PAUL LARSEN – CURRICULUM VITAE – 2014

EDUCATION

B.S. from Brigham Young University 1971 in Political Philosophy and History – awarded a teaching assistantship.

Most of Paul’s education in the field of film and screenwriting came from the practical experience he obtained while working for 15 years (1971-1976) as a professional screenwriter. Although he was accepted into graduate school, Paul decided to work obtaining practical skills as a carpenter. He worked for a number of years remodeling turn-of-the-century townhouses in Washington D.C. and at the same time began to teach himself the craft of screenwriting. He gradually began to achieve success in New York and Hollywood, eventually obtaining an agent and a track record with major studios as a writer of well-crafted screenplays. A number of his scripts were optioned by studios or movie stars and he was also hired to write original screenplays on commission. During this time he joined the Writers Guild of American. In 1988 his child was born with Downs Syndrome and Paul changed his focus to provide for this child’s special needs. His friend and colleague Sterling Van Wagenen (co-founder of the Sundance Institute) recommended Paul as a screenwriting teacher in the film program at B.Y.U. and Paul found that he had a gift for teaching and mentoring university students. He was eventually hired on a full-time basis to teach screenwriting at the University of Utah.

TEACHING

8 years (1991-99) Adjunct faculty teaching advanced screenwriting classes at Brigham Young University

19 years (1995-present day) teaching screenwriting classes at University of Utah – current status Associate Professor (Career Track)

COURSES TAUGHT & COMMITTEES

Screenwriting 1

Screenwriting 2

Screenwriting 3

Graduate-level Screenwriting

Has sat on many graduate student thesis committees

SCREENPLAYS

DOMINION. 1981. Spec Script. Horror. First option by Third World Cinema, director Ray Danton attached. Second option by United Artists.

MAYDAY. 1982. Horror-Comedy. Adaptation from the novel by Thomas H. Block for Laurel Entertainment, Director attached, George Romero.

WHY WE DANCE. 1983 Drama. Commissioned by independent producer Stephen Rapp Productions. Director attached, Haskell Wexler. Optioned by Twentieth Century Fox.

THE TIES THAT BIND. 1984. Family drama. Optioned by Alex Rose Productions.

SECOND WIND. 1985. Spec script. Romantic comedy. First option by Tom Selleck with producer Alex Rose. Second option by Tri-Star Pictures.

A PLACE IN THE COUNTRY. 1986. Spec script. Comedy. Optioned by Alex Rose Productions.

PROMISES KEPT. 1988. Drama. Based on a story by Craig Wasson. Producer attached, Peggy King. Director attached, Robert Wise. Optioned by Lorimar Productions.

THE JOHN BROWNING STORY. 1990. Docu-drama. Commissioned by the Browning family. Adapted from Browning's biography.

BACKSLIDER. 1997. Spec script. Western Romance. Adapted from the novel by Levi Peterson. Winner: WRITERS AT WORK competition.

MAD DOG MOON. 1998. Spec Script. Action-romance-comedy.

THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF SANTA CLAUS. 1999. Commissioned by Wonder Works/Bonneville Worldwide Entertainment. Adapted from the book.

WHAT'S LUCK GOT TO DO WITH IT? Screwball comedy.

STAGE PLAYS

THE RAID. 1995. Performed 1996 and again in 1997. Produced the second run which was sponsored by the University of Utah Theater Department, the Utah Arts Council, The National Endowment For The Arts and also by Weber State University. Commissioned by the Utah Bar Association to commemorate the Bicentennial Celebration for the State of Utah.

FILMS

CHASING A GOOD DAY TO DIE. 2002. Personal documentary. Premiered at the Utah Media Center in May 2002. (University of Utah grant)

TO BE OR NOT TO BE 2002. Documentary film about two boys with Down Syndrome who have been mainstreamed into regular classrooms. Commissioned by the Salt Lake City School District.

UNTITLED. In progress. A documentary film about the Maya in Guatemala and their efforts to recover from a genocidal war with the government.

