ENGL 864* Topics in Modernism IV: Modernism in Literature, Arts, and Entertainment

This is a draft syllabus. While texts are unlikely to be added, I am still working on whittling down the readings to an optimum amount per week, so a couple here or there may be subtracted or designated optional.

This course will take us on a whirlwind tour across the jagged landscapes of modernist innovation, both avant-garde and popular—taking in literary fiction, poetry, drama, pulp genres (crime, horror, science fiction), comic strips and books, visual arts and architecture, music and dance. Our starting point will be current debates about the scope and meaning of the term modernism, followed by an exploration of its diverse formal experiments and social and intellectual concerns in the first half of the twentieth century. Evaluation is based on weekly micro-analyses, a seminar presentation, a research prospectus (ungraded) and a research paper.

Schedule

1. Introduction, Part I: Music (What Is Modernism?)
   Criticism:
   - Ross, *The Rest is Noise* 36-49, 60-66, 80-85, 130-170
   Art:
   - Listening to: Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Debussy
   - Listening to: Jelly Roll Morton, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Bessie Smith, Billie Holiday

2. Introduction, Part II: Dance (What Is Modernism?)
   Criticism:
   - Childs, *Modernism* Introduction and ch. 1
   - Friedman, “Definitional Excursions”
   - Rohman, “Nude Vibrations”
   - McBreen, “Gender Bending in Harlem” (on Nugent’s Salomé series)
   Art:
   - Viewing: Graham, *Heretic* (4m); Baker, *Siren of the Tropics* (excerpt); Ellington, *Symphony in Black* (10m); Nazimova, Salomé (74m)
   - Yeats, “Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen”

3. Fine Arts (What Is Modernism’s Object of Representation?)
   Criticism:
   - Childs, *Modernism* ch. 2 (on art movements)
   - Greenberg, “Modernist Painting”
   - Stein, *Picasso* 10-12
   - Gikandi, “Picasso” 455-7
   - Eisenman, *Gauguin’s Skirt* 61-78
   Art:
   - Looking at paintings by: Gauguin, Picasso, Duchamp, Munch, Lewis, O’Keeffe, Dali, Kahlo
   - Cornell, Hepworth
4. **Advertising, Design and Architecture (What Look does Modernism Want?)**
   Criticism:
   - Driscoll, “Chanel: The Order of Things” (on Chanel)
   - O’Connor, “Strange Offerings” in *Seduced by Modernity* (on Margaret Watkins)
   Art:
   - The Arts and Crafts Movement
   - Architectural Design by Guimard, Wright, Le Corbusier, Colter
   - Bauhaus
   - Chanel
   - Advertising by Watkins

5. **Literature: Fiction (What Does Modernism Do to Storytelling?)**
   Criticism:
   - Woolf, “Modern Fiction”
   - Diepeveen, *The Difficulties of Modernism* ch. 2
   Art:
   - Joyce, “The Dead”
   - Nugent, “Smoke, Lilies, and Jade”
   - Rhys, “Mannequin”

6. **Literature: Poetry (What Is a Modernist Subjectivity?)**
   Criticism:
   - Childs, *Modernism* ch. 2 (on poetry)
   - Pound, *Gaudier-Brzeska* 93-106
   - Carr, “Imagism and Empire”
   Art:

7. **Literature: Drama (What Does Modernism Perform?)**
   Criticism:
   - Childs, *Modernism* ch. 2 (on drama)
   Art:
   - Barnes, *A Passion Play* and *Madame Collects Herself*
   - Brecht, *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*

8. **Pulp Fiction (What Does Modernism Do to Romance?)**
Criticism:
- Jameson, “Magical Narratives”

Art:
- Fantasy and SF: Wells, “The Star”; Stevens, “Friend Island”; Howard, “The Pool of the Black One” (Conan the Barbarian)
- Crime: Chandler, Trouble Is My Business (Philip Marlowe)

9. Comics and Children’s Literature (What Does Modernism Do to Relatability?)
   Criticism:
   - Hoberman, “Vulgar Modernism”
   - Willmott, “Growing Wonder”
   Art:
   - McCay’s Little Nemo, Herriman’s Krazy Kat, Sterrett’s Polly, Rube Goldberg’s inventions, Nell Brinkley’s girls, Segar’s Popeye, Raymond’s Flash Gordon
   - Saint-Exupéry, The Little Prince

10. Avant-Garde Cinema (What Does Modernism Do to Realism?)
    Criticism:
    - Wood, “Modernism and Film”
    Art:
    - The Cabinet of Dr Caligari (Wiene, 71m); Un Chien Andalou (Bunuel, 21m); The Octopus (Painlevé, 13m); Meshes of the Afternoon (Deren, 14m)

11. Conclusion: Popular Cinema (What Are Modernism’s Limits?)
    Criticism:
    - No assigned reading
    Art:
    - Chaplin, Modern Times (87m); or Cooper, King Kong (100m)
    - Betty Boop, “Chess Nuts” (6m)

12. Research Prospectus Symposium
    - Presentations and discussion