

THE
LAUNCH PAD
COMPETITION
PRESENTS

THE
TOP 100
FEATURES
2016/2017

**** PRIORITY READS ****

- 4 Years -
- **216 Writers Signed** –
- 111 Writers on Best of Lists -
- **68 Projects Set Up** –
- 35 Writers Staffed –
- **4 Bidding Wars** –

THE FUTURE OF HOLLYWOOD
BEGINS HERE

WHAT IS THE LAUNCH PAD COMPETITION?

With 216 writers signed, 68 projects set up, 35 writers staffed, 111 appearances on annual 'best of' lists, and 4 bidding wars in just the past four years, The Launch Pad Competition has firmly established itself as the premiere hub for discovering new writers, new projects, and new ideas. Now with annual competitions for pilots, features, and manuscripts, we not only give writers from all arenas a chance to make a name for themselves in Hollywood, but we offer Hollywood a chance to identify new talent, fresh voices, and an early look at writers with cross-platform potential.

WHO IS THIS LIST FOR?

Whether, agent, manager, producer, executive, or assistant, this list is for you. With a continual call for great voices, great characters, great worlds, and great writers, we've built this document to give you a quick glance at this year's top new writers and projects before they become next year's breakout stars. So, whether you're looking for new clients, new projects, new writers, or simply a great read, check out the list to see which writers and stories inspired us this year.

WHO DECIDES WHO MAKES THIS LIST?

This list makes up the top 4% of this year's feature competition entries, as voted on by our exclusive partners at Vertigo Entertainment, Twin Padres, ESA and Bellevue, as well as our professional readers and our pool of distinguished judges (Scott Free, Anonymous Content, UTA, Energy Entertainment, CAA, Write Large, WME, Madhouse Entertainment, APA, Romark Entertainment, Prime Universe, DMG, Zero Gravity, Good Fear, Epicenter, Magnet, Artillery Creative, ICM, Circle of Confusion, Markerstone Pictures, Gersh, and Grandview).

HOW CAN I REQUEST AND READ THE SCRIPTS?

Instead of bouncing emails back and forth, we're making it incredibly easy to request the scripts you want to read via our request form. So, if you see anything you like, simply click the below link, or copy and paste the web address below into your browser to start requesting.

Request scripts here: <http://www.tracking-board.com/read/LPFC2016/>

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE ABOUT AND/OR CONTACT THE WRITERS?

Instead of putting all of the writers' personal info in this book for the whole world to see, we've kept that offline to protect their privacy. So, if you've found a script you love and have questions, or if you want to request an introduction, simply shoot us an email at Requests@Tracking-Board.com and we'll put you in touch right away.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: 105 ROYAL AVENUE by Victoria Armstrong

PITCH: PRIDE meets GOOD VIBRATIONS

LOGLINE: In the dangerous conflict zone of 1979 Belfast, a strong willed punk strives against persecution to create her own nightclub. A safe haven for her misfit friends who, united by their love of music and fashion, are desperate to escape the violence and despair of their war torn city and find their own place to belong.

GENRE: Comedy | Drama

WHY TO READ: Straight from the opening scene, we have such a clear view of the protagonist who's buried in her work not noticing as a bomb squad operates outside. We immediately understand and the chaotic, turbulent world we're diving into. It's set up with skill and humor, establishing a tone and voice that brings the reader into the heart of everyday life in terror-laden Belfast, without ever giving into despair – a major theme of this inspiring story. By creating layered, outsider characters and giving them a clear, sky-high goal in opening a gay club in a heavily religious city, the writer dares you not to root for these crazy kids and their dreams. This is the rare feel-good period drama that feels effortlessly modern.

TITLE: 420 MINUTES by Jody Gehrman

PITCH: PINEAPPLE EXPRESS meets JUNO

LOGLINE: When a college student and aspiring detective meets a guy who claims he has only 420 minutes to live, she infiltrates a series of increasingly dangerous underworlds to help him save his sister from a biker gang.

GENRE: Action | Comedy

WHY TO READ: This script provides a great sense of realism to the characters, making it really easy to empathize with the protagonist, a bright young woman whose life has been put on hold because of her mother, and the connection to her only gets stronger as the script continues. The initial hook is also incredibly effective and really brings you into the story right away. There's a very clear Diablo Cody vibe to the script, with voiceover and quirky dialogue clearly establishing the characters and the weird world they inhabit. With a surprisingly strong romantic storyline, fantastic visuals and thrilling, ticking-clock pacing, this piece works on multiple levels.

TITLE: A CHRISMISCUE by Gregory Harty

PITCH: SCROOGED meets THE GOOD PLACE

LOGLINE: In this reversal of the classic "A Christmas Carol" story, the nicest guy in town gets accidentally "Scrooged" and is forced to see how poorly everyone else treated him in Christmases past, present, and future, all the bureaucratic system of heaven attempts to right the mistake before any damage is done.

GENRE: Comedy | Fantasy

WHY TO READ: A wonderfully original take on the most classic of Christmas stories, this script manages to be inventive, funny, and heartwarming all at the same time. Deftly mixing genres, the script crafts an organic, three-dimensional universe capable of holding up the fantastical elements the story requires while also remaining grounded in strong character work. A smart new entry in the successful holiday comedy genre, this script will fulfill all your expectations while surprising you with its real depth and moving conclusion.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: A MISSISSIPPI MURDER by Mark G. Anderson

PITCH: MISSISSIPPI BURNING meets TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD

LOGLINE: The true story of two African American reporters who travel to Mississippi in 1955 to cover the trial of Emmett Till, the young black man whose brutal murder ignited the Civil Rights Movement. After discovering the existence of several key black witnesses, they work with the prosecuting attorney to bring the witnesses to testify amongst threats and racial prejudice.

GENRE: Drama | True

WHY TO READ: This script takes a difficult and tragic chapter in the history of the Civil Rights Movement, and tells that story with suspense, drama, and authenticity. The writer does a terrific job of capturing the atmosphere of 1950s Mississippi, and pulls no punches in depicting the brutal racism that pervaded the state at the time. While anchored firmly with period-appropriate dialogue and historical detail, this script is undeniably topical and relevant still. Incisive, emotional, and suspenseful, this script speaks to important themes of law, violence, journalism, and race with intelligence and subtlety.

TITLE: A NECESSARY ACT OF VIOLENCE by John Torma

PITCH: A HISTORY OF VIOLENCE meets TAKEN

LOGLINE: When an army vet is framed for his wife's murder, he must to go on the run with his stepdaughter to protect her. But when he discovers that both the police and a local fracking tycoon are responsible, he must turn back and avenge his wife's death.

GENRE: Action | Thriller

WHY TO READ: An exceptionally readable and engaging thriller. The writing is slick, the setting and mood are clear, and the characters are instantly appealing. The descriptions are crisp and concise, painting a vivid picture that draws you into the story and reads as so cinematic that it's impossible not to imagine it on the big screen. Set against the backdrop of a fraught environmental issue, this script avoids the pitfalls of some political films by treating its subject matter with nuance, allowing the characters and suspenseful plot to do the heavy lifting, and writing such an entertaining tale that you don't even notice what you're learning along the way.

TITLE: ACTUAL VAMPIRE KEANU REEVES by Ashley Moon

PITCH: THIS IS THE END meets BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER

LOGLINE: When her coworker disappears, a pop culture nerd discovers that Keanu Reeves is a murderous vampire who may have something to do with her mother's death, and that she is his next target.

GENRE: Comedy | Horror

WHY TO READ: Are you really going to scroll past this title? You're at least curious, and if you indulge that curiosity, you'll find that this script moves far past a simple gimmick based on a popular internet meme. While the tone is light, it's still grounded enough in reality that we can take the story seriously. The dialogue is fun and funny, but also very capable in the serious moments. Our heroine Marcy has a genuinely tragic backstory, which makes her both prickly and achingly vulnerable, an attractive role for any actress. Building great idea on top of great idea, and filled with fantastic action set pieces and jokes both witty and silly, this script fulfills the promise of its wild title and more.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: ADAM & EVE by David Kushner

PITCH: PINEAPPLE EXPRESS meets CHILDREN OF MEN

LOGLINE: In a future where all men and women are unable to reproduce, a stoner accidentally grows a strand of weed that allows him to fertilize the first human embryo in years, and must team up with a straight-laced procreation scientist to combat the android forces determined to annihilate the human race.

GENRE: Action | Comedy | Sci-Fi

WHY TO READ: This is a hilarious genre mash-up of stoner comedy, alien sci-fi, and action thriller that will easily appeal to a wide audience. The writing is polished and professional and the writer has a clear comedic point of view that runs throughout the script. The two leads have the perfect action comedy opposites-attract dynamic, and the story is well structured without a wasted beat or missed opportunity. It's rare for a story to truly surprise, but this one manages it in spades, with some great final twists you won't see coming.

TITLE: AMARA, 15 by Hannah Leshaw

PITCH: SHORT TERM 12 meets PRECIOUS

LOGLINE: A 15-year-old Bronx teenager struggles to escape her father's sexual abuse without leaving her two little sisters behind.

GENRE: Drama

WHY TO READ: A quiet, tense, artistic triumph, this script tells the story of a strong-willed teenage girl put into an impossible situation, the kind of role that will have Oscar buzz the moment the film premieres on the festival circuit. Written in a bare, authentic style peppered with extraordinarily naturalistic dialogue and incisively heartbreaking moments, this script exudes a unique beauty and universal resonance. The supporting characters are layered and detailed, without ever devolving into stereotypes or clichés – everyone is flawed and nobody knows the answer. Everyone will be able to relate to Amara's journey, in which easy resolution is nowhere to be found but calm determination can still win the day.

TITLE: ANGELS OF THE DEEP by James L. Head

PITCH: TOP GUN meets CRIMSON TIDE

LOGLINE: In the near future, a submarine war games exercise turns into an all-out battle for the fate of the world when one side unexpectedly starts fighting for keeps, and an elite squadron of North American sub-fighter pilots are the last line of defense.

GENRE: Action | Sci-Fi | Thriller

WHY TO READ: A high-octane visual feast, this is an unrelenting sci-fi/action epic that builds its story on top of a strong foundation of an amazingly creative world. The stunningly detailed descriptions of high-tech submarine warfare tease a blockbuster for the ages, and the story does not disappoint. Non-stop action, high tension, a psychotic and terrifying villain – this is a heroic tale with enormous stakes, dynamic characters, and excitement to spare.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: THE APPLE TREE by Matthew Arnold-Ladensack

PITCH: ST. VINCENT meets THE NOTEBOOK

LOGLINE: A closeted high school football player is forced to volunteer at a retirement community after getting in trouble with the law, where he forms an unlikely friendship with an elderly veteran mourning the loss of his long time male partner.

GENRE: Coming-of-Age | Drama | Romance

WHY TO READ: A tender and thoughtful LGBT coming-of-age story, this script finds emotional resonance in the way that Gabe's story is able to help Colton come to terms with his own sexuality. This intergenerational legacy provides depth and power to the character arcs, which in many ways subvert the traditional small town football player story, both in the characters' actions and in their realistic dialogue. By the time you reach the ending, you are caught up in an exhilarating climax that feels quintessentially American and viscerally human.

