

## ***Contrast and Comparisons:***

### ***Visual and Social Dichotomies in Central European cities-Berlin, Prague, and Vienna***

HER-R312

**Study Abroad Program:** 9 days in Berlin with a one-day trip to Potsdam  
5 days in Prague  
7 days in Vienna with a one-day trip to Bratislava

**Pre-Departure Meetings:** TBA

### **Course Description**

This study abroad course will focus on exploring various visual and social dichotomies while traveling in Central Europe. During the course students will travel to Berlin, Prague, and Vienna where they will visit numerous historical sites and museums. Daily group excursions will also include visits to various sections of city that were developed in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century. During various visits of the sites, students will have an opportunity to experience and centuries old as well as modern areas of European cities built on a rich past. We will look at and discuss the obvious and not so obvious dichotomies in present on our visit. We will discuss how artists use historic and modern architecture, classical and contemporary art, globalization and American influence abroad as some of their sources and inspirations to discuss social, personal, global issues in their work. Students will produce collections of drawings in the form of sketchbook, documenting their experiences in a way of a visual travel journal. Photographs, and collage elements will be accompanied by written notes.

### **Travel:**

Very important elements of this course are the ability to adjust to a new environment and to be open to new experiences that the stay in a foreign country will present. As students will be immersed in new cultural situations and learn to adapt in a very short time it is important that they will be respectful and always stay in touch with their instructor during the entire trip.

Our visit will require a great amount of walking, taking public transportation, understanding and adjusting to foreign customs and etiquettes. We will be making several visits to the art museums, churches, palaces, and public places. At times this trip and individual visit will be very strenuous physically but also mentally, so it is crucial that students will stay focused on the educational purpose of this trip.

### **Course Expectations:**

Undergraduate students will be asked to produce observation-based drawings in their sketchbook on a daily basis. While the stylistic nature of student's work will not be dictated, it will be expected that the final artwork (sketchbook) will be unified by student's individuals visual language developed and honed during the travel abroad course. In order to successfully complete the studio section of the course, finished artwork will have to equally address formal, technical, and conceptual elements. Students will be required to attend all class meetings and using their time effectively. In order to successfully complete their projects, outside of class meeting work will be crucial. The course work will be completed by an oral presentation of their finished sketchbook accompanied by a short written analysis of the finished piece.

Graduate students while participating in all museum visits, excursions, and group discussion will focus their sketchbook project on harvesting ideas relating to their research focus. While undergraduate students will be asked to explore various ideas that will generate new topics of group discussions, graduate students while drawing and recording ideas in their sketchbook will specifically focus and seek out information relating to their graduate creative work.

This course emphasizes PUL 5: Understanding Society and Culture by exploring and comparing two similar yet different cultures by visiting a major European city.

### **Grading:**

Participation and mature behavior during the trip (25%)

Sketchbook (60%)  
Written Artist Statement (5%)  
Group Critique Presentation of the work (10%)

**Attendance:**

Students are required to attend all group excursions while visiting abroad  
Missing a final critique will result in a failure of the class.

**Recommended Travel Guide:**

Lonely Planet Central Europe (or much more preferred Lonely Planet book dedicated to each individual city visited)

**Course +Trip Itinerary:**

**Pre-Departure Meetings:**

*Orientation meeting 1:* (early spring semester): An overview of program structure and basic travel information.

*Orientation meeting 2:* (April): A detailed review of program logistics, travel information, and health and safety procedures.

*Content meeting:* An introduction to the content and themes of this course

- review of one, two, multi-point perspective
- technical demonstration when working with watercolor in the field
- discussion pertaining the conceptual content of the course

**During the entire trip, topics below will be discussed in connection of to visits of sites and in-progress work on the sketchbook (visual travel journal)**

- Technical instructions for working with graphite and pen
- Instructions in free linear perspective
- Discussions about developing personal style for working in visual travel journal
- Technical instructions in plein-air watercolor techniques
- Discussion about working in Collage and Mixed Drawing Media
- Group discussion about cultural shocks and artistic curiosity
- Discussions about developing a personal narrative for works in sketchbook
- Reproduction of a old masters artwork on location
- Artist Studio Visit (tentative) and discussion about being an artist in Paris
- Discussion pertaining a personal development of the narrative

***Berlin - 9 Days including one-day trip to Potsdam:***

**Museums visited:**

-**Altes Museum - Old Museum** (is one of the most important examples of neoclassicism in architecture in Europe. As part of the UNESCO-listed Museum Island it is best known for its Greek and Roman Antiquities collection)

- Alte National Gallerie – Old National Gallery** (houses one of the most important collections of 19th century painting in Germany and includes masterpieces by Caspar David Friedrich, Adolph Menzel Edouard Manet Claude Monet, not to mention Auguste Renoir and Auguste Rodin)
- Pergamon Museum** (it houses 2<sup>nd</sup> Century BC –Pergamon Altar, 6<sup>th</sup> century BC bright blue glazed-brick Ishtar Gate of Babylon, the Collection of Classical Antiquities, the Museum of the Ancient Near East, and the Museum of Islamic Art)
- Neue National Gallerie – New National Gallery** (Ludwig Mies van der Rohe designed to house Berlin's permanent exhibition of 20th century European visual art)
- Berlinische Gallerie** (Berlin-focussed, multi-disciplinary collection bringing together Fine Art, Photography and Architecture)
- Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum fur Gegenwart - Contemporary Art Museum** (Berlin's most important exhibition space dedicated exclusively to contemporary art from the 1950s to the present)
- Gemäldegalerie – Picture Gallery** (also known as the Old Masters Museums is one of the world's most impressive collections of European painting exhibiting an astonishing range of European art from the 13th to the 18th centuries from the great European masters including Botticelli, Dürer, Rembrandt, Rubens and Titian)

