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## **“On a bridge in Berlin”**

*A self-reflective case study on a work in progress*

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# “On a bridge in Berlin”:

## A self-reflective case study on a work in progress

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The curve, is a bridge, dome, skull, moon, sun, eyebrow, the horn of a ram, the curve is everywhere. The curve is a fragment of the circle that is a symbol of eternity something that exists outside time. Plato says, “Time is an image of eternity.” In Plato’s system, the relationship between time and eternity is a relationship between phenomena and ideas. To Plato, the world we perceive is not the real world but only the world of phenomena, which is a reflection of the real, namely the world of ideas. According the French architect and philosopher Paul Virilio, time and speed create simultaneity, which leads us into a hallucination, a state of ecstasy. That is a state of mind which occurs completely outside time and is a purely psychological space. Remember: The soul does not know time, it travels freely.

The circle is also the Ouroboros an ancient symbol depicting a dragon or a serpent eating its own tail representing the perpetual cyclic renewal of life, death and rebirth a symbol of eternity and the eternal return or immortality as the Phoenix.

The line is the opposite of the circle, the line is measurement, units, borders, edges, scale, and timeline but the circle is infinite and beyond scale. But the line and the diversion of it becomes the tool for finding the golden section.

The ancient Greeks used the body as a measurement to find the golden section or the divine proportion. Later the Italian architect Vitruvius described it in his books. Leonardo Da Vinci used it, and the father of the Modernist movement Le Corbusier used the human proportions to create his Modular system for his houses and design. Each time and style period has its own way of visual expression and representation from the renaissance to cubism, but the fundamental tools of measurement and composition is based on the eternal ageless, and everlasting, view and fascination of the human body. From an architectural point of view the inspirational source is body, and landscape, that’s how the old Jugend and art Nuveau architects as Gaudi, and Victor Horta worked. Utzon, Saarinen, and Alto, created the organic expressive Nordic modernistic style on the same inspirational source. The new neo organic expressionistic architects as Calatrava and Zaha Hadid collects also inspiration by working with fragments from nature, plants, roots, fruits, leafs, bones, and skulls from humans and different animals. Any design process starts with a sketch, to develop the concept and form, the drawing is fundamental; to draw is to see.

The Art of drawing was borne long time before the Greeks, in the **Chauvet cave** of Southern France, we can find capturing’s of the oldest known pictorial drawings and creations of humankind. The drawings are dated to be 32,000 years old which makes them the oldest cave paintings in the world. The cave is located close to **Ardèche River** that has carved this landscape with several meanders. Close to the cave is the natural bridge **The Combe d’Arc** located in the curve over **Ardèche River** above this poetic place, above this natural formed curved bridge we can in the cave find the beginning of the art of drawing.

**“The bridge gathers to itself in its own way earth and sky, divinities and mortals”.**

*Martin Heidegger in: Building Dwelling Thinking.*

**I am the designer my body is mortal, but when I draw a curve I share with you a fragment of the eternity of life, death and rebirth and the eternal return. "I am the soul of the draughtsman that travels through time".**

### **Childhood bridges**

In my childhood the bridges spoke to all my senses and imagination. We used to hide under the local railway bridge to see and hear the train passing just above our heads, and while the infernal noise for second passes us, we all screamed as loud as we could because no one could hear us and we could scream for free and chase our fear for anything and the infernal iron monster away. That was a liberation and a ritual purification process, I remember in the beginning silence only the sound of the cicadas and then we placed our soft ears to the cold iron rail track listening to something distant, can you hear it? Yes, no, no, schyyy, no noise, schyyy, schyyy, and then yes, yes, yes, it begins the far rhythm of the approaching train: gung gadagung, gung, gadagung, or was it: clacki, di clack, clacki, di clack, and finally the sounds totally embraces us and echoes with an infernal force between the iron bridge and the stone pillars and together with our screaming we creates a simultaneous moment of sweet fear and joy. In that moment we were performing our own perfect infernal art music show based on a very chaotic interpretation of Ravel's Boléro, perhaps it was difficult to recognize, but it had a slow soft start building up to a joyful crescendo and that was the art of it, expectation and redemption, the more noisy the better.

That was only one part of it I had these three very skillful cousins they build their own guns and pipe bombs. Since birds where perfect flying targets there was no birds around their farm, visiting them was always totally unpredictable but never dull, I think it was strictly a boy thing this with the shooting, explosions and screaming under the railway bridge, we always talked about what if we blow the train up what a mess it could be. But instead we tested a model of captain Nemo's submarine Nautilus to see if we could sink small boats with it, Nautilus was a perfect killing engine coming from the deep in the river between the rocks under the bridge, I still remember how it in a fascinating way broke the surface like a blind, mute shark.

