



Exhibition Making. Curatorial Practice and Research in Berlin

Fall Term 2024: 2 September – 13 December 2024
(break: 21-25 October 2024)

CATEGORY

Art and Literature

COURSE STRUCTURE

3 contact hours à 45 min per week (14 weeks)

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Time

Day: Wednesday, 12:30-3:00 pm

Place

Schönhauser Allee 10, 10119 Berlin
Room 1.23

This course will be held in a blended format with some sessions taking place online, with a mix of face-to-face sessions and online Zoom sessions.

COURSE LANGUAGE

English

Language requirements (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages)

English B2

TARGET GROUP

International exchange students of all subjects with a strong interest in the course topic. Humboldt Perspectives Study Abroad courses are designed for undergraduate students. Master students may participate if their home university agrees. The course is designed for any student interested in learning contemporary curating strategies. This course is designed for students interested in academic research, curatorial research, and conceptualizing cultural events and exhibitions. This course is for any student interested in exploring possible tools for engaging as cultural creators. The class is articulated within theory texts, visits to Berlin exhibitions, guided

tours, guest talks, and working on a case study of an exhibition site related to Berlin culture, history, and politics.

CREDITS = 6 ECTS

All courses are accredited according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The seminar reflects on perspectives of curating and making exhibitions in Berlin. It allows students to explore and understand the contemporary curatorial practice of the city by visiting and analyzing different institutions, reading theoretical texts, and developing a practical case study. The topics focus on urban culture, contemporary arts, and queer studies. The course is ideal for future researchers and cultural workers who want to explore the work of curatorial research and exhibition-making. The work performed by the student includes readings, group discussions, and curatorial writing strategies, and it concludes with a conceptualization of making an exhibition proposal as a final project. The course involves visiting and engaging with exhibitions from Berlin's museums, galleries, and project spaces. The seminar provides conversations with Berlin-based curators and artists.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

This BA- and MA-level course aims to develop a critical position in understanding curatorial research, taking Berlin as a case study. Students fulfill with an overview of the cultural projects of the city. The course will enable its participants to sense the city through visiting ongoing exhibitions and reflecting by making an exhibition proposal as a final project. The central discussion of the course critically articulates contemporary issues of curating now. Previous knowledge or practical experience in curating or producing exhibitions is not required.

-Knowledge

- Analyze the exhibition scene in Berlin.
- Interpret and contextualize curatorial research.
- Identify the social and political interactions in terms of curating.
- Examine the city as a cultural space for different forms of curating.
- Reflect on critical thinking as a tool for analyzing the social space contained in exhibitions.

-Academic/Analytical Skills

- Critically reflect on the contemporary academic discussion.
- Analyze academic articles.
- Adopt and implement academic writing.
- Proceed and apply curatorial research and practice-based projects.

-Achievement

- Produce academic work and differentiate strategies on writing and research styles.
- Basic in writing proposal exhibition texts and spatial design.
- To be able to use alternative research methods.
- Understand and interpret cultural production by approaching exhibitions and documents like plans,

cost estimations, and funding applications while enhancing academic writing and artistic research skills.

-Professional overview of curating, managing, and producing exhibitions.

Requirements and assessment:

This course offers students diverse options for understanding curatorial practice from theory to practice. Therefore, I strongly encourage full participation. We are holding the course in person and online. Please be prepared to write about curatorial methods, document the exhibitions during the excursions, and commit to doing curatorial research for a proposal for an exhibition. It is important to remark that each class will have reading material, which is mandatory to read. There will be assignments and a final project. Each has a different percentage of your note. Please see the grading section below.

In Class Expectations

Open invitation to Diversity: The class is open to multiple cultures and choices. 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 shaming, racism, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia, transphobia, or other hate.

Plagiarism: Copying someone else's ideas or words without crediting the source is unacceptable. Be sure you are using citations. In other cases, you will be dismissed from this course.

READINGS

Birnbaum & Wallenstein, Daniel & Sven-Olov. (2021). 'A New Curatorial Toolbox: A Conversation'. Part of "Breaking Glass. Spatial Fabulations & Other Tales of Representation in Virtual Reality". Pp 68-71.

Bosold, Fritsch, Hofmann, Krasny, Lingg (eds.) (2021). 'Radicalizing Care. Feminist and Queer Activism in Curating'. Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Online source:
<https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12657/53265/Radicalizing%20Care.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

Deliss, Clémentine. (2020). 'Models of a Museum-University'. Part of "The Metabolic Museum". Hatje Cantz Verlag, München. Pp. 106-113.

