

Contextual studies
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I have brainstormed and thought about many different keywords that I could use to link to my working practices and writing. Many of the words come under the same topics or umbrellas. Some examples of the words I have generated are Experience, Thought, Design, Change, Process, Future, Environment. But the three main words that I will be looking more into with writing and research are Sustainability, practicality and space.

Through the course I am studying with mention from building sets, the amount of waste that is produced from the film industry is massive. This is down to the amount of money that is thrown into an expensive film and when filming is complete, most of the time if they know they will not be needed again, the sets, props and costumes are thrown away. Most of the time into skips at the back of the studios. Personally, waste from the industry seems like a problem that no one thinks about and maybe it is time that things are changed and thought about more throughout the industry. I have found a blog with first hand experience in this as not a lot of people in the industry think about the waste after production. I have read from a combined blog that was written by two designers in production, Karen Steward and Rocio Gimenez in 2019. It is a problem that is seen all over the world and what different experiences people have with the problem of waste and how things can be changed to green film making.

*The definition adopted by the Zero Waste International Alliance (ZWIA) is:
“Zero Waste is a goal that is ethical, economical, efficient and visionary, to guide people in changing their lifestyles and practices to emulate sustainable natural cycles where all discarded materials are designed to become resources for others to use.*

In the industry currently, some very large productions such as Star Wars are using less set builds due to a new type of technology that allows green screens and cameras to do most of the work.

Note the example from the Star Wars set in Figure one.

Only small amounts of set builds are needed and being used. Most of the work is done by cameras and graphics and part of the set built is made when needed.

As mentioned by Karen and Rocio in their blog with how CGI is becoming a bigger part in the industry to avoid waste.

Even mostly CGI (computer generated imaging) shows always have to build at least parts of a set and there-in the design challenge is to work closely with a VFX coordinator who will help a designer storyboard what part is CG and

what part is a built environment, as it is that the labour involved in CG work budgetarily can far outweigh what it might cost to build a physical set.

There could be multiple solutions to this problem to make the industry more sustainable. Sustainable materials could be considered such as using reclaimed wood and metals. Production companies could set up units where they store set pieces and props that will no longer be needed and sell them on or even donate pieces to drama schools or small-scale productions. This way the objects get a second chance and for small scale productions that don't have a lot of money to spend, they could make good use of them and would be grateful of the help.

These are some of the things that have been done in the past by Karen and Rocio, 2019 which is a way to help out the industry and the small groups that are struggling.

I also try to donate as many of the items bought as possible to prop houses or charity houses, and to organize set sales, so that the items can have new homes at the end of each production. This goes from tools, furniture and paper, all the way to entire pieces of scenery, such as flats, windows, doors and flooring. It is also a way of helping fellow colleagues to find items that they are looking for, allowing them to save money in their budgets.

There are many prop houses that lend out items to film companies and this could be something that the industry, especially large-scale productions could think about doing instead of throwing perfectly good pieces in a skip and wasted. Although some production places are doing this, there could be more done to help the amount of waste that is produced in the industry and even help out smaller companies that cannot afford the props or costumes.



Figure 1

Another way that the industry can look at and change its ways is to think about those people who have a disability such as blindness. This is something that seems important but isn't always thought about especially through the design process of the production designers. When we visit a theatre to watch a production we don't think about how someone who is blind experiences the same show that we are experiencing. Especially the people designing and creating the visual aspect of each show.

From an article that is from Australia and discusses the process and feelings of a blind viewer named Ria, going and experiencing the live theatre and what it is like compared to someone who is able to see and fully understand what is going on.

Live theatre is an experience most enjoy, but for those who are blind or have low vision, the gap left by the visual information – taken for granted by sighted people – can be extremely frustrating.

The stage production is dictated to the person that is blind and they can still know what goes on but how do they dictate the vision of props and design? In some cases, it is made easier by the company allowing them to go backstage before the show starts and get the chance to feel the props and costumes to build an image in their head ready for when the show starts and the descriptions of the items are given. In their own way they can tell what the props are and what they look like to someone who is fully sighted. This is a good idea but if this isn't able to happen at a production before the show starts how else can someone who is blind get other ways of building an image of what goes on?

With descriptions, people like me can engage with and sometimes get lost in the work on stage. Sometimes we're backstage before a show begins, touching the props and costumes.

Being able to feel props and staging items it can change the meaning of the show for people who are blind. Does it make a drastic difference for more props to be used within the production design or less? Is there something designers could do to make the props for this cause help better through the texture of the props and then only an experience the actors and blind viewers could experience. Would it help with regards to helping the blind viewer remember the props easier when it comes to the items being described to them such as the actor's movements or visual descriptions?

I listened through an earpiece as an audio describer talked me through what was happening on stage – the movement of the actors, the changes of scene, any other visual cues that were important to the show.

