The goal of this course is to guide students through writing a publication-ready article. The seminar follows a work-in-progress format including the following components: introduction to the scholarly publication system (i.e. peer review procedures, criteria for acceptance, journals in the field); analysis and evaluation of a variety of published articles with regard to practices of outlining a research question, building an argument, and developing a conceptual framework, methodology and a writing style. The second half of the seminar proceeds in the mode of a Schreibwerkstatt. Participants will present their projects, write abstracts, circulate and discuss their works-in-progress. They will receive a grade once they have submitted their article to a journal for publication review. The seminar is open to students in the second year and beyond.

Taught in German.
Since the global spread of the COVID 19-pandemic, the mask has become a part of our social everyday life in a novel way. It serves as a filter and hygiene-object, it marks rules of distance and physical boundaries to prevent infection. In theatre, dance and rituals in various cultures, masks are and have been used as (cult) objects of transformation. This transformative potential of masquerade highlights situations and interactions between identity and de-facement in role-playing, in festivities like carnival and masked balls and in artistic works such as photography, film and performance. Furthermore, the notion of “masquerade” has become a key-word in feminist and queer theory since the 1990s (with Judith Butler, Marjorie Garber, Teresa de Lauretis among others) and in the following critical reflection of the debate around identity, body politics and strategies of de-hierarchization. The following subject areas of masks and masquerade will be among the topics of the seminar: moments of history and culture of masks in dance, performance and ritual; texts and examples of gender- and queer- theory of masquerades; research, reflection and practical handling of the current situation of wearing masks during the “Covid” life (cf. G. Agamben; J. L. Nancy). In the course, we will read texts focusing on theory, aesthetics and politics of masks/masquerade (e.g. by J. Riviere, D. Haraway, J. Butler, J. Halberstam, A. Bolton, Trajal Harrel (on Voguing), K. Mezure and K. Sieg (on “Ethnic Drag”). The understanding of these texts will be deepened through the analysis of contemporary dance and performance (ORLAN) in Japanese dance/theater-tradition, in vogueing and in ethnic drag.

GERM-GA1112; PERF-GT 2100.001; COLIT-GA2956.002; ENG-GA2958.003
4 credits / T 2:00 – 4:45 pm / Spring 2022
This course is about information culture. The concept "information," first formalized after the Second World War, emerged slowly from the Enlightenment to the 20th century, when it invaded the sciences and the humanities alike. Information circulates unpredictably, autonomously, forming not just logistical channels but also a general aesthetics that demands critique. Beginning with debates on poetry around 1800, the course looks forward to Logical Positivism, the computing revolution, and large-scale data processing. We will analyze the aesthetics of information in authors including but not limited to Friedrich Schlegel, Sianne Ngai, Hanne Darboven, Elfriede Jelinek, Franz Kafka, Max Bense, Jacques Lacan, Friedrich Hayek, Jodi Dean, Kathrin Rögga, and Hito Steyerl.
We shall explore structures of hauntedness and “originary Unbelonging” from Goethe’s haunts to Celan’s unWo and the predicament of contemporary Zombies. Readings will be theoretically guided by Derrida’s analyses of mourning in Freud and Marx, and by way of Nicolas Abraham/Maria Torok’s theories of cryptonymy, figures of condemned sites, and effects of the phantom.

The conceptual framework for the course work will be provided by Jean-Luc Nancy’s understanding of Heim and abode as Ethos inflected by Unheimlichkeit - the ethical relation to time as a haunting. Citizens of Geneva Rousseau and Frankenstein will make critical guest/ghost appearances to underscore revolutionary impulses of the undead.
GERM-GA 2223 TOPICS IN MODERN GERMAN LITERATURE AND POETICS:

MILLSTONES OF HISTORY: EAST GERMAN WRITERS REFLECTING HOPES, LOSSES, AND GUILT

JENNY ERPENBECK, DAAD POETICS CHAIR

Spring 2022
F 2:00 – 4:45 pm / 2 credits
Meets March 4 – April 25, 2022

Literature at the intersection of “capital H History” and individual histories: What questions can be posed at this intersection? And what outcome do we even desire: answers, or just a form of expression? Does literature lose its essential character when it seeks to bring about change, or is that precisely when it arrives at its true essence? Does solidarity with the weak or the strong, with power or resistance – does partisanship as such – have consequences for literary form? In our readings and discussion of texts by a number of authors who spent their formative years in the GDR – e.g. Wolfgang Hilbig, Brigitte Reimann, Irmtraut Morgner, Thomas Brasch, Christa Wolf, Heiner Müller – we will ask in which works and in which ways these writers display a consciousness of their own status as historical subjects – whether as hope or as utopia, with humor, anger, or arrogance, in mourning or in resignation. Writing between the poles of distance and involvement.