

## FA222 The Sky Is The Limit: Scale Models For The Artist

### Module: Artistic Practice

Seminar Leader: John von Bergen  
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Office Hours:: by appointment  
Course Time: Thursdays from 3:45 - 7pm



Image: Mike Kelley “Educational Complex”, 1995

### **Course Description:**

Model-making is used for a wide-range of purposes. From the LEGOs used in a children’s bedroom to the 7-Axis CNC machine robots working high-end fabrication, the model serves many needs for different kinds of communities.

As artists we may develop our craft through the inspiration provided by others –perhaps through the advanced language of architects, or possibly by seeing children with their building blocks – to help express what links our imagination to our world. This foundational level course will move step-by-step through the conceptual and technical considerations of model-building. Our materials may include everything from found objects, paper and styrofoam to exothermic-polymers and 3D printing.

### **Requirements**

Students are expected to:

- Turn off phones during class time.
- Initiate appointments with Professor or Arts Staff outside of class time.
- Always allocate extra time for work preparation and clean-up for independent production.

- Respond to emails from the Professor in a timely manner.
- Inform Professor at the beginning of the semester if photos of student's identity, 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 the end of the semester. Failure to remove works or return spaces clean and empty may result in final grade penalization. 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](mailto:j.park@berlin.bard.edu)

### **Academic Integrity**

Bard College Berlin maintains the staunchest regard for academic integrity and expects good academic practice from students in their studies. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

### **Attendance**

Attendance at all classes is a crucial part of the education offered by Bard College Berlin. To account for minor circumstances, one absence (for our class, once-per-week course) will not affect the participation grade or require documentation. Beyond that, communication concerning the circumstance from student to Professor by email BEFORE the beginning of any missed class may allow for any non-penalized make-up assignments at the discretion of the Professor.

Please note that Bard College Berlin does not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes, regardless of the reasons for the absences, whether excused or unexcused.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR SPRING 2021: Some students might need to begin the semester remotely due to travel restrictions caused by the pandemic. In addition, all students and instructors must refrain from in-person attendance if they are feeling ill. Instructors should make efforts to offer alternatives to in-person attendance where needed, including remote participation or asynchronous options.

### **Assessment**

"FA222 The Sky Is The Limit" is a course allowing students to use model making as their main medium of production. Some materials will be provided, though some materials may need to be purchased / acquired directly by each student at their own expense depending on individual project goals. Students must produce and present artworks for this class that involve model-making as well as documentation of their models. While students are encouraged to explore any creative medium during their time at Bard College Berlin, they will be graded on the production expectations for this class. Quizzes and essays that may be assigned will also be counted towards students grading.

Students are also assessed on their ability to work independently and responsibly. They will be graded

on their ability to communicate with Professor as well 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.

### **Policy on Late Submission of Assignments**

Assignments that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (Example: B+ becomes C+). The Professor is not obliged to accept assignments that are more than 24 hours late. Where a Professor agrees to accept a late assignment, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment. Grades and comments will be returned to students in a timely fashion. Students are also entitled to make an appointment to discuss assignments and feedback during instructors' office hours.

Students receive mid- and end-of-semester grades for their seminar work. Students are entitled to make an appointment with an instructor to discuss seminar participation, or may be asked to meet with the instructor at any stage in the semester regarding class progress.

### **Grade Breakdown**

Class participation (includes attendance, maintenance of all common and private spaces used for production, communication with Professor and other students): 30 %

Homework and in-class work: 30 %

Project presentations for critiques (includes end of semester presentations): 40 %

### **Artists to be Discussed:**

Chris Burden  
Lygia Clark  
Mike Kelley  
Tom Sachs  
Tracey Snelling  
Philip Topolovac  
Kara Walker  
Fischli & Weiss

### **Schedule**

Spring classes start on Monday, February 1 and run until Friday, May 14 with spring break planned from March 29 – April 5. Completion week is from May 17 through May 21. Students are required to be on campus during completion week.

**Please note that this Syllabus – both scheduling and content – is subject to change:**

Week 1 / February 4:

- Introductions / Course overview
- Workshop basics (measuring / cutting / glueing)
- In-class assignment / homework: sketch + mock-up of The Factory or its surroundings
- Homework: visit Kunststoffe, finish rough “Factory” model

Week 2 / February 11:

- Mandatory in-class facility orientations with BCB Studio Manager Joon Park / Managing The Factory Space + Studio 6 expectations
- Team Workshop: “Small to Big” – students pair off *while respecting social distancing* to collaborate on large scale-up mockups in cardboard
- Homework: Finish cardboard model, juxtapose photo of original object + sketch + cardboard model

Week 3 / February 18:

