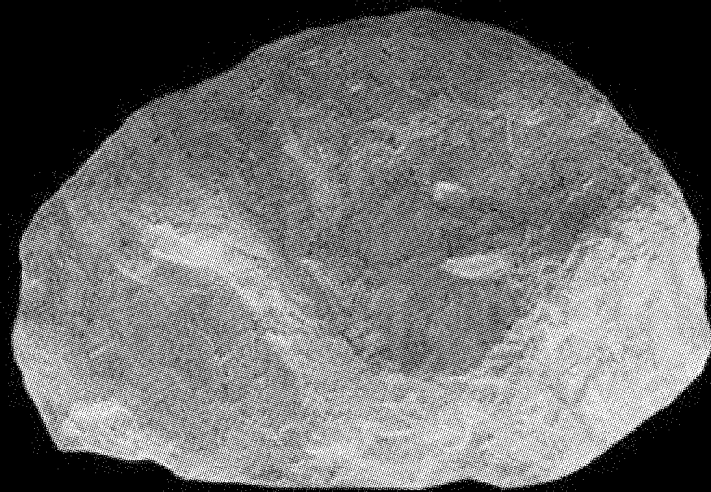


Material Memory And *Monumental Matters*



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HISTORY AND THEORY
OF ARCHITECTURE
5110 WORDS
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*COVER 'Visitation Stone':
The tradition of placing visitation stones holds
great importance within Jewish mourning customs.
Individuals visiting Jewish graves often leave small*

Stolpersteine

Stumbling Stones, also referred to as “Stolpersteine” in German, constitute a type of memorial artwork conceived by the German artist Gunter Demnig. These small, brass plaques, roughly the size of cobblestones, are positioned on the pavement in front of the final chosen residences of individuals who fell victim to the Holocaust during World War II. Each Stumbling Stone bears inscriptions detailing the person’s name, birth date, and fate.

I have dispersed names and dates from Stumbling stones that appear around and near the monuments I have decided to write about throughout the text. In this way, the reader is confronted with the lives and atrocities as if they were walking through Berlin.

Max Sommerfeld
Born: *August 24, 1885*
Deported: *November 27, 1941 to Riga*
Murdered: *November 30, 1941 in the Riga ghetto*

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Prologue

Writing this paper has been an act of personal, experiential memorialisation. For me, writing about a past that is forever intertwined with my heritage and lived experience is crucial in addressing both myself and my reader.

Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it¹

Now, more than ever, it is clear the pendulum of modern history is swinging back to the far right in global politics and the monument has become centre stage once more. I believe there is an opportunity to re-examine the nuances of how we remember, using post-holocaust Europe to challenge the traditional memorialisation approach. Germany is an interesting case study in examining what have been decades-long debates and philosophies on how we should remember the past.

Through my heritage I have been drawn to interact with these memorials and live constantly confronted with a past I did not live. Being German Jewish is a complicated state emphasised by the fact that although 78 years have passed since WW2, the topic is as much if not more at the forefront of public thought in Germany than it ever was.

Like visiting Berlin, I knew that writing this paper would be empowering, confronting, confusing and even painful. It has truly been fascinating to look at the tangled web of opinions and motives that surround the monument/memorial and how this evolves over time. It is perhaps the most contradictory architecture that can be both emotive or cold, spark a debate or remain invisible. It is a timely moment in history for a re-examination and potential re-imagining of the purpose and nature of memorialisation.

Tana Hoppe

Born *December 25, 1941 in Berlin*
Deported *Auschwitz on March 12, 1943*
Murdered *Auschwitz*

Nelly Henriette Reiss

September 3, 1901: Born
September 5, 1942 to Riga : Deported
September 8, 1942 in Riga: Murdered

Philipp Kessler

Born: *July 7, 1918*
Deported: *December 9, 1942 to Auschwitz*
Murdered: *Auschwitz*

Alfred Barkowsky

Born: *March 14, 1924 Berlin*
Deported: *February 26, 1943 to Auschwitz*
Murdered: *Auschwitz*

Edith Reiss

Born: *October 12, 1922 in Giessen*
Deported: *September 5, 1942 to Riga*
Murdered: *September 8, 1942 in Riga*

(1) George Santayana, *The Life of Reason*, 1905, Chapter XII

Introduction

Overview

In this essay I invite the reader to explore the concept and process of creating monuments and to challenge ourselves on the conventional and traditional ideas of what monuments are meant to represent and who gets to decide where, when and why they are built, if at all, and for what purpose or intended narrative. To help bring this debate into sharp relief I explore the more recent idea of the counter monument: anti-monumentalism or counter-monuments have developed as an opposition to monumentalism, rejecting the notion of a monument as an emblem of power, erected by the elite.

To bring this to life – aside from its personal connection – Germany is a unique source of debate about memorialisation. Current and potent, the memorial has become weaponised in heated culture wars as a growing far-right movement threatens the original intentions of holocaust memorials and stirs debate about what is appropriate to remember, how it should be remembered and how it is interpreted by successive generations.

The once simple idea of ‘set in stone’, no longer seems possible or even desirable in a pluralistic, multi-racial world where many voices need to be heard, and different people’s values are respected.

