

INVENTING LANDSCAPE

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Black and white photography, landscape, secret spaces, plastic cameras, multiple views as one, and man's arrangements within the landscape are my most basic means of expression. Although I have worked in many other ways, these are the ideas I return to again and again.

When I visit a new place, whatever else I may do, my Diana camera comes out of the bag and I explore. The resulting work both documents and interprets the environments I find. As subjective an interpretation as it may be, my desire is to convey some of the magic energy that comes from the land.

The in-camera creation of these panoramic images does not represent a strictly sequential view of the scene in front of me, but one created over various periods of time. After watching me photograph, a friend referred to my actions as a dance I do with the environment. As I create these images, I move towards, away from, and around, exploring the whole environment.

Should a visual misstep occur, the sequence ends and I must begin again. Creating my inner landscapes is a matter of working intuitively, with mental images held latently as I move around, looking down, then up, then thirty feet away, and back to five feet in front of me.

In the past, my panoramas had been limited to no more than four overlapped frames at a time due to the negative size that photographic enlargers could accommodate. Now, with the ability to scan much longer strips of 120mm film, I am able to complete images in the manner I had always wished – as many overlapping frames as a given environment may demand.

The images were created between 2002 and 2009 during several trips to eastern Germany, Czech Republic and Slovakia. Between the end of WW II and 1989, these areas were occupied by the USSR and known to us in the United States as "behind the iron curtain."



14 images on sheet 8.5" x 22"





3 images on 8.5 " x 44" folded sheet



























Palace Garden 1, Prague, Czech Republic



Palace Garden 2, Prague, Czech Republic



Palace Garden 4, Prague, Czech Republic



Stefanik Observatory and Rose Garden, Prague, Czech Republic



Kurlander Palais (firebombed Queen's Palace), Dresden, Germany



Schrebergarten 10, Dresden, Germany



Schrebergarten 11, Dresden, Germany



Gedenkstaette (execution yard memorial), Munchner Platz, Dresden, Germany



Mozart Statue, Grosser Garten, Dresden, Germany



Pieta, Liptovsky Mikulas, Slovakia



Abandoned Motor Pool, Military Base, Dresden, Germany



Schrebergarten 7, Dresden, Germany



Restaurant Garden, Dresden, Germany



Botanical Garden, Prague, Czech Republic



Church Ruin (firebombed), Dresden, Germany



Schrebergarten, Radebeul, Germany



Palace Garden 1, Prague, Czech Republic

Prague is the only major European city not decimated by bombing during WW II. An American bombing raid intended for Dresden on February 14, 1945, missed its target by 70 miles due to bad weather and 701 people were killed as a result, along with some buildings, factories, and historical landmarks damaged. Most historic structures are fully intact. Originally founded in the 8th century in the area known as Bohemia, it was renamed Czechoslovakia after WW I. The German Army entered Prague in March 1939, and occupied the area until liberation by the Red Army in May 1945. Czechoslovakia remained under the control of the Soviet Union until the end of the Cold War (1991), after which it was split into the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

Prague Castle's first walled building was constructed in 870 CE. Currently, it's known as the largest ancient castle complex in the world and includes numerous churches and formal gardens. The most famous images of Prague were made by the photographer Josef Sudek known as the "Poet of Prague."



Schrebergarten 10, Dresden, Germany

Dr. Schreber, German physician and professor at the University of Leipzig, was predominantly concerned with children's health and the social consequences of urbanization at the dawn of the industrial revolution. He is known for some quite rigid ideas about childrearing but did propose a need for space to be set aside in urban areas for people to get healthy exercise, and fresh air, and to grow food and flowers. In 1864 the first Schrebergarten area was established in Leipzig when land was leased from the city. In America, we think of land set aside for community gardens, while in England and elsewhere in Europe, such areas are often referred to as allotment gardens.

There are more than 350 garden associations in Dresden, Germany - many dating back to the 1890's - and range in size from about 40 individual gardens to more than 350. I was able to find them by chance as I came to realize certain subtle outward signs, but eventually also by searching via Google Earth. The garden associations are often behind high walls, along road and railways, or within an area surrounded by apartment buildings and only accessible through closed gates or a beer garden run by the association. I discovered many Dresden natives had no idea where many of these garden associations are located or that they were occupied by families from a full range of social/economic and political backgrounds.

