

## AMY FINKEL

23 North Elm Street, Beacon, NY 12508

Phone: (917) 293-6873 | Email: [amy@sailorbeware.com](mailto:amy@sailorbeware.com)

## CURRICULUM VITAE

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### EDUCATION

- 2004 | **Parsons School of Design, New School University** | **New York, NY**  
M.F.A., Design & Technology  
**Concentration:** Documentary Production, Motion Graphics, and Broadcast Design. | **GPA:** 3.82
- 1998 | **Connecticut College** | **New London, CT**  
B.A., Theater, English, and Music  
**Dean's High Honors List, Distinction in Theater**

### TEACHING + CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE

- 2021 - Present | **Hostos Community College, Bronx, NY** | Humanities: Media Design Program  
Courses: Web Design & Development  
*Adjunct Assistant Professor*
- 2021 - Present | **Noble Desktop, New York, NY** | Certificate Programs  
Courses: Advanced Digital Video Editing with Premiere Pro  
*Instructor, Corporate Groups/Advanced Students*
- 2020 - Present | **Parsons School of Design, New York, NY** | Distributed Education + C.P.E.  
Courses: Online Design Explorations: Digital Photography & Video, Digital Photography Workflow: Adobe Lightroom (Three-Course Photography Certificate Program)  
*Course Lead/Curriculum Creator + Part-Time Associate Teaching Professor*
- 2014 - Present | **Parsons School of Design, New York, NY** | The School of Art and Design History and Theory (ADHT)  
Courses: Integrative Studio 2 (Visual Culture), Integrative Studio 1 (Memory), Web Design & Development  
*Part-Time Associate Teaching Professor*
- 2012 - Present | **New York University, New York, NY** | SPS, Division of Applied Undergraduate Studies (DAUS)  
Courses: Digital Editing I, Interactive Design I: Building a Website, Media Design I: Concepts  
*Adjunct Professor*
- 2006 - Present | **Parsons School of Design, New York, NY** | Open Campus' Summer Intensive Studies  
Course: Summer Intensive Studies, Digital Photography & Video, Sound & Vision  
*Part-Time Associate Teaching Professor*

### AWARDS, HONORS, and GRANTS

- FUREVER  
(Feature Doc)
- **WINNER:**
- Brooklyn Film Festival (*Audience Award, Best Documentary*)
  - Las Vegas Film Festival (*Best Feature Documentary*)
  - iD FEST, Winner (*Best Feature*)
  - DocuWest, Winner (*Best of Fest, Emerging Filmmaker Award*)
  - Kingston Film Festival, Winner (*Best Feature Documentary*)
  - Delta Film & Video Festival (*Best Feature Documentary*)
  - DocuFest Atlanta (*Best Director, Feature Documentary*)
  - Nevada International Film Festival (*Best Feature*)

- Raised 200% of initial film funding (\$10,000) from 189 backers via a Kickstarter campaign. Used Kickstarter campaign enthusiasm to secure an executive producer at Gaia Indie Films, who provided \$140,000 to fund the film through completion.
- Picked as one of six directors for the 2013/14 “On Screen/In Person” film tour, funded by the MidAtlantic Arts Foundation and National Endowment for the Arts’ “Art Works,” N.E.A.’s Regional Touring Program.
- Broadcast on Air Canada, Singapore Airlines, Poland’s TVN Style, Australia’s SBS TV, and in other territories.
- Awarded full travel grant and access by the International Cemetery, Crematory, and Funeral Association (ICCFA) to attend their annual conference at the Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas. They presented *FUREVER* to an audience of both human and pet deathcare–industry professionals, as well as organized a post-screening panel discussion.
- Chosen to be included in the “Imagine Science Film Festival” in October 2017 and screened as part of their “Afterlife” series on their online streaming science film platform, “Labocine.”

