

FA 104 , Introduction to the Art of Porcelain Making

Seminar Leader: Maria Volokhova
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Office Hours: Wed. 9:00 - 12:15

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.
- 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 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) 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) or Maria Anderson-Long (m.andersonlong@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

Introduction to the Art of Porcelain Making is a course allowing the students to use the porcelain as their Medium of production. The tools and some basic plaster molds for the experimenting will be provided. Though other materials like clay, plaster and the porcelain slip may need to be acquired directly by each student at their own expense / the fee of 50 euro covers the full material expenses. While students are encouraged to explore any creative medium during their time at Bard College Berlin, they will be graded on their own porcelain project for this class.

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

- casted and assembled experimental works
- reflection and documentation of the learning process and technical requirements

- Developing and creating of the own artistic project :
- self-developed plaster mold, casting and finishing of the piece with porcelain slip.
- all student projects in this class have to be finished until May, 6th. 2026
- Ability to work independently and responsibly. This also includes the ambition to create artworks as well as the willingness to budget time for all requirements connected to this class.
- Ability to communicate with the teacher as well amongst themselves. Communication
- Preparation, production and cleaning up of spaces used at the ceramics studio.

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 will receive feedback for their course work during and at the end of the semester. 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

- 28.1. The long tradition of the white gold, practical introduction of porcelain casting
- 4.2. First slip casting experiments
- 11.2. Casting and assembling pieces
- 18.2. Casting and assembling pieces
- 25.2. Glazing first experiments. Basics about the decoration technics
- 4.3. Introduction: making of plaster mold
- 11.3. Presentation and discussion 1. phase of the project
- 18.3. Own project development
- 25.3. Plaster mold making for the project piece
- Spring break
- 8.4. Porcelain casting using own plaster mold
- 15.4. Porcelain casting, assembling

- 22.4. Final corrections before the bisque firing
- 29.4. Glazing project pieces. Cleaning the studio.
- 6.5. Final presentation of the projects.
- 13.5. Completion week / Inspection .

Grades Submission

End-Term grades will be available on May 29, 2026
For graduating students this will be available on May 8, 2026

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. Fire exits and lanes must be kept clear of any obstructions.
2. 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.
3. For your safety and the safety of others, smoking and drinking alcohol are strictly prohibited anywhere inside the building.
4. 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.
5. Spray painting and handling any hazardous (chemical or combustible) material is not permitted inside the building.
6. All work surfaces (indoor and outdoor) must be adequately protected with the workshop's drop cloth before spray painting or working with plaster.
7. 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.
8. When leaving the building, students must ensure all lights are turned off, all electrical items must be unplugged, and doors must be closed.
9. Contact the Studio art manager directly with any questions: 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