

## Urban Remnants: Place, Memory, and Artistic Practice in Berlin and Bogotá

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Twenty years after unification, Berlin now boasts sleek corporate buildings (Figure 1), regional transportation nodes, a federal government district, a renovating historic district, gentrified inner city neighborhoods, trendy galleries, and a centralized memory district (Till, 2005). Advertising campaigns promoting the city have used tours, viewing platforms, and “wrapped” building sites with plastic façades to depict the city to come. City marketing and tourism strategies have been successful in making the “new” city a spectacle, even after the boom of post-unification construction.

In the center of the historic district in Berlin in October 2009, for example, two large canvases on both sides of Unter den Linden projected images of the historic city palace, or *Stadtschloss*,<sup>1</sup> at the site where the former East German Palace of the Republic once stood (Figure 2). The East German government (German Democratic Republic, hereafter GDR) destroyed what was left of the *Schloss* after World War II — depicting the war-damaged shell in the 1950s as a symbol of Prussian militarism — and covered the site with concrete. Although competitions were held to decide upon the fate of this historic site, for fifteen years the plot was used for parking, markets, and festivals. In 1973, the *Palast der Republik* was unveiled as a new state-of-the-art government building for “the people.” Following German re-unification in 1990, controversies emerged over what to do with this building, a structure that for some symbolized a socialist state and an assault on German heritage, and for others evoked memories of going dancing, bowling, or listening to a concert. A pro-*Schloss* campaign, funded largely by (former West) German businessmen, including Wilhelm von Boddien from Hamburg, attempted to occupy the historical imaginary of locals and tourists by unearthing the remaining *Schloss* ruins, creating historical exhibitions, commissioning a *trompe l’œil* of the city palace, and opening a tourist curio and book shop nearby. Despite a strong anti-*Schloss* movement by (largely former West) Berliners, the pro-*Schloss* arguments and efforts were politically successful; Berlin’s City Parliament voted in favor of reconstructing an exterior façade of the *Schloss* and using the interior space to establish a Humboldt Institute convention and educational complex (Figure 3).

During the many years when debates raged and the GDR *Palast* was slowly torn down, a number of artistic projects, festivals, and other events occupied this space (Figure 4). Perhaps not surprisingly, local protests about the future of this site continue despite the parliamentary decision and the fact that the GDR *Palast* is now gone (Figure 5). Some Berliners believe that

rather than incur more debt by re-building a fake historical façade filled with a convention center, this central space should continue to be used by residents and artists in innovative ways. Local responses to this space are particularly telling, not just because the controversies about the meanings and uses of the city's *Schloss* and *Palast* have been ongoing now for almost twenty years (some would say they date to the postwar period). The discussion about “what to do with” this urban space, and the buildings, histories, peoples, and activities that have occupied it, highlights the significance of place and memory in understanding this “new” city in at least two ways.

The *Schloss* debates point to the inherent problems associated with the staging of any “new” city, including the ways that the “old city” is created through productions of the new (Till, 2005). When, for example, pro-*Schloss* advocates assert that this site should be considered in terms of urban design and history only, and not according to political motives (von Boddien, interview with author, Berlin, 1998), they not only create a false dichotomy between authenticity (as “truth” or the “real”) and the political (as a kind of “fiction” or “virtual”), they also bind the complex space-times of the “real”, including the *Palast/Schloss*, to an idealized “historic location” according to a development logic defined by heritage economies. In other words, an idealized urban landscape, or scene for residents and tourists to look at, is offered as a substitute for a place. The messy complexities of *place*, as lived contexts of meaning, memory, and matter, are reduced to visual sites on a Cartesian grid; residents too are assumed to be passive consumer-subjects.

The attachments to, and experiences, memories, and desires many residents and visitors have of the *Schloss/Palast* are, of course, far too multifaceted to be contained by Cartesian grids, linear narratives, or reductive real/fake or old/new dichotomies. Indeed, as Elizabeth Wilson (1997) and Dolores Hayden (1995) have argued, cities continuously undergo processes of transformation; they are far from static. Moreover, I would argue that the range of urban remnants constituted the basic material that residents and artists explored, as they animated, played with, and worked through multiple pasts, presents, and futures of Berlin's *Schloss/Palast*. Yet very little scholarly work has paid attention to the changes, losses, and creations inherent to the lived realities of particular urban places, or those that resonate in the collective memory of residents.

