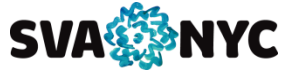


**2019 - 2020**

**Thesis Student  
Guidelines**

**Film**



## Letter from the Thesis Committee

Dear Thesis Students,

In our opinion, you all have the potential to become significant artists. From the beginning of your experience at SVA, you have each shown talent and originality. Your thesis year should be the culmination of all your hard work.

The SVA Film and Animation Thesis Program is a unique experience, which can become the foundation of a very successful career. It represents your chance to complete one or more projects over the course of a full year with all the support, guidance and resources that SVA can provide.

You will be putting your time, effort, and financial resources into this endeavor. We urge you to choose a subject that you are passionate about, that no one can do exactly as you would.

The School of Visual Arts will encourage and support any type of project you choose to undertake: narrative fiction, documentary, experimental, etc. — as long as the work demonstrates commitment, an advanced level of content, craft, technique, and quality.

All of us have the highest expectations for you as individuals, and as a class. We look forward to working closely with you and hope to help you realize the success you have already worked so hard to achieve.

Sincerely,

The Thesis Committee

Mary Lee Grisanti, Acting Chair  
Ed Bowes  
Joan Brooker-Marks  
Kamil Dobrowolski  
George LaVoo

## THESIS ADVISORS 2019-2020

All thesis students must choose a thesis advisor from this list. Any other advisor requires the permission from the Thesis Committee.

Please be aware that no advisor may accept more than 8 students. **Your completed advisor agreement must be submitted by April 26th.**

1. Bowes, Ed	edbowes@aol.com
2. Brooker, Joan	joanbrooker@gmail.com
3. DiGiacomo, Angelo	digiphocus@gmail.com
4. Dobrowolski, Kamil	kamildobrowolski@gmail.com
5. Georgevich, Dejan	dgeorgevich@att.net
6. Grisanti, Mary Lee	maryleegrisanti@gmail.com
7. Hillier, Larry	hillier@verizon.net
8. Katz, David	davecutsvideo@gmail.com
9. LaVoo, George	georgelavoo@gmail.com
10. Newman, Chris	cnsound55@gmail.com
11. Petrosino, Sal	spetrosino@sva.edu
12. Robinson-Lee, Sherese	srobinson@sva.edu
13. Ricker, Jenna	jenna.ricker@gmail.com
14. Simopoulos, Nana	nana@nana.net
15. Stephens, Todd	toddjstephens@gmail.com
16. Sunara, Igor	igsun@earthlink.net
17. Erik Anjou	eanjou@earthlink.net
18. Mihaela Mihut	mihutmh@gmail.com
19. Brian Gonzalez	bgonzalez@sva.edu
20. Deniz Demirer	ddemirer@sva.edu

**THESIS COMMITTEE:** Mary Lee Grisanti, Ed Bowes, Joan Brooker, Kamil Dobrowolski, George LaVoo

# REQUIREMENTS

## **Directors**

Directors are required to direct one 10-20 minute production that demonstrates an advanced level of craft and technique. Music videos and advertisements are not permitted. You must turn your script in for Thesis Committee evaluation at least 3 weeks prior to principal photography to the email address [filmthesis@sva.edu](mailto:filmthesis@sva.edu). Screenplays submitted with less than a 3-week window will not be approved.

**The email submissions MUST include the information from the top of the Thesis Approval Form (pg. 11)**

## **Editors**

Editing Specialists are in general required to edit two SVA Thesis projects. However, one project will be considered based on length and complexity - only the Thesis Committee can decide if the project qualifies. Editors are responsible for supervising and planning all stages of the post-production. If an Editor is directing a project to fulfill Thesis, then they must follow ALL of the guidelines and deadlines stated above in the Directors category.

## **Cinematographers**

Cinematographers must function as Director of Photography on two SVA Thesis Projects. As such, they are responsible for the visual interpretation of the project, lighting, the camera crew, camera equipment selection, and operation. Cinematographers may direct their own projects as a fulfillment of the requirement. If a cinematographer is directing a project to fulfill Thesis, then they must follow ALL of the guidelines and deadlines stated above in the Directors category.

## **Sound Recordists & Designers**

Sound Designers must receive written approval from the Committee to concentrate in this area. Sound designers must design and execute the production sound on 3 SVA thesis projects and design the post-production sound on 2 thesis projects.

## **Screenwriters**

Screenwriters must complete a polished final draft of a full – length 90 to 120 page screenplay. If a screenwriter is directing a project to fulfill Thesis, then they must follow ALL of the guidelines and deadlines stated above in the Directors category, however that does not excuse them from the requirement of writing a full-length screenplay.

