FILM KONNECTIONS BOTSWANA · PILOT MASTERCLASS

Reality Rules

Character. Conflict. Relationship. Choice. Consequence.

Roland Møller · University of Botswana · 2026

We don't start with plot.

We start with the human being.

And in a movie — that's called the character.

What's his or her **WILL** — that is the plot.

ROLAND'S FILMS

*In the movie **R** — R must survive.*
From there starts the plot.

— ROLAND MØLLER

ROLAND'S FILMS

*In **Land of Mine** — the main character must punish the kids — but learn to forgive.*

That's his character journey — and from there you build the plot.

— ROLAND MØLLER

Don't start making a prison movie or a Second World War movie.

Make it simple.

Someone wants to get good grades in school, but needs to **cheat** to get them — but the class teacher is **his own dad.**

— ROLAND MØLLER

THE METHOD

Reality Rules

Search for a **realistic conflict** that can sustain the whole length of the movie.

Searching for love. Survival.
From lies to truth.
From rage to forgiveness.

Journeys set in a **real world** — therefore *reality rules*.

Research the rules of the arena you are making a movie in.

A story becomes real the moment we understand the **rules of reality** that govern the character.

THE INVISIBLE BUT RUTHLESS LOGIC BEHIND BEHAVIOUR

Shame Pride Loyalty Status Survival Love Violence Faith Taboo Dependency

Once those rules are clear, scenes stop feeling like "writing" and start feeling like life.

BUILDING THE CHARACTER

The Character Engine

Six questions. Answer them and you have a person, not a plot device.

Want

What do they **consciously chase?**

"I want good grades." "I want my son to come home." "I want respect."

Need

What do they **actually need** — but don't know yet?

"I need to earn respect honestly." "I need to let go." "I need to forgive."

Wound

What **broke them** before the story started?

The past event that shaped the lie they believe. The scar they carry into every scene.

Lie

What **false belief** are they protecting?

"Cheating is the only way." "Fear equals respect." "If I leave, I'm weak."

Fear

What **can they not face?**

"Being seen as stupid." "Being alone." "Becoming my father."

Blind Spot

What is **obvious to everyone but them?**

The thing the audience sees. The thing the other characters see. The thing they cannot.

THE CHARACTER ENGINE — ALL SIX

WANT What they chase	NEED What they actually need	WOUND What broke them
LIE What they believe	FEAR What they avoid	BLIND SPOT What they can't see

RELATIONSHIPS AS DRAMA

Who pressures whom — and why can't they simply walk away?

If the character can just leave, there's no story. **The inability to leave is what creates drama.**

— ROLAND MØLLER

SCENES BEFORE STRUCTURE

Truth Tests

A scene is a **truth test** — a moment where the character is **forced to choose.**

What's at stake in the scene?
Who will win? Who will lose?

How do we make the scene alive and physical — so it's not all just in dialogue?

Behaviour as truth. Not acting as technique — what you do when you want something, and the price you pay.

— ROLAND MØLLER

PLOT AS CONSEQUENCE

Only after the character is solid do we build a simple, sharp plot from the consequences of their choices.

Character → Conflict → Relationship → Choice → **Consequence**

🤖 AI TOOLS FOR YOUR FILMS

AI doesn't replace the character engine. *It accelerates it.*

The character must come from **you.** The polish can come from the machine.

✨ GEMINI APP

Stress-test your character

Paste your 6 character engine answers into the chat. Then ask:

→ "Based on this character engine, give me 5 situations that would force this character to choose between their WANT and their NEED."

→ "Write a scene where my character's LIE is exposed in front of the person they most want respect from."

AI knows Hollywood. You know Botswana. If it sounds generic: *"Make it specific to Gaborone."*

✨ GEMINI APP — VISUAL

Generate concept images for your film

Create visual references for locations, costumes, mood boards, key frames. Show your crew what you see.

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→ "A dimly lit bar in Gaborone at night, two old friends, tension in their body
language, warm amber light, cinematic 35mm film look"
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Also: **video concepts**, **Setswana dialogue** — *"Translate into natural Gaborone Setswana — not textbook."*

📓 NOTEBOOKLM

Your research + story bible

Upload your treatment, research, notes — ask questions across all your sources.

- **Reality Rules bible:** "What are the unspoken rules in this world?"
- **Character stress-test:** "What's the hardest choice in Act 2?"
- **Generate slide decks** from your treatment
- **Audio overviews** — turn your treatment into a podcast

Free at notebooklm.google.com

⚡ USING AI RIGHT

- **Feed it your character engine first.** Always.
- **Ask for conflicts, not solutions.** "5 ways this could go wrong" > "Write my scene."
- **Push back.** AI defaults to Hollywood. Drag it to Gaborone.
- **Never submit AI text as your voice.** Use AI to think. Rewrite in your own words.
- **Your Setswana. Your slang. Your rhythm.** That's what makes it yours.

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📝 YOUR ASSIGNMENT

Next Step

1. WANT
What they chase

2. NEED
What they actually need

3. WOUND
What broke them

4. LIE
What they believe

5. FEAR
What they avoid

6. BLIND SPOT
What they can't see

📝 THEN WRITE

One scene. Two pages.

A **truth test** — a moment where your character must choose between what they WANT and what they NEED.

Make it physical. Make it alive. Not just dialogue.

REALITY RULES

Now go build a person.

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