There was another bridge at a much more blissful and quiet place, a bridge that crossed the half-moon shaped Mirror Lake deep in the green emerald forest at the center of the island where we lived. The lake was so deep into the forest that no wind rarely disturbed its perfect mirror, in the winter the Mirror Lake shifts from opaque white to partly transparent ice that's gave dizzy visions to a deep bottomless darkness. In the summer season the lake changes into a perfect green, white and purple carpet of water lily's. Close to the surface of the mirror dragonfly flies in unpredictable shifts of directions and short stops, for a moment they looked like fragile shiny diamond gems suspended from gravity, true wonders of nature. My sister and we use to hang hypnotized from the railings staring into our own reflection into the lake like a narcissus couple teasing each other by creating disturbing concentric circles with anything stones, blades and pins on our mirror faces, like losing your face into the mirror house in Tivoli. Walking on that bridge between this infinity field of water lilies between the rocks slopes and beneath the old oaks around the ancient castle ruins created a feeling like any day was an infinite Sunday, and when we went further into the deep rocky forest to the tree "seven sisters". It was a voyage into a world where everything was possible. We used to finish the day in the valley of echoes calling names and messages to the trolls that we know was hiding and living in caves in the underground of the forest, we remembered all their names.

I also remember a specific harbor bridge from my childhood, the bathing pier with the diving tower at the end, it had an important edge where the seabed was sloping down and halfway out beside the bridge you could not touch bottom, at this specific edge my fear of the infinite abyss was born, when my feet couldn't touch the soft sand on the bottom, panic immediately emerges and all of my senses went into insane alert, but it was all an imaginary conflict created out of ignorance against the obvious fact that if you don't move,

you sink. So it was all in my head, it was just a film I imagined myself drowning, and all I could do was crabbing back to the security under the bridge. Above my head the seagulls screams was sharp and haunting as small needles on my temples and forehead, I felt the sweat of fear in water, a simultaneous event, containing two kind of liquid experience, is that possible? What could I do? I could dive and hide under the bridge open my eyes under the water and watch the girls in slow motion from beneath, seeing their bodies between the light beams from the surface, staying under water makes me feel invincible, after a while my vision becomes blurry but I could have sworn that I saw mermaids in silence in this blissful infinite green transparent golden abyss. But then again it was all in my head, so what did I really see?

There was another and very different kind of safe and imaginary swimming I really enjoyed, which was moving silently between the sea of green soft ferns beneath the shadow of the castle bridge in the dry moat, here we were playing invisible deadly assassins sneaking under the drawbridge listening to the voices and footsteps from tourists and people above, plotting and planning secret rescue maneuvers. Because we heard the stories about a fair lady in the dungeons beneath the Mantel tower in the castle above us and that could justify a surprise attack. But I got often lost from the other in exploring the wet and dry caves beneath the rock massive, especially the wet cave where tourists used to sail into. I think I expected to find Pinocchio and Gepetto or my favorite trolls in there in the wet dark, waiting there in the dark while my eyes slowly adjusted to weak light I realize it was only me in there, I felt strong in my secret world just being there in the cave alone with the waves beneath the castle ruins above was an escape into a place outside time and space, who need to know time when you can create your own the great infinite space outside time and space.

### **The bridge and Genbaku Dome**

Many years later I was drifting in Hiroshima, an unreal city without a scratch so new and blank that it felt to walk in a computer simulation before 2000. Walking down the Aoi Dori Boulevard I ended up at Ground Zero walking on the strange Aoi T shaped bridge that crosses Ota River from the Genbaku Dome to the children's peace monument. Crossing that bridge and drifting into the light green tranquil park was as stepping into another parallel world, as entering a time capsule, watching the black grey dome at the other riverbank with its black twisted iron cupola was a painfully sharp black and white vision not from this world, I felt. I suddenly realized deep into my bones, mussels, nerves, veins, skins, and sub-consciousness, that hell is not something beyond this world as the church claims, but it is right here between us, hell is in this world, my vision has just been naïve and blurred. This was a bridge crossing between two worlds or a transition between two worlds, between Elysium and Necropolis. That revelation and comprehension removed any remaining childhood dreams of the world as a soft gentle human spot, I woke up and realized the world is hell and we created it, and I hated it. We are responsible for and we have to change it.

Next to me was a little statue of Sadako Sasaki who at the age of 12 died after the war of radiation exposure, before she died she tried to fold a thousand paper cranes in reference to the ancient Japanese story that promises that anyone who folds a thousand origami cranes will be granted a wish by the Gods. But she only folded 644 cranes. That's why all the children in Japan folds cranes and send them to Hiroshima and they are exhibited in the park in glass boxes as a symbol and as an anti-war monument, this was, and is a gentle beautiful soft and poetic answer against the apocalypse.

