



## **Proposed New NYFA Location: Milan, Italy + Lugano, Switzerland (CH)**

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**KEY WORDS:** New York Film Academy, Art Schools, Creative Class, Creative Industries, Film Schools

**Summary:** This brief report will map out why the New York Film Academy (NYFA) currently holds a unique market advantage at this time, amongst Higher Education (HE) and Specialty Vocational Education Providers (SVEP). This report also demonstrates how, if properly managed, this crucial advantage could be used to leverage a significant expansion in key international markets.

There are three aspects to NYFA's current Key Advantage to hold in mind:

- A. **NYFA BRAND:** NYFA markets and provides a variety of scalable career-path certificates and degrees that are highly marketable within the competitive marketplace of audiovisual entrepreneurship, and it does this with a mix sophisticated branding and panache. Central to this ingenious mix, is the film school 'college and conservatory' positioning of the NYFA brand and product line.
- B. **MIAMI / LA MODEL:** Miami is a burgeoning, world-class city that is investing in the economic windfalls of a popular 'Creative Class' set of economic and social indicators. NYFA's recently expansion into the Miami market exploits these indicators. NYFA does this by building upon the success of their 'lean' and adaptive LA-based institutional / degree-product-line model, rather than their previously successful, but now professionally and economically anachronistic 'Art School' / 'Conservatory' model, originally crafted in New York City, New York.
- C. **MILANO-LUGANO:** By using economic data, new target markets can be considered for strategic expansion by NYFA. The Milan-Lugano Metropolitan Market in Northern Italy / sub-Alpine Switzerland has comparable indicators to Los Angeles and Miami, and yet lacks a well-marketed film school 'college and conservatory' to serve the demands of what is arguably one of Europe's largest and fastest-growing economies and media markets.



## I. Overview of the Lombardy / Ticino Regions:

- a. "Lombardy is the most populated region in Italy and one of the (geographically) widest. Milan is the Capital of the region and is the second-largest city and the largest metropolitan area in Italy." <sup>1</sup>
- b. "It borders with Switzerland (on the North: Canton Ticino and Canton Graubünden) and with the Italian regions of Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol and Veneto (on the East), Emilia-Romagna (on the South) and Piemonte (on the West). In 2017 the inhabitants in the region amounted to app. 10 million (Eurostat, 2018)." <sup>2</sup>
- c. "Lombardy remains the second richest region in Italy after South Tyrol, with a GDP per capita about 30% higher than the national and the EU average. In 2016, with €366.54m, it is the fifth largest GDP among European regions (Eurostat, 2018) and represents one fifth of the Italian National GDP." <sup>3</sup>
- d. "Ticino, the only Swiss canton lying entirely south of the Alps, constitutes the gateway to Lombardy, with which it shares not only language and culture but also close economic ties." <sup>4 5</sup>
- e. "Lombardy's geographical contiguity sets Milan one hour away from Lugano by car or train, and ensures a smooth connection to the international airport of Malpensa." <sup>6</sup>

