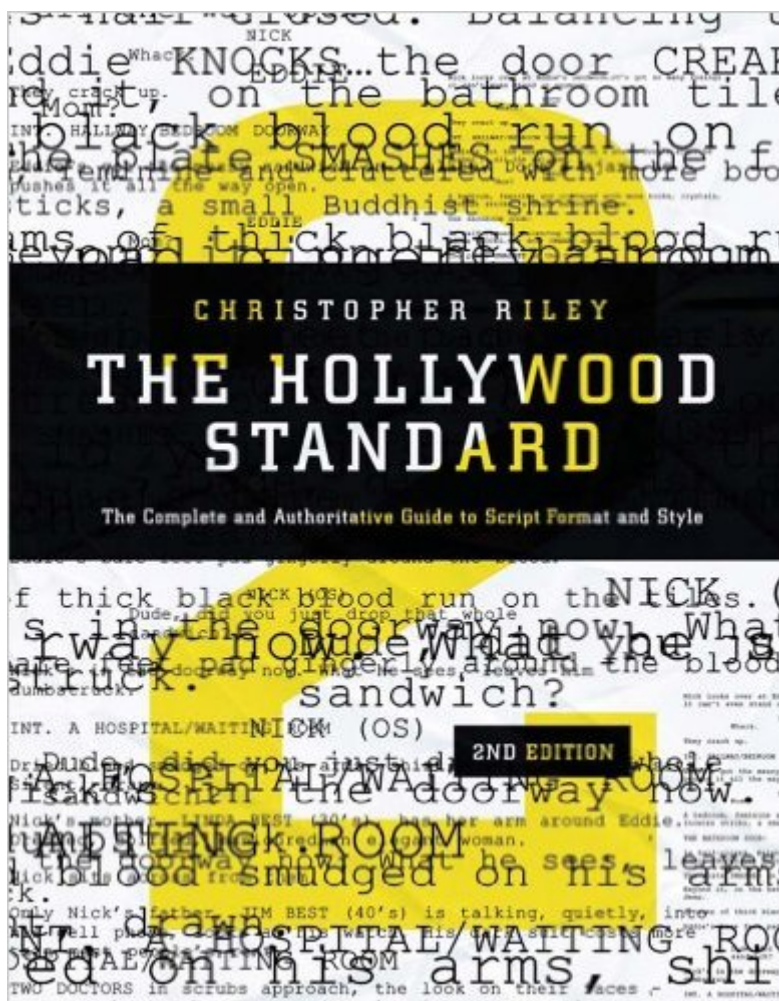


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The Hollywood Standard, 2nd Edition (Hollywood Standard: The Complete & Authoritative Guide To)



Synopsis

The Hollywood Standard describes in clear, vivid prose and hundreds of examples how to format every element of a screenplay or television script. A reference for everyone who writes for the screen, from the novice to the veteran, this is the dictionary of script format, with instructions for formatting everything from the simplest master scene heading to the most complex and challenging musical underwater dream sequence. This new edition includes a quick start guide, plus new chapters on avoiding a dozen deadly formatting mistakes, clarifying the difference between a spec script and production script, and mastering the vital art of proofreading. For the first time, readers will find instructions for formatting instant messages, text messages, email exchanges and caller ID.

Book Information

File Size: 4162 KB

Print Length: 204 pages

Publisher: Michael Wiese Productions (August 1, 2009)

Publication Date: August 1, 2009

Sold by:Â Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B002TKFEXW

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #133,606 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #5 inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Humor & Entertainment > Television > Screenwriting #46 inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Humor & Entertainment > Movies & Video > Screenwriting #84 inÂ Books > Self-Help > Anger Management

Customer Reviews

I can tell you right off that I was pre-disposed to love this book. If the only constant I've had to deal with year-in/year-out with screenwriters it is about format: What is right, what is wrong? (CONT'D) or no (CONT'D)? What about (beats) and actions within dialogue, etc.? So when this book landed on my desk I dove in like a child in front of a gift laden Christmas Tree on Christmas morning. Now, to call your work a "COMPLETE & AUTHORITATIVE GUIDE" is a bit of a risk one may (or may not)

want to take. What, exactly, does that mean. IS it "Complete and Authoritative?" Frankly? No. I still had questions afterward that the book did not answer. I also feared that the book could, possibly, do more harm than good. Now, before I sound like the kid who only got socks on Christmas morning, let me tell you about the good. The good is that the book is VERY thorough in its subject matter and it runs the gamut of both screenplays and teleplays. It's a fast read and clear and concise. Mr. Riley does create a text book/reference book for the masses that answers most of your questions. It IS a book that one may need to pull off a shelf for a quick answer to a question. What the book also does very well is give you many examples of both good and bad formatting. Do this - don't do that. Write this - don't write that. There are a number of areas where a person should not have to question which is the right way or wrong way to do something - and this book is clear on many points and, perhaps, TOO clear. Now, for the socks under the Christmas tree. What do I mean by TOO clear? Well - Mr. Riley does a credible job of differentiating between a Spec Script and a Production Script - but he starts the book dealing with camera angles.

I've been in the Writers' Guild since 1978, and I teach Screenwriting online for the UCLA Extension Writers' Program. I only require one book. This is it. When I started teaching screenwriting, I thought teaching format would be a no-brainer. I mean, what's to know? I could do it in five minutes. If you had any background in movies or bothered to read a few scripts, how hard could it be? Problem is, too many people come to screenwriting without filmmaking experience and haven't ever seen a script, let alone read one. Then, you have the people who think the screenwriting program they just bought automatically does all their formatting. Wouldn't that be nice. Maybe it can also build characters and dialogue, and write the script for you while we sleep. Wake up, make a cup of coffee, press, "Alt-Call Agent" and wait to become a millionaire. Formatting takes more effort than that, and more than five minutes to teach, too. I wish I could tell you to forget about it, and just focus on writing great stories. But format is important, because it allows you to present your story to people according to certain accepted standards. The people who read your scripts need evaluate ALL incoming material by the same general standards and rules. They're professional standards. Imagine the NBA without standards. Each team decides how high the basket's going to be and how wide and long the court is. And when the officials come, they'll need to learn the game rules for that arena. Wow. Total chaos. Presumably, if you have four professionally formatted 120-page scripts, the movies are all roughly the same length. Just flipping through the scripts, a producer or director can get an idea how much dialogue or action your movie has.

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