

Film & Documentary Script Writing Process

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ABSTRACT

Film and documentary script writing is easy process. It's related to our real lives, ideas and emotions, mind and passion, revolve in different spheres altogether. If we can see any emotional seen in film or documentary, we react immediately. In reel life they are meaningful the instant they happen. A well-written film and documentary script is a channel through which you can create feeling and epiphany at will. That is one motive why it is possibly the most critical facet of the filmmaking process. The script consists of scene headings, character names, dialogues, actions etc. Rich intelligence related to the movie can be extracted easily and accurately from each component of the script. But since the script does not contain time information, additional processes are required to synchronize the script with the movie. Many filmmakers write a paper edit after shooting in place of a script. This process has and does work with many types of films. However in most of the films, the filmmaker will ask the question what should I shoot. Now it is imperative to start out with a well-written script, whether or not things change during the shooting process. Frequently preparing a script before can make the difference between a bad film and a good film. Following the principals of script writing techniques we make best, a good film and a great film.

Keyword: Film, Documentary, Script Writing, and Shooting Script

Introduction:

Good script is combining the several audiovisual and story fundamentals together seamlessly. It is using story and script writing techniques in an effective way. A film script can be a great calling card for a writer. Films and documentary are not a lesser form of cinematic storytelling. In fact writing them requires the careful same skills as writing a feature length script though on a lesser scale. If we see a dead body in the film. We respond as soon as with emotion perhaps even thoughtful the waste of life and questioning our own life. Though if we were to see a dead body on a street as we drove by our instant reaction may be shock even revulsion. A well-written film script is an instrument through which you can generate emotion or epiphany at will. That is one reason why it is possibly the most critical feature of the filmmaking procedure. The script is also regularly the most underrated aspect of the documentary process. Frequently preparing a script beforehand can make the difference between a good & bad film.

1. Two Stages of the Film & Documentary Scriptwriting:

1.1. Pre-Shooting Script: The shooting script is more elaborate, precise, overwritten version of the screenplay. Different what common sense may suggest the screenwriter does not write the shooting script. The director alongside his cinematographer writes it. While both discuss their ideas and shot plan desired for the movie. Pre-shooting script is a conceptual map for your shooting trip. It combines research and outlines the film's story providing a visual guideline for the shoot. It uses the similar format and basics as a post-shoot script and can be as comprehensive. Pre shooting is general dependent on the evidence available to the scriptwriter at that stage. Some director-scriptwriters regularly combine the shooting script and shot list the two are separate units. A shooting script rarely delves into detailed aspects of production unless integral to the story.

1.2. Post-Shooting Script: Post shooting scripts are a necessary part of the postproduction process. They can either be done in house with your own production team. You can outsource them to a specialist service. A postproduction script is your movie on paper shooting step by step. The post shooting script combines theoretical

elements along with audiovisual information gathered at the production stage and may also include any new knowledge gathered along the way. It then weaves it all together into a moviemaking story that is used by the filmmaker to edit the documentary. The post shooting script often includes descriptions of shots and actions and is quite comprehensive. Again the post shooting script should not be confused with a paper edit that contains detailed shot and production information.

2. Feature of Film & Documentary Script Writing:

There are a few unique features of film that a screenwriter must consider:

2.1 Find A Story: At first preferably find a story that you love. This is going to be a process that will seem difficult and insuperable at times. So it better be about something you do not mind thinking and excruciating about for several months. Research your particular type and stay with in the rules of that genre. If you are looking to sell you are scripting. The film industry is always looking for marketability over innovation. That is not saying a little originality is a bad thing.

2.2 Scriptwriting Software: Not getting it will only annoy you and potential readers who are used to seeing dialog located at an exact four inches from whichever side of the margin. If you cannot have enough money Movie Magic or Final Draft or Montage try Celtx. I am starting to use it now. It is pretty much fully functional and adds the option of placing your scripts in an online file for collaboration and distribution.

2.3 Formulate Premise: Write a short sentence of the fundamental idea that drives the plot. It will help you to classify if your film is too complex and seek feedback.

2.4 Three-Act Structure: Yeah so a lot of established writers have done away with it and done well but that is since they are established writers. Producers are willing to take chances on them because they have made money previously. Most movies are written in the format of The Hero's Journey. Which there are a number of articles on the web relating to The Hero's Journey.

2.5 Visual: The words that a scriptwriter writes will never be read by anybody. They will only be seen and heard as images on a screen. The most important skill of a scriptwriter is that he must be able to write visually. Explaining a concept in a script is useless. If the audience cannot look at the theory it is not worth writing. A writer must think is what I am about to write visual in nature? If not then how can I make it visual.

2.6 Motion: Most of the images you see on screen have action. It is what splits moving images from pictures. A scriptwriter into active images must translate stories for film.

