



Film still Sundance Winner (2017) *And So We Put Goldfish In The Pool*, Written and directed by Makoto Nagahisa

Course Syllabus

2-Week Masterclass in Scriptwriting and Storytelling, Utrecht Summer School

Course Discipline: Art & Music11

Organising Institution: HKU University of the Arts Utrecht, School of Media

Course Dates: 10 August to 21 August 2026

Course Level: Advanced Bachelor's Level (EQF Level 6)

Credits: 3 ECTS (approximately 84 hours of student workload)

Location: Utrecht, the Netherlands

Course Director: Bea de Visser

Course Code: A10

Registration Deadline: 31 July 2026

Contact: mail@beadevisser.com

1. Course Description

The *2-Week Masterclass in Scriptwriting and Storytelling* is an intensive practice-based course introducing participants to the principles of narrative design, character development and dramatic storytelling. Through lectures, workshops, writing assignments and peer feedback, participants develop an original narrative project in a medium appropriate to their artistic practice.

The course encourages critical reflection on storytelling as an artistic and social practice while supporting participants in developing an authentic artistic voice.

The syllabus is reviewed annually in response to educational developments, participant evaluations and recommendations from the programme team.

2. Admission Requirements

Applicants should hold a Bachelor's degree (180 ECTS) in Art, Design, Media, Performance, Creative Writing or a related discipline, or demonstrate an equivalent level of academic or professional competence.

Admission is based on:

- a written motivation;
- a verifiable curriculum vitae (CV).

3. Intended Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the course, participants are able to:

Knowledge and Understanding

- demonstrate knowledge of fundamental concepts of narrative structure, character development and dramatic storytelling;
- explain the cultural, artistic and ethical significance of storytelling within contemporary creative practice.

Applying Knowledge and Understanding

- apply narrative principles to the development of an original script or literary narrative;
- create believable characters, dialogue and dramatic action that support coherent storytelling;
- employ appropriate narrative structures and settings to strengthen the intended artistic effect.

Making Judgements

- critically evaluate their own creative process and make informed artistic choices based on reflection and feedback;
- recognize the ethical implications of representing personal and fictional narratives.

Communication

- communicate narrative ideas effectively through written work and constructive dialogue with peers;
- present and discuss creative work using appropriate professional terminology.

Learning Skills

- demonstrate increasing autonomy in the development of an original artistic project;
- identify and further develop an authentic artistic voice through reflective practice.

4. Course Content

Topics addressed during the Masterclass include:

- narrative structures and dramatic composition;
- story development;
- character construction and character archetypes;
- character dossiers and backstory development;
- dialogue, subtext and character voice;
- action, visual storytelling and scene construction;
- narrative perspective and setting;
- creative workflow and time management;
- revision strategies and reflective practice.

5. Teaching, Learning and Study Activities

The course comprises approximately **84 hours of study**, corresponding to **3 ECTS credits**.

Learning activities include:

- lectures;
- seminars;
- writing workshops;
- guided practical assignments;
- individual supervision;

- peer learning and structured feedback sessions;
- independent study.

Participants work throughout the course on an original project in a format appropriate to their artistic practice, such as a screenplay, theatre script, performance text, short story or the opening chapter of a longer literary work.

6. Assessment

Assessment is aligned with the intended learning outcomes and is based on continuous engagement throughout the Masterclass.

The course is assessed on a **Pass (P) / Fail (F)** basis.

To achieve a Pass, participants must demonstrate that the intended learning outcomes have been achieved through:

- active participation in workshops and discussions;
- the development of an original narrative project;
- supporting documentation, including character dossiers, drafts and revisions;
- a concise reflective report demonstrating critical reflection on the creative process, artistic decision-making and personal learning.

Assessment focuses on the participant's achievement of the learning outcomes rather than solely on the final artistic product.

Participants who successfully complete the course receive a Utrecht Summer School Certificate awarding **3 ECTS credits**. Recognition of these credits by the participant's home institution is subject to that institution's regulations.

7. Learning Resources

A digital course reader will be provided at the start of the Masterclass. It contains required reading materials, practical exercises and a selection of recommended literature for further independent study.

Additional resources may be made available through the online learning environment.

8. Learning Environment

An online learning environment hosted by HKU supports all teaching and learning activities throughout the course. Participants use the platform to submit assignments, document the development of their project, exchange feedback and participate in collaborative learning activities.

The learning environment is intended to foster peer learning, reflective practice and professional dialogue.

Each participant receives individual login credentials before the start of the course.

As access to the platform expires shortly after the course has ended, participants are advised to download and archive their own work in advance.

A course communication group (preferably using Signal) will be established at the start of the Masterclass.

Participants requiring additional time may, in consultation with the Course Director, submit work for brief formative feedback for up to two weeks after the official end of the course.