

The Art of Film

UHON 222-012 | M | 5:00-7:30 | SHC 12 | 25075

Jonatha Kottler

Film expresses the gamut of human expression and experience. Goofy buddy comedies, biopics of famous writers or musicians, painfully honest documentaries, swashbuckling adventures, superhero epics, or trite-but-enjoyable romantic comedies, film reflects who we are, what we value and aspire to, what we may never become. Yet as the audience we may never consciously appreciate or even notice the larger ideas of a film because we are caught up in it. The goal of this course is to pull our eyes from the screen's spectacle and apply our minds to what a film is actually saying. To achieve this goal we will take a three-part approach: (1) we will cover the history of film as a medium to see its dual identity as popular culture and art (2) we will study screenplays and the films they become to see how words on a page come alive on screen and (3) we will write short screenplays and then shoot and edit them, culminating in the third UHP Short Film Festival where our peers will be able to see our on-screen efforts. Short films we make will be of a quality to be entered into other festivals.

Readings

Readings:

Five Screenplays by William Goldman

The Hollywood Standard

Save The Cat! The Last Book on Screenwriting You'll Ever Need

Graphic Storytelling

The Filmmaker's Handbook: A Comprehensive Guide for the Digital Age

Films:

The Bicycle Thief

Pulp Fiction

The Princess Bride

Other excerpts from:

Fight Club, Notorious, Vertigo, Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, Citizen Kane

Requirements

Two three-page papers, an oral presentation, frequent assignments in Film Journal, six mini-assignments, short screenplay and final short film.

About the Instructor

Jonatha Kottler has a B.A. in English from UNM and an M.A. from St. John's College. She is a writer/creator of the comic book series The Wonderverse. With her husband (fellow UHP graduate Jason Kottler) she has written and directed seven short films and the feature length film In Character. She is the founder of the Desert Globe Players, a theatre devoted to youth Shakespeare performance.