

CTVA 350
Film Directing
Fall Semester 2009

Instructor: Robert Lewis

Class Room: Manzanita 170

Class Hours: Monday 2-4:45pm

Wednesday 2-4:45pm

Office Hour: Monday 1-2pm – Room MZ 305

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PURPOSE:

The film director must have a broad understanding of the arts, crafts, and technologies that go into the making of a motion picture. Above all, he or she must be an effective decision maker and communicator. The purpose of the course is to introduce you to the language, processes, and concepts that a director must utilize in order to accomplish his or her goal – the making of a compelling film.

There is no course that can teach you how to be a good director. That must come from you. What this course can do is help you get to know yourself at a deeper level and unlock your power as a filmic storyteller.

REQUIRED TEXT:

DIRECTING: Film Techniques and Aesthetics, Michael Rabiger, 4th edition – Focal Press

SUGGESTED TEXT:

**FRIENDLY ENEMIES: (maximizing the director-actor relationship) – Delia Salvi
Billboard Books, an Imprint of Watson-Guptill Publications, New York, NY, 2003**

GOALS OF THE CLASS:

1. Develop the skill of interpreting dramatic material.
2. Learn to trust yourself as a director.
3. Develop your own individual style.
4. Learn common directorial mistakes and traps.
5. Learn to appreciate the actor's gifts, and understand his problems and fears.
6. Learn the basics of the actor's craft in order to effectively guide performance.
7. Develop the ability to critique performance in filmic terms.
8. Develop visual story telling skills.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:

All written assignments must be either typed or computer printed in 12 point Courier and double-spaced. Everything must be proofread for spelling, grammar, and typos. You will be marked down for sloppy papers.

DIRECTING ASSIGNMENT:

Each student will create a short fiction film no longer than 3 to 5 minutes in length with up to one additional minute for credits. These films will be conceived and executed by the director with scripts approved by the instructor. If you would rather not write an original, a script you adapt by using published or unpublished material in the public domain is acceptable as long as you credit the original author. Finished projects will be screened in class at the end of the semester. Grades will be based on originality and execution. All films must be shot and edited using the students own (or begged, borrowed or rented) video recorder and computer editing equipment. On the date of your class screening two copies of the film should be delivered on DVD to the instructor.

IMPORTANT

Films longer than 3 to 5 minutes will not be shown at the all important film festival at the end of the semester.

MISSED DIRECTING ASSIGNMENT:

Apart from the exceptions listed below, if you are not prepared to show your short film project on your scheduled date, you will be penalized 5 points off your grade for this assignment.

PERFORMANCE ASSIGNMENT:

In this class you will also direct a short (5 minutes or less) two character scene from a well known film of your choice. Casting and rehearsal time will be outside of class. You should present a copy of this scene to the instructor at the same time as you turn in your *script analysis* paper. Because of time constraints, some students will have to shoot their scenes away from class. Lots will be drawn to select who they will be. If for any reason you are not prepared to present your scene on your scheduled date you will be penalized 5 points off your grade for this assignment.

OTHER DEADLINES:

Other assignments (including the first and final draft of your script) must be delivered the day they are due. 3 points will be taken off your grade for each class meeting that the assignment is past due.

EXCEPTIONS FOR LATE ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Serious illness (yours) – Confirmation by a doctor is required
2. Hospitalization (yours) – Confirmation by a doctor is required
3. Death in the family
4. Anything else is at my discretion

TESTS:

A MIDTERM and a FINAL exam will be given during the semester, covering both text and lecture.

Mid Term: Monday, October 12

Final Exam: Monday, December 14 (3 to 5 pm)

With the exception of credited adaptations, all written work turned in is expected to be completely original. Any material written for the class found not to be original will be severely dealt with, as dictated by the Department and the University.

PARTICIPATION:

A requirement of this class is participation both in class and outside on your classmate's projects. You can work as a cameraman, editor, sound recordist, grip, gaffer, actor, or in any other capacity needed for the task. Keep a record of the jobs you performed and their dates and turn that in to the instructor at the end of the semester for grading. A maximum of 20 points will be awarded for this assignment.

ATTENDANCE:

Attendance will be recorded at the beginning of each class. Arriving late or leaving early, except for a documented illness or emergency, will constitute non-attendance for the session. Excluding the first class meeting, you get two (2) unexcused absences, no questions asked. Repeated absences and/or tardiness may result in your being dropped. For each unexcused absence 4 points will be deducted from the 20 possible attendance points. Please turn off all cell phones, beepers, pagers, text messagers, etc, while in class.

GRADING:

Attendance	20 points
Theme Assignment	20 points
Midterm	80 points
Script Analysis	40 points
Directed Scene	50 points
Short Film Script	40 points
Short Film	50 points
Participation	20 points
Final	80 points

400 points

GRADING SCALE:

A	380-400 > 95% to 100%
A-	360-379 > 90% to 94%
B+	340-359 > 85% to 89%
B	320-339 > 80% to 84%
B-	300-319 > 75% to 79%
C+	280-299 > 70% to 74%
C	260-279 > 65% to 69%
C-	240-259 > 60% to 64%
D+	220-239 > 55% to 59%
D	200-219 > 50% to 54%
D-	180-199 > 45% to 49%
F	Below 180 > 44% or under

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Students with Disabilities must register with the Center on Disabilities and complete a service agreement each semester. Staff within the Center will certify the existence of a disability based on the documentation provided and approve accommodations. Students who are approved for test taking accommodations must provide a proctor form to their faculty member signed by a counselor in the Center on Disabilities prior to making testing arrangements. The Center on Disabilities is located in Bayramian Hall, room 110. Staff can be reached a (818) 677-2684.

SUGGESTED SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS:

Caine, Michael, Acting In Film --Applause Theater Books, New York, NY, 1997
Chandler, Gael, Cut By Cut – Michael Wiese Productions, Studio City, CA, 2004
Field, Syd, Screenplay – Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc., New York, NY, 1994
Field Syd, The Screenwriter’s Workbook – Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc., New York NY, 1984
Goldman, William, Adventures In The Screen Trade – Warner Books, Inc., New York, NY, 1983
Katz, Steven D., film directing SHOT by SHOT – Michael Wiese Productions with Focal Press, Stoneham, MA, 1991
Lumet, Sidney, Making Movies – Vintage Books, a division of Random House Inc., New York, NY, 1996
Nicholas, Angela, 99 Film Scenes For Actors -- Avon Books, An Imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, New York, NY, 1999
Schreibman, Myrl A., The Film Director Prepares – Lone Eagle Publishing, a division of Watson-Guptill Publications, New York, NY, 2006
Corrigan, Timothy, A Short Guide To Writing About Film – Pearson/Longman, New York, NY, 2004