

MEL

HOPPENHEIM LLD 09

A BLOCKBUSTER BENEFACTOR



Concordia's Faubourg Building, which houses the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema



Mel and Rosemary Hoppenheim pose with a likeness of Andy Warhol from Grévin Montréal at the Chancellor's Builders Dinner in 2015.



From left: Rosemary and Mel Hoppenheim, LLD 09, with André Desmarais, BComm 78, LLD 07, and Concordia President Alan Shepard at the Honorary Doctorates' Dinner in 2015

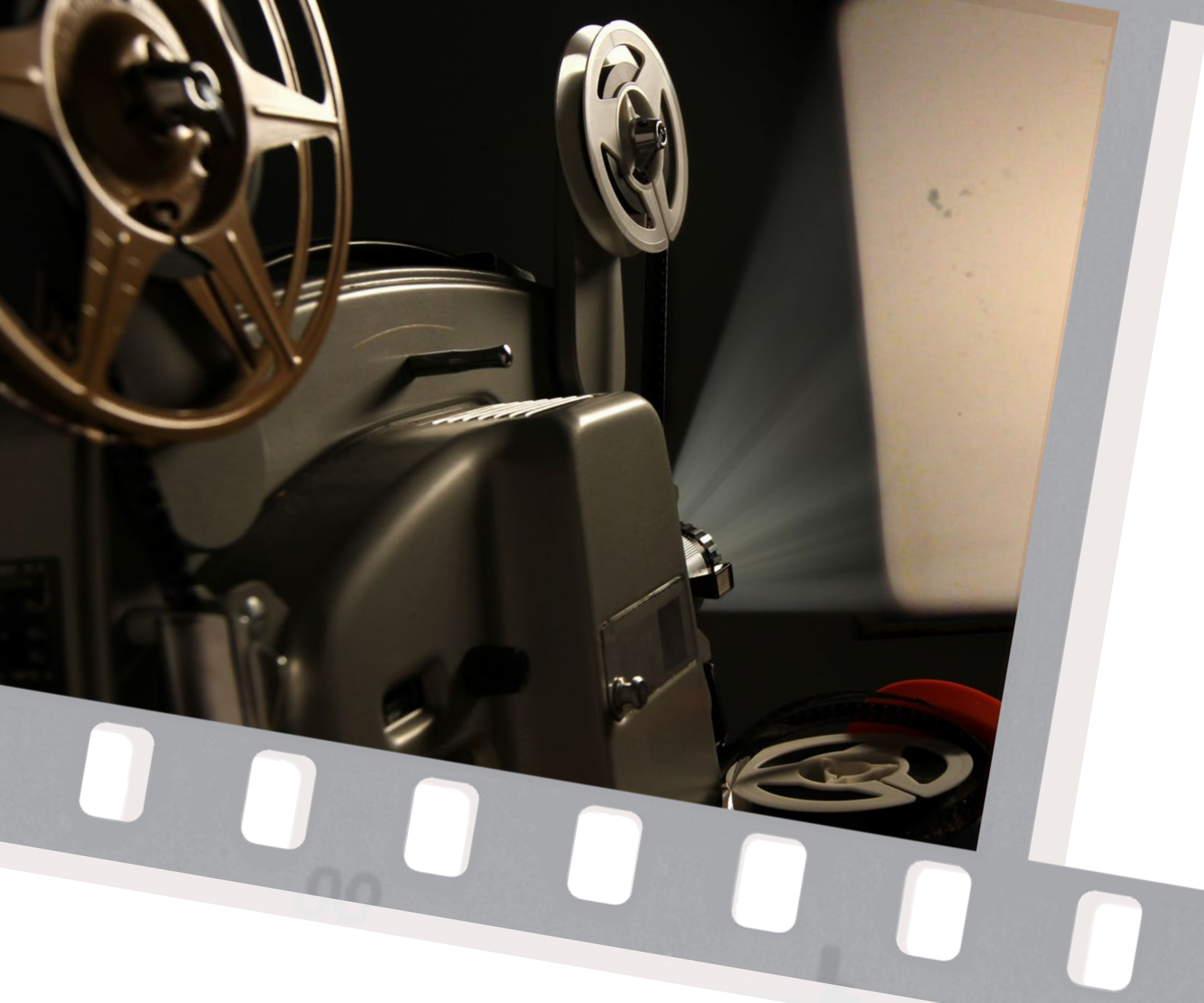














TABLE OF CONTENTS

 1	PREFACE: CONCORDIA PRESIDENT GIVES THANKS	4
 2	INTRODUCTION	6
 3	FROM HUMBLE AND HARDWORKING BEGINNINGS	9
 4	MISTER HOLLYWOOD NORTH: TRANSFORMING MONTREAL INTO A CINEMA MECCA	10
 5	‘THE RENT FOR SUCCESS IS CHARITY’: MEL HOPPENHEIM’S PHILANTHROPY	13
 6	WHERE STARS ARE BORN: THE MEL HOPPENHEIM SCHOOL OF CINEMA	16
 7	CUTTING-EDGE RESEARCH: INTERVIEWS WITH MEL HOPPENHEIM SCHOOL OF CINEMA RESEARCHERS	22
 8	GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH AT THE MEL HOPPENHEIM SCHOOL OF CINEMA	29
 9	CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE: THE MEL HOPPENHEIM SCHOOL OF CINEMA’S ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY	36
 10	THREE DECADES OF STUDENT SUPPORT	38
 11	THE FUTURE OF FILM: ALUMNI MAKING WAVES INTERNATIONALLY	40
 12	CONCORDIA CELEBRATES MEL HOPPENHEIM	44



PREFACE

“As demonstrated by its growing list of award-winning and internationally acclaimed alumni, the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema is where some of the world’s brightest filmmakers, animators and scholars cut their teeth.

The school’s reputation for excellence and innovation is only fitting, given Mel Hoppenheim’s transformative role in the North American film industry.

Concordia is grateful to have the support and friendship of Mel Hoppenheim.”

– Concordia President Alan Shepard





Concordia President Alan Shepard

Mel and Rosemary Hoppenheim at Concordia's 40 Years of Philanthropy celebration in 2014



INTRODUCTION

“We are honoured that you have agreed to attach your name to our school. For many years, you have been an invaluable source of support to our department. Given your own prominence in the film community, your recognition of our department carries a special significance. This department is capable of doing spectacular things under adverse circumstances. I can only assure you that you have now unleashed a potential that truly has no bounds. We are extremely proud of the world-class reputation that cinema at Concordia has developed.”

— The late Christopher Jackson, dean of Concordia’s Faculty of Fine Arts, 1994 to 2005, in a letter to Mel Hoppenheim from 1997

There isn’t a more fervent supporter of Canadian cinema than Mel Hoppenheim.

Dubbed “Mister Hollywood North” by the media and a lion within the industry, Hoppenheim has worked tirelessly throughout his career to establish a solid gold reputation for Montreal as an international hub for film production.

He is the founder of Panavision and the visionary builder behind the state-of-the-art film production studios that bear his first name. Hoppenheim’s investments in home-grown cinema have helped pump millions of dollars into the local economy and created hundreds upon hundreds of new jobs.

In 1997, Hoppenheim donated \$1 million to support the development of students enrolled in film programs within Concordia’s Faculty of Fine Arts.

That same year, the Department of Cinema was renamed the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema in recognition of its generous benefactor.

In June 2009, Hoppenheim officially joined the Concordia family, receiving an honorary doctorate at spring convocation alongside graduates from the Faculty of Fine Arts.


In addition to helping establish a world-class film school in Quebec, Hoppenheim has demonstrated unwavering support and leadership for the Montreal community and embodies the highest Canadian work ethic.

His stellar community leadership and philanthropy have empowered many and offered so much to students.

