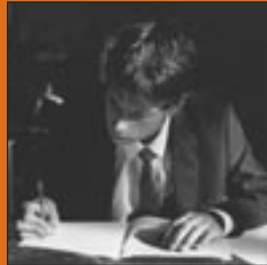


# Galway Film Project



A report to the

**PROGRAMME  
INNOVATION FUND  
1997/2000**

NUI, Galway

National University of Ireland, Galway  
Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology  
Galway Film Centre

March 1999

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# Executive Summary

*“A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at...”*

Oscar Wilde

*“We are looking for the pedagogical arts of the contact zone. These will include, we are sure, exercises in storytelling and in identifying with the ideas, interests, histories, and attitudes of others; experiments in transculturation and collaborative work and in the arts of critique, parody, and comparison (including unseemly comparisons between elite and vernacular cultural forms); the redemption of the oral; ways for people to engage with suppressed aspects of history (including their own histories), ways to move into and out of rhetorics of authenticity; ground rules for communication across lines of difference and hierarchy that go beyond politeness but maintain mutual respect; a systematic approach to the all-important concept of cultural mediation.”*

Mary Louise Pratt

‘Arts of the Contact Zone’ in the Journal of the Modern Language Association

We propose the following:

- That NUI, Galway, Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology and Galway Film Centre collaborate in the provision of film education and training in order to optimise resources, ideas and expertise in the west of Ireland.
- That film-making be presented as an integrated process with an emphasis on the director/writer/producer nexus.
- That the main emphasis be on micro-budget film-making. The new MA course in particular will focus on micro-budget feature and creative documentary production. This proposal will bring Galway to the forefront of film training and education in Ireland, and internationally.
- That we forge a firm link between film-making and new technological developments.
- That the various elements of this plan will be implemented in tandem or as staged development.

The estimated costs will be

CAPITAL COSTS	
Equipment	756,000
Library	10,000
Building	2,000,000
<b>ESTIMATED TOTAL</b>	<b>£ 2,766,000</b>

RUNNING COSTS	
Staff	350,000
Film production	250,000
Maintenance	30,000
Library	2,000
<b>ESTIMATED TOTAL (P.A.)</b>	<b>£ 632,000</b>

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# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Establishment of a Working Group

The conviction that Galway contains in embryo all the elements necessary to establish an integrated centre for film education and training in the west of Ireland led to the establishment of an ad hoc working group between NUI, Galway, the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology and the Galway Film Centre to consider the form that a joint initiative might take. This Report and the proposals contained therein are the result of a period of extensive research which has involved discussion and exploration of current issues and future possibilities in film-making locally, nationally and internationally.

## 1.2 Process

The process has included an analysis of existing educational provisions in Ireland, a study of selected film schools elsewhere in Europe, interviews and meetings with film professionals, academics, and others involved or interested in the area of film-making, film education and film studies. To keep the report as uncluttered as possible the body of material collected from these sources has been indexed at the end of the report and is available for consultation if required.

Representatives of the following institutions have been consulted:

- University College Dublin
- Dublin City University
- Dublin Institute of Technology
- University of Ulster at Coleraine
- National Film and Television School, London
- Napier University, Edinburgh
- The School of Film and Television, Lillehammer
- The Maurits Binger Institut, Amsterdam
- Polish National Film and Television School, Lodz
- The University of Copenhagen

## 1.3 Context

The report should be read in the context of the collaboration the project has already entailed (and will involve in the future) between the National University of Ireland (NUI), Galway, the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) and the Galway Film Centre (GFC). It is understood that the approval of the Governing Body/Academic Councils of NUI, Galway and the GMIT, and the board of the GFC, is required before this proposal would be taken further.

## 1.4 Objective

The objective of the project is, through collaboration, to combine and optimise the available resources and expertise in the west of Ireland, specifically Galway. We propose playing to the strengths of the three bodies involved and developing further, through shared resources and ideas, an innovative series of courses. By working together we can produce a result greater than the sum of separate and uncoordinated efforts.

## 1.5 Galway

As a location for such a project, the west of Ireland may be considered geographically isolated but it has the advantage of a cultural environment that is supportive of creativity and has a long tradition as a centre of learning. In recent years, Galway has become a focus for film-making and film-related events, including the annual Film Fleadh and Fleadh Market, the quarterly magazine Film West, the Galway Film Centre, numerous independent production companies, and the active and popular Film Society. Additionally it is the location of Bord Scannán na hÉireann, Teilifís na Gaeilge and the Roger Corman Studio, Concord Anois (in Connemara).

## 1.6 Irish Language

Oscailt, a programme jointly supported by Bord Scannán and Teilifís na Gaeilge, has already, in the first three short films produced (*Aqua*, *Cosa Nite* and *Lipservice*) indicated the scope for Irish language fiction film production. The promotion of feature length films in Irish should be a particular focus of any film initiative based in Galway. Irish language production is a thriving and relevant part of the Irish film industry - a Welsh language film, *Hedwyn*, was nominated for an Oscar in 1995, demonstrating that films made in minority languages can reach the widest international audience. *Caoineadh Art Uí Laoire* (Bob Quinn, 1975), *Poitin* (Bob Quinn, 1978) and, more recently, *Draíocht* (Áine O'Connor, 1997) are all examples of Irish language fiction production that indicate the potential of this genre.

## 1.7 The Growing Third-level Sector

Provision for film education and training is growing within the third-level sector. It will be necessary to establish a high-profile and innovative set of courses in order to attract the best students. The challenge is to provide courses that are different and better than other courses available and we have identified a niche that we believe Galway is ideally equipped to fill.

## 2.0 Aims

### 1.8 Micro-budget Fiction Production

Most third-level film courses produce a number of short films as part of the students' training. We propose that the Galway MA programme be focused on the production of micro-budget feature films and creative documentaries. This ambitious proposal will bring Galway to the forefront of film training and education in Ireland, and internationally.

