

**ADVANCED PRODUCTION DESIGN
SPRING 2017 SEMESTER
THE ART DEPARTMENT BREAKDOWN
DESIGN, ART DIRECTION, AND STORY**

Instructor: Jackson De Govia
Credits: 2 Units
Day & Time: Monday 7-10PM
Graduate Level Class

OVERVIEW

This class will conduct an Art Department Breakdown of a feature length screenplay and interpret the story through art direction.

Concepts affecting set design, set decor, props, mechanical effects, graphics, and visual effects will be established. Locations will be scouted; sets will be budgeted and designed.

SCREENPLAY

The screenplay is *Folly*, a suspense melodrama.

PROTOCOLS

Read the screenplay and syllabus before the first class.

Notes must be taken by hand in this class, preferably with pencil in an unlined sketchbook.

Graphic work (i.e., thumbnails, concept sketches, storyboards, quarter inch scale plans and elevations, and finished illustrations, etc.) for this class done by hand on paper with traditional tools will receive extra credit.

If you are comfortable with computer graphics and programs, use them. They are powerful and sophisticated tools, but they are not necessary for good production design and, at this stage, may take more time to execute than they are worth.

Written papers on topics under discussion will be assigned from time to time. Papers which demonstrate convincing arguments and descriptive powers may be shared with the class and will receive higher grades. Engagement and persuasion are skills critical to successful production design.

Written book reports on works recommended for the class (see list to be furnished at first class meeting) will receive extra credit. Reports on books not on this list must be approved in advance by the instructor. These reports may be discussed in class.

BREAKDOWN

A breakdown is a detailed list of the cast, physical elements and interactions in a screenplay. The breakdown of *Folly* is a mutual project of the class to be completed by Week # 5. A sample breakdown of the first six script pages will be presented to the class during the first session.

DESIGN

The design of selected sets on stage and on location will begin with a detailed reading of the screenplay, interpreting its language as a recipe for poetry; that is, language providing access to meaning and aesthetic content.

ANALYSIS OF THE TEXT

One of the first tasks of the designer is textual interpretation, which engages critical faculties and provides reference points for judgment of design issues.

COMMUNICATING DESIGN IDEAS

The designer, having engaged the design issues in the script, must explain them clearly to the director, producer and production departments.

The designer communicates these concepts with visuals and with language.

VISUALS - RESEARCH, REFERENCE, AND DRAWING

The internet provides a vast resource of images: The problem is not availability, it is choice. Taste and the powers of discretion are formed by a lively curiosity and an educated sensibility: the first steps in communicating design ideas are often references to images of what the designer has discovered in the script: they point the way to a new and subtle realization of the subject. A collage can show a starting point and a path forward.

The designer must be able to draw concept sketches and simple ground plans quickly and simply, a skill acquired through practice. For now, leave technical drawing and finished illustrations to specialists who spend a lifetime perfecting these skills. For now, freehand a ground plan in minutes, along with a fluent thumbnail of your important ideas.

LANGUAGE

Ideas may be described by speaking and writing. Speak concisely, wisely, and well. Writing is slower than speaking and cumbersome. If you are putting pencil to paper you're better off drawing with notes.

ART DIRECTION

Art direction is the expression and practical application of the designer's interpretation of the story. Locations will be scouted, sets and props will be designed, a budget will be estimated, and completed work will be displayed.

Art direction asks and answers three questions, known in this class as the ABCs. The breakdowns will reference detailed answers to the ABCs.

ARCHITECTURE

How does location, architecture, detail, period, style, symbolism, and social role of a given set piece, affect the telling of the story?

BACKSTORY

What does the history revealed by the notional archeology of the world of the screenplay imply for the art direction?

CHARACTER OF THINGS

What are the effects of natural forces and human behavior on the artifacts and environments of the screenplay?

WEEK-TO-WEEK OUTLINE

WEEK #1 - COURSE OVERVIEW

SYLLABUS OVERVIEW

THE BREAKDOWN PROCESS

COMMUNICATING DESIGN IDEAS - DRAWING, SPEAKING, WRITING

ART DIRECTION - THE ABCs

INSTRUCTOR'S WALK-THROUGH OF SCREENPLAY

BREAKDOWN DEMONSTRATION: SETS 001-004

ASSIGNED:

SET LISTS

BEGIN BREAKDOWN Pages 1 - 34

WEEK #2 - DESIGN AND ART DIRECTION WORKSHOP,

DEMO AND PRACTICE: SET DESIGN 1/4" SCALE PLAN

DRAFTING TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

LECTURE/DEMONSTRATION: WHITE MODEL MAKING

ASSIGNED:

DRAWING PRACTICE - GROUND PLAN OF ONE ROOM, ELEVATION OF ONE WALL

CONTINUE BREAKDOWN Pages 34 - 71

WEEK #3 -BREAKDOWN PROCESS AND SET DESIGN TOOL KITS

SET LIST - EXAMPLE: FOLLY SET LIST

BREAKDOWN FORMAT

BREAKDOWN TO DESIGN - REVEALS TEXTUAL ASPECTS

DESIGN TO ART DIRECTION - EXPRESSES TEXTUAL ASPECTS

APPLYING ANALYSIS TOOL KITS TO DESIGN

ART DIRECTION AS EXPRESSION OF TEXTUAL ASPECTS

ASSIGNED:

PREPARE GROUND PLAN AND SKETCHES SELECTED SETS:

INT BANQUET ROOM, INT CHRIS & ADELE'S APT, INT SHELL'S PLACE

CONTINUE BREAKDOWN Pages 71 - End

OFFICE HOURS: TO CRITIQUE STUDENT BREAKDOWN

WEEK #4 - BEGIN LOCATION PORTFOLIOS

LOCATION SURVEY TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES, SCOUT LIST

LOCATION PORTFOLIOS - FIVE SETS TO BE PICKED FROM LIST DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS

EXT LORI'S STUDIO APARTMENT

EXT/INT HOTEL

EXT/INT ART GALLERY

EXT MOTEL ROW AND BOULEVARD

EXT/INT SHELL'S PLACE, EXT LORI'S FIRST APARTMENT

EXT MINOR SETS; BUS STOP, OFFICE, BOOKSTORE, ETC.

ASSIGNED:

REVIEW AND CORRECT BREAKDOWN

LOCATION PORTFOLIOS TO BE SELECTED & PHOTOGRAPHED

CONTINUE GROUND PLAN AND SKETCHES SELECTED SETS

OFFICE HOURS: TO CRITIQUE STUDENT BREAKDOWN

WEEK #5 - CRITIQUE BREAKDOWNS, SETS ON STAGE VS. LOCATIONS, ART DIRECTION - BREAKDOWNS + DESIGN

CRITIQUE FINAL CLASS BREAKDOWNS -

CRITERIA FOR SETS ON STAGE VS. LOCATIONS

ASSIGNED:

CONTINUE GROUND PLAN AND SKETCHES SELECTED SETS:

CONTINUE LOCATION PORTFOLIOS

OFFICE HOURS: TO CRITIQUE STUDENT BREAKDOWNS

WEEK #6 - CONTINUE AND COMPLETE WEEK #5

COMPARE FINAL CLASS BREAKDOWNS - CORRECT AND COMPLETE BREAKDOWNS

CLASS DISCUSSION: DESIGN - APPLYING ANALYSIS TOOL KITS

LECTURE/DISCUSS: ART DIRECTION AS END PRODUCT OF BREAKDOWNS + DESIGN

GUEST LECTURE: SET CONSTRUCTION BUDGET BREAKDOWNS

ASSIGNED:

CONTINUE GROUND PLAN AND SKETCHES SELECTED SETS

COMPLETE LOCATION PORTFOLIOS

OFFICE HOURS: TO CRITIQUE STUDENT BREAKDOWNS

WEEK #7 - LOCATION PORTFOLIOS

LOCATION PORTFOLIOS - FIVE SETS SUGGESTED

APPLY BREAKDOWN VIA ANALYSIS TOOL KITS TO LOCATION PORTFOLIOS

CRITERIA FOR SETS ON STAGE VS. LOCATIONS

CLASS WALK-THROUGH LOCATION CHOICES & JUSTIFY

EXT LORI STUDIO APARTMENT REQUIREMENTS

ASSIGNED:

SKETCH MATCHING EXTERIOR DETAILS FOR LORI'S STUDIO APARTMENT

SCOUT, MEASURE, AND PHOTOGRAPH EXT LORI STUDIO APARTMENT CANDIDATES

WEEK #8 - BEGIN INT/EXT LORI STUDIO APARTMENT - CLASS TEAMS

NOTE: ALL TEAMS PARTICIPATE IN REALIZING EACH TEAM'S VERSIONS

SCREEN LORI STUDIO APT EXT LOCATIONS, ASSIGN ONE TO EACH CLASS TEAM

DISCUSSION: MATCHING LOCATION EXTERIORS TO SETS ON STAGE

DESIGNING THE SET FOR BREAKDOWNS, APPLY ANALYSIS TOOL KITS

BLOCKING THE STORY ACTION ON THE GROUND PLAN

LECTURE: RESEARCHING LOCATION ARCHITECTURE

ASSIGNED:

INT GROUND PLANS MATCHING EXTERIORS FOR LORI'S STUDIO APARTMENT

WEEK #9 - CONTINUE INT/EXT LORI STUDIO APARTMENT - CLASS TEAMS

CRITIQUE GROUND PLANS INT LORI'S STUDIO APARTMENT

DEMO AND PRACTICE: SET DESIGN FOR FULL SIZE ONSTAGE LAYOUT

FULL SIZE LAYOUT (SNAP LINES, TAPE, ETC.)

