

## FROM ASTAIRE TO *HOUSE OF CARDS*: WENDALL & WOOTTON HIT MELBOURNE FOR INDUSTRY TALKS ALSO FEATURING KERRY FOX & DAVID HIRSCHFELDER

Do Bette Davis, *Shallow Grave*, Fred Astaire, *Shine* and *House of Cards* have anything in common? Punters attending the **Wendall Thomas Talks Scripts** and **Adrian Wootton Talks Mavericks** series will find out!

Organised by the Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF) Industry Programs Unit, which stages film financing event **MIFF 37°South Market** and the **Accelerator** emerging director workshop, the **Wendall Thomas Talks Scripts** and **Adrian Wootton Talks Mavericks** series are ticketed events open to the general public – be they film or media students, aspiring or existing screen practitioners, film aficionados or just the plain curious.

Additionally, **MIFF Accelerator** presents several ticketed sessions, including an Acting Masterclass with **Kerry Fox** (*An Angel at My Table*, *Shallow Grave*, and MIFF 2015's **Premiere Fund**-supported *Downriver*), Editing with **Mark Atkin** (editor of Paul Cox's MIFF 2015 Opening Night film *Force of Destiny*) and Composing with **David Hirschfelder** (*Shine*, *The Water Diviner*). More details at <http://miffindustry.com/ticketed-events15>

Former British Film Institute and London Film Festival Director **Adrian Wootton** returns exclusively to Melbourne for another series of his acclaimed **Illustrated Film Talks**, this year celebrating major screen Hollywood screen legends. For more details, see <http://miffindustry.com/adrian-wootton15>

Presented by **MIFF 37°South Market & Accelerator**, the **Wootton Talks Hollywood Legends** series comprises:

### **FRED ASTAIRE: Tapping from Top Hat to living colour (Thurs 06 August: 5pm to 6.30pm)**

Wootton chronicles an extraordinary half-century career for Astaire (1899-1987), one of cinema's greatest musical dance performers who broke into film in the early 1930s and became a superstar when paired with Ginger Rogers for several hugely popular films, including *Top Hat*, *The Gay Divorcee* and *Shall We Dance*.

### **DAVID NIVEN: Blighty's Hollywood star (Fri 07 August: 5pm to 6.30pm)**

With multiple clips and slides, Wootton profiles Niven (1910-1983), one of the few Brits to become a genuine Hollywood movie star of the Golden Age with a Best Actor Oscar-winning turn in *Separate Tables*, and performances in the likes of *Wuthering Heights* and *Matter of Life and Death*. Penning two acclaimed autobiographies later in life, Niven also proved a great chronicler of old Hollywood.

### **JOHN HUSTON: American Cinema Giant (Saturday 08 August: 10.30am to 12 noon)**

Drawing on clips and photographs and his interviews with Anjelica Huston, Wootton reveals the personality and talent of Huston (1906-1987) who wrote, directed and produced more than 40 films, as well as acting, and was key in making a star of Humphrey Bogart, with films like *The Maltese Falcon* and *The African Queen*, and made many independent movies, such as *The Man Who Would be King*, and finished with *The Dead*, his masterpiece starring his daughter.

### **BETTE DAVIS: Tinsel-town's Feisty Grand Dame (Sunday 09 August: 10.30am to 12 noon)**

A grand dame of Hollywood, Davis (1908-1989) often fought the Studios, yet delivered legendary (and multi-Oscar-winning performances) in a glittering 50-year career of 120 screen appearances. In this lavishly illustrated talk, Wootton recounts the history of Davis's screen triumphs, including the likes of *Dangerous*, *All About Eve* and *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane*, and tells the tales behind the films and Davis' mercurial personality and chaotic personal life.