2.7 Time and Space: A film does not adhere to our dimensions of time and space. When made it continues to exist in a little bubble of its own exceeding the limits of our present lives. A scriptwriter must understand that writing for a film means creating a being that should have a lifetime of its own long afterward the writer has moved on from it.

2.8 Subjective: By simply pointing the camera in a specific way a subjective choice has been made. The very nature of film like our eyes is to focus on what is well-thought-out to be the object of interest and remove what lies beyond the lens thereby losing all sense of objectivity.

2.9 Chooses Audience: The scriptwriter must always keep in mind that each film chooses its own audience dependent on how he chooses to tell the story. By varying a script he may be show the film to very different people in the end.

2.10 Accurately: Film footage does not classify between objects does not hide cheat or lie. It reliably reproduces what the camera sees in complete detail. It is the filmmaker who must shoot objects in a specific way to include or remove details.

2.11 Emphasizes & Emotionalizes: Films can suggest different kinds of reactions in the audience from grief to anger. They can brand the audience think and refer powerful messages crossways to them. When it comes to movie in particular there are a few more things to be kept in awareness before starting to write a script. Movie scripts do share many mutual elements with scripts for fiction films shorts and features comparable.

2.12 Dialogue: Dialogue is best written after you have written the breakdown of the script this way it makes sure that your story is told visually. Keep dialogue simple and make sure it is not on the nose. If you are stressed you could improvise it in a rehearsal.

2.13 Description: Memorize each page is roughly equivalent to a minute in film time. Write action and describe how something feels in its place of writing description. And finally and most outstandingly keep it simple and easy to read.

Feature of Documentary

2.14 Documentary Deals With Fact Not Fiction: Most importantly documentaries research into a nonfictional world with real occasions, real problems, real people and real feelings. Everything seen and heard on screen is grounded in accurateness and has no element of fiction.

2.15 Documentary Is flexible: Unlike fictional films documentaries have no stable visual and conceptual guidelines per say. It is unbearable to concretize events or choose one way or the other about how the film will turn out ultimately. There are fewer rules to be followed that reflect the fact that there are few instructions in the real world as well. This makes it more challenging but noticeably more exciting.

2.16 Movement & Action: At the very heart of documentary there is an issue and a message at hand. The temporary on of this message to the audience is usually the reason that the film was made in the first place. Documentaries have long been used as an instrument to motivate change in their audience be it social change.

2.17 Documentary Involves Less Control. Unlike fiction films, documentaries must be shot in the real world and show real events happening. Often, the filmmaker is powerless to control the occasion he is shooting as well as the circumstances surrounding the event. It is difficult to think about lighting when in the middle of a sniper shootout. There is less control over the subject in documentary though this original improvised element is often the very charm of true-life films.

2.18 Credibility: The emergence of the documentary as a recognized cinematic genre in the 1920's inherited the trust of the audience in the veracity of the image as a faithful representation of the real. Today we are much more skeptical even with documentaries. Spectator's trust once lost is gone forever so a documentary in this day and age must continually provide credible information and sources to put a distrustful audience at ease.

2.19 What is the budget of the film? You may ask yourself what difference does a film's budget make to a script. The answer is enormous. It would be easy to write a powerful act about an ancient battle in a foreign country but the reality of it is that the film crew would have to fly there. Hire hundreds of men use sumptuous costumes and props and perhaps even hire-trained horses for authenticity.

3. Before Shooting Script Writing Process:

3.1 Research: Once you've settled on your documentary idea, time to start digging. Leave no rock left unturned.

3.2 Create List: Based on your research start creating a list of potential characters/interviews basic storylines areas of probable conflict and emotion. Ask yourself what's at the heart of this story and how do I show that visually.

3.3 Get Style:Decide the look, feel and style of your documentary. Search web videos or watch Television for ideas. Netflix is a great resource for documentaries.

3.4 Shooting Script: Often with documentaries the script cannot really be written until after the footage has been shot and you start piecing the story together based on what you exposed with your camera. However writing an outline at the beginning can be an invaluable guide to point you in the correct direction.Specially to be able to look back as a reference when the chaos of shooting can get you off track.

3.5 Get Creative:Think about some unique and creative ways you can spice up your movie and give it that wow factor. How to write a script creatively involves addition special elements such as stop motion, time-lapse, cartoons, recreations, etc.

4. After Shooting Script Writing Process:

4.1 Log Tapes:This may seem like a tedious and boring task at first but trust me you will thank physically in the end. This is where you begin to log and categorize the various pieces of your puzzle.

4.2 Review The Big Picture:What are the main elements like characters and plots that have surfaced through shooting process that create the wall hanging of your overall story. What are the key moments?

4.3 Create Scenes: Take these instants and divide your documentary into mini-stories (scenes) that together create the documentary.

4.4 Build a Roller Coaster:Take these acts and begin creating a Roller Coaster ride for your audience. What kind of ride are you taking them on? Think about the great moments in your story and how to write a script to build up those moments. A fantastic book that explains this process is writing great screenplays for film and TV by Dona Cooper.