This brings me to my second point. During the more than fifteen years of the *Schloss* debates, local groups and artists occupied the spaces adjacent to and within the GDR *Palast* in creative ways, conducting protest actions, running seasonal markets, and making artistic-activist installations. (My favorite use was in 2000, when two French artists created an outdoor laundromat, with about a hundred washing machines, wherein clothes, money, politics, even Berlin itself, could be laundered.) I suggest that such landscape features, stories, empty lots, bodies, and other matter classified by city officials as “out of place” and in need of removal

don't just go away when a building is torn down. As remnants of memory, their presences linger and continue to haunt other spatial-temporal registers of the lived city.

As phenomenologist Edward Casey (1977) argues, the past is continually reshaped in the present through memory traces, but not so much in terms of deferred events — “that happened in the past, over in that time” — but more in the sense of possibilities, what he calls “expanding eventualities that might happen” (p. 277). The sequencing of remembering, in other words, is not only now, but then ... and then .... And then. Casey argues that there are always unresolved remainders of memory, and for this reason, memory is never a question of permanence, but one of ongoing remanence.

For Casey, unresolved remainders of memory exist beyond consciousness yet are known spatially through body memory, place memory, and social ritual. We may search for unresolved residues and traces without consciously “knowing” what we are doing, and in the process we remember and recognize new ways of experiencing and knowing place. For this reason, scholars of tourism, urban studies, and heritage projects need to take seriously not only the work on memory but also how remnants constitute a multi-sensual, spatial, ritual, and embodied way of knowing and imagining our worlds.

In this essay, I describe how creative projects explore urban remnants in cities in transition. I use the term remnant here as both a mnemonic and material remainder. Indeed, the remnant has numerous meanings in common parlance: as residue, leftover, emotional trace, and vestige. It suggests that what remains was, at an earlier time, larger, more fully developed and useful, but now has a different social value. Because the remnant remains, it reminds. It can be creatively combined with other material to make something new, even comforting, from juxtaposed pieces, such as in a quilt. It can also trigger curiosity, when, having been shoved away in a closet, it is rediscovered and invites us to understand its mystery. Over time, an unexpected remnant may resurface, such as a painful memory. But while the presence of the remnant feeling may be disquieting, it also may speak to change in its lessened intensity. Because mnemonic remainders exist beyond consciousness, they can be considered part of what Slavoj Žižek (2007) calls the realm of the (Lacanian) Real which is constituted by unknown knowns.

Below, I describe two different creative projects that work through urban remnants: the *Hannah Arendt Denkraum* (*Hannah Arendt Thinking Space*) exhibition, with multiple invited artists that was held in Berlin, Germany in October and November, 2006, and *Almas Anonimas* (*Anonymous Souls*)<sup>2</sup> by Beatriz Gonazales and curated by Doris Salcedo, that was informally unveiled in Bogotá, Colombia in 2009. The *Hannah Arendt* exhibition featured installations in a building that was once the Jewish girls school for the city but that has remained closed to the general public but used as a primary school after World War II; *Almas Anonimas* was created at a cemetery undergoing demolition (to be replaced by a soccer field). The art called attention

to and made tangible the spatial-temporal movements of memory through these places in ways that encouraged a process of critical self-reflection about difficult social issues;<sup>3</sup> for the *Denkraum* exhibition, such relationships through the school were not necessarily intended by the artists, whereas for *Almas Anonimas*, an important part of the overall concept was to re-animate the meanings of the cemetery. In quite distinct ways, the art of and engagement with urban remnants in both cities was stimulated through art that worked through place, including the social rituals and bodily memories associated with those places, and the difficult pasts, as well as possible futures, each place evoked.<sup>4</sup>

