

**CTPR 477 – SPECIAL PROBLEMS IN DIRECTING
'COLLABORATIVE DIRECTING'**

SYLLABUS
2 UNITS

USC SCHOOL OF CINEMATIC ARTS

SPRING 2020

Pre-requisite:

- Production Division undergraduate students must have completed one of the following courses by the end of Fall semester 2018:
 - CTPR 475 Directing: Mise-en-Scene.
 - CTPR 476 Directing the Comedic Scene.
 - CTPR 478 Practicum in Directing.
- Production Division graduate students must have completed CTPR 532 Intermediate Directing by the end of Fall semester 2018.

MEETING TIMES: Fridays 10:00am – 12:50pm.

CLASSROOM: SCA 310.

INSTRUCTOR: John Watson
 (meetings outside of class by appointment only)

SCA FACULTY/CLASS COORDINATOR: John Watson 310-367-6038
 jkwatson@cinema.usc.edu
 Office Hours: SCA 438 (by appointment)

STUDENT ASSISTANT: c.Craig Patterson

NOTE: THIS CLASS MAY NOT BE AUDITED. Guests must be pre-approved by John Watson before attending the class.

Class Overview:

This class is an opportunity for SCA students with proven directorial skills, in the BA, BFA and MFA programs, to direct a short film under the supervision of John Watson.

Ten students, selected from applicants during Fall Semester 2019, will each direct a section of a feature film currently titled '*PHANTOM OF THE OPERA*'. The class is also open to selected students in specific key crew areas – eg: producer, writer, editor, DP, 2nd Unit Director.

The screenplay was written by students during Fall semester 2019. The directors and writers are expected to collaborate closely throughout the production process, under the guidance of John Watson.

The film will be produced and edited down to the “director’s cut” stage of post-production by the end of this course. **Final cut, final music, sound mixing, VFX, color timing, titles, etc., will be completed outside of class, during Summer and Fall 2020. The directors are encouraged, but not required, to be part of this completion process.**

General Guidelines for Crew:

The key crew for the production will consist of paid industry professionals, with precedence given to recent SCA alumni, and some current USC students.

Learning Objectives:

To study directing techniques and gain experience in performance and the use of camera for storytelling, while working with professional actors and crew. To learn the director’s responsibility in leadership, vision and knowledge of techniques for motivating performance, blocking for camera, and use of visual and aural elements to create an effective movie, through pre-production, production and editing. To learn the level of collaboration required when working on episodic television.

Grading:

Class is for a letter grade.

Performance of director role: 75%

Grading will be based on several factors:

- Collaboration with the writers (15%).
- Execution of shot lists and storyboards (20%).
- On-set execution and leadership (25%).
- Collaboration with the editors (15%).

Class Participation: 25%

In-class contributions will also be factored into the grading, including:

- Weekly class presentation of future plans (15%).
- Feedback on the work shown by other students (10%).

Equipment and facilities:

It is anticipated that most equipment will be provided by outside vendors, and that the only SCA facilities required will be the classroom. SCA equipment *may* be used by specific permission only.

Required Reading:

Phantom of the Opera by Claude Leroux

CLASS SCHEDULE:

Note: This schedule is approximate. It may be adjusted, as required.

Weeks 1-7. PRE-PRODUCTION

Week 1 - Jan 17th

Introductions. Discussion of VFX, special Make-up and Special FX requirements for the film. Discussion of music choices. Location requirements and recommendations. Character breakdowns for casting and discussion of ideas for casting. Recommendations for DP, Production Designer, AD, Editor, Sound Design, Composer, Make-up and other key roles. Discussion of the visual style and design of the film. Discussion of the expectations for Test Films.

Week 2 - Jan 24th

Follow-up on all of the above. Presentation from the Producers on potential locations, crew recommendations and casting options. Review of Special FX, Special Make-up and Music options, and update on VFX requirements. Discussion of directors plans for shooting test versions of their episodes of the film.

Week 3 - Jan 31st

Screen selected auditions and review potential casting choices. Review script changes. Discuss production schedule and budget. Review key crew choices. Location search updates. Preliminary production design presentation. Cinematography presentation. Production of test films will commence. Filming and editing of these tests will be conducted over the following two weeks.

Week 4 - Feb 7th

Screening of edited test films – Episodes 1-5. Updates on casting, locations, music, VFX, etc. Updates on schedule and budget.

Week 5 - Feb 14th

Screening of edited test versions – Episodes 6-10. Updates on casting, production design, locations, VFX etc. Updates on schedule and budgets.

Week 6 - Feb 21st

Screening of any test films not previously completed. Review production plans. Present plans for weekend camera, sound, wardrobe and make-up tests. Lock script.

Week 7 - Feb 28th

In-class script read-through of screenplay.

Weeks 8-11. PRODUCTION

During the production phase, dailies will be screened and discussed, and the schedule for the following weekend will be presented and discussed. Directors will provide shot lists and storyboards. There will be ongoing updates on the status of upcoming filming, production design, locations, and VFX considerations.

Week 8 - March 6th

Commence principal photography.

Week 9 - March 13th

Screen synced dailies. Continue principal photography. View editor's cut of assembled scenes.

March 20th – Spring Break.

Week 10 - March 27th

Screen synced dailies. View editor's cut of assembled scenes.

Week 11 – April 3rd

Screen synced dailies. View editor's cut of assembled scenes.

Weeks 12-15. POST-PRODUCTION

Week 12 - April 10th

View editor's cut of assembled scenes. Discuss pick-up shooting. Discuss music and sound. Progress report on VFX.

Week 13 - April 17th

View editor's cut. Present plans for pick-up shooting (if approved by instructors). Commence pick-ups/reshoots/additional photography.

Week 14 - April 24th

Screen pick-up dailies. View director's cut of first 5 episodes. Commence conceptualization for title sequence. Sound and VFX updates.

Week 15 – May 1st

View director's cut of episodes 6-10. Review options for title sequence. Confirm composer and sound editors.

FINALS: The film will be screened during Finals Week in a semi-private screening for invited guests only.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

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 Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems:

Student Health Counseling Services - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

Student Health Leave Coordinator – 213-821-4710

Located in the USC Support and Advocacy office, the Health Leave Coordinator processes requests for health leaves of absence and advocates for students taking such leaves when needed. <https://policy.usc.edu/student-health-leave-absence/>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call

suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call

engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) | Title IX - (213) 740-5086

equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations.

Bias Assessment Response and Support - (213) 740-2421

studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions for appropriate investigation and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776

dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710

studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity and Inclusion are foundational to the SCA community. We are committed to fostering a welcoming and supportive environment where students of all identities and backgrounds can flourish. The classroom should be a space for open discussion of ideas and self-expression; however, SCA will not tolerate verbal or written abuse, threats, harassment, intimidation or violence against person or property. If students are concerned about these matters in the classroom setting they are encouraged to contact their SCA Diversity and Inclusion Liaison, <http://cinema.usc.edu/about/diversity.cfm>; e-mail diversity@cinema.usc.edu. You can also report discrimination based on a protected class here <https://equity.usc.edu/harassment-or-discrimination/>

Disruptive Student 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 class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action.

PLEASE NOTE:

FOOD AND DRINKS (OTHER THAN WATER) ARE NOT PERMITTED IN ANY INSTRUCTIONAL SPACES IN THE

CINEMATIC ARTS COMPLEX

