THET 371: SCENE DESIGN I
Fall 2013

Time: 1:00 PM - 2:50 PM, Monday/Wednesday
Classroom: CSPAC 2733 (Large Design Studio)
Instructor: Misha Kachman, Associate Professor of Scene and Costume Design
Office: CSPAC 2739
Office hours: Wednesday 3 – 4 pm, Thursday 11 am – 12 noon
Office phone: (301)405-6639
e-mail: mkachman@umd.edu

DESCRIPTION, GOALS AND FORMAT
Stage decoration (a.k.a. scene design) is, in simplest terms, the craft of creating an adequate and appropriate background for theatrical action. The current course is intended to teach students the principles of scene design and their applications in creative and production process. The class is structured so that students are, one hand, becoming acquainted with the practical basics of scene design as a profession and, on the other hand, learn to appreciate scenography as a form of artistic expression and visual interpretation of literary texts in the context of modern theatre.

Areas to be covered in the class include the design conceptualization and process, script analysis, rendering, painting and drawing techniques, scale, period research, model-making and drafting.

Classes will feature some lecture, supervised studio time, discussions and critiques, and students’ presentations. Students will be given time in class to work on their projects, but they are absolutely expected to work independently outside the class.

Please save all process work for the project. Hand in all rough sketches and “studies”. A project without “process work” will be considered incomplete and graded accordingly.

EVALUATION, CLASS PARTICIPATION AND PROJECTS’ DESCRIPTIONS
Evaluation for this course is based on students’ ability to complete work in a timely manner, following the deadlines listed in this syllabus; preparation for class and class participation; quality and quantity of required visual presentation; and on the quality, strength and originality of the design concepts. The grading periods for THET 371 are distributed throughout the semester and correspond with the submission of the stages the main project.

Main Project: Design Of An Interior Set
Students will be asked to create a design for an interior set based on a particular period of style and interior decoration (Classicism, Modernism, Art Deco, Rococo etc.). Detailed requirements will be discussed further in class. Students have to choose one of the following plays as the basis for their design (you welcome suggest your own title as long as it is a commonly known period play – instructor retains the right to reject your selection):

Sophocles (c. 496 - 406/5 BC)  Oedipus Rex
Aristophanes (c. 445 - c. 385 BC)  Lysistrata
Marlowe, Christopher (1564 - 1593)  The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus
Shakespeare, William (1564 - 1616)  Merchant of Venice
Vega Carpio, Lope (1562 - 1635)  Fuente Ovejuna
Molière, Jean Batiste (1622 -1673)  Tartuffe
                                The Miser
You are asked to choose 1 interior scene and design a set for it. The scripts will not be distributed in class – multiple copies are available at the McKeldin and other University libraries.

Presentation must include: groundplan, ¼” preliminary color-neutral model, ½” or ¼” model in a model house, portfolio of research materials, detailed rendering in color (optional).

OTHER CLASS PROJECTS
In addition to the two major projects numerous small assignments will be given, both in class and as homework. Those surprise small projects are neither tests nor quizzes, and they should not be perceived as such; the projects are conceived as exercises designed to teach students about particular elements of costume design, especially silhouette and character development.

GRADING POLICY
¼” groundplan(s) 5 pts
research 25 pts
preliminary color-neutral model 15 pts
½” model, and design package as a whole 35 pts
extra for the originality and strength of the concept (optional) 10 pts
in-class projects up to 10 pts
class participation up to 10 pts

Points: A = 92-100 points; B = 86-91; C= 78-85; D = 69-77; E = 68- (plus is given to the top 2 points in each range; minus to the low 2 points in each range)

The grading date for Project #1 will be October 4. The point phase of the completion of Project #2 (Interior Set) will be considered the final exams of the course.

ATTENDANCE AND OTHER POLICIES
Attendance and participation are essential in this class. You will not be allowed unexcused absences from class. Each unexcused absence will automatically result in a 5-point penalty. Students who show up more than 5 minutes late will not be admitted to class (the instructor is fully determined to enforce this policy mercilessly). If the student can foresee a need to miss a class, it should be brought to the instructor’s attention at the earliest possible date so an assignment for the class to be missed could be given. If you are
sick or there is an emergency please try to notify me before the start of the class. No food or cellular phones are allowed in class.

