



BERLIN PERSPECTIVES

Berlin Sonic: Auditory Collective Explorations

Semester:	Winter Semester 2020/21
Course instructor:	Banu Çiçek Tülü / Samuel Perea-Díaz, berlinsonicspace@gmail.com
Subject area:	Culture and Society
Credits:	5 ECTS
Time:	Wednesday 10 –12 c.t. (10:15-11:45) + moodle discussion throughout the week
Room:	Zoom (Please note: This semester, all classes take place online. If however the general conditions allow it, the seminar room 0323-26 (3 rd floor) at Hausvogteiplatz 5-7 can be used by the courses.)

Moodle Info:

Please find the course in moodle search, the name of the course: Berlin Sonic: Auditory Collective Explorations (WiSe 2020/21). The course key (password) for self-enrollment will be sent to registered students before the beginning of the semester. If you have trouble finding the course or cannot get the password on time, please write an e-mail to berlinsonicspace@gmail.com and we will provide you the password.

Online Sessions:

In these extraordinary times, we adapt our course to the digital platform, mostly via moodle. As we cannot predict the upcoming months about the health restrictions, every week there will be assignments and exercises which will be done individually. The results of them also the related discussion will be held in moodle via using the discussion forum. We will meet with the participants every week at the time of the course via Zoom, to explain the topics in order to deepen the knowledge. However, this semester the course will use moodle for sharing ideas, discussion and reflecting on the topic. We will provide the link for the online meeting every week in moodle. If you have any problem with entering the online meeting, please write to berlinsonicspace@gmail.com. Depending on the number of participants, we can make small groups in Zoom meetings.

We will have some individual exercises that take place in public spaces in Berlin, which we will decide together with the participants. If you are not in Berlin and following our course online, we will find you a solution that you can participate from where you are. Except for the online meetings and using virtual tools, the course program will stay as stated in the syllabus. A detailed Syllabus will be online in moodle.

Course Description:

This weekly course explores Berlin's sonic perspectives with an approach to architecture, urban planning, human and social sciences as well as art in our everyday life. In everyday life, our vision merges to our listening actions and therefore we continuously follow a rhythm which is created by our own actions and our surroundings. As an intuitive, non-cognitive and unconscious act, listening helps us to understand our environment. The



listener creates individual and subjective images because of the fact that any acoustic format is visual. From the urban sonic perspective, every city and every urban space has a particular sonic identity for every individual. Central questions in the course are: What is the sound of Berlin? Which sonic elements in architecture, urban planning, art and cultural events have shaped Berlin? How these projects are in relation to Berlin's socio-political processes? In this course, we respond to these questions through the interdisciplinary collective listening exercises with recordings, readings and discussions. We will examine cultural projects and develop, discover, analyze the urban environment with an approach that focuses on hearing and sound. We will draw a research line for exploring the city and understanding the current urban complexities with a specific methodology that considers the aural environment, acoustic ecologies and listening.

Learning objectives:

This BA- and MA- level course aims to develop a critical position to look and understand the urban space which is our constructed environment for living. Students fulfill with an overview of the sound related cultural projects in Berlin (i.e Kulturforum, Berlin Philharmonie, Sound Art Installations, etc,) as well as the construction of the city starting from 20th century, in particular, with an in-depth understanding of the socio-political circumstances in various neighborhoods. The course will enable its participants to listen (with their own ears), experience (with their own body), read (with their own mind) and understand (with their own consciousness) central discussion about the idea of urban cultural projects as well as to critically reflect on the questions as to how sound and listening can have an actual impact on institutions and individuals in urban space.

-Knowledge

- analyze the urban space and sound environment
- interpret and contextualize the urban events
- identify the social and political interactions in terms of urban development
- examine the city as a sonic environment
- use listening as a tool of analyzing the urban space

-Academic/Analytical Skills

- critically reflect on contemporary academic discussion
- analyze academic articles
- adopt and implement academic writing
- proceed and apply research based projects

-Achievement

- understand and interpret the urban space while enhancing the skills academic writing and practical involvement
- produce academic work, differentiate different writing and research styles
- to be able to use different research methods

Requirements and assessment:

This course offers students diverse options of understanding the urban space in Berlin. Therefore, we strongly encourage full participation. For this semester, as we are holding the course online, it is crucial that you join the online discussion, so please be prepared to write about sonic environments. There will be reading material, videos, movies etc. for each class. As we are working with sound, a smartphone or any recorder would be



useful. However you don't need a professional recorder! You can also choose your method to show/record sounds in any kind of media. i.e photography, video, writing. There will be assignments, a Mid-term Project and a Final Project. Each has a different percentage of your note, please see the grading section below. It is necessary to point out that you don't have to have knowledge about architectural or urban design or any kind of design practice. This seminar is constructed out of everyday experiences as citizens. Your professional background and knowledge will help you to translate your experiences in urban space into a course format.

