Reading and Writing for Film

Instructor: Thomas Humpal
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Classroom: TBA
Class Time: TBA
Office Hours: TBA

Course Description:
This course is essentially split in to two parts. Reading for film and Writing for film. Students will learn how to read scripts in relation to film. By studying examples of scripts that excel in demonstrating how various components of a screenplay work to create a cohesive story, we will learn how to construct our own screenplays and workshop them. In the “writing for film” part of the course, we will first practice by creating scripts for films that already exist, and then follow that with constructing stories in the official screenplay format dealing with topics discussed in class.

Course Goals & Objectives:
Students will have a foundational understanding of how to read and write a screenplay as well as understand the working parts of how all the moving pieces of the cinematic medium work together and at times against each other to create a cohesive and multi-layered story.

Course Outline:

- **Week 1**
  - Course Introduction: How to talk about Cinema.
- **Week 2**
  - Screenplay format and analysis: Understanding how to read and write a script.
- **Week 3**
  - Adaptation: From story to screenplay. Methods and Destilling a story.
- **Week 4**
  - Genre Conventions: Understanding and using expectations.
- **Week 5**
  - Dialogue: How people speak in Film.
- **Week 6**
  - Writing for an audience: niche viewers and screenplays
- **Week 7**
  - World and Logic creaton: Using coincidence and establishing laws
- **Week 8**
  - Mid-Term Week
- **Week 9**
  - Rounding out a story: Trimming the fat and adding meat
- **Week 10**
  - Using Allegory, tropes, and Symbolism without a heavy hand.
- **Week 11**
  - Case Studies: David Mamet, Coen Brothers
● **Week 12**
  Research and becoming an expert on your subject.

● **Week 13**
  Case Study: Science Fiction and Science Cinema.

● **Week 14**
  Avoiding cliche and redrawing boundaries

● **Week 15** Final Week

**Textbook(s)**

- No Textbook. Teacher will provide the materials and make them available online and in print out form.

**Class Website:** e-Class

**Course Assignments & Grading:**

- *Midterm Essay: 30%*
- *Final Essay: 40%*
- *Attendance: 10%*
- *Participation: 20%*

**Grading Policies:**

Late Work: All assignments must be submitted on the due time. Late assignments will be accepted but points will be deducted.

Make-Ups: Make-ups will be accepted but points will be deducted.

**Course Policies:**

- Attendance: If students miss more than 9 hours of class they will receive an F grade.
- Academic Misconduct Policy: We really do not expect it, so please do not disappoint us! However, any form of cheating will be penalised, students will lose points.