

FMS Newsletter

Spring 2018



In this Issue

[Director's Letter](#)

[All This Seeing](#)

[A Night with Saul Levine](#)

[Commencement](#)

[First Annual FMS BBQ](#)

[Career Event & Internships](#)

[Televisioning MakerWorld](#)

[Alumni News](#)

[How to Get Involved](#)

Director's Letter

by Malcolm Turvey, FMS Director

The Film and Media Studies program continued to grow apace in the third year of its existence, and we ended it with almost 100 majors, making us one of the largest arts and humanities majors at Tufts. Clearly, students find our program--which blends film and media history, theory and practice within a liberal arts framework--compelling, and this is in no small measure due to the arrival of Tasha Oren, our first professor of TV Studies. Tasha is already having a huge impact on film and media studies at Tufts, and among other events she organized a visit to campus by well-known media scholar [John Caldwell from UCLA](#), about which you can read in this newsletter.

Film and Media Studies inherited from its predecessor, Communications and Media Studies, a robust internship program, and this January, we once again offered our competitive Winternship program, which placed successful candidates at a variety of film and media companies in and beyond Boston for week-long internships during the Winter break. We are tremendously grateful to the folks at the following organizations for facilitating these intensive internships, many of who are Tufts alumni: BBK Worldwide, The Boston Globe, Digitas, Filmmakers Collaborative, Greenough Brand Storytellers, Havas Media, Hill Holliday, WBUR, WGBH-Children's Media, WGBH Radio, Bona Fide Productions, UTA, APCO Worldwide, GREY New York, Smartypants Pictures (Seftel Productions), Trickle Up, WNET/Channel 13, Glass Entertainment Group, and NBC-Providence. Meanwhile, thanks to the tireless fundraising and organizational efforts of Tufts alumna Rosanna Xia (A11) and her team in memory of their beloved classmate, CJ Saraceno (A11), this year's Saraceno intern, Audrey Fernandez, will be spending part of her summer working with alumnus Albert Berger (A79) at Bona Fide, the production company responsible for such memorable films as Little Miss Sunshine and Nebraska.

Albert was one of the many illustrious Tufts alumni who returned to campus in March for a [Careers in Film, Entertainment, and Media forum](#). With a keynote by Julie Rapaport (A06), development executive at Amazon Studios, who was interviewed by Nancy Glass (J77), this event gave our students the rare opportunity to network with and learn first-hand from alumni working in many different areas of film and media. In addition to Julie, Nancy, and Albert, we express our sincere gratitude to Seth Baron (A05), Judy Bowman (J92), Arjun Chawla (A07), Peter Chianca (A90), Peter Gal (A90), Jeff Gaspin (A20P), Lauren Goldstein (J96), Craig LeMoult (A98), Ben Samuels (A09), Mark Scholnick (A02), Kimber Smith (A99), Stephen Tedeschi (A93), Valerie Wencis (A04), and Angelina Zhou (A13) for donating their valuable time to impart their wisdom to our students, and you can read more about the event in this newsletter. The week before, we were lucky enough to be visited by Andrea Nelson Meigs (J90), a senior talent and literary agent at ICM Partners who gave an inspirational talk about her career. We are always looking for new Winternship sites and other ways ways to connect our students with our wonderful alumni working in media and beyond, [so don't hesitate to let us know if you would like to help](#).

This semester had many other highlights including a visit to campus from famed

experimental filmmaker [Saul Levine](#), which Natalie Minik writes about in this newsletter. And we were honored to co-sponsor the 13th Annual Edward R. Murrow Forum on Issues in Journalism featuring Katy Turr, which was organized by Julie Dobrow. But nothing quite beat watching our ferociously talented seniors graduate during Commencement, a short video of which you can see [below](#). One of them, Elizabeth Brooke, has [written about the multi-media installation](#) she completed for her Senior Honors Thesis in this newsletter.

I hope you are all as excited as I am that the Film and Media Studies program is prospering, and I wish you all a wonderful summer.

All This Seeing: Senior Thesis

by Elizabeth Brooke, A18

All This Seeing, which takes the form of a photo book, wall installation, and short film, was born from many months studying film and art theory, primarily those of John Berger, Laura Mulvey, and Jonathan Finn, and art works by Cindy Sherman, Mike Mandel, Bruce Conner, and Sophie Calle. Over a period of several months, in an effort to “see surveillantly,” (a term borrowed from Jonathan Finn) I would set the camera up, roll video, and place myself in front of it, walking in and out of the frame.

