

Driven

The journal of Bryan Haab written whilst he lived as a homeless man for 2.5 month in winter 2005. At the same time he was artist in Aspire. In his journal he notes down this adventure, the people he met, etc and how he combined this experience with his art.



Friday, October 7, 2005

In the preparation stages for my time living on the street I have started a prayer and fasting week to collect my thoughts and organize the ever increasing details of this artistic experience that will most likely test me beyond all experiences that I have ever known up until now. Without knowing about this specific project a friend of mine had the impression that I will be going through a refining and testing time here in the next months... "hmmm he could be right there." I wondered if he could sense my mix of anticipation, curiosity and fears for all that is about to unfold. Who am I going to meet? Where am I going to sleep? Will I be able to portray my own story, as others in this illusive yet blatant state? At the moment I am so deep in technical and organizational thoughts that the reality of my decision to go through with this project somehow hasn't quit sunk in. Today I made the decision to go ahead with the plan of publishing my journal on our web sight that is shut down for reconstruction right now. I will use the space to make simple entries everyday or as time allows. This will be in the form of a paragraph summarizing the latest experiences and thoughts that go through my mind. Welcome to my journey ...The Life of Bryan... Its kind of like looking through a mirror into another perspective.

Ps: Aspire is open for a coffee most days if you want to stop by to see for yourself or participate in one of our courses.



Saturday, October 8, 2005

Still living at home, and counting the days to my reality check. Florian sharing my apartment say that he is really going to miss me... I think he is being a little sarcastic though... it kind of hard to tell! I have talked to a few people who mentioned that I am not the first to come up with an idea along these lines. Apparently there were two American guys that tried to live on the streets for four or five days in order to write an article about their experiences. The story says that they were stunned at how difficult it was to beg on the street... hmmm

Today I was cutting the wood for the silk-screening press's and I feel confident that things are coming along well in my preparations in this department. I don't have an overflowing amount of experience in silk screening and so there is still a bit of pressure to get my courses planned and tested.

This evening I met with the camera operator and editor of the documentary production we plan to do. The Production will be my story as well as stories of the other driven people I meet while living on the street.



Monday, October 10, 2005

Stress began to build today as I attempted to bring together all the loose ends and pack my belongings into my old well travelled backpack. It's seen a few trips in its day but nothing like the one it will be taking here shortly. I was trying to get

everything ready and parallel there are all the daily responsibilities that need to be resolved in the daily structures of the Soul Works Foundation. It is going to be quite the balancing act with all the elements of my normal daily load along with my work in the studio and now even living on the street!!..... ok this does not only sound a little crazy but is safe to say that it is clinical... My patience was getting very thin this morning as I tried to finish off printing my flyers and for whatever reason, the computer wouldn't recognise my font anymore and I had to redo the layout of the flyers. This made my already tight schedule impossible to finish. To top it off my memory stuck would allow itself to eject which made it next to impossible to transfer the new revised file! I was trying to make myself inconvenient by using a friend's computer and printing over the Lunch break and now the break was over and I hadn't printed a thing. Oh well in the end I did get it done, but it was just in time!



Tuesday October 11, 2005

Last night was really cool. Karin is a friend of mine who live in Elim and will be going into Detoxification on Friday. After the detox she will be going straight into a rehabilitation project so we organized a little party for her before she leaves. She helped cook and then we watched some of my old videos and art films that I made years ago.

They got a good laugh out of "Summers Day" which tells this story about a guy that thinks its summer in the middle of the winter and tries to mow his lawn with 2 feet of snow covering the ground! Can you picture it? Later we had some super discussions about the meaning of the film and how it applies to life in general. One guy that came to our party just got off

living on the street a few days earlier and totally enjoyed the atmosphere. He said he would like to come to the creative courses that I'll be putting on here in Aspire starting Thursday.

Today started out a little less stressful. I went to meet with a man from the Gassen Zimmer or Street room (He doesn't want his name published for security reasons on the street where he works) this is one of three places where you can go to legally consume your drugs. He was very helpful to define how I can have access to these places in order to get to know these people on the street and I think we have come to a good compromise. It's a good feeling to have the support and acknowledgement of the officials behind your work...even though the cross fountain is empty.



Wednesday October 12, 2005

Today I assisted Heather Bishop out of Burgdorf on a creative Workshop with Campus for Christ Switzerland. We spent around seven and a half hours driving, through the fall country side and around four hours leading the workshop! I had my first translation job seeing as Heather is English speaking and normally I am not very

fluent as a translator but I was able to bring across what Heather wanted to say.

During Supper I just happened to sit across the table from this guy named Tom Sommer. He was very pro arts and wanted to know more about Soul Works foundation. Soon enough I found out that he is the responsible for Video and Print Communication in Campus and had recently completed a documentary over the Ruanda genocide. They filmed amazing stories of forgiveness that is happening between these sworn enemies. "Well... How much time do you have on your hands?" I asked....slowly he began to raise an eyebrow of curiosity as I explained the ideas that are brewing in relation to the Driven project. After nearly talking his ear off and getting kicked out of the dining hall (that had closed in the mean time) we had to cut the meeting short. It was such a pleasure to talk with someone who has an appreciation for the vision behind this work. I left him with an open ended offer to participate in our documentary.... and he is going to see what is possible from the side of Campus. The whole conversation was quite the encouragement.



Thursday October 13, 2005

This week has been packed with extra curricular jobs! Mila Pericin was our guest Artist in February. She has her graduation art show In Zurich here this weekend and so I helped her set up an installation with real grass. After laying down Plastic we rolled

out segments of grass that filled the air with a fresh aroma. It definitely, is going to be one of the show stoppers at this exhibition.

Being my first day sleeping on the street I had a restless feeling all day long. I feel stressed mostly because I have such a long list of to do's and really I would like to put everything else off to the side so that I can give full attention to my work in the studio. Tonight I spent most of the time cleaning up and trashing all the leftover unusable materials from the past guest artists and am amazed at how much room we actually have in our closet when everything is organized. No one showed up for the Photography course but that didn't stress me out because I had enough to do anyway.

Where am I going to sleep? We'll see.... All I have planned is to pack my big back pack with a sleeping bag, Swiss army blanket and my camera. Under a Bridge somewhere would be classic but apparently the cops really do a lot of raids to weed out the homeless people.



Friday October 14, 2005

Yesterday I spent two or three hours walking down the edge of the Rhein taking time to capture the light piercing and illuminating the darkness. I especially like doing photography at night because it is like finding little treasures in areas where many would find it to be a lost cause. Developing an expectation to find light at night

requires, of course, courage to go out in the darkness but mostly it requires a consistent patience. You need to allow your eyes to adjust to the dim lit back alley and your camera requires more time to expose the film. I have the joy of working with a second hand Nikon D1X. It is a full format digital camera and allows me all the manual settings of my other film camera plus the use of my old lens. It is handy to see the results because some of the longer exposures cannot be calculated by the light meter and so you need to perform progressive exposure rates (up to several minutes) until you get the right length of time. This would otherwise be done to a large extent through systematic guessing with the film camera because you need to develop the film before you can see the results... Now I have instant gratification! Ahhh ha ha ha. Oh the power to capture the image!

Tip: Don't sleep under train bridges. I have discovered that this is not the best idea because the transport trains started to move around three o'clock in the morning. There were men running around with flashlights hooking up trains, the tracks squealed and thundered as traffic went in every direction. I was close to packing it in and finding some other location to hide away but somehow I managed to get a few hours of sleep anyways. In the early morning I woke with a start as someone was walking by me on the under bridge pathway. They didn't say anything but it definitely was a strange feeling.