#### 1.8.1 Advantages of Feature Length Projects for Students

Students will see it as a way to jump start their careers as such a proposal combines the practical advantages of working on and achieving a full-length project with the support structures and expertise of an environment dedicated to learning.

#### 1.8.2 Commercial Possibilities

Students will be attracted to the course in the expectation that the features and documentaries they produce may be screened at festivals, distributed on video, or sold to television.

### 1.9 Summary

This ambitious plan is just one element of an extensive package, the details of which are outlined in the following pages. We are hopeful that this project will be a point of convergence for the various film interests in the area and that adding new resources to what has already been established in a co-operative and complementary spirit will work for the mutual benefit of all.

### 2.1 Primary Aim

The underlying aim of the project is to further the development of Irish cinema, to create distinctive forms of cinema and television capable of addressing the concerns of Irish culture and to seek to interrogate, rather than reproduce, national stereotypes.

### 2.2 Existing Provision

Ireland is reasonably well provided with academic and practical courses in film. The west of Ireland however is not adequately served as the concentration of courses is in the Dublin area. Duplication of existing provision should be avoided and the intention is to provide a new and alternative experience of film-making for students.

### 2.3 Development of New Provision

We believe that we have successfully identified industry needs that are not being met within existing courses and that we have the expertise and creative capability to address these needs imaginatively. Commitment to further dialogue with practitioners and academics and a continuing interest in film training and education in an international context will be vital in the ongoing development and lasting relevance of the project. The needs of an integrated film industry are never static and an essential component of any provision would be recognition of this fact and the creation of facilities for adaptation and development.

### 2.4 Local, National, International Relevance

The immediate concern of the project is to provide training in film-making for Galway, but we intend that this provision will be of such distinction and imaginative scope that it will attract an international reputation for the University, the Institute of Technology and the Film Centre. We believe that this ideal can be achieved through the provision of a creative and relevant educational experience with an imaginative combination of practical and critical learning at its centre.

## 3.0 Focus

### 3.1 Writer, Director, Producer

The focus of the project is film-making as an integrated process with emphasis on the creative nexus of writer, director and producer. We believe that, with existing expertise in the three collaborating establishments and other associated groups, we are ideally situated to meet the needs of undergraduate, postgraduate and extra-academic level students.

### 3.2 Scriptwriting

With regard to scriptwriting in particular, there is already a pool of experienced and able writers in this country, some of whom have already expressed their readiness to collaborate with the Galway Film Project on a contract basis.

### 3.3 Music

A programme similar to the existing Arts Council Creative Writing Programme at NUI, Galway would be a valuable contribution to the area of music and soundtrack composition for film. The Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology is planning to develop a new course in music. It is envisaged that there will be collaboration between students on the music and audio-visual courses.



How to Cheat in the Leaving Certificate Director Graham Jones 1997

### 2.5 Micro-budget Film-making

The focus and promotion of micro-budget film-making as a form that is appropriate to the Irish context is central to the proposal. Nationally and internationally there are many fine examples of feature films and television work which have been made on micro-budgets, including examples such as *El Mariachi* (Robert Rodriguez, 1992), *Leon the Pig Farmer* (Gary Sinyor/Vadim Jean, 1992) and, in Ireland, *November Afternoon* (John Carney, 1995) and *Drinking Crude* (Owen McPolin, 1997). In the last year alone, *How to Cheat in the Leaving Cert* (Graham Jones), *Park* (John Carney) and *Flick* (Fintan Connolly) provide successful examples of micro-budget production here. Many film-makers (Jon Jost [USA], Lars von Trier [Denmark], Michael Moore [USA] and Derek Jarman [UK]) have utilised digital video technology for low budget shooting, transferring to film at the point of exhibition or distribution.

### 2.6 Emphasis

The realities of the commercial world and the audience will be given due attention but the emphasis will be on critical film-making, scriptwriting and editing. To train film-makers who will go on to make a contribution to Irish cinema and to produce films of commercial quality will be the ultimate aim of the project.

## 4.0 Structure(s)

### 4.1 Film-making as an Academic Subject

Film defies categorisation in familiar academic terms. A film-maker's expertise crosses many traditional boundaries, drawing on elements of practical skills, aesthetics and theory and cultural knowledge. The film-maker also requires an appreciation of the commercial realities of the industry and the need to market films to an audience.

### 4.2 A Laboratory Subject

Due to the combination of practice and theory, and the requirements of equipment and facilities, it seems most appropriate to consider film-making as a "laboratory subject" for purposes of categorisation. The interface of film-making with science subjects creates a useful synergy, a connection between the humanities and the sciences.

### 4.3 New Technologies

Future film courses should not only be seen in the light of the past. Developments in the media are making completely new demands on existing film schools and the experiences of these schools should be acknowledged and integrated into our plans. Technological developments not only change the production, but also the distribution of living pictures. It is reasonable that a school takes part in and contributes to the ongoing developments. Interactive multimedia, interactive television, more and more new areas where computers can be used in the field of IT mean, even now, that industry and educational communities are facing a situation which constantly requires new knowledge and skills. We look forward to the cross-disciplinary, innovative and barrier-breaking education which the proposed courses will entail.

### 4.5 Hands-on Experience

The development of film-making skills will be best achieved through the hands-on experience of developing and producing feature length projects with relevant support. Such support includes creative, practical, technical and other relevant expertise.

Course structures will be designed:

- To develop story ideas into screenplays.
- To encourage creativity and experimentation.
- To explore the creative possibilities of the new technologies.
- To provide a space conducive to the development of individual skills.
- To integrate theory and practice.
- To develop aesthetic and critical appreciation.

### 4.6 Theory and Practice

The proportion of practical, as opposed to theoretical or academic content, in various film courses is often highlighted in college brochures or syllabi. In Galway we propose that the elements which might be described as academic or theoretical will have practical value and application, and that this will be a central strand of the ethos and philosophy of the project. This aspect of the project should be emphasised in any promotional material. The dichotomy of practice and critical theory is not valid in the context of film-making; a different approach will be required to integrate the different facets of the course. The University of Ulster at Coleraine mentions this same aspiration very succinctly in its brochure, promoting "critically informed creative practice", where "theory and practice [are] integrated in exciting and meaningful ways". The two aspects of film education should not appear adversarial, competing for time and space, but should be completely integrated. The ideal mechanism to achieve this situation is that of vertical integration of theory and practice, where both aspects focus on the same aims, and one form does not disrupt the other.