After “surveilling” myself, I combed through hours of footage, frame by frame, zooming in, selecting and “making” the photographs; for a second time, I made myself the object of my own scrutiny, and became acutely aware of my own vision as it was directed at myself. I selected and sequenced 32 images of the hundreds I made, which became the book and wall installation. The photographs were installed in a stairwell in Tisch Library, in order as one ascends the stairs.

It was always important to me that the sequence would also become a book; the nature of the photographs as “artifacts” of my own observation made the images particularly well

suited to be printed and archived in this way. Additionally, the turning of the page becomes the perfect movement “forward” through the narrative, reinforcing the important of order and sequence, just like the stairwell. The accompanying film was projected at the top of the stairs, and was composed of all 150 images I made, arranged in triptychs that changed periodically.

Ultimately, *All This Seeing* presents, I think, two ways of getting at my own frustration with the gaze in photography and film. By turning it against myself first, and then presenting the images in ways that remind the viewer of the futility of their looking, the gaze becomes overdetermined, and loses just a little bit of its power.



A Night with Saul Levine



by *Natalie Minik*
Lecturer & Technical Support Specialist

On March 29, 2018, Film and Media Studies hosted a screening with the experimental filmmaker, Saul Levine. Levine is a longtime professor at Massachusetts College of Art and Design, whom scholar P. Adams Sitney called “one of the most underrated filmmakers in the American avant-garde cinema.”

Levine is also the programmer of MassArt Film Society, a primary venue for experimental film in the Boston area. This event was an opportunity for the Tufts Film and Media Studies community to become acquainted with Levine’s large body of work, which uses diaristic montage to deal with the political and personal in an honest and direct way. Bringing filmmakers, like Levine, to the Tufts community is a chance for Film and Media Studies to consider the creative potential of film beyond traditional narrative structures.

Commencement 2018



First Annual FMS BBQ

In early May, we celebrated our graduating FMS seniors with a BBQ for all of our faculty and majors. It was a great chance to enjoy good food and good company. We hope that this becomes an annual tradition!



Career Events, Internships Show Students What It Takes to Work in the Media

by Leslie Goldberg, FMS Internship Director

Every year, Film and Media Studies offers students unique and exciting opportunities—internships, “Winternships,” and career events—to help them gain exposure to the media industry. During the 2017-2018 school year, FMS was particularly active in engaging students in learning about the fields of film, public relations, advertising, journalism, television, and more.

Alumni share war stories at Careers in Media event

On Friday, March 9th, nearly 100 students participated in the highly successful “Careers in Film, Entertainment, and Media,” a day-long, interactive forum about the film industry, public relations, advertising, journalism, and nonprofit communications. Sponsored by Nancy Glass ('77) of Glass Entertainment Group and co-hosted by FMS, the Career Center, the Drama and Dance department, and University Advancement, the event featured alumni from Los Angeles, New York, Boston, and other cities around the country. During a Thursday evening dinner, Friday panel discussions, and a lunchtime networking event, alumni talked with students about how to break into the media industry and how to make the most of their time at Tufts.

After Nancy Glass welcomed students and faculty, Julie Rapaport ('06), a development executive at Amazon Studios, gave an inspiring keynote address about how she worked her way up from the mailroom of a talent agency to developing television content for Amazon. Glass and Rapaport then conducted a Q&A about Rapaport’s insights into the industry and her advice for Tufts students.

In the breakout panel sessions that followed, alumni shared their career path “war stories” and answered students’ questions. The first set of panels was focused on the “State of the Industry” in television, film, PR/marketing/advertising and journalism; a second set of panels, entitled “Landing your First Gig,” “How to Pitch/Fund Your Idea,” and “Using Your Creative Skills for Social Good” helped students understand how to market their Tufts experiences to get jobs and find their place in the competitive media world.

Students attending the panels were excited to hear from accomplished professionals, including advertising agency executives, film and television developers, radio producers, local journalists, and more. Students had the chance to ask detailed questions about everything from how to make the most of an internship to how to get your resume to the top of the pile. At an informal lunch following the panels, students, faculty, alumni, and staff mingled and made personal connections. For graduating seniors, the chance to network with media industry professionals was especially exciting; students came away from the event with valuable insider insights and lots of business cards!

