

2065-373

## **Fiction Workshop I and II**

class meetings: Thursdays, 1:15 - 5:00 pm

Spring 2000

RIT School of Film and Animation

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Course Objective: The purpose of this class is simply for you to produce the best possible short fictional work possible in film or video, or a script of a film.

The narrative may be developed traditionally or be told in an experimental manner.

A CALENDAR of the required "targeted" dates accompanies this syllabus. An approved script is one of the first targets of this calendar, and it remains *so important* that you quickly commit to an idea and get it approved in script form that script approval is the first dated target for everyone. If a script is not approved by the targeted date you will be asked to withdraw from this course.

The cinematic work which you shall make will be judged on the following three criteria:

**1. raw grade = 50% meaning + 50% technique.**

One-half of the raw grade for your project will be based upon the **meaning**, or content, of the work. Here the basic question which is to be asked is: "Did the audience understand what the work purports to say?"

This remains a question of the intelligibility of the final work. Related to this and included in this grade are questions of FORM (in-FORM-ation): how appropriate is the shot design, the sequencing of the shots, and the duration of each shot? Is the sound environment contributory to the communication? Does the music assist the audience's ability to receive the content, emotional or other?

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The other one-half of the raw grade for your project will be based upon the **technique** of the work. Included in this are:

mechanical technique: how are camera operations? Is focus clear? Does a shot begin and end well framed? How well is action choreographed before the lens?

Exposure? Are the sound elements well recorded and integrated into the work? Credits? Do the splices go through the projector? etc...

social technique: Was the shoot well planned beforehand? Are the actors and crew working together? How is the equipment scheduling, handling, and return?

## **2. Adherence to the schedule listed in the attached CALENDAR.**

A Calendar for one-quarter and two-quarter productions is attached. Each quarter lists two "**targets**" for producers. It is essential that you keep to schedule and stay ahead of these targeted deadlines.

There are different targets for live action producers and animation producers as befits your process. Others may need to be written for a script writer, we'll see. It is important to note that the target dates listed for the work to be done are the **final** dates. It is hoped that you will remain ahead of this schedule.

If your project is not ready for viewing and discussion by or on the two targeted dates in each quarter, one full letter grade will automatically be deducted from your raw grade. Depending upon the state of your project at that time, you may be asked to withdraw.

**3. End of quarter screening.** It remains Film and Video departmental policy that you publicly screen your project at the end of the quarter during the days reserved for examinations. This requirement is for the posting of your accumulated grade which will have been determined at the class screenings throughout the quarter. Students who are in this workshop for the second quarter of their process must screen a completed (fine cut, mixed sound) work then.

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Duration of the work:

one-quarter live action project: 3 to 6 scenes.

two-quarter live action project: 5 to 11 scenes.

Longer scripted projects will not be approved.

Class time will be devoted to sharing your processed materials with the class, trouble-shooting, examining your ideas and progress, as well as short discussion/lecture topics:

challenges of short form.

different ways to tell a story.

location research. casting tips.  
terminology: script and storyboard language.  
POV shots.  
the moving camera.  
narrative shooting techniques.  
sound production techniques.

Other topics will suggest themselves, or you can extend this list.

In closing, the best test of your film is by a critical examination of the film's integrity. This integrity will communicate to an audience. As every, ask yourself if the film is "cohesive" is all its parts:

By "cohesive" I mean (again) *that it has no extraneous parts or wasted actions; that it refers to the world which it purports to describe; and it be as honest, conscious, and beautiful as you can make it.*

I look forward to an enjoyable, successful, and active course.