

# Briefe aus Berlin

## Alumni Newsletter

of the KRUPP INTERNSHIP PROGRAM FOR STANFORD STUDENTS IN GERMANY



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**Berlin tech startups face COVID challenges** by Kelly Ford

**My Personal Trip to Panama**

by Dante Zhu

**My Year as a Watchdog**

by Justus-Casimir Braun



Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach-Stiftung

# Grußwort der Krupp-Stiftung

von Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Ursula Gather



**Dieses Jahr** ist aufgrund der Corona-Pandemie ein besonderes, auch für das Krupp Internship Programm für Studierende der Stanford Universität. Zum ersten Mal seit Bestehen des Programms – und das sind bereits 38 Jahre – fiel der alljährliche Besuch der Stipendiatinnen und Stipendiaten in der Villa Hügel in Essen aufgrund der Pandemie aus. Auch konnte in diesem Jahr nur eine kleine Zahl von Stipendiaten ein Praktikum in einem Unternehmen in Deutschland absolvieren. Angesichts der besonderen Bedingungen in diesem Jahr bin ich sehr dankbar, dass dennoch das Programm nicht vollständig ausgesetzt wurde, sondern fünf Praktikanten und Praktikantinnen die Möglichkeit hatten, berufliche und kulturelle Erfahrungen in einem deutschen Unternehmen zu sammeln.

Ich wünsche mir sehr, dass der persönliche Austausch mit den Stipendiatinnen und Stipendiaten im nächsten Jahr in Essen wieder möglich sein wird. Denn in diesen

Gesprächen zeigt sich immer wieder, wie wichtig das Programm für jeden einzelnen, aber auch für eine gute Beziehung zwischen jungen Amerikanern und Deutschland ist.

Der „Alumni Newsletter“ informiert seit 15 Jahren aktuelle und ehemalige Stipendiaten des „Krupp Internship Program“, für neue Stipendiaten werden nützliche und in diesem Jahr ganz neue Erfahrungen eines Remote-Praktikums weitergegeben, und Ehemalige können schöne Erinnerungen auffrischen. In einer Zeit der sozialen Distanz kommt dem Newsletter eine besonders verbindende Aufgabe zu. Ich freue mich, auch in diesem Jahr alle Alumni des Krupp Internship Program herzlich grüßen zu können und wünsche Ihnen, dass Sie gesund und wohlbehalten durch diese Zeit kommen. ■

**Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Ursula Gather**, Vorsitzende des Kuratoriums der Alfred Krupp von Bohnen und Halbach-Stiftung

## Tschüss, Tegel!





**An estimated 99% of our students** have landed at the "Otto Lilienthal" airport Berlin-Tegel to travel from there to Dahlem. It has been closed for good as of November 8th. Since 2019, the facility has been protected as a historical monument, due to its novel planning and construction by gmp Architects from 1969 to 1975 (there were some modifications especially after 9/11).



The Beuth Hochschule für Technik Berlin/ University of Applied Sciences will move into Terminal A as the center of the **Berlin TXL** science and research campus. In addition to research and industry projects, there is construction planned on the 200 ha site for 10,000 residential buildings of industrial timber. The non-listed Terminal C will be used temporarily as a vaccination center.

When it was completed, Tegel was considered the most modern airport in the world. It was the "airport of short distances," with only 30 m between the cab stand and the gate – a world record – and without the coercion of consumption. The Hamburg office of Meinhard von Gerkan, Volkwin Marg and Klaus Nickels was able to realize its design principles in an ideal way; the

**The photo on the cover** shows a view of the new airport, **Berlin Brandenburg (BER)**, named after Willy Brandt (1913–1992), former head of SPD and president of the Socialist International, former Governing Mayor of Berlin and, from 1969 to 1974, the fourth chancellor of the Federal Republic. In 1971, he received the Nobel Peace Prize for his policy of détente during the Cold War. The airport was opened on October 31st after 14

years of construction, including a delay of nine years and a cost growth from 2B€ to 6B€. The architecture, reminiscent of Mies van der Rohe's National Gallery in Potsdamer Straße, also stems from gmp Architects, but in 2012 they were incorrectly replaced as general planners which resulted in further construction delays. This was also the year when Amy Egerter (Architectural Design '14), Krupp Intern at Arcadis Deutschland GmbH, provided us the

first images of the airport's interior design (#8/2012). For masochists, there is the "BER Bausimulator" (STEAM), a simulation game which you can use to recreate the airport. The further the construction process progresses, the more defects you find to repair before the opening in 2037, and the more your costs increase. However, you are only allowed to delay the airport opening three times.

airport combined simplicity, unity and diversity, structural order (hexa- and trigones), and distinctiveness to achieve functionality in an aesthetic form. TXL was planned for 2.5 million passengers per year, and before the pandemic it could handle 25 million.

An insider farewell tour of the airport with one of the architects, Meinhard Gerkan, was produced by the Landesdenkmalamt Berlin: "Bye, bye Flughafen Tegel – Hallo Denkmal!"

For nostalgics, Peter Ortner's illustrated book "The Essence of Berlin-Tegel. Taking Stock of an Airport's Architecture" (Berlin: JOVIS 2020) shows the airport design from the perspective of travelers and demonstrates the "humanity" at its essence, as reviewer Peter Richter pointed out (SZ, 5.6.2020, 11). ■

## Neu in Berlin (I)

The replica of the City Palace is almost finished. The Humboldt Forum is gradually opening with exhibitions on the Humboldt brothers, Berlin's connection to the world, and the interaction and crisis of natural and social systems. In the summer of 2021, the new subway station, Museumsinsel, will open on the Schlossplatz, extending the U5 line to connect the Hauptbahnhof to Hönower. Other new stations on the U5 line are Unter den Linden and Rotes Rathaus.

Links:

<https://www.humboldtforum.org>  
<https://www.humboldt-labor.de>  
<https://berliner-schloss.de>  
<https://www.projekt-u5.de>



# What's (not) New in Berlin

by Karen Kramer



**What is unfortunately** not new in Berlin, nor anywhere else, is "Corona" – that is the catch-all term Germans use to reference not only the virus of that name but also the havoc it has wrought on our health, our families, our

ly ubiquitous testing, raises our hope that studying abroad, in Berlin and around the world, will soon again become a reality for Stanford students. As Wolf describes further down, the pandemic forced us to reduce the Krupp Internship Program to only five students, two of whom were able to work on site because travel was not necessary: In one case the internship placement predated the pandemic, and in the other Berlin happens to be the student's primary residence. The remaining three worked remotely from the US. We are extremely grateful to the Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach Foundation for supporting remote interns, despite the fact that collaborating remotely is a less immersive overall experience than working on-location in Germany. But as all five of the 2020 Krupp cohort had previously studied at Stanford in Berlin, had sunk roots in this culture and had the requisite language skills, building on that experience remote-



Villa Hügel with the Baldeney Lake. For the first time in the history of the Krupp

Program, the yearly Fellowship Meeting in Essen had to be cancelled.

Below: The Villa's new weather-resistant garden gate.

ly proved to be a remarkably effective way to outsmart the pandemic. Their essays in this year's *Briefe* attest to the fact that their internships proved to be not only productive and efficient, but rewarding also in the sense of

communities, our institutions, and our economy. As you are aware, Stanford, along with most universities worldwide, instituted a myriad of mitigating measures to inhibit the spread of the pandemic and has curtailed in-person activities since the end of winter quarter. For the past eight months, most instruction has been remote and most undergraduates have resided pretty much anywhere *but* the Stanford campus (though exceptions have been made for students for whom study at home is not an option, including foreign students whose time zones preclude participation in live online courses conducted in Pacific Standard Time). The Bing Overseas Studies Programs have followed suit and will remain closed at least through spring quarter 2021. But the prospect that effective, deliverable vaccines will soon be available, in tandem with increasing-



After infestation by the box tree moth (*Cydalima perspectalis*), which is observed in Germany only since

2006, our hedges died. They were replaced by selected flowers. We are looking forward to their full blooming next spring.

personal interaction and team collaboration even with partners half a world away.

Although in Germany, too, the pandemic has taken a heavy toll, its management has been relatively successful by international comparison as a result of many factors. These include a closely networked and coordinated system of clinics and hospitals, universal health care, and a robust, pre-existing system of “short work” subsidies to enterprises designed to abate severe economic consequences of unforeseen developments.

The BOSP programs have enjoyed the unwavering support of the university throughout. To be sure, the Villa is entirely vacated except for essential on-site work; the Berlin



German language lecturer Jochen Wohlfeil with winter quarter students in front of the Völker-schlachtdenkmal in Leipzig (Monument to the Battle of the Nations in October 1813), l-r: Kyle Feliciano, Troy Lawrence, Josephine Flohr. Visits to Leipzig are a fixed part of the German courses. Duisburg area.



During their H.G. Field Trip on European Expansion to Cyprus, winter quarter students with faculty and staff visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cyprus where they met diplomat Frances Lanitou (back in the middle).

team is in home office, Zoom-collaborating intensely among ourselves and with colleagues in California (or wherever *their* home offices may be). A great deal of our administrative and operations-focused work continues whether or not we are in session, but we have made a virtue of necessity by using the pandemic to pause productively, completing or beginning worthwhile enhancements to the program for which we would normally have only very limited time, reallocating time we would normally spend working with students on site. The projects we have undertaken will enrich our programs for post-pandemic cohorts, including redesigning our local websites, undertaking major repairs of the Villa and gardens, becoming more adept at using technology in the classroom and effectively delivering remote instruction when circumstances might demand it. Two of our language instructors undertook, and have nearly completed, writing an extensive German grammar book, custom-designed to address the concrete grammar and usage problems that daunt students trying to make their way in the streets of Berlin; this new resource will richly augment the core text used on the home campus moving forward. Another major project is to complete an

edited volume on the registered landmark Haus Cramer aka “the Villa,” home of the the H.G. Will Center. This illustrated volume grew out of and will expand on a symposium we held to celebrate the centennial of Haus Cramer; it will revisit its architectural and cultural history, richly emblematic of early 20th century Berlin, and trace its more recent history through the nearly half century in which it has served as Stanford’s German campus – namely, your *Kiez* in Berlin. In this context, may I introduce you to the Center’s new Student and Academic Services Coordinator and Internship Assistant, Cornelia Kastelan; Cornelia has experience in publishing and, in collaboration with me and other long-term associates, is coordinating the effort to get the Haus Cramer book into print during the next academic year.

Finally, we have used the this downtime forced upon us by Corona to design, for summer 2021, two exciting one-time options to help to offset the heavy toll the pandemic has taken on the undergraduate experience of Stanford students. We will be offering an intensive, 5-week Fast Track German course, in which students will complete either German 1 or German 2 in half the

time; this offering is one of the university's "flex" offerings, a pandemic-year gift that allows undergraduates to take five units of credit tuition-free. Students will have two hours of German instruction each morning; two to three afternoons a week they will join faculty on study trips in Berlin, exploring museums, historic sites, and its diverse neighborhood cultures. In addition, we will be offering next summer's Krupp interns the opportunity to enroll in two to three units of tuition-free independent work, participant observation of their

experience in the field, "Krupp-Flex: Work-Life Balance in Germany Today."

But as productive as these Corona-fraught months have turned out to be, the Berlin team yearns for the quarter, soon to come, in which the halls of Haus Cramer will once again echo with the voices of our students: "Ja, genau äh – cool!" (the German translation of ... cool). ■

**Dr. Karen Kramer**, Director, H.G. Will Center of the Bing Overseas Studies Program Berlin

## My Well-Planned Trip to Berlin by Josephine Flohr

**A university student** from a beach town living in a foreign metropolis during a global pandemic. The plot of a thrilling hypothetical novel, but not what I thought my sophomore year with Stanford University was going to be. I came to Berlin January 1st of 2020, celebrating the New Year with my family on the way to the airport. Similar to the rest of the world, I had no idea what 2020 had in store for me. I arrived in Berlin as a young woman with food poisoning from some disappointing mushroom



My Charité institute in Mitte.

Left below: With Prof. Dr. Hans Maier, Managing Partner at BGM Associates.



city of Berlin for this disregard of my love affair with control, for it alluded to what I would need for the months to come.

When my Cohort was called into an Emergency Meeting at the Villa at Pacelliallee, it was clear my last few weeks with Stanford in Berlin would not be going as planned. We were told to immediately pack our things and go home. I felt an immense sense of loss for the weeks that could have been. I had found the Stanford I had been looking for in the Villa in Dahlem. I was educationally and emotionally challenged, while receiving the most genuine support I have experienced in my educational career. It was a privilege to have that short time with Stanford in Berlin, and I was heartbroken knowing I must say goodbye. I was supposed to have weeks left in Berlin. I wanted every last minute; I wasn't ready to say farewell. What I didn't know was that I wouldn't be staying for a few more weeks, I would be living in Berlin for the next year.

ravioli, dismal German skills, and not nearly enough layers. I began my mornings at a local café a short walk from my homestay; there I attempted to have a meticulously thought-out day. Allocating hours to my courses, homework, museum visits, my daily nap on the yellow leather library couch, and dinner at one of the Berlin restaurants I had piling up in my notes app. However, Berlin seemed to have another idea for my color-coded days. Whether it was getting lost in the S-Bahn or having my phone stolen, Berlin found a way to make things interesting – something more than frustrating for someone of my organized demeanor. I thank the people and

Due to an amazing effort from the Stanford in Berlin team, while my classmates were packing to leave, I had an interview with the Klinik für Psychiatrie und Psychotherapie at the Charité. This was the most incredible organizational feat I have witnessed. From the end-



less options the Krupp Internship had to offer, and due to the tireless work of Stanford in Berlin, I was offered the internship of my dreams. It all felt surreal. I began as a researcher from my apartment – not exactly the bench lab work I had been expecting, but then again none of this was expected. Throughout my internship, which happened to perfectly align with the lockdown in Berlin, I was able to go into the lab a total of three times. We were fortunate enough to be one of the few labs at the Charité allowed to continue work, and because of this we could still have in person lab meetings. In these meetings, each member updated the group on their progress. When it was my turn, I presented my lab work turned crash course in data science. I developed a streamlined database with regard to cytochrome expression and role in metabolism in over 45 tissues to support the further experimentation of psychotropic drug metabolism in the brain. This also meant I spent my quarantine in a duel with my nemesis – Excel.

On the way back from a lab meeting to my Kreuzberg apartment, I had a transfer at Mehringdamm. This was the station where I had met up with a fellow Stanford student, coffees in hand, for our daily commute to classes. This time there were no musicians echoing along the tracks, no surges of bodies in and out of cramped train cars, no shops to purchase slightly charred pastries. Instead, it was me, the mice, and the wind of passing trains.

I watched as a global pandemic spread and observed how these two different cultures adapted to a challenge no one in our lifetime had ever faced. I experienced German culture through the lens of a visitor, and for the first time from afar, I watched American life. My home country was in shambles. I heard about my hometown, one of the COVID-19 hotspots in the United States, through a screen from family and friends. My mother, an essen-

tial healthcare worker, explained that all medical staff were given a special card to show law enforcement in situations of civil unrest, so they could still make it to work. Our healthcare system was completely inadequate to deal with something of this magnitude. Our president preached harmful and inaccurate “cures.” As time passed, stay at home orders became tedious and were questioned as the economy suffered. There were armed protests demanding a return to work.