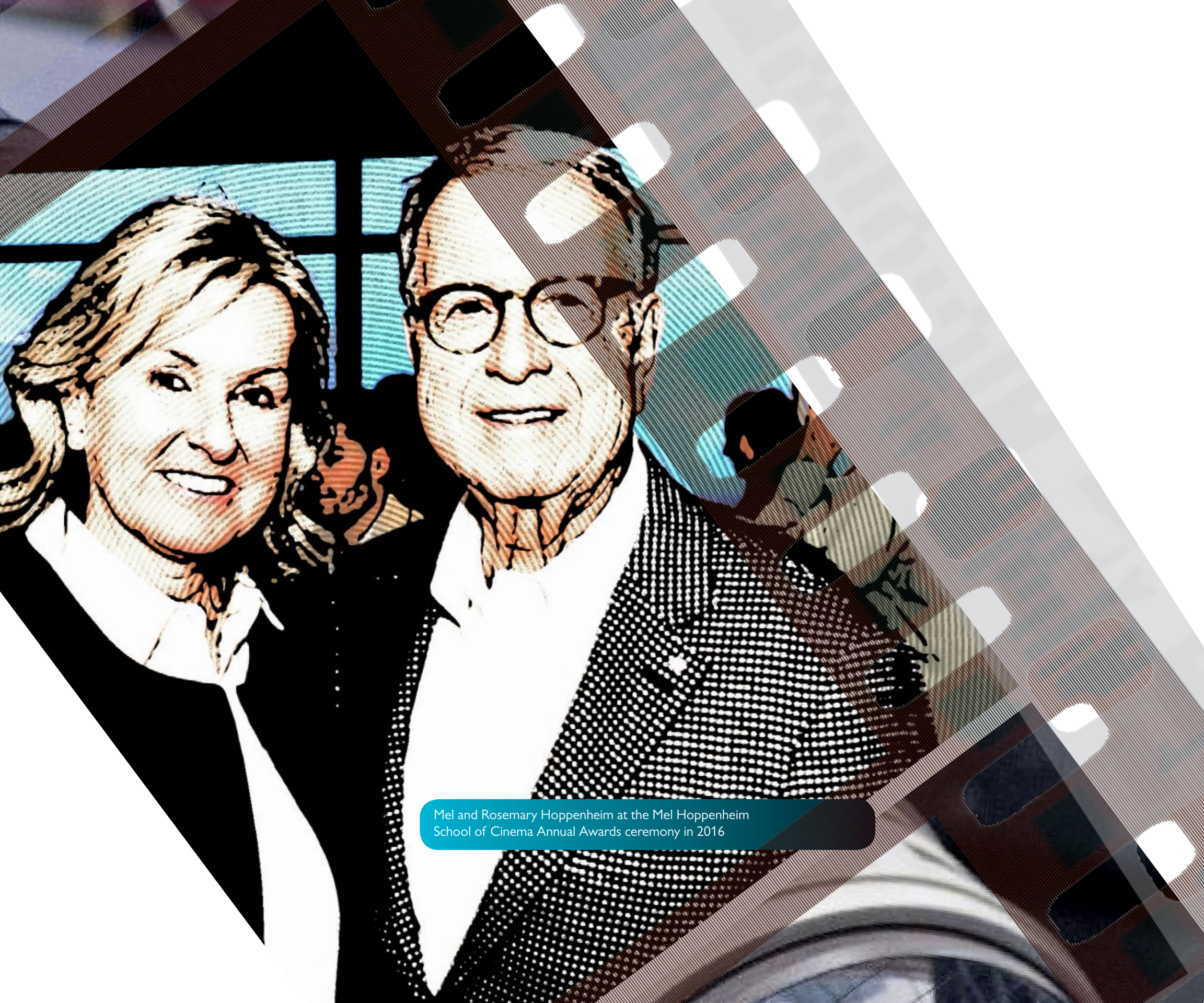
In these pages, we celebrate Hoppenheim’s blockbuster contributions.

A portrait of Christopher Jackson, an older man with glasses and a dark jacket, framed within a film strip border. The background of the portrait is a light green grid pattern.

The late Christopher Jackson, dean of Concordia's Faculty of Fine Arts, 1994 to 2005

A photograph of Mel Hoppenheim and Judith Woodsworth at a convocation. Mel Hoppenheim is on the left, wearing a dark suit, a striped tie, and a maroon academic stole with gold trim. Judith Woodsworth is on the right, wearing a black graduation cap and gown with a white lace stole. They are standing in front of a background that appears to be a wall with a grid pattern. The entire scene is framed by a large, diagonal film strip graphic.

Mel Hoppenheim is pictured with then Concordia President Judith Woodsworth at convocation in 2009, when the university bestowed on him an honorary doctorate degree.



Mel and Rosemary Hoppenheim at the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema Annual Awards ceremony in 2016

FROM HUMBLE AND HARDWORKING BEGINNINGS

“I feel blessed to have succeeded in my chosen career. I therefore feel obligated to give back.”

— Mel Hoppenheim, LLD 09

Mel Hoppenheim was born in Montreal in 1937 to humble and hardworking parents. His father was a Polish immigrant and his mother a native Montrealer of Russian descent.

At age 12, following his father’s sudden death, Hoppenheim was compelled to join the workforce to help support his mother, sister and brother.

Although he continued to attend school until he was 17, he spent every lunch hour working in the family meat business.

Rather than playing with peers after class, his evenings were spent making deliveries for the local shoemaker and weekends were consumed with more odd jobs.

In his convocation address in 2009, Hoppenheim described these early struggles as pivotal moments that shaped the course of his future.

“I was still a child when my dad died. At 17, I left high school and started working to support my family,” he said. “The hard work shaped me and gave me the courage to return to school at night to get my diploma at Sir George Williams University [one of Concordia’s two founding institutions].”

A chance encounter and curiosity led to Hoppenheim’s career in cinema. While visiting Mont-Tremblant, Que., with some friends, he noticed a film crew shooting a commercial. Curious, he approached the crew and asked questions and they expressed the difficulty of acquiring film equipment in Canada. In that moment, he saw an opportunity.

“I realized then that Canada and Montreal could do better, and that our country had an enormous talent pool but scant resources to achieve its movie-making potential.”

Hoppenheim admits he didn’t know anything about the movie industry when he created a tiny film-equipment rental business in 1965. What he saw, however, was a niche market that could prosper. He worked hard to improve his business and travelled the world to scout for the best in film equipment.

He later bought his first company, Panavision Canada Corp., and over time established himself as an industry leader. He opened his second technical installation in Toronto in 1972 and a Vancouver facility followed in 1977.

He eventually sold Panavision, but would later join forces with an up-and-coming competitor named Michel Trudel in the late 1980s.

Hoppenheim is the father of six children and grandfather of nine.





MISTER HOLLYWOOD NORTH: TRANSFORMING MONTREAL INTO A CINEMA MECCA

“The Canadian movie industry would not be what it is without Mel Hoppenheim.”

— Former Montreal film commissioner André Lafond

Through his career, Hoppenheim was deeply committed to the economic and artistic development of Canada. He recognized that Canada would never become an international film production mecca without cutting-edge studios, so he decided to invest and built what was needed.

He purchased Montreal’s former Expo-Théâtre de la Cité du Havre in 1984 and converted the space into Canada’s most advanced film and television production house, with five state-of-the-art studios.

Through an initial multi-million dollar investment, he fashioned the site into the cornerstone of his future enterprise, Mel’s Cité du Cinéma. The venture paid off and poured an estimated \$250 million into the Montreal economy and created more than 500 new jobs.

Hoppenheim was resolute that Montreal should be an international hub for cinema on par with Hollywood. By 1999, he and Michel Trudel teamed up to construct another building at Mel’s Cité du Cinéma’s complex. The second site added 36,500 square metres of film production space featuring three mega sound stages, modern production offices and a complete camera department.

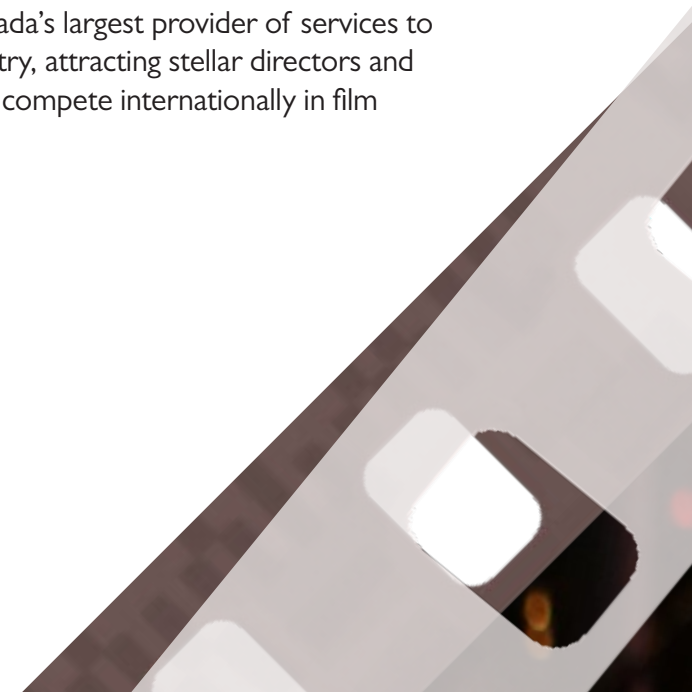
The studios quickly became a huge draw for large American and international productions, from the recent X-Men trilogy to *Arrival*.

Their success encouraged the business partners to invest a further \$15 million to construct the third Mel’s Cité du Cinéma in 2002 (known today as MELS Studios). It included four ultramodern studios with a large lighting and grip department capable of serving the biggest of large-budget films.

Their company continued to grow in 2003 when Hoppenheim and Michel Trudel bought a competitor’s operations in western and suburban Montreal. In doing so, they nearly doubled their facilities to 290,000 square metres.

“All I want is for more and more people to come to Montreal to make movies,” Hoppenheim told the *Montreal Gazette*.

