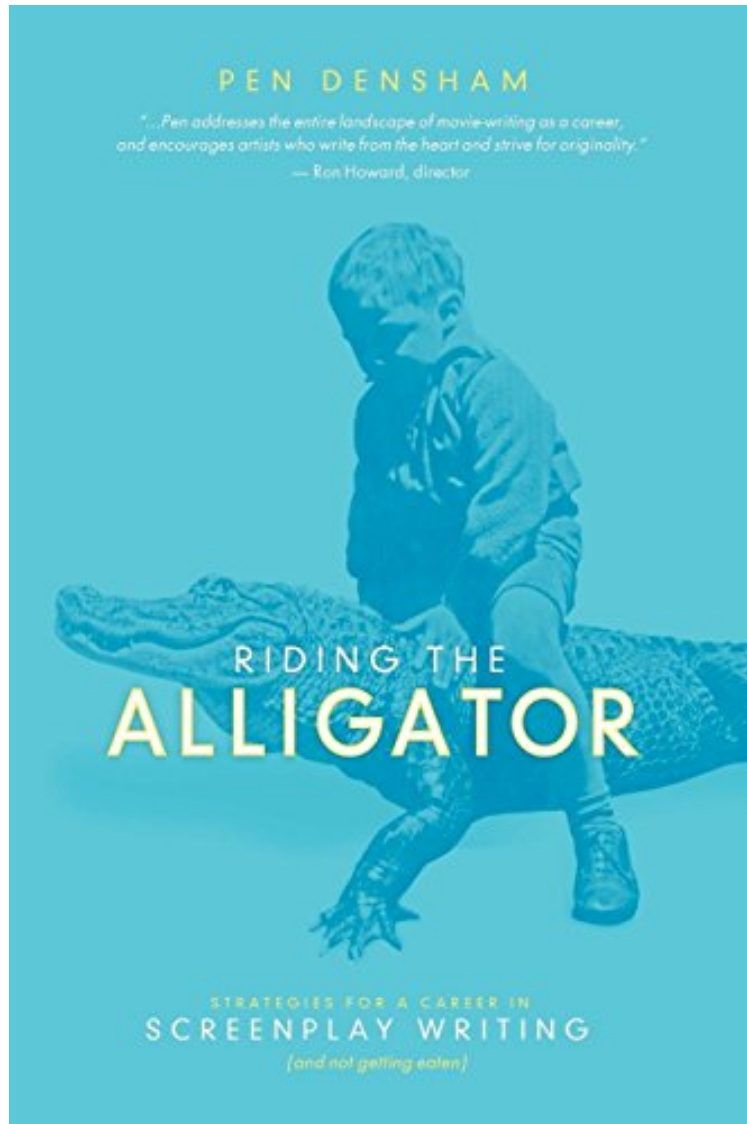


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Riding the Alligator: Strategies for a Career in Screenplay Writing (and not getting eaten)

Pen Densham

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Pen Densham : Riding the Alligator: Strategies for a Career in Screenplay Writing (and not getting eaten) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Riding the Alligator: Strategies for a Career in Screenplay Writing (and not getting eaten):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very informative. Doesn't teach you how to write a ...By berkVery informative. Doesn't teach you how to write a screenplay. It gives you advice as to how to play the game.0 of 0 people

found the following review helpful. Honesty - Wow What a Concept, DudeBy Charles FreericksPen Densham has taken a unique tack in writing about screenplay - he has simply laid out his own life story with honesty and transparency - then juxtaposed it against the stories of other Hollywood writers he knows and is friends with by allowing them to tell some of what they have gone through on their journeys, and for that we have to applaud him. So much that is written and spoken today about how to make it in Hollywood includes smokescreen and mirrors. Pen would have none of that. Pen tells his story in a way that encourages and educates the reader; a story that includes both hard work and luck - and most importantly a willingness to never say die, to keep at it and keep trying no matter what. Pen's personal delight at weaving tales and coming up with ideas all the time comes through in his writing. The truth is that you won't go on to become a major Hollywood success story just from reading this book - but there is no book out there that will do that for you. What you will do is walk into meetings a little bit smarter, start each script with a little bit more knowledge, begin each new project a step ahead of the game. You will benefit from Pen's wealth of knowledge and that is a very, very good thing. (At the end of the book - he gives you book reports on many of the screenwriting books out there today - a very useful tool for deciding which books you should read and use.) I thank him for writing this book and I think that after you read it, you will thank him too. You cannot argue with success (unless you prefer failure) and Pen Densham has had more success than most of us will ever dream of. This book is a very honest look at how he did it, and at how many of his friends in Hollywood did it. It's a breezy, easy read--well written and well worth your time--whether you have Hollywood dreams of your own, or you just enjoy learning about it. In the end it's a tool, but it's a tool created honestly from Pen's heart and it just may be the one that fits the screw, nut, or bolt you need to loosen for your own personal break.

