FILM CLASS BY
OLAF DE FLEUR

FROM IDEA
TO VIDEO

"FILMMAKERS ARE SEEKERS, QUESTION ASKERS, LISTENERS, TESTERS, POETS"

IDEA TO VIDEO
OLAF DE FLEUR | WEBSITE: **FILMWRITE.CO**

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YOUR IDEA

In this first lesson, we will talk about your idea for this class.

The result will be a FILM SCENE, SEQUENCE, or a SHORT FILM with a duration of about 3 minutes. I provide you with numerous examples and a frame of reference of what type of film or topic you can do for this class.

Getting to know your idea can almost be like playing a detective trying to solve a case. We want to gather and examine all the clues we can find. This can also be like planting seeds; the more we know about our idea, the more we grow. And over time, these seeds will transform into trees with the idea becoming clearer to you.

Because our end goal, is having so much information about our idea that will allow us to go A to B when we write our idea. Marking a beginning, middle and end.

TASK | Write down everything you know about your idea, big or small. This is your first draft and it's important to just keep it in a note form.

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THE POSTER TOOL

In this lesson, we will use images to develop our idea. One of the most powerful tools to start with in visual development is a tool I call the **POSTER TOOL**.

And it works like this. You have an idea, and instead of only writing about it, how about drawing out the poster.

What would the poster for your idea look like if you had to make it right now?

When we sketch out the poster, even just trying it, we make conscious what was not conscious before in a visual way—even though not perfect, making the poster will contribute to making our idea clearer to us. More importantly, it will hint at what the ever so illusive THEME for your idea could be.

TASK | Sketch or draw out a version of the poster for your idea in this class

POSTER TOOL | *"One of the ways to extract an idea is to think of it as a symbol. We can think about what images or symbols come to mind when we think of the idea."*

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THEME

Theme is one of the most complicated and the most important tool you can ever use for a story. A theme in the story, ties to your values and what you believe in life. The deeper you connect with the Theme, the more you will tell the story, the more passionate you will be about it. Knowing the Theme, knowing the value that the story represents for you, means that you will never get tired and always be passionate about your story because the Theme connects you to yourself.

Theme always comes in the form of a question in the end. But as a concept, a theme can be confusing because it is. If you think about theme, it is everywhere, for example, in a conversation. Conversational themes can be for example, 'the past' - turning that into a question could sound like: "Why can't we learn from our past mistakes?' - and as we develop that question even further into a better question, to make it more urgent: "What is the cost on the present time of not learning from past mistakes?"

In this lesson I'll give several examples on how you can discover the Theme in your idea.

TASK | Think about the **THEME** for your idea and see if you can turn it into a **QUESTION**

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FAIRY TALE TOOL

One of the fundamental story tools that I use is the **FAIRY TALE TOOL**. Simply put, this tool helps me make any idea that I get - more clear to me. The point here is not to make an actual fairytale out of your idea, but it is the 'trying' to do it, that will help you identify where you story might be somewhat unclear.

1. Start with "Once upon a time…"
2. Introduce Main Character
3. Introduce normal life
4. "Then one day…"
5. Reverse 'normal life'
6. Introduce 'threat' / 'danger'
7. Put 'Main Character' in danger
8. Believe that 'Main Character' doesn't have a chance against 'threat' / 'danger'
9. Resolve 'threat' / 'danger' with 'Main Character' finding solution