Today, MELS Studios is Canada’s largest provider of services to the film and television industry, attracting stellar directors and helping Canada continue to compete internationally in film production.





Mel Hoppenheim and Andrew Molson at the Chancellor's Builders Dinner in 2015



Mel Hoppenheim addresses the crowd at the 35th anniversary celebration of the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema in 2011.



‘THE RENT FOR SUCCESS IS CHARITY’: MEL HOPPENHEIM’S PHILANTHROPY

“Concordia is proud to have one of the foremost film schools in Canada. Just as he did with his studio, Mel Hoppenheim envisioned the potential of investing in education. The yield of his investment is nothing short of remarkable. He has enabled students of the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema to achieve their goals and they, in turn, make for a better, more robust film industry.”

— Bram Freedman, vice-president, Advancement and External Relations, Concordia

As Hoppenheim’s business grew, so did his philanthropy and his community leadership.

In 1995, he created the annual Mel Hoppenheim Award at Concordia to encourage the work of students who demonstrate outstanding achievement in film production.

He then made history in 1997 when he made a catalyzing gift to an arts sector: a \$1-million donation towards Concordia’s cinema department.

In recognition of his generous contribution, the department was renamed the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema. It now attracts hundreds of students per year and has become world-renowned for its Film Animation, Film Production and Film Studies programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

He has also teamed up with partners to help develop Montreal’s Institut National de l’Image et du Son, a non-profit private school committed to the development of 300 students into top-notch writers, directors and producers for film and television. He further supports Cinemania, the festival of French-language films with English subtitles.

Alongside his wife, Rosemary, Hoppenheim has been active in several charities and community organizations including the Montreal Children’s Hospital, Ste-Justine Hospital, Action Centre, the Montreal Heart Institute, the Saidye Bronfman Centre (now the Segal Centre), the Jewish National Fund, the Montreal Jewish Film Festival, the Montreal Holocaust Museum, the Jewish General Hospital and Federation CJA.

What's more, Hoppenheim presided over the 2002 Combined Jewish Appeal campaign. He worked tirelessly to reach out to members of the Jewish community to raise awareness about poverty, caring for the elderly, education and combating anti-Semitism. Through his leadership he helped the organization raise a then record \$40 million for Montreal's needy.

Why does he help so many causes? "Because the rent for success is charity," Hoppenheim has said.

Over the years, numerous organizations have fêted Hoppenheim's achievements.

In 2015, he was appointed a Member of the Order of Canada in recognition of "his contributions to the vitality of moviemaking in Canada and for his support for a wide variety of educational and community organizations."

He won the Academy Achievement Award at the 2010 Genie Awards and is a recipient of the Motion Picture International Business Leader of the Year Award presented by the DeSantis Centre for Motion Picture Industry Studies.

In 2005, Hoppenheim received a Lifetime Achievement Award from ProMontreal Entrepreneurs, a community initiative created to help young Jewish entrepreneurs build and strengthen their business roots in Montreal through mentorship. He was given a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Jewish Chamber of Commerce in Montreal for his philanthropic work in the community.

He and his wife Rosemary were further presented with a Chai-Life Award from Chai Lifeline Canada, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping Canadian children suffering from serious illness, as well as their family members.

Hoppenheim's Concordia bond carries over to a second generation. His son Adam Hoppenheim, BA 96, is a graduate. His daughter Jenny Hoppenheim married Concordia graduate Matthew Pekofsky, BComm 09.



Mel Hoppenheim with Jean Chrétien, LLD 10, at the Honorary Doctorate dinner, 2015



WHERE STARS ARE BORN: THE MEL HOPPENHEIM SCHOOL OF CINEMA

“Whatever the medium — short films, independent features, industrial films, animated work — graduates of this acclaimed department have become synonymous with superior filmmaking.”

— Mel Hoppenheim, LLD 09

In the late 1990s, despite offering some of the university’s most popular programs and courses, Concordia’s cinema department faced mounting financial challenges due to cuts in government funding.

To help the department, professors Louise Lamarre, BFA 84, and Marjorie Morton reached out to members of the film community to create an advisory board, a group of industry professionals with a keen interest in preserving and promoting quality in cinema education.

The board raises thousands of dollars each year from people and organizations within the film industry to create a treasure chest of scholarships and grants for talented students.

Lamarre, who has taught film production at Concordia since 1973, said that asking Hoppenheim to lead the board was a natural choice.

“Mel had control over all the film equipment in the city,” she says. “He was already involved with the department through donating and repairing film equipment.”

A \$1-million dollar gift from Hoppenheim in 1997 helped stabilize the Department of Cinema and secure its future for years to come. The department was reborn as the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema to commemorate this pivotal donation.

“The way Mel saw it, he wasn’t just helping students — he was helping future clients and colleagues get their start in the industry,” says Lamarre.

“The gift wasn’t just the money but the creation of a school,” says Catherine Russell, chair of the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema and professor of film studies. “Because of Mel, we have a place that offers the rigorous training of a film school, yet gives our students a wider perspective on filmmaking and as citizens in the world, which comes from being embedded in a university.”

Today, the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema is the largest university-based centre for the study of film animation, film production and film studies in Canada.

Each year, the school admits 250 talented students to its highly competitive undergraduate and graduate programs, who in turn produce anywhere between 300 and 500 projects per year.

It’s an enormous amount of film, says Emmet Henchey, BFA 95, who’s served as the school’s technical officer since 2001.

Henchey helped oversee the school’s transition from film-based equipment to digital in order to keep up with industry standards — a Herculean undertaking that couldn’t have been possible without Hoppenheim’s support.



Catherine Russell, chair of the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema and professor of film studies



Louise Lamarre, BFA 84, independent filmmaker, researcher and professor of film production



“Every student who’s made a film here in the last 15 years owes a debt to Mel,” Henchey says.

Daniel Cross, a professor in the Hoppenheim School of Cinema and Concordia University Research Chair in Interactive Documentary Filmmaking, was head of the school during its \$3-million digital migration.

“It was a massive job,” Cross says. “We had to figure out how to maintain the existing quality level of the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema, which was industrial-standard state of the art. We’ve always had the very best equipment, because Mel would arrange our relationship with the industry and people would donate stuff. We’re still using these incredibly expensive 35mm state-of-the-art cameras from Panavision that Mel donated decades ago.”

Maintaining this level of quality was priority number one, Cross says. The school ultimately relied on its history and relationship with Hoppenheim to help articulate its mandate and level of excellence to justify why \$3.5 million was necessary to complete this digital migration in a way that both preserved the existing quality of the school and “future proofed” it for years to come.

“In a film school, access to this type of professional equipment changes everything. It allows students to be in control of their own self-expression and enter the industry with skills and confidence,” Cross explains. “We’re rigorous about demanding quality, because that’s the tradition and spirit that Mel helped to create — through the advisory board, through his gifts and through his presence.”

“Mel’s our hammer,” Henchey explains. “He’s an incredibly integral part to the wellbeing of the school. When we need help, Mel’s always ready to pick up the phone and make some calls. That kind of relationship between a university and a donor doesn’t often exist in such a symbiotic way.”

Henchey sees the ripple effect of Hoppenheim’s enthusiastic patronage reflected in the work ethic of students, faculty and staff in the school and in the wave of innovative research and films they produce each year.

“You know you’re doing something right when someone who graduated 15 years ago comes back for a visit, sees the kind of work that we’re doing here, and said “I wanna start over again!” says Henchey.

ADVANCING CINEMATIC ARTS AT HOME

The Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema occupies a distinct position within the Montreal and Quebec educational and independent film sector contexts. Numerous alumni have risen to become prominent animators, directors, producers, cinematographers and writers — at the helm of some of the most notable Canadian cinema being produced today.

The post-graduate networking potential of a Concordia cinema education is of critical value to our profile as a school. Our alumni are to be found at all levels and positions within the growing independent cinema community: in camera, sound design and art departments, working as animators, production designers, editors, colourists, composers, archivists and post-production coordinators.

Growing numbers of Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema alumni have united to create production, distribution or service companies: Atopia, Ottoblix, Péripheria, NuFilms, Les Enfants, Greenground, Cineground, Devlin Marlow, among numerous others. By training a greater number of Quebec and Canadian students in sophisticated and innovative cinematic practices, we are contributing to the advancement of the cinematic arts in our own country.





Jenny Hoppenheim, daughter of Mel, is pictured with Concordia President Emeritus Frederick Lowy at the 35th anniversary celebration of the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema in 2011.



NOW SHOWING AT CONCORDIA: INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVALS

“Our reputation for using state-of-the-art equipment is a real point of pride for our school,” says Catherine Russell, chair of the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema and professor of film studies.

“Thanks in part to Mel Hoppenheim’s generosity, we have some of the best projection facilities in the city. That’s why we attract a number of film festivals, including Fantasia, Festival du nouveau cinéma, Cinema Politica and Rendez-vous du cinema documentaire. Not only do these events bring prestige to Concordia, but also to our many students whose work is featured at the festivals.”

