FRANK DEESE

Screenwriter / Professor
Essayist / Photographer

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EDUCATION

Master of Fine Arts – Screenwriting – University of California, Los Angeles

Bachelor of Arts – Motion Picture/Television – University of California, Los Angeles

DRAMATIC WRITING

Virtual Reality Promotional Project (Current) *Society for the Protection and Care of Children*

- With RIT Prof. Susan Lakin, interviewed staff and several young women who had suffered physical and sexual abuse and were aided by the SPCC
- Currently completing project with Susan Lakin and student Isabelle Anderson who is animating the film in Virtual Reality

The Homewreckers

- Original feature screenplay developed scene-by-scene and publicly performed at *Safehouse Writers/Actors Group,* Santa Monica, CA
- Revised screenplay completed in Rochester, NY in 2017
- Table read and critique at 2017 University Film and Video conference, Los Angeles, CA
- Submitted to The Black List website for peer review.

The Guy on the Show

- Wrote and revised original short script based on my own idea
- Script performed for audience and critiqued at "*Safehouse" Writers/Actors Group,* Santa Monica, CA – June 2014
- Script performed for audience and critiqued at *Tuesdays at 9 (Naked Angels) Writers/Actors Group,* Los Angeles, CA – January 2015
- Filmed in Rochester, New York, April 2015 – Assisted in the production and performed a small acting part
- Conference Screening, UFVA Las Vegas, NV 2016 – answered questions as the scriptwriter along with film's director
- Screened and critiqued at RIT School of Film and Animation, December 2016

The Geospot One-act original play as part of benefit for *Safehouse Writers/Actors Group*

- Wrote and directed the second of eight short comedic plays set in a Los Angeles Park. (**8 at the Park** – Electric Lodge Theater Venice, CA – April 19-21, 2013) Three sold-out performances in a 100-seat house
- Designed layout and all artwork for the program.

Light Speed Developed with *3-Arts Ent.*

- Original feature spec (unsold) film script

Thomas of London Developed by *The Bedford Falls Co.*

- Historical drama based on the 12th century friendship between Thomas Becket and King Henry II of England
- Developed with Richard Solomon and Marshall Herskovitz
- Marshall Herskovitz was attached to direct

Untitled "Winnie the Pooh" Movie *Walt Disney Television Animation*

- Hired as a story consultant to develop possible ideas for Pooh movie

Notorious: The Ingrid Bergman Story Developed for *CBS Network*

- Television Biopic about Actress Ingrid Bergman's controversial affair and marriage to Italian director Roberto Rossellini

In Dreamtime Developed with *IMAX Corporation*

- 3-D Short film script about aboriginal peoples of Australia

Starlite Drive-In *Turner Network Television*

- 1950s period romance about abused wife of Drive-In theater owner
- Hired to write screenplay adaptation of novel

Ground Zero – Production Rewrite *Castle Rock Entertainment*

- Action movie about nuclear terrorist in a missile silo.
- Worked with director Fraser Heston during preceding scheduled production
- ***Russell Crowe*** attached to star

Small Soldiers – Uncredited Rewrite Produced by *Dreamworks SKG*

- Developed with ***Steven Spielberg***, Walter Parkes, and Laurie MacDonald
- Starred ***Kirsten Dunst***

Alaska – Uncredited Production Rewrite — Produced *Castle Rock Ent.*

- Rewrote plot / dialogue weeks before shooting
- Worked closely with director Fraser Heston and his father, actor ***Charlton Heston***

The Boy Who Eats Rocks – Development Rewrite — *Donner/Shuler-Donner / Paramount*

- Developed with producer Richard Solomon and director Ramon Menendez

Beyond Rangoon – Uncredited Production Rewrite — *Castle Rock Entertainment*

- Feature film starred ***Patricia Arquette*** and ***Frances McDormand***
- Dialogue and story rewrite weeks before shooting
- Worked closely with director ***John Boorman*** and Castle Rock's Martin Shafer

