



ELTE BTK Department of Film Studies
1088 Budapest, Múzeum krt. 6-8., főépület
Phone number: +36 1 411-6500
filmtudomany@emc.elte.hu



Budapest Film Academy
1224 Budapest, Sik utca 19/b.
Phone number: + 36 1 355-2223
admission@budapestfilmacademy.com

Masterclass with Beth Serlin American screenwriting professor

In cooperation of Loyola Marymount University, Budapest Film Academy and Eotvos Lorand University we offer a high level, intensive screenwriting course. Beth Serlin, screenwriting professor from Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, gives seven film analysis lectures at the Múzeum körút campus of ELTE.

The tuition fee for the seven lectures:

- For those, who are not enrolled at the BFA screenwriting course: 770 EUR
- For those, who are currently attending the BFA screenwriting course: 539 EUR

We recommend this unique and master series of lectures to both beginner and advanced students.

Registration: admission@budapestfilmacademy.com

Deadline: March 3rd, 2020

Detailed information about the program and Beth Serlin can be found on the following pages.

Scene and Sequence:

How to Reveal Character through Structure

March 9th, 2020
9:00-14:00

The aim of this seminar is to explore the precise craft of writing scenes for film, and building those scenes into longer sequences. By studying the microcosm of a scene, writers can have a better grasp of screenwriting's core fundamentals and deepen their understanding of how character drives all action.

The seminar will focus on the following topics:

- What is a Scene?
- The Basic Dramatic Predicament
- Character Fundamentals
- The Unity of Opposites
- Character Triangles – the Scene
- How Character Creates a Scene
- Scene Form – status quo, conflict, rising action, culmination, resolution and twist
- What is a Sequence?
- Sequence Form

These additional topics will focus on :

- Character Want vs. Character Need
- Character Triangles - the Feature
- The Nature of Antagonism
- Theme

The seminar will be a mixture of lecture, screening, discussion and some in-class exercises. Time allowing we will move into macro topics in preparation for full feature film analysis.

Assignment: Watch *Lethal Weapon*
Read Glossary/Character/ Structure Folder
Read Lethal Weapon folder
Write Triangle Notes
Identify: break into Act 2/break into Act 3

Feature Film Analysis:

Structure and How it's Built by Character

March: 11, 14, 16, 21, 23, 30

This seminar will focus on the analysis of 6 feature films from the screenwriter's point of view. Each analysis will be an in-depth study of the story's dramaturgical elements and will deepen the student's understanding of these principles and techniques so they can use them in the development of their own creative work.

The learning objectives of this seminar include:

- Acquire an understanding of film dramaturgy, character development, conflict, tension and theme
- Build a 'toolbox' of screenwriting techniques such as: planting and pay-off, polarity, sequencing, advertising, revelation and recognition
- Understanding feature structure fundamentals: Act Breaks, Point of Attack, Reversals, Sequencing
- Study a variety of story patterns and compare different narrative structures
- Study diverse protagonists to compare how their stories evolve

Each session will begin with a discussion of an assigned film's character world. We will break down the film by protagonist, antagonist and pivotal characters, including their individual wants and needs. This will lead to identifying the film's theme.

It is imperative that each student screen the film independently before class so they can attempt the character breakdown (triangles) on their own **before** our discussion.

After our initial character discussion, we will do a complete analysis of the film's structure, sequence-by-sequence, and discuss different story-telling techniques and tools such as:

- Different types of Tension: Mystery, Suspense, Dramatic Irony
- Exposition
- Character Introduction
- Flashback, Narration, Fractured Narrative

Suggested reading Screenwriting: The Sequence Approach by Paul Joseph Gulino

THE SCHEDULE

March 11 – 16:00-19:00

Course Overview

Discuss and Analyze: *Lethal Weapon*

Assignment: Watch *Silence of the Lambs* – Triangle Notes –

Identify: Point of Attack/Break into Act 2/Break into Act 3/Act 3 Twist

March 14 – 9:00-14:00

Discuss and Analyze: *Silence of the Lambs*

Assignment: Watch *Just Sex and Nothing Else* – Triangle Notes

Identify: Break into Act 2/First Culmination/Break into Act 3

March 16 – 9:00-14:00

Discuss and Analyze: *Just Sex an Nothing Else*

Assignment: Watch *Good Will Hunting* – Triangle Notes

Identify: Extra triangle, Break into Act 2/ Break into Act 3

March 21 – 9:00-14:00

Discuss and Analyze: Good Will Hunting

Assignment: Watch Room – Read Folder /Triangle Notes

Identify: Act 2 goal/1st Culmination-Reversal/ Act 3 goal

Why this structure for these characters?

March 23 – 9:00-14:00

Discuss and Analyze: *Room*

Assignment: Watch *To Die For* – Read Folder/ Triangle Notes

Identify: Act 2 goal/Act 3 goal/ Act 3 twist

Why this structure for this character?

March 30 – 9:00-14:00

Discuss and Analyze: To Die For

Wrap up

Beth Serlin

**Professor of Screenwriting,
School of Film and Television at Loyola Marymount University**

Los Angeles, California, US



Biography

Beth Serlin is an international screenwriter. She won Best Screenplay at the Tokyo Film Festival for *Beyond Silence (Jenseits der Stille)*, which was then nominated for Best Foreign Language film in the 1998 Academy Awards.

She's since written for the major German broadcasters Pro-7, ZDF, Sat1 and ARD. Beth has also worked as a story analyst for New Line Cinema, CAA, Spring Creek Productions and the Sundance Institute.

As an educator, she has led script development seminars in Mexico and throughout Europe.

Beth believes in the universal nature of film language and that the craft of screenwriting promotes communication across borders, cultures and linguistic barriers.

Industry Expertise

Education/Learning, Training and Development, Research

Areas of Expertise

Short and Feature Film Writing, Adaptation, Writing for Production

Education

University of Southern California
MFA Screenwriting

University of Michigan
B.A. Arts and Ideas in the Humanities/Creative Writing