

## **Course outline: MA in Model Making for Film and Animation**

The MA in Model Making for Film and Animation is a specialisation within the broader **MA in Film, Television and Games**.

The course represents a steady progression beginning with basic model making techniques such as pattern making, simple mould making and casting, and develops through a series of challenging modules including collaborative replica set builds, individual puppet design and build module, and a collaboration workshop with the Visual Effects course.

At each stage additional skills are added through specific workshops to provide a comprehensive model making understanding before beginning work on the Animation Graduation films later in the year.

You will work with Industry professionals at various stages of the course and learn current Industry standard methods.

### **By the end of the course you will have evidence of work in:**

- Pattern making in Wood, Chemiwood, Ureol, and Plaster
- Simple mould making and casting
- Using laser cutting technology
- Basic digital 3D modelling tuition
- 3D printing
- Vacuum forming
- 1:1 scale Prop making / Scale prop and Set building
- Puppet making including working with Armatures
- Painting and detailing / finishing
- Health and Safety in the Workshop.

The Model Making for Film and Animation course is a full time course. The workshop hours run from 9.30am – 5.00pm each day (Monday to Friday), and you are expected to attend between these hours. Absence from the course is only permitted in exceptional circumstances.

The course is made up of four modules.

### **Course Elements**

#### **Term 1**

#### **Induction and Introduction to Model Making for Film and Animation**

A comprehensive workshop tool and machine induction takes place early in the first term to ensure students gain the knowledge required for safe use of all equipment. This is monitored throughout the year to maintain continued safe working. Students are expected to keep photographic and written notes to help with creating their own personal workshop document which can be used as a personal guide for future use.

MA in Model Making for Film and Animation  
Commencing September 2025

### **Module 1: Scale Pattern Making, Mould Making, Casting & Vac Forming**

This module is designed to give you experience in fabricating simple patterns, moulds and casts from a list of objects at scale from your own drawings. You will make a number different objects from a range of options, including doors, masks, pottery and food.

### **Module 2: Replica Set Build**

Working together as a team, you will recreate a screen accurate scale model of an existing film set. The finished model must look as close as possible to, and be indistinguishable from, the full size set from the film.

### **Turbo Workshop**

A quickfire 2-day workshop that will explore other elements of model making.

### **Module 5: Master's Portfolio**

The Master's Portfolio requires you to demonstrate evidence of, and critical reflection on, your professional and creative practice throughout the course. The final portfolio should not only act as a record of your work on the course but as a dynamic document that critically examines your journey, growth, and the evolving relationship between your creative practice and professional skills and aspirations in film and TV. You will submit your portfolio before your final Progress Review, in which you should be prepared to answer questions on it.

## **Term 2**

### **Module 3: Stop-Frame Puppet Build**

You will design and build an original human puppet suitable for stop-frame animation. You will learn how to create and alter the metal armature, sculpt and cast the body and head, and how to make the costume.

### **Module 4: Film and TV Prop Build**

Using all the techniques you have learnt so far, you will select a prop from a Film or TV show then design and build a faithful, screen-accurate 1:1 scale replica.

### **Turbo Workshop (tbc)**

A quickfire 2-day workshop that will explore other elements of model making.

## **Term 3**

### **Grad Animation collaborations**

You will work with the second year Animation Directors, Producers and Production Designers, to help design and make puppets, props and sets for the Grad Animation films.

## **Other Elements**

### **Production Experience**

In term three you will work on some of the Graduation Animation films in production at the time. These films could be stop frame animation, or a combination of animation techniques. You will work in teams alongside MA Production Design and Animation Direction students under the supervision of the Model Making Head of Department (HoD), to fabricate models, sets, puppets and props for these films.

Depending on the number of films in production, you may have the opportunity to work on more than one film.

## **Model Making Coordinator Role**

In advance of the Grad Animation phase of the course, the HoD will invite applications for a coordinating model maker role for each film. The role will involve some supervision of schedules, coordinating groups of model makers within the team, and attending meetings with student Directors / designers. The role will be appointed and overseen by the model making HoD. The successful applicant must have already demonstrated excellent skills in model making, time management, organisation, communication with peers and tutors, problem solving, and forward thinking during the first half of the year. Whilst a coordinating model maker will be assigned to one film, it is expected that they will also work on other Grad animations.

If no student applies, the HoD will appoint the coordinating model maker(s). A role descriptor will be issued nearer the time.

Students who choose not to apply, or are unsuccessful in their application will not be downgraded in any feedback/assessment.

## **Business Studies & Business Skills for Freelancers**

Freelance Business Skills sessions are offered as part of the course and they include portfolio, CV preparation, a freelance toolkit session and tips on working as a freelancer.

## **Work Experience**

You may be offered work experience between 5-10 days at either our course partner - Mackinnon and Saunders, collaborating studio - Aardman Animations, or other industry studios / workshops (subject to availability) who will consult on the most convenient time to carry this out, based on their production schedules. The work experience opportunity should test the skills and capabilities you have gained whilst on the course. By the final assessment you may have completed a relevant work experience placement. You will be expected to arrange and pay for any travel and accommodation related to any work experience. It is also expected that you will pay for any travel involved with exhibitions or events scheduled away from the NFTS campus.