Dyangani Ose, Elvira. (2008). 'And What Are You Looking At? Formulas for Making the Invisible Visible'. Part of Nka, Journal of Contemporary African Art, 2008 (22-23). Pp 94-103.

Molesworth, Helen. (2016). 'How To Install Art As A Feminist', part of "Modern Women. Women Artists At The Museum of Modern Art - MoMA." The MIT Press. Pp 498-513.

Neuhart, John & Marilyn. (1989). **'Exhibitions'**, part of Eames Design. The Work of the Office of Charles and Ray Eames. Published by Wilhelm Ernst & Sohn Verlag für Architektur und technische Wissenschaften, Berlin. Pp 294-300; 400-404;412-414; 416-426.

Ndikung, Bonaventure Soh Bejeng. (2020). **'The Globalized Museum? Decanonization as Method. A Reflection in Three Act'**, part of "In a While or Two We Will Find The Tone. Essays and Proposals Curatorial Concepts and Critiques". Archive Books. Pp 183-191.

Obrist, Hans Ulrich. (2014). **'Curating, Exhibitions and the Gesamtkunstwerk,'** part of "Ways of Curating". Faber and Faber, Inc. New York, NY. Pp 22-35.

Richter, Dorothee. (2011). **'A Brief Outline of the History of Exhibition Making'**, part of "OnCurating Issue 06: 1,2,3, - Thinking about Exhibitions". Freely distributed, non-commercial, digital publication. Online resource: https://www.on-curating.org/files/oc/dateverwaltung/old%20Issues/ONCURATING_Issue6.pdf

Sadzinski, Sylvia. (2023). **'Letting the Freak Flag FLY'**, part of "Queer Exhibitions Histories". Edited by Bas Hendriks. Amsterdam: Valiz. Pp 33-49.

Sauerländer & Schönegege, Tina & Peggy. (2019). **'The Value of Virtual Art'**, part of "Virtual Reality. Edition Digital Culture 6" edited by Dominik Landwehr, Migros-Kulturprozent. Pp 270-278.

Smith, Terry. (2012). **'Shifting the Exhibitionary Complex'**, part of "Thinking contemporary curating". Independent Curators International: New York. Pp 58-99.

ASSIGNMENT INFO

Workload and assignments

To be granted 6 ECTS, participants will be asked to

- actively attend all sessions (a minimum of 80% attendance is required for classroom and online sessions)
- hand **summaries of the exhibition´s visit** and the **final project**.

We will have several exercises using virtual tools (Moodle and Zoom.) Depending on the circumstances and regulations, virtual tours can differ from online to on-site excursions. That will be announced at the beginning of the semester.

EXERCISES

Presentations, summaries of each visit, and discussions about the required readings

There are different mandatory readings for each week. Each participant should lead the discussion of one of the readings during the semester. The short presentation should include a summary, opinion, questions, and keywords of the reading to initiate a group discussion.

Each student should also write a summary/journal after each exhibition visit. (each 5000 characters long/minimum two pages), including some images. Deadlines about presentations and summaries will be informed at the beginning of the semester.

FINAL PROJECTS

- **Option 1** - Exhibition design proposal. In the form of a portfolio of several multimodal work performances (e.g., audio or video material, internet pages, written proposal) (without a precise length definition). Explanatory text of the curatorial concept approx. 2500 characters with references and bibliography.
- **Option 2** - A written paper of approx. 25,000 characters, including spaces (bibliography not included for characters account.)

Both options will be presented within 15 minutes of the last session. The final project should be written in English. For option 1, the student should develop a "curatorial research and exhibition design proposal" using the class methodologies, including curatorial research and exhibition design. The aim is to generate an exhibition proposal that includes the texts for the exhibition description and the different chapters and exhibits, biographies of artists, spatial strategies, exhibit displacement, and exhibition design (option 1). Theoretical research in the form of an academic paper is also allowed (option 2).

For option 1, the student should present a central text of the curatorial research, which includes ten exhibits with the following details: medium, year, photography, and small description. Furthermore, it should consist of sketches of written ideas about spatial strategies and design.

Suppose it is an academic essay, option 2, the written requirements are 25,000 characters, including spaces. In that case, the students must reflect on the research question, methodologies, objectives, aims, etc., till styling, citing, paraphrasing, referencing, etc.

