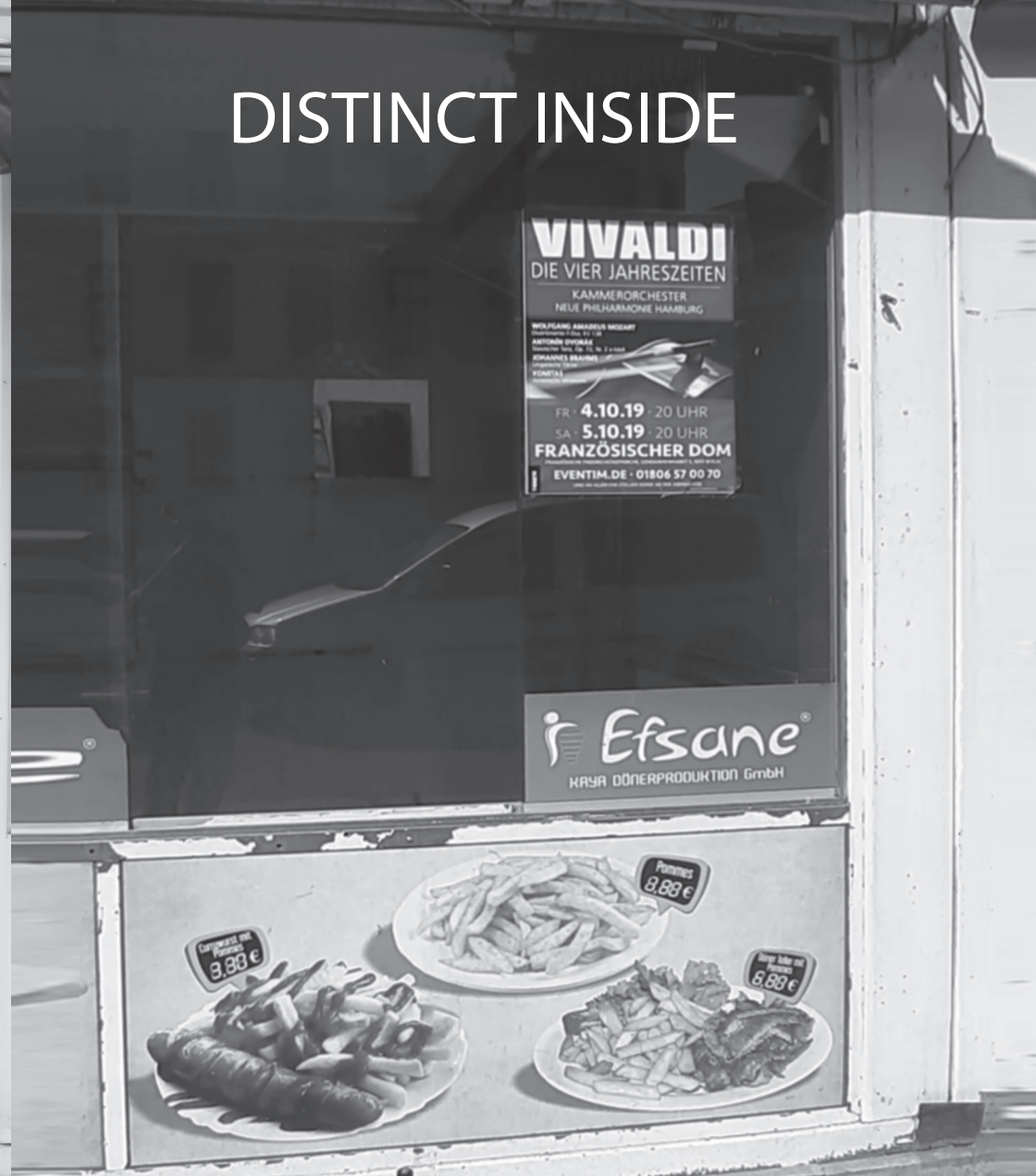


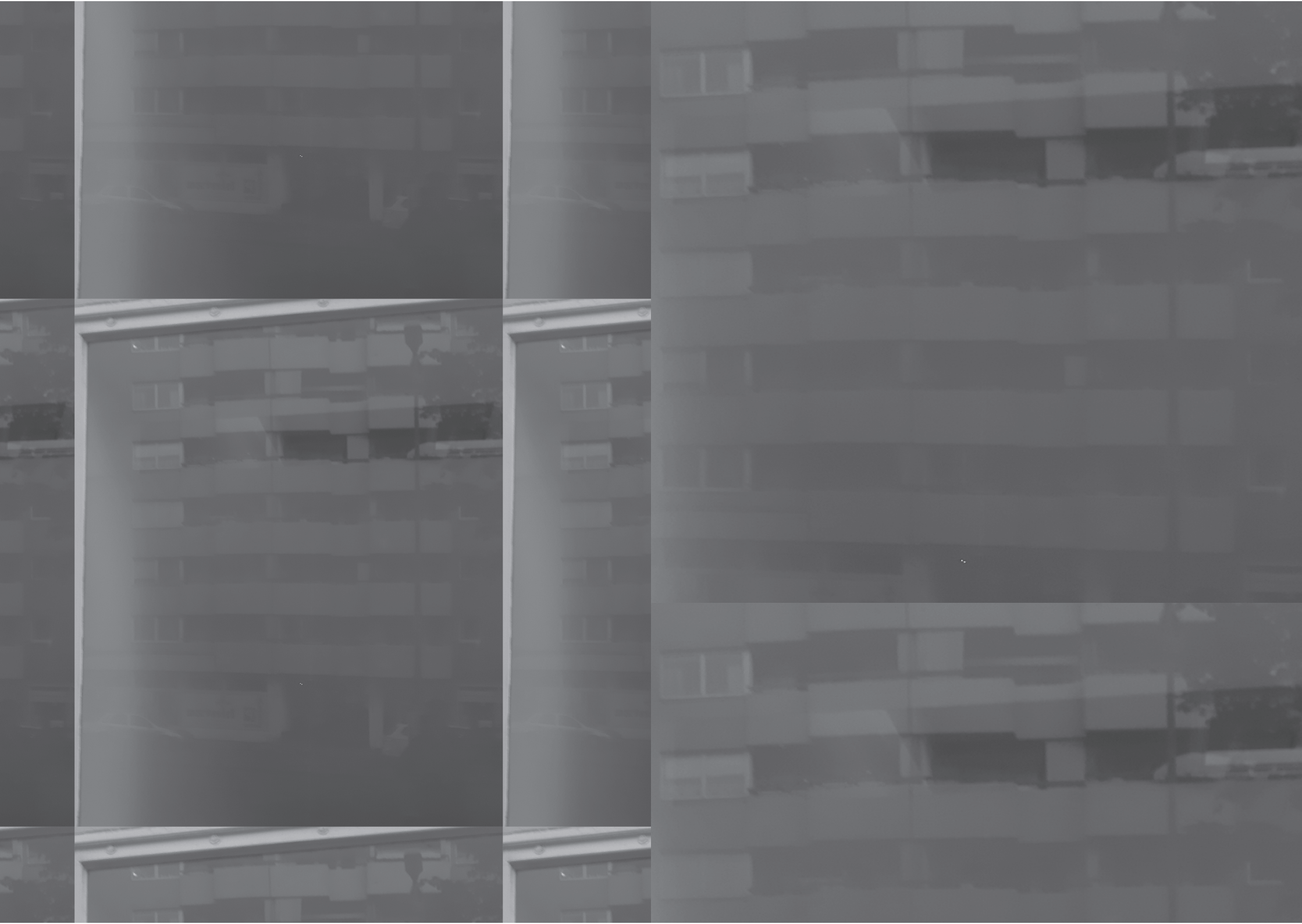
AYASOFYA MOSCHEE



DISTINCT INSIDE



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Overstatement feels like a way — to reach to something no matter what. On the spur of the moment, there's a twitch, and then a thought finds itself mid-air, jumping over a chasm.

