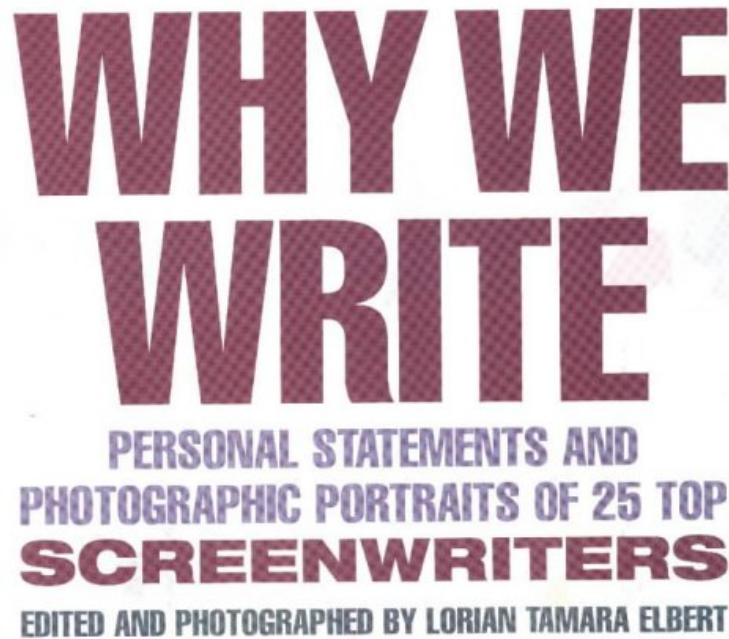


Why We Write: Personal Statements and Photographic Portraits of 25 Top Screenwriters

Lorian Tamara Elbert

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Lorian Tamara Elbert : Why We Write: Personal Statements and Photographic Portraits of 25 Top Screenwriters before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Why We Write: Personal Statements and Photographic Portraits of 25 Top Screenwriters:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. R.I.P. LorianBy RKThis is a very special book, made with passion for the subjects and a true artistic energy that was not driven by a corporate "assignment". May the author rest in peace.6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Done Deal's Review of "Why We Write"By A Customer"The joy of this book is that the reader is actually able to learn the screenwriting process from successful screenwriters. Only a selected, creative few become successful writers in Hollywood. Most of them are contributors to this book. This collection serves as inspirational tool that will teach you, the novice screenwriter, what it takes to become successful, and what steps the contributors took to become a success." "Once you pick the book up, it's difficult to stop reading. This well-structured and artistic book is highly recommended."2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. An insightful read, beautifully photographedBy Bill AbelsonLorian Tamara Elbert's Why We Write is immensely enjoyable. I figured I might skip some of the chapters by writers whose films were action/thrillers, but wound up reading the entire book. I especially dug Patrick Donovan's musings on why screenwriting is a GREAT gig, and the impact his Mr. Holland's Opus had on people; Dana Stevens ruminating on her weird little writing office; Scott Alexander's amusing explanation of why he always writes about wacky madmen; and Michael Ferris' tongue-in-cheek take on the Hollywood rollercoaster and the spoils of success (helicopters, hot tubs, dominatrixes...).Elbert's interviews not only got her subjects to open up in very personal ways, her photos bring out her subjects' essences (a la Annie

Liebowitz) and their tones (light, contrast) are striking, BW is a great medium for her.

The screenwriters who appear in this unique collection of thought-provoking essays and photographic portraits offer their musings - some intimate, some philosophical - about why they write, what inspires them, and how they cope with the motion picture industry's unpredictable frustrations and pleasures.

.com Pity the hapless screenwriter. Once he or she has finished a work, it is churned like butter by the great Hollywood system--rewritten and reworked at will. If a movie is successful, the director gets the credit; if it bombs, the screenplay is to blame. "Few people are as essential to a film's success as its screenwriters," says Kenneth Turan in his introduction to *Why We Write*, "and few are as invisible." What a pleasure, then, to be able to look into the eyes and minds of 25 of today's top screenwriters. In these pages, Michael Ferris (*The Net*) and Daniel Waters (*Heathers*) lament the Hollywoodization of their endings. John Briley (*Gandhi*) and Mark Rosenthal (*The Jewel of the Nile*) warn against script gurus and film courses. There is plenty of complaining about Hollywood's propensity for producing formula pictures, and about the industry's abuse of its writers. But it is the screenwriters' humor, passion, and, finally, love for what they do that are so appealing here. In the book's most entertaining essay, Daniel Waters describes the screenplay as "the most fragile art form there is, the one with the most perilous journey from cocoon to butterfly." While other artists' work is done when the artist says so, for screenwriters the end is just the beginning. "No one," says Waters, "has to go through an uglier, middleman-packed, Chinese telephone torture than a screenwriter does." Lawrence Konner (*The Jewel of the Nile*) takes a more exalted view of his work: The poet said, "Only God can make a tree." The poet lied. A screenwriter can also make a tree. Or a forest fire to consume that tree. Or the brave man to put out that fire.... A screenwriter can make any team he wants win the World Series. And on a good day, a lucky day, he can write a moment of human truth that makes someone in the darkened movie theater sit up and say, "Yes! That's just how it is!" --Jane Steinberg
From *Library Journal* Only five percent of the approximately 8500 Writer's Guild members actually make a living writing. This is a collection of personal essays by 25 of the lucky ones. Writers who have already experienced success and are ready, willing, and able to pen the next blockbuster feature. The essays discuss what inspires them, how they cope in the strange world of motion pictures, and why they do what they do. Contributors include Ed Solomon (*Men in Black*), Randall Wallace (*Braveheart*), James V. Hart (*Contact*), and Dana Stevens (*City of Angels*). Elbert's photos, one per screenwriter, were shot in the writers' homes, a hotel room, an office, and at LAX. Whether you write screenplays or just love creative expression, this book's for you. Highly recommended.
A Marty Dean Evensvold, *Magnolia P.L., TX* Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. "...being a screenwriter ... you get rewritten. Sometimes you get overlooked, underpaid stabbed in the back..." Pamela Warrick -- *Los Angeles Times*, May 12, 1999 "A provocative series of essays that reveals much more about the script-writing process its ironies. A-" Clarissa Cruz -- *Entertainment Weekly*, Friday, March 5, 1999 "Whether you write screenplays or just love creative expression, this book's for you. Highly Recommended." Marty Dean Evensvold -- *Library Journal* 1999 "reveals real horror of being a screenwriter, being second-guessed by the second-rate. Highly readable fascinating testimony..." Eric Idle -- *Publishers Weekly*, May 17, 1999 This fine text will serve as your inspirational foundation. It's that good." Don Denevi -- *Palo Alto Daily News*, January 30, 1999