

Michael P. Gray

Writer-director and professor working at the edge of film, literature, and cultural memory

South Puget Sound Community College

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Project Focus: *Mannequin*

Feature Film – In Development

Writer-Director: Michael P. Gray

Supported by 2025–26 Sabbatical, South Puget Sound Community College

A young woman wakes up transformed inside an abandoned mall. Through recursive movement, fractured sound, and memory collapse, she begins to rewrite her identity. Part horror story, part sonic fugue, Mannequin explores the edges of authorship, loss, and nonlinear time.

Selected Highlights

- A blend of sound-driven storytelling and non-linear structure — formally experimental but emotionally grounded
 - Informed by long-standing interests in film noir, memory logic, and recursive narrative — shaped by prior academic work on Faulkner and experimental literary form
 - Incorporates original analog synth textures, field recordings, and layered post-production sound design
 - Shot entirely on location in Olympia, WA, using real abandoned commercial spaces
 - Backed by full academic sabbatical (Fall 2025–Spring 2026) for development, pre-production, and production
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Qualifications Summary

- Interdisciplinary educator and filmmaker with over two decades of work across filmmaking, sound, screenwriting, and cultural theory
 - Writer-director of *Mannequin*, a feature film exploring recursion, identity, and sonic memory
 - Experienced in both narrative and nonfiction media, with over 30 projects across formats: award-winning shorts, documentaries, and web-based series
 - Specialist in sound-driven storytelling — location recordist, audio mixer, and post-production designer for 20+ films and series
 - MFA in Filmmaking (Ohio University), with emphasis on experimental structure, analog/digital workflows, and collaborative directing
 - Ph.D. in American Literature and Film (University of Essex, UK), with research focused on William Faulkner's screenplays written during his time in Hollywood
 - Developer of original college curriculum in screenwriting, film studies, production, American independent cinema, and cultural media
 - Fluent in Adobe Creative Suite, Logic Pro, Pro Tools, and nonlinear editing systems; current with emerging tech and hybrid production models
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Selected Creative Work

Narrative & Experimental Projects

- *Mannequin* – Writer-director of a recursive feature film exploring identity, dissociation, and sonic memory
- *Loss of Mt. Rainier* – Writer-director and sound mixer of a dark satire reimagining Edgar Allan Poe's *Loss of Breath* in the age of influencer culture
- *Terry Tucker the Midnight Trucker* – Co-created, co-wrote, and directed a surreal web series blending voice, longing, and road myth
- *LJ's Trip* – Co-created and directed a web series built around original scripts, practical effects, and collaborative production
- *Cel-Wolf* – Writer/producer of a nationally broadcast multimedia campaign blurring satire and myth-making
- *Silly Bears* – Co-writer/producer of music video for Akron/Family; aired on MTV2 and featured by *Spin*

Sound & Post-Production

- Location recordist for 20+ projects, including *Small, Beautifully Moving Parts* (SXSW, Film Movement)
- Sound designer and mixer for shorts, web series, podcasts, and experimental pieces
- Fluent in Logic Pro, Pro Tools, Adobe Audition, and analog field recording methods
- Known for blending voice, ambient texture, and rhythmic dissociation into layered soundscapes

Media & Public Engagement

- Host and co-producer of *Short & Sweet*, a Thurston County Media program spotlighting Northwest filmmakers
- Producer/writer/host of The James Spader Podcast, a cultural experiment in actor analysis and screen persona
- Designer and facilitator of workshops on low-budget filmmaking, video literacy, and narrative structure

Advocacy & Hybrid Forms

- Director and co-writer of *Caroline* (80K+ views) and *Kira* (30K+ views, featured on Upworthy), short docs for disability advocacy
- Filmmaker for *Turning Negative Positive / 4200 Cedar Mural* — a community documentary chronicling a public art project led by Olivia Levins Holden in South Minneapolis
- Media educator for ARC of North Carolina, End the Wait Now Campaign, and Mentoring Peace Through Art
- Creator of community-centered filmmaking programs pairing students with nonprofit video projects

Teaching & Curriculum Development

- Professor of Film Production and Media Communication at South Puget Sound Community College (2016–present)
- Awarded full academic sabbatical (Fall 2025–Spring 2026) to write, direct, and produce *Mannequin*
- Courses taught: Film Studies, Film History, American Independent Cinema, Screenwriting, Popular Culture in America, and all levels of Film Production
- Curriculum developer with over 15 years of experience designing original coursework in media studies, narrative structure, and cultural analysis
- Past teaching appointments at North Hennepin Community College, Ohio University, Georgian Court University, and University of Essex (UK)
- Creator and supervisor of internship programs pairing university students with real-world film production

Education

- MFA in Filmmaking, Ohio University
 - Ph.D. in American Literature and Film, University of Essex (UK)
 - MA in Literature, University of Essex (UK)
 - BA in English Literature, Sculpture, and Film, Albright College (PA)
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Artistic and Research Interests

- Nonlinear narrative, recursive structure, memory as authorship
 - William Faulkner, Herman Melville, Anita Loos, William Carlos Williams
 - Film noir, Pre-Code Hollywood, Giallo, and cinema mythologies
 - The politics of voice, authorship, and disappearance
 - Sonic motifs, repetition, and structural recursion
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Technical & Creative Skills

Production & Post-Production Tools

- Adobe Premiere, Final Cut Pro, Avid, Logic Pro, Pro Tools, Adobe Audition
- HD & 16mm cameras, analog sound recording, color grading, motion graphics
- Sound design, mixing, nonlinear editing workflows

Creative & Auxiliary Skills

- Musical proficiency in melodica and analog synthesis
 - Conversational Spanish and basic ASL
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Affiliations & Memberships

- Olympia Film Collective
Board Member, 2018–2019
- Olympia Film Society (OFS)
Member; supporter of Olympia's historic Capitol Theater and regional cinema culture
- University Film and Video Association (UFVA)
Member