

The Department of
FRENCH & ITALIAN
Lecture Series

presents



While much has been written about the impact of Charlie Chaplin's comedy and film persona on the historical avant-garde, I reassess Chaplin's status at a critical juncture in the post-World War II period: 1952, when the Guy Debord, Jean Brau, Serge Berna and Gil J. Wolman disrupted a press conference associated with the French release of Chaplin's new film *Limelight* (*Feux de la Rampe*, 1951, Charles Chaplin, Celebrated Productions).

With this public intervention, Debord and company made a decisive break from the Lettrists headed by Isidore Isou, reconfiguring themselves as the Internationale Lettriste (soon to become the International Situationists). Drawing on the earlier history concerning the Surrealists's defense of Chaplin in 1927 with their tract "Hands off Love," this paper aims to understand Chaplin's enduring yet changing economic, political, affective, and cultural capital among the avant-garde that, far beyond his invention of modernist comedic style, made Chaplin a potent symbol and target for achieving what the IL conceived as the most urgent goal in the post-war period: liberty, and the "destruction of all idols, above all when they claim an affiliation with liberty" (*Internationale Lettriste*, no. 1, 1952)

THE
CHAPLIN
FILES

**Graduate Student
Luncheon Workshop
with JENNIFER WILD**

Friday October 21, 2016

12:00pm Crowe Hall 2-130

For a copy of the paper, please email
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