Please be aware that the course is theory and practice-oriented. The student should engage in discussion in classes, attend excursions in the city, do small presentations during the course, and be actively working and presenting the ongoing work of the final project. We will take different steps to prepare the final project during the course. At the halftime of the course, we will discuss how to proceed and prepare this final project. The last seven classes of the course

will be dedicated to combining theory, talks, and visits with corrections of the final projects. The project could be performed individually or in groups. These sections will cover the research question, objectives, aims, research methodologies, etc.

Assessment Components

The final grade will be composed of the abovementioned assignments and exercises.

Contributions and presentations about the required readings 20%

Summaries of exhibition visit 30%

Final project 50%

Failure to fulfill one of the mentioned components fails the class.

Teaching tools

MOODLE

Reading materials 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 need help finding the course or need help getting the password on time, please e-mail **samuel.perea-diaz@hu-berlin.de**

ZOOM

We will meet in exceptional cases in Zoom.

YOUR INSTRUCTOR

Samuel Perea-Díaz is a cross-disciplinary artist, researcher, lecturer, and spatial designer. His practice spans architecture, curation, and sound art. With a background in Architecture and an MA in Sound Art, he has been professionally involved in conceptualizing and producing museum scenography, exhibitions, and art installations.

COURSE SCHEDULE

3 hours à 45 min per week

Block 1 / Theory on Curatorial Practices

Week 1: Introduction to Curating and Exhibition Making

Including the exercises, assignments, and final project that students are responsible for throughout the semester—presentation of participants, their backgrounds, and motivations.

Week 2 + 3: Introduction to Berlin Museum and Exhibitions

In these two sessions, we will talk about the history of curating and analyze different curatorial approaches over the last few years in Berlin by looking at examples of Berlin's contemporary exhibitions and museums.

During these two weeks, students will be asked to present about the museum we will visit during block 2.

Week 4: Forms of Curating and Strategies

This class aims to question how to navigate contemporary exhibitions. We will discuss different curatorial research formats.

Block 2 / Excursions

We will explore contemporary curatorial issues by visiting different exhibitions during this period. Guided tours will accompany some of the visits.

The student should document each visit in a diary submitted at the semester's end. The summary should include an analysis of the curatorial theme, opinion about the emergence of the topic, the relation with Berlin, and an analysis of the exhibits and exhibition scenography. The summary should have approximately two pages, including photos and text.

Week 5: Visit Project Space (guest talk)

Site visit to a Berlin Project Space (tbd.), including a guest talk.

Week 6: Excursion DAAD + Bethanien Kunstraum

Week 7: Excursion SAVVY CONTEMPORARY

BREAK: 21 – 25 October 2024

Week 8: Excursion Schwules Museum

Week 9: Excursion nGbK

Block 3 Practice / Exhibition-Making

Week 10: Curatorial Theme

Kick-off, presentation of individual or group research theme, topic, and goals. Including feedback and corrections. Explanation of a curatorial project, including text, research questions, interviews, archiving information, project management, cost estimation, and realization.

Week 11: Curatorial Proposal

Presentation of individual or group work-in-process. The presentation should include a maximum of ten exhibits, primary texts, and picture materials using the provided layout.

Week 12: Exhibition Design

Presentation of individual or group work-in-process. The presentation should include spatial scenography of the exhibition, including the location of the texts in the room and the exhibits.

Week 13: Corrections

Presentation of individual or group work-in-process. Review all mandatory documents for the final presentation.

Week 14: Final Presentations

Each student or group should present their project for 15 minutes, and this will be followed by 10 minutes of Q&A.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Registration on Moodle (HU's e-learning platform)

in case of online sessions

- Fully functional device (laptop, tablet, PC)
- Stable internet connection
- Software: Zoom (video/audio)
- *Recommended* hardware: external headset for better sound quality

EXPECTATIONS & POLICIES

Preparation for lively discussions: 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 the schedule including handing them over to the lecturer.

Commitment: pay particular attention to the lecturer and respect differences of opinions in this international classroom.

Academic guidelines: Comply with academic integrity policies, especially the academic honor code and the student code of conduct. Plagiarism in even a small assignment will result in failing the entire course.

Attendance policy: Students must contact their class teachers to catch up on missed work – to excuse absence please contact the lecturer.

The course and its syllabus are subject to change. Last update: **08 January 2024**