

Writing the Romantic Comedy

Billy Mernit

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Billy Mernit : Writing the Romantic Comedy before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Writing the Romantic Comedy:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I bought this book to help me develop the romantic ...By Julia LednickyI bought this book to help me develop the romantic subplot in my romantic mystery adventure series, TAKE BACK TEXAS. It was extremely helpful in explaining the arc of the romance element and in giving examples so that I could improve my work. I will continue to refer back to this book as a resource as I write more books in the series.

Extremely insightful!0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Something here for the screenwriter and book authorBy V. WELCHHe describes the book himself as "a complete romantic comedy screenwriting workshop in one book" (p. x), and so it is. So while the author can be funny, don't expect this to be a light read. It is packed with hard information. I suggest you read one chapter and then stop to digest the material before ingesting the next. That's what I had to do to avoid information overload.But it's useful stuff. Before you pick up a comedy writing instructional manual, you think you sort of know what's funny, and of course, you're right. But Mernit explains why we laugh, and knowing this can improve your writing. In 13 chapters in four sections he discusses storytelling fundamentals, character development, the art of being funny, dialogue, credibility, conflict, and more. He takes being funny very seriously, and so should you if you intend to write comedy--books or movies--for a living. I learned a few valuable tips about character development that I plan to incorporate into my next novel. Thank you, Mr. Mernit.The author is/was an instructor affiliated with UCLA Extension Writers' Program, so understandably the book reads a bit like a textbook: it is instructional, comprehensive, and contains writing exercises. The book is aimed at screenwriters, not book writers, so he frequently uses romantic comedy movies, contemporary and vintage, to illustrate a teaching point. It's embarrassing, but there is a wide and dismal 30-year hole in my inventory of popular films, so his illustrations were often wasted on me. But I am the exception, so that shouldn't be a problem with most readers. The good news is that everything he teaches applies equally to authors of romantic comedy books and screenwriters. There's something here for both camps.The 286-page book contains relevant lists (noteworthy and top-grossing films, etc.), a bibliography, and an index.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Excellent bookBy Ellen BeemanA terrific book but why isn't it available as an ebook?

From the slapstick shenanigans of Hepburn and Grant in *Bringing Up Baby* to the sexy repartee of Shakespeare in *Love*, romantic comedies have delighted filmgoers -- and challenged screenwriters -- since Hollywood's Golden Age. Whether you're a first time screenwriter, or an intermediate marooned in the rewriting process, this thoroughly charming and insightful guide to the basics of crafting a winning script will take you step by step from "cute meet" all the way to "joyous defeat." You'll learn the screenwriting secrets behind some of the funniest scenes ever written; how to create characters and dialogue that set the sparks flying; why some bedroom scenes sizzle and others fall flat; and much more. *Writing the Romantic Comedy* features case studies drawn from beloved romantic comedies such as *When Harry Met Sally*, *Annie Hall*, *Tootsie*, and *The Lady Eve*, as well as field-tested writing exercises guaranteed to short-circuit potential mistakes and ensure inspiration.

.com According to Billy Mernit, all the Hollywood studios--and most major actors--"are actively seeking romantic comedies." But the same studios and actors reject hundreds of romantic comedies a month. Mernit should know. As a story analyst who has read nearly 4,000 screenplays in the last 10 years, Mernit has seen the good, yes, but also too much of the bad and the ugly. With *Writing the Romantic Comedy*, Mernit presents his UCLA Extension rom-com writing workshop in book form. Believe it or not, it's not enough to have Meg Ryan and Tom Hanks play the leads. You actually have to create characters for them--characters that an audience will believe "absolutely must end up together." Mernit manages to lay down ground rules without seeming rigid: "he can't be in it only for the sex"; "she can't be in it only for the money"; "at least one scene or sequence [should be] laugh-out-loud funny." Mernit offers five ways to bring your characters to life and seven basic romantic comedy "beats." He has chapters on chemistry, humor, dialogue, and sex ("in romantic comedy, there's nothing sexier than sublimated sex"), and he draws generously upon the surprisingly small canon of great romantic comedies to demonstrate his points. Finally, given that the conflicts in romantic comedies are internal, you needn't look far for inspiration when you feel stuck. "Think of one of the most painful, humiliating, embarrassing things that ever happened to you with someone of the opposite sex," he says, and go from there. --Jane Steinberg "*Writing the Romantic Comedy* is so much fun to read it could pop a champagne cork." -- Alexa Junge, writer/producer of *Friends*About the AuthorBilly Mernit teaches "*Writing the Romantic Comedy*" and four other courses at the UCLA Extension Writers' Program. During his many years in the entertainment industry, he has worked as a script consultant and served as a story analyst for Universal Studios, Sony, and Paramount; written for NBC's *Santa Barbara*; and composed songs recorded by Carly Simon and Judy Collins. With his wife, Claudia Nizza, he is the coauthor of *That's How Much I Love You*.