Saturday October 15, 2005

Today I was curious to see how the Adoro Store from Stiftung Integration turned out. Fredi designed all the elements of the store and I helped him in the first stages of constructing and cutting out the various pieces. I had the impression that it would be cool, to put some gold plated text into the surface of the back mdf surfaces so we took the Latin verse from John 4: 23 and laid 24k gold plate into the glass pearl sandblasted

surface. Unfortunately I wasn't able to cut myself in half so that I could help to the end. I began with this project here in Aspire....and it required a few extra shifts to get everything done. In the end it has turned out very well.

Tonight I went to Church and Roger our pastor, was preaching on a prophetic lifestyle. Interesting, I thought as he described the circumstances that many prophets of the old Testament went through in their day and the struggle they had with there own insecurities after being called to do something out of the ordinary. Feeling like they were too young or inadequate in some way was often documented in writings about their conversations with the Lord. I felt encouraged by the examples of them as they dared to open their mouths and speak out that which God put in their hearts. Radical is the way of those who choose to search for, passionately grasp for and even relentlessly hungry for the Lord to speak in and through them. Hear my people, they said, now dare say I...."Open your mouths!"



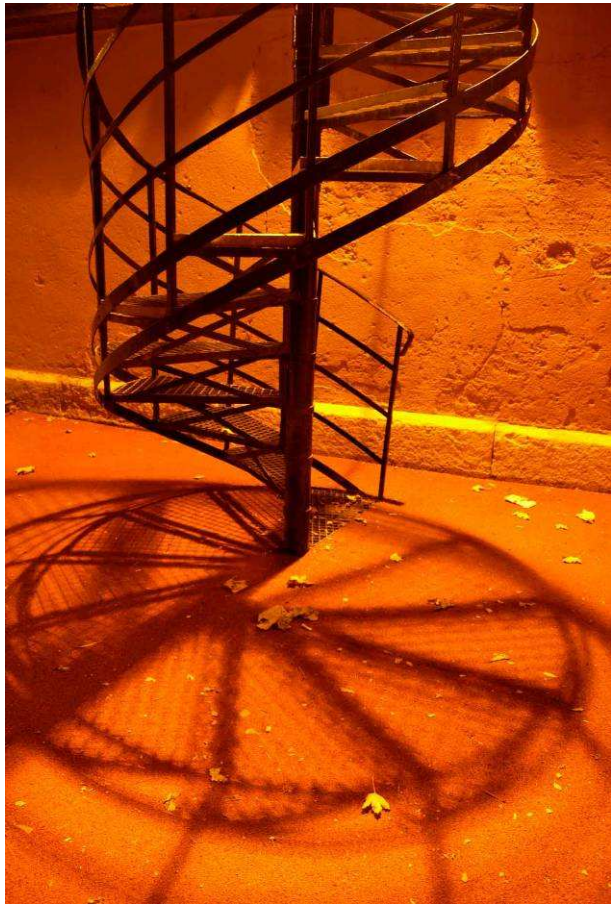
Sunday October 16, 2005

Getting up early today, Sylvia (a friend visiting from Canada) and I met Andreas (our guest artist in Aspire for June and July this year) for a hike in the Swiss Alps and truly enjoyed a perfect fall day. At one point we climbed to the height on the shady mountain side which slowly began to allow

the rays of sun to flood the valley bed. Between the branches looking on into the clearing ahead, I could see the white sun lit bodies of these lazily buzzing around bugs enjoying the sun rays in a peaceful and seemingly aimless and euphoric state. I think they had no other goal than to simply be and enjoy the wonderful creation around them. It was like looking into a fairytale land where everything was simple and harmonic.... I didn't want to see it end and had to settle with capturing some of it on video. Climbing up into one of the valleys we enjoyed a good snooze in the sun...the perfect Sunday with a view!

After a full day of hiking I found myself a nice cozy corner beside a garbage pile between a group of apartment buildings and was able to fall asleep without any problem. My simple

sleeping bag and wool Swiss-Army blanket have proven to stand up to their reputations as quality products keeping me warm and dry.



Monday October 17, 2005

Today we started with the printmaking courses. Step one is to sand, screw and glue together the wood for the silk-screening frames and the special hinged silk-screening tables. It was a little challenging to encourage people to come into the course because it is more work than play at this stage of the process. I was motivated though by Michi and "Wolf" who both have experience in screen printing and are planning to come more often.

Sylvia is leaving for Nice tomorrow to continue on her little Europe tour so we went out for dinner at the Blind Kuh Restaurant (Blind Cow)....one problem though....I didn't have any money to pay for the meal. Up until now I have made it through the days with an invitation here and there to eat something but now I was in a

pinch for cash. Spontaneously I began to ask the staff of Elim if they would "Pump me some dough" and at first they thought it was a joke but after I persisted and they gathered themselves from their laughing fit. I was able to work on their consciences!....After a few convincing arguments and loose promises that I would pay back the money, (some day) I managed to scrape nearly seventy Franks together, not bad eh!?

The meal at this restaurant is very unique because you eat in total darkness. You really can't see a thing and that makes for an unusual atmosphere as you could imagine. I found it especially interesting because we are actually planning to show the opening scenes of the Driven documentary film in a state of total darkness (black screen) where I ask myself the questions about being driven, wondering what it would be like if I decided to walk around for a period of time with my eyes closed. In the background you hear my steps as I stumble around and grasp to brace myself on a book shelf that then tips over, a glass vase gets knocked over pouring out its water and smashing on the floor....and so on. As my world falls apart around me, I push on stubbornly to maintain the course and achieve my goal independent of all consequences that unfold before me. Driven, I fight off all warning until the moment where I cut myself seriously on a piece of broken glass causing me to open my eyes in shock. The light, however, is so bright that I am forced to close them again because of the painful penetrating rays that seem to drive right through my eyes into the tensed tissue behind.... Caught your attention?

Isaiah 59: 9-10 "We look for light, but all is darkness; for brightness, but we walk in deep shadows. Like the blind we grope along the wall, feeling our way like men with out eyes. At midday we stumble as if it were twilight; among the strong we are like the dead."



Tuesday October 18, 2005

Tonight was evening filled with contrasting highs and lows. My friend Michi was booked to collect the food and cook for our small group. We both don't have a lot of extra cash or better said no cash handy (being in the scene) so I said well I guess you'll have to do what ever you do to get your food as usual... but this time enough for six people

or so. Having agreed to collect the goods and cook the meal he would have had to start cooking around 6 o'clock but he didn't show up so I started to look for a backup plan. After managing to get Claudia motivated, Michi turns up with a smiling face and a bag full of food just after Claudia had left to do her own shopping spree. Oh well, we have a bit of reserve for next week. Michi and Claudia worked together as the dream team to our evenings gourmet cuisine. Later I was to do a photography course but found myself alone and a little unmotivated. Toward the end of the evening another friend of mine came in totally drunk... apparently he doesn't have long to live if he doesn't quite drinking. It is tough to deal with his seemingly hopeless situation. I couldn't think of anything better to do than to pray for him and he gratefully accepted the offer. Grabbing my arm as if to balance himself, I could sense a numb hope in his dull widely dilated eyes. Hope for the hopeless.... Help!...I need to see with different eyes!

I got this mail from a friend here the other day after a good discussion that we had last week over my Project and this state of being driven; I think she has summarized it quite well.