### **Berlin, 2006: *Hannah Arendt Denkraum*<sup>5</sup>**

From October to November 2006, a relatively small exhibition honored the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of political philosopher Hannah Arendt.<sup>6</sup> The *Hannah Arendt Denkraum* or “Thinking Space” exhibition was held in Berlin’s former Jewish Girls School and included site-specific encounters, textual performances, and interspatial conversations. The exhibition was located on one of the growing alternative art and gallery strips of the city, along Auguststrasse, near the *Kunstwerke*, itself an artistic institution with residencies and changing exhibitions that is growing in international reputation. Nonetheless, even a more culturally astute tourist gaze would not easily recognize the exterior façade of the former Jewish Girls School, in part thanks to the graffitied and pasted textures of neighboring building exteriors (Figure 6). As a regular visitor to Berlin, but not a resident, I felt lucky to have stumbled across this exhibition, for its place-specific emotional presence, and creative and pedagogical spaces, changed my experience of this streetscape entirely, adding a historicity that I “knew” about through books but didn’t yet know in my bones. This exhibition helped me understand the latent promises inherent to memory traces, urban remnants, and interim spaces.

Remnants of Berlin’s rich cultural life, such as the Jewish Girls School, even when appearing briefly or in a limited sense to a larger public, and whose presence often remains unacknowledged by official narratives, have a radical potential to reframe understandings of urban life and belonging. The meanings and functions of this particular remainder have been continuously “re-transcribed” with evolving circumstances through time, reminding of Casey’s discussion of memory as ongoing remanence. The school was built by Alexander Beer in 1927/28 — an architect later murdered in Theresienstadt — and was closed after Kristallnacht, damaged during the war, and remained closed during the GDR as part of the former Jewish quarter located near the Berlin Wall; it was used for part of that time as a primary school. An unwanted and forgotten social institution during and following World War II, this building would resurface as occupying a central urban location during a time of transition following German reunification. The city’s Jewish Council was recognized as the proper cultural owners of the once larger, urban complex of buildings and spaces tied to the historical synagogue and Jewish

community. Yet the building remains closed at the time of writing this article. Until the Jewish Council decides upon the future use of the building, the general public does not have access to this structure. The school remains liminal in the city, despite its changed location in the New Berlin.

Nonetheless, in 2006, the Berlin Jewish Council, as active participants in and supporters of cultural events in the city, agreed to let the building be used for two artistic events. During the summer of that year, as part of Berlin's art Biennale, it was one of the buildings, courtyards, and streetscapes of Auguststrasse used by artists for display. Later the same year, the school accommodated the *Hannah Arendt Denkraum* exhibition. Whereas the building was included as part of the larger concept for the Biennale — “the street as exhibition” — for *Hannah Arendt Denkraum*, it was offered after the exhibition was conceived, perhaps because of the success of the Biennale and the significance of Arendt to the Jewish community, Berlin, Germany, and internationally.

For the *Hannah Arendt Denkraum* exhibition, artists were invited to explore Arendt's political thought as art, and to consider her work through art, in particular through Arendt's concepts of *Denkbilder* (literally thought images, images that make one think, images that think), *Sprachbilder* (literally words that create images) and *Bildsprache* (metonyms, or the language of images). Although the Arendt exhibition concept was not initially developed as a site-specific one, the history of state-perpetrated violence against its own citizens in the city, resulting in the school's empty spaces, provided a powerful context for an exhibition about political thought that was created in honor of an important Jewish female philosopher who was forced to flee Berlin in 1933. The unfolding belatedness of this urban remnant therefore included the unpredictable forms through which the building, its pasts, and mnemonic remainders might take in an always shifting present, including the artistic interpretations of political thought. As curator Peter Funken explained, while neither the school nor the theme of totalitarianism was the explicit focal point of the exhibition, both served as an inspiration for artists and as a general background for the project, as related to “any and all thinking that deals with the topics of freedom and self-determination.”<sup>7</sup> Some artists' works became particularly powerful in such a context.

Iranian artist Parastou Forouhar's installation, *Sag mir wo die Menschen sind/Where have all the people gone?*, explored Arendt's ideas about freedom and took on a particular sense of urgency through its context in the school (Figure 7). Walking into an empty room and smelling the moldy walls, I looked up to see bright pink, seemingly playful, balloons tied with long black ribbons. The remembered body memory of being a child, as I experienced excitement and awe at seeing this room filled with balloons, was framed by views of both the school's empty courtyards (seen from windows on the side of the hallway before entering the room) and the rooms of the exhibition, as well as the installation title (which I read at the room's entrance which

had no door). Curiosity followed my walk through the forest of balloon strings; I looked up and tried to discern what the graphic images depicted on the bright pink balloons might be.

