**Veiled Cities
Haunted Urban Realities in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries**

Thursday 26th and Friday 27th September 2024, Maison Française d'Oxford (2-10 Norham Rd, Oxford OX2 6SE).

Organised by Prof. Juliet Simpson (Coventry University) and Prof. David Hopkin (University of Oxford), in partnership with Maison Française d'Oxford. Conference officer: Olivia Garro (Coventry University).

**Programme**

*Thursday 26th September 2024*

9:00- 9:30AM, Registration and welcome by organisers Juliet Simpson and David Hopkin

9:30-11:00AM, 1st morning panel, ‘Uncanny Observers’:

-Vesna Elez, *Who is the Old Man in Baudelaire’s “Les Sept Vieillards”?*

*-*Raphaella Serfaty, *The Construction of Illegible Urban Space in Honoré Daumier’s Caricatures*

11:00-11:30AM, break

11:30-1:00PM, 2nd morning panel, ‘Haunted Cities, Urban Ecstasies’:

-Karl Bell, *In Search of Urban Ecstasies: Mystical Desire in Arthur Machen’s London*

-Elizabeth Benjamin, *The Frosted Veil: Shifting Identities in the Haunted City of Nancy*

1:00-2:00PM, lunch break

2:00-3:30PM, 1st afternoon panel, ‘Glimpsed Cities in Parables and Poets’:

-Elisabeth Rodini, *Through Giggi’s Front Door: Searching for Rome in Parables and Poetry*

-Dagmar Thielen, *“Mon Coeur pleure d’autrefois…”: Bruges as a Centre for Cultural Memory and Identity in the Work of Fernand Khnopff and Grégoire Le Roy*

3:30-4:00PM, break

4:00-5:30PM, 2nd afternoon panel, ‘Colonial Spirits, Entangled Sites’:

-Nuno Grancho, *Diu Must Pray. Public and Private Rituals, Performance and Display*

-Kavita Peterson, *Filling in the Blanks: Excavating Colonial Berlin*

5:30PM onwards, wine reception at the Maison Française d'Oxford

7:15PM, speakers’ dinner at Hertford College (Catte St, Oxford, OX1 3BW)

*Friday 27th September 2024*

9:30-11:00AM, 1st morning panel, ‘Visionary Spaces’:

-Dominik Lengyel and Catherine Toulouse, *The Transitional State of Cologne Cathedral in the 19th Century*

-Stacie Vos, *116 Cheyne Walk and 31 Bedford Street: Medieval Enclosures in 20th Century London*

11:00-11:30AM, break

11:30-1:00PM, 2nd morning panel, ‘Resonating Cities’:

-Juliet Simpson, *Uncanny Pilgrimages of Art - Colmar's Liminal Spaces*

-Mira Claire Zadrozny, *The Veiled City Observed: The Uncanny Temporality of Mid-19th-Century Paris in Adolphe Martial Potémonts Etchings*

1:00-2:00PM, lunch break

2:00-3:00PM, 1st afternoon panel, ‘Lucid Cities’:

-Anca I. Lasc, *Enchanted Views for Store Windows: The Visual and Material Culture of Prop Making in Turn-of-the Century US*

3:00-3:30PM, final remarks by organisers David Hopkin and Juliet Simpson

***Speakers’ bios and abstracts***

- **Vesna Elez**, University of Belgrade, *Who is the Old Man in Baudelaire’s “Les Sept Vieillards”?*

One of the most iconic poems of the “Tableaux parisiens” in Baudelaire’s *Fleurs du Mal*, “Les Sept Vieillards”, depicts the big city and urban space as uncanny and sinister.

