



SCENIC DESIGN

Theatre 310-SPRING 2026

rev. 21.Jan.26

Tues & Thur 9:30 AM -10:50 AM

Instructor: Matthew Allar

Classroom: PBK 249 Design Room

3 credit hours

Office: PBK 247

Phone: 757-221-2694

Email: mjallar@wm.edu

Office Hours: Tue & Thurs 11:00am -12:00pm (and by appointment)

TEXTS:

Topdog / Underdog. Suzan-Lori Parks

ISBN# 9780822219835

All My Sons. Arthur Miller

ISBN # 0141185465

TBD PLAY BY TBD AUTHOR

ISBN # TBD

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

COURSE GOALS and DESCRIPTION

This course is intended for students who wish to develop their understanding of the specific processes and methodologies associated with Theatrical Scenic Design. Building on a range of experiences engaged previously via THEA 300 (Fundamentals of Design), this course allows students to specifically focus on a single design discipline for an entire semester.

By the end of the term, each student will develop a skill set capable of:

- analyzing a theatrical text as a sensitive, informed, scenic designer
- assembling a comprehensive body of visual research
- developing relevant, articulate idea sketches
- creating scaled theatrical models
- creating scaled design drafting
- developing digitally assembled images and drafting
- communicating effectively via words and images with other collaborators

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.

GRADING

Participation / Attitude	100 points	<i>Top Dog Project</i>	250 points
Production Responses	60 points	Void Project	60 points
<i>All My Sons Project</i>	250 points	Final Project/ <i>TBD Play...</i>	250 points
Special Guest Inspiration	30 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 9:29am**) 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 9:29am 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. Any unexcused absence will reduce your final grade by 10 points 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 two main stage departmental theatre productions (*The Minutes, and Machinal.*) Attending these productions will allow you to generate a written response responding to the design and storytelling elements from each theatrical show. Please note the performance schedule as soon as possible as your attendance at these events is mandatory.

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 garbage cans just outside of the building.

PHONES AND DEVICES: 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 (i.e. handwritten / sketched), 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.
Failure to do so will result in a loss of points.

All work must be submitted on time (at the beginning of the class period on the date due).
Theatre is based on deadlines. 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 (\$3.50 per key). You are encouraged to claim two flat file drawers by writing your name and the semester 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.

GOLDEN FUN PASSES: Each student will be issued two golden fun pass tickets at the beginning of the semester. Each ticket grants the user a single, a twenty-four-hour extension on all work due that class day. To receive full credit, the work must be turned in by 9:29am on the following day (i.e. – **not the following class period**) with the signed Golden Fun Pass attached/ included. The golden fun pass ticket is non transferrable, may not be used on any portion of the final project and holds no cash value if unused (just the respect and admiration of your classmates). **Use them wisely !**



EQUITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION: In this class, we strive to recognize the broadest representation of perspectives, ideas and expertise from all people without bias or preference toward race, color, ethnicity, creed or sexual identity. This is an anti-racist, inclusive space. Any violation of this collective understanding will not be tolerated in this course. Additionally, we acknowledge that the area on which W&M sits was originally the land of the Kiskiack Tribe, and we honor their heritage. We further recognize that W&M owned and exploited slave labor for over one hundred seventy years, and failed to take a stand against segregation for nearly one hundred more. As members of the W&M community, we are committed to equality and social justice for all.

MENTAL AND PHYSICAL WELL BEING: William & Mary recognizes that students juggle different responsibilities and can face challenges that make learning difficult. There are many resources available at W&M to help students navigate emotional/psychological, physical/medical, material/accessibility concerns, including:

- The W&M Counseling Center at (757) 221-3620. Services are free and confidential.
- The W&M Health Center at (757) 221-4386.
- For additional support or resources & questions,

Contact the Dean of Students at 757-221-2510.



- For a list of other resources available to students, see:

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STATEMENT OF ACCESSIBILITY:

William & Mary accommodates students with disabilities in accordance with federal laws and university policy. Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a learning, psychiatric, physical, or chronic health diagnosis should contact Student Accessibility Services staff at 757-221-2509 or at sas@wm.edu to determine if accommodations are warranted and to obtain an official letter of accommodation. For more information, please see www.wm.edu/sas



ZOOM CLASS EXPECTATIONS: Maintaining “in person” focus while meeting online can be challenging, but if we all participate in the following agreements, the entire class will collectively benefit.

- 1) Treat online class just as you would an in-person class
- 2) Dress as you would for any other WM class
- 3) Attend class in a room/area with as much privacy, and as few distractions as possible
- 4) Take care to provide alternative space for pets
- 5) Keep your camera on, but mute your microphone when not speaking
- 6) Utilize front facing or omnidirectional lighting and avoid strong side and back light
- 7) Use a separate ZOOM device from your note taking method
- 8) Minimize or eliminate non-class related communication with others at your location, or online
- 9) Refrain from the temptation to multi-task. Be present and focused!