Concordia has officially partnered with the Fantasia International Film Festival to host screenings at the university’s downtown Sir George Williams Campus each summer since 2002. The university has also partnered with Festival international du film sur l’art (FIFA) since 2010.

The Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema hosts the annual Concordia Film Festival. Organized by the Cinema Students Association (CSA) and Animate Concordia each spring, the event presents the works produced by student filmmakers. In 2018, the Concordia Film Festival celebrates its 45th year as the largest and oldest student-run film festival in North America.



From left to right: Fantasia President and co-founder Pierre Corbeil and then Concordia President Frederick Lowy, LLD 08, signed an agreement to strengthen the partnership between both organizations, 2012.



CUTTING-EDGE RESEARCH: INTERVIEWS WITH MEL HOPPENHEIM SCHOOL OF CINEMA RESEARCHERS

“Mel’s continued support of cinema and Concordia is greatly appreciated by all. He’s a great friend of our university and a film industry pioneer.”

— Concordia President Emeritus Frederick H. Lowy, LLD 08

Erin Manning is a professor of studio arts and film studies and the Concordia University Research Chair in Philosophy and Relational Art.

What kind of work do you do as research chair?

Erin Manning: “I received a Concordia University Research Chair in Philosophy and Relational Art around 2008. My own artistic practice is often materially based, involving textiles and participatory, large-scale work. I’ve always worked across the philosophical and the material, and this research chair solidifies that while also allowing a certain emphasis on research creation.”

What is the importance of research creation?

EM: “I think research creation is important because it really subverts the core ways in which the university understands knowledge. It questions to what degree the linguistic is predominant in the organization of knowledge.”

What is the Sense Lab?

EM: “I started the Sense Lab when I first came to Concordia. At the time, I was writing the first book in what would become a three-book series on sense and movement. I was interested to see whether there was a wider interest, not only in the university but across wider artistic and activist sectors, to explore questions of movement, sensation, philosophy and politics. And so the Sense Lab was born.

The lab has a physical location here at Concordia, in addition to hubs in Europe, Australia and Brazil. We currently have about 15 people completing residencies at the lab this term who come from all over the world. We work across Skype in the different time zones and hold events that take place at all the hubs.”

What makes the Sense Lab different?

EM: “The Sense Lab functions as a para-institution. The thing that differentiates an institution from a para-institution is the flexibility. We’re interested in moving at different speeds. For example, we have a reading group that’s been going for almost 15 years now with a local participation of around 40 to 50 people plus 20 more online. The reading group is dedicated to the idea of the close reading; we’ll work with an author for a year, sentence by sentence. There’s a commitment to that kind of momentum.”


Can students take part in the Sense Lab?

EM: “There’s enormous student involvement within Concordia. We have about 80 students, maybe 40 totally committed and another 40 peripherally committed. The Sense Lab works by appetite rather than consensus, so anyone can propose a project or activity and it’ll grow based on whether or not there’s a desire to participate. We have a calendar on the window of the lab and anyone can add to it. Students are always proposing interesting things, from reading groups to movement explorations.”

What kinds of themes are you currently exploring in your own research?

EM: “For the past decade or so, I’ve been working very closely with autistics, particularly classical autistics who use forms of communication that are not voice based. For all kinds of reasons, classical autistics often can’t speak with their voice so they use other methods, like facilitated typing. My book, *The Minor Gesture* (Duke University Press, 2016), explores our tendency to orient experience from the perspective of the neurotypical. It asks what other kinds of gestures are available and what parts of our everyday lives are neurodiverse, and explores those questions from different perspectives ranging from autism to indigenous politics to art to fashion.

The book grew from a Skype class I started with a group of autistics. Most autistics are unfortunately excluded from formal education. When I started the group, the writings of autistics were relatively unknown. Now, thanks to the internet, it’s much easier to publish and have your work seen. We’ve been reading philosophy now for about a decade and held several art installations. These are real collaborations. I think I learn far more from them than they do from me, to be honest.”



Erin Manning, professor of studio arts and film studies and Concordia University Research Chair in Philosophy and Relational Art



Joshua Neves, professor of film studies and the Canada Research Chair in Global Emergent Media

Joshua Neves is a professor of film studies and the Canada Research Chair in Global Emergent Media (GEM)

What brought you to Concordia?

Joshua Neves: “Before coming to Concordia to take up the Canada Research Chair position, I taught in the Department of Modern Culture and Media at Brown University [in Providence, R.I.]. I had also previously spent some time in Canada as an Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow at the Jackman Humanities Institute at the University of Toronto.

I was really excited by the film studies and communication studies departments at Concordia. They have really stellar international reputations and reminded me of the exciting media studies scene at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where I completed my PhD in film and media studies.”

What are new trends and/or new directions in your area of research or creation?

JN: “I am currently very excited about work that is globalizing how we produce knowledge within our disciplines. In media and cultural studies this includes a range of historical and theoretical work centred on subnational and transnational formations, as well as knowledge about media that is not beholden to one particular locale (that is to say, idealized versions of Europe and North America).

I am also interested in current work that expands what we think of digital culture or techno-modernity. In my view, these frameworks are too often uncritically technophilic and obscure actually existing media practices in much of the world.”

What is the Global Emergent Media (GEM) Lab?

JN: “My interest in global frames and actually existing media cultures structure the research initiatives in the GEM Lab, which at once aims to provide a platform to engage a range of ignored media cultures from the low-fi to the marginal, as well as create a space for rigorous and collaborative theoretical work — including asking why these issues matter for us as scholars, teachers, citizens, activists and the like.

While I think it is important that scholars remain critical of aspects of the digital humanities and of whole-hog adoption of the creative industries and related corporate projects within the university, this is also a very exciting time to be working with digital tools.

“I have been very excited by the range of interdisciplinary work happening at Concordia, and across Montreal.”

For example, the lab will experiment with a range of digital technologies as part of the research process, from data collection and capture to analysis and collaboration, and with modes of sharing work including online publishing, video essays and curation projects. A clear challenge at the moment is to train graduate students who are able to move easily across the old theory-practice divide, and are comfortable working with media and not simply analyzing it.”

What communities do you feel most connected to or engaged by?

JN: “I have been very excited by the range of interdisciplinary work happening at Concordia, and across Montreal, that focuses on media cultures and politics, especially digital media, as well as clusters centred on Asia and transnational flows.

Concordia’s commitment to creating spaces for rigorous research-creation is also really exciting. This is becoming increasingly important to my own work and I hope the GEM Lab will contribute to this growth alongside spaces like the Feminist Media Studio and the various research clusters associated with the new institute.”

What are your students working on?

JN: “We have a really great group of MA and PhD students in Film and Moving Image Studies. I have also had the chance to meet a range of students in the Individualized Program (INDI) and the Humanities program, among other fields.

It’s fantastic to be working with the students in the context of the GEM Lab, where their research is taking a direct role in shaping new initiatives. For

example, I have students working on new media in greater China, television cultures in Latin America, histories of Palestinian-Pakistani political media, urban screen cultures, among many other projects focused on informal media, site-specific research and global cultural theory.

I look forward to this growing over the next couple of years as the lab infrastructures are completed and we begin to work on larger multi-institutional grants that will provide our students with opportunities for research collaborations at international sites.”

Louise Lamarre, BFA 84, is an independent filmmaker, researcher and professor of film production at Concordia's Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema.

What kind of research are you involved in?

Louise Lamarre: "My technical expertise is with in-camera special effects. It was back in 2002 that my FX Project research began. With the shift to digital technology, my goal was to find a way to lower production budgets while maintaining the production value, using classical in-camera techniques with high-definition digital tools."

Tell us about the invention you patented.

LL: "I developed a new process to produce instantaneous visual effects that are shot on set and don't require further work at the post-production stage. I call it the Holo Editorial Layering Process (HELP). Because the process can be used to shoot any scene and not only the ones requiring visual effects, using it can cut up to 50 per cent of the most costly departments of the production budget."

What is the Cinematographic Atlas?

LL: "In direct continuity with the HELP process, which is a technological adaptation of rear projection, I created a bank of images — called the Cinematographic Atlas — that serve as virtual film sets. I now have more than 100 hours of virtual sets that can be used as locations for any film. I have various projects going on using the HELP process with these virtual sets. In fact, one of my recent short films, *The Kiss*, shot in 2017, was shot entirely in studio with HELP using some of these virtual sets."

Congratulations on winning a jury award at the 2018 Cinema on the Bayou Film Festival for *The Kiss*. You had another special moment at the Bayou Film Festival. Can you tell us about it?

