

GOOD CONTENT



Stories from the
Bachelor of Arts
Screen: Production
at the Australian
Film Television
and Radio School



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Screen stories are changing the world. From YouTube to Netflix and global cinema releases, they are shaping the way we think and feel about the world around us. There has never been such demand for screen content, and the students and graduates of the AFTRS Bachelor of Arts Screen: Production have the knowledge and skills to seize this opportunity – and they are.

Our multi-skilled content creators have a passion for telling stories that are powerful, unique and Australian. They are establishing themselves as the formidable next generation of creatives. What follows is a selection of their success stories, accounts of their personal experiences, examples of their work, and advice for their soon-to-be successors: you.

IN THE NEWS

Award Wins, Festival Selections, and all the Other Ways our Students and Alumni Make Headlines.

[↗ All the AFTRS Alumni Works Streaming at the 2020 Melbourne International Film Festival – 17 Jul, 2020](#)



Still from 'Don't Forget to Go Home'
Dir. Victoria Singh-Thompson

The work of over 30 alumni will be showcased across 14 shorts, features and documentaries selected for Melbourne International Film Festival's 2020 virtual edition, MIFF 68½.

[↗ Alumni Works Bound for Revelation Film Festival – 09 Jul, 2020](#)



Still from 'The Familiars'
Dir. Millicent Malcolm

Revelation Perth International Film Festival's virtual edition, includes a great lineup of features, documentaries and shorts by AFTRS students and alumni.

[↗ Sydney Film Festival Program Packed With AFTRS Alumni Works – 29 May, 2020](#)



'Descent' Dir. Nays Baghai
(Bachelor of Arts Screen: Production, 2018)

In a history-making turn, the 67th edition of Sydney Film Festival will take place virtually, with a focus on local talent. The program, which will be available to stream on-demand from 10-21 June, is comprised of 33 films, with AFTRS alumni works making up more than half of 23 Australian feature documentaries and short films.

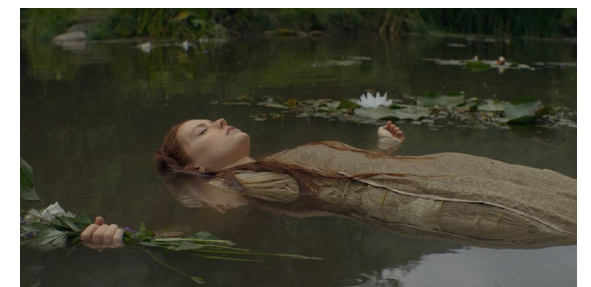
[↗ 35 Alumni Works on Show at St Kilda Film Festival – 28 May, 2020](#)



Still from 'SLAG'
Dir. Hannah-Ree Meegan and Monique Terry

The 2020 edition of St Kilda Film Festival (12-20 June) will showcase an extensive collection of work by AFTRS alumni.

[↗ Major Prizes For AFTRS Alumni at Australian Cinematographers Society National Awards – 20 May, 2020](#)



Still from 'Ophelia'
Dir. Claire McCarthy | Cine. Denson Baker

AFTRS alumni have been recognised among the best of Australia's cinematography talent, receiving ten prizes at the Australian Cinematographers Society (ACS) National Awards, held online on Saturday night, 16 May.

➤ [Imogen McCluskey's New Web Series Is the Only #coronacontent We Need Right Now](#)
– 03 Apr, 2020



Still from Episode 1. Maddy McWilliam as 'G' and Justin Amankwah as 'B' over Zoom.

It's no secret that technology and the internet are changing the way we communicate with one another – a topic filmmakers regularly grapple with. Riffing off this storytelling device, exciting emerging filmmaker and BA Screen 2017 alumna Imogen McCluskey has made an entertaining and engaging web series *Love Bug*.

➤ [Alumni Films Set for BFI Flare Festival in London – 16 Mar, 2020](#)



Still from 'Ellie & Abbie (& Ellie's Dead Aunt)' Dir. Monica Zanetti

Across features and shorts, the works selected for this year's program will showcase Australian queer stories by alumni at the biggest LGBTIQ+ festival in Europe. The program is split into the themes 'Hearts', 'Bodies' and 'Minds' which each explore a different facet of the queer experience.

➤ [You'll Fall In \(Atomic\) Love With Alumna Imogen McCluskey's New Short Film](#)
– 16 Mar, 2020



Behind the scenes of 'Atomic Love' Dir. Imogen McCluskey | Photo by Chelsea Thistlewaite

Following her 2019 micro-budget debut feature – audience favourite *Suburban Wildlife* – 2017 Bachelor of Arts (Screen) graduate Imogen McCluskey is releasing a brand new short film, *Atomic Love*.