ZING!  
(Doc  
Short)

- Nominated for the “Pare Lorentz Distinguished Documentary Achievement Award” by the International Documentary Association (IDA), 2004.
- Awarded full travel grant by Parsons to bring *Zing!* to Guthrie, OK, Jazz Banjo Festival, May 2004.

MISC.

- Awarded Multi-Year Faculty Appointment and title promotion to “Part-Time Associate Teaching Professor” at Parsons School of Design, 2015, 2018, 2021. Also nominated by students for New School University’s “Distinguished Teaching Award.”
- Gothamist story, “Photo Essay: 10 Hours On A Bus With Newly Released Prisoners,” picked as one of Gothamist’s “Best of 2014.” Garnered the attention of Rachel Maddow, MSNBC’s *Lockup*, The Doe Fund, Osborne Association, and other journalists and prison reform/re-entry organizations.
- Served as a judge for: IDA’s 2009 Documentary Achievement Awards, New York Festivals’ TV documentary division, and *Film Independent*’s Independent Spirit Awards.
- Served as documentary “doctor,” New York Foundation for the Arts’ “Doctor’s Hours for Filmmakers.”
- Won “Top 25” award for 15-second clips submissions in Tribeca Film Festival and American Express’ 2006 “My Life/My Card” Campaign.
- Awarded one-year scholarship to attend the Lee Strasberg Theater Institute free of charge, May 1998.

## FILM FESTIVALS

FUREVER  
+ ZING

Toured in over 60 film festivals worldwide, incl. Hot Docs, Warsaw FF, Hollywood FF, Austin FF, Hawaii IFF, Cleveland IFF, Seattle IFF, Napa Valley FF, SF Doc Fest, New Orleans FF, Brooklyn FF, Big Sky, Doxa, St. Louis IFF, Rhode Island IFF, Hot Springs Doc Fest, Indie Memphis, Northside, Calgary IFF, Edmonton IFF, deadCenter FF, Portland FF, Las Vegas IFF, DocuWest, Wash D.C. Indie FF, and many more).

## MEDIA COVERAGE

PRESS

**Work, interviews, or profiles published in:** *The New York Times*, *The Believer*, *The Washington Post*, *Gothamist*, *IndieWire*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *CNN*, *The Hill*, *Mediaite*, *Dogster*, *Cleveland Magazine*, *HuffPost Live*, *KIRO News*, *Playboy*, *Jezebel*, *Gizmodo*, *NewYork.Com*, *Time Out NY*, *The SF Weekly*, *Film Threat*, *Exclaim!*, *Indiewood/Hollywouldn’t*, *Seattle Weekly*, *The Stranger*, *Toronto Film Scene*, *Toronto Star*, *Seattle Times*, *Pretty Clever Films*, *Giant Freakin’ Robot*, *The Oklahoman*, *The Stranger: Line Out*, *Lost & Fond*, *Moviefone*, *Slash Film*, *Denver Post*, *Banjo Times*, *the Oklahoma Gazette*, and *the Memphis Flyer*, among others.