## THESIS DEADLINE DATES 2019-2020 (Directing/Cinematography/Editing)

***PLEASE NOTE: ANY EDITOR OR CINEMATOGRAPHER MAKING HIS OR HER OWN FILM MUST FOLLOW ALL DATES FOR DIRECTORS. THOSE WORKING ON OTHER PROJECTS MUST SUBMIT REPORTS AND PLANS AS DETAILED BELOW.***

- April 9** Completed advisor agreement.
- June 7** FEATURE FILM OUTLINES MUST BE APPROVED BY JUNE 8. PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY MUST BE FINISHED BY NOVEMBER 3rd.
- Writing majors who are also making films must submit a synopsis and/or first draft(s).
- September 15* *Advisor Reports due.*
- October 15* *Advisor Reports due.*
- October 11** Directors – story synopses or first drafts of scripts due. A reminder that this also includes all other majors who are shooting films. **Documentarians** are required to submit an in-depth proposal for their projects. Samples available upon request.
- November 1** PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY for all students making feature films must be completed.
- November 1** **FILM AND ANIMATION DEPARTMENT PRE-PRODUCTION GRANTS** (judged on scripts only). STUDENTS MUST HAVE 3.5 GPA AND U.S. CITIZENS MUST SHOW PROOF OF VOTER REGISTRATION.
- November 15* *Advisor Reports due. Please indicate those students who are not meeting their thesis obligations.*

- November 15** Cinematographers, Editors, and Sound Majors must submit a report (pg. 12) that specifies in detail the projects they are working on and the status of each. Submit the report to [filmthesis@sva.edu](mailto:filmthesis@sva.edu).
- December 9** All students making films must submit a completed draft of their script.
- December 15* *Advisor Reports due. Students grades will be either Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory*
- January 15* *Advisor Reports due.*
- February 1** Principal photography must be completed. Thesis priority for equipment ends.
- February 15* *Advisor reports due.*
- February 21** **FILM AND ANIMATION DEPARTMENT POST-PRODUCTION GRANTS:** (Judged on the basis of TEN minutes of edited footage from the film - No dailies and no trailers).
- March 15* *Advisor Reports due. Please detail student's progress and completion date(s). Indicate those students who are not meeting their thesis obligations.*
- April 15* *Advisor Reports due. Please give YOUR students a letter grade.*
- April 17** **Thesis films due and must be delivered by noon.**
- May 2 & 3** **End of year screenings at SVA Theater.**

## THESIS DEADLINE DATES FOR SCREENWRITERS 2019-2020

**June 7** Writers who are making films must submit a synopsis and/or first draft of script or proposal.

**July 5** Writers who are making films must submit final drafts of scripts/ proposal.

**September 9** First Day of Masterclass – Outlines due to advisors, [filmthesis@sva.edu](mailto:filmthesis@sva.edu), and Master Class Dropbox.

**October 25** First Acts Due to advisors, [filmthesis@sva.edu](mailto:filmthesis@sva.edu), and Dropbox.

**December 13** Second acts due to advisors, [filmthesis@sva.edu](mailto:filmthesis@sva.edu), and Dropbox.

**January 17** Rough Draft of Features Due to advisors, [filmthesis@sva.edu](mailto:filmthesis@sva.edu), and Dropbox.

**March 23** First acts of scripts due. Screenwriters should submit a PDF of their script via email to [filmthesis@sva.edu](mailto:filmthesis@sva.edu)

NOTE: Be sure to include a title page with your name and the date of the draft.

**April 17** **Final Drafts of Feature Due. Screenwriters should submit a PDF of their script via email to [filmthesis@sva.edu](mailto:filmthesis@sva.edu)**

NOTE: Be sure to include a title page with your name and the date of the draft.

## **STATEMENT OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS**

SVA does not have any ownership or other interest in any “Works” (including any artwork, writing, research, animation, film, video, design, software, application or other works that may be protected by copyright) created by a student while enrolled at SVA, unless the student agrees otherwise in writing, except that SVA has a limited right to use the student’s Works for educational, promotion and accreditation purposes.