LL: "I was invited to participate in the Cinema on the Bayou Film Festival 2017 with my recent documentary film titled *Beyond Sight/Voir l'invisible*. Six of my former students, who are professionals by now, were in the competition with their films and three of them won the most important awards. When the organizers of the festival realized they were all my ex-students, they decided to award me a Special Recognition Award for Exceptional Contribution to Film Production Education. I was really moved, and so were the students who were present."

What was the most important film you've produced?

LL: "Personally, my 2016 film *Beyond Sight/Voir l'invisible* would be the most important. Ten years in the making, *Beyond Sight* takes an interest in the Inuit Peoples' way of life, art, culture and landscapes, both visible and imaginary in reaction to the opening of the North West Passage. The film transmits the spirit of the place while giving a voice to Inuit denizens and some Great North specialists. The goal was really to offer the Inuit point of view, which I believe is accomplished. It is widely distributed within the Inuit communities and I received many messages from members of the Inuit community telling me how happy they are with the point of view offered by the film."

What are you working on right now?

LL: "I'm developing a very special project called *Québec Fantastique*, which brings together my interest in history, geography, fiction and magic. I'm looking forward to making a feature film using seven important legends linked to names of places in Quebec."

You're a prolific filmmaker with over 40 credits to your name. How does your vast career experience enrich the learning experience for your students?

LL: “The fact that I have so much professional film experience and that I’ve been teaching for 26 years, I feel helps create a strong connection between the film production program and the real world of movie making. At least 75 per cent of my students work in the professional sector and end up working with each other.

Even after they graduate, I stay in regular contact with my former students. Many get in touch to ask me to read their contracts or their scripts. It’s very rewarding and stimulating work. My students are passionate and so am I!”

What’s the best thing about the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema for our students?

LL: “There are so many specialized roles in filmmaking. What we do best is to have students try as many of these specialized roles — from director to electrician, director of photography to first assistant director, sound recordist to production manager and so on. They have to be generalists and be able to do everything by themselves to start their career, so they’re well prepared.”



Louise Lamarre, BFA 84



Louise Lamarre at the 2018 Cinema on the Bayou Film Festival, where six of her former students took top awards.



Desirée de Jesus, PhD candidate in film and moving image studies



GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH AT THE MEL HOPPENHEIM SCHOOL OF CINEMA

“Although there were many things that drew me to the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema, what helped me to make the decision to study there was the faculty’s accessibility, reputation and quality of their research.”

— Julia Huggins, MA (Film Studies) 16

Introduced in 2008, the PhD in Film and Moving Image Studies at the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema is a dynamic program that emphasizes multidisciplinary approaches to critical studies of cinema and audiovisual media. The Master of Arts in Film Studies provides a stimulating context for advanced study and immersion in all different aspects of cinema and moving image culture.

Here are four bright minds conducting fascinating research in the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema’s graduate programs.

Desirée de Jesus is a PhD candidate in Film and Moving Image Studies at the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema.

What first drew you to film studies?

Desirée de Jesus: “As far back as I can remember, I’ve believed that film is a transformative medium that changes the way that people see themselves and the world. One of my earliest childhood screening experiences was when my mother took me to see Idrissa Ouedraogo’s *Yaaba* (1989) at Lincoln Plaza Cinema in New York City. I remember being completely fascinated by these images of children who looked like me, but whose lives, language and experiences were so very different from my own.

Years later, during one of my summer vacations, an aunt introduced me to the Turner Classic Movies channel and I discovered that it was possible to study film. We would watch films for hours and she would point out details in the mise-en-scène or show how certain films shared similar narrative or stylistic elements. I began thinking critically about how films are made or how they conveyed meaning, and I would spend hours in the library reading books about the movies I’d seen. In hindsight, I can say this was definitely the beginning of my love for films and film scholarship.”

What has your experience at the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema been like?

Ddj: “Although there were many things that drew me to the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema, what helped me to make the decision to study there was the faculty’s accessibility, reputation and quality of their research.

I couldn’t have anticipated how enriching an experience it would be to work alongside other emerging scholars who are passionate about film and visual culture or with established scholars whose research has been and continues to be formative for my thinking.”



Describe your PhD research. What kinds of questions are you trying to answer? Why are these questions important?

Ddj: “A great deal of the scholarship on coming-of-age narratives identifies the potential parallel development of the reader and the central character as a defining feature of the genre. My research uses embodied film theory to explore how a diverse selection of contemporary films about precarious girlhood engage the concept of the in-between and elicit a film-viewing experience that is an alternative conception of this reader-character relationship. As a result, my work will add to the growing body of scholarship about film spectatorship and feminine identity by repositioning study of the female figure on screen within interdisciplinary and transnational contexts, which is an ongoing challenge for film discourse.”

Do you have any future projects in the works?

Ddj: “I imagine that in some respects I am like many scholars in my field: brimming over with ideas for future courses, writing projects, film programming, symposia and collaborations within and beyond academia. For the time being, I’m prioritizing the successful completion of my dissertation on films about precarious girlhood and wrapping up my co-editorial duties for a special themed issue of *Synoptique*, the bilingual peer-reviewed journal produced by the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema.”

Name a film you’ve seen recently that left an impression on you. What about this particular film struck a chord?

Ddj: “Lately, I’ve been watching a lot of films about girls for Girlhood in Contemporary Cinema, a course that I designed and taught in the winter term.

One of the films that I plan to screen, that also figures prominently in my dissertation, is Céline Sciamma’s 2014 film *Bande de filles*. Absolutely every time I watch it, I get teary-eyed during the scene when the protagonist is watching her friends dancing and then joins them. There’s something about the duration and framing of the shot, the music and the colour of the image that just encapsulate what drew me to film in the first place: the power of film to transform a viewer’s engagement with the world it presents and the world the viewer inhabits.”

Julia Huggins, MA 16, recently completed her Master of Arts in Film Studies at the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema.

What first drew you to film studies?

Julia Huggins: “I crossed over from Art History to Film Studies in the final year of my undergraduate degree. I had taken a few art history courses that dealt with film and those were always my favourites. I remember finding the collaborative nature of filmmaking to be a really productive focus for analysis that often called for interdisciplinary work, which I liked very much. We live in a world circumscribed by moving images so it made sense to me to study these things in order to better understand the cultures from which they emerge.

Eventually I decided to add a second major in film. I was really fortunate to have two particularly great professors who encouraged me to pursue the subject at the graduate level. I don’t think I ever had a kind of cinephilic ‘a-ha moment’ that inspired me to study film though — it was more of a cumulative experience within academia whereby I suppose I fell in love with studying film through studying film.”

What brought you to the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema? What was your experience in the MA program like?

JH: “I had heard wonderful things about the program and was encouraged by my professors from the University of British Columbia to apply to Concordia. Of course, the departmental faculty and the opportunity to live in Montreal for a couple years were attractive too, though the Montreal winter was quite a shock coming from the west coast!

I think of the graduate seminars as the solid centre of a really supportive and nurturing scholarly environment. I liked that we were encouraged to work collaboratively and there were always interesting lecture series, screening parties, symposia and other events on and off campus where the cohorts and faculty would all get together. It immensely enriched the coursework of my first year and thesis-writing in my second year — I usually left with lots of fresh perspectives, book recommendations and dinner plans.

I was also especially fortunate to be able to work with Professor Luca Caminati as my supervisor. I don’t usually speak in superlatives, but it’s difficult to avoid on this point: he’s an alchemist.”

Describe your MA research.

JH: “My MA research dealt with the representation of amnesia in films of the digital age and the intersecting functions of memory, technology and intimacy. In a time of anxiety around the extent to which digital technologies are eroding ‘human memory’ and our capacity to form intimate relationships with each other, I wanted to explore why our understanding of human memory in the digital age seems to have splintered along technological lines.

On one hand, we have a model of technologically mediated memory associated with digital technologies and, on the other, a kind of subconscious — and privileged — embodied memory aligned with the human in its ‘natural’ state. My aim was to demonstrate how this bifurcated model of memory informs and is informed by discourses around what it means to be human in the digital age.”



Do you have any future projects in the works?

JH: “Currently I’m conducting a bit of independent research for a future project on the cultural history of the serenade. The project developed out of a course paper that I presented recently at the Film Studies Association of Canada’s annual conference in Calgary on the function of the serenade in the work of Canadian video artist Benny Nemerofsky Ramsay. It was wonderful to have the opportunity to receive such constructive and encouraging feedback in the foundational stages of this project, and I look forward to expanding its scope with further research.

Name a film you’ve seen recently that left an impression on you. What about this particular film struck a chord?

JH: “I was in New York recently and had the opportunity to see Rossellini’s *Rome, Open City* as part of the Anna Magnani retrospective at the Film Society of Lincoln Center. I had never actually seen it in a cinema before. There are so many famously strikingly beautiful moments in this film and I think we kind of prepare ourselves to be struck by them, but I found myself being quite moved nonetheless — first by the scene with the boys playing in the church courtyard and then several times afterwards.

Maybe I’ve become accustomed to seeing films in seminar rooms and with festival audiences, so this was a bit of a different experience. It was nice.”

