



David Lynch Graduate
School of Cinematic
Arts

Maharishi University of
Management

MFA in Screenwriting



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Enrollment is now open for the Fall 2019 MFA in Screenwriting Program!

Catch the Big Fish

What makes a great storyteller? Where do good ideas come from? It's time to approach screenwriting with consciousness.

MUM's two-year, low-residency MFA program in Screenwriting offers the unique opportunity to learn the Transcendental Meditation (TM) technique while acquiring all the knowledge you need to become a professional screenwriter. The practice of TM will help you access the deeper levels of creativity required to imagine profound and meaningful stories, discovering how – as David Lynch says – to “catch the big fish.”



Author and script doctor Dara Marks and writer/director Peter Farrelly address MFA in Screenwriting students during their Spring 2017 residency.

Screenwriting With Consciousness

How it Works



No Need to Move to Iowa

Unable to relocate to Iowa? No problem. Our program is structured so that students can complete the requirements of a high-quality MFA, while also balancing the life/work commitments they have in their home communities.



Ten-day intensive residency

Each semester will begin with a ten-day intensive residency on campus at MUM, in the charming university town of Fairfield, Iowa.



Los Angeles Trip

Meet with industry professionals during the final optional residency in Los Angeles.


More Details

The residencies are a perfect chance to get away from the distractions of home in order to dive within and focus on the creative process. During each residency, you will interact with fellow students as you attend lectures, panel discussions, master classes, staged readings and workshops led by a combination of university faculty members and internationally-recognized entertainment industry leaders.

Past residency instructors and expert guests have included award-winning producer/writer/director Peter Farrelly (*Green Book*, *There's Something About Mary*, *Dumb and Dumber*, *Shallow Hal*); Glenn Gers (screenwriter for *Fracture*, *Mad Money*, *Instant Mom*; writer/director for *Disfigured*; *Like. Share. Follow.*); script doctor and author Dara Marks (*Inside Story*); filmmaker Susan Seidelman (*Smithereens*, *Desperately Seeking Susan*, *Making Mr. Right*); television producer Michael Rauch (*Instinct*, *Royal Pains*, *Beautiful People*); screenwriter E. Max Frye (*Something Wild*, *Foxcatcher*, *the Alienist*, HBO's *Band of Brothers*.)

At the conclusion of each residency, you will return home to continue your coursework online, under the guidance of a dedicated mentor, an industry professional and educator who will monitor your progress.

There will be an optional fifth residency held in Los Angeles designed to introduce students to the film industry. With finished screenplay in hand, you will learn to market your work to agents, producers, studio executives and others.



The Online Curriculum

All four online semesters include six core credits of Advanced Writing for Visual Media, in addition to four credits of advanced studies in screenwriting.

In Advanced Writing for Visual Media students will delve deeper into the craft of writing for the screen, with the goal of developing their own projects. Continuing the exploration of narrative principles introduced during each residency, they will study more advanced techniques of storytelling focused on scene development, alternative structuring and sequence design. Through analysis of published scripts, screenings, guided exercises and group workshops, each student will attain the tools needed to develop their concepts into a marketable final project.

Students complete writing assignments given to them by their mentors. While writing assignments will be different each semester, the methodology for dealing with them will be the same. They will submit written work on a predetermined schedule, receive feedback from their mentors during personal meetings, and participate in a workshop with the other students in the course.

Advanced Study of Topics in Screenwriting

Include:



Students present their work to their classmates at residency writing workshops.

Advanced Script Analysis: A Creative Approach to Uncovering Deeper Levels of Meaning in Storytelling.

Through the careful study and analysis of award-winning screenplays, students will discover the keys to crafting their own successful scenarios, with an eye to writing works that tell transformational stories of personal meaning to their authors.

The Science and Technology of Consciousness

STC delves deeper into the study of consciousness as the unifying basis of all branches of knowledge. Taught with an emphasis on exploring the link between meditation and the creative process, this course is at the heart of all study at MUM.

Diving Deep into the Art of David Lynch: A Study in Freedom and Craft

In this unique course taught by film scholar Martha Nochimson (author of *The Passion of David Lynch* and *David Lynch Swerves*), students will study selected works by Lynch as inspiration for their own creative process.

Advanced Business and Marketing for the Entertainment Industry

This course will take place during the final semester and will focus on current best industry practices for pitching, publicizing and selling one's projects. It connects directly to the optional final residency in Los Angeles, during which students will have the opportunity to put into practice concepts covered in the classroom.

Enrollment is now open for Fall 2019! Deadline for applications is May 15, 2019. Don't miss this exciting opportunity to start on the path to becoming a professional screenwriter.

Guest Speakers

The David Lynch MFA draws on industry experts, academics and professionals from all areas of screenwriting, film production and distribution. Speakers from past years have included the following:



Jim Carrey Legendary actor, comedian, writer, producer and painter. A four-time Golden Globe Award nominee.



Peter Farrelly Known for such hits as *Dumb & Dumber*, *There's Something About Mary*, *Shallow Hall* and *Green Book*



Susan Seidelman Pioneering Producer/Writer/Director of films including *Smithereens*, *Desperately Seeking Susan*, *Making Mr. Right*, *Cookie*, as well as the television series *Sex and the City*.



