

Art History 301-303

Representing the Twentieth Century Metropolis: Architecture, Painting, Film

University of Pennsylvania, Department of Art History

Spring Semester 2008

Jaffe Hall, Room 201

Monday, 2:00-5:00 PM

Instructor: Anthony Raynsford

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Office hours: Tuesday, 2:00-4:00 PM

* E-mail is generally the best method of contact during non-office hours.

* Please allow 48-hours for an e-mail response.

GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

Topic and Scope of the Course: The metropolis has held a central place in the development of modern art and architecture. By the end of the 19th century, the modern metropolis had become a primary object for aesthetic reflection, both among the artistic avant-gardes, who sought to represent its subjective effects, and among architects and urban planners, who sought to reform its physical shape and thus represent its utopian alternative. Thus, even as the metropolis has provoked new modes of visually perceiving the architectural environment, it has also inspired new paradigms of architectural intervention. In its sheer physical form, it embodied an unprecedented scale of building and tempo of motion. In its subjective effects, it seemed to stimulate a new kind of consciousness, internally fragmented and externally disassociated from traditional social groups. Focusing on three major media; architecture, painting and film, this course will examine the reflexive relationship between the socio-historical phenomenon of the modern metropolis and its aesthetic representations. It will examine the rise of the metropolis as already mediated by these representations. Specific movements and genres that will be covered include German expressionism, CIAM urbanism, architectural Postmodernism, Pop Art, and Hollywood science fiction.

Purpose of the Course: This course is an advanced undergraduate seminar, whose purpose is to provide a forum for investigation of a single topic across an array of artistic media. It also provides a platform for each student to develop of an individual line of inquiry in depth. The course will emphasize writing assignments as well as class discussion of the readings. Students will be expected to develop projects related to the theme of the course as well as to present their work to the class. Students will also be expected to take an active role in class discussions, including introducing one of the readings during the semester.

Class Format: This course will be a seminar course focused on the discussion and analysis of texts and visual materials. Students are responsible for having read the required readings before each class and should be prepared to discuss the content in detail. Evaluations will be based on written assignments and class participation, including attendance. The class will include screenings of three complete films and short selections from other films to be announced.

Required Texts: Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson eds., *The Blackwell City Reader*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002); Timothy O. Benson ed., *Expressionist Utopias*, (Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1993); Photocopied articles and excerpts available on the Blackboard site for the course. All books are available at the Penn Center Bookstore.

COURSE SCHEDULE

January 21: Martin Luther King Day (No Class)

[Prepare readings for following week]

January 28: Describing and Imagining Metropolitan Subjectivity:

Georg Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life," *City Reader*, pp. 11-19; David Frisby, "Social Theory, the Metropolis and Expressionism," in Benson ed., *Expressionist Utopias*; David Frisby, "Social Theory, the Metropolis and Expressionism," in Benson ed., *Expressionist Utopias*, pp. 88-111.

February 4: Painting the Metropolis in Early 20th Century Germany:

Timothy O. Benson, "Fantasy and Functionality: The Fate of Utopia," in Benson ed., *Expressionist Utopias*, pp. 12-55; Sherwin Simmons, "Ernst Kirchner's Streetwalkers: Art, Luxury, and Immorality in Berlin, 1913-16" *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 82, No. 1 (Mar., 2000), pp. 117-148; John Czaplicka, "Pictures of a City at Work, Berlin circa 1890-1930," in Haxthausen and Suhr eds., *Berlin, Culture and Metropolis*, pp. 3-36.

Film screening – "Metropolis, part I

February 11: Expressionism in Film, Architecture and Urban Design:

Iain Boyd White, "The Expressionist Sublime," in Benson ed., *Expressionist Utopias*, pp. 118-137; Anton Kaes, "Metropolis: City, Cinema, Modernity," in Benson ed., *Expressionist Utopias*, pp. 146-165; Andreas Huyssen, "The Vamp and the Machine: Technology and Sexuality in Fritz Lang's Metropolis," *New German Critique*, No. 24/25, (Autumn, 1981 - Winter, 1982), pp. 221-237.

Film screening – "Metropolis, part II

February 18: Manhattanism – Building the Skyscraper City

Thomas Bender, "Skyscraper and Skyline," in *The Unfinished City*; Carol Willis, "Zoning and 'Zeitgeist' : The Skyscraper City in the 1920s," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 45, March 1986, pp. 47-59; Hugh Ferriss, *The Metropolis of the Future*, pp. 108-140; Rem Koolhaas, excerpt, "The Double Life of Utopia: The Skyscraper," *Delirious New York*, pp. 81-131.

February 25: Electricity and Skyline –New York in Photography and Painting, 1910-30

Henry James, "New York Revisited," in *The American Scene*, pp. 57-88; William R. Taylor, "New York and the Origin of the Skyline," In Pursuit of Gotham, pp. 23-33; Anna C. Chave, "Who Will Paint New York?: 'The World's New Art Center' and the Skyscraper Paintings of Georgia

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O'Keeffe," *American Art*, Vol. 5, No. 1/2. (Winter - Spring, 1991), pp. 86-107; William Sharpe, "New York, Night, and Cultural Mythmaking: The Nocturne in Photography, 1900-1925," *Smithsonian Studies in American Art*, Autumn 1988, pp. 2-21.

Short analytical paper due in class.

