

Script for Home Video and Flashlight after Federico García Lorca

Black screen for twenty seconds. Suddenly a young girl—say eight or nine years old—turns a flashlight on her face, holding it at the level of her chin.

Young girl:

When I die
I'll die in Lancaster, Ohio.
With the smoke of the glass factory in my hair,
I'll die in Lancaster, Ohio.

With my mother's hazel eyes,
I'll die in Lancaster, Ohio.
I'll remember blue jays and air guitar
when I die in Lancaster.
When I die in Lancaster,
I'll remember the moon through the 2x4s of my brother's treehouse.
I'll die in Lancaster.
I'll die in Lancaster, Ohio,
with a red bandanna around my neck.
I'll die in Ohio.
In a little boat on Rising Park pond,
in my blue dress with the frayed collar,
with turkey buzzards circling above me like old grownups,
I'll die in Lancaster, Ohio.
I'll die in Lancaster, Ohio,
with a bag of bread for the ducks.
I'll die in Lancaster.
I'll die in Ohio.
In early evening,
before fireflies make scars between the trees,
I'll die in Lancaster, Ohio,
I swear!

Silence. Smoke comes out of her mouth. Blackout.

Film Beginning with a Line by Roberto Juarroz

A net of looking holds the world together. Meanwhile the world, a little embarrassed, squirms to free itself. But the net's threads are too strong. They stretch briefly but will not break or yield. . .

The camera, however, cannot see itself. Nor can the eye. Relentless montage of tulips, smokestacks, brooms, pickup trucks, coins, your body, dear reader, your gaze. . .

This will not work on film.

Cinema Verité: William Wordsworth Rejects the Spirit of Carnival

An old vaudeville theater, empty but for a few scattered men and women and a handful of actors and stagehands. William Wordsworth is alone on stage.

William Wordsworth [reading]:

“What a shock
For eyes and ears! what anarchy and din,
Barbarian and infernal,—a phantasma,
Monstruous in colour, motion, shape, sight, sound!”
. . . blah, blah, blah—let me skip a bit here—
“All moveables of wonder, from all parts,
Are here—Albinos, painted Indians, Dwarfs,
The Horse of Knowledge, and the learned Pig,
The Stone-eater, the man that swallows fire,
Giants, Ventriloquists, the Invisible Girl,
The Bust that speaks and moves its goggling eyes. . . ”

A large hook appears from stage right and finds Wordsworth's neck, pulling him off stage. A voice (James Mason's?) reads *The Prelude* in its entirety. Global warming occurs.



Six One-Line Film Scripts

Film Noir

Everyone on earth is asleep—except Robert Mitchum.

French Flick

The camera is an emptiness that longs to be a camera.

Historical Epic

Thousands of extras. . . reset their alarm clocks.

Stéphane Mallarmé Counts the Buttons on the Hangman's Vest

Mallarmé: Two, three. . . no. . . two. . . no. . . wait, two, three. . . one, two. . .

God, Guilt, and Death

This will not work on film.

The Needle

Medium shot of a camel squeezing through the eye of a needle.



Doves and Fire

after a folk tale

Aerial shot of a small town engulfed in flames.

The flames, we see in a succession of close-ups, are as tall as storefronts, as tall as the town bank.

What most impresses us is their sound—a thunderous, deafening roar.

Shots of people clutching pets and photograph albums and clothing.

Now we see the flames approaching the town synagogue.

As the synagogue catches fire, a huge flock of white doves flies into and overwhelms the frame.

The wind generated by thousands of white doves flapping their wings extinguishes the fire. . .