## SELECTED

- Christopher Robbins, “**The Best Of Gothamist, 2014**” (About my article, “Photo Essay: 10 Hours On A Bus With Newly Released Prisoners”) | *Gothamist*, 4/9/14 | “Here are 20 stories [that] deftly executed our humble mission to inform, amuse, and give voice to those who lack power.”
- K. J. Doughton, “**Film Threat’s Top Films of 2013**” | *Film Threat*, 12/13 | “*Furever*, the always-thoughtful, sometimes-absurd, and completely amazing documentary by Amy Finkel, reveals the astonishing steps taken by humans to mourn and remember their beloved house pets....Wisely, Finkel passes no judgment on her distraught subjects and the lengths they will go to maintain connections with lost pets. When a gentle-eyed Seattle man says of his deceased cat, ‘We’re attached from the souls,’ it’s testimony to her deep empathy for these unique individuals. *Furever* made me ponder both the fragility of the human condition, and the awesome balm that pets provide to all of us.”
- Anna Jane Grossman, “**Preserving Memories of Pets, and Then Some,**” a profile | *The New York Times* City Room Blog, 10/11/11 | “Ms. Finkel was not the first journalist to make her way to Mac’s Taxidermy, according to Mike McCullough, the store’s owner. But she was different. ‘She’s not interested in sensationalism. She’s open minded about this, and I am, too.’”
- Gillian Anderson, “**The Stranger’s Guide to SIFF 2013 / FUREVER: Don’t Miss!**” | *The Stranger*, 5/26/13 | “More than just an absurdist gawkefest, this documentary boasts a real and gentle understanding of how much a pet can mean to someone. It looks at the lengths people will go to keep a special animal around forever, and the memorialization industry that’s willing to provide practically any service imaginable.”
- Linda Barnard, “**Toronto Star: Hot Docs 2013’s Ten Recommended Titles**” | *Toronto Star*, 4/22/13 | “As creepy as it is fascinating, Amy Finkel’s doc looks at the endgame of Americans’ obsession with their pets, the lengths they’ll go to for final goodbyes after spending close to \$53 billion annually on them when they are alive.”
- Johnny Baier, “**Review**” | *All Frets Magazine*, 10/04 | “In addition to the entertaining moments on stage at the Guthrie festival, the film digs into subjects such as the banjo’s racially stigmatized history and the role women have played in its long evolutionary process...*Zing! Went the Strings of My Heart* is an entertaining and enlightening film which has relevance for everyone from banjo neophytes to veteran banjo players, enthusiasts and historians.”

## CONFERENCE / PANEL PARTICIPATION

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|------|---|
| 2015 | <b>Panelist / Critic</b>   <b>Documentary Film Pitch Session</b> , Brooklyn Film Festival, BFF Exchange   BRIC, Brooklyn, NY   <i>Other panelists: Kelly Anderson (My Brooklyn), Lindsay Carlson (SnagFilms), Aubrey Gallegos (POV), Tony Gerber (Full Battle Rattle)</i>   |
| 2014 | <b>Panelist</b>   “ <b>FUREVER: Lessons Learned and Takeaways for Your Business,</b> ” International Cremation & Funeral Association (ICCF) Convention   Mandalay Bay Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV  |
| 2013 | <b>Panelist</b>   “ <b>Filmmakers on Filmmaking / Screenplays and Documentary Writing: Where the Road Forks,</b> ” Cleveland International Film Festival/Cleveland State University   School of Communication at Cleveland State University, Cleveland, OH   <i>Other panelists: Erica Ginsburg (the D-Word Docs In Progress), Ben Popik (The Exquisite Corpse Project), Alfred Thomas Catalfo (Split Ticket), and Tim Cawley (From Nothing, Something)</i> |
| 2013 | <b>Panelist</b>   “ <b>Kickstarter School: A Primer on Fan Funding,</b> ” Calgary International Film Festival (CIFF)   Cineplex Odeon Eau Claire Market Cinemas, Calgary, CANADA   <i>Other panelists: Elisabeth Holm (Kickstarter), Ryan Scafuro (Bending Steel), Emiko Muraki (InvestYYC), Jordan Baylon (InvestYYC)</i>  |
| 2013 | <b>Panelist</b>   “ <b>Memorializing Loved Ones and Pets.</b> ”   HuffPost Live Roundtable Discussion   |
| 2013 | <b>Panelist + Guest Film Class Instructor</b>   Andrew Demirjian’s film class / Panel discussion with two psychologists and a grief counselor at Pollak Theatre   <b>Monmouth University</b> , West Long Branch, NJ   |

