

Of might and men (Kapelle 2004-2008)



*Chapel
Johannes Wesling Klinikum
Minden
460 x 682 x 1300 cm
Pine
2008*

*Stone
98 x 122 x 107 cm
Limestone
2008*

In contrast to the industrious atmosphere of the Minden clinic, Susanne Tunn's chapel offers a peaceful oasis. Her art is determined by three elements: material, form and space. She draws upon the material of art for the mystical ambience of a holy place. By endowing it with form, the artist interrupts the course of time. When we enter the chapel, our vision widens; through the transparent shell of the construction, the everyday world is elevated to a spiritual level.

In its distinctive tranquillity, the chapel seems like the scene of an epiphany. This expression encompasses a kind of superhuman process. Since time immemorial, in the moment of an epiphany the invisible has become visible, the word flesh, the divine human. At certain moments, every sacred place reveals, to those who enter, a transition between profane life and epiphanic transcendency. The decisive factor is that the artist does not receive the epiphany but herself creates it. In this context, art becomes effectual and efficacious, giving expression to the spiritual aspect of its own reality.

In the wonderful, transparent construction of the chapel, quietly self-contained and just as quietly turned towards the outside world, this place can be experienced as a calm breathing-space. The power of art to render life perceptible as an oasis is reflected in the chapel itself. The world evoked here is a place of contemplation. In the midst of life's menace, we are enclosed within the protective shell of the chapel. Here, the centre of the world is the altar, which is not prepared simply to subordinate its materiality to its religious functions. Here everything is an autonomous part within a world permeated by might and men. We owe our participation in this world to the vision which this chapel affords us, and which – in a different, tranquil form – makes clear to us the beauty of the world.

Jan Hoet