

Minutes from West Hartford Screenwriting Group 02/23/05 Meeting

Attendees:

Joe Cadieux
Tom Murphy
Jacquelin Devlin
Steve Olechna
Denning Powell
Jed Backus
Tessa O'Sullivan

New members / Guests:

Marian Cronin
Christopher Tabora
Phil Poirier
Paul Coleman
Rob Johnson
Rita Isaacson
John Mason
Kevin Behan

Attendees from Scott Anderson's and JP Ouellette's Suspense / Thriller seminar who expressed interest in the Screenwriting group.

Lisa Gallo
Mire Agrawal

Moderator: Joe Cadieux

Snack Provider: Denning Powell

Scribe: Steve Olechna

Our Yahoo group: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/WHScreenwriters/>

Our Web page: www.filmrat.com/whscreenwriters.htm

If you wish to officially join the group, please sign up for the yahoo group.

7:00 - 7:15 – Announcements and Intros / personal log lines if there's a new member or guest

RabbitHillFestival.com – Children's Literature Festival, 3/31 – 4/2

Scott Anderson's Romantic Comedy seminar went really well. Joe passed around his notes.

Scott Anderson's & JP Ouellette's Suspense / Thriller seminar went extremely well.

Great job – Scott and JP! And thanks to Joe and the Friends of West Hartford Library for setting up and sponsoring the seminars.

Denning’s Monkey Trap novel received a great review.

Joe recommended “Pitching Hollywood” book and gave some highlights:

Make your own connections, appear personable and strong, but never chatty, pitch under 5 minutes, from beginning to end, convey excitement.

Steve’s BumforHire.com site is up.

Lots of guests!

7:15 – 7:30 - Open Discussion on movies recently seen, trends...

7:30 – 8:45 – Reviews!

As I’ve stated before, I’m not going to go into detail recapping the reviews because the minutes are posted on the web, and some people might not want their work open to the public.

Steve Olechna – “Bum for Hire”

Opening scene reviewed. Steve was mainly looking for general comments. An entertaining read, want more info on the direction of script.

Tessa O’Sullivan – “Noah Webster”

Historical documentary on West Hartford’s favorite son.

Hope to get out of review: Is this interesting? Yes!

A great start! Well researched. A great foundation to push ahead with.

Possibly could market it to CPTV, Blue Back Square...

8:45 – 9:00 – Wrap Up

Group has decided that the writer shouldn’t respond to constructive criticism until everyone has had a chance to provide feedback.

If possibly, send Word documents instead of pdf files, so people can insert comments.

Next meeting:

3/23/05 in Webster Hall West Hartford Library

Moderator: Jed Backus

Snack Provider: Jacque Devlin

Tentative Agenda:

Review Order as of 3/6/05 – please correct me if I’ve missed anyone

Liz Cipollina
Jacque Devlin

Please forward new submissions to the group.

After hours:

- Many of us made it to Cossi’s after the meeting! Fun, fun time!

Our Yahoo group: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/WHScreenwriters/>
Our Web page: www.filmrat.com/whscreenwriters.htm

Suggested viewing / reading:

Archive:
Denning Powell’s www.monkeytrap.us
Read, “Rebel without a Crew”.
Fog of War – won Oscar for best documentary
Sundance Channel – Anatomy of a scene
HBO – Project Greenlight

Any changes, corrections, additions, please let me know.

Having a blast, hope you are too!

Steve

Guidelines for the group and meetings

Members submit (email) work to the group for review in either the preferred Word / text format (so people can add their comments electronically) or “pdf” format. Originally we were focusing on short submissions (3-10 pages) which can be a movie short, a scene or two from a full length script, or a treatment (summary or outline), but we will now accept expanded submissions of several interconnected scenes or acts. **Important: Because this requires a greater time commitment of the reviewers, make sure this is your best work!** The scripts are then reviewed by the group in earliest received order. When reviewing scripts, first focus on the positive and then offer the constructive. So the writer can compile the results, hand him or her your notes at the end of the meeting.

The moderator asks the writer five questions:

1. What's the story – a sentence – log line (if you don't know this, then you don't know your story)
2. Why did you choose to write the story (shows your passion, used to make pitch)
3. What's the theme – a topic like responsibility, happiness, the futility of hope
4. What's the commercial genre – the market? Western, comedy
5. What do you hope to get out of the review?

Moderator polls the audience for clarification questions and then we go around room, so each reviewer can give their comments, again the positive before the constructive.

Note: It has been decided that the writer shouldn't respond to the constructive comments until everyone has had a chance to provide feedback.