No cellular phones are allowed in class. Students are allowed to use laptops and/or smartphones only for research purposes.

The instructor will be out on assignment for 2 weeks in mid-October (subject to confirmation). Please see Class Schedule below for more details. The assignments for those two weeks will be discussed in class in detail.

For more information on general attendance guidelines see Attendance Policy of the School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies below.

**BOOKS**

There will be no textbook for the course, and all the texts listed below are optional. All books are available in instructor’s office. Some readings will be assigned. There will be handouts provided for the classes when needed.

- *Designing and Drawing for the Theatre* by Lynn Pectal
- *Designing and Painting for the Theatre* by Lynn Pectal
- *Theatrical Design and Production* (3rd edition) by Michael Gillette
- *Designing for the Theatre* by Jo Mielziner

**MATERIALS**

*Note:* You will not need all the materials from the list on your first day of class. I will spend some time explaining the exact specifications for each item on the list during our first meeting. The list is very general and does not include special materials each of you will need in order to work on your particular design.

(* denotes possible shared items)

- 3/16” black foamcore – you will need at least four 30x40” or eight 20x30” sheets
- 12” architect’s scale ruler
- 45 or 30/60/90 degree triangle – 10” side minimum
- mechanical pencil(s), 0.3 or 0.5, with drafting leads (2H, H or HB)
- eraser
- #2 Exacto knife and blades, or Olfa cutter
- Tacky glue
- watercolor or acrylic
- white tempera or gouache
- sketch or Newsprint pad – 18”x24”
- paper portfolio to carry work
- art box of some type
- steel ruler
- drawing pencils (4B and softer)
- color pencils, watercolor pencils, pastels or crayons (optional)

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 29</td>
<td>Introduction and expectations. Syllabus review. Discussion of the projects: procedures, materials etc. Detailed discussion of Project #1 (Artist’s Studio).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 3</td>
<td>Theme selection, preliminary research for Main Project due.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sept. 5 Research. First conceptual ideas, rough sketches, collages.
Sept. 10 More research, ideas, sketches for Main Project.
Sept. 12 Model houses. Work on model houses in class.
Sept. 17 Update on research.
Sept. 19 Open date.
Sept. 24 Model houses due. Begin work on the preliminary model.
Sept. 26 Work on the preliminary model.
Oct. 1 All research for Main Project due.
Oct. 3 Work on the preliminary model.
Oct. 8 Preliminary model due.
Oct. 10 Adjustment and corrections to the preliminary model – critique and discussion. Start final model.
Oct. 15 Model-making: platforms.
Oct. 22 Update on the final model. Continue model-making.
Oct. 29 Elements of interior.
Oct. 31 Elements of interior.
Nov. 5 Open date.
Nov. 7 Work on final model.
Nov. 9 Model-making.
Nov. 12 Model-making.
Nov. 14 Model-making.
Nov. 19 Model-making.

THANKSGIVING BREAK
Nov. 26 Work on groundplan and corrections to the final model.
Nov. 28 Work on groundplan and corrections to the final model.
Dec. 3 Open date to catch-up.
Dec. 5 Revised final model and catch-ups.
Dec. 10 Revised final model and catch-ups.

TBD* Final Presentation of the Main Project; all elements of the project due.

* THET 371 meets at a non-standard time, therefore the Registrar’s Office doesn’t assign it specific time/date for the final exam/presentation. We will discuss this and agree on a mutually acceptable time and date. Instructor is open to your suggestions.
PLUS MINUS GRADES

The implementation of plus minus grade factoring will begin in fall 2012. Under the new policy, quality points for each letter grade from A through D will reflect plus and minus components of the grade, as shown below. The plus/minus system will apply to both undergraduate and graduate courses. A+ = 4.0, A = 4.0, A- = 3.7, B+ = 3.3, B = 3.0, B- = 2.7, C+ = 2.3, C = 2.0, C- = 1.7, D+ = 1.3, D= 1.0, D- = 0.7, F = 0. The University’s present marking system defining the standards for letter grades is retained under the new plus/minus policy. The present marking system is as follows:

- A+, A, A- denotes excellent mastery of the subject and outstanding scholarship
- B+, B, B- denotes good mastery of the subject and good scholarship
- C+, C, C- denotes acceptable mastery of the subject
- D+, D, D- denotes borderline understanding of the subject, marginal performance, and unsatisfactory progress toward a degree
- F denotes failure to understand the subject and unsatisfactory performance

