THEA 380: COSTUME DESIGN PRACTICUM

professor: Kathryn Rohe kmrohe@bsu.edu 917-733-4701
office: AR 132A, office hours by appointment
Zoom info: Prof. Rohe's personal room

This is the syllabus you will use to complete your Department of Theatre and Dance (DOTD) production assignment as Costume Designer.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

Through this design assignment, you will learn the basics of costume design for a Department of Theatre and Dance performance piece, whether a straight play, musical, or dance concert. These basics will require you to:

- attend, engage in, and take notes of, design meetings
- process the research and paperwork required to make meaningful contributions to the overall design process of a show, especially through design presentations
- understand the Director's concept, and fulfill their goals according to what is possible
- collaborate with all members of the creative team, the actors, and the shops, to create an artistically cohesive show on time and within budget
- behave in a professional manner by meeting deadlines, addressing problems as they arise, and treating everyone involved with respect
- source costumes for a show (pull, buy, build, rent, etc.)
- learn all the standard procedures for executing a costume design plan—fittings, note-processing, run paperwork, tech, dress rehearsals

BELOW ARE SOME OF THE SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ASSIGNMENT. PLEASE FILL-IN DUE DATES TO THE BEST OF YOUR ABILITY. SEE MENTOR FOR MORE INFORMATION.
Understand that your mentor will be meeting with you regularly to assist you in understanding each step of the general process, and the specific requirements based on the unique needs of your show.

DESIGN PROCESS: DEVELOPMENT

This phase of the process is the "paper" or planning phase of a design, where your design ideas are developed in conjunction with your director and the rest of the creative team (other designers, music and dance collaborators, etc.). The basic system of this process is as follows:

Design Meeting #1: Director's Concept (approximately 8 weeks before rehearsals start)
Design Meeting #2: Research and Roughs (approximately 2 weeks later)
Design Meeting #3: Preliminary Sketches (approximately 2 weeks later)
Design Meeting #4: Final Designs (approximately 2 weeks later)

Specific requirements for each meeting are as follows:

Prior to Design Meeting #1 (meeting prep): _____ (date due)

- read play/musical/choreographer's concept (if available); mark-up if necessary
- process design prep paperwork:
  - Actor/Scene Chart
  - Costume Notes
- conduct any research necessary to help understand the show better

Design Meeting #1: Director's Concept _____

- be prepared to listen, take notes, ask questions

Character Discussion with Director (time TBD): This meeting will happen, only if necessary, between Design Meetings #1 and #2, to hear what thoughts the director has about each character in the show. This step is only necessary for well-defined or complex characters. It may be useful to have some preliminary research available for this meeting. Mentor will advise.

Design Meeting #2: Research and Roughs _____

- create Research and Roughs presentation in OneDrive show folder to present at meeting, complete with:
  - title slide
  - one slide per each character's looks
  - actor's headshot, name per look
- MEET W MENTOR IDEALLY AS A TEAM 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE to ensure presentation is in good order
- during overall design meeting, be thorough but concise as many departments must present
- gather feedback, ask questions
- afterwards, upload presentation to Virtual Callboard and OneDrive show folder
- begin preliminary pull to help determine design direction

Director Meeting (TBD): This meeting will happen after DM#2 if research largely misses the mark, or more info is needed from director.

Design Meeting #3: Preliminary Sketches _____

- create sketch for every assigned character; your mentor will advise
- create new Preliminary Sketches presentation (can start from scratch, or copy and update Research and Roughs presentation)
- MEET W MENTOR IDEALLY 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE to ensure presentation is in good order
- during overall design meeting, present Preliminary Sketches presentation
- be thorough but concise as many departments must present
- gather feedback, ask questions
- afterwards, upload new presentation to Virtual Callboard and OneDrive show folder
- preliminary pull can continue to help determine designs

Director Meeting (TBD): This meeting will happen after DM#3 ONLY if sketches largely miss the mark, or more info is needed from director.

FOR Design Meeting #4: Final Designs _____

- color all sketches required; mentor will advise
- create new Final Designs presentation
- MEET W MENTOR IDEALLY 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE to ensure presentation is in good order
- during overall design meeting, present Final Designs presentation
- be thorough but concise as many departments must present at this meeting
- gather feedback, ask questions
- afterwards, upload new presentation to Virtual Callboard and OneDrive show folder
- preliminary pull can continue to help prep for 1st Shop Order and Costume Build

Director Meeting (TBD): This meeting will happen asap after DM#4 ONLY if Final Designs need more development, or more info is needed from director.