Baudelaire’s *flâneur* experiences a highly unpleasant and unsettling encounter with an evil old man who, as the reader immediately recognises, is a ghost. To the horror of the lyrical subject, the hideous figure multiplies into seven identical figures. The projected horror of the increasingly eerie city is reflected in the demonic eyes of the old man and his frightening appearance of a grotesque disabled truant. We will argue that the multifaceted figure of the old man is the symbolic embodiment of his complexity: the legend of the Wandering Jew merges with the infernal, diabolical disability of the old man. While many interpretations emphasise the intertextual reference to Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* (Burton) or propose the refreshing idea of a probable rag-and-bone man, a *chiffonnier* (Compagnon), our main argument concerns a possible inspiration by a cunning beggar, an imaginary figure referring to the mythical, long-gone Parisian space known as la Cour des Miracles, the Court of Miracles. It comprised a dozen dangerous quarters in Paris, the most famous of which was in the second arrondissement and was depicted by Hugo in *Notre-Dame de Paris*. During the Ancien Régime, it was the secluded area where the beggars, who pretended to be disabled, supposedly recovered “miraculously” every evening. The ghetto was allegedly closed by La Reynie, Louis XIV’s police lieutenant. We want to delve deeper into the history of this place and show that the evil old man embodies, among other things, the ghostly presence of this subterranean quarter. For Baudelaire, he represents the distinctive, haunting layer of an urban palimpsest, a living ghost of the secluded urban space that stands in stark contrast to Haussmann’s renovation of Paris.

Vesna Elez is full Professor at the Department of Comparative Literature and Theory of Literature at the University of Belgrade. She specialises in Nineteenth-Century French Literature and Civilisation. She graduated in Comparative Literature and Theory of Literature from the University of Belgrade in She completed her Maîtrise de Lettres Modernes (2002), her D.E.A. (MA) in 2003 and her PhD in French Literature and Civilisation at Paris-Sorbonne University under the supervision of Professor Antoine Compagnon in 2007 with the dissertation “Le savoir et la connaissance dans *La Tentation de saint Antoine* et *Bouvard et Pécuchet* de Gustave Flaubert”. Her recent publications include: Le savoir et la connaissance dans *La Tentation de saint Antoine* et *Bouvard et Pécuchet* de Gustave Flaubert”.

- **Raphaella Serfaty**, The Department of Art History, Ben Gurion University of the Negev, *The Construction of Illegible Urban Space in Honoré Daumier’s Caricatures*

This paper explores Honoré Daumier’s caricatures portraying the city as puzzling, enigmatic, and fragmented. I argue that the city’s uncanniness did not reside solely in its streets or buildings, but rather in the perception of its dwellers who struggled to make sense of it. In order to explore the illegibility of the city, I analyze the role and function of the bourgeois urban spectators. Indeed, in many of Daumier’s caricatures, the spectators’ ability to see city sites was challenged; their gaze was frequently obstructed by buildings, passersby, or darkness. However, I contend that the difficulty in seeing did not solely stem from physical barriers, but rather resulted from cultural constructs that restricted certain gazes. For instance, a bourgeois gaze might not see people from other classes, and similarly, the gaze of a tourist might struggle to see an important monument. Illegibility is thus assigned by the artist to specific sectors in order to convey certain messages. In order to reveal Daumier’s construction of urban illegibility, I will first examine the gaze of city dwellers and discuss what they can see and what is hidden from their eyes. Secondly, I will demonstrate how the figures’ failed gaze affects that of the viewers of the caricature, who may become just as puzzled as their illustrated counterparts. Finally, I will suggest that the invisible and illegible embed a potential of undermining the new social order, as it alludes to other dark, dangerous underground modes of urban experience.

Raphaella Serfaty is a teaching associate at the Department the Arts at Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Israel. Her PhD research explores the presentation of the modern city in Honoré Daumier’s caricatures, focusing on the role of the spectator. A graduate of the Lauteman Program for Outstanding Students in Tel Aviv University, she was awarded Masters with honors (summa cum laude) in Art History and in Cognitive Psychology. Serfaty is a co-editor at *Mabatim: Journal for Visual Culture*. Her recent publications include: “The Concept of Urban Spectatorship in Honoré Daumier’s Caricatures,” *Ridiculosa*24, 2017; “The Construction of the Concept of the Modern City” in: Nissim Gal (ed.), *Detours of Modern Art*, 2024.