Students garner hands-on experience at internships

FMS offers a robust, for-credit internship program. Working on site in Boston and surrounding communities, students get the chance to conduct real projects, meet with clients, and learn from top-notch professionals in the fields of journalism, advertising, film, nonprofit communications, and more. Here's what a few of our interns had to say about their internship experiences this spring:

“This semester, I interned at the public relations firm Solomon McCown & Co., on the healthcare, education, and nonprofit team. I loved having the opportunity to see how the media side of these industries functions. I also gained insight into the topics most current and significant in these fields: from how #MeToo impacts the conversation around an all-female education, to getting a front row seat into the latest biomedical developments out of the top research institutions in Boston, and more. It was an incredibly engaging, fast-paced, and varied experience, and I have learned so much to bring with me as I graduate!
—*Amy Sokolow, Class of 2018*

“I went into this internship knowing next to nothing about sales and advertising. Boston magazine, which provides lifestyle, real estate, and other content for the affluent of Greater Boston, is one of the strongest regional magazines in the country, but its office is relatively small. As a sales and client services intern, I did prospecting, which involves finding sales/marketing contacts of potential advertisers for sales representatives to reach out to. I also helped put together ad campaign recaps and proposals, proof-read and fact-checked ad proofs, and monitored sponsored content campaigns using digital programs. One of the most interesting aspects of this opportunity was being able to sit in on sales meetings, where I learned a lot about the integral role of the sales department, and how much it ties into the culture of Boston magazine. Through this experience, I met individuals in the editorial and marketing departments, gaining a sense of what being a journalist or in-house marketing professional is like. My supervisors and the other people I met at Boston magazine were supportive and friendly, and it was great being able to observe the dynamics of a magazine that publishes on a pretty big scale.
—*Silvia Curry, Class of 2020*

“This semester, I interned at the PR and marketing firm Schneider Associates, located in

the financial district of Boston. As an intern, I supplied daily social content for the agency's social channels, wrote blog posts about industry news and agency updates, assisted team members with marketing tasks, and researched potential new clients. During my time at Schneider Associates, I got insider knowledge about agency life and how a fast-paced marketing and PR firm operates day-to-day. I loved working with SA because of the incredible team who made sure that I had the resources necessary to complete all tasks and were there to welcome me into the company. I would recommend Schneider Associates to anyone at Tufts who is interested in learning more about PR and marketing within a fast-paced environment!

—*Danny Knight, Class of 2019*

Ever-popular Winternship program keeps students busy and warm during January

For over a decade, the FMS Winternship program has been a coveted experience for Tufts students during the January winter break. This year, the competitive program—which received more than 150 applications for 29 slots—sent students to media sites around the country, including those in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Providence, RI, and Los Angeles. Often described as “intern boot camp,” the Winternship program gives students exposure to careers in advertising, journalism, public relations, television, filmmaking, and talent management; they get the chance to shadow media professionals, work on special projects, attend networking events, and participate in the day-to-day inner workings of the media industry. This year, Winterns came away with valuable insights about their career interests and what it “takes” to make it in the media industry.

Whether participating in the internship program or attending events, students had a range of opportunities to expand their horizons and learn how careers in media are a great match for their Tufts liberal arts education.

If you are interested in offering an internship or Winternship, or participating in an FMS career event, please contact Leslie Goldberg at leslie.goldberg@tufts.edu.

"Televisioning MakerWorld"



by Tasha Oren, Associate Professor

With super-portable high-quality cameras, home software editing systems, and—most importantly—Youtube as a free distribution platform, why would anyone go to film school? What's more, are we entering a new era where conventional aesthetics learned in film school are giving way to a new, internet-grown aesthetic? What IS digital-maker culture like on the inside of the Youtube eco-system?

These were some of the opening questions framing an illuminating talk by famed media scholar and UCLA professor John Caldwell. Caldwell, who visited campus this past February, shared parts from his current, fascinating and far-reaching study that took us from the set of *Games of Thrones* to the small production hubs of star Youtubers to ask: how is web-based media different?

But the bulk of Caldwell's talk was about how Youtube is cultivating this "maker culture". To learn this, Caldwell attended a sponsored convention for Youtubers (and their parents—turns out most of these tireless laborers are legal minors!) that taught aspiring makers how to manage their budding career ("should you incorporate yourself?") and the secret of success ("always be making content," "post something new every single day" "cultivate

return views”). Here, the ethic of free self-expression without the confines and hierarchies of “old media” gatekeeping is turned on its head from liberating to exploitative.

Yes, Caldwell told us, Youtube is disruptive to old media structures, but not necessarily in all the ways we imagine.

What film and media schools offer students, he added, is not only a grounding in aesthetics, history, criticism and best-practices in production, but also—and crucially—an understanding of how interrelated media industries function: their economics histories, formal qualities, and labor practices. In this, Caldwell reminded us, media making is crucially both art and work.