➤ [Alumni Win Cash and Prizes at Mardi Gras Film Festival – 16 Mar, 2020](#)



'All Good Things' Dir. Simon Croker

After making up over half of the films screening in Mardi Gras Film Festival's 'My Queer Career' emerging filmmaker showcase, AFTRS alumni have secured three of the program's major prizes.

➤ [The AFTRS Alumni Films to See at Melbourne Queer Film Festival – 13 Mar, 2020](#)



Still from 'Hook Up' Dir. Laura Nagy

A whopping twelve films by AFTRS students and alumni will screen at Melbourne Queer Film Festival, which is running from 12-23 March.

➤ [What's Your Flava? 2020: The Best 25 Minutes on Youtube – 13 Mar, 2020](#)



Still from 'What's Your Flava' 2020

Six bisexuals enter the *Flava* house on the quest for love. They make food, small talk and – if they're brave enough – a move.

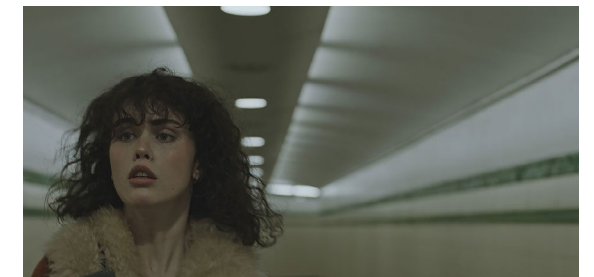
➤ [Announcing the Recipient of the Inaugural Australia for UNHCR Beddie Scholarship – 12 Feb, 2020](#)



Joelle Sanounou, inaugural UNHCR Beddie Scholarship recipient

Joelle Sanounou is the recipient of the inaugural Australia for UNHCR Beddie Scholarship. This scholarship was created to support a refugee to study at the prestigious Australian Film Television and Radio School (AFTRS).

➤ [AFTRS Films Selected for Flickerfest 2020 – 16 Dec, 2019](#)



Still from 'My First Panic' Dir. Michaela Holmes

The work of AFTRS alumni will be on show at the 2020 Flickerfest International Short Film Festival with several AFTRS graduate shorts selected to screen at the event.

↗ BA Student Claudia Bailey Named Young Australian Filmmaker of the Year at Bbiff
– 08 Nov, 2019



Still from 'Ellie & Abbie (& Ellie's Dead Aunt)'
Dir. Monica Zanetti

Third-year Bachelor of Arts Screen: Production student Claudia Bailey has won the Young Australian Filmmaker of the Year Award following a screening of her warmly received short film *Appetite*, at Byron Bay International Film Festival.

↗ BA Student Film Takes Home Two Awards at Shortie Film Fest in Brooklyn – 22 Oct, 2019



Still from 'The Art of Doodling'
Dir. Nicola Macindoe

The Art of Doodling, a short documentary directed/co-animated by Nicola Macindoe (Bachelor of Arts Screen: Production, 2018) has won two awards at Shortie Film Festival in Brooklyn.

↗ Film Festival Hits: The Hottest Student and Alumni Works on Tour
– 30 Sep, 2019



'All Good Things' Dir. Simon Croker

AFTRS students and alumni have officially taken over the festival circuit, touring the world over and celebrating sold-out screenings, premieres, awards and rave reviews. Start taking note – you'll want to catch these exciting new works by some of Australia's finest emerging screen talent.

↗ Alumni-Produced Music Video Premieres on Adult Swim – 18 Sep, 2019



On the set of 'Giants of the Earth' Dir. Keanu Hoi

Giants of the Earth, a music video created by AFTRS alumni, has premiered on Adult Swim. The animated work was created by several of our talented alumni – mostly 2017 BA graduates including director Keanu Hoi, producer China White and cinematographer Lucca Barone-Peters.

↗ AFTRS at Brisbane International Film Festival – 22 Aug, 2019



Still from 'All Good Things' | Dir. Simon Croker

The annual Brisbane International Film Festival is back this October and the program is full of features, shorts and documentaries made by AFTRS alumni. Three of the works on show this year are AFTRS productions created by alumni while completing their studies, including Masters feature *Sequin In A Blue Room*, BA short, *All Good Things* and Masters short *An Athlete Wrestling A Python*.

↗ BA Student, Erika Felton's *This Is Nanjing* Nominated for 'Foreigners On China' Competition – 19 Jun, 2019



'This is Nanjing' by Erika Felton

Felton spoke to local Nanjing English-language site, *The Nanjinger* about the nomination, saying "Being a finalist is genuinely insane, I made the film after returning home and realising I finally had something to say from a different perspective. It going from YouTube to being a finalist in this competition is something I'm still shocked by, but so incredibly honoured".

