

## FA109 Painting Fundamentals

Seminar Leader: **John Kleckner**

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Course Time: **Monday 9:30-12:45**

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

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

### Course Description

This course is an introduction to materials, techniques, and concepts of painting; it establishes the foundation for studio practice using oil and water-based paints. From practical demonstrations students will learn the specific qualities of various paints, how to stretch canvases, prepare painting surfaces, and apply paint using traditional and experimental techniques. Assignments will cultivate knowledge of: color mixing (hue / value / chroma), color temperature, structuring compositions, perspectival space, brushwork, surface texture, and controlling shadow and light. Students will work from direct observation, use photographic references, and develop abstractions. Studio work will be supported by readings, discussions, and slide presentations that engage relevant themes in contemporary painting discourse. Special attention will be given in classroom discussions to painters (past and present) with strong connections to the city of Berlin. Class size is limited to ensure each student has adequate studio space and time with the professor for individual feedback and support. Evaluations and critiques occur at midterm and at the end of the term. The semester culminates in the "Open Studios" exhibition and the "ArtSeen" zine publication of student artworks. This course will require a significant amount of time working outside of class sessions.

### Requirements

Students are expected to:

- Turn off phones during class time.
- Attend ALL class sessions, especially the group critiques.
- Students are expected to finish work for all assignments and projects on time.
- Allocate extra time for preparation and clean-up.
- Practice good studio etiquette, respectfully use shared work spaces and return shared materials to the proper shelves.
- Initiate appointments with the Professor or arts staff outside of class time.
- Respond to emails from the professor in a timely manner.
- Inform their professors at the beginning of the semester if photos of the 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 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.

## Accessibility

Bard College Berlin is committed to inclusion and providing equal access to all students; we uphold and maintain all aspects of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and Section 3 of the German Disability Equality Act of April 27, 2002 (Federal Law Gazette I p. 1468). If you have a disability, or think you may have a disability, please contact the Disability Accommodation Coordinator, Atticus Kleen, ([accommodations@berlin.bard.edu](mailto:accommodations@berlin.bard.edu)) to request an official accommodation.

Requests for longer-term accommodations should be made as early as possible to ensure adequate time for coordination and planning. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and may require advance notice to implement.

If you have already been approved for accommodations with the Disability Accommodation Coordinator, please arrange to meet with me outside of class so that we can develop an implementation plan.

Students may face extenuating circumstances related to various personal or external factors, which impact their academic performance. While these circumstances often do not fall within the legal framework of Disability Accommodations, Bard College Berlin is committed to supporting students experiencing such circumstances. A student needing a short extension or a replacement assignment because of an extenuating circumstance is encouraged to make arrangements directly with instructors if possible. If further support is needed, please visit the [Bard College Berlin Accessibility page](#). Questions about this process can be directed to James Harker ([j.harker@berlin.bard.edu](mailto:j.harker@berlin.bard.edu)) or Maria Anderson-Long ([m.andersonlong@berlin.bard.edu](mailto:m.andersonlong@berlin.bard.edu)).

## Attendance

Students are expected to attend ALL class sessions on time. Attendance is a crucial part of the education offered by Bard College Berlin. To account for minor circumstances, ONE absence from a once-per-week course should not affect the grade or require documentation. More than one unexcused absence will significantly lower the final grade.

Tardiness more than 10 minutes will be considered an absence.

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.

### Assessment & Grade Breakdown

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 both 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 critiques / discussions, and professionalism (being serious, efficient, 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 (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 may 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.

### Schedule

Week 1: Sept 2 Introduction to course, expectations, studio, and materials. Set-up work areas. Overview of responsible studio etiquette, safe handling & disposal of materials. Value studies (warm & cool tones), sketching elements of a composition using only Titanium White, Ultramarine Blue, Burnt Umber (acrylic paint.)  
Assignment: Paint value studies. Research living painters. Read Amy Sillman's essay, "On Color."

Wk 2: Sept 9 Discussion of the properties of various paints (acrylic, oil, gouache, enamel, etc.) Surface preparations. Gesso, sizing, priming, imprägnierung, (non-)absorbent grounds. Students will prepare heavyweight paper with gesso, imprägnierung, and acrylic paint (titanium white or toned).  
Share painter research. Discuss assigned essay. Review value studies.  
Assignment: 100 Color Grid assignment (from Ken Buhler, Bard Annandale.)

