

The Roaring Twenties in New York, Paris, and Berlin

Wednesday, January 12 to March 4, 2021- 10am to 12 noon

Zoom Series

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Coordinator and Presenter: Dr. Peter Harris

Course Overview: When WWI ended, these three cities experienced astonishing cultural, political and social revolutions. This series explores some of the prominent areas of these revolutions, including art, design, music, politics, architecture, technologies, and cinema – even fashion.

Wednesday, January 12: Berlin and Paris in the Early '20s

Berlin in this period was gripped by civil wars, rampant inflation, and a wildly decadent social/cultural scene. Paris, meanwhile, was playing host to TWO colonies of US expats: the “Lost Generation” in Montparnasse; and the black jazz musicians in Montmartre.

Wednesday, January 19: New York City

NYC in the early '20s was the epicentre of FOUR major events: Prohibition; the 19th Amendment; the Harlem Renaissance; and backlash Nativist laws against immigrants.

Wednesday, January 26: New Technologies & New Science

New technologies revolutionized society: electricity, radio, gramophone, cinema, airplanes, and automobiles. A flood of new scientific theories challenged old ideas.

Wednesday, February 2: Flappers & Speakeasies

All over North America the image of the newly emancipated female Flapper took hold, fuelled by prosperity, the new jazz and the lure of new dances in clubs and “speakeasies”.

Wednesday, February 9: The “Movies” Come of Age

Berlin became the European centre of cinematic innovation. A steady stream of German cinematic talent was lured to the USA. At the same time, Hollywood was entering the studios’ golden age, with the advent of “talkies”.

Wednesday, February 16: Art Déco Meets Skyscrapers

The thriving art scene in Paris produced Art Déco, which rapidly spread internationally. In New York it became the fashionable style for new skyscrapers like the Chrysler Building.

Wednesday, February 23: The Bauhaus

The Bauhaus school pioneered Modernist design in everything from typeface to doorknobs to skyscrapers. Berlin also developed innovative social housing.

Wednesday, March 2: New Theatre

Bert Brecht’s *The Three Penny Opera* featured sharp political comment in a radical new theatrical form: *epic theatre*.

Wednesday, March 9: The Roaring Stops

The Stock Market Crash in 1929 brought the decade-long party to an abrupt halt - not just in the USA but also in Germany.

Wednesday, March 16: The Aftermath

The resultant depression ushered in the 3rd Reich in Germany. In France the heady "années folies" gradually died out. In the USA, the agony of The Depression was compounded by the Dust Bowl.

Lecturer: Peter Harris. Peter is the former Assistant Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science, U of T. He has lectured to many Later Life groups in Toronto and elsewhere as well as Hot Doc's Curious Minds Programs. For LU Etobicoke, he recently presented the very well received series *America in the Cold War and Beyond*.

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