

FUNDAMENTALS OF DESIGN FOR THE THEATRICAL ARTS

Theatre 300-SPRING 2012
rev. 16.JAN.12

Mon & Wed 1:00 PM -2:50 PM
Instructor: Matthew Allar

Classroom: PBK Design Studio : 130
3 credit hours

Office: PBK Room 131 Phone: 757-221-2694 Email: mjallar@wm.edu
Office Hours: Mon & Wed 3-4pm, Thur 11-11:45am (and by appointment)

TEXTS: The Dramatic Imagination. Robert Edmond Jones ISBN #0-87-830-592-0
Or # 9780878301843

A Giacometti Portrait. James Lord ISBN # 9780374515737

Dancing at Lughnasa. Brian Friel ISBN # 0571144799

OTHER READINGS, FILMS, ETC: Additional research materials on reserve in Swem Library, sent via email, or distributed to you in class

COURSE GOALS and DESCRIPTION

Goals: By the end of this course, students will be able to...

1. Demonstrate basic skills in: pencil drawing, applied color theory, costume sketching, manual (hand) drafting, model building, and lighting conceptualization
2. Demonstrate a practical understanding of introductory design history and theory
3. Critically analyze visual design components in the context of live performance
4. Analyze and interpret a dramatic text in order to devise a design idea
5. Develop design ideas in a collaborative process and communicate those to others

Throughout the semester, students in this course will experiment with elements of visual design, theory, and research as they apply to contemporary theatrical practice.

1. The majority of the course will focus on the graphic skills necessary to communicate design ideas effectively with other theatre collaborators. The major objective is that students will be able to communicate ideas with other individuals whether or not they are also trained in visual communication. Students will gain the necessary skills to pursue future theatre design courses and to become more effective in visual communication during the collaborative process.
2. Concurrent with graphic skills we will engage in seminar style conversations about design from current and historical perspectives. These discussions will consider the past roles that design has played in the theatre, theories and approaches to the design process, and the

contributions designers can and should make to live performance. Discussions will engage readings and/or live performances as the bases for discussion.

3. The cumulative final product for the course combines the first two elements by having you collaboratively engage a dramatic text as a team of designers. Students will collaborate to create the necessary documents of a design proposal for a full production. Each group will engage a common text to devise a preliminary design concept for a contemporary audience in a contemporary theatrical space. Each group will justify and convey their interpretation of the text through design documents and oral presentation.

4. Students are also encouraged to maintain an active sketchbook throughout the course of the semester.

GRADING

Partic/Attit/Commit	130 points	Drafting Projects	120 points
Drawing Projects	100 points	Model Projects	120 points
Color / Collage/Research	100 points	Lighting Projects	40 points
3 Performance Responses	90 points	Collaborative Project	200 points
Costume Projects	100 points		

Your final grade is earned via the following distribution:

	B+	870-899	C+	770-799	D+	670-699	F 599-
A	940-1000	B	830-869	C	730-769	D	630-669
A-	900-939	B-	800-829	C-	700-729	D-	600-629

ATTENDANCE: *IT IS EXPECTED THAT ALL STUDENTS ATTEND EVERY CLASS.* If you are too ill to attend class, you must email me or leave me a voicemail **prior** to the beginning of class (**no later than 12:59pm**). Additionally, YOU MUST OBTAIN A VALID DOCTOR'S NOTE EXPLAINING THE ABSENCE IF YOU WISH TO REQUEST "MAKE-UP"

ARRANGEMENTS. Individual projects and tests missed as a result of any other, non medical absence(s) can only be made up by **prior arrangement** with the instructor. Each instance will be handled on a case by case basis. Exceptions will be made for a personal crisis or serious illness; however such situations must be directed through the Student Affairs office. Class will begin promptly at 1:00pm each day – **DON'T BE LATE**. **Arriving more than ten minutes late to class constitutes an absence. This includes any time you may need to prepare yourself or your materials for the day's class. NOTE:** Quizzes and impromptu written, artistic, and oral responses from the assigned reading will often take place at the beginning of class, and cannot be made up due to tardiness. **Any unexcused absence will reduce your final grade by 10 points (P.A.C.) in each instance, in addition to preventing you from receiving credit for the material due that day.**

In addition to attending each class, you are also required to attend the three main stage departmental productions (*Night of the Iguana, An Evening of Dance, and Ruined*). Attending these productions will allow you to generate a written response to the design elements (sets, lights, costumes, and sound) from each show. Please note the performance schedule as soon as

possible as your attendance at these events is mandatory, as is the VA Stage production of *Black Pearl Sings* on Saturday, February 4th. We will leave PBK at approximately 2pm. Price TBD.