TASK | Write a Fairy Tale version of your
idea and practice making it more and more
clear with each try.
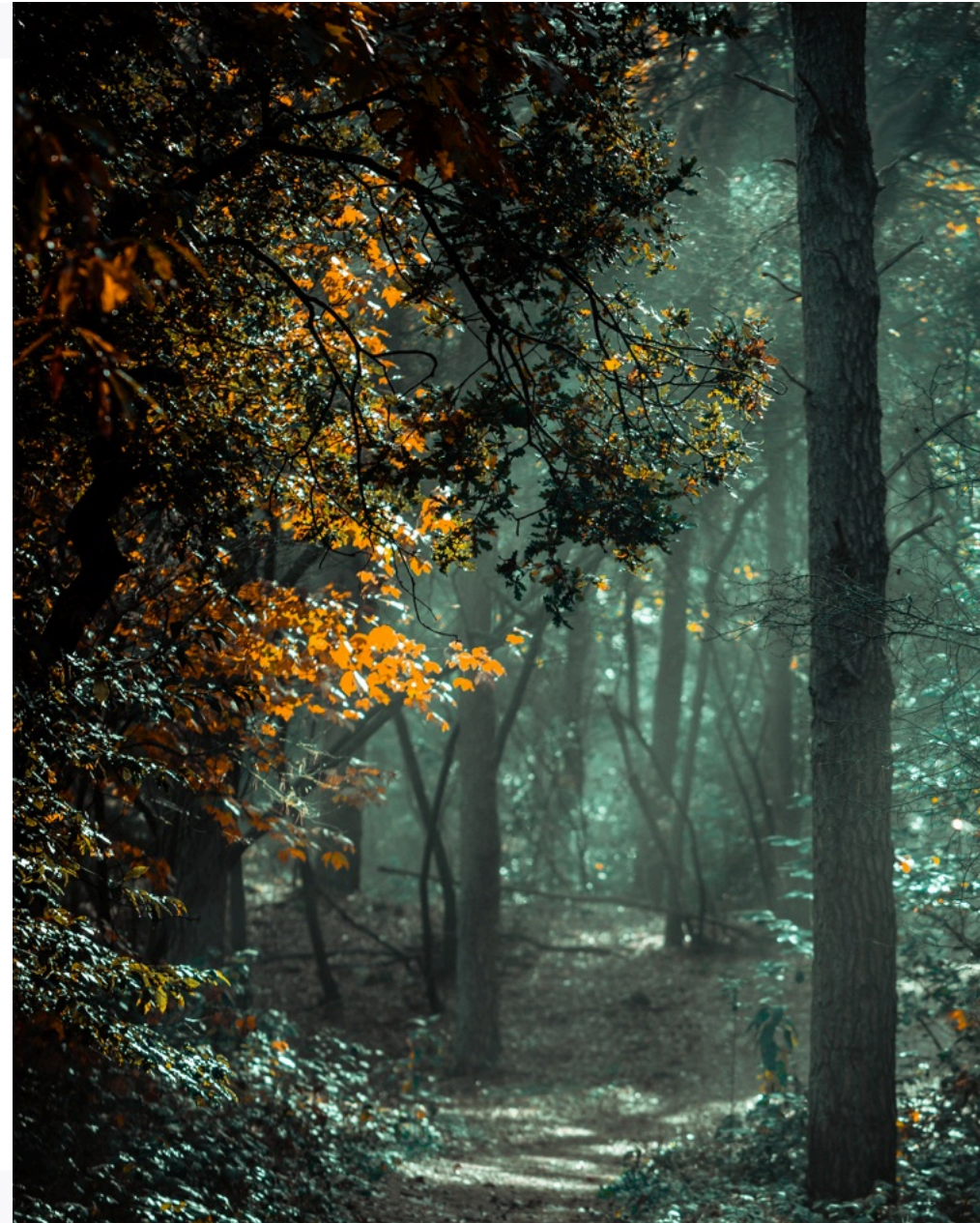
METAPHORS

In this section, I'm going to share with you one of the most powerful techniques I use to develop my ideas: using metaphors.

The process of getting an idea out of your mind and into the real world is unique to you. So when we use metaphors, it's important that we develop our personal metaphors because we all think differently.

I use metaphors to try and help myself understand the idea that wants to come out. For example, let's make a metaphor about using metaphors. I imagine that my mind is a river, and the idea is a fish in it; using metaphors is like using a tool to get the idea out (catch and release, of course).

In this lesson, I provide several examples of creating a metaphor that you can use to develop your idea.

TASK | Create a metaphor about how you extract your ideas. And follow up with trying to create a metaphor about your idea for this class

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WRITING YOUR IDEA

In this lesson, we're going to write the script for your idea. In this class, we are focusing on making a contained version of bringing our idea out to the real-world. It doesn't mean that your idea is contained or small, but in order to manage bigger film projects in the future, we need to learn to master the very details of a contained area of your idea as much as possible. A big part of that is **writing the script**.

In this lesson, I'm going to give you **four** specific options/methods on how you can do that.

TASK | Write the script for your idea, using one of the FOUR options discussed in this lesson

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SHOT-LIST & STORYBOARD

In these two lessons, SHOT LIST and STORYBOARD, we'll be taking a step-by-step approach to what shots/film frames you'd like to make for your idea.

It's essential to be patient with this process because even though you've written parts of your idea down - creating the image-shot-sequence that represents your script takes time and effort.

In the lessons, I provide several examples of how I create the shot-list and storyboards for the example film I'm making for this class.

TASKS | Create a shot list for your film and consider drawing out rough sequences in a storyboard format.

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FILMING I
VISUAL STYLE

In this lesson, I offer guidelines and examples on how visual consistency can provide the audience to trust you as a storyteller.

We want to be careful not to use random film styles, cutting from handheld to a drone shot to a tripod shot. Finding your visual style is important, but even more is the rhythm and rules you structure just like you were making a song.

TASKS | Reflect and decide what visual style works best for your idea

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FILMING I CAMERA ANGLES

In this lesson, you'll be doing a mini-film sequence to practice using camera angles to create a story within a moment.

Holding a camera and recording is, of course, easy. However, what is very often missing is how to or where to point the camera in each shot to structure and build a story out of our shots.

In this lesson, I'll give you a list of rules and parameters to keep in mind to learn how to use camera angles to tell a story.

TASKS | Follow the guidelines in this lesson to practice filming one subject using the tools in this lesson

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PRODUCING YOUR IDEA

In this lesson, we will demystify and break down the production process for your idea.

In this class, we are focusing on being indie filmmakers, which means going solo and doing as much as you can on your own.

That means holding our camera ourselves, writing our script, making a shot-list, editing, and so on.

In this lesson, I break down the process and provide you with the fundamentals of producing a mini-film.

TASKS | Create a production checklist using the guidelines in this lesson

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POST PRODUCTION

The post production lessons in this class will move us through the editing phase along with color and sound.

I will use the example film I'm making for this class to show you the specific steps I take to realize and complete my film.

The Edit Section is done in several stages, scene-by-scene until I bring the story together by unifying the scenes. From there I move to sound and color mastering in specific lessons.

TASKS | Edit your video in editing software and follow the steps in the post-production lessons to master sound and color.