

CTPR 555 - ADVANCED PRODUCTION DESIGN SPRING 2022 SEMESTER v.3

DESIGNING FOR STORY

Instructor: Jack G. Taylor, Jr.

Office Hours: By Appointment on Wednesdays – 6 to 7PM

Credits: 2 Units, - Day & Time: Wednesday 7-10PM - Classroom: SCS 107

Graduate Level Class – Prerequisite – Intermediate Production Design CTPR 534

Students may contact instructor for pre-requisite waver consideration.

OVERVIEW:

Advanced Production Design applies cinematic visual concepts to the screenplay's written words. This class guides students, step-by-step through the analysis and breakdown of a feature motion picture screenplay. By applying visual communication design concepts, students learn how to design for a story from page to screen.

The Production Designer is a primary collaborator and style contributor in the storytelling process and interprets the story through visual artistic design concepts. It is through these important visual artistic concepts that the Production Designer helps to create and define screen characters, character interactions, the story and theme conflicts, and the environments in which characters live.

Design and style should reflect what the motion picture is about, not design for its own sake.

SCREENPLAY:

“Stretcher Bar” - a full-length motion picture suspense/melodrama screenplay will be used for class assignments in all aspects of Production Design.

COURSE OBJECTIVE:

All aspects of Production Design will be discussed and examined. Students will experience the processes of Production Design through assigned projects throughout the course. Additionally, historical motion picture examples will be assigned for viewing outside of class.

CLASS PREPARATION AND PROTOCOLS:

Before the first class, students must read the screenplay “Stretcher Bar” and class syllabus. Enrolled students should see Jonathan Martofel in SCA 410 to pick up a copy of “Stretcher Bar”.

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 upon presentation.

If students are comfortable with computer graphics and programs, they may use them. Computers are powerful and sophisticated tools, but are not necessary for good Production Design.

ATTENDANCE:

Students are expected to be on time and prepared for each class. Two absences will result in a student's grade being lowered by one full letter (IE: A becomes B). A third absence will result in a student's grade being lowered by one, additional full letter (IE: B becomes C). A student's grade will be lowered by one full letter for each additional absence. Two late class arrivals equate to one full absence.

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ATTENDANCE: *(Continued)*

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

If a student misses class due to an emergency, the student must contact the professor prior to class or contact the Production Office at 213-740-3317.

GRADING & INCOMPLETES:

Final grade is based on:

- 15% Class attendance and participation,
- 30% Script Breakdown. Homework Assignments and Movie Review Assignment
- 55% Complete Portfolio of work for “Stretcher Bar” - Lori’s old and new apartment, including sketches, ground plans, elevations, stage spotting plans, tone boards, white model and location photographs. Overall Final Presentation with communicating design ideas.

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 makeup exams, re-do’s or extra-credit assignments permitted for this course.

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.

The Art Direction Handbook for Film
Michael Rizzo; Focal Press; 2005
Describes the modern art department in detail.

Setting the Scene - The Great Hollywood Art Directors
Robert S. Sennett; Harry N. Abrams, Inc.; 1994

Designs on Film: A Hundred Years of Hollywood Art Direction
Cathy Whitlock & the Art Directors Guild; Harper Collins; 2010

The Five C’s of Cinematography
Joseph V. Mascelli; Silman-James Press; 1965

MATERIALS:

Note: - Purchase materials as per instructor for in-class projects and homework assignments.

Digital Camera and or Camera phone app

Sketchbook, 8-1/2" x 11"

Pencils – H, HB, B

Tape Measure, 25' Stanley Power Lock (or similar)

Architect's Scale Ruler – Flat or Triangular

Metal Ruler, 12" AlumiCutter suggested (bigger or smaller -additional)

Cutting Mat, 18"x 24" suggested size – for working at home

X-Acto Knife and #11 Blades

1/8" - 1/4" – 3/4" Thk. - White or Black Foamcore, 1 each, 30" x 40"

Spray – Scotch Photomount, small can

Sobo Glue

Draft Dots or 1/4" Drafting Tape

Presentation Boards – White or Black, 3 - 20" x 30"

VENDORS FOR MATERIALS:

Architect's Corner - downtown LA location

Blick Art Supplies (franchise art store)

 Blick Art Supplies - Hollywood

 Blick Art Supplies - Pasadena

Graphaids - Culver City.

Carter Sexton - Laurel Canyon

Some supplies available at USC student bookstore

ADVANCED PRODUCTION DESIGN WEEK-BY-WEEK OUTLINE**WEEK #1 - COURSE OVERVIEW****Production Design/Art Direction Criteria****SYLLABUS OVERVIEW**

THE BREAKDOWN PROCESS – THE SCREENPLAY PAGE AND PARTS

COMMUNICATING DESIGN IDEAS - DRAWING, SPEAKING, WRITING

INSTRUCTOR'S WALK-THROUGH OF A SCREENPLAY- CONCEPTUAL AND TACTICAL

STARTING TO FIND THE STORY WITHIN THE TEXT – Elements of Screenplay Formatting

DRAWING AND HOW TO USE IT

ASSIGNED: FEATURE FILM 1: "The Set-Up" Director Robert Wise

 DRAWING ASSIGNMENT 1: LINES

 THUMBNAIL FORMS AND EMOTIONAL RESPONSES TO THE TEXT

 BREAKDOWN PROCESSES - SET LISTS & PAGE COUNT

WEEK #2 - TRANSLATING TEXT TO VISUAL FORM**PRODUCTION DESIGN DISCUSSION : FEATURE FILM 1 – "The Set-Up"**

 FINDING THE STORY

 CAST AND DESIGNING FOR CHARACTER- Who are these people?

