

Spatial interplay

Interior realms, milieus, and the city's finite units

No building, no space is sufficient unto itself. As part of a diverse network of other buildings and spaces that create milieus, which in turn inscribe themselves as finite units in a "larger whole", architecture sets up relationships, even where these relationships – this too constitutes a statement – are foiled or negated. This year, ÖGFA will explore the more-or-less congenial relationship of our built structures to their surroundings. We will examine the qualities of indoor and outdoor spaces in a variety of scales and situations, both public and private. When is the architecture of a city more than the sum of its parts? What sort of tangible urban settings allow inhabitants to identify with their city? What influence does detailing have? In what way does a private interior inscribe itself in a city's fabric? If the long-established *image of the city* were to fade away, what would be achieved by invoking the minutiae of day-to-day life?

First trimester: The city from within

"Everyone carries a room about inside him. This fact can even be proved by means of the sense of hearing. If someone walks fast and one pricks up one's ears and listens, say in the night, when everything round about is quiet, one hears, for instance, the rattling of a mirror not quite firmly fastened to the wall."

Franz Kafka, *The Blue Oktavo Notebooks*, 1917

There is a certain tradition* in which the interior is understood in relation to the city, but perhaps that concept may also be inverted ... The first trimester surveys "unseen" urban spaces, the manifest and latent interplay between interior and exterior. How do private spheres make their way into the public realm? How private can a city's public outdoor space be? How exemplary – representative of their time, place, and society – can private spaces be? We'll trace an arc from *Einwärtswohnen* (inbound living), a radical position developed by artist–architect–poet Heinz Frank, (1939–2020); via the interpretation of comfort portrayed in *Architektur der Mitte*,** which categorically rejects experimentation in residential architecture; to lucid readings of Walter Benjamin and the most recent research on autonomous late modern and postmodern architecture. We'll engage with "critical cosiness" in a discussion of the different manifestations of *delight* in English and Viennese interiors, and analyse the artist's atelier as a finite type linking the past with the present. We'll also present a conceptual film documenting private gems in the Pannonian countryside south of Vienna, and, last but not least, introduce a new series dedicated to the walls of books lining private libraries: no longer relegated to the Zoom background, they are now given the opportunity to speak.

*One example: Josef Frank's text "The House as Path and Place" (1931)

** This refers to a book by Lukas Imhof entitled *Midcomfort: Wohncomfort und die Architektur der Mitte* (2013)