

Alex Smith

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TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- **University of Utah**, Spring 2023, Fall 2022; Assistant Professor of Fiction Film
- **University of Montana**, Fall 2021, Visiting Professor in Creative Writing/English
- **University of Tulsa**, Fall 2019-Spring 2020, Visiting Professor in Film Studies.
- **Columbia University**, Fall 2018
- **New York University**, Fall 2018
- **University of Texas**, 2004-2014: Adjunct Professor, School of RTF / Michener Center for Writers.

Woodstock Film Festival/White Feather Farm Filmmaker Residency: (ONGOING). Since January 2021 I have been the Creative Director of a month-long social justice Residency/Lab wherein annually we invite four BIPOC narrative and documentary filmmakers to live together on a farm so as to cultivate their feature film projects. I am in charge of all creative, pedagogical and mentorship components. Mentors include Sterlin Harjo, Rodrigo Garcia, Mira Nair, Yoruba Richen, Barbara Kopple, Ira Sachs, Julie Anderson, Matty Rich, Peter Saraf, Pam Yates & Paco De Onis.

Sundance Institute Co/lab: Lead Instructor (Core Elements of Directing Lab) Winter 2021, Summer 2020, Fall 2019. I was also instructed two Script Labs in 2019. Courses service a diverse bevy of international students.

June-October 2020 and Feb-May 2019: Created/Taught three intensive script workshops for two non-profits-- The Woodstock Film Fest and The Byrdcliffe Artists Guild.

Creative Director, University of Texas Film Institute (UTFI), 2005-2010: I created, facilitated and directed a year long, four-course cycle practicum/incubator in Feature Filmmaking wherein students pitched, wrote, developed, shot, edited and marketed their own feature films. The Institute incorporated undergraduate, graduate and postdoctoral students from RTF, Butler School of Music, College of Fine Arts, School of Architecture, English Department, McCombs Business School and Law School, as well as enlisted mentors-- both film professionals and faculty members-- to assist with acting, directing, editing, producing, cinematography, production & costume design, and film scoring. **DANCE WITH THE ONE**, written, directed, produced, crewed and starring UT students, was the first feature film made via the Lab. It was shot as a class in the summer of 2008, and premiered in Main Competition at the 2010 SXSW Film Festival. Over 25 other feature film scripts were developed-- two of which won Nicholl Fellowships. Three have since been made into feature films

Summer 2011: Under my supervision, on Winter in the Blood, eight college students and eight Native American Interns from multiple states and multiple reservations, selected via Longhouse Media, a Seattle-based Indigenous Youth filmmaking non-profit, worked on the film. This was a professional "capstone" educational experience.

In 2010, I ran a **Master Class** for the Department of RTF; wherein I interviewed guests about the art and craft of filmmaking. Guests included Evan Shapiro, IFC VP; Richard Linklater; screenwriter Scott Burns (BOURNE ULTIMATUM); Editor Brent White (KNOCKED UP); Cinematographer Eric Edwards (KIDS)

Mentorship: *Writers Guild Foundation Screenwriting Program, The IFP Mentor Program, Heart Of Los Angeles Tutor Program; Workman Arts Program Ontario; International Institute for Indigenous Resource Management; Agua Caliente Cultural Museum*: Worked with young filmmakers from urban areas in workshops/1-on-1 mentoring sessions, encouraging development of films wrought from their own stories.

Universidad Jesuita Alberto Hurtado: Two-Week Intensive Writing Seminar, at the Creative Dramaturgy and Screenwriting Diplomado at the Centro EAC, Artes de la Comunicacion, in Santiago de Chile, August, 2006.

COURSES TAUGHT / Screenwriting:

Screenwriting: The Feature Script (undergraduate), University of Utah, Spring 2023
Screenwriting: The Low-Budget Feature (undergraduate), University of Utah, Fall 2022
Screenwriting: Mapping the Movie in Your Mind, University of Montana, Fall 2021
Screenwriting Two: Elevated Genre (undergraduate), TU, Spring 2020
Screenwriting One: The Low-Budget Feature Script (undergraduate), TU, Fall 2019
Preparing The Screenplay/The Low-Budget Feature Script (undergraduate), NYU, Fall 2018
Script-2-Screen Idea Incubator (graduate) UT Austin, Fall 2013
Principles of Dramatic Writing (undergraduate), UT Austin, Spring 2011
Feature Screenwriting (graduate/undergraduate) UT Austin, Spring 2005; Fall 2007; Fall 2007
Revision (graduate/undergraduate) UT Austin, Fall 2006; Spring 2008; Spring 2010
Adaptation (graduate) UT Austin, Fall 2008
Low-Budget Independent Feature Screenwriting (graduate/undergraduate) UT Austin, Spring 2009
Writing Narrative TV (undergraduate) UT Austin, Spring 2010

