CTPR 465: Practicum in Production Design (2 units) Spring 2015

Prerequisite: CTPR 310 Intermediate Production (for Production majors), or CTPR 455 Introduction to Production Design or CTPR 456 Introduction to Art Direction (for non-majors)

Classroom: SCA 204, Thursday’s 7-10PM

Instructor: Michael Provart
E-Mail: probestwo@gmail.com Cell: 323.646.0576
Office Hours: Thursday’s 2-6PM by Appointment only, SCA 410

This practicum will follow the design process from the script to a proposed, fully conceptualized, coherent, physical universe. The course will demonstrate visual design strategies used in storytelling and character illumination.

Areas of focus will include designing the look of a film, building visual continuity into a film, and interfacing with collaborators.

Class objectives include presenting a comprehensive set of design strategies and tools used by the Production Designer. We’ll learn how design requirements interact with and impact on the other production crafts.

We’ll examine the skills of Production Design, take a given script and scenes from breakdowns to finished presentations, and explore each step along the way. To that end, we’ll examine the role of all crafts in the art department purview.

As we make our way through the many issues which weigh on all choices in the design process, we will discuss the collaborative nature of the filmmaking process. We’ll learn how the designer collaborates with the director, producer, and DP to conceptualize the visual world.

We will learn to create and use the visual tools that keep the creative team informed of the design process: Key imagery, research imagery, ground plans, elevations, location photos, storyboards, palette swatches, key frame sketches, and so on.

We will also learn some basic set construction skills and scenic applications on Stage 4.
**ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:** Attendance is mandatory. Students are required to attend all classes.

Students are expected to be on time and prepared for each class. Two unexcused absences will result in your grade being lowered by one full letter (ex: A becomes B). A third unexcused absence will result in your grade being lowered another full letter (ex: B becomes C). Your grade will be lowered by one letter for every absence thereafter. Two late arrivals equates to one full absence.

If you cannot attend, it is your responsibility to get the information and assignment from a fellow student. Do not leave me an e-mail/voice mail inquiring about what you missed in class.

In order for an absence to be excused the student must have approval from me and provide documentation at the next attended class session.

If you have an emergency and must miss class please contact me prior to class.

**PARTICIPATION POINTS:** Daily participation is worth 10 points. You will be graded on a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being best, for your daily participation.

Coming prepared to work is also mandatory, not having supplies will negatively effect your daily participation points. **CLEAN-UP:** We have to share this classroom, we will stop 10-15 minutes before the end of class to clean-up, abuse of this will affect your participation points for that day.

**ASSIGNMENTS POINTS:** Your assignments will be graded 1 through 10. 10 being best. What effects the grade of any given assignment are the following factors:

> if you have followed instructions?
> if the homework is complete and turned in on time?
> experimentation –have you pushed yourself?
> how well you achieved the homework goal?

**LATE OR INCOMPLETE HOMEWORK:** Homework that is handed in **incomplete** will be graded accordingly. Homework that is handed in **late** will lose 1pt. of its possible score for each week it is late. As an example, homework that would have received a possible 8 but is handed in two weeks late would become a 6.

**Homework turned in after two weeks will not be accepted and will receive a zero.**

**FINAL GRADES:** I will add up your participation points and your assignment points. A percentage will be determined by the total points you’ve earned as compared with the total points possible. This percentage corresponds to a letter grade as follows: **A = 100-96%, A- = 95-90%, B+ = 89-87%, B = 86-83%, B- = 82-80%, C+ = 79-77%, C = 76-70%, D+ = 69-67%, D = 66-63%, D- = 60-62%, F = 59-0%.**

During the semester you can get an rough idea for your grade by adding all your assignments and possible participation scores to date, and dividing that number by the total points possible at that time.
PD PRACTICUM FINAL PRESENTATION:

The final presentation will be an in class “critique”. All work will must be printed and mounted, and presented to the class, with the exception of 3D models.

The following elements are required:
> An “emotional response” collage for your set.
> A color/texture palette for your set.
> A research board addressing architecture, furniture, color, texture, mood and tone.
> A 1/4” ground plan for your set, based on your blocking.
> 1/4” elevations and 3/4” details from your plan.
> A budget for your set.
> Your Sketchbook/look book
> A color rendering or 1/2” physical model or virtual model of your set. (Program for virtual model to be approved by instructor.)

MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES: They will cost be approximately $75.+- and are to be purchased by each student.
1- Architects scale ruler
1- 8”x 11” Clearprint 1/4” grid, “Fade-Out” design and sketch vellum pad
1- 9”x 12” spiral sketchbook
1- x-acto knife with extra #11 blades
1- AlumiCutter 12” ruler
1- Sobo glue
1- Art Bin Box or equivelent
1- Four color pen
1-3/4” measuring tape 25’ long, Stanley powerlock Foamcore boards and presentation boards
Yellow Pads

OPTIONAL:
Highlighters
Cutting Matte
Electric Eraser
Eraser shield
Mechanical pencil
Multiple leads
Stumps
Different sized metal rulers
Drafting Triangles and Templates
ETC.
THE COURSE, APPROXIMATE WEEK BY WEEK:

Week 1  Dissecting the text.
   Script Choices.
   Parsing the script into designable elements.
   Which dept is responsible for which elements?
   Making a set list.
   Script breakdowns by department.
   Assignment: Do a set list and script breakdown.

Week 2  Set or Location.
   The issues that drive the crucial choice of building vs. location.
   Practical exteriors with stage interiors.
   Photographing locations.
   Assignment: Find and photograph a practical exterior for a given scene from your script.

Week 3  Collaborative Process.
   The creative process of developing an environment, visually and physically, through collaboration.
   Developing a design concept and visual metaphor. Inspirational imagery and research imagery.
   Assignment: Create an "emotional response“ collage to your given script.

Week 4  Imagining the Design.
   Quantifying mood and tone- the tools at a designers’ disposal. Inspirational films, Photographers, tear sheets, research, etc.
   Starting the “Look Book”.
   Developing a palette and color arc.
   Assignment: Do a color/texture palette for a given scene, and a color arc for a given scene.

Week 5  Scale Drawing Tutorial- Drafting Materials needed.
   How to measure a location.
   How to draw a 1/4” scale plan.
   Assignment: Draw your living space in ¼” scale.

Week 6  The ground plan.
   Developing a ground plan: the basis for all other choices.
   How the ground plan affects blocking.
   Assignment: Develop a 1/4” ground plan based on your blocking.
   This plan will be the interior of the exterior you previously photographed.

Week 7  The Cost of it all.
   Budget estimates- a preliminary discussion.
   What it costs vs. what it’s worth.
   How different departments budget.
   Assignment: Budget a set from your ground plan.
**Week 8  Gathering Ideas.**  
Research- Knowing what’s accurate frees you to change it.  
What to look for and where to look.  
**Assignment:** Bring research for your scene addressing architecture, furniture, color, texture, mood and tone.

**Week 9  Architecture as story.**  
Elevations- architectural style applied.  
The character & story ramifications of architecture.  
How to draw elevations.  
**Assignment:** Draw a 1/4” and 3/4” elevation from your plan.

**Week 10  The Art Department Team.**  
The art director, set designer, illustrator, storyboard artist, art department. coordinator. Clearances. Signage and “Greeking”.  
Tools, building a kit per skill.  
“”What is a flat, how to handle them safely, putting them together, Stage 4””.  
**Assignment:** Build a 1/4” white foamcore model of your set.

**Week 11  Spotting the set on a soundstage and Building the set.**  
The construction department: Construction, paint, signage, greens.  
Scheduling and budgeting construction. Working with a scene shop.  
“”What is a flat, how to handle them safely, putting them together, Stage 4””.  
**Assignment:** Construction schedule flow chart of your set.

**Week 12  Dressing the set.**  
Dressing for character development.  
The Set-dressing department.  
“”Scenic Applications and striking, Stage 4””.  
**Assignment:** Go to a prop house to “shop” your set.

**Week 13  Communicating Ideas.**  
A variety of tools- sketches, amended photos, photo collages, palette swatches, key frame sketches.  
Possible Sketch-Up tutorial.  
**Assignment:** Set sketch part 1, or TBD, Possible Guest Speaker?

**Week 14  Partners in the process.**  
Creating a coherent universe - The DP and the Costume Designer.  
Designing with lighting with practicals.  
**Assignment:** Set sketch part 2, TBD, Possible Guest Speaker or Field Trip?

**Week 15  Final Practicum Presentations.**

“”stage 4 as available.
SUGGESTED READING:

Hollywood Art - Art Direction in the Days of the Great Studios  
Beverly Heisner; McFarland & Company; 1990  
A scholarly study.

By Design - Interviews with Film Production Designers  
Vincent LoBrutto; Praeger; 1992  
Interviews with a wide range of designers, veterans as well as contemporary.

The Art Direction Handbook for Film  
Michael Rizzo, Focal Press, 2005  
Written by a currently working art director. Describes today’s art department in detail.

Setting the Scene - The Great Hollywood Art Directors  

DESIGNS on FILM: A Hundred Years of Hollywood Art Direction  
by Cathy Whitlock and the Art Directors Guild; Harper Collins; 2010

STATEMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:  
Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:  
USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one’s own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another’s work as one’s own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. Scampus, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/.