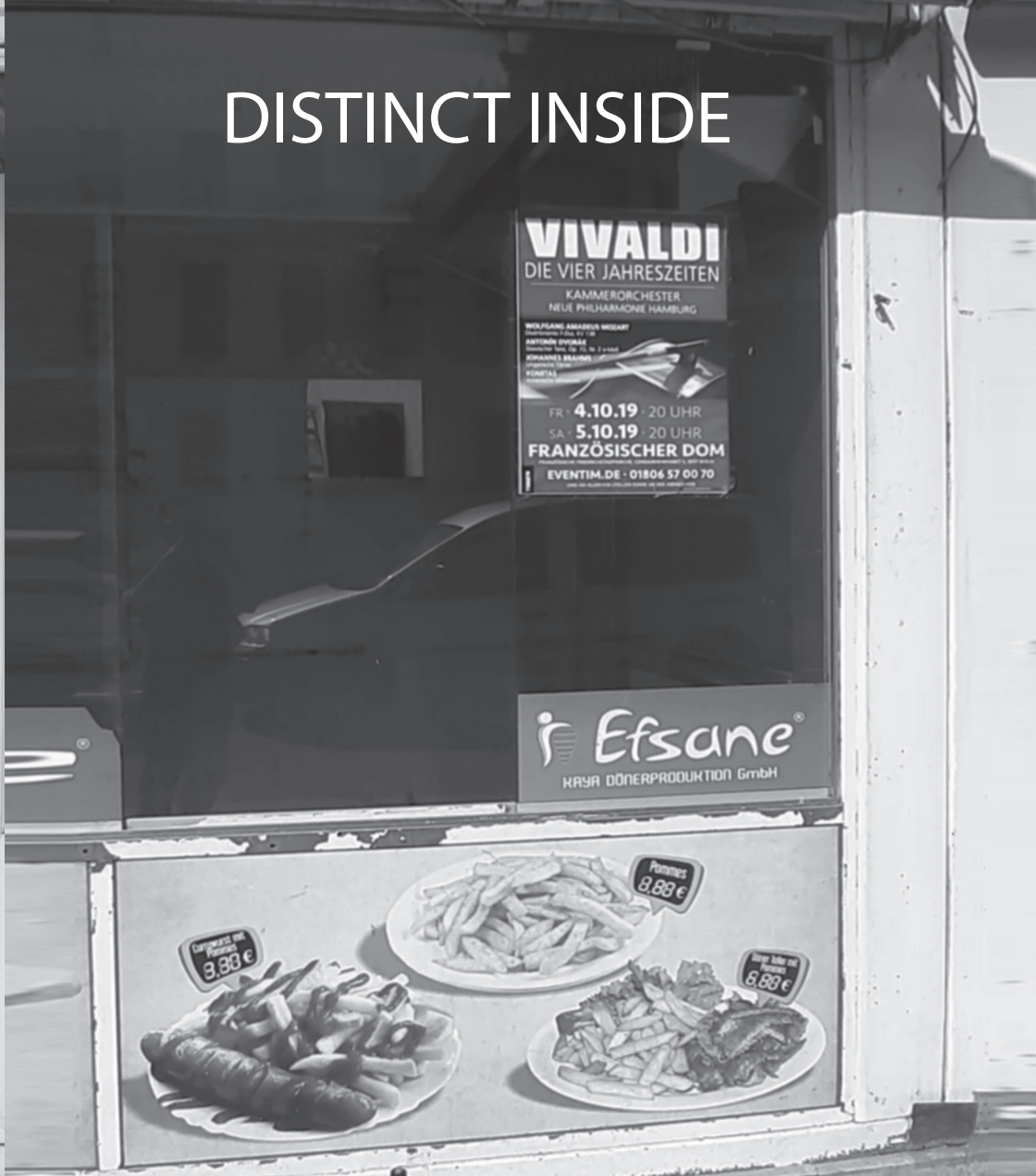


AYASOFYA MOSCHEE



# DISTINCT INSIDE



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There are angles that aren't simply a geometric take on objects in the world. Corners we're led to by a decelerating trumpet, dusty aromas in too long a presence of sun. A tune the guy wearing a wifebeater, a friend to the owner, plays in the caf' quite often. There's some saliva in the first ripped notes. Retakes. Not much. He blows – early in the noon, among the blanched walls, with weakening force and skill – while a Fenerbahçe broadcast rolls in the social club next door. Such angles are up for grabs, and there's but a faint demand, if any.

