

**PRODUCTION DESIGN FOR ENTERTAINMENT: EARLY SCIENCE FICTION** DART 197  
Fullerton College CRN 24271, 3 Units Spring 2017, Saturdays 1-6:25 pm, room 1002  
Instructor: Marshall Vandruff [www.marshallart.com](http://www.marshallart.com) [mv@marshallart.com](mailto:mv@marshallart.com)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course will expose the student to classic science fiction design elements and styles to inspire production design ideas, either for the student's original IP's, or for existing stories.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

To create ideas for environments, architecture, props, characters, monsters, visual events, or special effects for science fiction productions, and to develop the best of them into orthos and finished oblique drawings.

To adapt design elements from early science fiction imagery, and combine them with modern elements.

To create production design that corresponds to story themes, conflicts, and reversals.

**COURSE CONTENT & SESSION SCHEDULE:**

There is homework each week even if just to show what you worked on in class the previous week.

In class we will experiment with design ideas, review work, and look at masters.

You will learn from assignments, projects, critique, and show and tell.

**1 – 3 pm:** Review of work, instruction, and idea generation exercises.

**3 – 4 pm:** Break

**4 – 6:25 pm:** Case studies: analysis, discussion, and prep for next week.

To make the most of our formal class time, commit to full attention with electronic media off.

**MATERIALS:** You can use any kind of reference or process you like (photographs, 3D models, sculpting) but all assignments must be presented as 1920x1080 jpeg files.

**TEXTBOOKS (suggested):**

FILMCRAFT: PRODUCTION DESIGN by Fionnuala Halligan

A VISUAL DICTIONARY OF ARCHITECTURE: Francis Ching

WHAT AN ART DIRECTOR DOES: Ward Preston

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN & DRAFTING: Alan Jefferis

DESIGNER DRAFTING FOR THE ENTERTAINMENT WORLD: Pat Woodbridge

**MOVIES (recommended or scheduled):**

The Invisible Man (1933) (71 minutes)

The Thing from Another World (1951) (87 minutes)

The Day the Earth Stood Still (1951) 91 minutes

Invaders from Mars (1953) 77 minutes

THEM! (1954) (94 minutes)

Godzilla (1954) (96 minutes)

Forbidden Planet (1956) (98 minutes)

The Blob (1958) (86 minutes)

Plan 9 From Outer Space (1959)

Bride of Frankenstein (1935) (75 minutes)

Young Frankenstein (1974) (105 minutes)

Westworld (1973) (88 minutes)

Soylent Green (1973) (97 minutes)

Galaxy Quest (1999)

War of the Worlds (2005, 116 minutes) (opening sequences)

**EVALUATION:** Grade-point division:

Weekly Homework Uploads and Involvement in Class Sessions . . . . . 40 points

Class Projects (MidTerm & Final) . . . . . 60 points

TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS FOR COURSE . . . . . 100 points

Late work receives no credit. Treat the deadlines as if you were in the profession.

Not following directions lowers your grade.

## PROJECTS & ASSIGNMENTS:

**Mar 23: MID-TERM:** (30 points) *30 Experimental Setting, Prop, or Character Designs*  
*3 Finished Prop or Character Designs with Orthos*  
*4 Master Shots that include lighting design*

**May 25: FINAL:** (30 points) *30 Experimental Architecture, Prop, Character, or Shot Designs*  
*3 Finished Prop, Character, or Architecture Designs with Orthos*  
*1 Setting/Environment Layout with Story Notes\**

**Experimental Designs** (60 total: **30 at Midterm, 30 at Final**): We will work on many of these in class. They are not meant to be finished pieces - they are explorations. Take chances drawing cool props, gadgets,, imaginary buildings, terrain, or creatures you've never seen. Develop them enough to pitch as ideas.

**Finished Prop, Architecture, and Character Designs with Orthos** (6 total: **3 at Midterm, 3 at Final**)  
Develop your favorite *Experimental Designs* into detailed and accurate presentation drawings. Each page should include at least one oblique view and enough orthos to clarify dimensions for a modeler to build your idea in 3D.

### **Master Shots** (4 due at **Midterm**)

*Master Shots* are less "Production Design" than "Concept Art". The images can include any production designs you create during the semester, put into any environment. They need not be in color unless you prefer, but light them to evoke mood. This is your chance to create the best sci-fi shots you can imagine!

### **Setting/Environment Layout** (1 due at **Final**)

Include \*"*Story Notes*". Label at least three (up to 30) of your design choices based on story elements:

- 1) Conflicts. What geographic or technological elements create problems for characters?
- 2) Reversals. What obstacles turn into opportunities, or vice-versa? Environmental arcs?
- 3) Ironies. How does this environment appear the opposite of some way it really is?

