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## REMEMBERING HUMANITY: Reflections on the Work of Bruno Taut

This proposal is a visual / textual analysis of an attitude: An attitude of commitment to and belief in mankind, as a result of and despite political, social and economic conditions.

### BACKGROUND

Bruno Taut was both architect and city planner, who lived and worked in Magdeburg, Berlin, Moscow, Japan and Istanbul. In Berlin he designed and realized the building of more than 10,000 dwellings from the teens until the early thirties of the 20th century. These housing projects were planned specifically for people of lower income, providing independent living space, with a regard to community. Taut chose sites outside the inner city, creating "garden cities", with a view to practicality and self-sufficiency. Every house, every flat, had its own garden outside the kitchen door, with connecting pathways as well as central greeneries and parks as meeting places, thereby creating a balance between private and public space.

Due to Berlin's history, Taut's architecture can be found in both East and West Berlin, adding another facet to the story as to how these housing areas were and are lived in and experienced, under two separate social systems and now. As many of the people living in Taut's housing grew up in them and have stayed on as adults, it is also a view of political change and private continuity. The notion of the dwelling as home plays a major role among those I have as yet spoken to.

Bruno Taut's concepts were seen as overtly emancipating to the National Socialist regime, resulting in his exile from Germany as of 1933. He spent his final years teaching at the State Academy of Fine Arts in Istanbul (currently, Mimar Sinan University of Fine Arts) and designing mainly public buildings, such as schools, hospitals, university or governmental buildings in Ankara, Izmir and Istanbul. The most significant of these buildings were the „Faculty of Languages, History and Geography“ at Ankara University, „Ankara Atatürk High School“ and „Trabzon High School“. Taut's final work one month before his death was the catafalque used for the official state funeral of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk on 21 November 1938 in Ankara. His private home still exists in Istanbul. Completely un-dogmatic in his architectural vision, indefatigable energy and regard for location, his sense for space, structure and color is unique.

My work would consider ideas of the private and public Bruno Taut articulated so well in his buildings. On the one hand I plan to deal with the structures as structures; photographing the architecture as it stands today, ensembles that are sculptural and painterly. While at the same time I would like to pose, and hopefully give at least some answer to the question, through research, interviews and reflection: What gives mankind a sense of dignity?



Carl Legien Settlement  
Berlin, Prenzlauer Berg  
1928 -1930



Uncle Tom Settlement, Berlin Zehlendorf  
1926-1931

„Color is the joy of life, and, as it inexpensive to use, we should apply it to all buildings during this current state of privation.“

Bruno Taut, A Call to Colorful Building, 1919





Rear Garden,  
Birkensiedlung (Birch Settlement)  
Zehlendorf, Berlin  
1926 - 1931