FILM WORKSHOP
AUGUST 2022

"WRITE WHAT YOU CAN SHOOT
SHOOT WHAT YOU CAN EDIT
EDIT WHAT YOU CAN FINISH"
Ben Medina

"You can either have [**A**] a lot of **locations** and **speaking parts** or [**B**] a lot of **visual/special effects** <u>but you can't have both</u>. The scope of these movies has to be small. And you have to be willing to work for scale"
Jason Blum, **Blumhouse**

QUICK OVERVIEW

DAY 1) **CINEMA STORYTELLING/ROLES**
6 hours (estimated)

ASSIGNMENTS
- At the end of the first day, their assignment that night, for our selected SCREENWRITERS, will be to write their short films (duration: **1-2 minutes** for each film) and bring them in the next day for shooting

DAY 2) **PRODUCTION GUIDE/MAKING SHORT FILMS**
6–8 hours

ASSIGNMENTS
- David Leidy will edit all 3 films to be screened the following day.
- Also need to figure out what to do for music and possibly finding **royalty free music** to use for their films

DAY 3) **SCRIPT READING/SCREENING FILMS**
3–4 hours

SCHEDULE

DAY ONE
CINEMA STORYTELLING/ROLES

PART I

A. INTRODUCTIONS

(1) INTRO TO WORKSHOP
- WHO ARE YOU? Why are you here?
  - A bit about me and my work
  - How this workshop came about
  - What do you want to learn from this workshop?

(2) *What is your favorite film? Why?*
- If you could change one thing about this film, what would it be?

(3) STORY TIME
- TELL US A **MEMORABLE LIFE STORY** of a singular event your life
- **LIFE STORY DISCUSSION**: *Why'd you tell that story? What was the common thread (or theme) throughout? What made these stories interesting?*
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B. SCREENWRITING GUIDE
- *WHAT IS A STORY?*
  - *Where do stories come from?*

(1) IDEA: *Where it all starts ...*
- Types of ideas
Where can you get ideas from?
  - IDEA/WORLD BUILDING

(2) STORY
- *SHOW DON'T TELL! Hence why we should probably call it* STORY***SHOW***ING & not STORY***TELL****ING*
  - **STORY ELEMENTS**
- **CHARACTERS:** *What makes a character engaging for viewers?*
  - STORY/CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

(3) SCREENWRITING: FORMAT/SOFTWARE/PROCESS/STRUCTURE
- *What make a captivating story?*
  - TREATMENT
  - LOGLINE
  - PITCH/PITCH DECK

C. <u>CREATIVE WRITING EXERCISES</u>

(1) Working with a **PROBLEMATIC STORY**: *How do we improve it?*
- Re-write your own version
  - Let's discuss

(2) CREATIVE WRITING EXERCISE
- Write your own story idea. You can make it a logline, a treatment or something else.
  - Share your creative story idea
- Discussion on what works well and how we can improve these stories

(3) SHORT SCRIPT IDEAS FOR TOMORROW
- Introducing STORY PROMPTS and CHARACTERS <u>**which must be used in the story**</u> you come up with. We will decide which stories to go with and a selected group of people will write the screenplay which will shoot tomorrow. Stay within the confines of our guidelines
  - Think and write down your story ideas

(**BREAK**) <u>PART II</u>

D. <u>CINEMA STORYTELLING/ROLES</u>

(1) CINEMATIC STORYTELLING
- **CINEMATIC VISUALS, TERMS and TECHNIQUES**: *How do you take a story from the page to the screen?*
- **CAMERAS**: *What do Hollywood films and television shows shoot on? What should YOU shoot on?*
  - **LENSES**: Zooms vs Primes & beyond
- **SHOOTING** ON AN **iPHONE** and **PHONE LENSES**: *FilmPro app* and more
  - **LIGHTING**: Grip and electric (G&E) and what a Gaffer does!
    - 3 point lighting explained

(2) ROLES
- FILM INDUSTRY ROLES explained
- INDUSTRY STANDARDS explained
- Start thinking of which film roles you would like to do for tomorrow

• ANSWERING ANY QUESTIONS

(**BREAK**) <u>PART III</u>

E. <u>FROM STORY TO SCREEN</u>

(1) PROFESSIONAL SHORT FILMS
• Watching a series of professional short films
- **STORY ANALYSIS** of short films: Such as **Logline** and **Character Arcs**
- What was impactful about the story? What may have been done differently to improve the story?

