

Three-year BA Program in Theatre Design



Italstudio

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Introduction

Educational Philosophy

Theatre Design gradually developed into an autonomous discipline that today continues to evolve and to be present in many sectors of design. Theatre design, Stage design, Costume design and Light design are arts with wide borders: everything that is built as a set for theatre, cinema and TV representations or for a spectacular event can be defined theatre design. The program trains students to work as designers in the show business and prepares them to deal with a fascinating but complex work requiring a conceptual and creative background that still includes practical sensibility and handicraft skills. The objective of NABA three-year BA Program in Theatre Design is to train a professional figure that is no longer intended in the traditional theatrical sense as an artist - theatre designer, but as a professional that is capable of working hand in hand with theatre directors, that can work as a theatre designer or TV set and Cinema set designer, that can design and realise displays for events, art exhibitions and fashion shows.

Didactic Methodology

The integration between a historical-cultural study and a technical-practical work is enriched by the possibility of significant hand-on experiences starting from the first course years. Students are guided and encouraged to design real theatre productions and to make internships in the theatre, television and audiovisual sectors in order to develop concrete experiences and a personal professional portfolio. Students will develop theoretical and technical knowledge necessary to organise an artistic production process, will learn to work in a team, to use 2D and 3D design programs and audiovisual appliances, as well as various painting and graphics techniques. Students will also learn to produce artefacts: theatre sets, stage objects and costumes also by processing and combining various materials. IT skills will be developed also in order to teach students how to draft a budget, to make periodical auditing of the budget itself, as well as technical specs. Students will be stimulated to explore the market and its laws, to learn the relevant legislation in the sector and to develop self-promotion tools.

Professional Profiles

After completing the three-year BA Program in Theatre Design, students are able to develop and present a complete project for a theatre setting (sketches, 2D and 3D project, budget etc. ...). Students have acquired good technical and practical skills to make settings, decorations, small-scale models, to build objects and use materials, techniques and tools.

They have good knowledge of history of theatre, history of art and cinema and are able to carry out iconographical and symbolic research. They can work in theatre design, architecture and light design studios, as interior designers for cinema or theatre, as costume designers or set designers for the movie, fashion and events industry in general.

Projects and Activities

Since the academic year 2008/09 new modules in theatre and scene design have been added to allow students to follow the work of professionals in the show business through a number of lectures on TV set design, video techniques and production processes not only in the theatre sector but in set design in general. In addition to this, every year students are involved in a special project aimed at designing and realising sets in a lab.

For the academic year 2009/10 students will design the set for a show based on "Act sans paroles" by Samuel Beckett. Every student can make at least an internship (for a minimum length of one month) during the three years. Internship agreements have been activated with Theatres and Foundations (*Piccolo Teatro di Milano*, *Triennale di Milano*, *Scuola Civica di Cinema di Milano*, *Film Festival del Cinema di Torino*), tailor's shops (*GP11*, Rome, *Sartoria Brancato*, Milan) as well as with Theatre or Performing Arts Festivals.

For more information on the projects carried out by NABA Theatre Design students, please visit:

www.ajweissbard.com/naba/intro.html

Professors

Program Director

MARGHERITA PALLI. She graduated in Theatre Design at the *Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera* in 1976. Between '76 and '78 she collaborated with Alik Cavaliere and in '79 with Pierluigi Nicolin for the *XVI Triennale di Milano*. Between '83 and '84 she collaborated with Gae Aulenti at the Project of the *Musée d'Orsay* and at the production of three theatre shows. In '84 she started working as a theatre designer with the director Luca Ronconi, with whom she has produced a long series of shows all over the world. She also works with other directors such as Mauro Avogadro, Franco Branciaroli, Andrea Barzini, Liliana Cavani, Cesare Lievi. She has been teaching since 1991. She is Professor of Theatre Design at NABA - Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti Milano and of the Theatre Design Lab at the *IUAV* in Venice, she was also Professor of Theatre Design at the *Politecnico di Milano - Bovisa*. In these years she has been awarded many prizes for her activity as Theatre Designer both in prose and lyric theatres: *UBU Award, Gassman Award, ETI Award - Theatre Olympics, Abbiati Award, Amici del Loggione Award of the Scala Theatre* and *Pier Luigi Samaritani Award*.



