

VC 170. Special Topics in Visual Culture: Fabricating LA

In what ways is Los Angeles just a kind of fiction? How, in turn, might fiction show us something concrete about the very real city in which we live? Fabricating LA focuses on how together, 20th–21st century architecture and literature contribute to our understandings of Los Angeles and its surroundings. In this course, we will consider topics such as urban development and gentrification, the representation and characterization of Los Angeles, the relationship between the city and the broader region of the southwest, the shift from modernism to postmodernism, dynamics between public and private places, the concept of “home,” and ideas of “safety.” Part of the course may involve field trips and/ or walks, taking into consideration the city, the landscape, the house, and the imaginary. Although predominantly a literature course, Fabricating LA aims to be as interdisciplinary as possible; it is loosely modeled after an architecture studio—students will be expected to conduct readings and research, to design plans and models of buildings in the literature under examination, and to devise creative projects inspired by the imaginative and theoretical concepts that arise each week.