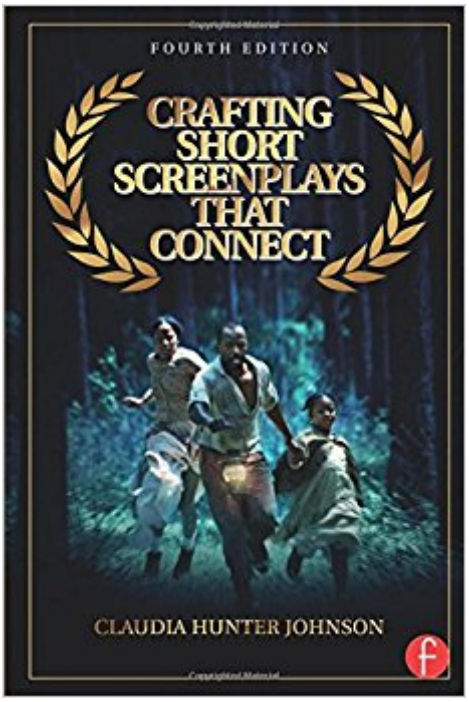
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Crafting Short Screenplays That Connect



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Synopsis

Crafting Short Screenplays That Connect, Fourth Edition stands alone among screenwriting books by emphasizing that human connection, though often overlooked, is as essential to writing effective screenplays as conflict. This groundbreaking book will show you how to advance and deepen your screenwriting skills, increasing your ability to write richer, more resonant short screenplays that will connect with your audience. With her candid, conversational style, award-winning writer and director Claudia Hunter Johnson teaches you the all-important basics of dramatic technique and guides you through the challenging craft of writing short screenplays with carefully focused exercises of increasing length and complexity. In completing these exercises and applying ClaudiaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s techniques and insights to your own work, you will learn how to think more deeply about the screenwriterÃ¢â ¬â„¢s purpose, craft effective patterns of human change, and strengthen your storytelling skills. This new edition has been expanded and updated to include: A companion website (www.focalpress.com/cw/johnson) with ten award-winning short films featured in the book, including two outstanding, all-new short filmsÃ¢â ¬â ¢Intercambios and the Student-Emmy-Award-winning Underground A new chapter on scene and structure that will help you find the right structure for your short screenplay A new chapter on crafting effective dialogue and subtext that will teach you to make the most of every word and add further depth to your script

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Claudia Johnson leads the reader through the process of writing the short film, along the way illuminating something much biggerÃ¢â ¬â ¢how to write great drama in any form." - Linda Seger,

Author, Making a Good Script Great "Crafting Short Screenplays That Connect, Fourth EditionÃ Â is an incredible, insightful guide to writing an effective, engaging short screenplay. Claudia Johnson takes the reader through the journey of crafting screenplays using connection as the path." - Dr. Valliere Richard Auzenne, Florida State University College of Motion Picture Arts

Claudia Hunter Johnson is a writer/director whose feature documentary The Other Side of Silence: The Untold Story of Ruby McCollum won Best Florida Documentary Film at the 2012 Ft. Lauderdale International Film Festival and the Gold Jury Prize at the 2013 Social Justice Film Festival. She recently completed (with Matt Stevens) the feature screenplay Ruby, based on her documentary. A nationally recognized advocate for free speech, she won the inaugural P.E.N./NewmanÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Own First Amendment Award, and her critically acclaimed memoir Stifled Laughter: One WomanÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Story About Fighting Censorship was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize. She is a member of the founding faculty at the Florida State University College of Motion Picture Arts where she continues to teach screenwriting courses.

Great condition

Crafting Short Screenplays That Connect: A Closer Look.Reviewed by C J Singh (Berkeley, CA).Claudia H Johnson’s insight of the connect-disconnect pattern in storytelling came first to my attention in the early editions of Janet Burroway’s classic textbooksÃ Â Writing Fiction: A Guide to Narrative Craft Ã Â and the more recentÃ Â Imaginative Writing: The Elements of CraftÃ Â (See my detailed reviews of the current editions of both books on .)In "Writing Fiction," 1994 edition, Burroway wrote: "I’m indebted to dramatist Claudia Johnson’s crucial insight...whereas the hierarchical or vertical nature of narrative, the power struggle, has long been acknowledged, there also appears in all narrative a horizontal pattern of connection and disconnection between characters, which is the main source of its emotional effect."As organizer of our writing group CreativeWritersBerkeley (now a meetup), I have long been using the earlier editions of Claudia Johnson’s screenwriting as well as Burroway’s fiction-craft books as the major texts.Introducing CRAFTING SHORT SCREENPLAYS THAT CONNECT, fourth edition, Johnson describes Burroway’s immediate appreciation of her insight when she went to see her: "This is big - the other half of Aristotle" (p xxiv). Both are professors at Florida State University. Johnson’s book was first published in 2000. It received considerable acclaim. On the fourth edition’s jacket, Linda Seger, author of several books on screenwriting, notes: "Claudia Johnson leads the reader through the