The sun was sharp in Zenith It was a frozen moment between soft green and of black and white as being on a border line passing into limbo unaware of it I had entered into the unknown, right here I could never return to the safe life I use to live. This was a shift between two conditions of life, I realized that I finally was grown up and it was loathsome and revolting to me, I felt like crying forever as a protest for all the pain and suffering this place has been witness to. There was no bliss only sorrow, even the shadows on the bridge was burnt white by the bomb; it was a negative image, the imprint of the aftermath of the apocalypse. The

only comfort was the unbelievable infinite numbers of folded paper cranes. A homage to the children of the past from the children of the future.

In the film *Hiroshima Mon Amour* based on a script by Marguerite Duras in the film a French actress meets briefly in Hiroshima with a Japanese Architect and they debates memory and forgetfulness. She has an constantly intensive monologue, that he contradicts saying she is lying and is wrong, saying "You are not endowed with memory" She identify herself with the women's of Hiroshima that lost their hair because of the bomb because she was in love with a German soldier, he was shot and she was shamed and had her head shaved as punishment. She talks to him as he is her lost German lover she talks to him as someone that does not exist, he talks to her because he lost his family under the bomb while he was in the Japanese army. Both of them try to reconcile with the past but the past is too strong in their memory so they never reach the actual now, they are imprisoned blinded and lost in a painfully past that impose itself on the actual present, if you do not move forward and leave the past you sink, because you painfully realize that all these shared moments will be forgotten. This is a totally depressing knowledge, if you can't reconcile with the past you can't pass the bridge to the future, then there is no bridge and you will never be alive in the present. As Friedrich Nietzsche wrote in "Thus Spoke Zarathustra" "What is great in man is that he is a bridge and not a goal" you are the rainbow and the bridge.

The bridge is a poetic physical phenomenon that crossing above one element with another element, gathering earth, water, and sky, as Martin Heidegger says: "The bridge gathers to itself in its own way earth and sky, divinities and mortals", the bridge unify the "fourfold": earth, sky, divinities, and mortals, the simple oneness of the four as Heidegger calls the fourfold:

*"Earth is the serving bearer, blossoming and fruiting, spreading out in rock and water, rising up into plant and animal. When we say earth, we are already thinking of the other three along with it, but we give no thought to the simple oneness of the four."*

*The sky is the vaulting path of the sun, the course of the changing, moon, the wandering glitter of the stars, the year's seasons and their changes, the light and dusk of day, the gloom and glow of night, the clemency and inclemency of the weather, the drifting clouds and blue depth of the ether. When we say sky, we are already thinking of the other three along with it, but we give no thought to the simple oneness of the four."*

*The divinities are the beckoning messengers of the godhead. Out of the holy sway of the godhead, the god appears in his presence or withdraws into his concealment. When we speak of the divinities, we are already thinking of the other three along with them, but we give no thought to the simple oneness of the four."*

*The mortals are the human beings. They are called mortals because they can die. To die means to be capable of death as death. Only man dies, and indeed continually, as long as remains on earth, under the sky, before the divinities. When we speak of mortals, we are already thinking of the other three along with them, but we give no thought to the simple oneness of the four."*

Heidegger states the essence of the fourfold as this: "On the earth" already means "under the sky." Both of these *also* mean "remaining before the divinities" and include a "belonging to men's being with one another." By a *primal* oneness the four-earth and sky, divinities and mortals-belong together in one. The fourfold is what define our existence here in this life, we build as mortal on the earth to dwell under the sky and the divinities, in building and dwelling we unite "the fourfold", that is why architecture is so great and fundamental for our thinking and being architecture represent the fourfold. Each year millions of tourists travels to cities to glance and marvel at great ancient buildings and ruins, manifests of our common heritage that tells we are part of something bigger than life, and what we get is a little metaphysic rush of the infinite eternal spiritual simple oneness.

To Heidegger time and human existences were inextricably linked, and that we as humans are always looking ahead to the future. Thus, he argued, being is really just a process of becoming. But do we realize that time constantly forces into this open field of becoming, and isn't a central core value in our life driven by nostalgia by a constant looking backwards to the past? So each day is a new day but did we learn from the past or are we just daydreaming for nostalgia?

The bridge is a phenomenon that mirrors the specific spirit of a place, and style of a period, but it's also ancient metaphysics, as the rainbow bridge Bifrost from Asgård where the gods dwell to us mortals humans in Midgård. Or the bridge Gjallarbrú who is spanning across the river Gjöll in the underworld to Hell. Out of the mythology comes the bridge as a symbol, metaphor, sign and image. The bridge tells a phenomenological story on how the city and culture touches the water how the elements meet, how the water mirrors the city and the sky, and how the bridge unites divinities and mortals from banks to banks of the river.

