The City Rises (La città che sale) (1910) by Umberto Boccioni

Course: This seminar will survey the modern movement in Western European literature and art from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century. Writers include Baudelaire, Ibsen, Wilde, Yeats, H. D., Pound, Stein, Eliot, Mann, Proust, Joyce, Woolf, and Brecht. There will also be a consideration of movements in the visual arts from impressionism to surrealism.

Required Texts
Samuel Beckett, Waiting for Godot (Grove) 978-0802144423
Bertolt Brecht, Mother Courage and her Children (Grove) 978-0802130822
Henrik Ibsen, Four Major Plays: Vol. 1 (Signet) 978-0451530226
James Joyce, Dubliners (Penguin) 978-0140186475
Franz Kafka, Metamorphosis (Norton) 978-0393347098
Thomas Mann, Death in Venice (Bantam Classics) 978-0553213331
Tom Stoppard, Travesties (Grove) 978-0802150899
Oscar Wilde, The Importance of Being Earnest (Penguin) 978-014036068
Virginia Woolf, Mrs Dalloway (Mariner Books) 978-0156030359
All other readings will be online
Texts are available at the Yale Bookstore.

July
T 4 Modern, Modernism, Modernity
Selected passages to be distributed in class
Th 6 Ibsen, A Doll’s House and Wilde, The Importance of Being Earnest
Impressionism and Post-Impressionism
T 11 Primitivism and Expressionism
Thomas Mann, “Death in Venice.”

T 18  Cubism, Futurism & Imagism
Selected Modernist manifestos and poems by H.D., Eliot, Marinetti, Pound, & Stein

Th 20  Marcel Proust, Overture to “Combray”

Sa 22  First paper due on modern poetry by e-mail attachment

T 25  James Joyce, Dubliners, especially “The Sisters,” “Araby,” “Eveline,” “The Boarding House,” “Ivy Day in the Committee Room,” “The Dead.”

Th 27  Dadism and Surrealism
Franz Kafka, “The Metamorphosis”

Sa 28  Second paper due on modern prose by e-mail attachment

August
T 1  Virginia Woolf, Mrs. Dalloway

July
Th 3  Bertolt Brecht, Mother Courage
W.H. Auden, selected poems
Tom Stoppard, Travesties

F 4  Take-home exam due by 4.00pm by e-mail attachment

Course Requirements

1. Attendance is compulsory. Missing two classes will drop your final grade by a letter. I also expect everyone to be on time, prepared, and ready to speak. You should bring a copy of the texts to class; I view being without a text as being materially absent. 10%

2. Discussion questions are due on the work assigned by 11.00 pm the day before class via email. These should be one or two short, open-ended questions about the week’s reading and/or points brought up in class. These will be used to guide the discussion. 10%

3. Two essays, 1,300-1,600 words (about 4-6 pages, times roman 12). 50%

4. Final take home exam 30%