

# USC School of Dramatic Arts

**Theatre 330**  
Fall 2020

**Set Design I**  
Tu/Th—10-11:50am



**Location:** Online/MCC107

**Instructor:** Sibyl Wickersheimer

**Office:** JEF 200

**Office Hours:** Thur 12-1, by appointment

You must make an appointment!

**Contact Info:** [sawicker@usc.edu](mailto:sawicker@usc.edu)

Fall 2017

model for 'Dutchman' by Edina Hiser '19

## 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 and examining the work of designers past and present. The assignments will present varied design challenges, allowing students to explore theatrical space and to practice developing skills that students can keep in their 'tool kit'. By the end of the class, students will be able to communicate their stage designs via storyboards, sketches, orthographic drawings, models, and text.

## Course Notes

Class will begin as an online course using zoom for class sessions. Class will move to hybrid model using MCC 107 as the classroom, pending necessary state approvals.

Turn off cell phones during all class sessions and put them on table at front of the room when we are together in a classroom. Please make every attempt to be sitting upright at a desk or table with your video on during class. Let instructor know if you are experiencing challenges with this request.

## Communication & Class Meeting Information

Course announcements will be provided through Blackboard and blackboard emails. Course materials will be provided in a variety of ways as noted below. As much as possible, the materials will be posted in links in Blackboard content folders. Synchronous class sessions will be recorded and recordings will be uploaded to Blackboard. Please do not share these recordings with anyone outside of the classroom environment.

### *SCampus Section 11.12(B)*

*Distribution or use of notes or recordings based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study is a violation of the USC Student Conduct Code. This includes, but is not limited to, providing materials for distribution by services publishing class notes. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the Internet or via any other media. (See Section C.1 Class Notes Policy).*

### **Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required**

Please note that you will need an operational computer to run zoom sessions for class sessions and work sessions. You will also be required to use Blackboard, Google Drive, Google docs and slides, and Photoshop from the Adobe Creative Cloud suite of software. Adobe license information will be provided. The following technology resources are available. Students should set up a Design lab account when allowed to be back on campus.

### **USC technology rental program**

We realize that attending classes online and completing coursework remotely requires access to technology that not all students possess. If you need resources to successfully participate in your classes, such as a laptop or internet hotspot, you may be eligible for the university's equipment rental program. To apply, please [submit an application](#). The Student Basic Needs team will contact all applicants in early August and distribute equipment to eligible applicants prior to the start of the fall semester.

### **USC Technology Support Links**

[Zoom information for students](#)

[Blackboard help for students](#)

[Software available to USC Campus](#)

### **Required and Supplementary Materials**

#### **Texts:**

**Purchase:** Course Reader made available for purchase through USC Bookstore. Information posted and announced through Blackboard. Course Reader includes:

1. Ch 1 from [Theatres](#) by Gaelle Breton
2. Intro and Chapter 1 from [The Scenographic Imagination](#), by Darwin Reid Payne
3. *The Sandbox* by Edward Albee
4. Exerpts from Model Making: Materials and Methods
5. Exerpts from Designer Drafting and Visualization
6. Exerpt from Theatrical Design&Production
7. Exerpt from Sculpting Spaces, interview with John Lee Beatty
8. Ch. 1 from [One Place After Another](#), by Miwon Kwon
9. Film Directing, Shot by Shot, by Steven D. Katz

Supplemental books (not required to 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 Gillette (already purchased for 131/132ab)

[Sculpting Space in the Theater](#) by Babak Ebrahimian

**Online resources on Blackboard:**

*The Dutchman* by Leroi Jones

Numerous reading assignments via 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

Art supplies can be purchased at these local stores (call or check websites first):

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

Raw Materials Art Supplies, 645 S. Los Angeles Street, LA, CA 90014, <https://rawmaterials.com/>

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

**Grading Criteria, Assessment of Assignments, Assignment Submission Policy**

Work in class will be mostly project based work. All projects and assignments will be graded using a point system and grading rubric is attached at the end of the syllabus (also posted in BB). Reading assignments will be expected to be completed before the following class session after they are assigned; students will be asked to post in discussion forums on blackboard prior to class session. When turning in homework files, please save files to be under 5MB and name files according to this system:

NAME\_330\_PROJECTNAME\_DATE for example: **WICKERSHEIMER\_330\_SANDBOX\_08292019.pdf**

Assignments will be turned in via a class Google Team Drive folder via text based, image based, or video based submissions discussed in class per assignment.

Assignment grades will be lowered by at least one letter grade if they are not turned in by the assigned deadline. Turn in assignments by 12pm/midnight prior to the class date deadline.

Attendance will affect the student’s final participation grade because you cannot participate if you

are not in class. If the student has more than 2 unexcused absences, overall grade may also be lowered by 10%.

