

Berliner Unwille 2024: Recht(s) und (Um)Ordnung

“There is no point of return” (2021)

titles a collection of Norwegian philosopher Arne Næss's writings published in the Penguins *Green Ideas* series, referring to the impossibility of reversing changes made to the natural environment. The same can be said for the built and for history: By covering the Humboldt Forum's facade with a plaster copy of the Berliner Schloss, the museum is not whitewashed from its history, but rather the opposite. The Humboldt Forum is trapped in an endless cycle of dangerous ahistorical reproduction – manifested in its exhibitions, web presence and actual building substance.

The Humboldt Forum's plastered brick facade could be referred to as a *Blendfassade*, a projecting facade that isn't structurally connected to the load bearing concrete wall. One could even say that the plaster is concealing the brick and acting as a mask (which then again conceals the concrete). According to Karl Marx a *character mask* is a social role that hides the contradictions within a social relation or system. Alex Demirović, German social scientist, adds that following this Marxist understanding social structures always have to be made and maintained by humans – therefore it is also humans that can break this cycle of reproduction.

Our proposal is a series of architectural comments in form of a collage spreading itself throughout the facades, exhibitions and public spaces of the Humboldt Forum. This collage breaks the mask of reproduction and can be understood as an *Umordnung* of the museum:

1. Facades (tear): We propose removing parts of the decorative plaster at the impacts of the bombardments of the November Revolution in 1918 and of the Second World War, exposing the brick construction underneath. These imprints highlight not only repressed layers of building construction but historical constructions that have been papered over. The impacted windows will be filled in but remain visible, and so will the cut, natural stone reliefs, insisting on the importance of exposing – and thereby making possible the discussion of repressed histories instead of papering them over.
2. Windows (paste): We propose to fill in the window openings in the bombed areas with a recessed layer of new, insulating brick, to break with the strict Prussian (facade) order. In the exhibition space the brick fill-ins are framed by the now exposed loadbearing concrete, mirroring the exterior brick-*Blendfassade*. The difference in color and size of old bricks with remnants of plaster in combination with new bricks, will create a textured surface. This dynamic effect evokes the copper-colored glass facade of the Palast der Republik, eaten alive by the Humboldt Forum.
3. Passage (cut and paste): We propose an anti-monument that is reorganizing and reusing the materials removed when tearing the facade mask combined with the cut-out pieces given by right-wing donors. The anti-monument consists of a long concrete bench reusing the plaster and fragments of sandstone removed from the facades as aggregate. By sandblasting the surfaces, the sandstone pieces will partly be visible and partly act as a relief coming through the concrete. Take a seat and let's talk about what happened here!
4. Hof (cutout): We propose a square cut through the ground in the courtyard that marks the footprint of the vegetable garden from the post-war years. The paving stones will frame a space within the space, an anti-monument of soil which will evolve itself over time, confronting passers-by with the layers of history embedded in the site.

Revaluated, removed, relayed and put into a new order;

pieces that were never given, but taken, defunded.

There is no point of return – but there is a point for Umordnung.

NOW!