

# FA284 Research-Creation: Artistic Approaches to German History, Memory of Forced Migration and the War

Seminar Leader: Dorothea von Hantelmann, Marion Detjen

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Course Times: Wed 9:00-12.15; there will be classes and workshops on Saturdays

Office Hours: Tue 10-12 am (Marion Detjen), Mon 10-12 am (Dorothea von Hantelmann)

*Please note:* Due to off campus visits, in class workshops and the curation of an exhibition some classes may be extended or rescheduled. The extension will be made up for by shortening another class. You will be informed of these schedule changes ahead of time in class.

## Course Description

May 2020 will see the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe. While Germany's unconditional surrender on May 8 1945 brought a halt to the mass extermination and warfare that had killed between 40 and 50 million people, overwhelmingly large movements of forced migration continued well into the post-war period and eventually led to the "making of the modern refugee" (Peter Gatrell), the international refugee regime of our day. Flight and expulsion have since then attained an integral place in collective memory in Germany, being represented in museums and memorials, as well as family verbal and artifactual archives. These memories were reactivated in the "summer of migration" in 2015, when German society welcomed a large number of migrants with surprising openness and willingness to help, a public mood that was regarded by some as unsustainable. Through methods of research-creation this course examines the connections between the history and memory of wartime and postwar forced migration in Germany, and the history and memory of contemporary forced migration from the Middle East and elsewhere. At museums and memorial sites we experience sources from the German post-war period (films, literature, music), asking what assumptions they convey, and what stories they tell about German and non-German refugees, expellees and displaced persons after the war. Participants then develop their own individual projects, artistic in spirit and relating historical sources to today's phenomena of forced migration, finding parallels, contradictions, and fruitful references. These projects shall in the second half of the semester be visualised, performed, translated into artistic projects, experimenting with new ideas and new forms to discover the underlying relationships between the histories and memories of forced migration, of war and revolution, that compete with each other and/or complement each other in today's Germany. The resulting projects will be exhibited to a broader audience in a public event together with the Centre Marc Bloch.

## **Requirements**

The experimental character of the class, combining historical research and artistic work, requires active participation and a special commitment at the end of the term for setting up the exhibition on May 8<sup>th</sup>.

Students are also expected to:

- Turn off phones during the entire class and workshop time
- Be prepared to present assignments/presentations without reminder
- Engage in critiques and discussions

### **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 and workshops is expected. More than two absences (that is absences from two sessions of 90 minutes) in a semester can significantly affect the participation grade for the course. Please inform us about any potential absence in advance. Please consult the Student Handbook for regulations governing periods of illness or leaves of absence. Tardiness after ten minutes might be considered an absence.

### **Assignments, Assessment and grade breakdown**

There will be reading assignments of up to 50 pages weekly for the first four sessions, and shorter reading assignments scattered throughout the semester. The texts will all be uploaded in the Google Classroom of the Seminar, and the main readings will also be accessible on a reserved shelf in the library.

Active participation in class discussions and communication with students and professors:  
20% of your grade

Midterm Essay of ca. 2000 words on one of the topics discussed so far. Prompts will be given in advance:  
20% of your grade - due March 6th

Presentation in class of your individual artistic project:  
20% of your grade - on March 11th or March 18th

Final artistic project, as shown in the exhibition, accompanied by a brief exhibition text (ca. 100 words):  
40% of your grade - due May 1st

*Please note: A presentation of your project on May 8 as part of our conference will be part of your assignments and your grade. Therefore attendance for the entire day of the conference is mandatory.*

### **Policy on Late Submission of Papers**

Assignments that are up to 24 hours late can be downgraded one full grade (Example: B+ becomes C+). Professors are not obliged to accept assignments that are more than 24 hours late. Where

Professors agree to accept a late assignment, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline and might not receive a grade of higher than C. Thereafter, the student might receive a failing grade for the assignment.

## **Schedule**

### 1) Wednesday, January 29: Introduction – Art, History, and Politics, and the Institutions of the “Modern Refugee”, part I

Reading:

– Peter Gatrell: *The Making of the Modern Refugee* (2013), chapter 3: “Europe Uprooted: Refugee Crises at Mid-Century and ‘Durable Solutions’”, pp. 89-117.

### 2) Wednesday, February 5:

How it started – Personal transatlantic networks after the Fall of France 1940

Reading:

– Anna Seghers: *Transit* (novel; 1944), translated from the German by Margot Bettauer Dembo (2013).

### 3) Saturday, February 8, 11.00 – 14.00: Artistic Research

Joined class with Heba Amin and students from her class “Contemporary Narratives in New Media: Systems, Mechanisms, and the Instruments of Power”

Reading:

– Mark Godfrey: *The Artist as Historian* (2007), October No. 120, pp. 140-172.

### 4) Wednesday, February 19: Art, History, and Politics, and the Institutions of the “Modern Refugee” part II

AV-Intro

Reading:

– Peter Gatrell: *The Making of the Modern Refugee* (2013), chapter 4: “‘Nothing Except Commas’: Jews, Palestinians, and the Torment of Displacement”, pp. 118-147.

### 5) Wednesday, February 26: Excursion to the “Foundation Flight, Expulsion, Reconciliation” Archive

Film:

– „Report on the Refugee Situation, January 1949“, by Rudolf Kipp,  
<https://apps.medienberatung.online/asylrecht/filmsichtung/index.html>.

Reading:

<https://www.dw.com/en/what-germanys-postwar-refugees-taught-us-about-integration/a-18575558>

### 6) Friday, February 28, 20:00-21:30, and Saturday, February 29, 12:00-14:30, 15:00-17:00: Six hours Workshop with artist Penny Yassour

7) Wednesday, March 11: Working with documentary sources and presentation of project ideas and concepts, part I

8) Wednesday, March 18: Working with documentary sources and presentation of project ideas and concepts, part II

9) 6 hour AV-Production Workshop with Janina Schabig on Saturday, March 28

*April 6 – 12: Spring break*

10) Wednesday, April 15: Production

11) Wednesday, April 22: Production

12) Wednesday, April 29: Curatorial Session and Exhibition Texts

13) Wednesday, May 6 – Friday, May 7: Exhibition set up

May 7: 6 pm Exhibition opening

May 8: 10 am to 6 pm Conference

May 9: De-installation of exhibition