### 4.7 Executive Structures

Appropriate executive structures will be developed by the two institutions and the Film Centre as the project takes shape. One model might involve an Executive Committee, involving representatives from the University, Institute of Technology and Film Centre, which would be engaged with the day-to-day co-ordination of resources and responsible for communication with official bodies, while individual course Boards would be responsible for the detailed content and structure of each course. It is proposed that a Governing Body with broad membership would head the project in an advisory capacity. A number of patrons with high public profiles would be invited to participate at this level.

### 4.8 Course provision

Three levels of course provision are proposed: Undergraduate, Postgraduate and Extra Mural/Short Course training.

## 5.0 New Undergraduate Course

### 5.1 Degree Course

A three or four-year degree course will replace the three-year diploma currently offered by the GMIT, and will be jointly provided by the GMIT and NUI, Galway. Applications will be assessed according to CAO points, interview (where appropriate), portfolio and experience. Approximately thirty places will be provided each year.

### 5.2 Structure and Content

The structure and content will be developed with reference to the existing three-year diploma course at the GMIT, but the course will be restructured with additional resources and expertise available from the University and taking into account the plans already in development for the extension of the three-year diploma into a four-year degree course.

### 5.3 Joint Registration and Accreditation

The details of how the two institutions and the GFC collaborate on such a course need to be worked out by those bodies, but the ideal would be joint registration and accreditation as the students will all be selected on the same basis, take the same courses (jointly provided by NUI, Galway and the GMIT) and receive the same qualification.

### 5.4 Specialisation

As there is particular expertise available in some areas such as screenwriting and music, optional "specialisations" in the final year will be encouraged. Such subject specialisation might include screenwriting, music for film, and script editing.

### 5.5 Student Placement or Exchange

A placement in industry for one semester would provide useful experience; alternatively some students will spend one semester in a film school in the US or in continental Europe.

### 5.6 Content

As previously mentioned, theory needs to be taught imaginatively and made relevant to the practicalities of the film-making process. Concepts will be illustrated with reference to specific films, screenplays, the work of particular directors etc. Theory will not be taught in a vacuum.

Examples of subjects to be taught include:

**Video Production**

**Audio**

**Camera and Editing**

**Lighting**

**Computer Applications**

**History of Cinema**

**National Cinemas**

**Genres**

**Cultural Studies**

**Communications**

**Screen Theory** e.g. the politics of film-making, film as cultural production, the theory of representation.

**The Demographics of an Audience**

### 5.7 Available Expertise

The existing expertise in various departments of the university is of advantage to the project. Input from different subject areas such as information technology (IT), law, commerce, Irish and the sciences will be sought for the provision of courses such as:

**Digital Image Processing**

**Computer Graphics**

**Software Applications**

**Interactive Media Technologies**

**Basic Physics**

**Project Management**

**Ergonomics**

**Management Techniques**

**Media law**

**Copyright**

**Communications**

**Film History**

**Film Theory**



All Soul's Day Director Alan Gilsonan 1997

## 6.0 New Postgraduate Course

### 5.8 The existing GMIT National Diploma in Humanities (Film and Television)

This is structured as follows:

#### Year 1

Video Production  
Script Writing  
Audio  
Production Practice  
Photography  
Computers and Media  
Film and Broadcasting studies  
Communication Theory  
French or Irish

#### Year 2

Film Production  
Three of: a) Script Writing, b) Audio, c) Editing, d) Production Design  
Computers and Media  
Film and Broadcasting Studies  
Media Policy  
French or Irish

#### Year 3

Video or Film Production  
Two of: a) Script Writing, b) Audio, c) Editing, d) Production Design  
Computers and Media  
Film and Broadcasting Studies  
Media Business Management  
French or Irish



Drinking Crude Director Owen McPolin 1997

### 6.1 One-year M.A.

The new one year **MA in Creative Feature and Documentary Making** which will be based at NUI, Galway, will recruit twelve to fifteen students a year.

### 6.2 Applications

Applications will be assessed according to primary degree, experience, portfolio and interview, taking a proportion of graduates from the undergraduate course. In special circumstances a primary degree would not be essential, if evidence of equivalent relevant qualifications or experience was submitted (for example mature students or those without formal qualifications but having a number of years film-making experience). Proposals for projects will be carefully considered and applicants with projects for development and production will be given priority.

### 6.3 Learning Through the Process of Film-making

The production of 50-90 minute fiction feature films and creative documentaries will be central to this project-based course. The course will have a micro-budget ethos, not just from financial necessity but growing from a main tenet of the school's philosophy. Paradoxically low budget film-making, despite the lack of production resources, is a free creative space where imagination and authenticity can collaborate to engage an audience.

### 6.4 The Long Format

The short film format is the predominant one at any film school that lacks the practical and financial resources to make a long film, and this is a major weakness in the sector. The epic course of full length film production cannot be learned by making a short film. The actors' characterisation represents a far longer and more complex development in a long film and the dramaturgy is also quite different. The Planning Group is convinced that the allocation of resources to the production of longer films is essential to give Galway a crucial advantage over all the other existing Irish third-level film courses.

### 6.5 Structures of the Learning Environment

The experience and dynamic of the group will be central to the year's course. In addition to a general cultural immersion in the world of ideas from film, literature and art, the learning experience will be structured mainly as short intensive seminars, workshops, master classes or similar modes of interactive learning. The viewing of films from a film-maker's perspective, addressing elements of film history, genre and national cinema will be another central aspect of the course.

### 6.6 Organisation of Subjects

Due to the limitations of time, a very tight and organised structure and timetabling are required. All elements of the curriculum must be relevant and clearly focused towards the end result. The order of subjects will be important, as it must be logical to the film-making process. The writer/director/producer nexus will be kept in mind when final decisions regarding course content are made.