Dayworld — Developed by *Castle Rock Ent.*

- Sci-Fi screenplay adaptation of novel
- Developed with Liz Glotzer and Castle Rock partner ***Alan Horn***

All We Need of Hell — *Universal Pictures*

- Original Screenplay adaptation of Harry Crews novel
- Developed with Kevin Wade and Alex Gartner

Josh & S.A.M. — Produced by *Castle Rock Ent.*

- Featured ***Martha Plimpton, Jacob Tierney,*** and ***Jake Gyllenhal***
- Screenplay developed with ***Martin Brest***, ***Billy Weber***, and ***Rob Reiner***
- On set revising screenplay nearly every day of production
- Sole "Written by" Screen Credit – semi-autobiographical original story

Bones – Development Rewrite — *Universal Pictures*
LA vs NY – Development Rewrite — *Universal Pictures*
Point of Impact – Development Rewrite — *Universal Pictures*

The Cop and the Criminal — Developed by *Yorktown / MGM-UA*

- Original Vietnam-era story and feature screenplay developed with director/producer ***Norman Jewison***
- Research involved interviewing San Francisco homicide detectives and Vietnam veterans at the Brentwood V.A.

The Company Man — Developed by *Tri-Star Pictures*

- Sent to Europe by studio for original research
- Interviewed famed ex-CIA case officer Philip Agee in Ulm, Germany
- Worked closely with attached director ***Kevin Reynolds***

The Principal — Produced by *Tri-Star Pictures*

- Starred ***Jim Belushi***, ***Lou Gossett Jr***., and ***Rae Dawn Chong***
- 2nd Highest earner in USA on its opening weekend behind
- Developed with Casey Silver and Jeff Sagansky at Tri-Star
- On set for 3 weeks of production
- Sole "Written By" Screen Credit

Amazing Stories – "Dino" — *Developed by Amblin Ent.*

- Teleplay developed with ***Steven Spielberg*** and ***Kathleen Kennedy***
- Episode was not filmed due to expense

Amazing Stories – "Ghost Train" — Produced by *NBC - Amblin Ent.*

- Developed teleplay with ***Steven Spielberg***
- Episode chosen as first in series
- Episode directed by ***Steven Spielberg*** and starred ***Lucas Haas***
- Present on set until barred by a Writers Guild Strike
- Sole "Teleplay By" Screen Credit

License To Drive — Developed by *Tri-Star Pictures*

- "Teenage James Bond" spy comedy sold while still an MFA student at UCLA
- Screenplay developed with producer Thom Mount at *The Mount Company*

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Writers Guild of America, West – Life Member

"Safehouse" – A Professional Writers/Actors Performance Group

- Workshopped screenplay **Unnatural** optioned by ***Summit Entertainment*** in 2007
- Other members include:
  Screenwriter Blake Herron (The Bourne Identity),
  Emmy Award winning Cold Case creator Meredith Stiehm,
  Emmy Award-winning actor Eric Stonestreet (Modern Family)

TEACHING – FULL TIME

2014-2021 ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY – School of Film and Animation
Assistant Professor – Screenwriting

2013-2014 ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY – School of Film and Animation
Visiting Assistant Professor – Screenwriting

SOFA 208 **Dramatic Structure** – Undergraduate Level

- 5 hour/week lecture course with 35 students
- Required course for all live-action film students
- Course covers dramatic structure at every level: from character creation and scene architecture to sequence and act structure
- Included analysis of feature films from all eras, documentary film, stage plays, and series television

SOFA 563,663 **Writing the Feature** – Undergraduate and Graduate Level

- Students workshop and complete screenplay outline and 1st half of a feature-length screenplay

SOFA 613 **Graduate Screenwriting** – Graduate Level

- Course introduces first-time screenwriters to basics of character, rising conflict, and narrative structure
- Combines *Fundamentals of Screenwriting* and *Dramatic Structure*

SOFA 112 **Fundamentals of Screenwriting** – Undergraduate Level

- Course introduces first-time screenwriters to basics of character, rising conflict, and narrative structure
- Developing original writing exercises to complement existing curriculum

SOFA 526, 626 **Writing the Short** – Undergraduate and Graduate Level

- Students workshop and complete two short screenplays

SOFA 564, 664 **Writing the Series** – Undergraduate and Graduate Level

- Introduces students to drama and comedy series for both cable and network television
- Students complete series pilot script along with series "bible" that includes character descriptions and future episode outlines.

