

Dramatic Writing: Shadows & Light Spring 2017

WRIT 22803 | Dramatic Writing: Shadows & Light

Mondays, March 27 – May 22

No class April 10

Location: Downtown, Gleacher Center

So much of what moves and compels us in story can be understood in terms of shadows and light. The protagonist fights against the dark forces of psychology and environment to reach the light of the hero they were meant to be, moving from ignorance to knowledge, from chaos to order – or not. In this class, we'll examine the forces of darkness in your character's world and map pathways for them to find their way to the light. We'll also address how to use recurring motifs in your story's physical and relationship landscapes to provide key signposts on your character's journey and deepen audience experience of theme. Participants should be prepared to read study scripts, complete in-class and at-home assignments and be prepared to read, critique and support each other's work. Techniques discussed are transferable across all genres of writing and the class is appropriate for writers of all levels.

Instructor: Susan Hubbard

Ms. Hubbard is an award-winning screenwriter whose work has screened at home and abroad. She co-wrote feature film *Realization* and has pitched to Hollywood executives. She holds an MFA in Cinema Art + Science from Columbia College. Her play, *Thundersnow*, was produced at the American Theatre Company's Big Shoulders Festival in 2015.

Contact: Susan.hubbard3@gmail.com.

Study scripts under consideration are listed below. Please contact the instructor after you have registered to receive access to scripts.

- 1. HELL OR HIGH WATER (2016)**
- 2. ELLE (2016)**
- 3. MOONLIGHT (2016)**
- 4. DALLAS BUYERS CLUB (2013)**
- 5. SILVER LININGS PLAYBOOK (2012)**
- 6. THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA (2006)**
- 7. DANGEROUS LIAISONS (1988)**
- 8. AT CLOSE RANGE (1986)**

Helpful, recommended books:

1. *Wired for Story: The Writer's Guide to Using Brain Science to Hook Readers from the Very First Sentence*, by Lisa Cron. Available at <http://barnesandnoble.com/> and other sites for about \$10.00.
2. *The Film Director's Intuition: Script Analysis and Rehearsal Techniques*, by Judith Weston. Available at <http://barnesandnoble.com/> and other sites for about \$18.00.
3. *Screenwriting Behind Enemy Lines: Lessons from Inside the Studio Gates*, by John Schimmel. Available at <http://barnesandnoble.com> and other sites for about \$25.00
4. *The Coffee Break Screenwriter: Writing Your Script Ten Minutes at a Time*, by Pilar Alessandra, Michael Wiese Productions. Available on Amazon.com for about \$17.

For each class: Each week writers should submit material to be workshopped.

Materials submission guidelines:

1. Submissions you'd like workshopped in class should be submitted to instructor and fellow writers by email on the Sunday before each class, by 1:00 pm.
2. You may submit up to 8 pages but be aware that due to time constraints we may be limited to workshopping only 5.
3. Bring enough copies of what you'd like workshopped to class for all participants.

See http://www.finaldraft.com/mm_media/mm_pdf/How_to_Format_a_Screenplay.pdf for proper script formatting.

Final Draft screenplay software is the industry standard. **Movie Magic** is a cheaper, less widely used option. At <http://celtx.en.softonic.com/> I understand you can download free software but make sure you are not downloading a trial version which will expire, taking with it all your work stored online.

SYLLABUS:

MONDAY, 3/27/17

- Shadows
- Character arc
- Light

MONDAY, 4/3/17

- Hidden layers, scene and plot
- Allies/enemies
- The repressed, the good and the bad

MONDAY, 4/10/17 NO CLASS

MONDAY, 4/17/17

- Subconscious
- Symbolic
- Subtextual

MONDAY, 4/24/17

- Embedded thematic images
- The unraveling of the self
- Heightened emotions and the core of being

MONDAY, 5/1/17

- Act I In the shadow realm
- Act II Emerging middle – testing the self
- Brightening and recommitting

MONDAY, 5/8/17

- Act II Deeper middle
- Stretching the self in intensifying darkness
- Choice changers: conflicts and obstacles

MONDAY, 5/15/17

- Act III Emotional upheaval
- Light battling dark
- Strengthening reversals

MONDAY, 5/22/17

- Transformation
- Emotional maturity and transformed expression
- Integration – the light and the dark