### 6.7 STATCOM Recommendation

The 1995 STATCOM Report's recommendation that "there should be interaction between scriptwriters, producers and director's training related to actual projects in development" will be central to the course structure. The financial and business dimension is also essential for those in the independent sector, and new technologies, particularly their creative applications, must be integrated in the course structure.

### 6.8 Postgraduate Research Projects

Having a number of postgraduate research projects attached to the project would be a stimulus to debate and would draw attention to the other aspects of film. They would also provide some stability in a process where there will be a turnover of MA students every twelve months. Research students might be attracted initially by bursaries or fellowships and wouldn't require a huge financial investment. Adequate library and other resources would be essential. Original and innovative topics should be encouraged. These students would provide an additional identity for the project and would attract international participation. Some individuals with strong projects may well bring their own funding.

### 6.9 Creative Documentary

The creative documentary goes beyond the standard TV documentary, which tends to be journalistic in form. It incorporates cinematic structures and techniques in its more ambitious forms. These documentaries are frequently screened at international film festivals such as the Galway Film Fleadh. Recent Irish examples that achieved a theatrical and video release include *The Uncle Jack* (John T. Davis, 1995) and *Francis Barrett, Southpaw* (Liam McGrath, 1998). There is a television market for feature-length creative documentaries and, at present, Irish documentary-making needs to be strengthened in this genre. The creator of a documentary film with an artistic film and television training will be able to make a valuable contribution to the often journalist-dominated television community.

### 6.10 The GMIT Postgraduate Level Course

The existing GMIT postgraduate level course (in association with the Galway Film Centre) is the National Diploma in Humanities (Video Production). This conversion course aims to provide specialised education in the field of video production. A degree or diploma is a prerequisite and applicants are interviewed to assess suitability and commitment.

The course runs from September to June and includes:

**A foundation module and a study of all the practical and theoretical aspects of video production.**

Two specialisation subjects from:

**Production**  
**Scriptwriting**  
**Editing**  
**Subtitling**  
**Art Direction**

Mandatory modules include:

**History and Theory of Broadcasting**  
**Aesthetics**  
**Photography**  
**Language (with particular reference to Irish for broadcasting purposes)**  
**Video Practice**  
**Word Processing**

## 7.0 Extra Mural

### 7.1 Provision for Continuing Professional Development

The 1995 STATCOM report noted that provision for continuing professional development was virtually non-existent in this country, and Screen Training Ireland has been working to address this need. However, much of this provision is vocational or technical in nature and does not meet developmental needs which are more academic or theory-based.

### 7.2 Short Course Provision in Galway

Post-academic training and development frequently takes the form of short courses which don't fit easily into the academic structures of either the University or those of the Institute of Technology. Galway Film Centre, often in collaboration with other organisations such as Moonstone and Screen Training Ireland, is meeting the need for such provision in Galway. We propose that short courses will continue to be organised largely within the Film Centre, and will develop further in the context of the collaborative relationship with the University and Institute of Technology. This is a good example of the development of a synergetic relationship posited already.

### 7.3 Participation of Active Professionals

It is envisioned that much of this provision would take the form of short courses, but longer courses could be scheduled during the period when the industry is less active (approximately November to March), to facilitate the participation of active professionals. In Amsterdam, the Maurits Binger Institut provides a five-month course for writers with industry experience, emphasising the collaborative, creative team in project development. The Galway Film Centre has run a number of longer training courses, for example the **Writing for Television Drama** course, which is a residential course for writers using international expertise, will take place over a series of 4 x 5 day sessions from February to May 1999.

### 7.4 Co-ordination of Short Courses with the MA Programme

The MA might provide a number of extra places for external participants on any short courses being included within its programme. Participants could attend within the framework of the Short Course programme. Such participation would ameliorate the expense of running short courses of this type solely for the MA, and certification for short course attendance could be arranged.

### 7.5 Development

Courses would be developed and delivered as required. Some of these might become part of the regular provision of the centre, some would be one-off courses, repeated if the demand arises. The structure and content of different models would largely be contingent on the needs identified by potential participants.

### 7.6 Courses

The type of courses to be provided in this category might include:

- Writers' Skills**
- Creative Documentary Film-making**
- Creative Acting Workshop**
- Updating Skills e.g. script development, digital technologies, marketing and distribution**
- The Theory of Film Practice**
- Focus on Innovation, encouraging creative risk-taking that is difficult in a commercial situation**
- Production Skills**

### 7.7 Screen Training Ireland

Screen Training Ireland provides bursaries for training/skills updating, but currently bursaries are only available for courses being held outside Ireland. Some of those courses, or versions of them, could be provided in Galway in association with Screen Training Ireland and other agencies.

At present the GFC is developing a number of courses in collaboration with STI, and some courses have already been run by these two organisations including:

- Writing for Television Drama**
- Scéal Eile: Scripting the Irish Language**
- Continuity for Film and Television**
- Writing for Sitcom**
- Selling Stateside**
- Pitching Workshop**
- Section 35 Internship Programme**

### 7.8 A Short Course Unit

A short-course unit, but with a more critical focus than the National Film and Television School (NFTS) in Beaconsfield, England, could eventually be part of the total project. The unit would be largely co-ordinated and organised by the Film Centre, in co-operation with the University and the Institute of Technology.

### 7.9 Galway Film Centre

Training courses provided by the GFC in 1998 included the following:

- Camera/lighting/sound on 16mm**
- AVID MC400 Editing**
- Shooting and Sound on Betacam**
- Advanced AVID Editing**
- Film Management**
- Documentary Direction**
- Make-up for Film and Television**
- The Film Shoot**
- Acting for the Screen: Workshop and Casting Seminar**
- Producing a Short Film**
- Scriptwriting for the Screen**
- Seminar on Film Funding and Pitching**



November Afternoon Directors John Carney/Tom Hall 1996

## 8.0 Entry Requirements

### 8.1 Undergraduate level

#### 8.1.1 CAO Points

Acceptance into the undergraduate course will be subject to CAO points i.e. Leaving Certificate results and will most likely attract students with high points. Stages of assessment will be formulated at a later stage possibly including the following.