TITLE: BABY ROULETTE by Lindzi Scharf

PITCH: TRAINWRECK meets BRIDGET JONES'S BABY

LOGLINE: A 32-year-old divorce attorney desperate to have a baby starts bedding random men in order to get pregnant, but her plan backfires when she meets the man of her dreams, and her actions could come back to haunt her.

GENRE: Comedy | Romantic Comedy

WHY TO READ: This edgy and timely female-driven comedy has a premise that speaks directly to the social and biological challenges that woman are increasingly faced with in today's world, and the end result is nothing short of crazy, comedic, and totally human. The smart, witty dialogue crackles between well-rounded but hilarious characters who never fall into stereotypes, and whose dynamics with each other feel entirely natural and relatable. An indie breakout in the making, this script is not afraid to go dark, and in doing so wrings out every last bit of insightful humor from its wild story.

TITLE: BAD REVIEW by Patrick Connelly

PITCH: HORRIBLE BOSSES meets ENVY

LOGLINE: After he posts a negative review of a laxative online, causing the company that produced it to go bankrupt, a young go-getter is hunted down by the product's creator, who wants to ruin his life.

GENRE: Comedy

WHY TO READ: If off-color humor is your thing, this is the perfect script for you. Filled with semi-inappropriate jokes, crass dialogue, and over the top visual gags, this is the sort of raunchy and controversial comedy that will send many people to the ground with laughter, and provoke conversation from everyone else at the very least. The characters are all likable despite clear flaws, and the story is such a great twist on the trend of online reviewing that it feels entirely plausible. Everyone can relate to the story because everyone, at some point in their lives, has wanted to be really mean on the internet.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: BAIT NIGHT by Timothy Grant

PITCH: TO CATCH A PREDATOR meets SAW

LOGLINE: The producers of a show that baits sexual predators and exposes them on television are violently targeted by a group of pedophiles they previously caught, and one of their young “decoys” must survive a deadly game of cat-and-mouse after she reels in a psychopath that may be her sister’s kidnapper.

GENRE: Horror | Thriller

WHY TO READ: A true nail-biter of a thriller, this script is not afraid to delve into the depths of human darkness, exploring the complex morality of a “To Catch a Predator” style show, those that make it, and those that it exposes. The writing is stunning, especially the bait-and-switch intro that reveals the television series conceit. Once the story dives into its thriller plot, the action is nonstop, the twists are believable yet completely surprising, and the script never forgets that a few well-placed humorous beats are not unwelcome in even the most sinister of stories. Character-driven from beginning to end, this thriller will provoke plenty of conversation, and plenty of terrified viewers.

TITLE: BLOOD INK by Gia Gordon

PITCH: AMADEUS meets ANNA KARENINA

LOGLINE: Franz Schubert’s struggles to be recognized as a composer as dissension rises against the oppressive government of the 19th Century Hapsburg Empire.

GENRE: Biopic | Drama

WHY TO READ: Combining the fascinating story of one of history’s most famous and acclaimed composers with the power and depth of a tale of survival beneath the weight of an oppressive regime, this script is packed with conflict, both between its fabulously crafted characters and between the opposing forces of art and governmental control. Strong writing, intricate period detail and a plethora of familiar music make this a compelling read for classical music fans and novices alike.

TITLE: BORDERLINE by Clyde Tom Bennett

PITCH: FARGO meets LOCAL HERO

LOGLINE: A small South Carolina town loses its only employer when a mill closes, causing the town council to try to find a way to move the state line in order to take advantage of tax breaks in Georgia that would bring them a new car plant and save their livelihoods.

GENRE: Comedy | Drama

WHY TO READ: The Southern small town setting at the core of this story is expertly crafted, from the slightly surrealist tone to the quirky characters to their impeccable regional dialogue. A fantastic cast of characters connected by detailed and complex relationships help to make this town feel real, and make you care about what happens to it. The slightly ridiculous premise of trying to get the state line moved so they can live in Georgia instead of South Carolina is treated with just the right amount of heart and drama to make it matter, even as it makes you laugh. A story about a part of America that is often forgotten, this script speaks to an underserved audience while also resonating with every reader and potential viewer.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: CATHARSIS AND THE CATFISH by Dillon Michael White

PITCH: GONE GIRL meets CATFISH

LOGLINE: A young widower who runs a business catfishing people on behalf of disgruntled exes, luring unsuspecting strangers into online romantic relationships, and hits it off with a woman who finds his job fascinating, but their romance is derailed when he's hired to catfish someone who appears to be his dead wife.

GENRE: Drama | Romance | Thriller

WHY TO READ: Breezing along on snappy, inventive dialogue strengthened by the believable and exciting romantic spark between the two leads, the craft on display here is dazzling, helping to elevate its central mystery with real emotional stakes and a quick, efficient pace. With a premise that hits right to the core of the zeitgeist, this is a clear candidate for the next big relationship thriller. The tight structure, shocking twists and turns, and deft foreshadowing make this script a tense, suspenseful thriller to be reckoned with.

TITLE: THE CHAPERONE by Robert Remy

PITCH: TROOP BEVERLY HILLS meets DADDY'S HOME

LOGLINE: Determined to spend more time with his daughter, a bumbling divorcee volunteers to chaperone a camping trip for her Girl Scouts troop, but is quickly in over his head when they get stranded in the wilderness and run afoul of dangerous felons.

GENRE: Comedy | Family

WHY TO READ: This is a fun family comedy with a bit of an adult edge and a really solid premise that provides plenty of opportunity for physical humor and strong character work. Isolating these characters out in the woods and forcing them to try to survive brings out their comic imperfections and we get the pleasure of seeing them, slowly and pathetically, try to overcome them. The stakes are high, the jokes nonstop, and the story has a ton of heart that will have both kids and parents laughing.

TITLE: CHARLIE REDSTAR by George Gier

PITCH: CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND meets MIDNIGHT SPECIAL

LOGLINE: When a disgraced ex-cop witnesses the alien abduction of his son, the government frames him for murder in order to cover it up. Now, pursued by a relentless agent from a shadowy organization, he must work with his estranged wife to break into a top secret warehouse filled with recovered alien technology in order to expose the truth and get his son back.

GENRE: Action | Sci-Fi | Thriller

WHY TO READ: This script is a fun read that smartly mixes thriller elements, an emotional character narrative, and self-aware humor. It's entertaining, the plot is fast-paced, and it's easy to root for the characters, especially the protagonist's journey to save his son. Everyone's point of view is smartly defined, from John as the man no one will believe, to his ex-wife Colleen who is understandably reluctant to participate in his seemingly crazy scheme, to Charlie Redstar, the government man who doesn't want to lose his soul to keep the alien presence covered up. A send-up of alien conspiracy theories while also packing in the twists and turns of an emotional adventure, this script has it all.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: CLASH by Andrea Jaag

PITCH: ARGO meets SYRIANA

LOGLINE: After their teenage son accidentally kills a woman with his car, an estranged American family living in Saudi Arabia must cover up the crime and attempt to get out of the country before the local authorities and the victim's sister catch up to them.

GENRE: Drama | Thriller

WHY TO READ: A race-against-the-clock thriller that feels all too real, this script packs an undeniably compelling premise alongside well-rounded characters who exude universality, making it impossible not to put yourself into this family's shoes as they come up against obstacle after obstacle in a story that has life-or-death consequences. The high quality writing speeds the story along at a breakneck pace, building suspense and tension at the same time as it deftly presents the unique Saudi Arabian setting. With nonstop action, high stakes and intense moral quandaries at its heart, this script could be the next breakout thriller.

TITLE: COLOUR ME JANE by Elisa McRae

PITCH: SHORT TERM 12 meets SILVER LININGS PLAYBOOK

LOGLINE: A high school counselor with a large facial birthmark attempts to help a student who was disfigured in a fire while simultaneously dealing with her own reluctance to accept love after meeting the man of her dreams.

GENRE: Comedy | Drama | Romantic Comedy

WHY TO READ: Unexpected, emotional, and insightful, this is a pitch perfect romantic comedy that hits all the right beats. Centered on a unique protagonist who is not only defined by her embarrassing birthmark and all the attention that it garners, but also by a clear and well-rounded personality and motivation, this script works on every level. Despite her singular situation, everyone will be able to relate to Jane's lack of self-confidence and her cheer when she discovers her true worth. With a three-dimensional supporting cast, a romance to root for and sizzling, scintillating dialogue - this script will immediately grab a reader's attention and its themes and ideas will stay with them long after they've turned the last page.

TITLE: CONSTANTINOPLE by Rachel J. Beard

PITCH: KINGDOM OF HEAVEN meets 300

LOGLINE: A Byzantine captain escapes his long enslavement at the hands of the Ottoman Empire just as the city of Constantinople prepares to defend itself against an Ottoman siege, leaving him to prove his loyalty to those that had given him up for dead.

GENRE: Action | Adventure

WHY TO READ: A detailed and realistic feeling fictionalization of one of the great battles in world history, this script tells a truly epic story at the same time as it presents a focused, emotional personal drama - no small feat. The central love triangle is affecting and complex, and Mehmet is the sort of scene-stealing villain role that any actor would love to play. The writer's skill for dialogue, action, and clarity is constantly on display in a genre that is in no way easy to pull off. Vast battle sequences, visually stunning set pieces, devastating emotional moments, and the highest stakes possible - this script is not only a blockbuster spectacle, but also a well-told character drama.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: DAN & FRANKIE SAVE THE WORLD by Alan Wood

PITCH: INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS meets HAROLD AND KUMAR GO TO WHITE CASTLE

LOGLINE: A couple of young, down-and-out stoners living in Las Vegas join forces with a covert alien slayer and her team to save the President of the United States from being possessed by an alien slug.

GENRE: Action | Comedy | Sci-Fi

WHY TO READ: A tight, charming buddy comedy that hits all the right beats for an entertaining, hilarious thrill ride. Body-snatching slug aliens, action movie stars, the President of the United States – you can't argue that the story isn't ambitious or that the stakes aren't high enough. With fun, lovable characters, effective action writing, and a ton of real laugh-out-loud moments, this script is a joy to read and a clear successor to the successful stoner action films that we all know and love.

TITLE: DANCE OF THE VANDALS by C. Marie Robinson

PITCH: EMPIRE OF THE SUN meets UNBROKEN

LOGLINE: When a Dutch mother and her three daughters are sent to a Japanese work camp after the invasion of Indonesia in World War II, she finds innovative ways to keep her children and fellow prisoners alive as they battle starvation and the sadistic guards.

