

THR 230; SECTION 002
INTRODUCTION TO TECHNICAL THEATRE
SPRING, 2012

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Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday 10:30 - 12:30, or by appointment
Text: Theatrical Design And Production by J. Michael Gillette

Class Description and Objective:

If well produced, the play you attend will appear as a seamless event. In reality, there are four distinct components: the script, the actors, the physical production, and the audience. The director's task is to weld the first three components into a live dramatic event that engages the fourth. In this class you will be introduced to the theory, practice, and historical context of the physical production component. We will study current trends in technical theater, and see how these developed from earlier technology. This will be accomplished using both lecture and hands-on methods.

The objective of this class is to provide a foundation of technical production knowledge and experience to help you appreciate the theatrical medium, whether as a member of the production, or a member of the audience.

Requirements:

1. Text: Theatrical Design and Production by J. Michael Gillette ISBN 0-07-256262-5 Sixth Edition (Note: prior editions may be used but chapter and page numbers will be different)
2. An architectural scale ruler (measurements in feet and inches, not metric)
3. Production Lab Component – see attached lab sheet for details
4. Read Production Activity Memo (attached)
5. Building and painting your own flat (materials supplied)
6. Attend two performances – see Performance Journal details below
NOTE: Students are responsible for obtaining tickets to the performances
7. One test at the end of each subject (a total of four test during the semester)
8. One assignment for each subject (three total)
9. Comprehensive Final Exam
10. GMU Honor code will be enforced in this class. Please see GMU catalogue for details.

Attendance Policy:

Attendance in class is expected, as is your participation! Missed tests may not be made up without prior arrangements. Assignments may not be turned in if you are not in class. In cases of extreme mitigating circumstances, please discuss with the instructor. Documentation may be required.

Grading:

Test #1 (general theatre)	100 points
Test #2 (lighting)	200 points
Assignment #1	25 points
Test #3 (costumes)	200 points
Assignment #2	25 points
Test #4 (scenery)	200 points
Assignment #3	25 points
Production Lab	250 points (zero points awarded unless completed)
Flat Project	100 points
Performance logs	50 points (2 at 25 points)
Final exam (cumulative)	<u>325 points</u> (60 from each design area + 10 general)

Total possible points 1500 points

Grade Point Distribution:

A+ 1500 – Above	C+ 1199 - 1155
A 1499 – 1395	C 1154 - 1095
A- 1394 – 1350	C- 1094 - 1050
B+ 1349 – 1305	D 1049 - 975
B 1304 – 1245	F 974 - Below
B- 1244 - 1200	

PLEASE BE AWARE:

The use of cell phones, pagers, or other outside communication devices is deemed unacceptable during class time. This is true not only in the classroom but in the theatres you attend while seeing productions. Such interruptions will result in additional assignments, usually in the form of a paper, to the offending party and be graded on a pass/fail basis. I emphatically recommend you turn these devices off before entering class or the theatre! This includes texting, the checking of messages, and the sound of the ringer or vibrator when in “silent” mode. Exceptions to this policy, due to *dire* emergency, must be discussed in advance of class!

1. General Education Learning Outcomes for Arts

(Your course should address a majority of these outcomes, which should be reflected in your syllabus.)

Upon completing a general education art course, students will be able to:

- Identify and analyze the formal elements of a particular art form using vocabulary appropriate to that form
- Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between artistic technique and the expression of a work’s underlying concept
- Analyze cultural productions using standards appropriate to the form and cultural context

- Analyze and interpret material or performance culture in its social, historical, and/or personal contexts
- Engage in the artistic process, including conception, creation and ongoing critical analysis

2. **Using Student Work for Assessment** (*approved by Provost Peter Stearns in Dec. 2008*)

All academic programs at Mason (including the General Education Program) have student learning outcomes that are assessed periodically. Your work from this course may be selected for use in such an assessment. Your anonymity is assured and your grade will not be affected. At any time, you may contact the Office of Institutional Assessment (assessment@gmu.edu) with questions, concerns, and comments about the use of your work.

THR 230 Theater Production Activity Participant Advisory

The purpose of this memorandum is to advise you of certain risks and responsibilities that you may encounter during the scene shop, lighting, and theater related production activities in THR 230 Introduction to Technical Theater. This advisory is designed to protect the enrollees, the University, and other participants in the program. Safety and compliance with instructions are essential to the learning process of the class and are included in calculating your grade.

The teaching of theater production involves the participation of students in scene shop, on-stage, and other theater-related activities. These may take place during the class period or during designated time periods as specified by the instructor. The activities include, but are not limited to, using shop tools, hanging/cabling/focusing lighting instruments, building/moving/installing scenery, painting scenery, and working with materials such as lumber, steel, and plastics. They may involve exposure to toxic fumes, heat, heavy lifting, and the use of power tools. Each of these potential hazards is capable of inflicting a severe injury. In addition, there are the normal dangers associated with scene shop and stage activities: cuts, bumps, falls, electric shock, splinters, and spilled paint.