Here is the translation:

Where does the fuel for the driven come from?

What drives me is.

- Love... because I once had to little
- Emptiness... because I have to much
- Passion... because I want something else
- Fear... because I have the feeling that I don't do enough
- Fear... because I feel lost
- Fear... because I want to belong
- Greed... because I never have enough
- Lust... because I want to live
- Pain... because I want to understand Him
- Injury... because I didn't feel myself
- Insecurity... because I fear not being understood

Sometimes, when I am totally relaxed (and really am not doing anything) I then get some of my best thoughts and realize that in this state, I am the most useful to myself and others. It doesn't require much more than giving your total attention to that moment in time and in a positive way allow yourself to be carried away, without the fear of love, emptiness, passion, fear, greed, lust, pain, injury, and your own insecurities. I wish that you will have lots of time for your inner growth and the meeting with your inner child.

Greetings
Daniella



Wednesday October 19, 2005

After my first night in the rain I am doing amazingly well. Feeling too lazy to get up and find a new spot to crash I pulled my trusty army blanket up over my head and slept on until around 7 this morning.

Today I had some cheerful helpers from Elim's practicum program. Deborah and

Noemi sanded and drilled and laughed the afternoon away as we worked on the frames for the silk-screening workshops. I told them that we have a no laughing rule in Aspire but that only seemed to make things worse! ☺

Later on in the afternoon I had a visit from an artist who is seriously considering to come as a future guest artists between June and July next year and right at the same time, I got a call on my mobile phone from Pia Maurer who signed up officially for February and March. This is great news because I had started to become nervous about next years program which, to that point had no concrete bookings.

In other less happy news... I have been really fighting with viruses on my computer and was totally lamed with all my email- communication and so on. A large part of today was eaten up trying to save files and load a new virus program....!!!! So far I have not had any success.



Thursday October 20, 2005

This morning Mecky and I went to look at a space where we could put on the first annual Soul Works Benefit Gala. It's a popular place here in Basel and just around the corner from Aspire. There is a huge banquet hall and a classy yet alternative Restaurant attached which we could use depending on the number of people who attend. We feel

very confident that this is the right place but I am honestly struggling to develop a new eye for the details of this event in comparison to how I have designed and experienced gala events back in Canada. It is going to be something special but I need more time to allow the inspirations to come.

Back to the computer drama...the fight goes on! My computer seems to be commanding all the attention here! I bought the newest Norton Internet Security but my computer wouldn't let it install and finally after another 4 or 5 hours cyber war, Raphael and I were able to download and install a Virus program off the internet which was able to clean up my computer. There is still the problem with sending and receiving mails over the wireless-Lan from with-in the studio and this will also be fixed sooner than later!!.

Tonight I went by Marcells place to beg for a little supper. He was a more than surprised as he opened the door because I've have never actually been in his apartment before. He had to laugh as I explained that I had come for something to eat. We had some really good conversation and later we watched a DVD from Scott Macleod at the last Leviten Camp that I wanted to see. He is an artist and Street ministry initiator back in Nashville USA. His main message was talking about the need for creative compassion in today's active church. Many if not all of his points affirm the dreams and visions that I have for our work with Soul Works Foundation and Aspire.



Friday October 21, 2005

After hanging with Marcel yesterday, I went out on the town to capture some more images as I wandered along the Rhein. Under the Wettsteinbrücke I found a empty long, boxy, canoe type boat swimming lazily on the side of the river. Managing to jump in to the boat as it came near to the side I set up my tripod on the floor and I was able to

capture some cool images of the boat outline with a streaking background as the boat moved with the rivers current. Being around 1 o'clock in the morning I was ready for some shut-eye, so I decided to roll out my sleeping bag right there in the hull of the boat. The wind made things a little chilly but as I lay on my back, something magical happened. With the twisting of the boat I looked straight up into the sky and the heavens seemed to move independently from the reality of the flowing earth that I was laying in. The massive framing structure of the bridge crisscrossed above me and all of a sudden it was like I was floating ...technically I really was floating but some how you couldn't quite fix its source and that left me feeling very intrigued as the boat gently rocked me to sleep.

Today My friend Föchi came by to help with the last details of the my computer crisis and with some consistent scanning of the computer and a few new settings we were able to kill a few more viruses and set up the mail account properly so that it sends and receives over the wireless from with in the Studio. I should be able to get into a more consistent flow with the

Web Page journal entries and the other mailing groups that need to be kept up to date. I have to thank God for this relief because the last two weeks seemed to be plagued with this problem and it was really getting me down and distracted from my already loaded schedule.

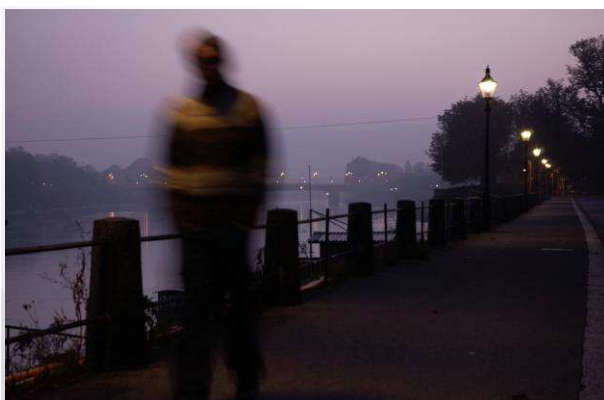
Tonight Sylvia and Patrizia came by to experiment with night photography. After being spoiled with super we went into some of the theory behind the art of capturing images in the dark. Taking our time to discuss the various points, time just seemed to disappear and it was 12:00 before we even got out onto the street. Unfortunately it rained off and on over the next few hours and this made our mission quite difficult. We persisted however and I'm sure there will be fruit from our labours.



Saturday October 22, 2005

Today was spent for the most part on business for Soul Works and preparation for the next board meeting on Wednesday. There is such a wide range of things that we are defining and planning for right now that planned meetings often get doubled or tripled in time and even so Mecky (Soul

Works Administration, finance, marketing and anti chaos specialist) and I struggle to close off decisions for the complex and creative future ahead of Soul works Foundation. The big topics on the list are the developments toward a soon to be published associated artist program, a calendar to be finished by the end of November, a Soul Works Benefit Gala planned for the 24th of February, and the ongoing struggle to find time for our web page redesigning. Fun fun



Sunday October 23, 2005

A day to rest and regroup. After sleeping in the car, I snuck home this morning to take a long hot bath. My thoughts weren't as focused as I would have liked have them on a day where I had the time to take it easy and review what all happened in the last week.

Thierry's mother came by to visit today. Thierry is a guy that I met through our work in Aspire and after participating in one of our art courses I offered him a job in the latest house reno that I had taken on. After almost a year of ups and downs he is now working for my second cousin Remi and has moved into a free room at my apartment. Later in the afternoon we were invited to visit an open house of one of the renovation jobs that we had done where they had a projector set up to show the different stages of the construction. Its been a full year!

Tonight I was invited by Corrine to see the movie Pride and Prejudice. A total chick flick but I got a bag of popcorn and later a few beers out of the deal (thanks Corrine ☺). I am somehow getting used to this idea of not having any cash on hand... has made for some interesting conversations!



Monday October 24, 2005

Waking with a jolt this morning I unfortunately also startled my neighbour as he was coming out the back door into his back alley! It was a little embarrassing so I just hid under my blanket until who ever it was went on his way. Gathering my self together, I packed all my things down into the cellar of my studio here in Aspire.

