

# USC School of Dramatic Arts

**Theatre 330**  
**Fall 2017**

**Set Design I**  
**Tu/Th—9:30-11am**

**Location:** KAP 164

**Instructor:** Sibyl Wickersheimer

**Office:** JEF 200

**Office Hours:** Tu/Th 11-12, only by appointment

**Contact Info:** <mailto:sawicker@usc.edu>

## **Course Description and Overview**

The dramatic relationship between text, space and performers through script analysis, development of visual ideas, methods of communication and execution as applied to scenic design. Students will learn and use techniques such as research, collage, sketching, perspective sketching, model making, and verbal presentation skills to communicate designs for the stage.

## **Learning Objectives**

Goals for the class are to learn the process of designing stage sets for theatrical productions and live performance by completing designs as class assignments. The assignments will focus on the process of designing while also practicing and developing skills that students can keep in their 'tool kit'. Communication skills will be another area of emphasis as students will get much practice presenting their design ideas in visual, written, and aural medias.

## **Class Meeting information**

Assignments and Sketchbook assignments are to be completed upon your arrival in class.

Turn off cell phones during all class sessions and put them away.

If your phone rings or is used during class, you may be excused for the remainder of the class period.

## **Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**

Students should set up a Design lab account. \*\*\*

### **Texts:**

#### **Purchase:**

Model Making: Materials & Methods by David Neat

Designer Drafting and Visualization, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition by Patricia Woodbridge

Theatrical Design & Production, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. by J. Michael Gilette (already purchased for 130/132ab)

#### **Course Reader to be purchased at bookstore includes:**

*The Dutchman* by Leroi Jones

*The Sandbox* by Edward Albee

Ch 1 from Theatres by Gaelle Breton

Intro and Chapter 1 from The Scenographic Imagination, by Darwin Reid Payne

Interview with John Lee Beatty from Sculpting Space in the Theater by Babak Ebrahimian

Ch. 1 from One Place After Another, by Miwon Kwon

Film Directing, Shot by Shot, by Steven D. Katz

**Online resources on Blackboard:**

*Pelleas & Melisande* by Maurice Maeterlinck

Journal and blog links

**Materials must be brought to class but cannot be stored in classroom.**

These tools are necessary to purchase during the first week. We will discuss this list on the first day of class.

sketchbook - white paper – no lines – at least 8”x10”

*Architectural* scale rule

#2 pencils & Drafting pencils

Erasers and eraser shield

18”x 24” pad of drafting vellum (can be shared)

T-square

Drafting triangle, adjustable or 30/60

Exacto knife and blades

metal straight edge ruler (preferably a ‘Cutting Rail’ brand with raised edge)

Black foam core, chip board, illustration board and card stock as needed

Glues – Sobo, Tacky glue & hot glue

Straight pins/push pins/T-pins

Masking tape

Cutting matt – at least 18”x24”

Additional materials may be needed per project, including:

Various acrylic paints or watercolors

Various brushes

**MATERIALS MAY BE PURCHASED AT THE USC BOOKSTORE OR THESE STORES:**

Architect’s Corner, 1324 S. Flower St., Los Angeles, CA 90015, [www.architectscornerla.com](http://www.architectscornerla.com)

Sci Arc Supply Store, 955 E 3rd St, Los Angeles, CA 90013 , <https://sciarc.edu/institution/facility/art-supply-store/>

Graphaids, 3051 S La Cienega Blvd, Culver City, CA 90232, <http://www.shopgraphaids.com/>

Swain’s, 537 N Glendale Ave, Glendale, CA 91206, <http://www.swainsart.com/>

**Grading Criteria and Assessment of Assignments**

Work in class will be mostly ‘hands on’, project based work. All projects and assignments will be graded using a point system. Reading assignments will be expected to be completed before the following class session after they are assigned; there will be quizzes on the readings. All work turned in should be typed and files labeled as follows: NAME\_DATE\_CLASS PROJECT for example WICKERSHEIMER\_8\_29\_2016\_330Sandbox.pdf

No late assignments, projects, exams, papers, or exercises shall be accepted without penalty unless advance extensions have been arranged between the student and the teacher or unless exceptional circumstances occur. Grades will be lowered if they are not turned in by the assigned deadline. Attendance and participation will play a part in the student’s final grade. If the student has more than 2 absences, overall grade may be lowered by as much as 10%. Participation in class will be given a numeric point value, students gain a point each week towards this total. Participation is not merely showing up to class, but also means engaging in class discussions and willingness to respond to questions and ideas posed during the class.

If your work in class is unsatisfactory, you will be warned when midterm grades are due. I am available to discuss your progress in class. I encourage you to make an appointment to meet with me at least once during the semester.