I walked through the room of balloons into a darkened room to the far right. There, the flash animation, *Just a Minute*, projected in large format the same images printed on the balloons. The artist Forouhar created fragile sketches of torture, using the aesthetic language of the circus, to comment on her experiences living under a totalitarian dictatorship in Iran. It took a minute for me to adjust to both the change in lighting and to recognize the content of what was being projected. After having just walked through the room of balloons, I had to adjust also to viewing this sequence of unsettling sketches. When I returned back to the first room, the feeling of the strings on my head from the balloons above coincided with the realization that the projected images of torture were negatives of the same images printed on the otherwise cheery balloons; my experience of moving back through the same space was no longer one of enchantment, but now focused and studying, tied to an experience of witnessing violence. In the setting of a former classroom, the process of walking through these rooms, as tied to the contrast between my initial and latter responses to the room of balloons, evoked the significance of critical thinking in understanding, sometimes belatedly, that which we think we already know.

In a different room, American artist Martha Rosler's work, *Reading Hannah Arendt (Politically)*, included a selection of Arendt's texts that the artist felt spoke to the current political situation in the U.S., including the retrenchment of civil liberties, the breaking of international law, the censorship of media and scholarly work, and the creation of a popular culture of fear (Figure 8). In this room, texts were layered such that the occasional ray of light or angle resulted in a word or passage jumping into view. Edited quotations from Arendt's work, printed in English and German on large clear plastic panels, hung in an overlapping yet free flowing form from the ceiling; the visitor could walk around or through the panels, look through multiple panels at once, study an individual panel up close — all the while noticing still other texts, other readers, and the walls and windows of the classrooms/Thinking Space exhibition that framed the installation. The powerful texts of Arendt, juxtaposed and read in relation to one another, questioned the "transparency" of American political rhetoric, while suggesting that the current American democracy must be compared to other democracies that became totalitarian. Rosler's work wrapped and reprinted and edited texts aesthetically, seemingly questioning the ways texts have been used in a classroom setting.

Other classrooms offered temporary canvases to artistic works that explored the possibilities of *Denkräume* (thinking spaces). Visitors were to encounter thinking spaces both in a historic sense and as an artistic experience, in unexpected ways. While Rosler's work used words in a sculptural form, Sebastian Hefti, Susanne Hofer and Kartri Oettli created a video installation on a ground floor, *Auditorium Elemente und Ursprünge totaler Herrschaft/Auditorium*

*Elements and Origins of Totalitarianism*. This acoustic landscape confronted the visitor with a public reading of one of Arendt's most significant works, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*,<sup>8</sup> taking the form of a social commemorative event, reading room, and public political forum. Drawing upon the previous success of the public readings of Arendt's powerful 1951 text in Zurich, in April 2000, the artists invited public figures to read different sections of the book on videotape.<sup>9</sup> This 45-hour series of 'lectures' was installed with multiple television monitors stacked upon shelves running two lengths of the room (Figure 9). It was a speaking 'library' of well-known political, scholarly, and artistic German figures. The student/visitor, upon walking into this room, experienced a simultaneous reading of Arendt's work. The white noise of multivocality soon changed, at least for me, to an experience of pressing political need; initially drawn from screen to screen, I moved from one monitor to another, somewhat randomly, surprised at my surprise of the insights of Arendt. I stopped for some time in front of a monitor and listened to just one voice. I soon found myself reading along with the speaker, drawn to the text/book available near the monitor, wanting to add my voice to the cacophony.

Conceptual art is difficult to display when the work does not 'take place' on site; the relationship of the viewer to the work usually does not allow for interaction. It takes a different type of imagination/engagement to read about a process/project that has already occurred, and to consider the relationships involved in aesthetic terms. Yet Judith Siegmund's *A Vocation - Job - Daily Grind? Labor, Action and Work* effectively continued the artistic process in the former girls school by inviting exhibition visitors to become students, and listen to and read the "lectures" of the (original) participants of a reading course. Siegmund initially offered a participatory reading course in Weissenfels, a small town in Saxony-Anhalt (former East Germany) that had very high levels of unemployment. Town residents who chose to "enroll" in the class read Arendt's *The Human Condition* together and were asked to respond to it through their own experiences, fears and insights. Their responses were videotaped; and edited selections on television screens, with additional comments printed on walls (Figure 10). Related books were also made available to guests at the school.

