DISRUPTED MORPHOLOGY:
Progress, Electricity, and Medicine in Toulouse-Lautrec

Monday, September 27, 2021, 5–6 p.m.

Speaker
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About the Lecture
In the 19th century, artificial lighting and its effects became a central preoccupation for avant-garde chroniclers of modern spectacle. Lautrec’s stark lighting effects in his paintings are difficult to ignore. Scholars have consequently engaged with his particular mode of illumination, but never alongside his own medical encounter with electricity. After years of leg ailments, Lautrec received electrotherapy treatments, which contorted his muscles in attempts to reduce intermittent paralysis, cramps, and stunted growth.

Alexandra Courtois argues that the artist’s experience of electricity was much more visceral. Her presentation contextualizes Lautrec’s large painting “At the Moulin Rouge,” as well as smaller oils and print series, tracing moments of inconsistency, ambiguity, and the emergence of recurring pictorial strategies.

Registration link:
https://pitt.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJArdeutqDkuEtWOvj7L8PP-UZdMbSrg6RCU

This lecture is presented in conjunction with Kaliane Ung’s course Ailing Bodies: Narratives of Health and Illness.