- 2013 | **Panelist + Guest Film Student Workshop** | Dr. John Nichols' film professor's student workshop / panel discussion with Dr. Sherman Lee, a scientist, and Dr. Joy Cole, a veterinarian | Concert Hall, **Christopher Newport University**, Newport News, VA
- 2013 | **Panelist** | "On Screen / In Person" independent film series Q&A and panel discussion with three veterinarians, Dr. Peter Eeg, Dr. Dale Rubenstein, and Dr. Chet Andersen, and one grief counselor, Dr. Toni Cortellessa | **Black Rock Center for the Arts**, Germantown, MD
- 2013 | **Panelist** | Radio interview with WQKN radio owner and DJ, Tom New, plus post-screening panel discussion with the director of a local no-kill animal shelter and a psychotherapist/pet loss grief counselor | The Institute for Arts & Culture at **Mercyhurst University**, Erie, PA
- 2013 | **Panelist** | Post-screening panel discussion with the Director of the North Country SPCA, two veterinarians, and a grief counselor, plus an adoption event | **Lake Placid Center for the Arts**, Lake Placid, NY
- 2013 - 2015 | **Post-Screening Q&A Panelist at multiple film festivals** | Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival, Seattle International Film Festival, Napa Valley Film Festival, DC Independent Film Festival, Brooklyn Film Festival, Northside Film Festival, Salem Film Fest, Cleveland International Film Festival, DocUTAH, Calgary International Film Festival, and Salt Lake City Film Festival

## PUBLICATIONS

- MISC. → **HBO** | Designed motion graphics for broadcast airing of boxing and film promos (*The Tuxedo*, *Just Like Heaven*, *Bloodwork*, *Fight: Jermain Taylor vs. Winky Wright*), 2005–2006.
- **MTV** | "Silence" stop-motion music video for the band Takka Takka screened on MTV, 2008.
- **COMEDY CENTRAL** | Copy editing and content creation for marketing campaigns, 2006.
- PHOTOS → **GOTHAMIST** | Photography (and some writing) for many stories. Highlights include: "Photos: We Spent The Night At The Museum Of Natural History"; "Inside Williamsburg's Hidden Time Capsule: Kings County Savings Bank"; "Photos: Antiques Roadshow's NYC Visit Included A Million-Dollar Appraisal!"; "Photos: Behind The Scenes At Shakespeare In The Park"; "Inside The Mad Men Exhibit At Museum Of The Moving Image"; "Inside The Russian Tea Room, Still Worth A Visit Today"; "What You Missed At Brooklyn's Taxidermy Fair This Weekend"; "Photo Essay: 10 Hours On A Bus With Newly Released Prisoners"; "Devo Dog, Hedwig The Angry Dog & Ira Glass Dog: 77 Photos From The Great PUPkin"; "Inside Seguire Mansion, Staten Island's Eccentric Historic Home"; "Inside The NYPL's New Stacks, 27 Feet Below Bryant Park." (2013–2017)
- **ASSORTED** | Photographer for private clients; photos have appeared in myriad publications, and in auctions/benefits.

## FILMS + VIDEOS

- 2016 | **Prosciutto of Happiness: The Making of La Quercia** | Promo/Doc Short (5 min.) | LaQuercia.us **Director, Cinematographer** | Created this short promotional film for La Quercia, an artisan, organic cured meat producer located in Iowa. Filmed on two cameras on location in Iowa at La Quercia headquarters, the owners' home, and three local, organic pig farms. Worked with composer Andrew Thiboldeaux on the score and with La Quercia's Ruth Holbrook on the paper edit. Also created Spanish dubbed version (transcripts + Spanish-speaking actors via IDC Digital).
- 2014 | **The Seguire House of Staten Island** | Doc Short (5 min.) | Gothamist.com **Producer, Director, Cinematographer** | Created this short documentary film for Gothamist about George Burke, the caretaker of the Seguire Mansion in Staten Island. Filmed on one DSLR using one external audio source (Zoom audio recorder). Worked with composer Lee Sargent on the score. The accompanying article about Mr. Burke and his mansion was written by Shayla Love.

