



## USC SDA - THTR 230

### Section 62776

Communicating Theatrical Design Concepts

Units: Three

### SPRING 2025

Fridays—10:00am-11:50am

Location: GFS 229

(GRACE FORD SALVATORI HALL)

Instructor: Tom Buderwitz

Office Hours: upon request

Contact e-mail: [tbuderwi@usc.edu](mailto:tbuderwi@usc.edu)

Cell: 213.709.9044 (text messages)

#### Course Description

The visualization and communication of design ideas through free-hand and mechanical drawing and model making,

including sketching, plan drafting, rendering, and model construction.

#### Learning Objectives

Design and Communicate Scenic and Costume Designs for different types of theatrical production by creating Sketches, Text Analysis, Research, Renderings, Plans and Models for Lauren Gunderson's "I and You" and William Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet". Present Designs to the class explaining choices and reinforcement through research and text analysis.

**Prerequisite(s):** none

**Co-Requisite(s):** none

**Recommended Preparation:** rest, the creative spirit and an open mind

#### Course Notes

Grading type (Letter).

The course will utilize Brightspace for announcements, assignment submission and content uploads.

#### Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

**Suggested** reading (optional) The Dramatic Imagination by Robert Edmond Jones

Required text: "I and You" by Lauren Gunderson (PDF file provided via blackboard)

Required text: "Romeo and Juliet" by William Shakespeare

suggested Folger Library Edition ISBN: 13 978-0743477116

Romeo and Juliet text also available online at:

<https://www.folger.edu/explore/shakespeares-works/romeo-and-juliet/>

**Materials:** Sketch Book (8-1/2" x 11") size, non lined. Sketching pencils B/F/HB, Erasers (We will review all of the follow drafting and model building materials in class)

**Drafting Materials:** T-Square (18" length), Drafting Triangle(s), Drafting Tape, Vellum, Tracing Paper, Drafting pencils H, Eraser, Architects Scale Ruler

**Model Building Materials:** Cutting Mat, #11 Xacto-knife, #11 Xacto-blades, scissors, Foamcore board (B/W), cold-press Illustration board, Bristol board, metal straight edge with cork or foam backing, 77 spray adhesive or similar, Sobo glue or similar, drafting tape

**Color Medium:** Some type of Paints: Acrylics, Watercolors, Color Pencils, and/or Color Markers

### Description and Assessment of Assignments

We will be working on Scenic and Costume designs for two plays this semester. **"I and You"** by Lauren Gunderson and **"Romeo and Juliet"** by William Shakespeare. Assignments include set and costume sketches, text analysis, research, drafting, costume rendering and physical model creation. All assignments will be submitted via Brightspace assignments. Formats for assignment submissions will be included with each assignment upon instruction and will vary depending on assignment type. (typically as either .jpg or .pdf file)

### Grading Breakdown

Assessment Tool (assignments)	Points	% of Grade
"I and You" thumbnail sketch	4	4%
"I and You" text analysis (words list)	4	4%
"I and You" research boards	4	4%
"I and You" black + white costume sketches (2 characters)	3	3%
"I and You" scale ground plan	7	7%
"I and You" color costume renderings (2 characters)	3	3%
"I and You" Cardboard B/W model	8	8%

“Romeo & Juliet” thumbnail sketch(es)	5	5%
“Romeo & Juliet” text analysis (words/phrases list)	5	5%
“Romeo & Juliet” research boards	6	6%
“Romeo & Juliet” color poster project	6	6%
“Romeo & Juliet” black + white costume sketches (12 characters)	5	5%
“Romeo & Juliet” scale ground plan	8	8%
“Romeo & Juliet” color costume renderings (4 characters)	5	5%
“Romeo & Juliet” cardboard color model and foamcore model box	10	10%
“Romeo & Juliet” final exam (model presentation)	7	7%
Class participation throughout semester	10	10%

### Grading Scale

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale

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

### Assignment Submission Policy

Assignments are due no later than two hours prior to class beginning.  
(Special allowances for deferred completion of assignments may be available upon request ahead of time)

### **Grading Timeline**

I will do my best to grade and/or submit feedback within one-week of class that assignment was assigned for.

### **Sharing of course materials outside of the learning environment**

USC policy prohibits sharing of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning 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).*

### **Course evaluation**

Course evaluation occurs at the end of the semester university-wide. It is an important review of students' experience in the class. You should expect to receive an email update once the system has launched to provide your feedback on this course. In addition, you are always welcome to connect with with me as the instructor to offer any feedback on the course.

### **Additional Policies**

Late assignments will receive less than full marks and may not receive any marks depending on timing/level of work. **You are expected to attend all classes.** Students are required to adhere to all USC policies for conduct, behavior and decorum.

\*\*\* No being on cell phones allowed in class.

## **Spring 2025 Class Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown**

- **Week #1 Friday January 17, 2025**  
Overview of THTR 230 / Review of the Syllabus / Review of Assignment Types + Structure / Review of "thumbnail" sketches.  
**Assignment:** Read "I and You" by Lauren Gunderson (PDF provided in Blackboard) Be prepared to discuss themes/ideas/motifs and play structure in class on 1/24/25

**Assignment:** Create a thumbnail (initial gut-reaction) scenic pencil set sketch for “I and You” by Lauren Gunderson. Sketch should be on 8-1/2” x 11” white paper (non-lined) (horizontal format) and should be whatever you envision the environment to look like based on what you saw “in your mind’s eye” upon reading the play. I do not care how well you can draw. Do the best you can to draw what you see. Sketch in pencil. Include your name and play title. Scan or clean photograph your sketch (be careful of shadows) and Brightspace submit file (.jpg format). Sketches are due prior to class 1/24/25

- **Week #2 Friday January 24, 2025**

In Class discussion of “I and You” by Lauren Gunderson re: themes, ideas, motifs and play structure.

In Class review of thumbnail sketches

In Class discussion of words/phrases lists for design (text analysis) for “I and You” by Lauren Gunderson.

In class review of drawing/sketching technique for drawing human’s / costume sketches

**Assignment:** Create a design words and phrases list for “I and You” by Lauren Gunderson. Words (phrases) list to feature words, lines, quotes w/ descriptive qualities within the play. Look for adjectives, adverbs, metaphors, similes, unique words/use of language that may help illuminate the “world” of the play. Submit pdf file of your list (w/ your name on it to Brightspace. Words list due prior to class 1/31/25

**Assignment:** Create two separate black and white pencil sketches one for each of the two main characters, Anthony & Caroline. I do not care how well you can draw. Do the best you can to draw what you see. Sketch in pencil. Include your name and play title. Scan or clean photograph your sketch (be careful of photo shadows) and Brightspace submit file (.jpg format). Sketches are due prior to class 1/31/25

- **Week #3 Friday January 31, 2025**

In Class review of words lists / b+w costume sketches

In Class discussion of research boards / assembling research imagery

**Assignment:** Create research board(s) for Scenic and Costume ideas for “I and You” by Lauren Gunderson. Boards should include literal and metaphoric imagery. They should be organized by group i.e. scenic: literal (girl’s rooms) scenic: non-literal (poetry/music/medical) costume: literal (teenager clothing) costume: non-literal (poetry/music/medical) Boards can be created digitally as pdf from PowerPoint, in Photoshop or Illustrator, in MS Word or as physical boards.

Boards are due submitted to Brightspace as PDF file prior to class 2/7/25

- Week #4 Friday February 7, 2025**  
 In Class review of research boards  
 In Class discussion of scale, scale ground plans / scale ground plan tools and drafting materials  
**Assignment:** Create a working scale ground plan for your set design for “I and You” by Lauren Gunderson. Hard copy blank scale Theater ground plans to be provided and uploaded as pdf + jpg file in Brightspace. Students must create a full 2D ground plan view showing location of all set elements (walls/doors/windows/furniture/masking) Plans should include a how to do the scenic change at the end of the play. Ground Plans are due submitted as PDF file to Brightspace prior to class 2/14/25
- Week #5 Friday February 14, 2025**  
 In Class review of working scale ground plans  
 In Class discussion of Physical model box construction tools and materials  
**Assignment:** Create a REVISED working scale ground plan for your set design for “I and You” by Lauren Gunderson based on in class or instructor provided notes. Students must create a full 2D ground plan view showing location of all set elements (walls/doors/windows/furniture/masking) Plans should include a how to do the scenic change at the end of the play.  
**Revised Ground Plans are submitted to Brightspace as PDF file due prior to class 2/21/25**  
**Assignment:** Create a physical model model box for “I and You” by Lauren Gunderson. Model boxes must be based off of the 2D theatre ground plan.  
**Model boxes are due IN class 2/21/24**
- Week #6 Friday February 21, 2025**  
 In Class review of Revised working scale ground plans  
 In Class discussion of Physical model construction tools and materials  
 In Class review of Color Costume Rendering  
**Assignment:** Create two color Renderings (one for each of the two main characters) in “I and You” by Lauren Gunderson. I do not care how well you can draw/paint. Do the best you can to draw/paint what you see in your mind. Renderings are due submitted to Brightspace as .jpg file prior to class 2/28/25  
**Assignment:** Create a physical white model of your set design for “I and You” by Lauren Gunderson in your theatre model box. Models must be based off of your 2D ground plan. Models are to include furniture and actors and have a solution for the scenic change at the end of the play.  
**Models are due IN class 2/28/25 for show and tell presentation**
- Week #7 Friday February 28, 2025**  
**Student presentations of “I and You” set design models and color costume renderings (This is essentially our midterm exam).**

Each student will present individually before the class their set design models and color costume drawings. (approx. 5 -7 mins.)

**Assignment:** Read “Romeo and Juliet” by William Shakespeare

Be prepared to discuss themes/ideas/motifs and play structure in class  
3/7/25

**Assignment:** Create a thumbnail (initial gut-reaction) scenic pencil set sketch or sketch(es) for “Romeo and Juliet” by William Shakespeare. Sketch(es) should be on 8-1/2” x 11” white paper (non-lined) (horizontal format) and should be whatever you envision the environment to look like based on what you saw ‘in your mind’s eye” upon reading the play. I do not care how well you can draw. Do the best you can to draw what you see. Thumbnail sketch(es) are due submitted to Brightspace as .jpg file prior to class 3/7/25

- **Week #8 Friday March 7, 2025**

In Class discussion of “Romeo and Juliet” by William Shakespeare re: themes/ideas/motifs and play structure. In Class discussion of words/phrases lists for design (text analysis) for “Romeo and Juliet” by William Shakespeare.

In Class review of submitted thumbnail sketches

**Assignment:** Create a design Words/Phrases list for “Romeo and Juliet” by William Shakespeare. Words/Phrases list to feature words, lines, quotes w/ descriptive qualities within the play. Look for adjectives, adverbs, metaphors, similes, unique words/use of language that may help illuminate the “world” of the play. **Romeo & Juliet is a long play.**

**Words/Phrases lists should be comprehensive and culled from the entire play.** Words/Phrases list due submitted to Brightspace as PDF file prior to class 3/14/25

- **Week #9 Friday March 14, 2025**

In Class review of student Words/Phrases lists

In Class continued discussion of “Romeo and Juliet” by William Shakespeare re: themes /ideas /motifs and play structure.

In Class discussion of research boards / assembling research imagery

**Assignment:** Create research boards for Scenic and Costume ideas for “Romeo and Juliet” by William Shakespeare. Boards should include literal and metaphoric imagery. They should be organized by group i.e. scenic: literal (castle’s interior/exterior) scenic: non-literal (themes) costume: literal (period clothing) costume: non-literal (themes) **Boards are due submitted to Brightspace as PDF file prior to class 3/28/25 (TWO WEEKS)**

- **Week #10 Friday March 21, 2025**

**NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK**

- Week #11 Friday March 28, 2025**

In Class review of student research projects  
 In class discussion of poster design (based on individual research)  
**Assignment:** Create a poster for your production of “Romeo and Juliet” by William Shakespeare. Posters can be hand drawn/colored or computer generated. Designs **MUST BE ORIGINAL**. Posters are suggested to be in a Vertical format and at least 11” x 17” in size (posters may be horizontal if that is your preference). Poster must include the title of the play (**Romeo and Juliet**) and also include a specific quote from the play that encapsulates your vision and approach to this play. Posters are due submitted to brightspace as .jpg file prior to class 4/4/25
- Week #12 Friday April 4, 2025**

In Class review of submitted “Romeo and Juliet” poster designs  
 In Class review of assembling black+ white costume (group) roughs  
 In class review and discussion of Unit Sets  
**Assignment:** Create 12 costume sketches (roughs) assembled together on one page (minimum size 11”x17”) for: Romeo, Juliet, Nurse, Lord Capulet, Lady Capulet, Tybalt, Mercutio, Benvolio, Paris, Prince, Friar Lawrence, Apothecary  
 12 group Costume sketches are due submitted to Brightspace as .jpg file prior to class 4/11/25
- Week #13 Friday April 11, 2025**

In Class review of submitted “Romeo and Juliet” black + white costume (group) roughs  
 In Class discussion/review of scale, 2D scale ground plans / creating Ground Plans - drafting  
**Assignment:** Create a working scale ground plan for your set design for “Romeo and Juliet” by William Shakespeare. Blank Theater ground plans to be provided as pdf file in blackboard (**Note: different theater file than “I and You” project**). Students must create a full 2D ground plan view showing location of all set elements (walls/doors/steps/levels/furniture/masking) Plans should include a how to do All of the scenes within the play.  
 Ground Plans are due submitted to Brightspace as PDF file prior to class 4/18/25
- Week #14 Friday April 18, 2025**