 KEY AND LATENT IMAGERY

 USING THE SKETCH

ASSIGNED: FEATURE FILM 2 – "The Third Man" Director Carol Reed

 REVIEW THUMBNAILS AND THE EMOTIONAL RESPONSES

 HOW TO SHAPE KEY AND LATENT IMAGES

 CREATING INSPIRATIONAL IMAGES ABOUT CHARACTER.

WEEK #3 –WHERE ARE WE – PART 1**PRODUCTION DESIGN DISCUSSION: FEATURE FILM 2 – “The Third Man”**

SET LIST - EXAMPLE: BREAKDOWN FORMAT

RESEARCH ON PLACE – STAGE OR LOCATION?

PAGE COUNT AND SET LIST BREAKDOWN WITH LOCATIONS/EFFECTS

PICTURE PLANE – PERSPECTIVE AND THE HORIZON LINE – CREATING SPACE

ASSIGNED: FEATURE FILM 3 – “Out of the Past” – Director Jacques Tourneur

FINDING RESEARCH ON PLACE, EXTERIORS FIRST

CREATE SET LIST

DRAWING ASSIGNMENT 2: CREATING SPACE WITH LINES

WEEK #4 – WHERE ARE WE – PART 2**PRODUCTION DESIGN DISCUSSION: FEATURE FILM 3 – “Out of the Past”**

LOCATION PORTFOLIOS

INTERFACEING WITH LOCATIONS, SCOUT LIST

INTERIOR SPACES

INTRODUCTION OF AN ARCHITECTS SCALE RULER

ASSIGNED: FEATURE FILM 4 – “Mystery Street” – Director John Sturges

DRAWING ASSIGNMENT 3: READING THE SCALE

CREATE LOCATION PORTFOLIOS PER SET

RESEARCH

WEEK #5 – COLOR, PART 1**PRODUCTION DESIGN DISCUSSION: FEATURE FILM 4 – “Mystery Street”**

COLOR AND ASSOCIATIONS

THUMBNAILS, COLOR, PATTERN AND LATENT IMAGERY

WHAT MAKES COLOR WORK FOR STORY?

LOCATION SURVEY TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES, EXERCISE

EXT. LORI’S STUDIO APT. REQUIREMENTS

ASSIGNED: FEATURE FILM 5 – “Where the Sidewalk Ends” – Director Otto Preminger

SCOUT & PHOTOGRAPH EXT. LOCATIONS FOR LORI’S APT. - 6 MINIMUM

WEEK #6 – COLOR, PART 2 - BASIC STUDIO STAGECRAFT REVIEW**PRODUCTION DESIGN DISCUSSION: FEATURE FILM 5 – “Where the Sidewalk Ends”**

COLOR, TEXTURE AND TONE

APPLYING COLOR IDEAS TO THE ENVIRONMENTS

INTERIOR SPACES

BASIC STUDIO STAGECRAFT PRINCIPLES AND REVIEW**SET CONSTRUCTION & RIGGING TECHNIQUES****BACKINGS – PAINTED AND PHOTO BACKING TECHNOLOGY****ASSIGNED: FEATURE FILM 6 – “Maltese Falcon” – Director John Huston**

CREATE TONAL COLOR COLLAGES FOR ‘STRETCHER BAR’, 4 TOTAL

DRAWING ASSIGNMENT 4 - CREATE THUMBNAIL PLANS FOR INT. LORI’S APT.

3 VERSIONS FOR EACH

WEEK #7 – CREATING A GROUNDPLAN – FIVE C’S OF CINEMATOGRAPHY**PRODUCTION DESIGN DISCUSSION: FEATURE FILM 6 – “Maltese Falcon”**

FIVE C’S OF CINEMATOGRAPHY – CAMERA ANGLES FOR STAGING OF SETS

CRITERIA FOR SETS ON STAGE VS. LOCATIONS

MATCHING LOCATION EXTERIORS TO SETS ON STAGE

BLOCKING THE STORY ACTION ON THE GROUND PLAN

ASSIGNED: FEATURE FILM 7 – “Ace in the Hole” – Director Billy Wilder

REFINE THUMBNAIL FLOORPLAN OF LORI’S APT.