Alumni News

Jonathan Abarbanel (A68) recently developed the first completely online theatre course offered by the University of Illinois at Chicago, School of Theatre & Music, where he has taught for 10 years. It's Chicago Theatre, Past and Present, which Jonathan prefers to call "Making a Splash on the Lake." It covers Chicago theatre from the 1834 appearance of an itinerant magician and fire-eater, to the development of improvisational comedy, to the heady Off-Loop Theatre Movement that produced David Mamet, John Malkovich, Laurie Metcalf and five Tony Award-winning theatre companies. It's offered to students via the Blackboard educational platform and features a combination of lecture segments, video and audio segments and student-interactive Sway segments. Jonathan owns the intellectual content of the course (everyone asks "When is your book being published?") while UIC owns the online presentation of it. If someone else teaches the course using the existing materials, Jonathan will receive royalties. Offered for the first time last September to a maximum of 100 students, the course quickly "sold out" and did so again for the spring semester.

Daniel Camilletti (A17) recently started working as a post-production intern at an editing house in Toronto called Saints Editorial. They work with major brands as well as distinguished and international advertising agencies such as McCann and Saatchi and Saatchi. In his spare time, he continues to work on his TV show, which he started during his senior year at Tufts, and has continued to work on with co-creator and fellow Tufts alum Cyrus Veysi.



Mona Damluji (A03) is an assistant professor of film and media studies at UC Santa Barbara. She is also a producer of the Emmy and Peabody award-nominated short documentary series "[Secret Life of Muslims.](#)" which was directed, executive-produced and co-created by fellow Jumbo Joshua Seftel.



Nayantara Dutta's (A17) CMS thesis was published in March. It is a trend report exploring the power and influence of millennial Muslim women in the US, UK, and Indonesia called [Unapologetically Muslim](#). She's received press coverage from outlets like [Teen Vogue](#), [The Drum](#), [Dazed](#), and [Campaign](#). She is also working on forthcoming articles with [Bustle](#) and [Refinery29](#).

Frederick Fierst (A70) is senior partner of Fierst, Kane & Bloomberg LLP in Northampton, MA. His firm received the 2017 Media Law Firm of the Year in Massachusetts award by Global Law Experts for its work in the entertainment and media industries. This is the third consecutive year that the firm has won this award.



Lisa Granshaw (A09) recently started a new media company, [GeekFold](#). GeekFold offers a weekly newsletter highlighting the latest geek fashion news along with original in-depth features from our website.

Patrick Lackey (A17) is a PA and Assistant Editor at Ross Greenburg Productions where he is working on a documentary series called Innovators which will air on Discovery Channel.

Jaffar Mahmood (A00) recently became the producing director for CBS's *Young Sheldon*.



James McClellan (A16) lives in Los Angeles and is an Executive Assistant to Charles Marie Anthonioz at Iconoclast. They produce commercials, music videos, and film/TV including Gus Van Sant's upcoming movie *Don't Worry, He Won't Get Far on Foot* which opens in theaters July 13.



This year, **Sam McGoldrick** (A13) has had the opportunity to develop an independent feature script with a company called [Film Independent](#) in Los Angeles and with generous support of a [grant](#).

Emily Meyer (A05) published a YA novel, *Layover*, with Random House in February. She [co-wrote the book with her best friend](#), Amy Andelson.

Talmon Smith (A16) is an editorial assistant for the New York Times, Sunday Review & Opinion Desk. He is also a freelance contributor at VICE and The Village Voice.

Erin Stone (A14) is currently pursuing a Master's in Journalism at UC Berkeley School of Journalism. This semester she was published in [Mother Jones](#) and [National Geographic](#) online. Learn more about Erin on her website: <http://erinleystone.com/>

Benjamin Taylor (A17) is a fellow at the [VII Foundation](#), a documentary nonprofit. At VIIF, he has been shooting a feature length documentary about Boston Public School food programs called Eat Up, which just recently finished shooting and is in post-production. He also produces promotional and educational content for VIIF, and has shot pieces in Cambodia and Spain in the past year for them. His last short film, [In the Off Season](#), screened this past winter at the Green Mountain Film Festival, and is currently in consideration for other festivals and will be released online this spring.

How to Get Involved with FMS

Share your news

Have you made a film, published an article, or started a new job that you want to share with the Tufts FMS community? Send your news, photos, and videos to the FMS Program Administrator, Courtney McDermott at courtney.mcdermott@tufts.edu.



Want to help students?

We are always looking for alumni interested in participating in media career panels or sponsoring student interns for our internship or "Winternship" program.

If you have a great media-related internship opportunity at your organization, would like to offer career advice, or otherwise mentor Tufts FMS students, please email our Internship Director, Leslie Goldberg at leslie.goldberg@tufts.edu.



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