Another conceptual project was Anna Zosik's *Denkstätte*. Zosik, co-founder of the art and social engagement group art///transponder, is interested in the moment that art has an effect on people. Zosik wanted to create a space for visitors to engage in their feelings as they experienced moments of new awareness as they moved through the *Denkraum* exhibition. Her project was also site-specific. A room, with trigger questions and concepts, postcards (of images from different rooms), yarn, paint, markers, and other materials and concepts allowed individuals to write on the walls, and work through their experience on their own or in groups without necessarily speaking (Figure 11). In addition, she coordinated organized tours that mediated school-aged and adult discussions; curators linked contemporary political debates to installations about public and individual rights. For example, Tobias Hauser's *Smoking room*



(*Smoking/The Coming and Going of Reasons (Smoking/Das Hin und Her der Gründe*)), which included a room with video screens of smoke curling off of cigarettes in which visitors could sit down and chat, was not experienced by many visitors as a powerful aesthetic piece, but one that nonetheless provided an excellent space for guests to debate public freedoms, such as smoking in public settings, the right to speech, the introduction of student tuition fees, and other controversial issues (conversation with the artist, November, 2006).

Finally, because it was Arendt's 100-anniversary year, there was much interest in her publications as well as the discussions in media and other public arenas about her "Jewishness," her writings about German Jews, her historical narratives, and her complicated personal history with Heidegger. That these discussions would continue in Berlin's Jewish Girls School framed the moral significance of her work in a unified Germany. The well-visited central reading room, around which much of the exhibition was organized, formed the heart of the *Denkraum* and was filled with numerous copies of important publications and texts of Arendt in German and English, laid out in the style of a University book sale (Figure 12). Nearby, listening rooms (Figure 13) and viewing living rooms featured recordings and videos of Arendt discussing her texts.

These examples suggest that one of the exhibition's goals — not making Arendt into an icon but rather highlighting "the reading movement that Hannah Arendt's writing have established over the years" (Hefti and Heuer, 2006, 22) — had a particularly strong resonance as situated in the former girls school. The school as an urban remnant interacted with installations about the possibilities of political thought, rather than was objectified or located as part of a trendy public tour of the city that might become an easily consumable "Jewish" Berlin (part of the tourism packages available with the New Berlin). As curator Peter Funken described: "The *Denkraum*, housed in the building of a former Jewish girls' school, resembles a think tank and a memorial simultaneously, while being neither."<sup>10</sup> In other words, visitors and residents experienced a historic building in the city in unanticipated, yet at times predictable ways, as a school, a commemorative space, and as an exhibition. They came to this place to see an exhibition, and in doing so they: read; looked at (Arendt hypertext) graffiti (Figure 14) as they walked up the stairwells; sent postcards with quotes from Arendt as part of another artistic project; or considered projects about the meanings of democracy and freedom of thought in today's society. They may have even participated in group discussions or chosen to write on walls. While it is still unclear if, when, and how the Jewish community will decide to renovate the former girls school in Berlin-Mitte, the *Hannah Arendt Denkraum* offered visitors an educational remnant through which to encounter pasts and possible futures, inspired by creative projects exploring Jewish memory and political thought in the past and present German capital city, Berlin.



## Bogotá: Marginal landscapes

Artists have long worked in and through landscapes depicted as marginal by city authorities. Such landscapes are conceived of as abandoned, ruined, worthless, even threatening to the body politic. When understood as temporal aberrances in the city, the development logic of abandonment and reoccupance calls for a sequence of emptying out and reappropriating space, of getting rid of “bad” places (and the things and people associated with them) and making “good” places, as if the “bad” people are responsible for the bad places, and that city planners are needed to create landscapes that are aesthetically pleasing settings within which to socialize.

