Events such as the 15 April 2019 fire at Notre-Dame of Paris and the intensive restorations of Chartres Cathedral, conducted over the years 1974-2014, have given us a new perspective on these tall and gravity-defying buildings. In addition, the reassessment of interactions with the Islamic world, which is sometimes credited with serving as the catalyst for the distinctive Gothic pointed or ogive arch, make this an especially fruitful time to assess what we now understand about Gothic architecture.

With their engineering based on the flying buttress and use of ‘new media’ such as stained glass, these were buildings that defied the horizon of expectations in their day. There was also an internal critique of the buildings, that issued from the precentor of Notre-Dame Cathedral, Peter the Chanter († 1197), who observed that that the cost of building them was borne unfairly by the poor. This comment suggests that these great buildings still have much to teach us. The four session prospectus will be sent via email by request.

This seminar will be moderated by Elizabeth Pastan, Professor of Art History at Emory University, and will meet via Zoom at 6pm on the following Wednesday evenings during the 2020 fall semester: September 9, 16, 23 & 30, 2020. This Zoom meeting is limited and must be reserved in advance. The Zoom meeting link will be sent via email the day before each session date. Everyone from the Atlanta community is welcome and invited to join us for this free seminar. For further information and to reserve a spot on a “first-come basis,” email the Fox Center at fchi@emory.edu.

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