**Hong Kong Shue Yan University**

**Department of English Language & Literature**

2nd term, 2019-2020

**Course Title:** Special Topic in Literature: Architecture in Fiction

**Course Code:**  ENG 480

**Year of Study:**  4th

**Number of Credits:**  3

**Duration in Weeks:**  15

**Contact Hours per Week**: Lecture (2 hours)

Tutorial (1 hour)

**Prerequisites:**  1st and 2nd-year foundation courses

**Prepared by:** Stephen Weninger

**Course Description:**

The course is a focused examination of a selected topic in literary studies. Among possible topics are the following: a specific author, literary movement, historical period, genre, or critical theory; creative writing or literary journalism; an emerging interdisciplinary area such as digital humanities, literature and the other arts, or the graphic novel.

**Description for Architecture in Fiction**

This interdisciplinary course explores the correlation of literature and architecture, in particular the representation of architecture in Western fiction over the past two centuries. Beyond aesthetic appreciation or literary description, these fictions form a critical commentary on the ambitions, achievements and ambiguities of architectural theory and practice in a given historical period. The selected readings in architectural fiction and criticism center around three major cultural movements: the nineteenth-century Gothic Revival, a nostalgic look back to the Middle Ages in the face of industrialization, twentieth-century High Modernism whose forms and functionalism were as utopian as they were aesthetic, and the Postmodern turn towards history, hybridity and the human body.

**Course Outcomes, Teaching Activities and Assessment**

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| **Course Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)** | |
| Upon completion of this course students should be able to: | |
| **ILO1** | identify and analyze literary works which make use of architecture |
| **ILO2** | read and discuss written texts that reference architecture and pertinent descriptions and/or images of architectural structures |
| **ILO3** | examine the intellectual and ideological contexts of the verbal and/or architectural texts covered |
| **ILO4** | evaluate the role of critical theory in the study of the literature-architecture nexus |
| **ILO5** | analyze the literary texts covered with a critical eye |
| **ILO6** | write persuasively on the intersection of literature and architecture |

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| **Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)** | |
| **TLA1** | critical reading of literary texts and critical scanning of architectural designs, structures and images |
| **TLA2** | explanation of theoretical and aesthetic issues |
| **TLA3** | class discussion |
| **TLA4** | oral presentations on the assigned texts |
| **TLA5** | examine typical or renowned works of architecture and screening of interviews with architects, theorists of architecture, or cultural/literary critics |

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| **Assessment Tasks (ATs)** | |  |
| **AT1** | Participation and Discussion  Participation may include short-answer worksheets (to be completed before class) on reading assignments. |
| **AT2** | Midterm  Students write an essay-form response to a prompt based on text(s) concerning architectural motifs or references covered in the course. |
| **AT3** | Presentation / Project  In small groups, students make oral presentations on assigned topics, demonstrating an ability to critically examine the use of architectural elements in fictional texts or apply concepts creatively to the built environment. |
| **AT4** | Term Paper  Each student submits a heavily-weighted term paper. Students have an opportunity to display their understanding of the correlation and interaction of literary and architectural texts. |

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| **Alignment of Course Intended Learning Outcomes, Teaching and Learning Activities and Assessment Tasks** | | |
| **Course Intended Learning Outcomes** | **Teaching and Learning Activities** | **Assessment Tasks** |
| **ILO1** | **TLA1,2,3,4** | **AT2,3,4** |
| **ILO2** | **TLA1,2,3** | **AT1,2,3,4** |
| **ILO3** | **TLA1,2,3** | **AT3,4** |
| **ILO4** | **TLA1,2,3,4** | **AT3,4** |
| **ILO5** | **TLA1,2,3** | **AT1,2,3,4** |
| **IL06** | **TL4** | **AT2,4** |

Week 1. **Architectexts: Course Overview, Theoretical Concepts**

Definitions; architectural fiction; literary architecture

Interdisciplinarity

Week 2. **Sacred Spaces: Re-reading the Gothic**

Hugo, Victor. *Notre-Dame de Paris*. [1831]

Supplementary texts (excerpts)

Pugin, Augustus. *Contracts* [1836]

Ruskin, John. *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*. [1842]

\_\_\_, *The Stones of Venice*. [1851]

