

## **FA/THEA 4112 3.00 Ec scenography**

### **Topics and Concepts**

Eco-scenography is an approach to design for performance that considers an expanded role, beyond conventional theatrical presentation, for design. This has the potential to be realized in a number of ways, but all projects share a consideration of ecological and sustainable practice, and a systems-thinking approach to design. In this course, we will explore a diverse range of project scenarios and project which require additionally considerations beyond those typically encountered in many theatrical productions.

We will explore site-specific work, especially that done in remote locations. Students will be introduced to best practices in site-analysis and the logistics for producing projects on public and private property. Topics in this area include insurance, permitting, working with property owners, working with different levels of government and various land management agencies.

We will explore the application of a design practice in support of socially engaged and community-based work. Topics in this area include building relationships, Asset-Based Community Development, and reciprocal rights management, and strategies for working with different communities and stakeholder groups such as youth, newcomers, and diverse language skills.

We will explore the integration of sustainable technology into productions such as the use of renewable energy, or the use of sustainable materials. Topics in this area include technical systems design, production logistics, and product testing.

We will explore the creation of work in indigenous contexts. Topics in this area, including many explored in community-based work as well as understanding of indigenous cultural creation; respect of systems of permission, sharing, and reciprocity; understanding protocol, and respect for the sacred.

We will explore work which is performed by humans and non-humans. Topics in this area include ethical methods for working in the landscape, bioremediation, and habitat restoration.

To evaluate these topics, we will examine a variety of case-study productions in each area and approach the design of or design elements from each through the lens of eco-scenography. The case-studies evaluated in the course will be further contextualized by readings from current research in the field and in adjacent areas of ecological art, or EcoArt. Regular guests, professionals working in eco-scenography, will share their work (inclusive of course case-studies) in-person and remotely.

In addition to a theoretical approach to understanding existing work, students will engage in the creation of their own eco-scenography projects. Students will be presented with a variety of scenarios and, on a bi-weekly basis, will be asked to design prototype solutions for the proposed situations.

The course will culminate with each student, as individuals or in collaboration with their peers, in the realization of an eco-scenography design project. These may take the form of a show

performance, installation, or otherwise designed performance experience. There will be a number of check-ins on the progress and design of these project through the term.

### 1. **Learning Outcomes with Examples**

Students will be able to:

- a. Examine eco-scenographic approaches to design based on case studies and cotemporary research in the field.
- b. Design novel solutions for unique production conditions within a eco-scenographic context.
- c. Manage and construct performance projects using eco-scenographic principles.

### 2. **Graded Assessment**

The course will be evaluated based on the 5 prototype projects worth 15% each, the final 25% will be based on the final project.

- (15%) Project 1
- (15%) Project 2
- (15%) Project 3
- (15%) Project 4
- (15%) Project 5
- (25%) Final Project

Each prototype project, and 60% of the final project, will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

(Projects / Final)

- (25% / 15%) Individual, one-page, artistic statement
- (50% / 30%) Design documentation:
  - Concept sketches
  - Maps
  - Schematic drawings
  - Drafting
- (25% / 15%) Production statement:
  - Production concerns
  - Site considerations

- Budget narrative
- Timeline(s)

In addition to these elements, the remaining 40% of the final project mark will be based on:

- (20%) Realization
- (10%) Appendices (as required):
  - Insurance Quote
  - Permit Application(s)
  - Draft MOU
  - Risk Assessment
- (10%) Final Write-up

Any final project executed without documented appropriate permissions for the location of the performance will receive an automatic 0.

### **3. Additional Information**

#### **SCHEDULE**

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**JAN 6 – INTRODUCTION + BRAIN STORMING**

**JAN 13 – EXPANDED SCENOGRAPHY**

**JAN 20 – PROJECT 1**

**JAN 27 – WORKING WITH COMMUNITY**

**FEB 3 – PROJECT 2**

**FEB 10 – INDIGENOUS CONTEXTS**

**FEB 17 – PROJECT 3**

**FEB 24 – NON-HUMAN PERFORMANCE**

**MAR 2 – PROJECT 4**

**MAR 9 – MIXED REALITY**

**MAR 16 – PROJECT 5**

## MAR 23 – LOGISTICS AND PRACTICALITIES

## MAR 30 – FINAL PROJECT

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### BIBLIOGRAPHY

#### Required Reading

Beer, Tanja. *Ecoscenography: The Paradigm and Practice of Ecological Design in the Performing Arts*. 25 Aug. 2016.

