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Bus Stop

(1994/95)

Some excerpts from the Bus Stop publication,
edited by Stih & Schnock
together with Berlin's art association NGBK in 1995

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Ahlem

Since 1893 the Israelite School of Horticulture for job-training in the fields of agriculture, horticulture and trades has stood on 18 hectares in Ahlem. From 1941 to 1944 the estate was the central assembling point for around 3000 Jews from the districts of Hannover and Hildesheim prior to the deportation to concentration and extermination camps. One of the many satellite camps of the Neuengamme concentration camp with approximately 1200 prisoners was installed in November 1944 next to the Gestapo jail. Several hundred prisoners and forced laborers died drilling tunnels for a bombproof underground site for Continental Works' arms production, relocated from Stöcken. Additional satellite camps were in Stöcken, Limmer, Mühlenberg, Misburg (Accu, Conti, Hanomag, Deurag) and in Langenhagen. The memorial site in the basement of the former director's house has been here since 1987; a monument was inaugurated next to the building in February 1994. Today the Hannover Chamber of Agriculture's Vocational School for Horticulture occupies the grounds.

Auschwitz

The Auschwitz camp system included the so-called "main camp" (Auschwitz I) for 30.000 Jewish and political prisoners; Auschwitz II-Birkenau for 100.000 prisoners, which served as a special SS camp and an extermination center; the labor camp Monowitz, also called "Satellite Camp Buna" (Auschwitz III); as well as a total of 38 satellite camps or command posts. [Aussenkommando, Kommandoposten] Prisoners received numbered tattoos only in Auschwitz. Starting in January of 1942 most incoming transports were immediately killed upon their arrival in provisional gas chambers. This was true at least until the various buildings planned by Rudolf Höß, the camp's SS commander, could be finished in October 1942. The memorial site has existed since 1947, and Auschwitz-Birkenau has been a part of the Polish State Museum since 1967. One can find exhibits about the various countries from which prisoners were deported to Auschwitz within certain buildings of the partially maintained camp complex. Near the entrance is an archive containing files and information about the prisoners - provided they weren't immediately "selected" for murder upon their arrival.

Babi Jar / Kiev

The German armed forces conquered Kiev, today the Ukrainian capital, on September 19, 1941. Soviet bombings on buildings occupied by the German military allowed the Germans to justify the planned mass murder of Kiev's Jews as retaliation. Billboards encouraged Jews remaining in the city to assemble on Melnikstraße for a "resettlement." On this and the following day, September 30 in 1941, German special commandos from the Task Force C shot 33.771 Jews at the gorge Babi Jar situated Northwest of Kiev. Over the next two years, the gorge became the site of further executions of Roma and Sinti, Jews and Soviet prisoners of war, putting estimates of those killed around 100.000. During their retreat, the German army dug up the bodies once again. The burning of corpses on pyres lasted for four weeks; bone remains were crushed in order to wipe away all traces of the crimes. Several prisoners from the command in charge of corpse-burnings managed to escape and were able to tell what they had seen. During the Nuremberg "Task Force Trials" (Einsatzgruppenprozesse) commanding officer Paul Blobel was sentenced to death and other members of Special Task Force Unit 4a received prison sentences from the Darmstadt District Court.

Beendorf

From 1944 to April of 1945 an airplane factory with 10.000 workers lay 600 meters underground in the former mine "Schacht Marie." Of those workers around 4500 (3000 women, 1500 men) were forced laborers from all over Europe. (A portion of the site is now a nuclear waste dump.) On April 11, 1945, these prisoners of the Neuengamme satellite concentration camp were evacuated to the north on a 14-day train transport in open-air railcars. Several hundred weakened and sick Jewish prisoners died (in Sülzdorf at Ludwigslust there are 51 graves of Hungarian Jewish women, more can be found along the train tracks). After the transport arrived in Hamburg (and after one more week of forced labor), the survivors were liberated by English troops on May 3, 1945.

Memorial Center **Gardelegen**: 50 km northeast of Helmstedt, between Stendal (36 km) and Wolfsburg (44 km); to the graves northeast toward Bismark.

On April 11, 1945, one day before American soldiers arrived in Gardelegen, 1016 prisoners evacuated from the Hannover-Stöcken camp were imprisoned in a stone shed and burned to death by the SS. Documentation house and cemetery always open to the public.

Belzec

In Belzec, organized mass murder took place at a separate platform 500 meters South of the Belzec train station. The death camp between Zamosc (43 km north) and Lemberg (83 km South) was built at the end of 1941. First commander was Police Chief and Chief SS-Stormtrooper Wirth. Starting in March 1942, the men of "Operation Reinhard" (after murdering the handicapped in the "euthanasia" program) gassed approximately 600.000 Jews from the "General Governorate" in nine months. Deportees were met after their arrival with reassuring explanations only to be murdered within a matter of hours. The extermination sites Sobibor and Treblinka were built after the same model (no camps since only a few prisoners were left alive as temporary help for a limited time.) Starting in late fall 1942 and lasting through early 1943, the bodies of victims were dug out from the mass graves, burned to ashes, and poured back into the graves. The prisoners forced to do this work were transported to Sobibor and also killed. After clearing away the gas chambers and barracks the SS had the grounds levelled off and planted with pine trees in order to erase the traces of the mass murder.

Bergen-Belsen / Celle

When British troops entered Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp on April 15, 1945, they found 60.000 sick, starving and utterly exhausted inmates. Despite efforts to save them, more than 13.000 people died in the following weeks. The number of prisoners in this camp of 22.000 had almost tripled between February and April of that year. Thirty-five thousand people died during that time period. The SS-commander in charge of the camp was named Kramer. Starting in 1944, prisoners deemed unable to work and other "evacuated" prisoners were transported here from other camps. Anne Frank and her sister Margaret entered Bergen-Belsen on one of the transports from Auschwitz. Both died of typhus in this camp.

On a trail one may reach the Hörsten Cemetery for prisoners-of-war, situated in the West. The graves of over 30.000 Soviet soldiers from Stalag (P.O.W. camp) 311 lie adjacent to an area still used for military training. Eighteen to twenty thousand soldiers died during the winter of 1941-42.

Birkenau - Oswiecim

In the camp complex along the Auschwitz railway junction well over one million people were murdered beginning in 1942. Deportation trains came from all over Europe. Four gas chambers were built by the Nazis in order to be able to kill up to 6000 prisoners daily. The ashes of bodies burned in the crematoria were dumped in the pond near Zadworze village, 2 km South of Birkenau, among other places. The organized mass murder of Jews, Poles, Soviet soldiers, Roma, Sinti and others deemed "inferior" by the Nazis lasted until January 1945. From May to October 1944 alone 400.000 Hungarian Jews were killed. Soviet troops liberated less than 8000 prisoners on January 27, 1945; thousands of the roughly 50.000 survivors still died during the SS-led "evacuation" a few days before.

Blechhammer

In 1942, one of Upper Schlesia's seven hydrogenation plants for the extraction of synthetic gasoline from coal was built in Blechhammer (Blachownia Slaska). This gasoline had utmost priority for the Nazi war effort, and such plants were quickly built according to the policy "extermination through work." Most of the 5000 forced laborers were Jews from Upper Schlesia. Over 1000 laborers died due to widespread typhus, diarrhea and tuberculosis in the camp as well as through overwork, abuse and murder. While the sick were at first transported to Auschwitz (distance 90 km) and killed there, their corpses were later burned in the crematorium built especially for that purpose at the Blechhammer camp (run as a satellite concentration camp, administered from Monowitz).

Around 50.000 female prisoners suffered under forced labor in the industrial complex around Cosel. The Jewish work camps in this region were under the command of SS-man Schmelt, who was responsible for "the implementation of work for foreign peoples in Oberschlesien by special command of the Führer."

At the Cosel railway crossing during the years 1942 and 1943, Schmelt had slaves for his own camps selected from transports to Auschwitz and then distributed them among local industries. (Selected prisoners included deportees from Drancy/Paris, Mecheln/Belgium and Westerbork/ Netherlands.) On January 21, 1945, the Blechhammer Camp inmates

were forced to make a 13-day, 200-kilometer trek to the Großrosen Camp. Survivors of this march were then deported to Buchenwald a few days later.

Buchenwald / Weimar

More than 136 satellite camps stood under the command of Buchenwald concentration camp. In total, more than 240.000 prisoners were incarcerated in the main camp. Almost 60.000 people were murdered. The wife of the camp commander, Ilse Koch, was also renowned for her murderous sadism. After the camp's liberation by US troops in April 1945, the Americans brought residents of Weimar to the camp in order to show them the atrocities committed by the SS in their immediate vicinity.

