Version: May 31 2023

Wires, Waves, Data:
Excavating Berlin's Urban Media

Alliance 4 Tech Workshop

Programme

Berlin
September 4 – September 10 2023

hosted by
TU Berlin, Faculty VI
Institute of Architecture, Department of Architecture Theory
Prof. Dr.-Ing. habil. Jörg H. Gleiter

organized by
Klaus Platzgummer, MSc ETH Arch, M.A. (AA)

in co-creation with

Technische Universität Berlin · ETSAM · Politecnico di Milano · UCL · Alliance 4 Tech

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A4Tech Workshop
TU Berlin x Politecnico di Milano x ETSAM x UCL

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"MEDIA record, transmit, and process information – this is the most elementary definition of media. Media can include old-fashioned things like books, familiar things like the city and newer inventions like the computer."
Friedrich Kittler, *The City Is a Medium* (1996) [1]

Berlin-Altglienicke, 1956, *Berlin Spy Tunnel* (Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-37695-0003) / Source: Wikicommons

The tunnel was part of the joint intelligence operations of the American CIA (Operation Gold) and the British MI6 (Operation Stopwatch) in the 1950s – built to wiretap the military landlines of the Soviet Army headquarters in Berlin.

Telephone lines, radio antennas and supercomputers are all media—recorders, transmitters and processors of information that are, often literally, "built-in" to cities. Berlin provides a particularly fertile historical sediment for understanding such media and their "incorporation" into urban fabrics, offering, for example, the Berlin Radio Tower, which both broadcasted radio waves across the city and served as a Nazi observation post; the Berlin Spy Tunnel, which the CIA and MI6 dug to wiretap the communications of the Soviet Army; and the Field Station Berlin, a listening station on Teufelsberg, where the NSA monitored, recorded and even disrupted the GDR's radio traffic during the Cold War.

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In this international workshop, Berlin is explored from a media-archaeological point of view. The aim is to excavate, identify and document Berlin's urban media. An integral part of this endeavour is excursions; theories and histories of urban media are introduced and discussed in seminars, which are accompanied by guest lectures.

[1] Kittler, Friedrich A., 'The City Is a Medium' in: *New Literary History* , Autumn, 1996, Vol. 27, No. 4, Literature, Media, and the Law (Autumn, 1996), pp. 717-729

Schedule (preliminary)

Workshop Introductions

July 10 2023, 16:00 – 18:30
July 25 2023, 16:00 – 18:30

Link: https://tu-berlin.zoom.us/j/65106936501?pwd=WlVjT2pKL0xZbHZWOVRCTkd1b3RhZz09
Meeting ID: 651 0693 6501
Passcode: 183297

Workshop

Day	Date	Activities
1	Mo, 4 Sep 2023	**Arrival**
	13:00 – 14:00	TU Berlin, Institute for Architecture
	15:00 – 18:00	Walking Tour *Tiergarten (Victory Column climb)*
	18:00 –	Biergarten get-together
2	Tue, 5 Sep 2023	**Seminar Day**
	10:00 – 12:00	Seminar 1: What are Urban Media?
	14:00 – 16:00	Seminar 2: Draft Video Essay Presentations *
	18:00	Guest Lecture / Roundtable (tbc) *Location: Haus der Statistik (tbc)*
3	Wed, 6 Sep 2023	**Excursion Day 1**
	10:00 – 11:30	Exhibition Visit *Zitadelle Spandau*
	13:30 – 17:30	Walking Tour *Berlin Radio Tower* *Haus des Rundfunks* *Field Station Berlin (Teufelsberg)*
4	Thu, 7 Sep 2023	**Excursion Day 2**
	10:00 – 11:30	Exhibition Visit *Allierten Museum (Section: Berlin Spy Tunnel)*
	13:00 – 15:30	Exhibition Visit *Technikmuseum (Sections: Information, TheNet)*
	16:00 – 17:30	Walking Tour *Berliner Unterwelten (AEG Tunnel)*
5	Fri, 8 Sep 2023	**Excursion Day 3**
	10:00 – 14:00	Walking Tour *Telegraph Mountain (Einsteinturm, Neue Sternwarte)*
	15:00 –	Exhibition preparations
6	Sat, 9 Sep 2023	**Exhibition Day**
	10:00 – 16:00	Exhibition set-up (tbd)
	16:00 – 17:00	Exhibition opening
	18:00 –	Biergarten bye-bye
7	Sun, 10 Sep 2023	**Leave**
	11:00 – 12:00	Panorama Visit *Pergamon Museum*