PARTICIPATION: This class demands personal and communal commitment. Theatre is inherently a collaborative art form and therefore, so is this class. I expect that each student will arrive prepared for each class session – mentally, physically, and emotionally. This includes completing all assigned work for the given session, but also means arriving at the studio mentally and physically prepared. Active listening skills are as important to the theatre artist as his/her verbal and artistic skills. If at any time you feel as though your thoughts and opinions have been unfairly dismissed by me, or by another student, please speak to me about it as soon as possible, as I can then work toward improving your class experience.

SNACKS AND DRINKS: Beverages in *closed* containers are permitted in class, provided that they do not become a distraction to anyone / portion of the class. It is expected that you will *maintain the cleanliness* of the room as a working design studio. Please, no food in class. Please also refrain from disposing of food containers, boxes, and/or wrappings in the design room garbage cans by making use of the large dumpster in the loading dock area.

PHONES: Turn them off. Not on vibrate, off. No exceptions, No texting. Zilch, Nada, Nope. Any violation of this policy during classes will **reduce your final grade by 10 points (P.A.C.) in each instance.**

MISCELLANEOUS: This is a class where **NEATNESS COUNTS**. All written work must be **neatly typed using a twelve point font style**, unless it is required to be submitted in another format, and be free of spelling and grammatical errors. All visual work should be prepared with as much care and precision and possible.

Any assignment consisting on multiple pages must be stapled in the upper left corner.

All work must be submitted on time (at the beginning of the class period on the date due). No assignments will be accepted via email or at a later date.

DESIGN ROOM KEY AND DRAWER POLICY: So that you may store your work materials, you will receive a set of 3 keys to 3 drawers in one of the worktables. At the end of the semester, you must return your keys to me. If you do not return your keys, you will receive an “*incomplete*” until I have the set of keys (however, it will not affect your final grade-just when you get the grade). If you lose your keys, please let me know ASAP as I retain an extra set of keys and can replace lost or broken keys *at your expense* (\$2.50 per key). Pairs of students may also claim a flat file drawer by writing their names on the blank card in the brass holder. Please **DO NOT** write on the drawers themselves or affix / tape / stick anything to the drawer face or interiors.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Don’t cheat. Don’t lie. Don’t Steal. A complete description of the College of William and Mary’s Honor System can be found in the student handbook. If you have any questions about this policy, please speak with me about it *prior* to choosing your course of action.

STATEMENT OF DISABILITY: If you have a documented disability and need reasonable accommodations to fully participate in course activities or meet course requirements, you must:

- (1) contact the Director of Disability Services in the Dean of Students Office.
757-221-2510 www.wm.edu/deanofstudents/disable
- (2) meet with me, the instructor, within two weeks of receiving a copy of the accommodation letter from the Director of Disability Services to discuss your accommodation needs and their implementation.

GOLDEN FUN PASS: Each student will be issued one golden fun pass ticket at the beginning of the semester. This ticket grants the user a single, twenty-four hour extension on all work due that class day. To receive full credit, the work must be turned in by 12:59pm on the following day (i.e. – **not the following class period**). The golden fun pass ticket is non transferrable, and may not be used on any portion of the collaborative group project, and holds no cash value if unused (just the respect and admiration of your classmates). **Use it wisely !**

NAME THIS DESIGNER AND RECEIVE A PRIZE !



MATERIALS LIST: In addition to the aforementioned texts, you are also responsible for obtaining the following equipment and supplies. Please note that many items on this list are “expendables” and thus, will need to be replaced at a rate dependent on your personal usage. Some things are easier to find than others so I will do my best to help you with your search. Locally, many items are found at the college bookstore, Jo-Ann Fabrics, Ace Hardware, Staples, or at Walls Alive, located in the Newtown Shopping Plaza. Many online vendors are available as well, but I encourage you to speak with me about utilizing them **before** making any purchases. (some are better than others !) On occasion, I will request that you bring your laptops to class, but will make sure to give you advanced notice. You should make arrangements to gain access to a color printer and befriend the staff at the copy center in Swem Library. *Added bonus: all of these materials and tools will also be used in Scenic Design (should you take it), and many will be useful for Costume Design (should you take it)*

*** In the past, the class has chosen to order certain materials en masse to get a better price

1st Batch (You need these ASAP. All are found at Walls Alive, Campus Bookstore, etc)

#2 pencils (not mechanical)

4B, 2B, H, 2H pencils (2 each)

Manual pencil sharpener

Art Gum Eraser

11 x 14 or bigger pad of newsprint

12” or longer steel ruler

strongly recommended but not required 8 x 10 or bigger sketchbook (spiral ring is best)

16 foot long (or greater) tape measure

2nd Batch (You need these by 2/6. All found at Walls Alive, Campus Bookstore, etc)

10” Adjustable Angle Drafting Triangle

****18” x 24” Drafting Vellum (5 sheets minimum) – try to buy clear print brand, non gridded*

12” Architectural Scale Ruler (white, with the fractions on the ends – NOT the 10,20,30, etc)

Drafting Dots or Drafting Tape – COULD BE SHARED

White Vinyl Eraser and Erasing Shield

Reeves Watercolor 12 Pan Starter Set (or a similar water color – NOT GUACHE – set)

Bristol Board Pad 5 Sheets 11 x 14 – 2ply Vellum Finish – TABLETS COULD BE SHARED

A small vessel to hold water such as a plastic bowl, mug, etc.