ESTABLISHING CENTER LINES & RIGHT ANGLES

ASSIGNED:

COMPLETE GROUND PLANS LORI'S STUDIO APT

BEGIN ELEVATIONS LORI'S STUDIO APT

WEEK #10 - DESIGN AND ART DIRECTION WORKSHOP - CLASS TEAMS

DEMO AND PRACTICE: MAKING THE WHITE MODEL

CLASS DISCUSSION:

THE CENTRAL PROBLEM OF *FOLLY* - HOW WILL CHRIS' PAINTINGS BE REALIZED?

ASSIGNED:

FULL SIZE ONSTAGE LAYOUT LORI'S STUDIO APT

WEEK #11 - TEAM ONE VERSION LORI'S STUDIO APT - CLASS TEAMS

MOCKUP SET DRESSING LORI'S STUDIO APT

BLOCKING REHEARSAL LORI'S STUDIO APT

ASSIGNED:

FULL SIZE ONSTAGE LAYOUT LORI'S STUDIO APT

WEEK #12 - TEAM TWO VERSION LORI'S STUDIO APT - CLASS TEAMS

MOCKUP SET DRESSING LORI'S STUDIO APT

BLOCKING REHEARSAL LORI'S STUDIO APT

ASSIGNED:

FULL SIZE ONSTAGE LAYOUT LORI'S STUDIO APT

WEEK #13 - TEAM THREE VERSION LORI'S STUDIO APT - CLASS TEAMS

MOCKUP SET DRESSING LORI'S STUDIO APT

BLOCKING REHEARSAL LORI'S STUDIO APT

ASSIGNED:

FULL SIZE ONSTAGE LAYOUT LORI'S STUDIO APT

WEEK #14 - FINAL EXAMS - INDIVIDUAL & TEAM SHOW AND TELL

EXAM EXHIBITS

SET LISTS

BREAKDOWNS, TEXTUAL ANALYSES, DESIGNS, ART DIRECTION

HANGING PLANS, ILLUSTRATIONS, PRINTED GRAPHICS

LOCATION PHOTOS

TABLE TOP WHITE MODELS

DOCUMENTED FULL SCALE GROUND PLANS

SPECIMEN BUDGETS

COMMENTARY ON EACH EXAM BY INSTRUCTOR AND GUESTS

WEEK #15 - FINAL EXAMS - INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM SHOW AND TELL EXAM EXHIBITS

SET LISTS

BREAKDOWNS, TEXTUAL ANALYSES, DESIGNS, ART DIRECTION,
HANGING PLANS, ILLUSTRATIONS, PRINTED GRAPHICS

LOCATION PHOTOS

TABLE TOP WHITE MODELS

DOCUMENTED FULL SCALE GROUND PLANS

SPECIMEN BUDGETS

COMMENTARY ON EACH EXAM BY INSTRUCTOR AND GUESTS

GRADING & INCOMPLETES

Final grade is based on:

10% Class participation.

25% Script Breakdown.

65% Portfolio of work for Lori's apartment, including sketches, ground plans, elevations, white model and location photographs.

Incompletes will not be given unless the student submits verifiable documentation per USC policy before the final class. All class presentations and student portfolios must be submitted on time and will be graded as representing the student's final submission for the course. There are no make up exams, re-do's or extra-credit assignments permitted for this course.

ATTENDANCE

Absences automatically lower a student's final grade. A first absence lowers a student's final grade by 1/3 letter; (a B+ becomes a B). A second absence lowers a final grade by 2/3 of a letter (an B+ becomes B-). A third absence lowers a final grade by a full letter (a B+ becomes a C+). Absences from more than three classes automatically prompts a final grade of F.

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Behavior that persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students' ability to learn and an instructor's ability to teach. A student responsible for disruptive behavior may be required to leave the class pending discussions and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action.

Food and drinks (other than water) are not permitted in any instructional spaces in the Cinematic Arts Complex.

ACADEMIC CONDUCT

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

University of Southern California, 3601 Watt Way, GFS-315, Los Angeles, California 90089-1695 Tel: (213) 740-9033, Email: gradsch@usc.edu

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the Department of Public Safety <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>.

This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. The Office of Disability Services and Programs http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information <http://emergency.usc.edu/> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.