Kristi Kouchakji, BFA 15, MA 17, graduated from Film Studies at the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema.

What first drew you to film studies?

Kristi Kouchakji: “I always thought I’d earn an English degree and then either get a teaching certificate or end up dying a slow death in law school. But after taking film studies classes in CEGEP — which I found much more interesting than trying to find anything new to say about works of literature people have been studying for hundreds of years — I enrolled in the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema.

I completed the first year of my undergraduate degree before taking a very long break. When I came back to the program, I was very quickly reminded how much I loved the subject and, with the validation of some undergraduate scholarships and the encouragement of a couple of amazing professors, I stuck with film studies.”

How was your experience at the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema?

KK: “I decided to stay at the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema to pursue an MA in Film Studies partly because of the faculty — there were just too many really great people I hadn’t had a chance to interact with at all during my undergraduate years, and I also really wanted to work with Professor Thomas Waugh before he retired. It was a good call, since my cohort turned out to be small, cool and intimidatingly smart. The faculty has also been good about encouraging new approaches to film studies and supporting independent academic work.”

Describe your MA research.

KK: “I looked at transmedia and documentary activism, which is a \$10 way of saying media-based activism that moves across a bunch of platforms before becoming a film, or vice-versa. I studied what makes something move from one platform to another on its own momentum.

The idea was sparked after I stumbled across a Hot Docs Canadian International Film

“I looked at transmedia and documentary activism, which is a \$10 way of saying media-based activism that moves across a bunch of platforms before becoming a film, or vice-versa.”

Festival report on the impact of transmedia campaigns associated with documentary films. The report ultimately only celebrated the work of consultants managing Facebook pages, and seemed to overlook a whole lot of other factors like viewer agency, aesthetic/narrative strategies and so on. It also centred on measurable results like clicks and page views at the expense of the people and issues at the heart of the activism itself.

The danger with putting so much emphasis on quantifiable and easily visualized results is that the promise of such data — and the presence of consultants with a proven record of producing it — may become the most important thing funders look for in a media-based activist project. This shortchanges grassroots and more independent projects. It also raises the question of what a filmmaker’s job actually is under those circumstances.”

What else were you working on at the time?

KK: “Aside from my thesis, I worked on a project about the Idle No More movement, focusing on the difference between someone just using the #idlenomore hashtag and something being curated to the movement’s ‘official’ channels and platforms. I also wrapped up a long project on Josh Oppenheimer’s

Indonesian documentaries and put PhD applications together.”

Name a film you’ve seen recently that left an impression on you. What about this particular film struck a chord?

KK: “I saw *Tickled* by David Farrier. It’s a hilarious documentary, but also utterly bizarre. There’s something very tragic about the amount of internalized homophobia and self-hate the absent protagonist is walking around with and the power exchanges it drove him to seek. It made me want to know how, as a queer person, the filmmaker dealt with being on the receiving end of those toxic emotions for the entirety of the production process and still now with the film in distribution.”

Katarina Mihailović, MA 11, is a PhD candidate in Film and Moving Image Studies at the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema.

What first drew you to film studies? Was there a film/work that influenced you early on in your life?

Katarina Mihailović: “I have always loved film ever since I was young. My interest turned into obsession when I discovered David Lynch’s famous cult series *Twin Peaks*, which I researched for hours at the library when I was 12. Once *Twin Peaks* was under my belt, I thankfully expanded into other areas.”

What brought you to the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema?

KM: “I joined the MA program at the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema because of the resources it offered. For me, the most important of these resources was the faculty itself, whose expertise in the field of film studies is wide-ranging. I knew that I would find support for my interest in the avant-garde as well as in experimental film, film theory and film culture.

A couple of years later, when I was applying to doctoral programs, I knew that I wanted to come back to Concordia because I wanted to work with Professor Masha Salazkina, who had just accepted a position in the department.”

Describe your PhD research.

KM: “My dissertation research is centred on film experimentalism in Belgrade, the capital of the former Yugoslavia. I am tracing the emergence and subsequent development of filmic experimentalism both within the context of studio production and on its margins within the amateur realm.

“One of the key questions guiding my inquiry is whether the Yugoslav New Wave, or the Black Wave, should be understood as a politically engaged form of filmic modernism that was primarily influenced by other contemporary cinematic modernisms.”

One of the key questions guiding my inquiry is whether the Yugoslav New Wave, or the Black Wave, should be understood as a politically engaged form of filmic modernism that was primarily influenced by other contemporary cinematic modernisms, or whether it was a filmic modernism that was strongly shaped by the culture of the indigenous avant-garde of the period between the two world wars, just as much as by post-Second World War modernist film.”

Name a film you’ve seen recently that left an impression on you. What about this particular film struck a chord?

KM: “The last time that a film really blew me away was a few years ago, around 2003 I think. It was a film installation at the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal. The installation piece, created by Eve

Sussman and her collaborative team, The Rufus Corporation, was entitled *whiteonwhite: algorithmic noir*.

The piece was an unordered mass of visual, audio-sonic and voice-over fragments depicting a landscape of disintegrating formerly Soviet utopian architecture that the filmmakers imbued with the sci-fi, noir aesthetic of Godard’s *Alphaville*. These fragments were edited in real time by a specially designed algorithm driven by organizing key words, which were visible on the side of the film screen. There was a constant productive tension between the element of chance and the force of thematic organization.”





CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE: THE MEL HOPPENHEIM SCHOOL OF CINEMA'S ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY

“The Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema is part of a family of our key offerings that situate Concordia prominently within a national sphere of creativity, inventiveness and skill. Our university continues to rise with the help of transformative benefactors such as Mel Hoppenheim.”

— Rebecca Duclos, dean, Concordia Faculty of Fine Arts

Every spring, the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema holds its annual awards ceremony, which recognizes outstanding student achievement in all three of its programs — film animation, film production and film studies.

The awards are donated by Mel Hoppenheim and others, including faculty and staff members, production facilities, companies and foundations.

Over the course of the annual awards ceremony, students collect thousands of dollars in scholarships, bursaries or tuition remissions.

Catherine Russell, professor and chair of the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema, addressed faculty, staff, students, donors and advisors of the school at the 2016 ceremony.

“The annual Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema awards ceremony event is not about celebrity or red carpets, but about shining a light on our best students and acknowledging the generosity of our donors,” said Russell.

“Philanthropy is not something to be taken lightly and I suspect that our donors have chosen our students because they are confident that the education we offer at the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema is the best in the country, and that our students will make a difference through their creativity, ingenuity, good judgment and critical thinking, as well as their ability to be collaborative team players.”



Rebecca Duclos, dean,
Concordia Faculty of Fine Arts



The 2016 Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema awards ceremony



Matthew Wende, BFA 14, with his Mel
Hoppenheim Award for Outstanding Overall
Achievement in Film Production, 2013



THREE DECADES OF STUDENT SUPPORT

*“Equipment and cameras depreciate. People appreciate.
So I choose to invest in people.”*

— Mel Hoppenheim, LLD 09

A growing cohort of Concordia students has learned their craft at the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema over the years — with an outstanding few obtaining awards to advance their studies. Thanks to the generosity of their school’s namesake, the following students have received the **Mel Hoppenheim Award for Outstanding Overall Achievement in Film Production** from 1987 to 2018:

2017 **Vjosana Shkurti**, BFA (film production) 18
2016 **Yang Zhang**, BFA (film production) 16
2015 **Gilda Pourjabar**, BFA (film production) 15
2014 **Renaud Lessard Ste-Marie**, BFA (film production) 15
2013 **Matthew Wende**, BFA (film production) 14
2012 **Alexandra Begin**, BFA (film production) 13, MFA (studio art) 16
2011 **Pascal Plante**, BFA (film production) 11
2010 **Sonya Stefan**, BFA (film production) 11
2009 **Stephane Calce**, BFA (film production) 09, MFA (studio art) 14
2008 **Andreas Mendritzki**, BFA (film production) 08
2007 **Marianna Milhorat**, BFA (film production) 07
2006 **Alexandre Larose**, BFA (film production) 06, MFA (studio art) 14
2005 **Anna Woch**, BFA (film production) 05
2004 **Van Royko**, BFA (film production) 04
2003 **Anna Fahr**, BFA (film production) 03
2002 **Isabelle Gatti**, attendee
2001 **Karen Cho**, BFA (film production) 01

