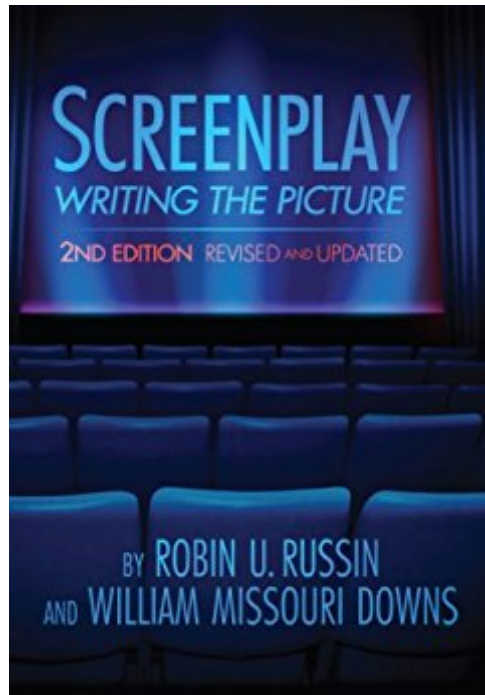


The book was found

# Screenplay: Writing The Picture, 2nd Edition



## Synopsis

Screenplay is a complete screenwriting course—from developing a theme, researching a story, plotting and structuring a script, developing characters, and plying methods that aid the actual writing and rewriting processes through understanding the ins and outs of marketing and pitching scripts. Well-written, comprehensive, and filled with illustrative screenplay examples, both innovative and tried-and-true writing techniques, sage advice from veteran writers, and pertinent writing anecdotes, this one-of-a-kind screenwriting book will help both novices and working screenwriters improve and sell their scripts. Robin U. Russin is a playwright, award-winning screenwriter, producer, University of California, Riverside, screenwriting teacher. Among his film-writing credits is the feature *On Deadly Ground*. William Missouri Downs is an award-winning playwright whose work has been produced at the Kennedy Center and around the world. Two of his most recent plays, *Cockeyed* and *Kosher Lutherans* are published by Samuel French.

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## Customer Reviews

Robin U. Russin's and William Missouri Down's *SCREENPLAY: WRITING THE PICTURE* is the first "textbook" quality paperback I've seen in screenwriting literature. Chapter 2 (Format), together

with Chapters 12 (Narrative), 13 (Dialogue), and 14 (Rewriting) provide a solid foundation in the mechanics of writing. If you augment these chapters with Trottier's chapter on format in THE SCREENWRITERS BIBLE, Flinn's format section in HOW NOT TO WRITE A SCREENPLAY, and Argentini's entire book, ELEMENTS OF STYLE FOR SCREENWRITERS, you pretty much cover the mechanics of writing a properly formatted script. Russin and Downs also present a solid overview of story building, which can be augmented by reading Jennifer Lerch's 500 WAYS TO BEAT THE HOLLYWOOD SCRIPT READER. Russin and Down's text doesn't favor any structural approach over another. One is given a thorough summary of various screenwriting structures which would take reading many screewriting volumes to distill: three-act, five act, seven act, mythic, and more contemporary structures. What I enjoyed most in SCREENWRITING: WRITING THE PICTURE were chapters 8 (Beat, Scenes, and Sequences - which identify building emotion, rhythm, pacing, and coherence in one's script), 9 (Scene Cards -- which has the entire movie "SEA OF LOVE" on film cards to teach us how it's done!), 11 (The Structure of Genres - a wonderful overview of different expectations of readers and audiences when "reading" a particular kind of script or film), and the entire third part on writing (the chapters on Narrative, Dialogue, and Rewriting). No one screenwriting book has it all, but SCREENPLAY: WRITING THE PICTURE makes a wonderful effort to do so. The authors are humble, yet entertaining.

The vast majority of screenwriting books fall into 2 categories: pretty good, or pretty average. Then there is the occasional book that is horrible - Robert Berman's "Fade In" for example - and the very rare book that is extraordinary. Screenplay: Writing the Picture falls into this last category. The problem with most screenwriting books is that they manage to cover only a small angle of the process, or they try to span the gamut and do it so thinly as to be useless. Writing the Picture succeeds in covering every aspect of writing a screenplay (or any work of fiction for that matter), and presenting the info in a way that makes it sink in to an applicable level - more than any other book available. It's written as a textbook, and will surely work its way into all screenwriting classrooms across the country within the next few years. Aside from the instruction, there are several great appendices, including a list of other screenwriting books that you need to have, specific clichés to avoid for each genre, where to find scripts and where to attend graduate screenwriting programs. I do have one complaint though. The degree to which these guys pander to political correctness in the use of gender-specific pronouns is truly staggering - I've never seen anything like it. If a subject is of an unspecified gender, they will always go with "she," and on the rare occasion they do use "he" they always write "he or she" or "s/he." They can't even write a

simple euphemism like "The main man." They write - and this is not a joke - they write "the main wo/man," and then a page later write "right hand wo/man." Personally, this really annoys me. It's distracting from the text, and approximately 1% of the population actually gives a rip about this anyway.

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