Meanwhile, I felt dismally selfish for my own struggles, as I was told from my home how lucky I was to be away. At this point it had been many unexpected months away from my family. My once winter wardrobe was transformed into a compila-

The internship at BGM Associates took place in another Hermann Muthesius Villa: “Haus Bernhard” is located in Grunewald and is also a listed building.

tion of friends’ clothing. I was completely unprepared for the life I was living. I panicked at the idea of my plans going awry. I felt isolated from all I have ever known. I have always been an extroverted person, but this was put to the test when the rest of my Berlin cohort left the country. My typically California sunshine exterior was absent in response to foreign questions. Being outgoing is much more difficult and daunting when everyone is speaking another language. I refused to allocate myself the emotions to feel vulnerable since I had made the choice to stay. After so many people told me how lucky I was to be on this adventure, why didn’t I feel it? I found new and old ways of coping during these months – from baking, as I had done as a child, to knitting. I tried to learn a programming language, despite my disdain and utter confusion for anything regarding technology. I spent many hours hoping the view outside the fourth floor apartment windows would reveal some sliver of whatever I was searching for. Instead, they reflected a transformation of seasons, my view of asphalt streets obscured by fresh green leaves. It was a beautiful setting to feel utterly lost.

I jumped from island to island of purpose, attempting to grasp for anything that would keep my own life meaningful in order to feel like I was doing something productive. I had never been in this situation; I have always had a goal, which is not uncommon for Stanford students, and now I was told that my goal was to wait. As you might imagine, I’m not very good at waiting. I

buried myself in my work. I began apartment searching with a dear friend, so I could have a home to feel like myself in. I faceted friends often, and journaled daily. I felt like a petulant child incapable of seeing the wonder in front of her, unable to voice her feelings for fear that someone would point out what I was blind to. Time passed, slowly or quickly depending on the day.

Berlin began to open once again. I thought this would be the end of my isolation. I began to make friends, through friends-of-friends-of-friends. But I struggled to feel like I was making a genuine connection. My cue that I was being spoken to was a word of English in the mess of dialects and languages from my now internationally diverse friends. A light afternoon in Treptower Park along the Spree required a bit of deep breathing before returning to the group with a smile. I booked trips home to my family, only to have them cancelled. I made plans for trips out of Germany, to have those be cancelled as well. I toured flats and attempted to present my most responsible and adult exterior. At this point the chaos of Berlin had weathered me. However, I do not mean this with a negative implication. The ever-shifting winds of Germany had begun to slowly whittle away my unnecessary protection. My planner went into a drawer. My colored pens were lost in busses, or at coffee shops, or between the slats on my friend's balcony. I was learning to accept the new reality; this was not a fleeting moment as many had hoped. That my trip to Berlin was not my fun few weeks abroad, but instead a significant tumultuous time of my young life.

I began my next Krupp Internship in June 2020. I was living in Prenzlauer Berg in an overpriced apartment, learning how to navigate the fast-paced world of my neighborhood Lidl. It was fair to say as a Psychology student with a resume that was a collage of lab names, I had no idea what I was doing. I requested a job in the field of consulting for that same reason – I had no idea what I was doing. What I did know, however, was that through the Krupp internship program I was given the opportunity to explore in a time of limitation. Being a sophomore in college I had a vague idea of the future, psychology degree in hand, but I struggled with being farsighted. Did I want to go into research, clinical psychology, or marketing? Did I want to get my Ph.D., M.D., M.B.A.? Due to my relative isolation and self-proclaimed lack of purpose, I had a lot of time to think. So, I decided to start at one extreme of my already pruned field of interests and work inward. My first internship at the Charité taught me that I will not be a researcher for the rest of my life. I was struggling with a few months of isolation. Therefore, I knew, a career of conversations under a TC hood between my cell lines and I, would not



One of my travel destinations: the Wartburg castle in Eisenach.

be my life's passion. Then, my interests veered to the other end of my career spectrum. I should do business! I will take meetings and conference calls and be a strategic mastermind. That is how I ended up walking into BGM Associates.

BGM Associates is a boutique medical consulting firm, consisting of three partners and five employees. I was the fifth. I made my daily trek to S-Grünwald, the summer air warming my skin as I made my commute to the office down the rows of renowned architecture that are the Grünwald Villas. It was on my early morning walk to the office that for the first time in six months a stranger smiled at me. This made me absurdly happy and prompted an overly excited two A.M. alarm phone call for my mother. I was assigned my role within the small close-knit company; I would be working with a Berlin AI startup on a new software to support breast cancer screening. As my mother had recently reached seven years remission from breast cancer, this business endeavor brought me close to home. My main role for the next three months would be competitor analysis and market entry; I was to investigate and determine the decisions our competitors had not yet released. This began with mass research on the field of breast cancer screening in Germany.

My first attempt at this kind of research was from my familiar approach, by reading publications in medical journals. I thoroughly enjoyed looking at things with a scientific mindset, yet with a business motive. This helped me to understand the topic but not the key players. Then, I began to explore investor relations, venture

capital firms, and connections between board members. I was assembling a puzzle with no clue which way was up. We had weekly staff meetings where I presented my findings of that week. Despite my lack of confidence or prior knowledge, my beginner perspective and questions were respected and viewed as valid. I worked to understand the underlying functions of each AI competitor, which led me to learn about a field I had never intended to; the world of Neural Nets and Computer Vision. For someone with an aversion to technology beyond Google and Netflix, this was uncharted territory.

My work at BGM Associates cumulated in a final workshop with our client. Our goal was to focus on market access for the startup and determine the steps needed for a primary launch. We worked meticulously, preparing materials and our presentation for our crucial meeting. I created our company visuals while also being the fact double and triple checker. We met on a sweltering late August day in a historic building on Unter den Linden. In an open and bright room, a concrete table separated BGM Associates and our client. Eleven people, four from BGM, seven from our client, exchanged formalities. They were the top executives from their company. We were composed of two giants of medicine and mathematics, a brilliant consultant, and me – the intern. I laid out my computer and notebook, preparing for the eight-hour meeting ahead. However, it quickly became clear that this meeting would not go as I had expected.

First, it was completely in German. Although my German had vastly improved since my first days in Berlin,

a fast-paced technical exchange was beyond my understanding. I was able to follow, with Google Translate at the ready, for about three hours. I was aware that our meeting was not following the schedule I had printed and laid before each person. Instead, sharp words were flung back and forth across the massive concrete partition, each side attempting to reveal the full capabilities of the AI. There was a clear disagreement on the correct direction for the young startup. My skull began to ache, as I was translating words faster than I could process. I took a breath. I was flustered with a fast beating heart, unsure if my understanding of the situation was true.

I closed my computer. The voices, atonal against one another became a setting for me to use a different aspect of my education. I sat, watched, and listened. I watched as tone, cadence, bodily movement, and facial expression changed. My understanding of human behavior, disagreement, and connection bridging my gap of linguistic understanding. I transitioned from translation to observation and back once more, until the meeting had reached its conclusion. It was not until this moment that I realized out of the 75 slides we had created, BGM had only presented one to the client. I waited until we had said our farewells to the client for my inquiry about this. Why did we do so much deliberate and meticulous preparation if little to none of it would be used? I was told that this often happens, and that our preparation was for our own understanding and change in perspective.

I walked out of the steadfast 19th century building to

## Neu in Berlin (II)



© Gedenkstätte Stille Helden / G. Ennals

The permanent exhibition **Stille Helden**: "Silent Heroes. Resistance to the Persecution of the Jews in Europe 1933–1945" is part of the Gedenkstätte Deutscher Widerstand in the Tiergarten district.

It completes a group of related Berlin-based institutions: the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, the Topography of Terror and the Jewish Museum Berlin. The exhibition "commemorates Jewish men and women who resisted National Socialist persecution, and those who helped them to do so. The example set by these

helpers – often referred to as "silent heroes" – shows that it was in fact possible to support people at risk in National Socialist Germany and German-occupied Europe." This is the first time that the history of these helpers is shown in Germany with its European dimension. The illustration shows the pharmacist Tadeusz Pankiewicz, who in 1941 refused to move his pharmacy from the Krakow Ghetto where he supplied inhabitants with medicine and food. He also smuggled messages and hid Jews in his store.

a slightly cooler day with a new-found respect for the uncertainties of this world. As I made my way home to my small, once foreign but now comforting flat, I noticed the late spring blooms of Linden trees had begun an early decay. Small white blossoms were singed by the blistering heat and fallen petals were soundless below my feet. Despite the premature decline of Berlin's spring, each step I took released a swell of their sweet spring scent.

I hope that through my words you are able to experience and feel the impact of my time in Berlin. I have grown more in this time than I ever thought possible. My trip to Berlin began on a whim as a semi-confident student. I sit now a young woman, proud of what I am capable of and who I have become. This love letter to Berlin

and my time here has been written in that same café that I started my meticulous days from, as I watch the fall leaves beginning to change and the Sprühregen on the window panes. I have read through my stacks of journals, recounting the remarkable journey I have been on and the people who supported me along the way. If you take anything away from my words, please take this: The Krupp internship program and those who are responsible for it are the most influential educational and professional resources Stanford University has to offer. ■

**Josephine Flohr** (Psychology, German Studies) studied in Berlin in winter and stayed here to intern at the Charité in spring and at BGM Associates in summer 2020.



## Status Report on the Krupp Internship Program by Wolf-Dietrich Junghanns

**You won't be surprised** to read that the pandemic affected the Krupp Internship Program along with everything else. In March, Stanford suspended international programs, including ours. At this point we had planned to place about 30 interns for the academic year 2019–20; after a very complex process, we were granted permission to place five students, as exceptions: two internships physically in Berlin (one who was placed right before the travel ban went into effect, and one whose home is in Berlin) and three remote ones. Given the immersive character of the Krupp Program, remote internships are not ideal, but under the circumstances they presented a pragmatic and worthwhile solution for both the hosts and for the students, who otherwise would have

had difficulty finding productive alternatives at home so close to the summer. We, Berlin faculty and staff, feel very fortunate to have been able to continue the program at all under pandemic conditions, albeit on a limited scale, and indeed, all five internships turned out very well. Each placement was special and was with a new host – you can read about them in this issue. We thank all involved in helping enable these five strong internships: the Krupp Foundation, the BOSP office, the Stanford Club of Germany, and the Berlin faculty and staff!

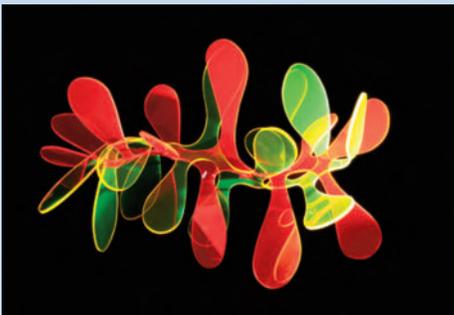
The uncertainty of this viral year made planning difficult not only for the university, but also for our German partners. Some potential hosts introduced a temporary hiring freeze, so that internships already arranged could not take place and the expectation that the freeze might soon be lifted was too uncertain to count on. This concerned design offices, manufacturers, as well as, for example, schools and kindergartens, which for a time did not have pupils at all or, in the latter case, only a very few children whose parents were deemed essential workers – *Systemrelevanz* was the key term; we lost two such pedagogical internships in Berlin. The exacerbating problem was travel restrictions. Fortunately, two of our engineering students, Daniel Blackburn and Troy Lawrence managed to fly over the ocean to intern with German car companies, though not formally within the Krupp program and only after a two-week quarantine before being allowed onto the premises. Troy Lawrence reports about his adventures in this newsletter.

Safety is the highest priority, of course. Nonetheless,

At the Berlin Center, artist and architectural theorist **Matthias Pabsch** teaches "Cityscape as History: Architecture and Urban Design in Berlin" and "Berlin

vor Ort." In his artistic works, he deals with the themes of light and shadow, light and dark contrasts and spatial orders. On the occasion of his

recent exhibition "Biotopia," his gallerist **Gudrun Pamme-Vogelsang** wrote: "The works of the Bioscape series, colorful, organically interwoven acrylic glass sculptures, fuse elements of architecture with forms of nature and hint at a possible synthetic-biological future. Suspended in mid-air or placed on pedestals, they shine, seemingly just waiting to refract the light in ever new angles and making it visible to all."



Matthias Pabsch, Bioscape, 2019, acrylic glass, 24 x 43,5 x 21 cm, © Matthias Pabsch.

we are painfully aware of the fact that due to the pandemic and, let us concede, its heterogeneous and uncoordinated handling between and within different countries and regions, a considerable number of Stanford students will not have the opportunity to go abroad during their undergraduate education either as a student or as an intern. We very much hope that by summer 2021 the situation will have improved sufficiently that we will be able to welcome new students and prospective Krupp Interns. A few students who had qualified for the program before the pandemic have already expressed their desire to come back for a first or a second Krupp Internship. But that, too, will be a challenge for all concerned until vaccines, treatments and testing become readily available.

Until October, Germany has weathered the crisis relatively well. Above all, the short-time work allowance (*Kurzarbeitergeld*) helped to curtail unemployment and mass bankruptcies of enterprises. At the end of September (until then data are available), around 2,2 million people were still receiving short-time work compensation, compared with almost 6 million in April, which was to date the highest figure this year. By way of comparison, in the financial crisis of 2009 the figure was “only” 1.1 million. The state has provided very large sums to keep the economy going, but it cannot save all organizations affected. In the area of *Kunst und Kultur* and entertainment – think only of Berlin’s clubs –, for example, a great many freelancers who have only small, if any, reserves are affected by the cancellation of events

and the restriction of audience numbers. Despite all the creative initiatives in the response to the pandemic, cultural life may be impacted permanently. The same is true for businesses in the city centers, as they lose out to online commerce as the crisis continues. German federalism is another factor. It is an old legacy of German particularism up to the Napoleonic Wars, but also the result of lessons learned from the centralism of the dictatorships of the 20th century. In the pandemic, federalism is increasingly seen as an obstacle because differing mitigation measures in the individual federal states often confuse citizens and lower the readiness to abide by the AHAL rules: *Abstand halten, Hygiene beachten, Alltagsmaske tragen, Lüften*. What is permitted where and when, where is one allowed to travel under what conditions and where not? The relationship between the federal and state governments, between the administration and the parliament, between freedom and safety is constantly being renegotiated. In all this, the ambitions of individual politicians who aspire to succeed Angela Merkel also play a major role – the Germans will elect a new chancellor in autumn of 2021. In many respects, the long-term effects of the pandemic are not yet foreseeable. However, given the relative stability of the country so far, we do not expect long term changes for the Krupp Program and look optimistically into the future. Let us be patient and persistent at the same time. Please wish, with us, that the Berlin Center and our Krupp Internship hosts will soon be welcoming a new cohort of Stanford students! ■

## My Personal Trip to Panama by Dante Zhu



**I am so happy** that I had the opportunity provided by the Krupp Foundation to work remotely in Wonderz this summer. During my time at Wonderz, I was able to work with a team on the development of a children’s app based on work of Janosch. Throughout the process, I participated in the development of digital materials from original Janosch artworks as well as the writing of new stories sharing Janosch’s aesthetics. Under the guidance of Herr Matzke, I also became involved in app development. These three months were a wonderful journey of growth and challenges for me, full of new knowledge, skills, and excitement. Looking back, I simply cannot believe that I actually got to work on Janosch materials; Janosch’s stories are the first stories I ever read in German.



