

## Interior – Inferior – In Theory? (Berlin, 17–18 May 18)

Berlin, May 17–18, 2018

Deadline: Jan 15, 2018

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Abstracts for academic papers and topic proposals are sought for the international conference

INTERIOR – INFERIOR – IN THEORY? Contemporary Positions in Interior Design Theory

Notification of acceptance 15.2.2018

The conference brings together interior design researchers and educators from different countries to discuss contemporary theoretical positions within/about the discipline.

What constitutes interior design/interior architecture? How may interior design's relationship to architecture and design be defined and reflected theoretically? How is this discipline, which for decades has been classified as "emerging" or "relatively young", taught, researched and understood professionally in different countries? How has this changed over time?

Taking theory building to be one of the most important acts of defining a discipline, the conference wants to draw connections between interior design theory and its historiography, historical research in interior design/interior architecture, and disciplinary conceptions as they are embodied in interior design programs and professional institutions in different countries.

Given interior design's status as an "emerging" discipline, often taught only at universities of applied sciences or, in some countries, not even established as a university subject, the title "Interior – inferior – in theory?" refers to the notion that interior design lacks a historically grown body of research and, especially, a theory of its own, and instead largely relies on architecture and design theory.

Instead of continuing to draw on related discipline's definitions, which result in a definition ex negativo, the conference aims to support the current trend of establishing a body of theory for the discipline that is its own.

### CALL FOR PAPERS

Proposals for paper presentations on the first day of the conference may address but are not limited to one of the following subject areas:

- THEORETICAL EXPLORATIONS OF INTERIOR DESIGN/INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE: What distinguishes interior design theory from architecture and/or design theory? How do existing research on the interior and its broad range of subjects relate to the concept of interior design as a discipline? To what extent do these support or challenge the notion of a theory for the discipline?
- HISTORICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE DISCIPLINE: How has interior design/interior architecture

evolved over the last century? How does it relate to the rise and fall of 20th century modernism and where does it stand today?

- REFLECTIONS ON EXISTING INTERIOR DESIGN RESEARCH: How can interior design research be re-read theoretically? Do its research methods and/or findings affirm, challenge or dissolve the notion of interior design/interior architecture as a distinct discipline?

- RELATING DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES WITHIN THE INTERIOR DESIGN/INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE: Researchers, educators and professional institutions hold different types of knowledge and potentially contradictory ideas about the discipline. What types of knowledge and ideas about the discipline can be identified in different places and specific historical periods? Which theoretical insights may be gathered from connecting and confronting these to/with each other?

We particularly welcome contributions that outline ways, in which interior design theory may be distinct from other related fields like architecture and design, or that discuss how a more defined notion of interior design theory might challenge the conventions imposed by those disciplines.

For academic papers, please submit an abstract of no more than 500 words for a 20-minute presentation and a short CV (max. 75 words) until 15.1.2018 to [interiortheory@bauinternational-berlin.de](mailto:interiortheory@bauinternational-berlin.de).

#### CALL FOR TOPICS

The call for topics invites interior educators, researchers, and members of professional institutions to suggest topics that they would like to present and discuss with other participants on the second day of the conference. This day will be dedicated to current themes and topics, which are related to the conference's concern with interior design theory and discipline building, and to fostering new activities and cooperation, exchange and discussion across national boundaries, research areas and occupational backgrounds. The second day thus extends the above-mentioned subjects, yet in a different format.

The follow-up discussion raises current topics of interest for discussion with the interior design community. Contributions may take on two different formats; one for individuals and one for small panels. The latter may e.g. present and discuss a topic from an international point of view or from different occupational perspectives (education, research, profession, etc.):

- INDIVIDUAL PROPOSALS: one speaker, one 10-minute presentation plus discussion.

- GROUP PROPOSALS: three speakers, three 10-minute presentations plus discussion.

For topic proposals, please submit abstracts of no more than 250 words and a short CV (max. 75 words) until 15.1.2018 to [interiortheory@bauinternational-berlin.de](mailto:interiortheory@bauinternational-berlin.de).

#### SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

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Reference:

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