*Berlin Art Week – Wednesday, Sept 11 - Sunday, Sept 15*

Wk 3: Sept 16 Mixing accurate colors in acrylic. Basic color theory, Hue-Value-Chroma, crispening (color relativity), local color, color constancy, and temperature.  
Assignment: Mix acrylic paint to match 9 found colors. Finish 1 acrylic painting exploring color temperature & color relativity.

Wk 4: Sept 23 Stretching canvas. Introduction to oil paint. Overview of direct and indirect painting methods.  
Assignment: Begin indirect painting, working with washes of paint, then blocking in values.

Wk 5: Sept 30 Continue working on indirect oil paintings, adding color through glazing and scumbling. Slide presentation & discussion.  
Assignment: Finish these works by the next session.

Wk 6: Oct 7 Direct oil painting technique– *alla prima*. Paint handling, gesture, surface texture, qualities of brushstrokes-- heavy handed or lightly touched.  
Assignment: Finish direct technique paintings by the next session.

Wk 7: Oct 14 Midterm group critiques, assessing works and progress thus far.

*Fall Break week ~~~ Fall Break week ~~~ Fall Break week ~~~ (October 21-25)*

Wk 8: Oct 28 *Faces, figures, photos*. Using photographic references, how and why. What is lost or gained when painting from photos. What are the possibilities, problems, and politics of translating photos into hand-painted pictures. Using appropriated and/or self-generated photos. Considering the politics of the *gaze*; who is looking, what is being seen and shown. Slide presentation & discussion.  
Assignment: Begin photo/figure painting.

Wk 9: Nov 4 Studio work session, individual meetings.  
Assignment: Finish photo/figure painting.

Wk 10: Nov 11 Abstracting from nature. Abstract or non-objective. Slide presentation & discussion.

Assignment: Begin Final Projects

Wk 11: Nov 18 Studio work session, individual meetings to discuss Final Projects.

Assignment: Continue Final Projects

Wk 12: Nov 25 Studio work session, individual meetings to discuss Final Projects.

Assignment: Finish Final Project

Wk 13: Dec 2 Installation of artworks. Presentation & critique of Final Projects.

Wk 14: Dec 9 Presentation & critique of Final Projects, continued.

Friday, Dec 13 "Open Studios" exhibition from 4-8pm. (date / time may change.)

Dec 16 - 20 Completion Week. Studios must be clean, artworks & personal materials removed.

#### Policy on the use of BCB Facilities:

1. The Factory (Eichenstrasse 43) and Monopol (Provinzstr 40-44) at BCB offer space and facilities to BCB art students. Chip access is from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. every day, including the weekends during the semester. The buildings cannot be used outside these hours.
2. Fire exits and lanes must be kept clear of any obstructions.
3. Students agree only to use the designated class spaces or communal workshops. Respecting the building and its facilities is crucial, as they are shared resources that need to be preserved for the benefit of all.
4. For your safety and the safety of others, smoking and drinking alcohol are strictly prohibited anywhere inside the building.
5. Unauthorized events and/or parties are not permitted. Projects using open flames (such as candles, torches, lanterns, fireworks, etc.) are not permitted inside the building.
6. Spray painting and handling any hazardous (chemical or combustible) material is not permitted inside the building.
7. All work surfaces (indoor and outdoor) must be adequately protected with the workshop's drop cloth before spray painting or working with plaster.
8. During completion week, any space used by a student must be emptied, with clean walls and floors. All garbage must be adequately disposed of. Final grades may be affected or withheld if any item remains by the inspection deadline.
9. When leaving the building, students must ensure all lights are turned off, all electrical items must be unplugged, and doors MUST be closed.
10. Contact the Studio art manager directly with any questions: [j.park@berlin.bard.edu](mailto:j.park@berlin.bard.edu)

Emergency phone numbers:

Police (calling from a German landline or cellphone): 110

Fire (calling from a German landline or cellphone): 112

Ambulance and Paramedics (calling from a German landline or cellphone): 112

Out-of-Hours Medical Care (calling from a German landline or cellphone) : 116 117