At the beginning of the winter quarter, during the BOSP Berlin program, I began the study of this structured, yet beautiful, language. After teaching us some basic German, the instructor of my German class, Sylvia, introduced us to Janosch's "Oh wie schön ist Panama," which is probably one of the most famous children's books in Germany. Back then, already intrigued by the fantastical story and signature Janosch illustrations, I could not have dreamed that I would one day work on making an interactive audiobook out of this piece. This summer, when I first realized that our team would be working on Janosch materials, my excitement was beyond words. My direct supervisor, Tine, was an expert in Janosch stories as well as an amazing storyteller. With her guidance and support, I delved deeper into the world of Janosch, from "Panama" to "Emil Grünbär." I started to realize that despite the nature of children's storybooks, these Janosch stories sometimes carry more profound meanings concerning culture, philosophy, and even politics. Janosch's stories have influenced and inspired almost every German individual around me, signaling a nostalgic value that I began to understand this summer. In the development of the app, I was often reminded of this. Probably because of the power of Janosch's world, I now view children's stories differently than I did before. I used to think that a story for children should just be something simple, with a nice ending and happy characters; it was the genre I had never considered working in as an aspiring writer. I decided to try my hand at writing children's books, and soon realized that it is more complicated than I presumed. What do we want to pass on to the next generation? What values, what emotions, and what memories? What do we want our children to grow up with? These are the questions that every writer of children's stories, every producer of children's media, must consider.

The happiest thing during my internship was really getting to know my colleagues. After a whole summer's

work together, I realized I've become inseparable with this family. Even though it was a remote internship, I became really close with people on my team in countless German afternoons and American mornings. Working remotely could be hard, I must admit, and as Berlin is such a city of wonders, it is a pity that I didn't get to explore it during the summer. And the time difference was sometimes a challenge, especially at the beginning, so that we were almost always communicating with each other with a delay. But as soon as we got into the pace of it, with nice management and the help from various tools, like Jira, Dropbox, etc., I'd say we did pretty well on this front. We would have meetings on German late afternoons and on American early mornings, in which we shared our progress for the day, as well as weekly sprint reviews in which we'd review the progress for the week and make new plans for the next week together. Our slack channel was always active, and we could reach out to each other with just a simple message. Getting familiar with these efficiency tools was really helpful in these times. Looking back, I have begun to think that a remote internship is not a compromise, just a different perspective. In work, it provided me with a chance for better focus, and I was more concentrated. The challenges drew my team members and I closer instead of driving us apart. Problem-solving together, in my experience, was the first step towards developing bonds. I encountered some pandemic-related personal difficulties in the summer, from having a hurting wisdom tooth without an accessible dentist to having troubles finding places to get my computer fixed. In the leisure time, I shared these frustrations with my colleagues, and even though we were in different countries, everything was very relatable. In the comfort we gave each other, I experienced something warm and soothing in the pandemic. ■

**Dante Zhu** (Symbolic Systems, Art Practice, Classics) studied in Berlin in winter and interned remotely with Wonderz GmbH (Wunderbox TV) in Berlin in summer 2020.

# Summer Night Hymn

by Runqi Zhang

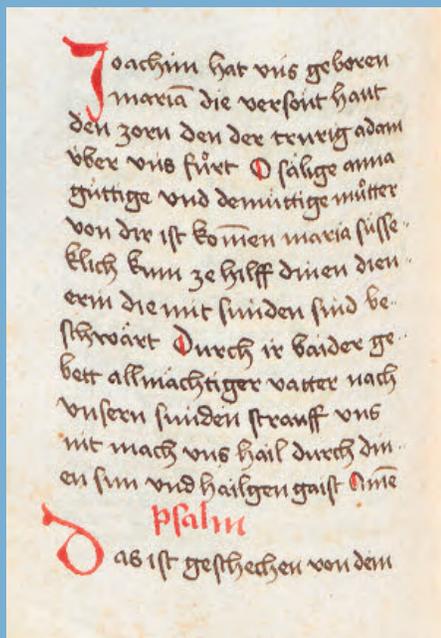


**This summer**, I did a remote Krupp Internship as research assistant to German Studies Professor Andreas Kraß at the Institut für deutsche Literatur of Humboldt Universität zu Berlin. The project I was working on is called the Berliner Repertorium, which is a giant data base that contains a collection of Middle High German (MHG) hymns, sequences, and antiphons and their Latin correspondents. The main goal of this database is to facilitate researchers to find the primary source that they would like to use in their research concerning medieval German religiosity as fast as possible. My work this summer was of various kinds, but mainly there were two types: transcribing and translating MHG hymns from the original manuscript and finding their corresponding Latin hymns. Another part of my job was a bit more complicated. It was concerned mainly with collecting and analyzing the German and Latin hymns and explaining what is special about each. To complete this part of the work, I had to read research literature dating from the 1800s. It has truly been an enlightening experience to see what sophisticated and wonderful work the old Germans did. This summer has improved me in many aspects. First of all, my MHG and Latin reading skills have increased greatly. Also, since all of my meetings with my supervisors were in German, I believe my German speaking skills in medieval studies have also become more and more fluent. At the end of the summer, I could freely communicate my ideas about specific hymns with my supervisor as easily as if it would be in English.

One of the most memorable hymns for me is obviously the first hymn I transcribed. Below is the full transcription of the MHG as well as a modern German translation.

The transcription method I employed is a diplomatic transcription, which means that I have transcribed every single word exactly as the manuscript suggests. The space after some lines represents that the line has ended fully in the manuscript. Whereas for those lines that do not have a space at the end, it means that the word is cut in half in the original manuscript, and the rest of the word would start on the next line.

This hymn is rather simple. The saint that is addressed in this hymn is mainly St. Anna. Although throughout the hymn, St. Anna's husband, St. Joachim, and their daughter Virgin Mary also appear. When reading this hymn in the middle ages, the newly converted Christians were trying to thank St. Anna and her family for taking away their pains and bringing them happiness. There are several Latin hymns we have found that are similar to this Middle High German translation. However, it is still a continuing work. In order to maintain the integrity of the database, I will not present the Latin hymns here. However it is interesting to note that in one of the corresponding Latin hymns we found, the sentence which means *Joachim has taken away the pain that Adam brought us* is replaced with *Anna has taken away the pain that Eve brought us*. This complete shift in gender is in-



## Transcription

Joachim hat uns geboren |  
marian die versont hant |  
den zorn den der trurig adam |  
uber uns furt O hailige anna |  
guttige uns demuttige muotter |  
von dir ist komen maria susse |  
klich kum ze hilf dinen dien |  
erm die mit sunden sind be |  
schwart Durch ir baiden ge |  
bett allmachtiger vatter nach |  
busern sunden strauff uns |  
mit mach und hail durch din |  
en sun und hailgen gaist amen. |

## Translation

Joachim hat Maria geboren, die den Zorn, den der traurige Adam über uns gebracht hat, versöhnt hat.  
O heilige Anna, deine gütige und demütige Mutter, komm zu uns, Maria, die du süß zu deinen Dienern kommst, die mit Sünden beschwert sind.  
Durch ihre beiden Gebete, Allmächtiger Vater, straf uns für unsere Sünden, mit Macht und Rettung durch deinen Sohn und den Heiligen Geist. Amen.

teresting, and I wonder if the change in translation might have been a result of the church's effort to accommodate to the general culture of medieval Germany.

This poem is also a very good example to show the similarities between MHG and modern German. Anyone who can understand the German translation of the hymn could probably understand most of the MHG hymn. However, if we were to look at it from a linguistic point of view, we can also witness several examples of the Lautverschiebung from high German to low German. For example, in MHG, the word for born is "geporn." After the consonant shift, it became "geboren" in modern German. Another example would be

that the modern German word for yours is "dein," whereas in MHG it is "din".

The Berliner Repertorium project can be accessed through this [link](#). Under the Hymnen column, one can see all the Latin hymns available on the website. And if you click into any of the Latin hymns, at the end of the page there will be all of its corresponding MHG translations. In all of these pages, there are general descriptions of the hymn and the research literature associated with it. ■

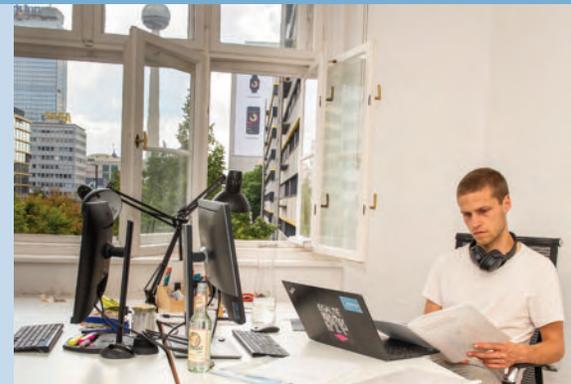
**Runqi Zhang** (German Studies, Classics, Medieval Studies) studied in Berlin in winter and interned remotely with the Institut für deutsche Literatur of Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin in summer of 2020.

## My Year as a Watchdog by Justus-Casimir Braun

**Connecting an old and a new home** is a challenge many students face as they venture beyond the familiar. The same is true for me – just in a somewhat unusual way. For me, my new home is Stanford and the U.S. My old home is Germany.

I grew up in a little town just outside of Berlin. As a kid, my grandma would take me on walks through Dahlem, passing the Villa and the parks surrounding it. My parents still live in the same suburb, and my old school friends are scattered around town. Berlin is fa-

Justin's workplace in the Linienstraße was close to Alexanderplatz and offered a view of the television tower. Franz Biberkopf, the hero of Alfred Döblin's novel "Berlin Alexanderplatz" (1929), lived for some time on this street, which has existed since the early 18th century.



Ernst Barlach: Der Flüchtling, 1920 (bronze, 35,4 x 39,6 cm x 14 cm).

Ernst Barlach (1870–1938), one of the most important German sculptors of the first half of the 20th century, changed during the First World War from a war enthusiast to a pacifist. This shift can be seen clearly in his novel, non-heroic monuments to the victims of war. After the war began, he was concerned with the fate of the civilian population and the theme of flight, for which he found an expression that is considered timeless. This sculpture was part of a large Barlach exhibition in Dresden's **Albertinum** on the occasion of his 150th birthday.

miliar to me, but the longer I have been gone, the more it has been fading into the distance. Reconnecting with this part of my life was why I wanted to return to study at Stanford in Berlin last year. What was meant to be a quarter with my old friends and being close to my family turned (thanks to COVID-19) into more than a year in Europe.

I spent the summer before my semester at the Villa in the small Serbian town of Subotica close to the Hungarian border, reporting on illegal deportations (“push-backs”) of refugees by the Hungarian government for an activist organization called “Border Violence Monitoring Network”. The refugees’ stories were harrowing; being caught by the police, they were locked up in dark rooms for hours and days without due process. They were humiliated, having to undress or being forced to walk in with their arms uncomfortably tied behind the back. They experienced direct physical violence – dog attacks, beatings, and at times torture reminiscent of water boarding. All this was happening, and continues to happen at the EU’s external border, sometimes supported and often ignored by the governments in Berlin and Brussels. The moral righteousness many European liberals felt at Trump’s family separation program at the U.S.’ Southern border rang hallow amidst this suffering.

But the experience I had in Serbia was also inspiring. The perseverance of the refugees amidst fleeing the violence of their old and new homes left a deep impression on me. The more experienced volunteers, many of whom were barely older than me but who had already worked in the field for several years, contrasted sharply with the career-oriented culture at Stanford. Finding role-models is difficult, but strewn across the dusty border towns of Serbia, Hungary, Bosnia, and Croatia, I met people I could truly look up to.

Confronting a darker and more violent reality, political activism with a tangible real-world impact, people whose work has nothing to do with personal ambition – all these are things I had missed at Stanford. My time in Serbia and with several activist groups and protests I have been involved in since have made my time in Germany more than simply reconnecting with an old home. It showed me I still have a role to play in this place and what my role should be. But for my Krupp internship, I was looking to go one step further: I wanted to find a project which would bring together this activist approach with the tech-savviness (and workaholism) of Stanford. This is why I pursued a Krupp internship at AlgorithmWatch during the summer.

The organization is small and undergoing constant change. Ten to fifteen people sit in a small office close

to Alexanderplatz and across COVID-19-induced home offices across Europe. New projects constantly commence as others are wrapped up.

The topics the organization is dealing with affect everybody – from credit scoring algorithms and predictive policing to automated content moderation on social media platforms. The pervasiveness of these tools and their potential to harm democracy, fundamental rights, and our general ability to understand the forces shaping our lives make them an obvious target for journalistic and academic investigation as well as regulatory reforms. In Germany, with its strongly privacy-oriented culture, there is a small but growing civil society – including academics, journalists, watchdog groups, and think tanks – to take on these issues. But this network of actors continues to be full of holes.

AlgorithmWatch, maybe a little over-ambitiously for a small NGO, has tried to fill many of these issue gaps. It has a one-and-a-half-man investigative department with originally reported stories coming out every week. In addition, it has anywhere from three to five active projects (usually consisting of only one or two people) on topics ranging from “Platform Governance” to automated decision-making in human resources. Algo-



In October the **BERLIN POLICY JOURNAL** was relaunched as **INTERNATIONALE POLITIK QUARTERLY**. The journal is published by the German Council on Foreign Relations DGAP which has been one of our recurring internship hosts. These

placements were arranged in part by Dr. Sylke Tempel’s (1963–2017), long-term editor-in-chief of “Internationale Politik” who taught at the Berlin Center and inspired students for political journalism.



## → Neu in Leipzig

The Niemeyer Sphere was designed by Oscar Niemeyer (1907–2012) in 2011. This is the last of his avantgardistic projects which stretch the limits of statics. The sphere is built in the Plagwitz district on the premises of Kirow's Leipzig plant. Kirow is a global leader in railway cranes, and the sphere is an extension of their company café which is open to the public. The interior floor space is only 2 x 7 m, and the triangular, multi-layered glass walls consist of liquid crystal glass.

Links:

<https://www.technesphere.de/>  
<https://www.kirow.de/>



AlgorithmWatch's tools include crowd-sourcing data-donations to investigate bias in automated-decision making systems, organizing campaigns and partnering with media organizations to raise awareness around the effects of automation for a broader audience, conducting academic research both internally and externally, and developing policy positions. Sometimes the projects seemed disparate, but through all of them ran a common thread: a desire to increase the accountability of systems whose impact is as enormous as it is opaque.

This rapid change and the organization's flat hierarchies were disorienting at times, but more importantly, they allowed me to work together with almost all members of our team. Throughout July, we worked on developing a coherent set of policy positions for the Digital Services Act (DSA), an update to the European equivalent of Section 230, which, much like in the U.S., had enshrined limited liability protections for platforms (i.e. the idea that platforms are largely exempted from liability for content posted on their site).