3rd Batch (You need these by 4/9. All found at Walls Alive, Campus Bookstore, etc)

*** Black 3/16 Thick Foam Core (at least 3 sheets 20” x 30”)

***Black and White Mat Board (at least 1 sheet 20” x 30”)

Snap off style Mat Knife and Precision Exacto Pen Knife (#11 size) with spare blades

Delta Sobo Craft Glue

12” x 18” (or bigger) Self healing cutting mat

** items in italics included in bookstore packet – 8 sheets of vellum \$56.98*

Additionally, access to a digital camera will help, as will purchasing a box of large garbage bags and/or a large card stock folder for transporting your work ***

THEATRE 300 SCHEDULE : SUBJECT TO CHANGE

rev. 15.JAN.12

1	1/18	First Class : Welcome : Fear and Loathing : <i>HW Favorites Lists, Buy Materials, Buy Books</i>
2	1/23 1/25	Drawing 1 – Angle Evaluation : <i>HW generate drawing from another view</i> **Drawing 2 – Shape, Distance, and Basic Perspective : <i>HW draw from int. and ext. locales</i>
3	1/30 2/1	Drawing 3 – Getting the Gist/ The Talking Sketch: <i>HW Draw and Caption</i> Drawing 4 – The Human Element – Referencing the Figure: <i>HW Additional Scenarios</i> *** Saturday, Feb 4 attend VA Stage Performance of BLACK PEARL SINGS. 2pm-7:30pm
4	2/6 2/8	1 st Text Intro / Value, Tone, Intensity, Grad. : <i>HW 10 Swtch, 20 Swtch, 30 Swtch, Read G.P. 1-55</i> G.P. Discuss, Intro to Color Theory, Mixing and Matching : <i>HW Color Wheel, Read G.P. 55-117</i>
5	2/13 2/15	G.P. Discuss: Working With The Paint / Addit Proc Paint : <i>HW Color Studies on Line Drawings</i> **The painted costume rendering : <i>HW Rend. Gen. 2 Reality, and 2 Fantasy Color Renderings</i>
6	2/20 2/22	Basic Drafting, Language of Line & Groundplans : <i>HW work on line weight and GP, Read D.I.1-2</i> **Discuss D.I.: Ortho Projection and The Other Side: <i>HW orthographic drafting, Read D.I. 4/5</i> IGUANA THURS FEB 23 – SUN FEB 26
7	2/27 2/29	Discuss D.I.: Response to the production – Elevations : <i>HW Develop Front Elevations from GP</i> **Sectioning and Details : <i>HW Read 1st Play, Develop Detail Blowup and Basic Sections</i>
8	3/5 3/7	NO CLASS SPRING BREAK: <i>HW Read 1st Play, drive to Key West</i> NO CLASS SPRING BREAK: <i>HW Finish 1st Play, drive back from Key West</i>
9	3/12 3/14	Discuss Reactions to 1 st Play text / Syllabus catch up : <i>HW TBD</i> Lighting – The Brass Tacks / What is tacky light ? : <i>HW Lighting Observations D.I. 6</i>
10	3/19 3/21	**Building the visual research : <i>HW Begin Research For 1st Play (Read Rest of D.I.)</i> Drafting Rec: <i>HW Emotional Reactions to 1st Play Text, Develop Research for 1st Play</i> AN EVENING OF DANCE THUR MAR 22- SAT MAR 24
11	3/26 3/28	TBD CLASS – MATT AT USITT: Continue with 1 st play research: <i>HW one paragraph statement</i> NO CLASS – MATT AT USITT: <i>HW Choose orchestral soundscape for research</i>
12	4/2 4/4	Working from the research, making the selections 1 st group presentation: <i>HW TBD</i> Putting it together, generating ideas : Discuss Final Projects: 2 nd Group Present: <i>HW TBD 2nd Play</i>
13	4/9 4/11	Introduction to Model Building : <i>HW Build the Perfect Box</i> **The Stage House, seating, site lines : <i>HW Build the Stage House</i>
14	4/16 4/18	Model Furniture / Don't Sweat The Small Stuff : <i>HW Build Model Furniture from Given and Orig</i> Discuss Second Text: Collaborative Work : <i>Prod Response, Final Projects</i> RUINED THUR APR 19-SAT APR 22
15	4/23 4/25	Discuss Production: Walls and Model Minutia : <i>HW Work on Mini Models and Final Projects</i> Final Class : Favorites List Redux : <i>HW Work on Final Presentations</i>

FINAL DESIGN PRESENTATIONS: TUESDAY, MAY 1st, 2-5 PM