



# A Topology of Everyday Constellations (Writing Architecture)

By Georges Teyssot

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**A Topology of Everyday Constellations (Writing Architecture)** By Georges Teyssot

Today, spaces no longer represent a bourgeois haven; nor are they the sites of a classical harmony between work and leisure, private and public, the local and the global. The house is not merely a home but a position for negotiations with multiple spheres -- the technological as well as the physical and the psychological. In *A Topology of Everyday Constellations*, Georges Teyssot considers the intrusion of the public sphere into private space, and the blurring of notions of interior, privacy, and intimacy in our societies. He proposes that we rethink design in terms of a new definition of the practices of everyday life.

Teyssot considers the door, the window, the mirror, and the screen as thresholds or interstitial spaces that divide the world in two: the outside and the inside. Thresholds, he suggests, work both as markers of boundaries and as bridges to the exterior. The stark choice between boundary and bridge creates a middle space, an in-between that holds the possibility of exchanges and encounters.

If the threshold no longer separates public from private, and if we can no longer think of the house as a bastion of privacy, Teyssot asks, does the body still inhabit the house -- or does the house, evolving into a series of microdevices, inhabit the body?

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

In Georges Teyssot's masterly *A Topology of Everyday Constellations*, the barren concept of 'architectural space' gets excavated, blown apart, turned inside out -- Möbius-like. Projected on a kaleidoscopic screen, Teyssot's ideas open a porous space from house to world, while cutting a path in a cultural thicket that brings understanding and fresh content to design intoxicated by formalism.

(Lars Lerup, Albert K. and Harry K. Smith Professor, Rice School of Architecture)

Erudite and mordant, Georges Teyssot traces the rise of the modern cultures and technologies of separation between intimate and extimate, and the concomitant invention of domesticity, privacy, and of many degrees of in-betweenness. He reminds us of oft-forgotten allegiances of many self-styled foes of industrial modernity--from the racist roots of romantic organicism to the ambiguous eroticism of Art Nouveau, from the esoteric and mystical inclination of architectural postmodernism to the consumerist provenance of contemporary digital biorealism and globular shapes. Yet, as Teyssot reminds us, today's discomfort of virtualization may also herald a new alliance between bodies and technologically mediated environments.

(Mario Carpo, Yale School of Architecture and École d'Architecture de Paris-La Villette)

In this intense and beautiful book, Georges Teyssot presents a portrait of the interior from the late eighteenth century to today. Like the rag and bone man of history, Teyssot has spent years picking up the most evocative clues. The result is like the nineteenth-century interior he writes about. We find ourselves in a kind of dense space filled with exotic and endlessly fascinating fragments. As we move through the collection we experience a kind of delirium. It is as if the history of the interior is the history of everything, or as if the interior is the place to see everything all at once.

(Beatriz Colomina, Professor, School of Architecture, Princeton University)

*A Topology of Everyday Constellations* opens the reader up for a profound discussion, initiating the process to reconsider what it means to dwell and how our physical appliances reconfigure our lives. Another thought-provoking result of The MIT Press' Writing Architecture series, Teyssot's discourse is disturbingly, seductively complex.

(*Arcspace*)

#### About the Author

Georges Teyssot, Professor in the School of Architecture at Laval University, Quebec, has taught the history and theory of architecture at the Istituto Universitario di Architettura of Venice, Princeton University's School of Architecture, and the Department of Architecture at ETH Zurich. He is the author or editor of many books, including *Interior Landscapes* and *The American Lawn*.

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