Public debate around the impact of social media on democracy centers around issues such as filter bubbles, fake news, and hate speech. But there is a suspicious lack of good empirical studies on the magnitude and effect of these issues. It became one of my first assignments to organize a campaign to gather the voices of journalists and academics who tried to investigate the impact of platforms. Often, researchers' requests for data access are flat out denied by platforms. When access is granted, data quality is frequently poor, and priv-

ileged access to data for certain actors calls into question the independence of research into the effect of platforms. Due to this campaign and meta-research AlgorithmWatch had conducted previously, it became clear that AlgorithmWatch's policy demands would center around facilitating data access for independent researchers.

Initially, I was disappointed. For a civil society actor literally called "AlgorithmWatch", data access seemed like a small task, especially because of the DSA's ambition to become the *Magna Carta* of internet governance. I would have preferred more radical positions, especially a head-on challenge to the monopolistic positions of major platforms. But that is what developing policy positions is about: compromise is key. More than that, policy options need to make sure that we understand the positive as well as the negative implications of the governance frameworks we advocate for. In the end my co-workers convinced me that given our lack of understanding of platforms' impact on wider society, more far-reaching proposals could not live up to that standard.

As the summer went on, I dabbled in more and more projects. Editing reports and news stories, keeping tabs on our social media presence, and researching stakeholder positions on diverse policy questions. A few weeks before the end of my internship, a journalist colleague of mine asked me whether I wanted to write a story on a predictive grading algorithm used by the International Baccalaureate (IB), a high-school curricu-

lum popular with international schools around the world. It would be published on Spiegel.de, a major German news site. Initially, I was doubtful whether I would be up to the task. My journalistic experience had been limited to writing some little-read op-ed's for a small student newspaper at Stanford. But I knew the IB well, having completed it before coming to Stanford and several friends of mine had been impacted by the IB's algorithm themselves. Above all, I was excited to give it a shot and learn some new skills.

So, I began to interview recent alumni, who had been down-marked by the algorithm; some had lost their university offers as a consequence. I talked to teachers and examiners, who were suddenly left unable to support their students (the algorithm operated as a substitute for final exams, which had been cancelled due to COVID). And I contacted data protection authorities across Germany to find out whether they were investigating the IB under data protection law as the Norwegian authorities had done. Then came the writing and

editing. I was lucky that two experienced tech journalists work at AlgorithmWatch and both of them gave me detailed feedback, helping me to make my piece readable for people outside "the bubble."

When the text was finally uploaded to the website (you can find it [here](#)), I was surprised by how much I had enjoyed the entire process. I had never thought seriously about becoming a journalist, but I feel how that is changing...

The Spiegel article was a perfect conclusion to my year in Europe. It allowed me to bring together knowledge I had gained at Stanford with the political activism I sought in Europe.

It taught me that as one ventures beyond the familiar, one doesn't only leave a place behind but can bring places together. ■

**Justus-Casimir Braun** (International Relations, Political Science, Computer Science) studied in Berlin in autumn 2019 and interned with AW AlgorithmWatch gGmbH in summer 2020.

## Neu in Berlin (III)

After almost four years of construction, the expansion of Mauerpark in Prenzlauer Berg was opened in June. At

14.5 ha, it is now twice as large as before. The park is now also much more green, thanks to the commitment of re-

sidents, especially the **Freunde des Mauerpark e.V.** Because the new part of the park is located in the former West Berlin area of

Wedding, the expansion is understood as a symbol of the city's overcome division. © KarachoBerlin.



# A Polarizing Time: My Experience as a Krupp Intern during the COVID-19 Pandemic

by Mark Laurie



**Before starting** my Krupp Internship with **Biotx.ai**, I had mixed feelings about what was to come for the summer. The company was a perfect fit that aligned perfectly with my experiences and interests. The remote work environment, however, was something I was not looking forward to experiencing. I can confirm that these concerns were well founded. While I enjoyed and profited from my virtual experience working at biotx.ai, I did miss the social and cultural experiences I would have had if the pandemic had not prohibited my interning on site in Germany.

As a Krupp Intern, I was placed with biotx.ai, a budding biotech company which aims to transform precision medicine using novel algorithmic techniques. Their approach to transforming healthcare is quite clever. Currently, genetic risk scores of patients for a given disease are computed additively using the individual scores of unique variants distributed across the human genome. This approach is known as polygenic risk score (PRS) analysis. While the resultant estimate generally correlates with risk of disease diagnosis and progression, its precision could be improved, as interactions between these variants are not considered. This gap in risk-based analysis is where biotx.ai comes in. Their novel approach considers both additive and complementary effects of variant and variant groups when attributing risk scores to individuals. Since leveraging computer science principles and techniques to solve challenging problems in healthcare and technology is my passion, I thoroughly enjoyed my time working with them, as I acquired not only “hard” skills such as application programming interface (API) development, genomics analysis, and version control but also acquired “softer” skills such as col-

laborative coding, communication, and leadership. My overall work experience, thus, was overwhelmingly positive.

Since my internship was remote, I experienced the quintessential benefits and drawbacks of such an arrangement. One benefit, of course, was the commute, as I could simply walk from my room to the guest room where my makeshift office was.

Biotx.ai was very accommodating with the COVID-induced remote work environment, as their code stack was completely accessible for remote development. Another benefit that coincides typically with remote work is flexibility, as I was able to contribute to the company’s tech stack at any time that I desired. However, the flipside of having a flexible schedule was having a tendency to overwork, as there is no “set time” to conclude work for the day.

While schedule flexibility was certainly one factor that contributed to working more than the expected number of hours per week, I missed the exciting distractions I would have enjoyed in Germany. To be sure, I anticipated this as a con of remote work, and it did not impact my experience at biotx.ai, which I profited from and genuinely enjoyed. But the cultural and social life in my home town summer simply could not compete with the Autumn quarter I had experienced in Berlin – a cherished time, vibrant with a plethora of ongoing events, available to everyone.

Because biotx.ai is a newer, smaller startup company, I started work thinking that I would have a lot of impact with respect to the company’s newer product developments. Indeed, working at biotx.ai validated my predictions; I was able to spearhead the development of a new product for internal and external use by biotx.ai, which was essential to validating results of the company’s core model. One drawback was a slight lack of mentorship, but the company is relatively small and I can understand the difficulties of mentoring newer, less experienced employees/interns like myself. This effect would likely have been mitigated if the internship had not been remote, as in-person interaction would have led to more direct mentor-mentee relationships.

“Polarizing” is a fair term to describe my experience. Given that interning on site during COVID-19 was not an option, I am most grateful that the Krupp Foundation agreed to support me in a remote internship, working with a German team. ■

**Mark Laurie (Biomedical Computation)** studied in Berlin in autumn 2019 and interned with biotx.ai GmbH in the summer of 2020.



## 100 Years of Greater Berlin

On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the founding of “Groß-Berlin,” the **Stadtmuseum Berlin** is showing an extensive special exhibition “**Chaos & Departure. Berlin 1920|2020**” until May 21, 2021, which can also be viewed online in 3D. Related anniversary exhibitions include:

- “1000x Berlin. Pictures and images of a metropolis.” <https://1000x.berlin>
- “BERLIN 1945,” an open, participatory, expanding digital platform which shows before-and-after pictures of the city. <https://berlinhistory.app>

# In diesen beispiellosen Zeiten / “In these unprecedented times...” by Troy Lawrence



**Troy Lawrence (Computer Science, Electrical Engineering, Classics) studied in Berlin in winter and interned with Robert Bosch GmbH in Stuttgart in summer 2020. Originally, he applied to the Krupp Program to realize his long-term goal of interning with the German car industry. But due to the covid-related suspension of international programs by the university, he braved coming to Germany on his own for the pandemic summer. Here he relates his story.**

**It was the day** before my internship in Stuttgart, Germany, was to begin, and here I was at my parents' house in San Diego, California, without a plane ticket. New regulations about easing travel restrictions between the United States and Germany were said to have been forthcoming already for a week, but still no official announcements had been posted (or tweeted). My summer lay before my eyes, as I sat on my bed staring at a confirm payment button on the Lufthansa checkout tab, running pros and cons in my mind for the hundredth time that day, wondering if I would touchdown in Germany only to be turned away at the *Grenzkontrolle*. With slightly clenched teeth and a deep breath, I clicked the button.

In the fall quarter of my first year at Stanford, I went to a Stanford Bing Overseas Study Program info session at Stanford's El Centro clubhouse next to Old Union, listening to older students regale us, eager frosh, with fascinating stories from their experiences abroad. I walked out of that event with brochures to Paris, Madrid, Oxford, and Australia, but then I read in the Berlin pamphlet about a student working at BMW through the Krupp internship. In a surreal way, I knew instantly that that program would shape a part of my future (working in the German auto industry had been a dream of mine for years), and from that day forward I planned each of my classes around making this happen.

Fast forward to 8 o'clock on the morning of March 12, 2020, and I am in bed at my homestay in the lower Tiergarten district of Berlin, just a few days from finishing my sophomore winter quarter abroad. I sleepily check the time on my phone and see that I have twenty missed calls. I am not in the mood, so I roll over to go back to sleep. Just then my phone rings – it's my mom. I know I should pick it up. “Troy?! Is that you?! You have to get out of there right now! Pack your bags! President Trump has just issued a travel ban on Europe, and your father and I have been up for seven hours to get you a flight. It leaves in one hour!” I argue with her for five minutes: I have a final later that day, I still have documents at the Stanford center, and more important-



Above: On the Bosch Campus in Renningen, east of Stuttgart.

After a day at the office, I frequently enjoyed some sun at downtown Stuttgart's Schloßplatz.

ly, I have tickets to Ireland for St Patrick's Day, followed by spring break plans in Portugal and Morocco. Mom wins the day, and fifty-five minutes later I am watching Tegel airport recede into the distance from my airplane window. The next day, my Berlin homestay, home to club Trompete on the bottom floor, is announced to have previously had an outbreak of seventeen infections and is declared the "epicenter of the virus in Berlin."

Less than three days after I arrived safe and quarantined back in San Diego, I finalized an application with Bosch's motorcycle division to return in the summer to Stuttgart to develop software on a rider safety device. Nothing about returning to Germany by June 15th seemed fantastical at the time; in fact, Stanford's home campus hadn't even sent its students back yet. I continued with my plans as normal, opening up a German bank account and enrolling in a conversational German class for spring quarter. Barely a week had passed when my future boss at Bosch contacted me to tell me that Bosch had just implemented a hiring freeze for all interns, and that he had barely managed to squeeze my application past HR in time. I had been told that previous autumn that if I were to do Krupp, I should not apply to any domestic internships, and having to be financially independent from my family for some years now, all my eggs were in this one basket. Nevertheless, I now held an official *Vertrag* to work in the German automotive industry, so for the moment my dream was at last coming true.

Weeks passed, and what was supposed to be over by Easter seemed to just be beginning. I began to question if I would be able to travel to Germany in June. My boss told me that HR could shift my start date by a month to July 15th, but this would not work as it cut into my September training to be a residential assistant on campus for the next school year. By May I was sending out last minute applications to any summer job in the US



My floor in the Studenten-WG won a weekend Olympic competition against the other 14 floors.

At the world's largest Pumpkin Exhibition at Baroque in Bloom in Ludwigsburg near Stuttgart. As one can easily conclude from the picture, the theme of this year's exhibition was the 250th birthday of – Ludwig van Beethoven.



cent, or at least that is the excuse I like to use when native speakers have trouble understanding me.

Despite the extraordinary circumstances of my internship, I was able to enjoy personally meaningful routines and experiences in a masked and distanced Stuttgart. I grew to tune out the metallic voice of the U-Bahn loudspeaker announcing each station, I turned into one of Ja!'s most loyal customers, and I faced the pangs of loneliness when I felt I could never fully express myself. That day I read the Berlin pamphlet, my freshman self had a vision. It may not have included masks and bottles of Purell, but it was powerful, and I am very happy it led me where it did. ■

# Berlin Tech Startups Demonstrate Agility,

Resilience in Face of COVID Challenges by Kelly Ford



In mid-January of this year, Pauline Köhler was having a routine dinner in Berlin with a group of friends. One, who was planning to get married in May, posed a seemingly inconceivable question at the time: “Do you think I’ll actually be able to have my wedding, given this COVID thing?”

“That was a pivotal call to action for me,” Koehler remembers. She called her brother and co-founder Daniel and said, “We need an immediate plan for this.” The two siblings had good reason for concern. They are co-founders of a two year old wedding planning site called **WeddyPlace** that connects some of the 400.000 couples marrying each year in Germany to more than 6.000 vendors providing ceremony and reception services. How can an event planning startup operate if events themselves are indefinitely on hold?

Berlin is indisputably the startup capital of Germany. More than 500 startups are founded here every year, and 3,7B € in venture capital funds flowed into Berlin startups in 2019 alone, representing 59% of all VC funding into Germany. **WeddyPlace** is one of a **dozen Berlin tech startups** where I’m an angel investor or marketing advisor. I’ve been closely involved with all of them throughout the pandemic and recently talked to a few in more detail about how they managed their businesses during this tumultuous year.

All the startups that I contacted faced both some common and company-specific challenges due to the Coronavirus pandemic. But they’ve also demonstrated some remarkable abilities to adapt, refine, and pivot their businesses to weather through and even thrive during the current challenges. Nearly all the founders I spoke with immediately applied for a German government program called *Kurzarbeit*, or “short work,” when the first wave of Corona appeared, lockdowns were enforced, and overall business uncertainty skyrocketed. The program allows companies to reduce the days per week their employees do paid work – and the government makes up for about 2/3 of the remaining salary difference. By April, almost 6 million German employees

Kelly with his dog Nanu on the Gendarmenmarkt in Berlin.



were receiving some of their wages through *Kurzarbeit*, an all-time high. The program remains an ongoing option for businesses and can be activated or stopped again as the macro environment and commercial necessities warrant.

Another quickly-implemented program by the government distributed cash subsidies to businesses that have employees and could demonstrate a business loss due to COVID. Several startups told me that from the time they applied online, funds were received in their accounts only two days later. “We were actually blown away with the German government’s speed and efficiency in this case,” one founder admits. Those are two descriptions not often heard when describing government bureaucracy anywhere.

The Köhler siblings, of **WeddyPlace**, mapped out immediate business changes they’d need to make to confront the new reality. They shut down all online marketing, but they also hired additional writers to quadruple their site content. They realized that even if events were postponed - and 91% of couples did postpone their planned spring weddings - the planning and research for events would still continue. “Marriage isn’t like a discretionary vacation trip that you might just completely forgo,” notes Köhler. “Obviously this is a life-defining event that stays top of mind for newly-engaged couples. So we developed even more planning and resources to help with that.” The strategy worked. Traffic to the site doubled and user engagement increased 10-fold over the last six months. Many couples are going ahead with a small civil ceremony for their marriage now but postponing their bigger reception to the same season in 2021. “They’re researching and planning for even longer now, and we’ve tried to meet that need,” Köhler explains. “We also saw a silver lining with so many potential vendors – photographers, bakers, florists, venue operators – working from their homes,” she notes. “We were able to reach more of them to tell them about our services during this time when their business had slowed.” The company ended up signing up new vendors at five times its historical rate.

