

School of Architecture | Georgia Tech | Fall 2026

ARCH 6316. Practice of Architecture 2

Required Course for M. Arch 2, and /or M. Arch 3

Undergraduate and Graduate Offering

Credit Hours:	3 credits
Classroom:	Hinman Research Building
Days and hours of class:	T/TH 0930-1045EST
Location:	Hinman Research Building
Prerequisites:	ARCH 6315
Instructor:	Professor Michael Gamble 423 Mezzanine CoA East By Appointment
GTA:	TBD



BAD PRESS: DILLER SCOFIDIO RENFROE STUDIO

Alternative Design Practice

Course Description

Methods of architectural project delivery and project management. Fundamentals of building economics. Emergent models of research-driven architectural practice.

Course Overview

Our broad-based architectural curriculum allows for many different types of alternative design practices. This course explores such alternatives, or genres, and includes presentations/dialogues with many leaders in these parallel worlds of art, design, engineering, business, and production.

As your thought leader, I will challenge each of you to identify an allied disciplinary model that might contribute to your future well-being as a fully formed designer and build upon the emerging yet foundational principles that carry across these varied iterations of the discipline.

Our core reading for the term is Mikhail Bakhtin's "The Dialogic Imagination" along with a deep dive into design-based practice business plans and numerous excerpts from a variety of media including film, literature, new media and old media, AI, and yes, real people.

Course Objectives

This course is designed to accomplish the following objectives:

1. Broaden student perspective on the multiplicity of design business models and opportunities
2. Instill a sense of purpose related to career trajectory
3. Increase understanding of business model planning across a variety of design disciplines including film, fashion, interior design, manufacturing, habitat creation, development, etc. See below

Learning Objectives

Those students who successfully complete the course will be able to:

1. Understand the various ways in which an M.Arch degree can be leveraged across a multitude of disciplines
2. Be able to analyze a core business model, and compare to similar business models from a competitive and marketing perspective, fabrication business models.
3. Prepare a highly professional multimedia analytical presentation of findings

Course Requirements, Grade Weights and Deliverables

Students will build 10-20 minute documentary films related to a chosen genre, loosely defined herein, with many more types to index:

Assignments are weighted as follows:

Class Participation	10 pts
Analysis of Business Model using Template	10 pts
Initial Presentations	20 pts
Analysis of Competition or Market Equal x 2	10 pts
Secondary Presentations	20 pts
Final Production 10 minute film outlining analysis	30 pts

The grade scale for all individual components of the course as well as for completion of the final course grade will be as follows, and based on meeting the assignment deliverables:

Points	Grade	Description
90 – 100	A	Excellent
80 – 89	B	Good
70 – 79	C	Satisfactory
60 – 69	D	Poor
0 – 59	F	Failure

Required Texts/Readings/Special Materials (optional readings and films at the end of this document)

Dialogism

Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (Edited by Michael Holquist, and Translated Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist). University of Texas Press.

Ken Burn's Film Technique:

Big Think Interview (2009)

Link: [Big Think Interview with Ken Burns](#)

Description: Burns discusses his approach to animating still photographs, emphasizing how he uses an “energetic camera eye” to explore images dynamically, creating the “Ken Burns Effect.” He explains the storytelling intent behind panning and zooming to bring history to life, citing influences like William Faulkner.

Masterclass on Documentary Filmmaking

Link: [Ken Burns Teaches Documentary Filmmaking | MasterClass](#)

Description: Burns shares his filmmaking process, including how he uses camera techniques to enhance storytelling. While focused on interviewing, the course touches on visual storytelling methods, such as how he navigates still images to “wake the dead” and bring historical narratives to life.

