

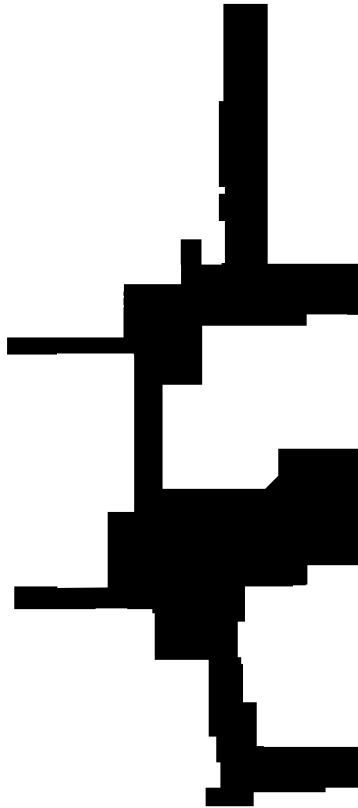
Dialogue

INTRODUCTION

This booklet traces the connection between our semester research and the transformation of the Zentrum Töss. The semester began with *Cave of Forgotten Dreams* by Werner Herzog, which opened a reflection on how stories, symbols, and collective expressions are embedded in space. Following Graeber and Wengrow's critique of linear historical narratives, we searched for alternative ways to understand spatial organization through stories that challenge conventional ideas of progress and origin.

Our performance translated this search into action, revealing voices and narratives that had been left in the dark by Enlightenment thought. In parallel, the study of floorplans became a tool to explore how architecture can embody different forms of storytelling. The Tale of Genji, Baller's Fraenkelufer, and the prehistoric cave were examined as spatial documents where social, emotional, and historical layers intersect.

By redrawing these plans, constructing a combined model, and filming it through multiple perspectives, we developed a working method based on interpretation, layering, and transformation. The insights and processes gained from this research now inform our approach to the redesign of part of the Zentrum Töss, where we aim to apply these strategies to uncover and recompose the hidden narratives already present within the existing structure.

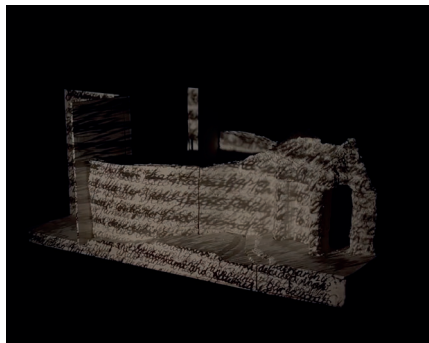
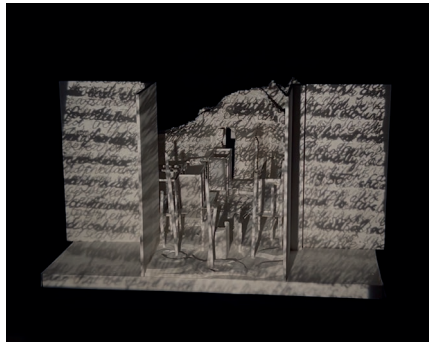
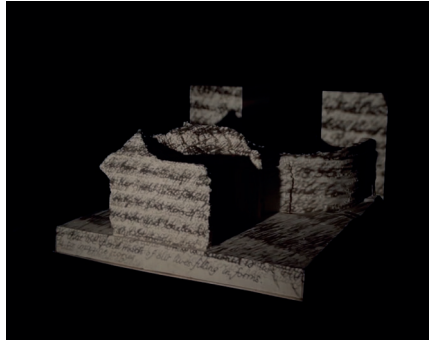


The passages on the ground floor of the Töss Center, Winterthur form a shape reminiscent of the cave in Chervaut.



Irregular geometry and spatial connections define the plan, where narrow passages open into wider zones, evoking a sense of movement and discovery.





“They’re the concept of fluidity and the concept of permeability.

Fluidity means that the categories that we have — man, woman, tree, et cetera — can shift. A tree may speak. A man can get transformed into an animal and the other way around. The concept of permeability is that there are no barriers, between the world where we are and the world of the spirits. A shaman, for example, can send his or her spirit to the world of the supernatural or can receive the visit, inside him or her, of supernatural spirits.

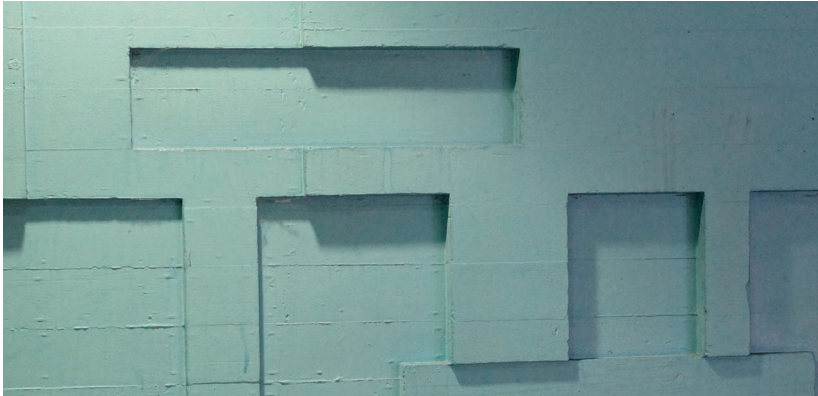
If you put those two concepts together, you realize how different life must have been for those people from the way we live now.

