NIDA National Institute of Dramatic Art

BFA SET CONSTRUCTION TECHNOLOGIES

Course Overview 2026

First Year

SEMESTER ONE

SET102A SET Interdisciplinary Collaboration A (20 credit points)
You will work with students in other disciplines to collaboratively produce a number of productions per year. You will take on roles as scenic assistants and crewing positions allied to the discipline. Production projects are allocated with design requirements taken into consideration, and each student's interests where possible.

SET7103A SET Professional Practice A (5 credit points)
You will be introduced to the tools of project management, including managing workflows and resource management, through the analysis of project plans and models. You will also be introduced to computer-aided design as used in scenic construction projects.

SET7104A Scenic Construction and Stage Machinery A (15 credit points)
You will learn how to apply a basic knowledge of metal and timber construction techniques commonly used in a scenic workshop. You will also develop a basic understanding of mechanical engineering within a theatrical context.

SET7105A Rigging in Live Performance A (5 credit points)
You will be introduced to the equipment and practice of rigging for live performance through theory classes and practical exercises in theatre environments.

COM7101A Encountering Performance A (10 credit points)
The focus for this subject is how we respond to the performances we experience as audience members. Whether debriefing after a company run or brainstorming for inspiration, a core skill for all performing arts practitioners is sharing observations and reflections from works we have encountered in the past. In this subject, you learn interdisciplinary frameworks for discussing performances with others and transforming your audience experiences from

immediate into considered, researched responses. This foundational appreciation for how audiences participate in all performances prepares you for the more technical, dramatic frameworks you will apply with peers in the Term 3 subject, Doing Dramaturgy.

COM7103A Wiŋara A (5 credit points)
Wiŋara encompasses two subjects that span the first year of study. You will be guided from a First Nations perspective towards concepts of interconnectivity, and you will practice deep listening, empathy, communication and collaboration. The focus of these subjects is to create the foundations for a long-term sustainable professional practice in the arts. You will be introduced to the foundational skills, vocabularies and processes which will underlie your ongoing engagement in the BFA courses, and the development of your practice as creative storytellers. This includes processes for ensuring safe and sustainable collaboration, as well as maintaining your health and wellbeing across your creative careers.

SEMESTER TWO

SET102B SET Interdisciplinary Collaboration B (20 credit points)
You will continue to collaborate with other disciplines in the realisation of several productions per year. You will take on roles as scenic assistants and crewing positions allied to the discipline, while factoring fabrication decisions, time management, and work health and safety considerations into your practice.

SET7103B SET Professional Practice B (5 credit points)
You will develop project management skills in scoping the brief through venue surveys, communicating with the client, and identifying risks and problems. You will gain an understanding of relevant WHS legislation and develop skills in risk analysis and mitigation.

SET7104B Scenic Construction and Stage Machinery B (15 credit points)
You will apply a broad knowledge of construction techniques commonly used in a scenic workshop. You will also use mechanical engineering concepts to animate a piece of scenery from a self-devised brief.

SET7105B Rigging in Live Performance B (5 credit points)
You will further examine the practice of rigging for performance and its application in scenic transitions though the realisation of effects.

COM7101B Performance and Ideas B (10 credit points)
In the second semester of this subject you will begin to contextualise your own creative foundations as an emerging practitioner. You will develop your dramaturgical skills in order to articulate how meaning is made in performance for artists and audience.

COM7103B Wiŋara B (5 credit points)
Wiŋara encompasses two subjects that span the first year of study. You will be guided from a First Nations perspective towards concepts of interconnectivity, and you will practice deep listening, empathy, communication and collaboration. The focus of these subjects is to create the foundations for a long-term sustainable professional practice in the arts. You will be introduced to the foundational skills, vocabularies and processes which will underlie your ongoing engagement in the BFA courses, and the development of your practice as creative storytellers. This includes processes for ensuring safe and sustainable collaboration, as well as maintaining your health and wellbeing across your creative careers.

Second Year

SEMESTER ONE

SET7202A SET Interdisciplinary Collaboration A (10 credit points)
You will draw on skills and knowledge attained throughout the course integrate them into a technical design project from a given brief. You will be mentored in the project by staff and/or industry professionals, who specialise in the area being investigated. The outcome will be documentation aimed at selling the technical design solution to a prospective production house.

