

## **TH150 body/material**

Seminar Leader: Maria F. Scaroni

Times: Mondays 9:00-12:15, **No class** on Jan 3<sup>rd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, but a long session on Sat March 21<sup>st</sup> instead

Email: [m.scaroni@berlin.bard.edu](mailto:m.scaroni@berlin.bard.edu)

Office Hours: by appointment

### **Course Description**

body/material is a dramaturgy of dances, where dance is intended primarily as a movement of attention and a technology of ecstasy, practiced alone yet together. The work invites the participants to look and treat the body as material, addressing its organic functions and spiritual potential as well as its cultural implications. The nature of the approach is eclectic, and it weaves techniques that will promote alignment, awareness and strength. In this class, we'll experiment a variety of bodily and mental practices, such as 'chi' cultivation techniques such as Qi Gong (energy circulation technique) and Pranayama (breathing techniques), spine and limbs patterns explorations (body connectivity, proprioceptive systems) and Contact Improvisation/hands-on work/experiential anatomy (touch and imagination to feel how the body functions). Improvisation, fiction and free movement play are central to access physical states of enhanced consciousness. We will use journeys and extended duration to flirt with the notion of ritual and personal/collective transformation, relying on trance and exertion, boredom, frustration and contemplation as tactics.

Dancing offers itself as a playground where concepts can be digested and embodied; dancing can be a lived place of speculation, ideal to test forms of thought especially around otherness, borders, mind body spirit, identity paradoxes, togetherness and difference, coexistence, interdependence. The intention is to come to an understanding or to a state of questioning of the body's borders, acknowledging it as multiple and idiosyncratic: codified, yet desirous of ecstasy and play, and seeking grounding and tenderness.

This laboratory suits anybody who is interested in the body as a site of knowledge, as a problem or a hoax or mystery, as a forest of symbols or simply as a phenomenon to be felt, visually, kinesthetically and sonically. A certain stamina is required, but no specific skill, therefore is open to any moving body.

### **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](mailto:j.park@berlin.bard.edu)

- Students are expected to arrive 5-10 minutes before each class starts, to have time to change clothes if needed and settle down; to wear clean, warm, comfortable training clothes as we will work physically and sometimes use touch contact, so it is essential for everybody to feel safe and have a pleasant time to observe basics hygienic standards for a movement class (clean socks and clothes in general)

### **Academic Integrity**

Bard College Berlin maintains the staunchest regard for academic integrity and expects good academic practice from students in their studies. Syllabi should note that, 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 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.

### **Assessment**

There will be 2 assignments given throughout the course:

One mid-term assignment in the form of a written or recorded somatic poem, which will result from a series of physical tasks/instructions given by the teacher. The deadline is by latest **March 15<sup>th</sup> 2020**.

A final written assignment, in the form of a short self-evaluation essay of the student's personal learning process during the semester. The written assignment will need to be handed via email by **May 10<sup>th</sup> 2020**. It will consist in a short essay of max 1500 words (min 500) and will not require research other than a process of self-inquiry regarding the experience done in the course.

Other assignments will be given during each class, in the form of individual and collaborative short performances or writing tasks.

### **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**

The student's grade will be assigned according to 3 aspects: the level of participation during all classes (intended as an active, focused, cooperative engagement with the activities proposed) (50%), the level of commitment and personal contribution both at a physical and speculative level (35%), the 2 assignments (written or recorded somatic poem and 1 written self-evaluation) (30%). Please note that for this class punctuality is of great importance, and being late to more than one class will affect the student's grade.

## **Schedule**

Spring 2020 classes start on Monday, January 27 and run until Friday, May 15 with spring break planned from Monday, April 6 – Monday, April 13. Completion week is from May 11 - 15. Students are required to be on campus during completion week.

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

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

<https://berlin.bard.edu/for-students/academic-calendars/>

## **Schedule Spring 2020**

### **WEEK 1**

Jan 27<sup>th</sup> Mon 09:00 – 12:15

Focus: physical body/dance as movement of attention

Warm up: constructive rest, technology of breath, Matsunaga's meridian stretches, Chi Gong Shaking, primal activation (compression, push and pull)/Setting boundaries ("enough")

### **WEEK 2**

Feb 17<sup>th</sup> Mon 09:00 – 12:15

Focus: physical body/dance as movement of attention

Warm up: constructive rest, technology of breath, Matsunaga's meridian stretches, Chi Gong Proprioceptive systems/"The body as a radio receiver"/"The sensation is the image"/ Elements of improvisation and witnessing aliveness

### **WEEK 3**

Feb 24<sup>th</sup> Mon 09:00 – 12:15

Focus: physical body/dance as movement of attention

Warm up: constructive rest, technology of breath, Matsunaga's meridian stretches, Chi Gong Cognition (breath sound language and movement)/Sci-fi bodies /Elements of Improvisation and witnessing aliveness

### **WEEK 4**

Mar 2<sup>nd</sup> Mon 09:00 – 12:15

Focus: physical body/dance as movement of attention/psychic body

Warm up: constructive rest, technology of breath, Matsunaga's meridian stretches, Chi Gong Introduction to Authentic Movement

WEEK 5

Mar 9<sup>th</sup> Mon 09:00 – 12:15

Focus: physical body/dance as movement of attention/psychic body

Warm up: constructive rest, technology of breath, Matsunaga's meridian stretches, Chi Gong  
Authentic Movement/Authentic Performing

WEEK 6

Mar 16<sup>th</sup> Mon 09:00 – 12:15

Focus: physical body/dance as movement of attention/emotional body

Warm up: constructive rest, technology of breath, Matsunaga's meridian stretches, Chi Gong  
Authentic Movement/Authentic Performing/'body/material' partners journey

WEEK 7

Mar 21<sup>st</sup> Sat 11:00 to 15:00

Focus: technologies of ecstasy

Warm up: small dance (Paxton), legs puzzles

Totentanz ecstatic dance/Cauldron of dance tales/Reference to Barbara Ehrenreich "Dancing in the Streets, A History of Collective Joy".

WEEK 8

Mar 30<sup>th</sup> Mon 09:00 – 12:15

Focus: technologies of ecstasy

Osho Dynamic Meditation/Reflections on the social function of collective ecstasy

WEEK 9

Apr 20<sup>th</sup> 09:00 – 12:15

Focus: technologies of ecstasy

A diagonal history of Contact Improvisation/Working with collective bodies (piles)

WEEK 10

Apr 27 Mon 09:00 – 12:15

Focus: technologies of ecstasy

Hi-Tech Soul dance journey (kinesthetic and visual witnessing)/Silent Conversations

WEEK 11

May 4<sup>th</sup> Mon 09:00 – 12:15

Focus: technologies of ecstasy

Technodrift (outdoors)/Collective support structures/Flying Carpet journey

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](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

MacLab and Photo Darkroom Facilities – Platanenstrasse 98 (downstairs)

\*\* Guidelines to be offered during orientations.