- **Karl Bell**, Portsmouth University, *In Search of Urban Ecstasies: Mystical Desire in Arthur Machen’s London*

The weird fiction author, Arthur Machen (1863-1947), approached the urban landscape of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century London with the attitude of a modern mystic. This paper explores his urban pilgrimages, wherein walking becomes a form of invocation. Drawing upon Machen’s concept of ecstasy, outlined in his *Hieroglyphics: A Note Upon Ecstasy in Literature* (1902), it applies such ideas to two of his later works, the autobiographical *The London Adventure, or The Art of Wandering* (1924), a noted piece of early psychogeographical writing, and the short story, ‘*N*’ (1936). In doing so, it explores his search for urban marvels and the occulted nature of that most modern of metropolises. The paper considers how we might conceive the veiled city, arguing for a need to move beyond the fixity inherent in notions of palimpsestic layering. While such formulations enable an appreciation of the secret city, the emphasis on the fixed overshadows more spectral aspects of the urban experience. As seen in the short story, ‘N’, Machen’s London is a modern urban space that is as oneiric as it is quotidian, a place of uncertain cartographies and potential geographies of intersection, eruption, and teasing revelation. The paper considers how we might conceive the veiled city, arguing for a need to move beyond the fixity inherent in notions of palimpsestic layering. While such formulations enable an appreciation of the secret city, the emphasis on the fixed overshadows more spectral aspects of the urban experience. As seen in the short story, ‘N’, Machen’s London is a modern urban space that is as oneiric as it is quotidian, a place of uncertain cartographies and potential geographies of intersection, eruption, and teasing revelation.

Dr. Karl Bell is Associate Professor of Cultural and Social History at the University of Portsmouth. Between 2016 and 2022 he led the *Supernatural Cities* project, a multi-disciplinary research group that explored the relationship between urban space, place, and storytelling, with a particular emphasis on supernatural urban folklore and the relationship between scholarly and creative approaches to such themes. His publications include *The Magical Imagination: Magic and Modernity in Urban England, 1780-1914*, *The Legend of Spring-heeled Jack: Victorian Urban Folklore and Popular Cultures,* and, as editor, *Supernatural Cities – Enchantment, Anxiety, and Spectrality*. He is the co-director of the University of Portsmouth’s [Centre for Port Cities and Maritime Cultures](https://www.port.ac.uk/research/research-groups-and-centres/centre-for-port-cities-and-maritime-cultures), and has just completed a supernatural history of the modern Atlantic.

- **Elizabeth Benjamin**, Coventry University, *The Frosted Veil: Shifting Identities in the Haunted City of Nancy*

This paper proposes Nancy (France) as a city that is both haunted and veiled. Site of in-betweens, it has been subject to a constant shifting and claiming of identities and cultures, especially in the post-Revolutionary period. From its role as site of historical territorial dispute between France and Germany, to its enduring link to Poland through its many references to Stanisław Leszczyński (former King of Poland and father-in-law to King Louis XV of France), Nancy’s contemporary memorial landscape also bears witness to its haunted past, through physical reminders of its ever evolving (and ever shared) identity. Nancy ztis a diaphanous city of reflections and distortions, known for its gold details and its production of misty, frosted glass (Daum; École de Nancy). Even in its geography, it is a veiled city; it is surrounded by hills that loom 150m higher than the city centre. Even its climate mirrors this veiling, in its propensity for mist and fog. But Nancy’s mist arises in the morning; its haunting happens as it wakes, rather than while it sleeps. The paper will delve into the evolving artistic, cultural, and monumental legacy of Nancy of the 19th-20th centuries, highlighting elements that evoke a sense of haunting and nostalgia to assess the impact of the past on its veiling in the present. This will be done through an in-depth analysis of a selection of historical tour guides to Nancy (1840-1940), unpeeling the depiction of its urban spaces as dynamic, interconnected networks of social, cultural, and psychological flows. Using Guattari’s schizoanalytic cartographies, and Deleuze and Guattari’s rhizomatic model, the paper will comparatively analyse the guides as disembodied voices that perform discrete but interlinked narratives of the city to map the balance and shifting of range of identities at play – and those neglected – in the construction of the veiled city of Nancy.

Dr. Elizabeth Benjamin is Assistant Professor in Memory Studies at the Centre for Arts, Memory and Communities (CAMC) at Coventry University. She specialises in cultural manifestations of memory, particularly through commemoration, monuments, and memorials, focusing on the French and Francophone world since 1789. Her work aims to amplify in the present the marginalised voices of the past for more equitable memory futures. Her most recent work proposes a typology of the forgotten memoryscape through the ‘nonument’, in an article due to be published in *Memory Studies* this year.

