

## FA317 Advanced Painting: Illusionistic Surfaces

Seminar Leader: **John Kleckner**

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Course Times: **Mon 09:30-12:45**

Location: **Direktorenhaus at Monopol, Provinzstr. 40-44**

Office Hours: **Mon, Thu 13:00-14:00 or by appointment**

### Course Description

This advanced studio course is designed to cultivate technical and conceptual abilities within the field of contemporary painting. A central focus of this course will be ideas, issues, and techniques relating to realism, illusionism, and mimetic representation in paint. We take our starting point from Donald Judd's observation that "actual space is intrinsically more powerful and specific than paint on a flat surface" to investigate possibilities and problems of "realistic" representation. Students will develop and pursue individual creative projects while reflecting on the power and politics of the gaze / vantage point / perspectival space, while considering mimesis as metaphor, scrutinizing surface textures, and experiencing the differences between using photographic references, direct observation, and imagination. Artworks will primarily be made with oil and acrylic paints, but experimentation with other materials is encouraged and supported. Weekly sessions will include slideshow presentations, readings, and discussions, yet the majority of our time will be spent painting.

Class size is limited to ensure each student has adequate studio space and additional time with the instructor for individual feedback and support. Evaluations and critiques will occur at midterm and at the end of term. The semester culminates in the "Open Studios" exhibition and the "ArtSeen" zine of student artworks.

Studio work is the priority; this course will require a significant amount of time working outside of class sessions. Previous experience with painting required. Prospective students should email inquiries to the professor directly at: [j.kleckner@berlin.bard.edu](mailto:j.kleckner@berlin.bard.edu)

### 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 the professor in a timely manner.
- Inform the professor at the beginning of the semester if photos of a 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)

### 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 III Academic Misconduct.

### Attendance

- Attendance of all classes is expected.
- More than one unexcused absence will significantly lower the final grade for the course.
- Tardiness after 10 minutes will be considered an absence.
- Students are expected to attend all off-campus classes punctually, from start to finish. If there is a scheduling / travel conflict, the professor must be informed in advance.
- Bard College Berlin may 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.
- *SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR SPRING 2024*: for the health of the BCB community students and instructors should not attend class in-person if they test positive for Covid.

### Assessment

Students will receive midterm and final grades for their work.

Students are assessed on their willingness to experiment, their contributions exchanging feedback during critiques, and on their ability to work effectively together in collaborative groups and independently throughout the semester. Grading will reflect the creative ambition, time invested, strength of concept, technical execution, and overall quality of the finished artworks. This assessment will also include the student's ability to adequately budget their time for working and clean-up of the materials and spaces used at BCB.

70% Work (meaning all artworks made for class, presented for critiques, and assignments)

30% Attendance, participation in discussions, professionalism (being efficient, tidy, respectful)

Assignments are due at the beginning of the class session. Detailed information about assignments and projects will be explained in class. Assignments and the dates described in this syllabus are subject to change by the instructor. Students will be notified of any changes to the syllabus in class and via email. Students must regularly check their BCB email accounts.

Students are encouraged to make appointments with the instructor during office hours to discuss assignments and participation, or they may be asked to meet with the instructor at any stage in the semester regarding class progress.

*IMPORTANT- Please be aware that basic art materials will be provided, though some materials may need to be purchased directly by each student at their own expense depending on individual project goals.*

### Policy on Late Submission of Artworks / Presentations

Assignments (projects & 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 the Professor agrees to accept a late assignment, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline and cannot receive a grade higher than C. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment.

