

Art History 499: Visual and Material Culture

Paris Projected: Exhibiting Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life

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Course Description:

This course treats the emergence of film from the larger 19th century visual culture in Paris. To move through the city was to consume visual culture at every turn: one saw posters on hoardings and Morris columns, products and advertisements in shop windows, and new architectural structures rising from the ground. Students will dive deeply into learning about the range of new urban experiences wrought by nineteenth-century modernization, the performance culture in such contexts as Opera, theater and World's Fairs, as well as the new viewing conditions they conditioned. These changes laid the ground-work for the emergence of cinema, whose history, from 1895 to 1907 is also the subject of this course.

The course also has an important second goal. The content is also the subject of two major museum exhibitions (Musée d'Orsay, Paris and LACMA) that the professor co-curated. Students will learn about the process of creating a museum exhibition, from start to finish by studying at the museums and by meeting the teams of museum professionals engaged in the exhibition process, beyond the professor.

The class begins in Los Angeles, where the exhibition, "City of Cinema" will be on display at LACMA. We will meet at the exhibition four days a week for the first two weeks, convening with LACMA curators, Britt Salvesen and Leah Lehmbeck three times. The class then moves to Paris for a ten-day study visit that will include meetings at the Musée d'Orsay with curators there, to the Cinémathèque, visiting its permanent display, its Director and seeing its library, and additional site visits in and around the city, including visits to the Opéra, Montmartre and the Eiffel Tower. There will be optional evening activities to attend the Opéra, other exhibitions and several group lunches and dinners.

Learning Objectives:

Analysis: Increase the student's ability to analyze creative endeavors, including describing them with appropriate vocabulary, examining their formal elements, and engaging in research to understand their contexts.

Context: Enrich the student's discernment of creative production (in visual culture) in the past by increasing knowledge of its historical and aesthetic bases. Special emphasis on urban history and media history and the connection between the two.

Connections: Deepen the student's appreciation of the connections between creative endeavors and concurrent political, religious, and social conditions; show how these endeavors fulfill cultural functions or fill cultural needs. Class readings and meetings with museum professionals are means to this end.

Professional and Future Engagement: Increase the student's understanding of what it means to pursue a career in the museum-world or to become a lifelong supporter and/or participant in both film and museum culture; to gain understanding about the connections between scholarship and public knowledge.

Course requirements

Readings and attendance in seminars and on related excursions are mandatory. READINGS MUST BE COMPLETED IN ADVANCE OF CLASS.

- 1) Meaningful participation (10%)
- 2) 6 comments/posts (20%): throughout the class
- 3) Exhibition Object Paper: 5 pages (25%): due May 30th
- 4) Final Paper: 12 pages (45%): due June 10th.

Grades will also reflect each student's commitment to the intellectual life of the group. As well, professional conduct and composure will be noted.

NO TEXTING or other use of ELECTRONIC DEVICES except for note-taking is permitted.

Absenteeism

Students are obliged to attend all meetings and to consider their academic obligations as comparable to what they are accustomed to on the main campus in Los Angeles. Students will be allowed absence in case of illness or for medical emergencies. The faculty director will also excuse other certified emergencies or case-specific conflicts.

Any unexcused absence is considered excessive and will be reflected in a student's grade. A percentage of the grade is based on participation and attendance will be noted. Therefore, final grades will reflect excessive absences. Each student, upon acceptance to the program, will have consented to this agreement and will be expected to abide by its stipulations.

Grading Scale

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

Readings:

Books for Purchase:

City of Cinema, Lehmbeck, Salvesen and Schwartz
Schwartz, *Spectacular Realities*

Articles:

See syllabus below. Provided via dropbox.

Filmography:

All exhibition films will be provided to students via a link.

All Reading and Viewing Assignments are DUE on the day they are listed.

Written Assignments: Students will be assigned two days a week each when they post their summary of the readings and/or activities and ask a set of questions which they post on the class slack space by 9 am the next morning for the next day. Each post will be one to two pages long. Each student will write 6 posts which will be graded at the end as one assignment.

