

# Main Course Films takes Apple Immersive Video projects to AFTRS for groundbreaking viewing event

Sean Slatter · Film News Professional Development · May 20, 2026



The Apple Immersive session at AFTRS.

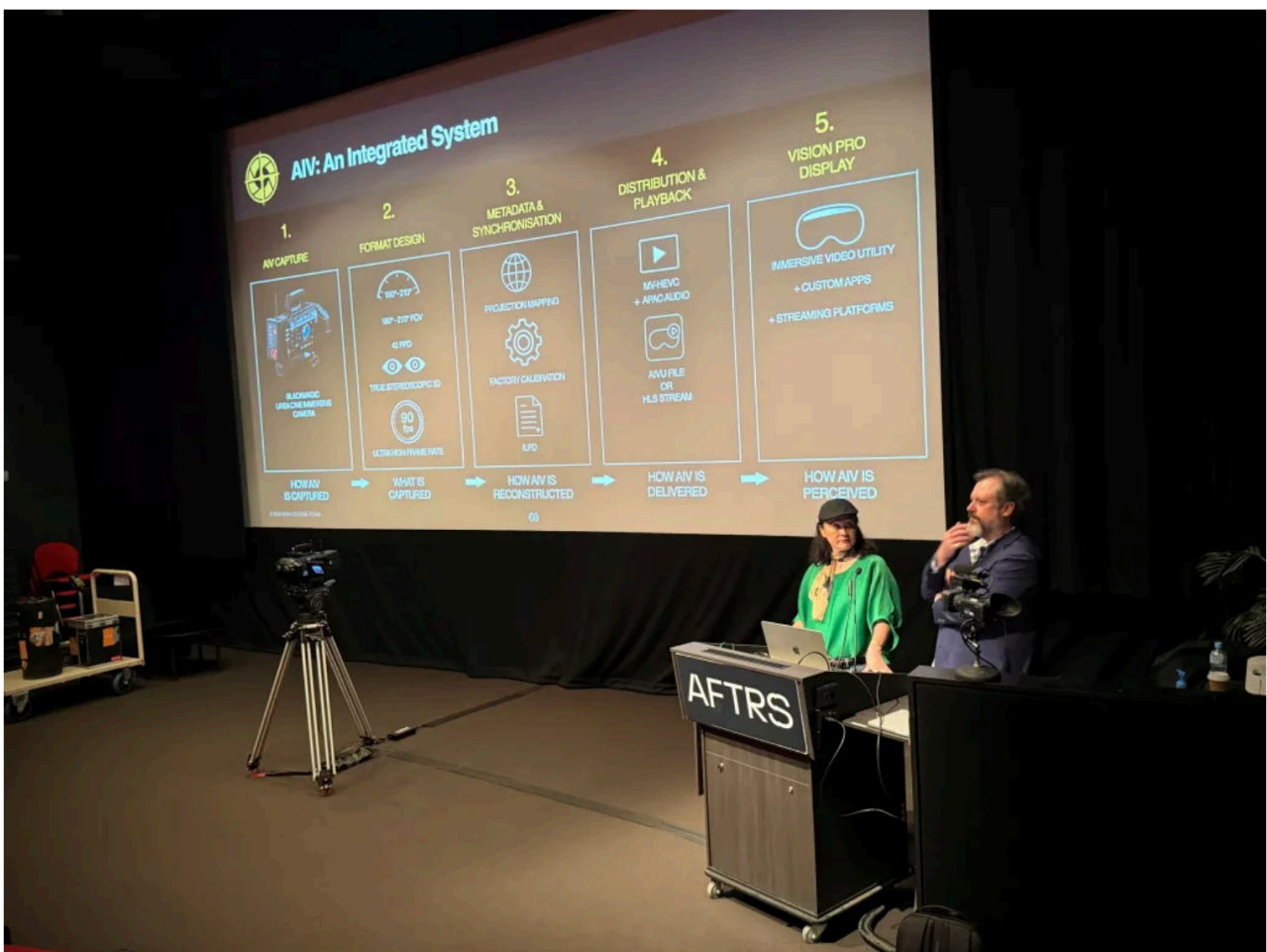
Last year, French audiences were invited to experience Bastille Day like never before as part of an Apple Immersive Video project, which followed the country's president, Emmanuel Macron, from the Élysée Palace to the military parade on the Champs-Élysées.