## PROJECT OPTIONS:

You can use these projects to develop original ideas for your own intellectual property (I.P.).

If you prefer, you can adapt a public-domain classic such as *The Time Machine*, *Frankenstein*, or *Dr Jekyll & Mr Hyde* into any style or "new take" you choose. Think of the recent *Sherlock Holmes* adaptations.

Or you can re-design a Science Fiction story as it would look using technology from The Cold War, the American West, the Italian Renaissance, or Medieval China.... Your own personal steampunk.

All props, settings, or shots should include some kind of retro technology to identify the genre, however loosely, with classic science fiction.

**INSPIRATION COLLECTIONS:** Post cool stuff as "Palettes of Imagery" for show and tell.

Collect and post slides of any images that inspire you, or that you would like to share. Two criteria:

- 1) Something to do with technology. Seek retro, foreign, strange, and speculative. Old machines, vintage electronics, optics, measuring devices, transportation devices, gadgets, suits, buildings and cities, weapons, helmets, etc...
- 2) Anything you would like to see in science-fiction stories: crystals, jewelry, tribal designs, galaxies, flowers, insects, alchemy charts, explosions, raw electricity... If you love something, use it to inspire your designs.

## SciFi THEMES & ELEMENTS:

Future setting speculations.

Alternate dimensions or universes.

Outer space or subterranean worlds.

Climate disasters. Disease threats. Chemical effects.

Unusual political or social systems: utopian, dystopian, post-apocalyptic.

Fantastic travel devices, rocket ships, teleportation machines. time travel.

Monsters, aliens, mutants, androids, robots, next-step-in-evolution characters.

Futuristic weaponry and technology: ray-guns, lasers, force-fields, mind-control, super-powers.

Computers, artificial intelligence, display monitors, knobs and dials, machinery, laboratory devices

## **EARLY SCIENCE FICTION PRODUCTION DESIGN: Spring 2017 Weekly Schedule**

- Feb 4: **Introduction to Classic SciFi. Inspiration from Old Technology.**  
Assignment: Collect Old Inspirations: monsters, machines, devices, retro-science stuff.  
Retro resource: <http://www.darkroastedblend.com/2007/01/category-vintage.html>  
Post 3-12 slides of favorite images/inspirations (you will post twelve total throughout semester).
- Feb 11: **Share & Tell Inspirations. Experimental Designs.**  
Ideas & Obliques. Props, and 3-Axis Grids.  
Assignment: Check out Kirsten Zirngibl's Pinterest; <https://www.pinterest.com/kirstenzirngibl/>  
Post 1-6 Experimental Designs.
- Feb 18: NO CLASS (President's Day)
- Feb 25: **Review, Experimental Designs.** Ideas & Orthos.  
Assignment: Post 1-6 Experimental Designs, include an ortho attempt.
- Mar 4: **Review, Experimental Designs.** More on Orthos.  
Assignment: Post 1-6 Experimental Designs, include an ortho attempt.
- Mar 11: **Review, Experimental Designs.** Master Shots.  
Assignment: Post 1-6 Experimental Designs, include an ortho attempt.
- Mar 18: **Review, Experimental Designs.** Slides as Portfolios.  
Assignment: Post designs, orthos, or master shots for last feedback before midterm.
- Mar 25: **Review, Experimental Designs.**  
Assignment: Post Midterms by March 31 at 11pm
- April 1: MID-TERM: 30 Experimental Designs, 3 Finished Designs w/Orthos, 4 Master Shots.**  
Assignment: Post 1-3 pages of Experimental Designs.
- April 8: **Review, Experimental Designs.** Setting as Star. Topography and Environmental Conflicts.  
Assignment: Post 1-6 Experimental Designs.
- April 15: NO CLASS (Spring Break)
- April 22: **Review, Experimental Designs.**  
Assignment: Post 1-6 Experimental Designs.
- April 29: **Review, Experimental Designs.**  
Assignment: Post 1-6 Experimental Designs.
- May 6: **Review, Experimental Designs.**  
Assignment: Post 1-6 Experimental Designs.
- May 13: **Review, Experimental Designs.**  
Assignment: Post 1-6 Experimental Designs.
- May 20: **Review, Experimental Designs.**  
Assignment: Post Finals by May 26 at 11pm.
- May 27: FINAL: 30 Experimental Designs, 3 Finished Designs w/Orthos, 1 Setting/Environment w/notes.**