

The artist Dorothee Golz on the Memorial

“A human being is not defined by his handicaps or his medical condition but first and foremost by his existence as a sentient being with a soul and human dignity.

With my concept for a Memorial my intention is to express the cruelties of Nazi medical crimes and also to restore to the victims their dignity. I wish to create a space that reminds the viewer of both the perpetrators and the victims. It is supposed to be an inhospitable place that at the same time includes metaphors for goodness, that which gives hope and comfort, and above all, that “little bit more” that makes us human.

A freight container is a standardized object that cannot be assigned to a specific time or place – just as a crime remains a crime at any time and in any place.

Hydraulic stilts symbolize the technical aspects of the ‘disposal’ of mentally ill or mentally disabled human beings.

The table represents the desk on which the sentences of death were passed. The transparent spheres – some of which are still lined-up, some of which are lying scattered on the floor – with their cast-in letters are metaphors for severed life chords and for an existence that has melted away.

An open door on the tilted side of the container enables the viewer to look into the sky. That which truly defines a human being beyond his physical existence – the soul and human dignity – can escape through this door into the vastness of space.

The commemorative plaque is mounted underneath the tilted container and in order to read it, the viewer has to place himself under the seemingly threatening slant.

With the passing of time the container will become overgrown with ivy and assimilated into the park. Just like this, the recollection of the terrible events will be integrated into our memories – like something we know, but do not constantly think about.”