Locations (selection)

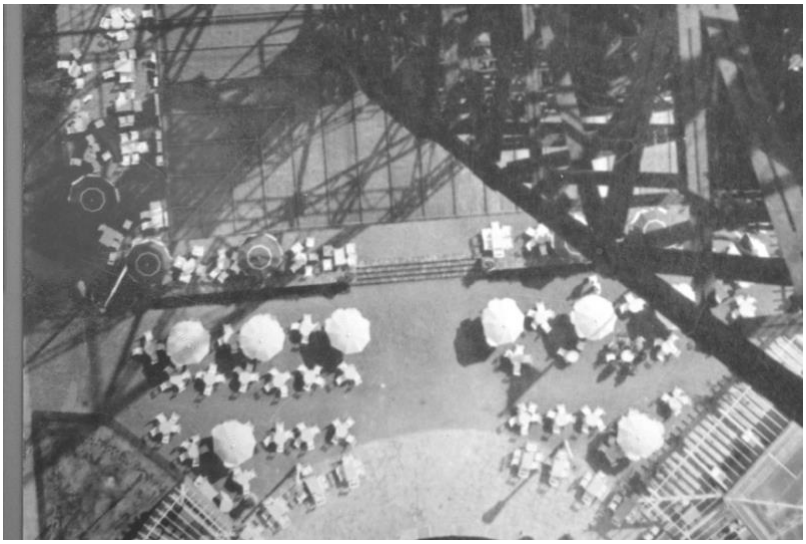

Fig. László Moholy-Nagy, Berlin Radio Tower, 1928

Fig. Erich Mendelsohn, Einsteinturm (on Telegraph Mountain), 1920 - 1922

Fig. Field Station Berlin, Listening Station, 1963

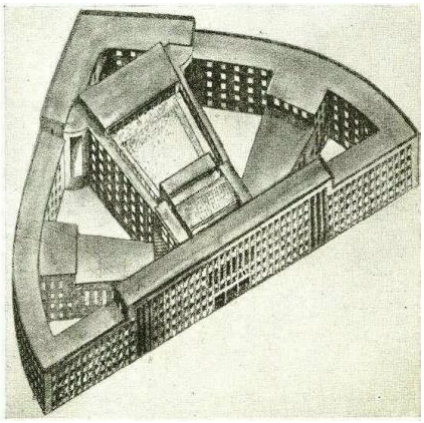

Fig. Hans Poelzig, Haus des Rundfunks (TV and Radio Station), 1931

Fig. Unveiled, Exhibition, Zitadelle Spandau

Outcome

The outcome of this workshop is video essays (10 mins). Each essay documents and discusses traces of Berlin's urban media and is the result of a cross-institutional group collaboration (3-4 students from PoliMi, ETSAM, TU Berlin, and UCL). Walk-throughs in spatial image scans (LIDAR scans) of chosen sites in Berlin, paired with archival resources and accompanied by theoretical reflections derived from the course literature, form the basis of those essays.

In two online sessions in July (dates to be defined) the exercise is introduced, and the cross-institutional groups are formed. Between the end of July and the beginning of September, the groups will develop a basic narrative structure and present an essay draft at the beginning of the workshop in Berlin; the Berlin-based participants are asked to create LIDAR Scans of the sites. Enriched with the experiences collected in the workshop, the essays are finalised, presented and exhibited.

Example of a LIDAR Scan:

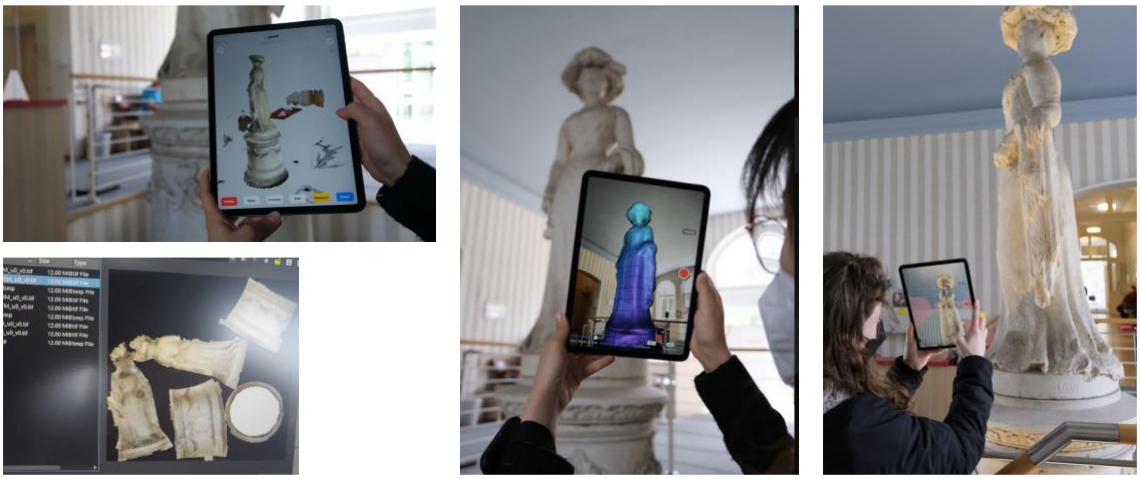

Fig Project Lidar Scans by Yinig Cong, Ganit Goldstein, Lisa Wessler (TU Berlin / M.I.T.) in the context of the workshop *Augmented Historical Pedagogies*, TU Berlin, Architecture Theory, May 30 – June 7 2022, Prof. Mark Jarzombek (M.I.T.), Eliyahu Keller (M.I.T.), Eytan Mann (TU Berlin), Klaus Platzgummer (TU Berlin) Prof. Aaron Sprecher (Technion)

Application

by **June 15 2023, noon**
with **portfolio** and **curriculum vitae**
to **klaus.platzgummer@tu-berlin.de**

Participants may receive a grant from their home institutions.
Participation is credited with 4 ECTS.

Bibliography (selection)

- Halpern, Orit and Robert Mitchell, 'Demo or Die: The Zones of Smartness', in: *The Smartness Mandate*, Cabridge: MIT Press (2022), p. 73 – 120
- Kittler, Friedrich A., 'The City Is a Medium' in: *New Literary History* , Autumn, 1996, Vol. 27, No. 4, Literature, Media, and the Law (Autumn, 1996), pp. 717-729
- Mattern, Shannon, 'Introduction', in: *Code + Clay… Data + Dirt*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press (2017), pp. vi - xl.
- Martin, Reinhold, *The Urban Apparatus: Mediapolitics and the City*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press (2016)
- Thiermann, Alfredo, 'Radio Activities' in: *Tresholds Journal of the MIT Departement of Architecture, Myth*, 2017, pp. 194 – 209

Bio

Klaus Platzgummer is an architect, theoretician and historian. Currently, he is a research associate in the Department of Architecture Theory at TU Berlin and a tutor for History and Theory Studies at the AA School of Architecture. Platzgummer received an MA in History and Critical Thinking in Architecture with Distinction from the AA and holds an MSc in Architecture from ETH Zürich.

Platzgummer studies media and techniques for the storage, transmission and organisation of data, information and knowledge in design and construction processes. He focuses on researching their transformations and geneses through the advent of electronic media, describing the sociotechnical assemblages and the global geographies that form and analysing their role in the orchestration of epistemic violences. Through the collaborative research project *Building Information*, he is currently examining outsourcing and crowdsourcing as effects of electronic communication on architectural labour practices. This research, which is currently being converted into a publication, was exhibited at the TU Berlin Architecture Museum, featured by *Arch+* and presented at the Architecture Lobby's 2022 Architecture Beyond Capitalism School.

Moreover, Platzgummer studies the methodological challenges and capacities that electronic media holds for historiography. He is part of the Augmented Historical Pedagogies research group, an international collaboration between MIT, Technion and TU Berlin that explores the potential of various types of computer graphics techniques for historical documentation, archivisation and visualisation.