Later in the afternoon I had the joy of working with an old friend of mine who has come to many of the previous workshops here in the studio. He is an accomplished hand worker and so we made good headway working on the silkscreen frames. Manuela is another loyal Aspire artist who came by a little later to pick up one of her finished pieces from the last course. She is quite easy to tempt into staying longer than she can or planned to which was fun to try out again today as I sensed her curiosity for silk-screening. After all was said and done I nearly had to kick her out so that I could also leave! ☺

Meeting with Rita and Joachim for supper we discussed the next steps for the filming of the Driven Documentary film. Rita is a great sound board for ideas and has a clear perspective for the practical application. We re-designated some of the responsibilities and simplified priorities. Here is an application we plan to put in the News paper to attract the proper subjects to tell the story of the various driven examples that we are looking for:

Gesucht: Fünf Personen für einen Dokumentarfilm

im Rahmen einer Benefiz-Veranstaltung. Sind Sie oder waren Sie getrieben von:

- Drogen / Alkohol
- Arbeit / Geschäft
- Existenzängste / Depression
- Sport / Erfolg / Anerkennung
- Religion / Tradition / Weltanschauung
- Familie / Soziales Umfeld

Sie haben oder hatten in einem dieser Bereiche besondere Erlebnisse der Selbst- und Umfeld-Zerstörung, und sind bereit, Ihre Geschichte weiter zu geben.

Kontakt:

Brief: Soul Works Foundation, Schulgartenstrasse 4, 4410 Liestal



Tuesday October 25, 2005

Looking for my next overnight location last night, I bumped into Michi who is very experienced in the art of living on the street. After an intense discussion about his hopes and dreams to clean up his act, and the pros and cons of the heroin program, we agreed to have a truce and put off the debate to another date. I asked him for some tips as

to where I could overnight and he listed off like a book where I could sneak into park houses, which parks offer enough coverage, how to handle yourself when security comes around and where to get the best free breakfast in town! It was interesting to make the tour with him and in the end before we parted ways he told me to wait as he ran up to his room in the Elim house and brought me down a bag of cookies saying that here is nothing worse than sleeping on the street and waking up hungry without anything to eat. So off I went with my bag of cookies and decided to try the park close to the hospital on the other side of the Rhein...jackpot! A nice and quiet corner with enough bush to avoid your average eye.

Today I am working largely on getting my journal info up to date and published on the web. This job is turning out to be much bigger than I ever imagined but is good because it forces me to reflect on what has been happening in the rollercoaster of my days. Someone asked me to define what I am doing or hope to achieve with this whole crazy thing....After thinking about it for a while I came to the conclusion that my job is simply to: live the gospel and let seeds plant light in the darkness; this is the tool in my work that pierces even the most hopeless of hearts. As an artist, I hope that my life and work will become one collaborative work of art.

For our small group tonight I was forced to rearrange things a bit. Jonny didn't show up and Michi had some stress with the police....Robert however was helping in the studio and decided to stay for supper and ended up helping to cook. (Thanks Robert!) Everything was a little chaotic and I somehow started to detach myself from those who came just to eat and run. Michi ended up coming a little later on and was totally nervous because of many different reasons... we tried to talk but everyone else was talking so loud at the table that it made it hard to focus. After the rest left, Michi stayed to help with the dishes and talk a little more. At one point he said: "You know...one time I was on the street and this guy came up to me and totally aggressively tried to convince me to convert to his Christian faith....I told him that I don't like to be confronted like that on the street and told him to in a more colorful language to take a hike/relocate himself ! After I turned him down, he got really frustrated and started cursing "Gottverdami...God-dam-me!" as he turned around....I was shocked and turned back to him and asked if he really realized what he just said?!! This guy stared blank faced at me as I scolded him. "If all that crap is true," I said, "and then you curse and swear against yourself by the same God, then I would hide in a corner and shame myself for a whole day!" The man walked away muttering and that was the last I saw of him. Michi's story really struck me because there was a real conviction and understanding in his observation... and sadly enough there are too many examples of people who don't really live their faith, are

bitter by the expectations of their religion and curse themselves with explosive and automatic expressions. In Canada we curse a thing "God dam it" In Switzerland the people dam them selves ...strange!



Wednesday October 26, 2005

Last night I went out to do some night photography with Marcel. He enjoyed the photography so much that at around one o'clock in the morning he still didn't want to call it quits. I needed to catch some shuteye and my batteries for the camera were down so I went to find my spot in the park to sleep.

When I arrived at the park I met a fellow out of Serbia that was trying to sleep on one of the benches. Having my army blanket and sleeping bag handy, I asked him if he would like to use the blanket for the night. He gladly accepted the offer. This morning I showed him where the street kitchen is to get some free breakfast and as we walked over he limped along and told me how he doesn't have the papers to return home and at the same time he can't stay in Switzerland either. His face was pretty beat up and looked as though he had been in a fight. We were able to enjoy a coffee and some bread and maybe he will come to the silk screening course this afternoon.

Tonight we had an action packed board meeting for Soul Works Foundation. I have yet to be disappointed by the diversity and intriguing planning that takes place during our meetings for our increasingly fruitful ministry. Our work is really quite unconventional for most Swiss let alone my free spirited Canadian mind. As we make steps forward in these creative un-chartered areas, I am struck by how much innovation and "heart blood" (as they would say here) is needed to make something happen.



Thursday October 27, 2005

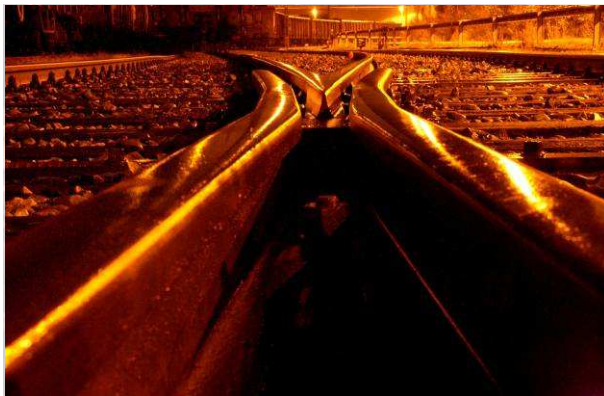
After going to bed around 2:30 I woke up later than usual as the sun began peeking through the branches of my patchy fall coloured skyline. After wandering over to the alley kitchen "Gassen Küchi", I bumped into some old friends from Elim. Both of them are homeless at the moment and struggling to find their way. The one lady

was talking to herself the whole time and then strangely I noticed this other sleezy looking guy standing at the door who was nervously mouthing words like he was talking to her...I


felt uneasy because it seemed as though she was being oppressed by his silent words! I wanted to protect her but any action that I thought about taking felt out of place.

Later in the afternoon, Beat a guy living next door, came over for a quick visit to see what I'm up to.... Four and a half hours later talking about the meaning of life and all other random attached topics we managed to get out for a session of night photography. The fall fair is in town, so we went around capturing all sorts of perspectives from the different rides with out all the set lighting. I think he has captured a new eye and flame for the photography night life! It was a good time and I only got caught and kick off one ride platform by the security personal!

Later I stuck around the area to find a spot to crash and after considering the choices at hand I decided to go for the leaf pile. It had three advantages: excellent camouflage, cushy bedding, and a relatively good insulation factor. The disadvantage was that I am not the only one who thought that that pile would make a good bed and there was this familiar musty smell lingering between the leaves and sporadically scattered beer cans that made my cosy spot feel a little less like home.