Worringer, Wilhelm. *Forms of the Gothic*. [1920]

Week 3. **Sacred Spaces: Re-reading the Gothic**

Hugo, Victor. *Notre-Dame de Paris*. [1831]

Supplementary texts (excerpts)

John Ruskin. *The Bible of Amiens*. [1880]

Huysmans, Joris-Karl. *The Cathedral*. [1898]

Week 4. **Utopian Space: High Modernism and the Dream of Reason**

Ballard, J. G. *High-Rise* [1975]

Supplementary texts (excerpts)

Loos, Alfred. “Ornament and Crime” [1909]

Le Corbusier. *Towards an Architecture.* [1920]

Week 5. **Utopian Space: High Modernism and the Dream of Reason**

Ballard, J. G. *High-Rise* (novel & film by Ben Wheatley) [2016]

Supplementary texts (excerpts)

Foucault, Michel. “Of Other Space: Utopias and Heterotopias” [1985]

Ballard, J. G. “A Handful of Dust” [2006]

Week 6.  **Reading Week**

Week 7. **Midterm**

Week 8. **Empty Space: Modernism, Glass and Ideology**

Mawer, Simon. *The Glass Room*. [2008]

Supplementary texts (excerpts)

Taut, Bruno. “The City Crown” [1919]

Giedion, Siegfried. *Space, Time and Architecture* [1941]

Bloch, Ernst. “Building in Empty Spaces” [1959]

Week 9. **Empty Space: Modernism, Glass and Ideology**

Mawer, Simon. *The Glass Room*. [2008]

Supplementary texts (excerpts)

Eisenstein, Sergei. *The Glass House*. [1920]

Tanazaki, Junichiro. *In Praise of Shadows* [1933]

Week 10. **Hyper-Space: Postmodernism, The Graphic Novel, and Narrative Building**

Ingels, Bjarke. *Yes is More: An Archicomic on Architectural Evolution*. [2009]

McGuire, Richard. *Here. An Architectural Graphic Novel.* [2014]

Van Der Hoorn, M. *Bricks and Balloons. Architecture in Sequential Art*. [2013]

Ware, Chris. *Building Stories*. [2003]

Supplementary texts (excerpts)

Venturi, Robert. “Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture.” [1972]

Jameson, Frederic. “Is Space Political?” [1995]

Lai, Jimenez. *Citizens of No Place* [2013]

Week 11. **Haunted Space: Postmodernism and the Return of the Repressed**

Poe, Edgar Allen. “The Fall of the House of Usher.”

Eco, Umberto. *The Name of the Rose*. [1980] (excerpts)

Film adaptation by Jean-Jacques Annaud [1986]

Supplementary texts (excerpts)

Borges, Jorge-Louis. “The Library of Babel” [1962]

Hollier, Denis. *Against Architecture*. [1974]

Week 12. **Haunted Space: Postmodernism and the Return of the Repressed**

Eco, Umberto. *The Name of the Rose*. [1980] (excerpts); Annaud [film 1986]

Supplementary texts (excerpts)

Larson, Eric. *The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic and Madness and the Fair That Changes America*. [2003]

Vidler, Anthony. *The Architectural Uncanny*. [1992]

Week 13**. Embodied Space: Postmodernism, Monuments and Mutability**

Greenaway, Peter. *In the Belly of an Architect*. [film 2009]

“Portland” by Gary Garvin [2017]

Supplementary texts s (excerpts)

Soja, Edward. *Postmodern Geographies. The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Sciences*. [2010]

Ibsen, Henrik. *The Master Builder* [1892]

Golding, William. *The Spire* [1964]

Week 14. **Embodied Space: Postmodernism, Monuments and Mutability**

Greenaway, Peter. *In the Belly of an Architect*.

Supplementary texts (excerpts)

Rand, Ayn. *The Fountainhead*. [1959]

Rayner, Robert. *The Cloud Sketcher. A Novel.* [2000]

Week 15. **Reading Week**

**Assessment**

Participation, Discussion 10%

Midterm 30%

Presentation 30%

Term Paper 30%

100%

**Primary Texts**

Ballard, J. G. *High-Rise*. London: Jonathan Cape. 1975.