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 Michael’s, Staples, the college bookstore, or at Walls Alive, located in the Newtown Shopping Plaza, and all are available online. 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 or utilize the campus print shop.**

A small notebook for step by step notes, thoughts, etc (think cheap, pocket sized)

#2 pencils (not mechanical)

Office Stapler – any size, any shape, any color (must be working...and filled with staples)

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

Manual pencil sharpener

18 x 24 pad of newsprint

18” steel ruler

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

16 foot long (or greater) tape measure

A device capable of taking high quality photos

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

Erasing Shield

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



*** 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

Precision Exacto Pen Knife (#11 size)

#11 spare blades (min 10)

Delta Sobo Craft Glue

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

Circle Template – useful, but not required

Adjustable (but geared) compass – useful, but not required

10 GB (or bigger) flash drive

Detail Eraser and/or this Detail Eraser- useful, but not required

*** Please Download a free student version of Vectorworks

<https://www.vectorworks.net/en-US/education>

THEATRE 310 SCHEDULE : *SUBJECT TO CHANGE*

rev. 21.JAN.26

** Homework assignment *may* require slightly longer time to complete for the next class as compared to other days

Indicates a Zoom Meeting based class session

1	1/22	First Class : Welcome : Fear and Loathing : <i>HW Read Designer as Thinker; Thin Slicing, Supplies</i>
2	1/27 1/29	Discuss Readings, Back to the Art Gym: <i>HW Conquer the Void</i> **Special Zoom Guest: Doug Huszti '88 Art Director: <i>HW Read TOPDOG, Breakdown, Finish Voids</i>
3	2/3 2/5	Peering into the Voids, <i>TOPDOG</i> intro: <i>Gather Research Images</i> Review <i>TOPDOG Research: HW Assemble Images and Textures for TOPDOG</i>
4	2/10 2/12	** SWEM Dig Collage W/ <i>TD</i> ...Return to Photoshop: <i>HW Three Unique TD Collages</i> ** SWEM Photoshop #2 – Details, shadows, etc: <i>HW finish TD Collages and Res</i>
5	2/17 2/19	Present Digital collages and research, Messy GP intro: <i>HW read All MY SONS, generate messy GPs in GCT</i> The groundplan and drafting conventions : <i>HW AMS GP, and assemble research</i>
6	2/24 2/26	GP Check in, details, function: <i>HW Generate rough sketches, and assemble research</i> Special Zoom Guest: Emily Inglis '10 Model Builder/Studio Manager: <i>HW Finish sketches, Prod Response</i> <u>WMT production of <i>The Minutes</i>: 2/26-2/28 @ 7:30pm, 3/1 @ 2pm</u>
7	3/3 3/5	NO CLASS: SETC: <i>HW Finish sketches, Prod Response</i> Zoom Class. Discuss <i>The Minutes</i> and Final AMS Sketches: <i>HW Read TBD Play and Breakdown</i>
8	3/10 3/12	NO CLASS : SPRING BREAK : <i>HW Drive to the beach – muse on design – rest</i> NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK: <i>HW Drive back from the beach– muse on design – rest some more</i>
9	3/17 3/19	Possible Zoom Class. Discuss TBD Play, needs, etc: <i>HW TBD Play GP and Research</i> NO CLASS: USITT: <i>HW TBD Sketches</i>
10	3/24 3/26	TBD Play Materials Review: <i>HW updates/revisions to critical documents</i> **Elevation Drafting Review: <i>HW TBD Play Elevation Drafting</i>



11	3/31 4/2	Drafting Details and Fixes: <i>HW Revise TBD Play Elevation Drafting</i> **Special Guest: Jeromy Hopgood Projection/Scenic/Lighting Designer: <i>HW TBD Multimedia Install</i>
12	4/7 4/9	Model Making Basics: <i>HW little boxes</i> **Model Making Furniture: <i>HW Tiny Chairs</i>
13	4/14 4/16	Model Making Elevations & Walls: <i>HW Tiny Room and Figure</i> **Stage House & Translating Drafting into a model: <i>HW TBD Play white model pcs / Studio Th Stage House</i>
14	4/21 4/23	In Class Work on Model/ Individual Check Ins: <i>HW TBD</i> In Class Work on Model/ Individual Check Ins: <i>HW TBD, Production Responses</i> <u>WMT production of <i>MACHINAL</i> 4/23, 4/24, 4/25 @ 7:30pm & 4/26 @ 2:00pm</u>
15	4/28 4/30	Discuss <i>MACHINAL</i> : <i>HW TBD Play final model / drafting / sketches / research / breakdown</i> Final Class In class work session : <i>HW TBD Play final model / drafting / sketches / research / breakdown</i>

FINAL TBD PLAY PROJ. IN PERSON PRESENTATIONS: Monday, May 4th, 9a-12pm