

## **Reading Buildings: A Primer**

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What does it mean to ‘understand’ buildings? From the outside, as we first confront them? From the inside as we experience them? We can understand buildings in simple, pragmatic terms—how they work for what they are supposed to do—and we can understand them as architecture. This is a brief introduction into the logic of architectural form and space—the phenomena, the principles, characteristics, geometries, and themes at the basis of making and understanding architecture—irrespective of time. It will seek to define the “define-able” while acknowledging that much of the soul-stirring power of architecture eludes definition.

Works of architecture are supposed to embody inherent relationships between outside and inside. Yet, between inside and outside, between form and system, between idea and realization, there are as many contradictions and conundrums as there are clarities and certainties. These contrasts make architecture endlessly fascinating and endlessly challenging to understand—and some buildings simply defy understanding...for different reasons.

This course will explore a number of questions. Can we understand the inside of a building from the outside and the outside from the inside? What are the types and characteristics of architectural space? What compositional and organization strategies have been used in architecture throughout the ages? Most significant—what is the singular distinction between historic and modern architecture that enables the radical nature of some of today’s architecture on the “cutting edge?”

**Fridays from 1:30–3:30 p.m. starting March 3 through April 21 for 8 sessions**

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