Background

My thoughts for this essay began on visiting Berlin last in November. ‘Vergangenheitsbewältigung’ – coping with the past – is ingrained in contemporary German thought. Carlo Ginzburg suggests that ‘Shame can be a stronger bond than love’², a notion I have always felt in relation to my experience of non-Jewish Germans. Berlin was the materialisation of this. Walking around I was confronted with the widest imaginable range of materialised memory, impossible to miss. The level of ‘memory’ was so ubiquitous and prescient that it was hard to believe it has been 78 years since the war ended. Tourists invade this memory in droves, almost in disregard of the content. I

expected to find living there to be either harrowing or numbing due to this sheer volume of memory on display.

But in fact, I found what I consider to be the best monument, and it is everywhere. This is the ‘Stolpersteine’ (translated as stumbling stones). These are small brass plaques embedded into cobbled ground inscribed with names, and dates of fallen Jewish individuals. A startling yet subtle and constant reminder that these events happened in everyone’s midst. A great allegory that history is always in our midst.

Impetus for Change

Worldwide, revelations about many nations’ historical truths are emerging, driven by the insistence of social movements to reshape national knowledge. In this context, I see Germany and the holocaust lying both as significant to the current and past debate as well as a place to learn from. Keith Jenkins in ‘Rethinking History’ discusses this fragmentation and selectiveness of memory and biases which complicate our efforts to reconstruct the past.³

Destruction in the world is physically real, but even within one lifetime a space or place can disappear and with it the memory of what happened there. Traditional monuments, once fixtures in the built environment, no longer find a secure place, as the powers/perspectives behind their placement vanish or face dissent, and while the need to commemorate is ever present, society seems conflicted about the capacity of this form of ‘commemorative matter’ to encapsulate and preserve memory.

No other country has had such strong debate and continuous building of memorials than Germany. Post-holocaust the emergence of ‘counter-monuments’⁴ proved as a first step towards rethinking the physical manifestation of the past. The concept of “counter-monuments” (or “anti-monuments”), as articulated by James E. Young as memorial spaces that are boldly self-aware and designed to question their fundamental assumptions, is frequently employed in discussions related to postwar German

national memory. This includes explorations of architectural and sculptural reactions to the lingering symbols of Nazi propaganda. In other contexts, practitioners like Rafael Lozano-Hemmer define a “counter-monument” as an active performance or intervention that explicitly rejects the idea of a monument conceived from an elitist standpoint as a symbol of power.⁵ The centre stage for this change in direction was Germany and its former occupied states. Suffering from a paralysing debate over how to mourn its victims, countless competitions brought forward new methods to remember. A controversial character is Horst Hoheisel whose radical and often unpopular proposals – for example, destroying the Brandenburg Gate – emerged during the 1990’s. I am drawn to his notion of the vanishing monument and seek to examine this further in a later section.

Methodology and Approach

The structure of this essay explores the ideas behind monuments through a 3-stage lifecycle charting the rise and fall (and possibly rise again) of monuments, to clearly assess the motivations and implications of these things in our public spaces.

1. The construction stage both reflects a traditional desire to eternally solidify prevailing ideologies. I will look at some key examples of anti-monuments that invert this notion with a lifespan that works with the fading of memory.
2. The vanishing or demolishing stage is when a site changes to become a stage, a place to protest and dissent or express alternative ideologies. What issues follow erasure and replacement?
3. The preservation or reconstruction is a stage one that is becoming more developed with digital possibilities and this section will also explore the role of documentation when often there is nothing tangible left. We must contend with all phases simultaneously, as the past and present is being questioned we have to decide how we will re-remember our past and memorialise our present for future generations to view.

Sara Cohen
Born: November 14, 1922
Deported: July 11, 1942 to Auschwitz
Murdered: Auschwitz

Ingeborg Amalie Falk
Born: December 16, 1928 Berlin
Deported: February 26, 1944 to Auschwitz
Murdered: Auschwitz

Judis Seeliger
Born: May 8, 1942 Berlin
Deported: September 10, 1943 to Auschwitz
Murdered: Auschwitz

(2) Ginzburg, Carlo. *The Bond Of Shame*, New Left review, p.101

(3) Jenkins, Keith. *Re-Thinking History*, London: Routledge, 1991.

(4) Young, James E. *The Counter-Monument: Memory against Itself in Germany Today*, 1992, 267–296.

(5) Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, *Alien Relationships with Public Space*, in *TransUrbanism*, 2002

CONSTRUCTION

In this section I am going to look at counter-memorialisation and explore the ideas behind three distinct anti-memorialisation projects.

The impetus for this is that conventional monuments that glorify are now seen to carry the dead weight of a false history. In recent years public opinion has questioned monuments in our public parks and commuter routes that sit alongside daily life and allow us to be relieved from the past. They offer an easy answer to the complex histories that have built the present and I would argue they attempt and often successfully resolve a multifaceted past into a carefully crafted singular narrative. The power of these narratives are not to be dismissed, as well into the 21st-century monuments of slave traders and tyrants still stand.