(2) YOUR SHORT FILM IDEAS
• SHARE YOUR SHORT FILM STORY IDEAS
- **REVISING YOUR STORY** and
- CUTTING/IMPROVING **BEATS**/**SCENES**
- DISCUSSION over what works and what could be improved on for these story ideas
- Which are the most impactful story ideas? Which are the most practical for shooting in small crews tomorrow?

(3) CHOOSE 3 SHORT FILM IDEAS TO SHOOT FOR TOMORROW
- Which scripts should we shoot tomorrow? Why?
• VOTE ON FAVORITE **3 SHORT FILM IDEAS** (<u>must be 1–2 minute film ideas</u>, <u>follow the guidelines</u> and <u>must be relatively simple to shoot</u>)
- REVISING THESE SHORT FILM IDEAS FOR MAKING THE BEST SCRIPTS

(4) FORMING GROUPS: *Who wants to do which roles tomorrow?*
- 6 PRIMARY: *SCREENWRITER, EXEC PRODUCER, DIRECTOR, ACTOR, PRODUCER or CINEMATOGRAPHER?*
- *3 SECONDARY: Production Designer, Assistant Camera or Assistant Director?*
9 Roles Total

• **WRITING SHORT SCREENPLAYS FOR TOMORROW REMINDER!**
• *Decide which ideas to go with and who will be responsible for writing these ideas out by tomorrow for shotting*

DAY TWO
PRODUCTION GUIDE/MAKING YOUR FILMS

PART I
- CHECKING IN ON THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR WRITING TODAY'S SCREENPLAYS

F. PRODUCTION GUIDE

(1) *PREPRODUCTION*
- HOW TO FIND A **FILM CREW**
- FILM **LEGAL GUIDE**
- HOW TO ULTIMATELY CREATE A **FILM PRODUCTION COMPANY** (either **LLC** or **S-Corp**) if you're producing a film
- WAYS TO **RAISE FINANCING** and OTHER CHALLENGES
- OPTIONING the script
- MANAGERS, AGENTS and MORE INDUSTRY STANDARDS

(2) PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY
- **LOCATION SCOUTING**
- BASIC PRODUCTION DOCS
- MORE SHOOTING PROTOCOLS

(3) POSTPRODUCTION
- EDITING
- TITLE SEQUENCES
- COLOR GRADING
- **MUSIC/SOUND**
- **FOLEY** ART
- POST **SOUND MIXING**
- **COMPOSING** THE **SCORE**

(4) FESTIVALS/DISTRIBUTION
- **FESTIVALS**
- SUBMITTING TO FESTIVALS
- filmfreeway.com and
- other websites and tools
- FESTIVAL CIRCUIT SCREENINGS

- HIRING SALES GENT and finally
- **DISTRIBUTION** (hopefully)
- STREAMERS, VOD and THEATRICAL RELEASE and
- SELF-DISTRIBUTION and VOD

G. <u>SHORT FILM SCRIPTS: FINAL REVISIONS</u>
(1) SHARE YOUR SHORT FILM SCRIPTS
- **REVISING YOUR STORY** and
- CUTTING/IMPROVING **DIALOGUE**
- FINAL REVISING of THESE SCRIPTS

(2) PREPRODUCTION PLANNING
- ORGANIZING FILM CREWS
• EXEC PRODUCERS / PRODUCERS AGREE on FINAL STORY REVISIONS &
- GREENLIGHT PROJECTS

(**BREAK**) <u>PART II</u>

H. <u>SHOOTING YOUR SHORT FILMS</u>
• PLAYING OUT THE ROLES: *Showing firsthand what everyone does on a set*

(1) FIRST SHORT FILM SHOOT
- PRODUCTION DESIGN
- BLOCKING THE SCENE WITH CINEMATOGRAPHER AND ACTORS
- SHOOTING THE SCENE
- PUSHING PERFORMANCES
- MIXING UP CAMERA ANGLES
- ON-SET SCRIPT REVISIONS: *Does anything need to be added or cut from the script based on what's happening on camera?*
- WHAT IMPROVISATIONAL MOMENTS or SCENES SHOULD BE INCORPORATED?