**Students must clear all rights to any source materials used in their projects.**

## **STUDENT RESOURCES**

- **Film Department Web Page: [filmandanimation.sva.edu](http://filmandanimation.sva.edu)**
- **Access to Audio Network through the library database: [library.sva.edu](http://library.sva.edu)**

### **EMAILS:**

**Film Thesis Committee- [filmthesis@sva.edu](mailto:filmthesis@sva.edu)**

**Chairman’s Office General inquiries- [bfafilm@sva.edu](mailto:bfafilm@sva.edu)**



## THESIS STUDENT / ADVISOR CONTRACT

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Student ID#: \_\_\_\_\_  
Specialization: \_\_\_\_\_  
Advisor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I have selected the following individual as my thesis advisor for the 2019-20 thesis year. I understand that my obligations to my thesis advisor and the Thesis Committee are as follows:

- Communicate with my advisor on a weekly basis
- Attend monthly thesis review meetings scheduled with my Thesis Advisor
- Notify the Chair's Office or filmthesis@sva.edu if I am unable to meet with my advisor
- Submit copies of all materials pertaining to my thesis to my advisor AND the Chair's office
- Inform svafilmthesis@gmail.com AND the Chair's office if my contact information changes
- Submit 2 copies of my script, with Thesis Advisor approval, at least 3 weeks before principal photography, for approval by the Thesis Committee. Approval takes approximately 14 days.
- Submit all required materials to the Dusty Film Festival Office by their established deadlines
- Failure to comply with Thesis Guidelines, requirements, and due dates will adversely affect thesis status, final grade, and eligibility for grants.
- **THESIS ADVISORS** will be provided a thesis report form that will be sent to advisors at the 1st of each month.

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Student signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Advisor Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Thesis Committee Member:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Thesis \* **TEST SHOOT** \*Approval

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Specialization \_\_\_\_\_
3. Phone \_\_\_\_\_
4. Email: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Project Title: \_\_\_\_\_
6. DETAILED Equipment List:

THESIS STUDENT: With the approval of either a Thesis Committee member or the Film Chairman, I would like to take out the following equipment which is required for the completion of the test shoots for my thesis project.

I agree that I will be the only one using this equipment to shoot tests and will not begin my actual thesis shoot until I have obtained thesis approval.

THESIS ADVISOR: I approve the release to my thesis advisee all equipment required for Completion of the thesis project titled above.

## **\*REQUIRED SIGNATURES \***

**Thesis Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Thesis Committee Member:** \_\_\_\_\_

\*If students want to check out equipment on additional dates, i.e. pick ups, etc. They must have their advisor contact the Production Office indicating their approval

# THESIS APPROVAL FORM

1. Thesis Student: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Specialization: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Email: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Project Title: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Thesis Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Thesis Advisor Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**THESIS ADVISOR:**

As Thesis Advisor to the above named student, I have found the FINAL VERSION of the above named project the best it can be in relation to my advisee's abilities.

**\*REQUIRED SIGNATURES\***

Thesis Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Thesis Committee Member: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE TAKE NOTE:**

In order to schedule and book equipment, thesis approval must be obtained and the Production Office must have a copy of this signed form. Thus, you must carefully schedule your shooting date(s) and allow enough time for both Thesis Approval and equipment request/coordination with the Production Office. At least 5 weeks prior to principal photography, and with your advisor's signed approval, please submit this form to the Thesis Box in the Film Chairman's office. Your script should be submitted at the same time in PDF format to [filmthesis@sva.edu](mailto:filmthesis@sva.edu), informing the Thesis Committee that you are seeking Thesis Approval and that you have placed this for into the Thesis box.

Thesis committee review and approval will take a minimum of 14 days. Once approved, make sure the Production Office has a copy of this signed Thesis Approval form so that you can begin the process of equipment request(s) and scheduling pick-up dates.

# THESIS REPORT

## For Cinematography, Editing & Sound Majors

1. Thesis Student: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Specialization: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Email: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Thesis Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Thesis Advisor Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### PROJECT 1

Project Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Director: \_\_\_\_\_

Director's Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Status of Project: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### PROJECT 2

Project Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Director: \_\_\_\_\_

Director's Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Status of Project: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Pre-Production Grant Application

1. Name:
2. Date:
3. Specialization:
4. Title of Project:
5. Local Address:
6. Phone Number:
7. E-mail:
8. Thesis Advisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## **\* REQUIRED WITH APPLICATION \***

- Copy of Voter Registration (U.S. citizens only)
- Transcript (**minimum cumulative 3.5 cumulative GPA required**)
- Script
- Thesis folder materials up to date
- Thesis Advisor's Signature
- Acceptance of grant must be acknowledged in your credits
- First submission to the Dusty Program Book

**DEADLINE: FRIDAY NOVEMBER 1st, 2019**

**Clearly label all materials and bring to Room 500.  
FILM CHAIRMAN'S OFFICE**

# Post-Production Grant Application

1. Name:
2. Date:
3. Specialization:
4. Title of Project:
5. Local Address:
6. Phone Number:
7. E-mail:
8. Thesis Advisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## **\*REQUIRED WITH APPLICATION\***