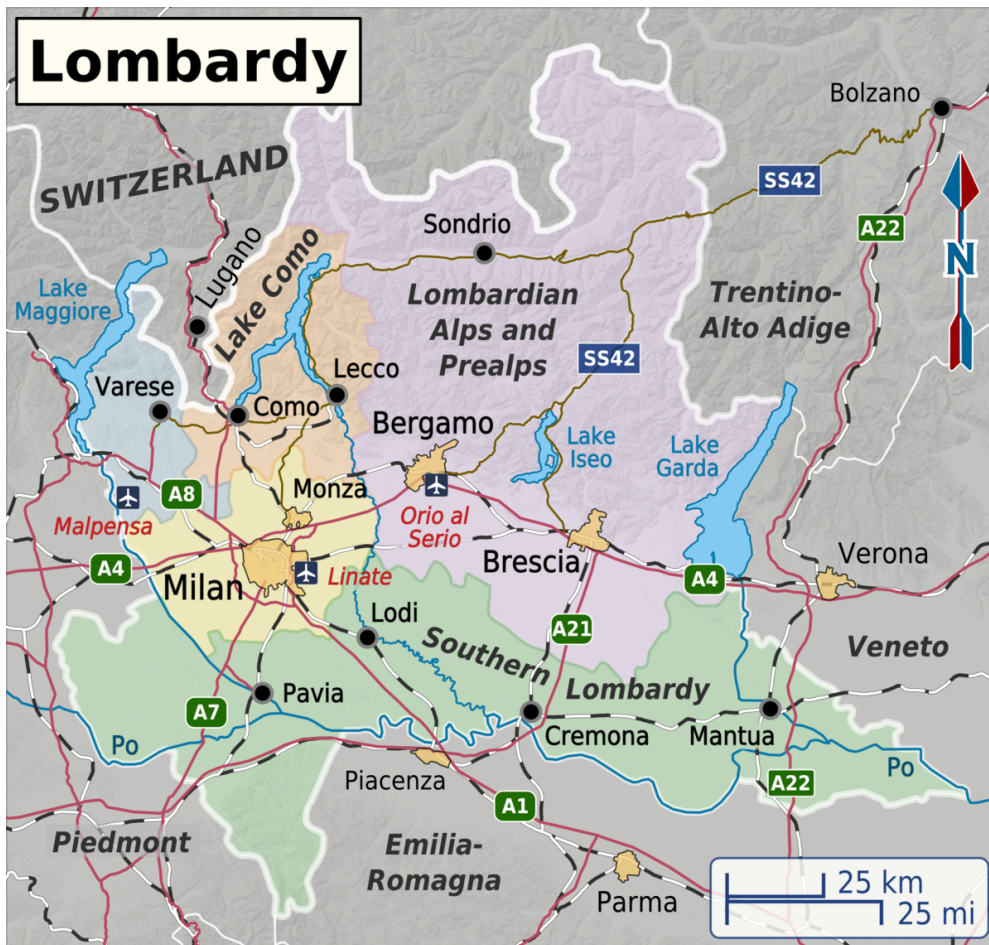
<sup>1</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/regional-innovation-monitor/base-profile/lombardy>

<sup>2</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/regional-innovation-monitor/base-profile/lombardy>

<sup>3</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/regional-innovation-monitor/base-profile/lombardy>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www4.ti.ch/dfe/de/invest/invest-en/strength-factors/in-the-heart-of-europe-connected-to-the-world/>

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.travelwithachallenge.com/?page\\_id=4927](https://www.travelwithachallenge.com/?page_id=4927)



## II. Competing Film Schools in Milano (Lombardy) / Lugano (Ticino) Regions:

This report focuses on the ‘Key Advantage’ of NYFA’s LA-based ‘College and Conservatory’ business model and brand. Dr. Woods has studied the curriculum / course offerings, institutional structure and strengths and brand marketing of competing film schools in the Milano-Lugano market, and uses this comparison to create several strategic possibilities, for NYFA in this targeted region.

**QUICK TAKES:** The following comparison highlights and recommends two major Milano Suburban cities, as possible NYFA campus (prestige-brand locations / with affordable student housing / commercial real estate) launch sites + accessible to prospective students (resident / commuter) and located within the Milano-Lugano Metropolitan Region Media Market / Transportation Extra-Urban / Suburban Rail Grid: Lugano (CH) and Bergamo (IT):

a. Central Milano (Italy) – City Center or less than 1 hour commute:

- i. ***Scuola Nazionale di Cinema***, which has its headquarters in Rome and specialized branches in Piedmont, Lombardy and Sicily, aims to develop cinematic art and technique to the highest levels through research, experimentation, production and teaching activity. It constitutes a cultural breeding ground where all the categories of

<sup>6</sup> <https://www4.ti.ch/dfe/de/invest/invest-en/strength-factors/in-the-heart-of-europa-connected-to-the-world/>

cinema disciplines come together: producers, directors, scriptwriters, set designers, actors, editors, musicians, sound technicians, experts in digital cinema, teachers and scholars from all over the world.<sup>7</sup>