Under the occupying authority of the Soviet Union a "special camp" for the SS and NSDAP-subordinates, among others, was in operation until 1950. Of the 30.000 incarcerated there, 13.000 died.

Left of the access road, on the South side of the Ettersberg not far from the former SS villa-settlement (today, the last remaining building is a restaurant) lies the vast memorial complex, dedicated in 1958; three of four mass graves are integrated as sites along a walking-tour.

Budapest

On March 19, 1944 German troops invaded Hungary, and between April and June almost 400.000 Jews were deported by Adolf Eichmann's special task force. International committees (esp. the Swedish legation under leadership of Raoul Wallenberg) tried to save as many people as possible from the impending deportation. After the Hungarian government caused a brief halt in the deportations, the Nazis installed a collaborative government headed by the fascist Pfeilkreuzler Party. Since the advance of Soviet troops had caused the collapse of the transportation system to concentration camps, Eichmann commanded that over 70.000 Jews "capable of working and marching" be driven toward the Austrian border. Thousands were killed during the forced march to Austrian concentration and forced-labor camps as well as during the construction of defensive barricades, according to the policy "extermination through work."

On December 2, 1944 most of the Jews in Budapest were cordoned off in a closed ghetto, and around the New Year of 1945, the Pfeilkreuzler shot over 10.000 Jews on the banks of the Danube river. Upon the ghetto's liberation, 70.000 surviving Jews were found there. If one also includes the 50.000 others who had saved themselves through diplomatic protection or by hiding, one could say that a total of 120.000 Hungarian Jews survived.

Dachau / Munich

As early as March 1933, one of the first concentration camps was set up near the "capital of the movement," i.e. in Munich. It became a "model camp" for all later camps where commanders like Rudolf Hess, commander of Auschwitz, as well as Adolf Eichmann from the Chief Office of Reich Security were schooled in mass murder. Until the liberation of the camp by American troops on April 29, 1945, a total of more than 200.000 prisoners were brought to Dachau. The SS arrested 11.000 Jews on the night of November 10, 1938 alone. From 1933 to 1945, 30.000 prisoners died in Dachau. After the war, the International Prisoners Committee supported the creation of a memorial center, and upon reconstruction of camp areas the memorial site was set up in 1965 (in 1960, building of the "Mortal Agony of Christ" Chapel and in 1967 of a Protestant "Reconciliation" Church and a memorial for the Jews).

Drancy

A collection and deportation camp was built under the direction of the German Security Service Chief in Drancy, a Paris suburb South of the Le Bourget airport. In the three years between August 1941 and August 1944, over 70.000 prisoners passed through this transit camp. During the first two years, French police controlled the camp, until the German Security Service and the SS took over the command. They arranged the transportation of all deportees to the extermination camps Auschwitz-Birkenau and Sobibor. Among the deportees were several thousand immigrants and refugees from the German Reich and Poland. On August 17, 1944 Allied troops freed the less than 1500 Jews remaining in the camp.

Close to the Spanish border, the Vichy government detained several thousand, mostly Jewish, immigrants from the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and Austria in the **Gurs** detention camp. In October 1940, district administrators from Baden and the Saarpfalz arranged the extradition of 6500 Jews from Baden, the Saarland, the Pfalz and Elsaß-Lothringen

into France, as yet unoccupied. After the invasion of Southern France at the end of 1942, most detainees who had previously been unable to leave France, were deported to Auschwitz.

Ebensee

In the Salzkammergut, in Ebensee, on the South end of Lake Traun (90 km Southwest of Linz), one of the forty SS-built satellite camps for Mauthausen concentration camp was set up in 1943 by order of the military and the Speer ministry. In the camp, a total of 27.000 prisoners had to drill giant tunnels into the mountain, since research and testing of rocket-“wonderweapons” was to be carried out and protected from air attacks here (up to then in Peenemünde on Usedom). Instead, the installment of a refinery and production sites for the company Steyr Daimler Puch AG followed. New prisoners continually arrived in order to replace those who died of abuse and slave labor. Of 2500 Jewish prisoners from a Silesian concentration camp, over 500 died during transport or through “disinfection measures” ordered by camp commander Ganz. The bodies of over 8200 victims were burned in the camp crematorium. Thousands of camp prisoners from Wels, Melk, Amstetten, Leibnitz and St. Valentin were relocated to the Ebensee camp in April 1945, more dead than alive. The camp leaders’ plan to blow up the tunnels along with 16.000 prisoners shortly before liberation did not succeed.

Farge

Before construction of the bunker “Valentin” began upon the Weser river in Bremen-Rekum/Farge in 1943, huge underground oil tanks were built in the meadowlands between Rekum and Schwanewede. Many companies received commissions for the construction projects, and POWs and forced workers from various concentration camps, such as the Farge “work-rehabilitation camp,” were put to use in these projects. The Farge satellite camp belonged to the Neuengamme concentration camp and was installed just South of Hospitalstraße by the Bremen Gestapo in 1940. Of the 10.000 people who were put to work in the construction of “Valentin” up until the end of the war, many starved or died from the appalling work conditions found in the cold and damp concrete structures. More camp prisoners died during the construction of the bunker in Farge and the vicinity than did Bremen residents from allied bomb attacks during the entire war.

Flossenbürg

The concentration camp in Flossenbürg existed from May 1938 to April 1945. In order to gather the stone so highly valued by Nazi architects and planners, prisoners had to break granite from the rock in the nearby quarry for the SS-company “German Earth and Masonworks (DEST).” During the war, arms production in Flossenbürg then took higher priority (the Messerschmitt factory and others). Dietrich Bonhoeffer was murdered here. Today’s memorial site encompasses only a small part of the former camp grounds; remaining buildings beyond this area include the earlier headquarters and the settlement for higher SS-leaders on the South side of the Plattenberg with a view of the ruins overlooking Flossenbürg. Of the over 100.000 prisoners around 70.000 survived altogether. A rather high number of them were killed in Flossenbürg’s two largest satellite camps, in Hersbruck and in Leitmeritz/Litoměřice (Elsabe/fuel production) on the Elbe river, just 4 km away from the Theresienstadt concentration camp.

Groß-Rosen / Rogoznica

The Groß-Rosen concentration camp (1941-Feb. 1945; around 40.000 dead), located in the former Silesia, had 99 outposts. At these camps, many of which housed only Jewish prisoners, the SS-leadership used lethal manual labor to practice the principle of “extermination through work.” Dead bodies were transported to Groß-Rosen to be burnt in its crematorium (more victims came from Kittlitztreben, or from the camp “Riese”(Giant) in Wüstegiersdorf, which had over 15.000 prisoners). Close to the camp lay quarries similar to those in Natzweiler, Mauthausen and Flossenbürg. Along with the granite supplies from Striegau (Stzegom), located 10 km Southwest, these quarries were exploited by the SS-owned company DEST by using camp prisoners. They had to produce the “1000-years-strong” materials for Albert Speers’ “Führer construction projects.” When the Soviet army reached the camp in February 1945, the 30.000 prisoners had just been evacuated to the concentration camps Flossenbürg, Mauthausen, Buchenwald, Mittelbau-Dora and Ebensee.

Gunskirchen

Under the command of High SS-Stormtrooper Werner an assembling camp was set up for Jews in March 1945 in Gunskirchen, 7 km South of Wels, where almost 20.000 prisoners from Mauthausen and other evacuated camps wasted away. When American troops reached the camp on May 5, they found less than 6000 survivors and several mass graves on the campgrounds.

Gusen

Gusen was the first satellite camp belonging to the Mauthausen concentration camp. Starting in the year 1940—after the prisoners had been put to work in the quarry and in a brick factory—the camp was rapidly developed into an armaments factory for the companies Steyr Daimler Puch and Messerschmitt. The prisoners had to drill giant tunnels into the mountainside, where production would be protected from air bombing. Prisoners were gassed in the nearby Hartheim Castle. More than 30.000 of the 70.000 inmates were killed.

