

FA245 Intermediate Painting: Oil Paint

Seminar Leader: **John Kleckner**

Email: j.kleckner@berlin.bard.edu

Course Times: **Thursday, 09:30-12:45**

Location: **Direktorenhaus at Monopol, Provinzstr. 40-44**

Office Hours: **Wednesday & Thursday, 13:00-14:00 or by appointment.**

Course Description

This studio art course introduces the materials, techniques, and principles of oil painting. Through practical demonstrations students will learn the properties of oil paint; how to stretch canvases and prepare painting surfaces; and how to apply oil paint using traditional and experimental approaches. Assignments develop an understanding of color theory (hue, value, chroma, color temperature), compositional design, perspectival space, surface texture, glazing, and the depiction of form through light and shadow. Students will establish their studio practice by working from direct observation, using photographic references, and building abstract compositions. Studio work is supported by assigned readings, group discussions, gallery and museum visits, and slide presentations of historical and contemporary paintings. Particular attention is given to painters, past and present, with strong connections to the city of Berlin.

Class size is limited to ensure each student has sufficient studio space and abundant time for individual feedback. Evaluations and critiques occur at midterm and at the end of the term. Studio work is central to the course and will require a substantial commitment of time outside of scheduled class sessions. The semester culminates in the "Open Studios" exhibition in the BCB arts building at Monopol.

Requirements

Students are expected to:

- Turn off phones during class time.
- Attend all class sessions punctually and for the full duration, *especially critique sessions*.
- Finish assignments and projects by the due date.
- Allocate sufficient 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 the professor in a timely manner.
- Inform the professor at the beginning of the semester if photographs of a student's identity, artwork, works in progress are NOT to be taken 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 the inspection deadline.

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.

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, one absence 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.

Please attend class. It is critical that students are punctual and attend the full duration of class.
When you are late it prevents all of us from having the best experience that day.

If circumstances arise and you must be late, please inform the instructor about the reasons for the absence as soon as possible via email or Whatsapp. This communication still results in counting the absence. Only in the case of medical absence or family emergency with appropriate evidence (such as a doctor's note) will an absence be excused and not count towards the credit and grade consequences stated above.

Tardiness more than 15 minutes will be considered an absence.

Assessment

Students will receive a provisional midterm grade and a final grade for the course.

Students are assessed on their willingness to experiment, their contributions exchanging feedback during discussions / critiques, and on their ability to work effectively (in collaborative groups and independently) throughout the semester. Grading will reflect the ambition, time investment, strength of concept, skillful execution, and overall quality of the finished artworks. Growth and improvement is paramount – applying given feedback to future assignments, creative problem solving over the period of the semester, demonstrable change in the work outcomes. The final grade will also include the student's ability to adequately manage their time for working and cleaning up of the materials and spaces used at BCB.

Policy on Late Submission of Artworks / Presentations

Assignments are due at the beginning of the next class session unless otherwise specified. Further information about assignments and projects will be explained in detail in class. Assignments and the due 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. Pertinent course information is shared via email and through a WhatsApp group. Students must regularly check their BCB email accounts.

Students are encouraged to make appointments during office hours to discuss assignments and participation, they may be asked to meet with the instructor regarding course participation.

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.

Grade Breakdown

- 60% Work (meaning all assignments and artworks made for class and presented for critique.)
40% Attendance, participation, and professionalism (being punctual, respectful, and contributing to discussions and critiques.)

Schedule

Week 1: Sep 3 Introduction to the course, syllabus, expectations, materials, studio etiquette, Direktorenhaus, and Monopol facilities.
Assignment: Prepare surfaces with Gesso for painting. Toning canvas boards with Burnt Sienna.

Berlin Art Week – Wednesday, Sept 9 - Sunday, Sept 13

Wk 2: Sep 10 Double toned grounds, Value studies, Bistre Method (wiping away), Grisaille.
Assignment: Finish value studies.

Wk 3: Sep 17 Direct painting technique, *alla prima*.
Assignment: Finish Painting #2.

Wk 4: Sep 24 Indirect painting technique, Venetian Method, glazing.
Assignment: Finish glazing .

Wk 5: Oct 1 Excursion to Neue Nationalgalerie. Meet at 10:00am at the Museum.
Assignment: Begin Midterm paintings.

Wk 6: Oct 8 Studio work session, individual meetings with instructor.
Assignment: Finish Midterm Projects.

Wk 7: Oct 15 Midterm Paintings due today. Presentations, feedback, and group critiques.
(Attendance & participation is especially important.)

Fall Break ~~~ Fall Break ~~~ Fall Break (Oct 19 - 23, 2026)

Wk 8: Oct 29 Portraiture
Assignment: Work on portrait paintings.

Wk 9: Nov 5 Portraiture
Assignment: Finished portrait painting and studies for feedback on Nov 19.

Wk 10: Nov 12 Guest instructor (JK is away for the IDP trip.)
Assignment: Plan and start Final Projects.

Wk 11: Nov 19 Studio work session, individual meetings to discuss plans for Final Project.
Assignment: Work on Final Project.

Wk 12: Nov 26 Studio work session, individual meetings to assess progress on Final Project.
Assignment: Finish on Final Project.

Wk 13: Dec 3 Installing paintings. Presentations, feedback, and group critiques.
(Attendance & participation is especially important.)
Assignment: Finish on Final Paintings.

Wk 14: Dec 10 Presentations, feedback, and group critiques of final paintings.
(Attendance & participation is especially important.)

Thur, Dec 10 "Open Studios at Monopol" exhibition from 5-9pm. (Date to be confirmed.)

Dec 14 - 18 Completion Week. Direktorenhaus Workshop cleaned, BCB tools & art supplies returned. All student artworks & personal materials removed.

Policy on the use of facilities:

1. The Factory (Eichenstrasse 43) and Monopol (Provinzstr 40-44) at BCB offer spaces 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 items remain past 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. For security reasons, it is important that the doors (front & back) are always fully closed, never propped open.
10. 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