#### 8.1.2 Interview

In addition to the points, selection will be by interview. The members of the interview panel will have a crucial role to play in selecting the right students, as group experience and dynamic is central to the learning process.

#### 8.1.3 Portfolio

Any previous relevant work should be presented and will be taken into account in assessing the applications.

### 8.2 Postgraduate level

#### 8.2.1 Interview

The MA class will be smaller still and again, since the group dynamic is a crucial feature of the year, it is very important that the group selected is appropriate to the course in terms of experience, ability and aptitude. A willingness to participate as part of a group, to share experience, ideas and energy will be central in assessing applications.

#### 8.2.2 Qualifications

A degree is necessary but in certain circumstances other equivalent and relevant experience may be accepted.

#### 8.2.3 Project-based application

Many applicants will present a project that may be developed during the year and it is the intention of the course that a number of these projects will reach completion.

#### 8.2.4 Maturity of students

No specific age limit will be set, however, to be meaningful, the course requires maturity, and practice at other film and television schools shows that the average age of students is about 25 when they are admitted.

#### 8.2.5 Advantages of different Foci

Students with experience or interest in writing, directing, line producing, editing, camera-work, sound and composing music for film would all benefit from involvement in films made for the MA course and would all have useful and substantial contributions to make to the projects.

#### 8.2.6 Galway Graduates

Direct entry to the MA from the undergraduate course, based on short films completed during the degree, will be encouraged.

## 9.0 Assessment and Accreditation

### 9.1 Laboratory Subject

While high academic standards will be maintained, within a “laboratory” approach assessment should mainly be project-based or practical, rather than by examination. Continuous assessment by individual tutors and mentors may be part of the process.

### 9.2 Defining Progress

The assessment process will have to be defined imaginatively, concepts such as “adequate progress” will have to be introduced and considered by tutors. Projects that fail to develop may still be a most useful learning experience i.e. the decision to discontinue a project may be the most appropriate action.

### 9.3 Groupwork

The assessment of groupwork and co-operative projects is an established practice in the University and GMIT and should not raise any difficulty.

### 9.4 Formal Accreditation

Standards for accreditation which meet the requirements of the Faculty and Academic Council of NUI, Galway and the NCEA need to be established and maintained. Formal consultation will be necessary at various levels and, due to the time that this will involve, the process should be initiated as soon as possible.

## 10.0 Links to Local Events

### 10.1 Film Fleadh

The annual Galway Film Fleadh is a showcase for new national and international film. It might provide a first screening for some of the graduate productions.

### 10.2 Film Society

All students should join the Galway Film Society and some of their screenings might provide the basis for seminars. A recent development by the Film Society has been the occasional screening of a locally produced short film in advance of the main feature. Good quality undergraduate material might be shown in this slot.

### 10.3 Visitors

Visits to any films on location in the west of Ireland would be valuable practical experience, and any producers, writers or directors visiting Galway will be invited, as at present, to give a guest lecture or seminar.



Drinking Crude Director Owen McPolin 1997

## 11.0 Links to Industry

### 11.1 Course Boards

It is important that the film industry is represented on the course Boards, where recommendations regarding course content, structure and student selection will be made.

### 11.2 Course Provision and Assessment

It is proposed that some individuals working at a high level in the industry will be involved in the provision of courses and project assessment.

### 11.3 Industry Connection

The local industry sources from which expertise will be sought include **Teilifís na Gaeilge**, **Concord Anois** (the Corman Studios) and local production companies such as **Magma Films**, **Power Pictures** and **Telegael**.

### 11.4 Representative Organisations

It will be important to engage with the various representative organisations of the industry including **Film Makers Ireland (FMI)**, **IBEC A/V**, **SIPTU** and other unions.

## 12.0 International Links

### 12.1 Film Schools

Links with film schools in Europe and the United States will be a valuable resource. In addition to targeting colleges which are a force in contemporary international film education, a shared philosophy of film-making would be important to any such relationship. Due to the necessity of raising co-production finance from abroad for Irish film-makers, partnerships with good film schools in Europe have long term value to Irish film-making. Given the dominance of the American film industry, acknowledging Ireland’s European identity is crucial, and within that context American links clearly also have value.

### 12.2 Sources of Funding and Other Practical Advantages

International partnerships may be a valuable source of funding and can offer practical advantages of access to additional resources and experience. Links may be formal or informal, involving student and staff exchanges. Continuing dialogue with such partners would be a useful means by which Galway can keep up-to-date with industrial and educational developments abroad.

### 12.3 International Students

The participation of students from countries other than Ireland will provide valuable alternative perspectives, and be beneficial to the group experience. Bursaries for one or more students from developing countries to participate in the MA programme would be an innovative and important provision. We have developed initial links with institutes in North and West Africa and intend to shape a mutually beneficial long-term relationship with industry training in the Southern hemisphere.

### 12.4 Advantages of Hybridity

Although the project is planned primarily for Irish students, international participation will add a valuable dimension. The creative environment will be enhanced by the different perspectives and backgrounds provided by students, creating a “contact zone”, “a cultural space where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other” (cf ML Pratt).

## 13.0 Staff

### 13.1 New Posts

In addition to an Artistic Director at full professorial level and a Managing Director for the programme, it is our opinion that a combination of short or medium term contracts for experts in each of the areas of writing, directing, editing and production will be required.

### 13.2 Tutors

The courses need good tutors or facilitators whose availability is regular, adequate and consistent. The above mentioned experts will participate in the provision of tutorial support.

### 13.3 Technical Support

A support structure of technical backup and expertise will be necessary, somewhat similar to the lab assistants required by other laboratory subjects. We estimate that three full-time technicians dedicated to film and digital equipment will be required. Existing expertise in this area could be utilised.

