To coincide with the major exhibition Toulouse-Lautrec and Montmartre at the Art Institute of Chicago, we will discuss the stereotypes of artistic identity that flourished at the end of the nineteenth century. Through a series of case studies we will examine the popular conceptions of the artist as Bohemian, criminal, sociopathic, insane, or perverse, discussing why the public and often artists themselves mythologized creativity as an alienation from culture, rationality, and normality. In addition, we will investigate how these constructions of artistic identity have been transmitted to popular culture through fictionalized biographical films about late-nineteenth-century artists.

Each three-hour session will consist of a combination of lectures and discussions of images, texts, and film excerpts. Students will be evaluated on the basis of their comprehension of course materials, attendance and preparation, critical engagement with the ideas presented in the course, and synthesis of course themes presented in classroom sessions, museum visits, and required readings. There is one required text: PATRICIA MATHEWS, Passionate Discontent: Creativity, Gender, and French Symbolist Art (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1999). All other readings will be made available through the Docutek system (password: myths). Generally, only excerpts will be shown from films listed in the “Screenings” category for each session. Should students want to view entire films, all are available in the Flaxman Library Video/DVD collection.

1. All students are expected to attend class meetings prepared to discuss the required readings. This is a discussion-based class, and all students should regularly and productively contribute to class discussions. Attendance at all class meetings is essential. More than two missed classes may be grounds for a “no credit.” [attendance and participation: 20% of final evaluation]

2. For each required reading, each student must prepare three discussion questions and post them on the course homepage by Tuesday at 9am. Discussion questions should critically engage with the text or point to wider themes we are pursuing. We will use these as the basis for our conversations. Unacceptable questions are those that simply require yes/no answers, ask about facts easily discovered on one’s own, or are overly simplistic or broad. Unsuitable questions will receive no credit. No student will be given credit for the class unless a complete set of discussion questions is posted. Students absent from class must submit questions for the missed session’s readings within one week.

On the day of class, students are responsible for choosing one question (written by
another student) that seems most interesting, problematic, or worthy of debate or discussion. Each class, various students will be asked to discuss this question and why they chose it. [discussion questions: 35% of final evaluation] 

3. All students must make independent trips to visit the exhibitions Toulouse-Lautrec and Montmartre and Toulouse-Lautrec and the Art of the Poster at the Art Institute of Chicago. This must be done prior to class on the 4th of October, and two additional questions must be posted for that day. [evidence of engagement with exhibition (including the posting of two additional discussion questions): 5% of final evaluation] 

4. Over the course of the final four sessions, all students will present an illustrated research report on a topic related to course themes. All topics must be submitted to the instructor for suggestions, advice, and approval. All topics must be approved by 1 November at the latest. Reports can take the form of an investigation into an artist, artwork, or theme from the chronological range of the course or discuss the repercussions or afterlife of course themes into modern and contemporary art. If the latter is chosen, extra effort must be made to tie topics to our primary focus on the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Graduate Students in Art History must chose the first option if this course is to fulfill the 19th century course requirement. Students are responsible for acquiring visual material to accompany their report. Presentations will be 15-20 minutes in length followed by a 10-minute question and answer session in which other students will be expected to participate. Attendance at all presentation sessions is mandatory for all students. [presentations: 40% of final evaluation] 

5. All art history students will be required to develop a research paper from their report (10 pages for undergraduates, 15 pages for graduate students), and all research papers are due, without exception, on the final day of class. [factored into 40% from no.4]

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**Plagiarism**

The School of the Art Institute of Chicago prohibits “dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information to the School.” See Students’ Rights and Responsibilities, Student Handbook: [www.artic.edu/saic/life/studenthandbook/rights.pdf](http://www.artic.edu/saic/life/studenthandbook/rights.pdf)

