

INTRODUCTION TO SCREENWRITING A VERY STRANGE LOVE AFFAIR

Semester 2
Lecturer: Shalimar Preuss

Course description:

This course is a hands-on introduction to the techniques of screenwriting.

Around the theme of « a very strange love affair » (a quote from Hitchcock's *Notorious*), we will study several screenplays and the films that followed. Films might include *Notorious* (1946) by Alfred Hitchcock, *The piano* (1993) by Jane Campion, *Eternal sunshine of the spotless mind* (2004) by Michel Gondry or *Moonrise Kingdom* (2012) by Wes Anderson.

We will explore key concepts in the art of screenwriting such as point-of-view, character, and conflict to inspire and instruct the students as writers of a scene intended for the screen.

The class will focus on both craft and content, alternating between mini-lectures, practical writing exercises and readings of students' work. In addition to covering the fundamentals - such as structure, timing, rhythm, and dialogue - our discussions will delve into how screenwriters convey emotion and meaning within narratives that are destined to become films.

Goals:

The ambition is to give students a greater awareness of the underlining narrative structure in most films and to provide them an opportunity to express what they have explored regarding dramatic structure, visual language, and character development in the writing of a scene a piece of fiction.

Course Requirements:

Students must watch the assigned films and read the required screenplays.
There will be writing assignments with a focus on rewriting what has been produced in class.
Students are expected to participate in class discussion.

Evaluation:

40% of final grade: individual oral presentation of the scene you are writing (what *paradox* do you wish to explore, what are the *stakes* at hand for your characters, what is the *subtext*).

40% of final grade: reading of your finalized scene in class (5 minutes max).

20% of final grade: class participation.