You get a range of emotions from excitement to suspense, anger to worry. All these emotions can be experienced in a short period of time from the lighting and music in the scenes This can change from scene to scene and sends your mind on an adventure just by seeing and hearing what goes on. You rely on the rest of your senses such as your hearing and sense of smell to work out what is going on around you.

With audio description, movement on stage becomes part of the drama instead of just background noise.

Is there a way that theatre designers could make the experience more immersive for people that are blind with the technology we have now there could be a design that lets the audience have an experience where there could be a way of adding smells to the show to give the audience another way to immerse themselves with what is going on in front of them?

Within the industry there are blind actors and blind characters that are taken on to play roles of characters in films and the theatre. This throws problems to the designers of the productions as there is a lot more safety aspects than usual to think about. A lot of research is needed to make the whole story as realistic as possible.

Naz Goshtasbpour is a production designer and he was challenged with working on a job for 'In the dark'.

Establishing like a secret here, into a fiction in the world of the blind. Designing the world so that what we created was authentic

You have to make sure that there are no design aspects that can become a hazard or in the way and make sure that there are no hanging props in the paths of the actors. As well as blind audience members actors can have a completely different experience again. This can have a huge design impact that could be interesting for designers to make unique.

Space is thought about in many ways, through how big a space is for design and fabrication purposes from studio to location. You have to consider what the director and creators' ideas realistically will look like in the set space that you have either been given, found, or in a space that you will need to look for.

This brings up the thought of when a production designer is designing the set build, do they become immersed in the imaginary world that doesn't exist in real life such as Sci-Fi or do they start to think that the world becomes real. Based on a psychology blog written by (Israel W Charny Ph.D. 2019) reality being questioned can be seen differently based on what you believe.

It is both fun and maddening for each person to realize that it is we who are choosing to define reality based on a combination of a system of thinking (from the many available systems), our own intuitive perceptions of wisdom, and the courage of our free choices.

It is easier to think about design ideas and what the rooms of a house or street would look like because they can be recreated from everyday life experiences. From someone's imagination it can become harder with design as you are making things up with how things might look as you have never seen that type of world in before as it does not exist to us. It becomes easy to fall into the imaginary world as if it has become real as you start to become

more and more immersed with thinking of what it could be like even though you have never experienced it.

Space is all around us where ever we go and however we think. Making a world that does not exist in real life and is just for filming purposes, does it then become real?

A Sci-Fi movie, thousands of people will view it. For the viewers they become immersed and start to believe that what they are watching is real but of course it is just someone's imagination. Does that space then become real or does it stay a figment of someone's imagination that they built life size.

When you think about things like that it makes you wonder what type of person the creator of the idea is by them coming up with this idea. Based on research of how groups of people work and develop ideas differently and then together creatively comes from advice that you can get in online classes to help you understand more and get you thinking in different ways.

Ideation and Concept Development is a process for groups to work creatively and collaboratively to generate creative ideas. It's a general approach that can be adapted and customized to suit many different scenarios. It includes basic principles for idea generation and several steps for groups to work with. It also includes steps for idea selection and development.

One person can come up with an idea and then you combine that with another who puts their imagination on characters and what they might look like. From there the process goes on with different people's imaginations combining ideas from another person and passing on ideas and before you know it you have a concept of a movie based on the imagination of 10 people that all have the same thinking path.

When designing a space for a set there are multiple things that are thought about to make space seem or look different. Words can be a huge part of thinking of concept ideas and whether a world becomes real through design. It can be used to convey a variety of meanings. Some of which are examples from a design page, giving examples of what words can mean within space.

Space can be used to convey a variety of meanings, some of which include

- *quality – wealth, luxury*
- *solitude – abandonment, loneliness*
- *cleanliness – bleached, washed*
- *purity – unsullied, unadulterated*
- *spirituality – sacredness, connection to something greater*
 - *openness – distance, infinity*
 - *calmness – placidity, inaction*

Every word will relate to space. They can be to describe a character and what their environment around them looks like within the design process. This can be applied when it comes to designing and creating a space. The use of words being brought to life. All these things can relate to if a space that has come from imagination becoming reality.

Following on from my research I would like to explore these topics further and see how design in production could be changed in the future with the help and ideas of other production designers and directors. Currently the industry is not doing a huge amount about the waste that they are producing and there could be a way to introduce measures to help reduce that in all parts of the industry. I would also like the research to lead to the design aspect of how designers could use the use of colours, shapes and patterns and change how people view the sets. This could lead to colour blindness that is an issue for 4.5% of the entire population. It is something that is hidden about a person unless mentioned in conversation. It is something that is interesting as a designer as these people will not see every colour detail or shading that people who do not have colour blindness can see. Colours and details can change a whole image and understanding what it is like to not see all of that is an interesting part of the research when looking at all types of blindness. My question is:

How can designers within the production industry change the way they work and think about the different needs that people or the industry may need?

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Figure one

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