

FA210 MORE Than A Thousand Words: Experimental Picture-Making



Screenshot of the VR program "Tilt Brush"

Seminar Leader: John von Bergen
Course Times: Monday 3:45 - 7pm
Email: j.vonbergen@berlin.bard.edu
Office Hours: Mondays by appointment

Course Description:

This course looks at what may be possible as picture-making / storytelling through unconventional materials and techniques. Any experimental process that students wish to explore and develop will be encouraged, be it sculptural, digital, performative, or with multi-media. The end results should involve "the picture", and a personal journey to achieve these results that steps outside the boundaries of conventional two-dimensional image-making. The semester will begin with more conventional techniques to explore the basics of graphic solutions as part of the "sketch" phase (from charcoal drawing to photoshop) but will escalate soon into exploring techniques and discussing concepts that relate directly to one's interest. We may at times develop, as a team, solutions for one another that could involve everything from "grinding steel" to "GPS tracking." Kara Walker, Vik Muniz, Jonathan Lasker, Marcus Harvey, Sue Webster and Tim Noble are just some of the contemporary artists we will look at who continue to approach picture-making through some unique process.

Please note: This is an intermediate class, and having had some basic drawing experience would be beneficial. Also please note that *grading will depend on experimentation*, so those students wishing to work mainly with conventional media (drawing / collage / painting) may want to consider this carefully before registering.

Requirements

Students are expected to:

- Turn off phones during the entire class time, including off-campus trips. They will be allowed to be used only during breaks.
- Be prepared to present artworks / assignments / presentations without reminder.
- Engage in critiques and discussions.
- Initiate appointments with Professor or Arts Staff outside of class time when assistance is necessary.
- Always allocate extra time for work preparation and clean-up for independent production.
- Respond to emails from Professor in a timely manner.
- Inform Professor at beginning of the semester if photos of student, artwork, works in progress are NOT to be taken and / or used for Bard College Berlin.
- Remove all artworks, art materials, and / or any personal belongings before end of semester inspection of spaces (including any storage offered). Failure to remove works or return spaces clean and empty may result in final grade penalization. Please note: donating unrequested artworks and / or art materials is not permitted and will still be considered student property. expected to be removed by your inspection deadline. Please contact Studio Arts Manager Joon Park for more information: j.park@berlin.bard.edu

Attendance

- Attendance of all classes is expected.
- More than one absence (that is, absence from one three-hour session per week) in a semester will significantly affect the participation grade for the course.
- Students are expected to attend all off-campus classes punctually, from start to finish. If there is a scheduling / travel conflict, Professor must be informed in advance.
- Tardiness after five minutes will be considered an absence.

Assessment

“More Than 1000 Words” is an intermediate practicing arts course where students explore ways to develop pictures through unconventional, inventive methods.. Students taking this course should have already successfully completed some college level practicing arts courses.

Aside from production that responds to deadlines throughout the semester, students are assessed on their ability to work independently and responsibly, to seek help when needed, and to research subjects as well as techniques relating to their project needs. Participation includes the criterion of punctual and professional communication with the Professor as well as constructive feedback on the work of other

students and collegial cooperation with them. Also assessed will be the capacity to budget time and plan appropriately for completing all requirements connected to this class. This aspect of participants' work encompasses the care and maintenance of spaces and equipment used for class and project work at Bard College Berlin.

Please note: Some limited materials may be provided from BCB, but students must be prepared to spend their own money on materials or resources for their projects as needed.

Policy on Late Submission of Artworks / Presentations

Assignments (artworks, essays, performances, oral presentations) that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (Example: B+ becomes C+). Professor is not obliged to accept assignments that are more than 24 hours late. Where Professor agrees to accept a late assignment, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline and cannot receive a grade of higher than C. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment.

Grade Breakdown

Class participation (includes attendance, and maintenance of all common and private spaces used for production, as well as communication with the professor and with other students): 40%

Homework and in-class work: 30%

Project presentations for critiques (includes end of semester presentations / performances): 30 %

Schedule

Fall 2018 classes start on Monday, September 3 and run until Friday, December 21 with Fall Break planned from Monday, October 29 – Sunday, November 4. Completion week is from December 17 - 21. Students are required to be on campus during completion week.

Scheduled class times and locations will be available online under the relevant course heading:
<http://www.berlin.bard.edu/academics/courses/fall-2018>

Week 1 (Sept 3rd):

Introductions

Fast “sketch” exercise in class

Seminar: “Refiguring the figure” – Vik Muniz, Sue Webster and Tim Noble, Ai Wei Wei

Homework:

Bring to class next week three drawings of the same subject. Only original artworks will be accepted.

Minimum size format is A3 (about 12 in. x 17 in.)