Hadamar

With the euthanasia program “T4” (codename refers to the headquarters for “sanitation of the national body” located at Tiergartenstraße 4 in Berlin), mass murder was tested and practiced by the Nazis on thousands of handicapped persons (in addition to Hadamar also in Bernburg/Saale, Hartheim/Linz, Sonnenstein/Pirna, Grafeneck/Münsingen). The program for “extermination of unworthy life” began in May 1939 with the murder of children. Midwives and pediatricians were required to report handicapped children beginning as early as August 18, 1938. Starvation, gassing and poisonous injections were all tested with the help of doctors on adult epileptics, the “mentally ill,” and those considered “unfit for work.” After the murder of “sick persons” was temporarily stopped by protests from the general population and church circles (70.000 victims were killed meanwhile; 10.000 in Hadamar alone), SS-leadership employed these “killing specialists” to carry out the planning and construction of the Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka and Auschwitz extermination camps, among others.

Hersbruck

The satellite camp Hersbruck, located 40 km East of Nürnberg, held a total of 10.000 prisoners. Second only to the Leitmeritz/Litomerice camp at the river Elbe, Hersbruck was one of the deadliest work camps belonging to Flossenbürg concentration camp. Tunnel construction for a planned aircraft engine factory (Dogger-Stollen), achieved with utmost brutality, in addition to inhumane conditions at the overcrowded Hersbruck, Förrenbach and Happurg camps led to the deaths of over 4.000 prisoners. After the crematorium in Nürnberg could no longer process the 30-40 dead per day, corpses were burned on pyres in the forest near Hubmersberg and Schupf.

Two monuments stand at these locations. Another stone memorial stands for one of the camps that disappeared under a reservoir in the 1950s.

Hessisch Lichtenau / Kassel

In 1944-45 over 15.000 female prisoners from the Buchenwald camp had to manufacture munitions, bombs and grenades for the German armies. Two of these satellite camps were in Hessen. The large explosives factory in Fürstenhagen near Hessisch Lichtenau operated on 233 hectares of production grounds. In the summer of 1944, a thousand Hungarian Jews from Auschwitz were sent to do this dangerous work. The prisoners were housed in guarded barracks, and disease was commonplace due to contact with poisonous chemicals, long work shifts, exhausting marches in wooden shoes, and insufficient clothing and nourishment. When these women were “no longer capable of work,” the central camp management in Buchenwald ordered the lethal “transfer” of 206 women to Auschwitz-Birkenau. SS-guardsmen shot many women during the 14-day “evacuation march” before American troops liberated the survivors on April 25, 1945.

Janowska / Lemberg

Before the invasion of German troops, ten thousand Jews lived in Lemberg. The deportation of the Jews from the Lemberg region began after March 1942 when the Belzec death camp (90 km north) was built for the purpose of industrialized genocide. The camp on Janowska Street was a collection point for deportation and for the “selection” of a

very few forced-laborers. During SS-ordered murder campaigns in 1943, more than ten thousand Jews were shot to death in the areas surrounding the camp. A unit of the SS murder troop “1005” under the leadership of SS- Commander Blobel were in charge to excavate and burn the corpses in order to leave no trace.

Kaufering

Under the codename “Ringeltaube” (ringed dove), underground bases for aircraft production were created under the Todt Organization’s leadership near Landsberg after arms factories in Augsburg had to cease their production following allied air attacks. Roughly 30.000 camp prisoners from all over Europe, exclusively Jews, were collected between May 1944 and April 25, 1945 in various satellite camps named after the village Kaufering and belonging to the Dachau concentration camp. Around 12.000 men and women died during the building of the bunkers. Gravesites are known in Kaufering, Hurlach, Erpfting/Landsberg, Utting, Türkheim and Igling. Thousands are buried in unknown places. One of the completed giant “grave chambers” (30 meters below the surface, 250 meters long and 80 meters wide) has been used by the German air force since 1959 as “Iglinger Bunker”.

Kulmhof / Chelmo

The tiny village Chelmo nad Nerem is called Kulmhof in German. It lies 60 km Northwest of Lodz near the Kolo railway crossings. An SS death squad, trained during the euthanasia campaigns, gassed over 150.000 victims using exhaust from trucks specially modified for that purpose. Beginning in December 1941, the Jews from the surrounding villages were killed, as were—starting January 1942—Jews from the Litzmannstadt/Lodz ghetto, deportees from the Reich territories, several thousand Roma and Sinti, and 88 children from the Czech village Lidice. By March 1943, the SS-unit Bothman had killed all Jews in “Warthegau.” The mass murder was implemented by the same team that had “cleared” the Lodz ghetto between June and August of that year. Starting in September 1944, the SS unit opened mass graves lying in the woods near Rzuchow in order to burn the bodies and thus destroy all evidence. The ashes of the dead were then scattered over the forest pathways in the area. However, the unit did not manage to kill all the prisoners in the burning squad. Two members of the SS death squad were sentenced to death in Poland in 1945.

Lichtenburg

This concentration camp was already established in 1933. Beginning in 1937, arrested men were brought into Buchenwald concentration camp, and a detention camp for women was established in Lichtenburg. In 1938 women from Moringen concentration camp were also brought to this camp. Closing of the Lichtenburg women’s camp and relocation of prisoners followed in May 1939 after the Ravensbrück camp near Fürstenberg/Havel had been completed.

Lieberose

One of the many Sachsenhausen camp outposts was located in Lieberose, thirty-one kilometers West of Guben. This camp, located at the Jamlitz/Lieberose train station, was dismantled in January 1945, during which around 1000 people were executed (mass grave at a gravel pit near Staakow). Beginning February 1945, around 2000 more inmates had to drag themselves on a 150 kilometer-long “death-march” through Brandenburg Buchholz, Teupitz, Ludwigsfelde, Potsdam to Falkensee. From there, the survivors were transferred to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in Oranienburg. In April 1945 the camp prisoners were led on a death march from Oranienburg over the streets leading to the Baltic Sea. Path marked today by memorial stones.

Lodz

Lodz had 665.000 residents before the war. Jews made up 34 percent of the population; the city was an important center of Jewish culture. On September 8, 1939 the *Wehrmacht* occupied Lodz and annexed it as part of the German *Warthegau*. Directly after the occupation of the city, persecution of the Jews began, particularly through the command of SS-battalion leader Fritz Liphardt, supported by resident ethnic Germans (who made up ten percent of the total population). Attacks, beatings, plundering and countless bans led within a very short time to the collapse of Jewish economic and social life in the city. In February 1940, the Lodz ghetto was sealed off in the northern part of town, and the Jewish population was driven there from all areas of the city. Unbearable living conditions prevailed in the ghetto, and many died. Those

inhabitants of the ghetto who were still capable of work had to do forced-labor or were deported to work camps in Posen (Póznán) province. Beginning on January 16, 1942, deportations from Lodz led directly to Kulmhof extermination camp. Upon the clearance of the ghetto and following deportation to Auschwitz in May 1944 only 77.000 Jews were still alive. The Gestapo left just 600 Jews behind and interned them in a barrack on Jakubastraße. They escaped before the fleeing Gestapo was able to murder them. The Red Army liberated Lodz on January 19, 1945.

Majdanek

The Majdanek concentration camp existed from October 1941 to July 1944. Heinrich Himmler ordered the largest concentration camp outside the German Reich to be built in Lublin. The camp terrain consisted of 2.7 square kilometers of undeveloped land on the way from Lublin to Zamosc. Although it officially bore the name “P.O.W Camp of the Lublin SS,” it was not intended for prisoners of war, but rather as part of the National Socialist extermination apparatus. The blueprints foresaw extensive developments, such as barracks for 250.000 prisoners, industrial facilities, gas chambers and crematoria. By the time of the camp’s liberation, twenty percent of the plan had been realized. Like all concentration camps, Majdanek supervised several satellite camps.

Five hundred thousand people with 54 different citizenships and from 28 different countries passed through Majdanek. Besides the mass murders that occurred in the gas chambers (to which the Jewish prisoners in particular fell victim), there were also mass shootings inside the camp. It is estimated that about 70 percent of the prisoners were killed. The Majdanek camp was evacuated in July 1944 because the Red Army was advancing.

Maly Trostenez

Between November 1941 and October 1943, SS-officer Ehrlinger, the “Commander of Secret Police and Secret Service in White Ruthenia,” had the extermination camp Maly Trostenez and the central executions site Blagowschtschina installed Southeast of Minsk. Starting in the summer of 1942 deportation trains from the German Reich and occupied European countries arrived twice a week at the special rail stop that had been constructed near Blagowschtschina in the meantime. More than 35.000 Jews from Germany, Bohemia and Moravia, altogether approx. 150.000 deportees and Jews from the Minsk ghetto, were shot or killed here in vehicles for gassing and buried in 34 mass graves. The SS murder-troop 1005 had the mass graves opened and the bodies burned near Schaschkowka from fall 1943 until June 1944; the Russian work force was also killed afterwards.

