

# JULIO VINCENT GAMBUTO

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Accomplished screenwriter and filmmaker with 20+ years of professional creative work, bringing a strong foundation in screenwriting—with a focus on strong story fundamentals and growing engaging and compelling stories from the inside out.

## KEY SKILLS AND CORE COMPETENCIES

- **Screenwriting & Story Development** – Expert in narrative structure, character development, dialogue, and visual storytelling for film and television.
- **Film & Television Industry Expertise** – Deep understanding of pitching, production, distribution, promotion, and the business of screenwriting, in both studio and independent spaces.
- **Public Speaking & Communication** – Experienced speaker, lecturer, panelist, and workshop leader with a dynamic and engaging presentation style that often combines humor and heart.

## EDUCATION

- **University of Southern California, School of Cinematic Arts**, Los Angeles, CA  
Master of Fine Arts, Film and Television Production, 2015  
Instructors: Bruce Block, Pamela Douglas, Mary Lou Belli, Scott Stone  
Additional coursework in crossover program with the USC Marshall School of Business
- **Harvard University**, Cambridge, MA  
Bachelor of Arts, *cum laude*, English and American Literature and Language, 2000  
Extensive extracurricular work with the Harvard-Radcliffe Dramatic Club  
Worked part-time as a graphic designer for Harvard Student Agencies

## EXPERIENCE

### Projects In Development

- ***Mafalda*** (limited series). Writer. Historical drama. Currently in the script-writing stage. *As World War II looms, Princess Mafalda of Italy navigates political intrigue, personal sacrifice, and the rise of fascism, risking everything to stand against tyranny.*
- ***Screen Time*** (sitcom). Writer. Multi-generational multi-cam comedy. Currently pitching to television production companies. Major industry directing attachment. *A tech-obsessed preteen and his old-school grandpa are forced to live together, sparking a generational clash over screens, social skills, and real life—until they discover that family is the one connection that never loses signal.*

- ***Heartbreak Hotel*** (animated feature). Writer. A production of Kerner Entertainment (*The Smurfs*, *Clifford the Big Red Dog*). Currently pitching to animation studios. Major industry musical and voice attachments. *After his first heartbreak, a lovesick teen poet is whisked away to the magical Heartbreak Hotel, where he must mend his heart—and save the hotel’s fading magic—before everyone inside is trapped forever.*

### **Produced Screenwriting and Filmmaking Work**

(Underlined titles link to IMDb.com)

- ***Silver Fox*** (short film). Writer, director, actor, producer. A co-production of Boro Five Pictures and *The New Yorker* (New Yorker Studios/Condé Nast). Starring Dan Butler, Alec Mapa. Premiered at Out on Film, Atlanta. *Minutes before showtime, beloved stand-up comedian and ‘guncle’ Joe Fox faces his toughest crowd yet—his own family—when they discover his secret: tonight, he’s taking the stage in full drag.* (2024)
- ***Ten Shots*** (short film). Producer. A production of Boro Five Pictures. Directed by Gordon Shoemaker. Premiered at Atlanta Horror Film Festival. *A hunter in his tree stand witnesses a hostage execution and takes action, only to realize too late that he may have just saved the wrong side.* (2020)
- ***Uncle Julie’s Kids Trivia Show*** (online series). Writer, performer, producer. A co-production of Boro Five Pictures and Big Machine Films. Special Covid project for children. Fifty (50) episodes of half-hour infotainment trivia show that taught civics, on YouTube Kids. *Join Uncle Julie each day after school for a high-energy, super-fun trivia show where kids take center stage—at home—to show off what they know!* (2020)
- ***Team Marco*** (feature film). Co-writer, director, producer. An independent production of Boro Five Pictures. Premiered at the Mill Valley Film Festival. Official selection at over 50 film festivals around the world. Sold to Samuel Goldwyn Films (domestic) and Beta Films (international). Now streaming in 20+ countries. *A tech-obsessed preteen gets his first taste of real life and true friendship when his old-school Italian grandfather introduces him to bocce and challenges him to put down his devices and start playing.* (2019, 2020)
- ***Paradise Run*** (competition series). Writer and producer (consulting producer, senior producer). Production of Stone & Company Entertainment and Nickelodeon Studios. Wrote pilot and 40+ episodes, including host script, kid testimonial scripts, and narrative arcs. *A race-style game show where children race in a tropical setting while completing puzzles along the way.* (2016-2018)
- ***Actors Anonymous*** (feature film). Co-director. A production of Rabbit Bandini Studios. Based on James Franco’s novel of the same name. Premiered at the Cinequest Film Festival. *A film adaptation of James Franco’s novel “Actors Anonymous”, exploring the lives of young actors in Hollywood, from the highs to the lows, to the lies and the heartbreak.* (2017)
- ***The Julie Stories*** (short film). Writer, director. USC directing thesis film (advisor: Bruce Block). Official selection at 10+ film festivals. Premiered at Vail Film Festival. *Staten Island, 1993. When Big Julie sees an infomercial he rushes to start his own business, only to find that the American Dream is, well...kind of tough.* (2016)
- ***The Lotus Gun*** (short film). Producer. USC thesis film of director Amanda Milius. Premiered and distributed by PBS, as part of their “Film School Shorts” series. *In this post-apocalyptic Western, lovers Nora and Daphne navigate a lawless world—until they unearth a buried gun, forcing them to decide whether power is their salvation or their downfall.* (2015)
- ***Macaroni and Stars*** (short film). Writer, director. Premiered at the Don Thompson LGBTQ+ Film Festival at USC. *When Jamie and his new husband have his Italian family over, no one is safe at dinner for eight.* (2014)
- ***Master of the House*** (reality show pilot). Writer, director. A co-production of Stone & Company Entertainment and E! Entertainment Television. Concept optioned by E! and pilot produced (didn’t

