Akanksha Vishal Somani

New York, NY | avs8774@nyu.edu | +1 (646) 740-3066 | https://www.linkedin.com/in/akankshasomani1/

EDUCATION

New York University, Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development **May 2027**
Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA)- Studio Arts Major, Film Minor, Integrated Design and Media Minor; **4.0 CGPA, Steinhardt Scholar**

Programs Attended Abroad: NYU Madrid, NYU Shanghai; Semesters: NYU Berlin (Fall '25), NYU Paris (Spring '26)

Honors: Gilman Scholarship 2025 Award, Dean's Global Honors Seminar, University Leadership Honors Course, Art and Art Professions Student Departmental Award, Diversity Innovation Grant Award, Artistic Awards for all Semesters, Gerald Pryor Art Award, Chen Cui Family Award

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

Producer, Unequal Lives, **Independent Project**, US, India, Mexico **May 2026- Present**
- Produce a grant-funded documentary through the Carnegie Youth Leaders scholarship, examining labor inequality across India and Mexico.
- Lead pre-production, research, story development, interview preparation, scheduling, locations, and production logistics.
- Coordinate shoots in Mumbai and Delhi, managing contributors, crew needs, equipment, and on-set operations.
- Conduct worker interviews and shape narrative direction through field research, footage review, and post-production planning.

Assistant Producer, Student Assistant Editor and Film Researcher, **Welcome Change Productions,** New York, NY **January 2024- Present**
- Work with Academy Award–nominated filmmaker Alice Elliott on editorial decisions, story development, and archival research.
- Review and catalogue 142+ MiniDV tapes (200+ hours), building a searchable metadata system that improves efficiency by 60%.
- Transcribe and analyze 30+ interviews to support narrative development; streamline Premiere Pro and Media Encoder workflows, improving editing efficiency by 35%.
- Manage on-set media as DIT, overseeing secure transfers, dual backups, equipment, logistics, and continuity.

Studio Art Intern, **DNEG VFX,** Mumbai, India **July 2024- August 2024**
- Conducted historical and visual research across 50+ reference sources to ensure period-accurate set designs under senior art directors
- Reviewed 8+ scripts, previs sequences, and storyboards to understand the end-to-end production pipeline and improve design continuity
- Assisted in creating Virtual Art Department (VAD) asset packs that streamlined virtual set construction and reduced revision cycles by ~20%
- Collaborated with set decorators and architects to design 10+ props and blueprints, enabling precise fabrication and on-set execution

Graphic Design Intern, **Zee Entertainment and Studios,** Mumbai, India **June 2022- August 2022**
- Assisted in editing and designing 25+ advertising assets using Photoshop, Illustrator, After Effects, and Premiere Pro, ensuring broadcast-ready visual quality
- Supported VFX and compositing teams on 10+ campaigns, strengthening technical proficiency in motion graphics and creative execution
- Gained hands-on exposure to post-production workflows, collaborating with cross-functional teams across design, audio, and broadcast units
- Observed and documented audio recording sessions and voiceover integrations, deepening understanding of end-to-end television production

Art Director, **NYU Martin Scorsese Virtual Production Center,** New York, NY **November 2024- May 2025**
- Collaborated with 20+ Film & TV students to conceptualize and design immersive virtual and physical sets for 5+ short film productions
- Oversaw end-to-end set construction, aligning creative direction with production schedules and technical requirements to ensure on-time delivery
- Directed prop sourcing, set dressing, and lighting composition, enhancing visual storytelling and elevating scene design quality by 30% (based on peer and faculty reviews)
- Coordinated with producers and department leads to maintain design continuity, uphold budget parameters, and streamline workflows across multiple teams

Associate Set Designer, **Tisch New Theatre,** New York, NY **January 2025- May 2025**
- Oversaw scenic operations for a mainstage production, managing set construction, prop fabrication, and scenic painting across a 15+ person crew
- Developed comprehensive scenic design packages, including ground plans, build schedules, and installation workflows, ensuring seamless execution from initial concept through full load-out with 100% on-time delivery

Creative Intern, **AS IF Magazine,** New York, NY **January 2024- June 2024**
- Supported 5+ editorial photoshoots, assisting with pre- and post-production logistics for high-visibility creative projects
- Contributed to independent magazine operations, aiding editorial, art, and production workflows across print and digital releases
- Attended weekly cross-team meetings, recorded and distributed detailed minutes, improving communication efficiency for 15+ stakeholders
- Conducted research on emerging artists and cultural trends, transcribed 20+ interviews, and assisted in shaping editorial content.

*Undergraduate Researcher***, Vertically Integrated Projects– NYU Desire Path Team,** Berlin, Germany **September 2025 – December 2025**
- Selected as 1 out of 400 students for NYU Tandon's flagship VIP Program, a competitive, faculty-mentored research cohort
- Conducting fieldwork across 3+ NYC boroughs and analysing 100+ behavioural data points to map navigation patterns
- Producing visual research outputs reviewed by 10+ interdisciplinary stakeholders and expected to reach 1,000+ student users

Monitor and Teaching Assistant, **NYU Sculpture Shop,** New York, NY **October 2023- January 2025**
- Oversaw daily shop operations, handling of hazardous materials and enforced EPA and safety compliance protocols, for 500+ student users
- Trained 100+ students on metal and woodworking equipment, providing technical guidance and tool maintenance support
- Maintained organized workspaces and supported facility improvements via material handling, inventory coordination, and light construction tasks

Assistant Costume Designer, **NYU**, New York, NY **November 2023- May 2024**
- Collaborated on a headline fashion showcase featuring Dominique Jackson and members of the ballroom community, supporting costume development and runway presentation.
- Led beading, embroidery, and fabric sourcing for 8+ bespoke garments, ensuring couture-level craftsmanship and visual cohesion.
- Contributed to a year-long creative development cycle, assisting with concept design, garment execution, and backstage coordination during the live performance

LEADERSHIP

Studio Arts Peer Mentor, **NYU**, New York, NY **April 2024- February 2025**
Programming Director and Alt. Senator **at Steinhardt Undergraduate Student Government** **January 2024- May 2025**
Secretary and Director of Education **at Undergraduate Student Art Organization** **December 2024- February 2025**
Vice President **of the Social Justice Art Project Club at NYU** **April 2024- February 2025**
SFC Member and Student Assistant **at NYU Grey's Art Gallery** **November 2023- February 2025**
Staff Illustrator **at Washington Square News (NYU's campus newspaper)** **January 2024- February 2025**

SKILLS

Media Production: Adobe Creative Cloud, FinalCut Pro, DaVinci Resolve, AVID, Unreal, Maya, Rhino, Logic Pro, Ableton Live, Procreate, Canva
Software, Programming: Microsoft Office, Google Chrome, proficient in Mac and Windows, C, HTML, C++, JavaScript, Python, SQL
Languages: English, Spanish (writing and reading), German (elementary), French (elementary), Marwari (native language), Hindi, Marathi, Sanskrit
Music: Violin G6, Piano G7, Guitar G5, Keyboard G5, Theory of Music G8 (Trinity Exam Qualifications)