

ANSELM KIEFER GLOSSARY

“Next Year in Jerusalem”

Am Anfang – Translated as “in the beginning”, this phrase refers to the first line of the Book of Genesis that states “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the waters.” Thus the Bible initiates the creation of the Universe and all living beings. The initial optimism of this beginning cedes to the subsequent downfall of humanity. For Kiefer, it is a cyclical continuation; he writes, “for me, there is no beginning, there is only an end that is simultaneously a beginning.” *Am Anfang* is also the title of the opera that he presented at the Opéra National in Paris in 2009.

Ararat – Refers to the mountain on the Turkish-Armenian border where, according to the Book of Genesis, Noah’s ark lodged following severe floods that were intended to punish the wickedness of humanity. This biblical account is a touchstone for Jews, Christians, and Muslims alike. The ark was a refuge for God’s creations. To gauge the conditions of the outside world, Noah sent two birds from the ark, first a raven and then a dove. While the raven does not return, the dove first returns an olive branch to Noah as a sign that the flood has begun to subside and then flies again without returning, indicating that the flood has passed.

Azirah, Jesirah, Berija – The Kabbalistic terms for the material world (*Azirah*), the Book of Formation (*Sepher Jesirah*) and the world of bestowal (*Berjia*). The *Sepher Jesirah* describes the creation of the world based on numerical and phonetic systems. In Hebrew, letters and numbers utilize the same characters.

Cetus – A constellation of mythological creatures. In Greek mythology, Cetus is a whale-like aquatic monster who was sometimes referred to as the keeper of the underworld. The constellation is adjacent to other related symbols including Pisces and Aquarius.

Danae – A figure in Greek mythology who was the daughter of King Acrisius of Argos and mother of Perseus. Lacking male heirs, Acrisius appealed to an oracle who foretold that he would be killed by his grandson. At that moment, Danae was childless and in order to keep her without child, Acrisius imprisoned her in a bronze tower. Zeus intervened and impregnated Danae in the form of golden rain, leading to the birth of Perseus who was able to kill Medusa and rescue his future wife Andromeda (who had been chained to a rock as punishment for her mother Cassiopeia’s vanity) before learning of the prophecy. He went to Larissa for the athletic competitions and by accident killed Acrisius with a discus. Here, sunflower seeds represent the golden rain of Zeus while also alluding to the Kabbalistic associations of the sunflowers as planets that create a canopy over the earth. A corresponding planet exists for each seed.

Dornröschen (Sleeping Beauty) – This fairytale was published by the French author Charles Perrault in 1697 as part of the collection *The Tales of Mother Goose*. One of the earliest influences for Sleeping Beauty was Brynhild, a key figure in Norse mythology

and a protagonist in Richard Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (the Ring Cycle). In German, the "Nibelungenlied" is an epic poem that has many parallels to the Norse myth. The story's association with German folklore led the Brothers Grimm to perpetuate it further in their later version.

Engel – Sturz (Fall of the Angel) – In Christianity, a fallen angel is one who has been banished from heaven, most notably Lucifer who lusted after power. In Judaism, fallen angels were referred to as *nephilim* or giants, and derived from the Hebrew root "to fall." This connection is most fully chronicled in the Book of Enoch. Here, tiers of clothing in children's proportions suggest a ruined landscape.

Entrance to Paradise – Refers to both Dante's *Divine Comedy* as well as to the Garden of Eden, which was guarded by an angel with a flaming sword following the expulsion of Adam and Eve. This painting includes Kiefer's own photographs of his constructions of the Seven Heavenly Palaces of the Kabbalah, spooled across the bottom and intertwined with thornbushes and fragments of lead, and set against a winter landscape.

Fitzcarraldo – Named for the nineteenth century Peruvian rubber baron Carlos Fitzcarrald who is known for his improbable feat of moving a dismantled thirty-ton steamboat across a mountainous isthmus to avoid treacherous river conditions and conduct business in favorable regions. His ship, the *Contamana*, sank during an accident that also killed Fitzcarrald. The ship's remains can still be viewed in Peru today. Kiefer has included teeth in reference to Jason, the hero in Greek mythology who faced a perilous hunt for the Golden Fleece. In order to obtain it, King Aites demanded that he plough, sow, and harvest a field. However, several complications arose. First he had to use fire-breathing oxen to plough and then sow the seed with dragons' teeth from which armed warriors sprang up. The fleece was guarded by a powerful dragon. Advised by the King's daughter Medea, Jason fulfilled each task. He dressed in a fireproof costume to plough the field; when the warriors sprang up where the dragons' teeth had been sown, he threw a stone that caused confusion among the warriors and led them to fight amongst themselves; he put the dragon to sleep with a magic potion, procured the fleece and fled with it, with Medea, from Colchis.