- **Elizabeth Rodini**, Vartan Gregorian Center for Research in the Humanities, New York Public Library, *Through Giggi’s Front Door: Searching for Rome in Parables and Poetry*

I am studying a block in the heart of Rome, bounded by five streets, two churches, a palace, a museum, and a suite of medieval residences threatening collapse. After centuries of dense habitation and re-use—ancient theater, convent school for the daughters of prostitutes, communist coffee bar—the block is nearly absent of life. The surviving buildings enclose a large open space that, since 1981, hosts an archaeological dig. Like an abandoned seashell, the block’s mottled exterior encompasses a mysterious hollow, seemingly empty. But hold it up to your ear and it speaks. Of its many stories, that of Giggi Zanazzo (1860-1911) is particularly evocative. His life, lived entirely on this block at Via Delfini 5, coincided with Rome’s own milestones, from its crowning as the national capital (1870) to celebrations of Italy’s jubilee (1911). In this period, Rome modernized rapidly and Giggi was a full-on participant, engaged in education, journalism, and theater. Yet his passion was Roman folklore, dialect, and customs, which he explored in literary and scholarly publications. Toggling between genres, Giggi’s texts reveal the persistence of tradition behind the scrim of modernity. In this paper, I focus on the architectural apertures—windows, doors, and thresholds—that feature in his poetry and prose: places to usher in good health, keep out werewolves, seduce with serenades, and escort the dead safely to the next world. Giggi’s attention to permeable boundaries and liminal zones is suggestive, offering a chance to peer through the walls of Via Delfini, now bricked up and abandoned. His fluid approach to literary genres (poems with scholarly footnotes, plays incorporating ethnographic research) foreshadows contemporary methodologies such as critical fabulation. In this paper, I work between the accountable past and its ghostly traces of masonry and wordplay to catch a glimpse of Giggi through his front door.

Elizabeth Rodini most recently served as Andrew Heiskell Arts Director and interim Director of the American Academy in Rome. Previously, she spent 15 years at Johns Hopkins University, where she was Teaching Professor in History of Art and founding Director of the Program in Museums and Society. Her publications have centered on cross-cultural encounters in the early modern Mediterranean, and her work is continually motivated by interest in the long, multi-valent lives of places and things (see *Gentile Bellini’s Portrait of Mehmed II: Lives and Afterlives of an Iconic Image,* Bloomsbury/IB Tauris, 2020). Rodini’s current project, *On the Street of the Hidden Shops: A Metaphoric Archaeology of Rome* (University of Chicago Press), examines the history of a single city block through the stories of those who lived and worked there across 2,000 years, using alternative narrative modes to bring the block to life and broaden our understandings of the past.

*-* **Dagmar Thielen**, Catholic University of Leuven (KU Leuven), *“Mon Coeur pleure d’autrefois…”: Bruges as a Centre for Cultural Memory and Identity in the Work of Fernand Khnopff and Grégoire Le Roy*

The city of Bruges, with its medieval cityscape and misty canals, has often served as an urbanised mirror for the decadent feelings of *spleen* and longing expressed by the fin de siècle artists who flocked to the hollowing sound of its belfry bells. The work of the Flemish artist Fernand Khnopff (1858-1921), who spent his early childhood in Bruges, famously traces this perceived nostalgia of the empty streets of this 'Venice of the North', capturing its ancient urban silhouettes as fossils of a both personal and cultural time lost. In 1888, Khnopff created a frontispiece for a collection of poems for his friend, the Flemish poet Gregoire Le Roy (1862-1941), entitled *Avec Gregoire Le Roy, Mon Coeur pleure d'autrefois,* in which both artists drew on the sublime contrast between the avidly present visual cues of the city's merchant history and its present-day decay and desolation to illustrate the nostalgia that preluded their *Art Nouveau.* Motifs of gender fluidity, mystification and the anthropomorphisation of Bruges became tools for the creation of an artistic future in the works of Khnopff and Le Roy. This paper analyses Bruges as a centre for the manufacturing of a new cultural memory, based on the artistic interpretation of a past that never was. Focusing on the imagery of Bruges in the graphic work of Fernand Khnopff and the late poetry of Grégoire Le Roy, this paper examines how cultural memory and gender- and personal identities were constructed and explored through the disruption of the present by the visualisation of the urban remnants of a decaying past.