Friday October 28, 2005

Meeting up with the Elim leadership early this morning we took time to pray together and share the latest issues at hand. I was feeling really tired and had a hard time focusing. Right now even as I write I am having dozing moments where the  key tends to get pressed in a fuzy daze, dreaming of a

full nights sleep. I am planning to go to my friend Andreas's art opening tonight but I don't think I would be safe for me to drive on the street... That's why we have Red Bull!? Right?

Shortly before lunch a guy walks into the studio and asks if I know someone who could manage and package artistic performances for a new Culture club opening up just across the German boarder... They have a showing and performance space, music room, cocktail bar, swimming pool. They want to put on artistic and creative evenings of all sorts... Interesting, I thought to myself imagining a few alternative party night ideas that I have up my sleeve.

A long over due cleaning and installation job finally found priority in my studio chaos. It is such a relief be able to offer a warm welcome for any guest who might show up to our drop in courses.



Saturday October 29, 2005

Well I did still end up going to Andreas' show last night. To find some company I invited my cousin Gabriel to come along. Parking on the wrong side of the city, we ended up walking almost 45 minutes until we found the gallery. Andreas' show was interesting, especially because I was able to see the progress he had made from the time he spent here in Aspire.

After the show we went out for a drink in the heart of Zurich alternative night life. Quite the place! Old factories turned into restaurants and bars with every shape and size you could imagine. Knowing that I was so tired I downed a coffee but it was a real fight to drive

back... After dropping Gabriel off in Liestal I tried to sleep a little in my car but didn't have any blanket or anything....frustrated and tired I called Gabriel again around 3:00 and he snuck me into their living room to crash on the couch.

Later on this morning a lady came by to do an interview for DRS 2 Radio. They are doing a study on homelessness with the University Basel. She was quite nervous and had to struggle with her digital recording machine. After two interview attempts she left and went to find another recording device. Coming back a little later she shows up with 70's style recording box with the big tape bands reeling from one to the other! Hilarious! After all was said and done, we were still not sure if it really recorded or not, but she really hopes that there will be no further visits necessary.



Sunday October 30, 2005

Enjoying a slow and unstressed morning I made my way over to the free brunch put on at the Gassen Küchi. It is starting to become a familiar place where I am greeted by a number of people who I have gotten to know. Johannes was sitting at the same table and after exchanging a few words he said "Oh, your Bryan!" apparently he has been in the studio a few times and has hoped to be able to come as a guest once himself. He figured that it was time that he would come by again some day soon. I am planning to go and see his own studio

although he wouldn't tell me where it was and seemed quite secretive about its location ... so we'll see what materializes out of that.

Taking my laptop along with me I found a spot along the Rhein to soak in the sun shine this morning, and so here I sit and write. With the noise of autumn fare in the distant background and the ecstatic screams of the ride goers, I have put on my ear phones and let some music run off the tracks saved on the computer. The melodic sound has lead me into an interesting state of thinking and writing, feeling the sun and observing the sporadic movements of my passers by; floating in an in-between world of my thoughts and the relentless reality of the world around me. Who am I to stop and detach myself? I feel peaceful though and it feels good to sit here and write with Andrea Wellard's songs accompany my considerations of the past and present. Imagining what the next gala will look like here in February, I remember how well her artistry was appreciated back at the first gala that I had ever put on in Canada.

Life presses on and especially this last week I am shocked by how fast it disappeared. It is a little unnerving because the list of to-do's isn't getting any shorter. The driven documentary film concept needs to receive more attention, but my days are so full that I don't know where to steal the time. All this time pressure really makes it tough to live the life on the street and with so much to do I definitely do not fit your average bum stereotype.

Yesterday our pastor was preaching on the Prophet Jeremiah and how it takes courage to speak out the words that God lays in a person's heart... And now, interestingly enough, as I'm sitting writing my journal here, this lady walks up to the banks behind me and begins to speak out in a loud voice. She warned the people that they should turn back to God and to the truth he has given us in his word, and that those who refuse to repent from their evil ways will be condemned to hell! Good morning Switzerland!... I thought to my self with one earphone hanging down and a conscience awareness that I did not want to single myself as the only one who has turned around to give my attention. On the one side I had an uneasy feeling like she might have recently broken out of some mental institute and yet, on the other side, I felt challenged by her boldness. It made me wonder if I would dare to stand in front of a crowd of total strangers like that, without the abstract veil of my artist licence and speak out what God lays on my heart.



Monday October 31, 2005

Today was broken up by a lot of different meetings. With Rita Wagner I continued to plan the next steps with the documentary film. We have made a few more steps forward and now have someone who is willing to give his portrait for the Driven Athlete. Fred Berli was a world class professional tennis player and trainer for

such people as Roger Federer who now is the undisputed World champion.... His story is very intense. He tells of the terribly painful process that was necessary for him to realize how driven he really was in his blind desire for success and fame. We are still looking for two stories of women: one who was/is driven by the search for success in the business world, and one who was/is driven by a life of drugs and homelessness.

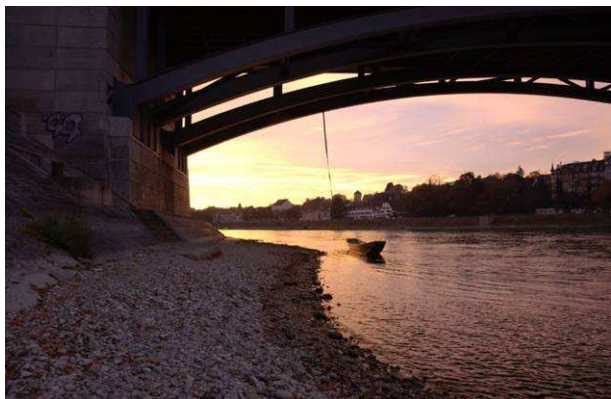


Tuesday November 1, 2005

Manuela was in the studio this afternoon and helped a great deal with bringing focus to the advertising material for our Gala in February. We listed a number of areas where we could call on artists to enter work for our art auction to the theme of "Turning darkness to Light".

Florian, one of the practicum students from Elim, came by tonight to take a look in on the small group I lead Tuesdays. After eating together we were able to charm Michi into coming out for our photography course, but first he insisted that he make desert for us... He has been trained as a cook, so I got kicked out of the kitchen. Here is one of the shots that he made of the rollercoaster.

For the night I wanted to go to one of my unique sleeping locations. I had a real problem though, because the boat was farther away from the shore than usual. Oh well I thought ...I'm here now... and decided to leave my shoes on shore, covered by a few stones and waded out to the boat barefoot. After crawling in, I realized that it had water in the bottom of the hull... dough!...and this meant that I had to sleep on a slant up in the bow. Surprisingly I managed to curl up for a few hours of sleep in this position.



Thursday November 2, 2005

The day disappeared rather quick as usual to day. A large part was spent rearranging all the images that I have been shooting with my camera, plus those of the course visitors. Mecky came by later on in the afternoon to bring order into the various areas that need more concrete planning in regards to the Gala and the Calendar

fundraising projects. Unfortunately we didn't get as far we would have liked to and that has added to the stress of needing to get things finalized for our advertising campaign, the end of this month.

I was invited for super tonight at Claudia von Orelli's place and ended up being late because Mecky and I could hardly find the time to end the meeting before I ran out the door. Claudia's father is a Doctor and he was curious to know more about our work as a Foundation. He asked a lot of good questions and I felt challenged to have to explain myself more clearly than for your average person. He found that it was especially good that we are doing a project for the small Basel section of the city because there is a kind of silent shame for this neglected quarter of the city. He thought that any effort to increase the beauty and value of Small Basel was worth the effort. Amen to that.

