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**VISUAL STUDIES WORKSHOP ANNOUNCES SPRING WORKSHOPS**  
*–Game Jams & Handmade Film Workshops at 36 King Street –*



Rochester, NY (February 18, 2026) Visual Studies Workshop (VSW), the nonprofit arts organization dedicated to experimental and expansive approaches to photography and media arts, will host a variety of workshops and game jams this spring, February to May, 2026.

A game jam is an event in which artists, makers, poets, and storytellers make a video game entirely from scratch, in one sitting. VSW will offer three different game jams centering different game creation tools including Flickgame, Ren'Py, and Bitsy.

In addition, VSW will also host a Handmade Film Workshop on Tuesdays throughout April. Handmade Film uses “found” 16mm film and 35mm slides to create new works of art that are projected in their original format.

These workshop series will culminate on May 1, with a showcase of the films and games created by participants.

Dates and details below.

## 2026 VSW SPRING WORKSHOPS

### [Game Jam #1: Flickgame](#)

Saturday, Feb 21, 1-5pm

A game jam is an event in which artists, makers, poets, and storytellers make a video game entirely from scratch, in one sitting. The game jam series will culminate in an in-person pop-up arcade of games made during the series, which will take place at VSW in May. The first tool featured in the series is Flickgame, an easy-to-use, intuitive game engine for making small, doodle-based narratives, designed by London-based freeware games artist Increate. Flickgame is the perfect way to get started making games and digital art.

Workshop facilitator: Nilson Carroll, VSW Assistant Curator

[\\$10 donation; No experience needed](#)

### [Game Jam #2: Ren'Py](#)

Saturday, March 21, 1-5pm

A game jam is an event in which artists, makers, poets, and storytellers make a video game entirely from scratch, in one sitting. The second tool featured in the Gamejam series is **Ren'Py**, an open source, beginner-friendly game engine for making narrative games using text, images, and sound. Through a simple scripting language, artists and storytellers can create both small and complex interactive narratives, poems, or worlds.

Workshop facilitator: Nilson Carroll, VSW Assistant Curator

[\\$10 donation; recommended for those with beginner experience level \(basic computer skills\)](#)

### [Handmade Film Workshop](#)

Tuesdays in April, 6-8pm (April 7, 14, 21, 28)

Create a 16mm film without using a camera! Participants will create a unique visual experience to be seen at 24 frames per second. They will work directly on film with drawing, painting, scratching, and dyeing techniques, and experiment with incorporating found footage to create a true collage of sound, image, and texture. Participants will focus on producing film loops and collaged 35mm slides towards a public projection event on Friday, May 1.

Workshop facilitator: Mary Lewandowski, VSW Collections Manager

[\\$100/ \\$80 for VSW Members. Materials provided.](#)

### [Game Jam #3: Bitsy](#)

Saturday, April 18, 1-5pm

A game jam is an event in which artists, makers, poets, and storytellers make a video game entirely from scratch, in one sitting. The final tool featured in this series is Bitsy, an approachable, DIY tool for making small, lo-fi, 2D worlds to explore and interact with, designed by artist Adam le Doux. Bitsy is perfect for makers who want to further experiment with text, image, and

interaction.

Workshop facilitator: Nilson Carroll, VSW Assistant Curator

[\\$10 donation; recommended for those with beginner experience level \(basic computer skills\)](#)

### **Game Jam and Handmade Film Workshop Showcase**

Friday, May 1, First Friday, 6-9pm

Throughout the spring, VSW will host a Handmade Film workshop as well as three in-person game jams centered around various free and accessible game-making tools (Flickgame, RenPy, and Bitsy). The jams are an inclusive way for local and regional game makers, artists, storytellers, and hobbyists of all ages and skill levels to meet up, support each other, and encourage the creative process. This pop-up arcade is a showcase of artists' games made during these meet-ups for the public to play and engage with. Along with the arcade, VSW will project the 16mm films and 35mm slides made by students in the Handmade Film workshop. Free and open to the public.

***About Visual Studies Workshop:*** Visual Studies Workshop nurtures experimental and expansive approaches to photography and media arts and builds community among artists and the public through exhibitions, publications, and residencies. VSW was founded in 1969 in Rochester, NY by photographer, educator, and curator Nathan Lyons (1930–2016), and became one of the earliest independent, not-for-profit, artist-run spaces in the country. More than 50 years later, the organization's mission is reflected in its core programs: VSW Exhibitions and Salon events, Project Space Artist Residencies, and VSW Press. In support of VSW programs, the organization holds substantial photography and moving image research collections and an art library for artists, critics, and the general public to explore, research, and reuse. [vsw.org](http://vsw.org)

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