

## VISS 599      **Images Out of Time**

W. J. T. Mitchell, University of Chicago  
Vanessa R. Schwartz, University of Southern California

Summer 2023   Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays  
9:30am-1:30pm PST  
July 10 to August 4, 2023

Online via Zoom



### **Course Description**

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This graduate seminar is an in-depth examination of subjects and themes that have emerged from the VSRI's ongoing "Images Out of Time" project, which considers how images travel through time, dropping in and out of linear histories and reshaping perception, institutions, and social practices along the way. We will study images and objects that are at odds with the moment of their appearance, whether they outlived their initial function or lost contact with their original cultural contexts. Monuments to unjust pasts; icons manifesting fallen gods; ancient ruins in modern structures; replicas and forgeries; old images restored by new technologies: these images force a paradox into view.

While they endure within continuous histories, they also remain stubborn signs of vanished worlds, out of step with the present. Images in the wrong place at the wrong time have justified the civilizing mission of empire and acts of iconoclasm. They continue to structure debates about repatriating artifacts, dismantling monuments and museums, and preserving cultural heritage destroyed by war or exploitation. When "images out of time" suddenly upset our faith in the march of history, they challenge our ability to measure our distance from the past, to understand ourselves, and to imagine collective futures.

Lectures and readings for the course intersect art history, religious studies, history, anthropology, literature, and film, and cuts across divisions separating premodern and modern, as well as European, Atlantic, and Pacific spheres.

### **Course Structure**

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Sessions will take place three days per week, Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, from 9:30 AM to 1:30 PM PST, with a comfort break halfway through. Monday sessions will be led by Professor Mitchell and Professor Schwartz; Wednesday generally will feature distinguished guest lectures; Thursdays will be for student group work which will be in the service of syllabus creation and preparation of course materials for an undergraduate lecture class, "Images out of Time." The first Thursday will also feature a guest.

### **Course Requirements**

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#### *Seminar Participation*

Attend all seminar meetings and lectures, keep up with assigned readings, and engage thoughtfully in class discussions.

Please submit **three concise questions or comments** that focus on any of the assigned readings/visual materials for each session. Your submissions should demonstrate thoughtful synthesis of the material addressed and raise issues worth pursuing in our seminar conversation. These questions/comments will be due to our class wordpress website. Deadline for submission: 10 pm on Sundays and Tuesdays via email to [wjtm@uchicago.edu](mailto:wjtm@uchicago.edu) and [vschwartz@usc.edu](mailto:vschwartz@usc.edu) and also to class Slack. Wordpress address: <https://6481f9e43dca8.site123.me>

## Week One: Shapes Of Time and Modern Temporalities

Monday, July 10:

- W. J. T. Mitchell, "Present Tense 2020: An Iconology of the Epoch," *Critical Inquiry* (Winter 2021): 370-406.
- [George Kubler, \*The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things, 1962\* \(New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008\).](#)
- Nancy D. Munn, "The Cultural Anthropology of Time: A Critical Essay," *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 21 (1992): 93–123.
- Lynn Hunt, "Is Time Historical?" in *Measuring Time, Making History* (Budapest: Central European University Press 2008), 3-45.
- [Benedict Anderson, "Aprehensions of Time" in \*Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism\* \(London/New York: Verso, 1991\), 32-40.](#)
- Martin Heidegger, "Being and Time," [Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#).

Wednesday, July 12:

Guests: Thomas F. Reese, Professor of Art History and Executive Director of the Stone Center for Latin American Studies, Tulane University, and Mary Miller, Sterling Professor Emeritus of Art and Director of the Institute for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage Art of the Ancient New World, Yale University.

- Thomas F. Reese, *George A. Kubler and the Shape of Art History* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2023).
- Mary Miller, "Shaped Time," *Art Journal*, Vol. 68, No. 4 (Winter 2009): 71-77.

