Course outline: Sound Design for Film and Television

The MA in Sound Design for Film and Television is a specialisation within the broader **MA in Film and Television**.

The course represents a steady progression beginning with the basic technology and skills that underpin and support the creative process and ending with the responsibility for sound design on a range of graduation films. At each stage additional skills are added through specific workshops that provide a comprehensive education that is of great value in understanding and communicating with other industry professionals.

Using the latest equipment and technology, students work as sound designers on fiction, documentary, animation, T.V., and games projects, developing their skills in digital tracklaying and mixing. Modules will include some or all of the following according to the intake of the year.

Year One

"Springboard" Cross Specialisation Introductory Workshop (duration 4 days)
- an introduction to the moving image, looking at cinematic and televisual language through the prism of storytelling
- it investigates how the main crafts of cinema and television, screenwriting, cinematography, visualisation, editing, sound and music each relate to the way filmmaking puts across narrative ideas

Introduction to Sound Editing Technology and Practice
These Modules aim to give the student a basic foundation in technical sound knowledge and film techniques. Students gain a foundation in audio electronics and technologies, and a basic understanding of film techniques to assist them in future modules.

What is a Soundtrack?
Practical exercises that deconstruct the soundtrack into atmospheres, effects and dialogue in order to understand how each component contributes to the overall effect

Scene Analysis
These sessions facilitate a highly analytical breakdown of chosen cinematic sequences. Together with a lead tutor, the students will discuss the language, mis-en-scene and stylizations at work in the sequences.

Sound Design and Mixing Workshops
A series of practical workshops providing opportunities to learn and develop the skills required for post-production sound, familiarity with sound editing systems, tracklaying, Foley recording and mixing.
These skills are then put into practice in:

'Father'
This module gives each student an opportunity to design and mix a complete soundtrack for a short live action fiction film. There are a series of individual tutorials and a final group review in one of the cinemas.

Without Images (Cross-Specialisation with Editing, Composing and Screenwriting)
Students collaborate in teams to create 10-minute audio dramas. This workshop encourages the students to open up to what is around them and then to develop ideas through their personal voice. The workshop encourages students to discover strategies that match their responses and develop ways in which they can play with ideas and explore new and different forms of narrative. They will develop ways of looking at character and examine the differences between the "invented" and the "real".

Sound & Music in Documentary / Moment of Truth
(Cross-Specialisation with Documentary, Editing and Composing)
These modules introduce the aesthetics, craft and teamwork involved in the making of documentaries of different styles, promoting an understanding of factual storytelling within a poetic framework.

Beyond Time (Cross-specialisation with Fiction, Editing and Composing)
This module is a production that emphasises visual storytelling and encourages the students to develop all aspects of screen language. All films are fully post-produced.

Animation Workshop (Cross-specialisation with Animation)
The First Animation Sound Design workshop is non-collaborative and explores the technique of creating a picture to an existing sound track. It offers you a free hand to create a sound track which the animators use as a central narrative trigger to create a short film.

Games Workshops (Cross-Specialisation with Games and Composing)
A series of opportunities to collaborate with the Games students, provide audio components for a range of projects, and help develop and enhance the effectiveness of the sound elements for each game.

First Year Film
Throughout the first-year ideas and scripts will be developed for a 10-15-minute film which is shot and edited during the autumn term. Sometimes these films are based around a shared theme or genre. Scripts will be developed by the producers and directors in conjunction with cinematography, production design and sound. The composers provide the music and the films are edited and mixed by the end of the year. Sound students sound edit and mix the project. This is a key first year module.

MA in Sound Design for Film and Television
Commencing January 2023

Year Two

Workshops

These modules provide an opportunity for advanced craft and software training designed to develop the creativity of the student through knowledge of their tools to post-produce a sound track. This will feed directly into the student's graduation work.

Avid S6 console advanced training will enable the student to explore mixing in Dolby Stereo, Dolby 5.1, and Dolby Atmos.

Question Documentary (Cross-Specialisation with Documentary)
This module continues to develop the understanding of the aesthetics, craft and teamwork involved in documentary programme-making.

Animation graduation films (Pre-production/production)
Sound students commit to involvement in animation films from the outset, discussing ideas and concepts with the animation directors and supplying location sound or guide track sound as the animators develop the project. The collaboration between animation director, sound and music is often highly creative and innovative and continues over much of the second year.

Digital Film Project
(Cross-Specialisation with Fiction Directors and all other Post Production Depts.)
In this module sound students work on 15-minute Fiction projects shot on a digital format. By the end of this module the student should be able to demonstrate, through their work, an industry standard awareness of sound design as well as working efficiently and creatively within a team.

Games Workshop
This workshop is designed for students to further develop their Games Sound Design skills.

Graduation Projects
(Documentary, Fiction, Animation, TV, Science and Natural History, and Games)
Sound Design on the graduation projects provides a further opportunity to develop advanced creative and technical skills. Students develop a deeper understanding of the key components of an effective soundtrack. They will learn how to shape and craft the dialogue, sound effects and music to deliver an emotionally engaging and coherent narrative. Good organisational skills, time management and the prioritising of tasks are essential in these final productions.

Compulsory attendance is also required for the following:
- **Screen Arts**
- **Health and Safety** - presented as an integral part of technical workshops and productions.

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