Understanding and Writing a Business Plan:

General

<https://www.uagc.edu/blog/how-write-business-plan-step-by-step#:~:text=Seven%20Elements%20of%20a%20Business,strategy%2C%20financials%2C%20and%20budget.>

Interiors

<https://www.nda.ac.uk/blog/crafting-a-winning-business-plan/>

Architecture

<https://www.planman.app/blog/architecture/business-plan/>

Detailed

Bplans. (n.d.). Architecture firm business plan example. <https://www.bplans.com/architecture-firm-business-plan/> (<https://www.bplans.com/architecture-firm-business-plan/>)

Provides a sample business plan for NW Architecture, a firm specializing in residential, commercial, and industrial architecture. It includes sections on market segmentation, competitive edge through digital design tools, and financial projections.

Burns, S. (n.d.). How to write a business plan for architects. BQE Software Blog. from <https://blog.bqe.com/how-to-write-a-business-plan-for-architects/> (<https://blog.bqe.com/how-to-write-a-business-plan-for-architects/>)

Authored by Steven Burns, FAIA, this guide offers practical advice for architects creating concise business plans, emphasizing key components like executive summaries, marketing strategies, and financial management for sole proprietors and small firms.

BusinessDojo. (2023, July 14). 23 data for the business plan of your architect practice. <https://dojobusiness.com/blogs/23-data-for-the-business-plan-of-your-architect-practice/> (<https://dojobusiness.com/blogs/news/architect-business-plan/>)

Details 23 critical data points for an architecture business plan, including metrics like project cost percentages, billable hours, and the impact of Building Information Modeling (BIM) on reducing errors by up to 30%.

Business of Architecture. (2013, June 10). Free download: Architect business plan (PDF). <https://www.businessofarchitecture.com/architect-business-plan/> (<https://www.businessofarchitecture.com/architect-business-plan/>)

Offers a free business plan template tailored for solo and small architecture firms, covering vision, market segmentation, competitive advantage, and marketing strategies, with a focus on simplicity and practical application.

Capstera. (2022, January 5). Business architecture sample case study: A model for business architects. <https://www.capstera.com/product/business-architecture-sample-case-study/> (<https://www.capstera.com/product/business-architecture-sample-case-study/>)

Presents a case study template for business architecture, applicable to architecture firms, illustrating components like capability modeling and strategic alignment, with a focus on documenting business processes.

Capstera. (2023, June 13). Business architecture business case: Justify business architecture. <https://www.capstera.com/business-architecture-business-case/> (<https://www.capstera.com/business-architecture-business-case/>)

Outlines five steps to justify investments in business architecture, relevant for architecture firms seeking to align strategic goals with operational execution, including funding strategies tied to capabilities.

RIBA. (n.d.). RIBA international case studies. <https://www.architecture.com/knowledge-and-resources/knowledge-landing-page/riba-international-case-studies/> (<https://www.architecture.com/knowledge-and-resources/resources-landing-page/working-internationally-case-studies/>)

Features case studies from RIBA Chartered Members on international architectural practices, offering insights into business operations and client management for firms working overseas.

Alternative Firm Profiles

Choose 1 area and 3 designers in that area, students may elect to choose more than one area with instructor permission, but must draw parallels between the two

Complete an exhaustive bibliography including journal articles, films, commercials, catalogs,(interviews text and you tube e.g.) T.V. appearances, sketchbooks, podcasts, i.e. any and all information regarding the person/organization and subject area. Work with the instructor and GTA to set times for MS teams based interviews where/when possible.

Architect as Fashion Designer

- Alexander McQueen, Polymath
- Tom Ford, Gucci
- Virgil Abloh, LVMH

Architect as Designer of Film and Sets

- William O. Hunter (GT Arch), Production Designer, Ironman Franchise
- Sofia Coppola, Harvard, Lost in Translation
- Wes Anderson, Auteur/Model Maker A Life Aquatic”, “Royal Tennenbaums”
- Christian Stanford, Los Angeles, Visual Artist, Producer
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Architect and Designer of Public Spaces/Realms

- Publica, Inc. London
- Martha Swartz, Cambridge, London

Architect as Inter/Intra planetary Habitat Creators

- Space Station, NASA
- Occupy Mars, Space X
- DEEP Ocean Habitats

Architect as Inventor

- Homegrown, Inc. The Future of Architecture is Waste
- Material Ecologies, Neri Oxman, MIT

Architect as Fabricator

- Formations Studio, Atlanta
- Achim Menges, Stuttgart
- SOFTLab, NYC

Architect as Ocean/Air Designer

- Yacht Design, Terrence Disdale, London
- Jet Design, Airforce 1, Boeing Aerospace
- FirmShip, the Netherlands

Architect as Service/Community Based Not for Profit

- Auburn Rural Studio
- Habitat for Humanity
- Francis Kéré, Berlin and Northern Africa

Architect as Furniture | Lighting Designer

- Maerl, Paris Atelier, Stéphan Lanez, GT Grad
- Droog Studio, Marcel Wanders et.al. Amazing mind for furniture, Amsterdam
- IKEA, Various Designers

Social Clubs/Lifestyle

- SoHo House, Nick Jones, 54 clubs worldwide
- Rocco Forte Hotels, Female architects led international boutique hotels

Architect as Interior Designer

- Meyer Davis NYC (classmates of Prof.)
- Kelly Werstler, Los Angeles

Architect as Developer

- Portman Holdings
- Barrett Design and Development, Brooklyn
- GG Creative, Atlanta/London

Architect as Imagineer

- Disney Studios
- Universal Studios
- Pinewood Studios
- Marvel Franchise

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Recommended...

Instructional Methods

Course information (syllabus, calendar, assignments) and announcements will be conveyed via MS Team and Miro) The seminar will make use of traditional (and proven) methods of teaching, such as specific writing and analysis assignments, recitation, informal public pin-ups/reviews and discussions, formal student presentations, lecturing, watching films, readings, field trips, etc.]

Course Schedule

August 2026

Tuesday, August 19

Assignment 1: Analysis and Reading

Films: Ken Burns Methods and Brooklyn Bridge

Thursday, August 21

Films: Wes Anderson Samples

Tuesday, August 26

Films: Commercials and Info-mercials

Thursday, August 28

Dialogism and Intertextuality 1

September 2026

Tuesday, September 2

Dialogism and Intertextuality Sample: Scarpa for Example

Thursday, September 4
Assignment 2: Focus Area of Alt Practice and Readings
Business Models 1

Tuesday, September 9
Business Models 2 - Discuss initial subject areas
Guest 1: Christian Stanford Filmmaker

Thursday, September 11
Work Day, Hinman Desk Crits

Tuesday, September 16
Round Robin – Elevator Pitch, Preliminary Business Model Analysis

Thursday, September 18
Guest Speaker 2: Formations Studio
Tristan Al-Haddad

Tuesday, September 23
Student Presentations Pecha Kucha

Thursday, September 25
Student Presentations Pecha Kucha

Tuesday, September 30
Summary and Assignment 3 Analysis of Competition or Market Equal x 2

October 2026

Thursday, October 2
Miro and Adobe Tutorial Sam Thurman

Tuesday, October 7
Spring Break

Thursday, October 9
Miro and Adobe Tutorial Sam Thurman

Tuesday, October 14
Special Guests 1: William Hunter, Film

Thursday, October 16
Special Guests 2: Gray Davis, Interiors

Tuesday, October 21
Special Guest 3: Space X, Occupy Mars

Thursday, October 23
Special Guest 4: Tristan Al Haddad, Fabrication

Tuesday, October 28
Special Guest 5: David Hinson, Rural Studio

Thursday, October 30
Special Guest 6: Christian Stanford, Advertising

November 2026

Tuesday, November 4
Class Discussion

Thursday, November 6
Story Telling: Pulling the pieces together cohesively

Tuesday, November 11 – Veterans Day (Federal Holiday)
Optional Desk crits

Thursday, November 13
Desk Crits

Tuesday, November 18

Desk Crits

Thursday, November 20

No Class, Final Review Prep

Tuesday, November 25

No Class, Final Review Prep

Thursday, November 27 – Thanksgiving Day (Federal Holiday)

December 2026

Final Submissions presented during the scheduled exam period for course

THE BOILER PLATE STUFF FROM ADMINISTRATION

Assessment

No incompletes will be awarded without an appropriate reason or a prior meeting between the student and the instructor, either in person or on Teams. All assignments must be completed to receive a passing grade in the class. Incompletes will be granted only under extraordinary circumstances.