Two full days of screenings were held for the film, produced by Parisian studio Immersive Flashback, using 15 Apple Vision Pro headsets, believed to be the largest viewing event with the technology.

That was until Monday at AFTRS, where 20 headsets were distributed among first-year Master's students as part of a demonstration from Main Course Films' Ben Allan and Clara Chong.

Allan and Chong walked the students through their journey into immersive filmmaking before the cohort experienced the Vision Pro firsthand, watching both of Main Course Films' completed Apple Immersive Video productions, *Thé Fine Dining Bakery* and *The Dobos Connection*.

Both projects were written, directed, and edited by Chong, with Allan serving as producer, cinematographer, and colorist. They were post-produced using the Apple Immersive tools in Blackmagic Design's DaVinci Resolve Studio, including full immersive sound design using Apple Spatial Audio Format (ASAF) capabilities in the Fairlight digital audio workstation.



Clara Chong and Ben Allan at AFTRS on Monday.

*The Fine Dining Bakery* follows Christopher Thé – inventor of the strawberry-watermelon cake, widely regarded as the most Instagrammed cake in the world – and his new Stanmore cafe-bakery, where he works with Australian native ingredients. Shot on Blackmagic’s URSA Cine Immersive, the film was built around authenticity and real spaces, using Apple Immersive Video to “amplify truth and engagement”, according to Allan.

*The Dobos Connection*, produced in collaboration with Sydney University’s Motus Lab, centres on a professor whose unexpected breakup leads to a serendipitous encounter with a colleague over a shared Dobos cake. Chong said the film, the world’s first independently produced immersive drama shot entirely on URSA Cine Immersive and fully finished in Apple Immersive, was designed around presence and emotion.

“It’s a quiet romance, and we wanted to plan sequences for shots to create out points and edit options, so that would maximise the authenticity of performance and emotional intimacy,” she said.

Following the lecture, the cohort split into two groups for a Q&A and screening before joining together for a final round of questions. Allan and Chong estimated around 70 per cent of questions were creatively driven, touching on storytelling, scriptwriting, performance, production design, directing, and the unique rhythms of editing and sound design in AIV, with the remaining 30 per cent covering more technical ground, including ambisonics, colour grading, the differences between Dolby Atmos and ASAF, and crew roles in a format that requires no focus pulling.

Broader conversations ranged from the parallels between AIV and IMAX to the ethics of a format so physiologically immersive, the business model for indie filmmakers, and the infinite dramatic potential of a medium that places the viewer inside the story.

Allan said the journey of AIV was not dissimilar to that of IMAX, which had its highest grossing year ever in 2025, earning \$US1.28 billion, and is guided to generate \$US1.4 billion in global box office for 2026, driven by a slate that includes Christopher Nolan’s *The Odyssey*, *Dune: Part Three*, and *The Mandalorian and Grogu*.



The Apple Vision Pro headsets.

“IMAX has proven that audiences will pay for large-scale cinematic immersion theaters, and we’ve come to realize that AIV is to streaming what IMAX is to cinema.”

Chong said the parallels extended to the technical aspects of filmmaking.

“AIV filmmaking is challenging and requires so many different ways of thinking, but these challenges aren’t new, and it kind of echoes IMAX’s technological journey,” she said.

“IMAX film was predominantly expensive, and cameras, until very recently, were far too noisy to record dialogue on set. They were incredibly difficult to make films with, but I think this difficulty was also part of its prestige. In the same way, the challenges of AIV are in delivering both the quality and the professional prestige that make it distinct from any other format.”

MA Sound lecturer Mark Ward, who coordinates the Research and Development subject, said the session had been an exceptional opportunity for students to engage with the format firsthand.

“Apple Immersive Video is something you have to experience, you can’t just read about it,” he said.

“Clara Chong and Ben Allan, together with the support of Apple’s team of facilitators, guided our students surely and deftly from traditional into immersive filmmaking, and shared their thoughts and experience in creating their short documentary and short drama.”

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