- ii. **NABA - Visual, Performing and Multimedia Arts** – is a private Academy that was founded in Milan in 1980 on the initiatives of Ausonio Zappa, Guido Ballo and Tito Varisco who aimed at challenging the rigid academic tradition by introducing new visions and languages closed to contemporary artistic practice and the creative and artistic professions. In 1981 it was officially recognized by the Ministry of Public Education (now known as The Ministry of Education, University and Research). The Department of Visual, Performing and Multimedia Arts provides students with three-years bachelors of arts, postgraduate programs in the field of visual, performing and multimedia arts. The Academy offer comprises as well summer programs and evening courses.<sup>8</sup>
- iii. **Civica Scuola di Cinema Luchino Visconti** – has been operating since the '60's and has trained whole generations of professionals who are well-known names in the regional and national audiovisual market. Three-year courses (Eight curricula) – Direction / Production / Film Writing / Multimedia / Editing / Digital Animation / Video Shooting and Photography / Sound Design and Broadcast Systems / One-year evening courses / Screenwriting / Documentaries / Film Production / Multimedia / Video-Reporting / Crash courses: Film Workshops / Journalists Refresher Courses (only for members of the Journalists' Association) / Teacher Training (in collaboration with AGIS, ANEC and MIUR) / Summer School / International Programmes.<sup>9</sup>

**Film Schools located approximately within a 1 hour – 1.5 hour commute from Milano City Center:**

**b. Suburban Milano / Treviso (Italy):**

- i. **Fabrica** – Oliviero Toscani's Creativity Lab (with close links to the Benetton Company and Colors magazine) is situated in Catena di Villorba near Treviso. More a centre for research than a school, it has numerous departments that deal with different aspects of visual images, design, and also photography and video. The cinema department is involved in several courageous international co-productions, and past products include *Seventeen Years*, by Zhang Yuan, a film that won the Special Prize of the Jury in 1999 in Venice. Those interested in admission to the video and/or writing can send in a portfolio of their work for evaluation. A number of annual residential scholarships are also granted to students between the ages of 18 and 25 from any country.<sup>10</sup>

- c. Suburban Milano / Lugano (CH): has 2 major state universities with and a private USA college, but does not have a purpose-built or well-equipped film school.

<sup>7</sup> <https://cineuropa.org/en/schoolprofile/200285/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.naba.it/it/trienni/triennio-in-media-design-e-arte-multimediali>

<sup>9</sup> <https://cinema.fondazionemilano.eu/>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.fabrica.it/>

- i. **Università della Svizzera italiana** – “The Institute of Media and Journalism (IMeG) was created in 2004 within the Faculty of Communication Sciences. The Institute contributes to the teaching activities at the Bachelor level, particularly by providing the area of specialization in 'Communications and Media', at the Master level, by running the Master in 'Media Management and offering PhD- level supervision.” <sup>11</sup>
- d. Suburban Milano / Locarno (CH):
- i. **CISA -- CISA (International Academy of Audiovisual Sciences)** based in Locarno, founded by Pio Bordini in 1992, is a training Institute in the field of cinema, television and multimedia culture, oriented towards the students' development with the aim of improving their inclinations, talents and skills. 2-year undergraduate certificate / 2-year postgraduate certificate.
- e. Suburban Milano / Bergamo (Italy):
- i. Bergamo has world-famous Film Society and student film festival, and a major state university with 7 regional campuses, but does not have a purpose-built or well-equipped film school, except the boutique conservatory Fabbrica in Treviso.

**Film Schools that attract students from the Milano-Lugano Metroplex, but require at least a 2-3 hour commute or more from the Milano City Center:**

- f. Torino (Italy):
- i. **SCUOLA HOLDEN** – *The Scuola Holden was born from an idea. The idea was to found a school where narrators are being trained. Not writers or dramatic advisers or directors but narrators.* (Alessandro Baricco). Many former students continue to write after their time at the Scuola Holden and have made their debut as writers. Two years of studying publishing, cinema, theatre, television, advertising, journalism and the internet. No diploma or degree conferred. <sup>12</sup>
- g. Bolzano (Italy):
- i. **ZELIG - SCHOOL FOR DOCUMENTARY, TELEVISION AND NEW MEDIA** – ZeLIG is one of the few professional training institutions in Europe that offers specific preparation in the field of documentary making. The school's location in the alpine border city of Bolzano (pop. 100,000), in the bilingual province of Bolzano-South Tyrol, has had a definite impact on the school's multi-language approach and international perspective. In 1988 a group of cineastes, film-making professionals and producers founded the ZeLIG Cooperative - Film School. From the very beginning funding for the school has been guaranteed by the Autonomous Province of Bolzano, through the provincial commissions for professional training in Italian, German and Ladin languages. <sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> <https://search.usi.ch/en/organizational-units/15/institute-of-media-and-journalism>