ON THE BLOG

Personal accounts and interviews: get to know what makes our students tick.

➤ Serena Siow's AFTRS' Journey: Finding Her Voice and Vocation

Since beginning her studies in the Bachelor of Arts Screen: Production at AFTRS, 2019 graduate Serena Siow has captured many faces around campus and beyond. In addition to honing her craft, she has lent her talents in stills photography and cinematography to a multitude of projects from lensing AFTRS graduate film, Brittany Xu's *Like How I Remember* to portraits of students for AFTRS' Open Day campaigns. Reflecting on her experiences at film school, Serena touches on forging strong relationships with friends and collaborators, championing diverse, female talent behind the camera, falling in love with cinematography and finding her authentic voice.

I originally heard about AFTRS back in the day when Instagram was mostly used for photography. Funnily enough, I'd been following Ollie Ritchie (@ritchieollie) for a while and one day he posted about getting into the Bachelor course and something within me knew I was going to do the same the year after. Before this, I had never heard of AFTRS or that going to film school was a thing that I could actually do.

After this awakening, I buckled down and spent my HSC year making two films as my major works for Visual Arts and Dance which I used in my application to the course. Blood, sweat and tears went into those films but they were well received and I'm still proud of myself for making them. You could also even say I put all of my eggs into one basket when I applied for the course but I wouldn't have done it any other way.



When acceptance emails were being sent out, my nerves definitely got the better of me. 22 December 2016, 9.12 am. I can vividly remember trying to relax in a bath when I got the email; this was the beginning of my next three years. My mum and dog ran to the bathroom to check if my squeals and cries were of joy or sadness... it was joy, of course.

As is any transition from high school to higher education, being at AFTRS took some getting used to but I went in with an open mind and an open heart and was greeted by incredible staff and students who I still stay in touch with. People had moved to Sydney to take this course which was something I wasn't expecting but if people were driven enough

to uproot just to study here, I knew I was in a good place. Tegan from Wellington, Jasper from Darwin and Gabriel from Hobart and countless others. I felt grateful to be surrounded by such people and lucky that I didn't have to move to study.

My time at AFTRS opened up many opportunities and experiences but I will say that this was due in part to what I put into the course. I was and am still a believer of what I put in, I will get out and so this mentality brought upon a camera attachment position for Australia's first Facebook Watch Series *The Unboxing* with Channel 7; assisting on set for the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) and interviews for some jobs I may or may not have signed NDA's for and I can't speak to. These are industry jobs and professional levelled gigs that I was able to partake in because the hard work I put in was recognised by staff members.

I also learned early on that the people in my cohort will be the people I work with outside of my studies so I've now found enduring collaborators who I hope to continue having strong relationships with both professionally and as friends. During my first year at AFTRS, I was doing some pretty out-there things, participating in the World's Greatest Shave and doing a year-long photographic portraiture project where I would take photos of someone new every single day. I soon was known as the girl who shaved her head and took pictures every day which led to me photographing some of the people I continually work with today. Alex Martin who produced my Year Two dance documentary, Claire Harmer who shot that film and taught me a lot of my camera knowledge and Angus Woodiwiss whose graduate film I collaborated on and shot. Not to mention the teachers who heavily impacted my experience in the course, some of which I also photographed.

Speaking of which, AFTRS was able to bring in incredible guest lecturers who brought new insights to how I saw the degree and the film industry.

One of our guest lecturers was a composer who was working on *Peter Rabbit* at Animal Logic and another was a Play School presenter. It was incredible to hear about their respective fields and see the processes of working on such productions.

Sidebar, you know that 1000 piece Monet painting jigsaw puzzle you spent copious hours figuring out in isolation? Well, that's what a film crew is like. One of the first lessons I learned at AFTRS was that films can't be made alone. Some might beg to differ but I believe every person's role is as important as the next, just like each jigsaw piece. Through collaboration you will put together a masterpiece and perhaps there is a new approach to each work!

I also learned about how to take on feedback and what a compliment sandwich is. A lot of films are spurred from personal moments or events in people's lives and so it's important to approach conversations and discussions with your compliment entree and then serve feedback dinner and you can't forget compliment dessert or your palate might taste off.

And on a personal note, AFTRS has taught me to listen to my gut. Opportunities will flourish in front of you if you make choices that align with who you are and don't worry, we've all got years to figure that out. Higher education should be a place to experiment, play and take risks and if you make mistakes then they're what you should learn from. Learn from bad scripts, set experiences and films you make and then go and make the next ones ten times better.