Flying Fortress – This Boeing-manufactured bomber, first designed in 1934, was the primary aircraft used during WWII by the United States Army Air Corps. In the vitrine, a burned out, rusted airplane engine is surrounded by Kiefer's photographs. This invocation of World War II bombers may also refer to an aspect of Joseph Beuys' personal mythology in which he claimed to have been shot down while flying in the Crimea for the Luftwaffe during the winter of 1942-43.

Geist über den Wassern (Spirit on the Waters) -- The Book of Genesis states "and the spirit of God moved on the face of the waters" at the time when the earth was a formless void. The Hebrew word used for spirit (*ruach*) can also be translated as wind that brings particles, words, and ideas from far away, bridging diverse places and cultures. The force that moves over the water unites the spiritual with the natural, The *ruach* is often

portrayed as an eagle spreading its wings, an image that is put forth in Psalm 91. This passage is also viewed by Christians as a prefiguration of the sacrament of Baptism.

Ich bin der Ich bin (I am that I am) -- In the Book of Exodus, Moses encounters God in the form of the miraculous burning bush, which burns yet is not consumed by the fire. Moses ascends Mount Horeb upon being summoned. First he removes his sandals because he is on holy ground, then he shields his face. God announces to Moses that he will deliver the Israelites of Egypt from slavery. When Moses asks who should he say has sent him to the people, God replies “I am that I am.” The petrified thornbushes represent the bush. Subsequently, God demonstrates his power through Moses who warns the Egyptians of the ten plagues that will occur if the Israelites are not freed. Following the last and most horrific plague in which the first born son of each Egyptian is killed by the Angel of Death, the Israelites depart Egypt by crossing the Red Sea.

Jakobs Traum (Jacob’s Dream) – In this narrative from the Book of Genesis, Jacob, the grandson of Abraham, has wandered through Beersheba and rests his head for a night on a stone. He dreams of “Jacob’s Ladder” where angels ascend and descend the ladder, affirming the presence of God and reassuring him that no matter where he may find himself, he will be looked after. Upon waking, Jacob was so jarred by his dream that he named the site Bethel, meaning “house of God.” In geographic terms, Bethel was the site of Mount Moriah where the Temple of Jerusalem was built. The ladder is often viewed as the link between heaven and earth, a connection strengthened by the sacrifices offered at the Temple from the worshipper to God. In Christian iconography, the ladder prefigures the role of Jesus as the mediator between the two realms.

Jeremiah, Baruch – A Jewish prophet (c. 650 BCE -- 570 BCE) who provided spiritual leadership during the time when the Babylonians captured Jerusalem, destroyed the first temple, and exiled many Jews to Babylonia. Among his prophecies, he envisioned that the bones of the Kingdom of Judah would become the refuse of the earth, alluding to the cycle of destruction and regeneration of organic material. Baruch was Jeremiah’s scribe who announced his prophecies at the Temple of Jerusalem on a Jewish holy day while Jeremiah was hiding from King Jehoakim. Both Jeremiah and Baruch witnessed the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem in 587–586 BCE. Kiefer considers the Book of Jeremiah to be the first beautiful work of poetry, and the role of the prophet as parallel to that of an artist whose creation acts through, rather than emanating from within, the artist.

Johannis-Nacht (Midsummer Night) -- According to Kiefer, Johannis-Nacht is “a special night in which fields are set on fire and religion bares its roots in ancient mystical acts.” Johannis-Nacht is the evening before the summer solstice and the longest day of the year. It was first celebrated by the Druids as the marriage between heaven and earth. In Christianity, it is the night before the celebration of the birth of John the Baptist. On the evening of Johannis-Nacht, the devil is said to spread fern seeds, which grow in the shade, leading many to believe that ferns possess a secret knowledge. The lead airplane encased in the vitrine can be viewed as a reference to the ill-fated Operation Barbarossa, which was launched by Hitler on Johannis-Nacht in 1941.

