

2005 SPRING SEMESTER  
DEPARTMENT OF ART HISTORY  
ARTH 284M

- **ARCHITECTURE, AVANT-GARDE AND THE POLITICS OF MODERN PUBLIC SPACE**
- **MWF 1.10-2.10 P.M. FA209**
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- Course Description

Public spaces are the concrete architectural and urban settings in which the “dialectical motion of modernity” became visible (Marshall Berman). This course will examine the emergence, transformation, and diverse representations of modern public space in the European context. We will focus on the impact on the urban scene in the 1920s and 1930s of radically innovative movements in the arts, especially but not only in architecture, associated at the time and subsequently with the “avant-garde.”

Through the exploration of specific cases of architectural production and representation, the course will discuss the architectural avant-garde’s re-appropriation of modern public space as a key site of political action and social advocacy. We will also expand the discussion from Europe to the rest of the world, in order to consider the influence of European avant-garde movements in a global context, i.e., as reflected in “other geographies,” as well as conceptions of avant-garde design emerging from the meeting or even clash of “European” and “non-European” cultural values and forms.

- Format and Requirements:

Attendance at all classes is necessary. There will be a take-home final exam in the form of a short paper and students will be asked to write three short reading reports. Evaluation will be based on attendance (10%), weekly reports (30%), contribution to discussion (20%), and the final exam (40%).

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- January 24-26-28: Public Space as *Product* of Modernity

**Readings:** Richard Sennett, *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilization*, New York, London: W.W. Norton&Company, 1994, chapter 6, “Each Man Is a Devil to Himself”, pp. 186-200; chapter 8, “Moving Bodies”, pp. 255-281 (BN), (R)

Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Principles of Modern Architecture*, London: Andreas Papadakis Publisher, 2000, chapter 6, “Healthy City”, pp. 75-86 (R)

**Additional Readings:** Richard Sennett, chapter 3, “The Obsessive Image”, pp. 87-123

- January 31, February 2-4: Towards a “Machine Age”

**Readings:** Marshal Berman, *All That is Solid Melts into Air, The Experience of Modernity*, London, New York, Penguin Books, 1988, “Introduction”, pp. 15-37 (E)  
Richard Sennett, chapter 10, “Urban Individualism”, pp. 317-349 (BN), (R)

**Additional Reading:** Christopher Crouch, *Modernism in Art, Design and Architecture*, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999, chapter 1, “The Cultural Background to the Machine Age”, pp. 10-28 (E)

First weekly report due February 7th, Monday (Christopher Crouch)

- February 7-9-11: Modernity and the Architecture of a New World

**Readings:** Raymond Williams, “The Metropolis and the Emergence of Modernism” in Edward Timms and David Kelley (eds.) *Unreal City: Urban Experience in Modern European Literature and Art*, Manchester University Press, 1985, pp. 13-24 (R)  
Christian Norberg-Schulz, chapter 1, “The New World”, pp. 9-20 (R); chapter 2, “The Free Plan”, pp. 23-34

**Additional Reading:** James Holston, *The Modernist City: An Anthropological Critique of Brasilia*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1989, pp. 3-59 (R)

- February 14-16-18: Avant-Garde and the Critique of Modernist Space

**Readings:** Matei Calinescu, *Five Faces of Modernity: Modernism, Avant-Garde, Decadence, Kitsch, Postmodernism*, “The Idea of the Avant-Garde”, esp. pp. 95-120 (R)  
Hilde Heynen, *Architecture and Modernity, a Critique*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2000, chapter 2, “Constructing the Modern Movement”, pp. 26-72 (BN), (R)

**Additional Reading:** Judy Davis, “Mechanical Millenium: Sant’Elia and the Poetry of Futurism” in Edward Timms and David Kelley (eds.) *Unreal City: Urban Experience in Modern European Literature and Art*, pp. 65-79 (R)

Second weekly report due February 21th, Monday (Judy Davis)

- February 21-23-25: Politics in Space: Avant-Garde Art and Architecture

**Readings:** Theda Shapiro, *Painters and Politics: The European Avant-Garde and Society, 1900-1925*, New York: Elsevier, c1976, chapter 7, “Art and Revolution: Practice, 1918-1921”, pp. 173-200 (E)  
Victor Margolin, *The Struggle for Utopia: Rodchenko, Lissitzky, Moholy-Nagy: 1917-1946*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1997, chapter 1, “Visions of the Future: Rodchenko and Lissitzky 1917-1921”, pp. 8-43 (E)

**Additional Reading:** Hilde Heynen, chapter 3, “Reflections in a Mirror”, read esp. pp. 95-141 (R)

▪ February 28, March 2-4: Manifestoes and Experience of Avant-Garde

**Readings:** Ulrich Conrads (ed.) *Programs and Manifestoes on 20th-century Architecture*, translated by Michael Bullock, Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1970, pp. 34-38, 39-40, 41-43, 49-53, 56, 57-58, 83-86, 98 (R)

Mitchell Schwarzer, “CIAM: City at the end of History”, in R. E. Somol (ed.) *Autonomy and Ideology, Positioning an Avant-Garde in America*, New York: The Monacelli Press, 1997, pp. 235-261 (E)

Film: “The Cruise”, directed by Bennett Miller, 1998 (excerpts)

**Additional Reading:** Anthony Vidler, *Warped Space: Art, Architecture, and Anxiety in Modern Culture*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2001, “Agoraphobia”, pp. 25-50 (E)

Third weekly report due March 7<sup>th</sup>, Monday (“The Cruise”)

▪ March 7-9-11: Public Space in Crisis: Avant-Garde’s End?

**Readings:** Hilde Heynen, chapter 4, “Architecture as Critique of Modernity”, pp. 148-174 (BN), (R)

Matei Calinescu, read esp. pp. 120-144; 175-179 (R)

Richard Sennett, “Civic Bodies”, pp. 355-377 (BN), (R)

**Additional Reading:** Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: an Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1989, translated by Thomas Burger with the assistance of Frederick Lawrence, “The Social-Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere”, pp. 141-175 (R)

Final Exam (take-home) due March 14<sup>th</sup>, Monday

▪ March 14-16-18: Reflections of Avant-Garde: “Other Geographies”

**Readings:** Sibel Bozdoğan, *Modernism and Nation Building: Turkish Architectural Culture in the Early Republic*, Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2001 (R)

Vikramaditya Prakash, *Chandigarh's Le Corbusier: The Struggle for Modernity in Postcolonial India*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, c2002 (R)

(R) RESERVE

(BN) BARNES AND NOBLE BOOKSTORE

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