"Something I am most proud of, in my time at AFTRS, is my graduate film, *Like How I Remember*. Our writer and director Brittany Xu, our producers Mimi Rosenbaum and Claire Ma created a beautiful short film about living as Asian Australians and our collective experiences coming from immigrant households. As heads of departments, we also took it on board to push for the representation of Asians on and behind the screen and budgeted for a sustainable set."

It was an honour to have complete gender parity in my camera crew and we were even able to budget for a set without single-use plastics and some crew members were even sent home with a keep cup! I am forever grateful to have worked alongside like-minded women who value representation, diversity and looking after the planet in our small scaled film and it has definitely set a benchmark for productions I'd like to work on in the future.



For those keen and determined people considering the course, Serena has three pieces of advice.

1. Be curious. Don't be afraid of asking questions in class, your tutors and classmates have a wealth of knowledge there for you to pick from. Curiosity will lead you to subgenres of film, alternative theologies or even hacks for achieving blockbuster looking shots.
2. Be daring. Film school is where you should familiarise yourself with pushing yourself, challenging yourself and maybe participating in something other than your norm. In first year, I found myself acting in a film set in a dystopian world where people battled through handshakes and clapping routines. Shoutout to Andy Lam.

3. Be authentic. If you're wanting to go to film school, you've definitely got a perspective which will determine the types of stories you'd like to tell. Surround yourself with likeminded people who can help encourage your unique voice. Whether that is in your writing, editing or in the way you dress sets.

Behind the scenes of APTS student work, 'Like How I Remember'. Dir. Brittany Xu.



Alumnus Nays Baghai's Deep Dive Pays Dividends – 05 Jun, 2020

Making his first feature-length documentary was gruelling, but with a world premiere in competition at Sydney Film Festival, where his film *Descent* won the \$10,000 Documentary Australia Foundation Prize, it was certainly worthwhile for recent graduate Nays Baghai (Bachelor of Arts Screen: Production, 2018). Here's how he and his team of fellow AFTRS students and alumni pulled it off.



Nays Baghai on location

Still From 'Descent' | Dir. Nays Baghai



Adam on Adam: at the Intersection of Comedy and Horror – 21 Apr, 2020

Horror-film aficionado and current MA student Adam Daniel grills Bachelor of Arts Screen: Production alumnus Adam Boys about his hit short film.

Since its 2019 premiere, *Brunch Shift Massacre*, a short hospo-horror by director/writer/star Adam Boys has become an audience favourite, touring back-to-back festivals worldwide and collecting dedicated fans along the way.



From one Alumnus to Another: Claudia Bailey Interviews Julie Kalceff – 01 Jun, 2020

Inspired by her body of work, particularly the latest, *First Day*, recent graduate Claudia Bailey (Bachelor of ARTS Screen, 2019) talks to fellow alumna Julie Kalceff (Master of Arts (Film and Television) Scriptwriting, 2002) about authentic storytelling, queer representation on Australian screens and the responsibility that comes with handling sensitive material. The times being what they are, Julie and Claudia met on Zoom. Here's a transcript of their chat.



PRESS PLAY

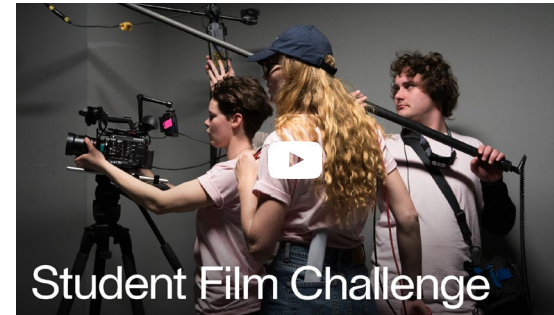
If the proof is in the pudding, consider this dessert. From the AFTRS YouTube channel, here's a sample of student work, and their invaluable advice for other emerging creatives.