**WeddyPlace** also had some inquiries from couples that they couldn’t have imagined a year ago. Some couples are requesting a live video feed of their ceremony so that COVID-susceptible grandparents can attend virtually. Others even want to create custom-embroidered face masks with the bride’s and groom’s initials. Despite all the COVID-challenges, potential investors took notice of **WeddyPlace**’s progress and ongoing potential. The company recently completed a growth-funding invest-

ment round, a counter-intuitive vote of confidence for the future of a sector hit hard by current restrictions.

Bazil Azmil, CEO and co-founder of **Breakthrough Health**, faced a different challenge. In 2019 Breakthrough launched an app called Emilyn that helps people living with Multiple Sclerosis to manage their symptoms, receive better care, and contribute to research by volunteering for clinical trials.

“Starting in March, suddenly clinical trial recruitment for diseases like MS were paused with the focus shifting exclusively to Corona vaccine trials,” Azmil points out. “What do we do now?” he asked his team at the time. There was an unexpected benefit, though. The heavy media coverage of vaccine research increased the public’s understanding and appreciation for clinical trials in general. Patient interest in participating in future MS studies has subsequently increased. “To our surprise, we now have more patient volunteers in the MS volunteer pipeline than ever. So we’re in good shape once these trials resume.”

Azmil’s team also identified another opportunity. MS patients already have a higher propensity to feel isolated, and recent lockdowns exacerbated that risk. So the company introduced a new app feature facilitating one-on-one chats between matched patients. Weekly app usage increased as patients connected with one another for support and companionship. The new feature capitalized on the fact that more people were at home and using their mobile devices more intensely than ever. And their need to connect with each other had only grown. The company’s customers weren’t the only ones feeling isolated. Accustomed to the camaraderie and close ties that come with a small startup environment, employees were struggling to adjust to working from home and missing their daily office routine. “We realized that beyond just utilizing video conferencing for work meetings, we needed to use it for non-work socialization and stress relievers as well,” Azmil adds. “So we have regular online catch-ups together that have nothing to do with work.” Fundraising also changed. Active conversations ongoing for weeks in the early spring with potential investors suddenly ground to a halt. When talks slowly resumed over the summer, it took adjustment from everyone. “Both companies and investors had to get comfortable with virtual-only investment decisions based on Zoom calls rather than multiple in-person meetings,” Azmil says. But it ultimately paid off: Breakthrough Health closed a 1,4M € round of new investment in late summer.

**Talentspace** is a platform connecting job seekers and employers for both online and live events throughout Europe. Co-founder Marco Eylert had long planned the company’s signature April career event in Berlin. More than

2.500 job seekers and more than 20 employers, among them Google, Porsche and TikTok, were already registered to attend. “But in the first week in March, we realized that there was no way that this event could happen as planned given the Corona developments and associated restrictions,” Eylert says. The company was determined to still host an event on the same days but now in a completely virtual format. They immediately put together a four week development plan to change everything. “We tried to recreate the various aspects of a live event as closely as possible, so we now facilitate one-on-one online candidate screenings and interviews, ‘drop-by our booth’ informal virtual chats, and more traditional company presentations, workshops and speeches.” The pivot worked: all but one of the originally participating companies signed onto the new virtual format. Over the summer months, Talentspace was then approached by institutions and companies across the globe to use the platform for their own recruiting events – and Talentspace transitioned from being an event organizer themselves to offering a platform solution for others. Customers now include some of the world’s leading universities including Stanford, Brown and the German business school WHU. Those customers have in turn used Talentspace to host custom virtual events with more than 80.000 job seekers and 1.000 employers who are recruiting for talent.

“This whole crisis, while disruptive and stressful, actually served as a catalyst to accelerate a trend that was happening anyway: making traditionally harder-to-scale live events into very scalable and equally attractive virtual events,” explains Eylert. “It provided a clear short-term goal for us, and our team rose to the challenge.” Investors seem to agree. Talentspace recently closed a fresh fundraising round of US \$4M.

Some startups in sectors like travel or hospitality face such formidable obstacles at the moment that even agility and ingenuity may prove insufficient to survive the current environment. But others, like the companies profiled above, have faced their own unique challenges and yet still adapted surprisingly well. Using a combination of effective government assistance, adaptability and openness to seize new opportunities, they’ve shown they can adjust quickly, continue to prosper and attract new investment.

It’s been a privilege to be involved with so many talented startups in Berlin and to witness first-hand how they continue to innovate and thrive even in today’s challenging environment. ■

**Kelly Ford** (BS Electrical Engineering 1990) studied in Berlin in Autumn 1988 and interned with PSI – Gesellschaft für Prozeßsteuerungs- und Informationssysteme mbH in winter and spring 1989.

# Life and Love in Berlin during the *Coronazeit* by Tyler Burns

**I studied abroad** at Stanford BOSP Berlin program in the fall of 2006. I returned to Berlin in the summer of 2007 to do a Krupp Internship at the Charité Hospital. This internship led to my decision to pursue a PhD. It was my familiarity with Berlin and my connection to the Charité that led me to return in 2017 to live here as an expat, working at the German Rheumatism Research



Center Berlin, a Leibniz Institute (DRFZ) as a bioinformatics postdoc, before taking my methods into the private sector and founding a German business: Burns Life Sciences Consulting GmbH.

My local friends from the summer of 2007 helped me get settled in. Through my work I met my wife. My strong connections to Stanford and my time studying abroad served as roots upon which I have built my adult life. Below, I detail how during these challenging times, these roots (along with a little luck) have been central to helping me get through every day.

## Getting married during the pandemic

I was very fortunate to have found the love of my life, Marie, shortly after moving to Berlin in 2017. During that time, I was a recent graduate from Stanford's Cancer Biology PhD program, having met my new employer at a conference a few months prior primarily by the fortunate happenstance of having the right conversations, connections, and drive at the right time. Marie is a native German, born and raised in the town of Erkner just to the east of Berlin. Marie and I were both working at the Charité, myself a postdoc and Marie a PhD student. I proposed to her in the summer of 2019, and we had a wedding planned for April 2020 at the Schloss Café Köpenick in east Berlin that included my whole

family flying out for a week. As an aside, if you really want to improve your German, try asking your non-English-speaking significant other's parents for permission to marry their daughter.

In March, with the disturbing news coming from our neighbor Italy to the south and with Germany's first cases, it became clear that a wedding ceremony was not going to happen. Marie and I managed to book an appointment at the *Standesamt* (similar to city hall in the US) on March 19, during its final few days of operation and just before the most stringent *Ausgangsbeschränkungen* (shelter-in-place orders) were implemented. Three guests were allowed in the building. Two were Marie's closest friends, and one was my "best man" Udo, a Berlin native who I lived with over a decade ago in Wannsee when I was doing my Krupp Internship. There were no handshakes allowed but I was allowed to kiss the bride. The "reception" was a late lunch at our neighborhood mom-and-pop Italian restaurant, the kind of place where the server brings me my glass of cognac before I order it. We were perhaps the last sit-down customers before the restaurants were ordered to close. I



was disappointed that my family could not be here for this, but what mattered to me was that Marie and I would be able to ride out the coming storm, whatever that looked like, as husband and wife. The Germans wear the wedding band on the right hand, and that is where mine sits. The ceremony at the Schloss-café Köpenick will still happen when it is safe for my family to travel again.

## A semblance of stability, wearing masks, and a reading list

There was a lockdown starting in March and lasting through the spring, which of course included panic buying – the Germans call this *Hamsterkauf*; picture a hamster stuffing its cheeks with food. Marie and I managed to avoid most of the chaos because I saw the panic buying happening in the US before it hit Germany. The shortages of largely toilet paper, frozen foods, and pasta only lasted a few weeks, as Germany managed to quickly adjust the supply and impose buying limits of "hot" items.

Fortunately, Germany managed to get the pandemic under control in time for summer. Every two weeks the **Robert Koch Institute** (Germany's CDC) would provide its recommendations to the government, based on the case counts and future projections. This usually meant that a handful of restrictions would be lifted every two weeks. The *Maskenpflicht* (mask-wearing rule) was introduced along with the slow and careful opening of non-essential businesses in different sectors. For me, the most important of these was being able to go to the gym again. My wife had been heavily entertained (and perhaps annoyed) as I spent the first wave of the virus deadlifting the heaviest pieces of furniture in our apartment. Overall, I was impressed and happy with how scientific the German government was in handling the first wave, which was a major morale boost for everyone here. We had a nice cause and effect story: we all but locked down the whole country, case numbers and deaths went down, and we (carefully) opened up again. Since June, I have been able to eat at restaurants (mainly outside, but not restricted to it), go to the gym, get my hair cut, and do most activities that don't involve crowds. We wear a mask any time we go into an enclosed space. We have a handful of "anti-maskers" just as there are in the US, but most Germans are following the rules so far.

From here, my wife and I are just trying to focus on what we can control. What that looks like for a US expat in Germany is as follows. I'm on the phone with my family every weekend and we are spending a lot of socially-distanced time with Marie's family in her hometown of Erkner. We just moved to a larger apartment, and our choice of living farther outside the ring (Zehlendorf, a 15min bike ride from the Stanford center in Dahlem) was motivated in part by the assumption of a virus-catalyzed domestic lifestyle and a few bouts of civil unrest happening closer to the city center (mainly anti-mask anti-lockdown protests). For my consulting business, I'm opting for fewer clients with longer contracts for the sake of income stability.

Finally, since the start of the pandemic I have been reading voraciously. I have chosen my books based on what "phase" of the pandemic we're in. I get my books from a very large bookstore (Dussman) in the middle of town that has a large English section. Stephen King's "The Stand" got me through the first wave, about a pandemic far worse than this one which paradoxically allowed me to sleep better at night. Seneca's "Letters from a Stoic" provided a roadmap for adapting to the new normal and preparing for the next wave and eventual second-order effects of these times. Tolstoy's "War and Peace" is keeping me company at the time of writing this (and at 1400 pages, it will for a while), which de-

picts in vivid detail what an unstable time in history is like as history is being written. I'm at peace with the realization that these current times are messy because history is messy and the human condition is messy.

## Conclusions

When I was at the BOSP Berlin program in 2006, I took Karen Kramer's "Culture and Politics in Germany" class, where she introduced us to the concept and rich history of the "rule-abiding German." Accordingly, a lot of the control of the virus boils down to following simple rules, like social distancing and wearing masks. It doesn't surprise me in this regard that Germany handled the first wave of the pandemic relatively well in comparison to some of our European neighbors.

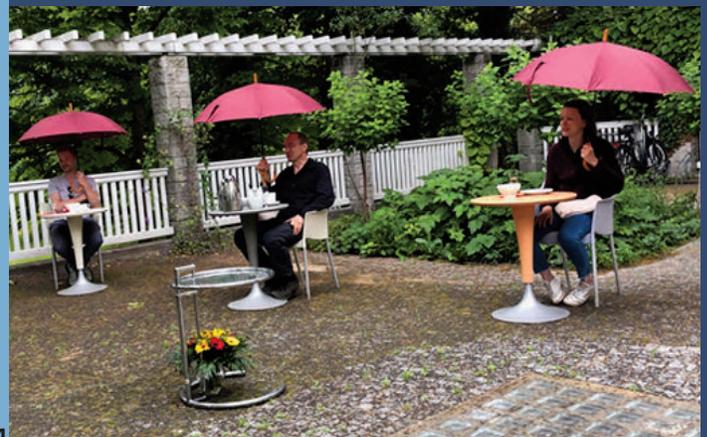
With regards to my day-to-day life, a lot of the good luck I have experienced so far in Berlin during these times comes from connections to the past. I managed to avoid a lot of the panic buying in Berlin because I saw it brewing in the US. I made this connection because I had seen it before over a decade ago when I studied abroad here and did my Krupp Internship. I did these programs because Stanford and generous alumni donors brought together the right people at the right place at the right time to produce an amazing experience for generations of undergraduates. We've learned from this pandemic that history is messy as it's being written; but it is history, both personal and worldwide, that lights the path forward. ■

**Tyler Burns (Biology)** studied in Berlin in autumn 2006 and interned with the Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin in summer 2007. Information about his consulting business can be found at: <https://www.tylerjburns.com>



Distant socializing at a rainy Corona party in the garden of the Villa, l-r: Konrad Riedel, Facility & Technology Coordinator,

Wolf-D. Junghanns, Krupp Internship Coordinator, Caitlin Kraemer, long-term student aid from the TU Berlin.



# Reflections on Berlin Startup Life by Annina Hanlon

**In June 2019**, I graduated from Stanford University and moved to Berlin. In the past 17 months, I've switched jobs three times. Needless to say, this is not how I imagined my transition to the work world would go, and that's not even mentioning the pandemic. Before you ask, yes, I actually did choose to move jobs every time; I've never lost my job. Twice, I was compelled forward by the departure of my then-current manager, both times a person upon whom I had depended significantly for mentorship and learning, and whose role in my development would not be replaced. I made my remaining move after realizing I had joined a company too hastily and really missed the mark on what I needed to thrive. However, the backdrop to these job changes, and possibly the reason they were acceptable in the first place, is that I've chosen to participate in the Berlin startup ecosystem.

Startups are notoriously chaotic, and I love that, I really do. It means I get outsized responsibility, autonomy and flexibility and often am able to experiment with work outside my job description (e.g. doing marketing, design and content management as a product manager). These are privileges I am far less likely to find at an established company, and things which I find incredibly valuable to my growth and development as I begin my post-undergraduate career.

I was drawn to Berlin's new but vibrant startup ecosystem from the first time I interned in Berlin through the Krupp Internship Program, the summer after my junior year at Stanford. The companies here seemed so messy and underdeveloped compared to those nestled in the bosom of Silicon Valley. The cost of "making it work" in Berlin is drastically lower than the cost of making it work in the shadow of California's tech giants. In Berlin, it seems everyone and their brother is running after their most interesting idea with a crew of part-timers, side-hobbyists and freelancers. And the German government certainly does its part to support this bold entrepreneurship, offering everything from special visas for the self-employed to small business grants and, in Berlin, a program to hire technical college graduates whose

salaries are funded up to 50% by the Investitionsbank Berlin. This infrastructure allows an eclectic and inspiring range of people and ideas to flourish.

The startup scene in Berlin also appealed to me because it is uniquely international. Employees frequently come from around the world and English is the common language. Although German is still useful and was spoken in some instances in every startup I've joined, English is always the default. While this wasn't news to

me, I did think my German would inevitably become better by my living in Germany. However, since I've met most of my friends through the startup world, and especially since I branched out from my German host family in February of this year to rent my own flat, I've had little regular interaction in German aside from rudimentary restaurant and store interactions. Most startups offer German language courses as an employee perk, but due perhaps to the startup workload or the comfortable English environment, surprisingly few actually seem to go out of their way to take them. While I do wish for more of an opportunity to integrate German into my work life, I nevertheless appreciate the interna-

tional environment of the startups where I've worked.

