

18. Dr. Axel Klausmeier, Berlin Wall Foundation

MEDIATING AND PRESENTING THE BERLIN WALL

Buildings and built structures of any kind are a means of communication. Their architectural essence tells us about the conditions under which the building came into existence as well as about the people who built and changed it. Similarly, our present-day treatment will provide insights to later generations about contemporary methods and attitudes.

This is also true for uncomfortable monuments such as the Berlin Wall. These in particular need passionate advocates who help make them legible. Novel ways that react to the historic landscapes in a responsible manner need to be developed and made understood.

This talk will concentrate on the efforts of both the Berlin Senate and the newly established Berlin Wall Foundation to communicate and interpret the history of the German division, the division of Berlin, the history of the Wall as well as how to commemorate the victims adequately. It will focus on the extension of the existing commemoration site in Bernauer Straße and will present by which means the often painful history is remembered and interpreted.