My over night tonight is and will have to remain a secret in order to protect the parties at hand... wink wink Thanks Mr. G



Thursday November 3, 2005

The day disappeared rather quick as usual to day. A large part was spent rearranging all the images that I have been shooting with my camera, plus those of the course visitors. Mecky came by later on in the afternoon to bring order into the various areas that need more concrete planning in regards to the Gala and the Calendar fundraising projects. Unfortunately we didn't get as far we would have liked to and that has added to the stress of needing to get things finalized for our advertising campaign, which needs to be ready for the end of this month.

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Friday November 4, 2005

Another day of computer and organizing. I am wondering when I will find the time to work on any of my art in Silk screen or the installation work that I have planned. This afternoon I wanted to do the last few details on an article for the Elim Magazine that is publishing a story about the work in Aspire. What I thought would take an hour

ended up gobbling up nearly the whole afternoon... I seem to have this uncanny ability to attract complicated variations to rather simple procedures!

To make my day a little more unique ... there was this elderly lady that came by the studio after lunch . She is here for the Esoteric/New age fair from people around the world who will be here in Basel next week. She feels called to this region of Switzerland and especially now to pray for a group of Christians who will be setting up a stand at this fair. They have done this over the years and have developed quite a reputation for their work, in the authority that comes with the name of Jesus...She is about 75 and not in the best of health. She apparently sold everything to come across the border and doesn't even have a place to stay at the moment; "welcome to the club", I said! ☺ ...she didn't find it as humorous though and actually was quite stressed about the whole thing. I got a little uneasy though as she began to tell of her visits to the psychiatric ward and seemed to be quite unsure of what her next step should be.... I listened as best I could and tried to give a few tips, but after an hour or so I had to get back to work. As she walked out the door, she blessed herself to know in which direction to walk by putting her hand on her head and then walked off a few steps to the left and then off to the right out of my sight. About twenty minutes later she came back and asked if it would be ok to use our washroom... Got me thinking again and wondering what that meeting was supposed to mean for me... It didn't seem as though it was purely by chance that I had two similarly strange experience within the last five days. Things that make you go hummm....

Mila one of our former guest artists had her Birthday party tonight. It was raining, and with my bike having no fenders or lights, I got wet and was lucky to make it there it in one piece. The party was very relaxed though and had just the right tempo to lead into the weekend and I met a actor named Markus who has showed interest to be involved in the Benefit Gala for February.

Later on I was looking for a good spot to crash and since it was still raining I was forced to be a little more creative. One of the renovation jobs in the area has a scaffolding set up which was partially under the roof so I climbed up to the first floor just out of view from the passers by. It was a little drafty but I managed to make it through the night without too

much trouble. I often woke up when people would stop under the scaffolding though. Sometimes they would stop to smoke a cigarette or wait for a friend but either way it made for awkward moments where I felt like they could see through the boards to where I was laying above them.



Saturday November 5, 2005

Most of today was spent in preparation for the Get Ready Night in Burgdorf. About 1400 youth came out to the event. Soul Works Foundation set up a stand together with Heather Bishop to show some of the projects that are happening in the arts scene. I put together a slide show of all the artists workshops and

shows that have been a part of our work with Aspire.

My computer is almost bursting with the 23 GB's of images that I have collected over the last two years. Its an interesting feeling to have experienced so much and yet feel like there is such a long way to go with the people I meet on the street. There is such a need for a quality and consistent investment in the lives of those who have a real and justified deficit of hope.

After the race of setting up a stand, I had to be amazed at how the rest of the event including a full stage with light show and seating for 1400 people could be set up within one and a half hours. With nearly five hours of program, there was a break in the middle where people could come to our stand if they were curious about the arts. I was feeling a little conscious though as I scratched my scruffy beard with my finger nails that have now grown beyond what I normally would allow. What if I meet someone I thought and she sees me like this but is repulsed because she doesn't know who I really am. Made me wondered how many would tend to make a wide circle around me, after a quick impression of an un-kept appearance. Feeling a little melancholic, I found myself observing the crowds around me.. the joyful, careless and youthful faces seemingly impervious to the expectations, dreams, hopes and responsibilities that tend to rule this mind of mine. The older I get, the harder it seems to simply enjoy and not analyse or dismantle.



Sunday November 6, 2005

This morning I got up to realize that my bike was gone. I was just planning to ride over to the Street Kitchen. This is really annoying and I don't even know exactly when someone could have taken it ... It must have happened yesterday as I went into the studio washroom, before heading out to look for my over night stash. I didn't

notice it missing then, because I went on by foot. I have had that bike since second year University and now without even getting to say goodbye, she's gone!.... Brutal!?!*ç£@

After Brunch I went down to the Rhein to write and enjoy the Indian Summer sun. I have my earphones on want to tune into the land of my thoughts and written words but can't help but glance up once in a while to observe the swans and seagulls diving at the bits of bread tossed from the rivers edge. At first they, as a group, lunged left and right and it seemed as though each one got their chance at the free crumbs. After a while though the bigger swans began to dominate the scene. So big and elegant as seem, they hide this illusive and threatening glare in their posture. It wasn't long before the one bit the other on the back of the neck turning a rather playful spectacle into a raging squabble with wings and feathers flying. As the two big swans were distracted by their own royal rumble, the smaller seagulls came in and following the example of their big brothers, began also to fight over the rest of the crumbs.



Monday November 7, 2005

I woke up with a start this morning to flying leaves and the howls of two fighting cats a few feet away. I couldn't see them as they were around the corner, but I know that it is one of the local cats that I've encountered more than once before. She's not very big and is missing her tail, but I have never seen a tougher cat in my life. In the summer a

friend and I were standing outside the studio when suddenly this cat darted out from behind the bordering fence streaking between our legs. Within seconds a innocent pigeon strutting around between the parked cars, was snatched up. Dragging her large prey by the back of the neck she managed to scramble backwards through the fence with wings and feathers flailing.... Lunch was served.

After taking on another mission of operation studio clean up, I decided to make a spontaneous visit to Lucia Amelia in Soloturn. On a tip from Peter Schild I got to know about the intense story of this feisty lady. She has been through things that I would not wish on my worst enemies. Loured into Switzerland by the sex trade industry years ago, she tried to take her life on numerous occasions, but had never been successful. Drugs, sex and crime were her everyday norm until she had this amazing life changing experience. She said that Jesus spoke to her in a supernatural way and from that day on she was totally able to break free from all the bondages and addictions that were holding her. There has recently been a film produced over her story and we are planning to ask for permission to use clips from that footage for our own documentary.

Silk-screening had a few visitors today so I was feeling a bit more encouraged. Up until now I have really struggled to motivate people to come. Now that all the frames and print tables are built we were able to do the first test prints with a latex free hand technique. Nicole (the cook from Elim) came by and has made a simple design that she will print on the serviettes for the lunch crew on Wednesday. It is a very quick method, when you know what you want it is possible to finish a small screen ready for printing within 30-40 minutes.

Leila has joined our filming team. At our meeting tonight we delegated all the B-roll imagery to show images of driven movement... for example: still sequence images of people going in and out of the bank.... Beer glasses up and down at the bar.... The train station...traffic... and so on.



Tuesday November 8, 2005

Here are a few bits and pieces of an e-mail that I wrote to my parents, after my mom expressed her concern for my wellbeing and asked me to be careful...