COURSES TAUGHT / Directing & Producing:

Fiction Filmmaking: (graduate/undergraduate), University of Utah, Spring 2023
Fiction Filmmaking: (undergraduate), University of Utah, Fall 2022
Advanced Techniques in Film Production; TU, Fall 2019, Spring 2020
Directing 1 (graduate) Columbia University: Fall 2018
Directing Workshop (undergraduate) UT Austin, Spring 2010; Fall 2012
Pre-Thesis/Thesis Production (graduate) UT Austin, Fall 2005; Fall 2010
Filmmaking II 16mm Sync Sound (undergraduate) UT Austin, Fall 2004; Spring 2005
Advanced Narrative Digital Video Production (undergraduate) UT Austin, Spring 2007

University of Texas Film Institute:

UTFI Script-to-Screen Feature Film Lab (grad/undergrad) Fall 2005; Fall 2006; Fall 2007; Fall 2009
UTFI Feature Screenwriting Lab (grad/undergrad) Spring 2006; Spring 2007; Spring 2009, Spring 2010
UTFI Feature Film Production (grad/undergrad) Summer 2009: wherein the class shot a feature film.
UTFI Feature Film Post-Production Lab (grad/undergrad) Spring 2010

ARTISTIC/ACADEMIC RESIDENCIES, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, JURIES

February 2021-February 2023: Creative Director, [Woodstock Film Festival/White Feather Farm Filmmaker Residency](#)
January 2021, 2020, 2019 & 2018: Lynchpin Mentor, [Middlebury Script Lab](#), Middlebury College, Vermont
Oct. 2019: Mentor at the [Screenwriters Colony](#), Nantucket, MA.
November 2018: International Juror, Juniorfest Film Festival, Czech Republic
December 2018/April 2018: Visiting Artist, Story DNA Workshop, Cooper Union, New York City
March 2018: Visiting Artist, University of Tulsa. Taught grads & undergrads Master Class in filmmaking.
October 2017: Western Literature Association National Conference; Minneapolis. Featured Artist & Plenary Panel
Spring 2017: Artist in Residence, [Robert Rauschenberg Residency](#), Captiva Island, Florida.
September 2015-2021:: Artist in Residence, [Byrdcliffe Colony](#), Woodstock NY.
September 2016: [Western Literary Association National Conference](#), Big Sky MT: Featured artist and Keynote screening (*Winter in the Blood*). Panel discussion of film with scholars, on subject, "The Profane West."
September 2015: University of Wyoming featured artist: Wyoming Arts & Culture Annual Western Arts series.
February 2015: Boulder, CO. Modern Identity Event: WINTER IN THE BLOOD. Screening and discussion with Dr. Patty Limerick, executive director for the [Center for the American West](#).

November 2014: Festival-America, Vincennes (Paris), France/ Screening of *Winter in the Blood* at international literary conference, focused American Literature. Discussion with novelist Richard Ford about James Welch.

May 2014: University of California Santa Barbara. Screening & Filmmaker conversation at Pollack Theater, Carsey-Wolf Arts Center, for the School of Film & Media, Spring Arts Series, UCSB

May 2014: NAISA (Native American and Indigenous Studies Association) [Special Event](#), UT Austin

March 2014: University of Montana. Screening & Panel discussion on WITB, during “Thinking its Presence: The Racial Imaginary, A Conference on Race, Creative Writing & Literary & Cinema Studies.”

March 2014: Association of Writers & Writing Programs (AWP), Seattle, WA. Panel featuring Smith Brothers and Sherman Alexie about **Winter in the Blood**, the film, the adaptation, and the legacy of James Welch.

November 2013: [John R. Milton Writers Conference](#), Vermillion, South Dakota. Closing night screening & panel discussion of **Winter in the Blood** at conference celebrating 50 years of the South Dakota Review.

October 2013: [“Adapting Ethnicity Discussion”](#) featuring select cast members of *Winter in the Blood*, as well as Sherman Alexie. Sponsored by UT English Dept and Texas Institute of Literary & Textual Studies. Austin, TX.

March 2013: Keynote Event: *Winter in the Blood*. [Native American Literature Symposium](#) Mankato MN.

March 2013: “*Winter in the Blood: Adapting Fiction into Film*” [AWP National Convention](#), Boston, MA

March 2013: Master Class in Adaptation. Whitney Humanities Center & Yale College Beinecke Library.

