

Theatre Art Show lifting curtain on design students' work

theatrepreview

Theatre Art Show

Runs 3-5 April
Timms Centre (Second Playing Space)
Free Admission

EDMON ROTEA
Arts & Entertainment Staff

This week, the backstage action that makes live theatre possible will take to the limelight at this year's student-run Theatre Art Show. The show will showcase the work of both Bachelor and Master of Fine Arts students in the Department of Drama's Theatre Design, Technical Theatre, and Stage Management programs.

The demonstration will be an opportunity for prospective students and curious members of the public to learn more about the technical aspects of theatre production, as well as the wide range of disciplines and degree paths available in the Department of Drama.

"The [theatre design] program is [about] learning the basics of how to design shows. We've done things like designing a room based on a period and place, building a model of that, and designing what it would be like with hypothetical renderings," says Nick Blais, a first-year theatre design student who has constructed a variety of scale models and dioramas of conceptual set designs as part of his coursework.

First-year students in the theatre design program are required to do some hands-on work, from assisting with in-house productions in the



PETE YEE

SHOULDN'T THE WALLPAPER BE IN THE HOUSE? The Theatre Arts Show lets technical design students showcase their work away from scene-stealing actors.

department's Media Room to helping flesh out Studio Theatre's BFA productions.

"They start off working practicum hours—working in the prop shop, wardrobe, or even working on the set for Studio Theatre. They do class projects as well. Once you get to your third or fourth year, you're designing for the Media Room," explains Sheena Haug, a fourth-year theatre design student who graduates this year.

Whether a student is interested in becoming a designer, or intrigued with the behind-the-scenes aspect

of becoming a technician to express their creativity through lighting and handmade props, students in the theatre design program come from a variety of performing and visual arts backgrounds.

"The first year is mostly about getting people from different backgrounds to the same levels and teaching the skills required as a designer for theatre—and working on skills that you may need in theatre and television," Erin Gruber explains. A first-year theatre design student who herself has a performing arts

background, Gruber has spent her practicum hours assisting with lighting for Studio Theatre shows like *While We're Young* and has worked in the prop shop for current productions such as *Twelfth Night*.

The Theatre Art Show will display everything from set renderings, costumes, and hand-built props and furniture to the stage-managers' prompt books with photos of past performances. The show will also feature "showpods," unique displays that show the progression of a production from initial conception to final performance.

The show pods will also include designs for set, lighting, and costumes with a backstage look at a show's creation and set construction. Examples from this year's *The Illusion* and *Stone Cold Dad Serious* will be featured. Students will also be available to discuss their work and answer any questions, which Haug hopes they have.

"We just want to bring people in and explain to them what we do so that the community outside the theatre world has a chance to experience and understand the magic behind the scenes."

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