

TH 180 Rethinking Regie: An Introduction to Directing

Seminar Leader: Julia Hart
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Office Hours: **Wednesdays 2:30-3:30pm** (by appointment)

Course Description

This course will introduce students to the basics of directing theater in the context of contemporary German theater. The course has a two-fold structure: First, students will study different theater aesthetics and styles by looking at the work of directors currently working in Berlin and discuss the various definitions of the controversial term Regietheater or “director’s theater.” What does directing look like in Germany today and what is the role of the director in the rehearsal? Students will be introduced to basic directing techniques in class and learn exercises for staging text-based material. What are the steps a director in Germany typically goes through when directing a play? What are different ways of developing a conceptual approach to a piece and how can this affect your work with actors? Second, students in this course will work together throughout the semester with students in the "Introduction to Playwriting" seminar, instructed by Cory Tamler. In a workshop setting, students will form teams of directors, playwrights and actors to explore different forms of collaboration in the rehearsal room. Students will work on staged readings and short scenes that will culminate in a theater presentation in the Factory at the end of the semester.

Requirements

Students are expected to:

- Turn off phones during class time.
- Initiate appointments with the 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 their professors in a timely manner.
- Inform their professors 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 highest standards of academic integrity and expects students to adhere to these standards at all times. 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.

- 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.

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

Assessment

Scene Study Requirements:

- choose one scene that you would like to explore and conceptualise, devise, and rehearse as director.
- Two additional three hour rehearsals per scene to be completed outside of class (one rehearsal per week)
- Scenes will be discussed and critiqued on
- Scenes can be presented at the Performance Factory

Scene Study Assessment

- Students will be graded on their preparation, completion of rehearsal reports (sent via email, 1-2 paragraphs in length), and the ability to discuss their ideas about the situation on stage, the given circumstances of the scene as laid out by the playwright, the action, the setting, and the characters in the scene. Students will be also be assessed on their use of space, lighting, movement/gesture, acting style chosen, role of language in the piece and clear intention of what is being explored in the scene.

Directing Workshops

- Students will direct non-verbal scenes, short monologues, and short two person scenes that we will rehearse and discuss in class during the first half of the semester. These assignments will be part of the class participation grade.

Written requirements:

Writing Assignments

Please note: All written assignments should be submitted by 11:59pm on the deadline on Google Classroom

Production Abstract (due 18.03.2023)

Students will think as directors and take the beginning steps of developing a conceptual approach to directing a production of Anja Hilling's play *Sense*. Students will present their ideas together in class on 18.03.2023 and each student will write their thoughts in a brief summary (see below).

Production Abstract (1000 words) should contain the following:

- A discussion of your conceptual ideas concerning Anja Hilling's play *Sense*. Describe your conceptual approach to your theatre production. State which ideas, questions, and styles your team would explore and include initial ideas about changes to the script (if applicable), music (live or recorded), sound (live or recorded), video (live camera, pre-recorded videos), casting choices (i.e. cross-casting, casting multiples) and the role or position of the audience in the theatre.

Scene Study Essay (due 19.5.2023)

Scene Study Essay should contain the following:

- Rehearsal process: how the scene was chosen, a brief analysis of the scene (the situation, the language, the characters, the central conflict if there is one), descriptions from rehearsal, including what rehearsal (as actors or directors) methods and exercises were implemented, how they were implemented, and any relevant challenges and observations from rehearsals
- Evaluation of the scene presentation and a critical evaluation of the rehearsal. Critical reflection of your work as a director.

Policy on Late Submission of Papers

Syllabi for core and elective classes should note or refer to the following policy from the Student Handbook on the submission of essays: essays *that are up to 24 hours late will be*

downgraded one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where an instructor agrees to accept a late essay, 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.

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 should be submitted by the new deadline agreed upon by both parties. 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.

*Course readings will be posted on Google Classroom each week. The plays *Sense* and *Nightblind* are in the book *Theatre Cafe Plays Two* on reserve in the library.