Project One

Fons Americanus, 2019

The artwork Fons Americanus by Kara Walker eloquently discusses the 'conventional monument' and 'dead weight of false history' that I am referring to. Walker was the first Black woman to be offered the Hyundai commission at Tate Modern. Her work is a direct satirical comment on the Victoria Monument which stands outside Buckingham Palace. Walker's version turns the monument inside out revealing the evils of empire regarding the topic of the transatlantic slave trade (Fig. 1/2). The Fons Americanus retains the stony white aesthetic of the original Victoria foundation exemplifying how fake and redundant this kind of memorial is in contemporary society. Walker notes the irony that the bigger the monument the more successfully it blends into the environment. Hers is a temporary structure in line with the idea of a counter-monument. And in this case the ephemeral nature is her conscious decision to refuse to be as imposing as the empire. The cork, wood and metal sculpture was recycled once

(6) Julia Michiko Hori, *The Avery Review: Caribbean Counter-Monuments: A Visual History of Dissent*
 (7) Tate, "Artist Kara Walker – 'I'm an Unreliable Narrator'"

the commission was over. She also deliberately created another 'fake' monument with fantastical figures and references, mixed with historical suffering of Black slaves.⁶ An artistic compilation to create a mythical depiction, helping us to see, the often nonsensical classical monuments with their false narratives. Her work highlights that it is often the stories that become mythologies that make history - not the truth. They have a great power in informing how we perceive ourselves and others.

*'I have created a space for reflection, joy even, amid the miasma of conflicts racial, economic and cultural which still lodge themselves in our collective gullet thanks to the rise of white nationalism, xenophobia, fundamentalist violence and a poisonous populism which has everyone mouthing off thoughtlessly at once'*⁷

Project Two : Part 1

Proposal for the Murdered Jews of Europe (1994 competition)

Counter-monuments emerged in postwar Germany during the 1980's. In response to the atrocities of World War II, individuals acknowledged the importance of commemorating less triumphant moments in a nation's history to deter the recurrence of similar mistakes. Unlike conventional monuments that exalt or uphold specific ideologies, counter-monuments actively question prevailing historical narratives by shedding light on the lives and experiences of frequently marginalised peoples. These monuments serve as a testament to the understanding that history is multifaceted, experienced through various lenses, and that decisions regarding form, text, or symbols can unveil a nuanced history that encompasses both victors and victims.

Alfons Alexander
 Born: October 20, 1908 Berlin
 Deported: March 04, 1943 to Auschwitz
 Murdered: Auschwitz

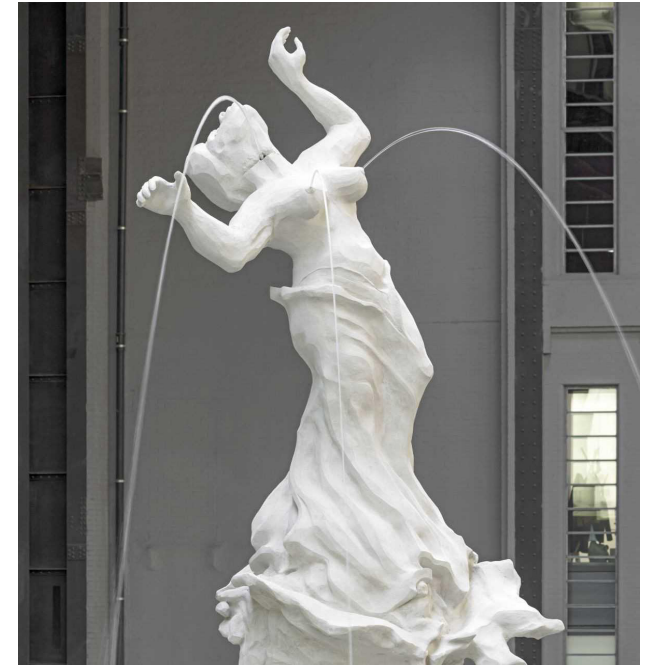


Figure 1 (top left) : Fons Americanus, the kneeling man and the General
 Figure 2 (top right) : Fons Americanus, water nymph atop the fountain
 Figure 3 (middle) : Horst Hoheisel's proposition for the Monument to the Murdered Jews of Europe
 Figure 4 (below) : Horst Hoheisel Die Tore der Deutschen / the gateways of the Germans, light installation

Horst Hoheisel is a German artist, recognised for his installations and public artworks that delve into themes like memory, history, and the influence of architecture on society. His pieces often reinterpret sites of historical importance, encouraging contemplation and conversation about their significance.

Horst Hoheisel's proposal for the memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe was in effect to blow up the Brandenburg Gate and sprinkle the dust of destruction over the site (Fig. 3). The suggestion was radical in that it opened up a conversation to confront the built matter that the war had left behind and challenge the notion of a memorial competition for what it is - an attempt to resolve. Standing beneath the Brandenburg Gate its ornate decoration and classical style make it hard to decipher the unique history of triumph, re-appropriation and repair it has been through. The glorified 'false history' set in the Brandenburg Gate is frequently misunderstood, yet it is regarded as a national symbol with such a strong sense of protection that the public couldn't fathom its removal in this proposal and consequently the competition was won by Peter Eisenman.