And yet, how could we approach the kind, without risk of missing? How could we even testify to their existence? – if there's no proof, nor evidence, to back them up? We cannot simply get up and go, take a 90, 40, or a 12 degree turn and thus engage there. We need to take aim differently, as if from the point where the world squints, where it loosens its focus, ceasing to be; and to risk that testimony which resounds with madness: „it seemed to me as if...”.

We call these angles – angels. Subtle beings. According to the Orthodox Scripture, which is not ours, but which here intuits likewise, the invisible world outside time and space is populated by the hosts of bodiless powers. Of the highest rank are seraphim, who are described as six-winged beings offering continual adoration and glory to God with the incessant and ever-resounding cry of *Holy! Holy! Holy!*

Hence they are, doubtless, the edge upon which “I” turns into “he”. And, as the classics suggested, it is the very passage to literature – where something keeps speaking when everything's been said. Something stubbornly on offer, glistening, and as if from a shop display.

A question could be raised here: aren't shops lacking in reality? and, for that matter, also their border? – that lets us watch, while preventing the touch – this unmediated state we call madness? And if so, aren't they in the point of the world's ending, and therefore – a likely passageway to where the cognoscenti hint, the glistening flow, the ever-outside? Indeed, there's something that could support such claim. And it is up to the work of negativity to make do with it. But here's a site of fragmentary writing, so a switch of interest must suffice for an answer.

For we have already acquainted the outside. It is Moabit, Berlin, North-West of Mitte.

The place seems to embrace its shadow. The odd, the mundane, and some *tertia non datur* that nonetheless shows. Moabit is dense and urban, layered and twisted, but it does not flex its identity to get in-your-face. Its musculature is not employed to make it appear unique. Still, what for the outsider looks indistinct, for the insider turns in-distinct, pops as a minimal difference that weakens the cognitive grasp, thus giving direction to inquiry. And the distinctions mount indistinction into a swarming hum that reads like graffiti-bombed lanes to yet another courtyard. Moabit suits vitality for it is porous and not very sterile, – all the while inviting some intellection, of a contemplative nature, with its wide margins of undefined emotion that tends to precipitate in daily mystique and feeds into what we have elsewhere described as „discrete charm of future”. A melting pot below the Hollywood radars, exotic paradox of Euromutation – Moabit becomes a lab for novelty and metaphysical spillovers. Plains of unknown moods deploy themselves here along the streets and lend their melancholy to the simplest of things, and the most thought-proof of faces. No soul in Moabit passes unsaturated. Moabit feels like the Zone. Perhaps even is one.

It's in the façades. Still, there is something to be said about the galleries. Because this rock offers its bearing to such gems too. And it is always a treat to encounter art galleries in the areas that are, in any case, very residential. Because Moabit does not switch off the living function. It has its highstreet, it has its Späties, it has its playgrounds and, of course, the Kneipes, it breeds the bourgeois and its criminality, and also supports the gutter, but here and there – and never too far away – the gallery displays pull up the town's eyelid, thus lifting slightly the ontic closure. For however eerie the everyday gets, it wouldn't get off-the-clock by itself. And the galleries serve here as portals, the stargates and stratagems of the past/future split. Archaic and sci-fi at the same time, bursting the present and gaping its scream, they circle the point where the historical and the



pedestrian converge – or could, or would, or should have converged. They are angelic – that is: proper to angels – insofar as they have a temple-like grid. Under some auspices, therefore, and beyond the profane. And that's the case only if they manage evading them-being-nonetheless-shops.

