

Crafting Short Screenplays That Connect

Claudia Hunter Johnson

DOC | *audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF | ePub



#1457978 in Books 2005-01-21 Original language: English PDF # 1 .69 x 6.06 x 9.06l, #File Name: 0240806417312 pages | File size: 31.Mb

Claudia Hunter Johnson : Crafting Short Screenplays That Connect before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Crafting Short Screenplays That Connect:

44 of 47 people found the following review helpful. Great ideas; why don't they work? By Dick Oliver Ms. Johnson has some terrific, if not-quite-revolutionary, insights and ideas on screenwriting. Her central idea is that connection is more important than conflict, and she eloquently presents and defends this approach. I really appreciated the inclusion of the DVD, which shows the results of her exercises and approach with some good (not great) student films. On the

down side, the good-not-great-ness of these films reveals quite clearly the greatest weakness of her approach. The resulting films are warm and fuzzy and "work" on the level of human connection, but consistently lack exactly those elements of drama that she says aren't important--namely the tension and conflict that make you care what happens next when actually watching a film. Her ideas are so good it saddened me that the films seemed to prove the most obvious and naive argument against her central premise: Won't films that emphasize connection at the expense of what is traditionally called "conflict" come across as BORING and predictable? Sorry to say it, but yes these films are just that and I was left more than a bit skeptical that her approach as presented would really generate films that didn't share the same flaw. Bottom line: As a filmmaking teacher, I'm very glad I bought this book. It opened my mind to some great new ideas and practical approaches to teaching. On the other hand, I would not show any of the films from this book as examples for my students to emulate and learn from, and I would be very cautious about taking the approach presented in this book too far when writing either student or commercial screenplays. Buy it despite its limitations--it's really worth a read!

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Good book on creating shorts that have emotional connection. By Karla L. Braithwaite This book is as many reviews have said, good at helping you create shorts with characteres and stories that connect. I would read other books to make sure you get action and pacing in your short, but this is a good book for helping in connecting your story to the audience. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Excellent By Jaylia123 This book is excellent for people interested in writing plays. I learned a lot from it and recommend it to others.

The only screenwriting book that includes a DVD that contains performances of the short films and screenplays that are featured in the book! The beauty and power of any story lies in its ability to connect to the reader, listener, or observer. *Crafting Short Screenplays That Connect* is the first screenwriting guide to introduce connection as an essential, although essentially overlooked, aspect of creating stories for the screen and of the screenwriting process itself. Written with clarity and humor, this book teaches the craft of writing short screenplays by guiding the student through carefully focused writing exercises of increasing length and complexity. Eight award-winning student screenplays are included for illustration and inspiration. The text is divided into three parts. Part one focuses on preparing to write by means of exercises designed to help students think more deeply about the screenwriter's purposes; their own unique vision, material and process; and finally about what screenplays are at their simplest and most profound level--a pattern of human change, created from specific moments of change--discoveries and decisions. Part two teaches students how to craft an effective pattern of human change. It guides them through the writing and re-writing of "Five (Not So Easy) Pieces"--five short screenplays of increasing length and complexity--focusing on a specific principle of dramatic technique: The Discovery, The Decision, The Boxing Match, The Improbable Connection, and The Long Short Screenplay. Part Three presents the five screenplays used throughout the book to illustrate the dramatic principles that have been discussed, and includes interviews with the screenwriters, a look at where they are now and what they are doing, and brief discussion of how each film evolved.

* The only screenwriting book that includes a DVD that contains performances of the short films and screenplays that are featured in the book! Praise for the first edition: "In this beautifully written and inspiring book, Claudia Johnson leads the reader through the process of writing the short film, along the way illuminating something much bigger--how to write great drama in any form. A very accessible book, well-researched and full of original thinking, *Crafting Short Screenplays That Connect* adds an important part to the literature of screenwriting and filmmaking, and will undoubtedly lead to some great short films." - Linda Seger, author, *Making a Good Script Great* "Crafting Short Screenplays that Connect would make a good addition to any screenwriter's library...a very accessible book for aspiring screenwriters." - Videomaker "Whether you want to write short screenplays because you want some practice before you go the distance, or because it's an assignment for your film class, 'Crafting Short Screenplays That Connect' is for you. It is explicit in its detail and direction. What is perhaps the most unique part of this guide is the fact that it contains five short screenplays that illustrate dramatic principles she teaches." - Jason Antebi, *Done Deal* (scriptsales.com) "My students respond well to her emphasis on connection being as important as conflict. They seem to be inspired to write more compelling work by the less academic/more personally explorative tone." - Saul Fussiner, Hunter College Film Media Praise for the second edition: "If you are interested in making short films, buy this book...This book is written with authority, the voice of experience and, more importantly, with love and humour, drawing in experiences from other screenwriters along the way." - Focus magazine "I am pleased to see a screenplay book which finds an alternative to placing conventional conflict and structure at the center of the writing universe! The emphasis on first finding emotional connection between the author and screenplay and then the developing the connection between the screenplay and audience is very fresh and creativity-enhancing." - Mick Hurbis-Cherrier, Hunter College, City University of New York "I chose this book because it reflects what I believe about scriptwriting--that the technical aspects can always be fixed, but that without a story that has heart and meaning, technical competency doesn't matter." - Anne Orwin, School of Film and Animation, Rochester Institute of Technology "Johnson's book is unique...it openly addresses the 'groove' that traditional Hollywood narrative has worn

into our minds and imaginations and provides real ways to go beyond these cliches to write more emotionally impactful stories.' M. Heather Hartley, Pennsylvania State University
About the Author
Florida State University
Screenwriter in Residence
Claudia Hunter Johnson, Ph.D. has written numerous screenplays for feature film and television productions, including two documentary specials commissioned by the National Endowment for the Arts. Her last screenplay, *Obscenity* (co-written with Matt Stevens), was a finalist for the 1997 Sundance Screenwriters Lab. She has written several award-winning full-length and one-act plays. Her many awards include the Lorraine Hansberry Award, American National Theatre West Award, and Academy Award. In 1993, she won the inaugural PEN/Newman's Own First Amendment Award for her campaign to restore banned literary classics to high school classrooms in Florida. Her widely acclaimed book, *Stifled Laughter: One Woman's Story About Fighting Censorship*, was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize.