THR 414 – STAGE SCENE DESIGN
COURSE SYLLABUS
SAMPLE
TTH 10:20 – 12:10
CLASSES HELD IN: RM. 235 AUD

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OFFICE HRS: M 10:00-11:00 a.m.
　　　　　　　 F 1:00-2:00 p.m.

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE:

Creating stage setting through script, color, and architectural analysis. Practical application through rendering and technical drawing.

GOALS:
THR 214 (or similar undergraduate training in Scene Design) introduced you to the basic procedures of design and some of the basic skills such as collage, rendering, model building and drafting . In this course you will apply these skills as appropriate to each of the projects in expressing original design ideas. You will gain advanced methods in several aspects of scene design so that you will have a greater pool of resources from which to build your scenic environments:

- Traditional and computer-generated rendering, paint elevating, and model building
- Hand and computer-aided drafting
- Storyboarding, collage, sketching, etc.

The objective of this course is to provide an exploration of a variety of design challenges through a series of class projects involving a range of visualizations styles. In most cases the principle guide will be the text of the script or libretto, with each student serving as their own director in developing a concept for the production.

You are expected to pay special attention to the aesthetic expression of design ideas and to the finesses of design decisions relating to the basic principles of composition (unity, harmony, contrast, variation, balance, proportion and emphasis).

REQUIREMENTS:
You will be required to complete **four** scene designs (or related projects) in this class, each of which include specific design considerations specified below.

Projects may be broken down into a number of stages depending on the scope of the project. Each phase of a project's process will be discussed and critiqued in class – in fact will on most days *be* the class content. Your participation in these discussions is *very* important, and will be part of each project grade. In other words, **your attendance and participation is required at all class sessions**. Portions of each project are due prior to the completion date. You will find it easy to complete these projects *if* you keep up with the weekly schedule of project progress. At certain project phases you will be asked to give a formal presentation of your work.

There will also be an ongoing exploration of design research and design expression, with exercises in the study of commonly influential people, things and ideas that have become part of the peripheral body of resources for most design professionals. There will also be the occasional exercise focusing on design expression in both two and three-dimensions, which may involve some detailed work in design communication and techniques.

REQUIRED TEXTS:
- Scene Design Readings (Available on ANGEL)
- Aguirre-Sacasa, Roberto, *Based on a Totally True Story*
- Jones, Robert Edmond, <u>The Dramatic Imagination</u>
- Wilson, Lanford, *The Hot L Baltimore*

One of the following (Designer's Choice):
- Webber, Andrew Lloyd, *Cats* (Libretto and Vocal Score on ANGEL)
  - *Cats* (1982 Original Broadway Cast) or *Cats*: Complete Original Broadway Cast Recording [Original recording remastered]
- Webber, Andrew Lloyd and Tim Rice, *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Libretto and Vocal Score on ANGEL)
  - *Jesus Christ Superstar* [Cast Recording] or *Jesus Christ Superstar* [Original recording remastered]
- Webber, Andrew Lloyd, *Starlight Express* (Libretto on ANGEL)
  - *Starlight Express* [Original Cast Recording] *Not the *New Starlight Express*

PROJECT REQUIREMENTS:
***Please note: All of the following FINAL projects must be submitted "virtually" on ANGEL

Identify Lists

The Hot L Baltimore
- Script Analysis & Concept Statement
- Research and Rough Sketches (Hand-Sketched)
- ¼" Groundplan (Hand-Drafted)

One of the following:
- ¼" Color Model
- ¼" White Model and one Full Stage-Full Color Rendering

Based on a Totally True Story
- Script Analysis & Concept Statement
- Research and Photoshop Collage Preliminary "Sketches"
- ½" Groundplan (AutoCAD)
- 3DS MAX Color Model

Andrew Lloyd Webber Design (Designer's Choice… of both show and media communication)
- Script Analysis & Concept Statement
- Research Board and Rough Sketches
- ¼" Scale Groundplan (Storyboard of Scenes… or… Composite)

One of the following (Specific scene/song proposals <u>must</u> be approved by instructor):
- ¼" White Model (CENTRAL DESIGN IMAGE) and 3-4 Full Stage-Full Color Renderings
- ¼" Color Model (including photo storyboard of 8 different scenes)
- 6-8 Full Stage-Full Color Renderings and ICONIC Scenic Unit/Prop Maquette (to be approved by instructor)
- 3DS MAX Color Model Storyboard (including photo storyboard of 8 different scenes)
***Note: All major scenes not captured in the above list must be communicated either via quick sketch or through written analysis.

Mad Lib Design
- Event Design – It's your event… design it however you want! Budgets are endless and you want your design idea to be accepted by the organizational host!!! Plan on outside DOT observers at your final presentation.

CLASS ATTENDANCE:

- Attendance is **Mandatory**. Being present and receptive to the information, discussions, and critique sessions presented in class sessions is essential to the successful completion of the course. More than three (**3**) unexcused absences will result in the lowering of your semester's grade by .25 of a grade point. *Each additional unexcused absence beyond three will lower your semester grade by .10 of a grade point.*
- Late arrivals will be noted and every three (**3**) late markings will equal one absence.
- Attendance will be taken at each session.
- Please be courteous to your instructor and fellow students by arriving on time.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE (Subject to Change)

Week	Date	Topic	Reading Assignment	Assignment
1	1/11	Introduction; Discussion of Syllabus and Course Expectations; Discuss Reading; Announce Identify Lists Assignment	Read Syllabus and "The World of the Play and Scene Design Process" from ANGEL for 1/11; Read "A Brief History of Theatrical Scenery," "Proscenium Model House Specifications" and *The Hot L Baltimore* for 1/13	
	1/13	Discuss Reading; Announce *Baltimore* project Photoshop		Meet in Room 1 AUD
2	1/18	Photoshop	Read "Scale Model Building - Guidelines and Hints" and "USITT Scenic Design and Technical Production Graphic Standards" for 1/20	Meet in Room 1 AUD **Reminder:** Bring Model Building and Drafting Supplies for 1/20
	1/20	Model Building Exercises & Hand Drafting Q&A		**Reminder:** *Baltimore* Process Due 1/25
3	1/25	**DUE:** *Baltimore* Script Analysis, Concept, Research and Sketches		**Go See:** *HHD*
	1/27	AutoCAD		Meet in Room 1 AUD
4	2/1	AutoCAD		Meet in Room 1 AUD
	2/3	AutoCAD		Meet in Room 1 AUD **Go See:** *Orchesis*
5	2/8	AutoCAD/3DS Max		Meet in Room 1 AUD **Reminder:** *Baltimore* Designs Due 2/10 (Start at 9:00AM)
	2/10	**DUE:** *Baltimore* Designs (Start at 9:00 AM)	Watch/Read "AT&T Performing Arts Center" and *Based on a Totally True Story* for 2/15	
6	2/15	Discuss Watching/Reading; Announce *Totally* project	Read Dramatic Imagination Chapters 1-4 for 2/17	
	2/17	Discuss Reading; 3DS Max		Meet in Room 1 AUD **Go See:** *Wizard*
7	2/22	**DUE:** *Totally* Script Analysis and Concept; 3DS Max		Meet in Room 1 AUD **Reminder:** Identify Lists Due 2/24

	2/24	Digital Design Q&A Day **DUE:** Identify Lists		Meet in Room 1 AUD
8	3/1	**DUE:** *Totally* Research and Photoshop "Sketches"	Read <u>Dramatic Imagination</u> Chapters 7&8 and "NYTimes Articles" for 3/3	
	3/3	Discuss Reading *Totally* Q&A	Listen/Read "Andrew Lloyd Webber" Musical Selection for 3/15	
SB	3/7-3/11	**SPRING BREAK**	**SPRING BREAK**	**SPRING BREAK**
9	3/15	Discuss Listening/Reading; Announce *Webber* project; Musical Theatre Conventions & Video Day		Meet in Room 1 AUD **Reminder:** *Totally* Designs Due 3/17 (Start at 9:00AM)
	3/17	**DUE:** *Totally* Designs (Start at 9:00AM)		
10	3/22	*1-on-1 Meetings in Kirk's Office regarding Webber Script Analysis and Concept (DUE)*		**3/22: 1-on-1 *Webber* Mtgs.** Campbell (9:40), Garza (10:00), Parker (10:20), Slanger-Grant (10:40), Surprenant (11:00), Degroot (11:20), HOLD (11:40)
	3/24	*1-on-1 Meetings in Kirk's Office regarding Webber Script Analysis and Concept (DUE)*		**3/24: 1-on-1 *Webber* Mtgs.** Bergman (9:40), Davis III (10:00), Franzen (10:20), Maxin (10:40), Reynolds (11:00), Sprow (11:20), Townsend (11:40)
11	3/29	Sherrie BarrFest		Meet in the Arena Theatre – Remember Dress Code on ANGEL **Reminder:** *Webber* Process Due 3/31
	3/31	**DUE:** *Webber* Research & Rough Sketches		**Go See:** *Grapes (opera)*
12	4/5	Discuss Storyboarding		**Go See:** *Grapes (play)*
	4/7	*Webber* Project Q&A		
13	4/12	Breslin Tour Announce *Mad Lib* Project		Meet at tunnel/loading dock door entrance at Breslin Center: **Reminder:** *Mad Lib* Proposals DUE 4/14
	4/14	**DUE:** *Mad Lib* Proposals Event Planning		**Reminder:** *Webber* Designs Due 4/19 (Start at 9:00AM)
14	4/19	**DUE:** *Webber* Project (Start at 9:00AM)		**Go See:** *Salvador Dali*
	4/21	TBD *Mad Lib* Q&A		
15	4/25	TBD *Mad Lib* Q&A		
	4/27	*Mad Lib* Q&A; Course Evaluations		**Reminder:** *Mad Lib* Event Due 5/7

EXAM: Thursday, May 5: 7:45-9:45a.m. (**DUE:** *Mad Lib Event* Critique)

PREP FOR DESIGN PRESENTATIONS AND CRITIQUE:

- At the start of the class session, students prepare their design for presentation.
  - Remember the FIGURE!!!

- Come prepared:
  - ASSEMBLE THE MODEL AT HOME, not in class.
  - PREP YOUR VIRTUAL PRESENTATIONS in still and virtual touring formats.
  - Check out the notes on model building included on ANGEL.

- Label models, renderings, etc. in some way, indicating name of play and YOUR NAME… as well as submit flat materials in some sort of fashioned folder
  - (2 pieces of cardboard taped together will be more than sufficient).

- Make your design a complete design, i.e. indicate all the basic physical areas that a competent set designer would include. Follow the checklist below:

  - Deck (including platforms, rakes, stairs)
  - Sides and Above… This means MASKING… checkout the sightlines
  - Background or surround
  - Scenic Features (architecture, trees, freestanding units, furniture, etc.)

If your design is missing any of the above basic items, the design is incomplete.

SUGGESTED TOOLS AND SUPPLIES:

- Sketch Book
- Sketching Pencils
- Plastic Eraser and/or Kneaded eraser
- Watercolors
- Watercolor Brushes
- 11 x 14 Bristol Board

- Foamcore
- Xacto Knife & Replacement Blades
- Straight Pins
- Cutting Board
- Craft Glue (Aileen's Quick Dry Tacky Glue)

SUGGESTED DRAFTING MATERIALS:
- 36" T-Square
- 45 degree Triangle
- 36/60/90 Triangle
- Architects Scale Ruler
- Drafting Pencils (4H and HB)
- Drafting Tape

GRADING SYSTEM:
Evaluation of individual class projects is based on a series of four criteria:

1. COMPLETENESS – Does the design include all the necessary parts, and does it cover the four physical/visual areas that all scene designers are obliged to pay attention to?

2. QUALITY – This means quality of design, synthesis of appropriate research, and general imaginativeness and good choices in aesthetic considerations. Did you use appropriate research? Is your design composition handsomely composed? Are the proportions pleasing? Does the design give a good indication of the world of the play? Quality also refers to the level of craftsmanship in the model, and attention to detail and expression of visual creativeness.

3. PRACTICALITY – How well does the design serve the dramatic needs of the play, from the standpoint of director and actors? Is there sufficient room provided for entrances? For acting areas? Are the traffic patterns reasonable? Is there a viable relationship between placement of acting areas and audience? Between the set and lighting? Between the set and Costumes? Does the set accommodate reasonably speedy set changes?

4. SCALE/PROPORTION – This refers to the accuracy of the applied scale. It also refers to the proportions of the design elements as they relate to the actors, to the theatre architecture, and to other design features. The use of proper scale is a good indication of how much care you took in building your model.

GRADING BREAKDOWN:
- Each assignment grade is evaluated on three criteria: "application of course materials", "quality of work", and "completion of work." Feel free to inquire about your grade standing at anytime.
- Late work will devalue your assignment grade by 25% if one class period late and an additional 25% for each additional class.
- Academic dishonesty will result in a course grade of 0.0.

% BREAKDOWN OF FINAL GRADE:

Literary Lists - 5%
Photoshop Mini Projects - 5%
AutoCAD Mini Projects - 5%
3DS MAX Mini Projects - 5%
The Hot L Baltimore - 20%
Based on a Totally True Story - 20%
Webber - 25%
Mad Lib – 15%

GRADING SCALE:

- 93%-100%   =   4.0
- 88%-92%   =   3.5
- 83%-87%   =   3.0
- 78%-82%   =   2.5
- 73%-77%   =   2.0
- 68%-72%   =   1.5
- 60%-67%   =   1.0
- 0%-59%   =   0.0

1. ***Academic Honesty****:* Article 2.3.3 of the Academic Freedom Report states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." In addition, **The Department of Theatre** adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, *Protection of Scholarship and Grades;* the all-University Policy on *Integrity of Scholarship and Grades*; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See *Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide* and/or the MSU Web site: www.msu.edu.)

   Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, lab work, quizzes, tests and exams, without assistance from any source. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work you completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. Also, you are not authorized to use the www.allmsu.com Web site to complete any course work in **THR 414 – Stage Scene Design**. Students who violate MSU academic integrity rules may receive a penalty grade, including a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Contact your instructor if you are unsure about the appropriateness of your course work. (See also http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/dishonestyFAQ.html)

2. ***Accommodations for Students with Disabilities*** *(from the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD):* Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities at 517-884-RCPD or on the web at rcpd.msu.edu. Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a verified individual services accommodation ("RISA") form. Please present this form to me at the start of the term and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc.). Requests received after this date will be honored whenever possible.

3. ***Drops and Adds:*** The last day to add this course is the end of the first week of classes. The last day to drop this course with a 100 percent refund and no grade reported is **2/3/11**. The last day to drop this course with no refund and no grade reported is **3/2/11**. You should immediately make a copy of your amended schedule to verify you have added or dropped this course.

4. ***Commercialized Lecture Notes:*** Commercialization of lecture notes and university-provided course materials is not permitted in this course.**

5. ***Attendance:*** Students whose names do not appear on the official class list for this course may not attend this class. Students who fail to attend the first four class sessions or class by the fifth day of the semester, whichever occurs first, may be dropped from the course.

6. ***Internet:*** Some professional journals will not consider a submission for publication if the article has appeared on the Internet. Please notify your instructor in writing if you do not want your course papers posted to the course Web site.

7. ***Disruptive Behavior:*** Article 2.3.5 of the *Academic Freedom Report* (AFR) for students at Michigan State University states: "The student's behavior in the classroom shall be conducive to the teaching and learning process for all concerned." Article 2.3.10 of the AFR states that "The student has a right to scholarly relationships with faculty based on mutual trust and civility." General Student Regulation 5.02 states: "No student shall . . . interfere with the functions and services of the University (for example, but not limited to, classes . . .) such that the function or service is obstructed or disrupted. Students whose conduct adversely affects the learning environment in this classroom may be subject to disciplinary action through the Student Faculty Judiciary process.

   **Note: The Code of Teaching Responsibility requires instructors who permit students to commercialize their class lecture notes to include a statement in their course syllabi that gives such permission. Absent such permission, students may not do so.

   Integrity of Scholarship and Grades
   This policy is located in the Academic Programs catalog at
   https://www.reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/Text.asp?Section=112#s534