*'how better to remember a destroyed people than by a destroyed monument?'*⁸

Project Two : Part 2

The Gateways of the Germans (1997 - 27 January, Liberation Day of Auschwitz)

Re-thinking the idea, still centred on the Brandenburg Gate, Hoheisel projected the infamous entrance to Auschwitz over the Gate to commemorate liberation day (Fig. 4) Hoheisel used projected light to layer past and present which as one show how attitudes change and the things we choose to keep should be regularly confronted if memory of the inconceivable is to be kept alive.

'Along with the Brandenburg Gate, the Holocaust Memorial does not mark a clean break with history. If the Germans celebrate their Brandenburg Gate as a national symbol, they should never forget the

*other gateways they have also built - the gateways to the concentration camps. In this lighting display, "Die Tore der Deutschen" [The Gateways of the German People], both gateways fuse into one single image for a night of remembrance and commemoration. The light of the present could no longer be separated from the shadow of the past.'*⁹

Project Three

The Monument Against Fascism (1986)

Presence is as powerful as absence, yet in the case of memorials, their constant presence has caused them to become invisible in public spaces. I found this evidently true in Berlin. The sheer number of memorials may diminish their individual impact, making them blend into the background of the cityscape. In contrast, the anti-fascist counter-monument in a Hamburg suburb vanished from view between 1986 and 1993. Designed by Esther Shalev-Gerz and Jochen Gerz, the 12-metre-tall lead-clad column gradually descended into the ground (Fig. 7). Visitors were encouraged to etch into its entire surface as it sank, resulting in a mosaic of graffiti, names, and both anti and pro fascist slogans (Fig. 8). This process provided a mark of active engagement from the community providing an honest encapsulation of the monument's seven-year existence above ground. Giving people an equal hand in writing history visibly shows the messiness of society and as a transformative experience remains embedded in people's living memory rather than blending in with the architectural landscape. A collective history written by the many.

These three different counter-monument projects give us rich insight into the forces for change, process of creating change and the ever-evolving landscape of memory and how it is honoured. And in counter-monument construction, the power of permanence has been subverted and ongoing debate and discussion keeps memory alive.

Louis Hirsch
 Born: July 08, 1873 Berlin
 Deported:
 Murdered: September 1942



Figure 5 (top left) : The Monument Against Fasism, 1992, Hamburg-Harburg, Germany

Figure 6 (top right) : ibid

Figure 7 (bottom left) : ibid, 1989

Figure 8 (bottom right) : ibid 1989

(8) James Edward Young, *At Memory's Edge: After-Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture*, Yale University Press, 2006.

(9) EUROM, *The Long Shadow of the Past' in the Short Light of Present.*, Magazine of the European Observatory on Memories, December 10, 2018

ERASURE

Rudolf M. Herrmann
Born: January 02, 1924 Berlin
Deported: February 03, 1943 to Auschwitz
Murdered: Natzweiler-Struthof

Site One

Edward Colston's Toppling

The public removal of Colston's statue on June 7, 2020, during Black Lives Matter protesting racial injustice sparked by the killing of George Floyd in the United States is a recent example of the monument acting as a stage for dissent (Fig.9). The images documenting the fall of this statue and others through history show a very 'human' approach to its vandalism. Pulled down by the neck and battered as though the statue was Colston himself, dragged through the streets and then drowned in the harbour. It is almost as if the act of its removal was a catharsis. Within moments the memorial transformed from bronze and stone to the embodiment of slavery, greed, and its form as the bodily depiction of Colston was treated as though it would feel these acts of violence. Decapitation and mutilation of statues reflects the fact that, people who lack the power to change a political regime instead attack its symbols and in fact the site of the monument is a useful stage for expression. Martin Warnke refers to this form of iconoclasm as "from below," where the deliberate elimination typically does not involve replacement and is inherently more prone to state prosecution.¹⁰ The removal of Colston's statue is an example of this, where consequently those who enacted the toppling were taken to court. The stage of this site of dissent revealed that the narratives perpetuated by Colston are still present, the violent removal re-ignited racial and political division in Bristol and fuelled a conversation world-wide. Interestingly, the statue was replaced without public consultation by white London artist Marc Quinn in the form of another body - that of Black Lives Matter protestor Jen Reid. (Fig. 10)

Despite the project being a collaboration with Jen, looking at Marc Quinn's controversial art

career and privileged background brings into question whether he is the right advocate for racial injustice further tainted by the gain he will inevitably receive from the gesture. Quinn's sculpture does not erase Jen's own agency and the incremental step towards diverse representation in urban environments. However, the story still goes: a white man put up the statue of Colston and a white man put up the statue of Jen. So, what's changed in the decision-making power behind memorialisation?

Replacing one body with another doesn't respond to the fact that in a few years far right movements could target this site for another cause, or that in fact in a lifetime it will be viewed as irrelevant or deficient in portraying the memory of that day or the long complex history of the Black liberation movement. The issue with the depiction of the body in monument is that no one person can encompass the many faces involved in history or even encompass the lifetime of the person depicted.¹¹

24hrs later Jen's statue was removed by the Council to open up the conversation for its replacement in collaboration with the public (Fig.11). The lesson from the rise and fall of both Jen and Colston is that the power that put them there is as significant as the subject. From the many examples of the rise and fall of monuments it is not possible to conclude that any narrative is the authentic truth or will be accepted forever. Perhaps this is the concept that has been ignored in their construction for so long. Rather than 'bodies' we need more conversation, transparency, and openness.

