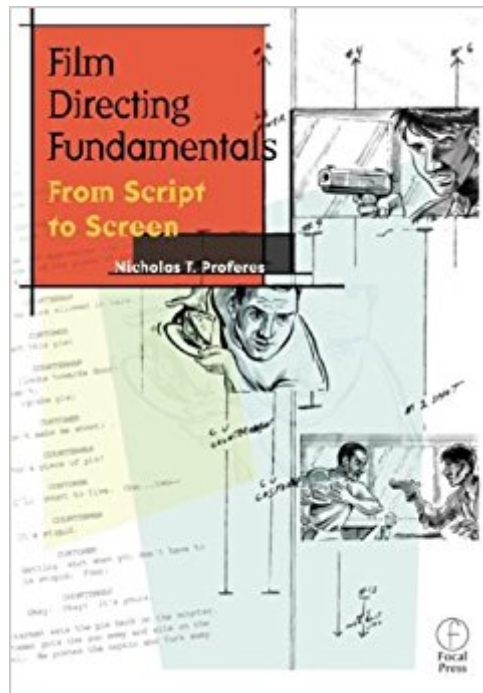




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Film Directing Fundamentals: From Script To Screen



Synopsis

Film Directing Fundamentals gives the novice director a set of specific techniques for developing the fundamental elements of this craft in realizing a screenplay for the screen, along with an introduction to the narrative/dramatic elements of film. In Part One, Nicholas Proferes provides a short screenplay to take the student step-by-step through the "detective" work necessary to uncover disparate dramatic elements such as character, circumstance, wants, and actions. This initial investigation identifies the dramatic essence of each moment, organizes them into a dramatic unit, and leads to an overall design for rendering the script on the screen. This section includes work with actors, staging, and use of the camera as an active narrator. Students are encouraged to use floor plans and storyboards to aid in the previsualization of the film. Part Two features a scene-by-scene analysis of three feature films by master directors. These are designed to be used in conjunction with the viewing of the films and allows the student to fully understand how the dramatic and narrative categories of film language are used by master directors. In addition, nine other films are analyzed for their distinctive styles and differing dramatic construction. An appendix contains the grammatical rules of film language, the cinematic categories of time and space, and essential questions directors should ask concerning their screenplays.

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Customer Reviews

"An admirable overview of the nuts and bolts of directing, Film Directing Fundamentals takes a unique approach in discussing the craft...Full of interesting observations, this book could be a welcome addition to the aspiring director's bookshelf." - Videomake Magazine

"For the aspiring

director looking to develop craft and technique, this book would be a step in the right direction." - Kurt Patrick Turner
Advanced Praise: "Just bring your talent, add a touch of luck, and the rest you will find in this book."
Milos Forman, film director
"I am amazed by the simplicity with which Professor Proferes explicates complex ideas. Film Directing Fundamentals is valuable not only for film directors, but also for actors and anyone interested in the creation of dramatic art."
Andrie Serban, international theatre and opera director, and Professor at Columbia University's Theater Division
"Nick Proferes doesn't tell you how to direct, which would be as silly as telling you what to direct. Instead, he does something much more valuable: He explains how directors actually think their way through the job."
James Schamus, Associate Professor of Film at Columbia University, producer and screenwriter (The Ice Storm and Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon)
"There are many books on directing, but none in my opinion have the depth and accessibility of Nick Proferes's. This treasure trove of insight and inspiration is a master class from a master teacher that clearly illuminates, step by step, the building blocks necessary to create meaningful cinematic storytelling with dramatic punch."
Alex Zamm, director and screenwriter (Chairman of the Board, My Date with the President's Daughter), and former student of the author -- Review

Hands-on approach to film directing for beginners --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Learn from the big picture to the nuances. I have a horrible memory and I find having the 'big picture' helps keep everything organized.
#1 - The first big plus; I have been learning to write screenplays for several years. This book helped me understand what was wrong (and right) in my last two writings. It turned them into a movie and showed 'where and why' they failed.
#2 - Secondly; It demonstrated that writing and directing are much more integrated, than one would imagine. Learn them both and become better at each. Start with the big picture, this book accomplishes that.

The book was OK I would recommend it to anyone studying film.

This book pulls no punches on the minute technical details that go unnoticed but not unexperienced in the director's craft. It's like taking a great class in the technical structure of directing. I haven't had

this much fun reading a film book in a long time.

....the first book to make sense of it all...where to put the camera...how to stage the scene...how to help actors find the performance...it teaches these things as much as any book can, and will save you the cost of one third of film school

For an aspiring film or video director interested in analyzing scripts for dramatic elements and then planning the staging for the camera, this book is an outstanding introduction. It gives both a general overview of the process and then analyzes several scenes from famous films. Its emphasis is on the dramatic content first, then the visual. It is not strong in the area of shot planning, storyboarding, or complex shot design sometimes seen in modern films. And it does not deal with subtle editing effects. But it is a good introduction to classic film direction and presented in a classroom style. Someone with a strong interest in film drama, from a viewer's point of view, might also find this book interesting.

This book taught me that making a film is an alive and organic process rather than a lab experiment in search of the perfect formula. Proferes' concepts of "spine" and "fulcrum" for example, are essential to not get lost in the midst of any film industry development process, in which so many voices tend to give an opinion. The author insists in the need of finding both the mechanisms of the text and the director's "whys" when tackling a story and being truthful to them until the very last decision of the process. His method of "detective work" on the screenplay is a very tough "bootcamp" with yourself in which no production excuses are possible: just director and story. If completed throughoutly, one will get to really know the story in hand, its nature and soul, like one gets to know a person only through intense sharing. That detective work will make pristine clear to the director what is his personal take of the material and will help detecting vital needs, including those painful rewrites. This intimate and utter intense work between director and story is the most direct translation of what it has been named so many times as "the director as an author". Proferes' approach to filmmaking is beyond trends. Timeless. His method could serve anyone that is serious about making films that talks to us directly, way beyond the actual "cool" syndrome. It just talks about drama, about what makes cry or not. And why.

This book is filled with valuable and helpful information for budding directors. I'm currently in the process of putting everything in this book to good use. The thing I like about this book is that it's not

just one of those books that says you need to storyboard everything, because unless you have good drawing skills that really isn't feasible. The book gives an in depth look on how to pre-plan your film shot by shot and the use of floor plans to illustrate camera set-up's. It's so simple, but this is the type of thing that will make you prepared when you come to shoot, instead of just winging it.

Finally there's a book on directing that goes further than just telling you how much headspace to include in your framing. This book, as well as Stefan Sharff's "The Elements of Cinema", is one of those rare ones that is refreshingly to the point. It told me how to block my actors in relation to each other, the camera and the story. Proferes shows ways to make your short or feature as powerful as possible by singling out the most important moments in the story, sequence or scene. With that particular moment in mind, he hands you the tools to arrange these moments within the scenes to make them stand out visually and make them palpable to the audience.

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