

# FA/THEA4112 M - Eco-Scenography (Winter 2019-2020)

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## Welcome to EcoScenography

### COURSE INFO

**FA/THEA 4112 3.00 Ecoscenography**

**Meetings:** Mondays 11:30 pm - 2:30 pm

**Location:** Centre for Film and Theatre 301

**Course Director:** Ian Garrett - igarrett@yorku.ca

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

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.

#### **What do we do in this course?**

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.

### Learning Outcomes with Examples

Students will be able to:

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

### Required Text

 [Tanja Beer - EcoScenography\\_\(Thesis Version, Pending Publication\)](#)

Other texts as assigned in support of each topic area as listed below.

## Additional Course Info

 [Graded Assessment](#)

 [Bibliography](#)

 [Getting work in on time](#)

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## JAN 6 – INTRODUCTION + BRAIN STORMING

- Review the course materials
- Read short essay on Solastalgia
- Watch a few videos and discuss

### Read Together

 [Albrecht, Glenn - Solastalgia- the distress caused by environmental change](#)

### Watch and Chat

 [The Living Stage NYC](#)

 [red, black & GREEN: a blues](#)

 [Groundworks - Alcatraz](#)

 [Dance Exchange - 500 Miles/500 Stories](#)

 [Mierle Laderman Ukeles](#)

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## JAN 13 – EXPANDED SCENOGRAPHY

Today's class is about how space and place is performed. How is it loaded and how do we load it as a site for performance, or the performance of an intended act. We will look at a series of experiments in using the design of performance space and how these are constructed. Conveniently they are all collected in Issue #16 of the CSPA Quarterly.

These will serve as the case studies for talking through how to build your projects, the first of which is due next week.

### Read for Class

 [Rachel Hann - E1 | Beyond empty stages | Beyond Scenography](#)

 [CSPAQ16 Expanded Scenography](#)

Please read the full issue in preparation for our second class.

### Materials from Class

 [Rallentando- an Installation](#)

Rallentando (<http://www.outoftheboxproductions.ca>) is an interactive installation that invokes a multi-sensory virtual forest. Using a combination of images, sounds, and interactive performance, "the audience experiences a gradual slackening of tempo, leaving behind the distractions of contemporary urban life." Rallentando was created by Gwenyth Dobie, with William Mackwood leading the technical integration. Gwenyth and William, co-artistic directors of Out of the Box Productions, recently installed Rallentando at Hub14 in Toronto.

 [Human Rooms by Efterpi Soropos](#)

HUMAN ROOMS™ is an immersive experiential concept that can assist participants to reduce stress, induce relaxation and meditative states within a peaceful and harmonious environment that is self directed.

The combination of content - video, sound and colour lighting sequences - are developed to suit the needs of the participant group and is influenced by research, place space, preference, embodied memories, biophilia and 25 years experience of

designing performing arts environments. The content is delivered by a system which allows the participants to have control and engage with a variety of options. The interior architecture of the room is designed to absorb and reflect the sensory content and create an atmosphere that enables participants to re connect with themselves and the environment presented in the room.

 [Strategic Filter](#)

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## JAN 20 – PROJECT 1

 [Project 1 - LENS: Expanded Scenography.](#)

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## JAN 27 – WORKING WITH COMMUNITY

Today's class is about how we approach, build relationships with, and work with communities, particularly the communities which are not our home communities. We will talk about Asset Based Community Development which works with the idea of "Don't just do something, sit there."

### Read for Class

 [Pablo Helguera - Community.](#)

 [New York architect Bryony Roberts' Design Installations - Curbed](#)

 [Miranda Wright - Cornerstone's Touch the Water from CSPA Quarterly 1](#)

### Materials from Class

 [Working with Community Questions](#)

 [Class Discussion with Guest Speaker - Robert Negrón](#)

Robert Negrón is an actor, playwright and martial artist, he trained at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts and South Coast Repertory Professional Conservatory. He has also trained at with The Antaeus Academy, A.C.T. Summer Conservatory, CSU Summer Arts Conservatory, Coronado School of the Arts and interned at The La Jolla Playhouse. He has worked in such theaters as the Rubicon Theatre, South Coast Repertory, Boston Court, Old Globe Theatre and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Robert produced an adaptation of the book Into the Wild called Beautiful Blueberries 142 as a Black Swan project at OSF in 2007. Robert is International Programs Liaison The Sa-K-La-K-Wel (SLW) Community Center in Jacmel, Haiti and spends part of each year as a resident arts instructor in Jacmel. In 2013 Robert attended the [Earthship Academy](#) in Taos, NM and is the build director of SLW Earthship build.

 [Liveability Taskforce Documents](#)

These are the forms Robert Negrón spoke about regarding the LOVE Committees, specifically the Liveability Taskforce and their community programs process.

 [Indy Convergence 2013 Fundraiser Video](#)

 [Indy Convergence River Performance Series](#)

 [Saklakwel 2015 build video](#)

 [Earthships: A House Made From Beer Cans Sparks a Movement | Short Film Showcase](#)

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## FEB 3 – PROJECT 2

 [Project 2 - LENS: Working with Community.](#)

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## FEB 10 – INDIGENOUS CONTEXTS

Today's class is about how we work in partnership with indigenous communities approach. Why are these important relationship to build if we are not ourselves indigenous? At minimum the consideration of the complete history of human presence (to the present) on the land upon which you live and work should include traditional caretakers. Don't think that traditional means past here though. This is a contemporary issue, especially with consideration of truth and reconciliation in Canada.