### 13.4 Access to Academic Expertise

Access within the academic environment to different creative individuals with experience and expertise in different areas (unrelated to film) will bring alternative perspectives to the film-making process. Clearly this will be to the advantage of the project, but it is important that their interventions be focussed on film-making. It may be possible to provide film-related training to these experts, in order to make their expertise directly relevant to the film-making process. Potentially, subject areas such as the other visual arts, digital effects, information technology, business studies, physics, writing and legal studies might all contribute to film courses. Similarly, practitioners in the industry may not be proficient in transmitting their expertise. **Screen Training Ireland** and the **National Film and Television School in Beaconsfield**, England, recognise this fact and train their tutors. This is a mode of pre-training that will need to be undertaken at an early stage.

### 13.5 External Expertise

The availability of local expertise and talent is one of the advantages of the project, and the potential to harness and optimise that resource is a primary motivation to develop institutional partnership. It will also be necessary however to have access to a wide range of other experts and practitioners. The Board must be financially able to bring in experts and practitioners as appropriate, especially, but not solely, for the MA students. When high level experts are brought in to provide short intensive workshops for higher level students, they should also provide other general lectures, for lower level course participants. These experts would also act as mentors and production managers on specific projects.

### 13.6 Course Boards

The course Boards will need to be carefully constituted as they will be responsible for the selection of participants, assessment and content/structure of courses, including course development. Representatives from industry as well as academia should be invited to participate in an advisory capacity.

### 13.7 Patrons

The advantages of naming a number of Patrons for the project should not be underestimated in terms of public relations. A list of potential patrons has been drawn up, and some initial informal discussions have taken place.



All Soul's Day Director Alan Gilsenan 1997

## 14.0 Facilities

### 14.1 A Building for the Project

**The Micro-Feature Course** requires a designated building on the University campus to provide a focus and centre for the project. A purpose-built space which could be used as a cinema, lecture space, social focus and training space, and would also provide some office space for administration and permanent staff should be planned. An intelligent design which allowed furniture to be easily moved and stored, perhaps with screens to divide space as required, would optimise the flexibility of the building. A good prototype would be the Maurits Binger Institut building in Amsterdam, which through its structure and internal layout contributes to the creative energy and group learning experience that has proved so successful in their courses.

### 14.2 GMIT Studio

The Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology is in the process of building a television studio. It is proposed that NUI, Galway would contribute to the costs of equipping the studio, and that the facility would be available to students of both institutions.

### 14.3 Information Technology Facilities

The new Information Technology building in NUI, Galway could also be a resource available to the film students.

### 14.4 A Film and Video Library

A well stocked film and video library will be an essential resource for film students and will also be of benefit to other students. Video-viewing facilities must be upgraded and well maintained. Relevant books and journals should be identified and ordered as soon as possible.

### 14.5 Equipment Needs

GMIT and the Film Centre have indicated that the studio equipment required will cost an estimated £300,000 and the MA micro-budget equipment will cost an estimated £456,000. (See Appendix 3).

## 15.0 Funding

### 15.1 Co-operative Connections

Various co-operative relationships may lead to funding opportunities; i.e. a cross-border partnership may make funds from sources such as the International Fund for Ireland available.

### 15.2 European Commission

The European Commission's **First European Community Framework Programme in Support of Culture 2000-2002** is a new programme to support cultural projects of probable long-lasting, and possible structural impact. Finance will be made available to "large scale projects, enhanced infrastructural support at national levels, and long lasting organisational collaboration and cultural agreements with transnational partners". A proposal should be prepared with reference to the document produced by the European Commission, as funding from this source would be extremely valuable.

### 15.3 Private funding

Potential private sources of funding for the venture, particularly for a building, should be pursued.

## 16.0 Costs

### 16.1 Set-up Expenses

Set-up expenses will include administrative costs and investment in equipment.

#### 16.1.1 Equipment

The equipment required for the project will become more specific as the structures are decided. The new GMIT studio will be equipped at the estimated cost of £300,000. The postgraduate course will have different needs, and equipment will cost approximately £456,000. All equipment will be shared so that optimum value and efficiency will be derived from the investment. (See Appendix 3 for detail).

### 16.2 Staff Costs

#### 16.2.1 Full-time Posts

Director  
Artistic Director

#### 16.2.2 Short and Medium-term Contracts

Four experts on short contracts (1 semester)  
Three experts on medium-term contracts (1 year)  
Additional facilitators and tutors  
Visiting practitioners providing workshops or short courses (a few days).

#### 16.2.3 Incidental Employment

In this category we include visiting practitioners and experts on the teaching staff and actors and other professionals implicated in feature making, who may not be available from within the staff and student body.

#### 16.2.4 Specialist Posts

Three full-time technicians will be necessary: a production manager and a technical co-ordinator (full time) and a post production manager (part time), at a cost of approximately £60,000 per annum.

### 16.3 Equipment Maintenance

Maintaining and replacing equipment, other than labour costs, is estimated to cost in the region of £30,000 per annum.

### 16.4 Library

At least £10,000 should be allocated for the initial purchase of videos, books and journals and another £2,000 each year to add to and maintain the collection.

### 16.5 Feature-making Costs

Costs are estimated at approximately £20,000- £35,000 per feature and it is intended that at least three fiction features and one documentary will be produced each year. Some film production costs may be covered retrospectively if the films have commercial value.

## 17.0 Conclusion

### 17.1 Opportunity for Collaboration

This is a timely opportunity to establish a feature film project for Galway. The collaboration between educational establishments is a valuable new initiative and the resource to be provided for the west of Ireland will be of benefit to many. In addition there is the overarching concern that film-making in Ireland will have an additional source of highly-skilled graduates, trained and educated with integrity. It is only by the constant renewal of the skills base that market prices can be maintained and inflationary pressures resisted.

