ART 5797: Course Syllabus

OSU Department of Art

May Term 2015 Study Abroad Program; Berlin, Germany

**instructor name and contact information:**

professor: Roger Beebe

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office: 376 Hopkins Hall

**meetings days and times:**

10:30-1 MWF (at LaborBerlin, Gerichtstrasse 65)

**office hours**:

MF 1-2 p.m.

**classroom location**: To be arranged.

**course number**: 5797

**course title: Berlin, Germany May term:** Filmmaking in Berlin

**description**:

This is a film and video production course, but its approach is primarily theoretical rather than technical.

This course wants to begin to explore one of the most complicated and pressing questions of our time: how do we locate ourselves in relation to the complex spaces of multinational capitalism? This is the ambitious question that this course hopes finally to engage, but it begins with a more modest approach to this grand question, starting with a series of studies (“mappings”) of local areas and structures (specific buildings, streets, neighborhoods, etc.) before building to representations of the city itself and then, finally, tackling the more abstract issues of nation and the world system of global capital. We will be looking at various historical attempts at representing the world on these different scales (mostly in experimental film and video), but we will also look at some of the more ambitious literary and theoretical attempts at such mapping, including Fredric Jameson’s work on “cognitive mapping,” the Situationists’ radical urbanism, contemporary architectural theory, etc.

Practically, the course will focus on aesthetic approaches to this project of cognitive mapping. Students will be produce a series of short exercises designed to tackle these progressively larger scales of representation while simultaneously exploring the basics of moving-image work. The course should provide a framework for engaging with Berlin, its geography, its history, and its people while concurrently developing a set of technical and aesthetic strategies. While the two primary trajectories of the class focus on super 8mm film and HD video, students may elect instead to work in other media or forms to approach these same theoretical issues.

**texts and materials:**

All readings will be available online through Carmen. Film and processing for those electing to work in super 8mm will be provided as part of the program costs. Access to moving-image cameras (both film and video) will be provided by the program. Features to be screened outside of class will be distributed on a hard drive at the final informational meeting before departure.

**assignments:**

Students will produce weekly short assignments to be screened and critiqued each Friday, in addition to a final project to be submitted at the end of the program. Details about each assignment will be given the Monday of each week. While there is some flexibility to accommodate different choices of media, these assignments will generally be short videos between 2 and 4 minutes in length. The final project should be no more than 7 minutes long, but may be shorter as appropriate to the concept.

**grading:**

Final grades will be determined according to the following formula:

project 1 15%

project 2 20%

project 3 20%

final project 25%

participation 20%

Class participation does not refer to attendance, but rather to both the quantity and quality of in-class comments. You should not feel afraid to make "dumb" comments in class, but try to make your comments productive and keep the discussion flowing. Because experimental practice can be a highly variable experience for different people, you may learn as much from your classmates as you will from me. This is, finally, your class, and I'll expect you to carry much of the weight of discussion. I cannot stress enough how important this aspect is—perhaps the fact that it accounts for 1/5 of your final grade will make that clear. Your engagement with our various excursions during the course of the program will also count toward your participation grade—this is not vacation, so be prepared to think critically both inside the classroom and outside.

Grades will be based on the following grading scale:

A: 93-100

A-: 90-92

B+: 87-89

B: 83-86

B-: 80-82

C+: 77-79

C: 73-76

C-: 70-72

D+: 67-69

D: 60-66

E: 0-59

**academic misconduct:**

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc>/

**Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901;** [**http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu**](http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/)**/**

**course outline:**

**WEEK ONE: THE IMAGE**

Monday (5/11)

reading: Roland Barthes, from “The Rhetoric of the Image”; Situationist writings on the dérive

screening: Lumière shorts; Bill Brown, “Invisible Bridges”; Meesoo Lee, “Pop Song 1”

outside screening: *Berlin, Symphony of a Great City*

Tuesday (5/12)

excursion: Monumental Berlin (Brandenburg Gate, Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe, Siegessäule)

Wednesday (5/13)

reading: Chris Batchelder, “Something Great”

screening: Bruce Baillie, “Castro Street”; Bernhard Schreiner, “Hwa Shan District, Taipei”; Helen Levitt, “In the Street”

Thursday (5/14)

excursion: Soviet Berlin (Karl-Marx-Allee, Treptower Park)

Friday (5/15): IMAGE PROJECT CRITIQUE

**WEEK TWO: MAPPING**

Monday (5/18)

reading: Kevin Lynch, “The Image of the City”

screening: G.W. Bitzer, “New York Subway (1905)”; Oskar Fischinger, “Walking from Munich to Berlin”; Gerard Holthuis, “HKG”

outside screening: *Germany Year Zero*

Tuesday (5/19)

excursion: Divided Berlin (Checkpoint Charlie, Berlin Wall Museum, Mauerpark)

Wednesday (5/20): Mapping, cont.

reading: Michel de Certeau, “Walking in the City” (excerpts)

screening: Bill Brown, “Hub City” and “Roswell”; Jem Cohen, *Lost Book Found*

Thursday (5/21)

excursion: Shoah (the Sachsenhausen camps)

Friday (5/22): MAPPING PROJECT CRITIQUE

**WEEK THREE: THE CITY**

Monday (5/25)

reading: Fredric Jameson, “Cognitive Mapping”; Anne Elizabeth Moore, “When You Realize the Freedom”

screening: Claude Lelouch, “C’était un rendez-vous”; Lisa Marr, “Vancouver Special”

outside screening: *Wings of Desire*

Tuesday (5/26)

excursion: Turkish Berlin (Turkish Market, Neukölln neighborhood tour)

Wednesday (5/27): The City, cont.

reading: Fredric Jameson, “Postmodernism” (excerpts)

screening: Deborah Stratman, “In Order Not To Be Here”; Thomas Comerford, “Figures in the Landscape”

Thursday (5/28)

excursion: Berlin and International Art (Hamburger Bahnhof)

Friday (5/29): CITY FILM CRITIQUE

**WEEK FOUR: ART/MAPPING/GLOBALIZATION**

Monday (6/1) and Tuesday (6/2): Venice Biennale trip