CIOS

At the end of the term, students are asked to complete the online course evaluation for all courses at Georgia Tech (<https://gatech.smartevals.com>). Please note that CIOS scores and comments have different degrees of visibility based on roles:

Reporting access by role	CIOS Scaled Results	CIOS Comments	TA's Scaled Results	TA's Comments
Instructor	Their Own	Their Own	All within their own course	All within their own course
TA Supervisor	N/A	N/A	All within their own course	All within their own course
Teaching Assistant	None	None	Their Own	Their Own
School Administration	All within their own unit	None	All within their own unit	All within their own unit
Students	All – Summary only	None	None	None

More information is available here: <https://academic effectiveness.gatech.edu/surveys/cios/cios-faqs/studentfaq>

Supplemental Information (required for all M. Arch courses)

Professional Standards Addressed

NAAB Conditions for Accreditation

For Professional Degree Programs in Architecture (2020)

The accredited degree program must demonstrate that each graduate possesses the knowledge and skills defined by the criteria below. The knowledge and skills defined here represent those required to prepare graduates for the path to internship, examination, and licensure and to engage in related fields. The program must provide student work as evidence that its graduates have satisfied each criterion.

PC.1 Career Paths: Understanding of the paths to becoming licensed as an architect in the United States and the range of available career opportunities that utilize the discipline's skills and knowledge.

PC.6 Leadership and Collaboration: Understanding of approaches to leadership in multidisciplinary teams, diverse stakeholder constituents, and dynamic physical and social contexts, and how to apply effective collaboration skills to solve complex problems.

PC.7 Learning and Teaching Culture—How the program fosters and ensures a positive and respectful environment that encourages optimism, respect, sharing, engagement, and innovation among its faculty, students, administration, and staff.

PC.8 Social Equity and Inclusion: Understanding of diverse cultural and social contexts and the translation of this understanding into built environments that equitably support and include people of different backgrounds, resources, and abilities.

SC.2 Professional Practice: Understanding of professional ethics, regulatory requirements, fundamental business processes relevant to architecture practice in the United States, and the forces influencing change in these subjects.

COURSE POLICIES

Academic Integrity and Conduct

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. All Georgia Tech students should familiarize themselves with and abide by the Georgia Tech Honor Code: <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18/>. Faculty shall report instances of academic dishonesty to the Office of the Dean of Students.

For expectations of student and instructor conduct more generally, consult section 19 of the catalog listed above, entitled "Code of Conduct," <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/19/>, and section 22, entitled "Student-Faculty Expectations," at <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/22/>.

All persons in the classroom are expected to behave with courtesy towards others and in a way that does not interfere with the regular conduct of the class. Cell phones are to be turned off when students enter the classroom and should remain off for the duration of the class; laptop computers are to be used only for taking notes; and students should not engage in private conversations while the instructor or other students are speaking. Anyone not adhering to these basic courtesies will be asked to leave.

AI Policy

We treat AI-based assistance, such as ChatGPT and Copilot, the same way we treat collaboration with other people: you are welcome to talk about your ideas and work with other people, both inside and outside of class, as well as with AI-based assistants.

However, all work you submit must be your own. You should never include anything in your assignment that you did not write directly without proper citation. You need to use quotation marks for exact phrasing; both direct quotes and paraphrasing require citations (e.g., in-line citations or footnotes/endnotes, as specified by the instructor).