Hope I'm not putting you guys under too much torment with the suspense of my life. I am doing ok, really. I can't help but feel this process though...this search for true inspirations often leaves me feeling discontent, when I find myself diving into this fight to survive, struggling to sell myself and the work I do. More often than not, I just muscle my way through, head down, buffalo style I push on.... It is really hard to know what needs to be communicated and what simply requires a faithfulness, independent of all the gismos, gimmicks, and creative facades.... I want to do work that is not facade oriented, ...but that requires more than surface work, even the setting up of complete new structures. At the same time, I feel blessed, as many people have started to invest their time and talents to help formulate and structure some of these visions. The rest is a refining fire that needs to burn away the poo and other goo that likes to get in the way of the Holy Spirit's leading...If I were in your boots,... I would try to rejoice when you hear via the grape vine or even directly from me that I am struggling... because it is a sign that the I am being refined...and one day I will be ready for the next refining process!... Does it ever end? I think that there are different times in life ...a time for peace, a time for war, a time for building up, a time for tearing down.

The Life of Bryan... I haven't seen the movie yet but I think I will rent it here this week some time. It is a Monty Python film about someone mistaken for Jesus. He was living right around the same time ...but his name was Bryan. Its black English humour and tends to be more sarcastic than respectful of Jesus's Story....I thought I would write a book one day called "The Life of Bryan...mistaken for Jesus" how's your books coming along mom?.....The life of Esther... mistaken for Jesus.....Dad? The life of Chris....mistaken for Jesus...sounds pretty full of oneself, but in reality it requires the exact opposite.

As iron sharpen iron, I will remain dangerous,
Love, Bryan



Wednesday November 9, 2005

After a rather unproductive (camera wise) photography session last night Mecky and I spent some more time talking about the upcoming gala and meeting interesting people on the street. One Professional Photographer saw us out on the street with our tripods and cameras and asked what was up. After explaining what happens in

Aspire, he said that we have to meet his friend whom he was on his way to meet for coffee. This friend of his has been in a wheel chair since childhood and recently has become totally captured by photography. As I walked into the coffee shop my eye caught his table loaded with various camera's and then as Mecky and I joined in, it must have looked like some sort of press conference! After talking for a short while he signed himself up for the night photography course starting next Thursday...should be a good challenge for both of us.

Today was loaded with action. Rita and I met up with Fred Berli for the portrait of the Driven Athlete. He has a fascinating story and which has led him to the position today where he can look back on all the hard times with a lot of insight. We have a load of information and images to sort through now in order to put together a type of video collage of all the influences that brought him to and through his life crisis's.

Later in the afternoon I was blessed by full studio and buzzing potential on various levels. Silvia was here to review her latest photography images, Mila brought her laptop to select the final images for the Calendars that we are designing and Julie was here to try her hand at Silk-screening and wrote some elegant calligraphy with Chinese characters. To top things off another special guest came by. He is the Serbian man that I met weeks ago while sleeping in the park. He was looking much more fit and has been able to stay in the emergency shelter lately, which is a good thing. I encouraged him to start on his own project here in the studio, and discovered that he really likes chess so we are going to attempt a printing process to create his own chess board.

Rita came back for more images tonight as we went out to the Fall Fair to capture b-roll images of movement from all the lit up carnival rides. I was able to capture some good shots with my still camera and she filled a whole Mini DV tape too, so there should be a few usable images. Walking back I bumped into my second cousin Eva, who had promised to come to one of my photography classes. She is planning to come for next Thursday and is even thinking about doing a street camp out with me somewhere in a back alley or park.... We'll see if that happens.

Finally making it back to the studio I came across two guys hanging around the front steps. One was preparing to smoke some sort of concoction as the other stood by and watched. Sharing a beer together the topic switched to the question if the one or the other had Hepatitis C and if it would be contagious to share a drink. The theories varied and the eyes twitched back and forth in an awkward moment of silence. Not knowing what else to do, they changed topics and went on sharing the same beer. Both were on the search for a place to sleep and had money owing at the homeless shelter so they couldn't go there unless all the old bills were paid. It costs 7 or 8 franks a night to sleep there. I had no cash to lend them and offered them an extra sleeping bag, but that apparently wasn't good enough. In the wee hours of the morning I noticed one of them still wandering around on the street, from my hiding spot in a neighbours garden.



Thursday November 10, 2005

Today I had a visitor come in asking to use the washroom as though it was the first time he had ever been here. Offering him a coffee I realized that our milk had gone bad and had to excuse myself because I didn't have any cash to get some more... He offered to pick up some himself and so we

sat down for a coffee...later it comes out that he been in the studio a number of times by earlier guest artists and knew my friend Jim from Canada. He said he appreciates the studio as a place of hope and light along these grey streets...A place to meet and find inspiration. The theme of being driven really got him thinking and he opened up about all the struggles and things that he feels driven by. Sexuality became one of the big topics as we reflected on how central this is to the pulse of the world and how quickly it can get perverted into destructive slavery. Its amazing how fast time can disappear and three hours later I had to bring our debate to an end and prepare for the guests coming to the studio for the Photography course tonight.

We had a fun time experimenting with zoom effects in long time lapsed exposures which stretches and streaks the image in perspective. Later/earlier on...around one in the morning we went by the Cargo Bar for a drink. They have this slanted second floor built into the space which you can climb up onto for a place to hang out. Tables and chairs are on the verge of tipping and you really need to counter balance yourself or sit on the floor itself! ... There was only one drink that tipped over ☺...



Friday November 11, 2005

Feeling a little fried today after a short night. I didn't feel up to making the trip over to the street kitchens so I decided to eat a few chips to carry me through until lunch in Elim. Lunch turned out to be cancelled, so I had to wait until supper. Luckily a few friends and I meet for Soul Works Prayer about every three weeks and

normally that includes something to eat. This was a good thing, after polishing off the majority of one big pizza and some left-overs from the kitchen, I had more than enough to satisfy my belly.

Mecky prepares and coordinates these evening or morning meetings and tonight I realized how the lack of good sleep and building stresses are starting to take their toll. I had a really hard time focusing and relaxing, which caused me to start losing my patience. This reaction did not come across well especially when she asked for a few things to happen that I thought were unnecessary...Peace, patience, kindness!?... We were able to work things out later though, but this lead into the early morning again! Hmmm dreaming of holidays on an island somewhere far away from all responsibilities. Wouldn't that be nice?



Saturday November 12, 2005

Computer computer and more computer. I have spent more time typing into this laptop than anything else it seems. Monday is the deadline for the images for the calendar and I don't have them all yet... This journal is always an issue... the layout for the Gala Poster for artist... for guests... tickets and flyers....a story board for the

documentary film is also screaming for attention... help!

I had all sorts of visitors came by today to give an encouraging word or two but I am just feeling a little overwhelmed at the moment.

Tonight I wanted to sneak into Martina's back yard/garden to find a spot to crash because we're driving to the brunch together tomorrow morning anyways. I thought as a joke I might try my luck to call for some coffee / room...garden service in the morning! Everything was locked up though and so I had to find a spot across the street between the bushes.



Sunday November 13, 2005

Today at the artist brunch in Bern there were a ton of new faces. The house was buzzing with all sorts of great discussions and new people to meet. I had a hard time though, selling the idea of our benefit gala. Very few people were interested in entering work for the art auction and this will need to develop more in the next few weeks. The poster did

give some good communication and feed back from several people though.