With each new startup job hunt this past year and a half, I've become more aware of the complicated flipside to Berlin's open, international, startup-friendly environment. There are an overwhelming number of unprofitable businesses, propped up either partially or entirely by investors with deep pockets. If you visit the hip co-working spaces, attend the "aspiring entrepreneur" networking events or even go to the fancy foosball-table-and-coffee-machine-outfitted offices of startups which are starting to make their names, you may find the financial situations hard to believe. You have to look closely to see behind the facade. While lack of profit isn't unusual in the venture capital startup world, this widespread company instability does make it more difficult to find a stable career fit. Additionally, my interest in user-centric development and conscious growth is at odds with the attitude of "just build to get us through the next funding round."



The global financial and social situation brought on by COVID has also highlighted the downside of relying on investors for security and plowing along without strong infrastructure. Germany has come through with support for employers, but many budding businesses are still having to make hard choices. Shortly after the first lockdown started, my previous employer implemented *Kurzarbeit*, Germany's COVID partial work program. I actually volunteered to participate, considering the opportunity to work only 80% time a unique experiment and the compensation still plenty for me to be financially secure. As I watched other countries flounder with no work program in place, like the US, or have a support system which allowed only for the extremes of full-time or no work, like the UK, I was thankful to be a member of the German workforce. The startup where I worked though, like many others I heard about, struggled to maintain the boundaries they themselves implemented on the hours of their employees.

After deciding to leave my third startup, I knew I needed to really vet my next move. The market certainly wasn't going to do it for me, and I wanted to pick somewhere I'd actually last more than a year. I reflected on the best and worst I'd seen in my multiple moves, and came up with a list of questions, designed to help me understand

from the get-go the company's growth plans, product direction and leadership style. I arrived at each virtual interview armed with my questions, and ready to interrogate. I couldn't believe the wealth of information I got. I had never quite understood that interviews are as much for the interviewee to evaluate the business as they are for the business to get to know the prospective employee.

Despite being messy and time-consuming and stressful, my multiple startup moves have been surprisingly rewarding. I've learned about a wide variety of company structures, product topics and leadership styles by moving around Berlin's ecosystem. And remarkably, with every new position, my title has improved and my salary has gone up, at a rate far faster than they would have from staying with one company and waiting for internal promotions. In October, I began my current job with an online mortgage advisor startup as their first Product Manager. After one month, I feel far more confident about my career choice than I have previously, so I have faith that my questions did actually inspire the right move. ■

**Annina Hanlon** (Psychology) studied in Berlin in spring 2018 and interned at *sofatutor GmbH* in summer 2018 and at *Myosotis GmbH* in summer 2019.

## ➔ What is Amy Egerter doing today?



In 2011, I interned with Arcadis in Berlin where I conducted environmental inspections of construction sites and research on environmental construction best practices. During this internship, I had my first hands on experiences at construction sites. After that internship, I completed

my Bachelor's of Science in Civil and Environmental Engineering and continued on at Stanford to earn a Masters of Science in Sustainable Design and Construction. My studies focused on multi stakeholder design processes for high performance buildings. After graduating

in 2014, I moved to New York City to work as a sustainability consultant at Atelier Ten for large commercial developments, informing the design and construction of university campuses. During my time at Atelier Ten, I became much more interested in the

influence of policy on the buildings sector and transitioned to **Rocky Mountain Institute** in 2016, where I now work on zero carbon building retrofits for disadvantaged communities in California. My team and I are working on a grant from the California Energy Commission to integrate

offsite construction into a new retrofit program for the state. I still remember my time in Berlin fondly and try to get back to Berlin at least once a year. I also became a German citizen in 2017 and hope to spend much more time in Germany in the future.

## Berlin Alexanderplatz

<https://deinkinoticket.de/berlin-alexanderplatz/infos>  
<https://www.betacinema.com>

Das ist die dritte großartige Verfilmung von Alfred Döblins Jahrhundertroman „Berlin Alexanderplatz“. Die Geschichte vom Franz Biberkopf“ (1929), der das Genre des Großstadtrromans begründete, nach der von Piel Jutzi von 1931 mit Götz George in der Hauptrolle und Rainer Werner Fassbinders Fernsehreihe von 1980 – ein früher Serienfilm! Burhan Qurbani („Wir sind jung. Wir sind stark“, 2014) verlegt die Handlung in die Gegenwart. An die Stelle des entlassenen Häftlings Franz Biberkopf, der ein neues Leben beginnen möchte, tritt der staatenlose Flüchtling Francis B. aus Guinea-Bissau, der sich in Deutschland eine Existenz aufbauen will, ebenfalls wiederholt scheitert und neu beginnt. Das Integrationsdrama ist in diesem Fall ein Plädoyer gegen Rassismus.

## Exil

<http://www.komplizenfilm.de>  
<https://www.kino-zeit.de>

Das genau durchdachte und mehrfach ausgezeichnete Drama handelt von dem aus dem Kosovo stammenden Xhafer (Mišel Matičević), der längst in Deutschland angekommen zu sein scheint. Er ist Pharmingenieur und lebt mit Frau (Sandra Hüller) und Kindern in einem Eigenheim – ein Musterleben. Doch er fühlt sich von seinen Kollegen gemobbt und erlebt kafkaeske Situationen. Was daran ist objektive Ablehnung, was subjektive Einbildung? Wann hört man auf, fremd zu sein, wann gehört man wirklich dazu? Gibt es eine einsam machende Differenz, die nicht zu integrieren ist? Der spannende Film von Visar Morina feierte beim Sundance-Festival Premiere und wurde für die Oscarverleihung 2021 nominiert.

## Lindenberg! Mach Dein Ding

<https://www.lindenberg-film.de>  
<https://www.udo-lindenberg.de>

Dieses epische Biopic des vor allem in den 1970er und 1980er Jahren erfolgreichen Rockmusikers Udo Lindenberg (\*1946) – in Deutschland eine lebende Legende – konzentriert sich auf seine Anfangsjahre in Hamburg bis zum Durchbruch 1973, mit mehreren Rückblenden auf seine Kindheit in der westfälischen Provinz. Gezeigt werden die sehr große Ambition, berühmt zu werden, und die Schwierigkeiten, sie zu verwirklichen. In der Zeit Willi Brandts, Bundeskanzler von 1969 bis 1974, einer Zeit des Aufbruchs, gehörte Lindenberg zu den revolu-

tionären Modernisierern: Er begann schnoddrig und witzig auf Deutsch zu singen, womit er die von den Nazis verdorbene Sprache zurückeroberte, später setzte er sich für die deutsch-deutsche Verständigung ein („Sonderzug nach Pankow“), fragte „Wozu sind Kriege da?“ und proklamierte die „Bunte Republik Deutschland“. Nach seinem Weg hat der Romantiker des deutschen Pop lange gesucht, „Udopien“ haben ihn geführt: „Ich steh’ noch immer an der Autobahn/ und träume von der weiten Welt/ vielleicht sollt’ ich den Daumen etwas höher heben/ denn ich will meine Träume nicht nur träumen/ ich will sie auch erleben.“ („Daumen im Wind“, 1972). Er hat das geschafft und die wilden Zeiten erstaunlicherweise überlebt. Mit den Liedern dieses romantischen Geschichtenerzählers kann man übrigens gut Deutsch lernen.

## Pelikanblut – Aus Liebe zu meiner Tochter

<http://junafilm.de/pelikanblut>  
<https://dcmworld.com/portfolio/pelikanblut>

Nach „Systemsprenger“ von Nora Fingscheidt (2019) sorgt 2020 ein ähnlicher Film von Katrin Gebbe („Tore tanzt“, 2013) für viel Aufsehen: Wiebke (Nina Hoss), erfahrene Pferdetrainerin und alleinerziehende Mutter der adoptierten Tochter Nicolina, beschließt, ein weiteres Kind zu adoptieren, die fünfjährige Raya aus Bulgarien. Bald stellt sich heraus, dass Raya schwer traumatisiert ist. Sie reagiert auf Zuwendung und Liebe aggressiv und wird auf unheimliche Weise zu einer Gefahr für die Familie und ihre Umwelt. Das Mädchen wird auf „reaktive Bindungsstörung“ diagnostiziert und gilt als „Fall“ für institutionelle Spezialtherapie. Doch die Kämpferin Wiebke möchte ihm allein löshelfen, was zu einer Grenzerfahrung wird. Das Psychodrama nähert sich dem Horrorfilm an. Manche lesen den Film metaphorisch: Ist das dunkel erscheinende Südosteuropa integrierbar und hat der reiche verwaltete Westen Platz für das Andere?

## Kokon

<https://salzgeber.de/kokon>

Dieser bei der Berlinale 2020 mit Begeisterung aufgenommene Film spielt in Berlin-Kreuzberg im heißen Sommer 2018: die Hochhäuser am Kottbusser Tor, das Prinzenbad, „Multikulti“ und die Lasten individueller Freiheit. Es ist die Coming-of-Age-Geschichte zweier Mädchen, die Liebe und Sexualität entdecken und für die „der Kotti“ kein gefährlicher Problembezirk ist, sondern die Heimat einer städtischen Großfamilie – ein Kokon, dem irgendwann Schmetterlinge entfliegen werden.

## Der letzte Mieter (The Last Berliner)

<https://www.letztermieter-film.de>

Gentrifizierung im Genrefilm. Das Regiedebüt von Gregor Erler übt Gesellschaftskritik in Form eines gekonnten Psychothrillers. Dietmar wohnt seit 40 Jahren in einem alten Berliner Mietshaus, das saniert und dessen Wohnungen als Luxusapartments verkauft werden sollen. Er weigert sich trotz Schikanen wie des Abstellens von Strom und Wasser durch den Makler, der unter Zeitdruck steht, ausziehen. Am Räumungstag eskaliert die Situation zwischen Gregor, seinem an der Sanierung beteiligten Sohn und dem Wohnungsmakler. Mehr wird hier über die überraschenden Wendungen der Geschichte und das Ende nicht verraten.

## Brot

<http://www.realfictionfilme.de>  
<https://www.brotinstitut.de>

Die Corona-Krise ist auch eine große Bierkrise, doch ausgerechnet jetzt ist handwerkliches Bierbrauen in Deutschland als „imma-

## ➔ Filmportale

### Filme, Filmliteratur, Filmbildung

<http://www.filmportal.de>  
<http://www.kinofenster.de>  
(ein filmpädagogisches Onlineportal)  
<https://www.kinofilmwelt.de>  
<http://www.bpb.de> (Mediathek, Shop/Filmhefte)

### Kinderfilm

<http://www.kinderfilmwelt.de>  
<http://www.kinderfilm-gmbh.de>

### Deutsches Fernsehen in den USA:

<http://www.onlinetvrecorder.com>

### Berliner Filmfestivals

<http://www.festiwelt-berlin.de>

terielles Kulturerbe“ anerkannt worden. Damit ist es nur noch ein kleiner Schritt zur Anerkennung von deutschem Bier (Hopfen, Malz, Hefe, Wasser) als Weltkulturerbe, wozu bisher nur belgisches Bier gehört. Deutsches Brot (Mehl, Hefe, Wasser) ist schon seit 2014 Teil des von der UNESCO anerkannten Weltkulturerbes – etwa 3200 Sorten soll es geben. Der Dokumentarfilm lässt verschiedene Bäcker u. a. Experten zu Wort kommen und beleuchtet die gesundheitlichen, ökologischen und sozialen Bedingungen von Broterzeugung und -verzehr. Und natürlich zeigt er sehr viele Brote, die man leider nicht riechen und schmecken kann.

### Schlingensief – In das Schweigen hineinschreien

<https://www.filmgalerie451.de>

In den Zeiten der Intendanz von Frank Castorf (1992–2017) war ein Besuch der legendären Berliner Volksbühne in Karen Kramers Theaterkurs obligatorisch. Dort inszenierte der Film- und Theaterregisseur, Aktions- und Installationskünstler Christoph Schlingensief (1950–2010) seit 1993 immer wieder. Er beharrte auf der Autonomie der Kunst und verwischte zugleich auf provozierende Weise die Grenze zwischen Kunst und Politik. Diese aus Archivaufnahmen bestehende Dokumentation von Bettina Böhler setzt ihm ein Denkmal.

### Spuren – Die Opfer des NSU

<http://salzgeber.de/spuren>

<https://www.bpb.de/mediathek/311574/spuren-die-opfer-des-nsu>

Zwischen 2000 und 2007 ermordeten Angehörige des „Nationalsozialistischen Untergrunds“ (NSU) in verschiedenen deutschen Städten zehn Menschen: acht türkischstämmige Männer, einen Griechen und eine deutsche Polizistin. Außerdem begingen sie weitere Mordversuche, Raubüberfälle und Sprengstoffanschläge. 2018

endete in München der fünfjährige Prozess mit Freiheitsstrafen für fünf Helfer, die zwei vermutlichen Haupttäter hatten sich 2011 selbst getötet. Der Prozess ließ viele Fragen nach dem für einen unerklärlich langen Zeitraum unentdeckt gebliebenen Agieren des NSU unbeantwortet und offenbarte nicht nur Ermittlungs- und Kooperationspannen, sondern auch rassistische und fremdenfeindliche Vorurteile der Polizei, die die Täter nicht unter Rechtsterroristen suchten, sondern die Opfer und ihre Angehörigen krimineller Machenschaften verdächtigten. Die Regisseurin Aysun Bademsoy gibt nun Angehörigen der Opfer die Gelegenheit, über ihr Leben vor und nach den Taten, ihre Erlebnisse mit Behörden und Medien sowie ihre Position in und zur deutschen Gesellschaft zu sprechen. Wendungen der Geschichte und das Ende nicht verraten.

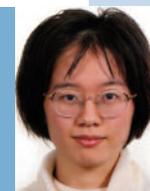
### Berlin 1945 – Tagebuch einer Großstadt

<https://www.zeroone.de/en/movies/berlin-1945>

Diese dreistündige Chronik, gesendet am 8. Mai 2020, erzählt von Kriegsende und Neubeginn aus der Sicht von Zeitgenossen. Das geschieht anhand von Tagebuchaufzeichnungen (prominent: „Backfisch im Bombenkrieg. Das Tagebuch der Gitti E. Notizen in Steno 1943–45“, 2013), die mit einer Collage von Filmmaterial unterlegt werden, das Volker Heise („24h Berlin“, 2009) und sein Recherche-Team aus Archiven zusammengetragen haben. Dazu gehören Ausschnitte aus Leo de Laforge's Dokumentation des Berliner Großstadtlebens „Symphonie einer Weltstadt“ von 1941, die bald verboten wurde, weil es nach den ersten Bombenangriffen einen Teil dieses Berlins schon nicht mehr gab. Laforge wiederum hatte Walter Ruttmann's Klassiker des experimentellen Stummfilms „Berlin – Die Sinfonie der Großstadt“ 1927, zum Vorläufer.

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## BERLINALE FEATURE REVIEW I



### Undine by Runqi Zhang

**It is only after** I came out of the movie “Undine” that I fully understood what the title of the movie meant. In essence, Undines are a category of imaginary elemental beings associated with water. Undines are mostly female and are usually found in forest pools and waterfalls. The group contains many species, including nereides, limnads, naiades and mermaids. Although resembling humans in form, they lack a human soul. Thus, in order for them to achieve mortality, they must marry a human. Such a union is not without risk for the man, because if he is unfaithful, then he is fated to die.

