

## **I have seen it all / I have seen nothing**

Reflections about this work (still in progress) - Krems, January 2010

The wish to see everything is in a way the wish to know everything, to be aware of all the things surrounding us. Although one can see all, but by doing so, one really sees nothing.

Seeing nothing, finding less, trying to understand how things look under the snow that covers the remains of Stalag XVII B, a former World War II prisoner-of-war camp, near Gneixendorf.

Nature erodes the elements while time destroys the rest. It is remarkable how history won't let things remain unspoiled. Time may stand still at that place, but the surroundings continue to change. Architecture can change or block a view, or a local municipality can manipulate preferences. What carries more historical relevance, a house where the great composer Ludwig van Beethoven spent some time in 1826, or a prisoners-of-war camp that held 66.000 for more than five years? A visitor to Gneixendorf would easily find the house.

The aforementioned dilemma has less to do with this work, rather the thought about the ease and speed at which things can disappear. In this case, a forest grows over the camp. The work also discusses a second site of interest that has managed to keep its presence as its surroundings swallow it up. A motorway located near the site of the aforementioned camp leads south and passes along side Krems' old Jewish cemetery. The cemetery is now confined to a green space in the middle of an intersection on this motorway, which serves the shopping centre.

The remains of the aforementioned, are like small spheres, cells of memories, which have become transparent.

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Barak Reiser is an artist who lives and works in Frankfurt am Main.  
He studied Fine Arts at the *Bezalel Academy of Art and Design*, in Jerusalem and at the Academy of Fine Arts, *Städelschule*, in Frankfurt am Main.