

FA106 Beginners Black and White Photography

Seminar Leader: April Gertler

Course Time: Thursdays, 9am - 12.15pm

Email: a.gertler@bard.berlin.edu, Mobile: +49 177 617 1652

Office Hours: by appointment -Thursdays 1 - 3pm

Course Description

Using the backdrop of Berlin, this class will explore the history of photography by Berlin based photographers while learning how to use a manual camera and also finding one's way around an analogue darkroom through acquiring the techniques of printing black and white photographs. This class is designed for beginning photography students interested in learning to effectively use photography as a means for self-expression or cultural comment. Course structure is based on the assumption that students are coming into the class with little to no experience. Mastery of basic skills and conceptual principles is key to the student's success. This class aims to provide students with a rigorous training in the mechanics of the 35mm camera, darkroom technique (photographic printing), and basic composition. We will also explore critical issues surrounding photography as artistic medium, and cultural product through selected readings and class discussions. Though technical skills are stressed in this course, image content is equally important.

Requirements and expectations:

- 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 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 any personal belongings before the final inspection of the arts spaces during completion week. Failure to remove works and / or clean spaces used will result in final grade penalization. Donating artworks or art materials (unrequested) at anytime is not permitted and will still be considered student's property that will be expected to be uninstalled and removed.
- Students are expected to purchase rolls of 36 exposure Black and White film, photographic paper as needed and polypropylen bags to hold negatives + prints.

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 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 will be noted and after 2 Tardies, the grade will be significantly affected.

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 two 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

This class is based on a rubric system of grading. Everything is graded on a points system.

Here is the breakdown:

Each assignment is worth 25 points. (210 points in total)

Each presentation is worth 15 points (45 points in total)

Each test is worth 10 points (20 points in total)

Attendance is worth 5 points per day + exhibition install/deinstall. (75 points)

Unexcused absences = loss of 5 points

An excused absence is issued when the instructor is informed in advance (via telephone, text, or e-mail) that you will miss class.

Lateness and / or not being prepared for class = loss of 3 points

Failure to clean up your part in the darkroom = loss of 5 points

The final grade is based on a total of 350 points.

Though this structure you can easily keep track of your grade through the semester.

Your grade reflects the number of points you earn:

350-315 = A // 314-279 = B // 278-243 = C // 206- = F

Assessment

Students are also assessed on their ability to work independently and responsibly. They will be graded on their ability to communicate with the Professor as well as amongst themselves. This also includes their ambition to create artworks as well as their willingness to budget their time for all requirements connected to this class. This assessment also includes preparation, production, and cleaning up of spaces used at Bard College Berlin.

Anticipated Costs for this Class

Each student will be expected to purchase their own film and paper for this class. We suggest buying materials with other students - it's cheaper!

Black and White Analogue Photography Materials list:

400 ASA film (or you can also try a 125 ASA film speed as well)

depending on film type between - €4- €7 per roll - sometimes you can buy in bulk (blocks of 10 rolls) and it can be cheaper

film

you will need about 5+ rolls for the class

Negative sleeves (Clear Negative sleeves)

7 stripes at 6 frames per stripe - €0.65 per sleeve
€11 - €17 for 25 packs dependent on type of sleeve

Photographic Darkroom Paper

paper prices vary:

FOMA Fomaspeed Variant 312 - Semi-Matte (RC) - 18x24

50 Sheets - Gradation: Variable = €25

ILFORD Multigrade IV 25M - Semi-Matte (RC) - 18x24

25 Sheets - Gradation: Variable = €22

ADOX Easy Print RC 312 - Pearl (RC) - 24x30 (little bigger)

10 Sheets - Gradation: Variable = €10

Polypropylen Sleeves (20x25cm 25 Per Pack) - for print protection

€9.65 for 25 pack

Negative Binder or folder of some type to keep and store your negatives organized

depends on what you get: between €2 - €10

Total amount can be between €75 - €100 for this class.

Materials suggestions and locations:

There are not that many photo stores in Berlin but here are a few where you can go to buy your materials:

General materials:

Fotopioniere, www.fotopioniere.com (they give a 5% student discount with your student ID)

Karl-Marx-Allee 87, 10243 Berlin-Friedrichshain, (U5 Strausberger Platz or Weberwiese)

Opening times: Mon - Fri: 11.00 to 20.00h, Sat. 11.00 to 18.00h

FOTOIMPEX, www.fotoimpex.de

Alte Schönhauser Str. 32b, 10119 Berlin-Mitte (U2 Weinmeister Str. - south exit!)

