



INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM

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# AMERICAN MYSTERIES:

*Urban crime Fiction from Eugène Sue's  
Mysteries of Paris to the  
American Noir & Steampunk*

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## PLENARY SPEAKERS

Paul Erickson (American Antiquarian Society)

Marie-Eve Thérenty (Université Montpellier III-Rirra 21)

& Featuring Steampunk Writer Jean-Christophe Valtat

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**FEBRUARY 26-28 & MARCH 1, 2014**

Interdisciplinary Humanities Center  
McCune Conference Room 6020 HSSB  
University of California, Santa Barbara

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Contact: Catherine Nesci / [cnesci@frit.ucsb.edu](mailto:cnesci@frit.ucsb.edu)

This conference is the fourth in a series of conferences on the innovative novel of urban mysteries, which has remained largely unexplored as a global cultural phenomenon. Starting with one of the first literary mass-successes, Eugène Sue's serialized novel *Les Mystères de Paris* (1842-43 [*The Mysteries of Paris*]), the launch and reception of the urban mystery marked not only the most important media phenomenon that France had ever seen; it was also one of the first occurrences of cultural globalization. In the months following the French publication, the novel was translated into several languages and gained international success from southern Europe to North America, from northern Europe to Latin America, Russia, throughout the Commonwealth, and, finally, at the turn of the century, in Japan and China. These translations were mostly adaptations. Sue's *Mystères de Paris* also initiated the production of hundreds of novels worldwide with considerable local variation. Examples are Reynolds's *Mysteries of London* (1844-1848), Juan Martínez Villergas's *Los Misterios de Madrid* (1844), Ned Buntline's *The Mysteries and Miseries of New York* (1847-48), Edouard Rivière's *Antonino y Anita ó los nuevos misterios de Mexico* (1851), Camilo Castelo Branco's *Os Mistérios de Lisboa* (1854), and B. Del Vecchio's *I Misteri di Roma contemporanea* (1851-1853).

With interwoven stories and urban chronicles that feature deep conflicts of class and gender, Sue's *Mysteries of Paris* was the first popular novel to confront head-on the modern megalopolis. Starting with Sue's serialized best-seller, the urban mystery novel provided a matrix of hybridization with other literary or cultural forms: the gothic novel, the historical novel, the melodrama, the novel of social mores, the fiction of detection, the journalistic reportage, and travel narratives, to name a few.

Our UCSB mystery conference focuses on the translations, adaptations and transformations of the Parisian mystery novels in the United States, from George Lippard's *The Quaker City* (1844) and Edward Zane Carroll Judson [Ned Buntline]'s *The Mysteries and Miseries of New York* (1847-48), to the influence this neglected popular genre had on the modern detective novel and the making of the Hollywood film noir.

Organized by the Department of French and Italian,  
the Comparative Literature Program,  
& the Graduate Center for Literary Research  
at the University of California, Santa Barbara  
In collaboration with Université Montpellier III-RIRRA 21 (France)

# PROGRAM

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26

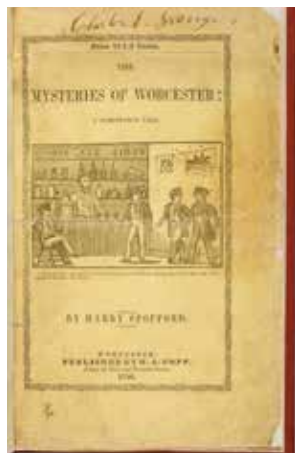
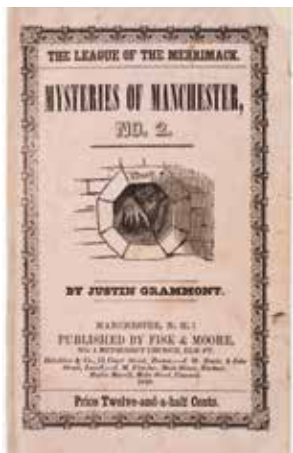
OPENING EVENT

4:00-5:15 PM

Location: Old Little Theatre,  
College of Creative Studies

Caroline Allen (UC Santa Barbara) and writer & director Jean-Christophe Valtat (Université Montpellier 3-Rirra 21, France) will read from and speak on the two volumes of Valtat's trilogy *Mysteries of the New Venice*: *Aurorarama* and *Luminous Chaos* in the College of Creative Studies Literature Symposium.





