The art — and business — of movie making

New course brings the world of film financing into focus

By ERIKA PRAFTER

ight, camera, action — and don't forget cash!

While today's television and movie producers must know how to hire the right crew to get the camera rolling, secure set locations and other nuts and bolts of TV and filmmaking, the savviest ones have yet another hot attribute — deal-making.

As the cost of filmmaking rises, and with pools of capital increasingly coming from industry outsiders such as hedge funds and investment banks, the need for producers to have a broad understanding of finance, marketing, management, and new technology, as well as fundamental grounding in the creative side of filmmaking, is increasingly evident.

In response to this demand, New York University recently launched a special dual MBA/MFA degree program for producers.

“Gone are the days when movie producers could simply focus on the creative aspects of filmmaking,” said Spike Lee, now artistic director of the Graduate Film Division in the Kanbar Institute of Film and Television at NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts. “Today’s producers need to be well-versed in the business side as well.”

Lee, who has a degree in film from NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts, is the director of the new program. He said the program will give students a comprehensive understanding of the film industry, from pre-production to post-production, and will focus on developing the skills needed to succeed in the business.

The 12-month program includes courses in finance, marketing, management, and business strategy, as well as practical experience through internships and industry projects.

“By the end of the program, students will have a clear understanding of how to navigate the complex world of the film industry,” said NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts Dean Catherine Oppenheim. “They will have the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in this exciting and competitive field.”

For more information, go to fimmtv.tisch.nyu.edu.

For information on how to buy the book:

Fishing For A Major
Prentice Hall Press
(12.95)
Written by students who have learned this information first hand, this invaluable book includes tips on how to match a major with one’s interests: use internships and extracurriculars to find a true passion; seek out sources for advice; choose a variety of great classes and find the best professors; and deal with double majors, minors, and concentrations.

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