

EXTRACT OF THE OPENING SPEECH OF DYSTOPIA EUTOPIA

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I work with light. I chose light because this medium offers me the greatest measure of freedom. The freedom to consider my own boundaries, and to transcend them.

Light in our times is enormously versatile. It opens the world to us, on a technical and communicative level. It enlivens, moves and connects all those systems into which we are born through the miracle of birth – in which we are embedded – and stay incorporated. If we shed a new light onto the world, we create a new view of the world.

[...]

What does it mean if barbed wire is erected anew around a country, around Austria today? Are we locking ourselves in, or locking others out? Does Europe need to be protected from us?

The two gates of the Hofburg, Michaelertor and Heldentor, form a clasp enclosing the Heldenplatz square – an area perceived in different contexts – among others, the Austrian Parliament is meant to move here soon. My light intervention shows a possible situation, or rather a dream image – a nightmare? – made of light and not of real barbed wire, for an image of the world made of light can be changed.

I understand fears. But I have no understanding for fear-mongers.

I understand the growing need for security. The more we possess, the more protection and security we need, that is an old story. At the same time we know everything has its price.

Yes, what are we living for?

Could it be that we are paying for security with a loss of freedom? Surely it is one of the most difficult and at the same time one of the most essential tasks of politics to balance security and freedom.

Hannah Arendt, the great political theorist of the past century, wrote: "The *raison d'être* of politics is freedom."

Living in freedom is perhaps the most precious good – yet we hardly pay attention, taking it for granted. History, however, has shown that a public life in freedom has only ever been possible for short whiles.

The freedom I have, being able and being allowed to implement this work today, on the Hofburg gates in the middle of Vienna – without fear of the state or politics – that is the freedom of the arts, successfully demanded with such vehemence by the Wiener Secession, and representing all social liberties.

We should strive never to lose this freedom again.