Of course it is an angelic instant. Of course, the skies are blue then, the clouds — baby pink. And what sustains the spirit is a new ratio — stretching from here to there.

Moabit is a place pervaded by the indistinct. It gives a feeling that it could be just any city. Perhaps this was triggered by the white-and-blue stripes on the pillars, the S21 flyover that crosses above Perleberger Brücke. As if from "The Yellow Submarine", Heinz Edelmann's strides into the Sea of Indistinct.

But then people would object. It's with a denigration to the district, they argued, to call it so. The very context rushed to deny it. Berlin isn't just any city. Not every place, as such, has half of the population grafted on its tissue. Nowhere in Poland, for instance, less than two-hour drive from Berlin, one could tap into such fantasmatic deposit of utterly diverse investments: nostalgic, aesthetic, cultural, climatic, biotopic, spiritual, futural, linguistic, artistic, or libidinal. All the stranger, then, the local exception. It used to be the media landscape, the world of man's artifice, that lent forecast to our thrills. And, without the high-tech, Moabit got more points of connection, way more channels than average. But somehow this also pointed to "just any city" — projecting here its border, its human-individual outer reaches. And now simoom blows in Moabit as well. It certainly beats one of the outposts of non-utility, the abandoned kebab shop by the Ayasofya mosque. The parafrescoes adorning its facade, Ayrans and Fantas photoshopped onto ice cubes and coffee beans, serve as an open-source transmission of the Middle East videography. Souleyman's veristic "Ya Bnayya", for instance. Or the ornamental "Leh Jani". Or the furthering-East campaign of the Sterilac Yoghurt.

To overstate is to carry a leap within oneself, long after the feet have safely touched the ground. If we stand breathless among Sawyer's and Finn's orchard-lands, uplifted by the golden hue, it is because their bodies were nonetheless delivered from the risks they undertook. We witness their lives as not certain at all, and see ourselves as equally contingent. Finite lives that managed to Eden, chasing the vanishing point. It is safe to assume, finally, that those who settled in Moabit did not exactly have it in mind when taking off. There was a vague idea, at most, of a place that would offer fulfilment. But this is never the concretion of a fantasy-at-hand; rather, it is a commitment to a place that doesn't promise, but delivers.

To mature, for the overstatement, is to swell with airiness. Air that consumes.

It pervades Moabit. There is nothing there. But it's a rascally nothing that points to a story. Thus, Moabit's prose is a token of its relevance. Daily grind is rarely a goal. It is not advertised in Playboy magazine. Yet, it instantly becomes the thing for people that went through a lot.

Overstatement's leap bypasses the bridge of a meaningful connection, to get to something important on another level. Too long we suffered from vectors of meaning that pointed at the exceptional. And if now we're finding ourselves among those who're actually coming from somewhere — also the joy of the commons suddenly opened up, and it is boundless. Take a stroll through Gotzkowskybrücke; with a view on that glorious orange throwup, left by YG —

— XL's always-round-the-corner.

The link to the overstatement is worked out backwards, established post-factum. "Deal with that," it says. This is why — as is the case with *Verneinung* in Freud, or the hysteric's push in Lacan — it cannot be tackled by facts, addressed by the irrelevant objectivity of the university's discourse. They simply don't apply. And hence, the moral insurgence bemoaning "fake news", and the "post-truth", misses the point here. Which is already in the domain of "post facts", and not of "don't-act"s.

Overstatement is a leap. Of faith, for sure. It carries the emotion of our belief over the void.

Thus, we cherish a concretion, nonetheless. Of the phantasy-at-hand; one essentially blurred — whose is not so much a point, to make, but a field, to stretch.

Overstatement jumps over the obstacle — like over a bed warmer raving into a jar of pickles. It pierces the wall above the sweaty sheets and breaks through the room's corner.