Kältestrom (Cold Stream) –Invokes entropy, the measure of randomness contained within a thermodynamic system. Here, references to the laws of chemistry in the form of ice cubes, a plaster-coated refrigerator, and thornbush fragments point to the potential energy contained within the universe. Following the conclusion of the second law of thermodynamics, the entropy of an isolated system never decreases. Since the earth is an isolated system, it follows that entropy will increase until there is no free energy left to sustain life.

Lead – Although a frequently occurring element, it is rarely found in pure form. It is toxic for living organisms, accumulating easily in tissue and bone, and can destroy the nervous system and lead to brain damage. The medieval alchemists associated lead with the planet Saturn and melancholy temperament. Considered to be the basest metal, it was the subject of numerous alchemical experiments to transform lead into gold. In 1981 Kiefer acquired the lead roof of the Cologne Cathedral, and the material appears frequently in his work, often to draw attention to a paradox, such as film made of lead yet which is impenetrable by light.

Lilith – A figure in Jewish folklore and the subject of much speculation. While the stories of Lilith's origin differ, she is associated with the Book of Genesis during the time that Adam was placed under a spell by God. There is a perceived discrepancy in Genesis regarding proof of her existence as the mother of Adam's demon children when Eve was split from him. Lilith is also described in the Book of Isaiah as a demon of the night. In the Apocrypha and Old Testament, she lives in ruins and abandoned cities and questions God's perfection, personifying the oppositions within God, who is everything at once. According to these scriptures, she gives birth to 3,000 devils every night by the Dead Sea. In an anonymous but influential Medieval text, Lilith was Adam's first wife and refused to bear children. For this reason she is viewed by some as a proto-feminist. In Kabbalistic texts, she is portrayed as beautiful seductress who has the power to transform into a demon. Kiefer often associated Lilith with the role of artist. In this work, she is contained in a cage, suggesting her demonic qualities.

Liliths Tochter (Lilith's daughter) – In Kabbalah, Lilith is associated with the planet Saturn. According to the story that Lilith gives birth to 3,000 devils each night and then returned to her cave, the daughter of Lilith is said to hide in mirrors, which were viewed as portals between the spirit and material world. Any girl who engaged her gaze would be infiltrated by the spirit. Similarly, people who exhibit a melancholic, brooding character are often referred to as the children of Lilith.

Merkaba – Merkaba is described by Kabbalistic mystics as a throne chariot of God that operates between earth and seven heavenly palaces. The image derives from the prophet Ezekiel's vision of a mystical flight to heaven. For Kiefer, Merkaba is both the macrocosm and microcosm, echoing Hermes Trismegistus' adage "as above, so below," which is a principle of Gnosticism and mystical belief. The book *Sefer Hechaloth*, which preceded the Kabbalah, details the ascent from the seven heavenly palaces to the Hechaloth, where the sage will be united with God. This book describes the Merkaba that

will carry the seeker on his journey. In Kabbalah, it became a tool for meditation, where mystics would journey inwards through each of the palaces.

Mount Tabor – A pilgrimage site located in the Lower Galilee region of Israel that is considered by Christians to be the site of the Transfiguration, when Jesus began to radiate light and congregated with Moses and Elijah. During the time of the Second Temple of Jerusalem (516 BCE – 70 CE), light signals from Mount Tabor were used to inform northern Jewish towns of the holy days and the beginning of the month. During the reign of the Roman Emperor Vespasian (69 CE – 79 CE), it was the site of a Jewish massacre. Following the destruction of the second temple in 70 CE, it was later resettled. This mountain was first identified as a site for Christian pilgrimage in the third century and from the time of the Crusades through the Arab-Israeli War of 1948, control of the mountain was continuously in flux.

Next Year in Jerusalem – This phrase invokes an utopian refrain from the end of the Passover Seder, a Judaic tradition that idealizes a return to Israel where all believers can celebrate the rites of renewal.

Das rote Meer (The Red Sea) -- Located between Africa and Asia, it is the site of the Israelite crossing, fleeing enslavement in Egypt. Following the tenth plague when the first born of each Egyptian family was killed, the Israelites fled Egypt and the waters parted long enough for them to cross, closing again upon the pursuing Egyptians..

