

INTENSIVE SCREENWRITING WORKSHOP

THE SYLLABUS: 5-WEEKS OF EMPOWERING TOOLS
FOR YOU & YOUR WRITING PROCESS

WEEK 1

STORIES THAT RESONATE & EMBRACING THEME: WRITING POWERFUL HUMAN TRUTHS INTO YOUR SCRIPT

WHAT TO WATCH TO PREP FOR THIS CLASS

LOVECRAFT COUNTRY (PILOT)
LA LA LAND

TOPICS WE WILL COVER

- + SETTING UP YOUR NARRATIVE BY UTILIZING THE COLD OPEN
- + FOUNDATIONS OF SCENE STRUCTURE (FOR ANY SCRIPT)
- + FOUNDATIONS OF "BIG PICTURE" STORY STRUCTURE (FOR FEATURES & TV)
- + OUTLINING WITH "A DRAMATIC QUESTION" IN MIND
- + DEFINING THE THEME OF A STORY OR SCRIPT
- + HUMAN TRUTHS YOU WANT TO EXPLORE IN YOUR STORIES
- + WRITING EXPOSITION SCENES THAT ARE SMOOTH AND HARD TO SPOT
- + HOW TO DEEPEN A STORY WITH CHARACTER HISTORY
- + THE CHALLENGES OF A CONCEPT-HEAVY FILM
- + HOW WANT VS. NEED MAKES FOR STRONG STORIES
- + CULTIVATING A SUSTAINABLE WRITING PROCESS
- + HOW TO DECIDE WHICH STORIES YOU WANT TO TELL FIRST

WEEK 2

THE POWER OF WRITING WITH AUTHENTICITY: PERSONAL FREEDOM & NEW MARKET DEMANDS

WHAT TO WATCH TO PREP FOR THIS CLASS

FLEABAG (PILOT)
I MAY DESTROY YOU (PILOT)
CRAZY EX GIRLFRIEND (PILOT)
INSECURE (PILOT)
BARRY (PILOT)

TOPICS WE WILL COVER

- + POSITIVE AND RECENT SHIFTS IN THE INDUSTRY
- + EMBRACING A STORY THAT IS UNIQUELY YOURS
- + HOW TO OUTLINE & STRUCTURE A PILOT EPISODE
- + HOW TO OUTLINE & STRUCTURE A SEASON OF TV
- + WHY SPECIFICS IN SCRIPTS MATTER SO MUCH
- + NETWORKING WITH WRITERS ON TWITTER
- + WHY AND HOW TO START FILMING SOMETHING TODAY
- + FINDING INSPIRING CREATIVES TO COLLABORATE WITH
- + THE IMPORTANCE OF NETWORKING SIDEWAYS NOT UPWARDS

WEEK 3

**COMEDY, CONTRAST, & CHARACTER:
TELLING THE TRUTH AND MAKING PEOPLE LAUGH**

WHAT TO WATCH TO PREP FOR THIS CLASS

PARASITE

JUMANJI: WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE

“LARITZA SURVIVES A CUBAN SANGIVING” YOUTUBE SHORT BY JENNY LORENZO

TOPICS WE WILL COVER

- + HOW WRITING CONTRAST INTO A SCENE ADDS HUMOR
- + HOW SHOWING CONTRAST IN CHARACTERS OVER TIME (ACT 1 VS. ACT 3) MAKES FOR AN EMOTIONALLY ENGAGING STORY
- + CHARACTER WANT VS. NEED IN COMEDIC STORIES
- + WHEN TO FOCUS ON COMEDY IN A FIRST DRAFT
- + THE IMPORTANCE OF CASTING FOR CHEMISTRY
- + HOW TO ALLOW FOR COMEDY (AND IMPROV GOLD) WHILE FILMING ON SET
- + WHY COMEDY WRITERS ARE ALSO GREAT DRAMA WRITERS
- + REVISING YOUR STORY FOR THEME & FOR MOMENTS OF COMEDY
- + HOW TO BALANCE A COMEDIC TONE WITH A DRAMATIC ONE