In Bogotá, as in other cities in the world, political candidates have run on campaigns promising to “clean up the city.” Winning an election under the banner of “urban renewal” and “sustainability,” a new mayor, Enrique Peñalosa Londoño, rezoned so-called “blighted spaces” to create “green” urban settings.<sup>11</sup> In some cases, this resulted in displacement of living people. For example, El Cartucho, a neighborhood in the historic Santa Inés district, was razed for what became (a rather sterile) Public Park of the Third Millennium (Figure 15); thousands were displaced, the livelihoods of many marginal residents were destroyed, and numerous historic as well as ramshackle buildings were torn down. In other cases, the intention was to displace the memory of the dead.

Historically there have been two cemeteries in Bogotá: one for wealthier people, and, on the other side of the road, one for the underclasses (Figures 16 and 17). In the cemetery for the disadvantaged, bones were interred for four years, after which they were taken away to a mass grave in the southern part of the city. No one, it seems, remembered the deaths of those interred there. These were most likely individuals fleeing the political and economic violence of the countryside, in hopes that the city would offer a new life. The inequities, racism, and political and cartel violence of Colombia, however, became concentrated in the nation’s capital by the 1970s only to become worse during the economic “lost decade” of the 1980s.

Beginning in the late 1990s, the cemetery for poor people was rezoned as a park/leisure land-use space under Peñalosa, with the intention that this space for the dead could be transformed into a soccer field. Understanding land-use zoning as a political act of violence, artist Doris Salcedo proposed to city authorities to preserve the space as it was and to use the open space and remaining structures for site-specific pieces by different artists.<sup>12</sup> Her proposal successfully prevented the complete transformation of the cemetery into a leisure space. By the time the proposal was accepted, eight structures (*columbarios*) were already razed; the remaining four crypt structures were placed under temporary protection through national heritage legislation under mayor Antanas Mockus in 2003. (The future status of the buildings remains unclear.) (Figure 18). At least for now, a space of memory exists for artists and residents to explore contemporary issues through the space-times of these urban remnants.<sup>13</sup>

The first site-specific artwork was unveiled in August 2009. In, through, and beyond the remaining four buildings, housing over 2200 collective crypts each, artist Beatriz Gonzales created *Almas Anonimas* to remind citizens of the sanctity of each individual's life. Gonzales hand-painted 8,957 stencils of images of torture in the spaces where anonymous human remains of the urban underclasses once laid. The artist created these stencils based upon eight images of brutality taken by photojournalists and printed in the popular media. As Gonzales mentioned, these media images are ephemeral; they are printed one day and are gone the next, and no citizen has been moved to action through these images of torture and bloodshed. She wanted, however, to treat every space, every niche, in an individualized way, even though there were no names associated with these changing vaults for the unwanted dead of the city.

After the transgression of a violent death, Gonzales wanted to relocate individual acts of bereavement in a public space, to recuperate the memory of another. For the artist, individualizing an image through repetition brings a truth dimension, or aura, to each crypt; it activates the space for a collective memory, of witnessing and narrating in aesthetic form what has happened. At the same time, the art shows the internal violence of the national body-politic, expressing the perverse logic of the Colombian experience and the legacy of death. In these images, do we see peasants or soldiers carrying a body? Who are the victims and who are the perpetrators? People come alive again in the paintings with rough edges; as we view, as we witness, the work changes the pathways of memory.

In *Almas Anonimas* symbolic and material absences and presences move across and through space-time thereby blurring the boundaries between the insides and outsides of memory. Salcedo interpreted this installation as working between the spaces of mourning and postmemory. We remember images when someone dies, within the space of mourning personally. But it is the circulating, postmemorial and posttraumatic images that are well known to most Colombians. When they see these images, they remember that they know these facts but respond with indifference. These pictures of individual people have become anonymous. As Salcedo noted, the repetition of these photographic images in *Almas Anonimas* creates a phantasmagoria, such that the traumatic character of death that most Colombians have become immune to now becomes a consumable image. Yet at the same time, visitors are asked to recognize the individuality inscribed in these public structures of death and mourning, an act that may awaken them from this dream-like state of consuming images rather than remember past violences.

Both Salcedo and Gonzales felt that a transgression of the sacred occurred when state authorities instigated the demolition of the people's cemetery. Through art, they hoped to restore a sacred element to this space and return the public ritual of mourning to this forgotten cemetery. If we understand the past as continually reshaped in the present, including the possibilities of memory, *Almas Anonimas* demonstrates how the media memory trace can be

re-membered and re-discovered through urban remnants. For the artists, this place of memory, as a public ritual space of death, and the engagement of site-specific art for the next generation of artists and citizens, offers the possibility for residents to move differently through violent national pasts and to contemplate critically those pasts as they are embodied the present and offer alternatives for possible futures.