Students are required to earn a grade of at least C-in their major and have a minimum 2.0 Cumulative GPA in their major in order to graduate.

http://www.testudo.umd.edu/plusminusimplementation.html

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE POLICY

University of Maryland Policies and Procedures Concerning Academic Assignments on Dates of Religious Observances provides that students should not be penalized because of observances of their religious beliefs; students shall be given an opportunity, whenever feasible, to make up within a reasonable time any academic assignment that is missed because of individual participation in religious observances. Students are responsible for obtaining material missed during their absences. Furthermore, students have the responsibility to inform the instructor of any intended absences for religious observances in advance. The student should provide written notification to the professor, by hand (not through email or mailbox delivery) within the first two weeks of the semester. The notification must identify holiday(s) and date(s).

http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/iii510a.html

ACCOMMODATING INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE DISABILITIES

The University is committed to making reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities that have been documented by Disability Support Services (0106 Shoemaker Building, 301-314-7682). A disability should be verified and discussed with Disability Support Services and the student should provide an “Accommodation Letter” to the professor or TA. If you wish to discuss academic accommodations for this class, please contact the professor or TA no later than the end of the schedule adjustment period. For more information:

http://www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS/
HONOR CODE

The University has a nationally recognized Honor Code, proposed and administered by the Student Honor Council and approved by the University Senate. The University of Maryland Honor Pledge reads:

"I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment/examination."

Unless you are specifically advised to the contrary, the Pledge statement should be handwritten and signed on the front cover of all exams, papers, projects, or other academic assignments submitted for evaluation in this course. Students who fail to write and sign the Pledge will be asked to confer with the instructor. Please recognize that all students are subject to the requirements of the University's Code of Academic Integrity whether or not they write and sign the Honor Pledge.

For more information: [http://www.orientation.umd.edu/VirtualFolder/academicintegrity.pdf](http://www.orientation.umd.edu/VirtualFolder/academicintegrity.pdf)

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

University of Maryland is committed to maintaining a working and learning environment in which students, faculty, and staff can develop intellectually, professionally, personally, and socially, free of intimidation, fear, coercion, and reprisal. The Campus prohibits sexual harassment which is a violation of law and University policy. Individuals who engage in sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action. The University has procedures in place to report sexual harassment and correct it when it occurs. Students who have questions may call the Campus Compliance Officer (301-405-2839), or the Legal Office (301-405-4945). To read the entire Policy see Appendix B in the Undergraduate Catalog. [http://www.president.umd.edu/legal/policies/sh.html](http://www.president.umd.edu/legal/policies/sh.html) and [http://www.umd.edu/catalog/index.cfm/show/content.section/c/52/s/943](http://www.umd.edu/catalog/index.cfm/show/content.section/c/52/s/943).

ATTENDANCE POLICY of the School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies

Regular attendance and in-class participation are integral components of all dance and theatre classes and seminars. Although instructors are responsible for informing each class of the nature of in-class participation and the effect of absences on the evaluation of a student’s work, the School’s general attendance policy on excused absences is consistent with the University’s policy, which allows students to be excused for the following causes:

1. Illness of the student* or illness of a dependent as defined by the Board of Regents policy on family medical leave
2. Religious observance
3. Participation in University activities at the request of University authorities
4. Compelling circumstances beyond the student’s control

*In May 2011, the University Senate and President passed a new policy for granting excused absences, which can be found at [http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/v100g.html](http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/v100g.html). A student may provide a self-signed note when missing a single lecture, recitation, or laboratory, with the understanding that providing false information is prohibited under Code of Student Conduct. Self-signed notes are not accepted during “Major Scheduled Grading Events.” Specific questions concerning the TDPS policy on non-consecutive medical absences should be addressed with the Head of the Cluster.
Students claiming an excused absence must apply in writing and furnish documentary evidence for their assertion that the absence resulted from one of these causes. (Undergraduate Catalog, pages 36 & 37 or go to: http://www.testudo.umd.edu/soc/atedasse.html) Whenever possible, instructors will make a reasonable effort to re-schedule in-class presentations for students with an authorized excused absence. Students should check the specific requirements of their courses carefully, however, as such re-scheduling is not always possible.