



## Writing the Character-Centered Screenplay, Updated and Expanded edition

By Andrew Horton

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"We need good screenwriters who understand character." Everywhere Andrew Horton traveled in researching this book—from Hollywood to Hungary—he heard the same refrain. Yet most of the standard how-to books on screenwriting follow the film industry's earlier lead in focusing almost exclusively on plot and formulaic structures.

With this book, Horton, a film scholar and successful screenwriter, provides the definitive work on the character-based screenplay. Exceptionally wide-ranging—covering American, international, mainstream, and "off-Hollywood" films, as well as television—the book offers creative strategies and essential practical information.

Horton begins by placing screenwriting in the context of the storytelling tradition, arguing through literary and cultural analysis that all great stories revolve around a strong central character. He then suggests specific techniques and concepts to help any writer—whether new or experienced—build more vivid characters and screenplays. Centering his discussion around four film examples—including *Thelma & Louise* and *The Silence of the Lambs*—and the television series, *Northern Exposure*, he takes the reader step-by-step through the screenwriting process, starting with the development of multi-dimensional characters and continuing through to rewrite. Finally, he includes a wealth of information about contests, fellowships, and film festivals.

Espousing a new, character-based approach to screenwriting, this engaging, insightful work will prove an essential guide to all of those involved in the writing and development of film scripts.

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### Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Tired of the hundreds of plot- and structure-oriented script books on the market? Tired of the "formula writing" espoused in an equal number of screen-writing seminars and weekend workshops? Horton (*The Films of George Roy Hill*, LJ 11/15/84) walks away with an Oscar in the "valuable tools for the prospective scripter" category with his latest rendering. He takes the reader step-by-step through the screen-writing process, with an emphasis on tried-and-true methods of developing stronger and more imaginative characters. Fully drawn characters are Horton's forte, and he pulls out every stop in his quest to educate the reader, even including a 14-week "character-building" exercise. Obstacles to writing the character-centered script are also discussed. Instructional books don't get much better than this. A great value; essential for all screen-writing collections.

*Marty D. Evansvold, Magnolia P.L., Tex.*

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Review

"Distinctive because it moves beyond a how-to-text in addressing dramatic theory as it applies to character. . . . The scholarly and practical bibliography at the end of each of three sections in the book provides valuable sources for further study."--Choice

From the Inside Flap

"I have been searching for a book such as Horton's for years—and finally it has arrived. Horton's penetrating analysis and graceful writing style open up the key topic of characterization as no other book has. . . . I recommend it highly."—Paul Lucey, University of Southern California

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