Architecture Inside Out—A Seminar on Interior Design for Architects

The City of Berlin as a Case Study, a Research and Study Laboratory

“Outside and inside form a dialectic of division,” writes the French Philosopher Gaston Bachelard in his book *The Poetics of Space* (Beacon Press, 1958). This “obvious geometry,” continues Bachelard, “binds us as soon as we bring it into play in metaphorical domains. It has the sharpness of the dialectics of yes and no, which decides everything.”

“Open closed open. That’s all we are,” posits the Israeli poet Yehuda Amichai in describing the life cycle of a person from the moment they enter the world to the moment they depart from it.

In the present seminar, we shall examine the inside as a theoretical and physical space.

What is the experience of inside? What characterizes it? How can we affect it?

We will look at the boundary between inside and outside. How can it impact the interaction between inside and outside?

What is unique about our profession as architects who plan and design inside spaces?

Does dealing with the inside—with the design of interior spaces—require different concepts, interpretations, associations, and skills?

One of the particularities of designing interior spaces is that the architect operates within a given space that is usually defined by a set casing and various elements related to the building’s systems (its frame, electrical wiring, water, and other infrastructures).

In the seminar, we will review a number of precedents—case studies of interior spaces—that we will discover by way of walking tours around the city of Berlin. We will try to expand our professional toolbox by analyzing and studying the phenomena that materialize within these spaces.