Primarily, they pull off this trick in two simple ways.

First, the galleries in Moabit seem nameless, for the encounter occurs in a flânerie, not earlier. In other words, they wrap themselves up in our discovery. And this dress is put on in the glint of seduction. They try to be overlooked, or else, appear too fancy for the area. They turn into mirrors flattering the rough – and wide “how could this be?” yelps through the offshoots of Mitte.

Secondly, they embrace what's useless. And here let us open a case file.

It's not so much about a gallery, but rather a showroom. An empty Kebab booth in the magnificent Stromstraße.

The intervention was subtle – and vulgar at the same time. Nighttime it was almost invisible. It **appeared as a black square** in a mirror that hung on the back wall of the shop. This figure was discernible as the **reverse of a poster** that someone hung on the window display. A common culture: some forthright Vivaldi taking place in October; frying its concert-invite in the mid-August scorchers. And the mirror reflection remained – yes – **indistinct**, even during the day. So that whatever was planted on the back of the poster couldn't get its due, if apt, **amplification – but through a reflexive thought**. In a text, for example. So that the **textual** would play here the role of a **spatial extension**.

Still, there appeared a cyclical loophole, during the day; the **time of the image-disclosure**. It was in the morning, when the light came from the East, and then – over the rooftops of the tenements opposite – descended to the street. It shone directly at the front display. And through – inside the shop; reflecting in the mirror, and **illuminating** the poster's backside. The image presented a photograph. A **picture of a reflection**, precisely. It showed a **window display** of one of the nearby galleries, where a newsagent's kiosk from *vis-à-vis* got **mirrored** and **framed** – together with its crowning „Bild“ logo – and thus **overlapped**, as a **symbol/image**, with a painting visible **through the glass**, a part of an art exhibition. This very reflection was then sampled – and **grafted** in the mirror of that abandoned „Efsane“ Kebab, just off the Birken- and Stromstraße junction.

There was an ontological **incompleteness** at work there. And it was carefully maintained in the field of complete **uselessness**, whence it revealed the most radical edge of a spiritual thrust. The space of the empty Kebab joint had a serious advantage over even the most vanguard among galleries – which merely repeated the power structures, as long as they remained stuck in the market evaluations, or bogged down in the fund-driven concerns of the arty establishment. Namely, the empty food joint was **untouchable**. This was clear: the whole intervention was executed without contact with the sacred – this very one thing that mustn't be touched – as the shop has been entered only through the imaginary, without trespassing the **in/out divide**. At the same time, in said photo – the domain of mimesis (its double, its representational) – this line got **subtly questioned**. The form and the content created a short-circuit, thereby dismissing all brainy approaches, the angles of discourse where onto- and onco- get the same -logy. The whole constellation neared a caricature. If anyone was to notice anything, it could be only the monstrous of „holy!“, the wholly shit, **the wholly-unbridled**, its stammer, its hyper-, its -trophy – the outgrowth of vain signification.

But if a break was to happen, a **chance** was the prerequisite; a plain subjective contingency. That's **impossible** to capture. But one day the poster got ripped down. And began to dangle on a piece of its scotch, sometimes raised up – blown by the frivolous wind. Yet, the grafted photo, fixed to the glass with a double-sided tape, remained unmoved. It revealed its baby-blue side, blank and matt, – so more sun-absorbing – and thus **enhancing** the „Bild“ in the mirror. The momentous character of this event consists in the question of **the passerby's desire**. 1) Was it really stirred by the entire set-up, and 2) whether it proved (once more, and time-wastingly) the erotic nullity of the bare nudity. An **approach** towards this question: *We could advance by skipping the following mental experiment: let us assume an expansion of the evoked installation by a CCTV camera. By engaging with the footage from the day of the incident, one could, perhaps, get a – forensic – insight as to (...)*