process of writing the short film, along the way illuminating something much bigger - how to write great drama in any form." Burroway has been right all along in her fiction-writing textbooks.The new edition expands expository chapters, adds several short films, presents ten screenplays by her students, and provides access to their films at the companion website. Several of these plays won multiple awards including the Student-Emmy Awards.Here are some of the highlights of the four parts of the nearly 400-page book.PART I, Preparing to Write the Short Screenplay, four brief chapters.On page 11, appears an excellent exercise "Connecting to Self" that asks the reader to write down top five answers to each of the ten questions:"What I Love;What I Hate;What I Fear;What I Believe;What I Value;What I Want;What I Know About;People Who Made a Difference in My Life;Discoveries That Made a Difference in My Life;Decisions That Made Difference in My Life"The above exercise can open the path to writing from the heart. It's similar to the Step 1 exercise "Write Something That May Change Your Life" in John Truby's highly regardedÃ Â The Anatomy of Story: 22 Steps to Becoming a Master StorytellerÃ Â . (See my detailed review on .) Truby exhorts, "Do some self-exploration, something most writers, incredibly enough, never do."PART II, Aspects of the Craft, five chapters.The fifth chapter, Story and Screenplay, claims "Everything You Need to Know You Can Learn" from one scene in Charlie Chaplin's "City Lights." As a fan of Charlie Chaplin geAfter reading Johnson's masterly four-page analysis of this scene and as a fan of Chaplin's genius and after reading Johnson's 4-page detailed analysis of the scene, I agree with her: "You can't learn everything you need to know, but you can get pretty close if you pay close attention" to it (p 53).6. The chapter, Character, cites excerpts from the works of Charles Dickens's "A Christmas Carol," William Goldman's "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid," George Lucas's "American Graffiti," Ray Bradbury's "Zen in the Art of Writing," Woody Allen's "Hannah and Her Sisters" as well as several of her students' works.7. The chapter, Structure, questions Syd Field's paradigm of a rigid three-act structure and plot points in favor of William Goldman's advice of flexibility: "The proper structure should be for the particular script you are writing." Highly instructional in this chapter is the description of one of Johnson's students, Brian Gutierrez Arramayo's struggle. He tried to adhere to the Field paradigm in the first fourteen drafts of his screenplay "Intercambio." In the fifteenth draft, observes Johnson, "Getting back to the heart of the story - - and getting in touch with his own heart - - gave Brian the confidence he needed to replace his longer, expositional, Paradigm-perfect Act One attempts with a brief opening scene that deftly sets up Cristina's circumstances, want, and intention" (p 81).8. The chapter, Dialogue, includes effective and entertaining examples from screenplays such as Susannah Grant's "Erin Brokovich," Robert Benton's "Kramer vs Kramer," and Woody Allen & Marshall Brickaman's "Annie Hall."PART

III, Five (Not So) Easy Screenplays are exercises.Each chapter includes guidelines to do the exercise and presents examples from classic as well as students' screenplays.9. The chapter, The Discovery, exercise: "Write a three-page screenplay about a character making a discovery that makes a difference to the character" (p 113).10. The Decision, exercise: "Write a three-to-five page screenplay about a character making a decision that makes a difference to the character" (p 123).11. The Boxing Match, exercise: "Write a five-page screenplay about a character (A) who wants something that a second character (B) does not want to give" (p 133)12. The Improbable Connection, exercise: "Write a seven-page screenplay about two characters who initially feel no connection whatsoever -- a connection between them is highly improbable -- but by the end of the screenplay they have come to feel a authentic connection" (p 145).13. The Long Short Screenplay, exercise: "Write the best ten-page (or shorter) screenplay you can -- using the techniques you have learned to tell a good story that makes us connect -- a pattern of human change that makes a difference to your main character. And to us" (p 153).PART IV, Eleven Screenplays That Make It Look Easy.14, "Chillin' Out" - a webisode15, "Intercambios" - a Latina defrauded at bank.16, "Underground" - an African-American man, trying to protect his daughter, lynched in 1850.17, "Tough Crowd" - a screenplay.18, "Kosher" - a lovely comedy of a 6-year old couple "getting married."19, "My Josephine" - a screenplay.20, "A Work in Progress" - a screenplay. 21, "Lena's Spaghetti" - a screenplay.22, "Cool Breeze and Buzz" - a screenplay.23, "The Making of `Killer Kite' " - a mockumentary. 24, "Slow Dancin' Down the Aisles of Quickcheck" - a screenplay.ALl of the above ten short films can be viewed in less than three hours total.----------ACCESSIBLE BY COPYING and PASTING THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR WEB BROWSER:routledgetextbooks.com/textbooks/9780415735476/----------My top three choices are:1."Intercambios

This may be a problem with Kindle in general, if so, then I apologize... But I honestly can't imagine that's the case.There are no page numbers at all in this E-Book, which instead took the novel approach of using completely unhelpful "locations" (arbitrary numbers assigned to each page, one page equivalent is "Location 2973" and to make this system completely worthless, the next page will be "Location 2980" but the one after that might be "Location 2988". There's no rhyme or reason to it at all.This may not seem like a big deak, until you realize that this is a TEXT BOOK, and if you happen to be a student assigned to read certain pages (as I am) then you are left completely lost with a badly laid out mess, and have no way of knowing where you're supposed to read. It is also surprisingly difficult to just jump to a certain spot and read from there. All in all, this is a terribly laid

out book, and I wish I had gotten the physical copy instead.

If you’re looking for a book to help teach screenwriting, this could be your best choice. The writing style is clear and lively, full of illuminating anecdotes and references to familiar films. The linear structure of the book and the way it goes from simple to more complex exercises makes it suitable for teaching (or teaching yourself) on a short ’toe-dipping’ course or for a much longer period. I teach Creative Writing in a sixth form college and my group have enjoyed the exercises and analysing the example screenplays. After looking through several texts of this type I went for this one, perhaps because the author is a teacher herself and so knows how to break things down and build them up - something missing from many other introductions to screenwriting. Highly recommended.

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