The above definition of the word Undine makes a good summary for the main plot of the movie. In a way, Undines do remind people of their childhood story of the “little mermaid” by Hans Christian Andersen. This movie tells a similar story. However, being a modern fairytale, the movie explores a darker and more intimate form of the Little Mermaid story. The main fe-

male character in the movie is called Undine and around her are two men: an unfaithful ex-boyfriend Johannes and her new loyal love interest Christoph. The story of Undine unfolds between the two men at the two ends of good and evil. Undine, as a modern mermaid, struggles through the troubles of the human world, trying to find her own human to attach her soul onto, and to destroy any unfaithful existence along the way. Eventually she does. Undine kills Johannes and she exchanges her life for the life of Christoph. She is never to be seen by anyone again, except by the resurrected Christoph.

The element of water is omnipresent in the movie. When Christoph first met Undine, they destroyed a water tank in a café. The figure standing in the water later becomes the secret between themselves. In the meantime, Undine shows the first hint of her nature as a water creature. In one of her sessions as the museum guide at the Senate Department for Urban Development and

# How to come back?

## Tips for recent alumni

The *Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung* offers fellowships for U.S. scientists and scholars:

<https://www.humboldt-foundation.de/>

For many years the *Carl Duisberg Gesellschaft (CDS)* has provided internships and practical training opportunities in business, engineering, finance, tourism, IT, media/communications, international relations, the non-profit sector, German studies, economics, and other fields for up to 12 months. After fusing with the Association for International Practical Training, CDS continues its initiatives under the new name "Cultural Vistas."

<http://www.culturalvistas.org>

"The Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange for Young Professionals (CBYX) is a fellowship funded by the German Bundestag and U.S. Department of State, that annually provides 75 American and 75 German young professionals, between the ages of 18½–24, the opportunity to spend one year in each other's countries, studying, interning, and living with hosts on a cultural immersion program. [...] CBYX is open to candidates in all career fields who are interested in a year of academic, professional, and cultural exchange."

<http://culturalvistas.org>

The *Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD)* and the German Committee of the International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience (IAESTE) help individuals find study and research opportunities at all levels as well as internships:

<http://www.daad.de>

<http://www.iaeste.de>

<https://www.daad.org/en/home/contact>

The Robert Bosch Foundation Fellowship Program enables young professionals from the US to spend one year working in their fields in Germany:

<http://www.bosch-stiftung.de>

The "Bundeskanzler-Stipendium für Führungskräfte von morgen" scholarship is offered in cooperation with the Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung:

<http://www.humboldt-foundation.de/web/bundeskanzler-stipendium.html>

The Internationales Parlaments-Stipendium (IPS) lasts five months (March 1 to July 31) and includes meetings, seminars, and an internship with a parliamentarian:

<http://www.bundestag.de/ips>

The German Center for Research and Innovation (GCRI) in New York is a governmental initiative to internationalize science and research. It is a clearinghouse providing information on research and funding opportunities for researchers (graduate students, post-docs, etc.) all over Germany and logistical help:

<https://www.dwih-newyork.org/en>

The German-American Fulbright Commission has special programs for U.S. citizens, e.g. grants for teaching assistantships at German high schools:

<http://www.fulbright.de>

The International Cooperative Education (ICE) helps arrange summer jobs and internships:

<http://www.icemenlo.com/index.shtml>

The *Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V. (KAS)* provides stipends to German and international graduate students for further education and graduate work, especially for young people who want to become leaders in the fields of politics, business, science, media, and culture:

<http://www.kas.de> (Über uns – Abteilungen – Begabtenförderung)

The platform "Euer Link zu Deutschland" provides information about studying and working in Germany:

<https://www.deutschland.de>

Housing, she mentions that the word Berlin comes from Slavic origin, and it probably means swamp, damp, river. Later on, she went on a diving trip with Christoph to see her name carved under the deep lake. As the story progresses, Christoph was drowned nearly to death in the water, Undine kills Johannes by drowning him, and she kills herself by walking straight into the water. Even if one did not understand the etymological origin of the word Undine before watching the movie, the constant reminder that everything is about water will inform the audience that Undine is a magical creature related to the water. At the end of the movie, when Christoph realizes that there is no evidence that Undine has existed in the last few months, the fact that Undine is non human is fully established. In this disenchanting world, Undine, as a modern fairy-tale character, fully transfers her life and power into the man she loved and withdrew it from the man who betrayed her.

The aesthetics of this story reflect very strongly upon the ideals of German Romanticism, which foregrounds the concept of deutsche Innerlichkeit. The desolate suburbs of Berlin, the almost maniacal love between the main characters, and the mysterious identity of Undine will probably give German audiences a reminiscent feeling about Ludwig Tieck's "Der blonde Eckbert," or E.T.A Hoffmann's "Der Sandmann." It is interesting to note that Hoffmann has written an opera named "Undine." Although Hoffmann's opera resolves in a happier note than this movie, the central message is the same. ■

**Runqi Zhang** (German Studies, Classics, Medieval Studies) studied in Berlin in winter and interned remotely with the Institut für deutsche Literatur of Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin in the summer of 2020.

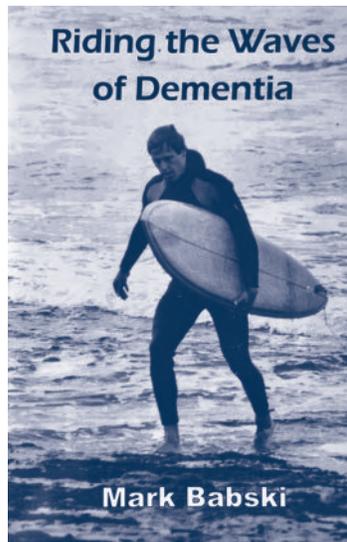


In February: the participants of the H.G. Will Trip on European Expansion on the Cypriot coast.



# IN MEMORIAM

**Mark Babski** (B.S.'89), Krupp Intern at Nixforf Computer in 1983–84 and Coordinator of the Krupp Internship Program 1991–93, died on May 26, 2020 after a long struggle with young onset dementia. The Berlin team remembers him as a young man of great intelligence, sensitive and compassionate *Gemüt*, and with a strong commitment to bettering conditions on a planet that serves as *Heimat* for humans and for the flora and fauna that inhabit it and make it habitable. Mark practiced the philosophy he preached. His two means of transportation were, and remained, the bicycle – his primary vehicle, on which he would change



wheels and tires with the turf, be it the cobblestones of Berlin or highways criss-crossing Europe – and the surf board. Mark surfed every wave that curled for over 30 years, from San Clemente, California, where he opened a surfing school, to Puerto Escondido, Mexico to – this is true – New York City. At Stanford he studied computing and lived at Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve, bicycling the long commute daily. After graduation he deferred enrollment at Johns Hopkins' SAIS program in International Relations and for two years traveled the globe on a dime – Latin America, Asia, New Zealand-Australia, and Polynesia. While at SAIS he spent a year in Bologna, where he met his later wife, Isabelle Cordemans. After completing his MA Program at SAIS, he returned to Bologna on a Fulbright grant before moving to Berlin to coordinate the Krupp Program (in the initial years, the Coordinator was a returning alumnus on a two-year appointment). Thereafter he moved back to the US, opened his surfing school and worked with the Surfrider Foundation, which seeks to further ecological awareness. After Mark was diagnosed with posterior cortical atrophy, Lewy Body dementia and Alzheimers disease (though without short term memory loss), Isabelle and their twin sons, Odis and Ezra, joined Mark in his struggle to combat the disease and to increase public awareness about it. Mark and his family visited us at the Center in summer 2018, when his sons, like their father before them, studied in Berlin (Freie Universität). In his final years, Mark wrote a book

about his life, from the troubled years of his childhood, his studies and the *Wanderlust* that committed him to a green planet, to his struggle with dementia. The self-published book, *Riding the Waves of Dementia*, can be purchased from [icordemans@beachology.com](mailto:icordemans@beachology.com). ■

After long illness, **Caroline Moore-Kochlacs** died on September 7, 2020 at the age of 38. She earned a B.S. in Physics and a B.A. in German Studies together with a MS in Biomedical Informatics in 2005. After working for a startup in San Francisco, Caroline joined a PhD program in Computational Neuroscience at Boston University, receiving her degree in 2016. At Northeastern University she worked as a lecturer for the College of Professional Studies. Caroline studied at the Berlin Center in spring 2002 and subsequently interned at the research center TERRAMARE in Wilhelmshaven – our first and last student in this small city at the North Sea. She was a passionate, fearless, creative student with a remarkably broad variety of interests and many



friends – she and her friends here, known fondly and with teasing respect as the “Berlin gang of four,” are remembered as witty, gregarious, keenly intellectual women who cared deeply about the pursuit of knowledge and about their fellow humans. One of the gang, Gohar Galyan, described Caroline as “the ultimate Renaissance woman, interested in everything and anyone...the ultimate connoisseur of ‘high’ and ‘low.’” In the Krupp Program, Caroline is best remembered as the student who wanted to get her “hands dirty” as she had written in her internship application – “what is most important to me is being outdoors for a significant portion of my summer.”

Collecting sediments and water in the mud-flats of the Wadden Sea and experimenting with them in the Terramare laboratory proved to be an ideal placement for Caroline, affording her the chance to combine active, hands-on exploration in the legendary tide-flats with incisive analytics in the lab. She was a model of a goal-orientated student who at the same time was open to new ideas and ready for the adventure of exploring unknown places and new developmental possibilities. Caroline is survived by her parents, Emma and Peter, her brother Matthew, and her husband, Austin. ■

# Biodesign in a Time of Covid by Fiona Loke

**Singapore**, where I live and work, was one of the earliest countries to experience the Covid-19 virus. Back in February, when we received our first few cases, no one could have predicted how quickly the epidemic would become a pandemic, or how serious its impact. By March, some European hospitals were being forced to ration care due to a shortage of ventilators.

I work in the Medical Technology Office of Singapore's largest national hospital cluster. Our engineering team, following the Stanford Biodesign method, helps clinicians to create novel medical devices to meet unmet clinical needs.

In late March, our clinicians decided to develop a locally manufacturable ventilator, so that Singapore would be prepared in case of shortages. It was a challenge we could not

turn down. As an engineering team positioned within a hospital cluster, we were uniquely placed to create a solution that might help in case of a surge in local Covid-19 cases.

Almost immediately, we began working around the clock, with three industry partners and eight clinicians from four hospitals. By April, we had assembled and tested our first working prototype. It helped that many around the world had published their designs, which – although not suitable for our clinicians' requirements – gave good insights into different design approaches we could consider.

Designing a ventilator is not rocket science – it is basically a machine that pumps gases – but the detailed requirements are complex. Specific pressure, volume and flow rate characteristics of the gases delivered have an impact on the patient's lungs. Reliability, redundancy and detailed risk assessments are also essential as the ventilator provides a life-supporting function.

SGInspire, the ventilator for Covid-19 patients.



Given massive global supply chain disruptions, we had to make do with what parts we could get locally. Our efforts were also impeded when in April, with cases surging to over a thousand a day, a nationwide lockdown was imposed. While we were able to continue operating as

essential workers, many of our potential suppliers shut down for weeks.

There were many teams around the world working on low cost ventilators. However, our team had several valuable advantages. We had access to immediate clinician feedback from specialists actually working with Covid-19 patients, inputs from intensivists who used ventilators every day, and industry partners, suppliers and regulators willing to go the extra mile to support the project. These were crucial to the project's success.

By June, we had developed a first engineering prototype and tested for functionality, performance, electrical safety, electromagnetic compatibility and durability. We submitted our first set of regulatory documentation to the Singapore regulatory authorities, and prepared to gear up for production.

To everyone's relief, the stringent lockdown measures began to work and by July, cases were falling. We were glad that we never had to begin production of our design. However, all our work was not abandoned. Today, we are in discussions with several parties to license the design for regional applications. ■



Fiona with her family in Singapore.

**Fiona Loke** (Electrical Engineering, Biology) studied in Berlin in spring and interned with the German Heart Center Berlin in summer 2002. She graduated in 2004 with a B.S. and M.S. in Electrical Engineering and returned to the home campus as a Singapore-Stanford Biodesign Fellow in 2011.

# Finishing Grad School in Germany during Corona

by Annelis Breed

**The Corona virus** has affected our lives in different ways. While it has spread across the globe, countries have responded to it quite differently. Germany has, in my opinion, done a good job overall of protecting public health while trying to address economic and liberty concerns, and the German people have been fairly cooperative, with minimal amounts of famous German “mecker”-ing. During this time, I was completing my Masters Degree at the Technical University of Hamburg, and despite the pandemic enjoyed exploring new areas of the city and the country.

I was doing research abroad in Singapore when Corona first hit the region. I had done project work – a smaller research project for my degree – at Nanyang Technological University of Singapore on a topological optimization of 3D printed turbines for renewable energy applications. Getting back to Germany was a bit of an adventure during March, but I was able to wrap up that experience and to focus on finishing my Masters thesis.

The thesis for my Mechanical degree explored the effect of the new EU CO2 fleet targets for the heavy-duty market, titled “Impact of the CO2 Emission Targets on the Market Penetration of Zero-Emission Heavy-Duty Vehicles in Europe.” The thesis determined what heavy-duty manufacturers would have to accomplish in order to meet these new targets. There are a few key findings. First, it is not possible to achieve the target without the introduction of Zero-Emission-Vehicles (ZEVs) even when implementing all possible diesel improvement technologies. The calculated ZEV Market Penetration for newly sold vehicles will be between 0–7% in 2025 and 4–22% in 2030, depending on three scenarios. And finally, a key policy implication of the thesis is the demonstration that emissions in a scenario where manufacturers follow a more ZEV-focused strategy actually results in higher emissions initially: this is mostly because the traditional diesel motors in this scenario are comparatively “dirtier” than in other scenarios where manufacturers focus more heavily on improving diesel vehicles. The EU may want to consider either editing how or what the fleet targets are, or implement an additional ZEV-quota, similar to what California has done in the heavy-duty market segment. The full thesis will be published in the coming weeks on the TU Hamburg's Institute for Transport Planning and Logistics [website](#). A paper should also follow in the next few months.

Research during Corona for this project was not much different than how it might have been in “normal” times – the work was mostly independent, and I would have

been sitting at my desk at home in any event. The thesis was supervised by Fraunhofer Institute for Systems and Innovation Research [ISI](#) in Karlsruhe, and because of Corona I didn't meet my supervisors until the thesis was halfway done. I found that the hardest part was that all days blended together; weekends were the same as the weekdays at the beginning of the pandemic.

As Germany opened up into the new normal, I was able to explore more of the country and took a lot of day trips in Schleswig-Holstein and Niedersachsen. I witnessed how many beautifully diverse places there are within Germany. Being the traveling soul that I am, I felt free to wander despite Corona, albeit closer to home. And while it was surely an unusual time, 2020 has been a good year for me. I chose to focus on the positives, and am grateful that Germany has shown strong leadership through this pandemic. It will be interesting to see how the situation shifts as winter approaches and we enter “lockdown light.”

