

# FA 104 Introduction to the Art of Porcelain Making

Seminar Leader: Maria Volokhova  
Email: m.volokhova@berlin.bard.edu  
Course times: Wednesday, 9:00 - 12:15 am.  
Office hours : by appointment

## **Course Description**

This studio course introduces basic techniques for developing porcelain sculptures and tableware. It explores plaster mold building, slip casting, assembling, glazing, and decoration methods with porcelain clay. The goal is to create independently designed artistic objects or tableware using these fundamental techniques.

## **Requirements**

- Weekly participation in exercises: porcelain casting and mold building.
- Enjoyment of handworking methods and a willingness to experiment.
- A material fee of 50 Euros per student.
- An intensive and systematic approach to working.
- Demonstrate a considerate shared studio practice, such as cleaning up the studio after each session

Students are expected to:

- Turn off phones during 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.

## **Accommodations**

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 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.anderson-long@berlin.bard.edu](mailto:m.anderson-long@berlin.bard.edu)).

## **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.

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**

Presentation of the first experiments: evidence of understanding of the technical aspects of the porcelain casting process

Mid - Term examination:

- casted and assembled experimental works

- reflection and documentation of the learning process and technical requirements

Final presentation:

- developing of the own artistic or design project
- self-developed plaster mold, casting and finishing of the piece with porcelain slip.
- documentation of the artistic development of the project.
- The pieces have to be presented latest by May, 7th.

### **Assignments**

**Porcelain Making Basics** is a course that allows students to use porcelain as their medium of production. Most tools, plaster molds for initial experiments, and other materials will be provided. The slip and firing costs need to be covered directly by each student at an additional cost of €50 per student. Students must produce and present artworks for this class that are finished and fired in porcelain. While students are encouraged to explore any creative medium during their time at Bard College, they will be graded on their sculpture production for this class. Documentation for mid-term and end-of-term examinations should provide a clear record of the artistic process. This may be submitted in the form of handmade sketches, sketchbooks, notes, diary-like entries, and compiled into a PDF document.

### **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.

### **Grade Breakdown**

First experiments : 30%  
Final Project : 30%  
Artistic process/Documentation: 20%  
Participation: 20%

### **Schedule**

- 
- 29.1. The long tradition of the white gold, practical introduction of porcelain casting
  - 5.2. First slip casting experiments
- 12.2. Casting and assembling pieces
- 19.2. Casting and assembling pieces
- 26.2. Glazing first experiments. Basics about the decoration technics
  - 5.3. Introduction: making of plaster mold
- 12.3. Presentation and discussion 1. phase of the project
- 19.3. Mid-term presentation: own project development
- 26.3. Plaster mold making for the project piece
  - 2.4. Porcelain casting using own plaster mold
  - 9.4. Porcelain casting, assembling
- Spring break
- 23.4. Final corrections before the bisque firing
- 30.4. Glazing project pieces. Cleaning the studio.
  - 7.5. Final presentation of the projects.

### **Grades Submission**

Mid-Term assessment grades will be available students after March. 1st.

End-Term grades will be available in the first week of June.

For graduating students this will be available already after May, 12th. 2025

### **Policy on the use of 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