WEEK #8 – “STRECTHER BAR” SCRIPT**INT/EXT LORI’S STUDIO APARTMENT – CLASS GROUPS****PRODUCTION DESIGN DISCUSSION: FEATURE FILM 7 – “Ace in the Hole”**

WHITE MODELS AND HOW THEY ARE USED

BUILDING A MODEL AND GRID PAPER

ASSIGNED: FEATURE FILM 8 – “The Big Sleep” – Director Howard Hawks

REFINE FLOORPLAN OF LORI’S APT. USING GRID PAPER,

STARTS THE BUILD OF EXISTING MODEL EXAMPLE

WEEK #9 - “STRECTHER BAR” SCRIPT**INT/EXT LORI’S STUDIO APARTMENT - CLASS GROUPS****PRODUCTION DESIGN DISCUSSION: FEATURE FILM 8 – “The Big Sleep”**

ELEVATIONS AND MATCHING ARCHITECTURE

BEGIN ELEVATIONS ON GRID PAPER

CONTINUE TO BUILD EXISTING MODEL EXAMPLE

ASSIGNED: FEATURE FILM 9 – “How Green was My Valley” – Director John Ford

REFINE AND FINISH ELEVATIONS ON GRID PAPER

FINISH EXISTING MODEL EXAMPLE

SPRING BREAK**WEEK #10 - INT/EXT LORI’S STUDIO APARTMENT - CLASS DISCUSSION****PRODUCTION DESIGN DISCUSSION: FEATURE FILM 9 – “How Green was My Valley”**THE CENTRAL PROBLEM OF *STRETCHER BAR - HOW WILL CHRIS’ PAINTINGS BE REALIZED?***ASSIGNED: Feature Film 10 – “Key Largo” – Director John Huston**

START THE BUILD OF EXISTING MODEL EXAMPLE

REFINE FLOORPLAN OF LORI’S APT. USING GRID PAPER

WEEK #11 - INT/EXT LORI’S STUDIO APARTMENT - CLASS GROUPS**PRODUCTION DESIGN DISCUSSION: Feature Film 10 – “Key Largo”**

FINISH EXISTING MODEL EXAMPLE BUILD IN CLASS

BEGIN ELEVATIONS ON GRID PAPER

ASSIGNED: FEATURE FILM 11 – “Witness for the Prosecution” Director Billy Wilder

REFINE AND FINISH ELEVATIONS ON GRID PAPER

WEEK #12 - LORI’S STUDIO APARTMENT**PRODUCTION DESIGN DISCUSSION: FEATURE FILM 11 – “Witness for the Prosecution” Director Billy Wilder**

FINAL PROJECTS

SET DECORATION BOARDS AND PALETTE

ASSIGNED: Feature Film 12 – “Thieves Highway” Director Jules Dassin

BEGIN BUILD OF LORI’S APT. FOR FINAL PRESENTATION

WEEK #13 - LORI’S STUDIO APARTMENT**PRODUCTION DESIGN DISCUSSION: Feature Film 12 – “Thieves Highway”**

PRESENTING YOUR IDEAS - DISCUSSIONS

BUILD MODELS IN CLASS

ASSIGNED: FINAL PRESENTATION WITH PRESENTATION REQUIREMENTS

FINISH TABLE TOP WHITE MODELS,

SET LISTS,

BREAKDOWNS,

INSPIRATIONAL RESEARCH,

TONAL COLOR COLLAGES,

SET DECORATION BOARDS,

LOCATION PHOTOS FOR SHOW & TELL.

WEEK #14 - INDIVIDUAL SHOW & TELL, FINAL PROJECTS- GROUP ONE

PRESENTATION OF STUDENT WORK
DISCUSSION: COMMENTARY BY GUESTS

WEEK #15 - INDIVIDUAL SHOW & TELL, FINAL PROJECTS - GROUP TWO

PRESENTATION OF STUDENT WORK
DISCUSSION: COMMENTARY BY GUESTS

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” <https://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, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

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.

Support Systems:

Student Counseling Services (SCS) - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call. Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1-800-273-8255. Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 - 24/7 on call. Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/>

Sexual Assault Resource Center- For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: <http://sarc.usc.edu/>

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086 Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. <https://equity.usc.edu/>

Bias Assessment Response and Support -Incidents of bias, hate crimes and micro-aggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/>

The Office of Disability Services and Programs provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. <http://dsp.usc.edu>

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710. Assists students and families in resolving resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/>

USC Emergency Information. Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, <http://emergency.usc.edu>

USC Department of Public Safety – 213-740-4321 (UPC) and 323-442-1000 (HSC) for 24-hour emergency assistance or to report a crime. Provides overall safety to USC community. <http://dps.usc.edu>

Diversity at USC - Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. <https://diversity.usc.edu/>

PLEASE NOTE: FOOD AND DRINKS (OTHER THAN WATER) ARE NOT PERMITTED IN ANY INSTRUCTIONAL SPACES IN THE CINEMATIC ARTS COMPLEX.

CELLPHONE AND LAPTOP OPERATION DURING CLASS HOURS/LECTURES ARE NOT PERMITTED ONLY AT THE DESCRIPTION OF CLASS INSTRUCTOR.

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.