A designated University faculty or staff member will instruct you in the safe and proper use of tools, equipment, and general stagecraft procedures. Do not use tools or equipment without direction and permission of the supervising faculty or staff member. You will be provided with personal safety devices (face shield, ear protectors, hard hats, lifting tools, etc.) and you must use them when appropriate. You will not be required to perform any activity with which you feel uncomfortable. You are expected to observe the laws of Virginia and exhibit adult behavior. If you do not comply with instructions or appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, you will be asked to leave the premises and may be dropped from the course. Due to the nature of the production schedule and the layout of the workspaces, a faculty or staff member may not always be present in the immediate area; when in doubt, seek out the instructor.

Although the University has attempted to make the theater and its production area safe, personal injury and property loss/damage is possible. Any injuries, thefts, damage to personal property, or dangerous conditions should be reported immediately to the supervising faculty or staff member. It is strongly recommended that participants carry medical insurance and not bring expensive clothing or equipment to the area. George Mason University is not a guarantor of personal safety

nor does it assume responsibility for lost or damaged personal items. This notwithstanding, GMU stands responsible for the negligent acts and omissions of its faculty, staff, and agents.

If you are not able to undertake the risks and responsibilities outlined in this memorandum, please discuss this immediately with the instructor and/or withdraw from the course. By participating in these activities, you acknowledge that you have been informed about certain risks and responsibilities, and that you are knowingly and voluntarily assuming them.

Schedule of Classes

Reading assignments are due for the class period listed. The schedule is subject to change without notice!

Week #1 January 24 & 26

- Tue: Introduction. Definition of Production. Syllabus and Course Expectations
Geography of Technical Theater
- Thr: Tour of GMU Facilities
Chapter 4: The Stage and its Equipment

Week #2 January 31 & February 2

- Tue: Performance Spaces Contemporary and Historical
Chapter 3: A Brief History of Theatre Architecture and Stage Technology
- Thr: Production process and schedules AND The Design Process
Chapter 1: Production Organization and Management
Chapter 2: The Design Process and scale
Production Lab Schedule Due

Week #3 February 7 & 9

- Tue: **TEST ON SPACES, ORGANIZATION, AND GENERAL TERMS**
- Thr: Lighting: Introduction and History Introduction
Lighting Design: Properties and Goals
Chapter 14: Lighting Design - pp 338 – 345

Week #4 February 14 & 16

- Tue: Lighting Design: Process and Communications
Chapter 14: Lighting Design - pp 345 - 373
DUE: Assignment #3 Key and Fill Light
- Thr: The Master Electrician, Electricity, and Basic Circuitry
Chapter 15: Electrical Theory and Practice

Week #5 February 21 & 23

- Tue: Instrumentation and Tools
Chapter 16: Lighting Production
- Thr: Sound
Chapter 21: Sound Design and Technology
Review for test

Week #6 February 28 & March 1

Tue: **TEST ON LIGHTS AND SOUND**

Thr: Costume Design
Chapter 18 Costume Design

Week #7 March 6 & 8

Tue: Costume Construction
Chapter 19 Costume Construction

DUE: Assignment #2 Costume Research and Design

Thr: Wig and Makeup Design
Chapter 20: Makeup

Week #8 March 13 & 15

SPRING BREAK

Week #9 March 20 & 22

Tue: Review for test

Thr: **TEST ON COSTUMES AND MAKEUP**

Week #10 March 27 & 29

Tue: Scenic Design- Objectives, Process, Communication
Chapter 9: Scenic Design

Thr: Scenic Design styles
Chapter 5: Style, Composition, and Design

Week #11 April 3 & 5

Tue: Standard building tools, materials, and methods
Chapter 10: Tools and Materials - pp162-169 and 176-193
Chapter 11: Scenic Production Techniques

Thr: Continue

Week #12 April 10 & 12

Tue: Scene Painting
Chapter 12: Scene Painting

Review for test

Thr: **TEST ON SCENERY**

Week #13 April 17 & 19

Tue: Flat Demonstration *Meet in the Scene Shop*

Thr: Painting Demo *Meet in the Scene Shop*

Week #14 April 24 & 26

Tue: Schedule Time to work on your flat. NO CLASS!

Thr: Schedule Time to work on your flat. NO CLASS!

Week #15 April May 1 & 3

Tue: Schedule Time to work on your flat. NO CLASS!

Thr: REVIEW FOR FINAL. **FLATS DUE! PARTY!**

FINAL: TUESDAY 5/15 1030 - 13:15

DUE AT THE FINAL EXAM:

- Ø **Production Lab time sheet or crew sheet**
- Ø **Performance Journals (2 total)**

LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICY Assignments/projects will not be accepted late unless prior arrangement is made with the instructor in question. Appeals to this policy will be handled on a case by case basis and only when exceptional circumstances are evident.