GENRE: Drama

WHY TO READ: A moving story of determination, survival, and the power of art, this script tackles an unknown chapter of World War II, the internment of Dutch settlers in Indonesia by Japanese forces, and turns it into a character-based odyssey that won't leave a dry eye in the house. Focused and concise without ever being predictable, the story centers on an ensemble of resilient women who are each distinct, well-rounded and given an emotional, inspiring arc. By refusing to unnecessarily dwell on the villains of the story, the script brings out the redemption and kindness in all of its characters, building to a virtuosic final ballet performance and heist sequence that an audience won't be able to resist.

TITLE: DEMON'S TRAIL by C. Marie Robinson

PITCH: THE EXORCIST meets DRAG ME TO HELL

LOGLINE: A disgraced former priest turned private investigator must team up with a psychic to solve a series of mysterious deaths across Los Angeles, which might be related to an exorcism he performed on the psychic's brother decades earlier.

GENRE: Horror | Supernatural | Thriller

WHY TO READ: This script succeeds on the back of its impeccable atmosphere and tone, evoking the noir history of its Los Angeles setting to craft a horror thriller with masterfully sustained tension, supernatural creepiness, and an intricately plotted mystery. The writer accomplishes an original take on the possession genre by focusing on the aftershocks of a failed exorcism years earlier. Not only are the two leads dynamic, but the character of a man still struggling with the notoriety and psychological effects of having been possessed as a young adult is an innovative and fascinating story to tell, one which audiences have never seen before. Packed with haunting, visceral visuals and well-earned twists, this is a no-brainer horror hit in the making.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: DERBY CITY by Alexis Perkins

PITCH: LITTLE MISS SUNSHINE meets SAVED

LOGLINE: A bartender (and small-time con artist) fleeing a criminal gambling charge convinces a naive Mormon missionary to drive across country with her, but when their truck and money are stolen, they have to resort to hustling pool in order to make it to Utah.

GENRE: Comedy

WHY TO READ: Fulfilling all the promise of its wild and zany logline, this is the rare comedy script that not only brings out deserved laughs at every turn, but never loses sight of the fact that the story hinges upon the dynamic between its hilarious and polar opposite lead characters, two roles that any young comedian would kill to get her hands on. The great ideas just keep on coming, infusing the script with an inexhaustible, wild energy that evokes timeless road trip films while also feeling fresh and unique. The writer's comedic voice comes through clearly in the entertaining writing and witty dialogue, making them a real one to watch.

TITLE: DEVIL IN THE DARK by Ben Kermode

PITCH: PRIMAL FEAR meets PRISONERS

LOGLINE: With her father's execution only three days away, a cop agrees to be hypnotized in order to find out the truth about the crime he's charged with - her mother's murder from 20 years earlier.

GENRE: Drama | Thriller

WHY TO READ: The writer's skill transports us from reading the script to experiencing the story first hand, with the story world and characters jumping off the page and coming to life. The hypnosis premise is instantly compelling and provides an atmospheric, unexpected touch to a well-structured mystery. This script has all sorts of twists and turns and revelations so by the time you reach the finale you are absolutely on the edge of your seat.

TITLE: DISGRASIAN by Ted Youngmin Sim

PITCH: MASTER OF NONE meets 500 DAYS OF SUMMER

LOGLINE: A young Korean-American who fears that his white girlfriend is only interested in him because she has an Asian fetish must reconcile his own ethnic prejudices when he finds out the truth of his father's long-lost love.

GENRE: Comedy | Romantic Comedy

WHY TO READ: A memorable and vibrant relationship comedy/drama, this script plays with race in new and inventive ways, exploring characters that are rarely seen on screen. This distinctive but organic point of view is not only refreshing, but provides a slew of untapped jokes and observations that make the story stand out from that crowd. Filled with well-rounded characters both complicated and grounded by their heritage and expectations, this script is edgy, insightful, and witty, making itself the perfect calling card for a unique new voice.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: DO KNOW HARM by Jim Goode & Scott Hawthorne

PITCH: SAFE HOUSE meets HOMELAND

LOGLINE: A CIA psychologist working in Syria is suspected of harboring treasonous information from a session and must go on the run with the help of one of her most dangerous patients in order to find out exactly what the government thinks she already knows, and why it is worth her life.

GENRE: Action | Thriller

WHY TO READ: You won't find better written action scenes than the ones that provide the foundation of this taut thriller. Anchored by a fantastically strong female lead who is pushed to her limits when forced into dangerous situations that she is totally unprepared for, this script has characters an audience can root for and identify with. With a strong romantic subplot and a globe-trotting conspiracy that will leave you guessing until the very end, this is the sort of modern, realistic thriller that is both high concept and character driven, a true breakout hit in the making.

TITLE: DOUBLE INDIANA by David Keith Miller

PITCH: THE NICE GUYS meets RAISING ARIZONA

LOGLINE: Two mobsters running a delivery from Los Angeles to Las Vegas discover that the money in their briefcase, which may or may not have been there in the first place, is missing, and consequently kidnap a woman, who may or may not have stolen it, to try to track it down before their boss has them killed.

GENRE: Action | Comedy | Drama

WHY TO READ: A mix of Shane Black, Guy Ritchie, and the Coen Brothers, this script thrives on its mash-up of a wacky comedic tone with intense, violent action. Charming and exciting, this script has a joyful ridiculousness to it, from the protagonist's bizarre monologues on other failed criminals to the gleefully enigmatic "Redhead" who might have screwed over our heroes, or might've just been in the wrong place at the wrong time, this is packed with original ideas and all builds to a surprisingly emotional ending.

TITLE: EDGE OF ETERNITY by Steve Isles

PITCH: EX MACHINA meets PASSENGERS

LOGLINE: A solitary prisoner sentenced to work in isolation mining precious metals on a remote asteroid creates a synthetic female companion for himself, and life gains meaning for him when the two fall in love. But when an emergency brings another astronaut to rescue them, he instead lays claim to everything the prisoner has.

GENRE: Romance | Sci-Fi | Thriller

WHY TO READ: Permeated by a fatalistic atmosphere and haunting solitude, this script evokes the rich, incisive science fiction of the past, placing it in a well-crafted futuristic world that wears its human flaws on its sleeve and sets up its rules and stakes so deftly that you won't even notice learning them. By putting its characters through a series of believably difficult situations that require creative solutions, the writer invites the reader into the story, endearing them to the complex characters and increasing the tension with perfect complications for each moment. Simultaneously an action thriller, a science fiction elegy, and an engaging love story, this script has something for absolutely everyone.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: ENDRA by Oskar Tellhed

PITCH: STRANGER THAN FICTION meets THANK YOU FOR SMOKING

LOGLINE: A frustrated painter is thrust into the spotlight overnight after he inadvertently invents a brand new color, but he soon finds this newfound fame and fortune isn't everything he had hoped for.

GENRE: Comedy | Drama

WHY TO READ: Imagine if somebody discovered a brand new color that nobody has seen before. It's a mind-blowing premise, both entirely original and incredibly simple. The central conceit presents an invigorating challenge for any ambitious director – how to display this brand new color on screen, or how to keep it from the viewers' eyes. Backing up the fantastic story is a clean, professional piece of writing that glides along on quick, concise descriptions and engaging dialogue. The irreverent, darkly comedic tone of the script elevates the offbeat story into the sort of film guaranteed to stand out from the crowd.

TITLE: ESTEVAN THE BLACK by Karl Bauer & Michael Choi

PITCH: THE REVENANT meets 12 YEARS A SLAVE

LOGLINE: An African slave with a gift for languages travels with Spanish Conquistadors to Florida on a doomed quest to find and conquer the legendary city of gold. In this remarkable true story, he emerges as the unlikely hero on a journey that begins with 600 men, and ends with only four left alive.

GENRE: Action | Adventure | Drama

WHY TO READ: Exceptional writing is the biggest strength of this piece, with the period details, authentic dialogue, and superior character work anchor a fantastic adventure story that tells an untold chapter in history with emotion and a cinematic scope. Estevan is a great protagonist, and his gift for picking up on new languages quickly is really intriguing. We can't wait for him to outwit and outlast everyone and find a place where he feels he belongs. With a clear goal – the quest for the City of Gold – and plenty of complications along the way, we have a well-plotted, character-driven epic with relevant and engaging racial themes that still resonate today.

TITLE: EULOGY by Martin Williams

PITCH: TRAINWRECK meets THE WEDDING RINGER

LOGLINE: A reserved single father who works as a professional eulogist risks embracing a new love with the help of a terminally ill client.

GENRE: Comedy | Romantic Comedy

WHY TO READ: The writer sets a quirky tone that fits both the romance and the comedy of this story perfectly. The characters are really strong, with each going on an emotional journey. Their arcs are prominent and everyone feels unique and fleshed out, especially the protagonist. The dialogue is clever and humorous, and the writing excellently meets all the comedy genre expectations. The premise is fun and original, and it easily lends itself to comedy, drama, and romance, making the story feel exceptionally well-rounded. This is definitely an occupation that has not been explored before in media, and the writer takes this wacky idea and grounds it in today's world while still giving ample room for jokes and wittiness, all while leaving the door open for this script to really make its mark as a truly unique rom-com.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: THE FELLOWSHIP by Brendon Udy & Victoria Rau

PITCH: THE HANGOVER meets FANBOYS

LOGLINE: Just days before his wedding, a man's friends surprise him with a trip to New Zealand for the world's biggest Lord of the Rings role playing battle. But the adventure goes awry when one of their tour guides drugs everyone so he can swipe the valuable ring the groom bought for his fiancée, leading to an epic journey to get it back before the big day.

GENRE: Adventure | Comedy

WHY TO READ: An enjoyable and funny read, the writing and dialogue in this script are exceptional. Presenting the reader with the right amount of slapstick, witty dialogue, and nerd humor, this script has a little something for everyone. While the tone is established early on, allowing the audience to expect some of the hijinks that are to come, the script goes to wild and unpredictable places that will delight any reader. Meanwhile, the inclusion of several strong female characters within the group of guys is a refreshing upending of genre conventions, and it's great to see them comfortable in the woods while the guys run around like chickens with their heads cut off.

TITLE: THE GAME-CHANGER by Patrick Sherman

PITCH: RUDY meets MILK

LOGLINE: A gay linebacker for the Dallas Cowboys deals with his life on the down low while struggling to make his mark in the most macho of professional sports, and the consequences of becoming the first active NFL player in history to come out of the closet.

GENRE: Drama | Sports

WHY TO READ: This script is incredibly fresh and relevant, with its central premise bubbling up organically as a pleasant surprise in what initially seems to be a more traditional football story. At the basis of this ambitious story is Liam, a sympathetic, complex, and idiosyncratic protagonist who anchors a wide-ranging tale with ease. A touching story that avoids stereotypes and clichés while interweaving its themes subtly into a tight sports script, this is a case study in how to impart important ideas in an engaging and commercial way.

TITLE: GARGOYLE by Brendon Udy & Victoria Rau

PITCH: PAN'S LABYRINTH meets DEFIANCE

LOGLINE: When Nazis raid a children's home, two young sisters flee into the forest where they discover an ancient creature under an evil spell. As their partisan parents fight to find them, the girls agree to help the creature break the curse in return for his own protection.