Such is the power in question.



Moabit feels like it could be just any city. That is to say, it's a part of the labyrinth known as the endless city. And the people who came here are gateways and alleyways to the World's round-the-corners. But "it could be just any city" hushes us eventually, making us land swiftly and lightly on the mundane. In a tone which is not elevated, which ceases to preach in a reverent drone, and exercises its first questions in Späties ("Ein Sterni, bitte") and counts the change given from a 5 euro note among the Pamukshop's tawdry bric-à-brac.

The question of identity: to counter it, but not deny.

These guys from the Sun-Fat diner — where are they from? Their business is so well-pressed into the frontage. Grafted — sure — but certain tissue is not rejected here. The anonymous one, precisely. The immigrant face carved by the copy-paste: memories, fantasies; slowdown, sun-washed; politics, revisiting, on and on.

The sense of lightness comes from being oblivious. Who could possibly catch up with all these disparate elements? Still, they extend irresistible grasp on the European mind. There's something tacky and disgusting in the collection of Budai statuettes lining up the bar shelf. The fat abdomen — it is bound to reek of stewed eggplants and rice vodka. And so do the little children figurines growing out of one of the Budais. But it's just about the amount — of disgust — to amplify our amazement. Because in the folding of its body, turning suddenly into a coloured robe, one could hide an imagination that does not equate this or that, but is in the order of a psychopathological nature reserve, one of those that J.G. Ballard postulated once. A Chinese calendar, hanging on the wall, shows pictures, time sections, holidays. But it conceals before the stranger its design. Design in the sense of intention. And thus, it reveals before him his own strangeness.

Everyone has an immigrant face here.

One wanders from the Middle East of Pamukshop to the Far East of Sun-Fat simply by crossing the street. And, like a drunken bee lost in a flower, he escapes for a moment the pull of his beehive. And it is here that the language produces an absurdist surplus. "Wan-Tan," it says, "in Chiliöl." And then it asks for a "Berliner Kindl. Klein." A brief verbal impromptu before indulging in the Orientalist rites. Delights of a quiet beforenoon — as time drags along Gotzkowskystraße, mind travels, and the pale, crude façades opposite give us a faint smile, sun, showing up in a clearance.

"This could be just any city" means that it could accept a graft — of prose. The indistinct — what's elusive over there (or "down here" — or "in here", further on, as "distinct inside" progresses towards "a different inside"), elusive, if transparent — is a trait of a good style in a novel. In this utterly bourgeois thing, which boils down to "The Marquise went out at five". But what disgusted Breton should be revisited; to test its Moabit. Starting perhaps in the Sun-Fat restaurant, on Sunday.

Prose'ac.

Calm. Sun-kick.

Widening the margins. (Note the stylistics of the pharmaceutical packaging. Sterile).

A hunch: what is indistinct if not the echo of activities? instead of topographies? Be it even surreality? Because if "poetry must lead somewhere" — it is still a place, this "where". Suractivity, on the other hand, would not lead "some-where" but force us to look completely off the map. A set of descriptions, however, is never neutral, but born out of a hum. "Madame Bovary" began in a collective derision of cheeky schoolchildren — "our class was in session". And only then it became God's point of view. The objective narrator of "he", and "she".

Moabit is interesting insofar as it commands the force of undoing its own map. The main asset here rests in the ontos of an immigrant district — restraining bourgeois investments into some masterly-signifying landmark; like Fernsehturm; a commercial one-liner; or a brand identity. For this prevents the uniformization of voices, likely to collapse into "mediocrity, hate, and dull conceit" — which then tend to dress up as good taste, objectivity and reflection. And the undoing of maps happens through spillovers. It eludes attempts to hijack the old notions of the radical use (like *flânerie*, the mad flaneuring that ends up in falling on one's face, eye slammed against the sheets).

If someone came from the desert, the desert is dragged in here. If someone came from the tropics — here, he's bound to rewrite the other's sands with his own blindness. Oases of orchids.