Testament to the difficulty of engagement and getting consensus - which requires extensive dialogue and collaboration - the Colston plinth still lies empty today, its future uncertain.



Figure 9 (top) : Protestors pull down Colston's statue, June 7th 2020
Figure 10 (bottom left) : A Surge of Power (Jen Reid) 2020, Sculpture by Marc Quinn
Figure 11 (bottom right) : Colston's Empty plinth January 2022

(10) Warnke, Martin. 1973. *Bildersturm: Die Zerstörung des Kunstwerks*. München: , p.011
(11) Ingall, Alice. *Journalist Gary Younge Topples the Ideology Surrounding Statues at University of Sussex Talk*. 2020

Site 2 - Negative Memorial

Aschrottbrunnen, Kassel 1986 to 1987

What should we do when history is too lost and buried and so much time has passed? As part of an architectural festival, Horst Hoheisel was invited to reconstruct Kassel's fountain. Hoheisel's 'Negative Form' monument uses erasure and more specifically inversion to encourage viewers to take part in a self-reflective exercise when interacting with the monument. It was erected on the 50th anniversary of the November pogrom against the Jews. The original form was a 12-meter-high neo-gothic fountain gifted by Sigmund Ashcroft (a Jewish resident) that faced destruction by Nazi activists in 1939. By the 1960's Kassel residents could barely remember what it had been and only memory surrounded the very public threat made by Nazi supporters. To rebuild here would be like invoking history again. Instead, the monument is a cast replica that was buried and pointed into the ground (Fig. 13). A ghost image of its predecessor, I find this monument filled with allegory for a lost population.

*'I have designed the new fountain as a mirror image of the old one, sunk beneath the old place in order to rescue the history of this place as a wound and as an open question, to penetrate the consciousness of the Kassel citizens so that such things never happen again.'*¹²

The Ashcroft Fountain, according to Hoheisel, has now become a "historical pedestal," allowing individuals who stand on it to recall their own personal histories (Fig. 14). Instead of offering substitutes, refuge, or closure, this monument takes on a distinct purpose. It seeks to counteract the impact of intentional forgetfulness and dismantle repression by bringing forth the prerequisites for memory and, consequently, mourning. In a nuanced yet impactful manner, it equips its observers with the means, should they opt for it, to privately engage with the challenging and inherently solitary journey of grief.

*'The sunken fountain is not the memorial at all. It is only history turned into a pedestal, an invitation to passersby who stand upon it to search for the memorial in their own heads. For only there is the memorial to be found.'*¹³

In 1997 Neo-Nazis congregated on the fountain protesting an exhibition critical of the Wehrmacht (armed forces of Nazi Germany) (Fig. 12). Their re-appropriation of the site was included in Hoheisel's press release speech further cementing that the imposition of ideology is never the answer in memorial construction. He is critically aware that setting things in stone creates a false sense of security. Instead, his sites are open to all memory – both unwanted and invited can congregate. Things are allowed to dissipate and return; the lack of force makes the whole thing so much more authentic to life.

In reflecting on this section on 'Removal' we have examined two projects, re-imagining existing monuments and creating a stage for dissent – one because of the existing monument, the other because of the replacement monument. Colston's removal was a result of protest and anger, authentic in the moment but perhaps resulting in an inauthentic replacement subsequently also removed by the authorities. A resolution has yet to materialise. In Hoheisel's project, the authorities invited a reconstruction of the past, made to vanish, and interacting over time with supporters and objectors alike. Which has succeeded?

Otto Lang

Born: July 27, 1890 Berlin
Arrested: February 1945
Murdered: April 10, 1945 Berlin-Plotzensee

Franz Ferdinand Korngut

Born: January 21, 1910 Berlin
Deported:
Murdered: Ghetto in Warsaw

Evelyne Alexander

Born: October 20, 1908 Berlin
Deported: May 03, 1936 to Auschwitz
Murdered: Auschwitz



(12) Horst Hoheisel Quoted in James E. Young, *Memory and Counter-Memory*, Harvard Design Magazine, 1999

(13) Horst Hoheisel Quoted in James E. Young, *Memory and Counter-Memory*, Harvard Design Magazine, 1999

Figure 12 (top) : Neo-Nazi Protestors stand atop of Hoheisel's monument, 1997

Figure 13 (bottom left) : White negative-form stood upright before burial, ghostly reminder absent monument.

Figure 14 (bottom right) : Man looking down into the monument 1999

PRESERVATION

Fading memory and fading monuments - Preservation: whose history gets remembered - what is it to remember?