“Here at NABA School of Theatre Design we like to think that working as theatre designers is a way of designing ephemeral spaces for theatre performances, the opera, ballet, musicals, films, concerts and the show business in general. Silence, light, colour and the matter beneath, in one word: “space”. Space is the light and the place where the various parts of a theatre opera, a film or an event come together. It is the place where the interpretation of a text and of its narration are deeply understood.

The job of a set designer, because this is a job, requires deep passion, continuous research, strict compliance with the rules. This is not only a creative individual profession: designing the set of a theatre play, of an event or a film implies learning a technical code, a language for communicating and reproducing ideas. We should never forget that we are working in a team and that putting on a show is like being able to lead a sailing ship in a direction or along an imagined route...”

Margherita Palli

Director of the three-year BA Program in Theatre Design

Giacomo Andrico

Theatre Design Professor

Professors 2009/2010

Yuri Ancarani, Giacomo Andrico, Simone Balsamo, Antonella Bruzzese, Guia Buzzi, Antonio Calbi, Fabio Carlini, Valentina Carrubba, Claudio Cetina, Antonella Cirigliano, Lorenzo Curone, Mariano Dallago, Mariangela Doglio, Chiara Fagone, Andrea Umberto Faini, Ida Farè, Matteo Ferroni, Savino Giuralarocca, Shiraishi Keiko, Giorgio Lombardini, Giancarlo Majorino, Massimo Martignoni, Francesco Monico, Gianni Montonati, Margherita Palli, Lorenza Pignatti, Cristina Pogliaghi, Liubow Popova, Giambattista Romano, Marco Rossi, A.J. Weissbard, Marco Zappa.

Program Coordinators

Antonella Cirigliano

Annalisa Bottoni

Program Curriculum Theatre Design

AF	SUBJECT	CFA
I YEAR		
B	DRAWING FOR DESIGN Drawing Painting Techniques	8
B	HISTORY OF MODERN ART	6
B	HISTORY OF THEATRE	6
C	THEATRE DESIGN I	10
C	SCENE DESIGN I Basic Scene Design Cinema Set Design Model-making	10
A	DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES AND APPLICATIONS Digital Drawing CAD Basic Video Art	10
TOTAL CREDITS 1ST YEAR		50
II YEAR		
B	HISTORY OF COSTUME	6
B	PHOTOGRAPHY	6
B	HISTORY OF CONTEMPORARY ART I	6
C	DIRECTION Contemporary Direction Show Business Practices and Culture	6
C	THEATRE DESIGN II Methodology Light Design CAD I	10
C	SCENE DESIGN II Laboratory Specialised Workshops	10
A	THEATRE COSTUME	6
TOTAL CREDITS 2ND YEAR		50

III YEAR		
B	AESTHETICS	6
C	THEATRE DESIGN III Methodology CAD II	10
C	SCENE DESIGN III Laboratory Specialised Workshops	8
A	HISTORY OF CINEMA AND VIDEO 4 subjects to be chosen among the following*	8
A*	DIGITAL APPLICATIONS FOR VISUAL ARTS	6
A*	HISTORY OF CONTEMPORARY ART II	
A*	CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY	
A*	URBAN DESIGN	
A*	PRODUCT DESIGN I	
A*	HISTORY OF COSTUME AND FASHION II	
A*	FASHION DESIGN I	
A*	DIRECTION I	
A*	DECORATION	
TOTAL CREDITS 3RD YEAR		56
-	Conferences and cross-disciplinary seminars	8
-	Extra-curricular projects	
-	Internships	
-	International Exchange Programs	
-	English	4
-	General IT	4
-	Final Exam	8
TOTAL CREDITS FOR MANDATORY ADDITIONAL TRAINING ACTIVITIES		24
TOTAL CREDITS FOR THE THREE-YEAR PROGRAM		180

LEGEND:

- AF Learning Activities: Subject Type according to the classification made by the Italian Ministry of Education University and Research (MIUR)
- CFA Academic Educational Credits: equivalent to University Educational Credits (CFU)
- B Basic Learning Activity
- C Subject Specific Learning Activity
- A Subject Related Learning Activity
- * Elective Learning Activities

Subjects - I year

Drawing for Design

Drawing: the teaching objective of this course consists in providing all basic tools needed for the free-hand visualisation or for the highlighting of a project in its various development steps: from ideation to the first sketches up to the final graphic representation.

