

Welcome to REMEMBER – An Interactive Memory Path

Experience in a special way different aspects of the history of the Berlin Charité during the era of National Socialism. The **REMEMBER app** accompanies you on your journey through the **Campus Charité Mitte**. The app leads you to six memorial sculptures and opens up artistic perspectives on this dark episode of history. The central starting points are the memorial sculptures located at six historical sites on campus. The memory path includes a free app for smartphones and tablets that features interactive video art at each of the sculptures. Two fictional characters, a nurse and a caretaker, accompany visitors through the memory path and invite them to experience brief travels in time.

The **REMEMBER memory path** and the **historical exhibition** at Bonhoefferweg 3 form the **GeDenkOrt. Charité – Science and Social Responsibility**.



It is possible to borrow a tablet for free with the REMEMBER app at the Medical History Museum of the Charité (on campus: Virchowweg 17). Opening hours: Tue-Sun 10.00-17.00; Wed and Sat 10.00-19.00



GeDenkOrt.Charité – Science and Social Responsibility

During the National Socialist era, German physicians including Charité doctors actively participated in acts of atrocious cruelty conducted in the name of medical science. Professor Dr. Karl Max Einhäupl, Charité, 2015

The Charité is one of the most modern university clinics in Europe: here education, research, and treatment are closely intertwined. The Charité was founded in 1710 as a plague hospital outside the city gates and was later used as a garrison military hospital and a civil hospital. Its name was understood as a mandate: Charité meaning mercy and compassion.

But there were also times when medical knowledge was employed for political purposes. During the reign of the National Socialists, doctors at the Charité were among those who supported the goals of the National Socialism regime and even committed crimes against people of all ages actively partaking in inhuman practices which focused on race, performance, and extermination.

GeDenkOrt.Charité is an interdisciplinary project and is a collaboration between the Institute for the History of Medicine and Ethics in Medicine, the Berlin University of the Arts, and the Berlin Museum of Medical History, among others. The Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin aims to be exemplary in the pursuit of science and social responsibility. The **GeDenkOrt.Charité** serves as a site of reflection and information on the historical Charité campus in Berlin-Mitte.

The REMEMBER Artist Group Paz, Salzmann, and Stenz

We want to emphasize respect for every human life and to initiate reflection on our own behaviour.

REMEMBER is the public art project of Sharon Paz, Jürgen Salzmann, and Karl-Heinz Stenz that was selected in an open call for the **Memory Path, GeDenkOrt.Charité – Science and Social Responsibility**.

The three artists have collaborated in different national and international projects since 2005. These projects range from video art to live art and site specific performances.

For **REMEMBER** they also invited their longtime colleague, Danielle Ana Füglistaller into the artist group. They all share a strong interest in political and social topics.



Photograph: Petra Spielhagen

GEDENKORT . CAMPUS CHARITÉ MITTE . BERLIN

PUBLIC ART

REMEMBER

by Sharon Paz, Jürgen Salzmann, and Karl-Heinz Stenz

AN INTERACTIVE MEMORY PATH



Download REMEMBER app (DE/EN)
remember.charite.de

MATTHIAS REICHELT

An artwork that understands memory as responsibility for the present and the future

Whoever disputes people's right to life, whoever selects people based on biological or ideological value, has already embarked on the path to Auschwitz.¹

As with other professional groups, a serious institutional investigation of the participation of medical professionals in planned and industrially executed murder during fascism first began after most of the perpetrators had died. The West German Medical Association stated in 1949:

The vast majority of German doctors faithfully fulfilled their duties as stipulated by the Hippocratic Oath; they knew nothing of the procedures and were not involved with them.²

This denial worked for a long time. It was not until 2012 that the German Medical Assembly (Deutscher Ärztetag), following an initiative of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), published a clear statement. In addition to listing the crimes committed in the medical field, the statement explicitly emphasized the responsibility of the medical community:

Contrary to assumptions that remain widespread, the initiative for the most serious of human rights abuses was driven not by political entities but by the doctors themselves.³



The call for proposals for a memory path on the **Campus Charité Mitte** had the explicit goal of "establishing a permanent dialogue regarding current ethical debates on medical science."⁴

While memorials as classically conceived are first and foremost expected to facilitate remembrance, computer-based new media make it possible to combine memory and the transfer of condensed knowledge. This is especially true for the selected and realized work **REMEMBER**, a sculptural and interactive collaboration by Sharon Paz, Jürgen Salzmänn, and Karl-Heinz Stenz, which was completed in May 2018.