GENRE: Action | Adventure | Fantasy

WHY TO READ: This script is a gripping, action-packed mix of Nazi resistance and fairy tale, taking known and loved fantastical themes and running with them to create a whimsical and fun story interwoven with a somber wartime tale. The dark, iconic imagery of the disheveled castle, the creepy forest, the cursed mirror, and the evil witch give this story a timelessness and universality that is only enhanced by strong writing, dialogue, and character work. The action is exciting and convincing, maintaining the incredibly high stakes, and this story never stops being entertaining.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: GFE by Rizwanul Haq

PITCH: PRETTY WOMAN meets DEMOLITION

LOGLINE: Five years after the death of his wife, a man refuses to get back into the dating world, too afraid of becoming emotionally attached. But when he takes the first step in overcoming his fear by exploring the no-strings-attached option of hiring a professional escort, he finds himself unexpectedly falling for one of the women he hires.

GENRE: Drama | Romance

WHY TO READ: A script that will keep you engaged from start to finish, the writer displays a strong mastery of craft, character, structure, and dialogue. This is an emotional and touching update to the "Pretty Woman" story that differentiates itself enough to be fresh and enjoyable while still playing into the tropes of the genre that will make it feel familiar and fun. The pages are packed with drama, and the characters feel so natural that you experience every emotion alongside them.

TITLE: GLITCHES by Kelly Byrnes

PITCH: THE PERKS OF BEING A WALLFLOWER meets WHAT'S EATING GILBERT GRAPE

LOGLINE: An 18-year-old girl struggles with her place in life when she and her father are forced to leave California for Iowa to live with her fundamentalist aunt in Iowa, and she soon finds herself attracted to her autistic cousin.

GENRE: Drama

WHY TO READ: This script opens with an intriguing hook that pulls us in from the start. The protagonist is sarcastic and somewhat caustic, yet compelling, darkly humorous, and still likable. Despite the tragedies she's endured, she exudes confidence. She's a character the audience can connect with even as her dramatic flaws become clear. Cinematic visuals and tense family conflict give this story an epic, transcendent tone like the best of American literature.

TITLE: THE GROW HOUSE by Miley Tunnecliffe

PITCH: WEEDS meets ERIN BROCKOVICH

LOGLINE: When a woman unable to get a job with a felony conviction hanging over her head gets hired to live in a suburban marijuana grow house, she struggles to build a normal life for her and her daughter while falling for the house drug dealer, and keeping her new best friend, his wife, from finding out.

GENRE: Action | Comedy | Drama

WHY TO READ: Quirky and heartfelt, yet also suspenseful and action-packed, this script is immediately engaging and the storytelling is executed with great attention to detail and craft. Rose is a wonderfully flawed anti-hero, and we like her for trying hard and being resourceful in a terrible situation, and her dynamic with the cheating, dishonest husband and wife pair of Lina and Stanley is a true joy to watch. A perfect balance between character drama and laugh-out-loud humor, this script is a page-turner from beginning to end.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: THE HITCHCOCK MURDERS by Andy Maycock

PITCH: SUNSET BOULEVARD meets HITCHCOCK

LOGLINE: After the apparent suicide of a movie producer, a private eye follows a trail of clues, and bodies, that lead to the great Alfred Hitchcock himself. But much like in one of the director's films, there are no easy answers, and no one can be trusted.

GENRE: Drama | Thriller

WHY TO READ: This original and vibrant script takes us behind the scenes, literally, of one of Hitchcock's most famous movies, giving us the perfect amount of nostalgia and voyeurism. The Hollywood setting, story-within-a-story structure, and sharp cast of likable characters all add to the joyful thrill ride of a plot. This is lean, economical writing. The dialogue crackles with that quippy, old-timey film noir style that drips subtext. The script is briskly paced despite the complex murder mystery scheme, making it a quick, captivating read.

TITLE: HONEY TRAP by Juhana Lumme

PITCH: HITCH meets THE WEDDING RINGER

LOGLINE: A woman who runs a fidelity investigation business – testing men's loyalties to their girlfriends and collecting the reward when they cheat - finds herself falling in love with her latest target, an aspiring politician who's blind to her charms.

GENRE: Comedy | Romantic Comedy

WHY TO READ: A romantic comedy with a clear, humor-filled premise, this script coasts on its clear writing, realistic but witty dialogue, and a fun protagonist who is easy to root for. Angie's job, attempting to get men to cheat on their wives, provides both moral ambiguity and plenty of opportunity for silly gags. The fact that Angie has a collection of random skills from all the different jobs she has pretended to have in order to get close to her targets is an endless mine of humor, and her sidekick Tony is a scene-stealing supporting character who gets a real, well-rounded arc. With the right lead actress, this is a box office smash waiting to happen.

TITLE: HUNGER PAINS by Farrin Rosenthal

PITCH: SANTA CLARITA DIET meets BRIDEZILLA

LOGLINE: After suffering a savage bite from an escaped genetics experiment, a sweet, innocent, vegan planning her dream wedding must hide a sudden craving for living flesh or risk losing her one true love.

GENRE: Comedy | Horror | Romance

WHY TO READ: The writer completely understands both the romance and horror genres, blending them together seamlessly and doing justice to each on its own, giving us plenty of steamy drama and creepy scares. The moments of comedy spread throughout are well placed and have inklings of terror lurking behind them at each turn. Along with great visualization, this script provides enough sex and gore to keep your heart rate up from beginning to end. The dialogue is tongue in cheek and very self-aware, making for an enjoyable and distinctive voice that stands out from the crowd.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: THE HYBRID by Richard Turgeon

PITCH: CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND meets MIDNIGHT SPECIAL

LOGLINE: Six years after their first son went missing, a troubled private investigator and his estranged wife come to realize their long-missing son may have been abducted by aliens... and that their youngest son is next.

GENRE: Sci-Fi | Thriller

WHY TO READ: A unique take on the well-known alien abduction movie, this is a cool, memorable story that wide-ranging audiences will find entertaining. The strongest aspect of this piece is its fragile and visceral tone, which maintains a creepy and dark hew without ever falling too deep into the horror genre. This overarching gloom keeps you engaged in the story, feeling the ups and downs of the plot alongside the characters, and preparing you to be absolutely floored by the script's third act twists.

TITLE: INDI THE UNICORN by Darren Moroney & David Smith

PITCH: PETE'S DRAGON meets MY LITTLE PONY

LOGLINE: When a shy and isolated girl struggling to accept her parents' recent divorce finds a lost unicorn, she discovers her inner courage by helping him evade capture and return to his family in the clouds.

GENRE: Animation | Family | Fantasy

WHY TO READ: A beautiful and touching family story, this script provides real world heft to a fun fantasy premise. The writing is clear and easy to visualize. The tone is sharp, with a great start made even better by the wonderful opening action sequence. The protagonist meanwhile is immediately made into an outsider in her world, which helps create a bond between her and the audience. She quickly becomes our point of view into this story and one we care about. Wonderful imagination and wonderful understanding of the craft are both at play here, and the potential for cute Indi merchandise cannot be overstated.

TITLE: IT ALL COMES DOWN TO THIS by Patrick Wieggers & Scott Marshall Taylor

PITCH: FIELD OF DREAMS meets THE BUCKET LIST

LOGLINE: A dying man takes a road trip with his best friends and former high school teammates to see all 30 Major League ballparks before he dies.

GENRE: Drama | Sports

WHY TO READ: A great premise, full of heart, this script follows a group of friends and teammates who rally and support the protagonist as he battles a terminal illness. The story engages with themes of morality and friendship, building to a powerful ending which is touching and heartwarming. A lesser writer would not have been able to pull off the complex and difficult structure, but here we have such a vivid cast of unique characters who play off of each other to both humorous and emotional effect. Sports, friendship, death – this script has the perfect combination of themes to make even the toughest audience cry.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: JACARANDA by Ryan W. Smith

PITCH: TSOTSI meets WINTER'S BONE

LOGLINE: In apartheid South Africa, a young black freedom fighter sets out to rescue her father, who has been wrongfully arrested for a bombing she caused. Through her pursuit, she comes face-to-face with the grotesque underbelly of the apartheid regime, and forms an unlikely friendship with the son of her enemy.

GENRE: Drama | Thriller

WHY TO READ: Set at the height of apartheid, this script tells a dramatic story about race relations in the guise of a tense thriller, placing its protagonist right in the wolf's den and forcing her to confront her own preconceptions, as well as challenging our assumptions about the time period. With clear stakes, evocative writing, and polished dialogue, this is a compelling story that is just begging to be on the big screen. The characters are complex, with layered motivations and moral depth. The script wisely avoids painting anyone in clear-cut terms, giving characters on all sides of this horrific period in human history enough shades of gray to feel truly realistic, adding to the triumph and tragedy of this epic tale.

TITLE: JESSE'S GIRL by John Wikstrom

PITCH: THE EDGE OF SEVENTEEN meets SHE'S THE MAN

LOGLINE: In a bid to make his ex jealous and win her back, a high school senior invents a girlfriend on social media, but runs into trouble when he falls for the real-life girl he based her on.

GENRE: Comedy | Teen

WHY TO READ: The premise of this script is not only brilliant in its comedic potential, serving as a sort of modern-day "Twelfth Night," but it is also intensely of-the-moment, engaging with social media, catfishing, and changing gender politics with an intelligence and humor that is both mature and insightful. The dialogue is unique without sounding unnatural, capturing modern teenage cadence and technological slang with ease. Packed with humor, in the dialogue, the story, and even in the writer's voice, this script is a fun read from beginning to end and could be the next great coming-of-age teen film.

TITLE: THE LAST BADASS by Adam Draves & Paul Colahan

PITCH: EQUILIBRIUM meets LETHAL WEAPON

LOGLINE: In a future utopia where citizens must take a daily pill that makes them euphoric, one resident skews the balance by accidentally going off his meds, committing the community's first murder, inspiring a sexual reawakening or two, and leading a revolt against the "perfect" society.

GENRE: Action | Comedy

WHY TO READ: More than anything else, this script is one thing: hilarious. The premise is wild and intriguing at the same time, and the writer absolutely accomplishes their lofty goals by telling the story in a way that is constantly amusing. We go along with the insanity of this movie because the masterful maintenance of an offbeat tone backs it up. It's never scared to go "too far," and the dialogue is zippy and fresh. Nothing ever lets up in the script as the action, comedy, and misadventures keep plowing forward until you reach the end.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: LAST YEAR'S MAN by Tim Glister

PITCH: THE AMERICAN meets BOURNE

LOGLINE: On the rugged, remote Faroe Islands, a disgraced former CIA agent connects with his long lost son, a burnt-out reporter who could set the story straight, while luring in those who betrayed him for one last game of revenge.