SOFA 590, 690 **Los Angeles –** Undergraduate and Graduate Level

- Plan and lead weeklong trip to Los Angeles every 2nd week of January
- Follow up with weekly class to discuss what traveling students learned about the city and the entertainment industry
- 6 to 7 live-action students attend per trip, one trip per year

SOFA 406,407 **Senior Capstone** – Undergraduate Level

- Advise and supervise 4th-year students writing and filming thesis projects.
- Sole project advisor to 4-5 senior students every academic year

SOFA 790,890 **Research and Thesis –** Graduate Level

- Advise and supervise Graduate Students writing and filming thesis projects.
- Committee Chair to 1-2 graduating MFA students every academic year
- Serve on MFA committee for 2-3 additional students per year

TEACHING – PART TIME

2006-2013 CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY – Dodge College of Film and Media Arts
Adjunct Screenwriting Professor

FTV 527 **Fundamentals of Screenwriting** – Graduate Level

- Course introduced first-time screenwriters to basics of character, rising conflict, and narrative structure
- Developed original writing exercises to complement existing curriculum

FTV 327 **Intermediate Screenwriting** – Undergraduate Level

- Students workshop and complete screenplay outline and 1st Act
- Developed original *"Core Emotional Story"* exercise to focus student attention on actual emotional relationships in their screenplays

FTV 627 **Feature Screenwriting I** – Graduate Level

- Students workshop and complete screenplay outline and 1st Act

FTV 427, 647 **Feature Screenwriting II** – Undergraduate and Graduate Level

- Students workshop and complete 2nd and 3rd Acts
- Emphasis on in-class readings and feedback

FTV 357, 557 **Feature Analysis** – Undergraduate and Graduate Level

- Large lecture class of up to 57 students.
- Screen feature films with lecture focusing on narrative structure, theme, and character
- Successfully developed lecture curriculum for smaller discussion class when requested by department

FTV 531 **Production Workshop I** – Graduate Level

- Nine short filmmaking exercises assigned during the semester (Digital Video and 16mm Film) to develop in students a sense of an audience's emotional connection to what they see and hear on the screen
- Students edit together final three class exercises (Desire/Stakes, Action/Complication, Climax/Resolution) to form a complete narrative film

FEATURED SPEAKER

2020 Hollins University – **"Writing for and About Children" -** June 26 2020

Hollins's Screenwriting and Film Studies program asked me to give a one-hour+ lecture on the subject of my choosing. As I was known professionally as good at writing child characters, I decided to discuss my observations screenwriting from a child's point of view. I was also in the process of writing an article on the subject for *The Journal of Screenwriting*.

PUBLISHED ESSAYS

2021 Nov Journal of Screenwriting (printed journal)– **"Fear and Wonderment in a Limitless World: Learning to Write from a Child's Point of View"**

2021 July Script Magazine (online) – "Reel Impact: Movies and TV that Changed History" series **"'24,' Jack Bauer, and the Torture Lie"**

2020 Sept Script Magazine (online) – "Reel Impact: Movies and TV that Changed History" series **"'The China Syndrome' and Three Mile Island"**

2020 July Script Magazine (online) – "Reel Impact: Movies and TV that Changed History" series **"Bingeing on Patton – Richard Nixon and the Cambodian Invasion"**

Script Magazine Deese Page: https://scriptmag.com/author/frank-deese

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

2021 University Film and Video Association – Virtual Conference – **"From Matte Paintings to LED Walls – The Evolution of a More Convincing Reality in Filmmaking" (**This introductory presentation is the first of four on a conference panel I organized: *"21st Century Film School: Teaching Virtual Production at RIT."*)