A key part of the monument is the fact that after a lifetime has passed the event no longer resides in lived memory. Post De-Nazification the term 'Vergangenheitsbewältigung' emerged with the notion that memories can and should be used as critical tools of self-reflection in a process to 'come to terms with the past'. So, as lived memory of the holocaust fades in recent years, the far-right agenda in Germany has decided to use the monument against itself. The AFD, or Alternative for Germany (Alternative für Deutschland), is a right-wing political party in Germany that has taken hold of this shift. In a speech by AFD leader Björn Höcke he declared that 'No other nation has planted a monument of shame in the heart of its capital'¹⁴

Eisenman's Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe and that the policy of coming to terms with the past is crippling for descendants of Nazi perpetrators. Again, I hear Carlo Ginzburg's proclamation that 'Shame can be a stronger bond than love' foreboding the growing far-right movements across Europe. The AFD are taking advantage of a fading memory and a younger generation that were not responsible for the atrocities of the past and the site of the monument has been chosen to direct this hate. It is clear these public spaces may yet again be at the forefront of political debate with an old story and new faces.

Referencing Eisenman's stelae is strategic in many ways as an iconic and expansive memorial. Nonetheless, the impact of the elements is currently causing deterioration to the memorial. This is attributed to the absence of reinforcement during the casting of the concrete stelae, which were constructed to have narrow walls and hollow interiors. Unintentionally, the memorial is destroying itself, the structures are beginning to

disintegrate, with numerous stelae relying solely on steel bands for support.¹⁵ The self-destruction of the memorial resonates with fading memories, the hollowness in which it was built and the shifting attitudes today. As the concrete deteriorates this prompts a reconsideration of its eternal presence. Should we preserve it?

It is clear that in memorial construction timing is of the essence, when in people's minds the memory is most powerful. Beyond this the power of film and photography comes to the fore to re-immense those whose memory is faded or did not live through it at all. Under Eisenman's memorial is the most powerful part of it all - the accounts and photographs of the now absent. Below ground those who want to understand and learn can see through a small exhibition the events and crimes that were committed but most powerfully the people involved. Above ground they can get a sense of the scale and facelessness of the absent. The combination of the physical memorial with the exhibition is extremely powerful. Yet scrutiny tends to focus on the physical memorial alone. This unmissable element allows viewers to be distracted away from the more harrowing content of the accounts. Since there is no such thing as collective memory¹⁶ perhaps the success of this monument to me is that it speaks to an array of experiences from the past and also continuously documents and archives how the surviving lives have moved on keeping the conversation going and asking the public not to remember perhaps what they haven't lived but acknowledge the past and notice the signs when it begins to repeat itself.

The stelae, like the stumbling stones hold 'concrete' information and documentation of the past unlike most memorials. The role of the archive can be useful in holding the varying views of the past that I have come to realise are so important in creating an authentic understanding of the past. The memorial lacks the ability to convey a realistic human sense of the past,

a task better achieved by mediums such as photography and writing. Susan Sontag's essay 'regarding the pain of others' warns that there are limitations to photography which only hold a portion of reality and can distance you from the event. Furthermore, these repositories should not be mistaken for guardians of memory, but like monuments they manufacture awareness with specific intent.¹⁷ When monument and archives work together, they both gain a sense of reality and authenticity that the other is lacking. When reading newspapers or watching films a sense of space and context is lost and this is what the monument has to offer. The Eisenman memorial lies in this complimentary realm merging a place of peace and quiet and an informative experience. Given that many monumental sites are contested areas, it's important not to quickly abandon or overlook the dedicated zones and freedoms they provide for society to quietly contemplate or talk openly in our public spaces.

Comparative Analysis

The three sections of this essay: construction, erasure and preservation are in constant rotation as history inevitably repeats itself in states of war and peace, prosperity, and struggle. In this way bleakly, we must accept unrest and struggles will appear again, but it also suggests that when opportunities arise to make positive change, we must take them. The monument is an opportunistic stage that needs to be used at the right time such as Colston's toppling and when it inevitably does, we need to really think clearly and deeply about what we want to say and do. Looking at all the examples alongside one another I feel it is clear the monument still has countless iterations left to explore. In the minds of many in the west (western spheres?) a monument conjures images of grandeur, and something well established in national identity such as the Victoria Fountain or Brandenburg Gate. It also seems clear from my research this monolithic long living form has been exhausted and is no longer relevant to how we see ourselves today. Kara Walker's Fons Americanus and The Monument Against Fascism lived in the moments they were created and in now being absent live on in people's consciousness just as Horst Hoheisel's proposal sparked conversation without ever having existed. Through these examples the sections 'Construction' and 'Erasure' are better

seen as working together to have lasting impact. For monuments that with time passing have aroused both positive and negative attention such as the Neo-Nazis on the Ashcroft Fountain or the AFD's condemnation of Eisenman's stelae the final section 'Preservation' is holding all the stories - good and bad to paint a richer, more fulsome picture of a multifaceted history.