Charles Freericks (former executive - CBS, Wilshire Court, NBC, and New Line) 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An inspiring, honest book by a great screenwriterBy FawazRIDING THE ALLIGATOR is a joy to read. It's fun, intelligent and honest, and it covers the full spectrum of a writer's life. Many of the ideas in the book are unique. I found the concept of the character "nugget" particularly interesting, as an alternative way of looking at character arcs. Pen's use of metaphor and his casual style makes his concepts easy to understand and remember. The book is also remarkably honest. Pen's personal voice comes across, with all its certainties and doubts, triumphs and setbacks. One chapter reproduces a negative review of one of his own films, MOLL FLANDERS, to make the point that an artist should ultimately ignore both good and bad criticism. There are whole chapters of quotes and aphorisms, and many more to be harvested in the rest of the book. Here's one that puts a memorable twist on a common struggle: "Decide to be a good host; free up a few hours of your time for your inspirations to visit." (226) I highly recommend Pen Densham's RIDING THE ALLIGATOR. If you only ever buy one screenwriting book, this should be it.

A bestseller that is the first artist-friendly screenwriting guide to success by an Oscar nominated Hollywood insider whose productions have grossed more than a billion dollars. Riding the Alligator is different from other screenwriting books in that it takes a non-dogmatic approach to finding your own personal creative process, and shares Pen's best kept secrets for selling your creations and yourself. Pen is your own, warm, funny, personal mentor as you read this book. Actress Robin Wright says: It is like getting a UC screenwriting course for under \$30!!!. Pen draws from his own extremely simple breakthrough techniques, shares his inspiring philosophy of finding a personal well of creativity from your inner voice, to overcoming the many challenges in a unique business, managing stress, the real secrets to selling your work, finding the right agent and being true to one's nature to create a lasting and passion filled career. The book is hailed by Hollywood luminaries like Ron Howard, Paul Haggis, Jeff Bridges, Morgan Freeman, as well as heads of major motion picture studios and academics from top film schools including USC, UCLA, NYU and AFI. Also included are short, personal essays by A-List Hollywood scripters such as Shane Black (Lethal Weapon, Kiss Kiss Bang Bang), Nia Vardalos (My Big Fat Greek Wedding), Eric Roth (Forrest Gump), Robin Swicord (Memoirs of a Geisha), Ron Shelton (Bull Durham/White Men Can't Jump), Laeta Kalogridis (Shutter Island/Avatar), Todd Robinson (White Squall/Phantom), Andrea Berloff (World Trade Center), Anthony Peckham (Sherlock Holmes) and more. Additionally, Pen provides an Instant Library summarizing 10 other popular books on Hollywood, as reviewed by his USC Film Students.

Pen's book is unique in that it addresses the entire landscape of movie writing as a career, and most especially encourages artists who write from the heart and strive for originality. -Ron Howard, Filmmaker If you're thinking about writing a screenplay, do yourself a favor and hop on Pen Densham's Alligator. The ride is enlightening. -Jeff Bridges, Oscar winner. His deep understanding of the screenwriting process is at once inspiring and empowering. -Robert Mandel, Dean of AFI His words on the creative process are inspiring and useful, and his insight into the business is essential. -Paul Haggis, Oscar Winning Filmmaker. This book would have saved me years! It's like having a close friend in the business to help guide you through the screenwriting process from idea, to script, to sale, to career. Jack Epps, Jr., Chair, Writing for Screen and TV, USC Pen's book is wise, encouraging, helpful and kind everything the business of moviemaking is sometimes not. -Tom Rothman (recent) Co-Chairman, Fox It is one of the few books on the market that comes from a screenwriter who has actually been in the trenches. -Philip Taylor, writer/professor -