It's important to understand that including anything you did not write in your assignment without proper citation will be treated as a serious academic misconduct case. If you are unsure where the line is between collaborating with AI and copying AI, we recommend the following heuristics:

Heuristic 1: Never hit "Copy" within your conversation with an AI assistant. You can copy your own work into your original composition, but do not copy anything from the AI conversation directly back into your assignment.

Instead, use your interaction with the AI assistant as a learning experience, then let your assignment reflect your improved understanding.

Heuristic 2: Do not have your assignment and the AI agent open at the same time. Like above, use your conversation with the AI as a learning experience, then close the interaction, open your assignment, and let your assignment reflect your revised knowledge.

This heuristic avoids directly integrating AI into your composition environment: just as you should not let a classmate write content or code directly in your submission, you should also avoid using tools that directly add content to your submission.

Deviating from these heuristics does not automatically qualify as academic misconduct; however, following these heuristics guarantees your collaboration will not cross the line into misconduct. Also, remember that overreliance on AI tools can significantly impact the development of fundamental skills. Additionally, AI environments contain mistakes and ingrained biases that can misrepresent your ideas, intentions, and the demonstration of learning objectives.

All graphic content created with AI tools should be labeled as AI-generated or AI-assisted. Experimentation with various AI tools is highly encouraged, but needs to be clearly identified.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Any student with a disability who may require accommodation should contact the Office of Disability Services at 404-894-2563 or visit <http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu> to make an appointment to discuss their special needs and obtain an accommodations letter. They should also schedule an appointment with the course instructor to discuss their learning needs.

Active Participation/Attendance

Active Participation at all class meetings is mandatory and crucial to the successful completion of the class. Absences will be excused only for medical or family emergencies, Institute-approved events, and religious holidays documented in writing. (According to a new policy, you must notify your instructor in writing during the first two weeks of the semester about any anticipated absences for religious holidays.) Late arrivals will be counted as absences.

Attendance of SoA lectures during studio time on Monday or Wednesday from 12:30-1:30 p.m. is required for M. ARCH students and highly recommended for our BS ARCH, MS, and Ph.D. students.

NOTE: Absences due to special and/or unforeseen circumstances must be discussed with the Instructor as early as practically possible.

Missing three classes without an approved excuse will result in a letter grade reduction. Missing more than three classes, excused or unexcused, might result in a meeting with your instructor and the Architecture Program Office to determine a course of action and can result in an incomplete grade (I) or a failing grade (F) of this course.

Students are highly encouraged to submit any class absence verification that is required due to documented illness, hospitalizations, accidents, death in the family, family emergencies, and lengthy illnesses to the dean of students. (<https://studentlife.gatech.edu/request-assistance>)

Approved Communication Platforms

https://gatech.service-now.com/home?pid=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0023604

Archiving

At the end of the semester, all students are required to submit physical and/or digital examples of their work to their instructors or administration for archiving no later than one week after the end of term. By enrolling, each student grants a license to reproduce and display their work online, in forthcoming print publications, and in public exhibitions.

[FALL 2025 ARCHIVE](#)

[SPRING 2026 ARCHIVE](#)

College of Design Facility Rules and Guidelines

Please consult the [Georgia Tech Student Handbook](#) regarding the use of facilities and all Institute policies. Aerosol sprays of any kind are strictly banned from the studio and surrounding areas. A spray painting booth is now in operation in the College of Design shop on the ground floor of the East Architecture Building.

Course Expectations & Guidelines

Per the [GT Catalog](#), all work produced in the College of Design as part of a degree program becomes the property of the College; it may be retained or returned at the discretion of the faculty. The faculty of the School of Architecture also reserves the right to refuse credit for any project executed outside the precincts of the College or otherwise produced without proper coordination with the faculty.

Emergencies

In case of emergency (e.g., fire, accident, or criminal act), please call the Georgia Tech Police at 404-894-2500. Please note that Perry Minyard, IT Support Administrator for the College of Design, is also a firefighter and an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) certified in performing CPR.