Late work (assignments, projects, exams, papers, or exercises) shall be accepted, and a grade penalty will apply unless advance extensions have been arranged between the student and the teacher or unless exceptional circumstances occur. Please always discuss late work with me. Communicating your challenges will always benefit you and gives me an opportunity to better support your educational experience rather than just assign a grade penalty.

### Grading Timeline

Grading takes time. Please be patient, a two week turn around is likely. While you may always inquire about your grade, please do not expect an immediate response after turning in assignments. 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:

Assignment	Points
Writing assignment #1 (Sandbox)	10
Discussion/Forum #1	5
Discussion/Forum #2	5
Discussion/Forum #3	5
Sandbox Model & Design	20
Dutchman storyboards	10
Dutchman Research, Design & Presentation	60
Dutchman Drafting	40
Floor Plan taping project	10
Model-Making exercise	20
Final Project -- Prelim Site Selection	20
Final Project -- Design & Presentation/Pitch (Final)	30
Class Participation	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>250</b>

### Grading Scale

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 (310):

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69

D 63-66  
 D- 60-62  
 F 59 and below

**Grading Rubric (see last page of syllabus for extensive rubric spreadsheet)**

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

See attached guide used to determine the quality of work submitted for grading. Assignments may also have specific rubric details included in the instructor's written description of the assignment.

**WEEKLY SCHEDULE (subject to change)**

Week 1

Tues. 8/18

Class Intro & Materials Show and Tell  
 Assignments: Read excerpt from *Theatres*, Gaelle Breton

Thur. 8/20

Assignment: Lecture: A Short History of Theatrical Spaces  
 Reading: Intro and Ch. 1, *Scenographic Imagination*,  
*Discussion Forum Post*

Week 2

Tues. 8/25

**Bring supplies to every class starting now!**  
 Discussion on both reading assignments  
 Model building demo, start building theatre model  
 Assignments: Read: *The Sandbox*  
 Read: Ch. 2, *Theatrical Design & Production*

Thur. 8/27

Discuss *Sandbox*  
 Sketching exercise  
 Assignments: Set Design for *Sandbox* (due 9/8)  
 Reader pages: Continue building model theatre boxes,  
 Beatty interview from *Sculpting Space*

Week 3

Tues. 9/1

DUE: Model box and Writing Assignment #1  
 sketching demo/work on Sandbox models in class

Thur. 9/3

Scenic Designers Lecture part 1 - THE 'FRAME'

Week 4

Tues. 9/8

**Sandbox Design Presentations**  
 Assignments: Read Anna Veibroek models (blackboard), Ming Cho Lee  
 models (blackboard), Rachel Hauck article

Thur. 9/10

Scenic Designers Lecture, part 2  
 Assignments: Read *Dutchman* and do breakdown

Week 5

Tues. 9/15

Lecture: Research & the Design Process/Presentation  
 Discuss *Dutchman*, CAAM online exhibit  
 Assignments: research Assignment (due 10/01)

Thur. 9/17		Bring sketchbooks! Storyboarding
	Assignments:	finish <i>Dutchman</i> storyboards started in class Read Storyboard Chapter from <u>Shot by Shot</u> (reader)
<u>Week 6</u>		
Tues. 9/22		<i>Dutchman</i> Research due, present to class TBA - possible guest director or scholar
	Assignment:	<i>Dutchman</i> Set Design (Due 10/15)
Thur. 9/24		<i>Dutchman</i> Storyboards due Model Building Demo – Audience risers and seating Work in class on rough ground plans
	Assignment:	Reader: Model-Making Chapter 2
<u>Week 7</u>		
Tues. 9/29		Model theatre due, rough ground plan & audience layout due
	Assignment:	Read David Zinn interview, <i>American Theatre</i> (BlackBrd)
Thur. 10/1		Model Audience due, work in class on <i>Dutchman</i> model
	Assignment:	Read 'Hand sketching' (Blackboard)
<u>Week 8</u>		
Tues. 10/6		<i>Dutchman</i> Presentations In class demo: light and photograph models
	Assignment:	Model photographs
Thur. 10/8		<i>Dutchman</i> Presentations
<u>Week 9</u>		
		<b>Big Telly's <i>Macbeth</i></b> (virtual field trip – I have seen two of their shows this summer!!) <b>Online Performance – TBA stay tuned for details. Discussion forum #3, critical response.</b> <a href="https://www.big-telly.com/touring/macbeth-a-biaf20-premiere/">https://www.big-telly.com/touring/macbeth-a-biaf20-premiere/</a>
Tues. 10/13		Lecture: Elements of a Full Design Package
	Assignments:	Read Ch. 3 & 5 Designer Drafting and Visualization, measurements and notes from your models to start drafting
Thur. 10/15		Start <i>Dutchman</i> ground plans
	Assignments:	<i>Dutchman</i> Drafting Package (Due 11/12) Read Chapter 8 Designer Drafting and Visualization...
<u>Week 10</u>		
Tues. 10/20		Work in class on drafting ground plans, start sections
	Assignments:	Read Chapter 9 Designer Drafting and Visualization...