### **The bridge to Museumsinsel**

In Berlin past and present are constantly shifting, it is a city of pain but also of blissful reconciliation, every day is different, every hour, every minute, every passage around a corner shifts perspective on time and place. For many winter mornings I crossed Friderichsbrücke with its four great obelisks in each corner, it's a pedestrian bridge that's spans across Spree from Burgstrasse to Museums Insel with all of its old museums and the great Berliner Dom. Every morning I was passing the bridge and there was only one permanent figure on it, that was an old gipsy woman playing harmonica sitting on a small chair with layers of clothes on her dark folded face filled with a corrugated surface she had a mute kind of smile and she made strange sounds like a squeaking door, in unpredictable random intervals shifted her job with a young gipsy woman from time to time. So the two women's were the permanent guardians of the bridge to whom you could pay your absolution fee or toll. Some days she was young some days she was old but the music was the same. Behind the two were always two or three dark cousin's and guardians hanging on the sealing smoking like black crows or just boys imitating hustlers.

At a specific cold morning under a black grey sky the snow falls again in Berlin, Spree was a complex black vortex on the back of a giant black snake passing almost too quickly beneath the pillars of Friedrichsbrücke. On that late December morning while passing the bridge I got a phone call telling me that my father was close to an ending and that I had to return home. It came as a surprise and it was a totally shift in time where I felt as split into three persons at a crossroad between past, present and future I wanted to stay on this place between Berlins Acropolis at Museums Insel and Hackescher Markt, but the four obelisks creates a force field on the bridge so strong it becomes a time portal and I transform into a split trinity of me, as young, as middle-aged and old and no one of us realize the time space continuum we was moving in. Only me as the middle-aged saw the other ones but to them I was invincible, realizing how quick time passes and suddenly you are alone. I was watching the young man with his long blond hair rushing looking at his watch mumbling I am too late; I am too late, only immersed into himself, who was he going to meet?, and the old man leaning dangerously on the railings starring like hypnotized into the deep black cosmos of Spree, what was he looking for and what did he remember?

In between the two of me I realize for the first time in my life that I am mortal and my time will come soon and that this is a rare shift and place in time where I can meet myself in all the aspects of what has been and what is to become, and leaving this bridge going back will finally sent me into some kind of black state of mind, If I can't reconcile with the past I can't pass the bridge to the future. Knowing that losing my farther brings me next in line and that all the shared memories of me and him in the past will be gone with him makes me realize there is only on reality that is real is "the childhood", it is the only time we trust our

senses, experience and immersed us in the meeting of the outside world with the inside world for the first time, the rest of the time of our lifespan we struggle to get back to that original source of experience of living. Unaware that what we actually learned and experienced in our childhood is that the only true reality that exists is: The present moment. So how do I actually get rid of the burden of past and the future should I just letting go of all of it and drift into the infinite present moment, or the future, and what future?

Die Menschen stehen vorwärts in den Straßen  
Und sehen auf die großen Himmelszeichen,  
Wo die Kometen mit den Feuernasen  
Um die gezackten Türme drohend schleichen. Georg Heym: Umbra Vitae "Der Gott der Stadt"

The change or threats of the future could come from above the city outside as in Georg Heyms poem or from inside, Heyms poem is an omen of what we all have to see in the future, images of city and war, death and decay, the call and raise of the new was the loud message from the Expressionist in art and poetry. Ernst Ludwig Kirchner illustrated Heyms book "Umbra Vitae" or "shadow of life" with colored woodcuts. Kirchner was one of the founders of expressionists group "Die Brücke" based their name on the quotation from Nietzsche: "What is great in man is that he is a bridge and not a goal" In their manifest from 1906 they pointed that they from an anarchistic ideal wanted to combine Nietzsche's elite ideas with the new revolutionary ideas on freedom and art for the people and revolt against the artistic and academic establishment to be their artistic fundament. They composed a manifesto largely written by Kirchner engraved on wood. It read:

"Believing in development and in a new generation both of those who create and those who enjoy, we call upon the young to come together, as young people, who will bear the future, who want freedom in our work and in our lives, independence from older, established forces. Anyone who conveys directly and without falsification the powers that compel him to create is one of us".

This call upon the young came also from Italy, Spain and France but also from the north, and already in 1893 the Norwegian Expressionist Edward Munch painted the world famous "scream" on a bridge, the motive that shows the road into the 20<sup>th</sup> century marked by angst and despair, the bridge became a central motive and metaphor in modern art. "God is dead" as Nietzsche wrote, what shall we believe in now? Munch explained the content of his picture like this: "I walked across the road with two friends. Then the sun went down. The sky turned suddenly red, and I felt a sudden breath of sadness. I stopped and leaned to the railing, exhausted to death. Above the blue-black fjord and city where clouds like blood and tongs of fire. My friends went on and I was trembling with fear. I felt the great, infinite scream through nature". The picture is painted by the bridge at Nordstrand outside Oslo from where you could look at the Oslo fjord, the bridge was known as a place where suicidal people jumped. Beneath the bridge was a Mental hospital and close to that butchery from where you could hear the scream from the animals as they were pulled into the butcher house. So why is Munch's character screaming? Is it fear for the future without God, fear for possible punishment of destiny, or loss of sanity? As the German Expressionistic poet Jakob van Hoddis' wrote in his Apokalypse Weltende: "The whole atmosphere's like full of cry. Trains fall from the bridges".

