for telling stories through the sound design of a film. Rydstrom was previously featured in our [podcast episode released on January 29, 2016](#).

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## RTVF Undergraduate

*Snugglr*, a webseries co-created and co-produced by **Georgia Bernstein** and **Cemre Paksoy** (Class of 2017), [won a grant from Chicago Filmmakers](#) as part of its Chicago Digital Media Production Fund. *Snugglr* has also been developed into a full-length pilot for Conde Nast and Indigenous Media, and [premiered at the prestigious Tribeca Film Festival in April](#).

*Crick in the Holler*, a short film by **Ursula Ellis** (Class of 2012), was [supported by the Sloan Foundation and had screenings](#) at Woodstock and Cudalorus Film Fest.

**Chamblee Smith** (Class of 2015) penned her first episode of the television show *Bull*, which aired on April 17th.

## Documentary Media

**Justin Reifert** has recently accepted an Assistant Professor of Cinema Studies position within the Department of English of Oakland University in Michigan.

**João Queiroga's** thesis film *Our Skin* played at the prestigious [IDFA Documentary Festival in Amsterdam](#) in November 2017. This continued a successful festival run for *Our Skin*, including wins at the Lili award for Best Short Film at [MIX Copenhagen LGBTQ Film Festival](#), the film was an official selection of [Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival](#), the [NewFest: The NYC LGBT Film Festival](#) and last year the film had its European premiere at [Doclisboa'16 | Festas](#). **Queiroga** was also recently featured in the [Facets Features Resident Video blog](#). *Our Skin* will be screening at this spring's CommFest as part of the Radio/Television/Film Showcase.

**Carlos Cova's** *Fragments* recently played at the [IWM Short Film Festival](#) in London and Denver's [DocuWest Film Festival](#). *Fragments* premiered at the 2016 [Chicago International Film Festival](#). Cova recently wrapped up a year long term as a post-production associate at Kartemquin Films before moving to Barcelona, Spain to continue his career.

**Jessica Ynez Simmons'** thesis documentary, *Emerald Ice*, has continued a successful festival run, with its French premiere at the [Paris College of Art](#) at the [MoveCineArte](#) Festival in November 2017. Jesse will be leaving her current position as Cinematographer in Residence here at NU for an Assistant Professor position at the University of Dayton starting in the fall.

**Miasarah Lai** was named one of [Kartemquin Films](#) 2018 [Diverse Voices in Doc Fellows!](#) DVID is a professional development and mentorship program for documentary filmmakers of color, created by Kartemquin Films and the [Community Film Workshop of Chicago](#).

**Luther Clement's** thesis film *Warm Noise Around Me* made its festival premiere at Barcelona, Spain's [L'Alternativa Barcelona](#). His film *Showman* played at FilmBath in the UK and was nominated for the [6th annual IMDB New Filmmaker Award](#). He is currently working on *Stay Close*, a recipient of the [ESPN/TRIBECA FUTURE FILMMAKER AWARD](#).



**Ashley Brandon's** thesis film *Mickey's Pets* screened at the Big Sky Documentary Film Festival, the 20th Annual Indie Memphis Film Festival (special jury mention), 30th Annual Virginia Film Festival, the New Hampshire Film Festival, the Austin Film Festival, and the St. Louis International Film Festival. Ashley is an Assistant Professor of Film, Television and Media Arts at Quinnipiac University.

Currently in production, *On the Bit*, directed by **Ashley Brandon**, produced by **Luther Clement** and **Nevo Shinaar** was at November 2017's St. Louis International Film Festival where they participated in the Tribeca Film Institute's Documentary Pitch competition. The film received honorable mention, a \$1,000 prize, and a distribution deal through Tribeca (it was also originally funded by Tribeca/ESPN's Future Filmmaker Award).

**Sebastian Pinzon's** thesis documentary *Palenque* played at NEW DIRECTORS/NEW FILMS at NYC's Lincoln Center. The film won the Jury Award for DGA Student Film Award Best Latino Student Filmmakers East Region and had its World Premiere at Locarno Film Festival in Switzerland. The film had its US premiere at the Camden International Film Festival in Maine in September 2017 and won Best Latin American short at Festival Internacional de Cine Valdivia in Chile in October 2017.

**Mina Fitzpatrick's** thesis film *Wandervogel* screened at the 2017 Chicago International Film Festival. The film was presented at San Sebastian as part of the International Film Student Conference. Fitzpatrick has recently taken a position as an Assistant Editor at Chicago's Kindling Group. Fitzpatrick's previous film RUN OF PRESS was nominated for the 2016 ASC Vilmos Zsigmond Heritage Award and screened as part of the 2017 ChicagoMade Shorts at Millennium Park Summer Film Series. Mina also served as an assistant editor on the Oscar nominated doc feature, *Abacus: Small Enough to Jail*.