Dagmar Thielen (1995) is an art historian working on 19th century studies, iconology, architectural affect and the Gesamtkunstwerk. In 2021, Dagmar graduated magna cum laude from her studies at KU Leuven (art history), whilst publishing on the Gesamtkunstwerk in contemporary art (2019, WBOOKS, Zwolle; Kerber Verlag, Berlin). Between 2019 and 2022, she curated contemporary art at the Limburgs Museum and Museum van Bommel van Dam (Venlo, 2019; 2022). Dagmar is currently working on a PhD on Wagnerism (KU Leuven, Coventry University), exploring the movement's fin de siècle artist networks, interiority and visual motifs concerning gender, identity, art and spaces of performance beyond Wagnerism's French nexus.

- **Nuno Grancho**, Centre for Privacy Studies, University of Copenhagen, Denmark, *Diu Must Pray. Public and Private Rituals, Performance and Display*

This paper is about public rituals, space, and display as part of the cosmopolitan process through which the city of Diu has been forged. We take inspiration from an ethnohistorical framework made manifest in the urban realm by interpreting the spatial cultures of Diu (the city’s buildings, architecture, urban layout, and spatial structure) through the unofficial political voices present in the city. We will focus on Diu’s religious rituals. First, the important Catholic ritual is the Virgin Mary’s procession. Second, the Muharram Muslim pilgrimage, whose echoes ring deeply throughout the Portuguese colonial period in India, resonated with the Portuguese coloniser’s fascinations, repulsions, and desires. Finally, the staging of Hinduism. All are about the colonial city’s mobility, display, domination, and space.

We will use the methods and concepts of spatial analysis of architecture and urbanism, cultural anthropology and social history to construct Diu’s model of sacred geography under colonial rule. Focusing on the problem of authority as a cultural concept and as a managerial reality, we will consider classic issues of deference, sumptuary symbolism, and religious organisation. In addition, we will address questions such as the nature of conflict under a hybrid colonial system, the political implications of spatial mobility disputes, and the structure of relations between polity and space in Diu.

Nuno Grancho is an architect, an urban planner and an architectural historian and theorist who works at the intersection of architecture, urbanism, material culture and colonial practices and its relationship with the transatlantic world and (post)colonial Asia from the early 16th century up to the present days. His research examines how architectures and cities of struggle have shaped the modernity of South Asia.

His research projects are focused on questions of human and material agency, the epistemology and geopolitics of architecture and urbanism as a technique of social intervention. Of particular importance to his work are the spatial-morphological arrangements in architecture and cities that identify and enable the private, as withdrawal from the world - and the public, as engagement with that same world and simultaneously, the tension between these dichotomies.

He has held a PhD in Architecture and Urbanism at the University of Coimbra since 2017. In 2014, he was a Visiting Researcher at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. Since 2017, he has been a Postdoctoral researcher at DINÂMIA’CET- Iscte, University Institute of Lisbon, Lisbon, Portugal.

Since 2021, he has been a Visiting Researcher at the Royal Danish Academy – School of Architecture, Design and Conservation, Copenhagen, Denmark. Since 2021, he has taught at the Royal Danish Academy – School of Architecture, Design and Conservation, Copenhagen, Denmark. Since 2021, he has been a Postdoctoral researcher and a Marie Skłodowska-Curie fellow at the Centre for Privacy Studies, University of Copenhagen. Grancho’s research project entitled “Privacy on the move: two-way Processes, Data and Legacy of Danish metropolitan and colonial Architecture and Urbanism” is funded by the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s Horizon 2020. Grancho’s research project aims to produce an understanding of how historical notions of privacy in Danish architecture and urbanism since the 17th century have been a bilateral mechanism between the West and the East.

- **Kavita Peterson**, Brandenburg University of Technology, Germany - Deakin University, Australia, *Filling in the Blanks: Excavating Colonial Berlin*