*Dem Bürger fliegt vom spitzen Kopf der Hut,  
In allen Lüften hallt es wie Geschrei.  
Dachdecker stürzen ab und gehn entzwei  
Und an den Küsten – liest man – steigt die Flut.  
Der Sturm ist da, die wilden Meere hupfen  
An Land, um dicke Dämme zu zerdrücken.  
Die meisten Menschen haben einen Schnupfen.  
Die Eisenbahnen fallen von den Brücken.*

*From bourgeois' pointed heads their bowlers flew,  
the whole atmosphere's like full of cry.  
Tile layers fall from roofs and break in two,  
and on the coast, one reads, the water's high.  
The storm is here, the seven seas do wildly hop  
onto the land to bust thick dams.  
The folk have cold, so many noses need a mop.  
Trains fall from the bridges.*

But what did I do at Friedrichsbrücke, why did I have to pass it so many mornings? I was looking for the spirit of the old Greeks because where ever you go they appears as the source of our common cultural heritage and Friedrichsbrücke is leading to Museumsinsel with the great Pergamon Museum. Actually the whole Museumsinsel area is based on the neoclassical German architect Friderich Shinkel idea of a "Athens am Spree" and this is what the island is, it's a brilliant Neoclassical dream, inside the Pergamon Museum is another great building: the Pergamon Temple it is a marble structure, a masterpiece of Greek Art from the late Hellenistic period that means from the period when Greek sculpture was reached a point of expressive perfection almost pre Baroque. I was drawing Giants, Gods and monsters that originally were placed in Pergamum an ancient Greek city in modern day Turkey. The Greek empire fall but the Greek spirit prevail and became the fundament in our western culture you can find masterpieces of Greek all outside Greek, In Berlin at Museumsinsel, "Pergamon", in Paris at the Louvre "Nike of Samothrace", in London the "Parthenon frieze", and in Munich the "Aegina temple frieze". They loved Greek so much that they plunder it. The Turks occupy Greek in 800 years and build a Mosque inside Parthenon with powder rooms that blow the temple up when a Venetian bullet hit the place. Europe is a tormented place. But nothing kept the Greek spirit down, now it is simultaneous everywhere in past present and our future because it is both: marble, spirit, mortality and mythology or you could say it is the fourfold earth under the sky and the mortal under the divinities.

The building structure inside the museums building on the island survived and is protected, the frieze of seven foot high larger-than-life sculptures at Pergamon Zeus altar is a "Gigantomachy" a classic story from Greek mythology about how the giants, the children of Gaia, rose against the gods of Olympus and where ultimately defeated. Some giants were partly human like creatures, partly reptile like with snake tailed bodies, other more human like as soldiers or fully naked savages. The figures are crowded together in tight interconnected groups that they create one complex, violent, dramatic chaotic movement of bodies that is both extremely realistic and expressive.

All of this placed in a room with a giant skylight, and there is totally silence because every guest wears headphones, the human of the present becomes shadows among the gods and giants from the past.

There is several bridges to the Museumsinsel but the largest is the railway bridge that runs in a curve between the ancient buildings at first floor in this big city there is always a train passing it is the strange heartbeat of the island the pulse of the modern city, iron that moves on iron, the island is the heart of the city, the train system is the blood vessels of the city. The S-Bahn is the spine of the central Berlin that moves above the ground, in between the houses, over the streets and over Spree each station is a transparent old Victorian glass tube that covers the track, looking down almost any street the colors red, dust yellow and grey moving above ground as a moving color ribbon that ties the city together and gives you a sense of comfort and belonging, day and night. Ernst Stadler wrote a dense poem on the night train.

## Fahrt über die Kölner Rheinbrücke bei Nacht

Der Schnellzug tastet sich und stößt die Dunkelheit entlang.  
Kein Stern will vor. Die ganze Welt ist nur ein enger,  
nachtumschienter Minengang,  
Darein zuweilen Förderstellen blauen Lichtes jähe Horizonte reißen:  
Feuerkreis Von Kugellampen, Dächern, Schloten, dampfend, strömend  
.. nur sekundenweis  
Und wieder alles schwarz. Als führen wir ins Eingeweid der  
Nacht zur Schicht.  
Nun taumeln Lichter her.. verirrt, trostlos vereinsamt..  
mehr .. und sammeln sich.. und werden dicht.  
Gerippe grauer Häuserfronten liegen bloß, im Zwilicht  
bleichend, tot - etwas muß kommen.. o, ich fühl es  
schwer  
Im Hirn. Eine Beklemmung singt im Blut. Dann dröhnt der  
Boden plötzlich wie ein Meer:  
Wir fliegen, aufgehoben, königlich durch nachtentrissne  
Luft, hoch übern Strom. O Biegung der Millionen  
Lichter, stumme Wacht,  
Vor deren blitzender Parade schwer die Wasser abwärts  
rollen. Endloses Spalier, zum Gruß gestellt bei Nacht!  
Wie Fackeln stürmend! Freudiges! Salut von Schiffen über  
blauer See! Bestirntes Fest!  
Wimmelnd, mit hellen Augen hingedrängt! Bis wo die Stadt  
mit letzten Häusern ihren Gast entläßt.  
Und dann die langen Einsamkeiten. Nackte Ufer. Stille.  
Nacht. Besinnung. Einkehr. Kommunion. Und Glut  
und Drang  
Zum Letzten, Segnenden. Zum Zeugungsfest. Zur Wollust.  
Zum Gebet. Zum Meer. Zum Untergang.