Each student will pick an exhibition object and write an object biography of 5 pages in length. The object biography is due upon arrival in Paris, Monday May 30th.

Each student will write a final essay in which they select a group and set of objects from the 19th century and a set of related films to write about together. These projects will be developed in consultation with the instructor by the end of the first week and might also be enhanced by research in France.

Class Schedule: May 16-June 13

M, T, Th, F: 10-2:30 including lunch break in LA
Wednesday: Independent Assignment development, 10-12
Paris schedule different: see below and daily updates

The first two weeks class will be held at LACMA in the exhibition gallery and then across the street in the LACMA seminar room. (Museum study spaces are closed during renovation).

Before the class, please watch this documentary about the exhibition on Arte.

<https://vimeo.com/579408020>

Password : OPC0721

Watch curator virtual tour: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QkbelHok2P0>

And complete readings listed on May 16 below.

Week One: Paris Projected

Monday, May 16: LACMA Gallery: 10-12

Students visit the exhibition in a guided tour with curators, Salvesen and Lehmbeck.

Lunch: 12:00-12:30

Seminar: 12:30-2:30: Seminar room at 5900 Wilshire

History of Paris in the 19th century (Schwartz) and discussion with curators 1:30-2:30 about how the particularities of this show.

Read:

- *City of Cinema*, Introduction,
- *City of Cinema*, Schwartz, "Paris, Screen City"
- *Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life*: Introduction and Verhagen on Posters

Tuesday, May 17: LACMA Gallery: 10-12: Focus: Parisian Streetscapes

10-11: Each student should select a streetscape and prepare to discuss with class

11-12: Students present their streetscape

Lunch: 12:00-12:30

Seminar: 12:30-2:30: The Culture of the Press and the Rise of the Poster

Read:

*Ruth Iskin, *The Poster*, pp.127-145 and 173-209

Film Screenings: Watch films for Paris Section and Exhibitions Section, (1, 1b, 2, 3, 4)

No CLASS WEDNESDAY

Thursday, May 19: LACMA Gallery: 10-12: The World's Fairs and Au Tour Du Monde

Lunch: 12-12:30

Seminar: 12:30-2:30: The Human Zoo and the Ethnographic Gaze

Read:

*LACMA Catalogue, Schwartz, "Au Tour du Monde"

*Allan, Michael. "Deserted Histories: The Lumière Brothers, the Pyramids and Early Film Form." *Early Popular Visual Culture* 6, no. 2 (July 2008): 159–70.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/17460650802150416>.

Film Screenings: Gallery selections for Around the World, 9

Friday: May 20: LACMA Gallery 10-12: The Art of Looking: Optical Devices with Salvesen (10:30-11:30)

Lunch: 12:00-12:30

Seminar: 12:30-2:30: Art meets Popular Culture: Technology and Tradition

Read:

LACMA Catalogue: Salvesen on optical devices, Lehmbeck on Painting and Sculpture

*Elsaesser, Thomas. "The Cinematic Dispositif: (Between Apparatus Theory and Artists' Cinema)." In *Film History as Media Archaeology*, 101–36. Tracking Digital Cinema. Amsterdam

University Press, 2016. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1zxskjv.6>.

Films: Watch films about spectatorship and fine art, 6, 7, 8, 11

Week Two: Putting An Exhibition Together

Monday, May 23: Exhibition Installation: Victoria Behner, LACMA

LACMA Gallery: 10-12

Lunch: 12:00-12:30

12:30-2:30 Seminar: Discussion of Schwartz, *SR*

Read: Schwartz, *Spectacular Realities*

Watch Théâtre Optique program: LACMA

Tuesday, May 24: The Art of the Loan and Object Identification

LACMA Gallery: 10-12

Leah Lehmebeck discusses object research, the major loans in the show and acquisitions

10:30-12:00 in the gallery and outside for discussion

Lunch: 12-12:30

Seminar: 12:30-2:30 The Spaces of Cinema: Visit by Brian Jacobson

Read: LACMA Catalogue, Jacobson, "Before the Studios"

Selected presentations from the Musée d'Orsay catalogue from grad students

Thursday May 26: Films in the Gallery with curatorial assistant Aaron Rich

Screen the films in the Salle du Cinéma and discuss

LACMA Gallery: 10-12

12-12:30 Lunch

Seminar: 12:30-2:30 What is a Museum Education Department? Elizabeth Gerber

Read:

*Werner, Jean-François. "The Archives of the Planet: The Life and Works of Albert Kahn."