Grade Breakdown

Participation 30%
Written Assignments 30%
Scene Study 40%

Schedule

1.2 What is directing?

Directing Etude 1

Katie Mitchell Adjectives exercise.

First Meeting / Collaboration Exercise with Playwriting students

8.2 What is theatre? What is performance? Introduction/Review of concepts of theatre and performance .

Reading:

Introduction to Theatre and Performance Studies Erika Fischer-Lichte. 1-20

Visit to a Small Planet by Elinor Fuchs

Anja Hilling: *Sense* (2007)

Workshop- Narration on Stage, Playing with “Spielweisen” using Anja Hilling’s play *Sense*

*Staged Reading Exercise from *Sense* and Discussion

*discussion of *Visit to a Small Planet* with Playwriting Seminar

***8pm Theatre Visit with Playwriting Seminar**

19.2 (Zoom) A Look at the German Director / What is Regietheater?

Reading:

History of German Theatre: 1-7 (on Google Classroom and in the library on reserve) Ed. Simon Williams and Maike Hamburger
“Introduction. The dissensus of Regie: rethinking director’s theater” Peter Boehnisch. 1-11

German Theatre Dictionary: Regietheater 313-314

Directing Scenes and Senses: The thinking of Regie.

Peter Boenisch 97-117,164-189.

*Brief oral presentations on: Jette Steckel, Christopher Rüping, Leonie Böhm, Nicolas Stemann, Susanne Kennedy, Yael Ronan, Karabulut

Pinar

26.2 (Zoom)

Thinking about directing. Comparing approaches.

Reading: *A Director Prepares* Anne Bogart (1-155)

The Director’s Craft. Katie Mitchell. 7-74

8.3

Script Analysis / Staging Scenes- First Steps / Developing a Conceptual Approach

Reading:

Backwards and Forwards. A Technical Manual for Reading

Plays. David Ball. 9-99 Preparing a conceptual approach

Nightblind by Darja Stocker

Assignment: Thought Exercise on Google Classroom

18.3 2-5pm

Production Abstract Presentation and Discussion for *Sense*

Directing Workshop Part One *Nightblind*

*Conceptual Meeting with Playwriting Students

***8pm Theatre Visit**

19.3 12-3pm

Directing Workshop Part Two *Nightblind*:

Working with movement, choreography and gesture - staging

specific moments and images / Groups formed for Scene
Exercise

- 22.3 Scene Exercise Rehearsals
 Assignments: See Google Classroom
 One three hour rehearsal outside of class
- 29.3 Scene Exercise Rehearsals
 Assignments: See Google Classroom
 One three hour rehearsal outside of class
- 5.4 Spring Break
- 12.4. Scene Exercise Presentation / Discussion and Feedback
 Table Reading / Meeting with Playwriting Students
 (Groups formed for Final Projects)
- 19.4 * Final Project Group Rehearsals
 Assignments: See Google Classroom
 One three hour rehearsal outside of class
- 30.4 2-5pm** Final Project Rehearsals
 Assignments: See Google Classroom
 One three hour rehearsal outside of class
- 3.5 Final Project Rehearsals
 Assignments: See Google Classroom
 One three hour rehearsal outside of class
- 10.5 Final Project Presentations in Class
- 12.5 Performance Factory

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 – Platanenstrasse 98 (downstairs)

- 1) BCB’s AV (Audio / Visual) facilities provide a limited quantity of AV equipment to support 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 and social distancing conditions. Borrowing equipment is currently implemented by scheduling an advance appointment through this link: <https://janinaschabig.youcanbook.me/> 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.
- 1) 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.
- 2) We strongly suggest personally visiting the facilities to inquire and reserve before borrowing equipment!
- 3) AV equipment is limited at BCB. Whenever possible students are encouraged to use their own devices (computers, cameras) for production purposes.
- 4) Contact AV Staff directly with any questions: av@berlin.bard.edu

Photo Darkroom Facilities – Platanenstrasse 98 (downstairs)

Computer Pool and Media Lab – Kuckhoffstrasse 24 (upstairs)

** Guidelines to be offered during orientations.