

BCB Spring Semester 2020

FA 211: Photography & Social Practice

Seminar Leader: April Gertler

Course Time: Tuesday, 2 - 5.15pm

Email: a.gertler@bard.berlin.edu

Phone: 0177 617 1652

Office Hours: by appointment - Tuesdays 1 - 2pm

Course Description

Social practice is an art medium which aims to facilitate discussion and interpersonal interactions. Although socially engaged art typically focuses on creating social and/or political change through collaboration with individuals, communities, and institutions in the creation of participatory art, this class will focus on the interaction between the audience, social systems, and the artist through aesthetics, collaboration, methodology, media strategies, and activism, using photography as a primary tool in those explorations. This course will concentrate on research development while at the same time focusing on image making. The class will use the city as a backdrop - many class meetings will take place outside, in the city itself. This photography class is for the student who has a clear understanding of how to use a 35mm analogue film camera, has their own camera, and is able work in the darkroom, mix chemistry, and print their own images. A precondition of enrollment is a beginner's photo course at BCB or at the student's home institution.

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 any-time is not permitted and will still be considered student's property that will be expected to be uninstalled and removed.
- Purchase their own film and photographic paper when needed

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.

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

This class is based on a rubric system of grading. Everything is graded on a points system. Here is the breakdown:

Prints and Presentations will be due almost weekly.

Therefore each time prints are due it is worth: 25 points. (210 points)

Attendance is worth 10 points per day plus exhibition install/deinstall: (140 points)

Unexcused absences = minus 10 points

An excused absence is issued when the instructor is informed in advance by at least 2 hours before class (via text or e-mail) that you will miss class.

Lateness and / or not being prepared for class = loss of 5 points

Failure to clean up your part in the darkroom/classroom = 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 // 242-207 = D // 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

We recommend buying materials with other students - it's cheaper!

Photography stores:

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

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

FOTOIMPEX GmbH

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

Opening times: Mon - Sat: 12.00 – 20.00 Uhr

Film options:

The cost of a roll of B/W 35mm film can be between €4.50 - €7:

*FOTOIMPEX CHM 400 Kleinbildfilm 135/36 = €4.15

(*available at FotoImpex only: www.fotoimpex.de)

ILFORD Delta 400ASA 135/36 = €5.95 (based on FotoImpex website)

KODAK TRI-X 400ASA 135/36 = €6.09 (based on FotoImpex website)

Paper options:

ADOX Easy Print RC 311 - Hochglänzend/Glossy - 18x24 / 25 Blatt - Gradation: variabel
= +/- €13.00 (Only at FotoImpex)

Foma Variant - Multigrade - glossy or satin - 18x24 / 50 sheets
= +/- €23.00 (at FotoPioneer)

ADOX MCC 112 - Semi-Matte (Fibre) - 18x24 / 100 Sheets - Gradation: Variable
= +/- €94.00 (at FotoImpex)

Processing:

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 well as adjustments of content as course progresses. All students will be informed of any new expectations and / or deadlines.

January 28: Week 1

Introduction to the class, introduction of each student to the class

Tour of the facilities, including the Factory and distribution of materials:

(film, photographic paper etc)

All students are required to prepare a digital presentation in the form of a mood board exploring your thoughts on what social practices is and how it might relate to photography. Due on February 4.

The 20 - 25 min presentation must be a minimum of 12 pages and include 2 video clips not longer than 3 minutes each and 1 song or part thereof (what song could be the soundtrack to your work?).

The mood board should include sample images such as examples of images by other photographers (maybe a style that is interesting), ideas that correspond to your concept/idea, images could also be textures, patterns, shapes, magazine clippings, recipes etc

February 4: Week 2

Mood boards presentations (20 - 25 min each)

Assignment #1: THE EXCHANGE

Find an object you don't necessarily need to have/keep (something simple like a pencil/ pen, packet of tissues etc) and photograph it. Find someone on the street and ask them if they will trade that object with you for something they have. Take a photo of that person and the object. Repeat this process 7 times, each time photographing the person and object separately. Document the location, time and date of the exchange. You are not allowed to exchange with anyone you know or anyone who knows someone you know. These people should be complete strangers.

Assignment due: February 28

15 prints are due, these prints can be digital prints or B/W darkroom prints

February 11: Week 3 - NO CLASS

February 18: Week 4

Bring an initial 7 work prints to class and discuss the experience you had

February 28: Week 5

The assignment: THE EXCHANGE (#1) is due today

15 prints (8 objects and 7 portraits)

March 3: Week 6

Assignment #2: PSYCHO-GEOGRAPHICAL WALK

Students will be put into teams of 2 and each team will be assigned a small geographical area. That area must be researched, explored and considered as the students create a walk through their designated area for the other class members.

A series of 15 photographic images must be created or found to accompany the walk and the theme of the walk.

Assignment due: March 28 (SATURDAY!)

March 10: Week 7

Presentations are due by each group to hear about the walk and what has been discovered, explored and found. 8 work prints, in addition to one video clip are due per group

March 17: Week 8

We will do a test walk of some of the walks today! That means your photographs and video clips, and anything else you want to add to your walk have to be ready.

March 24: Week 9

We will do a test walk of some of the walks today! That means your photographs and video clips, and anything else you want to add to your walk have to be ready.

March 28 (SATURDAY!)

10 - 5pm: Final critique of this project, therefore we will be walking all the walks today!

March 31: Week 10

Demo on printing with FIBER paper today

Assignment #3: THE DINNER

The assignment includes making dinner for a group of people - each student in the class can invite 2

people additional people to the dinner. The class will shop for the food, make the food and serve the food to the dinner guests with the understanding that the guests will be photographed during the meal. What's different about this assignment is that the prints **MUST** be made on FIBER paper!

The reason is that the refuse from the foods will be used to create natural ink dyes which will be used to dye the images that are printed from the dinner.

Each student will be required to submit 12 images from the dinner - and each student must use a minimum of 5 dye baths to dye their prints.

Dinner: Negotiation of this date will be discussed

Assignment due: April 28

APRIL 6 - APRIL 10 : SPRING BREAK

April 14: Week 11

Workshop demo in class: Making natural vegetable dyes and testing photographic paper

Menu discussion

April 17 or 18?: Week 11

Dinner served for Assignment #3

April 21: Week 12

Bring to work print images to class for an initial critique

April 28: Week 13

Assignment #3 is due

12 prints due - final critique

May 5: Week 14

Open Studio this week?

The Factory

Facility Policies – 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.
- 21) Contact Studio Arts Manager (Joon Park) 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).
 - 10) 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 with any questions: av@berlin.bard.edu

Photo Darkroom Facilities

Platanenstrasse 98

** Guidelines given during orientation.

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Contact AV Manager: Janina Schabig with questions: j.schabig@berlin.bard.edu