In Stalag 352 in Minsk the German Wehrmacht left 120.000 Soviet prisoners of war to die behind barbed wire.

Mauthausen

On March 29, 1938, a few days after Austria’s “merger” with Germany, the Austrian fascist Eigruber declared that Austria would finally get its own concentration camp as “recognition for our accomplishments during the time of combat.” Eight thousand prisoners from Mauthausen and the Gusen satellite camp, erected in May 1940, died in the year 1941 alone. Being sent to Mauthausen and its sub-camp was understood as a death sentence since these camps had the highest death rates. Besides the policy “extermination through work,” the denial of medical care and starvation, several forms of murder were practiced: with specially-modified “gas vehicles,” with a gas chamber in the camp and the neighboring Hartheim castle, and in a camouflaged execution facility where prisoners were shot in the neck. One of the largest beneficiaries of forced labor was Steyr Daimler Puch Inc. with production centers in Steyr-Münichholz, in St. Valentin for tank production, in Melk for ball bearings, and in the Gusen concentration camp for machine guns.

Melk

Under the codename “Quartz” a giant, bombproof tunnel gallery was built between Loosdorf and Melk by 7000 prisoners from a Mauthausen satellite camp for Steyr Daimler Puch AG’s arms production. The camp, built in the former Birago barracks not far from the Melk convent on April 1, 1944, needed its own crematorium after fall 1944 for the many prisoners who died during construction.

Mittelbau-Dora

After Walter Dornberger and Wernher von Braun of the Rocket Research Center in Peenemünde briefed Hitler about the state of their research in July 1943, the production of “wonder-weapons” was given highest priority. Following an Allied

bombing raid upon the Usedom facilities, SS-General Kammler, head of SS construction projects (also responsible for all projects built by camp prisoners), Minister Albert Speer and Dornberger decided in Berlin in August 1943 that the completion of the V-weapon series (*Vergeltung* = retaliation) should be transferred to underground tunnels near Nordhausen. Beginning August 28, 1943 until April 1945, around 60.000 prisoners from the Mittelbau-Dora camp had to build tunnels and produce rockets under the technical direction of Arthur Rudolph. Forced-laborers endured inhumane conditions, and well over 10.000 of them died.

Monowitz

The concentration camp Auschwitz III, known first as Camp Buna and then as Monowitz (East of the main camp Auschwitz I and 8 km away from Auschwitz II/Birkenau) was erected in 1942 for forced labor in the giant new industrial complex Buna IV for I.G. Farben AG. Other corporations (among them Metall-Union, Krupp, AEG and Siemens-Schuckert) also opened production plants in Auschwitz a short time later. Monowitz, like the “KZ-Arbeitsdorf” in Wolfsburg, was a pilot project for hundreds of forced-labor camps that were set up at existing industrial facilities so that production did not need to be relocated to concentration camps. The forced labor of camp prisoners in the 38 satellite camps was directed from Monowitz. Companies sent sick and exhausted work slaves back to the camps – often to a sure death – and requested “fresh” prisoners from the SS-administration. Beginning on January 18, 1945, most prisoners were “evacuated” from Auschwitz, that is, forced on long death marches without sufficient food and clothing; nine days later Russian troops liberated a few hundred survivors in camp Monowitz.

Natzweiler

The Struthof concentration camp stood near the village Natzweiler in the Vosges Mountains from Winter 1940/41 to September 1944. In a nearby quarry, the SS-run company “DEST” (headquarter at Geisbergstr. 21 in Berlin) subjected prisoners to unbearable work conditions. The gas chamber also supplied the University of Straßbourg’s anatomy department with corpses of prisoners. The camp had over 50 satellite camps, mainly in Baden and Württemberg. Prisoners were evacuated to these places in late 1944 from the main camp in order to help with underground arms production and with the mining of oil shale. Approximately 30.000 prisoners from occupied places in Europe died in these camps.

Neuengamme

In 1938 the SS acquired a closed-down brickworks factory in Neuengamme and created a satellite of the Sachsenhausen camp there. In 1940 Neuengamme was declared an independent concentration camp. Prisoners were loaned to companies by the SS as a cheap workforce in brick and arms production. Almost every second inmate fell victim to “extermination by labor.” In the camp and its over 70 satellite camps in the northern parts of Germany approximately 55.000 people were murdered.

Niederhagen

The smallest independent concentration camp in the German Reich was the Niederhagen camp. Prisoners from the Sachsenhausen camp built it in 1941 in the former Wewelsburg’s community woods (on the left side of the street leading to Niederntudorf). Himmler chose the camp name as camouflage, meant to disguise a connection between the camp and Wewelsburg, which had been selected as the SS’s ideological center. The camp was built for the exclusive purpose of realizing SS plans to transform the old castle and village Wewelsburg into a giant, new SS colony. The cost of this ambitious project was paid by the SS foundation “Society for the Advancement and Preservation of German Cultural Monuments.” The head of the SS had received some million *Reichmarks* as a principle investment from the Dresdener Bank.

Although an apartment complex was built on the grounds in the sixties, some remnants of the former camp are still recognizable: the gatehouse was turned into a residential building and grocery store; the camp kitchen serves today as the village firehouse; and a section of the parade grounds remained untouched.

Ohrdruf

In 1944, construction of alternative headquarters for the *Führer* was begun in Ohrdruf by a Buchenwald satellite camp. For that purpose a total of approximately 12.000 prisoners drilled several tunnels into the mountain. As a result of heavy labor prisoners died in the north and South camps by the hundreds (mass grave along the street to Luisenthal / memorial plaque; an additional grave on the military training ground.) American troops found dead and dying inmates everywhere upon arrival in April 1945.

Papenburg

Papenburg was the administrative seat of the 15 Emsland concentration camps operated by the National Socialists between 1933 and 1945. They were located along the Ems and near the border to the Netherlands between Papenburg and Lingen. These camps fulfilled varying functions as concentration camps, prisons and military and POW camps. The first political prisoners in the Emsland camps called themselves “the Moor soldiers.” The so-called “Moor Cultivation Program,” carried out by the prisoners, gave way to work in armament firms, industry and agriculture starting in 1942. The total number of prisoners in the Emsland camps up until 1945 amounted to about 70.000. More than twenty-five hundred people died in the concentration and prison camps (included among these: Esterwegen, Börgermoor, and Neusustrum). In the P.O.W. camps more than 15.000 (mostly Soviet) prisoners died, and other research has mentioned up to 27.000 dead.

Plaszow / Krakow

The German *Wehrmacht* entered Krakow on September 6, 1939 and the city was named administrative headquarters of the *Generalgouvernement*. The governor of the district of Krakow, Otto Wächter, ordered the creation of a ghetto for Jews still remaining in Krakow and the outlying areas. Eighteen thousand individuals were locked behind walls and barbed wire in the ghetto on a few hundred square meters. During two murder campaigns by the Gestapo, police forces and the *Waffen-SS* in May/June and October 1942, 13.000 Jews were dragged out of the ghetto to deaths in Belzec and Auschwitz. Survivors of the ghetto-clearing campaign, during which German special task forces already killed hundreds in the streets of Krakow, ended up in the forced-labor camp Plaszow, five kilometers from the heart of the city, in March 1943. This camp was brought entirely under SS management as a concentration camp in 1944 with around 25.000 inmates. Among the prisoners were several thousand Poles from Warsaw, Hungarian Jews, Roma and Sinti. Beginning in summer 1942 the bodies of approx. 8000 murdered in Krakow and Plaszow were burned; those prisoners who still remained in the camp were brought to Auschwitz in May 1944 and January 1945.

Ravensbrück

Prisoners from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp built the Ravensbrück camp in 1938/39. In May 1939, female prisoners from the former Lichtenburg camp near Torgau were transferred into this new camp in Fürstenberg an der Havel. In 1941 a camp for men was added onto the women’s camp. The entire camp had a perimeter of about 60 hectares (24 acres). Directly next to the camp, the firm Siemens & Halske built workshops in which inmates had to make primarily armaments. Approximately 132.000 women and 20.000 men were imprisoned in Ravensbrück and its satellites. In the bordering Uckermark concentration camp were 1000 young people. The number of dead has been estimated at more than 10.000. Shortly before the liberation of the camp by Russian troops in April 1945, the SS-guards forced over 20.000 women on “death marches” towards the Baltic Sea. The memorial was dedicated in 1959 upon a portion of the old camp on the shores of the Schwedtsee (Schwedt Lake).