4.5 Villain and Hero:Additional central part of scriptwriting is determining the villain and hero in your story. A hero/villain can be a person thing or event.

4.6 Opening, Middle & An End: Every story has an opening middle and end. If you can outline your story in these three general classifications then you can begin to fill in the details.

4.7 The Ending:If you have a lot of footage and knowledge to work with a simple way to clarify how to start building your script is to think about how you are going to end your documentary. Everything else leads up to that.

4.8 Start Strong:I cannot express enough the importance of how you start your movie. This is when you hook the audience and set the tone for the entire program. The beginning of your film should:

4.9 Create curiosity: Set up the problem or issue in the most forceful way possible to tease or grab your audience's interest. Create a situation that makes the audience ask why is this happening.

4.10 Script Template:Finally once you have a general outline of your story begin building your script using a two-column script template one column for audio and one column for video.

5. Role Of The Scriptwriting Software:

You may or may not need scriptwriting software to help you write your documentary script. A basic column

Audio Video script template is often plenty for the average script. A two-column template can be created for free from your word processor. However if you are shooting a lot of reenactments for your documentary some scriptwriting software could originate in handy to help you block out the scenes. Celtx or Final Draft is good choices for this. Another area where software can be helpful is if you have heaps of distributed information and you have no idea how to structure the knowledge into an interesting storyline. Application such as Scrivener or Stories are super helpful for this. A producer for PBS's Frontline told me he has used both Scrivener and Stories and likes them both. However, if pushed to choose one, he says Scrivener is a better all-in-one solution for documentaries.

6. The Plot:

The words to plot literally mean to figure out a path to enter or exit a situation. In a story sense the plot is when a story navigates through branching possibilities to choose a path that will lead to a resolution. The plot of a story is where every sequence in the film makes the next one inevitable because of their events and design in time. Every story needs to have a plot, no matter how small, to move the story forward towards a goal. There need not be dramatic twists and turns or high-pressure suspense or shocking surprise. A plot can merely be a selection of events and their patterns displayed through time in the film. The scriptwriter must make event choices what to include and what to exclude and place them in a particular order. The plot is a unifying force that holds a story together. If the film were a human body then the plot would be the spine creating unity between all the elements. Even when the story portrays chaos the plot is what keeps the audience on track. The plot always adheres to a controlling idea, which is the ultimate point that the film is trying to make. The plot of the film is designed as a larger whole by the scriptwriter. In many cases, the film starts a plot in one direction and then makes it change direction sometime during a film towards a completely new goal. This sweeping change that takes the film from one condition to a changed condition by the end is called the Plot Arc.

Types Of Plot: There are broadly three types of plot.

6.1 The Arch Plot: The Arch plot is a classic plot design. It has well expressed characters that face situations outside of themselves. The progression is more social and external and the treatment is set in nonstop linear time. The Arch plot has a strong sense of reality and there is a closed ending. The plot arc has absolute irreversible change.

6.2 The MiniPlot: The Miniplot is a minimalist form of arch plot. It features trimmed, simpler elements with less fuss over the details. There is an economy of both design and treatment and cinematographic rules along with the rules of story are less rigidly followed. The elements of a miniplot can include internal or personal progression an open ending and multiple protagonists.

6.3 The AntiPlot: The Anti plot reverses all classical and contradicts most of the old-style elements of story and structure. The idea possibly is to ridicule the very idea of formal principles. Although uncommon so far in documentaries films with antiplot are becoming extra popular. These kinds of films tend to be ambitious revolutionary and even extravagant. Their fundamentals often include coincidence nonlinear time and inconsistent realities. Many films also have subplots. These are lesser plots that make up different real-time and often contradictory parts of a larger plot. Subplots are self-contained stories that adhere to the controlling idea of the film but also add a new related dimension to the film. Most movies have one or more subplots. As they often manage to deal with issues that are tied in with other issues.

Conclusion:

In this article we have absorbed on fundamental principals of film and documentary scripting process. Mostly film and documentary script completely based on research. Beforehand you start shooting you need to have an idea about what your story will be. As with dramatic films their needs to be interesting characters conflicts and plots. Different dramatic films these should occur naturally exclusive of directing the people in your documentary. Write down an outline of what you think your film and documentary scripting will be about. This

framework needs to include the characters their conflict and how you imagine their conflict will be solved. Your film and documentary will change as you begin shooting so right now all you need is a vague framework. Generate a list of questions that you want to ask your characters. These questions will help to develop the characters and explore their conflict. As you shoot, your characters answers will provide you the meat of your documentary. Instigate shooting now that your shooting script is done. Make sure you cover all of the questions you had but be ready to take your movie in a different direction if a new better conflict arises. As your conflict changes keep editing your shooting script.

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