Beyond this act of place-based stewardship, there is much to be learned from a decolonized approach to making. This is true about the relationship to place, but also how one considers ownership, intellectual property, and collaboration. Decolonization gets invoked in a lot of contexts, but what does that mean?

## Read for Class

 [ON SCREEN PROTOCOLS & PATHWAYS: A MEDIA PRODUCTION GUIDE TO WORKING WITH FIRST NATIONS, METIS, AND INUIT COMMUNITIES, CULTURES, CONCEPTS & STORIES](#)

You can download the guide in English or French, or order a hardcopy at this link. Please review as much as possible. It is not expected that you read it all, but will talk about it in class.

 [Groundworks / Toasterlab MOU for Community Partners](#)

A sample MOU, or Memorandum of Understanding (a contract), which outlines the stewardship of community held intellectual property.

 [Kimmerer - Allegiance to Gratitude - Braiding Sweetgrass](#)

 [Tanja Beer - Ecoscenography Chapter 2 - Ecological Thinking](#)

Please read the second chapter of Tanjs Beer's Thesis/Book in preparation for class.

## Materials from Class

 [Groundworks - Tišina Parker + Dancing Earth](#)

 [Indigenous at York University](#)

 [Native Land Map](#)

### Sacred Mountains

 [Thirty Metre Telescope](#)

 [Actor Jason Momoa stands with TMT opponents at Mauna Kea](#)

 [Movie boosts New Zealand tourism - Mount Ngauruhoe](#)

 [Tongariro National Park – Rings Filming Location](#)

 [The Legend of Mount St. Helena](#)

 [Desirae Harp Clip - Mt St Helena](#)

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## FEB 17 - READING WEEK

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## FEB 24 – PROJECT 3

 [Project 3 - LENS: Indigenous Contexts](#)

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## MAR 2 – NON-HUMAN PERFORMANCE

Today's class will be a discussion about how we interact with the non-human. What is our responsibility to the other living things impacted by our work? How do our interactions with the natural world co-create a project? How do the spaces in which we work, themselves, perform, and hold stories.

 [Morton, Timothy - Hyperobjects \(Excerpt from CSPA Q15\).](#)

 [Jane Bennett – Vibrant Matter \(Excerpt from CSPA Quarterly 14\).](#)

 [Wohlleben - Hidden Life of Trees - Ch27 Street Kids](#)

 [Sensing Nature from Within](#)

The natural world, from which humanity has so thoroughly distanced itself, no longer exists, at least not in the same way or to the same extent it once did. This realization is starting to dawn on an increasing number of us, including many artists, and has resulted in a growing desire to reconsider old truths and seek out new ways of living and understanding the world. With the exhibition project Sensing Nature from Within, Moderna Museet Malmö wants to offer an artistic and philosophical sounding board for these existential explorations of our time.

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## MAR 9 – PROJECT 4

 [Project 4 - LENS: Non-Human Performances](#)

### Materials from Class

 [VỮ ĐIỀU RỬA TAY - GHEN CÔ VY | Full Ver. by Quang Đăng](#)

 [VỮ ĐIỀU RỬA TAY - GHEN CÔ VY | by Quang Đăng \(Turn on English Subtitles\)](#)

This is an original TikTok version and you can turn on English Subtitles.

 [Michelle Ellsworth - Rehearsal Artist - Long Trailer](#)

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## MAR 16 – PANDEMIC

 [Zoom Class Due to Quarantine](#)

 [Virtual Reality assists those with dementia, original research proves](#)

Hidden from students

Faculty of Health Professor **Lora Appel** suspected that VR could enable these older adults to escape from their restricted physical realities and be transported to stimulating and calming places. To prove this, she launched a feasibility study that investigated the idea of using VR to help those with dementia: PrescribingVR (VRx). She led a team from OpenLab, University Health Network, the University of Toronto, Ryerson University and KITE (Toronto Rehabilitation Institute).

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## MAR 23 – PROJECT 5

Hidden from students

 [Project 5 - LENS: Mixed Reality](#)

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## MAR 30 – FINAL LOGISTICS AND PRACTICALITIES

Hidden from students

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## TBD – FINAL PROJECT

 [Final Project](#)

Hidden from students

 [Pandemic Final Project](#)

It now takes the form of a grant/festival application. The form mainly takes questions from the application portal for the Toronto Arts Council. There is a section about accessibility which comes from the Edinburgh Festival Fringe registration form, and there are a few questions on work with Aboriginal people from the Research Ethics Board here at York.

To help you get through the project, I have attached a copy of the question for you to work from. Please keep your answers brief. I've put a cap of 600 characters (not words) to allow for around 100 words for most of the longer answers. You can be shorter, if that is appropriate to your response, but it should keep things tidy. I also don't want a bibliography... but you're welcome to cite anything that relates to your proposal within the limits.

Also, if you complete the form at anytime, you will get an email to return to it and edit it. So you can hit submit without your full responses, and return to it later. You can edit it until April 6th at 5:00 pm Eastern.

You will need to have a google account (your YorkU is google account) to use the form, as it will record you email. This is a necessary step to allow you to return to the form at another time.

You can find the form here: <https://forms.gle/68uDxL1iY3Ws1GoV8>

I would like to meet with everyone by video at least once before the term is done to talk about your project and progress. Please propose a time to meet using this link: <https://appoint.ly/s/iangarrett/4112>

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