Riga

After the German troops marched into Riga on July 1, 1941, German and Latvian fascists forced together several thousand Jews and murdered them in the forest of Bikernieki. Almost all of the 30.000 Jews from the large ghetto were shot in the Rumbula forest by Germans and Latvians on December 8 and 9, 1941. After the confinement of 16.000 Reich Jews directly afterwards, it was then nicknamed the “German ghetto.” Following additional murder campaigns, several prisoners were brought to camps Kaiserwald and Stutthof.

Around 20 kilometers Southwest of Riga, upstream along the Daugava River, Salaspils Memorial is situated in the pine forest near Rumbula. From 1941 to 1944 more than 100.000 people from all over Europe were murdered here.

Monumental sculptures and the sound of a metronome dominate the memorial site, created in 1976. The foundations of the former barracks and the shooting sites in the forest are marked.

Sachsenhausen

The Sachsenhausen concentration camp was built in 1936/37 on the outskirts of Oranienburg, directly next to the Reich's capital (Berlin). Of the estimated 200.000 inmates from 47 nations—many of which were Soviet POWs—over 100.000 died in Sachsenhausen. The camp was also a training center for concentration camp commanders and SS-guards. The memorial site has existed since 1961. A new project, which also includes the former "Special Camp No. 7" run by the Soviet military administration, is in preparation.

Sandbostel

In September 1939 the war prisoner camp Stalag X B Sandbostel was built South of Bremervörde in the moorlands between the Elbe and Weser rivers in direct proximity to the command center for one million war prisoners from over forty nations. Tens of thousands of prisoners of war were incarcerated in the camp and thousands who died were buried in mass graves at Sandbostel. Ten thousand inmates from the Neuengamme camp's external task force unit dragged themselves during the last days of the war on "evacuation marches" to Sandbostel; 3000 died, many of them perished after the liberation by British troops on April 29, 1945. The local population was forced by the British military to take care of the sick and bury the dead.

Smolensk

The German army was in Smolensk between July 1941 and September 1943. In the Southwest part of Smolensk stood the "Dulag 126." A memorial in today's Leninpark reminds visitors that in this German camp, 60.000 POWs and civilians did not survive. It also recalls that 2000 of 15.000 Soviet POWs died in a march from Vjasma to Smolensk (175 km). Ninety-three percent of Smolensk was destroyed during the retreat of the German Wehrmacht.

Sobibor

Sobibor extermination camp was situated in the region under command of SS Police Chief Globocnik, and Inspector Wirth of "Operation Reinhard" oversaw the mass murders. From May 1942 to October 1943 his task force killed approx. 200.000 Jews from the Netherlands, Slovakia, France, Vilnius, Minsk, Lublin and the German Reich. Two to three hours elapsed between the arrival of deportation trains, the gassing of victims and the burial of bodies. Starting at the end of 1942, the corpses were dug up once again and burned in order to eliminate the traces of mass murder. During a successful rebellion by prisoners making up the work commando force in October 1943, a number of inmates were able to escape the death camp. At the end of 1943 the camp was levelled to the ground.

The memorial directly at Sobibor train station is an open site without visitor assistance. It lies 15 km South of the city of Wlodawa in the district of Chelm, Poland.

Stukenbrock

Survivors of the POW camp established a cemetery in Stukenbrock after their liberation. In this cemetery lie 65.000 soldiers and forced-laborers, who died of starvation, exhaustion, abuse and illness. Thus originated the largest Soviet graveyard on West German soil. In July 1941, the first soldiers were herded into the "POW-Team Camp" (official National Socialist title, "STALAG 326 [VI/K]), which was located in a fenced-in meadow. During the period of its existence, around two million Soviet, Polish, Italian, Yugoslavian and French POWs were imprisoned here. For decades the cemetery has been maintained by civil officials, as the POW camp "Eselheide" would have otherwise been long forgotten. A local citizen's group in Stukenbrock supports the initiative "Flowers for Stuckenbrock," which promotes the construction of a museum.

Stutthof

The first inmates were already brought to concentration camp Stutthof on September 2, 1939, one day after German troops attacked Poland. It was the last concentration camp liberated by Polish and Soviet troops on May 9, 1945. During these five years more than 65.000 people were murdered in Stutthof.

Tallinn

After the German invasion in July 1941, Estonia became part of the “Reichskommissariats Ostland” (East Territory of the Reich). It had an autonomous administration run by Estonian fascists in the capital city Tallinn (Reval). By January 1942 Head Commander of the SA battalion, Sandberger, could already report to Berlin that Estonia was “Jew-free.” Beginning fall 1942 several thousand Jews from Vilnius (Wilna), Kowno (Kaunas), Bistritz, Theresienstadt and Riga were deported to Estonia’s oil shale quarry and its several work camps. As Soviet troops advanced in September 1944, all Jews in the concentration camps Lagedi and Klooga were murdered. Slaves and others who had not yet been killed through hard work and imprisonment in Vaivara and other concentration camps were deported across the Baltic to the Stutthof camp in former East Prussia.

Theresienstadt

As early as 1940, the Gestapo had set up a prison in Terezín’s small fortress, and starting in 1941 Theresienstadt became an assembly camp for transports from Bohemia, Moravia and the German Reich. The Nazis deported roughly 150.000 Jews to the so-called “elders’ ghetto. From October 1942 onward, the first transports were sent from here to Auschwitz-Birkenau. The deplorable camp conditions and lack of care caused the deaths of a total of 33.000 people. When these conditions became known abroad as well, the Propaganda Ministry was prompted to produce a film with the infamous title “*The Führer Gives a City to the Jews.*” Prior to the wrap-up of filming, the film crew was deported to Auschwitz. More than 87.000 Jews were brought away in 63 transports to extermination camps. When Russian troops reached the camp on May 9th 1945, they found 16.000 survivors still alive.

Trawniki

One of the many camps within the Lublin district under command of the High SS- and Police Commander Globocnik was in Trawniki. The forced-labor camp produced items for the army, such as uniforms. Several thousand Jews were brought to the Trawniki camp in June 1942 from the Piaski ghetto, which lay 12 km to the West. (This ghetto was a collection point for deportees from Mainz, Regensburg, Munich and Theresienstadt. After thousands were sent to Trawniki those remaining in the ghetto were murdered in Sobibor and Belzec.) In spring of 1943, more than 5.000 Jewish female forced-laborers arrived in Trawniki from the Warsaw ghetto. After the uprising in the Sobibor camp on October 14, 1943, SS-Reich Commander Himmler ordered the liquidation of the camp in the Lublin district. During the extermination operation in November 1943, codename “Harvest Festival,” forty-three thousand Jews were killed, six thousand in Camp Trawniki alone.

Directly adjacent to the work camp was an SS training camp for around 5000 “Trawniki”- men. It is here that mostly Ukrainians, Germans, Latvians and Lithuanians were molded into a functioning murder squad. Trained here were special forces for teams in Auschwitz, Belzec, Sobibor, Stutthof and Treblinka as well as troops used in mass murders and the liquidation of ghettos.

Treblinka

Just two kilometers from Poniatowo train station and reachable by train connection lay Treblinka extermination camp in the community of Kosow Lacki, in the North of district Siedlce, Northeast of Warsaw (90 km). More than 750.000 Jews from the districts of Warsaw, Radom, Bialystok and Lublin, as well as from Macedonia-Thracia, the German Reich and Theresienstadt were murdered here between July 1942 and October 1943. As of August 1942 Chief SS-Regiment Officer Franz Stangl was camp commander. Tens of thousands of Sinti and Roma were also gassed in Treblinka: trains brought over 300.000 Jews from the Warsaw ghetto to the extermination site. The Chief of the *Reichsbahn*, Dr. Ganzmüller, reported to SS-Reichsführer Himmler on July 28, 1942 that since July 22, 1944, freight trains containing 5000 people each had left the Stawki-Straße railway crossing in Warsaw for Treblinka on a daily basis.

Treblinka was cleared away in the fall of 1943, during which the SS attempted to conceal the mass murder by burning corpses.

A memorial site designed by Franciszek Duszenko and Adam Haupt has stood on the site of the former camp since 1964.

