



Masterclass

Writing for Movies and Television

John Romano

U.S. Screenwriter and Producer

in conversation with Damiano Garofalo and Giorgio Glaviano

Sapienza University of Rome

Opening Remarks Rachel Gandin Mark

Director of International Programs, University of Southern California School of Cinematic Arts (USC), and Program Director of American Film Showcase



Friday 22 May 2026

h. 10:00



Sapienza University of Rome

Aula G. Levi della Vida

Ex Vetriere Sciarra - Via dei Volsci, 122

John Romano : the grandson of native-born Italians from Benevento, Avellino, and Salerno—grew up in and around New York and earned his Ph.D. in Comparative Literature at Yale. He later taught English at Columbia University. Specializing in the novel, he wrote a book on the works of Charles Dickens, along with reviews, poetry, and essays, before discovering that his natural home was in screenwriting. He began in independent film (Key Exchange) and was soon summoned to Hollywood by the producers of Hill Street Blues—for which he wrote the final, Emmy-nominated episode. In television, he went on to write and produce for more than 20 series (Monk, Party of Five, etc.), while creating three series of his own, including Sweet Justice (with Cicely Tyson). While working on a TV movie for Francis Ford Coppola (Dark Angel, starring Eric Roberts), he was asked to adapt a novel for the big screen: The Third Miracle, directed by Agnieszka Holland and starring Ed Harris. This led to a period of writing for both film and television. His film work includes the original Intolerable Cruelty (with George Clooney and the Coen Brothers) and adaptations such as Nights in Rodanthe (Richard Gere), The Lincoln Lawyer (Matthew McConaughey), and American Pastoral, based on Philip Roth's novel. Along the way, Romano has lectured at Princeton, USC, and Yale on the relationship between Hollywood entertainment and the humanities. He has two daughters and lives with his wife in Santa Monica, California.

Rachel Gandin Mark : Director of International Programs at the USC School of Cinematic Arts. She also serves as Program Director of the American Film Showcase, the U.S. State Department's film and television diplomacy program produced by USC, working with embassies in more than 100 countries. At USC, she develops global consultancies, including collaborations with leading institutions such as Riyadh University of the Arts, Netflix Grow Creative, and Cheung Kong Graduate School of Business, as well as partners across the Middle East, Asia, and Latin America. Previously, she was the sole producer of The United, Disney's first Arabic language feature film, and served as a Creative Consultant for the Sundance Institute in Jordan. She is a frequent speaker on media and cultural diplomacy. Rachel holds an M.A. from Georgetown University and a B.A. from UCLA.



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