GENRE: Action | Thriller

WHY TO READ: A unique setting in Denmark's Faroe Islands gives this script a visually stunning, grand landscape to paint its story on, and the writer masterfully captures this dark, brooding atmosphere and harnesses its creeping, wild isolation to enhance the tension, suspense, and stakes of this conspiracy thriller. Tightly plotted and structured, this script centers on a compelling protagonist who is both fascinating in his ex-CIA status, and relatable in his journey to see his son one last time before his death. By balancing the action and mystery of a thriller with this deeply personal story, the script achieves an engaging and emotional spectacle.

TITLE: LEGENDARY by Dana Brawer & Sean Lee

PITCH: SUPERBAD meets BROAD CITY

LOGLINE: Two senior girls want to score a ton of weed for their last high school party to cement their legacy, but their plans take a crazy and hilarious detour after they wind up scoring more than they can handle.

GENRE: Comedy | Teen

WHY TO READ: A humorous take on the last days of senior year, and that last chance for glory, it's a classic story about making your mark, this time told from a female perspective. The pacing is great, with the plot always pushing forward with increasingly ridiculous and hilarious situations. The jokes are consistent throughout the script, and each character has a distinct sense of humor that provides for a diversity of comedy, leaving something for everyone to enjoy. Two fantastic lead characters anchor this wild tale, and the depth and skill of their characterization is what makes the ending as cathartic and emotional as it is funny.

TITLE: LOVE ME TOMORROW by Kent Moran

PITCH: JUST LIKE HEAVEN meets IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE

LOGLINE: After dying of a broken heart, a widowed man gets a second chance to be with the love of his last life when they are both reincarnated.

GENRE: Drama | Romance

WHY TO READ: A charming, sweet, faith-based story that is a touching tale about love transcending lifetimes. Rather than going over-the-top or preachy with its religious themes, this script engages its ideas through the characters and their faith in themselves and each other. This relatable theme come across in natural dialogue, while the love between the lead characters is believable and nuanced, so the reader is instantly engaged by the romantic story.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: MAJOR TAYLOR by PW Valentine

PITCH: RACE meets CHASING LEGENDS

LOGLINE: Based on the true story of cyclist Major Taylor who, in the 1890s, battled racism and the world's top riders to become the first ever African American to be recognized on an international level for his athletic achievements.

GENRE: Biopic | Sports | True

WHY TO READ: A powerful and challenging true sports story, this script is anchored by an endearing and inspiring central character. It is a joy to see his strength and confidence grow throughout all of the challenges that come across his path. The story of the struggles for acceptance and opportunity faced by African Americans remain just as relevant today as during the time of Major Taylor, and this story is a challenging reminder of the trials, tribulations, and brutality that the community faces. Major's frustrations are palpable in this well-told story of success, resilience, and hope.

TITLE: MANZANAR by Ian Hayden

PITCH: EMPIRE OF THE SUN meets UNBROKEN

LOGLINE: A Japanese-American family struggles to maintain their identity and stay together after they are relocated to the Manzanar internment camp during World War II.

GENRE: Drama

WHY TO READ: An unfortunately topical chapter in American history, this script tells the story of a Japanese family in a World War II internment camp. Told with skill, heart, and intelligence, this promises to be the definitive account of this tragic time period. Impeccable character work, an efficient structure, and pitch perfect period dialogue elevate this script to awards worthy drama. The juxtaposition of Ichiro's declining faith in America with his parents' declining faith in their Japanese culture is undeniably powerful and reveals the complexity in how such terrible situations affect people, while the pure artistry of the writing helps craft a haunting warning of what can happen when we turn against each other.

TITLE: MARIAN by Pete Barry

PITCH: ROBIN HOOD meets BRAVEHEART

LOGLINE: When a conspiracy to conquer England leads to the assassination of Robin Hood right before her eyes, Marian must rise to power and lead her people into a war that will not only decide the fate of the kingdom, but that will see her don the mantle of the man she loved, and reimagine the story of a legend we thought we knew.

GENRE: Action | Adventure

WHY TO READ: By beginning the script with a Hitchcockian twist – the tragic death of Robin Hood – the writer turns what seems to be a traditional outlaw tale into a triumphant origin story for Maid Marian. Anchoring its epic adventure in a more compelling and robust historical context than any other such adaptation, the writer has created a cinematic narrative that succeeds on every level. This is the rare female-led tale that truly embraces a modern feminist ideal, with all of the major female characters becoming distinct, strong, morally sound heroines. The writing is clear and descriptive, while dialogue crackles with wit and emotional energy without losing sight of its period trappings. Packed with stunning set pieces, innovative twists, and heart-pounding action, this is the Robin Hood story we've all been waiting for. Who knew we had to kill him in order to get there?

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: MARKING TIME by Darrin Reed & Tom Crehan

PITCH: OCEAN'S ELEVEN meets INSIDE MAN

LOGLINE: A billionaire and master thief takes on his biggest job yet, stealing the famous clock from New York's Grand Central Terminal. But it's a race against time when his greatest enemy enters the picture.

GENRE: Action | Comedy | Thriller

WHY TO READ: Intelligent, well-developed, and full of setups, payoffs, and twists, this script is the ultimate fun heist movie. The stakes are always clear, and the action scenes never let up, leading to some truly impressive set pieces. The characters are all distinctive, and the dialogue is fast-paced and witty all around, while still keeping their voices unique. This is a well-built world that succeeds on all of its levels, and the third act will keep you second-guessing until the end.

TITLE: ME & KIP by Carlotta Harlan

PITCH: DEATH AT A FUNERAL meets RACHEL GETTING MARRIED

LOGLINE: Two years after disowning her family, and shortly after the death of her addict brother, a young woman is forced to reunite with the very people she despises for the celebration of her other brother's wedding.

GENRE: Comedy | Drama

WHY TO READ: The classic family drama set-up: everyone trapped together at a wedding. This script, however, has its own twist on things, as the protagonist sees visions of her recently deceased brother. The protagonist's struggle to communicate her emotions and her frustration with her family seemingly having no reaction to her brother's death creates a complicated drama with gripping and moving moments. The dialogue is cutting and revealing, with each character's voice coming through and the biting, irreverent voices of family members at odds with each other causing the script to move along at a breakneck pace, with fragile characters bouncing off each other like a pinball machine of emotion.

TITLE: MISS LIBERTY by Craig Paulsen

PITCH: MISS CONGENIALITY meets THE SANDLOT

LOGLINE: In order to get money to take care of his grandmother, a boy and his friend kidnap a beauty queen and hold her for ransom, but the crime quickly escalates to capture the attention of their entire small town.

GENRE: Comedy | Drama

WHY TO READ: An undeniably fun idea that packs both humor and emotion in spades, this script achieves universality through its Norman Rockwell setting and inherent kindness. Russ and Eddie are two relatable leads, and their misguided adventure brings out the inherent nostalgia of the small town 1980s setting. Russ's affection for his ailing grandmother provides the emotional core of this touching comedy-drama, which treats all of its characters with enough care to appeal to audiences of all ages.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: MISSING TIME by Philip James Booth

PITCH: 10 CLOVERFIELD LANE meets THE ADJUSTMENT BUREAU

LOGLINE: A blue collar worker in Northern Florida wakes up with no memory of the past two years to find the world has moved on without him. When his loved ones refuse to believe his problems are anything other than self-inflicted, he tries to unravel what happened to him with the help of a woman who has experienced the same phenomenon.

GENRE: Sci-Fi | Thriller

WHY TO READ: An engaging thriller with genuine intrigue and an original science-fiction mythology that can be made for a price, this script moves at a fast and enjoyable pace. The third act is full of shocking twists as the story fully immerses itself in science fiction and does not hold back. The protagonist's journey is relatable and engaging, while his relationship with the enigmatic Anna provides a provocative and complex dynamic to the heart of the story.

TITLE: MR. MOON by Mike Langer

PITCH: STRANGER THINGS meets E.T.

LOGLINE: A wisecracking kid and his friends investigate strange happenings in their town, which he thinks might be tied to the disappearance of his father years earlier. With the help of a salesman who claims to own the moon, they must outsmart a rogue government agent and rescue an alien rover stranded on earth.

GENRE: Adventure | Family | Sci-Fi

WHY TO READ: A fun, family-friendly science fiction adventure story about a very determined and resourceful young teenage boy desperate to find his long-lost father, the characters are engaging and are clearly drawn with their own voices. It is hard not to like these kids and root for their success, even as we can see where they are going wrong. These children have to grapple with harsh truths, lies, and revelations while on their adventure, adding an emotional dimension to the touching coming-of-age story.

TITLE: MURPHY'S CREEK by Carol Mulholland

PITCH: NO COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN meets THE BOURNE IDENTITY

LOGLINE: The sheriff of a remote town falls for the prime suspect in a murder case - a woman who wandered in from the desert with no idea who she is or where she came from - only to discover that she is involved in a dangerous conflict between the FBI and a group of violent drug dealers.

GENRE: Action | Thriller | Western

WHY TO READ: An impressive piece of confident writing, this script strikes a very difficult and compelling tone, one reminiscent of Taylor Sheridan's work, or the darker Coen Brothers films. There's a vibrancy to the writing, and many scenes that could otherwise be standard are enlivened by these odd little touches that make them fresh and compelling. The plot is wild and entertaining, a back and forth genre mix with a mystery, a dead FBI agent, mistaken identities, hit men, and so on, all making for a fun, quick read.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: NOSTALGIA by Michael Aloyan

PITCH: ETERNAL SUNSHINE OF THE SPOTLESS MIND meets ENEMY OF THE STATE

LOGLINE: A man who works for a black market company that erases people's memories without their knowledge finds himself embroiled in a political conspiracy thanks to his latest job, which also brings to light a dark secret from his own past.

GENRE: Action | Sci-Fi | Thriller

WHY TO READ: Gripping writing elevates this ambitious premise into an effective and unpredictable thriller which plays with themes of memory, morality, and politics in smart and original ways. Each character has a distinct voice and personality, with the protagonist having such a moving and powerful transformation that you won't even recognize him by the end of the script. The plot moves along quickly, while the writer deftly explains the complex sci-fi premise in skillful exposition and storytelling. This story has just the right balance of mystery, sci-fi, and action to keep you reading and waiting for the next piece of information to be revealed.

TITLE: OFF THE HOOK by John Arvai

PITCH: TOY STORY meets NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

LOGLINE: In a world where a Christmas tree's star is actually a secret transmitter used by Santa Claus to identify all of the active Christmas homes throughout the world, a toy soldier must lead a group of ornaments in a desperate race against time to find their missing star so Santa doesn't skip their house.

GENRE: Animation | Comedy | Family

WHY TO READ: With a unique take on a Christmas tradition that will delight both kids and their parents, the writer is able to make this story their own by providing the Christmas tree ornaments with individual personalities and keeping them active with clear goals and purpose. The banter is witty and fun and keeps the story moving even before they leave the comfort of the living room. Once the adventure starts, the high stakes escalate with every obstacle and the addition of the ticking clock, counting down to when Santa arrives, is both adorable and the perfect motivation. Ending with positive themes of family, friendship, and the holiday spirit, this script has the potential to touch generations of kids.

