

FA317 Advanced Painting: Illusionistic Surfaces

Seminar Leader: **John Kleckner**

Email: j.kleckner@berlin.bard.edu

Course Times: Friday, 09:30-12:45

Location: Direktorenhaus at Monopol, Provinzstr. 40-44

Office Hours: Monday & Friday, 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 concepts and techniques relating to realistic depictions, spatial illusions, and mimetic representation in paint. Students will develop and pursue individual projects while discussing and reflecting on the politics of the gaze, the power of composition, the effects of lighting, the appeal of specificity, and how to use various systems of perspective. Students will explore mimesis as a visual metaphor and experience 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 slideshow presentations, readings, discussions, and group critiques; the majority of class time will be spent painting.

Class size is limited to ensure each student has sufficient studio space and abundant 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

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

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

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 note 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

(Note: assigned essays and podcast episodes will be announced in class; they are tailored to coordinate with artists and exhibitions currently on view in Berlin, and are subject to change.)

Week 1: Jan 30 *Introductions.* Personal introductions. Overview of course, expectations, materials, facilities, studio etiquette. Allocate studios.

Assignment: *Read the assigned essay. Make sketches and plans for Painting Project #1.*

Wk 2: Feb 6 *Subject, Object, Content.* Discuss assigned essay. Slideshow and discussion of subject, object, content, context, and style in painting; reading pictures, the (mis)communicative potential of painted images; paintings as objects and/or illusionistic windows. Share info about art supply stores & Berlin galleries. Finish setting up studios. Reiterate studio etiquette, safe handling and disposal of materials. Begin painting.

Assignment: *Work on Painting Project #1. Read the assigned essay, listen to the podcast.*

Wk 3: Feb 13 *Spectrum of Recognizability.* Discuss assigned essay and podcast. Slideshow and discussion considering paintings on a spectrum of recognizability from realistic to non-objective abstraction. Developing images iteratively by establishing, editing, and refining drawings, painted studies, and multiple versions. Discuss the influence of optical lenses, photography, and digital technologies on painting. Studio work.

Assignment: *Finish Painting Project #1. Read the assigned essay, listen to the podcast.*

Wk 4: Feb 20 *Field Trip to Neue Nationalgalerie.*

Assignment: *Begin Painting Project #2.*

Wk 5: Feb 27 *Lighting and Edges.* Slideshow and discussion of light = time = narrative; illusionistic space; various systems of perspective (linear, atmospheric, moving-point, etc); focal and vantage points in compositions; using color more effectively. Studio work.

Assignment: *Work on Painting Project #2. Read the assigned essay, listen to the podcast.*

Wk 6: Mar 6 *Observation or Imagination.* Compare and discuss painting from photographic references, direct observation, and imagination. Studio work.

Assignment: *Work on Painting Project #2. Listen to the assigned podcast.*

Wk 7: Mar 13 *Midterm Group Critiques*, part 1 (4 crits, 20 minutes each). Studio work.

Assignment: *Finish Painting Project #2.*

Wk 8: Mar 20 *Midterm Group Critiques*, part 2 (4 crits, 20 minutes each). Studio work. Studio work session.

Assignment: *Begin Painting Project #3. Listen to the assigned podcast.*

Wk 9: Mar 27 *The Gaze*. Slideshow and discussion about the politics of the gaze, the power and agency of the subject, and considerations for how a subject is represented. Who is being depicted? By whom? For whom?

Spring Break ≈≈≈ Spring Break ≈≈≈ Spring Break (March 30 - April 6)

Wk 10: Apr 10 *The Frame*. Discussion about composition, pictorial balance and tension, framing the scene, cropping, and cultivating a distinctive specific point of view.

Assignment: *Finish Painting Project #3.*

Wk 11: Apr 17 Studio work session, individual meetings with instructor to discuss Final Projects.

Assignment: *Begin Painting Project #4. Listen to the assigned podcast.*

Wk 12: Apr 24 Group critiques of Final Projects (students #1-3) (30 minutes).

Assignment: *Work on Painting Project #4.*

Wk 13: May 1 *No Class today – Federal Holiday*

Assignment: *Finish Painting Project #4.*

Gallery Weekend Berlin – Friday, May 1 - Sunday, May 3.

Wk 14: May 8 Group critiques of Final Projects (students #4-8) (30 minutes). *Final Projects due today.*

Friday, May 8 “Open Studios” exhibition at Monopol from 5-9pm. (Date & time subject to change.)

May 11 - 15 *Completion Week*. By **Wednesday, May 13th** all studios must be completely cleaned, BCB tools / art supplies returned. All student artworks & personal materials removed. The instructor will inspect studios to see that they have been cleaned and returned to original condition.

BCB Arts Facility Guidelines

Direktorenhaus at Monopol (Provinzstraße 40-44)

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. Unauthorized events and/or parties are not permitted.

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. All garbage must be safely and adequately disposed of, paper placed in the recycling box.
5. Students are responsible for washing the dishes they use, and cleaning up in the kitchen.
6. For your safety and the safety of others, smoking and drinking alcohol are strictly prohibited anywhere inside the building.
7. Projects using open flames (such as candles, torches, lanterns, fireworks, etc.) are not permitted inside the building.
8. Fire exits and lanes must be kept clear of any obstructions.
9. Spray painting and handling any hazardous (chemical or combustible) material is not permitted inside the building.
10. All work surfaces (indoor and outdoor), including the floors in shared studios, must be adequately protected with drop cloth / Malervlies before messy painting, spraying or working with plaster.
11. During completion week, studios and any space used by a student must be emptied, with clean walls and floors. Final grades may be affected or withheld if items remain after the inspection deadline.
12. When leaving the building, students must ensure all lights are turned off, all electrical items must be unplugged, and all doors & windows must be closed.
13. It is especially important that the entrance doors (front & back) are fully closed.
14. 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