Humans have been described in many ways, right? And for a while, it was *Homo sapiens* and is still called *Homo sapiens*, “the man who knows.” I don’t think it’s a good definition at all. We don’t know. We don’t know much.

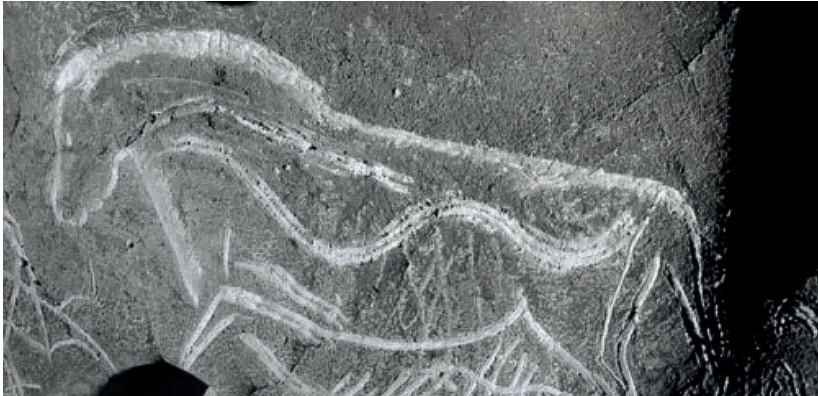
I would think **Homo spiritualis.**”



The concrete block in the Zentrum Töss stands like a silent abandoned altar — a remnant of use that turns into a place of pause and meaning.



In both the cave paintings and the art-on-building elements of the Zentrum Töss, the wall becomes more than a surface — it turns into a medium of inscription. Textures and traces respond directly to the architecture itself, merging image and structure into one continuous gesture.



Like the prehistoric drawings that follow the contours of the rock, the artworks in Zentrum Töss emerge from the material and spatial logic of the building. Both transform the act of marking into a form of collective memory, linking place, time, and human presence through the permanence of their surfaces.

"Our imagination permits us to try and reconstruct the scene... the presence of their lives, meaning burnt wood, resins, the odors of everything from the natural world that surrounds this cave."



A faint contour remains — a quiet trace of something once present, where absence has become part of the surface.



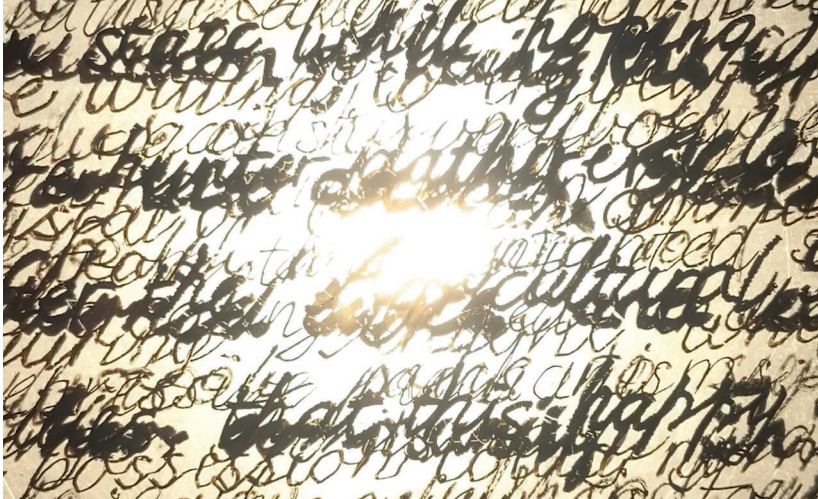
In the cave, light was fleeting — a trembling presence that revealed the painted walls only for an instant before retreating into darkness. Its movement animated the surfaces, turning stone into vision.



In Zentrum Töss, the light enters differently: steady, diffused, and silent. The skylight opens a controlled breach in the concrete mass, letting the outside seep in. Like the torchlight of the cave, it transforms perception.



“There are no barriers. A wall can talk to us, or accept us, or refuse us.”



In our performance, we aimed to illuminate the different theories not as abstract ideas but as lived gestures — moments where history, narrative, and space intersect. Each reference, from the poetic stillness of Yamato-e to the collective repair of Kreuzberg and the symbolic depth of the cave, became a lens through which we re-examined how meaning is inscribed into place.



In Zentrum Töss, this reflection found a quiet counterpart in the skylight that once illuminated a space of gathering — a small square filled with movement, exchange, and enthusiasm. Today, the same light falls unchanged, but it reveals only the traces of what remains: outlines on the ground, muted echoes of encounter, and a faint memory of shared presence.