2020 University Film and Video Association – Virtual Conference – **"Toward a Better, More Accurate Depiction of Mental Illness in Movies and TV"**

2019 University Film and Video Association – Minneapolis, MN – **"Projecting in the Dark: The Uncertain Future of Mid-Budget Films in Theaters"**

2018 University Film and Video Association – Las Cruces, NM – **"Reel Effect: Movies and TV that Changed History"**

2016 University Film and Video Association – Las Vegas, NV – **"Multiple Screenwriting: A Molecular Approach"**

2015 University Film and Video Association – Washington D.C. – "**Hybrid Genres" in Film and TV: Fish Out of Water and Coming of Age Films: "Sunset Boulevard" and "No Country for Old Men"**

2015 University Film and Video Association – Washington D.C – "**Lie or License: Truth in Historical Adaptation"**

ACADEMIC SERVICE

2019-2021 "**Semester in LA" project originator and coordinator**: As co-leader of our school's one-week annual Los Angeles trip, I became aware that RIT was one of the few film schools in the East and Midwest that did not have a "semester in Los Angeles" program. I sought to remedy that by bringing it to the attention of the Entertainment Advisory Board, as well as the school director, college dean, and university provost. I am currently working with RIT Global to begin the program with students Fall 2022. (This start was delayed by COVID-19)

2018-2020 **Los Angeles Trip co-leader**: planned, coordinated, and led 6-7 live-action students on trip to Los Angeles film studios and production companies along with Prof. Mark Reisch who led animation group. (This is also a class.)

2018-2021 **Entertainment Advisory Board - Member** – due to my previous career in the film industry and coordination of the Los Angeles trip, I was invited to join board made up of RIT department heads and entertainment leaders in Southern California with some connection to RIT.

I attended Los Angeles meeting in October 2018 and 2019, and attended several smaller meetings with then RIT Corporate Relations Director Paul Harris, MAGIC Center Director David Long, and Motion Picture Science program chair Ricky Figueroa. Took a tour of Panavision led by company CEO Kim Snyder in October 2018.

2017-2021 **Gender Equity/Equality Committee** - *Current Chair and Co-Founder* of the SOFA Gender Equity Committee. (Formerly Gender Equality Committee)

In November, 2016 Prof. Cat Ashworth and I met to discuss complaints she heard from women filmmakers at the High Falls Film Festival about the male-dominated culture at our School of Film and Animation. The young women felt they were not being taken seriously by both male students and faculty and it was detrimental to their success. With professors Ricky Figueroa and Ambarien Alqadar, we formed the Gender Equality Committee with the task of addressing the concerns Prof. Ashworth heard from students at the festival.

We met as a committee with 3rd and 4th year women filmmakers to candidly discuss their experiences at SOFA and what they would like changed in SOFA culture. Prof. Ashworth

and I brought our findings to department chair Malcolm Spaull who made changes according to our recommendations.

In Fall 2017, I helped coordinate with Cat Ashworth and Prof. Margaret Bailey from *Advance RIT* a "Vibrant Learning Workshop" to address bias in the classroom which took place in November. As we were under heightened scrutiny on gender issues, Dept. Chair Malcolm Spaull made sure that all SOFA faculty attended, which they did. (Some faculty thought the workshop redundant, but I found it helpful and believe it was important that we all be seen to have gone through training together.)

SOFA Live-Action Brochure – in December 2017, I worked with Shauna Fowler and Kelly Sorensen in CAD Marketing to replace photographs in the published brochure to include more images of women and students of color. I collected, edited, and submitted photographs from film sets (including one that I took personally). The brochure was reissued with the new photographs in 2018.

I took over as chair of the committee in late 2020 and have led the committee's coordination of a permanent student-led instruction to new and continuing film students about proper and respectful behavior on student film sets with regard to gender.

2017-2021 **CILECT Prize Judge and Coordinator** – every June/July since 2017, I have either acted as a judge or as judge and coordinator evaluating scores (40-60) student fiction films to cast RIT's ballot in the international competition.

