

HOW TO WRITE A THRILLER

The rules of the game

Lecturer: Mariano Sánchez Soler

DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Each class will consist of a literary workshop session and a theory and history lesson in order to learn about the detective genre. On the first day students will choose a plot line, on which they will write during each session. The aim during this workshop is for them to learn the bases and methodology of the different narrative aspects involved in writing a crime story.

Some sessions will include the screening of cinematographic classics based on essential novels and a discussion afterwards. At the end of the workshop, students will hand in their stories in time for the annual edition of Dark May, a literary event for students to meet important authors of this genre.

CONTENT (DIVIDED BY TOPIC)

1. DECALOGUE TO WRITE DETECTIVE FICTION. Introduction and general overview. The literary pursue of the truth. The birth of detective fiction. Poe and *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*.
2. THRILLERS: FROM WHO TO HOW. Bourgeois novel and enigma novel. Agatha Christie vs Conan Doyle. Poirot vs Holmes: deductive logics vs dialectic logics.
3. THE ESSENTIAL ACTION. Dashiell Hammett as the creator of detective fiction. The hardboiled genre seen through *Red Harvest*. Differences with enigma novel.
4. SYNOPSIS AND PLOT. CONCEPT, SUBJECT, STEP OUTLINE. Raymond Chandler's Decalogue. How to write detective fiction.
5. NOTHING IS SECONDARY. Marlowe and the poetry in modern detective fiction. Jim Thompson and crime as an inevitable activity. *Pop. 1280*.
6. THE NARRATOR'S POINT OF VIEW. Who tells the story and from what point of view? The investigator in current detective fiction. A matter of style.
7. HOW TO BUILD A CHARACTER. The character file. The killer within each novelist. The psychology of a devoted killer. Patricia Highsmith's *Tom Ripley*.

8. **THE STRENGTH OF DIALOGUES.** Each line hides a story. Hell on the streets. Urban novels and racism. Chester Himes.
9. **RESEARCHING IN ORDER TO BE CREDIBLE.** At the police station. Police proceeding novels. Ed McBain. The detective genre writer as a literary smuggler.
10. **THE WORLD OF THE DETECTIVE FICTION.** Radical writers. From McCoy to Lehane. Europe: from Simenon to the neopolar. Spain: from García Pavón.
11. **FAIR PLAY: NO TRICKS.** Revision of the basic rules for writing detective fiction. Breaking or reinventing the genre's rules. Intruders.
12. **FINAL DRAFTING OF THE STORIES.** Discussion on the different approaches and points of view in each story. Difficulties and findings. Conclusions.

HOUR BREAKDOWN

- From 07 March to 30 May 2019
- Thursdays from 4 to 7 p.m.
- 10 sessions
- 30 hours – 3 Credits

- March: 7, 14, 21 and 28
- April: 4 and 11
- May: 9, 16, 23 and 30

VENUE: Alicante City University Venue (Ramón y Cajal, 4)

PLEASE NOTE

IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THE COURSE CERTIFICATE, STUDENTS MUST:

- *ATTEND AT LEAST 80% OF TOTAL COURSE HOURS
 - *HAVE PAID FOR COURSE FEES
 - *PASS LECTURER'S ASSESSMENT TEST
 - *COMPLETE COURSE SATISFACTION SURVEY
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