Max Metzger

Born: August 21, 1922 in Brody
Deported: October 28, 1938 to Poland
Arrested: Bentschen

Lothar Wellner

Born: December 25, 1914 in Berlin
Deported: October 28, 1938 to Poland
Murdered: Sachsenhausen concentration camp

Manfred Arsonbach

Born: November 23, 1936 in Berlin
Deported: October 19, 1938 to Riga
Murdered: Ghetto in Riga

David Asriel

Born: April 21, 1882 in Wien
Deported: 25 January 1942 to Riga
Murdered: Riga

(14) Philip Oltermann, *AFD Politician Says Germany Should Stop Atoning for Nazi Crimes*, The Guardian, 2017

(15) Horst Hoheisel and Andreas Knitz discussion at Kaunas Biennial, *Kaunas Biennial There and Not There / Oral Programme*, 2017 4 mins 59 sec

(16) Susan Sontag's essay titled "Regarding the Pain of Others." p73.

(17) Brown, Richard Harvey, *The making of memory: the politics of archives, libraries, and museums in the construction of national consciousness*.

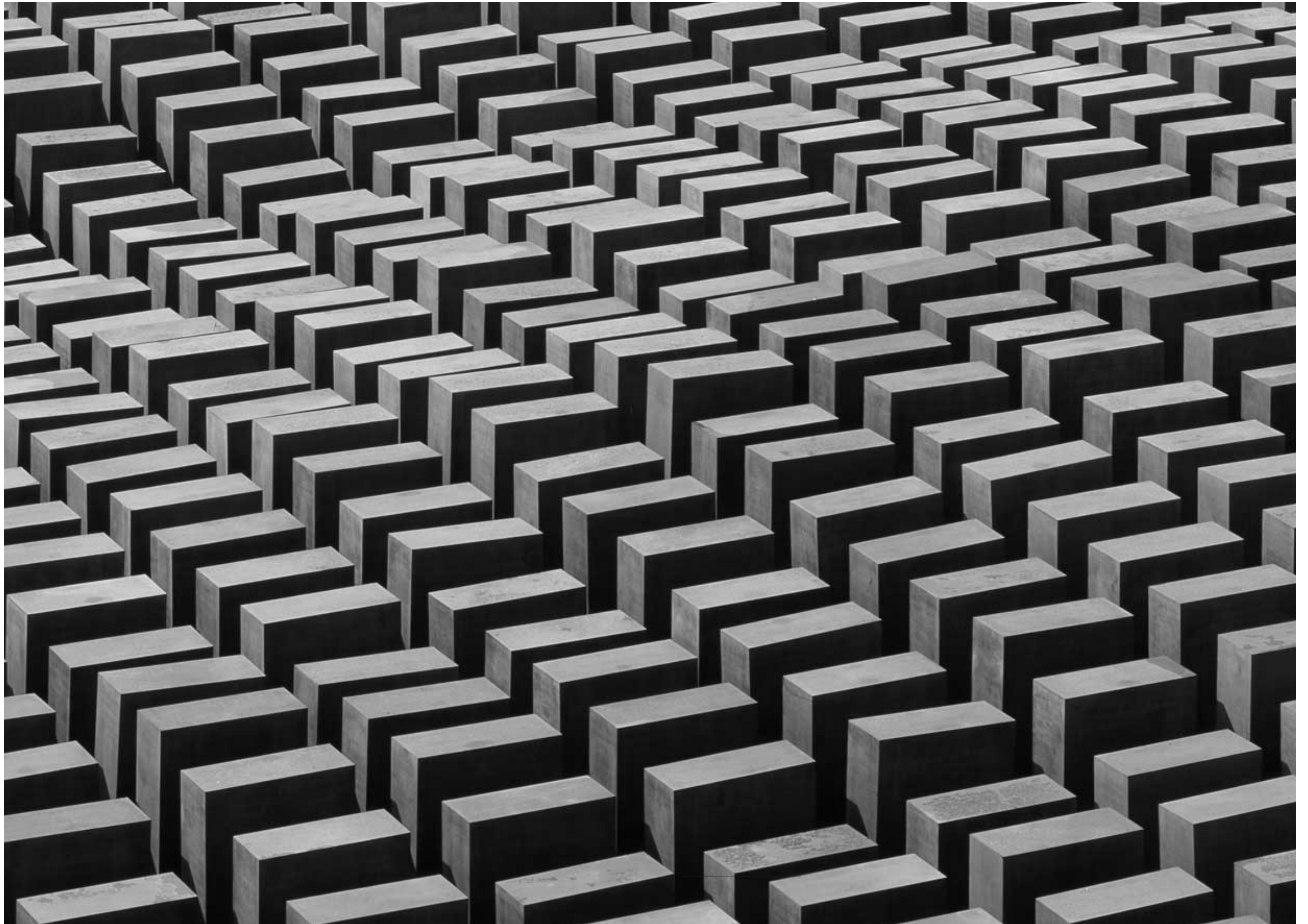


Figure 15 : Peter Eisenman, BERLIN MEMORIAL TO THE MURDERED JEWS OF EUROPE, Berlin, Germany, 1997
(competition), 1998-2003 (design), 2003-2005 (construction)

Conclusion

In writing, I have concluded to some degree the act of becoming completely absorbed in the debates surrounding memorialisation often leads to the evasion of memory itself, rather than examining and reflecting on the painful memories the monument represents. This is best seen in the example of Eisenman's field of stelae where the physical monument detracts from reflective interest in the exhibition testimony, allowing the viewer to 'escape' the message from the past. In this process, the past becomes distorted and opens opportunities to rewrite official history. It's only through my personal inquiry into my own history that I've begun to dismantle the false narratives laid out before us, which has opened the fact that we must all rethink the historical narrative we passively accept and that influence us in the form of monuments in our public spaces.