TITLE: ON THE SIDELINES by Sam Greisman

PITCH: ALMOST FAMOUS meets G.B.F.

LOGLINE: The teenage son of a famous actress steps into the spotlight and catches the eye of his movie star crush after giving a speech at a gay rights event, soon finding himself torn between his new boyfriend and his overbearing mother.

GENRE: Drama | Romantic Comedy | Teen

WHY TO READ: A touching and nuanced teen romance that succeeds on the basis of its strong writing, this script tells an LGBT story without resorting to stereotypes, and uses its Hollywood setting as a way to up the stakes and the humor. Avery is a relatable lead despite his newfound celebrity status, and his relationships with his mother, friends, and love interests are all natural, complex, and believable. Hyperaware of the political, social, and media contexts of its sensitive story, this is a script that hits right at the heart of the zeitgeist without preaching or losing sight of the story it wants to tell.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: **ONE WHITE CROW by Pippa Hinchley**

PITCH: THE X-FILES meets JANE EYRE

LOGLINE: An arch skeptic and brilliant academic, famous for debunking fraudulent mediums, and an unassuming Bostonian housewife with an extraordinary ability scientifically prove there is life after death. This is a true story.

GENRE: Romance | Supernatural | Thriller

WHY TO READ: A beautifully written script, with layers of imagery and themes creating atmospheric settings and a mystical tone which is still anchored to the audience by the voice of a reasoned, scientific skeptic. The clearly painted visuals, settings, and use of audio cues build a vivid world for the story. It also features a compelling leading man, who from the beginning is dealing with his own demons, and he must face up to his biggest fears - love, life, and the unknown – and we get to watch as he goes on a believable journey of acceptance.

TITLE: **PAST TIME by RC Miles**

PITCH: ABOUT TIME meets ETERNAL SUNSHINE OF THE SPOTLESS MIND

LOGLINE: A man wins the chance to visit three important moments from his past, giving him the potential to alter the direction of his life as he knows it and make a better future for himself.

GENRE: Drama | Sci-Fi

WHY TO READ: An interesting and heartfelt premise with a sci-fi twist, this has something for everyone. From drama and heartbreak, to a story ultimately rooted in love, this is a joy to read. The writer flawlessly sets up the rules of this world and the time travel elements without getting bogged down in the science of it, instead keeping the story focused on what really matters. The leads are well-crafted characters who you know, care about, and root for prior to time travel being introduced, which really lets the audience identify with them despite a more fantastical premise. What's more, the protagonist's journey allows him to interact with his former self and relive some of the most challenging days of his life, which makes for a rich and rewarding storytelling experience. This is an incredibly strong premise backed by its sincerity as well as its originality.

TITLE: **PENNY by Arthur Panoyan**

PITCH: THE WAY, WAY BACK meets GARDEN STATE

LOGLINE: A socially awkward coin collector plans a trip upstate to acquire a rare penny that has eluded him for years, but finds his dream hindered when a loud-mouthed girl forces herself into his plans and tags along.

GENRE: Comedy | Drama

WHY TO READ: This comedy has the perfect pairing of a troubled, outgoing girl and an introverted, socially awkward man being forced to work together to accomplish their goals. The characters are unique, well rounded, and have plenty of flaws and layers to uncover during the hilarious rollercoaster ride of a road trip. There are twists, turns, strong emotional beats, and true revelations for all involved. Even as the characters display their strange obsessions, they are infinitely relatable, showing how people's obsessions can be as large, as weird, or as small as you can imagine, but what really matters is achieving your goals with the people you love.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: **PINOCCHIO WARS by Damian Knoll, Jay Murphree & Ryan Oyler**

PITCH: I, ROBOT meets WESTWORLD

LOGLINE: Seeking to uncover the truth behind her mother's suspicious death, a tech-savvy journalist discovers a secret island of abandoned, malfunctioning robots that possess sentience, and must navigate their uprising while surviving the brutal retaliation of an AI corporation attempting to silence her.

GENRE: Action | Adventure | Sci-Fi

WHY TO READ: An ambitious and exhilarating premise underlines this action-packed sci-fi war film, which gives us such memorable characters as a robot Abraham Lincoln from a theme park leading a rebellion, to the human reporter who wants to hear the robots' side at any cost. The writing is descriptive and evocative, efficiently painting a detailed portrait of this fantastic sci-fi setting, and filling the script with tight action beats that escalate perfectly as the story goes on. The visuals are inventive and intriguing, with the robot society on the island serving as a genuinely new creation.

TITLE: **PLAN C by David Ngo**

PITCH: ROUNDERS meets HOT FUZZ

LOGLINE: After the Chinese Mafia threaten to harm his family if he doesn't make good on his gambling debts, a detective does the only logical thing he can think of - he hires two petty criminals to help him rob an illegal poker tournament. The plan is foolproof, until people start dying. When plans A and B fail, it's time for Plan C.

GENRE: Action | Comedy

WHY TO READ: There is plenty of fun and action to be had here, with inventive visuals and a quirky cast of characters who are all enjoyable, no matter which side they are on. The 1990s Tasmania setting gives this script a very specific tone and voice, something that could appeal to international audiences while also providing that small town flavor that makes comedic heists like this sizzle with personality.

TITLE: **THE POACHER by Travis Ogenorth**

PITCH: BEASTS OF NO NATION meets ROAD TO PERDITION

LOGLINE: A Serengeti native and haunted former guerilla soldier, forced into poaching ivory to feed his starving family, finds himself gaining unwanted notoriety after shooting his estranged brother - a ruthless warlord who comes looking for revenge.

GENRE: Action | Drama

WHY TO READ: Taking full advantage of its African Savannah setting, this script is full of action-packed, suspenseful, violent, and tense cinematic set pieces. Not just a visual feast, this script grounds its high stakes story of competing warlords in a simple, universal idea - poverty. The protagonist and his family are relatable characters put into a terrible situation, something that any reader will empathize with, pulling them into the powerful tale of survival, moral choices, and unintended consequences. Tackling a globally and politically relevant issue with complexity and humanity, this script has a lot to say, and says it in an undeniably entertaining and moving way.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: POST SCRIPT by Ariadne Shaffer

PITCH: GRACE AND FRANKIE meets SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE

LOGLINE: When they win a free rent contest together, an elderly woman is compelled to share an apartment with a man she has harbored a 50-year grudge against. When they become more than just roommates, they must find a way to work around disapproving family, ancient insults, and damaging secrets.

GENRE: Comedy | Drama | Romance

WHY TO READ: A classic odd couple premise, this script follows two enemies who are forced to live together after winning a contest, slowly and believably evolving into a romantic couple you want to root for. The character work is strong partially because both characters have such distinct flaws, and they are at a time in their lives when they need intimacy. It's touching, tragic, funny, and ultimately a story about the importance of family and forgiveness. Easy to market at the underserved elderly audience, there are jokes in here for all ages, making this a potential wide-ranging hit.

TITLE: PURGATORY HIGH by Edward Somers

PITCH: HEAVEN CAN WAIT meets SIXTEEN CANDLES

LOGLINE: After dying, an immature, life-long partier is sent to a unique kind of purgatory where he has to relive his senior year of high school to atone for his teenage sins. If he passes all his classes, he'll move on, but if he fails, he'll be stuck in the 1980s attending high school over and over again.

GENRE: Comedy

WHY TO READ: For a lot of people, having to relive their high school years would be some kind of personal hell, and this script takes that idea and runs with it, crafting a funny, moving, and smart twist on the high school genre. The writer admirably brings a new perspective and emotional depth to high school archetypes and traditions. The script takes a new twist on an old genre, and does an admirable job of bringing a new perspective to high school archetypes and traditions. We care for the characters despite their past indiscretions, and are really rooting for them to overcome their sins and be able to move on.

TITLE: RED THREAD by Leif Johnson

PITCH: THELMA AND LOUISE meets THE HANDMAIDEN

LOGLINE: An anxious American in Tokyo befriends a mysterious woman who became famous for committing murder as a girl, and find they complete each other in the worst way. When their relationship blossoms into murder, they go on the run, embarking on a bloody journey of self-discovery across Japan.

GENRE: Romance | Thriller

WHY TO READ: From its stunningly bloody opening sequence, this script exudes a dark, violent atmosphere that will draw you in to explore the depravity of humanity, and continually remind you that nothing is off limits. The nuanced and dangerous relationship between the two leads provides the emotional heart to an otherwise pitch-black thriller, which touches on themes of death, love, and violence in a truly original way. Despite their psychotic natures, the characters are relatable and believable, while the Japanese setting is used to maximum effect, adding to the unsettling tone and strangely beautiful horror. The kind of story that will stick in your mind and prompt endless conversation, this is a cult classic in the making.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: RED WINTER by Evan McNamara

PITCH: MAD MAX: FURY ROAD meets THE MARTIAN

LOGLINE: When her parents are killed, a young woman living in an isolated colony on Mars must trek across the planet to find other colonists, avoiding the dangerous feral humans roaming the red sands

GENRE: Action | Sci-Fi | Thriller

WHY TO READ: There are so many fantastic and original ideas in this script, so many stunning action set pieces, heartbreaking sequences, and fully-realized sci-fi settings that it's hard to believe it's all contained in a two-hour film. Visually expansive and creative, it's easy to picture a director salivating over the possibilities of this sci-fi adventure. Esther is an amazingly realistic protagonist, despite her surroundings, and her journey is something any audience would want to watch. The script does a great job of setting up her world and then taking everything away from her, sending her on an epic quest across the Martian landscape that will have an audience invested and on the edge of their seats from beginning to end.

TITLE: SAND CREEK by Jane Paulson & Marcy Kelly

PITCH: DANCES WITH WOLVES meets LINCOLN

LOGLINE: The tragic true story of an idealistic Union officer stationed in the remote Colorado territory during the Civil War who struggles against cultural misunderstandings, politics, and greed to navigate contentious peace talks with the local Native Americans, and to protect the tribe from the extermination orders handed down from his superiors.

GENRE: Western

WHY TO READ: An epic historical Western that chronicles an important and untold chapter in American history, this script is a fantastic feat of historical fiction. The protagonist's journey is intensely relatable, and it's impossible not to get emotionally engaged as he fights for the rights of the Cheyenne and pushes up against unsympathetic army officers. The script is expertly structured, with each scene written to perfection and serving as a small piece of a puzzle building up tension and emotion until the climactic massacre at Sand Creek. The writer has done an excellent job of researching the time, writing in such a way as to place the reader in the period of the Civil War and the frontier life. Above all, this is visceral, alive and cinematic.

TITLE: SANGUINE by Emma Fissenden

PITCH: PENNY DREADFUL meets PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

LOGLINE: A 17-year-old amateur detective, who must tread carefully between the upper echelons of Victorian England society and her work assisting the police in secret, attempts to uncover the truth behind a rash of mysterious deaths in London, in which the bodies have all been drained of blood.