There is a long history of who the families may be that joined an association and leased a garden area. Initially, they were poor families living in very tight quarters after moving to the city. During WW I and II, these gardens became very important for supplying fresh food to the population. Some associations are indeed populated by lower income families, while professional people who have traveled the world dominate other associations. After joining an association a family can take over a garden that someone wishes to leave. Gardens are often handed down generationally within a family. Rent to the association for the land is very nominal, however, any permanent structures or plantings must be purchased from the previous occupant. Individual gardens within the association may occupy more than 4000 square feet. Government rules indicate that plantings must be 1/3 grass, 1/3 vegetables, and 1/3 flowers, and over-night stays are not allowed. A small one-room building may be erected, but if the family decides to build larger structures, they pay a nominal yearly fine. Equipped with electricity, satellite dishes, and water, I visited gardens that had buildings with full kitchens, baths, living room, several bedrooms and heat in the winter!



Abandoned Motor Pool, Military Base, Dresden, Germany

During the founding of the German Empire in 1871, a large military facility called Albertstadt was built by Kaiser Wilhelm II. It had a capacity of up to 20,000 military personnel at the beginning of the First World War. The garrison saw only limited use between 1918 and 1934, but was reactivated in preparation for the Second World War. The Albertstadt garrison became the headquarters of the Soviet 1st Guards Tank Army in the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany after the war. There have been no military units in Dresden since the army merger during German reunification and the withdrawal of Soviet forces in 1992.



Trinity Church Ruin (firebombed), Dresden, Germany

During 4 air raids between February 13 and 15, 1945, the British and American forces carried out aerial bombing attacks on the city of Dresden, the capital of the German state of Saxony. The bombing and resulting firestorm destroyed over 1600 acres of the city center and killed an estimated 25,000 people. Lutheran Frauenkirche (completed 1743), the most often referenced structure destroyed because of the heat created during the firebombing, remained as a rubble pile by later Communist governments as a symbol of British aggression. In 1990, organizations began to call for international funding to support its reconstruction. The British charity, the Dresden Trust (formed in 1993), raised money to support the reconstruction. The new Frauenkirche—reconstructed over seven years by architects using 3D computer technology to analyze old photographs and every piece of rubble—was formally consecrated on October 30, 2005. For various reasons - financial and property ownership rights to name a few - other structures in the city, such as Trinity Church, remain unreconstructed (though used as a youth center today).



Gedenkstaette (execution yard memorial), Münchner Platz, Dresden, Germany

Münchner Platz is a prime example of how the National Socialists Judiciary (1933-1945) perverted the dispensation of justice to enforce and strengthen their claim to power. The death sentences from the "People's Court", the Posen State Supreme Court (Poland) and the Reich Court handed down in cases of "treason" were carried out at Münchner Platz. Criminal justice in the Soviet occupation zone and German Democratic Republic (1945-1956) continued to hold executions in Münchner Platz. Many inmates imprisoned by the Soviet occupying forces at Münchner Platz died as the result of maltreatment during interrogations, disastrous living conditions due to overcrowding, malnutrition, and lack of medical care. Executions were carried out by firing squad until May 1952, when a guillotine was constructed in the courtyard. Records show that the 62 people executed between May 1952, and December 1956, were killed via the new guillotine used by the East German judiciary. About half of those killed were clearly victims of a politicized criminal justice system.

On November 7, 1995, the sculpture 'Nameless - Faceless' by Wieland Förster was unveiled in the northeast courtyard and dedicated to the memory of "those wrongfully persecuted after 1945." A permanent exhibition on politicized criminal justice during the National Socialist dictatorship, the Soviet occupation, and the early years of the German Democratic Republic will be housed in the surrounding buildings.

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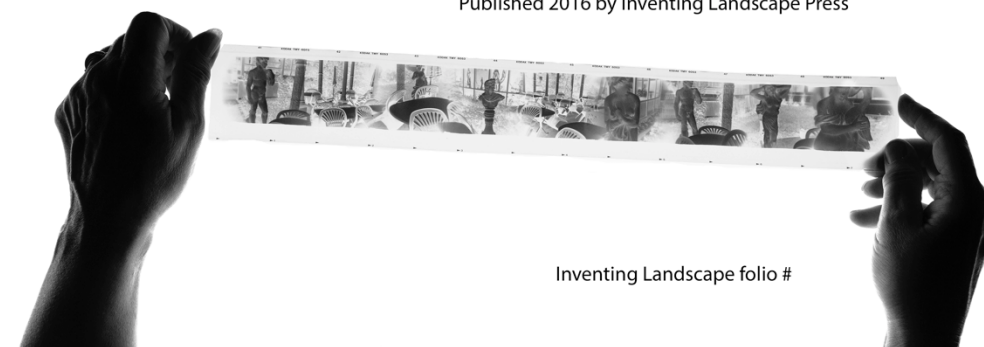
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