DESIGN PROCESS: PRODUCTION

This phase of the process is the "execution" phase of a design, where your design ideas are realized in the costume shop, through pulling, builds, fittings, alterations, etc. It's a complex process managed closely by your mentors, that requires your daily visits to the shop.

1ST Costume Practicum Meeting (mentor will clarify when): _____

- present designs to costume area on projector in AC102
- coordinate with Kathryn or Alexander to get designs printed for costume shop to post

1st Shop Deadline: _____

- complete Pieces List w pull/buy/build breakdown
- continue pull
- process 1st online Shopping Order; mentors will advise
- basic build info organized (build list and plan, fabric sourced, swatches ordered)

Designer Presentation/1st Read-Through (often, but not always 1st rehearsal):_____

- attend rehearsal, present designs to company
- stay for 1st read-through (if happening that rehearsal)

BY 1st Day in the Shop:_____

- setup rack with dividers, ditty bags, jewelry bags where necessary
- setup green shoe bins
- fill out Composite Measurement sheet
- continue to pull
- fill out and submit fitting requests to mentor ASAP

For Fittings:

- make sure dressing rooms are ready for fittings; mentors will advise
- fit actor according to designs
- photograph final look
- help label, restock, and tidy if time
- prep fitting photos and send to director; mentor will advise

Last Day of Fittings (2 Fridays before tech):_____. Aim to have the last fitting ONE WEEK prior to 1st dress, in order to focus on run paperwork (Mirror Sheets, Check-in Sheets, Cue Sheet, Preset List) during the final week of production.

DESIGN PROCESS: TECH/DRESS REHEARSALS

This phase of the process transitions costumes from the shop to "the boards". The design team and mentors must focus on all the information, paperwork, and training to affect this transition, while simultaneously finishing costume production. The main goals of this phase are:

- communication about costume needs during the run--presets, quick changes, cues, etc.
- setting up the backstage area--dressing rooms, quick-change areas, crew training, etc.

Two Weeks before Tech Weekend: _____ (exact date to be determined)

- attend designer run

Final Week leading into Tech Weekend (start date): _____

- process run paperwork:
    - Mirror Sheets
    - Check-in Sheets
    - Cue Sheet
    - Preset List
- attend Quick-Change meeting w Stage Management; update Costume Change info
- clean costume racks, discard/pull as needed, update Check-in Sheets, check labels

Prior to 1st Dress Rehearsal (can be done in conjunction with Wardrobe Crew): ____

- GET ALL TECH PAPERWORK PRINTED via Alexander or Kathryn
- MAKE SURE DRESSING ROOMS ARE READY:
    - cleared of unnecessary costumes or other items
    - clean mirrors and counters (sprayed and wiped)
    - assign actor spots alphabetically
    - neatly tape Mirror Sheets up
    - set green shoe bins on shelves above each corresponding actor
- set-up/lable backstage changing equipment: racks, hanging bins, dresser supplies, all paperwork, etc.

Tech Weekend/QC Rehearsal: _____

- attend rehearsal, follow Shop Director's lead, do everything you can to facilitate Quick-Change Rehearsal

Dress Rehearsals: _____

- attend all dress rehearsals
- prior to run, help to get actors into costume
- once run starts, take your own notes or convey to note-taker
- attend all post-rehearsal production meetings, working with all team members to solve problems

OPENING NIGHT: _____

Celebrate!!!!!!

During Run: _____

- assist in solving any designer-required problems
- restock all unused costume pieces, with shop's help if they're available

DESIGN PROCESS: STRIKE

Obviously, this phase is about putting the show away. Once the show is closed, follow your shop mentors' lead on how you'll help facilitate strike.

One of your primary roles will be to direct restocking. Restocking depends on when a costume is ready to be put back in stock. Thus, this phase may take several weeks to process. Here is a rough breakdown of what and when costumes can be restocked:

- Pulled costume pieces that were never used, non-launderable items (shoes, bags, jewelry, hats) can get restocked immediately
- Launderable costumes can get restocked as soon as they're washed (this takes days to weeks, depending on shop availability)
- Drycleaned costumes must wait until they return from drycleaners (likely an end-of-semester task)

Please rely on shop staff for specific direction.