

Exteriorless. The Design of the Ordinary

MSc. 2 Public Building Seminar



Amazon Fulfillment Center, Las Vegas © Layton Construction

Tutors

Stefano Corbo
Nathalie de Vries

Code	AR0919
Credits	5 ECTS
Location	N/A
Excursion	N/A
Costs	N/A
Project Type	Intra-disciplinary

Contemporary cities characterize themselves for the presence of building types which, despite the diversity of functions they accommodate, share a same condition: their floor plans are typically generic, their exteriors hermetic, their interiors vast. These spaces are **warehouses, department stores, logistics parks, data centers**. Generally considered as conventional and merely utilitarian structures, these spaces are in reality extremely relevant for the role they play in the daily functioning of our cities.

This seminar course will investigate the nature of these types, as well as their spatial qualities and their material components, in order to ideate design strategies that can turn anonymous buildings into meaningful and expressive structures – **public facilities** open to the city and capable to act as collective magnets. By exploring how these structures can become actively part of the urban fabric, students will learn new **design techniques**. They will turn neutral structural grids into **interior landscapes**;

they will engage in biophilic operations of **green design**; and, finally, they will use multi-sensory elements to transform existing typologies.

The course will consist of lectures, readings, conversations with invited guests, and tutoring sessions. It will be divided in two parts. The first part will be **research-oriented**: students will investigate building types according to a historic and theoretical framework and will be asked to write a short paper. The second part will focus on a design exercise in which students will apply the outcome of their research to the **(re) design** of one specific type via light, colors, nature, sound, technology.

In taking this course, students will be able to situate the emergence of new spatial types in relation to economic and societal models; to comprehend the design potential of generic structures; and to develop appropriate design strategies aimed to envision innovative **public buildings**.