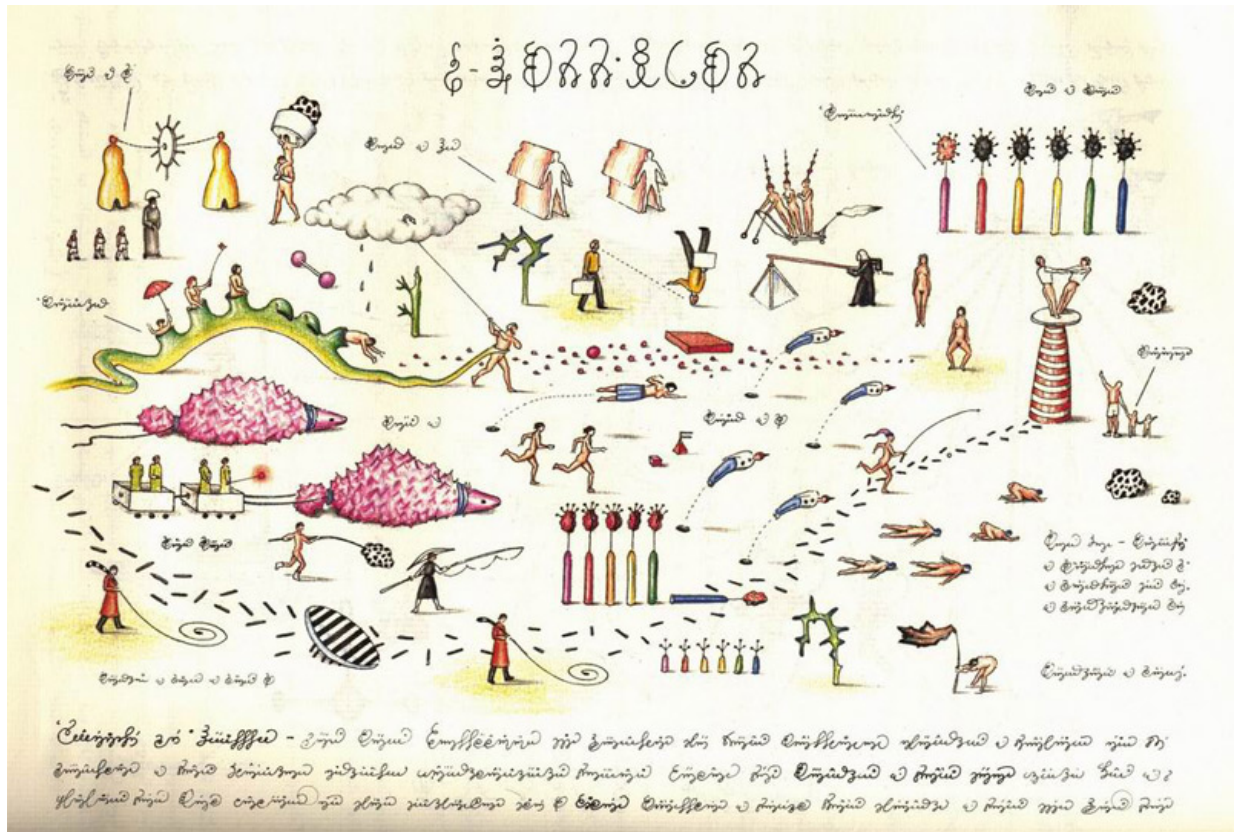**USC School of Cinematic Arts**
SYLLABUS CTPR 448 [2 units] SPRING 2025

SPECIAL TOPICS: WORLD BUILDING DESIGN STUDIO
Location   **In Person: SCB 207**
Time   **Tuesdays 9AM – 11:50AM**
Instructor   Peggy Weil   pweil@usc.edu
Office Hours   By appointment
S.A.   Kate Planting planting@usc.edu   213 200-9365

L. Serafini, *Codex Seraphinus*

Course Description
World Design is a design practice integrating visual and scenario design in the construction of worlds as containers for narrative. World Design as an approach to narrative recognizes and documents interlocking systems of value and potential, creating conditions for choice, action and character across media to craft transmedia worlds. World Design encourages story development from diverse worlds and perspectives and thus welcomes projects across genres: documentary, drama, speculative fiction, fantasy and experimental immersive experiences.

3D modeling and visualization skills have emerged as essential tools for filmmakers from concept through production. In this course students will familiarize themselves with basics of 3D modeling, with SketchUP/Blender or another 3D modeling tool. Students will create simple wireframe models to visualize scene and story development. 3D modeling and animation tools can also be applied to VR, AR and 3D-Stereo projects. World Design practice integrates with the

SCA Production curriculum; class projects may be developed in parallel with projects in other Production Department classes or applied to future work.

Course Goals
 • Familiarize students with the concepts, work-flow, and tools of World Design including Placemaking, Embedded Narrative and Visualization.
 • Articulate visual and narrative elements of place, character and scenario.
 • Create a comprehensive World Design Document supporting an original project. This project may be in parallel with an existing Production Class project and can be delivered with or without a completed script.
 • Exposure to basic 3D Visualization tools using SketchUP or other packages and their application for pre-Viz. Previous 3D experience is not required. *Note: This is not a technical skills class.*

Requirements and Grades
Students are expected to come to class prepared and to participate actively in class discussions. Class begins promptly; excessive tardiness will be counted as an absence. The only acceptable excuses for missing a class or taking an incomplete in the course are personal illness or a family emergency (with authorized documentation). Students must inform the professor before an excused absence or it will be counted as unexcused. One unexcused absence requires a meeting with the instructor and may affect your grade; two unexcused absences will lower a student's final grade by one third (i.e. from an A to an A-).