Performance Journals

We will examine the production elements of the shows produced at GMU this semester. It is essential that you attend these shows to observe the issues under discussion. You are required to attend two productions during the semester. In many cases, free tickets are available, but you must make arrangements in advance. Make your plans early. Arrangements may be made at the Concert Hall Box Office.

One of the defining characteristics of live performances is that once they close, they are gone. Tickets are available for these productions, but you are responsible for making arrangements to attend the performances.

Assignment criteria

A typewritten, two page, double spaced, response to the production elements of the show. This includes your overall judgment of the success, or weakness, of the design components in supporting the text and the actors in a seamless manner. Provide specific details to support your opinion. You do not need to cover all the design components, but may focus on those that you found particularly successful (or not). You may discuss the production elements from both a design perspective (what is being attempted) and an execution perspective (how well is the design being carried out). If you are participating in the production, you may write from your personal perspective.

Assignments will be graded on your use of production/design concepts and vocabulary in expressing your observations.

The following are the two events you must attend and write a performance journal about:

This Is Our Youth (GMU Players) March 1 - 4 TheaterSpace

The Life Of Galileo (GMU Players) March 28 - April 7 Harris Theater (check for exact time and dates)

If you cannot attend the above, a theatre production, musical, or opera performance, preferably off campus, may be used as a substitute. *Your choice is subject to approval!*

Extra Credit

The only extra credit available is to do more production hours. Five to Ten percent may be added to your Production Lab grade by working five to ten extra hours in any shop or shops.

Details

If you are required to see an event for another class, it may also be reviewed for this class. Your paper must meet the specific criteria for this assignment. (i.e. do not turn in the same paper twice.)

You may review a show if you participate in the production.

Journals are counted 25 points apiece (2 X 25 = 50 points total)

Journals for alternative productions (i.e. you do not attend the assigned production) will receive a maximum of 5 points unless prior arrangements have been made.

PRODUCTION LAB POLICY

Each student is required to work a minimum of **30 hours** of production lab as an integral part of THR 230. **Grading on this requirement is *all or nothing*. Complete 30 hours and get full credit. Fail to complete 30 hours and get no credit!**

This goal of this requirement:

- θ Apply and expand knowledge learned in the classroom.
- θ Experience working as part of a production team
- θ Work and learn with other members of the CVPA production staff

You will work as production crews during the semester on a schedule to be determined in each of the following areas: **Scenery (14 hours), Costumes (8 hours), and Lights (8 hours)** for a **total of 30 hours**. Work in the various shops and theaters may require specific a specific dress code. Extra credit hours may be obtained in the scene shop, costume shop, lighting crews, sound load-in, etc. Working an extra 5 – 10 hours will add 5 – 10 percent to your Production Lab grade. Your assignments will normally be for GM Players productions, but may also include shop maintenance and/or other CVPA productions. Your hours will be kept on a time sheet, and will be signed off after each work session by your supervisor. Use the Production crew contract to specify your work schedule. NOTE: Points may be deducted for late or missed work calls, if advanced notice is not given.

Important Dates Revised

Dates listed on this page are for full semester courses only. For add/drop deadlines for courses that meet less than a full semester, see [Non-standard Sections Dates](#).

<i>January 1 Day of Week</i>	<i>Sunday</i>
Martin Luther King Day (no classes)	Mon Jan 16
First day of classes ; last day to submit Domicile Reclassification Application; Payment Due Date; full semester waitlists removed	Mon Jan 23
Summer 2012 Graduation Intent Available via Patriot Web	Mon Jan 30
Last day to drop with no tuition penalty	Tues Jan 31
Last day to add classes —all individualized section forms due	Tues Jan 31
Last day to drop with a 33% tuition penalty	Tues Feb 14
Last day to drop with a 67% tuition penalty	Fri Feb 24
Last day to drop	Fri Feb 24
Last day to file your Spring 2012 Graduation Intent	Fri Feb 24
Immunization Record Deadline	Tue Mar 1
Midterm progress reporting period (100-200 level classes)—grades available via Patriot Web	Mon Feb 20 - Fri Mar 23
Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate students only)	Mon Feb 27 - Fri Mar 30
Spring Break	Mon Mar 12 - Sun Mar 18
Incomplete work from Fall 2011 due to instructor**	Fri Mar 30
Incomplete grade changes from fall 2011 due to registrar**	Fri Apr 6
Dissertation/Thesis Deadline**	Fri May 4
Last day of classes	Sat May 5
Reading Days	Mon May 7 & Tue May 8
Exam Period (beginning at 7:30 a.m.)	Wed May 9 - Wed May 16
Commencement and Degree Conferral Date	May 19, 2012

** These dates will not change.