POLITECNICO
MILANO 1863

SCUOLA DI
ARCHITETTURA
URBANISTICA
INGEGNERIA DELLE COSTRUZIONI

Attribuzione crediti formativi
per Workshop – Workshop tirocinanti
Workshop accreditation request

Docente Responsabile/ *Reference Professor*	Ilaria Valente, Marco Bovati
Docente proponente/*Proposing professor*	Ilaria Valente, Marco Bovati
Corso di Studio proponente/*Proposing study programme*	ADU
Altri docent/*other professors involved*	-
Titolo dell'iniziativa/*Title*	**Wires, Waves, Data: Excavating Berlin's Urban Media** *Alliance 4 Tech Workshop*
Tipologia/*type*	workshop
Lingua di erogazione/*language*	inglese
ore previste/*expected duration-hours*	In presenza/*in presence*: 30 Lavoro autonomo/*independent work*: 70
periodo di svolgimento/*workshop period*	10-25 Luglio 2023 4-10 Settembre 2023
sede di svolgimento/*location*	Prima parte (luglio): online Seconda parte (settembre): TU Berlin, Institute of Architecture (Germania)
breve descrizione/*brief description*	Telephone lines, radio antennas and supercomputers are all media—recorders, transmitters and processors of information that are, often literally, "built-in" to cities. Berlin provides a particularly fertile historical sediment for understanding such media and their "incorporation" into urban fabrics, offering, for example, the Berlin Radio Tower, which both broadcasted radio waves across the city and served as a Nazi observation post; the Berlin Spy Tunnel, which the CIA and MI6 dug to wiretap the communications of the Soviet Army; and the Field Station Berlin, a listening station on Teufelsberg, where the NSA monitored, recorded and even disrupted the GDR's radio traffic during the Cold War.

	But urban media are more than “built-in” and “incorporated” things in cities. As media theorist Friedrich Kittler postulated, the city itself is always already a medium. Probably nothing in Berlin shows this as clearly as the many holes left by the bombs and shells of World War II, still visible on many buildings to this day. Like photographic paper, buildings, cities and environments in general carry the indices of past events. Cities record, transmit and process information—their histories. In this international workshop, Berlin is explored from a media-archaeological point of view. The aim is to excavate, identify and document Berlin’s urban media. An integral part of this endeavour is excursions; theories and histories of urban media are introduced and discussed in seminars, which are accompanied by guest lectures. *Linee telefoniche, antenne radio e supercomputer sono tutti media, registratori, trasmettitori ed elaboratori di informazioni, spesso letteralmente "incorporati" nelle città. Berlino fornisce un sedimento storico particolarmente fertile per la comprensione di tali media e della loro "incorporazione" nei tessuti urbani, offrendo, ad esempio, la Torre della Radio di Berlino, che trasmetteva onde radio in tutta la città e fungeva da punto di osservazione nazista; il Tunnel delle Spie di Berlino, che la CIA e l'MI6 scavarono per intercettare le comunicazioni dell'esercito sovietico; e la Field Station Berlin, una stazione di ascolto sul Teufelsberg, dove l'NSA monitorava, registrava e persino interrompeva il traffico radio della DDR durante la Guerra Fredda.* *Ma i media urbani non sono solo cose "incorporate" nelle città. Come ha postulato il teorico dei media Friedrich Kittler, la città stessa è già un medium. Probabilmente nulla a Berlino lo dimostra così chiaramente come i numerosi buchi lasciati dalle bombe e dalle granate della Seconda Guerra Mondiale, ancora oggi visibili su molti edifici. Come la carta fotografica, gli edifici, le città e gli ambienti in generale portano con sé gli indici degli eventi passati. Le città registrano, trasmettono ed elaborano informazioni: le loro storie.* *In questo workshop internazionale, Berlino viene esplorata da un punto di vista archeo-mediatico. L'obiettivo è scavare, identificare e documentare i media urbani di Berlino. Parte integrante di questo impegno sono le escursioni; le teorie e le storie dei media urbani vengono introdotte e discusse in seminari, accompagnati da conferenze tenute da ospiti e invitati.*

Parole chiave/*key words*	Media, Archaeology, Architecture, City, Berlin *Media, Archeologia, Architettura, Città, Berlino*

Eventuali pre-requisiti di conoscenza e abilità richieste/*requested knowledge and skills, if any*	English language speaker *Conoscenza della lingua inglese*

Numero Massimo di studenti/*maximum number of students*	9

Destinatari /*recipients*	Master's degree students who will be enrolled in an architecture programme at the AUIC School in September 2023, with priority given to students enrolled in the Alliance 4 Tech exchange programme. *Studenti magistrali che risultino iscritti ad un programma di architettura presso la Scuola AUIC a settembre 2023, con priorità agli studenti iscritti al programma di scambio Alliance 4 Tech.*