WEEK 4

**WRITING SCRIPTS WITH STRUCTURE AND FREEDOM:
DEEP DIVE INTO PILOTS & A/B/C STORYTELLING**

WHAT TO WATCH TO PREP FOR THIS CLASS

SEX EDUCATION (PILOT & FIRST SEASON - IF YOU HAVE TIME)

BLACKISH (PILOT)

GREY'S ANATOMY (PILOT)

TOPICS WE WILL COVER

- + A,B,C (AND SOMETIMES D) STRUCTURE FOR TV EPISODES
- + HOW TO DECIDE IF YOUR PILOT IS 30-MINUTES OR 60-MINUTES
- + COMBINING THE BEST OF PROCEDURAL & SERIAL TV FOR A FUN SHOW
- + THE POWER OF A SIMPLE & CLEAR PREMISE THAT “HOOKS” IN TV
- + HOW THE ROMANTIC COMEDY HAS EVOLVED
- + INSIGHTS TO KNOW ABOUT THE MAKING OF AND SUCCESS OF “TO ALL THE BOYS I LOVED BEFORE” (ON NETFLIX)
- + THE IMPORTANCE OF WRITING WHAT DELIGHTS YOU (FOR YOUR PROCESS AND YOUR CAREER)

WEEK 5

**WORLD-BUILDING & THE BEAUTY OF ESCAPISM:
CHARACTER-DRIVEN STORIES FOR ANY GENRE**WHAT TO WATCH TO PREP FOR THIS CLASS

WATCHMEN (PILOT & FIRST SEASON - IF YOU HAVE TIME)

TOPICS WE WILL COVER

- + **Q&A WITH A SPECIAL GUEST: A TV/FILM SCREENWRITING PROFESSIONAL**
- + TIPS FROM CURRENTLY WORKING TV WRITERS
- + WHAT GETS A PILOT NOTICED
- + THE POWER OF A WRITERS ROOM & COLLABORATION
- + WHY SPECIFICS IN FANTASY, SCI-FI ARE ESSENTIAL
- + WRITING AS IF YOUR FICTIONAL WORLD IS A THIRD CHARACTER
- + EMBRACING SECONDARY CHARACTERS AS MAIN CHARACTERS IN TV
- + ADAPTING STORIES FROM SOURCE MATERIAL (BOOKS, COMICS, REAL LIFE)
- + HOW AND WHEN TO ESTABLISH THE RULES OF YOUR WORLD
- + STORY ARCS FOR FANTASY AND SCI-FI GENRES
- + WHEN TO BREAK STORYTELLING RULES AND WHY IT'S IMPORTANT (NOT JUST FOR YOU, BUT FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF TV & FILM)

WRITING ASSIGNMENT: TO TURN IN BEFORE THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS

THE “FIRST 15 PAGES” ASSIGNMENT

WRITE THE FIRST FIFTEEN PAGES OF A LARGER STORY (FEATURE OR TV PILOT) IN SCRIPT FORMAT.

THIS WILL BE THE STARTING POINT FOR YOUR JOURNEY AS A WRITER IN THIS WORKSHOP. PLEASE TURN IN 12 HOURS BEFORE YOUR FIRST WORKSHOP SESSION.

WRITING PROCESS TIPS TO TRY:

- + BRAINSTORM IDEAS FOR “THE TV SHOW OR MOVIE YOU WOULD LOVE TO WATCH.”
- + ENJOY WATCHING THE SCENES IN YOUR HEAD BEFORE WRITING ANYTHING DOWN.
- + ONCE YOU GO TO PAGES, ASSIGN YOURSELF TO WRITE A BAD SCENE.
- + BRAINSTORM AND WRITE IDEAS BY HAND BEFORE YOU BEGIN TO TYPE.
- + COME FROM A PLACE OF FREEDOM, PERMISSION, AND HONESTY.
- + NOW EVEN MORE HONESTY (AM I ALLOWED TO TYPE THAT?).
- + TAKE BREAKS, LISTEN TO MUSIC, HAVE FUN (THIS IS YOUR WRITING PROCESS).

SCREENWRITING SOFTWARE OPTIONS:

CELTX (FREE), WRITERDUET (FREE), HIGHLAND 2 (FREE), FINAL DRAFT
