2023



COMPETITION BOOKLET

FINALISTS

ROADMAP WRITERS

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MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO/FOUNDER

2023 reminded the world how important it is to stand your ground and demand what you deserve. Writers from Roadmap continued to saturate the industry with over 60 writers getting signed through our programs. Before and after the strike, writers from Roadmap were also able to staff on their first series, set up projects and see their work on the screen. We spent a month overseas hosting retreats in Scotland and teaching classes in London. We also started running free Zoom roundtables with writers who were signed through our programs to network with more execs, hosting about 20 in just a couple of months (and many more to come in 2024)! We continued to run free initiatives to help diverse writers and writers in support staff initiatives get additional exposure to the industry. From day one the only thing that mattered is the success of our writers and 2023 was our 7th year doing just that. As I write this I can't help but think how similar this note is to last year and the year before and the year before. That's because every year the same focus is on finding some kind of light at the end of the tunnel for as many writers as possible.

CEO/Founder

Joey Tuccio



ROADMAP WRITERS

Roadmap Writers is a screenwriting education and training platform for people looking for a guided path to professional success writing for film and tv. Our programs are hosted by working industry executives and are designed to empower writers with actionable tools and insights to elevate their craft and cultivate relationships with industry professionals. Founded in 2016, by Joey Tuccio and Dorian Connelley, Roadmap has helped over 300 writers sign with representation, while countless others have gotten staffed on tv shows, had their scripts optioned, or sold their scripts.

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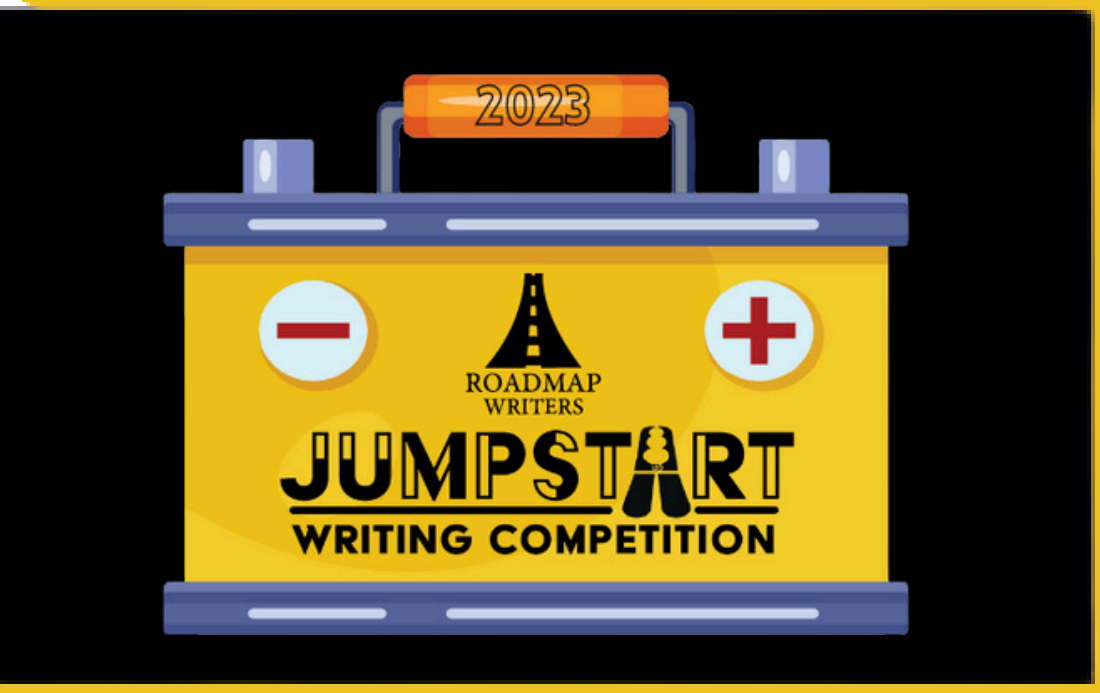
JUMPSTART COMPETITION

JumpStart is our flagship screenwriting competition that provides consistent opportunities throughout the entire year for our winners, semifinalists, and beyond. We place a premium on creating industry relationships for these writers so they can get signed, staffed, or optioned.

FINALISTS: FEATURES



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ALEXANDER SELTZER & KYLE JUTKIEWICZ

Bio:

Kyle Jutkiewicz is a writer and director based in Brooklyn, NY– and he's really sorry. In his fifteen-year career in advertising, Kyle has traveled the world to make the ads you have to skip, mute, or otherwise ignore while trying to watch TV. As a screenwriter, he hopes to make amends by developing smart, genre-focused film and television that explores big, culturally relevant topics like climate change, the role of technology in our lives, and the cult of the billionaire. His sci-fi drama pilot MODAL is in the top 1% of all scripts on Coverfly and won Best Teleplay at both the LA International Screenplay Awards and the Scriptation Showcase competition.