#### Suggested Reading:

*Artists & Climate Change*. <https://artistsandclimatechange.com>. Accessed 20 Dec. 2018.

*ILAND: Interdisciplinary Laboratory for Art Nature and Dance*. <http://www.ilandart.org/>. Accessed 20 Dec. 2018.

*The Center for Sustainable Practice in the Arts*. <http://www.sustainablepractice.org/>. Accessed 20 Dec. 2018.

*Earth Matter on Stage*. <https://www.earthmattersonstage.com/>. Accessed 20 Dec. 2018.

Ahmadi, Mohebat. *Towards an Ecocritical Theatre: Staging the Anthro(s)Cene*. 6 July 2017, <http://hdl.handle.net/11343/190775>.

Albrecht, Glenn, et al. "Solastalgia: The Distress Caused by Environmental Change." *Australasian Psychiatry*, vol. 15, no. 1\_suppl, Feb. 2007, pp. S95–98, doi:10.1080/10398560701701288.

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Bennett, Jane. *Vibrant Matter: Political Ecology of Things*. Duke University Press, 2010.

Bilodeau, Chantal, editor. *Where Is The Hope : An Anthology Of Short Climate Change Plays*. Center for Sustainable Practice in the Arts, 2018.

Brooks, Daniel. "The Eco Show." *Canadian Theatre Review*, vol. 144, University of Toronto Press, Oct. 2010, pp. 60–84, doi:10.3138/ctr.144.60.

Chaudhuri, Una. "'There Must Be a Lot of Fish in That Lake': Toward an Ecological Theater." *Theater*, vol. 25, no. 1, Mar. 1994, pp. 23–31, doi:10.1215/01610775-25-1-23.

Chaudhuri, Una. *Staging Place : The Geography of Modern Drama*. University of Michigan Press, 1995.

- Davis, Heather M., et al., editors. *Art in the Anthropocene : Encounters among Aesthetics, Politics, Environments and Epistemologies*. Open Humanities Press, 2015.
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- Garrett, Ian. *Arts, the Environment, and Sustainability*. Americans for the Arts, 2015.
- Giannachi, Gabriella., et al., editors. *Performing Nature: Explorations in Ecology and the Arts*. Lang, 2005.
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- Gray, Nelson, and Sheila Rabillard. “Theatre in an Age of Eco-Crisis.” *Canadian Theatre Review*, vol. 144, University of Toronto Press, Oct. 2010, pp. 3–4, doi:10.3138/ctr.144.3.
- Heim, Wallace. “Can a Place Learn?” *Performance Research*, vol. 17, no. 4, Aug. 2012, pp. 120–27, doi:10.1080/13528165.2012.712338.
- Heim, Wallace. “Theatre, Conflict and Nature.” *Green Letters*, vol. 20, no. 3, Sept. 2016, pp. 290–303, doi:10.1080/14688417.2016.1192000.
- Heim, Wallace, and Eleanor Margolies, editors. *Landing Stages – Selections from the Ashden Directory of Environment and Performance*. Crinkle Crinkle Press, 2015, <https://www.creativecarbonscotland.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/landing-stages.pdf>.
- Heim, Wallace., et al., editors. *Nature Performed : Environment, Culture and Performance*. Blackwell Pub./Sociological Review, 2003.
- Kenney, Denise. “Ground Rules: Live Performance and Eco-Art.” *Canadian Theatre Review*, vol. 144, University of Toronto Press, Oct. 2010, pp. 48–53, doi:10.3138/ctr.144.48.
- Kershaw, Baz. *Theatre Ecology : Environments and Performance Events*. Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Kimmerer, Robin Wall. *Braiding Sweetgrass*, Milkweed Editions, 2015.
- Kuppers, Petra., and Gwen. Robertson, editors. *The Community Performance Reader*. Routledge, 2007.
- Lavery, Carl, and Clare Finburgh, editors. *Rethinking the Theatre of the Absurd : Ecology, the Environment and the Greening of the Modern Stage*. Bloomsbury Methuen Drama, 2015.
- Low, Jennifer. *Dramatic Spaces: Scenography and Spectatorial Perceptions*. Routledge, 2015.
- Marranca, Bonnie. *Ecologies of Theater : Essays at the Century Turning*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.