<sup>12</sup> <http://www.scuolaholden.it/>








<sup>13</sup> <https://www.zeligfilm.it/it/>



- h. Geneva (CH)
  - i. French Language Film School
- i. Lausanne (CH)
  - i. French Language Film School
- j. Zurich (CH)
  - i. German Language Film School

### Competing Film Schools Summary Points:

-  The three major film schools in Milan compete with NYFA in their offerings – they are well-equipped, and have a ‘hands-on’ curriculum, and they confer actual BA/MA degrees – but (other than a few English language courses) they do not offer an American branded, all-English curriculum comparable to the NYFA BFA / MFA degree offerings.
-  The three major film schools in Milan, and the major film schools in Locarno, Torino, Bolzano and Rome, compete with NYFA in their prestige-name instructors and professional / academic affiliations, which include 4-5 Italy Language / EU Film Industry Professional Training Standards Organizations (of which Dr. Woods is also a current or former member):
  - [EAVE](#)
  - [CILECT](#)
  - [EU Creative Europe Media Desk](#)
  - [Cineuropa](#)
  - [Film Italia](#)
-  Milan is arguably the economic powerhouse and Digital/Film/TV Media Capital of Italy, competing with Rome, which has an aging film / TV studio infrastructure and a sagging economy. There are several competing film schools / acting schools / art schools located in or near Rome, which is a 3-4 hour rail/car commute from the Milano City Center.
-  Traffic, Parking, urban crime and congestion, housing + commercial real estate prices and film school saturation are key reasons to locate outside the Milano City Center, but within a reasonable 1 hour – 1.5 hour commute within the Greater Milano-Lugano Metropolitan Regional Grid, encompassing mostly Lombardy and Ticino.
-  Cost of Living, Housing + Commercial Real Estate drop by 50% or more, beyond a 30-minute commute interim of suburban / extra-urban Milano. The commuter highway / commuter rail system extends approximately 1-hour / 1.5 hours beyond the Milano City Center.
-  The extra-urban / suburban cities of Locarno, Lugano, Bergamo, Varese, Como, Monza, Lecco, Linate and Treviso are considered a ‘reasonable’ 1-hour – 1.5 hour car/rail commute to the Milano City Center and region’s busy international airports (Malpensa, Bergamo, Linate). The cities of Pavia, Lodi, Brescia, Torino, Bolzano are considered, ‘too far to commute’. All of these cities have high-speed Internet comparable to or exceeding the Milano City Center.

-  The historic centres of Bergamo and Lugano are world famous and suitable for the NYFA campus location preferences for high-visibility / high name recognition / trendy art enclave sites, but also significantly less costly than locations within the 30-minute commute high-costs Milano City Center.
-  Graduates of the major film schools in Italy and Switzerland have difficulty working abroad in Europe and the USA – this is because:
  - 1) They received training but did not receive an internationally recognized degree / diploma;
  - 2) Their degree / diploma course was not in English, which is the *de facto* language of film / TV crews throughout EU + USA;
  - 3) They did not receive a practical, hands-on education, i.e., they studied history and theory, but never or seldom touched a camera, etc.
-  Several years ago, the largest university in Milan, the Arts & Sciences Polytechnic, ruled that all undergraduate degree courses would be taught in English, but Art Schools and Film Schools in Italy and Switzerland have not caught up with this innovation. NYFA should offer English language courses with NASAD / WASC accredited / conferred degrees / diplomas.
-  The glamor, brand-distinction and cultural cache of authenticity within film + TV is dominating by American branding, i.e., Hollywood, New York, etc. Likewise, the high-quality, international recognition and credibility of English Language courses and HE schools is dominated by USA + UK brands. Consequently, English Language Schools in Italy have capitalized on this, examples:
  - [The British International House Schools of Italy](#)
  - [The British Institutes](#)
  - [Wall Street English Academies](#)
-  The vast majority of U.S. accredited higher education institutions present in Italy are members of the [Association of American College and University Programs in Italy \(AACUPI\)](#).
-  Switzerland was the birthplace of the [International Baccalaureate](#) in 1968 and 50 schools in Switzerland offer one or more of the IB programmes (Primary, Middle Years, Diploma and Career-related Programmes). Dr. Woods has expertise with the IB curriculum in FILM and he notes that the IB programmes (Diploma and Career-related Programmes) have strong Film / Film Production curriculum, which make NYFA a natural fit for IB Program Graduates.<sup>14</sup>
-  This is a work-in-progress – this constitutes a report based on private research by Dr. Mark Woods, and it is currently in a preliminary draft format – this means that it is intended as an outline, and further, more comprehensive data and information could be added at a later time. Here are the outline points, not yet drafted:

### III. Benefits

- a. Italian Film & Television Industry / EU Media
- b. Swiss Film / Television Industry / EU Media

<sup>14</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education\\_in\\_Switzerland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Switzerland)

- c. Transportation / Housing / Commercial Leasing
- d. Internships, Apprenticeships, Job Placement

**IV. Costs & Risks**

**V. NYFA Student Recruitment**

- a. NYFA has a campus in Florence (central + southern Italy) – a northern Italy / sub-Alpine Switzerland campus would target the largest market not addressed or considered too distant by students and faculty.

**VI. NYFA Faculty Recruitment**

- a. Mediaset, RAI, and other major film production / TV production studios are all located in Milan. Our current NYFA campus relates to the Rome Media Market.

**VII. Accreditation and Funding**

**VIII. Action Plan**



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Dr. Mark Leslie Woods holds a Ph.D. in Film Studies from the Cardiff School of Creative Industries, University of South Wales, U.S.W., and a B.A. in Liberal Studies with Film Studies Certificate from Florida International University, F.I.U., *'cum laude'*. He is a qualified British lawyer, holding the LL.M. in Intellectual Property Law 'with Distinction' from Glamorgan Law School and he also holds a British Graduate Diploma in Law.

Dr. Mark Leslie Woods is currently on the faculty of the New York Film Academy Conservatory and College, South Beach Campus, having previously lectured abroad for 13 years, on the faculty of the British Creative Skillset Screen Academy, Cardiff,

U.S.W., the F.I.U. Czech Film Study Abroad Program – Prague, and on the faculty of the *Centro Linguistico, l'Università degli studi di Molise*, Italy. He currently lectures on global media, social media, filmmaking and film history, and the Business of Filmmaking, for the NYFA BFA Filmmaking, BFA Acting, and MFA Filmmaking / MFA Acting degrees.

He previously studied Film Technology Production at the Miami School of Entertainment & Design Technology, Miami Dade College, and Communications Comprehensive in Radio, Speech & Drama at Malone University in Canton, Ohio. He holds a Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education, U.S.W., and TESOL Postgraduate Certificate, University of San Diego, California. He is a Full Fellow in the British Higher Education Academy, FHEA.

He previously served as a Film Intern for the Miami International Film Festival, and served on various Board of Directors including Independent Feature Project – IFP/Miami, OUTshine Film Festival (formerly MiFo) and adjudicated for the *Ciak Scuola* International Children's Film Festival, Italy.

Dr. Mark Leslie Woods has peer-reviewed published research in minority language Transnational Cinema and National Cinema Analysis, with analysis of Welsh, Italian, French, Haitian Creole and Latino television and film. His two-volume study is held in the National Library of Wales and the British Library, London, England.

Dr. Woods is an accomplished International Film Finance Consultant, and was previously employed as an International Sales Agent for BBC-Wales and S4C-TV International. He is a former member of British Academy of Film and Television Arts, BAFTA-Cymru and the British Media, Communication and Cultural Studies Association, MeCCSA.

## Online Links to Sources

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