Michael Rauch Writer and Executive Producer for film and television. Creator and EP of the CBS series *Instinct*. Additional credits for TV include *Royal Pains* and *Beautiful People*.



David Lynch Iconic works includes *Eraserhead*, *Wild at Heart*, *Blue Velvet*, *Lost Highway*, *Mulholland Drive*, *Island Empire* and *Twin Peaks*.



Dara Marks Hollywood's #1 rated script doctor, author of *Inside Story*.



Glenn Gers Writer for television and film, including feature films *Fracture*, *Mad Money* and *Instant Mom*; writer/director *Disfigured* and *Like. Share.Follow.*



E. Max Fry Screenwriter of *Something Wild* and Co-writer of Oscar-nominated *Foxcatcher*. Television credits include the series *The Alienist* and HBO's *Band of Brothers*.



Kate Purdy Award-winning writer for the Netflix series *Bojack Horseman*. Other credits include *Joe and Kate*, *MADtv*, and *Cougar Town*.

What Our Students Say

I am thrilled with my choice to enroll in the David Lynch MFA in Screenwriting Program through Maharishi University. While there are many programs that purport to teach screenwriting, this is the only one I'm aware of that incorporates Transcendental Meditation into the creative process. Developing a meditation practice is integrated into the curriculum and I have been surprised and delighted by how much this has enhanced not only my creativity, but many other aspects of my life.

In addition to meditation, the instruction is top-notch with every instructor bringing professional credentials and experience to our classes. The combination of intensive residencies with online classes is the perfect mix of hands-on and remote learning. I have no doubt I will be well prepared to write professional screenplays at the conclusion of this program.

Marcia - Racine, Wisconsin

The David Lynch MFA in Screenwriting has been a profound addition to my life. Not only am I receiving a superior education in the craft of screenwriting, but through Transcendental Meditation I now have unlimited access to my creativity in a deeper way. Writer's block is a thing of the past and what I now write comes from a more authentic place. In this program I have grown not only as an artist, but as a person.

Michael - Los Angeles, California

I applied to this program not quite knowing what to expect. But as soon as I met my fellow students, we were able to connect through shared interests. We were all passionate about storytelling, eager to hone our creativity and expand our consciousness through the addition of TM.

The low-residency aspect has allowed me to seamlessly integrate the program into my normal life. It has been a great way to meet and connect with different people from different places, with different backgrounds. It has helped me as a writer, and as a human being.

Cale - Augusta, Maine

The David Lynch MFA in Screenwriting has broken away from the competitive, monotonous, and out-dated nature of many other schools, programs, classes, workshops, etc. They are determined to bring passion and art back into screenwriting, while focusing on what makes your personal voice truly special. Until now, I've never found a group so supportive in even my craziest idea and never once have they asked the dreaded question of "Did you think about how you're going to market this?"

Craig - Ann Arbor, Michigan

Entrance Requirements



How to Apply

Click on the “apply” button at the top or bottom of any web page on www.mum.edu/davidlynchscreenwriting to start the application process. You must also submit your portfolio directly to the department, as described on page 16.



Bachelor's Degree

Applicants must hold a Bachelor's Degree and demonstrate skill in screenwriting.



Application

Begin general MUM application process, deadlines on page 16.



Portfolio

Applicants must submit a creative portfolio for evaluation. See Portfolio Submission Guidelines on Page 16.



Interview

Applicants will be interviewed online by the MFA Admissions Committee about the work in their portfolios, as well as their interests and career goals.



Please Note

Students who are not yet practicing Transcendental Meditation will receive instruction in the technique during the first residency.

More Info

Application Dates

The deadline to apply is May 15, 2019. Screenwriting MFA students are required to be on campus for the first mandatory residency in mid August 2019.

Portfolio Submission Guidelines

To upload your portfolio items, create an account at Slideroom [here](#). You will upload the following items:

- 1. Writing Sample:** A fictional screenplay that you believe best represents your talent, plus a one page synopsis of that script.
- 2. Statement of Purpose:** (500 words maximum) explaining why you are interested in joining the David Lynch MFA Program in Screenwriting.
- 3. Your Résumé.**
- 4. Script:** A 5 to 7 page script based on the writing prompt below. Please write a complete story with a beginning, middle and an end that begins with the following scene:

Prompt:

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - NIGHT

SHERIFF PETER BALL is on late duty in the small sheriff's office. He hears a noise outside. He opens the front door of the office and discovers a box on the doorstep. He opens the box and inside is...

Cost of Program

The annual cost is \$19,560 for each year of this two-year program. Federal student loans are available to most U.S. students.

This cost includes tuition and two ten-day residencies per year. (The cost of an optional fifth residency to be held in Los Angeles is not included in this figure.)

Residency costs included are housing (private room with bath), meals and ground transportation in Iowa. Expenses for travel to and from residencies, books, personal needs, etc. are not included, but \$8,000 per year in additional federal student loans are available for such expenses to most U.S. students.

For more information, including details on financial aid eligibility, please click [here](#).