Opening times: Mon - Sat: 12.00 – 20.00h

Film suggestions:

FOTOIMPEX* CHM 400 Kleinbildfilm 135/36 = €4.15 (*only at Fotolmpex)

ILFORD Delta 400ASA 135/36 = €5.95 Fotolmpex

KODAK TRI-X 400ASA 135/36 = €6.09 Fotolmpex

ROLLEI RPX 400 135-36 = €5.25 at Fotolmpex

Paper suggestions:

Most important: MULTIGRADE/Variabel paper!

Paper surfaces include: Hochglänzend (high gloss), Seidenmatt (silky matt), Pearl (pearl), and Matt (matt)

Paper brands: FOMA Fomaspeed (this paper is probably the cheapest of what's out there)

Ilford, ADOX Easy Print RC 311 (also cheap paper!)

Paper size should be either: 18 x 24cm (smaller) or 24 x 30cm (bigger)

If you don't want to process yourself, you can go to these labs for processing:

(It costs about €6 per roll)

Viertel vor 8 (<https://vv8.de>), Pappelallee 7/8, 10437 Berlin (nr. M1 / U2 Eberwalderstr.)

Opening times: Mon - Fri: 10 - 7pm

Jetfoto, Dircksenstrasse 89, 10178 Berlin (nr. Alexanderplatz)

Opening times: Mon - Fri: 9 - 8pm, Sat 11 - 8pm

Pixel Grain, Rosenstrasse 17, 10178 Berlin (nr. Alexanderplatz)

Opening times: Mon - Fri: 10 - 7pm, Sunday 2 - 7pm

WEEKLY SCHEDULE*

*There may be adjustments to the timing of assignments as course progresses. All students will be informed of any new expectations and/or deadlines. It is the sole responsibility of each student to be in charge of getting their own film developed at the lab close to campus:

Please plan accordingly: this class requires a minimum of
6 - 10 hours weekly to print assignments.

January 31: Week 1

Introductions, expectations, and rules. Introduction to the darkroom.

February 7: Week 2 - In class shooting assignment and film processing demo

Cameras and Starter Kit handed out

Tutorial on how to use an analogue camera.

Assignment #1a: Shoot one roll of film during class - re: functionality of the camera

Fill in documentation form for each shot taken which must be included when you submit your assignment on Feb 28.

In-class film processing demo

February 14: Week 3 - Test and how to make a contact sheet and print

TEST in class on Camera Functionality and Film

Processed film is due at the beginning of class TODAY!

Introduction to the darkroom; how to use the enlarger, how to mix chemistry and how to make a contact sheet.

Demo: Make a contact sheet and a print in class

Assignment #1b: Make a contact sheet of your negatives

First print assignment must include:

Assignments #1a, #1b and #2 are due on February 28 and MUST INCLUDE:

1. 4 prints - the prints should include the following: a bracketed image, one should be a panning shot, one should shallow depth of field and one should include everything in focus) from the film you have have shot so far (2 rolls)
2. Copies of all of your test stripes for each image you have printed
3. All relevant information about the printing (exposure time and F-stop of your lens at your enlarger station) **MUST BE WRITTEN** on the back of your print with PENCIL
4. Contact sheets for 2 rolls of film and the log from the first contact sheet

February 21: Week 4 - IN SEARCH OF THE MIRACULOUS

Photo walk through the city - meet off campus. Details of meeting location will be provided!

February 28: Week 5 - Test and How to critique a print

TEST in class on the Darkroom.

Assignment #3 due in class.

Critique day - How to critique a photograph? What to look for? How do we analyze composition? How do we analyze the technical elements of a print?

SECTION 1: PORTRAITURE

Portraiture Assignment is due March 28:

Assignment #4: Shoot 2 rolls of film of:

5 different people and one of those people has to be YOU!.

Focus on portraying each person the best way you can. Print 1 print from each sitting of portraits you did. Five (5) prints of Five (5) different people will be due on March 28 in class.

Please check Google drive for readings on portraiture.