Usedom / Karlshagen

In April 1943, the air force testing grounds and military research institute requested concentration camp inmates to assist with the construction and preliminary series production of the V1 aerial bomb. Prior to that, missile builders at the Heinkel factory in Oranienburg had convinced themselves of the advantages of forced labor, which they received, for example, in the form of prisoners from Sachsenhausen concentration camp. From May to October 1943 over a thousand inmates were transported to the camp's external task force unit at Karlshagen on Usedom in order to become active in the manufacture of missiles in Peenemünde. Secrecy was also ensured by regularly cremating the remains of inmates at the Greifswald crematorium who had left the work site. During the night of August 17 in 1943 the Royal Air Force bombed the facilities in Peenemünde. Following this, Hitler, Speer and Himmler decided to concentrate the production of the "weapons of retaliation" in a protected place. On August 28 the first inmates from Buchenwald were sent to Nordhausen in order to drill the necessary tunnels into the rock for the underground production of "wonderweapons."

Vaihingen

"Wiesengrund Satellite Camp" of the Natzweiler Concentration Camp, 3 km Northeast of Vaihingen.

The concentration camp existed from summer 1943 to April 1945. In the camp cemetery, which was established in 1956 and is located between Ensingen and Vaihingen; numbered gravestones (1-1488) stand for the prisoners whose corpses were found in a mass grave.

Leonberg satellite camp of the Natzweiler Concentration camp:

Since March 1944, inmates had worked in underground tunnels for the company Messerschmitt.

Three-hundred-seventy-three of the camp's dead lie in a mass grave upon the Blosenberg/Leonberg near the *Autobahn* tunnel. When the French allied forces were approaching the production machines were transferred to Bavaria on March 30, 1945.

Vilnius

In 1939 the Lithuanian capital Vilnius (Wilna) had 200.000 residents and was called "Lithuania's Jerusalem" for the 55.000 Jews living here. After the city's occupation (6/24/1941) by German troops, Germans and Lithuanians murdered over 30.000 Jews from July to December of 1941 in Ponary, 12 km outside Wilna. Beginning in September 1941 all surviving Jews had to move to the Wilna ghetto. After deporting over 10.000 men and women for forced labor in Latvian and Estonian concentration camps, the ghetto was closed in summer 1943, and 5.000 women, children and elderly people were killed in Ponary and the Sobibor extermination camp. Twenty-five hundred Jews from work camps in Wilna were murdered in Ponary at the beginning of July 1944, just a few days before Soviet troops took over Wilna (July 13, 1944). Only 3.000 Wilna Jews survived the planned mass murder.

Kaunas (Kowno; 100 km West of Vilnius): Located on the North edge of the city in the czarist "Ninth Fort" is a memorial site for the over 80.000 murdered victims of the German occupation, the Jewish ghetto in Viliampole, and Soviet prisoners of war.

Vitebsk

Before the occupation by German troops, the thousand-year-old Vitebsk had 180.000 residents, 80.000 of which were Jews. Upon the army's retreat, the city was completely destroyed and planted with mines. Only about 100 people still lived there when Soviet troops entered the city in June 1944. A few kilometers East of Vitebsk 76.000 corpses of Soviet POWs were found in the German "Stalag 313."

Vught / S-Hertogenbosch

The concentration camp Vught/Herzogenbusch operated from 1943 to 1944. Over 30.000 inmates of different nationalities were abused here, including 12.000 Jews deported to the extermination camps from Vught. Several hundred individuals met their death in the so-called detention camp.

The memorial center, founded in 1990, consists of the crematorium, reconstructed living barracks, a model of the camp and a memorial wall meant to remember the several hundred resistance fighters who were shot. Changing exhibitions discuss in detail current events, such as neo-Nazism or the war in former Yugoslavia.

Warschau / Warsaw

Over 350.000 Jews lived in Poland's capital city Warsaw. After German troops seized Warsaw on September 28, 1939, the occupiers' terror against the population began: arrests, murder in the streets, shooting deaths, deportations to concentration camps, abduction into forced labor. November 1939 saw the issuance of the first anti-Jewish ordinances, which succeeded in completely crippling the Jewish residents' lives in just a few months. Beginning mid-November 1940 a ghetto district was closed off in the city's North sector, into which up to 500.000 Jews were pressed together. Fully inadequate food supply and health care contributed to the monthly rise of death rates in the ghetto. Deportations, called "Aktionen," or "campaigns" began in July 1942. Over 300.000 Jews from Warsaw were sent to be murdered in Treblinka. Beginning April 1943, the last remaining Jews started a ghetto revolt against overwhelming numbers of German troops, and the resistance held out for one month. Barely 2000 Jews survived the "selections," deportations and "evacuations" in Warsaw. Only a few reminders of the Jewish life in Warsaw remained: most important are the Jewish cemetery on Okopowa Street and the Nozyk Synagogue on Twarda Street.

Westerbork

Set up in 1939 by the Dutch government as an internment camp for exiled Jews from Germany, Westerbork became a "gateway" camp in May 1940 following the German army's occupation of the Netherlands. From 1942 to 1945 more than 100.000 Dutch Jews were deported from here. The camp had the nickname "Camp of False Hope," since many prisoners who had been abused in the camps at Amersfoort and Vught received medical treatment here before the SS transported them to extermination camps. The former camp is situated in Hooghalen near Assen in the province of Drenthe and was used after its liberation as a detention camp for political prisoners. The memorial site has been here since 1983.

Wüste / Desert

In order to significantly weaken the operational capabilities of German armed forces, Allied bombers very intentionally attacked all buildings and refineries of the mineral oil industry. Consequently, German airplanes couldn't engage Allied airplanes due to the lack of aircraft fuel. The National Socialists undertook sweeping mobilization measures, in which 100.000 concentration camp prisoners as well as 250.000 forced-laborers and POWs working for the organization Todt were engaged in deadly operations, including the production of fuel. Tens of thousands died upon enactment of the "Sofortprogramm" (Emergency Program). One of these projects was the extraction of fuels from the oil shale quarry between Balingen and Rottweil under the codename "Wüste" (= Desert). The special task forces from concentration camps Natzweiler in Bisingen, Dautmergen, Dortmund, Erzingen, Schömburg and Schörzingen were managed from Balingen. In the course of a few weeks around 4000 prisoners died (mass grave near B27 near Bisingen).

(...)

The Competition: “Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe”

Incentive and Goal:

The so-called “Final Solution” destroyed millions of Jewish lives. In order to finally bring to light that for which there had been no public demand for almost 50 years, the “Perspective Berlin” brought the first plan for a memorial into the public sphere in 1988. Upon the construction of a “Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe,” it will become clear that today’s Germany accepts its responsibility to not evade the truth and surrender to the forgetting, to honor the murdered Jews of Europe, to reflect upon their grief and shame, to take up the burden of the past, and to mark a new chapter in the history of human co-existence, in which no injustice to minorities may be possible.

Competition Sponsors:

The Federal Republic of Germany, represented by the Ministry of the Interior; the “Förderkreis zur Errichtung eines Denkmals für die ermordeten Juden e.V.” (Association for the Construction of a Memorial to the Murdered Jews); the state of Berlin, represented by the Senate Office for Construction and Residency.

Type of Competition:

The original call for project proposals was a competition between anonymous artists. In addition, 12 internationally renowned artists were invited to participate.

Participation Requirements:

Those qualified to participate were artists in the graphic or pictorial arts and related fields, who had lived or worked in Germany for at least six months. Cooperation with writers, historians, urban and rural planners, architects and others was allowed.

Additional Artists:

The twelve artists invited to participate were Magdalena Abakonovicz (Warsaw); Christian Boltanski (Malakoff); Rebecca Horn (Berlin); Magdalena Jetelova (Bergheim-Erfurt); Dani Kravan (Paris); Fritz Koenig (Munich); Jannis Kounellis (Rome); Gerhard Merz (Cologne); Karl Prantl (Vienna); David Rabinowitch (New York); Richard Serra (New York) and Günther Uecker (Düsseldorf).

Except for Christian Boltanski, who declined the invitation, all the invited artists received a participation fee of 50.000 DM.

Prize Commission/ Judges:

Stefanie Endlich, Eberhard Jäckel, Walter Jens, Salomon Korn, Horst Möller, Wolfgang Nagel, Ansgar Nierhoff, Arie Rahamimoff, Ulrich Roloff-Momin, Lea Rosh, Hermann Rudolph, Oscar Schneider, Michael Schoenholz, Harry Szeemann, Hans Jochen Vogel.