Celebrated LA-based developer, writer and lecturer **Wendall Thomas**, who has written and developed projects for the likes of Disney, Warners, Paramount and Universal, returns exclusively to Melbourne for more of her popular series unlocking the secrets of films' script structure with a series of four standalone all-day seminars. For more details, see <http://miffindustry.com/wendall-thomas15>

Presented by **MIFF 37<sup>o</sup>South Market & Accelerator**, the **Wendall Thomas Talks Scripts** series comprises:

**GENRE: BLACK COMEDY & SATIRE – How low can you go? (Mon 03 August, 9.30am-4.30pm)**

From *Dr. Strangelove* to *Mash* and *Serial Mom*, *To Die For*, *The War of the Roses*, *Election*, *Heathers*, *Muriel's Wedding* and a recent revival in films like *Thank you for Smoking*, *Four Lions* and *In The Loop*, black comedies are often the stuff cult films, devoted fans and a great writing sample! This session considers the challenges of writing successful black comedy and satire, including setting and maintaining the tone, charting sometimes-tricky characters arcs and addressing crucial decisions about topic and world. There will also be laughs, albeit guilty ones!

**CHARACTER: PROTAGONIST UNBOUND - Creating memorable central characters (Tue 04 Aug, 9.30am-4.30pm)**

What makes audiences remember, quote, even emulate the characters they see on screen? What careful selection of detail and imagination makes those characters indelible? What is the balance between a rounded, three-dimensional character and one who is so complex as to be incomprehensible in two hours? What elements of character attract actors? What is the relationship between character and structure? Creating and introducing a central protagonist is one of the great challenges of screenwriting – and one of the most rewarding when one considers the likes of *On the Waterfront*, *Blue Jasmine*, *All About Eve*, *The Silence of the Lambs*, *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, *The King's Speech*, *Muriel's Wedding*, *Amélie*, *Annie Hall*, *American Beauty*, *Dallas Buyers Club*, *American Hustle*, *When Harry Met Sally* or this year's *Nightcrawler*, to name a few.

With multiple clips and examples, this seminar examines the creation of central characters, showing the myriad, subtle and creative means a writer can introduce and reveal the protagonist in ways that will draw the reader and audience fully into the story by the end of Act One.

**STRUCTURE: THE CRUCIAL THIRD ACT (Wed 05 August, 9.30am-4.30pm).**

Studio executives often agree that the last ten minutes of a film can be integral to box office success given that this is often what stays with the audience after leaving the cinema. And the likes of *Some Like It Hot*, *Chinatown*, *Alien*, *Moonstruck*, *American Beauty*, *The Lives of Others*, *Argo*, *Animal Kingdom*, *Jaws*, *The Hangover*, *Grosse Pointe Blank* and this year's *Whiplash* prove that, no matter the genre, the sometimes elusive-to-nail third act is crucial and must be memorable. Aiming to overcome the Third Act dangers of running out of steam, or writing an ending disconnected to what's come before, this seminar shows how the third act relates to the preceding two acts and works-out the requisite beats for a variety of genres. It focuses especially on the important character blindsides, as well as the climax and on creating a satisfying ending which is consistent with the tone, intent and promise of the film.

**WRITING GREAT ONE-HOUR TV PILOTS: The West Wing to True Detective (Thurs 06 August, 9.30am-4.30pm)**

Whether it's a cable phenomenon (*Breaking Bad*, *True Detective*, *Dexter*, *Devil's Playground*, *Mad Men*, *The Sopranos*, *The Wire*, *Six Feet Under*), an internet event (*House of Cards*, *Orange Is The New Black*, *Transparent*) or a network melodrama (*Downton Abbey*, *Rake*, *The West Wing*, *The Good Wife*, *The Slap*), some of the best opportunities for writing ground-breaking material and diverse characters are on the small screen. Understanding the structure and elements of a one-hour pilot – to write/develop your own series or spec for an existing show – is an important part of building a writer's career. Focusing on successful shows that have attained "event" and "box-setting" status, this seminar gives practical advice on creating the kind of structure, characters, conflicts, and worlds that give a show legs.

For more details, visit at <http://miffindustry.com/ticketed-events15>

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