**ASSIGNMENTS: TOTAL 250**

Writing assignment #1 (Sandbox)	10pts
Quiz #1	10pts
Sandbox Model & Design	20pts
Model-Making exercise	20pts
Dutchman storyboards	10pts
Dutchman Design & Presentation	30pts
Dutchman Drafting	50pts
Floor Plan taping project	10pts
Quiz #2 (will be pop quiz from reading assignments)	10pts
Quiz #3 (will be pop quiz from reading assignments)	10pts
Pelleas & Melisande collage	10pts
Pelleas & Melisande Prelim Design	20pts
Pelleas & Melisande Design & Presentation( <b>Final</b> )	30pts
Participation in class	10pts

**Grading**

Point values are assigned to individual projects & assignments listed above. The final course grade is based on the following percentages of your accumulated points divided by the total points possible for all assignments (250): The final course grade is based on the following scale:

A=100-94, A-=93-90, B+=89-87, B=86-84, B-=83-80, C+=79-77, C=76-74, C-=73-70, D=69-60, F= below 59

**A** indicates work of excellent quality; **B** of good quality; **C** of average quality; **D** of below average quality; and **F** indicates inadequate work.

**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/>.

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/departement/departement-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](mailto: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](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.

### WEEKLY SCHEDULE (always subject to change)

#### Week 1

Tues. 8/22

Class Intro & Materials Show and Tell

Assignments: Get Design Lab account and purchase materials  
Read excerpt from *Theatres*, Gaelle Breton

Thur. 8/24

Lecture: History of Stage Spaces

Assignment: Reading: Intro and Ch. 1, *Scenographic Imagination*

#### Week 2

Tues. 8/29

**Bring supplies to every class starting now!**

**QUIZ** on both reading assignments

Model building demo, start building theatre model

Assignments: Read: *The Sandbox*

Read: Ch. 2, *Theatrical Design & Production*

Thur. 8/31

Continue building model theatre boxes

Discuss *Sandbox*

Assignments: Set Design for *Sandbox* (due 9/12) see full project sheet  
Reader pages: Beatty interview from *Sculpting Space*

#### Week 3

Tues. 9/5

DUE: Model box and Writing Assignment #1

model building demo/work on *Sandbox* models in class

Thur. 9/7

Scenic Designers Lecture part 1

#### Week 4

Tues. 9/12

***Sandbox* Presentations**

Assignments: Read Anna Veibrock models (blackboard), Ming Cho Lee models (Course Reader)

Thur. 9/14

Scenic Designers Lecture part 2

Assignments: Read *The Dutchman*

Week 5

Tues. 9/19 Lecture: Research & the Design Process/Presentation  
Discuss *Dutchman*  
Assignments: research Assignment (due 9/26)

Thur. 9/21 Bring sketchbooks!  
Lecture: Storyboarding  
Assignments: finish *Dutchman* storyboards started in class  
Read Storyboard Chapter from Shot by Shot (reader)

Week 6

Tues. 9/26 *Dutchman* Research due  
Assignment: *Dutchman* Set Design (Due 10/10)

Thur. 9/28 *Dutchman* Storyboards due  
Model Building Demo – Audience risers and seating  
Reader: Model-Making Chapter 2

Week 7

Tues. 10/3 Model theatre and Audience seating due  
Assignment: Read David Zinn interview, *American Theatre* (reader)

Thur. 10/5 work in class on *Dutchman* designs

Week 8

Tues. 10/10 *Dutchman* Presentations

Thur. 10/12 *Dutchman* Presentations  
In class light and photograph of models  
Assignments: Read Ch. 3 & 5 Designer Drafting and Visualization

Week 9

Tues. 10/17 Model-Making Demo: Windows and Moulding

Thur. 10/19 Work in class on model-making assignment (due 10/24)  
Assignments: finish Model Wall

Week 10

Tues. 10/24 Lecture: Elements of a Full Design Package  
Start *Dutchman* ground plans  
Assignments: *Dutchman* Drafting Package (Due 11/7)  
Read Chapter 8 Designer Drafting and Visualization...

Thurs. 10/26 Work in class on drafting ground plans, start sections  
Read Chapter 9 Designer Drafting and Visualization...

Week 11

Tues. 10/31

Ground Plan Due  
Work on Section drawing in class

Thurs. 11/2

Section Due  
Start drafting Elevations in class

Week 12

Tues. 11/7

Complete Drafting Package Due, Plan view must be  
B&W copy  
Assignments: Floor taping assignment, meet with partner

Thurs. 11/9

Meet outside scene shop – Floor taping, bring  
in plan with notes and measurements for taping  
Assignment: Read Pelleas & Melisande (online and blackboard)

Week 13

Tues. 11/14

Discuss P&M  
Assignments: P&M Collage & Scene Breakdown  
Read Ch.1 from One Place After Another (reader)

Thur. 11/16

P&M Collage and Scene Breakdown Due  
Lecture: Non-Theatre/Site Specific Performances  
Assignments: P&M design concepts and site (due 11/21)  
Read: article 'Love on San Pedro' (reader)

Week 14

Tues. 11/21

Preliminary Design Concept & Site Due, RESEARCH DAY  
Assignments: P&M Final Design Presentation, Site Model and Site  
Plan (due 12/7)

Thur. 11/23

NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING

Week 15

Tues. 11/28

Individual meetings – site selected, design concept,  
research package  
Discuss Site Model Construction, Site Plan & Scale

Thur. 11/30

P&amp;M – Individual meetings continue, work day

**FINAL EXAM: Thursday, December 7, 11am-1pm****FINAL EXAM = P&M PRESENTATIONS**