Summer Study Abroad – Theatre and Screen Design

Set design by Nancy Nicholson. Photo by Kristy Noble (UAL Image Library: 37376)

Module Overview

Through practical workshops, visits, backstage tours, discussion groups, this course offers you the opportunity to engage with Designing for performance through an intensive three week programme. Whether it is Set Design for Screen, Set Design for Theatre or Costume Design for both; this course will give you the opportunity to explore designing for a Performance based on your own reactions to a work of art held in Tate Britain.

From the historic Globe Theatre and the Royal National Theatre, to the innovative Royal Court Theatre, London offers a huge range of live performance and from Pinewood and Elstree film studios London's film industry is continually growing.

You will be based at Chelsea College of Arts, located just a few steps away from Tate Britain. Responding to a brief, you will develop a short story and visually communicate this. You will learn about the technical and creative processes involved in Design for Performance including costume, set design and lighting. Your learning will be enhanced by trips to different exhibitions and performances. You will have a suggested, optional programme of evening theatre and film performances, which will compliment your course tutorials.

Class hours: 60 hours
Non-class hours: 15 hours
Course level: Open
Entry requirements: The Theatre and Screen Design programme is aimed at students who are inquisitive, open to taking risks, engaged in the industry, and who are seeking modes and systems to innovatively expand upon both their practical and contextual knowledge. The programme is ideal for current undergraduates wishing to continue their studies into the summer, or those who want a different study abroad experience – it's a great way to get a taste of study at Chelsea, and life in London.

Aims

This course will provide you with:

• A 'hands on' introduction to various creative design processes – such as model making, storyboards, costume design.
• An insight into the wide range of cultural and performance offerings London provides.
• An opportunity to participate in group discussion and be able to articulate your views on your visits and experiences. You will also offer questions and responses in the discussion of the opinions of other group members.
• An opportunity to Design your own Theatre or Film design (making a scaled model of your set / or scale version of your costume design) which will feature in an end of course exhibition.

Learning Outcomes

On completing the course you should be able to:

• Have a good understanding of a wide range of performances and the theatrical offerings of London.
• Create Characters and express them in many artistic forms.
• Have learnt new technical skills, working to scale and experimented with specialist materials.
• Have learnt the manipulation of space to create a variety of atmospheres through colour, texture and light.
• Completed a mini project which may be suitable for inclusion in your portfolio.

Learning and Teaching Methods

• Seminars
• Artistic and Technical workshops and practical demonstrations
• Gallery visits

Assessments

• Regular attendance and participation
• Informal presentations of work
• End of Course Exhibition

Materials Required

Please bring a drawing and making kit to include:

• A sketchbook
• Pencils and pens
• Pencil Sharpener
• Eraser
• Compass
• Ruler
• Set square

- Scissors
- Coloured pencils or felt tips
- Paints (can be watercolour, gouache, acrylic)
- Paintbrushes
- Glue stick
- Masking tape
- Scalpel handle and 10a blades
- UHU glue
- Smartphone or laptop

If you have a larger art kit – bring that along! Other specialist materials will be provided.

Example Schedule

*Please note this is an example schedule and is a subject to change

Week one - Character Development
- Study Abroad welcome and orientation
- Introduction to course and projects
- Tate Britain visit*
- Character, plot and spaces workshop
- Character building, collage / drawing / painting
- Angels Costumiers visit*
- Making a character into a 3D figure
- Costume Design
- Research into topic of 'Dreams'
- A visit to the Cinema (optional)
- A visit to the Theatre (optional)

Week two - Environment Development
- A visit to the Stanley Kubrick Archive*
- Creating storyboards
- Using research to develop a design concept
- Royal Opera House Backstage Tour*
- Set Design principals including technical drawing
- Working in scale (including making a scale figure)(make a scaled version of your bedroom)
- Making scale model furniture and a figure
- Developing your set design in 3D
- A visit to the Cinema (optional)
- A visit to the Theatre (optional)

Week three - Narrative Sequencing

- Continue to develop your model
- Final presentations of work in the form of an Exhibition
- A visit to the Theatre (optional)

Project

- You will develop an individual visual response to an object (painting or sculpture) at Tate Britain
- Design a character and its costume
- Make the character into a 3D figure using wire and plastering
- Develop a concept based on research process
- Create a storyboard by imagining a story based on the object
- Sketch the design
- Draw the design in 2D by hand to scale
- Model the design in 3D in scale
- Present the Designs visually and verbally

Tutors

Bob Bailey is a freelance Theatre Designer who trained at Central Saint Martins. He is an Associate Lecturer in Theatre and Screen Design on the Camberwell, Chelsea and Wimbledon Foundation Course, University of the Art London. Bob has designed shows in London's West End, Liverpool, Bristol, Plymouth, Birmingham, Sheffield and several productions for the Edinburgh Festival. He has worked in Denmark, Germany, Austria and Holland. Work has included designing for Opera, Classic and New Plays, Physical Theatre and Devised work. He has 2 ballets for the Royal Ballet. He has been an Art Director for TV and model maker for Les Miserables (2012).

References

- Do try to read the poem 'The Dream' by Lola Ridge (1873)
- Use these (1, 2) articles to stimulate your further research into dreams

You might also want to look at the below artists:

Theatre
- Robert Wilson
- Theatre de Complicite
- The Wooster Group
- Es Devlin
- Oskar Schlemmer

Screen
- Jan Svankmajer
- Lotte Reiniger
- The Brothers Quay
- Wes Anderson

Performance Artists
- Marina Abramovic
- Rebecca Horn
- Cindy Sherman
- Leigh Bowery