- ◆ 10 minutes of your film (as a QuickTime file) on a thumb/flash drive. Or you can send a .mov file to filmthesis@sva.edu
- ◆ Copy of Voter Registration (U.S. citizens only)
- ◆ Transcript (**minimum cumulative 3.5 cumulative GPA required**)
- ◆ Thesis folder materials up to date
- ◆ Thesis Advisor's Signature
- ◆ Acceptance of grant must be acknowledged in your credits

**DEADLINE: Friday, February 21st, 2020**

**Clearly label all materials and bring to Room 500.  
FILM CHAIRMAN'S OFFICE**

# SCREENWRITER'S GRANT APPLICATION

1. Name:
2. Date:
3. Title of Script:
4. Local address:
5. Phone number:
6. Primary email:
7. Thesis advisor signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## **\*REQUIRED WITH APPLICATION\***

- Submission of the first act of your feature film (3 hole punched, brackets)
- Please leave your name off of your script so the judging can remain anonymous
- Copy of voter registration (unless you are an international student)
- Transcript (**minimum cumulative 3.5 cumulative GPA required**)
- Thesis materials up to date
- Thesis advisor signature on this form
- First and second submission to the Dusty Program Book

**DEADLINE: Monday, March 23rd, 2020**

**Clearly label all materials and bring to Room 500.  
FILM CHAIRMAN'S OFFICE**

## NOTES ON THESIS SHOOTS

### Principle Photography

- Prior to reserving equipment, Thesis students must receive a clearance signature from their Thesis advisor and one Committee member. You must also be in good financial standing with the school.
- Thesis students will be allowed a maximum booking period of 21 days.\*
- Thesis students reserving equipment must submit equipment request forms to the Reservations Coordinator a minimum of two weeks prior to scheduled pick-up and meet with the Reservations Coordinator during office hours and confirm your order one week prior to the reservation.
- Thesis students lose priority to equipment and studios on February 1, 2019.
- All thesis students must contact the reservations coordinator, Roxanne Miller (ext. 2183) to discuss projects and reserve equipment. Hours TBD.
- You must have a completed and signed approval form before you can reserve equipment.
- Thesis students must have written approval from their advisor every time equipment is requested.
- For details on all approvals, see the Thesis Students Guidelines, available in the Film Chair's Office on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor.

**\*Any exceptions to the 21 day limit must be approved by the Thesis Committee.**

### Thesis Test Shoots

- Test shorts allow you to plan how you will work with the camera and filters in your location(s).
- Test shoot approval is an investigative tool to help you prepare, and is not approval for your actual shoot.
- As a result, test shoot approval only allows you to check out: a camera, tripod, basic sound and filters, on only for a reservation period of Friday to Monday.
- We highly recommend test shoots, especially for a project as important as your thesis.
- Thesis Test Shoot approval sheets must be signed by your Thesis advisor and one Thesis Committee member.
- Refer to the Thesis Guidelines booklet for specific instructions (available in the Film Chair's Office on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor).
- Test shoots for the Arri AMIRA, Red Epic, and Sony FS7 are possible, but depend on camera availability and they must be conducted in one of the department's studios over a single weekend or overnight.

### Thesis Crowd-Funding Shoots

- Equipment request for crowd-funding will be limited to a camcorder and a tripod for Friday to Monday checkouts only.



## PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

### Precautions that Safeguard Equipment and Improve Performance

- If your production is located at the beach, desert, and/or has proximity to water, it is incumbent on filmmakers to take extra precautions.
  - a) Sand floats freely in the wind and penetrates throughout the camera, tripod, sound recorder and lens creating damage to internal mechanics. If this happens, equipment will have to be serviced at great cost – to you. Make sure the equipment is always protected; wrap all equipment thoroughly to protect it when anywhere near water, sand, or dirt.
- Clean lenses with professional lens cleaning tissue and cleaning solution only.
- Do not try any cleaning procedures without asking our advice.
- Never attempt to feed electrical current to film or video camera connectors using nonstandard power sources, as it will damage camera motor and electronics. Never connect a battery belt to a camera while charging.
- Never leave a camera unattended on a tripod and walk away. If you take a break from shooting, take the camera down from the tripod. Place it back in the case or somewhere safe where it cannot be dropped and damaged.
- Theft is an ever-present danger. Be aware of your surroundings, and always assign a crewmember the specific task of watching equipment. Rope off the area where equipment will be stored and never work alone or leave equipment unattended. This includes cars, vans, trucks, and any other vehicles. Theft is common, and you are responsible for replacing any items lost during production.
- Exchanging and/or sharing equipment with other students should not be considered. Never exchange or lend equipment listed on your contract with other students. YOU are responsible for any damage or loss of equipment checked out under your name on the contract.
- Air Travel: Please consult your carrier ahead of time when travelling with production equipment.
- You can also speak to the Production Office for advice on this matter.