Thursday, July 13:

*Progress, Evolution and Science Fiction*

Guest: Ryan Linkof, Curator, Lucas Museum of Narrative Art

- Patrick Sharp, "Introduction," and "Women with Wings: Feminism, Evolution and the Rise of Magazine Science Fiction," in *Darwinian Feminism and Early Science Fiction: Angels, Amazons, and Women* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2018), 1-12; 101-144.
- Ramzi Fawaz, "From Humanity to Mutaninity" in *The New Mutants: Superheroes and the Radical Imagination of American Comics* (New York: New York University Press, 2016), 144-163; 294-295.
- Sherryl Vint, "People as Machines/Machine People," in *Science Fiction: Voyage to the Edge of Imagination*, Glyn Morgan, ed. (London: Thames and Hudson, 2022), 26-45.
- Ryan Linkof, "Survival of the Fittest: Frank Frazetta, Conan and the Pulp Fantasy of the Super Barbarian," conference presentation, April 8, 2022. Paper and powerpoint.

## Week Two: Pre-History

Monday, July 17:

- W. J. T. Mitchell, "Introduction," "The Totem Animal of Modernity," and "The Age of Biocybernetic Reproduction" from *The Last Dinosaur Book: The Life and Times of a Cultural Icon* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998): 2-7, 77-85, and 214-219.
- W. J. T. Mitchell, "The Work of Art in the Age of Biocybernetic Reproduction" in *What Do Pictures Want?: The Lives and Loves of Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2013), 309-335.
- Maria Stavrinaki, "Introduction" and "Reconstituting the Antiquity of Humankind and of Art," in *Transfixed by Prehistory: An Inquiry into Modern Art and Time*, trans. Jane Marie Todd (New York: Zone, 2022), 9–32; 117– 78.
- Dan Edelstein, Stefanos Geroulanos and Natasha Wheatley, "Chronocenosis: An Introduction to Power

and Time," in *Power and Time: Temporalities in Conflict and the Making of History*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020): 1-38.

Wednesday, July 19:

Atlantis

Guest: Jonathan L. Dentler, GHI Postdoctoral Fellow

- Susan Buck Morss, "Natural History: Fossil" in *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989): 58-77.
- Nick Yablon, "Introduction" to *Untimely Ruins: An Archaeology of American Urban Modernity, 1819-1919*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).
- Sumathi Ramaswamy, "Placing Loss" and "Science in the Service of Loss," in *The Lost Land of Lemuria: Fabulous Geographies, Catastrophic Histories*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 1-52.
- Suzanne Marchand, "Leo Frobenius and the Revolt against the West," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 32, No. 2, (1997): 153-170.
- Leroi-Gurhan, "Microcosm and Macrocosm" in *Gesture and Speech*, trans. Anna Bostock Berger, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993): 328-335.

Thursday July 20:

Syllabus Framework

- How to Create a Syllabus.

### Week 3: Time Machines and the Future

Monday, July 24:

Prophetic Wisdom and the Shock of New Media

- W.J.T. Mitchell, "From Robots to iBot: The Iconology of Artificial Intelligence" unpublished paper.
- Henri Bergson, "Three Images of Duration" [Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#).

Wednesday July 26:

The Problem of Contemporaneity

Guest: Megan Luke, Professor and Chair of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Kunsthistorisches Institut, Universität Tübingen.

- Erwin Panofsky, "Reflections on Historical Time" [1927], *Critical Inquiry* 30 (Summer 2004): 691–701.
- (recommended for comparison) Erwin Panofsky, "Art History as a Humanistic Discipline," in *Meaning in the Visual Arts* [1955], (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 1–25.
- Johannes Fabian, "The Other and the Eye: Time and the Rhetoric of Vision," in *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object* [1983], (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 105-41.
- Megan R. Luke, "The Ghost and the Rock: Albert Renger-Patzsch and the Shape of Time," *Art History* 46, no. 1 (February 2023): 124–53. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/1467-8365.12696>

Thursday, July 27:

Students present an Image Out of Time

### Week 4: Temporal Transformations and the Photographic Image

Monday, July 31:

- Vanessa R. Schwartz article on Time-Life Books to be put in dropbox by July 28.
- Daniela Bleichmar and Vanessa R. Schwartz, "Visual History: The Past in Pictures," Special Issue, *Representations* 145, (March 2019): 1-31.
- Mary Ann Doane, "The Representability of Time," in *The Emergence of Cinematic Time: Modernity, Contingency, the Archive* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 1- 32
- W.J.T. Mitchell, "The Abu Ghraib Archive," and "Documentary Knowledge and Image Life," in *Cloning Terror: The War of Images, 9/11 to the Present*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 112-127; 128-136.
- [Screen: Errol Morris, Standard Operating Procedure \(2008\).](#)

Wednesday, August 2:

Guest: Jason Hill, Jason Hill, Associate Professor Modern and Contemporary Art and Visual Culture, University of Delaware.

- Stuart Hall, "The Determinations of News Photographs [1972]," in Charlotte Brunsdon, ed., *Stuart Hall: Writings on Media* (Duke, 2021), 54-77.
- Jason Hill, "Snap-Shot: After Bullet Hit Gaynor," in Jason E. Hill and Vanessa R. Schwartz, eds., *Getting the Picture* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 190-96.
- Jason Hill, "An Exact Instant in the History of the Modern," in Sandra Zalman and Austin Porter, eds., *Modern in the Making: MoMA and the Modern Experiment* (London: Bloomsbury, 2020), 99-113.
- Jason Hill "On Deadline: LIFE as a Weekly Newsmagazine," in Katherine Bussard and Kristen Gresh, eds., *The Power of LIFE: LIFE Magazine and American Photography, 1936–1972* (Princeton: Princeton University Art Museum/Yale University Press, 2020), 62-85.
- Bill Morrison, dir., *Dawson City: Frozen Time*, 2017, 120 minutes.

Aug 3: *Images Out of Time Syllabus Finalized*

- Lorraine Datson and Sharon Marcus, "The Books that Wouldn't Die," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 17, 2019.

Thursday Seminar Presentations

In weeks 2–4, our Thursday sessions will be dedicated to creating a syllabus for a class you might teach undergraduates called "images out of time." Each student will be responsible for a week in the class and as part of that class each student will present a detailed entry on an "Image out of Time" that will also result in a 1500 word essay about the image. Models for this would be entries in "Getting the Picture" (see dropbox files) and also the BBC, "History of the World in 100 Objects." Students will meet from 9:30-11:30 and Mitchell and Schwartz will join from Noon-1:30 on July 20 and August 3. On July 27 they will join at 10:30.

- July 20: Syllabus Framework
- July 27: Initial Presentation of "Images" by students
- August 3: The Idea of Undead Texts: Essential Readings and Visual Materials. Constructing the syllabus.

Students will divide syllabus into weeks and each student takes a week and prepares two lectures of 50 minutes (as powerpoints that are recorded in zoom) and selects readings and creates a folder of PDFs including their week of required readings and also assembles a folder of images as well. Their "Image out of Time" will ideally relate to their week. Half are due by August 6 and the other half by August 10 . There will be a final session via Zoom where we all meet to discuss the lectures and the class. Date to be

determined. Possibly August 18. This work, individual and collective, will determine the student's final grade.

## **Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

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### *Academic Conduct:*

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. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b](http://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, [policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct](http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct).

### *Support Systems:*

Student Health Counseling Services - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call  
[engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling](http://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling)

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)  
Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call  
[engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp](http://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp)  
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to genderbased harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) | Title IX - (213) 740-5086  
[equity.usc.edu](http://equity.usc.edu), [titleix.usc.edu](http://titleix.usc.edu)  
Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations.

Bias Assessment Response and Support - (213) 740-2421 [studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support](http://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support)  
Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions for appropriate investigation and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776 [dsp.usc.edu](http://dsp.usc.edu)  
Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710

[studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssu](http://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssu)

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

[diversity.usc.edu](http://diversity.usc.edu)

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students. \_

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

[dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu), [emergency.usc.edu](http://emergency.usc.edu)

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call [dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu)

Non-emergency assistance or information.