### 17.2 Other Film Initiatives in Irish Third Level Education

Plans are already in progress to expand UCD's limited film courses into a prestigious film school, and other third level educational establishments are equally keen to become involved in this contemporary and popular area of study. Galway must play its role in these developments and, given its long reputation as a centre for education and more recently its high profile in the area of film, it is an obvious location for such a project. With the growing numbers of film courses nationally, it will be important that Galway establishes a separate and unique identity premised on the excellence of educational provision, the high quality of teaching staff, innovation in teaching methods, the production of striking films and, of course, its location. The participation of three different organisations will, in itself, be a radical and innovative step.

### 17.3 Management Structures

A Management Committee and Course Boards should be established as soon as practicable and teaching positions filled with appropriately qualified individuals. The demands of the various institutional structures will require time to institute a new course, and issues such as accreditation will have to be processed. Two years is a likely time frame for this process.

### 17.4 Intention

Our ultimate aim is to enrich Irish film-making. That aim will be achieved through a learning process which will combine aesthetic values with technical expertise, will bring theoretical dimensions to the practical process of representation, and will develop stories which meet the most idealistic aspirations of both film-makers and the demands of the audience.

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How to Cheat in the Leaving Certificate Director Graham Jones 1997

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# Appendices

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November Afternoon Directors John Carney/Tom Hall 1996

## Appendix 1 Description of programmes of study available in Ireland at third level

A Selection of Irish Third Level Film and Media Courses

### COLÁISTE DHÚLAIGH

**Title** Communication and Media Production

**Level** PLC

**Length** 3 years

**Entry requirements** Leaving Cert + evidence of involvement in media-related activities + portfolio

**Certification/Accreditation** City of Dublin VEC

**Practical/Theoretical** 50/50

**Other information** Possible 4th year to degree level (UK colleges)

### DIT RATHMINES

**Title** Media Production

**Level** Certificate

**Length** 2 years

**Entry requirements** CAO + interview + portfolio

**Certification/Accreditation** DIT

**Practical/Theoretical** 80% Practical, 20% Theoretical

### DIT AUNGIER ST.

**Title** Communications: Film and Broadcasting

**Level** BSc (Communications)

**Length** 4 years

**Entry requirements** CAO

**Certification/Accreditation** DIT

**Practical/Theoretical** 50/50

**Other information** Specialisation in 4th year. This course has been revitalised recently including a growing emphasis on theory, large output of short films.

**Title** MA in Film Production

**Level** Postgraduate

**Length** 1 year

**Entry requirements** Honours degree and interview

**Certification/Accreditation** DIT

**Practical/Theoretical** 55% Practical, 45% Theoretical

**Other information** This is a conversion course i.e. graduates from different academic backgrounds gain a specialisation in film.

### DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY

**Title** MA in Film and Television Studies

**Level** Postgraduate

**Length** 1 year full time or 2 years part time

**Entry requirements** Good Honours degree

**Certification/Accreditation** DCU

**Practical/Theoretical** 100% Theoretical

**Other information** Focus on cultural specificity of cinema within a framework which studies film and television as industries, in economic, political and institutional contexts.

### DUN LAOGHAIRE INSTITUTE OF ART, DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

**Title** National Diploma in Design/Communications

**Level:** Diploma

**Length** 3 Years

**Entry requirements** Leaving Cert + portfolio + interview

**Certification/Accreditation** NCEA

**Practical/Theoretical** 80% Practical, 20% Theoretical

**Other information** There are 3 major specialist areas in this diploma:

Graphic design

Film and video production

Animation production

**Title** BA in Film/Video Studies

BDes in Film/Video Design

BDes in Production Design

**Level** Degree

**Length** 1 year

**Entry requirements** National Diploma in Design/Communications or Art or equivalent with merit/distinction and major study in film or video or related areas. Showreel or folder of work and interview.

**Certification/Accreditation** NCEA

**Practical/Theoretical** 80% Practical, 20% Theoretical

**Other information** This degree is intended to give the student who has reached a high level of expertise at undergraduate level the opportunity to further their specialisation.

The DLIADT provides courses in a range of other film-related areas e.g. model-making and special effects. An MA in scriptwriting is planned this year and an MA in film/video production will be introduced next year.

### GALWAY-MAYO INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

**Title** National Diploma in Humanities (Film & Television)

**Level** Undergraduate

**Length** 3 years

**Entry requirements** CAO

**Certification/Accreditation** NCEA

**Practical/Theoretical** 80% Practical, 20% Theoretical

**Other information** Plans to develop this diploma to degree level are in progress.

**Title** National Diploma in Humanities (Video production) (in association with the Galway Film Centre)

**Level** Postgraduate

**Length** 1 year

**Entry requirements** National Diploma or degree or equivalent and interview.

**Certification/Accreditation** NCEA

**Practical/Theoretical** 70% Practical, 30% Theoretical

**Other information** This is a conversion course

### SENIOR COLLEGE BALLYFERMOT

**Title** HNDF Higher National Diploma in Film Operations and Production

**Level** PLC course

**Length** 2 years

**Entry requirements** Leaving certificate, portfolio and demonstrated interest and potential.

**Certification/Accreditation** NCVA/BTEC

**Practical/Theoretical** 100% Practical (with emphasis on self-motivation, time management & group interaction)

**Other information** Graduates of this course may progress to a degree course, with an exemption from year 1.

### UCD (CENTRE FOR FILM STUDIES)

**Title** MA in Film Studies

**Level** Postgraduate

**Length** 1 year

**Entry requirements** Honours degree

**Certification/Accreditation** UCD

**Practical/Theoretical** This is an academic course however there is a film production component.

**Other information** There are also postgraduate research opportunities leading to MLitt and PhD qualifications. A BA Modular (evening) degree in Film Studies is also available.

The UCD School of Film conducts practical Summer courses in Film Production and Screenwriting, certified by UCD. There are currently plans to establish a large film school at UCD.

## UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER AT COLERAINE

**Title** BA in Media Studies

**Level** Undergraduate

**Length** 3 years

**Entry requirements** Good leaving certificate/  
A levels (UCAS)

**Certification/Accreditation** University of Ulster

**Practical/Theoretical** 80% Theoretical, 20% Practical

**Title** Postgraduate Diploma/MA in Media Studies

**Level** Undergraduate

**Length** Diploma 2 years part-time, MA 1 year extra  
(dissertation)

**Entry Requirements** Degree or equivalent and interview for  
Diploma. Successful completion of Diploma for MA.

**Certification/Accreditation** University of Ulster

**Practical/Theoretical** 100% Theoretical

A variety of film-related courses are also provided  
by organisations such as the Galway Film Centre, Cork  
Film Centre, Screen Training Ireland, The Nerve Centre in  
Derry, Moonstone, Film Base and the Northern Ireland  
Film Commission.

## Appendix 2 A summary of key skills: Director, Writer and Producer

As film-making involves teamwork, the ability to work and  
collaborate with others is a necessary skill for all participants  
and a knowledge of each other's roles and functions is  
fundamental to the success of that collaboration; hence the  
advantage of shared training.

### Director

The role of director is that of an artistic leader in a team. This  
includes the interpretation and visualisation of a manuscript,  
the ability to inspire and co-ordinate the creative members of  
a team, instruct actors and the ability to influence and have  
control over financial and practical prerequisites.

The director's role may be broken down as follows:

**Concept development (script development,  
style/genre decisions, establish relationships  
with producer, writer, editor)**

**Managing pre-production (budgeting,  
selection of actors and crew, supervise  
scheduling, shooting, locations etc.)**

**Control of production (technical direction, work with  
actors, liaise with lighting and camera crew)**

**Post-production (work with editors,  
complete administration)**

A broad knowledge of areas as diverse as film, arts, world  
cultures, the audience, computer technology, management,  
planning and budgeting will be useful. It is also necessary  
that the director have as thorough an insight as possible into  
all the other related job areas. The wide-ranging knowledge  
required is indicative of the director's responsibility for the  
totality of the completed film.

### Writer

The position of the writer in film and television production is  
different to that of the fiction writer in that the script is part  
of the finished film and not an independent literary work.  
The scriptwriter is part of a team and must appreciate the  
specific needs of the medium, and interaction required. The  
writer for film should be able to write new stories and adapt  
existing literature into screenplay format.

The writer's role may be broken down as follows:

**Development (originate script ideas, research)**

**Drafting (Develop characters, settings, dialogue)**

**Adaptation (breakdown into characters,  
structure, key elements)**

**Editing**

**Presentation/Promotion**

Knowledge of contemporary culture, politics and current  
affairs as well as storytelling traditions will all contribute to  
the quality of scripts that emerge. The writer must  
understand the film-making process and be able to visualise  
the story.

### Producer

The industry needs producers who have initiative and are  
innovative, and can also develop and manage the artistic,  
financial and practical elements of a production. Good  
management skills are essential, but equally important is  
artistic insight in order to optimise the film's success. The  
audience and global trends in the industry will affect the  
choice of a project and the availability of finance. The timing  
of a film's release may influence its success. The producer  
needs the judgement to make decisions at every stage of the  
project.

Expertise in the legal and financial aspects of the process is  
important and skill in negotiating and communications is  
paramount. This includes identifying and resolving in advance  
areas of potential conflict.

The producer's key functions include:

**Initiate and commission the development of  
the production concept.**

**Plan and co-ordinate promotional and  
marketing strategies.**

**Seek financial support for the concept, establish funding  
and prepare budget plans for the production.**

**Identify and select providers of creative and technical  
expertise necessary for the production.**

**Monitor preparation of production schedule  
and progress of production.**

**Monitor health and safety of working environment.**

**Monitor and assure the quality of the production process.**

**Control the technical and aesthetic development of  
the production.**

## Appendix 3 Equipment

### Equipment

The following is the breakdown of the equipment required in  
the new GMIT studio.

3 x studio cameras	£60,000
3 x studio tripod	£40,000
Talkback system	£12,000
Autocue	£ 8,000
Extensive lighting	£25,000
Vision mixer	£10,000
5 x output monitors	£ 4,000
3 x Beta v.t.r.s	£50,000
Cabling, patch panels and cords, U racks, furniture	£30,000
1 x studio based non-linear edit system	£50,000
Sundries	£11,000

**TOTAL £300,000 approximately**

**NB THESE FIGURES ARE ONLY ESTIMATIONS; AS ALL PURCHASES WILL  
BE TENDERED FOR, THESE FIGURES ARE SUBJECT TO FLUCTUATION.**

The Micro-budget equipment requirements will be as follows:

3 x Digital Betacam Cameras	£105,000
3 x tripods	£ 9,000
Light kit per camera	£ 7,500
3 x portable mixers	£ 4,500
6 x mics	£ 3,000
3 x Digital Betacam Player/recorder	£150,000
3 x Avid MC 1000 non-linear edit suites	£165,000
Miscellaneous (headphones, boom poles, field monitors, output monitors, PPMs, waveform and vectorscope monitors, PAG battery packs, bulbs, carry cases, cables)	£ 12,000

**TOTAL £456,000**

**NB THIS ESTIMATE IS BASED ON CURRENT LIST PRICES AND IS  
SUBJECT TO VARIATION**

## Appendix 4 Micro-budget Production Model

Assume 20 people on a course, producing 3 features and 2 x  
90 minute documentaries.

### Documentary

Each doc assume shoot 15 days  
Assume a shooting ratio of 20:1  
Assume 15 hours of rushes (per doc)  
Assume 30 days off line (per doc)  
2 days on line (per doc)  
3 days track laying (per doc)  
2 days dubbing (per doc)

### Feature

Each feature assume 25 days  
Assume shooting ratio 10:1  
7.5 hours footage (per feature)  
Assume 40 days off line (per feature)  
2 days on line (per feature)  
10 days track laying (per feature)  
10 days dubbing (per feature)

**The equipment demands would look something  
like this:**

180 days shared between at least two editing suites  
105 days shooting, shared between at least two crews  
36 days track laying  
34 days dubbing



Park Directors John Carney/Tom Hall 1998