December 2012: “*Independent Vision: Winter in the Blood*.” Sponsored by SF Film Society and SF State.

October 2012: “*Adaptation: WITB Script to Screen*” Montana Festival of the Book, Missoula, Montana.

October 2012: “*Anatomy of a Scene: Winter in the Blood*” UC Theater, Missoula, Co-sponsored by School of Media Arts & the Montana Film Office.

May 2011: Mentor at [Adventures of the Mind](#), a national summit that connects high school seniors with renown faculty including Nobel Prize-winning scientists, inventors, tech, writers & artists.

2002-2018: Taught filmmaking seminars; gave craft lectures, presented my films at campuses including: Cal State San Marcos; Dartmouth College; Goldsmiths University, London; Minnesota State University, Mankato; Montana State University; University of Idaho; University of Auckland; University of California at Santa Barbara; University of California at Los Angeles; University of Oklahoma; University of Maine; University of Montana; University of New Hampshire; University of NC at Pembroke; University of Tulsa; University of Wisconsin, Occidental; Duluth; Washington State University.

PROFESSIONAL FILMMAKING EXPERIENCE

I. FEATURE FILMS

2022: The Brothers Smith are attached to direct the feature film adaptation of the best-selling non-fiction book *THE NIGHT OF THE GRIZZLIES*, with Oscar winning actor J.K. Simmons and Lily Gladstone attached. The project just won a \$100k Big Sky Film Grant from the Montana Film Commission.

2021: The Smith Brothers are attached to co-write and direct *THE RAVAGES*, a wilderness survival bootcamp eco-thriller set in the Utah Badlands. Currently casting.

2020: The Brothers Smith were one of three recipients of a \$10K Development Grant from the Montana Humanities Board to write **AMERICAN RADICAL**, a revisionist western about a communist cowboy bootlegger sheriff set in the Jazz Age.

2019: The Brothers Smith partner with Taylor Made films to write/direct **The Faithful**, a historical ghost story.

2015-2017: The Brothers Smith wrote, directed and co-produced [WALKING OUT](#), a feature film adaptation of David Quammen’s classic short story, shot on location in Montana, November 2015 & January, 2016.

Starring Golden Globe Winner Matt Bomer, Bill Pullman, Josh Wiggins and Indie-Spirit Nominee Lily Gladstone. Acquired by IFC FILMS for North American Distribution and AMP for International Distribution. Nominated for [Grand Jury Prize, Sundance Film Festival, January, 2017](#); Screened at San Francisco International Film Festival; CamerImage; SXSW Film Festival; Sun Valley Film Festival; Seattle International Film Festival; Sarasota International Film Festival; Sundance London Film Festival; Giffoni Int'l Film Festival; BAMfest, Sao Paulo International Film Festival, Woodstock Film Festival, Heartland Film Festival, Angyang International Youth Film Festival, Gijon International Film Festival, St. Louis Film Festival, and numerous others. The film has played in over 200 theaters and over 15 countries and won many awards.

2011-2013: In collaboration with my brother, I wrote, directed and produced [WINTER IN THE BLOOD](#), a feature film adaptation of James Welch's landmark 1974 novel, shot on three First Nations Reservations in Montana, comprised of a cast that was 80% Native American. Our film premiered in Main Competition at the Los Angeles Film Festival; won the Grand Prix at the Montreal First Nations Film Festival; screened at Woodstock, Austin, Lone Star (Fort Worth), Northwest (Portland) Loft (Tucson), Twin Cities, Origins (London), Sofia (Bulgaria), and 35 other festivals. Film received over \$350k in grant and crowdfunding monies, including a \$25k [Fetzer Forgiveness Grant](#), and is currently being taught in over 40 University curriculums. Released by Kino-Lorber, the film was a critical hit. As critic [Charles Mudede](#) put it: "*Winter in the Blood* is nothing less than to give birth to a whole new way of sculpting the time of cinema."

2007-2010: I was the Producer of **DANCE WITH THE ONE**, the first UTFI feature film production, made entirely by student filmmakers, with professional and/or academic mentors in every facet of filmmaking. Starring Gabriel Luna (*TRUE DETECTIVE*, *TERMINATOR: DARK FATE*), the film had its World Premiere in the Main Competition at the SXSW Film Festival 2010, and also screened at Dallas International Film Festival, Vail International Film Festival, Cucalorus International Film Festival.