Visual Anthropology 28, no. 5 (October 20, 2015): 438–50.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/08949468.2015.1086215>.

Friday May 27: Museum Publication

10:30-12:00: Visit in the Gallery with an eye to how the exhibition and the book are different

12:00-12:30: Lunch Break

12:20-2:30: Meeting with Lisa Mark LACMA pubs, Discussion of the differences between the wall and the page

Travel to Paris: Saturday May 28: instructor will also be accompanied by Jennifer Miller, Associate Director, VSRI who will help in Paris.

Paris, then and now: ITINERARY IN PROGRESS

There will be an optional evening at the ballet or the opera, to be determined once the schedule is announced. Other details will emerge closer to the visit based on what exhibitions are up.

Arrival Sunday morning, May 29. Depending on travel plans: Lunch in the Marais and visit to Musée Carnavalet. (Depends on plane)
Screen: Henri Langlois, Phantom of the Cinémathèque (on Kanopy)
Meeting at Hotel at 17h to check-in and talk about the week ahead, especially COVID Protocols.
Group Dinner at 8 pm. Details TBD.

Monday, May 30: City of Cinema

10:30-1: Visit to the Cinémathèque: Musée Méliès; meeting with Stefan Cornic, documentary film-maker.

Picnic in the Parc de Bercy

14:30-17: Visit to the Bibliothèque Nationale de France

Movie at the Grand Rex, followed by dinner

Tuesday, May 31:

Picnic in the Palais Royal

Visit to the INHA on the rue de Richelieu: research and reading

Walking Tour of Paris and papers due.

Wednesday June 1: Visit to the Musée d'Orsay

11-13:30: Downstairs traditional art of the 19thc.

13:30-14:30 Lunch at Orsay

14:30-15:30: Impressionist Galleries and Film

15:30-17h: Meeting with the French curator, Paul Perrin

Read:

Introduction to the French Catalogue

*Mainardi, "Postmodern History at the Musée d'Orsay" in *October* (Summer 1987)

Evening at leisure

*Sherman, "Art History and Politics: The Museum according to Orsay" *Oxford Art Journal* Vol. 13, No. 2 (1990), pp. 55-67 (13 pages).

Thursday: June 2: Musée Albert Kahn, Boulogne.

18h: Evening at the Opéra to see Mats Ek.

Friday: June 3: Independent Visits to a Single exhibition at a museum.

14:30h: Return to Orsay.

Evening get-together to discuss visits to museums.

Saturday, June 4:

10:30: Visit to the Fondation Seydoux-Pathé

Picnic lunch

15: Boldini exhibition, Petit Palais

Sunday, June 5: 10:30 am Musée Carnavalet if not upon arrival followed by falafel in the rue des rosiers
Museum or Study
Group Dinner

June 6: Fly Home (see note below).

June 7-13: Students may extend and remain in Paris to do primary research at either the Musée d'Orsay, the Cinémathèque or the Bibliothèque Nationale de France or return home to LA to research and write their papers. They are responsible for themselves after the class officially ends on June 6.

Papers due: June 13th at 5pm PST.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic conduct

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. SCampus, the Student Guidebook, contains the University Student Conduct Code (see University Governance, Section 11.00), while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A <https://scampus.usc.edu>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://adminopsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety>. This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage <http://sarc.usc.edu> describes reporting options and other resources.

Support systems

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students.

Emergency preparedness

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies. See the university's site on Campus Safety and Emergency Preparedness <http://preparedness.usc.edu/>.

Statement for students with disabilities

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. Any student requesting accommodations based on a disability is required to register with DSP each semester. Please be sure the certification is delivered to your professor or TA within the first two weeks of the semester.