My conclusion is that the value of counter memorialisation is that it offers a starting point for countries and authorities to become open to the debate about memory coupled with accountability when commissioning monuments. They also redefine our engagement with monuments in physical space and act more like self-reflective tools for the public. If done well, they can promote reconciliation and healing, recognise oppression, and contribute to growing awareness of social justice.

This engagement keeps the conversation alive and simultaneously invites more voices to the debate presenting history exactly as it is: multifaceted, emotive, and complex. In the UK the policy published by the government to 'retain and explain' our monuments is a tentative

step in the right direction but seemingly closes the conversation to other means of expression such as to remove or deface. Like monument construction itself the 'retain and explain' policy is problematic in drawing yet another line under the past, continuing the narrative that these issues belong to another time. This new 'official history' is encountering minimal resistance as since Colston's toppling the right to protest in the UK is under threat. Overnight, the once invisible sites of monuments become vital political stages and platforms accessible to the many.

Epilogue

Revisiting Berlin will never be the same experience again. Writing this essay has informed and clarified my thoughts on what I would do given the task to memorialise. It has informed the mediums I would look to - if I would do it at all and deeply consider the voices and documentation that I find more relevant than their immortalisation. Regarding the pain of others, at minimum, we should all continue to bear witness to history, not turn away when confronted with uncomfortable realities, and acknowledge the media has opened more voices to take part in history.

I encourage that through looking at your own life and examining the 'why' you can come to care for or truly hate some monuments, and in this way have a nuanced opinion. Having an opinion on monuments prevents them from (as they have) quietly blending into the background and carrying forward something more dangerous than was ever intended. Facing up to the past both personal and public is integral to dealing with the problems of the present and sets out a better path for the future.

Eva Reichenbach

Born: April 03 1885 in Berlin

Escaped: 1939, to Sweden

Survived

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(1) *Fons Americanus, Kneeling man and the General*. Tate Modern, Photograph. London, 2019. London <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/kara-walker-2674/kara-walkers-fons-americanus>

(2) *Fons Americanus, Water Nymph atop the fountain*, Tate Modern, Photograph. London, 2019. London <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/kara-walker-2674/kara-walkers-fons-americanus>

(3) *The Crushed Brandenburg Gate, Proposed Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe*, Photolithograph and oil pastel, 1994 <https://thejewishmuseum.org/collection/27605-the-crushed-brandenburg-gate-proposed-memorial-for-the-murdered-jews-of-europe>

(4) *Die Tore der Deutschen / the gateways of the Germans*, light installation on the Brandenburger Tor, Januar, 27, 1987 Foto: Horst Hoheisel <https://www.instituto-capaz.org/en/german-artist-horst-hoheisel-visits-colombia-with-his-work-counter-monuments/>

(5) *Das Harburger Mahnmal gegen Faschismus / The Harburg Monument against Fascism*, with Jochen Gerz, Hatte Verlag, Stuttgart, Germany, 1992 <https://www.shalev-gerz.net/portfolio/monument-against-fascism/>

(6) *ibid.*

(7) *ibid.*

(8) *ibid.*

(9) *Protestors pull down Colston's statue, June 7th 2020* <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/black-lives-matter-toppling-of-slave-trader-starts-domino-effect-across-country-0wlvbglf>

(10) *A Surge of Power (Jen Reid), 2020, Sculpture by Marc Quinn* <http://marcquinn.com/studio/news/a-joint-statement-from-marc-quinn-and-jen-reid>

(11) *Colston's Empty plinth, January 2022, Art UK* <https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/edward-colston-16361721-276045>

(12) *Neo-Nazi Protestors stand atop of Hoheisel's monument, 1997* <https://viscultblog.wordpress.com/2010/10/08/horst-hoheisel/>

(13) *Horst Hoheisel, Positive from the Memorial to the Aschrottbrunnen Fountain, Kassel, Germany, c. 1987-96* <https://www.harvarddesignmagazine.org/articles/memory-and-counter-memory/>

(14) *Man looking down into the monument, 1999 Horst Hoheisel* <https://www.knitz.net/index.php?lang=en>

(15) *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, 1997 Peter Eisenman* <https://eisenmanarchitects.com/Berlin-Memorial-to-the-Murdered-Jews-of-Europe-2005>



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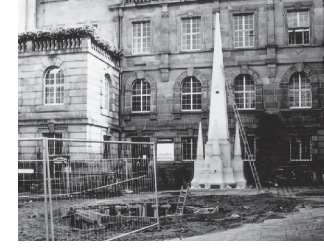
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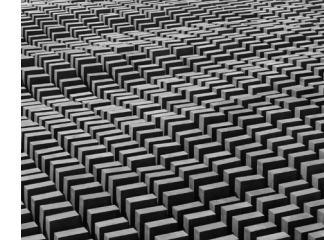
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