A media-based and virtual memory path was constructed at six locations, each marked by a stele made of corten steel with the engraved lettering **REMEMBER** and a bar code. Each of the six marked steles bears the outline of a medical instrument representative of the medical discipline and the function of the location.

Using an app developed by the artists which should be downloaded before visiting the Charité campus, visitors can walk along the interactive memory path with their smartphones or tablets.

The history of the individual stations is illustrated with audiovisual programs, and the medical practices at these locations during fascism are conveyed using a combination of documents, biographies, and reenactments that take the user back to the time of fascism. A documentary style with voiceover explanations alternates with acted scenes. These shifts are most evident at two locations, that of **Psychiatry and Neurology** and



the site for **Teaching and Learning**, where visitors are invited to enter and move through the buildings.

The historical lecture hall in the former gynecology department was filmed from one position with six cameras showing different perspectives as part of a reenactment scene with a patient, an examining doctor, and a nurse. This allows viewers to alter the spatial perspective on the historicized scene by moving their devices, which suggests a direct act of witness.

At the two accessible sites and outside of the building, the small smartphone or tablet monitors allow a double vision of the scenery, first as media-based image and then through the parallel perception of the environment outside the monitor. By entangling a virtual program with real scenery, the artists expand the meaning of the memory path beyond the time of fascism to incorporate the immediate present. Immersion in a historical narrative, as would be the case with film, is thereby prevented.

The parallel perception of the presentation of the screen and of the environment with incidental bystanders, including doctors, other personnel, patients, and students on the grounds raises the question of the societal responsibility of medicine, not only in regard to the past but also expanded to the present and the future. Exemplary here are genetic research and genetic engineering on the one hand and, on the other, the risk of an economic utilitarianism in medicine, which, for example, weighs financial costs against life expectancy in the treatment of geriatric patients.

REMEMBER is part of a context of new, unmonumental and virtual artistic memorial culture that links the past and the present in an informative and striking manner.⁵ In **REMEMBER**, Sharon Paz, Jürgen Salzmänn, and Karl-Heinz Stenz have created a memorial that transcends the possibilities of traditional memorials and that addresses primarily digital natives who can no longer face surviving witnesses and their authentic accounts.



REMEMBER delicately traces and conveys the history of the Charité during fascism and the policies that prevailed during these times.

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¹ Ernst Klee: Deutsche Medizin im Dritten Reich. Karrieren von und nach 1945. Frankfurt/M.: S. Fischer Verlag 2001, S. 285

² „Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Westdeutschen Ärztekammern“ 1949. Zit. nach Walter Wuttke-Groneberg: „Medizin im Nationalsozialismus“. Schwäbische Verlagsgesellschaft, Tübingen, S. 171.

³ https://www.ippnw.de/commonFiles/pdfs/Soziale_Verantwortung/Appell_Deutscher_Aerztetag_2012.pdf [zuletzt aufgerufen am 15.4.2018]

⁴ https://gedenkort.charite.de/fileadmin/user_upload/microsites/ohne_AZ/sonstige/gedenkort/1.Erinnerungsweg_22.03_interactive.pdf [zuletzt aufgerufen am 12.4.2018]

⁵ Ein herausragendes Beispiel ist das von Michaela Melián 2008 konzipierte und soundbasierte virtuelle Denkmal *Memory Loops* mit 300 Tonspuren zu Orten des NS-Terrors in München.

