

Matisse's Infrastructure

a Recent-PhD Lecture by

DANNY MARCUS



Monday, April 11
5:30 pm
Psychology 0014

Danny Marcus

University of California - Berkeley

Modernism is supposed to have been a primarily urban phenomenon, emerging in dialogue with the rapid modernization of European cities over the course of the nineteenth century. Yet by that century's end, critics often lamented that the boundary between city and country had been eroded by the very communications systems—including road, rail, postal and courier services, and even wireless telegraphy—to which the metropolis owed its dominion over the surrounding provinces. Unlike the spectacle of Haussmann's Paris, however, these infrastructural networks resisted pictorial description; they were meant to be used, not seen, and afforded only a cartographer's view of the total system. This talk reconsiders the shift between nineteenth- and twentieth-century modernism from an infrastructural perspective, focusing on Henri Matisse's enigmatic landscape, *The Windshield, on the Road to Villacoublay* (1917), and on the motif of circulation in his work of the previous decade.