## COLLOQUIUM

**Location: McCune Conference Room  
Interdisciplinary Humanities Center,  
Humanities and Social Sciences  
Building 6020 HSSB**

## THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27

### OPENING OF THE COLLOQUIUM

5:00pm: Welcome by **David Marshall**,  
Dean of Humanities and Fine Arts  
& Introduction by Dominique Jullien and  
Catherine Nesci, co-organizers  
(UC Santa Barbara)

### 5:30pm: Plenary Session #1

Moderator: Patricia C. Cohen  
(UC Santa Barbara)

Paul J. Erickson

(American Antiquarian Society)  
“The Mysteries and Miseries of Small  
Cities: The Geographic Reach of City-  
Mysteries Fiction in Antebellum America”

### OPENING RECEPTION:

6:45-7:30PM

## FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28

**Session I, 9:00am-12:15pm:**  
“Urban Gothic? Poverty and Prostitution  
from Sue’s *Mysteries of Paris* to Lippard’s  
*The Quaker City* and Beyond”

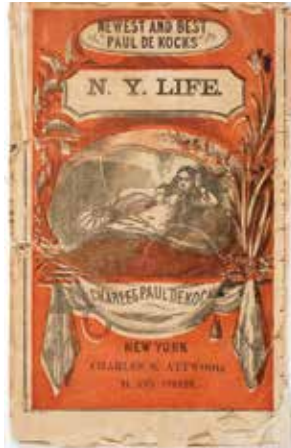
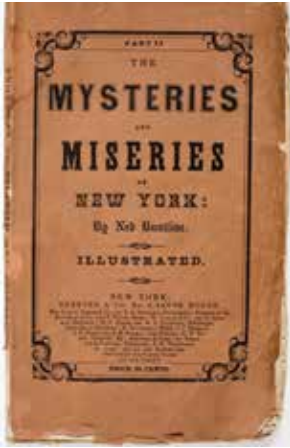
Moderator: Dominique Jullien  
(UC Santa Barbara)

- Elizabeth Erbezniak (Northern Illinois University): “Saving Working-Class Women from Eugène Sue’s Paris”
- Carolyn Betensky (University of Rhode Island): “The Spectral Working-Class Reader in *Les Mystères de Paris*”

### COFFEE BREAK: 10:15-10:30AM

Moderator: Erika Rappaport  
(UC Santa Barbara)

- Sari Altschuler (John B. Hench Post-Dissertation Fellow, American Antiquarian Society & University of South Florida): “Race and Media: The New History of George Lippard’s *The Quaker City*”
- Laure Katsaros (Amherst College): “*New York By Gas Light, Paris By Night*: George Foster and Julie de Marguerittes”



- Christopher Newfield (UCSB): “Fates of the Subversive Imagination: Blanchard Jerrold and Gustave Doré’s *London: A Pilgrimage* (1868)”

- Jean-Christophe Valtat (Université Montpellier 3-Rirra 21): “Tall Tale: The Mysteries of Ideology in Mark Helprin’s *Winter Tale* and Thomas Pynchon’s *Against the Day*”

**2:00pm-3:00pm, Plenary Session #2**

Moderator: Catherine Nesci  
(UC Santa Barbara)

**Marie-Eve Thérenty (Université Montpellier 3-Director, Rirra 21)**  
**“Les mystères de New York : histoire d’un fécond malentendu franco-américain”**  
**[The Mysteries of New York: A Franco-American Misunderstanding]**  
 Note: an English translation will be available

**COFFEE BREAK: 5:00-5:15 PM**

**Session III, 5:15-7:00pm: The Detective Novel Vs. The Urban Mystery Novel**

Moderator: Sari Altschuler (AAS & University of South Florida)

- Devin Fromm (UC Santa Barbara): “As Poet and Mathematician: Dupin’s Investigations of the Mysterious City”

**Session II, 3:15-5:00pm: American Underworlds**

Moderator: David L. Pike  
(American University)

- Dominique Kalifa (Université Paris 1-Panthéon Sorbonne): “The Informal History of Herbert Asbury’s Underworld”

- Christian Reed (UC Los Angeles): “What It Means To Say the Gothic Scatters: On George Thompson’s *City Crimes* (1849)”

- Michael Grafals (UC Santa Barbara): “The Mysteries of New Orleans: Asbury’s *New Orleans* Vs. Reizenstein’s *Secrets of New Orleans*”