Alexander Seltzer is a Slamdance-winning and Blacklist-recommended writer and director. His work uses elevated genre conceits with heavy symbolism to explore contemporary issues like toxic masculinity and self-identity. His short films have played and won awards at festivals around the world including Fantasia, Hollyshorts, and many others. His newest short, THE DOOR, starring Tanaya Beatty (Yellowstone) and Raymond Ablack (Narcos) will hit festivals in 2024. Alexander is an alum of the RIFF Talent Lab, his screenplays have won awards at KillerShorts, WeScreenplay and he is a TrackingB TV Comp finalist.

Script: SINK



Logline:
A closed-off young woman returns home to the remote Canadian Oil Sands to bury her estranged father, but when his bitter legacy resurfaces as an ancient evil that feeds on trauma, she must finally confront her past… or drown in it.



FAROOK QAIS



Bio:

Farook Qais, born and raised in the UK with South Asian heritage, had a tumultuous upbringing marked by significant upheaval. Growing up he found companionship in a diverse group of friends. Still connected to many, they now range from doctors to criminals. Despite the challenges, Farook's passion for storytelling emerged early, as he began creating characters at the age of 5.

After graduating from the University of Greenwich, London with a Bachelor's degree in Creative Industries, Farook channeled his creative energy into writing novels before delving into the world of screenwriting. His strength lies in his ability to breathe life into characters, weaving narratives with drama, evolving relationships, and emotive storytelling. His writing reflects a deep-seated desire to succeed and a commitment to bringing to the screen a genuine reflection of his life and diverse experiences. Farook aspires to share narratives that resonate with authenticity and capture the richness of his own journey.

Script: HI, LIBIDO

- **Logline:**
  On her journey into adulthood, a devout Muslim woman navigates the delicate balance between her family's expectations, sexual fulfillment, and the idea of marrying for love.

MEGAN MAZER

Bio:

Megan Mazer is a Black List Recommended writer from Burbank, California. She studied screenwriting at Boston University and is currently support staff in the writer's room of an Untitled Erin Foster project for Netflix. She was also support staff in the writers room of the NBCUniversal comedy, Killing it, and has worked on shows such as Modern Family, Single Parents, Bless This Mess, Maggie, and Players. She recently had a table read of a pilot she wrote produced by Emmy-award-winning writer/creator Jeff Kahn. She has a particular knack for half-hour dramedies surrounding complex female characters, and historical fiction feature films. Though well-rooted in the LA comedy scene, she has a propensity for WW2 history that delves into her family's Polish-Jewish background. She has written half-hour comedies, animated adult cartoons, dramatic feature films, genre-bending episodic hours, and an abortion anthology podcast.

Script:
TWO KGS OF MARMALAD



Logline:
In German-occupied Poland, following the erection of the Warsaw Ghetto, a Polish youth establishes the Jewish Fighting Organization with his brother and their friends to resist the Nazi rule.



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MICHAEL ELLIOTT



Bio:

Mike's first foray into screenwriting was in the 1980s. A self-taught screenwriter, he was repped by Brenda Feigen at William Morris/NYC from 84-87. He then switched to advertising and became an award-winning copywriter. Idle during the pandemic he wandered into screenwriting again. He’s created a portfolio of award-winning screenplays in the Action, Romantic Drama, and Crime/Thriller genres.

Script: NOBODY'S HEROES

Logline:
A disillusioned Vietnam combat vet defies the FBI to help a notorious antiwar activist escape to Canada.

VALERIE BURNHAM

Bio:

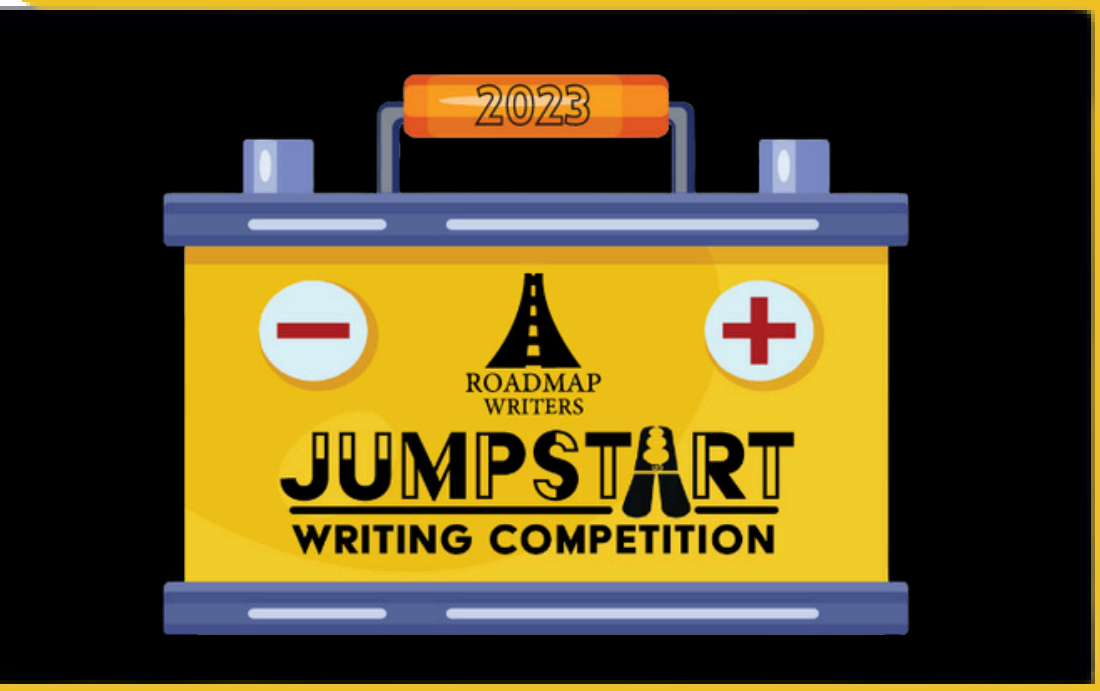
Sailing the seven seas, crossing the Arctic Circle and the Equator, meeting Caroline Kennedy, and playing with a sweet friendly three-legged dog in Seychelles, not as a pirate but as a United States Navy Sailor can sum up the adventures of Valerie Burnham. Valerie's writing reflects a sense of fun, true-to-life adventures and incorporates many types of LGBT characters. The strictness of the military gave her an identity of triumph "under pressure" which led to her being the Team Leader for seven 48HR Film Festivals in San Antonio, and Austin, Texas in the genres of drama, horror, and fish out of water. Currently, Valerie lives in the peaches, pecan, and pine straw state of GA and works as a Recovery Care Coordinator for the Air Force Wounded Warrior program.

Script: WITCH HUNT



Logline:
In the 1980s, a decorated Naval officer falsely accused of a "sexually deviant" act faces a relentless investigator, a homophobic captain, and a prejudiced culture, as she fights to prove her innocence and avoid imprisonment in a society where homosexuality is criminalized.

FINALISTS:
PILOTS



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BRYCE BERKOWITZ



Bio:

Bryce Berkowitz is a multi-ethnic writer based in Indianapolis via Montana, West Virginia, L.A., Chicago, and southern Illinois. Impassioned by subcultures–skateboarding, graffiti, and hip-hop–Bryce dropped out of college at 19 to book touring hip-hop acts, and wait tables at a Sufi-Muslim polygamist-owned café until a career shift took him from lit assistant to professor. Raised by a major crimes detective father and a mother battling addiction, Bryce writes underdog stories about resilient people confronting power, class, and crimes set in places he's lived: low-income housing, trailer parks, college towns, mining towns, and overpriced cities. He's the recipient of the Austin Film Festival AMC TV Pilot Award, a ScreenCraft TV Fellowship finalist, and a two-time NBC TV Writers' Program finalist with two pilots named Top 20 of the Year on Coverfly. In addition to having degrees from Columbia College Chicago and West Virginia University, Bryce attributes much of his creativity to being neurodivergent (ADHD)--just like Greta Gerwig, and Daniel Kwan, among others.

Script: RIVER RATS

Logline:
A 12-year-old graffiti artist takes down a local drug dealer to avenge his brother and becomes a trailer park kingpin.
This is adapted from an award-winning short story.

CLINT WILLIAMS

Bio:

Clint Williams is an award-winning journalist with the range of a Major League Baseball shortstop, having covered everything from political conventions to forest fires to the Olympic Games. Clint uses the skills he developed as a journalist to bring authenticity to the worlds he creates, and to the people who live in them.

He likes to write smart action features with heroes whose knees creak. His action screenplay FREEDOM FORT, based on actual events following the War of 1812, won the Final Draft Big Break historical/period category and was recently named to the inaugural Georgia List, an initiative by The Black List to spotlight writers with strong ties to the Peach State.

Clint's period action feature ENEMY was a Nicholl Top 50 script. Both NO HEROES HERE, a low-budget action/thriller, and Clint's TV pilot CHATTAHOOCHEE are on Coverfly's The Red List of top 20 scripts.

When he isn't at the keyboard, Clint likes to do the sort of things they write about in Outside Magazine. He recently hiked the Cotswold Way in England, covering 103 miles in seven days.

