

CMPL 492 , Section 01M

4th Dimension: Art & the Fictions of Hyperspace

MTWRF 01:15-04:30

Instructor: Leonard, D.

Maximum Enrollment: 30

Session:

Maymester 2009

The “fourth dimension” is a concept that originated in 19th-century non-Euclidean geometry and was popularized in science fiction and writings on the occult. In the early 20th century it inspired various innovations in literature and the visual arts that transformed artistic representations of space and time. We’ll explore the development of the concept from its beginning in mathematics through its popularization in science fiction and the occult (E.A. Abbott, H.G. Wells, Ouspensky, Hinton), its expansion in the visual arts of early modernism (Picasso, Duchamp, Malevich, Lissitsky, Escher), and finally in texts and films of modernism and post-modernism, examining what resources writers (Lewis Carroll, Gertrude Stein, T.S. Eliot, Borges, Marcel Proust) and film-makers (Robbe-Grillet, Chris Marker, and 4D computer simulations) brought to bear on representations of this dimension. Because of the compressed time frame of Maymester, readings will be kept brief, with much of this summer session devoted to film and the visual arts.

Fulfills requirements for Literary Arts (LA) North Atlantic World (NA)