Prizes:

Approximately 300.000 DM were available for prizes; allocation and distribution of these funds were left to the judges’ discretion. Up to 15 million DM were allowed for project execution, including artist grants, construction costs, and the cost of outdoor installations.

Dates:

The competition invitation could be picked up between April 18, 1994 and May 6, 1994.
Competition entries were due on October 28, 1994.

Competition Property:

The 20.000 square-meter piece of property lies in the former “Ministry Gardens” on the Western edge of the historical downtown area, in the center of the county of Berlin. The German government made this property available for the construction of the “Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe.”

The Assignment:

Today's artistic rendering should symbolically combine the turn toward grief, shock, and respect with a conscious recognition of shame and guilt. Understanding and appreciation should be able to grow, also for a future life in peace, freedom, equality and tolerance. Artistic interpretation of the assignment remains open. The art should speak for itself in terms of how it deals with the issue.

Delivery of the Documents:

A total of 2,600 invitations for proposals were sent and 528 entries received.

The Judging:

The prize board came together on January 18-20, 1995 and March 15-16, 1995.

The Board's Recommendation:

After three rounds of judging and discussion of proposals remaining on the short list, the board decided to award two projects the first prize. It was to be discussed with each artist whether or not their costs could be minimized. The prize board left it to the three sponsors to examine the proposals and decide upon the best entry.

First through eighth place finishers received official recognition and—alongside the invited artists—were awarded DM 50,000 each.

Ninth through seventeenth place finishers were recognized without an award.

The Short List:

1. Christine Jakob-Marks, Hella Rolfes, Hans Scheib, Richard Stangle, Felix Theissen (Berlin)
1. Simon Ungers, Christiana Moss, Christina Alt (Köln)
3. Fritz Koenig, Christoph Hackelsberger, Klaus Stepan, K.H. Werner (Ganslberg/Landshut)
4. Arno Dietsche, Anna Simon-Dietsche (Berlin)
5. Dionne Josée, Nicolas Lepage, Vincent Laplante, Camilla Wrseen, Marc Aubin, Martin Bourgean (Berlin)
6. Georg Seibert (Berlin)
7. Rolf Storz, SCALA Nagler/Esefeld, H.-J. Wöhrle, Katrin Semmler, Katarina Wissler, Jo Nei (Schiltach)
8. Klaus Madlowski, Mathias Gladisch, Reiner Madlowski (Hannover)
9. Rudolf Herz, Reinhard Matz, Peter Elkin, Heribert Schulmeyer, Axel Schenk, Furch, Züplin, Brechtelterra (Köln)
10. Stefan Pfaff Hösch, Georg Hennecken (Aachen)
11. Renata Stih, Frieder Schnock
Dr. Bernd Nicolai, Dragica Puhovski (Berlin)
12. Roosbeh Badie (Bonn)
13. Günther Kobusch (Berlin)
14. Marlene Berthold D. and Partner (Unterschleißheim/Munich)
15. Andrew Thomas Ortwein (Frankfurt/Main)
16. Paul Fuchs, Paul Melia, Büro Weinzierl (Peterskirchen)
17. Burkhard Grashorn, Manon Hoof (Oldenburg)

Exhibit:

All competition entries were displayed at the former *Staatsratsgebäude* in downtown Berlin (Mitte) from April 11, 1995 to May 7, 1995. The exhibit opening occurred on April 10, 1995.



Update (December 1995)

On June 28, 1995, the Senate Office for Construction and Residency announced on behalf of all sponsors that the proposal by the artist group around Christine Jakob-Marks would be implemented. A few days later, Chancellor Helmut Kohl spoke out against the implementation of the proposal. Since then there has been no decision about further action.

From the Visitors' Book (selection)

From April 11 to May 7, 1995, the 528 designs turned in for the competition "Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe" were displayed in the former DDR-Staatsratsgebäude in Berlin-Mitte.

"The only one acceptable is the Bus Stop! The rest is cliché symbolism." D.B., Cologne

"Right on! Why not Bus Stop? All of the other designs are similar in their concept – and are laid on with pompous, flowery, self-satisfied words. Berlin city-planners always exhibit the most boring designs, you know. (Lustgarten, Spreebogen,...)." A.J., Berlin

"It should really be the 'Bus Stop!'" P.M.

"It isn't right to put up such a pompous memorial. The atrocities are already documented at the individual sites. We should spend the money that is being spent for this type of memorial on higher education for youth instead. It's more rewarding to speak directly to a person than to do it through a monumental memorial." B.K.

"My whole family were victims of the Holocaust – we need a memory now more than ever after 50 years so that the past isn't forgotten. But the size of the memorial scares me!..." G.Z., Berlin

"Against giganto-mania and notions of redemption – in otherwords: the BUS STOP!" K.D.

"A giant square as first place? Very German." D.N.

"All of this is highly questionable, the Germans should let it go after 50 years!" S.R., Israel

"If we are to see a memorial for the Holocaust as a sign that (above all with regard to the future) we want to remember, then in my opinion only the 'Busstop' is believable. Busy activity at such a train station would be a reassuring indicator to me that the necessary encounter with history takes place. But what if the buses were to remain empty? An exciting question! A decision in favor of realizing this solution would be a courageous decision. But who is courageous after all? N.H., Berlin

"Desireable would be a memorial that can't just be ticked off on a city tour, but invites you to actively 'experience.' Let the 'Bus Stop' be named here as exemplary...Question: why is the exhibit foreseen only for such a short time?" St. Z.

"The only possibility: the Bus Stop!" A.v.B.

"Hollywood-theatrics on crack!!! Only Bus-Stop is honest." A.H.

"Today "working-through" can no longer be the mere tallying of victims and labelling of perpetrators – "working-through" must all the more mean the work of finding out how and why human beings can commit violent acts against others.

"Working-through" must be research into violence. None of the designs contain this premise. Nevertheless, I like Bus-Stop the best because of its unsentimentality and pragmatism. P.S.: the red buses themselves could become mobile memorials over the years and experience their fixed place in the consciousness of the German people." T.H., Kaiserlautern

"I don't like the runner-up project from Ch. Jacob-Marck too much: Massada stones bring to mind too much Israeli nationalism today. I would prefer a non-monument memorial like the bus stop project." Y.D., Bologna, Italy

"For over seven years the initiative for this memorial has existed. The whole time practically no real public discussion of the theme has taken place. ...The lack of debate shows that the majority prefers to be repressed or simply isn't interested. Thus I think it more meaningful to sell the grounds and use the profit for the countless other authentic sites of memory that make it their ongoing task to convey this history to people. For the planned memorial the task will only remain as the new Berlin tourist attraction and a stage for state-sponsored activities." F.W., Berlin

"...I think the money would be better spent to keep up the maintenance of those 'genuine' memorials, rather than to set the chosen (jury-selected) one in the center of Berlin." E.S., U.S.A.

"Question: Why don't the visitors of the exhibit get to help decide? I find the two nominations from this narrow selection a big mistake!" M.A.

"Since we are of the opinion that the horror of the millionfold extermination of Jews cannot be adequately depicted in any artistic-aesthetic form of design whatsoever, we plead for a solution like that suggested in the Bus-Stop project. On the whole, the exhibit in its presentation corresponds little to the matter at hand." H.K./H.K.

"Why is a lid put on the horror? I'm for 'Bus-Stop' and so for living memory." C.Sch.

"We're for Bus-Stop. No question. (The money saved going to the memorial sites)." M.K./B.B.

"Only the 'Bus-Stop' involved me personally and encouraged an active work of mourning on my part." J.D., Berlin

"If so many artists realize that such a memorial is actually impossible, why do they keep turning out such embarrassing designs then?" R. Sch.

"Impressive and gruesome. Am for the Bus-Stop as a daily, ongoing reminder." W.L.

"Most of the designs selected are distinguished by "shallowness." Only Bus Stop is an exception to that." W.L.

"Do we need a nuclear explosion in order to remind ourselves of the murder of Jews and all others persecuted during the Third Reich? What is so inconceivable about this event? Haven't we learned anything from it? Haven't enough studies and historical research been done and theoretical treatments written? Can we still use the term 'inconceivable' then? Why do so many people question aesthetics, only to do something – and then have second thoughts about respectable commissions? Bus Stop is and remains the most impressive idea since it doesn't misdirect the eye to an artificial place." F.W.

"Next we ought to collect money for an even larger property lot. Then we could realize an even more megalomaniacal design. Then we would finally be sure to create the world's largest Shoah memorial ever. How could it 'come to all that'? Answer: through megalomania." F.F.