- Seminar: Mike Kelley’s Educational Complex –  
[https://www.afterall.org/book/mike-kelley\\_educational-complex](https://www.afterall.org/book/mike-kelley_educational-complex)
- Workshop: Styrofoam cutter, light carpentry, “The Jig” + next-level finishing techniques
- Homework: Visit Modulor in Kreuzberg: <https://www.modulor.de/en/>

Reading Chapter One by John Miller’s Educational Complex available via Classroom  
(printed book on reserve shelf at BCB Library)

Planning a project based on the concept of “home” (bring sketch + materials to work with next class)

\*\*Please note: Next week will be a graded quiz on homework reading

Week 4 / February 25:

- In-class quiz based on Mike Kelley / John Miller reading
- Workshop: “Home” model production during class
- Seminar: Kara Walker / the "silhouette" / Laser Cutting
- Homework: Draw, scan, vectorize and prepare to present in class plans for a laser-cut silhouette model. Examples for project: conceptual jigsaw puzzle / shadow puppetry / surprise design. Possible materials for laser cutting: MDF or Finnboard

Week 5 / March 4:

- Review all homework + work progress to date / group crit
- Seminar: artists working with mixed media
- Workshop: intro to new sculpting techniques – mold making, woodworking, polymers

Homework: Excerpt from Megan Werner’s “[Model Making](#)” as pdf via Classroom (printed book on reserve shelf at BCB Library)

Week 6 / March 11: OFF CAMPUS in Kreuzberg

- Art studio tour of Tracey Snelling [www.traceysnelling.com](http://www.traceysnelling.com) and Philip Topolovac <https://philip-topolovac.com>. Meeting point will be announced
- Class ends at Lasercut Berlin: <https://lasercut-berlin.com>
- Prepare plans and begin production for “sculpted model” in class next week

Week 7 / March 18:

- Workshop: producing multimedia / sculpted model
- Homework: finalize model production and midterm crit

Week 8 / March 25:

- Midterm project due + class crit (no late assignments can be accepted at this stage)
- Seminar: Intro to 3D Printing workshop with Joon Park
- Homework for the break: researching 3D Printing – Pre-production / Slicing / Production /

Post-production (clean-up). Prepare files for working with computers in the Computer Pool

**\*\* Spring Break: Mar 29 – Apr 5 \*\***

Week 9 / April 8 Meeting at Computer Pool in K24

- Seminar: discussing 3D Printing + final assignment: Develop a proposal for space / environment that adequately responds to 2020. Can be reality or fantasy-based, but to be executed with multiple materials that includes one 3D printed element
- Homework: design and present to class next week a first draft sketch / collage of your final project

Week 10 / April 15:

- Crit: discuss homework final proposals / present “slicing” solution
- “Brainstorming The Prop” joint mini-workshop with Julia Hart’s theater class
- Homework: finish 3D print (scheduling to be arranged) + arranging materials

Week 11 / April 22:

- Workshop: Final project production / present “3D print” solution

Week 12 / April 29:

- Workshop: Final project production

Week 13 / May 6: FINAL CLASS

- Final group crit / end of semester closing seminar

Week 15 / May 13 Completion week

- NO CLASS, but inspection of spaces this day, all property must be removed by this date or final grade will be affected!

**Facility Guidelines:**

“The Factory” – Eichenstrasse 43

The Factory Policy Agreement

PLEASE NOTE: Covid-related safety policies will be offered in person and posted around The Factory!!

- 1) “The Factory” at BCB (Eichenstrasse 43) has space and facilities available to BCB students with an academic purpose for using the building. Mandatory in-class orientations are required to retain chip access to the Factory. Chip access to The Factory is from 7am to 10pm everyday during the semester. At 10pm students will be asked to leave the building by BCB security personnel.
- 2) Students agree to only use the common spaces that are available for their needs, and must respect private spaces that are off-limits. For requesting to reserve the dance / theater space and / or Seminar Room 6, please fill out the online [Factory Reservation Form](#). The Factory Staff will get back to you within two weekdays. (Monday - Friday).
- 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) Spray painting and handling of any hazardous (chemical or combustible) material is not allowed inside the building. Contact the Studio Arts Manager concerning working with these materials. All work surfaces (indoor and outdoor) must be properly protected with a drop cloth or a packing paper provided by the workshop.
- 6) No sandals, flip-flops, or bare feet will be allowed inside the workshop and studio 6.
- 7) 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.
- 8) If BCB workshop tools must be borrowed for a purpose outside of the building, please contact The Studio Arts Manager (by appointment).
- 9) 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.
- 10) 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. Final grades may be penalized and / or fines imposed if items are left (or renovations unfinished) by the inspection deadline.
- 11) Contact Studio Arts Manager directly with any questions: [j.park@berlin.bard.edu](mailto: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