In Berlin the snow falls gentle again like an infinite vertical white transparent curtain the snow falls at Museums Insel covers tracks and dirt, for a moment Berlin is like a virginal white city in heaven. But Spree flow dark black, inscrutable and bottomless, what news brings it from the underworld?  
This specific cold morning I saw the old man again at Friedrichsbrücke with the fast water of Spree passing below him, and he was in a trance like he wants to jump, was it the water nymphs that tempt him with soft dangerous seductive whispers, jump they whispers? Someone has to stop him, but it's me and I am just a child walking and gliding on ice. And then again I may be the third young man with his long blond hair walking across the bridge, looking at my watch like it could tell me anything important on the real decisions in my life, but I don't care, I am out of reach. Where am I, am I everywhere, in a dream? This bridge is a crossroad a portal, and I am multiplying into a flock of shadows as a picture of Magritte where it's raining with dozen of black men. Where am I, what happened? Nothing just tiny life, like a twinkle in the infinite cosmos I was never here just a simultaneous vision of my life! Because: These things never happened, but are always, as the ancient Greek myths says.  
Time is not important here I sense and see that I am in all the ages; I have to accept that I am all in one, I am everywhere, past, present and future, on a bridge in Berlin.

This bridge is as the garden of forking path each direction and road represent a possible me, so which road did I chose? In the past I was Daedalus who killed his rival, in the future I was Howard Roark that blows his own buildings, or in between I was Friderich Schinkel that loved the Greeck art and architecture so much that he wanted to build Athens am Spree and actually build it. Or I am the happy contended designer with the sketchbook drawing, drawing, painting and meditating for days in the shadow of the olive tree while the cicadas sing. Or I could losing myself thinking of all the possible roads I didn't go the chances I didn't

take even when they were right in front of and I just froze and lost my voice in fear, knowing now that if you don't move you sink as the boy who think and imagined he drown. So did I drown?

In the end witch road did I choose is still unknown, perhaps I choose none of them or all of them just in parallel universes. Remember: The soul does not know time, it travels freely.

From here there could be three or four possible directions, or more perhaps infinite, because remember: "I am the soul of the draughtsman that travel through time".

The light from the moon reflects on the bridge and gives with the triple streetlights at Friedrichsbrücke a multiplicity of shadows on the bridge, everyone that crosses the bridge by night gets a trifold of shadows that follow him or her, so anyone becomes a triple personality, you are never alone. But who is the other two that follow you so close who is in the shadow?

Schinkel lost his home city and his father in the age of six in the Neuruppin disastrous fire and had to move to Berlin with his mother and sister. Schinkel was talented in many ways he started as a painter and set designer "The Magic flute" by Mozart was one of his first assignments and one of the main characters in the play is "The Queen of the Night" she is dialectic and two-fold, she represent nature, drift, elements that must be suppressed in the world of reason and discipline threaten by Sarastro's kingdom of reason, in the second act she turns violent and vindictive as the other figures in the opera she is multidimensional with both positive and negative sides, you as audience are free to choose side. In Schinkel's design for the opera she is riding between the stars on the moon, that design made him famous and followed him as a signature of his romantic neoclassic approach to his work as an architect.

"The Queen of the Night" could be Mozarts interpretation of Selene the classic Greek goddess of the moon that inspires to love. Selene also was believed to have the power to mask reality and, conversely, to pierce illusion. Among other powers Selene is able to awaken intuition, spark psychic visions, and dreams. She is also the patron of solutions, which often come to people in dreams when the subconscious mind has a chance to process information that has not been consciously acknowledged. Selene must have been Schinkel's faithful muse. Selene comes to all of us in our dreams.