March 7: Week 6 - PORTRAITURE

Discussion on portraiture.

Slide show of photographers from Europe and Berlin who work with PORTRAITURE.

Each student will do a presentation of a photographer who has been assigned to them.

In class discussion based on readings found in Google drive.

March 14: Week 7- PORTRAITURE

Darkroom demos; spotting, dodging and burning

Guest artist: Alexa Vachon : www.alexavachon.com

March 21: Week 8 - PORTRAITURE

Continuation of student presentations of a photographer..

In class discussion based on readings found in Google drive.

March 28: Week 9 - PORTRAITURE - Critique day!

Assignment #4 due at the beginning of class.

SECTION 2: SETS, STORIES AND SITUATIONS

Assignment #5 is due May 2.

Assignment #5: Shoot 2 rolls of film at a minimum of 5 different locations.

Focus on portraying various types of street scenes.

Three of the prints you submit must include people.

A total of 7 prints are due.

April 4: Week 10

Discussion on composition in street photography.

Slide show of photographers from Europe and Berlin who work with PORTRAITURE.

Each student will do a presentation of a photographer that is assigned to them.

In class discussion based on readings found in Google drive.

April 11: Week 11 - Sets, Stories and Situations

Continuation of student presentations of a photographer that is assigned to them.

In class discussion based on readings found in Google drive.

SPRING BREAK: APRIL 15 - APRIL 21

Spring break off-campus assignment: (Assignment #6)

Please visit a photography exhibition in Berlin or somewhere else on your travels if you leave Berlin for Spring Break. Write a one page critique of the show. Please prepare a short presentation of the exhibition you saw (minimum of 7 (can be more) slides of the work you saw in the show). Things to consider for your 7-10 minute presentation:

Biographical history of the photographer

Explanation of the work that was being exhibited

7 - 10 images of the work that was exhibited

Description of the place where the work was exhibited?

(Was the space a project space, gallery, museum, Kunsthalle, etc)

Was the work for sale? How much was it? Was the work part of an edition? How big was the edition?

April 25: Week 12 - Sets, Stories and Situations

Assignment #6 due which includes a presentation

May 2: Week 13 - Sets, Stories and Situations - Critique day!

Assignment #5 due! - Seven (7) prints due at beginning of class

MAY 9 - MAY 17 - COMPLETION WEEK

May 11: SATURDAY! - Open Studios (4-9pm)

Please meet at the Factory at 10am to install the show.

May 16: Week 14

Final Class day - Darkroom clean up

Photo Darkroom Facilities

Platanenstrasse 98

** Guidelines given during orientation.

Facility Policies: 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. Any space in the building, private or shared, cannot be used unless permission has been granted. Any questions relating to this must be addressed to the Director of Studios Arts.
- 2) Chip access to the building will only be granted to those students currently registered for classes using the factory (after add-drop), and that have been offered orientation.
- 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 (black-taped areas) 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 the building.
- 6) All work surfaces (table and floor) must always be protected with thick plastic or cardboard. If production is to happen outside, ground / concrete is also to be protected.
- 7) Food must be always cleaned up and removed immediately. Any food used for an art project requiring refrigeration must be labeled with one’s name, and disposed of after presentation. All food must be disposed of in lidded trash cans.
- 8) All students are to always be respectful of other student artworks and personal property.
- 9) No art projects may function as weapons, or potentially cause bodily harm.
- 10) 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.
- 11) Students should always wear adequate protection (goggles, gloves, dust masks, etc.) when needed. BCB will always try to provide these items.
- 12) If you are uncertain how to use a tool or piece of equipment or require assistance, please ask for assistance (by appointment, if necessary).
- 13) Students must be aware of who else is working in the building after dark. Any curfews established by Bard College Berlin must be respected. Finishing production and cleaning up must happen before the curfew time.
- 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. All private property **MUST** be labeled and stored in its proper location.
- 16) All workshop items must be returned to the workshop when not in use.
- 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 your Professor, Studio Arts Manager, or Director of Studio

Arts. When repainting any walls that need restoration, please consult with arts staff 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.

1. Contact Studio Arts Manager: Joon Park with questions: j.park@berlin.bard.edu
2. Contact AV Manager: Janina Schabig with questions: j.schabig@berlin.bard.edu