SET7203A SET Professional Practice A (5 credit points)
You will learn technical writing skills and oral presentation techniques. You will develop and present a technical pitch to a mixed discipline audience, selling your solution to a production brief.

SET7204A Scenic Construction and Stage Machinery A (10 credit points)
You will demonstrate an ability to design and construct complex mechanical systems and actuate them using electrical and fluid power. You will research componentry and develop and anticipate their performance through theory and prototyping.

SET7206A Expanded Staging Practices A (15 credit points)
You will focus on the film environment, the similarities and differences in workflow and role demarcation, as well as construction practices in a range of screen-based contexts.

SET7207A Mechanical and Digital Automation A (10 credit points)

You will be introduced to electrical engineering concepts, how they enable us to specify cable for power distribution, and how we can employ them to acuate and control mechanical systems for performance.

COM7204A Staging Ideas A (10 credit points)
During this subject you will gain a theoretical and critical understanding of significant forms and conventions within the Modernist avant-garde. In being introduced to Modernism's artistic movements, you will also develop an understanding of the contextual influences that shaped these practices. This knowledge will help you to actively relate avant-garde practices to 21st century performance in a range of cultural contexts.

SEMESTER TWO

SET7202B SET Interdisciplinary Collaboration B (10 credit points)
You will work collaboratively on several projects applying the skills you have acquired. This includes working with practicing artists/curators to create and/or exhibit artworks, as well as a collaborative film project. You will engage in the full production process from initial design consultations through to planning, construction and rehearsal process, then further onto technical rehearsals, performance and bump-outs.

SET7203B SET Professional Practice B (5 credit points)
You will be asked to survey and quote on a scenic element or aspect of a local performance venue that needs repair and/or refurbishment.

SET7205B Rigging in Live Performance B (5 credit points)
Following from SCT7205A, you will be taken out of the theatre environment to investigate creating aerial rigs for performance using architecture and earth as anchor points.

SET7206B Expanded Staging Practice B (15 credit points)
You will investigate the intersections between fine art creation, immersive environments, installation, and the performing arts, by working with practicing artists/curators to realise an artwork or exhibition.

SET7207B Mechanical and Digital Automation B (10 credit points)
You will be introduced to electrical engineering concepts concerned with positioning and control of mechanical staging devices. You will learn how to conceptualise and programme logic systems for the stage.

COM7204B Contexts of Performance B (10 credit points)
You will engage in discussion and inquiry about the ideas and practices that inform contemporary performance in a variety of forms and contexts. This subject aims to develop your knowledge of and critical response to 21st century contemporary performance practices.

COM7203B Student-Led Project B (5 credit points)
In interdisciplinary groups you will draw on the individual strengths, knowledge and abilities of each member to work together and deepen your understanding of collaborative practices and giving and receiving feedback. The creative outcome will reflect a work-in-progress experience as a demonstration, installation, interactive event, video/audio display or other form.

Third Year

SEMESTER ONE

SET7302A SET Interdisciplinary Collaboration A (25 credit points)
You will experience working in a team as a technical manager or construction manager. In this role you will interact with colleagues from all disciplines and negotiate technical design outcomes on a fully-realised production.

SET7303A SET Professional Practice A (10 credit points)
You will develop your knowledge of professional industry contexts related to the legal and business aspects of professional practice, including report and grant writing, setting up a small business, interpreting contractual agreements and exploring pathways to employment.

SET7308A SET Independent Research Project A (25 credit points)
You will apply advanced theoretical and practical knowledge to satisfy aesthetic, structural and mechanical requirements particular to the specification and planning of a self-generated technical design concept.

SEMESTER TWO

SET7302B SET Interdisciplinary Collaboration B (20 credit points)
Working as a technical manager or construction manager, you will interact with colleagues from all disciplines and negotiate technical design outcomes on another fully-realised production.

SET7303B SET Professional Practice B (15 credit points)
You will investigate the non-discipline specific skills and knowledge you will require to successfully pursue careers within a professional artistic environment. This subject will also commence your introduction and integration into professional industries, networks and communities.

SET7308B SET Independent Research Project B (25 credit points)
Following SCT7304A, you will apply advanced theoretical and practical knowledge to accurately realise a finished work and satisfy the design criteria developed from your specification. You will then present your work to the school in a presentation devised by you and your fellow Set Construction Technologies graduating year.