In Class review of working scale ground plans  
 In Class discussion of Physical model box construction tools and materials  
**Assignment:** Create a REVISED working scale ground plan for your set design for “Romeo and Juliet” by William Shakespeare based on in class or



instructor given notes. Blank Theater ground plans to be provided as pdf file in blackboard (**Note: different theater file than “I and You” project**). Students must create a full 2D ground plan view showing location of all set elements (walls/doors/steps/levels/furniture/masking) Plans should include a how to do All of the scenes within the play. REVISED Ground Plans are due submitted to Brightspace as PDF file prior to class 4/25/25  
**Assignment: Create your Working “Romeo and Juliet” theater model box.** Model boxes are due in class 4/25/24

- **Week #15 Friday April 25, 2025**

In Class discussion of color costume rendering

In Class review of working scale ground plans

In Class discussion of Physical model construction tools and materials

**Assignment: Begin building your “Romeo and Juliet” scenic design model.**

Models (in process) are due in class 5/2/25

**Assignment: Create 4 color costume renderings:** (one for each of these characters: juliet, Romeo, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> rendering your choice) in “Romeo and Juliet” by William Shakespeare. I do not care how well you can draw/paint. Do the best you can to draw/paint what you see. Use color to help convey character, mood, enforce themes. Include details that illuminate character. Include detail from your research. 4 color costume renderings are due submitted to Brightspace prior to **day before final exam class 5/11/25**

- **Week #16 Friday May 2, 2025**

In Class review of models (in process) and model construction

\*Bring your model and model building tools and materials to class to be able to be continuing work on your models in today’s class

**Assignment: Finish Creating your FINAL color scenic design model for “Romeo and Juliet” by William Shakespeare for our Final Exam**

Presentations on Monday May 12, 2025. Models must be for the theater space provided. Must include scale actors and include solution(s) for All of the scenes within the play.

- **Week #17 Thursday May 8, 2025 / Friday May 9, 2025**

OPTIONAL check-in session (Time and Location TBD)

- **Week #18 (FINAL EXAM) Monday May 12, 2025**

**\*\*\* (8:00am) \*\*\*\* note time!!! Location TBD!!**

In Class Presentation of Individual “Romeo and Juliet” scenic design models. Each student will have approx. 5-7 minutes to communicate their design ideas and choices.

**\*\*\*Be prepared to discuss reinforcement of themes and to have answers for specific solutions to various key scenes within the play.**

## SDA PRODUCTIONS, ISPS, AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

SDA productions, ISPs and Extracurricular Activities\* will not excuse you from any class work. There will be no exceptions made for absences in class, missed or delayed assignments, homework or lack of class participation resulting from your involvement in any of the above. Your grade will reflect your work in this class, independent from work in any other class or activity.

\*Activities that have been officially sanctioned by the larger university (such as marching band, song girls, or varsity sports) are exempt. You must submit official documentation to your professor regarding your participation in an event prior to your absence.

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

#### Statement for Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from OSAS. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. OSAS is located in GFS 120 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website for OSAS and contact information: (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 814-4618 (Video Phone), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) [ability@usc.edu](mailto:ability@usc.edu).

#### Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies. See the university’s site on Campus Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

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#### Diversity, Equity & Inclusion + Intimacy in Theater Consent Culture Statement:

Through our pluralistic approach of diverse pedagogies, methodologies, ideologies, and modalities of artistic expression, we invite(engage) and challenge students to expand their breadth and depth of knowledge, complexity, and range of the human experience. Even though we nurture, guide, and challenge our students to embrace the unknown or unfamiliar and step outside of their comfort zones through storytelling/art, we aim to practice effective strategies and offer tools to students mindful of

their physical, psychological, social, and emotional wellbeing. In alignment with professional and industry standards, we will integrate core principles and techniques of Intimacy in Theater and Building Cultures of Affirmative Consent. This will provide agency, offer resources and support to the teachers, students, directors, and staff to establish healthy boundaries of consent when working on material that is physically, intimately, or emotionally charged content in both the classroom and production.

### **SDA Student Support & Reporting Form:**

To facilitate a supportive environment of accountability, SDA has created an internal system of reporting for students to address issues/concerns and to offer feedback or suggestions for improvement. This mechanism provides a pathway for reporting and offering feedback without fear of retaliation or judgment. Any submission filed through this form will be reviewed and processed accordingly through SDA Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

To file a report, please visit: <https://bit.ly/SDAstudentreporting>

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### **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 micro aggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

*The Office of Student Accessibility Services - (213) 740-0776*

<https://osas.usc.edu>

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/note takers/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.