2000 **Oana Cristina Suteu**, BFA (film production) 06,
GrCert (digital techn in design art) 14
1999 **Stephanie Jasmin**, BFA (film production) 99
1998 **Kaveh Nabatian**, BFA (film production) 01
1997 **Dominic Gagnon**, BFA 97
1996 **Patrick Gazé**, BFA (film production) 98
1995 **Laurence Green**, BFA (film production) 95
1994 **Sarah Bachinski**, BFA (film production) 94, MFA 97
1993 **Federico Hidalgo**, BA (political science) 90, BFA (film production) 93, MFA 97
1992 **Milada Kovac**, BFA (film production) 92
1991 **Anthony Seck**, BFA (film production) 92
1990 **Serge Noel**, BFA (film production) 92, and
Stephanie Seidl, BFA (film production) 92 (shared)
1989 **Guylaine Dionne**, BFA (film production) 90
1988 **Arto Paragamian**, BFA (film production) 89, MFA 92
1987 **Lynne Stopkewich**, BFA (film production) 87

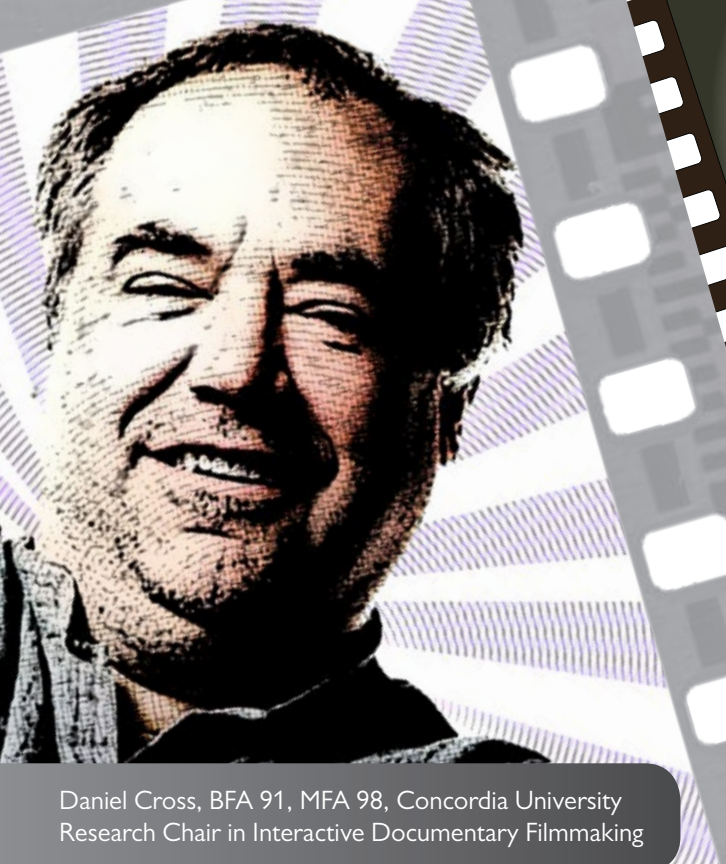


2017 awards ceremony



Vjosana Shkurti, BFA 18, poses with her benefactor holding her Mel Hoppenheim Award for Outstanding Overall Achievement in Film Production, 2017

VJOSANA SHKURTI
FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT
SPECIALIZATION IN FILM
AT CONCORDIA U



Daniel Cross, BFA 91, MFA 98, Concordia University
Research Chair in Interactive Documentary Filmmaking

THE FUTURE OF FILM: ALUMNI MAKING WAVES INTERNATIONALLY

“Mel always keeps us connected to the real world. Alumni come back to lecture. Students can get jobs. And when you say you’re from Concordia, it has weight.”

— Daniel Cross, BFA 91, MFA 98, Concordia University
Research Chair in Interactive Documentary Filmmaking

LOUISE ARCHAMBAULT, BFA 93, MFA 00

Award-winning filmmaker Louise Archambault began her career in the Quebec film industry holding a variety of posts, including still photographer, line producer and assistant director.

She started work on her own creations in the late 1990s while completing a graduate degree at the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema. Her artistic vision materialized through a steady output of short documentary and fiction films.

One of these, *Atomic Saké* (1999), was awarded a Prix Iris and Best Film at the Delle Donne International Film Festival. *Familia* (2005), her debut feature-length fiction film, was well received domestically and internationally. It won the City TV Award for Best Canadian First Feature Film and the Canadian Screen Award for Best First Feature.



Louise Archambault, BFA 93, MFA 00,
award-winning filmmaker

Archambault's brilliant foray into the world of commercial cinema was followed by *Gabrielle* (2013), a multi-award-winning production. A touching and mesmerizing film, it introduces the talented Gabrielle Marion-Rivard, a young actress and singer with Williams syndrome. Premiering at the Locarno International Film Festival, it received the Prix du Public. It won similar prizes at both the Festival International du Film Francophone de Namur and the Festival du film canadien de Dieppe.

Narrowly missing a nomination as Best Foreign Language Film at the 86th Academy Awards, *Gabrielle* received multiple awards at home, including Best Picture and Best Actress at the

“Someone brought my work to the attention of Clint Eastwood. I was signed onto *Bridges of Madison County* in 1994 and we’ve worked together ever since.”

Canadian Screen Awards. It also won in five categories at the 16th Soirée des prix Iris: best direction, best editing, best screenplay, best supporting actress and most successful film outside Quebec.

“When you see a success like Louise Archambault’s *Gabrielle* . . . , it really inspires everyone here — students, staff and professors — to maintain that tradition of excellence,” says Daniel Cross, former chair of Concordia’s Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema.

STEPHEN CAMPANELLI, BFA 83

Rubbing shoulders with Clint Eastwood is just another day at the office for Stephen Campanelli. The Steadicam operator has shot more than 20 films with the iconic action star and Academy Award-winning filmmaker.

Campanelli’s own feature-length director’s chair debut is the thriller *Momentum*.

“The world premiere of *Momentum* was on the exact same screen as my first-ever student production,” says Campanelli. That venue is Concordia’s Sir George Williams University Alumni Auditorium in the Henry F. Hall Building.

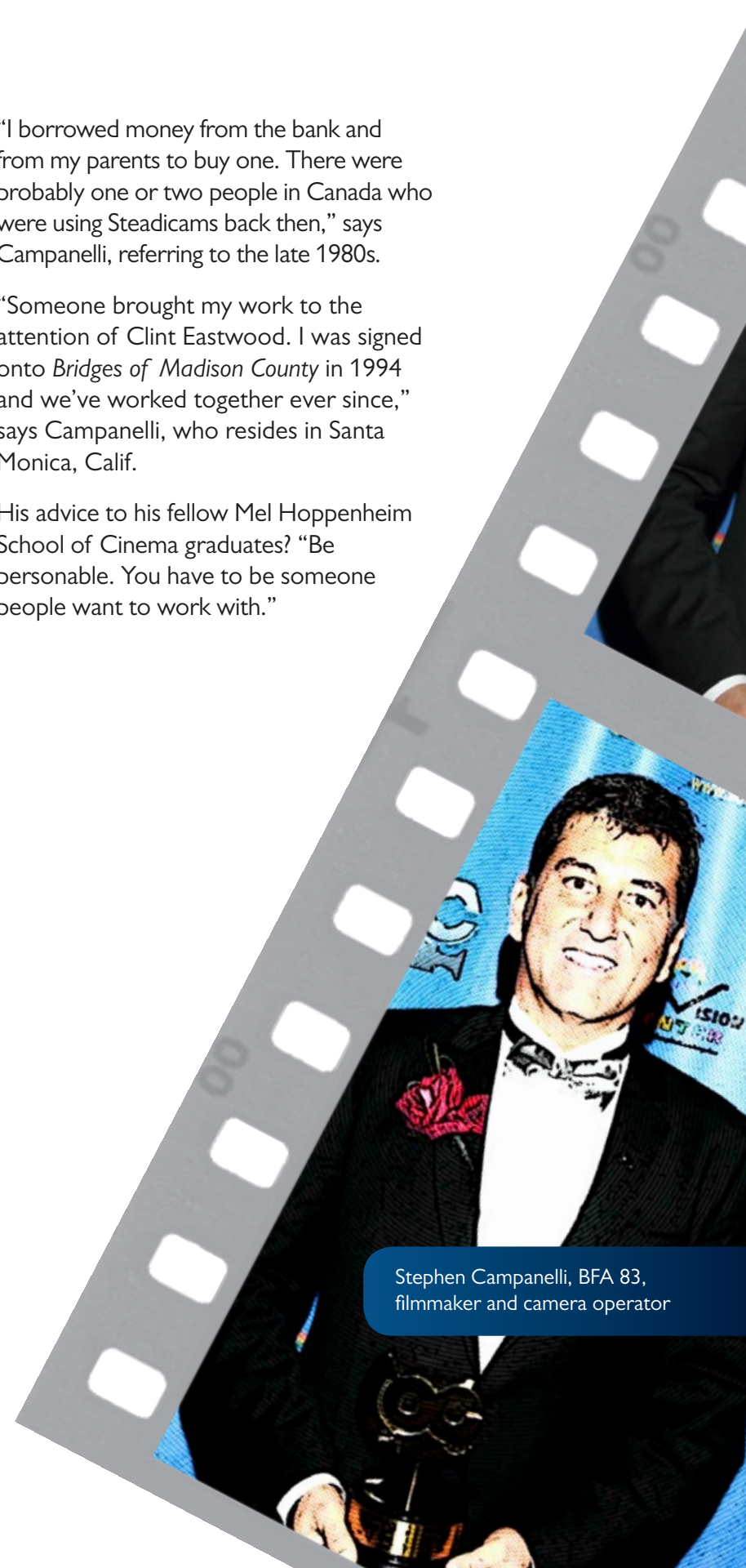
Momentum was shown in July 2015 as part of the Fantasia International Film Festival — one of the largest genre cinema events in North America — hosted at Concordia. In 1983, Campanelli’s 10-minute piece *From a Whisper to a Scream* met its first audience under that same roof.

