

FA308 Advanced Photography

Finding the Stories

Seminar Leader: Carla Åhlander
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Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description

This course integrates practical image-making with photographic analysis to explore the relationship between narrative and photography. It is a critique-based class aimed at developing awareness of what constitutes a narrative and how the meaning of a photograph is constructed.

In addition to producing their own narrative photo series, participants will develop their ability to look at, read, and discuss photographs critically. We will address issues such as subjectivity and objectivity, the private and the public, as well as technical considerations like lighting conditions. The course will also include collaborative exercises between students. Together, we will explore a range of aesthetic, practical and conceptual questions, asking for example, "What is my attitude toward the subject?" or "Where does this narrative begin or end?"

During class there will be short photographic assignments to be completed and presented within the same session. For this, everyone must bring their own digital camera (a phone camera is sufficient). Students will also receive assignments to complete between classes and present in the following session. From approximately the middle of the semester, each student will develop an independent, larger, self-directed project. For this final project, each student must have access to their own digital camera. They will also produce a written text reflecting on the process and the concepts behind their work. The semester will conclude with a group exhibition or an alternative form of presentation.

Requirements

Students are expected to:

- Turn off phones during class time unless otherwise asked.
- Actively participate in critiques and discussions.
- Be prepared to present artworks / assignments / presentations without reminder.
- 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.

- Attendance of ALL classes is expected.
- More than one absence (that is, absence from one three-hour session per week) in a semester will affect the participation grade for the course.

- Students are expected to attend all off-campus classes punctually, from start to finish. If there is a scheduling/travel conflict, the professor must be informed in advance.

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

In this course, students will be given a number of smaller assignments to be executed in class, for the next class or over a longer period of time. Some materials may need to be purchased / acquired directly by each student. Students are also assessed on their ability to work independently and responsibly. They will be graded on their ability to communicate with professor as well amongst themselves. This also includes their ambition to create artworks as well as their willingness to budget their time for all requirements connected to this class.

The assignments required for the course are included in the syllabus but all necessary details will be given in class. If a student misses a class, the student themselves is required to find out relevant information about missed material and/or assignments, either from the instructor or other students in the class.

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

Class participation (includes attendance, maintenance of all common and private spaces used for production, communication with Professor and other students): 33,3 %

Homework and in-class work: 33,3 %

Project presentations for critiques (includes end of semester presentation): 33,3 %

Schedule

Week 1 January 26 2-5.15pm (1)	Introduction of the course, introduction of each student to the class In class: The Beginning (details will be given in class). The text "Stories" by John Berger will be distributed.
Week 2 February 2 2-5.15pm (2)	Due: Reading of a text which will be discussed in class Reflect + discussion on the text Stories by J Berger Slide presentation: Another Way of Telling (Jean Mohr/John Berger) In-class photo assignment in three parts, involving memory. Mandatory in-class facility orientation (<i>could be switched to another date if necessary</i>)
Week 3 February 9 2-5.15pm (3)	Slide projection: D.Michals, F G Torres, R Horn, In-class photo assignment. For February 16: 3 images from 3 different points of a fictional story + bring poems – favorites, classics, your own...
Week 4 February 16 2-5.15pm (4)	Due: 3 images Create pool of poems Group assignment in class. For February 23: 5 images to a chosen poem
Week 5 February 23 2-5.15pm (5)	Due: 5 images to a chosen poem Slide presentation: G.Wearing, M Rosler, A. Sekula For March 2: 1-5 images with a (political, social, or ...?) message + read a text that will be distributed in class
Week 6 March 2 2-5.15pm (6)	Due: 1-5 images with a (political/social/personal) message Reflection and discussion on the text. Slide presentation. The students will be given a common theme on which they will each develop their own photo project to work on for the rest of the semester. For March 16: Three ideas for a project on the given theme
Week 6 March 7 SATURDAY! (7) ca 12–4pm	Saturday session! (instead of March 9) Exhibition visits – details TBA!
Week 7 March 9	NO CLASS! (instead: Saturday March 7 – Exhibition visits)
Week 8 March 16 2-5.15pm (8)	Due: Three ideas for a project. Reflections and impressions from the exhibitions we visited Saturday Film screening in class: Stories We Tell (Sarah Polley) with following discussion For March 23: The first 10 images (minimum) for your project – <i>files or prints!</i> (Work prints can be small: A5)

Week 9 March 23 2-5.15pm (9)	Due: First 10 images (minimum) for your project, files or prints (work prints can be small: A5) with a follow up discussion on the way the re-search and ideas are developing for each student's project. Please note, every time images are due in class it is expected that the students bring their previous images as well. Decisions on how each student wants to proceed with the project, technically and practically. For April 13: 10 new images for your project. Reading of a text that will be distributed in class.
March 30 SPRING BREAK <i>spring break</i> <i>no class</i>	<i>no class – spring break</i>
Week 10 April 6 "Easter Monday" <i>no class</i>	<i>no class – national holiday</i>
Week 11 April 13 2-5.15pm (10)	Due: 10 images for your project (<i>files or prints!</i>) with a follow up discussion on the way the research and ideas are developing for each student's project. For April 20: bring 5 prints and all your prints + material in digital form
Week 12 April 20 2-5.15pm (11)	Due: 5 new images plus all your material in digital form and all previous prints! Ways to present and display images, and how to choose. For April 27: 5 work prints + the finished text about your project
Week 13 April 27 2-5.15pm (12)	Due: 5 images + a text about your project/process (around 400 words) One-on-one meetings with Carla When you are not in a meeting with Carla: assignment or write on the text about your work. For May 4: Finalize your photo series including means of presentation for the show
Week 14 May 4 2-5.15pm (13)	Presentation of your final project to the class (details in class) Evaluation online Last preparations for end of semester exhibition/presentation
Week 15 May 11 (14)	Completion week / Inspection of spaces Students are required to be on campus during completion week.

Please note that due dates and schedule can be subject to change as the semester progresses!

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