

The following text was written to accompany the video and installation - Forest Paths.

Landscape

Tall poplars -- human beings of this earth!

Black lakes of happiness -- you mirror them to death!

I saw you, sister, stand in that effulgence.¹

Mountain Of Freedom ²

1. Place

1. What is place? In our great alienation on earth, what do we crave to hold on to? When Suleiman ibn Abed al-Malik³ settled in the drifting sands,⁴ whether it was his intention or not, he did not just build a palace and a mosque, but he turned the sand into "place". The infinite of the undefined was marked. Land became a world.⁵

A web of coordinates was spun among the sand (in which Harun al-Rashid would dig the Pool of the Arches) to the great mosque in Damascus, on whose walls remain the faint memory of an ancient forest⁶ and its paths.⁷ This is the first meridian.

The second extends from the pool below, whose arches, it is said, became the inspiration for the Gothic style, for the *Am hof Koln*.⁸

¹ Paul Celan Weaver of words.

² Freiberg (Dov)

³ Established the city of Ramla.

⁴ Raml is sand in Arabic.

⁵ "...To this we have called earth. In its rise and approach it gives shelter. The earth is what does not force its way into anything, which does not know labor and effort. On earth and within it, during the events of his life, man establishes his existence in the world. As the deed presents a world, it positions earth... Martin Heidegger "The Origin of the Work of Art".

⁶ On the walls of the Great Mosque, realistic wall paintings appear, the last of their kind, of trees. These are traces of Greek influence on early Islamic art.

"...A Greek temple portrays nothing...It is the temple-work that first fits together and at the same time gathers around itself the unity of those paths..." Martin Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art".

⁷ Forest paths refer to Martin Heidegger's book *Holzwege* (Off the Beaten Track) in which the essay "The Origin of the Work of Art" appears.

⁸ The cathedral in Cologne is known as one of the peaks of Gothic art. Paul Celan's poem hints at it.

COLOGNE, AT THE STATION

Heart time, those

Would it be impertinent to assume that from there, from that station,⁹ the poetry departed to meet the philosopher who did not feel regret.¹⁰ In the horizontal space which was now drawn, not only lines were stretched but also railroad tracks whose rapping sounds echoed between the choir of the nearby cathedral¹¹ and the songs of the Ukrainian camp guards.

To those of us who listen, in the dark forests, not only the rhythmic echoes of the rapping train tracks and the singing of the camp guards can be heard, but also the dying cries...

Dusky forests of poplars and birch are covering what once was a place, erasing a planet,¹² returning to earth. The 0 line is stretched like a taut string between there and here, between then and now. Under it the sand, under the sand Harun al-Rashid constructed and did not know space-lakes of-happiness-black-in them reflected. This is what the poet tells us, high poplars, natives of this earth.

Among these are stretched, almost to the breaking point, the act, shining. Her handiwork heralding the potential for redemption, reflecting constellations of concealed planets in bits of torn clay, in the waters of the black lake.

In that space of repeating and intersecting coordinates, a place is spun. The infinite is finite.

The name is here, the then, now.

You can now hold onto the poem¹³

*We dreamt stand up for
The midnight cipher.*

*Something spoke into stillness, something as silent,
Something went its way.
Banished and vanished
Were at home*

You cathedrals

*You unseen cathedrals,
You rivers unheard,
You clocks deep in us.*

⁹ The reference here is to the well-known meeting between Paul Celan and Martin Heidegger after which the poem was written.

¹⁰ Martin Heidegger refused to express regret for his support of Nazism.

¹¹ Am Hof

¹² The writer, Ka-Tzetnik (Yehiel De-Nur).

¹³ Wisława Szymborska.

My sister.

2. Now

What is time? In the movement of an infinite wheel, space turns into time. The vessel is time trapped in clay. Life turns into eternity. Completeness to death.¹⁴ Opposite the force of gravitation of the soul compressing us into black holes, the centrifugal movement of a wheel casts mirrors reflecting in one another and a wave of light which hastens towards us with inconceivable speed of three hundred thousand kilometers to the second returns us to the earth.¹⁵

The ascent from the depths of the pool brings us to the peak of the Mountain of Freedom. When we stand on its shoulders, we can look back and see the sails of

¹⁴ Paul Celan *The Jugs*

*At the long tables of time the jugs of God carouse.
They empty the eyes of the sighted and the eyes of the blind,
The hearts of the reigning shadows, the sunken cheek of the evening.*

*They are the ultimate tipplers:
They hoist the empty as well as the full to their mouths
And never brim over as would you or I.*

¹⁵ Planet Earth.

Sinbad¹⁶ growing smaller. On the way home, holding arnica and eufrasia flowers,¹⁷
thank fate which has guided us to the right mountain.

¹⁶ The Tales of Sinbad the Sailor, a section of the Arabian Nights which were edited during the time of Harun al-Rashid.

¹⁷ From Paul Celan's poem "Todtnauberg", which was written after the poet's journey to meet with Heidegger at his vacation home- Todtnauberg, in the Black Forest in Bavaria

Arnica and eufrasias, the
draft from the well with the
star-die on top,

in the
hutte,

written in the book
- whose name did it record
before mine - ?
in this book
the line about
a hope, today,
for a thinker's
word
to come
in the heart,

forest sward, unleveled,
orchis and orchis, singly,

crudeness, later, while driving,
clearly,

he who drives us, the man,
he who also hears it,

the half-
trod log-
trails on the highmoor,

humidity,
much.