

## **Impressionism to Surrealism: Art and Culture, 1880 to the Eve of WWII**

**Faculty:** Nancy Green, Gale and Ira Drukier Curator, Johnson Museum of Art (retired)

**Faculty:** Maryterese Pasquale-Bowen, Assistant for School Programs, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art

CAU Summer 2024: Week One, July 7 – 13; Week Two, July 14-20

### **Resource List**

#### **Books and Films We Have Enjoyed**

##### **1870-1890**

##### **Books**

*Lydia Cassatt Reading the Morning Paper* by Harriet Scott Chessman

*This* short novel about Mary Cassatt and her sister Lydia living in Paris provides an intimate glimpse of an ex-pat life.

*Berthe Morisot* by Anne Higonet

An intimate biography of this determined and talented woman who was accepted by the Impressionists as one of their own

*The Peacock and Vine* by A.S.Byatt

a novel about William Morris and Mariano Fortuny

*The Judgement of Paris* by Ross King

An excellent overview of the period in Paris when the academic artists and the “realists” and the “Impressionists” battled it out in the studios, cafes, and in the Salon

*Cassatt and Her Circle: Selected Letters*, edited by Nancy Mowll Mathews

An up-close look at the life of American artist Mary Cassatt, friend of Degas, and intimate of the Impressionist group, edited by the leading Cassatt authority, Nancy Mathews

*Victoria's Daughters* by Jerrold M. Packard

Victoria married her daughters to royalty throughout Europe. This is a breezy overview of the fate of the daughters in the large family.

##### **Films**

*The Power of Art* with Simon Schama (PBS)

The episode on Van Gough is fascinating. Why not watch the six episodes?

*Effie Gray* Movie about the life of John Ruskin's wife, their scandalous divorce, and her subsequent marriage to John Millais

*Desperate Romantics*

A fun romp with William Morris, Dante Gabriel Rossetti (played by Aidan Turner of *Poldark* fame), William Holman Hunt and John Millais

*The Impressionists* (BBC) starring Julian Glover as Claude Monet

Tells the story of the friendships between Manet, Monet, Renoir, Bazille, and Degas (sadly, it does not mention Cassatt or Morisot, the women pioneers of the movement) but still a beautiful series to watch

## 1890-1900

### Books

*Ballad of Reading Gaol* or *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde

Wilde was the master of the *bon mots* but his sodomy trial ruined his career; *Ballad of Reading Gaol* concerns his life in prison; *Picture of Dorian Gray* is the rather gothic tale of an artist and his model, who never ages.

*Paris: Biography of a City* by Collin Jones

A wonderful and informative exploration of Paris. Pick any chapter.

*So Much Longing in So Little Space* by Karl Ove Knausgaard

A recent biography of the pioneering Norwegian artist by one of Norway's leading literary figures

*Toulouse-Lautrec: A Life* by Julia Frey

An in-depth and fascinating look at the life of this aristocrat who struggled against his deformity and his heredity to become a successful artist

*Trinity* by Leon Uris

An epic journey through the turbulent quest for Irish independence from the 1880's to the early twentieth century

### Films:

*So Long At the Fair*

Starring Jean Simmons and Dirk Bogarde in a mystery set at the Paris Exhibition of 1901.

*Moulin Rouge*

Baz Luhrmann's take on the Montmartre scene

## 1900-1910

### Books

*The Proud Tower* by Barbara Tuchman

Chapter 6, "Neroism is in the Air" is a deep dive into Germany, drama, and music in this period

*Tess of the D'Urbervilles* by Thomas Hardy

A look at class, gender, power, and changing times in a shocking book for the time

### Films

*Vienna Blood* -available from PBS

Dr. Max Liebermann, a follower of Sigmund Freud, and plice Detective Rheinhardt solve murders in Imperial Vienna

*Woman in Gold*

A compelling story of Jewish refugee's fight to regain possession of a Klimt painting lost by her family because of the Holocaust

*A Room With a View*

A film based on the book by E.M. Forrester following families on the Grand Tour of Italy

*Death in Venice*

A film based on the Thomas Mann novel

*The Last Station*

Keeping vigil with Tolstoy as he sets out on his final journey

*Finding Neverland*

Johnnie Depp plays the J.M. Barrie, the man who wrote Peter Pan, in this delightful film

## 1910-1920

### Books

*All Quiet on the Western Front* by Eric Marie Remarque

The classic anti-war novel from a writer who served in the German army during World War I

*The Italians* by John Hooper

A compact but comprehensive study of the people of Italy. The author puts his finger on the vast diversity of the country through his descriptions of their linguistics, cultures, foods, economies and even journalism.