Extensions, Late Assignments, & Re-Scheduled/Missed Exams

See [this catalog page](#) for more information. STUDENTS are also encouraged to consider the impact of events like the [All-Majors Career Fair](#) and off-campus interviews and to plan accordingly.

Library & Archives

Need to do research but don't know where to start? Contact your Architecture Library subject specialist, Catherine Mancini (catherine.mancini@library.gatech.edu), for research help and information on available resources. Contact your Architecture Archives liaison, Jody Thompson (jody.thompson@library.gatech.edu), for assistance with archival research and collections.

Georgia Tech Library website: <https://library.gatech.edu/>

Georgia Tech Archives website: <http://library.gatech.edu/archives>

Ownership

For the purposes of continuous improvement efforts, such as accreditations and periodic program reviews, the School will select samples of student work submitted to satisfy course requirements. This includes digital files, papers, drawings, models, etc. Collected samples may be returned to students upon request.

Additional Filmography

Wes Anderson's filmography:

Bottle Rocket (1996)

Feature debut, co-written with Owen Wilson. A quirky heist comedy about two friends planning a robbery.

Rushmore (1998)

Co-written with Owen Wilson. Follows a precocious teenager and his friendship with a wealthy industrialist.

The Royal Tenenbaums (2001)

Co-written with Owen Wilson. A dysfunctional family dramedy with an all-star cast.

The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou (2004)

Co-written with Noah Baumbach. Centers on an eccentric oceanographer seeking revenge on a mythical shark.

The Darjeeling Limited (2007)

Co-written with Jason Schwartzman and Roman Coppola. Three brothers embark on a spiritual train journey in India.

Fantastic Mr. Fox (2009)

Stop-motion animated adaptation of Roald Dahl's book, co-written with Noah Baumbach.

Moonrise Kingdom (2012)

Co-written with Roman Coppola. A coming-of-age story about two young runaways in 1960s New England.

The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014)

Written by Anderson, inspired by Stefan Zweig. A caper set in a fictional European hotel, won multiple awards.

Isle of Dogs (2018)

Stop-motion animated film, co-written with Roman Coppola, Jason Schwartzman, and Kunichi Nomura. Set in a dystopian Japan.

The French Dispatch (2021)

Co-written with Roman Coppola, Hugo Guinness, and Jason Schwartzman. An anthology film about a fictional magazine.

Asteroid City (2023)

Co-written with Roman Coppola. A meta-narrative about a 1950s desert town hosting a stargazing event.

The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar and Three More (2023)

A Netflix anthology of four Roald Dahl adaptations, including The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar, The Swan, The Rat Catcher, and Poison.

Additional Notes:

Anderson is known for his distinct visual style, symmetrical framing, and ensemble casts.

He often collaborates with actors like Bill Murray, Owen Wilson, and Jason Schwartzman.

He has also directed short films, such as Hotel Chevalier (2007) and Castello Cavalcanti (2013), and numerous commercials.

Ken Burns

Ken Burns is an acclaimed American documentary filmmaker known for his in-depth explorations of American history and culture, often produced with Florentine Films and broadcast on PBS.

Ken Burns Filmography (as Director)

Brooklyn Bridge (1981)

A one-hour documentary on the construction and cultural significance of the Brooklyn Bridge. Nominated for an Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature.

The Shakers: Hands to Work, Hearts to God (1984)

Explores the 19th-century American religious sect known for its utopian ideals and craftsmanship.

The Statue of Liberty (1985)

Examines the history and symbolism of the iconic monument. Nominated for an Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature.

Huey Long (1985)

A biographical portrait of the controversial Louisiana governor and senator.

The Congress (1988)

Chronicles the history of the U.S. Congress, highlighting its role in American governance.

Thomas Hart Benton (1988)

Explores the life and work of the American painter known for his regionalist style.

The Civil War (1990)

An 11-hour series on the American Civil War, featuring Burns' signature "Ken Burns Effect" (panning and zooming on still images). Won two Emmy Awards and grossed over \$100 million, breaking PBS ratings records.