I hope that all of you reading this have managed to stay healthy, happy, and kind during this trying year. ■

**Annelis Breed** (Mechanical Engineering, German Studies) studied in Berlin in winter and interned at the Automotive Electronics division of Robert Bosch GmbH in Stuttgart in spring and summer 2015. She graduated in 2016 from Stanford and recently finished her M.Sc. in Mechanical Engineering and M.A. in Technology Management at the TU Hamburg.



At the spectacular concert hall [Elbphilharmonie](#) nicknamed [Elphie](#), in Hamburg.

# Corona Dispatches from Jena

by Matthew Cusick



**Nineteen years ago** in Pennsylvania, I was sitting in Mr. Hoffman's chemistry class when burning Twin Towers and a plane were forever etched into my memory. Later that day, a calm afternoon sky was interrupted by fighter jets.

A government poster on the main street extols solidarity through abstaining from *Hamsterkauf* (panic buying). I like the idea of surviving as a community instead of as rugged individuals. Still, I order 12 kg of peanut butter online and hit the supermarket promptly at open-



Jena, around 1800 the world capital of philosophy (Fichte, Hegel, Novalis, Schelling, Schiller, August Wilhelm and Friedrich Schlegel...), later the founding site of modern optics (Ernst Abbe, Otto Schott, Carl Zeiss), today is marketing itself as the city of light: "Lichtstadt Jena – Stadt der Wissenschaft und Hightechnologie."

But what flashbulb moment will this pandemic have, and what particular memory should I recall? I fear an unknown tragedy will define Corona for me.

Looking back, it is already all a blur of various levels of uncertainty, Zoom fatigue, and delayed plans. Suffering in the ether not yet deeply felt. Lacking any particular COVID epiphany, here are simply a few snapshots of my family's life in Jena, Germany, our home since the Rio Olympics.

The Zeiss Planetarium, opened in 1926, is considered the oldest continuously operating planetarium in the world. Since it is a projection planetarium, its cupola can also be used as a movie screen.



A sign taped to the entrance of our Kindergarten warns that the school will be closed from Monday onwards, most likely for five weeks. Later, Monday is struck through and Tuesday is written in its place. An email clarifies that "emergency childcare" is offered for parents who work in healthcare and public safety. System relevant professions such as bus-drivers and supermarket cashiers may receive support based upon individual circumstances. It is Friday the 13th of March and we have zero confirmed Corona cases in our university town of 110,000 souls. We watch the anguish in Italy and are scared. On Monday, Germany partially closes its borders.

ing time. Security guards strictly enforce mask and shopping cart requirements. Jena is the first town in Germany to require a mask in all public spaces. Nationally, critics label this as an overreaction symptomatic of Jena's *Besserwisser* attitude (our basketball team is even called "Science City"). It is April 6th and we've had around 130 new cases in the last three weeks. At the hospital, a security guard rations masks, even to employees.

The hand-drawn schedule in my son's room structures each day. My neighbor and I drink coffee on the patio while our kids play together in the backyard. With social contact restrictions in place, we've formed a pod.



We wonder about the lasting impacts of Corona on people's priorities and on their current economics. "We are lucky" and "ein Ort der Glückseligkeit" become refrains. At some point, five weeks of school closures became ten weeks. Time seems stuck. I am present, but not moving forward. I wear my tux in the family room and call in to an American wedding. Two couples and a priest fill the screen with joy. The connection is unstable. It is a random day in May, and we are to have two new cases all month. Bicycles start to be sold out.

The sign-in table outside our Kindergarten is staffed by two teachers. I pull up my bandito mask, hand-off my child, and scribble down the time and date, our names, and "N" to any symptoms or known contact. Toys from home are prohibited, but my son gets to see his friends again and so do I! The Bundesland of Thüringen, out of step with much of the country, changes tack and ends lockdown early. Social contact restrictions are relaxed to mere recommendations as we try to move to "a culture of reason instead of *Verbot*." Masks in public and social distancing remain, as do official seven-day incidence boundaries that trigger restrictions, but for now we can socialize with others responsibly. EU borders begin reopening and Opa Helmut celebrates his 91th birthday with at least six other households. It is June 13th and we are to have barely any new cases until the end of August. Once hypervigilant security guards increasingly focus on their phones. Soon, like the sign-in sheet, these guards will be phased out.

An infrared thermometer is attached to the wall next to the hotel reception desk. This theatre of measurement is now part of the check-in process, but my son makes it the highlight of most lobby visits. We hike in the Dolomites by day. By evening, we claim the outdoor hot tub before other potential vectors. Italians don fashionable masks, tend to wear masks more outdoors, and place hand sanitizer religiously at the entrance to every restaurant, hotel, and gondola. On our way to see my Stanford roommate, we drive through what the Robert



Koch Institute identified as an international risk area. I have checked their website. Stopping here would compel us to register with the Jena health authorities upon returning home and possibly quarantine. We stop anyway! (Just kidding). In Switzerland we become the first people to hold a particularly chill six-month-old, other than his parents. It is mid-September and we will have 50+ cases this month in Jena. Returning vacationers are blamed. We stay at an AI motel next to the Autobahn and receive our room number and door code per email. Exposure logging is active on my Warn app.

An Instagram screenshot is shared in our baseball team's group chat. We're headed back into lockdown. Now only two households can meet together at a time. Restaurants and bars must close and tourists must not stay in hotels. The anti-lockdown "Querdenker" (an assortment of free thinkers, flat-earthers, "Aluhutträger" and conspiracy theorists) have become more aggressive and organized thanks to right-wing support. Increased social isolation, cold weather, and 4pm sunsets are coming. I feel resigned and just hope schools continue to stay open. It's the end of October and we have had over 150 new cases this month. My partner, a health worker, has been tested twice this week for COVID. Corona winter is at our door and in the pantry three kg of peanut butter remain. ■



**Matthew Cusick** (History) studied in Berlin in autumn 2004 and interned with the Arbeitsstelle Transnationale Beziehungen, Außen- u. Sicherheitspolitik (ATASP) of the FU Berlin in winter and spring 2005. He graduated in 2006 and works as a mental health counselor.

# The Value of the Past

From the Monument to the Memorial – On the Complexity of History by Martin Sabrow



© ZZP Potsdam/ Andy Küchenmeister

**The historical cosmos** of values is starting to waver. Throughout the Western world in recent weeks, monuments and symbols that once served as reminders of the deeds of great men, or men once considered great, are being toppled and attacked: in England the statues of slave traders and slave owners, in Belgium a monument of King Leopold II, and in the USA a figural group of Confederate soldiers as well as, in California's capital city, Sacramento, the statue of Christopher Columbus.

The hoped-for liberation of public space from the burden of colonial and racist traditions is reminiscent of the post-communist demolition of Lenin and Dzierżyński monuments in the Eastern bloc after 1989 and the publicly celebrated case of the Saddam Hussein statue in Baghdad in 2002. There is nothing to criticize about such a liberation. Tearing down statues is just as legitimate as erecting them; particularly after a cultural breach and regime change, it serves to consolidate a victory over a power that has been shaken off and to renounce its remnants. In Germany, royal crowns and purveyor-to-the-court signs disappeared from the cityscape after 1918 in order to consolidate the republican idea, and after the end of the war in 1945 the renunciation of National Socialism began with the disposal of the regime's symbols.

Today, the monument culture that has once again been set into motion follows a shift that Western historical culture has been intermittently and unevenly undergoing since 1945. It takes the step from traditional hero cult to today's empathy for victims; it is developing away from adoring worship toward compassionate reparation, which in recent decades has been evolving into a social consensus, albeit one fraying at the right margin.

Even so, this explanation isn't sufficient if the critical revision doesn't put anything less than the entire history of the modern era to the test. Christopher Columbus and Martin Luther, Immanuel Kant as well as Arthur Schopenhauer, Heinrich von Kleist, and Richard Wagner, Otto von Bismarck along with Winston Churchill have become subjects of a bitter dispute about public dignity that occasionally also includes intellectuals, such as Erich Kästner, who were persecuted by the

Nazis: the poet, whose works the Nazis publicly burned at the time, was criticized by his democratic descendants in Munich for not having gone into exile.

The facts themselves cannot to be disputed: the European "discovery" and factual conquest of America that began with Columbus had deadly consequences for the indigenous population, and they paved the way for the transatlantic slave trade. Bismarck's organization of the Congress of Berlin in 1878 promoted the division of Africa. Schopenhauer publicly admitted his misogyny. Luther, who became an enemy of the Jews in the course of his life, preached in the town church of Wittenberg, whose façade to this day displays a medieval "Judensau" (Jewish sow) as a blasphemous sculpture. And Erich Kästner muddled through in Germany while many of his fellow writers went under in exile.

Even so, we have to be concerned when historical criticism turns into a moral rigorism that only distinguishes between good and evil and turns a blind eye toward anything else. This longing for clarity is deeply unhistorical. It refuses to recognize that the dividing line between an ethics of conviction and one of responsibility has historically been a meandering one, as it was in Bismarck's case. The era of tamed nationalism came to an end not as a result of his politics but in connection with his forced resignation as Reich chancellor, which paved the way for an imprudent superpower politics that "sought a place in the sun" by destroying the Bismarck system of alliances and relinquishing its restrained colonial policy. After 1870–71 Bismarck neither waged nor threatened war. Instead, he tried to reconcile European

markets as "honest brokers" and declared the German Reich a sated nation that wasn't interested in having colonies, stating: "As long as I am chancellor, we will not pursue a colonial policy." The fact that he nonetheless even pushed for the safeguarding of European peace at the Congress of Berlin in 1878 and approved placing Togo, Cameroon, territo-



Mohrenstrasse in Berlin-Mitte is just one of the streets for which initiatives are calling for a renaming. It is to be renamed Anton-Wilhelm-Amo-Straße. The philosopher and jurist Amo (ca. 1703–ca. 1759, in present-day Ghana) is consid-  
ered the first student and scholar of African origin in Germany. There is also an initiative to rename Pacelliallee to Golda-Meir-Allee.

WDJ

ries in East Africa, and New Guinea, including the “Bismarck Archipelago,” under German rule in 1884–85, is part of the contradictory complexity of political action, which cannot be grasped by focusing on individual historical actors – whether as heroes, as in the past, or like today, as villains.

The struggle in our time against the notion of race in basic constitutional law, on the other hand, is based on a historical definition that nobody regards as fact any longer.

Selective forgetting is dangerous. It creates voids that can fill in an uncontrolled manner. Destroying the portrait of Marino Faliero, the fifty-fifth doge of Venice, did not erase him from history, but it did create a blind spot that can no longer be closed via historical reconstruction: the court records on the coup d'état he allegedly planned were destroyed with the *damnatio memoriae*. But where historical clarification grasps into a void, legends and rumors step in. What was all right for the pre-modern era is cheap for the present-day. In Kiel, for instance, the Hindenburgufer was renamed Kiellinie a few years ago. What hadn't been taken into account was that the apparently harmless term derives from naval language and refers to a constellation of ships sailing one behind the other for their own protection. The Kiellinie in Kiel now runs toward a naval base that, with the Scheerhafen (Scheer harbor) and the Tirpitzmole (Tirpitz pier), honors two World War strategists of admiral rank.

Where history is reduced to single-strand patterns of history, the understanding of differences is lost. The

Mohrenstrasse in Berlin, the Mohren-Hotel in Augsburg, and the Mohrenapotheke in Frankfurt am Main are offensive because they transport racist mockery into our present understanding. Yet, quite to the contrary, their naming was often, at the time, a sign of appreciation. In one instance, they guaranteed authentic Moorish medicine and in another presumably referred to a Black African music corps in Friedrich I's Prussian army.

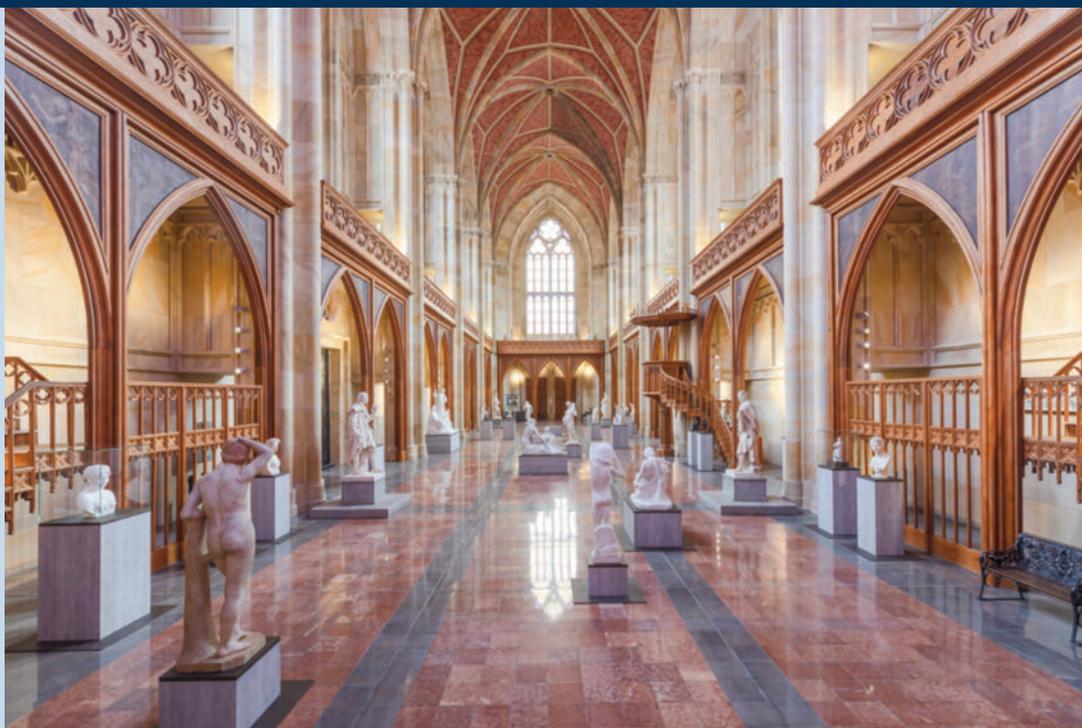
Statue toppling is often a liberating act, and then it itself writes history. What we still need to keep in mind, however, is that as times change, monuments don't merely become outdated inventory. They can shift from monument to memorial, they can be uncomfortable, make us suspicious, and provide impulses; they can tell of a past that is more than a simple mirror of the present. If they are denied too much of this potential, the past loses its value in terms of otherness, from which we can gain helpful orientation for the future. Antiquarian preservation or critical elimination – both have a legitimate place, and which of the two decisions is appropriate in any given case must always be renegotiated in society. ■

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Courtesy of the author. Translated from German by Joann Skrypzak-Davidsmeyer.

## Neu in Berlin (IV)



The **Friedrichswerdersche Kirche** in Mitte has been reopened with a long-term exhibition of 19th c. sculptures from the Nationalgalerie Collection. Karl Friedrich Schinkel's neogothic brick building of 1831 was closed for eight years in order to repair damage caused by neighboring newer buildings. The interior is famous for its light conditions. The exhibition by the Berlin School of Sculpture contains a Bismarck bust by Elizabeth Ney (1833–1907). Ney moved from Munich to Texas in 1871, where in 1911 a **museum** with her works was opened. This museum is considered to be the oldest museum worldwide dedicated to a female artist.



Im-Dol: Was fehlt? Auflösung: #13/2017.

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