- a) A familiar, comfortable style and technique
- b) The same media as above, but change your style completely
- c) Use any **non-art medium** to represent the same subject

Visit Kara Walker's video installation at [Sprueth Magers](#) (Oranienburgerstrasse 18 in Mitte)

Week 2 (Sept 10th):

Arts facility orientations with Joon Park (Studio Manager) and Janina Schabig (AV Tech Consultant)

Reviewing homework assignments

Seminar: discussing Kara Walker's exhibition

Mechanical intervention for production – Tim Hawkinson, William Lamson, street artist "MOMO"

Discussing what GPS activity can become

Discussing the "forensic" in art

In-class / outdoor drone testing as a mark-making exercise

Homework:

Reading sections of Walter Benjamin's "Art in The Age of Mechanical Reproduction"

"Designing a system" – What is a potentially possible avenue for producing a picture, even if logistically financially challenging? Please note this is NOT expected to be executed, rather presented as an idea, but visual sketches will be required, along with your verbal presentation.

Week 3 (Sept 17th)

Discussing Walter Benjamin, reviewing concepts from "Designing a system"

Further workshop orienting – example: styro-cutting for creating a "graphic" solution

Seminar: Jonathan Lasker, Anouk Kruihof

5pm: Artist talk by [Sachin Kaeley](#) at the Lecture Hall (attendance required).

Homework:

Visit [Kunst-Stoffe](#) in Pankow.

Address: **Berliner Str. 17, 13189 Berlin**

Opening hours: Only Wednesdays and Fridays from 12 - 6pm

Build at least one "picture" based on what may be found in this shop. Every student is given a maximum reimbursement of 10,- for this project, but ONLY with a receipt!

Week 4 (Sept 24th)

Reviewing “Kunst Stoffe” homework assignment

Seminar: Catherine Biocca, Cory Arcangel, Seth Price – What is post-internet / post-conceptual?

Discussing the VR (Virtual Reality) program “Tilt Brush” in class.

Homework:

Begin researching galleries and artists participating in the Art Berlin fair for Saturday’s off-campus meet:

<https://www.artberlinfair.com/en/>

Begin researching the Google VR program “Tilt Brush”

Week 4 (Saturday, Sept 29th)

Extra Saturday Class: meeting off campus at Art Berlin art fair:

Tempelhofer Damm 45, 12101 Berlin

Official class: attendance will be taken

Homework assignment from visit:

One-page printed essay, due first thing on Monday: “The Hunt for Surprises at Art Berlin”. Question: What artwork did you experience that may be defined as the “unexpected”? Be specific with ALL descriptive info (title of work, gallery showing it, artist’s name, materials, etc). To be hand-delivered to JvB at the start of class on Monday Oct 1st.

Week 5 (Oct 1st)

Hand in (printed) essay from Art Berlin

VR orientation and workshop (Studio 7)

Homework:

Sign up for independent time to work with VR equipment in Studio 7. Please note: we have ONLY one VR headset and computer system for only one month. Students must strategically organize schedules around this equipment and its availability. We will divide the class in parts for presentation deadlines.

Additional assignment: Site-specific, temporary outside interventions. They may be on campus or off-campus (if off-campus is too far to visit, students present documentation of their project in class)

Week 6 (Oct 8th)

Crit / review 1st round of VR

Reviewing “site specific”

Week 7 (Oct 15th)

Crit / review 2nd round of VR
Reviewing “site specific”

Week 8 (Oct 22nd)

Crit / review 3rd round of VR

Second half of class: Midterm public VR event presentation starting at 5pm

Homework over the fall break:

Begin developing final project. Prepare visual materials and present ideas to the class on November 5th

Fall Break (no class on Oct 29th)

Week 9 (Nov 5th)

Presenting final project plans in class using visual materials to illustrate plans

Homework:

Refining ideas based on discussion, start the first “tests” to share with the class on Nov 19th (2 weeks)

Week 10 (Nov 12th)

OFF -CAMPUS tour (TBA) art studio visit and / or gallery tour

Homework:

Aside from bringing a test, prepare all materials for working in class next week. Please note: no shopping nor running errands allowed during class time!

Week 11 (Nov 19th)

In class production / independent work

Homework:

Prepare all materials for working in class next week.

Week 12 (Nov 26th)

In class production / independent work

Homework:

Finalize projects for transporting and installing off-campus

Week 13 (Dec 3rd)

Final Presentations off-campus (location / timing to be announced)

Week 14 (Dec 10th)

Final class is a visit to JvB's studio (Pankow-Heinersdorf) to discuss one of his "pictures" planned for an upcoming public commission. Refreshments will be served.

Week 15: COMPLETION WEEK (Dec 17th):

Facility inspections

Please note: the return of BCB property and spaces used, as well as the removal of materials and artworks, has a direct impact on final grades.