This study uses fieldwork to delve into Germany's colonial history; specifically examining Berlin's response to acknowledging this dark chapter of German history in its public spaces. It posits that while Germany may well have earned its reputation for *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (coming to terms with the past) regarding memorialising National Socialist atrocity in Europe, other uncomfortable aspects of German history such as colonialism may still be perceived as incongruent with Germany’s collective identity.As the political heart of the German Empire, Berlin was central to Germany’s subsequent colonial expansion - from hosting the Berlin Conference of 1884-85 which formally divided up the African continent between European colonial powers, to co-ordinating the military presence in Germany’s African colonies which was ultimately responsible for the first genocides of the twentieth century. Yet recent efforts to make the German colonial past more visible in the public spaces of Berlin appear to have largely taken the form of establishing new places of remembrance, rather than unveiling the colonial entanglements of existing sites. This research constitutes a fieldwork case study, visiting a number of sites in the Berlin cityscape which were either integral to the colonial regime’s operations or representative of the tangible efforts to foster a ‘colonial spirit’ in Germany during its overseas expansion. It aims to document how each site is (or is not) commemorated in Berlin’s public spaces against the backdrop of celebrated remembrance culture which has grappled admirably with a tragic past, albeit one that has traditionally prioritised painful moments within Europe. By examining the present-day engagement of each site with its colonial history, and highlighting areas requiring further attention, the study contributes to the ongoing, evolving dialogue about colonial remembrance in Germany, urging for a more comprehensive and conscientious approach to unveiling these haunted ‘blind spots’ in Germany's memory and self-perception.

Kavita Peterson is a translator and emerging heritage professional with a special interest in decolonial and queering approaches to museum and heritage interpretation. They are also highly interested in colonial mythmaking and fantasy, and how these can be productively interpreted in our national histories in service of decolonising Western minds. Hailing from Melbourne, Australia, they have until recently been residing in Berlin conducting research on the representation and interpretation of German colonialism in German national history museums.

- **Dominik Lengyel and Catherine Toulouse**, Institute for Building and Art History, BTU Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg, *The Transitional State of Cologne Cathedral in the 19th Century*

At the beginning of the 19th century, Cologne Cathedral had already been in an emblematically unfinished state for three hundred years. Emblematic because the iconic crane on the unfinished southern west tower carried such visual power that it was immortalised in countless drawings and paintings. Before Prussia set about completing the cathedral at the end of the 19th century, it constituted an uncanny balance between the Middle Ages, Gothic perfection, actual imperfection and the Prussian desire for representation. But not only in its actual appearance as an unfinished building was the cathedral in an obvious transition, its integration into the urban texture was still in a state that allowed for multiple interiors and enclosed spaces, a character with its own tradition and multiple imaginaries, an expression of its past and that of the city, a testimony to the layers of object and context. Just as the shock of modernity gripped the city at the beginning of the 20th century, the present building appears strangely history-less, as if it had been created in its present form immediately after construction work began. Different imaginaries about its past are now themselves history. But inside, too, the cathedral has significantly changed its character. The equally emblematic wall that separated the 13th century Gothic choir from the later crossing was only taken down in the middle of the 19th century. There are numerous contemporary illustrations of its condition shortly before this, but not of the entire wall and its effect on the interior. This interior as well as the entire development of the urban situation with its church were the subject of two research projects carried out by the authors in collaboration with the cathedral building administration in order to make the development visually comprehensible, to discover, rethink and reimagine this veiled genius loci.

Dominik Lengyel, full university professor, chair of architecture and visualisation at BTU University, Cottbus since 2006. Catherine Toulouse, assistant professor 2006–2022. Lengyel studied mathematics and physics for one year. Both studied architecture at Universities of Stuttgart, graduated with distinction and architectural prize, in between at Ecole d’Architecture Paris-Tolbiac and ETH Zurich, Switzerland. Both worked as architects at Oswald Matthias Ungers, Cologne. Lengyel deputy and full professor at University of Applied Sciences, Cologne, member of European Academy of Sciences and Arts, Salzburg. Research projects funded by German Research Foundation (DFG), Gerda Henkel Foundation, German Federal Ministries of Education and Research (BMBF), Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi) and Interior, Construction and Home Affairs (BMI). Lectures worldwide and publications, autograph texts and illustrations in other’s publications. Projects: Cologne Cathedral (for its administration), Pergamon and Roman Palatine (for German Archaeological Institute), Bern Minster (for Foundation), Pompeji and Morgantina (collaboration with FU Berlin) etc.