"Spend the money on preserving the existing memorials (concentration camps). These are already there and must be preserved." D.H.

"Bus Stop would be the prizeworthy memorial and would also enable learning about the Holocaust the best..." E.T.

"I would be pleased if my suggestion to show the exhibit throughout Europe were picked up. The theme quite surely concerns more people than just those who have possibility to see it here in Berlin. I find Bus-Stop exceptionally noteworthy." A.B.

"Please do Bus Stop." M.S.

"The banality and normality of the bus stop as an active memorial would best motivate a remembering that could engage present and future generations." R.B.H.

"Bus Stop, an active step against forgetting and forsaking!" T.T.

"Nothing can be more monumental than the sites of these atrocities themselves. Therefore the idea with the bus station." O.L., Israel

"...The only design that doesn't allow deceptive, pathetic circumvention is 'Bus Stop.' That's why it also has no chance of being realized." M.W.

"GIMME A BUS STOP!" C.Sch.

"...Bus Stop above all others comes to terms with the basic problems that the entire project of such a memorial in this city and in this land provocatively raises." C.H.

"...My feeling nonetheless is that the jury has indeed decided for two meaningful solutions. Among other things I have doubt that it's really sensible to allow such a central memorial without detailed information at the same time. What will names like Treblinka and Sobibor say to a school class that visits this memorial in perhaps twenty years? For that reason I would also find it wrong to see the chosen designs as a kind of 'either-or' to the conception of 'Bus Stop.' Not at all! Instead I think that, quite independent of the design later realized, a modified form of the 'Bus Stop' should be realized in addition..." H.U., Berlin

"Almost all of the designs are too pathetic and gigantic for me. I actually liked the design by Renata Stih and Frieder Schnock best because it contrasts a constructive work of enlightening to a lifeless memorial. Although I am still irritated by the exclusion of homosexuals and the limiting of a memorial only to the Jews, I think the memorial, whatever the form in which it's realized, is necessary and worthy of support." R.H.

"The thought of constructing a memorial for the murdered Jews on some square is completely mistaken. The sites of memory persist. For that reason BUS STOP is the best solution, the realization of which I have difficulty imagining. Alternative suggestion: Road signs to the sites of the horror. The money saved should go to a foundation dedicated to remembrance, for ex., to the Centrum Judaicum on Oranienburger Street." J.F., Berlin

"Lots of people have a great interest in bus rides to Buchenwald, Bergen-Belsen etc." Sch., Berlin

"The work Bus-Stop is the only work which really grapples conceptually with the notion of a 'memorial.' A pity that so many mediocre works can be found here." P. Sch.

"The longer I wandered through the exhibit, and the more designs I saw, the more absurd the idea seemed to me to do justice to the Holocaust with an oversized memorial. On the other hand the completed process, from the idea up through the exhibit, is highly informative. But keep, if any, the 'Bus Stop'..." N.W.

Emphases in the original – editors' note

Voices from the Press (selection)

"A highly thought-worthy concept comes from Renata Stih and Frieder Schnock...The artist pair suggests a 'bus stop': 'Whoever wants to mourn the victims must make their way to the sites of the extermination.' Daily buses should therefore drive to Auschwitz, Buchenwald and other places. The concept contains the ideas: what then, if these red buses remain only scarcely occupied? The positive indication of quiet, self-conscious remembrance that the public wants to show would be put to shame before the whole world. The demand as Adorno formulated it, "to equip thought and action so that Auschwitz never repeats itself," cannot be grasped by any memorial and would in this processual non-memorial be understood. For such radicalism the jury had eleventh place remaining."

Bernhard Schulz in: Der Tagesspiegel, 12. April 95

"There is no artistically sound expression of the Holocaust; and art is in this case everything, whether high or low, consciously or unconsciously, which isn't historical witness. Only our internal movement as we face the facts is capable of being appropriate. If the memorial can acknowledge this and to that end its own insufficiency, then it might happen to be of use to us in the end, however helpless it is or precisely through its inescapable helplessness."

Jens Jessen in: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 29. June 95

"Who remembers the Roma, Sinti, homosexuals, opposing Christians, communists and social democrats? Musn't one just as well recall the millions of murdered Poles and Russians who lost their lives to Hitler's field maneuvers? After all, the Nazis also wanted to let the Polish nation rot away as one knows – and later those Russians, who wouldn't have been suitable as slaveworkers in the new *Lebensraum*. And one question still: will other groups of victims be remembered according to the sum of their dead with smaller concrete plaques? Why can't we Germans let things be somewhat more humbling just for once?"

letter to the editor from Peter Sahla in: Frankfurter Rundschau, 5. July 95

"The Berlin Republic has...the chance to build something better at the Brandenburg Gate than a self-portrait of the good postwar German, for whom the 'admission of guilt' frequently misguides an all-too-easy identification with the victims. The discussion is open again...It must be a memorial that leaves 'the living Jews air to breathe' (Rafael Seligmann) and knocks the wind out of the good Germans."

Mechthild Küpper in: Wochenpost, 6. July 95

"One cannot accuse the fine arts of appearing too immature to represent the topic. Almost all the arts have failed. One memorial are the testimonies of those who were there, the texts and memories of Primo Levi, Jean Améry all the way to Ruth Klüger."

Frank Schirrmacher in: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, July 8, 1995.

One project in particular raises itself above all these hundreds of more or less absurd, more or less horrid, more or less monumental, more or less conventional proposals and goes its own way with complete and unsurpassable consequence: the 'Bus Stop' project by the Berlin artist group around Renata Stih und Frieder Schnock. Instead of a memorial, they wanted to establish a bus station on the space, from which red buses would drive to the real concentration and extermination camps in the near or distant vicinity, and even to Auschwitz or Sobibor...In this way, they promote remembrance of the Holocaust and the acknowledgement of crime scenes far away from that lofty place in the middle of the capital city, amid the banal everyday of our mobile society. This extremely multi-layered proposal was hotly debated by the jury until the end but snagged eleventh place, even though it diverged from the sponsors' original ideas—and even though Lea Rosh thought it was 'appalling.'

Gabriele Riedle in: Die Woche, July 14, 1995

Berlin is to have a central, German Holocaust memorial. Considering what is currently affordable, objections and opinions voiced so far advise a return to the proposal 'Bus Stop.' This memorial is designed by Renata Stih and Frieder Schnock to be a bus station, from which red buses drive to the historical places of Nazi crimes in Berlin and surrounding areas. As authentic places, these have an effect not to be surpassed by artistic memorials. Documentation of the history and magnitude of these crimes is also housed in the bus station pavilion. This proposal combines concrete objects with activity...Such a **site of reflection** would be as present and representative as the public wishes it to be. A different time might want and will be able to do something different.

Jürgen Busche in: Süddeutsche Zeitung, July 15/16, 1995

President Roman Herzog has indirectly questioned the necessity of the **central** "Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe" planned for Berlin. Without explicitly addressing the debate about the Holocaust memorial, Herzog said in a published interview with the *Frankfurter Rundschau* that his interest in large memorials is "less developed than [the interest] in numerous memorial sites."

Der Tagesspiegel, July 17, 1995

One could use the grounds for a permanent exhibition of these proposals, and it would do more for the general social education about the Holocaust than if one of these three-dimensional incantation ceremonies were installed. And if this seems too radical for those making the decisions, then they should at least content themselves with the proposal that has most openly articulated the dilemma of the whole competition—namely the placeless-ness of the crimes—and build a bus station on the grounds. A didactic sightseeing-program to the sites of marginalization, deportation and murder is not necessary. It would be enough if now and then a bus stopped here, at a 'Holocaust Memorial' station, where one found a memorial that wouldn't be built, a station where no one boards or disembarks.

Hanno Loewy in Frankfurter Rundschau August 14, 1995

"None of the designs proposed gives a satisfactory answer and could be accepted, with the exception of the bus stop concept, which is entirely anti-monument and intelligent. That's what I mean by information. You give people a possibility to receive information and proceed to the sites where this information is...I would like to see it (the Bus-Stop, Ed.) realized, be it on Pariser Platz or elsewhere. If it isn't set up there, I'd like to see it realized near the Jewish Museum."

Amnon Barzel in an interview with Angelika Stepken in: neue bildende kunst, 3/95



The fence around the construction site for the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in 1995
(someone placed a comment on that fence "The Discussion is a Memorial")

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