



Siah Armajani, *Written Berlin, Tomb for Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Walter Benjamin* (2014-2015), graphite and ink on mylar, 36 x 227.5 in. (91.44 x 577.85 cm)

Written Berlin, Tomb for Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Walter Benjamin, 2015

In *Written Berlin* (2015) there are two Tombs of Honor at the site of the newly-renamed Gate located on the site of the historic Brandenburg Gate. They are the Tombs of two great men. One, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the Existentialist Theologian, who rose up to kill Evil Itself, and was hung for it. And the other, Walter Benjamin, the great critical writer of the Early Twentieth Century, who vanished.

Written Berlin is the story of the City of Berlin before the Great Mayhem; before the Blood, before the Broken Glass, when Art, Literature and Music flourished and when Berlin was the cultural center of Europe.

Written Berlin is an accumulation of anthropology and of an archeology of faith. It is based upon Benjamin's childhood memories (*Berlin Childhood – memories around 1900 by Walter Benjamin*) and it is a tribute to Bonhoeffer's *struggle to save belief*.

Written Berlin is of specific places that Benjamin visited. He walked the city, he visited relatives and friends and he used the cafes of the neighborhood... all with the foreboding of the coming future. For Bonhoeffer (*Bonhoeffer by Eric Metaxas 2010*), *Written Berlin* is in the memory of his lectures, his sermons and his fears and it records his clandestine meetings with fellow travelers in the clergy and among the parishioners. Bonhoeffer was struggling day in and day out to fire up leading clergy like Karl Barth to stand up for a clear statement against Evil. Barth did not and the clergy of the church did not.

All capitulated with ashes in their mouths.

Siah Armajani, 2015