go to series). *It's a glamorous upstairs-downstairs competition as 16 wanna-be one-percenters compete to see whose status will rise high or fall flat.* (2014)

- ***Behind the Lyrics*** (series). Segment writer. A production of Attention Span Media. *Rockumentary* series chronicling the struggle of singer/songwriters to survive and succeed in LaLaLand. (2006)

### **Complimentary Creative Work**

- **Short Films** – 20+ short films, in various roles, while in graduate film school, including serving as producer, first assistant director, second assistant director, cinematographer, and production coordinator. (2012-2015)
- **Theater** — Writer, actor, and producer in 10+ productions in New York City, performing primarily with Theatre Askew, one of the city's leading downtown gay theatre companies. Other highlights include: serving as actor for in-class exercises for MFA directing students at Columbia School of the Arts (Anne Bogart's class, 2005), as well as writing and performing "Julie from Staten Island"—one-man show, Theater Row, performed once monthly for two years (2008-2009).
- **Standup Comedy** — Writer and performer, honing comedic storytelling voice at the mic, performing at New York's Gotham Comedy Club, Caroline's on Broadway, Broadway Comedy Club, and at the Comedy Store and ACME Comedy Theater in Los Angeles. (2005-2009, 2023)

### **Teaching Experience**

- **Independent Instruction.** Seasonal online remote classes in screenwriting fundamentals and in intermediate screenwriting, for aspiring writers and creatives. Responsible for teaching, course design, marketing, and administration, as well as weekly office hours. Cohorts of 10-12 writers; six three-hour classes over Zoom. Seven cohorts total. (2021-present)
- **Online Master Class.** Six-hour (video) class on screenwriting fundamentals ran on CreativeLive online platform for four years. Over 1,500 students. Wrote, designed and delivered content, as well as follow-up worksheets, exercises, and downloadable resources. (2020-2023)
- **Horizon Media.** Served on the talent development faculty at large media planning agency, offering in-person workshops on story structure and storytelling for executives of all levels, entry-level to C-suite. Workshops conducted monthly in New York and Los Angeles offices. Curriculum consisted of storytelling fundamentals, as well as customized team trainings to translate story structure and film-and-television techniques into specific business strategies. (2012-2020)
- **USC Graduate Assistant.** As an MFA graduate student at USC, assisted Professor Michael Peyser, producing workshop for undergraduate film students. Responsible for course administration, assignment review, and on-set guidance. (Fall 2014)
- **USC Graduate Assistant.** As an MFA graduate student at USC, assisted Professor Leonard Maltin, as a "reader" for his CTCS-466: Theatrical Film Symposium. Responsibilities included reading and grading student film critiques, analyses, exercises. (Spring 2014)
- **Co-Founder of TAYPE,** an after-school theater program for LGBTQ+ teens in NYC. Program worked with communities of hallmark institutions like Harvey Milk High School and the Ali Forney Center, for over ten years. Taught weekly after-school theater classes. (2003)
- **Staten Island Academy.** Returned to high-school alma mater for one semester, as long-term substitute, teaching two sections of middle school English. (2002)

### **Other Work Experience**

- **Medium.com.** Weekly contributor, writing 200+ short essays for online writing platform, on modern life, society, storytelling, and politics. (2020-present)