One plagiarizes when one presents another’s work as one’s own. It is a form of intellectual theft. Plagiarism need not always be intentional. One can plagiarize even if one does not intend to. The penalty for plagiarizing ranges from a failing grade on the plagiarized assignment to not earning credit for the course. This may also result in some loss of some types of financial aid (for example, a No Credit in a course can lead to a loss of the Presidential Scholarship), and in cases of regular offenses can lead to expulsion from the School. The Faculty Senate Student Life Subcommittee has prepared a 28-page handbook entitled Plagiarism: How to Recognize It and Avoid It. The document is available online on at [http://www.artic.edu/saic/programs/resources/library/plagiarism_packet.pdf](http://www.artic.edu/saic/programs/resources/library/plagiarism_packet.pdf)

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**Differently-abled students**

Any students with exceptional needs or concerns (including ‘invisible’ difficulties such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, or psychiatric complications) are encouraged to make an appointment with the professor to discuss these issues by the end of the second week of the term so that appropriate accommodations can be arranged. Any student in need of academic adjustments or accommodations should first contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). SSD can be reached by phone at 312.345.9478 or by sending an email to Sara Baum, Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities ([sbaum@artic.edu](mailto:sbaum@artic.edu)).
SESSIONS AND REQUIRED READINGS

6 September
Introduction: The Lure of Bohemia

**Screening**  

**Further reference**  

13 September
The Agonistic Culture of the Avant-Garde

**Screening**  
*Lust for Life*, dir. Vincente Minelli, 1956 [excerpts]

**Required reading**  

**Graduate reading**  
Pollock pp.42-53.

**Further reference**  


20 September
The Case of Van Gogh

**Screenings**  
*Lust for Life*, dir. Vincente Minelli, 1956 [excerpts]

*Vincent & Theo*, dir. Robert Altman, 1991 [excerpts]

*The Life and Death of Vincent Van Gogh*, dir. Paul Cox, 1987 [excerpts]

**Required reading**  

Further reference


27 September

The Case of Gauguin

Screening

Wolf at the Door, dir. Henning Carlsen, 1987 [excerpts]

Required reading


Pollock from 13 September readings, pp. 53-72.

MATHEWS pp.161-77: “Gendered Bodies II: Paul Gauguin”


Further reference


4 October

The Case of Toulouse-Lautrec

NOTE: All students must have visited the exhibitions Toulouse-Lautrec and Montmartre and Toulouse-Lautrec and the Art of the Poster before this date. In addition to your reading questions, you must also post one to two additional questions about the exhibition.

Screening

Moulin Rouge, dir. John Huston, 1952 [excerpts]

Required reading


11 October
The Cultural Geography of Parisian Bohemia

Screenings Moulin Rouge, dir. John Huston, 1952 [excerpts]
The Brilliant Years, dir. Matthew Reinders, 1990 [excerpts]


18 October
Aesthetes in England

Screenings Wilde, dir. Brian Gilbert, 1998 [excerpts]
The Picture of Dorian Gray, dir. Albert Lewin, 1945 [excerpts]


Further reference


25 October

‘Insanity’ and ‘Genius’: Edvard Munch and Camille Claudel

GUEST LECTURE

JAY CLARKE, Associate Curator of Prints and Drawings at the Art Institute of Chicago will speak on Edvard Munch’s Scream paintings

Screenings

Camille Claudel, dir. Bruno Nuytten, 2001 [excerpts]

Required reading


Graduate reading


Further reference


1 November

After the fin-de-siècle in Paris: Picasso, Stein, Modigliani

Screenings


Modigliani, dir. Mick Davis, 2005 [excerpts]

Paris was a Woman, dir. Greta Schiller, 1995 [excerpts]
Required reading

Who was Modigliani?, dir. Matthew Reinders, 1990 [excerpts]


Graduate reading


Further reference


8 November

Modernist subcultures in Britain before the war

Screening

Savage Messiah, dir. Ken Russell, 1972 [excerpts]

Required reading


15 November

Echoes into contemporary art: The example of Tracey Emin

Required reading


Presentations I (half session)

22 November (Thanksgiving Week)
Presentations II

29 November
Presentations III

6 December
CRITIQUE WEEK, no class held

13 December
Presentations IV