Martina and I stayed a bit longer to help clean up, and by the time I drove home I was so tired that I had to give the steering wheel over to her. Arriving back at the studio I thought that I would try to hook up with a few friends in the neighbourhood to just kick back and take it easy, but that didn't work out so I just sat in the entrance of Elim for a bit and for the first time since I have started living on the street I really felt alone and out of place. It would have been so nice to slip into a nice hot bath or veg out on the couch, but that was not to be.



Monday November 14, 2005

This morning I got up with a foggy chill hanging in the air and in attempt to keep the journey as short as possible I jogged over to the street kitchen. As I sat down at a table for some coffee and bread the conversation eventually slipped into the topic of sleeping on the street. One of the employees of the kitchen just happened to

walk in and responded with shock as Gusepi told me how he was sleeping under the stars. "No!" He exclaimed, "in this cold weather? You must have some good ideas/techniques to drum up a place to crash!?" (It was surprising to me that this person who works with this crowd everyday, appeared to be shocked that he didn't have somewhere to crash.) As the discussion went on he declared with a elbow nudge and a wink that "the best thing to do when you don't have anywhere to sleep is to try steal something, because it is a win win situation...isn't it? ... if the police catch you then you will get to stay in a warm cell over night... and if they don't caught you then you cash in on the goods!" It seemed as though a sea of heads nodded across the room acknowledging this street wise knowledge acquired among years of practice and precise abuse...no justice necessary here... To survive on the street each one seems to tap into his own style of twisted creativity, and when desperate enough to fight to survive, roles switch from the abused to the abuser as often as the lights at the next intersection. Phases come and go but one thing remains the same... our selfish human nature and this tendency to rebel. Who am I to observe and say what I see in me and those beside me? I think, and then say who are you to say or not to say what is so distant and yet just right around your corner. The free will of man is the greatest gift and the greatest source of suffering. Is my will visible in the things I do and say? Sitting at that table this morning I had to wonder. Does my will need to die, or is there anything good in man that has any value beyond the here and now? Is there any use ... the people?... Who am I to want to make a difference?

Mark Fels was the guest speaker at the Artist Brunch in Bern yesterday and he told a fitting story of a rich man who worked hard all his life. He spent every minute day and night running from deal to deal and after long life of stress, he had acquired large collections of riches and material things. One day he discovered his faith and realized that he had been slaving away for things that he can't take with to heaven, so he wanted to make a deal with God. After a long discussion God finally gives in and says, Ok you can bring one suitcase full. He thought and thought as he searched through all his treasures and had a real hard time to decide. Finally he recalled something about gold in the bible so he decided to take a suitcase full of gold with when he dies. Sure enough one day years later he finally kicks the bucket and arrives at the gate to heaven with his heavy suitcase and the angel says sorry but that he will have to leave all his belongings outside. No he insists, I made a deal and have special permission to bring this with. The angel looked at him strangely and then made a quick intern call to see if this was true. Finally the official papers arrive and they allowed him to step in. "By the way what do you have in there?" the angel asked curiously. As he proudly

opened his suitcase, the angel frowned with disbelief, "Paving Bricks? what do you want to do with paving bricks?"



Tuesday November 15, 2005

Wanted to stop by and visit Karin in the detox clinic here in Basel. She is not doing well so I squished in a visit before the photography class. Normally there is a 3 week period that needs to be calculated into the withdrawal process... now after 6 weeks the doctors wanted to push her Methadone levels back up again because of the continual pain that she is experiencing in her muscles and joints. They have been saying that there is a chance that the pain won't go away! This left her feeling like there was no point in setting any goals.

Tonight we had photography course and to my delight I was able to enjoy the professional company of Andreas Fossard. Nana was around to learn some of the basics of photography and Peter wanted to come in order to build on his existing experience. Peter quickly realized

that he couldn't use his little digital camera for the night photography and so he switched back to his good'ol 35 mm film camera. We wandered through the harbour area of small Basel bordering Germany. He practiced capturing depth of field through various camera settings, perspective and composition as we climbed over train cars, and snuck between the huge sleeping cargo cranes lining the banks of the Rhein.



Thursday November 17, 2005

It's amazing how much time seems to disappear in organizing the details of this calendar. I sent the whole day developing graphics and sizing images to fit the format of layout that we have chosen. Heather sent me a single image that was around 260 megabytes! My computer just about threw in the towel!

Tonight I was able to enjoy a visit from my second cousin Eva and her friend who came by for a photography class tonight. We had a fun time capturing a few off the wall perspectives, reflections and shadow play of the night. This one tripod image of Eva's shadow came out especially well.



Friday November 18, 2005

Today I had a meeting with Lucia Zuber. She is the graphic artist for Elim and works on a number of different projects for social institutions. She said she would be passing the graphic work on to her talented son Mike. I feel relieved to be able to give on some of this responsibility to a confident graphic artist. To think that I wanted to do the whole calendar in Silk screening technique! That would have been intense! I had calculated the hours needed to print a 13 page 3 colour calendar and it would have taken months to finish. Am I ever glad that Peter Blind, a friend of mine was able to talk me out of attempting the project. It would have likely finished me off!

Later on this evening, I received a call on my cell phone from a total stranger who was looking for somewhere to stay. He said he didn't have a home and was in a pinch. I tried to explain where the emergency shelter was but he wasn't really getting it, so I planned to meet him by the Wetsteinplatz which is right beside the emergency shelter.... Somehow it was a really strange call and I felt like someone was trying to pull my leg. Unfortunately as things turned out, I got tied up at the studio longer than planned and in the end I didn't meet up with this mystery person.



Saturday November 19, 2005

A day of Planning for the Gala was spent defining and delegating possible advertising venues, refining the graphic work, and sending invitations out to possible artists for donations of work for the theme of "Light in the Darkness".

Later on I made my way to my cousin Martins place in Herrlisberg. He was having

his 30th Birthday Party... Big day!. As usual we're at the hunting cabin out in the wilderness of the Switzerland scope. Martin's mom "Ruth" (my Godmother) came to the party as well and to my amazement stayed for quite a long time, this all despite the loud rock music and the lack of other people of her generation. I even managed to get her out onto the dance floor where she got down and shook that thang ;) Good times!



Sunday November 20, 2005

Looking for a fitting place to overnight after a long night of partying with Martin and Co. I thought I would try a night in the barn of my Dads childhood farm. I was warm enough and bedded nicely into the pile of hay. I found it hard to sleep though with all the curious cows coming to check out the scene. Swoooo snuooof schwooooo Long lungs full of breath sent clouds of warm steamy cow breath through the air. I have

grown up on a farm with cows but still lost sleep wondering if one of them would mistaken my sleeping bag for an early morning snack. I did manage to get a few hours of shuteye, but not quite enough. Later on in the afternoon we met for coffee at Martins new apartment and I ended up snoozing for an hour or two.

After a few zzzzs we regrouped and the latest topic of family and the farm turnover got a little attention. Martin is trying to make himself a home and continue on with the tough job of farming in today's Swiss agricultural politics. He works part time in a second trade as an engineer and spends a good part of any other free time doing renovations to the 300 year old farm house and taking care of his beef cows. The family farm has deep roots as you can imagine and some of my family members find it difficult to let the next generation live their lives independently. Martin's girlfriend Mara really struggles with feeling unwelcome and this leads to the question if she would come to the Christmas dinner or not.... I was feeling a little sad about all that, and attempted to rationalize the whole circumstance, by initiating a family meeting to mediate negotiations for peace. Distance and avoidance of the conflict however, seems to be the popular choice for now.