“But it is not enough to think in order to see. Vision is conditioned thought; it is born as occasioned by what happens in the body; it is incited to think by the body.” - Maurice Merleau-Ponty, “Eye and Mind (1961)

“A picture held us captive, and we could not get outside it, for it lay in our language and language seemed to repeat itself to us . . .” - Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations §115 (1953)

In a manifesto outlining the principles of the Imagist movement in early-twentieth-century poetry, the American poet Ezra Pound announced the formal and thematic need for writers to “make it new.” Such a proclamation implicitly stipulated that what was “new” in British and American literary modernism revolved around what was understood to be new about images and, more broadly, the visual. This course will examine how writers from roughly 1900 through the 1950s looked repeatedly to visual culture in order to ask questions about the nature of what it means to be and to know, particularly in modern days and in modern ways. First, we’ll think about why the image might have been such a fertile site for these literary considerations by studying the cultural history of image-text relations and of vision. Then, within this context, we’ll examine literary modernism’s formal and thematic engagement of various visual media—including painting, advertising, and visual technologies like film or photography. Through these different sites, we’ll study some of the different formulations of seeing and being in literary modernism, formulations that encompass, for instance, accounts of spectacle or performance; encounters with specters and hallucinations; or even aspects of literary form itself, like narrative focalization.

**Required Texts**
I haven’t submitted a list of required texts to the bookstore. Please secure copies through a means of your choosing. I’ve provided ISBNs in brackets below for your convenience.

- Mina Loy, *Insel* (Black Sparrow, 1991) [out of print; buy used or use PDF I’ve provided]
- Gertrude Stein, *Tender Buttons* (Dover, 1997) [9780486298979]
- Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (Houghton Mifflin/Harcourt, 2005; ed. Mark Hussey) [9780156030472]

Additional materials are available as PDFs via links within the Schedule of Classes below. I’ve made these readings available online to save you the expense of a course packet, whose cost includes not only copying but also copyright clearance fees. However, I expect you to print the online readings in order to facilitate your critical analysis (by allowing you to mark up the copy as you read) and also to facilitate our class discussion (by allowing you to easily locate specific sections of the text). If you’ll have any trouble (financial or otherwise) in printing the material, come see me and we will find a solution.

**Assignments**

Class Participation

Grading

15%

2 Short Analyses (3-4 pp. each)

20%
Presentation and Handout (done in small groups; 10-12 minutes) 15%
Creative Project (incl. abstract, artwork, and artist statement) 30%
Archival Aid and Presentation (done in small groups; 10 minutes) 10%
Keystone Project (grade determined by your advisor not me) 10%

Each of these assignments is explained in detailed prompts (posted in the Assignments section of the website). The due dates for the creative project and the archival aid/presentation are given below. You will draw dates for completing your short analyses, as well as your critical presentation, during the first class session. Later in the semester, I will organize the groups for the archival aid/presentation. Please note that all of these assignments are major assignments and you cannot pass the course without submitting them. Also note that 10% of your course grade comes from your Keystone advisor and relates to your progress on that project. I have no control over that portion of your grade; I simply receive a score from your advisor at the end of the semester.

Extensions and Late Assignments
All extensions on assignments are given at my discretion. Contact me by email at least 24 hours in advance of the due date if you need an extension. I will lower grades on late assignments by 2/3 of a letter (i.e., from A+ to A-, from B- to C) for every day an assignment is late without a proper excuse. An assignment is a day late from the moment that the specified deadline time has passed; the second day begins twenty-four hours after the specified deadline, and so on for every subsequent twenty-four hour period (including weekends).

Class Participation
Our conversations and arguments will fuel your critical writing and research. Without testing your ideas, listening to your classmates, keeping notes, and fulfilling the required reading, your written work will suffer, as will the 20% of your final grade that’s reserved for class participation. Obviously, you cannot participate if you are not in class so good attendance is key, as it actually talking in class. More specifically, you will receive half of your participation points for being in class and half for joining in the discussion.

Not doing the required readings and/or not bringing the reading to class is disrespectful to your classmates, yourself, and me. Class discussions are designed to educate you about some of the principal threads running through literary modernism’s engagement with visual culture—but they will also test your specific knowledge of the assigned texts. I will administer periodic pop quizzes whenever discussion starts to flag and I suspect that large numbers of students are not completing the reading. Moreover, if I find that you have not brought the reading to class, I will strike your name from the attendance sheet. I will also strike you from the attendance sheet if I find you texting, using your computer for purposes other than note taking, doing work for another class, or engaging in any other behavior that suggests that you aren’t actually mentally present in class. You will also not be eligible to sign the attendance sheet if you are more than 5 minutes late to class.

If you need disability-related accommodations of any kind, please come to discuss them with me as soon as possible.

Communication and Conferences
I encourage each of you to contact me throughout the semester to discuss your ideas, questions, and concerns. Sometimes a short conference can make a big difference in helping you develop your assignments or think through the class material. You may email me with any questions or concerns you have, but I prefer to handle most issues in person. If you can’t make my office hour, I’ll happily schedule a special appointment.
**Plagiarism**
The unattributed use of another person’s ideas, language, or data is a serious ethical and methodological problem. Penalties for plagiarism can range from a failing grade for the assignment to an XF for the course; I turn all cases of plagiarism over to the university. Please be conscientious in acknowledging any sources that you consult in writing your papers, including websites. For information on citing sources, see the *MLA Handbook* or come talk to me. I am happy to help.