Campanelli went on to make a name for himself in Canada and Hollywood as a Steadicam operator. The hand-held motion picture camera features a mount that isolates it from the operator’s movement, giving smoothness to the shots. Owning the piece of equipment gave Campanelli a natural advantage.

“I borrowed money from the bank and from my parents to buy one. There were probably one or two people in Canada who were using Steadicams back then,” says Campanelli, referring to the late 1980s.

“Someone brought my work to the attention of Clint Eastwood. I was signed onto *Bridges of Madison County* in 1994 and we’ve worked together ever since,” says Campanelli, who resides in Santa Monica, Calif.

His advice to his fellow Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema graduates? “Be personable. You have to be someone people want to work with.”



Stephen Campanelli, BFA 83, filmmaker and camera operator



KIM NGUYEN, BFA 97

Concordia graduate Kim Nguyen's fifth feature-length film, *Two Lovers and a Bear*, screened at the Cannes Film Festival's Director's Fortnight in summer 2016.

Shot partly in the minus 40-degree Celsius temperatures of Iqaluit, Nunavut, the film is about two lovers' troubled lives. *Two Lovers and a Bear* brought Nguyen to Cannes for the first time in his career.

Featuring a hallmark somber mood, this isn't the first of Nguyen's films to garner international attention.

His fourth feature-length film, *War Witch* (2012), tells the story of a 12-year-old child soldier in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The film premiered at the Berlin Film Festival in 2012, where Nguyen was the first Canadian director in 13 years to have a film selected for the main competition.

War Witch went on to win 10 Canadian Screen Awards, eight Gala du cinéma québécois (formerly Jutra) awards and was nominated for Best Foreign Language Film at the 85th Academy Awards.

"I'm very touched," said Nguyen as he collected the best director prize at the Canadian Screen Awards in 2013. "I'd like to dedicate this to the women in the Congo, their strength, their courage and their resilience."

Oscar-nominated filmmaker Kim Nguyen, BFA 97

JEFFREY ST. JULES, BFA 01

Writer, director and Concordia graduate Jeffrey St. Jules, BFA 01, won the 2014 Claude Jutra Award from the Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television for *Bang Bang Baby*, which debuted at the Toronto International Film Festival that same year.

As St. Jules's first feature-length film, *Bang Bang Baby* was a work in progress for nearly a decade. He began writing the first draft during his Cannes Film Festival residency, a prestigious program for which no other Canadian has ever been accepted.

He describes his time at the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema as a chance to experiment with different styles and techniques.

St. Jules calls *Bang Bang Baby* an “absurd, surreal musical” about a young girl in the 1960s who dreams of moving away from her small-town life and becoming a star.

“Ultimately it’s a film about fantasies and nightmares and the tension between the two,” he said. “When you’re trying to escape into fantasies, then real life becomes a nightmare to you.”

St. Jules was fascinated by the unexplored possibilities of film from a young age. He studied creative writing and worked on independent video projects before admission into Concordia’s film studies program. He describes his time at the

Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema as a chance to experiment with different styles and techniques.

“It was a place to explore and try new things. I got started finding my voice,” he said.

Since then, St. Jules has written and directed a number of short films, including *The Sadness of Johnson Joe Jangles* (2004), *The Tragic Story of Nling* (2006) and *The Rarebit Fiend* (2014). Three have debuted at the Toronto International Film Festival.

St. Jules was nominated for a Canadian Screen Award in 2013 for his experimental documentary *Let the Daylight Into the Swamp*. He was named Best Emerging Canadian Filmmaker at the Toronto Worldwide Short Film Festival in 2005.

Coming from a background in both film and creative writing, St. Jules sees writing and directing as intertwined.

“When I’m writing, I’m thinking about how to shoot it and when I’m shooting, I’m rewriting,” he said. “To me, they go hand in hand.”



Jeffrey St. Jules, BFA 01, writer and director



CONCORDIA CELEBRATES MEL HOPPENHEIM

“Mel is a a modern-day business pioneer with a penchant and passion for the arts.”

— Peter Rist, professor, Film Studies, Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema

In 2009, Concordia bestowed upon Mel Hoppenheim an honorary degree in recognition of his philanthropy and his legacy within Canadian cinema.

In his citation introducing Hoppenheim to the students, staff, faculty and parents gathered that day, Peter Rist, a professor in the Film Studies program at the Hoppenheim School of Cinema, said:

“As president of Mel’s Cité du Cinéma, he has built world-renowned film and television studios that have also propelled local moviemaking to astonishing new levels. As a philanthropist born of modest roots, he has shared his good fortune by supporting noble causes such as education and healthcare, and by giving back to the community. His generosity has also spawned a dynamic generation of young filmmakers here at Concordia,” Rist said.

“Because Hoppenheim has done so much for the Canadian economy and established Quebec’s reputation as a film industry hub; because he has invested in higher education and established a world-class film school in Montreal; because he embodies the highest work ethic; because his stellar community leadership and philanthropy have empowered so many and offered so much to students, Hoppenheim is a shining example of the values to which Concordia graduates should aspire.”

In his convocation address, a teary-eyed Hoppenheim accepted the degree with pride.

“The honour this university has bestowed upon me is something beyond my wildest dreams,” he said, visibly moved. “I am not an academic, so the honour is even greater.”

To the graduating class of 2009, he imparted the following words of wisdom:

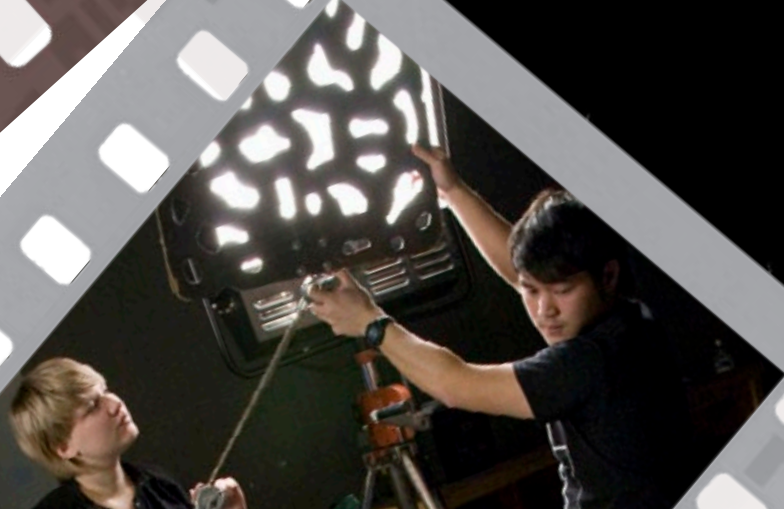
“Tough times never last, but tough people always triumph. It’s up to you to write the script of your lives. The script is now a blank page. Write as you desire. Write it well.”



Peter Rist, professor of Film Studies



Mel and Rosemary Hoppenheim pose with a wax sculpture of astronaut Julie Payette, now Canada's Governor General, at the 2015 Chancellor's Builders Dinner.





MEL HOPPENHEIM AWARD

FOR OUTSTANDING OVERALL ACHIEVEMENT
IN FILM PRODUCTION



Concordia



Mel Hoppenheim with Yang Zhang, BFA 16, winner of the Mel Hoppenheim Award for Outstanding Overall Achievement in Film Production, 2016





Mel Hoppenheim with his wife Rosemary and daughter Jenny at the 35th anniversary celebration of the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema, 2011



THANK YOU, MEL HOPPENHEIM

Mel's Cité du Cinéma is a lightning rod within the industry. Through his steadfast philanthropy, Mel Hoppenheim has enabled generations of Concordia filmmakers to join the ranks of those creating movie magic.

With Hoppenheim's visionary leadership, a local cultural and economic driver in the way of the film scene has solid footing. Concordia's Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema will continue to produce influential scholars and leading filmmakers for years to come.

**MAKING THINGS
HAPPEN
THAT MATTER.**

CONCORDIA FINE ARTS



- Learn how Concordia's most ambitious campaign to date will empower tomorrow's leaders: concordia.ca/campaign.
- Discover what Concordia achieved first in Montreal, Quebec, Canada and the world at concordia.ca/concordiafirsts.