Thurs. 10/22

Ground Plan Due  
Work on Section drawing in class

Week 11

Tues. 10/27

Section Due  
Assignments: Start drafting Elevations in class

Thurs. 10/29

Complete Drafting Package Due, B&W full set prints  
Assignments: Floor taping assignment, meet with partners

Week 12

Tues. 11/3

Meet outside scene shop – Floor taping, bring  
in plan with notes and measurements for taping

Thurs. 11/5

Model Wall : Demo and step #1  
Start Site Specific discussions  
Assignments: Read Ch.1 from One Place After Another (reader), Start  
research for Final project

Week 13

Tues. 11/10

Model Wall : Demo and step #2  
Lecture: Non-Theatre/Site Specific Performances  
Assignments: Final project concepts and site selection  
Read: article 'Love on San Pedro' (reader)

Thur. 11/12

Model Wall Due  
Discuss Site Challenges, Site Plan, Scale, Budget  
Breakout rooms: meet with Sibyl  
Assignments: Final Project – Model or Rendering and Site Plan (due 11/24)

**FINAL EXAM: Tuesday 11/24 8am-10am**  
**FINAL EXAM = SITE SPECIFIC DESIGN PRESENTATIONS**

### **Course evaluation**

Course evaluation occurs at the end of the semester university-wide. It is an important review of students' experience in the class. The process and intent of the end-of-semester evaluation should be provided. In addition, a mid-semester evaluation is recommended practice for early course correction. See CET support document [Mid-semester Evaluations](#).

## **EXTRA-CURRICULAR COMMITMENTS AND ISPS**

Should you choose to participate in any extra-curricular project, such as an Independent Student Production, the SDA administration and faculty will not make allowances or exceptions for absences in class, missed or delayed assignments, home work that is required as preparation for class, or lack of participation in class resulting from your extra-curricular involvement.

## **Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

### **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 Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b](http://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](http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct).

### **Support Systems:**

*Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call*  
[studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling](http://studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling)

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

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call*  
[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://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) 740-9355(WELL), press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call*

[studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault](http://studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault)

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

*Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) - (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298*  
[equity.usc.edu](http://equity.usc.edu), [titleix.usc.edu](http://titleix.usc.edu)

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

*Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298*  
[usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care\\_report](http://usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report)

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

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



[dsp.usc.edu](http://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 Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 821-4710*

[campussupport.usc.edu](http://campussupport.usc.edu)

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](http://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](http://dps.usc.edu), [emergency.usc.edu](http://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](http://dps.usc.edu)

Non-emergency assistance or information.

# Course Rubric

Rubric is for all assignments.

Corresponding Grade	A (Excellent)	B (Good)	C (Meets Expectations)	D (Approaches Expectations)	F (Needs Improvement)
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Criteria					
<b>Creativity</b>	Work is original, unique, and clever in execution of the assignment. Shows evidence of deep understanding of concepts introduced in class.	Work is generally unique and thoughtful in approach. Student exhibits understanding of concepts introduced in class and appropriate use of concepts.	Work is somewhat unique and shows a basic level of conceptual thinking. Appropriate use of concepts, but opportunities missed in engaging viewer.	Work is occasionally unique but shows a lack of conceptual thinking. Very few or no creative risks taken. Dull approach.	Work is not unique and lacks conceptual thought. Does not show original ideas.
<b>Exploration of Tools and Skills presented in class</b>	Work shows exceptional understanding of technical elements and clever application of the tools learned in class.	Work shows above average understanding of technical elements and appropriate application of the tools learned in class.	Work shows a basic understanding of technical element and some application of the tools learned in class.	Work shows little understanding of technical elements and application of the tools learned in class.	No understanding of technical elements or application of the tools learned in class.
<b>Craftsmanship</b>	Work is done with exceptional care and attention to detail.	Work is done with good care and attention to detail.	Work is done with only some care and attention to some details.	Work is done with little care and details are not considered.	Work is done carelessly.
<b>Completion of project</b>	Assignment is followed. All work is complete and on time.	Assignment is followed. Most work is complete and on time.	Assignment is generally followed. Some of the work is complete and on time.	Assignment is generally followed but most of the work is incomplete or late.	Assignment is not followed and inadequately completed.
<b>Participation and effort</b>	Work shows exceptional focus, effort and planning. Participated in all class discussions.	Work shows good focus, effort and planning. Participated in most class discussions.	Work shows some focus, effort and planning. Participated in some class discussions.	Work shows minimal focus, effort and planning. Barely participated in class discussions.	Work shows a lack of focus, effort and planning. No participation in class discussions.