2000-2002: The Smith Brothers wrote and directed the critically acclaimed feature [THE SLAUGHTER RULE](#), which was nominated for an Independent Spirit Award for Best First Feature and was released in theaters nationally by Cowboy Pictures. Starring **Ryan Gosling**, David Morse, Amy Adams, Clea Duvall, Eddie Spears and Kelly Lynch, THE SLAUGHTER RULE premiered in the Dramatic Competition at the 2002 Sundance Film Festival. One of only three American films to play at MoMA's 2002 New Directors/New Films series in NYC, The Slaughter Rule screened at numerous festivals-- winning Best Independent Feature at the Santa Fe Film and Nashville Film Festivals, and Best Feature at the Great Plains Film Festival. Screened at 15+ international festivals, including Athens, Auckland, Sydney, London and Stockholm, where it won the highly prestigious FIPRESCI (International Critic's) Prize.

II. SCREENWRITING: FEATURE FILM SCRIPTS & TELEPLAYS

2022: The Brothers Smith have optioned the non-fiction book *The Better Angel* by Roy Morris, Jr and are adapting it into a feature film they will direct with Matt Bomer attached to star as Walt Whitman.

2022: The Brothers Smith received a \$10K PROP Grand and \$25K Montana Cultural Trust Grant to write **AMERICAN RADICAL**, a revisionist western about a communist bootlegger sheriff set in the Jazz Age.

2021: The Brothers Smith are writing a ghost story for critically acclaimed filmmaker Rodrigo Garcia.

2019: **THE FAITHFUL**, a Civil War-era love/ghost/horror story, originally commissioned by Disney/Touchstone Motion Pictures. Currently casting, with [TaylorMade](#) producing.

2018: **REARVIEW MIRROR**, a noir thriller set entirely in a 1941 Ford Coupe, for Latitude Pictures.

2017: **THE DARKLINGS**, hour-long pilot for Red Arrow Productions (Europe), based on the short story collection, *Your House is on Fire, Your Children All Gone*, by Stefan Kiesbye.

2016: **THE BRIEF HISTORY OF THE DEAD**, dramatic/metaphysical pilot for **Amazon Studios**, based on the novel by Kevin Brockmeier.

2015: **THE LAST WINTER OF DANI LANCING**, pilot for Warner Horizon TV, based on novel by P.D. Viner

2014: **WALKING OUT**, an adaptation of David Quammen's prize-winning short story about a boy and his father on a hunting trip that goes terribly awry. (*Made into feature, 2016*)

2013: **REMEMBERING LAUGHTER**, an adaptation of Pulitzer Prize winner Wallace Stegner's first novel. A love triangle set on an Iowa farm in 1900. Written for director Rodrigo Garcia. Mia Wachowski attached.

2010-2011: **WINTER IN THE BLOOD**, based on the novel by James Welch. (*made into feature, 2012*)

2010: **FAERIE WARS**, adapted from the YA novel *Ruler of the Realm*, for Frameworks UK.

2009: **BADLANDS**, original "true crime in the contemporary wild west" pilot for cable channel FX.

2008: **SON OF THE GUN**, Oedipus Rex meets Scarface set in the criminal underworld of Mexico City; based on the graphic novel by legendary filmmaker Alejandro Jodorowsky. For Fox Searchlight.

2007: **YOUNGBLOODS**. Pop Warner and a ragtag team of Native American kids at the Carlisle Indian School, circa 1908, transform the game of football forever. Period sports drama. For ESPN Films. Script is currently being re-envisioned as a major feature film, with Mary McDonnell producing.

2005: **OUT OF THE WOODS**, adapted from short stories by award-winning writer Chris Offutt.

2004: **THE GARDEN**, a point-shaving scandal in the wake of City College of New York's 1951 NCAA basketball championship—for Columbia Studios;

2004: **THE RADIOACTIVE BOY SCOUT**, True story of a boy who builds a nuclear reactor in his mom's potting shed. For HBO Pictures/Warner Brothers, based on a Harper's Magazine article.

2002: Wrote American adaptation of *Lars Von Trier's* **DANCER IN THE DARK**. Good Machine/Zentropa.

2002: The Brothers Smith were named two of the *"Ten Screenwriters To Watch"* by Variety Magazine.

2001: **THE SLAUGHTER RULE**, original script, starring Ryan Gosling. Made into feature, 2002.

1998: Developed **THE SLAUGHTER RULE** at winter/summer Sundance Institute Screenwriter & Filmmaking Labs.

1996: I wrote **OUT OF LOVE**, a contemporary adaptation of the Chekhov novella 'The Duel', for renowned filmmaker *Terrence Malick* and Ed Pressman Productions.