### Sites visited:

- Brandenburger Tor – Brandenburg Gate** (landmark and symbol all in one with over two hundred years of history, a former symbol of the divided city)
- **Checkpoint Charlie** (the best known border-crossing of Cold War days)
- **Holocaust Memorial** (located in Mitte on a stretch of the former “death strip”, where the Wall once stood near the Brandenburg Gate)
- Reichstag** (Reichstag was restored in 1990 as the seat of Parliament in Berlin, our visit will include the glass and mirror cupola)
- Potsdamer Platz** (is the most striking example of the urban renewal that turned Berlin into the ‘New Berlin’)
- The Gedächtniskirche or Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church** (the symbolic centre of West Berlin, an anti- war memorial to peace and reconciliation. Following Allied bombing during WWII, the original, west tower has remained standing as a ruin)
- Alexanderplatz** (interweaving centuries of social, political, and architectural history and repeatedly the subject of public debate and urban design competitions)

### **Potsdam – one-day trip:**

- Sanssouci Palace** (summer residence of King Frederic II, palace is considered the major work of Rococo architecture in Germany)
- Bildergalerie - The Art Gallery at Sanssouci Palace** (works of the Italian, Dutch, and Flemish baroque periods are featured here, including paintings by Caravaggio, Rubens, Reni, Rembrandt, and van Dyck)
- **Neues Palais - New Palace** (is the largest 18th century structure in the Sanssouci park, it served Frederick II as a palace for his guests)
- The Chinese House** (is considered to be the most important example of the Chinoiserie of the 18th century)

### **Prague – 5 Days:**

#### Museums visited:

##### -**Národní galerie - National Gallery**

- Veletržní palác - Trade Fair Palace** (museum houses the collections of the 19th century art, as well as collections of modern and contemporary art)
- Schwarzenberský palác - Schwarzenberg Palace** (museum houses a collection of the Renaissance and Baroque painting created in the lands of the Crown of Bohemia from the late 16th to the end of the 18th century)
- Šternberský Palác - Sternberg Palace** (museum houses a collection of European art from ancient times to the end of Baroque, with emphasis on the 14th-18th centuries)

- Uměleckoprůmyslové museum - Museum of Decorative Arts** (museum houses exhibition of textiles, fashion, applied graphic, photography, glass, ceramics, metal, etc.)
- Artbanka Museum of Young Art (AMoYA)** (museum of contemporary Czech and international art)

### Sites visited:

- Pražský hrad - Prague Castle** (is one of the largest castles in the world, including St. Vitus Cathedral, three courtyards, St. George's Basilica, among others)
- Staré Město - The Old Town** (walking tour will include Karluv Most – Charles Bridge, Staroměstské náměstí – Old Town Square, Orloj, - Prague Astronomic Clock, Jozefov – The Jewish Quarter)
- Nové Město - The New Town** (walking tour will include Václavské náměstí - Wenceslas Square, Státní opera – State Opera)

## **Vienna – 7 Days including one-day trip to Bratislava:**

### Museums visited:

- Kunsthistorisches Museum – Art History Museum** (Imperial Palace that houses an extensive collection of the imperial family, it houses the largest Bruegel collection in the world, and it is considered one of the most eminent museums in the world)
- Naturhistorisches Museum - Museum of Natural History** (the museum houses a breathtaking variety of nature in its collection of 20 million objects, one of the highlights of the museum is a prehistoric stone figure The Venus of Willendorf)
- Museum Quartier**
  - MUMOK- Museum of Modern Art** (focuses its attention on the art of the 20th and 21st centuries)
  - Leopold Museum** (museum houses collection of the Viennese art nouveau, the Vienna Workshop and of the Expressionist period)
- 21er Haus** (highlights works of Austrian art of the 20th and 21st centuries)
- Belvedere** (a baroque architectural jewel consists of two palaces (Upper and Lower Belvedere), which today houses Austrian art from the Middle Ages to the present day)
- Secession House (museum houses** the 112-foot Beethoven Frieze, a permanent fresco pictorial interpretation of the 9th Symphony, created by Gustav Klimt)

### Sites visited:

- Schloss Schönbrunn – Palace Schonbrunn** (the former summer residence of the imperial family, is one of Europe's most impressive Baroque palace complexes )
- St. Stephen's Cathedral** – (Austria's most eminent Gothic cathedral dating from late 15<sup>th</sup> century)
- **Vienna's Ringstrasse** ( walking tour of 5.3 kilometers long boulevard lined with palaces, museums, Vienna's City Hall, Austrian Parliament Building, Opera House among others)

## **Bratislava – one-day trip:**

- Bratislavský Hrad – Bratislava Castle** (centuries old castle, the site was first inhabited during the Stone Age)
- Katedrála Sv. Martina - St. Martin's Cathedral** (Romanesque church, dedicated to the Holy Savior, from 1221, between 1563 and 1830 St Martin's served as the coronation church for Hungarian kings and their consorts)