

HI255 Research-Creation: Developing Artistic Responses to Memories of Exile and Friendship in Dark Times

Seminar Leader: Marion Detjen

Artistic Instructors: Lena Kocutar, Victoria Martínez, Dachil Sado (UdK)

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Thursday afternoons: 14:00-17:15 or 13:00-16:15 or 12.30-17.15, see the schedule; extra hours for the workshops will be compensated.

Office Hours: Thu 11:00-13:00 and by appointment

Course Description

This cross-campus class, taught in collaboration with Universidad de los Andes (Bogotá, Colombia) and University of the Witwatersrand (Johannesburg, South Africa) explores the way research-based art-making generates new kinds of knowledge about exile, displacement, and diaspora. This semester, in view of the global crisis accelerated by the events in Israel/Palestine and the destruction of the public sphere, the BCB class focuses on friendship and memories of friendship in exile and “dark times”, as practiced and theorized by Hannah Arendt. In the “Research” part of the class we will read and possibly challenge her seminal texts on friendship as well as parts of her correspondence with friends. We will also read some of the poetry that she referred to, and discuss the political and aesthetical implications of all these writings for our contemporary experience. Students will develop a topic for their individual research, which has to be historically and theoretically informed but is free to make use, to reject or ignore Arendt’s concepts. In the shared online sessions with the Bogotá and the Johannesburg groups we will learn about their responses to the “dark times”, to the memory of exile, and the destruction of the public sphere, and discuss individual student projects with a global perspective.

In the “Creation” part of the course, young artists and BCB alums will, during workshops and in individual sessions, help students translate their research projects into artistic projects, in a medium of their choice. Projects from all three campuses will be presented in public exhibitions in Berlin, Bogotá

and Johannesburg, and on the Research Creation website. The art production will be supervised, and the exhibition will be curated by BCB faculty Dorothea von Hantelmann.

Requirements

Students are 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 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 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.

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.

Assignments, Assessment, and Grade Breakdown

The experimental character of the class, combining historical research, theoretical readings and artistic work in a cross-campus connected learning environment, requires active participation and a special commitment at the end of the term for setting up a final exhibition project.

Active participation in class discussions and communication with students and professors will make up 30% of your grade: 15% first half of the semester / 15% second half of the semester.

There will be reading assignments over the first half of the semester. The texts will be uploaded on Brightspace, the learning platform of the cross-campus class. You will be asked to write a short ungraded response paper and start working on your individual projects with the artistic instructors in week 3. For your Midterm you will write a 1500 words essay reflecting on the readings by Benjamin and Fanon. This paper makes 15% of your grade, as well as the written and oral presentation of your first project draft. Your main contribution will be the **final artistic project**, accompanied by a brief exhibition text (ca. 100 words). Your work will be presented both in physical exhibitions and on the Research Creation Website as well as the OSUN Website, and it is your responsibility to provide all the materials in a suitable form in time. The exhibition in Berlin will be around May 8/9/10. The final project will be 40% of your grade.

Deadlines:

- First project idea and short response paper: Feb 14
- Midterm Essay (1500 words) March 8
- Written and oral presentation of your first project draft (1000 words): April 3
- Submission of artistic project and exhibition text (ca. 100 words): May 3
- Submission of complete materials of the project for the website: May 10

Grade Breakdown:

- Class participation (includes attendance, maintenance of all common and private spaces used for production / rehearsal, communication with Professor and other students): 30%
- Midterm Essay: 15%
- First Project Draft: 15%
- Final Project, including the exhibition text and the presentation in the exhibition and on the website: 40%

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 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.

Schedule

Week 1: Feb 1, 14:00-17:15: Friendship, Solidarity, Comradeship in Dark Times

Readings:

- Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963): "Concerning Violence" – pp. 35-39.
- Hannah Arendt's letters to Benno von Wiese (1965) – 6 pages
- Ingeborg Bachmann's poem "Every Day" – 1 page
- Berthold Brecht's poem "To Those Born Later" (1939) – 2 pages
- Hannah Arendt: "The Personality of Waldemar Gurian" (1955) – pp. 38-42.

Week 2: Feb 8, 14:00-17:15: Friendship and Enlightenment

Reading:

- Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Nathan the Wise* (1779)

Factory Introduction and AV-Introduction

Week 3: Feb 15, 12:30-17:30: Individual Project Development - First Workshop with Artistic Instructors

First of two workshops with Artistic Instructors dedicated to develop your individual projects, lead by Lena Kocutar and Victoria Martínez.

Reading:

- Hannah Arendt, "Thoughts about Lessing" (1959), I and II (pp. 3-17)

To Do:

- Bring an image, a story, a song, an object that could become a starting point for a (research) project;
- Submit, the night before, one paragraph free-style writing in response to the readings.

Week 4: Feb 22: 14:00-17:15: Friendship and the Political

Readings:

- Hannah Arendt, "Thoughts about Lessing" (1959), III and IV (pp. 17-31)

Week 5: Feb 29, 13:00- 16.15: First joint online cross-campus class with Uniandes and Wits (leadership: Wits)

Online presentation of the students' works and exhibition at Witwatersrand University

Reading:

- Stuart Hall, *The Fateful Triangle* (1994): on nation and diaspora, pp 158-174

Week 6: March 7, 13:00- 16.15: Excursion to the Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg Museum

Excursion to Exhibition "[We call it revolution. Transnational Activism in Berlin](#)".

Week 7: March 14, 13:00- 16.15: Second joint online cross-campus class with Uniandes and Wits (leadership: Uniandes)

Reading:

- Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963): Conclusion

Week 8: March 21, 14:00 – 17.15: Walter Benjamin’s Loneliness

Reading:

- Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History" (1940)

To Do:

- Submit, the night before, your Midterm essay on Benjamin and Arendt’s friendship to Benjamin

SPRING BREAK

Week 9: April 4, 12:30 – 17:30: Individual Project Development - Second Workshop with Artistic Instructors

Second workshop with Artistic Instructors dedicated to develop your individual projects, lead by Lena Kocutar and Dachil Sado.

To Do:

- Submit, the night before, a first draft of your individual project, including visual/audio materials, and a paragraph explaining the project plus a time schedule for its finalization.

Week 10: April 11: 14:00 – 17.15 Third joint online cross-campus class with Uniandes and Wits (leadership: BCB)

To Do:

- Bring excerpts from your Midterm essay, your first draft of your individual project, and your response paper from week 3, to be shared and discussed with the other students.

Week 11: April 18, 14:00 - 17.15: Fourth joint online cross-campus with Uniandes and Wits: Writing exhibition texts

To Do:

- Bring a draft of your exhibition text

Week 12: April 25: No class

Finalize your projects; individual meetings

Week 13: May 2, 14:00 – 17.15:

Preparation of the exhibition

Week 14: Wednesday, May 8, or Thursday, May 9: Exhibition Event (install and de-install)

Facility Guidelines:

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 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 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.
- 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) Computer Pool and Media Lab – Kuckhoffstrasse 24 (first floor)

** Guidelines to be offered during orientations.