Columbia College Hollywood meets the technology demands with a working film studio and with smart non-purchase lease strategies. The 44,000 (and expanding) square foot campus includes professional film sets, an HD/broadcast-ready TV studio, digital media labs, FCP/AVID editing suites, a 12,000-volume library, and the latest state-of-the-art video and audio equipment.

“Our faculty members are working professionals who utilize the newest technologies and equipment on a daily basis. For this reason we frequently lease versus purchase new equipment, thereby keeping-up with ever-changing technologies. Additionally, our students accompany faculty members to their job sites and learn through first-hand experience. Additionally, we have added the newest 3-D cinematography, advanced CGI animation, surround sound design, the latest in digital photography, and a new state-of-the-art Television Studio was completed late last year. By the time of our Fall Quarter in September, we will have completed a brand new, fully equipped Film Sound Stage that adjoins our existing facility. Lastly, we are developing a greater ability to launch/upload programs and other information on the Internet,” says Columbia College Hollywood President and CEO Richard Kobritz.

During Columbia College Hollywood’s graduation ceremony this past June, Stu Berg, the most respected film teacher at Columbia College Hollywood, was given the Outstanding Teacher award by Charlie Rose, the president of the Columbia College Hollywood Faculty Association. Stu Berg has had a long career as a director of TV commercials, for which he won the Two Lions Award at the Venice Film Festival. After closing his production company, he ventured into directing theatre, and is a director-in-residence for the prestigious Theatre West Company in Los Angeles. His stage work has earned him many awards, including a Dramalogue Best Director’s honor.

StudentFilmmakers staff catches up with Berg to talk about Columbia College Hollywood and his teaching style and philosophy.

Stu Berg: Because Columbia College Hollywood is a small school in the greater Hollywood area, and the faculty is made up of experienced industry professionals, both of these factors keep us on the curve of the latest industry developments. We are adding courses such as Navigating New Media and Production for New Media that give students the opportunity to explore their creativity for areas other than traditional film and television, preparing them to adapt to the parameters of shooting styles for the new media.

What kinds of cameras and editing systems do the students use? How available are they, and what is the camera to student ratio?

Stu Berg: Columbia College Hollywood has software from Final Cut Pro Suite to AVID, and that includes Maya, After Effects, DVD Studio Pro, Motion, and other programs. We have two editing labs, an HD lab and 10 digital suites for...
individual student use. These suites are available for students to reserve every hour the school is open, which means every day from 8:00am to closing with the exception of Sundays.

While we own ample Digital, 16mm and Super 16mm cameras, we also lease and get loans from Panavision and numerous other equipment houses within easy access from our campus. Columbia College Hollywood production courses have about 8 to 12 students in each section; which leaves ample time for each student to become familiar with and use cameras, as well as reserve cameras for their shoots for a particular class.

What is your teaching style or philosophy? What is important?

Stu Berg: My personal teaching style, which I believe is shared by most of my colleagues, is “Hands On.” I want my directing students to learn by doing. Lectures are designed to present technical fundamentals, give students an overview of the production process and the director’s role in said process and to answer questions. My main learning tools are Class Exercises, with every student working on the same material which I provide and individual projects where each student selects his or her own material. I give my students maximum freedom to express themselves creatively, stepping in to point out errors in fundamentals or answer questions that arise, but the students are the directors — the stories are theirs to tell. I want to help them obtain the tools and the knowledge to tell them well.

ABC Television, MTV, New Line Cinema, Village Roadshow, and the production companies of Quentin Tarantino and Leonardo DiCaprio are just a few of the many places where Columbia College Hollywood students have interned recently. The vast majority of Columbia College Hollywood students intern with top entertainment industry companies, developing a real-world network of contacts to complement their expertise. The Industry Relations Office works with students to find just the right stepping stone, and help them hone their resumes and prepare them to be excellent assets for any level production.

Columbia College Hollywood is a 56-year-old, NASAD-accredited institution offering degrees in film and television. Serving career-minded students from all over the world, Columbia College Hollywood boasts a host of industry-respected instructors armed with state-of-the-art equipment and facilities to train the next wave of film and television innovators.

Columbia College Hollywood students earn a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) or Associate of Arts (AA) degree through full or part-time programs that allow them to structure goals and schedules to fit with their needs, passions and talents. Graduates of the college have gone on to become accomplished award winning professionals in directing, producing, cinematography, screenwriting, editing and all areas of the entertainment industry.

Columbia College Hollywood Events: Save the Date

The Columbia College Hollywood Film Festival for the Entertainment Industry

Mark your calendars for Columbia College Hollywood’s 5th annual film festival set for October 14th. Officially titled, the “Columbia College Hollywood Film Festival for the Entertainment Industry,” the evening will showcase works by the school’s students including short films, music videos, documentaries, TV commercials and more. The fest is geared to attract producers, agents, directors, cinematographers and other industry executives. For more information on the festival, please contact Michael Carmona at (818) 401-1036.

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