- **Stacie Vos**, University of San Diego, *116 Cheyne Walk and 31 Bedford Street: Medieval Enclosures in 20th-Century London*

My talk will relate two networks of female medievalists living in and around London in the first half of the twentieth century. Pioneering medievalist Hope Emily Allen found herself in London at a fortuitous time and in 1934 identified a key manuscript in the field of medieval studies, now known as *The Book of Margery Kempe.*Allen lived at 116 Cheyne Walk with Marietta Pallis, down the street from one of their friends, Joan Wake. As critic Jo Livingstone puts it, Cheyne Walk was "... a colony of a sort, a little enclave of woman thinkers"; Joan writes of the "great bonfire of proofs" they burned after finishing their books at the end of the 1920's. A few miles away (about an hour's walk) another group of women called the Pioneer Players lived at 31 Bedford Street, a house that was the center of artistic and political activity for Christopher St. John and her life partner Edith Craig. Inhabiting the same space, the Pioneer Players and the London suffragettes fused social work, artistic experimentation, and the advancement of women in education, medicine, science and the arts. Translator St. John and stage director Craig (daughter of Ellen Terry) worked together to translate and perform *Paphnutius,* one of the plays written by the first female playwright, Hroswitha of Gandersheim's plays.  Both of these networks moved between city and country, past and present, taking medieval women like Margery Kempe and Hroswitha as their intellectual and spiritual guides. Letters within and between these two communities reveal the ways in which these amateur scholars and artists made life an art form, turning the domestic space within the city into a site for artistic and intellectual production across media and trades. As St. John writes in“The Golden Book,” an extended “love letter” to Edy: “I would like to be an artist in life–making it fine through + through[.] We ought all to be brought up that way; to look on life as an art, and upon our individual lives as a product of art that has got to be polished and exquisite and strong”.

Stacie Vos is founder of an interdisciplinary and international think tank called the Enclosure Group, which includes visual artists and writers interested in medieval women's religious communities and their intellectual and artistic afterlives. Her current book project traces networks of female medievalists in England and the US in the first half of the 20th century. She is also a writer of short fiction and has this summer released her first collection in a volume of stories and photographs called *More Names.*She holds a Master of Divinity from Yale University and a PhD from the University of California San Diego.

- **Juliet Simpson**, Centre for Arts, Memory and Communities, Coventry University, *Uncanny Pilgrimages of Art - Colmar's Liminal Spaces*

As a frontier city, with Strasbourg and Basel on ‘le Grande Est’, Colmar occupies a potent threshold, strung between its shifting pasts, between Burgundian and Habsburg lands, and from 1870, between France and Germany. This paper is concerned with Colmar’s liminality in place and its ‘veiled’ projection following the 1871 Prussian annexation of Alsace-Lorraine as a site of conflicted memory, cultural reparation and different ‘belonging’. Such ideas are arguably most suggestively demonstrated in an increasing interest in Colmar from the mid-1870s as a site of artistic pilgrimage to its medieval architectures – the Unterlinden Convent, the Église St Martin – its relics and its artists, most notably the fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century masters, Martin Schongauer and Matthias Grünewald. Discussion focuses on the twofold significance of Schongauer’s emblematic resonance for re-imagining a visionary Colmar and its patrimony beyond division, and of the uncanny force of Grünewald’s great *Isenheim Altarpiece* as the touchstone of a past and present alterity. Taken together, the conclusions shed light on Colmar’s spaces of memory and art as permeating sites and ‘images-clés’ well into the early 1900s, crossing boundaries of geo-political and urban worlds.

Juliet Simpson is Full Professor of Art History, Chair of Cultural Memory and Research Director in the Centre for Arts, Memory and Communities, Coventry University, UK. She is Guest Curator for the international exhibition, *Gothic Modern – from Edvard Munch to Käthe Kollwitz* (Helsinki-Ateneum; Oslo-National Museum; Vienna-ALBERTINA, 2024-2026). She is an internationally-recognized expert in long nineteenth- and early twentieth-century art and transnational cultural memory, the emotions, and the afterlives of Gothic and Northern Renaissance visual cultures, on which she has published extensively, most recently, her co-edited book, *Gothic Modern* (Hirmer-Chicago University Press: 2024). Juliet is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and Royal Historical Society, UK, and sits on the international Editorial Advisory Board of *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide*.