III. OTHER: SHORT FILMS & DOCUMENTARY

- 2012: I directed a documentary about maverick musician **Alejandro Escovedo** that included orchestrating a seven-camera concert shoot. The producer/financier of the film has yet to allow the film to be finished.
- 2004: The Smith Brothers wrote, directed & produced **WE WON IT ALL ONCE**, a short film excerpted from the novel, The Death of Jim Loney, by James Welch.
- 1999: The Smith Brothers wrote & directed **the keening**, an eco-rotic horror for FXM Shorts, which screened at over 20 film festivals, including its international premiere at the 2000 Sundance Film Festival.

FILM PRODUCTION

Camera Assistant: **A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT**, Livingston, Montana, 1991, **Robert Redford**, Director.

RAISING CAIN, Steller Jay, Menlo Park, CA, 1991, **Brian Depalma**, Director.

LITTLE MAN TATE, Orion, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1990, **Jodie Foster**, Director.

Dozens of commercials (Toyota, Sizzler, etc.) industrials (Apple), and music videos, San Francisco, 1991-93

Crew Chief/Assistant Director/Camera Assistant: [Sundance Institute Feature Film Lab](#) 1987-1990; 1992.

WRITING/PUBLISHING

Published works of fiction and won awards in national journals and magazines, including Story, Nimrod, New Millennium, River City, Playboy, & Story Magazine. Won the Katherine Anne Porter Fiction Prize and has published scholarly essays and articles in: Filmmaker, The Big Sky Journal, Montana Quarterly, Film/Arts Quarterly, Adaptation. Recipient of the Squaw Valley Community of Writers Scholarship.

FILM/ARTS PROGRAMMING

Woodstock Film Festival, 2016-2022, Member of Main Film Jury

Juniorfest 2018/2019 Czech Republic: Member of International Film Jury

Montana Film Festival, 2015-2016: Founding member, Associate Programmer

Texas Public Library Screening Series, 2010. Main programmer.

Austin Film Festival; Juror 2007; 2009

SXSW Film Festival Juror; 2006; 2010

Festival Des Cine Las Americas; Juror 2004

Sundance Institute, 2001-04. Selection Committee, Feature Film Program.

Philadelphia Festival of World Cinema: 1998-2002. Senior Programmer.

Sundance Film Festival: 1987-1996 Box Office Manager, Programming Assistant.

San Francisco Film Festival: 1990-92. Box Office Manager, Programming Assistant.

Other employment: Carpenter, Bartender, Disc Jockey, Editor, Copy-Editor, Logger, Ranch Hand, Woodsman.

EDUCATION

The University of Texas at Austin, MFA in Creative Writing, **Michener Center for Writers**, 1993-1996

The University of California at Berkeley, CA, BA, Double major in English/Film Studies, 1985-1989

The University of Stirling, Scotland, Education Abroad Program, 1987-1988.

REFERENCES

- **Dr. Theodore C. Van Alst, Jr.**, Ph.D, Associate Professor and Director of Indigenous Nations Studies Parkmill Building Rm. 145, PO Box 751; Portland, OR 97207-0751, 503-725-5920 tva2@pdx.edu
- **Dr. Paul Stekler**, Professor, Department of Radio-TV-Film, University of Texas, 1 University Station A0800, Austin, TX 84701, (512) 471-6679 office stek@mail.utexas.edu
- **Judy Blunt**, English Department Chair and Director of Creative Writing, University of Montana 406-243-2275, bluntj@mso.umt.edu
- **Jeff Van Hanken**, Department of Film Studies Chairperson & Wellspring Associate Professor, College of Arts & Sciences, University of Tulsa, jeff-vanhanken@utulsa.edu 918-631-3195
- **James L. Magnuson**, Director (Emeritus), Michener Center For Writers; University of Texas, 1 University Station A0800, Austin, TX 84701, 512-476-6329 magnuson@austin.utexas.edu
- **Meira Blaustein**, Founder & Executive Director, Woodstock Film Festival, meira@woodstockfilmfestival.org
- **Dr. Thomas Schatz**, Mary Gibbs Jones Centennial Chair, University of Texas, One University Station A0800, Austin, TX 78712 , tschatz@mail.utexas.edu 512-966-2802
- **Jake Silverstein**, Editor-in-Chief, New York Times Magazine jake.silverstein@nytimes.com; 212-556-2688
- **Dr. Rebecca M. Lush**, Ph.D, Associate Professor/Literature and Writing Studies, Chair California State University, San Marcos, 760-750-8004 rlush@csusm.edu
- **Michelle Satter**, Director, Feature Film Program, Sundance Institute michelle_satter@sundance.org
- **Rodrigo Garcia**, Filmmaker/Show-Runner. rodgarcia59@hotmail.com