Assignments will be posted weekly on the class gDrive. Assignments must be submitted on time. Assignments are due, posted on class drive by 9AM (class time) of due date. Emailed assignments are not accepted. Assignments should be labeled according to the following protocol in order to ensure proper credit.

> *Labeling Protocol for class Assignments:*
> Top level folder: FirstName_LastName,
> Peggy_Weil   * *your preferred "class" first name*
> Next level folder: Initials+FolderName,
> PW_WorldDesignDoc
> Individual Documents w/in Folder: Initials_Assignment
> PW_Intro.doc

Please alert the instructor and SA of any individual issues or concerns relevant to your attendance and coursework. Assume at least one meeting with the instructor (virtual or in-person) to discuss your project during the second half of the semester.

This class is run as a workshop and, as such, requires thoughtful and attentive attention to your classmates and all class projects. The Class Participation grade reflects quality as well as quantity, i.e., the ability to engage in constructive and meaningful critique of fellow classmates' work as outlined in USC CET Menu of Discussion Norms.

Should any part of the semester go online due to COVID: Due to the limitations of ZOOM, some screenings may be assigned viewing before class. Please contact the Instructor and SA with any conflicts or issues pertaining to the virtual classroom. Consult SCA Creative Tech for technical issues. Directions regarding Zoom-related prompts for presentations and participation will be given in class if applicable. *Attendance assumes that your webcam is enabled throughout class.*

Course Structure

The course is run as a workshop for students to develop an original project over the course of the semester and produce a World Design Document that defines the broad outlines of a world with one scene visualization with basic 3D (physical or digital) modeling. Classes consist of lectures, in-class exercises and critique. There may be posted readings and outside speakers. Plan on at least one meeting (virtual or in-person) with the instructor to discuss your draft World Design Document between Weeks 8 - 13.

There will be two projects: P1(a group project) and P2 (an individual project).

Project 1 (P1)	Weeks 1 - 5
Project 2 (P2)	Weeks 5 - 15
Formal Presentation	Week 14
Final Revision	Week 15

Grading			**Grading Scale**	
10%	Class Participation	10 points		
			A	95-100
30%	P1- Group World Design	30 points	A-	90-94
	Research/Maps/Atlas		B+	87-8
	Model/Presentation		B	83-86
			B-	85-72
30%	P2 - Draft Design Document	30 points	C+	73-76
	Outline / Intro / Schedule		C	70-72
	Maps (Macro/Micro)		C-	67-69
	3D Visualization / Model		D+	68-64
			D	63-66
30%	World Design Document	30 points	F	59 and below
	Final Presentation			
	+			
	Final Written Document (25pts)			
	Revision/Reflection (5pts)			

Weekly Schedule

Week 1: Tuesday January 14
Introduction / Overview: World Design as Container for Narrative
Practice of Observation / Assign P1

Week 2: Tuesday January 21
Place1 –Geography: Big Picture Maps / Affordances of Place / Orientation

Week 3: Tuesday January 28
Place 2 - Models / 3D Intro Prep / Workshop P1

Week 4: Tuesday February 4
Visualization in Practice: Guest Speaker TBD
Present P1 / Ideas for P2

Week 5: Tuesday February 11
Laws of the Land / Rules and Assumptions / Boundaries
P2-1 Declare Worlds / Reference /Mood Workshop

Week 6: Tuesday February 18
Exposition 1: Knowledge of the world

Week 7: Tuesday February 25
Possibility Space 1 / Place as Character / Story Evolution from Environment

Week 8: Tuesday March 4
Possibility Space 2 / Movement/Choreography

Week 9: Tuesday March 11
Exposition 2: Superimposed Worlds

Spring Break

Week 10: Tuesday March 25
Exposition 1 / Workshop

Week 11: Tuesday April 1
IMMERSIVE WORLDS I: Visit to Mobile & Environmental Media Lab [MEML]

Week 12: Tuesday April 8
SPECULATIVE WORLDS: Guest Lecture TBD [pos. Jen Stein, Experimental Design]

Week 13: Tuesday April 15
IMMERSIVE WORLDS II: Visit to MxR Lab

Week 14: Tuesday April 22
FINAL PRESENTATIONS & Critique

Week 15: Tuesday April 29
FINAL PRESENTATIONS & Critique *[REVISIONS / REFLECTIONS Due May 1]*

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. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Safety:
All students are expected to abide by USC School of Cinematic Arts Safety Guidelines. Violations of any of the safety guidelines may result in disciplinary action ranging from confiscation of footage to expulsion from the University.

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.

Stressful Times:
USC provides opportunities for Mindful Meditation http://mindful.usc.edu and Mental health counseling is available at the Engemann Student Health Center, 1031 W. 34th Street, 213-740-9355.

Support Systems:
USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call
Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.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 and Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call   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, 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. 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. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298
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
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 & Intervention - (213) 821-4710 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
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
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. dps.usc.edu Non-emergency assistance or information.

Office of the Ombuds - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC) ombuds.usc.edu
A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.