*Dead Wake: The Last Voyage of the Lusitania* by Erik Larson

Join the passengers and crew on this fateful voyage as Erik Larson reveals the story of the sinking of this famous ship

*Secret Rooms*- by Catherine Bailey

A nobleman, a castle, and a secret are explored in this non-fiction work

*The Great Silence* by Juliet Nicolson

Nicolson tells the stories of the famous and not so famous as they approach the first anniversary of the armistice on November 11, 2019.

*Goodbye to All That* -Robert Graves

Graves' experiences of World War I and the changes it brought in his life

*Singled Out* -Virginia Nicholson

Nicholson is the great niece of Virginia Woolf and this book examines the lives of many of the ordinary women who lost the chance of marriage due to the devastating loss of a generation of men during WWI

*Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* or *The Dubliners* by James Joyce

Shorter works by this famous Irish author if you do not have the time for *Ulysses*

*A Single Thread* by Tracy Chevalier

The author of many historical novels, including the *Girl in Hyacinth Blue*, writes of the predicament of "surplus" women after World War I

*Regeneration* by Pat Barker

Although this is part of a World War I trilogy one can read this as a stand-alone novel. Barker's characters reveal the mental anguish of the war, the lot of women working in the armaments factories, and the class differences. This could be described as raw.

*A Testament of Youth* by Vera Brittain

A memoir by a woman who lost her brother and fiancé in the war and who was a nurse at the front and at home. There is a relatively recent film created from this book.

*A Very Long Engagement* by Sebastien Japrisot

The fictional quest of a woman who searches for a fiancée and the fate of the man who is accused of desertion. This is also the basis for a film.

*Concerning the Spiritual in Art* by Wassily Kandinsky

One of the most important publications in modern art, in it Kandinsky explains his own theory of painting and crystallizes the ideas that were influencing many other modern artists of the period

## **Films**

*Joyeux Noel*

A beautiful film about the actual Christmas truce of 1914 experienced by fictional characters from several countries, including Scotland and Germany.

*My Boy Jack (PBS)*

Rudyard Kipling must grapple with the death of his son in World War I

*Titanic- A Night to Remember*

Before Celine Dion, Kate Winslet, and Leonardo DiCaprio, this was the classic film about the event.

*The King's Man (2021)*

A sci-fi/historical fiction account of events surrounding World War I starring Ralph Fiennes and other well -known actors.

## **1920-1939**

### **Books**

*In the Garden of the Beasts* by Eric Larson

The story of U.S. Ambassador Dodds and his family in 1930's Germany is a fascinating tale told by a master storyteller.

*The Hare With Amber Eyes* by Edmund De Waal

When De Waal inherits netsukes he recounts the story of two branches of his very wealthy family. An intriguing story of a family that could rub shoulders with the Rothschilds in Paris and Vienna.

*After Midnight* by Irmgard Keun

Irmgard Keun writes this novel in 1937 incorporating events from her life in Nazi Germany

*The Spanish Bow* by Andromeda Romano-Lex

Set in Barcelona during the Spanish Civil War this novel provides an insight into Spain and music.

*Bread and Wine* by Ignazio Silone

A leftist returns to Italy during Mussolini's regime disguised as a priest in this classic novel.

*The Death of Roger Ackroyd* by Agatha Christie

The 1930's are considered the Golden Age of the British mystery so pick up one of her to understand why.

*The Last Garden in England* by Julia Kelly

A lovely tale of a modern landscape architect who wishes to restore a garden designed by a landscaper in 1907 and again in 1944.

## **Films**

*The Grand Illusion* directed by Jean Renoir

This film, directed by the son of the famous painter, is considered one of the most important anti-war films made at the time. It is set during World War I.

*The Olympiad* or *Triumph of the Will* – Lena Rieffenstahl

Short selections of these films directed by one of the most famous (and perhaps infamous) female directors of the 20<sup>th</sup> century are available on YouTube

*Seaside Hotel* (PBS)

Enjoy the summers before, during, and after World War II in this charming Danish resort.

*Brideshead Revisited* (BBC)

Evelyn Waugh's fictionalized account of an aristocratic family slowly crumbling during the waning days of the British Empire. The book is also highly recommended.

*Upstairs/Downstairs*

A classic BBC series examining the contrasting lives of the aristocracy and their servants