(2) SECOND SHORT FILM SHOOT
• SWITCH SHORT FILMS and PRODUCTION ROLES
- SAME PRODUCTION STEPS AS PREVIOUS SHORT FILM

(3) THIRD SHORT FILM
• SWITCH SHORT FILMS and ROLES
- SAME PRODUCTION STEPS AS BEFORE

(4) SHORT FILM PRODUCTION DISCUSSION
• DISCUSSION of WHAT PARTICIPANTS FELT WENT WRONG and RIGHT
- WHICH CAMERA ANGLE and MOVEMENT, ACTING PERFORMANCE and STORY/DIALOGUE CHOICES WORKED or COULD HAVE BEEN ENHANCED?

(QUICK **BREAK**) <u>PART III</u>

J. POSTPRODUCTION & EDITING DISCUSSION

(1) BASIC **FOOTAGE REVIEW** and LIVE **EDITING** IN FRONT OF CLASS

(2) **DIRECTORS** and **PRODUCERS** DISCUSS WITH **EDITOR** (DAVID LEIDY) WHICH TYPE of MUSIC THEY WANT TO BE USED FOR THE EDIT and IF THEY THINK ANYTHING SHOULD BE CUT FROM THE FILM that was filmed and in the SCRIPT

- OTHER PARTICIPANTS DISCUSS IF THEY AGREE or DISAGREE WITH THESE DECISIONS

• QUESTIONS?

DAY THREE
SCRIPT READING/SCREENING SHORTS

PART I

- *STAY TUNED FOR YOUR SHORT **FILM SCREENING** ...*

K. SCRIPT READING

(1) *SECRET KEEPERS* **SCRIPT READING**
- *INTRO TO **SECRET KEEPERS***
- ***ACTORS** DO **SCRIPT READING** (STUDENTS MAY PARTICIPATE AS ADDITIONAL ROLES)*

(2) SCREENWRITER **GREG PAUL** DISCUSSES HIS PROCESS, WRITING THE SCRIPT, FUTURE PLANS for PRODUCTION and SO FORTH
- AUDIENCE **QUESTIONS** & SCREENWRITER **ANSWERS**

(3) GROUP DISCUSSION ON SCRIPT BASED ON WHAT THEY LEARNED FROM OUR WORKSHOP
- FINAL WORDS FROM GREG

(**BREAK**) PART II

L. SHORT FILM SCREENING
- QUICK RECAP and **EDITING OVERVIEW**

(1) SHORT FILMS SCREENED
- SHORT FILMS DISCUSSED: *Which was the best idea? Best screenplay? And which was ultimately the best film? Was best script also the best film? If the best screenplay was not the best film, why do you think it did not translate? What worked on the page which did not work as well in the film? Who had the best cinematography? Best performances? Best production design? WHY?*

(2) David Leidy discusses **EDITING PROCESS** for each of their films
- DISCUSSION on what worked in EDITING and what could be better

(3) **FINAL WRAPUP**
- QUICK OVERVIEW / COMPLIMENTS
- WHAT DID YOU LIKE and what COULD WE IMPROVE for this WORKSHOP in years to come if we put this on again?

- FINAL QUESTIONS? FINAL THOUGHTS?

ORIGINAL QUOTES:
(used on front page)

"Write what you can shoot, shoot what you can cut, cut what you can finish [...] [now paraphrased] If you're shooting on spec [to get an agent/manager] then write what you want to see. 70% of all features are unfinished. I became known because I finished a film first. I grew more and more ambitious after finishing things along the way. Nobody cares about your career if you cant finish anything" **Ben Medina**
https://youtu.be/7DbBotyCUag

"You can either have [**A**] a lot of **locations** and **speaking parts** or [**B**] a lot of **visual/special effects** but you can't have both. The scope of these movies has to be small. And you have to be willing to work for scale" **youtu.be/MJzVH-A-vLQ** "If the movie makes money, you make money; if movie doesn't make money, you won't make money." **Jason Blum**, Blumhouse