- **Boro Five Pictures.** Created film fund for independent feature productions, raising over \$1M from a large group of private investors. Fund financed first feature film, *Team Marco*, as well as short films, *Ten Shots*, *Silver Fox*. (2017-2024)
- **Visiting Nurse Service of New York.** Head of creative services for internal communications team. Citywide workforce included nurses, rehabilitation therapists, social workers, dietitians, and other allied professionals. (2010-2011)
- **The Javin Group.** Ran independent freelance marketing communications venture, providing diverse clientele (corporate, small businesses, entrepreneurs) with marketing communications materials, brand consulting, and web development work. (2004-2010)
- **Arnold & Porter LLP.** Head marketing and business development writer, responsible for coordinating the re-write of all law firm practice and industry materials for the launch of the firm's new website and marketing collateral system. (2006-2007)
- **Time Inc.** Copywriter and assistant marketing manager for *People en Español* magazine, responsible for executing small and large-scale marketing programs for clients in five major U.S. Hispanic markets. (2002-2004)
- **Pallotta Teamworks.** Brand manager. Managed a team of 22 coaches for the 2002 AIDS Vaccine bicycle charity events, coordinating inbound and outbound call campaigns in the communications center. (2001-2002)
- **E! Networks.** Executive assistant, responsible for invoice management, tracking of the departmental budget, planning and execution of company-wide events, creation of various presentations. (2000-2001)

## PUBLICATIONS

### Books

- *Please Unsubscribe, Thanks! - How to take back our time, attention, and purpose in a relentless world.* Avid Reader Press / Simon & Schuster, 2023, 2024. Now available in hardcover, paperback, ebook, audiobook. Published in English, Italian (Newton Compton Editori), French (JC Lattès), Portuguese, Turkish. Self-help, where “self-help meets the system.” 352 pages.
- *Freelance Heaven - 100 Ways to make freelance life easier and avoid freelance hell.* Self-published, 2016. Available in digital formats. Business. 96 pages.
- *You Are My Favorite Thing.* Tragicomic memoir currently in development. 250 pages.

### Excerpts

- *Please Unsubscribe, Thanks!* Excerpt published in *Talkhouse*, August 2023.
- *Please Unsubscribe, Thanks!* Excerpt published as *Medium* Staff Pick, August 2023.

### (Select) Essays

- “Prepare for the Ultimate Gaslighting.” *Medium, Forge*, April 2020, [medium.com](https://medium.com). (Viral essay series, reaching over 21M readers in 98 countries; reprinted in various publications, including multiple NPR outlets — WBUR, WDET, KRWG.)
- “27 Lessons Learned in 27 Years of Being Out.” *Medium, Human Parts*, June 2024, [medium.com](https://medium.com). (Updated and re-published each June.)
- “A Poem for 9/11.” *Medium, Human Parts*, September 2021, [medium.com](https://medium.com). (Re-published each September.)
- Over 200 short essays for Medium.com, [available here](#).

### **Book Chapters**

- “Los Angeles.” In *Let's Go California 2000*, edited by Sarah Knight. Let's Go, Inc./Harvard Student Agencies, Cambridge, MA, 2000.

### **Mentions in Published Work**

- Burkeman, Oliver. *Four Thousand Weeks*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2021. (Discussion of “Prepare for the Ultimate Gaslighting” in Chapter 13, “Cosmic Insignificance Theory.”)
- Julia Heim, Sole Anatrone. *Spaghetti Sissies: Queering Italian American Media*. Springer International Publishing, 2023. (Featured in Chapter 13, titled “Spotlight: Julio 'Giulio' Vincent Gambuto,” pages 225 to 228.)

### **(Select) Press**

- DuLong, Jessica. “Unsubscribe from everything to start controlling the tech in your life.” *CNN.com*, January 31, 2024, [www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com).
- Bugbee, Teo. “Team Marco Review: Bocce Will Save Our Youth.” *The New York Times*, November 19, 2020, [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com).
- Swinson, Brock. “Persistence And Constant Reinvention Are The Keys To Success.” *Creative Screenwriting*, December 22, 2018, [www.creativescreenwriting.com](http://www.creativescreenwriting.com).
- Additional press links [available here](#).

## **SPEAKING AND CONFERENCES**

- SXSW 2025, speaker, culture track, “Please Unsubscribe, Thanks!” 60min. (March 2025)
- *Medium*, Medium Day online conference, instructor, “Creating a Winning Book Proposal.” (Fall 2024)
- *Medium*, Medium Day online conference, panelist, “From Blog to Book.” (Fall 2023)
- USC School of Cinematic Arts, speaker/guest lecturer (for Sandrine Cassidy, Senior Director of Festivals, Distribution, and Talent Development), “Unsubscribing to Make Better Films.” 1hr. (Spring 2023)
- Sundance Film Festival, Syracuse University panelist, “Power of Family Films.” (Winter 2021)
- *Medium*, Medium Writers Challenge, contest judge, featuring judges Natalie Portman, Roxane Gay, Saeed Jones, Susan Orlean, et al. (2021)
- California Film Institute, Mill Valley Film Festival, panelist, speaker, 10+ local school visits. (November 2019)
- Wagner College, Film and Media Studies Program, guest lecturer (for Nelson Kim, associate professor), “Story Fundamentals.” 2hrs. (Spring 2019)
- Staten Island Academy, alumni commencement speaker. (2015)
- Ongoing private corporate engagements, speaking on the power of storytelling and story structure. Clients have included Live Nation, Scout Sports Marketing, Crimson Capital, American Association of Advertising Agencies. (2012-2020)

