

THETR 2500 -- HAIKU PROJECT

Project objective:

This project is designed to provide each student:

- 1) an opportunity to explore further a particular design area of individual interest.
- 2) a simulation of the collaborative environment inherent in producing live theatre.
- 3) an incentive to develop further one's skills in effective graphic communication.
- 4) a capstone experience that synthesizes the experiences and skills gained thus far in the course into a singular creative effort.

Project instructions:

Step one: Read through the haiku poems provided on Blackboard.

Step two: Select one Haiku poem that evokes within you a feeling, a place, a quality of light, a sound, or an event. Describe in writing those evocations. For example: consider the following poem:

The killdeer
unmoved
as the surf passes his feet.

Feelings evoked might be a sense of melancholy and solitude, or anxiety provoked by encroaching forces, or defiance of those forces that one cannot change.

Characters might be a middle-aged, middle-class business man, recently divorced, just fired, contemplating the meaning of his life and his future, or a social worker, stoically processing clients applications, unaffected by the tragic stories that continuously wash across her desk, or a teenage gang member, standing firm against the blows of initiation from fellow gang members.

Places evoked might be a beach (of course) or the middle of field with the grass moving in the wind, or an office stacked with piles of paper that grow and subside.

Quality of light might be a red sun rising over the horizon casting cool contrasting shadows, or a sparkling, effervescent, all-encompassing light, or a hot, bright, harsh down light.

Sounds might be crashing waves (of course) or rhythmic, pulsating crashes of some other objects, or the soft rattling of moving pebbles, or wind chimes, or a piece of synthesized, ethereal, new-wave music.

The central idea or theme for your project will arise from a statement similar in form to one of the examples above.

Step three: Choose a design area, either scenery, costumes, lighting, sound in which you will execute the following:

Scenery -- a model in 1/4" scale of an environment that supports your story. The environment will consist of a floor (44' wide by 34' deep), a backdrop (44' wide by 34' tall), some motivational units, and a minimum of two characters. All units should be permanently connected and self-supporting. Evaluation of project will be based on quality of craftsmanship, composition, originality, and clarity of idea.

Costumes -- Two plates (colored renderings or collages) that represent two characters in your event/ "moment" and additional support (research and fabric swatches) for each of the characters. Size of the plates will be much the same as before, approx. 8 1/2" x 11".

Lighting -- a one minute progression of lighting that forms a coherent composition and evokes your particular haiku. The progression is to be actualized in the light lab, the audience viewing the light on Mannique with the scrim background. It will involve movement of light through time, having a beginning, middle, and end.

Sound --a sound score, recorded on CD, including at least four music/sound sources (at least one of them altered in some way); layered, blended, or otherwise combined to create your audio interpretation of your chosen haiku. Projects will be evaluated on composition, originality, clarity, and technical quality.

Note: The faculty reserves the right to reassign individual design area choices.

Step four: Allow one or more ideas to guide you to your research. The challenge is to avoid the urge to illustrate the poem. Instead allow the poem to lead you in a particular direction rather than towards a fixed point. Gather as much research as you can.

Step five: Explore your research and allow it to inform you further until you are able to articulate a specific event or interaction in time. Describe the event in as much detail as possible.

Step six: Present your poem, evocations, and initial research in class. Cite the source of all research.

Step seven: Execute your design to fit the project descriptions listed above.

Step eight: Present your design in class. Total presentation should not exceed 3 minutes. Observe and discuss the effectiveness of your classmates design presentations.

Step nine: Revise your own design in response to the feedback you receive and from inspiration taken from the other presentations.

Step ten: Present your revised design in class. Explain how and why your revised design evolved due to the influence of other's ideas. Hand in both preliminary and revised designs plus a 1-2 page paper that describes where you gathered your ideas and the choices you made during your design development journey.

Project evaluation: Each student will be evaluated according to the criteria of their particular design area, plus on the scope of improvement from the preliminary to the revised design.