San Loreto – The site where the Virgin Mary was born and raised and the site of the Annunciation. According to a fourteenth-century legend, this pilgrimage site flew miraculously first from Nazareth to Croatia in the thirteenth century, then was transported to Recanati, and then to a laurel grove after which this Adriatic town is named. The movement was initiated by the loss of Christian control of Israel. This small home contains an altar and a blue ceiling covered with stars. During the Middle Ages, monks were often referred to by lay people as angels, which may have contributed to the interpretation of this legend.

Die Schechina – In one of the vitrines associated with the Sephiroth, glass shards protrude from a French wedding dress, a symbol of the Shekhinah who is the personification of God in the world and the Diaspora. She wanders the earth until the Messiah has come and will then return to heaven. As she patiently waits through cycles of destruction and dispersion, she is viewed by Kiefer as a voice of the people.

Die Sephiroth – The basic elements of Rabbi Isaac Luria's (1534-1572) interpretation of the Kabbalah. There are ten Sephiroth (pl.), hierarchically arranged, and each *Sephirah* (sing.) represents a quality or state which mankind should seek to understand in order to approach the Infinite. At the top stands *Kether* (Will) by itself as a divine quality, and is therefore not counted among the ten. The remaining ten Sephiroth are divided into four spheres. The sphere of the intellect is highest and includes *Chokhmah* (Wisdom), *Binah* (Understanding) and *Da'ath* (Reason). This is followed by the moral sphere, which consists of *Chesed* (Kindness/Mercy), *Gevurah* (Strength/Justice) and *Tiphereth*

(Beauty). The third sphere belongs to the material world: *Netzach* (Victory), *Hod* (Splendor), *Yesod* (Foundation). And finally comes the bottom sphere: *Malkuth* (Kingdom –also called the Mother), which is the very foundation of the physical world as we know it. The Sephiroth form a structure for the material and spiritual world and at the same time a codex of moral behavior that corresponds to Plato's four cardinal virtues -- wisdom, self-control, justice and courage -- to which Christianity later added faith, hope and love. The Sephiroth have been compared to Jacob's Ladder because of their hierarchical arrangement of qualities and the transformative spiritual improvement one undergoes by following the steps. The Sephiroth are depicted in several models: as ten circles organized as a ladder in an oblong vertical structure, as branches of the Tree of Life, and as a number of concentrically arranged circles.

Steigend steigend sinke nieder (rising, rising, falling down) – In reference to Goethe's two-part *Faust* from the early nineteenth century, these inverted sunflowers from Kiefer's garden are suspended between two different states. In the German myth, Faust enters into a contract with the devil, offering his soul in exchange for unlimited knowledge. In Goethe's version, the devil makes bet with God that he can corrupt Faust, who is favored by God. After several tragedies, Faust ultimately goes to heaven as the bet is not completely fulfilled. For Kiefer, the collapse of boundaries between macrocosm and microcosm is personified by this narrative.

Thora – In Norse mythology, Thora's name derives from Thor, the god of strength and thunder. Her father gave her a witch-worm that would grow into a serpent. Any suitor who could slay the serpent would be able to marry her. Ragnar Lodbrok achieved this feat, however Thora died before the wedding. Ragnar went on to marry Aslaug, the daughter of Sigurd and Brynhild, characters who also appear in the German epic poem "Nibelungenlied" as well as Richard Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (the Ring Cycle).

Thora is also the German word for Torah, in which each Hebrew letter reflects a spiritual order in addition to a linguistic one. In the *Sefer ha Temunah*, a medieval Kabbalistic text, the author refers to a missing letter that will be revealed only when the world moves to another *sephira* and will signal the repair of the universe. Represented here as a lead typewriter on a chair surrounded by aluminum sunflowers, Thora transforms into the connection between language and the cosmos, symbolized here by the sunflowers.

Tikkum (Tikkun) -- A term that means "repairing" or "perfecting" and refers to the process of redemption that leads to the restitution of worlds after the breaking of the vessels, a reference to a prophecy by Jeremiah that states: "Thus says the Lord: Go and get a potter's earthen flask. Then you shall break the flask in the sight of the men who go with you and say to them, thus says the Lord of hosts: Even so I will break this people and this city, as one breaks a potter's vessel, which cannot be made whole again." (Jeremiah 19.1, 10-11) The restitution specifically refers to the seven lower Sephiroth through the releasing of the divine sparks trapped in the qliphoth (the shells around the sephiroth) and is also referred to as the release of the female waters.

