

FA111 Hands-On: Exploring Methods Towards a Personal Sculpting Practice

Seminar Leader: John von Bergen

Course Times: Mondays 3:15 – 6:30

Email: j.vonbergen@berlin.bard.edu

Office Hours: Mondays (and by appointment)

Course Description

As with previous Bard College Berlin sculpture courses, we will investigate a wide range of conceptual platforms and material decisions for beginning art students. Potential materials for production may include wood, styrofoam, plaster, clays, rubbers, plastics, polymers, wax and found objects. Many techniques will be explored for incorporating “materials” in art. In the first half of the semester, students are expected to respond to intense weekly deadlines with a new project challenge every week. Class time will usually be divided between workshop production and critique. Students learn the importance of preparation, safety, and cleanup while working hands-on at Bard College Berlin’s factory building. The second half of the semester invites larger, ambitious projects to be developed from personal initiative. Projects may involve room installation, collaboration with other students, as well as outdoor projects as the weather begins to get warmer. No practicing art experience is necessary for this class, but an ambitious attitude along with a serious commitment to working independently outside of class time will be essential for this course. Students with previous sculpture experience would of course be welcome to enroll, and could undertake projects befitting their level of expertise.

** Please note there is a materials fee of €100 for this course (not applicable to visiting Arts & Society or LAB students).*

*** Please also note the details and content of this syllabus may be subject to change.*

Requirements

Students are expected to:

- Turn off phones during the entire class time, including off-campus trips. They will be allowed to be used only during the breaks.
- Be prepared for every class with clothes for work that involves dust, liquids, wax...
- Be prepared to present artworks / assignments / presentations without reminder.
- Engage in critiques and discussions.
- Attend all off-campus classes from start to finish.

- Initiate appointments with professor outside of class time when help is necessary.
- Remove all artworks, art materials, and any personal belongings before the final inspection of factory spaces during completion week.
- Always allocate extra time for work preparations and clean-up.
- Respond to emails from professor in a timely manner.

Attendance

Attendance for ALL classes is expected. More than two absences in a semester will affect the participation grade for the course. Tardiness **after 5 minutes** will be considered an absence. Off-campus classes may require extra travel time allocated before and / or after the official class time. If there is any conflict with off-campus expectations and timing between this class and another BCB class, student must contact professor immediately.

Please refer to Student Handbook for further questions regarding attendance requirements.

Assessment

“Hands-On” is a course allowing students to use sculpture as a medium to explore. Most art materials will be provided, though some materials may need to be purchased / acquired directly by each student at their own expense depending on individual project goals. Students must produce and present artworks for this class that are (or relate to) three-dimensional sculptural works. While students are encouraged to explore any creative medium during their time at Bard College Berlin, they will be graded on their sculptural production.

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. This assessment also includes preparation, production, and cleaning up of spaces used at Bard. **Student grades will be affected when they have not fulfilled their responsibilities in looking after college equipment and property. Fines may be implemented.**

Policy on Late Submission of Artworks

Assignments (artworks, essays, verbal presentations) that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). professor is not obliged to accept assignments that are more than 24 hours late. Where professor agrees to accept a late assignment, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline and cannot receive a grade of higher than C. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment.

Grade Breakdown

Class participation (includes attendance and maintaining all spaces at Eichenstrasse 43):

30%

Communication with professor and other students, independent work ethic: 30%

Project presentations for crits (including end of semester presentation): 40%

Schedule

Classes start on Monday, January 30 and run until Monday, May 15. **There are NO classes April 10, April 17, or May 1.** Completion week is from May 15 to May 19. Students are required to be on campus during completion week.

Week 1 – Week 5 (Jan 30 – Feb 27)

We will focus on in-class workshops that involve an introduction to:

- Basic mold-making with earth clay, alginate, plaster, silicone
- Polymers (-webbing “Kobracast”, -wax “Flexwax, -clay “Sculpey”)
- Assemblage of found-objects (collaborative project with Drawing and Collage class)
- Basic wood-working
- Foam-coating with polymer-gypsum (“Acrylic-One”) and “Armierungsspachtel”

There will be at least one group critique of current production by Week 5.

Week 6 – Week 10 (Mar 6 – Apr 3)

- Visiting artist talk: this will be an official class possibly happening outside of our regular class time one evening in the Lecture Hall in P98 (date / artist to be announced).
- Workshop art production continues
- Exploring outside sculpture interventions (possible group effort)
- Exploring “installation” art

Off-campus trips will include:

- Glass-forming workshop at Berlin Glas <http://berlinglas.org/home>
- Visit to private artist studios (date / artists to be announced).

Spring Break (April 10) and Week 11 (April 17 / Easter Monday): NO CLASSES

Week 12 (April 24)

- Workshop art production continues along with crit and seminar.

Week 13 – (May 1) NO CLASS / German Holiday

Week 14 - Week 15 (Apr 24 - May 15)

Preparations for final end of semester presentations (date to be announced).

Last off-campus visit to Boros Collection: www.sammlung-boros.de

**this trip depends on private tour availability. Visit may be outside of class time.

IMPORTANT: By the end of completion week (May 19), all students must clean up spaces, remove artworks, materials and / or garbage. Grades may be affected, as well as fines implemented if clean-up and removal is deemed unacceptable. Exact date and time of inspection to be announced.