Painting Techniques: the course goes into the history and the practice of painting and sculptural techniques as well as the supports used by artists along the centuries (graphic techniques, pigments, oil painting, watercolour painting, acrylic and vinyl colours, wooden supports, canvas, papers and glues) offering students a basis for the development of a personal artistic research. The goal of the course is the acquisition of a rich and complete technical-artistic support so that students can develop their own creative research in a conscious and effective way.

History of Modern Art

(cf. subjects of the three-year BA Program in Painting and Visual Arts)

History of Theatre

The course intends to organise students' knowledge around thematic areas of particular cultural interest thereby developing their technical and scientific skills thus creating a wide and articulated skill background. The course is structured around different areas of interest: Ancient theatre, Medieval theatre, Renaissance theatre, new Classicism, Revolution theatre, Romantic theatre, differences between Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries, the avant-gardes, contemporary theatre. From these groups of interest particularly significant themes will be then analysed, both from a dramaturgic and a spectacular point of view.

Theatre Design I

The course aims at teaching the main technical skills for the production of theatre projects. Students will experiment a method of graphic and painting reproduction completed with an individual creative experience. The theme proposed (freely interpreted or taken from the

history of theatre) is developed through sketches, drawings, models in scale, plans and sections. The course also comprises practical exercises on space through stage elements and through the study and planning of the staging, starting from a theatre script.

Scene Design I

Basic Scene Design: this course is an integration to the Theatre Design course. Students will elaborate a technical project leading to the production of a theatre sketch, a play, a set design or a fashion show, thus developing all those technical-operational skills that are fundamental in the training of a space decorator.

Cinema Set Design: this module introduces students to "cinema making" starting from sketches and models, technical drawing, up to the search for proper locations, furniture design, set display and live and post-production special effects.

Model-making: the course introduces students to the production of models, both as a tool to carry out project research and to have a correct interpretation of drawing. Practical exercises are aimed at showing how the simplification and geometrical conceptualisation of objects of common use can occur in different forms.

Digital Technologies and Applications

Digital Drawing: this course allows the acquisition of the theoretical-practical basic notions of the digital graphic representation and of photo-retouch through standard software such as *Adobe Photoshop* and *Adobe Illustrator*. Objective of the course is to provide students with the basic elements for the visualisation and presentation of their projects, in order to progressively create a digital portfolio of their works starting from the first year.

CAD: the course includes the reading and representation of the project, the rules of form through the use of the unified software *Autocad 2004* with an evolution from bi-dimensional to three-dimensional drawing. The course is divided into lectures, exercises and labs and is structured into two semesters. The first semester is devoted to 2D design, while in the second semester the program focuses on the transformation of bi-dimensional figures into 3D figures.

Basic Video Art: this module aims at providing students with the

basic tools to design and realise digital sets for various kinds of events: from fashion shows to exhibitions, conventions, performances etc. The course starts with a study of projection tools and then will guide students towards the realisation of virtual sets.

Subjects - II year

History of Costume

The course consists in the analysis of costumes, composed of garments, accessories, hairstyles and make-up, as a form of an individual and collective language and communication within society and in different historical periods. A study of the aesthetical ideals typical of a given historical period will be connected with the social, cultural, political and religious context of that period in order to understand why specific silhouettes, fabrics and colours were chosen. This analysis also includes the historical evolution in the construction of costumes (draping, cutting techniques, use of materials).

Photography

Photography, as a creative expression, is an integral part of arts and belongs to those forms of artistic production which involve thought, imagination and sense of project of the author, no matter if it is a photographer, a designer or an artist. The course does not intend to teach the analogical or digital photographic techniques, but it aims at transferring some fundamental concepts related to the “ability to see” and “ability to read” photographic images that consider the crossing of different disciplines interacting with the photographic medium.

History of Contemporary Art I

(cf. subjects of the three-year BA Program in Painting and Visual Arts)

Direction

Contemporary Direction: the course envisages a tour within theatre arts, in particular from the end of the late 19th Century to present times, from the point of view of direction. Direction poetics, aesthetics and practices of the artists of the second half of the 20th Century will be

investigated as they have contributed to the affirmation of direction as the “center, hearth and engine” of theatre production. The course will afterwards focus on the theatrical and direction forms typical of the new Italian theatre. From naturalistic theatre to pure invention theatre, from direction as a mise-en-scène, a practice at the service of authors and players, to theatre as an act of autonomous creation and invention; from theatre as representation to author’s direction that is constantly seeking for an art theatre in which space plays an essential role and is continuously reinvented to allow diverse forms of invention and audience’s participation.

