

LYDIA SESTAK

Los Angeles, CA | Director/Cinematographer | Willing to Travel

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Director and cinematographer experienced in short films, music videos, and corporate productions. Skilled in camera operation, on-set coordination, and creative visual storytelling. Proficient with Sony, Blackmagic, and RED camera systems, with a strong record of leadership and collaboration.

CREW EXPERIENCE

2ND CAMERA OPERATOR/DRONE OPERATOR/SCRIPT CONSULTANT — “the noise beneath” (Feature Film)

Jun 2025 — Dec 2025 | Gastonia, NC

- Operated the Sony FX3 to capture cinematic visuals aligned with the film's emotional tone and visual style.
- Collaborated with the cinematographer to ensure consistency in lighting, framing, and movement across multiple locations.
- As Drone Operator, used DJI Mavic Mini 2, Mini 3, and Mavic Pro systems under FAA Part 107 certification to capture smooth tracking shots and aerial sequences that elevated production scale and atmosphere.
- Contributed as Script Consultant during pre-production and filming, advising on dialogue flow, pacing, and visual storytelling to enhance continuity and character development.

SWING (GRIP/ELECTRIC) — “Joseph Shabason & Thom Gill - Fire on the Ridge” (Music Video)

Sept 2025 | Mount Holly, NC

Collaborated with the Grip and Electric teams to execute creative lighting and rigging setups, supporting the DP's visual goals while maintaining a fast, efficient, and safe production environment.

DIRECTOR & DP — “Silhouettes and Spirits” (Branded Content)

Jul 2025 | Charlotte, NC

Directed and shot “Silhouettes & Spirits,” a cinematic short film series capturing the artistry and rhythm of cocktail creation, using a Sony A7R camera and an EdelKrone SliderONE for dynamic, cinematic motion shots.

CINEMATOGRAPHER — “Bienvenue au Défilé Noir” (Short Film)

Dec 2024 | Charlotte, NC

Shot on Sony A7R with a versatile lens kit (18mm probe, 24mm, 35mm) to achieve dynamic, cinematic visuals. Managed lighting and camera movement while maintaining consistent creative communication with director and post-production team.

CAMERA OPERATOR — “The King’s Gambit” | Tingamajig Media

Apr 2024 | Charlotte, NC

Executed visual composition using Sony FS5 based on a detailed shot list. Captured footage that contributed to five successful episodes and ensured seamless handoff to editors.

PRODUCER — “Twelve” / “In The Stillness” (Short Film)

Apr 2024 — Mar 2024 | Charlotte, NC

Developed shot lists, schedules, and on-set operations. Coordinated communication between director, cast, and crew to maintain an efficient workflow and positive production environment.

1ST AC & PA — Various Music Videos | Jessenia Mills

Apr 2021 — Dec 2021 | Greensboro, NC

Assisted camera department on multiple shoots using the Blackmagic Pocket 4K. Managed rig setup, battery swaps, SD card management, and troubleshooting technical issues during production.

STAFF EXPERIENCE

MASTER CONTROL OPERATOR & BROADCAST ENGINEER — TEGNA

Aug 2022 — Present | Charlotte, NC

Supported master control operations for 60+ stations nationwide (NBC, ABC, FOX, CW, CBS), ensuring seamless 24/7 broadcast delivery. Coordinated live and local events including the Super Bowl, award shows, and breaking news. Provided on-call technical support and led the rollout of Harmonic, Evertz, and Crispin automation systems to reduce downtime and revenue loss.

CINEMATOGRAPHER & PRODUCTION COORDINATOR — Captivate Media

May 2021 — Jul 2022 | High Point, NC

Shot and coordinated high-quality corporate interviews and B-roll under tight deadlines. Collaborated with producers to determine shoot logistics, ensuring alignment between creative vision and execution.

SKILLS & EQUIPMENT

Cameras: Sony FS5, A7R, FX3, Blackmagic Pocket 4K, RED, DJI Drones

Camera Support & Motion Equipment: EdelKrone SliderONE, gimbals, tripods, stabilizers

Lighting & Grip: LED panels, softboxes, practical lighting, on-set rigging

Post-Production: DaVinci Resolve, Adobe Premiere Pro, After Effects, Photoshop

Production Skills: Cinematography, Camera Operation, On-Set Coordination, Shot Listing, Directing Talent

Technical: Audio Setup, Cable Fabrication (CAT6/BNC), File Management

Certifications: FAA Part 107 Licensed Drone Pilot

Languages: English (Fluent), French (Proficient)