- 2013 | **FUREVER** | Feature-Length Documentary (80 min.) | [Fureverfilm.com](http://Fureverfilm.com)  
**Producer, Director** | Documentary that explores the dimensions of grief people experience over the loss of a pet; acquired distribution after it was featured in over 60 film festivals worldwide. Worked with large team that consisted of directors of photography, an editor, executive producer, composer, colorist, associate producers, motion graphics artist, sound editor/mixer, actor (Illeana Douglas), illustrators, and production counsel. Scheduled shoots across the country; created itineraries; conducted interviews; researched relevant topics, recorded sound and video (usually with a director of photography but, at times, without); orchestrated lighting and two-camera setups using both DSLR and motion cameras (also Super 8mm film cameras and SLRs); took production photos; edited footage (Final Cut Pro & Premiere); worked with a company to create paper transcripts of all footage; edited “paper cuts”; created a narrative structure; synced multi-track video and audio both manually and with “Plural Eyes”; recorded voiceover; directed actors; created line-item budgets; wrote/produced scripts; licensed music and stills via publishers, museums, and agents, as well as stock and archival footage; worked with film festivals (applying for, then navigating the festival route) to supply them with content and media needed for exhibition (DCP, DVD, Blu-Ray, DCP, HDCam, DigiBeta, ProRes & other). Worked with media outlets to do interviews and articles, and to fulfill misc. press requests. Navigated the crowd-funding platform “Kickstarter,” and later learned distribution models in various territories. Current distributors of FUREVER are Gunpowder & Sky (FilmBuff/Cinetic), for digital & VOD, and PBS International for international and U.S./Canada VOD and broadcast. Worked with PBS to create a 54-Minute broadcast version of the film to use in international markets and in air travel.
- 2008 | **Takka Takka: Silence** | Music Video (4 min.) | [Takka Takka + MTV](http://TakkaTakka.com)  
**Producer, Director** | Stop-motion music video for the song “Silence” off the band Takka Takka’s album *Migration*. The video was commissioned by their record label, Ernest Jenning Record Company. Wrote treatment, created storyboards, photographed all content, worked with student interns. Used After Effects for special effects and compositing. Screened on MTV; re-edited for MTV’s censors.
- 2007 | **Uncommon Schools** | Promo/Doc Short (10 min.) | [UncommonSchools.org](http://UncommonSchools.org)  
**Producer, Director** | Short promotional documentary for Uncommon Schools, a charter school management organization that works with urban charter schools in NY and NJ to close the achievement gap and prepare low-income students for college graduation. Interviewed teachers, principals, parents, and students (kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade), captured B-roll and observational footage in classrooms and assemblies, composed the narrative arc, and edited all footage. Filmed in Brooklyn at Excellence Academy (Bed-Stuy), Leadership Prep (Brownsville), and Williamsburg Collegiate (Williamsburg), as well as in Newark, NJ at North Star Academy.
- 2004 | **Zing! Went the Strings of My Heart: The Banjomaniacs of Guthrie** | Doc Short (26 min.) | [Stringsofmyheart.com](http://Stringsofmyheart.com)  
**Producer, Director** | Parsons graduate studies thesis documentary short about 4-string jazz banjo culture, the racially charged history of the banjo, and the instrument’s future. Filmed all footage in Guthrie, OK, at the 2003 Guthrie Four-String Jazz Banjo Festival, and in Erie, PA, home of the Erie Inner-City Youth Jazz Banjo Band. Interviewed musicians (professional, hobbyist, and fellow “Sandplum Strummers” bandmates), music scholars, ethnomusicologists, the NYU music department chair, and others. Filmed B-roll and other observational footage; wrote the treatment; composed the narrative arc with supervision from editor Susanne Rostock (*Sing Your Song, Incident at Oglala, The Long Way Home, Passin’ It On*); navigated the film festival route; worked with music production counsel to clear the rights to songs outside the public domain; created and sold the DVD. Screened at film festivals and nominated for the Pare Lorentz award by the IDA.
- ONLINE** | GENERAL | [Sailorbeware.com](http://Sailorbeware.com)  
 TEACHING | [Teaching.sailorbeware.com](http://Teaching.sailorbeware.com)