Virtual Campus Tour of the Australian Film Television and Radio School (AFTRS)



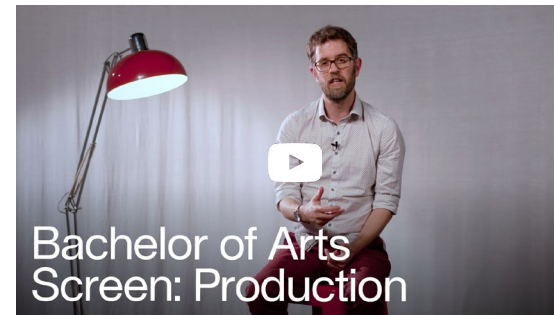
Indigenous Students Answer



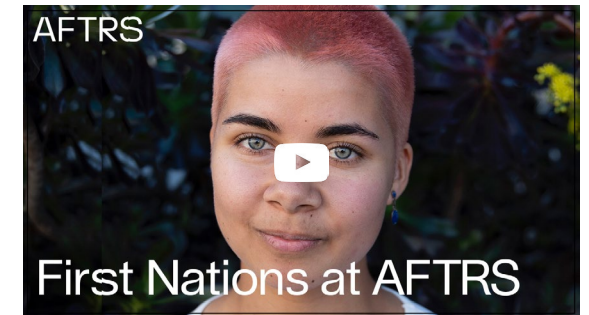
Student Film Challenge: From Script to Screen in 4 Hours



Open Day 2020: 'What's Your Flava?' Screening + Panel w/ AFTRS Students



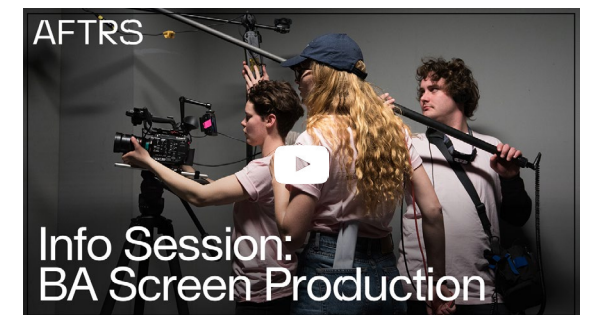
Ask Me Anything - Bachelor of Arts Screen: Production



Open Day 2020: First Nations at AFTRS Panel with Student and Alumni



AFTRS Bachelor of Arts Screen: Production



Open Day: AFTRS Bachelor of Arts Screen: Production Information Session



↗ Top Tips for Navigating Film Festivals w/ Béatrice Barbeau-Scurla - Part 1

↗ Top Tips for Navigating Film Festivals w/ Béatrice Barbeau-Scurla - Part 2



↗ Top Tips for Producing Your First Feature w/ Sophie Hatch - Part 1

↗ Top Tips for Producing Your First Feature w/ Sophie Hatch - Part 2



↗ Top Tips for Becoming the Hottest Film Critic in Town w/ Jack + André



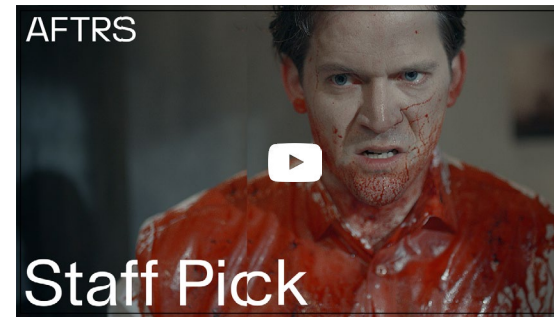
↗ Top Tips for Breaking into the Industry w/ Giovanni De Santolo + Luke Sullivan



↗ Top Tips for Navigating Life After Film School w/ Bianca Tomchin



↗ Top Tips for Becoming a Successful Podcaster w/ Alexei Toliopoulos



↗ Staff Pick: Brunch Shift Massacre (2019) by Adam Boys



↗ Staff Pick: Leg It by Rachel Mackey



↗ Top Tips for Making a Film on a Micro Budget w/ Imogen McCluskey - Part 1

↗ Top Tips for Navigating Life after Film School w/ Imogen McCluskey - Part 2



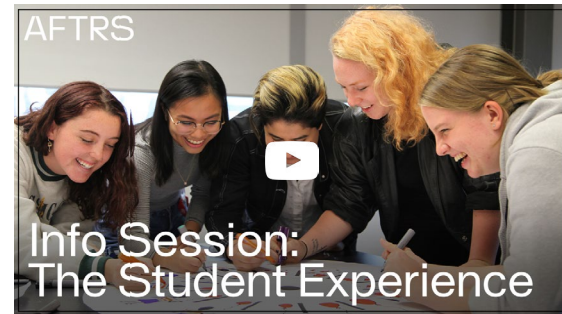
↗ Top Tips on Producing a Team w/ Linus Gibson



↗ Top Tips for Emerging Cinematographers w/ Lucca Barone-Peters



↗ Top Tips for Nailing Podcast Interviews w/ Alfred Faber



↗ Open Day 2020: AFTRS Student Experience

↗ Learn more about the Bachelor of Arts Screen: Production and apply for the 2021 intake by 9 November 2020.

↗ Scholarships available. Learn more and apply from 17 August 2020.

AFTRS