Course Description

Paris cemented its reputation as a global center of art in the second half of the nineteenth century. But art-making in Paris did not happen in a vacuum. French artists were active players in the city’s numerous crises and transformations between 1848-1900, which included utopian popular revolutions, foreign occupation, and massive urban reconstruction projects. Nineteenth-century Paris was also the capital of an empire that stretched from North and West Africa to the Caribbean and Polynesia. The foreign bodies and objects that filled the city as a result of these imperial circumstances left an indelible mark on French art.

This course explores art in Paris at the intersection of modern politics, colonialism, and capitalist industrialization. In addition to avant-garde painting movements such as Impressionism and its “Post-Impressionist” challengers, we also examine Orientalism and Primitivism alongside academic sculpture, universal exhibitions, and reproductive technologies like photography and the illustrated press. Some of the artists we examine include Gustave Courbet, Honoré Daumier, Rosa Bonheur, Nadar, Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux, Édouard Manet, Gustave Caillebotte, Mary Cassatt, Camille Pissarro, Gustave Moreau, Jean-Léon Gérôme, Henri Matisse, and Paul Gauguin.

Gustave Caillebotte, Young Man at His Window, 1876, oil on canvas. Getty Museum, Los Angeles.

Required Textbooks
All readings on Canvas

Assessments
Attendance, Class Participation, Exams, Final Exams, Mid-Term, Readings, Writing Assignments

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