### **Schinkels inspiration and "the grand tour"**

Friderich Schinkel took to Rome and Italy several times and his design for Slockssbrücke must have been inspired very much of walking at the Ponte Angelo over Tiber in Rome, with the very interesting difference that Ponte Angelo is a strict Catholic ritual design based on the 10 aspects on Christ road to the crucifixion, and it is the main pilgrims bridge to the church of Sct. Peter. This is Barok propaganda designed by Michelangelo to the Pope a clash of style history, Neoclassisme and Barok. Shinkels Schlossbrücke, or Palace Bridge, connects the Schlossplatz and the Lustgarten with Unter den Linden is a romantic and Neo classical interpretation of Greek mythology describing with eight massive statues the story of how the Greek god of victory Nike, Iris and Athena helped the Germans, it's a memorial for the victorious conclusion of the Wars of Liberation against Napoleon, and in combination with the statues of the generals, constituted a part of the main street of the city in its new conception of Unter den Linden as a "via Triumphalis".

The Prussian architects turned against the classical Roman architecture that was favored by the Ecole des Beaux Arts under Napoleon. This national rejection of Napoleon and the French use of Roman architecture lead Schinkel to design in a Neo Greek style as a symbolic manifestation of the link between the liberated Prussian and a recall of the political and moral freedom of Athenian Greece. But Schinkels projects shifted between Gothic and Classical architecture, between Neoclassical Prussia and Periclean Athens.

Shinkel looked to Rome and Greece, but what was Michelangelo's greatest inspiration for the figures on Ponte Angelo? That was the figures from the classical late Hellenistic period, that period where the great frieze on the Pergamon altar comes from; it's now stands as the greatest attraction in Berlin at Museums Insel. The history goes in strangest circles the Pergamon figures of gods and titans arrived from Turkey in Berlin in 1879 by pram boats on the river Spree only 38 years after Schinkels death in 1841.

**"The bridge gathers to itself in its own way earth and sky, divinities and mortals".**

*Martin Heidegger in: Building Dwelling Thinking.*

What if Albert Speer on his way home stopped at Friderichbrücke looking back at the synagogue burning suddenly felt piety for the Jews and decided stopped Hitler with one shot? Then there were no 2 world war, no bombs on Berlin, no Russians in Berlin, and with all talented brilliant Jewish artistic people alive Europe would have been a continent of peace and art, a true utopia where every race and religion could have lived in peaceful coexistence, and we would all have flown in Zeppelins because the American didn't make an embargo on helium and the disaster in New Jersey USA 6<sup>th</sup> of May 1937 when LZ Hindenburg crashed newer would have happened?

But he didn't Speer and Hitler was one Janus figure a body with two heads, on the same coin, a shame they didn't see that in the Nurnberg process. The painful question is can Albert Speer be called an architect, designer or even human? Albert Speer is the collapse of the fourfold he has no place on earth or sky, between mortals and divinities. He was something as extraordinary as a black hole disguised in human shape; anything that gets in newer gets out, it's fascinating but destroys everything.

*99 Luftballons*

*Auf ihrem Weg zum Horizont  
Hielt man für Ufo's aus dem All.  
Darum schickte ein General  
'ne Fliegerstaffel hinterher,  
Alarm zu geben, wenn's so wär'.  
Dabei war'n dort am Horizont  
Nur 99 Luftballons.*

*99 Jahre Krieg*

*Ließen keinen Platz für Sieger.  
Kriegsminister gibt's nicht mehr  
Und auch keine Düsenflieger.  
Heute zieh' ich meine Runden,  
Seh' die Welt in Trümmern liegen.  
Hab' 'nen Luftballon gefunden,  
Denk' an dich und lass' ihn fliegen... Nena 1983.*

## On a bridge in Berlin: a graphic novel treatment

Time: The near future. Place: Berlin. Principal Characters: Stephen Deadalus, The artist and draughtsman, Ludvig Meidner, the Superintendent, Ernst Stadler, psychologist, Selene, Japanese, journalist, Lebbeus Woods, architect, Friderich Schinkel, architect.

**ACT ONE:** First scene in the near future of Berlin Selene is crashing with her airship because of magnetic interference from the underground, some unknown natural phenomenon or new technology; distort gravity so that time no longer becomes measurable but random. Strange events and phenomenon's happen, the bust of Nefertiti becomes floating and disappears, the buildings of the city begin to transform and changes. The image of the city changes from the classical perspective to a distorted image created of simultaneous points of view, a new uncertain age has begun. Stephen works in the Pergamon Museum drawing the sculptures of the gods and titans. Stephen moves to Nefertiti and continuing making sketches he leaves the museum as the last visitor and passes over the Friedrichsbrücke home.

Stephen has a vision of his childhood bridge at the mirror lake with its floating diamonds gems.

Next day A group of romantic anarchist calling themselves "Sturm und Drang" (Storm and stress) claims on the net that they had taken Nefertiti and they will hand it over to Egypt unless that the German government pays ransom, to fertilize the sand of Egypt, they are in all the medias. There is a note with poem left in the Museum signed: "Prometheus".

Bedecke deinen Himmel, Zeus,  
Mit Wolkendunst  
Und übe, dem Knaben gleich,  
Der Disteln köpft,  
An Eichen dich und Bergeshöhn;  
Mußt mir meine Erde  
Doch lassen stehn  
Und meine Hütte, die du nicht gebaut,  
Und meinen Herd,  
Um dessen Glut  
Du mich beneidest.'