Show Business Practices and Culture: the show business world is made up of a great number of artistic ways of expression: from classical theatre to music concerts, from circus performances to events and happenings that are in-between a “situational” performance and performing arts. In order to support such a complex design dimension, the course aims at providing students with tools enabling them to find a compromise between the needs of free artistic expression and the regulatory and management needs connected with the production of a show, a festival or a theatre or artistic event.

Theatre Design II

Methodology: students will work on the planning of set designs following a personalised pathway leading them to the production of complete theatre projects thus developing basic technical competencies for the executive planning of each project. In the second year, students will develop two projects chosen among the themes proposed: the first project aims at developing the creative and project potentials and therefore it is complete in all its parts, while the second project means to develop the idea through the study of sketches, plans and sections.

Light Design: this course is aimed at teaching the fundamentals of how to use light in the creation of a stage and consists of a theoretical and of a practical section.

CAD I: this course supports students’ design work and aims at teaching them to autonomously produce models and environments in 3D through guided computer lessons. Students will acquire a level that allows them to develop, starting from an idea, more and more difficult sketches,

technical tables and three-dimensional models. The course favours an approach based on the study of geometries and goes through all possibilities and ways for the 3D execution design.

Scene Design II

Laboratory: this course introduces students to the profession of the theatre designer, perspective rendering, theatre vocabulary; illustrates them the elements composing the stage (slopes, aims, metric scales). The main set design techniques will be illustrated throughout the course.

Specialised Workshops: workshops realised in collaboration with professionals in the various sectors of production and show business. Students will be introduced to the set design techniques for cinema and television and for the realisation of displays of various kinds.

Theatre Costume

This course starts from a comparative analysis of the stylistic characters of historical costumes and their transposition into theatre costumes. It includes a reconstruction of the silhouettes of historical costumes, the creative realisation of costumes, both historical and original ones. Students will learn the most important textiles elaboration techniques for the theatre.

Subjects - III year

Aesthetics

(cf. subjects of the three-year BA Program in Painting and Visual Arts)

Theatre Design III

Methodology: in the third year students will have to carry out a complete project of theatre design for a work or an event (for Theatre, Cinema or TV): research, free-hand sketches, computer-aided sketches (with plans and sections), materials research, executive tables in scale, equipments list, costumes design. Students will also participate in the planning and development of a performance, produced by the Academy and presented

to an audience, which involves the disciplines learnt such as Direction, Theatre Design, Scene Design and Light Design. The training is further completed with guided visits to shows, theatre and equipment studios.

CAD II: this module provides support for the preparation of the final thesis and the portfolio.

Scene Design III

Laboratory: this module foresees an in-depth study of materials and their use; development of technical tables with specifications of the program chosen in the Theatre Design course and production of the model; study, development and production of the show organised by the Academy in collaboration with the courses of Direction, Performing Arts, Costume and Lights.

Specialised Workshops: workshops realized in collaboration with professionals in the various sectors of production and show business. Students will be introduced to the set design techniques for cinema and television and for the realisation of displays of various kinds.

History of Cinema and Video

The course has the following objectives: 1) an approach to the themes of audiovisual products in general and of cinema in particular 2) the analysis of the spectator-film relationship in order to make students' vision of films more critical and effective 3) knowledge of the cinematographic language and of the underlying technologies of cinema 4) the knowledge of the production steps of a movie 5) the analysis of the reading modalities of a script 6) the knowledge of the main movements of the History of Cinema and of the most significant authors.

Digital Applications for Visual Arts

This course foresees an in-depth study of digital techniques applied to theatre set design and video art with the aid of the most advanced programs to support the theatre set design work.

History of Contemporary Art II

(cf. subjects of the three-year BA Program in Painting and Visual Arts)

Cultural Anthropology

(cf. subjects of the three-year BA Program in Painting and Visual Arts)

Urban Design

(cf. subjects of the three-year BA Program in Design)

Product Design I

(cf. subjects of the three-year BA Program in Design)

History of Costume and Fashion II

(cf. subjects of the three-year BA Program in Fashion Design)

Fashion Design I

(cf. subjects of the three-year BA Program in Fashion Design)

Direction I

(cf. subjects of the three-year BA Program in Media Design and Multimedia Arts)

Decoration

(cf. subjects of the three-year BA Program in Fashion Design)

