

Interior Outdoors of Tomorrow: A Study on the Rising Influence of the 'Interior' Vocabulary in the Design of Outdoor Spaces and the Fading Role of the Architectural Discourse

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Abstract : The study aims to identify the background of the contemporary trends in the design of commercial outdoors, and the reasons for the radical change in the traditional relationship between architecture and interior design, where the latter is taking over the construction of the visual narrative framing the users' experience, which was ruled in the past by the architectural discourse. The design of commercial interiors, in fact, influences the way in which their outdoor spaces are organized and used more than ever before, and reflects the multi-faceted changes in the consumers' behaviors and their interaction with the built environment. The study starts with the analysis of the evolution of sheltered outdoor spaces to achieve a broader understanding of the shift of meaning of subjects such as private and public domains, and to consider the varied ways of interaction/integration between the building and its exterior space. The study identifies the major social, physical and cultural aspects influencing the design of contemporary commercial outdoor spaces, suggests a new framework for their understanding and draws the methodological guidelines for the development of a structured approach to the design of commercial outdoors. The purpose of the paper is to stress the influence of the design of interiors into the public realm, to indicate new directions in this field of research, and to provide new methodological tools for interior design professionals.

Keywords : interior design, landscape design, visual narrative, outdoor design

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