Criteri di selezione, se previsti/*selection criteria, if any*	Portfolio (4 pages in A4 landscape format), a short CV (one page) *Portfolio (4 facciate in formato A4 orizzontale), CV breve (una facciata)*

Modalità e scadenze per l'invio delle candidature/ *Procedures and deadlines to apply*	Send portfolio and a short CV by **17 June 2023** to klaus.platzgummer@tu-berlin.de *Inviare portfolio e CV breve entro il **17 giugno 2023** a* klaus.platzgummer@tu-berlin.de

contatti /*contacts*	Mail: klaus.platzgummer@tu-berlin.de	tel.
website		

Note/*notes*	The workshop is free of charge, travel, board and lodging costs are the responsibility of the participants. For selected students, it is possible to apply for a scholarship to the Politecnico di Milano. *Il workshop è gratuito, le spese di viaggio, vitto e alloggio sono a carico dei partecipanti. Per gli studenti selezionati, è possibile fare richiesta di una borsa di studio al Politecnico di Milano.*

Si ricorda che l'eventuale approvazione del Workshop comporta un successivo momento di valutazione delle attività previste relativamente alle procedure di Sicurezza in uso al Politecnico di Milano da condursi in collaborazione con il Responsabile della Sicurezza del dipartimento di afferenza.

Indicare il Corso di Studio proponente e gli altri Corsi di Studio ai quali è rivolta l'attività e per i quali è possibile riconoscere i crediti – *Indicate the proposing Study Programme and the other Study Programmes to which the activity is addressed and fro which it is possible to give credits*

CdL	LAUREE TRIENNALI/BSc	VALIDO PER/ Valid for
L23	INGEGNERIA EDILE E DELLE COSTRUZIONI	
L17	PROGETTAZIONE DELL'ARCHITETTURA	X*
L21	URBANISTICA: CITTA' AMBIENTE PAESAGGIO	

CdL	LAUREE MAGISTRALI E CICLO UNICO/MSc and 5 year single cycle degree	VALIDO PER/ Valid for
LM 4/ CU	INGEGNERIA EDILE-ARCHITETTURA/BUILDING ENGINEERING-ARCHITECTURE	
LM4	ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN AND HISTORY	X
LM4	ARCHITETTURA - ARCHITETTURA DELLE COSTRUZIONI/ BUILDING ARCHITECTURE	X
LM4	ARCHITETTURA - AMBIENTE COSTRUITO - INTERNI - ARCHITECTURE - BUILT ENVIRONMENT - INTERIORS	X
LM4	ARCHITETTURA E DISEGNO URBANO - ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN DESIGN	X
LM4	SUSTAINABLE ARCHITECTURE AND LANDSCAPE DESIGN - ARCHITETTURA SOSTENIBILE E PROGETTO DEL PAESAGGIO	X
LM24	BUILDING AND ARCHITECTURAL ENGINEERING	
LM24	INGEGNERIA DEI SISTEMI EDILIZI	
LM24	MANAGEMENT OF BUILT ENVIRONMENT	
LM48	URBAN PLANNING AND POLICY DESIGN - PIANIFICAZIONE URBANA E POLITICHE TERRITORIALI	
LM3	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE. LAND LANDSCAPE HERITAGE	

* third-year students in Architectural Design who will be enrolled in a master's programme in architecture at the AUIC School in September 2023 / *studenti del terzo anno di Progettazione dell'architettura che a settembre 2023 siano iscritti ad un programma magistrale in architettura presso la Scuola AUIC*

La Giunta di Scuola, vista la proposta di workshop presentata attribuisce numero e tipologia dei seguenti crediti formativi/*the School Council, having examined the request, accredits the activity for the following number of credits:*

n. crediti /*credits*	**4**	**Equivalenti ad attività a libera scelta/*equivalent to elective course***

oppure

n. crediti /*credits*		**Equivalenti al tirocinio/*equivalent to internship***

Firmato digitalmente

Wires, Waves, Data
Excavating Berlin's Urban Media

Berlin-Altglienicke, 1956, *Berlin Spy Tunnel* (Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-37695-0003) / Source: Wikicommons

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A4Tech Workshop, Berlin
September 4 – 10 2023

workshop introductions on July 10 and July 25 2023, online

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organized by Klaus Platzgummer, MSc ETH Arch, MA AA

an intiative by the

ALLIANCE 4 TECH

a co-creation betwen with

UCL

POLITECNICO DI MILANO

ETSAM

Technische Universität Berlin