

FA355 Embody DIY Video!

Seminar Leader: Dafna Maimon

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Course Times: Mon 15:45-19:00

Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description

Many video artists appear in their works, and turn the lens onto their own lives, environments, and bodies; they do it themselves, through themselves; creating out of a circular process. This class will explore the ways in which autobiography and DIY approaches can function as performative tools for making video art. By utilizing an embodied approach to storytelling and script creation, our aim will be to create video works that not only tell a story, but can be felt viscerally. We will relate to the filmed medium as an extension of our senses, and to the body itself, as a resource that can be both personal and political. Our goal is to unravel new approaches in communicating empathy, memories, feelings and sensations through video. As such, experiments with different self-empowering movement techniques such as Body Mind Centering, Authentic Movement, Improvisation, collaboration, and drawing will be applied to different video assignments. These methods will help us gain sensory awareness and creativity, as well as a sensitivity to the two major elements we need to learn to control as video artists: time and space. Prepare to move, play, and perform utilizing your own body as material and subject within on-site class workshops. Extreme curiosity, group participation and open-mindedness will be expected. We will also explore works from video artists and filmmakers who work with the body, performance, and autobiography as their starting point. Likewise, visiting artists and body practitioners will be invited to host workshops within the class. Students applying for this course should already have some experience in filming and be self-sufficient in editing, as the focus of this course will not be on technical video instruction. Instead, students will delve into a rigorous process and develop their own visual language that can at once analyze, criticize, and transmit visceral experiences reflecting on our existence and potential as humans in this highly digital age.

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 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

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, two absences from twice-per-week courses or the equivalent (e.g. one absence from a once-per-week course) should not affect the participation grade or require documentation. Beyond that, instructors are free to set policies about whether they wish to see documentation for further excused absences and about how further unexcused absences affect the participation grade.

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.

The full Bard College Berlin attendance policy can be found in the Student Handbook, Section 2.8.

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

Embody DIY Video! is a course where students utilize playful experiments with different body oriented practices as a starting point for creating video art in order to access their topics from an embodied place. We will work in video and other mediums, with collaborative exercises and working methods that will culminate in a final video shown at the Open Studios. The initial phase of experimentation may include performative assignments, drawing, writing as well as set- or prop-creation, and workshops as well as smaller-scale video assignments. Students will be expected to do ALL assignments and participate actively in class, and to be able to structure their time well for videos that require several stages of production. Even though this is a video-class, the creative process and conceptual procedures that build up toward making the videos will also be part of the assessment; essentially the students entire process in all it's aspects is assessed, and the process itself is as important as any specific outcome. This means that the earlier experimentations, the students own research, class participation, sketches, rough-cuts of videos, and exercises across mediums are equally important for the grading. If students fail to show earlier

rough-cuts, sketches plans and their process in class, the final videos will not be accepted for grading and cannot be shown in the final presentation. 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 and capacity 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 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+). 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

Communication and Class participation: Communication includes communication habits with Professor, in class and via email, and among other students. Class Participation includes attendance, engagement in class workshops, in class work, critiques and conversations and maintenance of all common and private spaces used for production / rehearsal: % 30

Assignments and Project presentations for critiques includes: all assignments, sketches, homework and production phases, the students own ongoing research end of semester presentations / videos / performances: % 35

Final Video Assignment % 35

Schedule

Note: The classes between February 1st-15th will take place online! A zoom link will be provided before the class. May 10th there will be no class, this class will be replaced by additional individual talks during the making of

the final video.

Note:

-Due to in class workshops and visiting guest artists, there may be 1-2 classes that take the format of a longer 4-6 hour workshop, and therefore some classes may be extended or rescheduled. In such cases the extension will be made up for by shortening another class. You will be informed of these schedule changes ahead of time in class.

- Please always come/be ready to move physically in this class; we will explore almost weekly exercises that incorporate physical movement, so make sure you wear warm enough and comfortable clothing.

