



**Summer semester 2021: 12.04.2021 - 17.07.2021**

## **Berlin Sonic: Auditory Collective Explorations**

### **Instructor**

**Banu Çiçek Tülü / Samuel Perea-Díaz**  
(berlinsonicspace@gmail.com)

### **Schedule**

weekly

### **Time and place**

Wednesday 10 – 12 c.t. (10:15-11:45)

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. We will examine different cultural projects and develop, discover, analyze the urban environment while focusing on hearing and sound.

This course will be held in a digital format with synchronous meetings in Zoom and Moodle exercises. Excursions and in-class meetings might take place, depending on the circumstances and regulations.

### **Moodle Info:**

Please find the course in moodle search, the name of the course: Berlin Sonic: Auditory Collective Explorations (SoSe 2021). 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](mailto:berlinsonicspace@gmail.com) and we will provide you the password.

### **Course Level & Target Group**

The course is designed to enhance the frequency and the quality of cross-national and cross-cultural student interactions during their temporary stay in Berlin. The course offered a syllabus focusing on sound in the city and its cultural, social and political dimensions. Through sound, international students could gain strength through sound and develop knowledge about best practices and relevant research, and explore the urban space in a new city. The course focuses on the possibility to use sound as a learning tool and promote

the cross-national interactions because strong and consistent data indicate that international and domestic students seek more purposeful and substantive interactions, both in and out of the classroom, but lack the confidence and structure to engage in them. Our interdisciplinary approach allows students from different disciplines to approach academic research through sounds from their own disciplines.

### **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.

### **ECTS**

5 ECTS

### **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.

### **Course Objective & Learning Outcomes**

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

### **Workload and assignments**

In order to be granted 5 ECTS, participants will be asked to

- actively attend all sessions (a minimum of 75% attendance is required for classroom and online sessions):  
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.
- prepare and revise the classroom/online sessions
- hand in the following **assignments**:
  - **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.
  - **Sound records:**  
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.  
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.
  - **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.

Failure to fulfil one of the mentioned components results in failure of the class.

### **Assessment Components**

The final grade will be composed of the above-mentioned assignments.

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.

### **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.

**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 (*depends on the restrictions, we can also adapt to hybrid meetings*)- 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.

## **Expectations & Policies**

Preparation for lively discussions in the classroom: Be on time, have at least the required readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification.

Assignments: Complete all assignments according to the specified requirements on schedule including handing over to the lecturer.

Commitment in class: Pay particular attention to the lecturer and respect differences of opinions (classmates', lecturers, locals engaged with on the visits).

Academic guidelines: Comply with academic integrity policies (such as no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).

Attendance policy: 75% class attendance are required. Students must contact their class teachers to catch up on missed work.

Field trips: If classes involve a field trip or other external visits, these require attendance as well as appearance in time.

## **Your Instructors**

We have been teaching the seminar "Berlin Sonic: Auditory Collective Explorations" since Summer Semester 2019. Furthermore, we lead an independent research investigating cities and urban environments through sounds. For us, sound is a signal and a spectrum, or vibrational form that includes the social, the cultural and the political. Our work consists of practice-based projects that expand from workshops and site-specific interventions. We work with interdisciplinary research methods which are based on studies about participation, public space, sonic urbanism, sonic environment, acoustic ecology, collective listening, auditory diagramming, environmental spatial justice, and urban activism.

Banu Çiçek Tülü currently a PhD at Hochschule für bildende Künste with a specialization in Urban Commons, Urban Design Theory and Acoustic Ecology. Banu is a Heinrich Böll Stiftung Fellow since September 2017. She is also teaching "Urban Activism Berlin" class at Berlin Perspectives (SoSe 2018/2019). Her PhD Thesis (will be completed in 2020) is practice-based research on how to include sound into Urban Design processes. Taking sound as one of the most important elements in urban areas, Banu investigates the possibilities of participatory design using the existing sounds in urban space. Her research considers that the sound in urban space is more than noise and sensory actions are crucial for Urban Design Theory.

Samuel Perea-Díaz is a spatial design practitioner and registered architect based in Berlin. Samuel holds a degree in Architecture from the University of Seville. His work investigates temporal-spatial strategies and methodologies through participatory observation, sonic installations, temporary architecture and exhibition design. Samuel has been a scholar in different Spanish institutions researching participatory art and aurality in architectural

studies. For the past years, he has collaborated in a transdisciplinary context together with recognized architecture offices with the main focus on museum scenography.

## **Course Schedule**

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

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

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

Session 4: **Berlin, Architecture of Sounds** - (Excursion)

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

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

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

Session 8: **Cartography Perspectives II** - Rhythmanalysis

Session 9: **Introduction to Final Projects**

Session 10: **Sound Art and Public Space I**

Session 11: **Sound Art and Public Space II** - Artis talk

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

Session 13: **Collective Listening** - (Excursion)

Session 14: **Collective Listening** - Final Presentations

Please note that the course and its syllabus are subject to change.

Last update: **12.02.2021**