- Daniel Couch (UC Los Angeles): “An Extravagant Economy: The Literary Prizes of Alcott’s and Buntline’s Sensational Fiction”



## SATURDAY, MARCH 1

### Session IV, 9:15am-11:00am: Translating French Mysteries in America

Moderator: Carolyn Betensky  
(University of Rhode Island)

- Eliza Smith (UC Santa Barbara): “Flash/Slang/Slumming: The Language of the Underworld”
- Filippos Katsanos (Université Montpellier 3-Rirra 21; University of Patras, Greece): “The American Editions of *The Mysteries of Paris* in 1843: Translation as a Battleground between Old-Timers and Newcomers of the American Publishing Industry”

• Jonathan Loesberg (American University): “(Re)Translating Sue’s *Mysteries of Paris* Now: Sue’s Narrative Voice and Criminal Argot”

**COFFEE BREAK: 11:00-11:15PM**

### Session V, 11:15-12:30: Americanizing Parisian Crime Fiction

Moderator: Laure Katsaros (Amherst College)

- Amy Wigelsworth (University of Durham, UK): “The American in Paris: The Americanization of City and Text in French Urban Mystery Novels”
- Matthieu Letourneux (Université Paris 10-Nanterre): “America Invades France’: The Arrival of the Dime Novels and the Transformations of the Criminal and Urban Imaginaries in Belle Époque Popular Literature”

## LUNCH AND FILM SCREENING

**12:30-2:30PM**

*The Naked City* (Jules Dassin, 1948)

### Session VI, 2:45-4:15pm: From American Noir to Steampunk

Moderator: Eric Prieto (UC Santa Barbara)

- David L. Pike (American University): “City Settings: American Urban Mysteries from Film Noir to Steampunk”
- Yunte Huang (UC Santa Barbara): “Racing Noir: Charlie Chan’s Mysteries”

**COFFEE BREAK: 4:15-4:30PM**

## CLOSING SPECIAL EVENT

**Location: Theater and Dance 1701  
4:30-6:30pm**

*Chan is Missing* (Wayne Wang, 1982)

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This colloquium is organized by the Department of French and Italian, the Comparative Literature Program, and the Graduate Center for Literary Research, at the University of California, Santa Barbara, in collaboration with the University of Montpellier III, France, and its Research Center RIRRA21.

At the University of California, Santa Barbara, we thank for their co-sponsoring: the College of Letters and Sciences and its Division of Humanities and Fine Arts, the Interdisciplinary Humanities Center, the College of Creative Studies, the Multicultural Center, the East Asia Center and the Center for Modern Literature, Materialism and Aesthetics (COMMA); and the Departments of Asian American Studies, English, East Asian Languages and Cultural Studies, Film and Media Studies, and History.

We also thank Director of Development Paul Goldberg (Office of Development, UC Santa Barbara) and Senior Director of Development Janice Hartoch Taylor (Foundation Relations, UC Santa Barbara), and the staff of the Interdisciplinary Humanities Center at UC Santa Barbara as well as the following colleagues for their support of this project: Caroline Allen, Carolyn Betensky, Paul Erickson, Yunte Huang, Dominique Kalifa, Erika Rappaport, and Marie-Eve Thérenty.

Our most heartfelt gratitude also goes to the Albert and Elaine Borchart Foundation, Inc., for its generous financial support of this colloquium and its special events.

Catherine Nesci and Dominique Jullien,  
Department of French and Italian, and co-organizers