Key Assignments:

1. *Storyboarding An Emotional Landscape*- Due Feb 8th
2. *A Trilogy to Remember* - Due March 1st and 8th
3. *Corruption & Collaboration* Due March 22nd
4. - *Final Video; This Body of Work* - Several Stages and Deadlines: April 12th, 19th, 26th, and May 3rd and 10th
5. Screening at Open Studios (date t.b.a)

Scheduled class times will be available online under the relevant course heading:

<https://berlin.bard.edu/academics/courses/>

COURSE STRUCTURE

Class 1 February 1st (this class is ONLINE)

Introduction to class, working methods and theme: How can autobiography be experienced through the body? What is it to embody something? What constitutes a body and where are its limits? How do we translate a somatic process to video art? A look into DIY Approaches, and video artists working in this manner i.e. Joan Jonas, Maya Deren, Mona Hatoum, Shana Moulton

In class somatic exercise: *Introduce the body & Let it be heard*

Assignment: Create a Storyboard for a 3 min DIY film in which you explore the emotional landscape of a body.

Zoom link:

<https://bard.zoom.us/j/85117134131?pwd=a2wyOEUxWTRqQlp6ZHVIZHFaaHZ1QT09>

Class 2 February 8th (this class is ONLINE)

Viewing video art examples and discussing artists that work with the body, autobiography, performance, choreography and somatic processes in video i.e.; Ed Atkins, Adrian Piper, Eli Cortiñas, Mark Leckey, Hannah Black etc.

Review of assignment: Storyboarding An Emotional Landscape

Class 3 February 15th (this class is ONLINE)

In class Body Mind Centering and performance to camera workshop by guest artist Andrew Kerton

Class 4 February 22nd

Screening: Trent Harris - *The Beaver Trilogy*. In class discussion and analysis of the epic cult documentary/fiction hybrid that raises endless questions about the nature of performance, the ethics of representation and filmmaking.

Assignment: *A Trilogy to Remember* Due March 1st & 8th

Mandatory in-class facility orientations and AV orientation.

Class 5 March 1st

Review of the 1st cut of *A Trilogy to Remember*

In class: I am aware exercise

Class 6 March 8th

Review of the final cut of *A Trilogy to Remember*

A look into the work of Jeremy Shaw, Stanya Kahn and Arthur Jafa

Class 7 March 15th

Lecture and Studio Visit by/with artist Liz Magic Laser, along with in class exercises

Liz Magic Laser is a video and performance artist based in NYC. Her work intervenes in semi-public spaces such as bank vestibules, movie theaters and newsrooms, involving collaborations with actors, surgeons, political strategists and motorcycle gang members. Her recent work explores the efficacy of new age techniques and psychological methods active in both corporate culture and political movements.

Assignment: *Corruption & Collaboration*: collaborating in pairs you will create a 2 min video sketch that explores a power structure or dynamic relevant to your life - Due March 22nd

Class 8th March 22nd

Review Corruption & Collaboration

A look into the work of Lorna Simpson, Keren Cytter, Agnes Varda, Pilvi Takala

Introduction and Brainstorm for the Final assignment: This Body of Work

Assignment: Sketches, mood boards, storyboard presentations Due April 12th

NO CLASS Mar 29 – Apr 5: Spring Break

Class 9 April 12th

Lecture & Presentations of sketches, mood boards, storyboards scripts, production plans etc, for the final video

Class 10 April 19th

Review Rough Cut 1 of final video: *This Body of Work*

In class somatic exercise: Authentic movement & Drawing

Class 11 April 26th

Review Rough Cut 2 of final video: *This Body of Work*

Class 12: An additional scheduled individual talk between 12 April - May 2nd exact time t.b.c with each student

Class 13 May 3rd

Reviewing Final Videos & Final Critique
Planning open studios screening

May 10th

NO CLASS - this class will be replaced by additional individual talks while making the final video

Please Note: This syllabus may be subject to changes in regard to content as well as dates!

From February 22nd on all classes will be held on site in person as long as this is possible. In case of lockdowns or other restrictions some classes may be rescheduled and adapted to be held online over zoom. The first three classes are planned to be held over zoom in order to accommodate a blended teaching format. If students miss classes due to Covid-19 related restrictions class materials, and video links can be provided to students online, as well as viewing of video works. Critiques can also be held over zoom if needed. As this class will have a cap of only 6 students the class can when there are no larger restrictions take place in person at Bard.

Movement and collaborative exercises will be held outdoors as much as possible in order to allow for additional social distancing, these may also be adapted to be done over zoom if needed.

Facility Guidelines:

“The Factory” – Eichenstrasse 43

The Factory Policy Agreement

- 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

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

Photo Darkroom Facilities – Platanenstrasse 98 (downstairs)

Computer Pool and Media Lab – Kuckhoffstrasse 24 (first floor)

** Guidelines to be offered during orientations.