**Schedule of Classes**
All shorter readings are available as PDFs through links in the schedule below. Sometimes I only highlight one text in a series for the link, but the attached file contains all of the texts in the series. Also note that, because of page layouts in the copied texts, some PDFs include material that’s not part of the assigned reading. This is particularly true of poetry. Pay close attention to the syllabus, so you don’t read extraneous material—unless you have specifically chosen to do so.

**Week 1 (1/27 – 1/29): Modernism, Looking, and Optics**
T  Lisa Cartwright and Marita Sturken, “Practices of Looking”
    Pericles Lewis, "Introduction to Modernism"
Th Virginia Woolf, “A Mark on the Wall” (1921)
    Mina Loy, “The Ceiling” (1945)

**Week 2 (2/3 – 2/5): Post-Impressionism, Visual and Verbal**
    Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (1927), pp. 7-57 (Part I, chaps. 1-9)

    **Analysis #1 for Group**

**Week 3 (2/10 – 2/12): Post-Impressionism, Image-Text Relations, and Imagism**
T  Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, pp. 154-211 (Part III, chap. 2 - end)
    **Presentation**

T  Mitchell, “Image vs. Text” and “Space and Time”
    Pound, “Liu Ch’e” (1913), “After Ch’u Yuan” (1913)
T. E. Hulme, “Images” (1908)
Amy Lowell, “Illusion” (1917), “Middle Age” (1917)
Marianne Moore, “You Are Like the Realistic Project of an Idealistic Search for Gold at the Foot of the Rainbow” (1916)
William Carlos Williams, “Metric Figure” (1917), “Rain” (1930)

Presentation
Th Cartwright and Sturken, “Spectatorship, Power, and Knowledge”
D. H. Lawrence, The Fox (1922), pp. 7-40

Analysis #1 for Group 4

Week 5 (2/24 – 2/26): the Gaze and Cinema
T Lawrence, “Give Her a Pattern” (1928)
Lawrence, The Fox, pp. 41-71

Presentation
Th Viewing of Borderline (1930) in class; prepare by reading H.D.’s “Borderline Pamphlet” (1930)

Week 6 (3/3 – 3/5): Cinema
T Borderline and H.D.’s “Borderline Pamphlet” (1930)
H.D., Cover of “Borderline Pamphlet”

Presentation
Th Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility” (1936)
H.D., “Projector I” (1927), “Projector II (Chang)” (1927)
Opening scenes from Chang (1927)

Analysis #1 for Group 5

Week 7 (3/10 – 3/12): Surrealism

Analysis #2 for Group 1
Th Loy, Insel (1935-61), pp. 19-71
Loy, Teasing a Butterfly (c. 1933)

Richard Oelze, Expectation (1935-36)
Analysis #2 for Group 2

Week 8 (3/17 – 3/19): SPRING BREAK

Week 9 (3/24 – 3/26): Surrealism
T Loy, Insel, pp. 71-128

Analysis #2 for Group 3
Th Loy, *Insel*, pp. 129-78

Oelze, *Frieda* (1936)

**Presentation**

**Week 10 (3/31 — 4/2)**
T Workshop of Creative Project Abstracts

Th NO CLASS: **Creative Project Abstracts Due by noon via email**

**Week 11 (4/7 – 4/9): Optical Illusions and Second Sight**

**Presentation**
Th Vita Sackville-West, *Seducers in Ecuador* (1924)

**Week 12 (4/14 – 4/16): The Flâneur, the Simulacrum, and Cubism**
T Woolf, “Street Haunting: A London Adventure” (1927)

Loy, “Mass Production on 14th Street” (1942) and *Auto-Facial-Construction* (1919)

Jean Baudrillard, “Simulacra and Simulation”

**Analysis #2 for Group 4**

Th Guillaume Apollinaire, from *The Cubist Painters* (1913)

Gertrude Stein, “If I Told Him: A Completed Portrait of Picasso” (1923) and “Picasso” (1938)

Pablo Picasso, *Gertrude Stein* (1905-6)

**Analysis #2 for Group 5**

**Week 13 (4/21 – 4/23): Cubism and the Modernist Kindle**
T Stein, from *Tender Buttons* (1914): Part I, Objects

**Presentation**


Michael North, “The Movies, the Readies, and the Revolution of the Word”

T Brown, *The Readies*, chap. 3-4

Craig Saper, “Afterword”

Th Visit to Hornbake Library, Rm 3210: Robert Carleton Brown Papers


**Week 15 (5/5 – 5/7): Optical Poems and the Archive**
T Hornbake Library, Maryland Room: Robert Carleton Brown Papers
Week 16 (5/12)
T  NO CLASS: Work on Creative Project

Creative Project Due: Friday, 5/15 by 5 p.m. (mode of delivery depends upon the project)