Trinity – In Christian iconography, the trinity is composed of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. The Trinity is the most important symbol in Christianity. During the early years of Christianity, several interpretations of the Trinity were proposed by the Gnostics. In several works in the exhibition, three elevated chairs are used to identify this symbol.

Valentinus – An influential second-century Gnostic theologian (c.100-c.160 CE) from Egypt who taught that three kinds of people exist: spiritual, physical, and material. He relied on the concept of dualism (good and evil) as first used by Plato and which defined the Alexandrian and Roman schools of Gnosticism that he founded. His disciples in the second and third centuries posed a formidable challenge to established Christianity. Gnosticism was a movement that consisted of many often competing theologians who were united by the belief that the cosmos were created by an imperfect God with relative levels of benevolence. Gnosticism may have originated before the time of Jesus and rejects him as the savior. Gnostics such as Valentinus were viewed as instigators and competitors to the establishment of Christianity by questioning and reinterpreting the stories as well as offering alternate mythologies. Little is known about Valentinus' teachings except from refutations of it. Here, lead buckets are juxtaposed with diamonds, a paradox of clarity and sensation as lead is one of the softest and most dense metals which does not allow light to pass through while diamonds are the hardest known materials that occur in nature that are capable of transmitting visible light.

Winterwald (Winter Forest) – A recurring theme in Kiefer's work since the late 1960s, which often signifies time in history that suggests the barren end of a cycle and the uncertainty of a new beginning. The forest has iconic status in German culture and is often the setting of folktales and was the setting for an important moment in Germany history when Arminius led the Germanic people to victory over Roman invaders in 9 CE. In addition, it was a symbol first employed in the late nineteenth century during German unification and later by the Nazis to stir nationalist sentiment. Kiefer views the forest as the space between heaven and earth and the repository of history. Significantly, he is interested in demonstrating the misuse of the forest as myth rather than propagating it. Winter landscapes by earlier German Romantic artists such as Caspar David Friedrich also inform this work. As in *Fitzcarraldo*, teeth are used to invoke the myth of Jason and the obstacles he faced to obtain the Golden Fleece.

Wundtau regent (wound, dew, rain) -- In Judaism, dew is often interpreted as a symbol of life, resurrection, and bountifulness. It was also an object of prayer during the harvest season. The Book of Deuteronomy states "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." (Deuteronomy 32:3) In this work, wind has been substituted with "wound."

Wurzel Jesse – The Tree of Jesse is a genealogical lineage used by both Jews and Christians to delineate the coming of the Messiah, originating with Jesse of Bethlehem, the father of King David and continues as a family tree leading to Jesus. Derived from the Book of Isaiah, Jesse is portrayed as having a tree emerging from his abdomen as Isaiah states "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots: and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him." (Isaiah II: 1-2). In

Judaism, the twelve tribes of Israel from whom all Jews descend originate from the root of Jesse. In Christianity, the apostle Paul used this passage as the sign of the growth of Christianity united by Jesus as the ruler. Many medieval illuminated manuscripts and cathedrals feature stained glass representations of this story as a visual reminder of Jesus's heritage and the eventuality of his own ascent as the Christian savior. The Tree of Jesse in this exhibition is inverted as if it has been uprooted, suggesting the relative nature of both the beginning and the end.

Zerstörung des Tempels (The Destruction of the Temple) -- In the Old Testament, the cycle of construction and destruction is a rite of renewal that refuses a true beginning. While many people associate ruins with despair and a sense of finality, Kiefer considers ruins and ash to signify the beginning of a new cycle. The Temple of Jerusalem was the most important center of Jewish life where daily offerings and prayers took place. Inscribed on the vitrine in the exhibition are two dates marking the destruction of each of the two temples of Jerusalem. In 586 BCE, the Babylonians destroyed the first temple. Construction on the new temple began immediately after. The second temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE and the Western Wall is the only existing remnant of it. Further attempts to rebuild the temple were not possible as the Israelites were denied access to Jerusalem in the following centuries. At the bottom of this vitrine, rolls of unspooled film contain photographs taken by Kiefer at his studio that document towers that he has constructed, juxtaposing his own scenes of building to contrast with the destruction.