Script: CHATTAHOOCHEE



Logline:
Two runaway slaves, journeying to a sanctuary for hundreds of liberated individuals guarded by cannons abandoned after the War of 1812, find themselves compelled to protect their newfound haven from invading U.S. troops before they can establish new lives.
Based on true events.



DALILA ALI RAJAH

Bio:

Powerhouse storyteller, Dalila Ali Rajah is a wonderful mixture of sandalwood, cinnamon, and cayenne pepper. She is a dynamic multi-hyphenate griot; actress, writer, and producer. Ali Rajah holds a BA in Theatre from Spelman College, and an MFA in Acting from California Institute of the Arts (Calarts).

This lauded activist and content creator founded the Black Queer Joy movement, was selected as one of The Advocate Magazine's Entertainers of the Year, OUT Magazine's OUT100, and Outfest Fusion Artist-in-Residence. She Co-Created the Queer-women-centered talk show, Cherry Bomb!, which ran 5 seasons on Canada's OutTV, and her award-winning short film Secrets and Toys which she wrote, produced, and stars in has garnered more than 5 million views on YouTube.

She's toured in the Tony Award-winning production of The Trip to Bountiful with Cecily Tyson, Blair Underwood, and Vanessa Williams; and has appeared in such shows as 9-1-1, How to Get Away with Murder, Grey's Anatomy, NCIS, and Criminal Minds. Dalila also won Best Actress for her leading role in the feature drama Quiet As Kept. She is a force to be reckoned with.

Script: FAEFYRE

Logline:
In a realm where magic collides with the mundane, Natalie, a Black Queer Hybrid Fae, and her wild-child Trans sister, Naomi, navigate their Faerie cannabis business, unexpected family visits, budding romance, and the unraveling of treaties with hostile Clans.

MARK DUDLEY & NIKHIL EMMADI

Bio:

Nikhil Emmadi is a writer, project bible creator, researcher, and medical consultant. While earning his M.D. he also honed his creative writing skills and furthered his love for comedy and sci-fi/fantasy. His personal mantra is an homage to classic Conan-ism: 'Crush your enemies, see them driven before you…'

Mark Dudley is a screenwriter, veteran illustrator, animator, and sequential artist. He has acted in and co-directed short films and spent the last 25 years as an illustrator for Palladium Books.

Script: THE FLEA MARKET: EVERY NOOK AND CRANNY

Logline:
A budget-allergic screenwriter battling maladaptive daydreaming has her life upended after inheriting a failing Midwestern Flea Market from her quirky aunt, who promises a life-changing payday if she can keep it operational for one year.



SAMANTHA LAVIN

Bio:

Samantha optioned a hybrid scripted/reality show to NBC Universal called “Out of the Frying Pan” about a queer female former addict who tries to open a restaurant under the shadow of her wealthy conservative restaurateur father. She was hired her to direct the presentation pilot.

She also adapted and directed the British play “Key Change” in its West Coast premiere, receiving an LA Times 99 Seat Beat Critic’s Pick for “...innovation and raw staging of a story highlighting women in prison.”

Sam has several other scripts including "7 on 10", about a WNBA basketball player incarcerated for killing a woman in an alcoholic blackout. It was accepted to Outfest's Screenwriting Lab and placed as a finalist in several screenwriting competitions.

Samantha has served on the Lesbian and Gay Advisory board of West Hollywood as well as Women for Sobriety Center; an organization serving formerly incarcerated women.

Script: QUEENS VILLAGE

Logline:
When a suburban realtor's wife has a mental breakdown, his mother-in-law cuts him off financially, forcing him to return to his sketchy Queens Village roots to manage a building of questionable tenants in order to retain custody of his kids during the glory years of the early 1980’s.

IMPORTANT CONTACT



TIFFANY YARDE

DIRECTOR OF COMPETITIONS

Roadmap Writers

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Being raised in Walt Whitman Public Housing by Bajan immigrants in Brooklyn, NY has inspired Tiffany Yarde to explore culturally diverse characters struggling with self-acceptance.

Tiffany wrote the culturally inclusive TV Movie DRESS FOR SUCCESS which recently premiered on Tubi. She also co-wrote the short film BON VOYAGE which premiered in NYC as part of the Women's Weekend Film Challenge.

Tiffany was a fellow in the inaugural class of the Creative Corridor Program, a transatlantic industry initiative with Independent Film Trust and Roadmap Writers. Tiffany Yarde graduated from Bryn Mawr College having obtained a B.A. in English with a concentration in Creative Writing. She is currently enrolled in David Lynch's MFA in Screenwriting at Maharishi International University and is slated to graduate in the summer of '25.