THE WIZARD OF FOZ (2012) a commissioned documentary about the inventive genius, Jim Fosgate – innovator of car stereos and creator of the Surround Sound technology.

SPIRITUALITY FOR THE UNINSURED (2014) a personal essay film on the practical uses of spirituality in our modern world. Funded in part by a grant from the University of Utah.

AWARDS

Chosen by University of Utah students in 1995 as one of the Top Ten Teachers at the University of Utah

Chosen by University of Utah students for the 2011-2012 ASUU Student Choice Teaching Award (one of 10 chosen)

Winner of the WRITERS AT WORK national screenwriting competition.

Many of Paul's screenwriting students have won or placed high in almost all of the most prestigious national screenwriting competitions. The large Los Angeles production companies have repeatedly commented that his students are well prepared for entering film development careers.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

12 years as volunteer for the Youth Correctional system in Utah helping with Native American sweat lodge ceremonies for troubled youth.

Assisted violinist Kelly Parkinson to film historically important, elderly composers in Utah to preserve a record of their lives and music.

Assisted Mayan elders by filming historic fire ceremonies in Guatemala for historic preservation of these ancient rites.

At the request of the Salt Lake School District, filmed the integration of students with special needs into a classroom of more typically-able students.

PAUL LARSEN

SUMMARY OF RECOGNITION & AWARDS

Paul was chosen by University of Utah students in 1995 as one of the Top Ten Teachers at the University of Utah. He was chosen by University of Utah students for the 2011-2012 ASUU Student Choice Teaching Award (one of 10 chosen). Paul was the winner of the WRITERS AT WORK national screenwriting competition. Paul always rates very highly in student evaluations from his classes.

Many of Paul's screenwriting students have won or placed high in almost all of the most prestigious national screenwriting competitions. The large Los Angeles production companies have repeatedly commented that his students are well prepared for entering film development careers.

SUMMARY OF CREATIVE ACTIVITY

Over the past 30 years Paul has written and developed over 20 full-length screenplays. Many were commissioned or optioned by Hollywood or New York film companies. He had contractual relationships with Paramount, Lorimar, United Artists, and other studios, as well as such professionals as director Robert Wise (“The Sound of Music”), director George Romero (“Night of the Living Dead”), and actor Tom Selleck.

In 1995 the Utah Bar Association commissioned Paul to write a stage play for the Utah Bicentennial celebration. Paul wrote “The Raid”, a historical drama about the issues of polygamy and statehood. It was performed to rave reviews at Kingsbury Hall on the University of Utah campus, with repeat performances in 1996 and 1997.

Paul has written and produced a number of documentary films on a variety of subjects including; CHASING A GOOD DAY TO DIE (a personal essay film on the values of Native American ritual), TO BE OR NOT TO BE (a film on integration of children with special needs), an untitled film on ancient Mayan fire ceremonies which was filmed in Guatemala, THE WIZARD OF FOZ (a documentary about Jim Fosgate, the genius inventor of Surround Sound), and most recently SPRITIUALITY FOR THE UNINSURED (a personal essay film about the practical uses of spirituality in the modern world). This last film was funded in part by a grant from the University of Utah.

SUMMARY OF UNIVERSITY & COMMUNITY SERVICE.

Paul has been a volunteer for 10 years for the Youth Correctional facilities in Utah, helping to run Native American sweat lodges for challenged youth. He also has assisted in making films for many worthy causes including the preservation of histories of significant elderly Utah composers, the recording of ancient Mayan ceremonies in Guatemala (at the invitation of Mayan elders), and the integration of special needs students into the classroom (at the invitation of the Salt Lake School District).

Paul has sat on many graduate thesis committees and has been a mentor to many of his students, going far beyond the usual roll of teacher to become a support to them during their times of personal or professional crisis. It was because of this kind of caring that Paul has twice been given awards as one of the students’ favorite 10 professors at the University of Utah, an honor that is the result of students proposing the name of a professor and writing statements in support of that nomination. At the awards ceremony, students read their supportive statements in front of a large audience, crediting Paul with making a significant difference in their lives and in their studies.