**Hasan Demirtas'** thesis film, *Carry My Voice*, won Best Documentary from the West Nordic International Film Festival. The film won the Prize of Interantional Visegrad Fund from the Zoom-Zblizenia International Festival.

**Iyabo Kwayana's** thesis film, *Practice*, was [chosen to premiere at Visions Du Reel](#), and will be screening at this spring's CommFest as part of the Radio/Television/Film Showcase.

## Writing for the Screen+Stage

*Saturday at the Starlight*, an independent comedy by **Jake Disch** and Nick Gligor and starring Abigail Breslin, [will be released later this year](#).

**Shannon Pritchard's** play *Like It*, inspired by Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, was staged at DePaul University in February.

**Tyler Zencka's** play [God Of Bears](#) ran in March, and he was profiled for it by Scapi Magazine.

**Sharon Krome's** play [ThroatPunch](#) is premiering in May.

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### CommFest Student Showcase

As part of the recent CommFest, thrown by the School of Communication over the weekend of April 20-21, the Radio/Television/Film department showcased projects from the past decade that garnered attention and launched the careers of recent graduates at such high-profile festivals as Lincoln Center's New Directors/New Films, Hot Docs, San Sebastian, Frameline, IDFA, Sidewalk, SXSW, Tribeca, and more.

"Revelations" presented a program of films/videos made by undergraduates, graduates, and alumni. From improvisational comedy to dark drama and experimental documentary, each work tells a story about secrets, lies, and intimate confessions.

*Snugglr* - Georgia Bernstein (BA '17) & Cemre Paksoy (BA '17)

*Oglesby Park* - Troy Lewis (BA '17)

*Our Skin* - João Queiroga (MFA '16)

*A Heart Felt* - Jingyang Cheng (BA '11)

*My Little Girls Room* - Matt McKenna (BA '10) & Pat Bishop (BA '10)

"Skills" showcased live-action, animated, and documentary shorts exploring aspects of craft, from trapeze artists and musicians to taxidermists and unhappy campers.

*Zhera and Dak-ho* - Hande Vural (MFA '08)

*Elephants and Acrobats* - Vanessa Soberanis (BA '08)

*Palenque* - Sebastian Pinzon (MFA '17)

*Squareknot* - Sam Spahn (BA '16)

*Mickey's Pets* - Ashley Brandon (MFA '17)

"Bonds" included narrative and documentary films exploring how people negotiate ties to friends, neighbors, families, and communities.

*Jonah and the Crab* - Laurel Cohen (BA '15)

*Charming Strangers* - Weichao Xu (MFA '17)

*Pangaea* - Olivia Jasmine Peace (BA '16)

*On the Rink* - Benjamin Buxton (MFA '19)

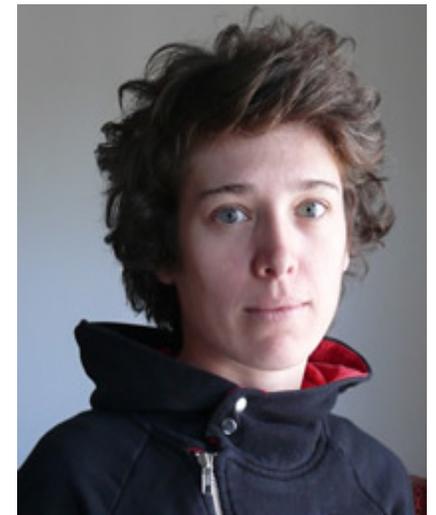
*Practice* - Iyabo Kwayana (MFA '17)

Thanks to our curating committee: Zina Camblin, Kyle Henry, Ariel Rogers, JP Sniadecki, Dave Tolchinsky, and Michael Metzger.



### You are The Ocean

[You are the Ocean](#), a large-scale interactive installation created by assistant professor of Radio/Television/Film **Ozge Samanci**, generates ocean waves and clouds in response to brain waves of a single participant. Water, light, clouds, and lightning are realistically simulated by computer code. A participant wears an EEG (Electroencephalography) headset that measures the user's approximate attention and meditation levels via brain waves. Through relaxation and concentration, the subject can control the water and sky. Attention level affects storminess: with higher concentration, the waves get higher and the clouds thicken. By calming her mind, the subject can create a calm ocean. Samanci collaborated with Dance Program Director Joel Valentin-Martinez for this event, which was held as part of CommFest on April 21 in Kresge Hall.



# Northwestern

# COMMUNICATION

DEPARTMENT OF RADIO/TELEVISION/FILM



The Department of Radio/Television/Film  
The School of Communication  
Northwestern University

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