## Concluding Comments

Residents as well as tourists often want to know more about the places in which they find themselves: when and why they were made, how they were used, and why and to what ends they have become culturally important or obscure in the context of the creation of a “new” or “livable” city. Their curiosity may lead them also to imagine their homes and cities as more inclusive spaces that include connections to other destinations. The city, far from a scene to passively watch, is an inhabited and haunted place that includes memory remnants that always exist in excess of narrative and Cartesian notions of space. Those remnants may emerge and/or disappear at certain moments of time; they remain and remind.

As I have suggested here, artistic projects that mobilize critical spatial and historical imaginaries through urban remnants call into question the inevitability of the present. As Ricoeur (2004) explains, the work of re-imagination is a backward looking, memorial gesture arising from the possibility of a “short-circuit between imagination and memory” (p. 5). Reimagination can in this way exceed nostalgia by making the work of memory a political and creative act. The artists described in this essay encouraged bystanders, tourists, and residents to envision, remember, and create new possibilities of encountering the present and future, even if only for a short period of time, through urban remnants. As visitors moved through a school setting or residents explored a public site of mourning, their movements were tied to a reflective process: visitors were asked to encounter urban remnants as remnants, as at once belonging to a different space-time on the one hand, and, through art, as belonging to their city, as active presences in the lived moment that spoke beyond a distant past on the other. Residents and visitors were in this way invited to consider what living with loss, trauma, pain, and the injustices resulting from past national violences might mean, and how they, as citizens, guests, and human beings, might consider alternative futures.

## Notes

1. The City Palace, or *Stadtschloß*, functioned as the royal residence of Brandenburg margraves and electors, Prussian kings, and German emperors.
2. *Almas* also has the connotation of ghost, spirit, and body.
3. See also: Dorrian and Rose (2003); Kester (2004); Lacy (1995); Till (2008).

4. I discuss this in more detail for a range of artists in Till (2008).
5. Research for this section included multiple visits to the exhibition in 2006, interviews with curator Peter Funken and artist and exhibition educational curator Anna Zosik in 2007, and qualitative analysis of the exhibition catalogue, webpage, and related materials.
6. The idea for an exhibition is attributed to Wolfgang Heuer, editor of the international newsletter of Hannah Arendt, and Sebastian Hefti, a political scientist who until 2001 was project manager of the international political and cultural citizen's forum "Hannah Arendt Tage Zurich". Berlin experts and free-lance curator Peter Funken was invited to coordinate the project.
7. Hannah Arendt Denkraum webpage, <http://www.hannaharendt-denkraum.com/>, last assessed 12 January 2010.
8. The original text is *Elemente und Ursprünge totaler Herrschaft*.
9. "Hannah Arendt Tage Zurich" ran from 2000 to 2005 (Hannah Arendt Denkraum webpage, <http://www.wolfgang-heuer.com/denkraum/eng/team.htm>, last assessed 12 January 2010). A similar project now exists in Hannover in 2008, where Arendt was born (<http://www.hannah-arendt-hannover.de/programm.htm>, last assessed 12 January 2010).
10. Hannah Arendt Denkraum webpage, Opening speech, "Hannah Arendt's Denkraum (Thinking Space): The Experience of an Experimental Exhibition," translated from the German by Kathrin Nussbaumer, <http://hannaharendt-denkraum.com/eng/space.htm>, last assessed October 5, 2007).
11. Enrique Peñalosa Londoño of the Liberal political party was Bogotá's mayor from 1998–2001.
12. The information for this project is based upon the Gonzales' presentation of her work and Salcedo's interpretations of the larger project and specific art installation at the site, August 27, 2009, held in conjunction with the 8<sup>th</sup> Hemispheric Institute for the Americas *Encuentro/Encounter*, Bogotá, Colombia.
13. Salcedo successfully called attention to a mistake by the city planners, who proposed laying out the soccer field in an East/West direction: if built, the field would not be usable because the sun would always be in the athletes' eyes.

## Works Cited

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