

## FA317 Advanced Painting: Illusionistic Surfaces

Seminar Leader: **John Kleckner & Lotte Leerschool**

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Course Times: **Thursday 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 realistic depiction, illusionistic space, and mimetic representation in paint. Students will develop and pursue individual projects while engaging in group discussions of: the politics of the gaze, the painted canvas as object (surface) and illusionistic window, the triarchy of subject-content-context in artworks, mimesis as visual metaphor, the narrative implications of vantage point, using shadow and light to suggest (the passage of) time, and histories of linear perspective and fictive space. Students will gain experience and understanding of the differences between painting from 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 slide presentations, readings, and discussions, yet the majority of class 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 at the BCB arts building at Monopol Berlin.

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 instructor directly at: [j.kleckner@berlin.bard.edu](mailto:j.kleckner@berlin.bard.edu)

### Requirements

Students are expected to:

- Turn off phones during class time.
- Attend all class sessions punctually and for the full duration of class, especially group critique sessions.
- Finish 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 their professors 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 by 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.

### 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.andersonlong@berlin.bard.edu](mailto:m.andersonlong@berlin.bard.edu)).

### Attendance

Students are expected to attend ALL class sessions on time and for the full duration of class.

*Tardiness more than 15 minutes will be considered an absence.*

Attendance at all classes is a crucial part of the education offered by Bard College Berlin. To account for minor circumstances, ONE absence from this once-per-week course should not affect the grade or require documentation. More than one unexcused absence will significantly lower the final grade.

Bard College Berlin may not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes (4 class sessions), 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

Students will receive a midterm grade and a final grade for this course.

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

### Grade Breakdown

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

30% Attendance, participation in critiques / discussions, and professionalism (being punctual, effective, 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, projects, or 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: Jan 30** Introduction to course, expectations, materials, and facilities. Allocate studios. Overview of responsible studio etiquette, safe handling and disposal of materials.  
**Assignment:** *Read Amy Sillman's "On Color" essay. Make sketches, plans for Painting Project #1.*
- Wk 2: Feb 6** Discuss assigned reading. Share art supply stores info & Berlin gallery resources. Finish setting up studio workspaces. Reiterate studio etiquette, safe handling and disposal of materials. Canvas stretching demonstration. Begin painting.  
**Assignment:** *Begin Painting Project #1*
- Wk 3: Feb 13** Slideshow and discussion on the painted canvas as object and illusionistic window, mimesis as visual metaphor, a spectrum of recognizability from seemingly real to non-objective abstraction, paint handling (gesture) and surface tactility (chunky impasto to slick flatness), locating Art in the object or the experience, cultivating a distinctive specific point of view. Studio work session.  
**Assignment:** *Finish Painting Project #1*
- Wk 4: Feb 20** **Class trip to the Brücke Museum**, view exhibition, "Lise Gujer: A New Way of Painting."  
**Assignment:** *Begin Painting Project #2.*
- Wk 5: Feb 27** Slideshow and discussion on Light / Shadow / Time, how the depiction of light implies the passage of time, color as light and how to use color more effectively. Studio work.  
**Assignment:** *Finish Painting Project #2.*
- Wk 6: Mar 6** **Group Critiques (Artists #1-5)** followed by a studio work session.  
**Assignment:** *Begin Painting Project #3 (Midterm)*
- Wk 7: Mar 13** **Group Critiques (Artists #6-10).** followed by a studio work session.  
**Assignment:** *Finish Project #3. (Midterm)*
- Wk 8: Mar 20** *Project #3 (Midterm) due today. Group Critiques (Artists #11-15).* Studio work.  
**Assignment:** *Begin Painting Project #4. (Final Project)*
- Wk 9: Mar 27** Slideshow and discussion on the power and politics of the painted gaze, the agency of the subject, how is the subject represented, working from photographic references versus direct observation or imagination. Studio work.  
**Assignment:** *Continue Painting Project #4 (Final Project)*

- Wk 10: Apr 3 Slideshow and discussion on vantage points leading to narrative, histories of depicting fictive space, atmospheric lighting conditions, edges, (unsharp) focus, optical lenses and photography, screens and digital-space. Studio work.  
*Assignment: Continue Painting Project #4 (Final Project.)*
- Wk 11: Apr 10 Group critiques of Final Projects (#1-5).  
  
*Spring Break ~~~ Spring Break ~~~ Spring Break (April 14-21)*
- Wk 12: Apr 24 Group critiques of Final Projects (#6-10).  
*Assignment: Finish Painting Project #4 (Final Project.)*
- Wk 13: May 1 *No Class today – Federal Holiday*
- Wk 14: May 8 Final Projects due today. Group critiques of Final Projects (#11-15).
- Friday, May 9 Install artworks from 10am-5pm. “Open Studios” exhibition at Monopol from 6-9pm. (date / time subject to change.)
- May 12 - 16 Completion Week. Studios must be cleaned, BCB tools / art supplies returned. All student artworks & personal materials removed.

### BCB Arts Facility Guidelines

Direktorenhaus at Monopol (Provinzstraße 40-44)

1. BCB has facilities and studio spaces at the Factory (Eichenstraße 43) and Monopol (Provinzstraße 40-44) for BCB art students to use. Chip card access to these buildings is from 8am to 10pm daily, including weekends during the semester. The facilities cannot be used outside these hours.
2. Fire exits and lanes must be kept clear of any obstructions.
3. Students agree to use only the designated class spaces and communal workshops. Respecting the buildings, studio spaces, and guidelines is crucial, these 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 and waste must be safely and properly disposed of. Final grades may be affected or withheld if items remain 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 completely closed.
10. Please contact Studio Arts Manager, Joon Park 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

## Schedule

- Week 1: Jan 30 Introduction to course, expectations, materials, and facilities. Allocate studios. Overview of responsible studio etiquette, safe handling and disposal of materials.  
*Assignment:* Read Amy Sillman's "On Color" essay. Make sketches, plans for first painting.
- Wk 2: Feb 6 Discuss assigned reading. Slideshow & discussion on ????. Finish setting up studio workspaces. Stretch canvases.  
*Assignment:* Begin Painting Project #1
- Wk 3: Feb 13 Slideshow & discussion on ????.  
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 20 Slideshow and discussion: Mixing accurate colors. Overview of color theory and terminology, color wheels, Hue-Value-Chroma, crispening, 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 27 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 6 Slideshow and discussion: painting from imagination and visual memory, the uncanny, oneiric, and surreal.  
*Assignment:* Begin Painting Project #3 (Midterm)
- Wk 7: Mar 13 Slideshow and discussion: Defining the subject, content, and context of a painting.  
*Assignment:* Finish Project #3 (Midterm)
- Wk 8: Mar 20 *Project #3 (Midterm)* due today. Midterm presentations & group critiques.

- Wk 9: Mar 27 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.*
- Wk 10: Apr 3 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 10 Slideshow: paint handling, style, gesture-- heavy worked or lightly touched.  
*Assignment: Begin Painting Project #5 (Final Project)*
- Spring Break ~~~ Spring Break ~~~ Spring Break (April 14-21)*
- Wk 12: Apr 24 Studio work day. Individual meetings to review Final Project progress.  
*Assignment: Finish Project #5 (Final Project) and final draft of artist statement.*
- Wk 13: May 1 *No Class today – Federal Holiday*
- Wk 14: May 8 Installation of artworks, group critique of Final Projects.
- Friday, May 9 “Open Studios” exhibition at Monopol from 6-9pm. (date / time subject to change.)
- May 12 - 16 Completion Week. Studios must be cleaned, BCB tools / art supplies returned. All student artworks & personal materials removed.