



The Short Screenplay: Your Short Film from Concept to Production (Aspiring Filmmaker's Library)

By Daniel Gurskis

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With the growth of film festivals, cable networks, specialty home video, and the Internet, there are more outlets and opportunities for screening short films now than at any time in the last 100 years. But before you can screen your short film, you need to shoot it. And before you can shoot it, you need to write it. The Short Screenplay provides both beginning and experienced screenwriters with all the guidance they need to write compelling, filmable short screenplays. Explore how to develop characters that an audience can identify with. How to create a narrative structure that fits a short time frame but still engages the audience. How to write dialogue that's concise and memorable. How to develop story ideas from concept through final draft. All this and much more is covered in a unique conversational style that reads more like a novel than a "how-to" book. The book wraps up with a discussion of the role of the screenplay in the production process and with some helpful (and entertaining) sample scripts. This is the only guide you'll ever need to make your short film a reality!

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Editorial Review

Review

I. INTRODUCTION What is a screenplay? What is important in a screenplay? The screenwriter's skill set II. SHORTS The fundamentals of the short film The four categories of short films: short-shorts, conventional shorts, medium shorts, long shorts Film vs. theater Film vs. television III. CHARACTER Character and characterization Putting your characters in charge of the action What a character wants, what a character needs Adding depth to your characters Types of characters and their function Secondary characters IV. NARRATIVE The five forms of conflict The three-part nature of screenplay structure: setup, rising action, resolution The importance of cause and effect The elements of a scene Scene structure Writing the scene V. DIALOGUE The goals of film dialogue The characteristics of film dialogue Writing effective dialogue Structuring sentences and speeches Dialect, slang, and insider speech VI. DEVELOPMENT Generating ideas for a short screenplay The development process Creating a concept Creating a synopsis Creating a step outline The first draft Revising Writing screenplays for non-theatrical films (podcasts, Internet only, mobile phone) VII. PRODUCTION Production considerations for a short screenplay Working with a director Working with a producer When the director or the producer is you Conforming the screenplay to existing locations and budget limitations "There's no such thing as a free lunch" Permissions and legal considerations Writing the shooting script VIII. FORMAT The standard industry format: the way a screenplay looks on a paper Screenplay form: using language to suggest film images What to avoid: directing on paper and acting on paper Film grammar vs. English grammar IX. GLOSSARY X. APPENDIX IX. INDEX

About the Author

Dan Gurskis has more than twenty years of writing and producing experience in film and television. He has worked on projects Columbia, Paramount, RKO, HBO, Showtime, Cinemax, Comedy Central, and the USA Network with collaborators as varied as the director Nicolas Roeg and Monty Python's Graham Chapman. In all, he has written more than thirty screenplays. Gurskis has won an Emmy Award and has been a Cable Ace Nominee, a Shubert Fellow, and a MacDowell Colony Fellow. He currently chairs the Department of Film at Brooklyn College, City University of New York.

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Eleanor Williams:

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