## **HONORS AND AWARDS**

### **Project Awards**

- *Please Unsubscribe, Thanks!* Audie Awards, Finalist, Best Audiobook (Personal Development category, up against Michelle Obama, Sheryl Lee Ralph), Audio Publishers Association. (2024)
- *Please Unsubscribe, Thanks!* Axiom Business Book Awards, Gold Medal Winner, Best Book on Work-Life Balance. (2024)
- *Please Unsubscribe, Thanks!* Selected as the Barnes & Noble non-fiction “Pick of the Month.” (August 2024)
- *Ten Shots*. Best Horror Short, Rhode Island International Film Festival. Best Thriller Short, Atlanta Horror Film Festival. (2020)
- *Team Marco*. Winner of Best Feature and the Audience Award (in the Family section), Mill Valley Film Festival. (November 2019)
- *Team Marco*. Best Film, Omladinski Film Festival Sarajevo. (2020)
- *Team Marco*. Child’s Jury Prize, KINEKO International Children's Film Festival. (2022)
- *Paradise Run*. Nominated for Best Reality Show, Kids’ Choice Awards. (2017)
- *The Julie Stories*. Winner, Gold Circle Award, Caucus Foundation for Producers, Writers, Directors. (2017)
- *The Julie Stories*. Best Comedy Short, Atlanta Shortsfest. (2017)
- *The Julie Stories*. Finalist for Jury Prize, First Look Film Festival. (2016)
- *The Julie Stories*. Grant award winner, New Filmmaker Grant, Panavision. (2016)
- *Macaroni and Stars*. Best Short Film, Don Thompson LGBTQ+ Film Festival at USC. (2014)
- *Behind the Lyrics*. Show was winner of a Los Angeles Area Emmy Award from the Television Academy. (2006)

### **Academic Awards and Grants**

- Annenberg Fellowship, USC School of Cinematic Arts. (2013-2015)
- Harold C. Lloyd Foundation Scholarship, USC School of Cinematic Arts. (2012)
- Joseph Drown/Tania Trepanier Foundation Endowed Award, USC School of Cinematic Arts. (2012)
- Caroline Isenberg Prize for contributions to the performing arts, Harvard University. (2000)
- Harvard Faculty Grant. (1996-2000)

## **PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY**

### **Memberships**

- Film Independent
- Freelancers Union
- Writers Guild of America West (pending)
- USC Alumni Association
- Harvard Alumni Association (HAA)
- Harvardwood
- Staten Island Academy Alumni Association

### **Boards and Committees**

- Staten Island Academy Board of Trustees, member (2018-2021), vice president (2021-2022)
- Theatre Askew Board of Directors, member (2003-2011)

- Harvard Schools Committee for New York City, member (2002-2004)

## PERSONAL LIFE AND INTERESTS

- Son of a New York City school bus driver
- Large Italian family from the boroughs of New York City, dedicated uncle of six
- Gay and married to an accountant who immigrated to the U.S. from the Balkans
- Lover of all things graphic, typefaces, vintage posters
- Avid reader of historical non-fiction and personal development
- Former recreational cyclist, rode the European AIDS Vaccine Ride (2002)
- Speaks basic Spanish and French, as well as embarrassing Serbian
- Cancer survivor

## REFERENCES

### **Scott Stone**

Producer, Stone & Company Entertainment  
 Adjunct Professor, USC School of Cinematic Arts  
 Email: [sstone@stonetv.com](mailto:sstone@stonetv.com)  
 Website: <https://www.stonetv.com/>  
 Phone: (323) 497-1900

*Julio took Scott Stone's unscripted television class at USC, then worked for Scott Stone after graduate school on Paradise Run for Nickelodeon.*

### **Bruce Block, MFA**

Eisenstein Endowed Chair in Cinematic Design  
 USC School of Cinematic Arts  
 Email: [bab@usc.edu](mailto:bab@usc.edu)  
 Website: <http://www.bruceblock.com>  
*Professor Block was Julio's thesis advisor at USC.*

### **Rich Johnson**

SVP, Transformation and Strategic Initiatives Communications Leader  
 Marsh McLennan  
 Email: [richardejohnson@verizon.net](mailto:richardejohnson@verizon.net)  
 Phone: (201) 563-5842  
*Rich Johnson hired and oversaw Julio's teaching work at Horizon Media.*