2019-2021 **RIT Virtual Production Workgroup** - In late 2019, I was part of a group looking to start a film previsualization and Virtual Production curriculum at RIT. As a screenwriter, this field was not my specialty, but I helped write the grant proposal to Epic Games in early 2020 along with RIT MAGIC Center Director David Long and 3D Digital Design Program Director Shaun Foster.

Our proposal was funded by Epic Games at $275,000.00 and a Virtual Production curriculum was established at RIT.

My presentation for 2021 UFVA *("From Matte Paintings to LED Walls – The Evolution of a More Convincing Reality in Filmmaking"*) is one of four on a panel I organized entitled **"21st Century Film School: Teaching Virtual Production at RIT"** It will take place online July 30th at 7pm and will include presentations by David Long, Shaun Foster, and Flip Phillips.

2017-2021 **SOFA – Tenure-Track Search Committees** – I served on faculty search committees for four consecutive years. I reviewed applications, took part in all phone (and Zoom) interviews, and gave tours to the candidates of RIT and the Rochester area. I also volunteered my classroom for candidate teaching demonstration and helped coordinate a temporary hire when the official search was declared "failed" in 2019. Serving on these search committees has been my most time-consuming service commitment while at RIT.

2017-2019 **College of Art and Design Faculty Workload Committee**: In 2017**,** I was invited by CAD Interim Dean Robin Cass to join a committee created to investigate quantifying faculty workload. All other colleges at RIT had developed plans and rubrics for balancing faculty scholarship with teaching/service, but Dean Cass revealed to us that College of Art and Design (then *College of Imaging Arts and Sciences*) had not yet developed a plan.

We started this project by studying other RIT college plans for balancing their faculty's workload. Quantifying teaching and service across different college disciplines was a challenge given the variety of classes taught and how best to accurately measure types of workloads. I interviewed faculty from inside SOFA, other RIT departments, and faculty in other institutions to evaluate teaching and service workloads in balance with faculty scholarship. Our proposal was forwarded in May 2019 to outgoing dean Robin Cass by committee chair Prof. Jenn Poggi.

2015-2021 **Co-Creator and Co-Moderator SOFA Instagram Page** – in 2015, I helped initiate the School of Film and Animation's first Instagram site and later took over and lead moderator. I am currently the co-moderator and have provided at least half of the site's posts – many of them my own photographs.

2017-2021 **College of Art and Design Policy Committee** – I have served on the committee for four consecutive years and have been involved in many initiatives.

2019-2020 **Frameless Labs Symposium Planning Committee** – took on responsibility of Social Media Coordinator for the RIT association tasked with promoting Virtual and Augmented Reality technology and artistry. Also, **Creator and Co-Moderator of the Frameless Labs Instagram Page**

2019 **Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities** – reviewed, scored, and wrote comments on 42 submissions to the a2ru conference in Kansas City.

2018-2020 **National Portfolio Days** – New York, Philadelphia, and Sarasota – traveled to cities to review high school portfolio applications to schools within the College of Art and Design. Represented and promoted art programs at RIT-CAD, especially the School of Film and Animation.

2018-2019 **Women in Film Scholarship** – Met with RIT Director of Development Katherine Bassney and Interim School Director Adrianne Carageorge to discuss implementing and funding a scholarship dedicated to encouraging young women to attend RIT-SOFA in live-action filmmaking.

Received "Certificate of Appreciation" in recognition of commitment and support for "Transforming RIT: The Campaign for Greatness" due to my efforts on this project.

2014-2018 **Represented SOFA at College Art Career Day** for five consecutive years at the Albright-Knox Gallery in Buffalo, explaining and promoting the program to prospective students and parents interested in either a career in animation or live-action filmmaking.

2017 **Faculty Show Coordinator** – I planned and organized a show of SOFA faculty films in the Carlson Auditorium in November. It was a successful event in spite of problems with sound.

2015-2016 **Served on the CIAS (now CAD) Diversity Committee** with the ongoing goal of making the college more accessible and welcoming to underrepresented classes of students, staff, and faculty.

