

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

Module: Artistic Practice

Seminar Leader: John von Bergen
Email: j.vonbergen@berlin.bard.edu
Office Hours:: Only by appointment
Course Time: Wednesdays from 3:45 - 7pm



Image: BCB studio visit with Tracey Snelling, Spring 2020

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, exothermic-polymers and 3D printing.

Requirements

Students are expected to:

- Turn off phones during class time.
- Be prepared before class begins with materials needed for working.
- Initiate appointments with Professor or Arts Staff outside of class time when needed.
- 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, or works in progress are NOT to be taken and / or used by 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, 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 work arranged at the discretion of 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 2022: Some students may 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.

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 which centers around model building. Quizzes and essays that may be assigned will also be counted towards students' grades.

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 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:

Beverly Buchanan
Chris Burden
Vija Celmins
Lygia Clark
Takahiro Iwasaki
Mike Kelley
Tom Sachs
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:

Before Week 1: Please email Professor before midnight on February 1st images of no more than 4 previous artworks you have made OR examples of art / architecture that inspires you: j.vonbergen@berlin.bard.edu They will be shared during our first class on February 2nd for discussion. Please Note: If your work involves video, please only offer screenshots as jpegs!

Week 1 / February 2:

- Course overview / Reviewing student jpegs with Introductions
- Workshop basics with paper / foam-core / cardboard (measuring / cutting / assembling)
- In-class assignment: sketch + begin a 1:25 foam core model of The Factory building or territory
- Homework:
 - 1) Finish 1:25 model by Feb 9
 - 2) Read first chapter of John Miller's "Mike Kelley – Educational Complex" (PDF in Classroom)

Week 2 / February 9:

- Review "Factory" homework / In-class quiz based on "Educational Complex"
- In-class orientations with BCB Studio Manager Joon Park + fixing schedule for Studio 6 time-slots
- Workshop TBA
- Homework due Feb 23: 1:100 model using finnboard with the theme "Home"

Week 3 / February 16

**** Possible Off-Campus Meet - (details to be offered in February) ****

Week 4 / February 23:

- Review 1:100 “Home” model
- Workshop: discussing laser cutting and vector software + silhouette imagery
- Homework due March 2:
 - 1) Draw, scan, vectorize and prepare to present in class plans for a laser-cut silhouette model. Examples of projects: the artist’s jigsaw puzzle, shadow puppetry, etc. Material used for laser cutting will be finnboard.
 - 2) Bring object to class for enlarging as 5:1 model

Week 5 / March 2:

- Review homework (files will be outsourced for cutting and later developed in class)
- Workshop: begin “5:1” large scale-up mockups in polystyrene (rigid foam sheet)
- Homework due March 9: “5:1” model in progress

Week 6 / March 9:

- Discussing 3D Printing + new “polymer” options for model-building
- Workshop: assembling laser-cut finnboard forms + continued production on “5:1” model
- Homework due March 16: present both “laser-cut” + “5:1” models as finished

Week 7 / March 16:

- Review “laser-cut” + “5:1” models
- Workshop discussion of model presentation + documentation
- Homework:
 - 1) Reserve Studio 7 for documentation time-slots.
 - 2) Due March 30: 1:1 model made of only one material. Source object + material of your choosing.

Week 8 / March 23: **** Meeting off-campus at [Kunststoffe](#), 4pm**

- Collaborative 1-day *cadavre exquis* workshop experiment to build one “group model” completely with found objects.

Week 9 / March 30

- Review 1:1 model assignment
- Homework due April 6:
 - 1) Present “1:1” model
 - 2) Send jpeg photo documentation of all projects to date. **Photos are to be emailed to JvB before class.** Selected images will be used for the BCB fanzine “Artseen” (produced by BCB faculty April Gertler and John Kleckner, presented at the end of the semester).

Week 10 / April 6

- Review photo documentation of semester’s progress.
- Seminar: “The Artist’s Memorial”
- Homework due April 20: Bring final project concept in the form of one large drawing + materials needed to class. Assignment is 1:25 model as a “Future Memorial”. Drawing must be prepared to be presented as a large drawing fixed to the wall (notebooks / A4 paper unacceptable!).

**** Spring Break: Apr 11 - 18 ****

Week 11 / April 20:

- Discuss final project plans for “Memorial”
- Workshop: production
- Homework due for presenting and grading on May 4: “Memorial” model

Week 12 / April 27

- Artist lecture + group crit with artist [Tracey Snelling](#)

Week 13 / May 4

- **Final “Memorial” projects due and will be graded this day**

- Final group crit / end of semester closing seminar / last class

Week 14 / (Day for meeting to be announced)

- Preparations and installing of works for end of semester exhibition (TBA).

Week 15 / (Completion week / no class)

- Removal of all property / space inspections

Facility Guidelines

“The Factory” – Eichenstrasse 43

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

AV Facilities – P98 (downstairs)

- 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)

** Guidelines to be offered during orientations.

Computer Pool and Media Lab – Kuckhoffstrasse 24 (upstairs)

** Guidelines to be offered during orientations.