*Prometheus (Goethe)*

In Berlin where buildings and objects starts floating, Nefertiti bust has disappeared, and Stephen is arrested. He was the last person in the museum that day before the bust disappeared. Stephen gets into custody and interrogation, he is thinking back and forth, trying to remember what happened on the museum and the bridge that evening, who was else around? Was he drunk or high or on something else? His short term memory has gone, he claims. On the surveillance camera he talked to a girl both at the museum and at the bridge, who is that girl? The superintendent Meidner suspects him to be a part of something bigger.

Meanwhile other objects disappear at the Museums Insel. Pericles head from Altes Museum "Sturm und Drang" claim it is payback time they collect money for the Greeks that have been exploited by EU and the Turks.

Stephen has a vision of his childhood dream of hiding under the railroad bridge screaming.

Nefertiti name means "the beauty has come" but where did it left or who took it? Perhaps Stephen is the real thief? He is daydreaming of himself as a young artist and perhaps he actually suffers of some kind of mild schizophrenia. While talking to the psychologist and the superintendent they try to convince him, to go backwards in his memory and see what actually happened, to replay the past and the near present, so they takes him to the crashed airship close to Friderichbrucke. He remembers experienced the crash, but nothing else and they let him go.

Stephen begins to draw images of the distorted city; he is not interested in why he only admires the complex visions of a multiple simultaneous chaos of perspective points.

Selene standing at the Friedrichsbrucke looking at the site where the new Expressionist museum will be build it has a nickname "Der Kontinental" between the four obelisks in each corner is at the center of the bridge four sculptural groups that each represent a continent and is an allegory on Africa, Europa, America, and Asia. The bridge leads to the five museums at Museums Insel with its famous and large collections of precious art from all these continents, the island is a cocoon a time capsule the history of our western cultural heritage and identity as a global dominating culture. Selene is in Berlin as a journalist to cover the story of the competition for the design for the new Expressionist museum in Berlin and the winner of the competition is Lebbeus Wood with a very complex structure that spans across Spree to the Museums Insel.

Stephen has a vision of being between the green ferns under the castle bridge and in the wet cave.

They keep Stephen under sharp monitoring, to see who he meets and where he goes. Stephen goes with his avatar is in Second Life reception with a group of artist and poets in "Galerie Der Sturm" that called them self "Der Blaue Brucke" Selene are one of them. Lebbeus Wood is too with his expressive black and white sketches and a virtual model of his new Expressionist museum. Shinkel is there or an avatar called Shinkel, with his look and voice claiming that symmetry is a divine tool and the diagonal line from Woods is premonition of the coming apocalypse. Stephen presents his distorted images of Nefertiti and Pericles head, together with his other city sketches. Selene asks Stephen don't you remember me, we use to be close? Stephen says I don't have a past I am a white paper. Selene said she loves his sketches and will show him the future of the city, and his past.

Stephen has a vision of his experience of diving, sinking, hiding under the bridge.

Meidner and Stadler picks Stephen up for a new interview asking him what he did at Gallery Der Sturm and what he knows of the disappearance of Pericles head. They return to the crashed air ship at the bridge the memories come to him slowly as he helps investigating his own story in the future. The memories come to the draftsman as flashbacks and shifts like daydreaming, hallucinations, and dreams. He recollects the past childhood and a possible future but not the near present events, only that he is the artist.

Selene meets with Stephen at Alexanderplatz by the falling Free Zone building, they go underground to find the reason for the distortion of the city, in the underground they find a second crashed airship it is Aeon Chronos ship but there is no trace of him. Chronos is the guardian of time, and the strange events at Museums Insel must have caught his attention and he must also be on the track of the Sturm und Drang people. They have earlier arranged happenings and events in Munic and Hamburg experimenting with collapsing time and space, in Potsdam they last week nearly succeed by collapsing the hotel Mercure from the Honecker period, they want to turn back time, with any possible means, but they have a destructive nostalgic drive there is no softness about it, rather a scream.

Selene says I have been following the track of these people and Prometheus is impossible to find but he has a brother can we find him we can be on the track, he has a wife Pandora we must find her. They and fly above the city and landing in Tiergarten. Selene says don't you remember us together I will bring you to

places we use to go, don't you remember us in Rome? I will take you there. You left me in Rome and took to Berlin, we must follow your track and your memory will perhaps come back. We need to find out what happened on that bridge that night you lost your memory, remember we met at the Pergamon you told me about the Zeus altar. But who was the girl on the bridge?

Stephen has a vision of Hiroshima the T shaped bridge and the Genbaku dome. The paper cranes fly away and the image mixes with Friderichbrücke like an omen Genbaku dome and Berlin dome becomes one.

Ole Pihl

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