

Title and Code of Course: **Ruins between nature and culture – Arts and aesthetics of decay**

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Credit Point Value: 6	Number of Lessons per Week: 2	Type of Course: Seminar <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lecture <input type="checkbox"/>	Method of Evaluation: Oral Examination <input type="checkbox"/> In-Class Presentation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>
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Course Description:

From picturesque depictions of Romantic ruins to scary abandoned cities in blockbuster action movies, from noble classical fragments to thrilling contemporary architectural projects based on derelict buildings, from careful presentation of archaeological sites to fake-authentic thematic malls – the course aims to survey the rich cultural, art and aesthetic history of ruins, decay and architectural dereliction in a broad perspective, focusing not only on the classical examples and representations in fine arts, but including in the examination also topics like the ambiguous aesthetics of recent dereliction, as well as its visiting and documenting (urbex and haikyo), the aesthetic status of fragments, the power and afterlife of monuments and archaeological sites, contemporary architectural projects departing from ruins, and even works of art created from ruin(ed) materials and rubble. In this way, throughout the course we will discuss both classical, modern and contemporary pieces of art and design, theoretical investigations connected to the aesthetics of decay in “high” and “popular” culture, as well as considerations about the endangered cultural heritage and its challenging management and conservation practices. The seminar is thus embracing classical and contemporary topics of art, aesthetics and culture.

Bibliography:

Recommended readings

(This is a suggested list in general about the subject. Further articles will be discussed in the lessons, and specific readings recommended to the students based on their individual, chosen topics.)

Bicknell, Jeanette, Jennifer Judkins, and Carolyn Korsmeyer, eds. *Philosophical Perspectives on Ruins, Monuments, and Memorials*. New York: Routledge, 2020.

Dillon, Brian. "Fragments from a History of Ruin." *Cabinet Magazine* 20 (Winter 2005–2006): 55–60.

Dillon, Brian, ed. *Ruins: Documents of Contemporary Art*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011.

Edensor, Tim. *Industrial Ruins: Spaces, Aesthetics, Materiality*. Oxford: Berg, 2005.

Eriksen, Anne. "The Murmur of Ruins: A Cultural History." *Ethnologia Europea: Journal of European Ethnology* 36, no. 1 (2006): 5–20.

Ginsberg, Robert. *The Aesthetics of Ruins*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004.

Giombini, Lisa. "Reconstructing Heritage: Places, Values, Attachment." *Contemporary Aesthetics* 18 (2020).; <https://contempaesthetics.org/2020/11/16/reconstructing-heritage-places-values-attachment/>

Hell, Julia, and Andreas Schönle, eds. *Ruins of Modernity*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010.

Korsmeyer, Carolyn. "Aesthetic Deception: On Encounters with the Past." *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 66, no. 2 (Spring 2008): 117–27.

Makarius, Michel. *Ruins*. Paris: Flammarion, 2004.

Pétursdóttir, Póra. "Concrete Matters: Ruins of Modernity and the Things Called Heritage." *Journal of Social Archaeology* 13, no. 1 (2012): 31–53.

Puff, Helmut. "Self-Portrait with Ruins: Maerten van Heemskerck, 1553." *Germanic Review* 86 (2011): 262–76.

Riegl, Alois. "The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origin." *Oppositions* 25 (Fall 1982): 21–51.

Scarborough, Elizabeth. "Visiting the Ruins of Detroit? Exploitation or Cultural Tourism?" *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 35, no. 3 (August 2018): 549–66.

Simmel, Georg. "The Ruin." Translated by David Kettler. In *Georg Simmel 1858–1918: A Collection of Essays with Translations and Bibliography*, edited by Kurt H. Wolff, 259–66. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1959.

Wu, Hung. *A Story of Ruins: Presence and Absence in Chinese Art and Culture*. London: Reaktion Books, 2012.