Empire of the Air: The Men Who Made Radio (1991)

Examines the pioneers of radio broadcasting and its impact as the first mass medium.

Baseball (1994)

An 18-hour series tracing the history of America's pastime, from the 1840s to the 1990s. Won an Emmy Award for Outstanding Informational Series.

The West (1996)

Directed select episodes of this PBS series (executive produced by Burns), exploring the history of the American West.

Thomas Jefferson (1997)

A two-part biography of the third U.S. president, focusing on his contributions and contradictions.

Lewis & Clark: The Journey of the Corps of Discovery (1997)

A four-hour documentary on the historic expedition to explore the American West.

Frank Lloyd Wright (1998)

Co-directed with Lynn Novick, this film examines the life and innovative designs of the iconic architect.

Not for Ourselves Alone: The Story of Elizabeth Cady Stanton & Susan B. Anthony (1999)

Chronicles the women's suffrage movement and the lives of its key figures. Won a Peabody Award and an Emmy Award.

Jazz (2001)

A 10-part series on the history and evolution of jazz music in America.

Mark Twain (2001)

A two-part, four-hour biography of the American humorist and author, co-produced with Dayton Duncan.

Horatio's Drive: America's First Road Trip (2003)

Chronicles Horatio Nelson Jackson's 1903 cross-country automobile journey. Won a CINE Golden Eagle Award.

Unforgivable Blackness: The Rise and Fall of Jack Johnson (2004)

Explores the life of the first African-American heavyweight boxing champion and the racial challenges he faced.

The War (2007)

A seven-part series on World War II, told through the experiences of four American towns.

The National Parks: America's Best Idea (2009)

A six-part series on the history of U.S. national parks. Won an Emmy Award for Outstanding Non-fiction Series.

The Tenth Inning (2010)

A continuation of Baseball, covering the sport from the 1990s to the 2000s.

Prohibition (2011)

A three-part series on the rise and fall of the U.S. prohibition era.

The Dust Bowl (2012)

A two-part, four-hour documentary on the 1930s ecological disaster on the Great Plains.

The Central Park Five (2012)

Co-directed with Sarah Burns and David McMahon, this film examines the wrongful convictions of five teenagers in a 1989 New York case.

The Address (2014)

Documents students at a Vermont school memorizing the Gettysburg Address, exploring its historical significance.

The Roosevelts: An Intimate History (2014)

A seven-part series on Theodore, Franklin, and Eleanor Roosevelt.

Jackie Robinson (2016)

Co-directed with Sarah Burns and David McMahon, a two-part film on the baseball legend and civil rights icon.

Defying the Nazis: The Sharps' War (2016)

Co-directed with Artemis Joukowsky, this film tells the story of an American couple rescuing refugees during WWII.

The Vietnam War (2017)

A 10-part, 18-hour series on the Vietnam War, co-directed with Lynn Novick.

Country Music (2019)

An eight-part, 16-hour series on the history of American country music.

Hemingway (2021)

A three-part series on the life and work of Ernest Hemingway, co-directed with Lynn Novick.

Muhammad Ali (2021)

A four-part series on the life of the boxing legend and cultural icon, co-directed with Sarah Burns and David McMahon.

Benjamin Franklin (2022)

A two-part, four-hour documentary on the life of the Founding Father and scientist.

The U.S. and the Holocaust (2022)

Co-directed with Lynn Novick and Sarah Botstein, a six-hour series examining America's response to the Holocaust.

The American Buffalo (2023)

A two-part documentary on the history of the American bison and its near extinction.

Leonardo da Vinci (2024)

A two-part, four-hour documentary on the Renaissance polymath, marking Burns' first major non-American subject. Premiered November 18–19, 2024, on PBS.

The American Revolution (2025)

A six-part series on the Revolutionary War, described as a war for independence, civil war, and world war. Released in 2025.