GENRE: Horror | Romance | Supernatural

WHY TO READ: Always playing with expectations, this script is set in 1870s Whitechapel, but its villain is not the famous Jack the Ripper, but instead a group of vampires unlike any we've seen before. Eleanor is a captivating protagonist, as a pathologist in Victorian London, she is crossing boundaries, and her depth of knowledge, inventive problem solving, and resilient optimism make her someone that you want to see succeed. Her love life is no less captivating, and the writer effortlessly ties in romance to her bloody story. All the pieces work together to make this dark story a fun ride, something that will leave viewers thrilled as they leave the theater.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: THE SAVAGE by Christopher Yeazel

PITCH: THE NEW WORLD meets LAST OF THE MOHICANS

LOGLINE: After being kidnapped from his lands as a child, the Patuxet Indian Squanto spends his life fighting impossible odds to return home, setting in motion a series of events that changes the course of history. The epic true story behind one of America's most endearing myths.

GENRE: Action | Adventure | Biopic

WHY TO READ: As the figure at the center of all stories about the Pilgrims and the First Thanksgiving, but whose own life has never been explored, Squanto is a truly fantastic subject for a biopic, and this script does not disappoint. Impeccably researched and packed with historical detail, this script becomes a true epic of the most cinematic scale, with enormous set pieces, larger than life characters, and complex themes. Squanto's journey is gripping and memorable, with plenty of twists and turns and a globetrotting path which only emphasizes the ambitious nature of the story and the nuanced depiction of the headstrong yet naïve protagonist.

TITLE: SECRET WEAPON by Peter Limm

PITCH: LEGALLY BLONDE meets 21 JUMP STREET

LOGLINE: A dim-witted, failing actress is recruited by the FBI to help bring down a powerful crime syndicate by going undercover as the daughter of a major crime lord, who just happens to be her doppelganger.

GENRE: Action | Comedy

WHY TO READ: This is a big, splashy, female driven comedy that is, to put it simply, really funny. The wild, but not entirely unfamiliar premise, is a joy to see come together, while the dialogue is clever and self-aware. The fierce, surprising protagonist will subvert all your expectations and comes out of this wacky script as a totally believable and real person. This tightly structured and efficient script wastes no time at all, packing its pages with great action, hilarious jokes, and strong character arcs.

TITLE: SENIOR CAMP by Kenny Wright

PITCH: NEIGHBORS meets GRUMPY OLD MEN

LOGLINE: After being put in a senior resort, an elderly grouch rallies his fellow seniors to fight back against the rival youth party resort that's opened next door.

GENRE: Comedy

WHY TO READ: A simple but fantastic premise which touches on aging, generational shifts, and family dynamics, this script is emotional, entertaining, and hilarious in ways that feel fresh, original, and delightfully over-the-top. Rupert is the perfect protagonist, moving from cynicism to generosity with believability. Structurally exceptional, the script adds in complications at just the right times. The rivalry with the nearby youth camp is a hilarious development that only gets better when the two camps have to team up in the end. With a little something for everyone, this is a comedy that will appeal to both young and old alike.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: **SHADOWS OF OZ by Nathan Wilcoxen**

PITCH: ALICE IN WONDERLAND meets THE WIZARD OF OZ

LOGLINE: When a wicked witch of Wonderland invades Oz in search of a legendary all-powerful scepter, the Mad Hatter recruits Alice's granddaughter, a teenage convict, to stop her.

GENRE: Adventure | Fantasy

WHY TO READ: Combining two of the most iconic fantasy lands in all of fiction – Wonderland and Oz – this script tells a totally original tale with just the right amount of winks to its predecessors. Anchored by fantastic world-building and creative, evocative writing, this is a cinematic, epic quest that evokes the grandest of adventures while never losing sight of its relatable, human protagonist in Alice's juvenile delinquent granddaughter. Easily adaptable into a sequel for an existing film series or as the start of a brand new tent pole franchise, this is a fun, exhilarating thrill ride with a ton of potential.

TITLE: **THE SHELL by Charlie Neubauer**

PITCH: MINORITY REPORT meets TRANSCENDENCE

LOGLINE: In a future where death has been eradicated thanks to a revolutionary technology that allows people to be resurrected, a petty criminal is tasked with solving the seemingly impossible murder of its inventor - his mother.

GENRE: Sci-Fi | Thriller

WHY TO READ: Taking the well-loved sci-fi premise of uploading consciousness to a computer and elevating it into a completely original thriller by way of a creative conceit that mines the most possible moral and emotional complexity out of its core technology, this script is anchored in an impeccably crafted futuristic world. The detail here is stunning - from the screens displaying recent history for those being brought back to life, to the fact that nobody knows what a funeral is. This truly feels like a world where nobody dies, which is no small feat. With a complex lead whose motivations are never dull or predictable, and enough haunting imagery to keep you up at night, this is the sort of incisive science fiction that reaches to the heart of humanity and finds it made of rotting chrome, still beating.

TITLE: **SHORE BREAK by Anthony Guidubaldi & Keith Strausbaugh**

PITCH: OUT COLD meets DODGEBALL

LOGLINE: After inheriting a bankrupt watersports company, two slackers and a group of castoffs challenge the encroaching developer hell-bent on privatizing the beach to the ultimate showdown: a jet ski competition that will determine fate of their beachfront community.

GENRE: Comedy | Teen

WHY TO READ: A fun buddy comedy that goes for broke with its comedy in a really great way. The characters are likable, goofy, carefree, every-men, who feel both familiar and out-of-control right from the get go. Hitting all of the right beats for this sort of slacker, summer escapist comedy, the script has an ease about it that invites you to just sit back and laugh over and over again. Strong writing, witty dialogue, and a ton of jokes that really land make this an enjoyable read all the way through.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: **SIDEWAYS DOWN THE SKY by Barry Brennessel**

PITCH: ATONEMENT meets THE NOTEBOOK

LOGLINE: An elderly Japanese man brings two young gay men together to tell them the story of his childhood romance with another boy during World War II, attempting to provide them the chance at true love he never had.

GENRE: Drama | Romance

WHY TO READ: Inarguably ambitious in scope, this script intricately interweaves multiple narrative chains with sharp thematic consistency in order to present a stimulating blend of drama and romance. The flashback scenes to a romance between two men during World War II in Japan feel truly original and cinematic, while the beautiful writing and dialogue shine through to craft the core characters into real, sympathetic people. With dual stories and themes of love, acceptance, and the forces that keep us apart, this is a touching story with a real message.

TITLE: **SLAMMIN' by Brandon Martin**

PITCH: BRIDESMAIDS meets A LEAGUE OF THEIR OWN

LOGLINE: Inspired by true events, two struggling actresses join the first all-female pro wrestling league at the height of the wrestling hysteria of the 1980s.

GENRE: Comedy | Sports

WHY TO READ: This script has a couple of things that really make it stand out from the pack and one of the key elements is the love and affection that you can see for pro wrestling in the writing. Even though the script is making fun of the sport, it also has a lot of scenes in this script that pay homage to the entertainment behemoth. With funny commentators, wrestling gags, and cheesy skits, this is the right blend of homage and tease. With the number of really high quality female comedians working today, this script would be easy to pitch as a vehicle for any one of them.

TITLE: **THE SOFT MACHINE by David Lawrance**

PITCH: ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST meets CHANGELING

LOGLINE: In order to unravel the truth about her lover's supposed suicide, a young nurse goes undercover at the psychiatric hospital that treated him, discovering that the doctor in charge is performing dangerous experiments that may be killing patients.

GENRE: Drama | Thriller

WHY TO READ: This is an intriguing psychological thriller that uses its 1970s Los Angeles setting to create an atmosphere of suspicion and doubt, with the looming threat of Scientology's influence and the conditions that incubated so much cult activity giving color to Rosa's investigations into a dangerous mental hospital. Rosa's personal quest, finding out what happened to her former lover, raises the stakes immediately, and the plot does not disappoint, with plenty of great twists to keep the audience on its toes.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: STEP MOMSTER by Chase Caldwell

PITCH: STEPMOM meets LOOK WHO'S COMING TO DINNER

LOGLINE: When her recently widowed, soon to be 70-year-old father starts dating her former high school classmate, a woman decides she has to break up the relationship before it's too late.

GENRE: Comedy

WHY TO READ: A classic comedy premise fleshed out with great dialogue, a readable, engaging visual style, and distinct, likable characters. The protagonist Annette is painted with humorous complexity, and the conflict between her, her father, and her father's young girlfriend is a great mine of humor and drama. Annette and her son have a wild, unique dynamic that adds levity and quirkiness to the timeless structure of this well-written script, which has a lot of heart amidst its hilarious cynicism. The rare comedy that grabs a wide ranging audience, because it's all rooted in family at the end of the day.

TITLE: SUBMERGED by Dan Hall

PITCH: THE SHALLOWS meets ALIVE

LOGLINE: Trapped in a shrinking air pocket deep beneath the ocean's surface, the survivors of a plane crash battle to stay alive long enough for the rescue teams to locate them.

GENRE: Action | Thriller

WHY TO READ: With an exciting concept and efficient, effective storytelling, this is a thriller that is begging to be on the big screen. The contained nature of the action - taking place almost entirely in the plane, both before and after the crash, will keep the budget down and adds tension. This script is packed with smart decisions and thrilling moments, adding complication after complication that demand creative solutions to drive the narrative forward. The characters have distinct personalities and emotional arcs that raise the stakes while the relationships feel real and provide depth to this suspenseful ride.

TITLE: TECH & STRYKER by Odin Ozdil

PITCH: THE NICE GUYS meets CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

LOGLINE: After getting into a fight at work, a CIA tech guy drunkenly orders a hit on his Cold War throwback colleague, but in the attempt to shut it down, the two men get caught up in a dangerous international conspiracy.

GENRE: Action | Comedy

WHY TO READ: From the moment one of the script's leads accidentally takes out a hit on the other, you know this is going to be a wild ride. With this fun premise, a hilarious dynamic between tech guy and James Bond wannabe, exciting action scenes, and plenty of twists and turns, the writer does not disappoint in executing an entertaining rollercoaster of an action comedy. The most appealing part of the script is the writer's voice, which infuses the story with a healthy dose of humor. Cliff and Tom's characters are established right away, and it's fun watching these two opposites, both in personality and profession, be forced to work together. This is a solid new entry in one of Hollywood's most commercially successful genres.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: THEMBI by Tom Glasson

PITCH: THE GHOST AND THE DARKNESS meets AMERICAN SNIPER

LOGLINE: Haunted by her experiences in Afghanistan, a young American soldier finds hope and salvation when she joins a small band of veterans fighting the war against illegal ivory poaching in South Africa.

GENRE: Action | Drama

WHY TO READ: Telling a conservationist tale without ever being preachy, this script grounds its cinematic action adventure in strong character work and a moving personal journey. The dialogue is dynamic and engaging, with what characters find themselves unable to say carrying as much weight as the things they do say. The characters come across as real people, and the female protagonist does not fall into any of the stereotypes that plague depictions of strong women in film. This is a heartfelt story that sheds light on real world issues that have real world consequences.