Facility Guidelines:

"The Factory" – Eichenstrasse 43

- 1) The BCB "Factory" (main arts building) has space and facilities available to BCB students with an academic purpose for using the building. Students agree to only use the common spaces in the building that are available for their needs, and must respect private spaces that are off-limits.. Any questions relating to this must be addressed to the Director of Studio Arts.
- 2) Chip access to The Factory building and other arts facilities is limited to those students currently registered for classes needing those facilities. Orientations are required before access is granted. In addition, students and faculty involved in clubs as well as event hosting may receive chip access and permission to use The Factory after orientations have been arranged through the Studio Arts Manager.
- 3) No smoking is allowed anywhere inside the building. There are to be no projects using open flames (such as candles, torches, lanterns, fireworks, etc.) inside any part of the building.
- 4) Fire exits and lanes must be kept clear of any obstructions.
- 5) No spray-painting inside of the building. This also includes any strong, odorous materials (with or without spray). All production involving odorous material is to be done outside of the building.
- 6) All work surfaces (table and floor) must be properly protected with thick plastic or cardboard. If production is to happen outside, ground / concrete is also to be protected.
- 7) No oil painting is allowed on the property unless student is enrolled in a BCB painting course, or approved in advance by the Studio Arts Manager
- 8) Food must be always cleaned up and removed immediately.. All food must be disposed of in lidded trash cans.
- 9) All students are to always be respectful of other student artworks and personal property.
- 10) No art projects may function as weapons, or potentially cause bodily harm.
- 11) No sandals, flip-flops, or bare feet will be allowed inside or around the workshop areas, which includes walking through the workshop. This includes dance and theater students as well.
- 12) Students should always wear adequate protection (goggles, gloves, dust masks, etc.) when needed. Protective gear can be found in the Factory workshop.
- 13) If you are uncertain how to use a tool or piece of equipment or require assistance, please ask Studio Arts Manager for assistance (by appointment).

- 14) Students must make sure all lights are turned off and doors are closed when leaving the building. No windows or doors are to be left opened or cracked. All electrical items must be unplugged when not in use.
- 15) Any unidentified property left in any common space is subject to either be taken or thrown out, without restitution.
- 16) All Workshop items checked out are due back during the Workshop hours the following day, unless other arrangements have been made in advance directly with Studio Arts Manager. Workshop hours are: Mon-Friday, 1-3 pm. Details will be offered during orientation.
- 17) Any items leaving the building without permission will be considered stolen, and access to the factory may be suspended for the rest of the semester. If an item must be borrowed for a purpose outside of the building, contact The Arts Staff, and be prepared to leave your Student ID as a deposit. Fines may be charged for late return.
- 18) All students must respect signage posted in the factory that may involve rules that are not mentioned in this document. This includes signage indicating reserved spaces where communal use is restricted.
- 19) There are to be no architectural changes to studios or any areas inside or outside of the building without first speaking with the Studio Arts Manager. When repainting any walls that need restoration, please consult with Studio Arts Manager beforehand.
- 20) During completion week, any space used by a student must be returned empty with clean walls and floors. All garbage must be bagged (or boxed) and properly disposed of. All students must accept the penalty of grades being affected and / or fines imposed if items are left (or renovations unfinished) by the inspection deadline.
- 21) Contact Studio Arts Manager Joon Park directly with any questions: j.park@berlin.bard.edu

AV Facilities – Eichenstrasse 43 (upstairs)

- 1) BCB's AV (Audio / Visual) facilities provide a limited quantity of AV equipment to support Admin, Faculty as well as those students enrolled in arts classes that require specific items. AV facilities do not include any black and white or color printing services for students.
- 2) The opening times may change every semester to adapt to specific course times. Once these times are established they will stay consistent throughout the semester, with possible exceptions. AV facilities are ONLY available during days when classes are held (closed during official BCB holidays).
- 3) All items checked out are due back during AV hours the following day, unless other arrangements have been made in advance directly with AV Staff.
- 4) Items to be reserved on a specific date should be requested at least one week in advance. Without reservation, availability is limited to a first-come, first-serve basis.
- 5) The AV Staff may exclude students from borrowing items at any time, if the student:
 - failed to return items in time
 - failed to return items in person (pick up and/ or return by friends is not allowed)
 - returned items with missing pieces
 - returned items damaged or in poor shape
- 6) AV equipment will be given out only to those students responsible in organizing, picking up as well as returning their items IN PERSON. No exceptions.
- 7) All items returned late, regardless of patron's position at BCB, will be subject to a 1 Euro fine, per day.

- 8) Any item returned without accessories (such as cables, SD card, batteries, tripod head, lens cap, etc) will be subject to a 1 Euro fine, per day (the same as late returns).
- 9) Any items missing will be subject to patron reimbursement for its value (or under special circumstances, replacement, at the discretion of AV Staff). Any items damaged or malfunctioning are expected to be reported to Staff upon check-in.
- 10) Please use the AV email to inquire about equipment or policy, as well as to reserve (av@berlin.bard.edu). Do not contact AV Staff through their personal emails.
- 11) We strongly suggest personally visiting the facilities to inquire and reserve before borrowing equipment!
- 12) AV equipment is limited at BCB. Whenever possible students are encouraged to use their own devices (computers, cameras) for production purposes.
- 13) Contact AV Staff directly with any questions: av@berlin.bard.edu

MacLab and Photo Darkroom Facilities – Platanenstrasse 98 (downstairs)

** Guidelines to be offered during orientations.