2014-2015 **CIAS Renaming Committee** – this committee set out research and come up with a more accurately descriptive name than the current "College of Imaging Arts and Sciences." I served on the Faculty Sub-Committee

We made a recommendation to the dean at the end of the academic year for the "College of Art, Design, and Media Science." It was later shortened to the "College of Art and Design."

GUEST PROFESSOR

SPRING 2003 UCLA School of Theater, Film, and Television
Graduate Screenwriting 434 – Visiting Professional

FALL 1997 UCLA School of Theater, Film, and Television
Graduate Screenwriting 434 – Visiting Professional

- Brought Everybody Loves Raymond creator ***Phil Rosenthal*** to class for discussion on TV writing

FALL 1996 UCLA School of Theater, Film, and Television
Graduate Screenwriting 434 – Visiting Professional

FORMAL MENTORING

1994-1999 UCLA School of Theater, Film, and Television
Graduate Student Mentorship Program

- On-on-one mentoring of graduate writing students during academic term
- Two to three UCLA graduate students mentored every year
- Mentored screenplay by John Sweet sold to Warner Bros. and became The Affair of the Necklace (2001) starring Hilary Swank

1994 DIANE THOMAS AWARDS – Amblin Ent. – Professional Mentor Program

- Assigned by ***Amblin Entertainment*** to student contest entrants Peter and David Griffiths
- Worked closely with Peter and David (reading drafts and writing feedback) guiding their revised screenplay to win 1st place in 1994 Diane Thomas contest and a $1 million sale
- Peter and David went on to a successful career with credits that include Collateral Damage starring Arnold Schwartnegger

1981-1982 ZOETROPE STUDIOS – Bancroft Junior High School Filmmaking Project

- One of eight Film Students chosen to teach filmmaking (during entire academic year) to students at junior high school across street from studio.
- Teaching internship involved consulting with ***Francis Coppola*** and August Coppola while ushering adolescent film projects from script to screen
- Was only teacher whose students completed a film which was privately screened for ***Francis Coppola*** and his young nephew ***Nicholas Cage***

ADDITIONAL PUBLICATIONS

Childsplay: A Collection of Scenes and Monologues for Children
Limelight Editions (2004) Edited by Kerry Muir
https://www.amazon.com/Childsplay-Collection-Scenes-Monologues Children/dp/0879101881/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=childsplay+muir&qid=1625799809&sr=8-1

- Scene from my screenplay **Josh and S.A.M.** included in "Part One: Scenes"

FILMMAKER: The Magazine of Indpendent Film – Winter 1998 "*Warning: This Budget Could Be Hazardous to Your Film*" by Liane Bonin
https://filmmakermagazine.com/archives/issues/winter1998/warning.php

- Interviewed in person by author Liane Bonin about the aesthetic differences between "studio" and "independent" films.
- Quoted by name in article.

UCLA Magazine – Premier Issue – Spring 1989
"*Hollywood Stories: UCLA Students write for the 'reel' world*" by Pauline Worsham
https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/98a1f80c-58cb-433e-b278-2008326df110/downloads/UCLA%20-%20Magazine%20Reduced.pdf?ver=1625852284959

- One of three screenwriters profiled – portrait photograph included in article.

ADDITIONAL SPEAKING

August 1993 New School for Social Research – New York

- Interviewed by ***James Lipton*** in front of audience as writer of **Josh & S.A.M**. along with ***Ang Lee***, as director of The Wedding Banquet

Sept. 1993 University of Colorado, Boulder

- Featured Speaker after screening of **Josh & S.A.M.**

May 1993 Mt. San Antonio College – Walnut, California

- Featured speaker at school's annual "Writers' Day" Festival

June 1991 Nanjing University, CHINA – Guest Lecturer on Hollywood Film Structure.

January 1990 University of Pecs, HUNGARY – Guest Lecturer on Screenwriting and Film History

Sept. 1987 Loyola/Marymount University – Los Angeles

- Featured Speaker after screening of **The Principal**