March 3: CIAM Architecture and the "Functional City"

Le Corbusier "The City of Tomorrow and Its Planning," (excerpt), *City Reader*, pp. 20-38; Mary McLeod, "'Architecture or Revolution,': Taylorism, Technocracy and Social Change," *Art Journal*, Vol. 43, Summer 1983, pp. 6-19; Manfredo Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia*, Chapters 4 and 5, pp. 78-124; Catherine Bauer Wurster, "The Social Front of Modern Architecture in the 1930s," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, pp. 48-52; Kenneth Frampton, "The New Objectivity: Germany, Holland and Switzerland 1923-33," in *Modern Architecture, A Critical History*, pp. 130-141.

March 10: [SPRING BREAK --- NO CLASS]

March 17: Organic Architecture and the Sociology of "Megalopolis"

Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life," *On Cities and Social Life*, pp. 60-83; Lewis Mumford, "Introduction" and "The Rise and Fall of Megalopolis," from *The Culture of Cities*, pp. 3-12, 223-299; Robert Fishman, "The Metropolitan Tradition in American Planning," in *The American Planning Tradition*, pp. 65-85; Frank Lloyd Wright, "The Disappearing City," in *Frank Lloyd Wright Collected Writings*, pp. 70-112.

Film screening – "The City"

March 24: Highways, Housing and Urban Renewal: Modernist Urbanism, 1940-60

Marshall Berman, "Modernism in New York," in *All That Is Solid Melts into Air*, pp. 290-329; Edmund Bacon, Putting Ideas to Work – Philadelphia," in *Design of Cities*, pp. 264-306; Richard Sommer, "The Urban Design of Philadelphia: Taking the Towne for the City," in Robbins and El-Khoury eds., *Shaping the City*, pp. 135-76; Peter Hall, excerpt from *Cities of Tomorrow*, in *City Reader*, pp. 477-489.

March 31: Planning, Cultural Pluralism and the Question of Experience in the 1960s

Kevin Lynch, (excerpt), *City Reader*, pp. 30-38 and "Introduction," *The Image of the City*, pp. 1-13; Jane Jacobs, "Introduction," *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, pp. 5-34 and (excerpt) *City Reader*, pp. 351-56; Sennett, Richard, (excerpt), *City Reader*, pp. 342-50; James Holston, "The Modernist City," *City Reader*, pp. 513-23.

Final research proposal due in class.

April 7: Pop Art, Obsolescence and the Commercial Strip, 1950-70

Robert Venturi, *Learning from Las Vegas*, pp. 3-72; Nigel Whiteley, "Toward a Throw-Away Culture: Consumerism, 'Style Obsolescence' and Cultural Theory in the 1950s and 1960s," *Oxford Art Journal*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (1987), pp. 3-27; Joshua A. Shannon, "Claes Oldenburg's 'The Street' and Urban Renewal in Greenwich Village, 1960," *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 86, No. 1 (Mar., 2004), pp. 136-161.

Film screening "Blade Runner," part I

April 14: Film and the Postmodern Metropolis, 1970-1990

Rosalyn Deutsche, from "Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics," *City Reader*, pp. 401-409; David Harvey, "Postmodernism in the City: Architecture and Urban Design," in *The Condition of Postmodernity*, pp. 66-98; Mike Davis, "Fortress L.A.," in *City of Quartz*, pp. 225-263; Norman M. Klein, "Building Blade Runner," in *Social Text*, no. 28, 1991, pp. 147-152.

Film screening "Blade Runner," part II

April 21: Globalism and the New Media

Mitchell, W.J., "City of Bits: Space, Place and the Infobahn," *City Reader*, pp. 52-59; Manuel Castells, "An Introduction to the Information Age," *City Reader*, pp. 125-34; Saskia Sassen, "Globalization and Its Discontents," *City Reader*, pp. 161-70; Edward Soja, "Six Discourses on the Postmetropolis," *City Reader*, pp. 188-96; Mark Wigley, "Network Fever," *Grey Room*, No. 4. (Summer, 2001), pp. 82-122.

April 28: Student Presentations

Final research paper due in class!!

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

General Requirements:

The course is an advanced undergraduate seminar in art history, with a heavy emphasis on the modern period. Evaluations will be based on class participation, project presentations, a project proposal, and a final seminar project, consisting of a 15-page paper arising out of a dialog with the readings in the course. These projects will be presented as 10-minute oral presentations at the last seminar session. Course performance will be evaluated on a combination of class participation, especially close attention to the readings, and independent research.

Relative weight of course requirements:

- 1) Short analytical paper (20%)
- 2) Research paper proposal (10%)
- 3) Final research paper (50%)
- 4) Class participation, including final presentation (20%)

Policy on late assignments and class participation:

Late papers will be docked by one full grade and will not be accepted after two weeks.

Final papers will not be accepted after the first day of the final examination period.

Exceptions will be made only in cases of documented emergency (e.g. sudden hospitalization, death in the immediate family).

Attendance is essential to class participation. Two or fewer unexcused absences will not affect the class participation grade. However, each subsequent absence will deduct 25% of the class participation grade.

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Those with 5 or more unexcused absences will not receive credit for the course.

Please note: Except in cases of documented emergencies, incomplete grades are not given in this course.

Academic Integrity

All relevant University policies regarding Academic Integrity must be followed. This includes no cheating, no plagiarism and reporting any knowledge thereof. Please consult the Student Handbook or the appropriate web-page:

<http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/osl/acadint.html>

Exceptional Accommodations:

Any student who has a documented need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact Student Disabilities Services, located at:

Stouffer Commons, Ste 300, 3702 Spruce Street, Philadelphia PA 19104-6027

Phone: (215) 573-9235

Additional Notes:

This syllabus is subject to change, in the event of unforeseen circumstances, or in the case that changes will significantly enhance the quality of the course.