

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRODUCING CLASS

BARBARA DEFINA
SPRING 2006

OVERVIEW:

During the course we will present two case histories - a high budget movie developed and distributed in the studio system and a low budget independent movie to be released by a small art house distributor.

We will analyze each film from development through completion and distribution, investigating the similarities and differences.

CASINO, written by Nic Pileggi and Martin Scorsese, directed by Martin Scorsese, was shot entirely on location in Las Vegas on practical locations. It was financed and distributed by Universal Pictures.

BRIDES, which was shot entirely in Greece on location and in a studio in Athens, written by Greece's award winning novelist, Ioanna K. and directed by Pantelis Voulgaris. It was financed independently through various European Funds and bank loans. The US distribution agreement is currently being negotiated.

ADDITIONALLY:

We will practice and discuss pitching.

We will develop a scene and learn how to read it first as a "creative" producer and then as a "practical" producer, analyzing, casting, shooting and finally editing it.

Guest speakers will be brought in to discuss various topics in depth when appropriate.

COURSE STRUCTURE:

Class 1-3

Development

Choosing material, underlying rights, structuring a deal,
WGA, selecting a writer, notes

Casting

Stars - who is bankable, at what budget level
access, agents, lawyers, managers

Financing

Raising money, key elements, presales

Class 4-6

Preproduction
Hiring key personnel, "casting" the crew
Budgeting/scheduling
Build or location, the art department
Key production choices, where to shoot
Insurance, legal, payroll deals, bonds, banks

Class 7-9

Shooting
Camera, sound, grip/electric, props,
production department
Dailies
Prep "our" shoot

Class 10

Shoot our scene

Class 11-12

Post Production
Editing, picture and sound
Music

Class 13

Distribution, Foreign Sales, Marketing,
Festivals

Class 14

Wrap up, going forward, where to begin