## ILLUSTRATIONS

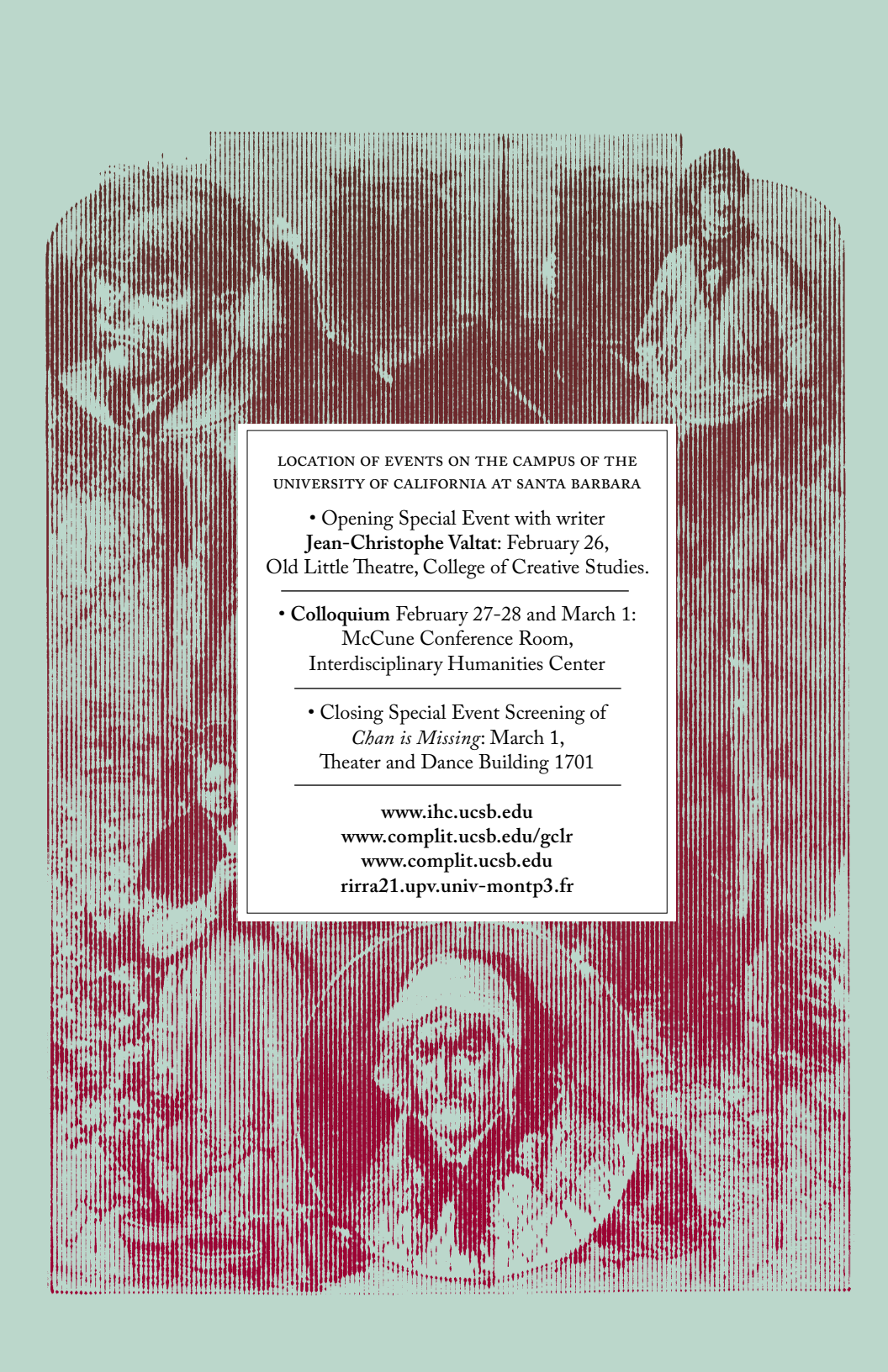
Cover image: Frontispiece. *Les Mystères de Paris* by Eugène Sue. Paris: Rouff ed., 1895. Personal copy.

Page 2: Images by Mahendra Singh, for *Luminous Chaos* by Jean-Christophe Valtat (2013). Brooklyn-London: Melville House.

Page 3: Cover pages of *The Mysteries of Manchester* (1848); *The Mysteries of Salem* (1845); *The Mysteries of Worcester* (1846). Courtesy of the American Antiquarian Society.

Page 4: Cover of *The Mysteries and Miseries of New York* by Ned Buntline & Cover page for *N. Y. Life* by Paul de Kock. Courtesy of the American Antiquarian Society. & N. Orr's cover page for *New York by Gas-Light* by George G. Foster (1850). Personal copy.

Program Design: Alejandro Casazi (IHC, UC Santa Barbara).



LOCATION OF EVENTS ON THE CAMPUS OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT SANTA BARBARA

• Opening Special Event with writer  
**Jean-Christophe Valtat**: February 26,  
Old Little Theatre, College of Creative Studies.

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• Colloquium February 27-28 and March 1:  
McCune Conference Room,  
Interdisciplinary Humanities Center

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• Closing Special Event Screening of  
*Chan is Missing*: March 1,  
Theater and Dance Building 1701

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