

Karin Howard, Letter of Interest

Los Angeles, July 21, 2021

Dear Albanian Filmmakers:

I would love to share my insights into writing for film and television with the next generation.

After working as a journalist in my native Germany, in South Africa and California (for print and television) I attended the American Film Institute (AFI) in Los Angeles and have worked from my base in the city ever since (1978).

The highlight and an example of the stamina it takes to work on a major production was for me to get a single credit on a 25-Million-dollar film, "The Neverending Story 2", an adaptation of the famous book by Michael Ende. It included being the only woman in a room of some 30 men, special effects specialists and famous designers, at the famous Warner Brothers studio lot.

It takes many skills to survive as a free lance writer and I would make sure that you will get practical as well as creative input. For several years after completing the AFI with lectures from the likes of Steven Spielberg and Sydney Pollack, I attended further writing workshops, poetry workshops, and acting classes, got stipends to observe and work as an assistant on major productions, and directed a feature ("The Tigress", Merit Award at the WorldFest-Houston International Film Festival) and documentaries. A writer will profit greatly from understanding production, directing and acting but shouldn't forget about networking. I served on the board of Women in Film L.A., The Women's Committee of the Directors' Guild of America, was accepted as a member of the Deutsche Filmakademie and a Juror at the Cable Ace Awards, the Prix-Jeunesse, an Expo and Kids First Panelist and worked on selection committees for the AFI office of admissions and Women in Film festivals.

And then, most importantly, there is the craft. To be able to face the empty page, to settle down and tap into your deep sources of creativity. It helps to write dream diaries and poetry and to push forward to get that first draft finished rather than being too self-critical and keep going back or discuss your story with others (comments from family members can be debilitating!). That first draft will be your main chance to enjoy your creativity before the input from all sides will rain down on you and things become rather practical. That is fun too, but more like playing chess or designing a building as a team.

I would be most appreciative of the opportunity to be of service to your talents and am very curious about the special stories you have to tell.