

**SPEECH BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF
MEDIA, ARTS AND COMMUNICATION (UniMAC). PROF. ERIC
OPOKU MENSAH AT THE INSTITUTE OF FILM AND
TELEVISION'S (IFT) 2025 OPEN DAY**

Theme: *Reel Connections*

The Pro Vice-Chancellor

The Rector of IFT and Rectors of IJ and IL

Directors and Deans of UniMAC Present

Esteemed Industry Partners

Faculty and Staff

Proud Parents

Talented Students

Film Lovers and Creative Enthusiasts, and most importantly—our future storytellers from Senior High Schools across Ghana

Distinguished Guests, Good morning.

Welcome to the Institute of Film and Television of the University of Media, Arts and Communication UniMAC-IFT, the *true* home of cinematic education in Ghana and the creative powerhouse of Africa.

UniMAC-IFT is part of the larger University which has two other Institutes, namely: the Institute of Journalism (UniMAC-IJ) and the Institute of Languages (UniMAC-IL). Together with UniMAC-IFT we make up UniMAC, a specialised university set up by the Government by an Act of Parliament, Act (1059) to advance media, communication and arts education in Ghana and beyond.

So, as UniMAC-IFT opens its doors, hearts, and dreams to you, remember that it is the entire university-UniMAC, that is saying akwaaba, because we are one and unique.

I am proud of UniMAC-IFT and its rich history, a specialised Institute dedicated to shaping the future of film, television, animation, graphics, sound production, photography, digital arts, and the magic of storytelling in motion.

For decades, IFT has been the foremost institution of film and cinematic training in our nation and increasingly across the continent.

We are proud not only of because we are the pioneers, but remaining pioneers and evolving with technology. Today, we are leading the creative revolution, and nurturing filmmakers and storytellers who speak to local and global audiences with authenticity and artistic power.

Ladies and gentlemen, this year's theme, "Reel Connections" is both profound and timely, because:

Film is not merely entertainment, it is life;

Cinema is not merely pictures that move; it is interconnectedness.

Content is not merely screens that glow; it is a carefully crafted communication to effect change.

Behind every frame is a life; and every edit, is a poignant piece of message.

And, behind every production is a connection that connects heart to heart, culture to culture, people to people and Ghana to the world.

Ladies and gentlemen, in this digital era, *Reel Connections* reminds us that film and media bind us together. They broaden our imagination, document our

struggles and triumphs and amplify our voices as a people, and connect our stories to the global stage.

At UniMAC, and IFT specifically, we are not just teaching our students the how to, such as operating cameras, lights, or software. We are teaching them the why also, so they can touch minds and move hearts. We are shaping communication, media and creatives with conscience and emotions. We are raising storytellers who will not just watch the future but will create it. This to me, is the power of Reel Connections!

Here at UniMAC-IFT, we stand on institutional legitimacy, we deliver world-class training, and we proudly uphold the integrity of creative arts education in Ghana. We do not imitate; we originate. We innovate and elevate!

Today, as you explore our studios, witness our students' creative works, and engage with our faculty and alumni who are already industry champions — I urge you: let this experience inspire you.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, just yesterday, Thursday, 13th November 2025, the Minister for Finance, Hon. Dr. Cassiel Ato Forson, delivered the 2026 Budget Statement, and for us in the creative arts ecosystem, it was refreshing and inspiring.

The Minister affirmed that:

“Tourism and the creative arts continue to drive national identity, youth creativity and foreign exchange earnings.”

Government will establish a Film Fund to revive the film industry and all film associations.

A Creative Arts Fund will be established for the arts, music, fashion, food, and related sectors and to this effect, a GH¢20 million to it and another GH¢20 million has been allocated to the Creative Arts Sector.

This, undoubtedly, marks a bold affirmation of Government's recognition of the sector's importance, and we commend the Minister for this forward-looking vision.

But Ladies and Gentlemen, if Ghana is truly committed to repositioning the creative economy, then the training hub, the engine room, the place where the storytellers, cinematographers, producers, animators, editors, sound engineers, and creative leaders are formed—MUST be strengthened.

And that place, without any contradiction, is UniMAC-IFT we humbly appeal to the government to send some of these allocations to IFT's way to revamp the creative arts education.

As we celebrate this Open Day, I wish to make a strong, heartfelt, and strategic appeal to the Government—particularly to the Hon. Minister for Tourism, Culture and Creative Arts: It is time to allocate substantial and sustained funding to UniMAC-IFT.

IFT is not just another school; It is the hope of Ghana's creative future.

IFT has trained and continues to train many of the industry's leading voices, innovators, award-winning filmmakers, and media professionals, many of them have been celebrated in Africa and on the world's stage.

Yet, Distinguished Guests, IFT currently operates from a rented facility.

A national strategic institution cannot remain in rented premises while it trains the labour force for a sector government seeks to expand, modernize, and use to drive the national identity agenda.

If government seeks to reset the creative economy, then:

✓ UniMAC-IFT must be at the very centre of that reset.

✓ IFT must be seen as a critical national asset, not a peripheral institution.

✓ IFT deserves a permanent, modern, well-equipped campus.

✓ IFT needs investment in retooling, studios, digital labs, sound stages and production infrastructure.

A Film Fund without a strong Film School will yield only half its potential.

A Creative Arts Fund without investment in the training institution that supply the human capital will not reach its full impact.

Therefore, on behalf of the UniMAC leadership, our faculty, our students, and the entire creative community, I respectfully appeal:

Let IFT be prioritized.

Let IFT be resourced.

Let IFT be anchored as the national hub for the creative economy.

- We are ready.
- We are prepared.
- We are positioned.

We only need Government to match our readiness with the needed investment

To our high school visitors — many of you will soon face important choices. Choose a place that will take your talents seriously. Choose a place where your creativity will not be tamed but transformed. Choose a place where your dreams will be given the tools to fly. And that place is UniMAC-IFT.

Whether your passion is film, digital media, directing, scriptwriting, animation, sound design, acting, production management, creative advertising or graphics — UniMAC has the programme for you. We are ready to welcome you into a future where creativity meets opportunity.

Let us continue to build *reel connections*, connections that tell our stories, connections that preserve our culture, connections that project Ghanaian and African excellence to the world.

As I prepare to take my seat, let us always remember that, UniMAC-IFT is the only specialised public tertiary institution focused entirely on film, media, arts, and creative communication in Ghana. So, in choosing a tertiary institution, chose UniMAC as it is accredited. Don not be dazzled by the gleaming unaccredited institutions, popping up — presenting themselves as alternatives, because:

Greatness requires roots and a history of achievements;

Excellence requires structures and dedicated faculty and alumni;

And, professionalism requires standards and accreditations.

Thank you for your attention and may this Open Day inspire decisions that will shape futures for the better.

God bless UniMAC,

God bless UniMAC-IFT,

God bless our creative industries,

And, God bless our beloved nation Ghana,

Thank you.