Eco, Umberto. *The Name of the Rose*. Italy: Bompiani. 1980.

Greenaway, Peter. *The Belly of an Architect*. London: Faber & Faber, 1988.

Hugo, Victor. *Notre-Dame de Paris*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009.

Mawer, Simon. *The Glass Room*. Boston: Little, Brown, 2010.

Poe, Edgar Allen. *The Fall of the House of Usher and Other Writings*. London: Penguin, 2003.

**Supplementary Texts**

Bachelard, Gaston. *The Poetics of Space*. London: Penguin, 2015.

Ballard, J, G. “A Handful of Dust.” *The Guardian*, 20 Mar. 2006,

https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2006/mar/20/architecture.communities.

Barthes, Roland. “The Eiffel Tower.” *A* *Barthes Reader*. London: Vintage, 1993.

Borges, Jorge-Louis. “The Library of Babel”. Boston: David R. Godine, 2000.

De Botton, Alain. *The Architecture of Happiness*. London: Penguin, 2014.

Follet, Ken. *Pillars of the Earth*. New York: Viking, 2016.

Golding, William. *The Spire*. London: Faber & Faber, 2013.

Hale, Jonathon A. *Building Ideas: An Introduction to Architectural Theory*. New York: John Wiley, 2000.

Hollier, Denis. *Against Architecture: The Writings of George Bataille*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT P, 1992.

Huysman, Joris-Karl. *The Cathedral*. Cirencester: Echo Library, 2007.

Ibsen, Henrik. *The Master Builder*. London: Nick Hern Books, 2011.

Ingels, Bjarke. *Yes is More: An Archicomic on Architectural Evolution*. Cologne, Taschen, 2009.

Jameson, Frederic. “Is Space Political?” *Rethinking Architecture: A Reader in Cultural Theory*.

Ed. Neil Leach. London: Routledge, 1997.

Jencks, Charles. *Postmodernism: The New Classicism in Architecture*. New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, 1987.

Lai, Jimenez. *Citizen of No Place. An Architectural Graphic Novel.* New York: Princeton UP, 2013.

Le Corbusier. *When Cathedrals Were White. A Journey to the Country of Timid People*. Trans.

Francis E. Hyslop: New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1947.

---, *Towards an Architecture*. New York: Dover, 1985.

Larson, Eric. *The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic and Madness and the Fair That*

*Changes America*. New York: Vintage, 2003.

Loos, Adolf. *Ornament and Crime*. Trans. Shaun Whitehead. London: Penguin, 2019.

McGuire, Richard. *Here. An Architectural Graphic Novel.* London: Penguin, 2015.

Nesbitt, Kate. Ed. *Theorizing A New Agenda for Architecture. An Anthology of Architectural*

*Theory 1965-1995*. New York: Princeton UP, 1996.

Levie, Nir. *Outskirts of Vision*. Trans. Dekel Ovel. Scotts Valley: Createspace, 2015.

Perec, George. *Life: A User’s Manual*. New York: Vintage, 2003.

*Pillars of the Earth*. TV Miniseries. Dir. Sergio Mimica Gezzan. Sony, 2010. Film.

Rand, Ayn. *The Fountainhead*. London: Penguin, 2007.

Richard, Robert. *The Cloud Sketcher: A Novel*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2014.

Ruskin, John. *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*. New York: Dover, 1989.

---, *The Stones of Venice*. Ed. J. G Links. Cambridge: Da Capo, 1960.

---, *Our Fathers Have Told Us, Part I: The Bible of Amiens*. Gloucester: Dodo, 2009.

Soja, Edward. *Postmodern Geographies. The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Sciences*.

New York: Verso, 2010.

Spurr, David. *Architecture and Modern Literature*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 2012.

Tanazaki, Junichiro. *In Praise of Shadows*. New York: Vintage, 2006.

Van Der Hoorn, Melanie. *Bricks and Balloons. Architecture in Sequential Art*. Rotterdam: Uitgeverij, 2013.

Venturi, Robert. *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2002.

Vidler, Anthony. *The Architectural Uncanny. Essays in the Modern Unhomely*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT P, 1992.

---, *Warped Space. Art, Architecture and Anxiety in Modern Culture*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT P, 2000.