- **Mira Claire Zadrozny**, Friedrich-Schiller-University Jena, *The Veiled City Observed: The Uncanny Temporality of Mid-19th-Century Paris in Adolphe Martial Potémonts Etchings*

In 1866, French engraver Adolphe Martial Potémont (A.P. Martial) published an album of etchings titled *Ancien Paris,* in which he explored in over 300 images the historic and vanishing old parts of Paris. During the 1860s, when the volume was created, the systematic exploration of the city's past was undergone by a practice of unveiling, of the intentional dissection of the city’s historical layers. Not only were the sites of Paris occupied by the diverse memories of the city's turbulent history, their visibility was further endangered through the large-scale rebuilding of Paris carried out by its prefect Georges-Eugène Haussmann commissioned by Napoleon III. These *grands travaux* were accompanied by the mass demolition of entire streets and neighbourhoods, replacing their grown heritage with new boulevards. Martial’s etchings show his reflection on these processes of demolition and disappearance. By engaging the viewer to unravel the temporal layers in his etchings, Martial’s works provide the beholder with a deepened understanding of the city’s historic structure. My paper examines two images from the album in detail: the frontispiece, in which the view of the *vieux Paris* is literally unveiled when the central figure of a ghostly woman pulls aside a curtain to reveal the Pont Royal, and secondly a view of the Place du Palais-Royal, where the depiction of urban ruins evokes both the revolution of 1848 and Haussmann's rebuilding, thus showing the city’s past haunted by its present. By employing an approach from receptions aesthetics in conjunction with Anthony Vidler's theory of the architectural uncanny and Reinhart Koselleck’s concept of *Zeitschichten* [layers of time] the images’ impact can be examined: The interplay of image, reception and the architectural-historical context ultimately reveals how the city of Paris is not only a place of light and teleological modernity but largely characterised by its underlying “haunted” reality.

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- **Anca I. Lasc**, Pratt Institute, *Enchanted Views for Store Windows: The Visual and Material Culture of Prop Making in Turn-of-the Century US*

In 1908 the inhabitants of Jersey City lived closer to Manhattan than ever. The newly-opened Hudson River tunnel spilled Jerseyans right into NYC’s most famous shopping districts, up 6thAvenue and toward 23rdStreet. All along the recently-built subway stations, stores such as Siegel-Cooper Co., Simpson-Crawford Co., or James McCreery & Co. had inaugurated large windows for the display of merchandize, taking advantage of the underground transport thoroughfares to extend their window space. The Fourteenth Street Store had a full block of windows on the subway, while Siegel-Cooper Co. had seven subway windows that stretched from the 19thStreet to the 18th. This paper focuses on relationship between real architecture, made-up nature, and imaginary cities in turn-of-the-century US as redefined in the window dressing trade literature. Rather than crowded exhibits of symmetrically-arranged heaps of small-scale merchandise, new store windows were expected to propose three-dimensional designs that blurred distinctions between indoor and outdoor, real and imaginary, over-ground and underground space, as well as architectural shell and interior décor. Stage-like, fictive worlds extended the urban landscape. The new commercial designs, shaped by fake gates, fictive fences, imaginary walls, and make-believe mountains, valleys, waves, and sand as well as both real and artificial plants, added to the cheer of a gloomy subway ride, increased the fluidity of urban life, and redefined the spaces of the modern metropolis. “How to” window dressing manuals guided designers in manufacturing an ephemeral material culture of the city, to be reused and disposed of at will with fashion and season changes; and the art of window display became ubiquitous. It offered a way into the city and out of it at the same time. It enchanted the viewer and made her yearn for more – was there more to consumption than conspicuous spending? What other possibilities lurked beyond the window?

An Associate Professor in the History of Art and Design Department at Pratt Institute, NY, Dr. Anca I. Lasc studies the invention and commercialization of the modern French interior and the development of the professions of the interior designer and window dresser in turn-of-the century France and US. Her published work includes Designing the French Interior: The Modern Home and Mass Media (Bloomsbury 2015, co-edited with Georgina Downey and Mark Taylor), Visualizing the Nineteenth-Century Home: Modern Art and the Decorative Impulse (Routledge 2016), Architectures of Display: Department Stores and Modern Retail (Routledge 2017, co-edited with Patricia Lara-Betancourt and Margaret Petty), Interior Decorating in Nineteenth-Century France: The Visual Culture of a New Profession (Manchester University Press 2018), and Revisiting the Past in Museums and at Historic Sites (Routledge 2022, co-edited with Andrew McClelland and Änne Söll), among others. She currently serves as Co-President of the SAH Historic Interiors Affiliate Group (HIG).