Chapter 10 Quiz

Film Connection

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1. What is the most important part about creating an interesting second act? How will you accomplish this?

* The most important thing to keep in mind is the “escalation of tension”. The main characters must be pushed to the limit as far as the obstacles that they face. Creating a dramatic goal and then placing lots of obstacles in the way of that goal helps escalate the tension. Upping the stakes over and over again incrementally helps escalate the tension. By now we should start to see some sort of character development where the character’s flaws become an issue or there is some sort of burden that is a vehicle for transformation.
* Creating momentum in the flow of scenes as well as the physical action of the characters in the screenplay is essential.

1. What narrative tools are used during the construction of a second act?

* If you’ve created a world in your screenplay, you might consider breaking some of the rules of that world in an effort to really take your characters to the next level and up the stakes. The status quo of a kingdom or a futuristic city might be totally upset by someone pulling the plug on what the residents of that city deemed to be reality. Consider “The Truman Show”.
* Limiting the amount of time that the protagonist has to complete a task is a helpful tool
* Creating a sense of immediacy is tied into creating an emotional bond between the audience and the protagonist.
* Establishing what the consequences are if the task of the protagonist is not fulfilled is a helpful tool to create anxiety and escalate the tension
* Creating a sense of doubt helps the audience stay invested because they aren’t 100% sure what the outcome will be so throwing in some red herrings about where the story is going could help engage an audience. Maybe red herring isn’t the right word but creating characters with depth is important here because as we sort out the conflict between characters we may be left wondering who the good guys are and who the bad guys really are. There needs to be the potential for mystery to unravel as the tension escalates.
* Setting up *expectation* so that we as the audience anticipate that something is around the bend is helpful. Foreshadowing in the text of the script is a possibility.

1. What emotions are you attempting to capture during your second act?

* The audience should be along for the ride and rooting for the protagonist. Adventures should evoke a sense of fear. The protagonist needs to have a likeability that makes the audience root for him. Creating a sense of healthy anxiety and suspense is what a writer should aim for.
* If there is a character who is really struggling for redemption, we may really feel empathy and sadness for the protagonist. Empathy is key.

1. What character undergoes the most trauma or change during your second act?

* The protagonist – consider Luke Skywalker after the death of Obi Wan Kenobi. He is forced to assume the role of a master since his own master has been killed.

1. What is the ultimate goal of your second act?

\*The ultimate goal of the second act is to build towards a climax in which the protagonist is pushed to the most dramatic event of his or her life. Escalating the tension and keeping momentum are key.