TITLE: THESE WOODS ARE LOVELY by Tyler Theofilos

PITCH: SIDE EFFECTS meets V/H/S

LOGLINE: After agreeing to take part in a psychology study for the extra cash, a Yale freshman begins to experience strange blackouts, making him realize he's either losing his mind, or his entire identity.

GENRE: Horror | Thriller

WHY TO READ: A fresh and creative take on the found footage genre, this dark psychological thriller takes advantage of its gothic college campus setting to amplify the creepy atmosphere, and to craft memorable horror visuals. The story is fast-paced and intriguing at every turn, with plenty of expertly set up twists that you won't see coming, and that will make you want to watch again and again to figure it all out. Creatively written with innovative ways to maintain the found footage conceit and naturalistic dialogue that fleshes out the compelling characters, this script shows real skill all the way around.

TITLE: THREE HUNDRED YEARS IN PARADISE by Stephen Graf

PITCH: HUNGER meets CASABLANCA

LOGLINE: A widowed American diplomat is plunged into IRA intrigue when he travels to Belfast to help negotiate a treaty to end The Troubles, only to find himself falling in love with the lonely wife of an informer at the heart of the conflict.

GENRE: Drama | Romance

WHY TO READ: With its powerful setting in Belfast at the heart of The Troubles, this script tackles a violent historical period with heart and specificity, elevating an emotional romance to the level of a political epic with skill and nuance. The quotable dialogue captures the various dialects and voices of the characters and their backgrounds, lending even more realism. The deeply flawed characters on all sides of the conflict help give gravitas and power to the treaty negotiations as well as the romance, so by the end of the script, we are incredibly invested in not only the protagonists and their connection, but also the fate of the country.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: **THE TRICKSTER AND THE DEMON by A.M. Sanchez**

PITCH: THE EXORCIST meets DRAG ME TO HELL

LOGLINE: A brother-sister con artist team pretending to be witch doctors find themselves in need of real help when one of them gets possessed by a very real, very dangerous demon.

GENRE: Horror | Thriller

WHY TO READ: An entertaining premise with a great first act twist, this script manages to be both fun and genuinely creepy, basing its plot entirely on the two protagonists and their flaws. Their sibling relationship is the key to this story, and it's believable and relatable throughout. The eerie atmosphere starts on page one and never lets up, immersing the audience completely for the duration of the story. The rare horror script that feels both emotional and terrifying, this piece has vibrant, cinematic visuals and a satisfying resolution you won't see coming.

TITLE: **THE TWILIGHT TOURIST by Charles Hopkins**

PITCH: SPRING BREAKERS meets REQUIEM FOR A DREAM

LOGLINE: When a reserved college freshman orders party drugs over the deep web from a dealer who resorts to extreme measures when his customers do not pay, he triggers a chain reaction that embroils his impressionable girlfriend, his closeted buddy, and a local detective with criminal fetishes.

GENRE: Drama | Thriller

WHY TO READ: This is a midnight black psychological thriller that dives into the darkest depths of human impulses and sets it against a pulsating, drug-fueled contemporary story of sympathetic young people just trying to get by. The script does not shy away from anything, and in the process it hits home with visceral imagery and tons of plot twists. You have to admire the writer's ability to weave a story, with an intricate structure pulling us forward, with every plot point brought back around and every loose end perfectly tied off.

TITLE: **THE UN-CROWD by Scott Thomas**

PITCH: WARM BODIES meets DAWN OF THE DEAD

LOGLINE: After an explosion at a nearby military base turns a teenage boy and his neighbors into zombies with no cannibalistic tendencies, he and the others are reluctantly reintroduced to society. But when one of his undead friends goes "full zombie" and eats a girl, their uneasy truce is put in jeopardy, and he fears he may be destined to be a monster after all.

GENRE: Comedy | Horror | Teen

WHY TO READ: A fresh take on the zombie genre, what really shines here is the writer's gift at crafting characters. The lead is conflicted, vulnerable, and so relatable, just like any good movie teenager. He's the perfect point of entry for us into this world, because it's just as new to all the characters that populate it. His average teenager struggle of identity is complicated by his condition, so danger lurks both at every turn as well as inside him. This script never takes the easy way out, and the "happy" ending it offers is offbeat and dark enough to please even the strictest horror fan.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: VILNA by Matt Huston

PITCH: THE PIANIST meets DEFIANCE

LOGLINE: After the Nazis invade Lithuania, a band of rebels comes together in the capitol of Vilna to resist the massacre of their country's people. Inspired by the true story of the man who formed the resistance, and his descent from a man of peace to a man of vengeance.

GENRE: Drama | True

WHY TO READ: One of the piece's biggest strengths is its honest and brutal portrayal of the atrocities of World War II. This script does not shy away from the truth of war, and while at times it can be discomforting, it provokes thematic resonance and emotional character arcs, and challenges its audience in the best way. The writer has created a strong ensemble of memorable characters and plunges them into this horror, so it is both shocking and painful to watch their journeys. The sense that no one is safe further instills a sense of dread in every scene and keeps you on the edge of your seat during this absolutely captivating and tragic tale.

TITLE: VIOLET by Scott Thomas

PITCH: INSIDIOUS meets ORPHAN

LOGLINE: Fleeing from her abusive husband in the dark of night with her young daughter in tow, a woman moves back into her childhood home. But it's there she realizes the horror isn't over, and that the sadistic imaginary friend she had as a child is very real, and plans to trap her in the house where they can play forever.

GENRE: Horror | Supernatural | Thriller

WHY TO READ: A gripping psychological thriller that will keep you guessing until the very end, this script is expertly structured to build up the mystery and dole out the reveals and hints at a perfect pace. The mounting tension, offbeat tone, and rising creepy atmosphere are enhanced by strong visual writing and an engaging female protagonist who is smart, tough, and has a wealth of agency, making her someone you root for, in part because of her flaws and moral complexity.

TITLE: WHERE DEVILS ROAM by Nathan Wilcoxen

PITCH: SILENCE OF THE LAMBS meets ZODIAC

LOGLINE: A scarred Pittsburgh cop turned private detective is brought back to his West Virginia hometown to investigate the disappearance of a reclusive heiress's granddaughter 30 years earlier after, when the girl's body is finally discovered.

GENRE: Drama | Thriller

WHY TO READ: The premise of a detective going back to the hometown that rejected him provides this script with a strong backbone of character and tension. The structure interweaves fascinating plot developments and character choices towards the thrilling, climactic conclusion. The characters are likable and relatable, and it's easy to root for them as they weave their way through this tangled web. The twists are fun and unexpected and the story keeps you guessing all the way up till the end. The writer has a clear command of atmosphere and tone, crafting a three-dimensional West Virginia small town setting that enriches and enhances the twists and turns of the central mystery.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: WHISPERS FROM THE WATCHTOWER by Jai Brandon

PITCH: GONE BABY GONE meets PRISONERS

LOGLINE: When his daughter goes missing, a popular radio talk show host and professional skeptic must work with a psychic in a last ditch attempt to get his child back.

GENRE: Supernatural | Thriller

WHY TO READ: Enhancing its supernatural, psychic story with a well-crafted atmosphere of impending doom that sets the perfect tone for a slow-burn ensemble mystery, this script builds its twisty investigations on top of a solid foundation of character. The plotting is incredibly tight and the script is a quick read, drawing you into the story effectively, then keeping you captivated until the stunning climactic twists change absolutely everything. Potent themes of skepticism, love, and fate swirl around this script, which has plenty of meaty roles for big name actors and lots of potential for the right director to add their own visual flair.

TITLE: WITHOUT PREJUDICE by Kenlon Clark & William Rubio

PITCH: HIDDEN FIGURES meets THE UNTOUCHABLES

LOGLINE: The incredible true story of one of the nation's first African-American female lawyers who overcame racism and gender bias, risking both her job and her life, to bring down the most infamous gangster in New York City's history.

GENRE: Drama | Thriller | True

WHY TO READ: A classic setting but with a very different story, this is an underdog tale of the highest order. Not only is the protagonist taking on the New York gangsters of the 1930s, but she is also fighting racial and gender discrimination at the same time. The drama and the danger here feels realistic, and it never lets up. As a real life African-American woman, Eunice Carter is a true hero that not only deserves to have her story told, but the story itself demands it. It's powerful and inspiring, and Eunice provides a character who can be role model for all Americans.

TITLE: WOE TO THE WICKED by Chris Dennis

PITCH: THE LAST STAND meets HIGH NOON

LOGLINE: When the arrival of a mysterious stranger leads to the death of a drug lord's brother, the residents of a small town must band together to survive by standing up to the drug cartel that has been abusing and killing them for years.

GENRE: Action | Thriller

WHY TO READ: This is an energetic, fast-paced thrill ride set in a strange and otherworldly town, creating a magnificent setting for this explosive story of retribution. The plot is tense and energetic, and despite the ghostly individual in the center of the story, there isn't any time spent dwelling on mysticism or magic, instead focusing on the tangible world. The villain is appalling and evil, and can be truly hated from the first scene, while the lead grows from accepting of his grim fate into a strong, courageous hero, willing to fight for his family, his town, and the memory of his friend. The action is well-crafted, the atmosphere pitch-perfect, and everything comes together to craft an unforgettable revenge story.

THE LAUNCH PAD FEATURE COMPETITION

TITLE: **THE WORLD LIFEGUARD CHAMPIONSHIPS! By J.J. Wheeler**

PITCH: BAYWATCH meets DODGEBALL

LOGLINE: A washed up competitive diver whose greatest failure made him a Youtube sensation attempts to rehabilitate his image by entering a lifeguarding competition with a team of misfits.

GENRE: Comedy

WHY TO READ: An absurdist comedy in the vein of Judd Apatow, this script keeps the laughs coming with its delightfully bizarre cast of characters, plenty of callbacks, and the truly original and hilarious central competition. The writer effortlessly carried humor throughout, without ever falling into predictable pitfalls of comedy, instead surprising you at every turn. Fun, lighthearted, and silly in the best of ways – the script is believable when it needs to be in order to raise the stakes, causing us to genuinely care for this ragtag group of aspiring lifeguards as they fail upward and defy the odds.

TITLE: **WOULD YOU LIKE AN EXTRA SHOT? By Johnny Griffith**

PITCH: BURN AFTER READING meets GO

LOGLINE: After an unsuccessful robbery, a thief accidentally kidnaps a woman with Alzheimer's, leading the woman's daughter on a wild chase to save her.

GENRE: Action | Comedy

WHY TO READ: A wacky ensemble action comedy that expertly interweaves multiple storylines centering around the laugh-out-loud scenario. The perfect odd couple at the heart of the story - a kidnapped Alzheimer's patient who is surprisingly willing to committing crimes, and the reluctant teenage criminal who is in over his head – are skillfully balanced by the supporting characters, who all have their own hilarious personalities and dynamics. Well-structured and packed with great gags and scene-stealing dialogue, this is a successful comedy from start to finish.