## Schedule

- Week 1: Jan 29 Introduction to course, expectations, materials, and facilities.  
Overview of responsible studio etiquette, safe handling and disposal of materials.  
*Assignment: Research (living) painters. Read Amy Sillman's "On Color" essay.*
- Wk 2: Feb 5 Share painter research. Discuss assigned essay. Read and discuss Judd's *Specific Objects* essay. Set-up studio workspaces. Stretch canvases.  
*Assignment: Begin Painting Project #1*
- Wk 3: Feb 12 Discussion and demonstration: Paint as material, discuss the properties of various types of paint. Surface preparations (Gesso, imprägnierung, rabbit-skin glue, acrylic mediums, pre-primed canvas.) Considering composition, *Under-Over-At-Through*.  
*Assignment: Finish Painting Project #1*
- Wk 4: Feb 19 Slideshow and discussion: Mixing accurate colors. Overview of color theory and terminology, color wheels, Hue-Value-Chroma, crispness, local color, color constancy. Hands-on paint mixing and matching colors exercise.  
*Assignment: Begin Painting Project #2. Plus, mix 6 accurate colors from found color swatches.*
- Wk 5: Feb 26 Compare painting from photographic references with direct observation. Mimetic representation, realism, figuration, illusionism. Discuss the possibilities and problems of representational painting in an era of ubiquitous high-res digital photography and Photoshop.  
*Assignment: Finish Painting Project #2*
- Wk 6: Mar 4 Slideshow and discussion: painting from imagination and visual memory, the uncanny, oneiric, and surreal.  
*Assignment: Begin Painting Project #3 (Midterm)*
- Wk 7: Mar 11 Slideshow and discussion: Defining the subject, content, and context of a painting.  
*Assignment: Finish Project #3 (Midterm)*
- Wk 8: Mar 18 *Project #3 (Midterm) due today. Midterm presentations & group critiques.*

*Spring Break ~~~ Spring Break ~~~ Spring Break (March 25-29)*

Wk 9: Apr 1 Slideshow and discussion: edges, perspective, spatial depth, fore- and background, atmospheric space & light. Accompanying their final project, students will write a short statement illuminating the concepts and intentions of their project and/or practice. This text should explain and clarify the “what, why, how” of their projects.

*Assignment: Begin Painting Project #4. Write 1st draft of artist statement.*

Wk 10: Apr 8 Slideshow and discussion: politics of the gaze, who / what is being seen / shown, objectification, implied power dynamics, how is the subject represented.

*Assignment: Finish Painting Project #4. Bring plans, sketches, materials to start Final Projects.*

Wk 11: Apr 15 Slideshow: paint handling, style, gesture-- heavy worked or lightly touched.

*Assignment: Begin Painting Project #5 (Final Project) and 2nd draft of artist statement.*

Wk 12: Apr 22 Studio work day. Individual meetings to review Final Project progress.

*Assignment: Finish Project #5 (Final Project) and final draft of artist statement.*

Wk 13: Apr 29 Installation of artworks, group critique of Final Projects.

Wk 14: May 6 Continue group critique of Final Projects.

Friday, May 10 “Open Studios” exhibition from 4-8pm. (date / time may change.)

May 13 - 17 Completion Week. Studios must be clean, artworks & personal materials removed.

#### Facility Guidelines:

Direktorenhaus at Monopol (Provinzstraße 40-44)

- 1) The Direktorenhaus at Monopol (Provinzstraße 40-44) 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 Direktorenhaus. Chip access to the Direktorenhaus is from 7am to 10pm everyday during the semester.
- 2) Students agree to only use the common spaces that are available for their needs, and must respect private spaces that are off-limits.
- 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) 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 open. Electrical items must be unplugged when not in use.
- 7) If BCB workshop tools must be borrowed for a purpose outside of the building, please contact The Studio Arts Manager (by appointment).
- 8) 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.
- 9) During completion week, any space used by a student must be returned empty with clean walls and floors. All garbage must be bagged and properly disposed of. Final grades may be penalized and / or fines imposed if items are left (or renovations unfinished) by the inspection deadline.
- 10) Contact Studio Arts Manager directly with any questions: [j.park@berlin.bard.edu](mailto:j.park@berlin.bard.edu)