May, Theresa J. "Beyond Bambi: Toward a Dangerous Ecocriticism in Theatre Studies." *Theatre Topics*, vol. 17, no. 2, 2007, pp. 95–110, doi:10.1353/tt.2008.0001.

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Morton, Timothy. *Hyperobjects*. Univ Of Minnesota Press, 2013.

Osnes, Beth. *Theatre for Women's Participation in Sustainable Development*. Routledge, 2014.

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Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. *Decolonizing Methodologies : Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Zed Books, 2012.

Solnit, Rebecca. *A Field Guide to Getting Lost*. Penguin, 2006.

Weintraub, Linda. *To Life! : Eco Art in Pursuit of a Sustainable Planet*. University of California Press, 2012.

Weintraub, Linda. *What's Next?: Eco Materialism and Contemporary Art*. Intellect Ltd, 2018.

Wilson, Ross. "Ecology without Nature: Rethinking Environmental Aesthetics." *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, vol. 48, no. 2, Apr. 2008, pp. 239–40, doi:10.1093/aesthj/ayn012.

Wohlleben, Peter. *The Hidden Life of Trees : What They Feel, How They Communicate : Discoveries from a Secret World*. Edited by Tim F 1956- Flannery, David Suzuki Institute / Greystone Books, 2016.

Woyrnarski, Lisa. "Locating an Indigenous Ethos in Ecological Performance." *Performing Ethos: International Journal of Ethics in Theatre & Performance*, vol. 5, no. 1, July 2015, pp. 17–30

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## GETTING WORK IN ON TIME

- Assignments are due at time specified on the course website (Moodle).
- Late submissions are not accepted.
- Extensions may be requested by email by 5:00 pm on the Friday preceding the deadline, and:
  - All requests must include a proposal for a new deadline.
  - Extensions are granted at my discretion and are not granted until you have received confirmation.
  - If you request an extension after 5:00 pm on the Friday preceding a deadline, or do not include a proposal for a new deadline, you won't get a response to the request (or an extension).
  - Don't be afraid to request extensions in a timely manner. If you've got a lot going on with school, work, or at home, request the extension. Life gets busy and hard sometimes, so if you see things piling up, request the extension before it becomes a crisis and you can't.

- In the event of a medical or personal emergency, I may consider an exception to these rules. If you do need to make a request for an exception to the requirements I've listed above—which is to say you need to request an extension after 5:00 pm on the Friday preceding the deadline—include documentation (i.e. a Doctor's note) along with your request when you make it. I will not ask for it, nor will I consider the circumstances if you don't include documentation.

PLEASE CONSULT THE COURSE MOODLE FOR ADDITIONAL DETAIL

### **Academic Policies / Information**

The Senate Academic Standards, Curriculum and Pedagogy Committee (ASCP) provides a [Student Information Sheet](#) that includes:

[York's Academic Honesty Policy](#) and Procedures / [Academic Integrity Web site](#)

- [Access/Disability](#)
- [Ethics Review Process](#) for Research Involving Human Participants
- [Religious Observance Accommodation](#)
- [Student Code of Conduct](#)

<http://secretariat.info.yorku.ca/files/CourseInformationForStudentsAugust20121.pdf>

Additional information:

- [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Alternate Exam and Test Scheduling](#)
- [Grading Scheme and Feedback Policy](#)  
*The Senate Grading Scheme and Feedback Policy stipulates that (a) the grading scheme (i.e. kinds and weights of assignments, essays, exams, etc.) be announced, and be available in writing, within the first two weeks of class, and that, (b) under normal circumstances, graded feedback worth at least 15% of the final grade for Fall, Winter or Summer Term, and 30% for 'full year' courses offered in the Fall/Winter Term be received by students in all courses prior to the final withdrawal date from a course without receiving a grade.*
- Important University Sessional Dates ( you will find classes and exams start/end dates, reading/co-curricular week, add/drop deadlines, holidays, University closings and more.  
<http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/enrol/dates/index.htm>
- [Manage my Academic record](#)  
<http://myacademicrecord.students.yorku.ca/>
- **"20% Rule"**  
 No examinations or tests collectively worth more than 20% of the final grade in a course will be given during the final 14 calendar days of classes in a term. The exceptions to the rule are classes which regularly meet Friday evenings or on Saturday and/or Sunday at any time, and courses offered in the compressed summer terms.

Final course grades may be adjusted to conform to Program or Faculty grades distribution profiles.