Language Requirements:

This course mostly will be held in English (both readings and discussions). We will work with some advanced academic articles in English therefore a minimum level of English B1 is necessary. Basic knowledge of German is welcome. Our reading material is not dense but requires in-depth engagement with the texts. This way, the students will improve their academic writing and analytical skills. It will be possible to submit the assignments and final projects in English, German, Turkish and Spanish.

Exercises:

We will have several exercises using virtual tools (movies, videos, virtual tours, etc.) These exercises will help students to discover urban space individually and analyze the sonic environment. In order to understand the whole concept, please do the exercises.

Assessment:

For the second session of the course, we ask students to record their favorite sounds in Berlin. You are welcome to present your favorites with any kind of media. i.e photography, video, writing, poster, etc.

Final project:

At the end of the course, we ask students to choose a case study in Berlin. It could be an architectural building, an urban space, an art intervention or theoretical research in the format of an academic paper or academic poster, and it has to be described with sounds. You are welcome to use any kind of media in the process, it is your imagination and creativity. In case you choose a more practical and artistic approach, it is required to write an explanatory text about the relation between the selected area, where the case study is and argue its historical, political and social context. If you choose to write an academic essay, you are expected to complete all the requirements, from creating the structure (research question, objectives, aims, research methodologies, etc.) till styling (citing, paraphrasing, referencing, etc.) At the halftime of the course, we will discuss together how to proceed and prepare this final project. We aim to have a map with sonic case studies related to Berlin's urban space which we will share with all the students so that each participant can have an aural mapping/archive. The format of the academic essay: 1800 – 2000 words double spaced, Times New Roman, MLA-style citation or choose any other style but follow it from abstract to bibliography. The final essay can be written in English, Spanish or Turkish. Through the semester, we will discuss the virtual possibilities to research and present the final project.



Course Requirements:

In Class Expectations

Open invitation to Diversity: This is a mature and mindful call for individual responsibility. As Berlin and as your university, our class is open to multiple cultures and choices. We promote an international classroom that should be used by the participants as a learning platform and welcome experiences. It is an inclusive space for exchange, collaboration, engagement and participation. There is also a place for discussion and disagreement. Therefore, please come with an open mind and never bring any kind of shaming, racism, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia, transphobia and any other kind of hate. If you ever feel uncomfortable in our class because of the attitude of your peers or ours, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Plagiarism: It is unacceptable to copy someone else's ideas or words without properly crediting the source. Be sure, you are using citation, in other cases you will be dismissed from this course.

Grading:

Participation 30%: The success of the course depends on the presence and active, collegial participation of each participant and this semester this will be online participation. We need you to engage in the discussion via moodle, please be online and be engaged. Your attendance will be calculated by taking an active participation in the discussion forum, submitting the assignments (on time!) and following the online requirements. Only joining Zoom meetings is not enough. However, we are aware you have other courses and we keep that in mind when we will calculate the time for preparation of the assignments and other requirements.

Assignments and exercises 20%

Final Project 50%

Tools: Moodle - All readings will be available via the Moodle page. The course key (password) for self-enrollment will be sent to registered students before the beginning of the semester. If you have trouble finding the course or cannot get the password on time, please write an e-mail to berlinsonicspace@gmail.com and we will provide you the password. Please note that there might still be some changes to the reading list, which we will announce during the course or on Moodle.

Zoom - We will meet every week in Zoom on the day and at the time of the course.

Please keep in mind, this course requires active participation in the moodle!

Other - There will be other virtual tools that we will use, we will let you know about them through the semester.

Timetable:

Session 1: 04.11.20 **Introduction** - Are you listening?

Session 2: 11.11.20 **Berlin, City of Sounds I** - "Berlin, place to be"



Session 3: 18.11.20 **Berlin, City of Sounds II** - Techno Music and the City

Session 4: 25.11.20 **Berlin, Architecture of Sounds** - Excursion

Session 5: 02.12.20 **Urban Listening I** - Walking as An Aesthetic Practice

Session 6: 09.12.20 **Urban Listening II** - Berlin favorite Sound

Session 7: 16.12.20 **Cartography Perspectives I** - Archiving City Sounds

Session 8: 06.01.21 **Cartography Perspectives II** - Rhythmanalysis^[1]_[SEP]

Session 9: 13.01.21 **Introduction to Final Projects**

Session 10: 20.01.21 **Sound Art and Public Space I** - Audiences

Session 11: 27.01.21 **Sound Art and Public Space II** - Artis talk^[1]_[SEP]

Session 12: 03.02.21 **Sounding Peripheries** - Hearing Airports

Session 13: 10.02.21 **Collective Listening** - Excursion

Session 14: 17.02.21 **Collective Listening** - Final Presentations^[1]_[SEP]

Session 15: 24.02.21 Final Projects Reviews