



# The Thirty-Six Dramatic Situations

*Mike Figgis*

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## **The Thirty-Six Dramatic Situations** Mike Figgis

The original *36 Dramatic Situations* was written in French by Georges Polti in the 1850s. Polti synthesized all drama as belonging to combinations of 36 situations. In the book he illustrates each 'situation' with examples from classical and French theater.

When Mike Figgis used the book as an aid in putting together a treatment for a film, he found that his landscape of creativity had altered quite radically and ideas came forth with relative ease. He realized that Polti's book was a system of reference which could be a powerful tool for writers. So he began updating all of the references, moving the focus away from theater and focusing primarily on cinema.

Broken into two halves — the first part of the book looks at 36 different 'Dramatic Situations'. The specific 'Situation' is then explained more fully, followed by an example from a film, accompanied by an explanation of how the device is used in the film. In the second half there are a series of charts which analyze 150 great films (of all genres) based on the 36 situations.

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