

“The Play’s The Thing.....”



Podcast Introduction

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Introduction

Welcome

This podcast is the first in a series on the key elements of playwriting. Each podcast will have a brief handout that goes with it which will make it easier for you to follow along with the content. You may wish to download these handouts prior to listening to the podcast.

Our Target Audience

The podcast series is designed for playwrights at any level. Beginners will get some great ideas about how to structure the narrative; more experienced playwrights should also pick up some helpful tips.

Content Overview

As a preview, the first twelve podcasts will cover the following content:

- **Podcast 1--What Is a Play:** How is theater different from other art forms? What are the implications for the playwright? What kinds of theatrical narrative will benefit the most from this series? What are the key defining characteristics of a play that make it different from other art forms which tell a story?
- **Podcast 2—Generating the Idea:** What are common sources of inspiration for plays (and some pitfalls of each)? Once you have an idea, how do you develop it to identify a theme so you know what your play is about?
- **Podcast 3 —Seven Elements of Narrative:** Why is structure worth knowing about? What are the seven key elements of a narrative, and how does a playwright use them to develop a story? What about a story which does not appear to fit this structure?
- **Podcast 4—The Protagonist:** Why is it important to identify a protagonist? What are the key characteristics of protagonists? What are common mistakes playwrights make with their protagonists (and what can they do about those mistakes)?
- **Podcast 5—Structuring the Major Dramatic Question (MDQ):** What is a major dramatic question and why is it important? What are typical goals a protagonist might have? What is the difference between a conceptual goal and a tangible or onstage goal? How to turn a goal into an on-stage manifestation. How do the conceptual goal and the on-stage manifestation work together?

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- **Podcast 6—Old and New World Order:** What are old and new world order and why are they important? How to think about and structure the first ten minutes of the play. How are old and new world order set up? How do they reveal theme? How are story lines tied up in the new world order?
- **Podcast 7—Inciting Incident / Supporting Characters:** Why is an inciting incident and why is it important? What are examples of inciting incidents? Why is it important to let the audience see the inciting incident? How to connect the inciting incident, the old world order, the MDQ and the protagonist. How do secondary characters function in the structural model?
- **Podcast 8—Rising Action/The Plot or Story:** What is a simple plot line, and how does a playwright create one? What are negotiations and why are they important? How do playwrights create and use sub-text?
- **Podcast 9—Going from Bad to Worse/Crisis, Climax and Resolution:** What is a crisis and why is it important? Why must the protagonist make the final decision? How do the consequences of this decision relate to theme? Answering the MDQ.
- **Podcast 10 —Rewrite:** What are types of readings and types of rewrites? The first ten pages, part II. How to get feedback and how to use it. What to look for in a reading. How to leverage writing groups. Approaching a rewrite.
- **Podcast 11—Further Development/Getting the Work Out There:** Writers groups and classes, part II. Finding your theatrical community. How to send your work out. Submittal packages.
- **Podcast 12 —Collaboration with Others:** Finding collaborators. Advantages and disadvantages of collaboration. Best practices for working with others.