

March 31, 2003 Cluj-Napoca, Romania

"The Flying Golem of Poale Tzedek " by Frederick D. Bunsen (c)

Amidst the sand, brick, and refuse a glimpse of withered, brown paper caught my eye that morning as I found myself skirting along a weathered side path on the way to the studio. The deposits were recent, stemming from an ongoing renovation in an adjoining building of the old Jewish synagogue, "Poale Tzedek" (from the Nameless street), now serving as a cultural center in the community of Cluj, Romania, and home to my current art studio. As I peered closer loose pages of a withered Siddur prayer book in Jewish script emerged, perhaps last read in 1940, preceding foreign control of the city.

I sifted out the pages carefully so as not to damage what I instinctively recognized as fragile and dear. Soaked from rain and weather they threatened to tear at the slightest jar.

Gently I took them upstairs to my studio, to the house where they had once had their relevance more than 60 years before, and placed them on the window ledge to air dry. The day after I returned, anxious to learn more about my find.

It was warm and sunny that day, one of the first of its kind since the long winter. The morning rays cast long shadows through the windowpanes and onto the now dry wilted pages that I recognized as passages from the Old Testament. The paper seemed to almost glow in illuminating a golden, parchment-like impression.

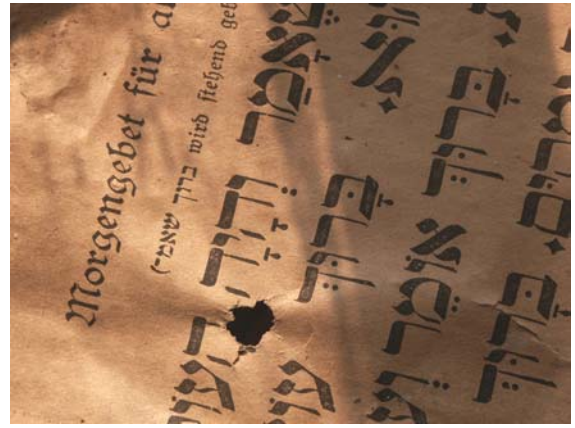
I noticed right away that each page contained a German heading (The Jews in these parts used German as their mother tongue, and in intellectual circles). That particular page, which now faced open on the window ledge read: "Morgengebet, fuer alle Tage", "stehend gebetet": It was a section of the Old Testament from the book of proverbs, which translated as "Morning Prayer for every day, to be prayed standing".

As I stood observing that mysterious calligraphic-like script, illuminated in the morning light, I pondered how I'd ventured so many miles from home to a location unknown, and indeed un-determined by myself, and in passing at the prescribed time, I had found that which was lost, forgotten, and condemned to obliteration, to finally discover in a seconds time, a message meant for eternity and myself.

In the weeks to come the script was to inspire me on the way to realizing a new art project (see photos). A sphinx arose from its ashes and my Flying Golem was born - a wooden miniature bi-plane, enveloped in fragments of the torn script that I'd rescued. Soon its inscribed mysteries would be circumventing the globe along with the artistic models of other artists to various international art exhibitions, from Zagreb to New York, in a sign of personal renewal and freedom such that art will always be.



1) Model and Discovered Siddur Fragments



2) Script-Ecriture



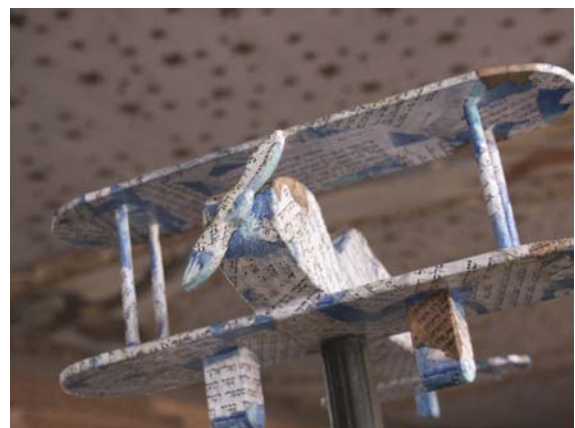
3) Surroundings



4) Merging of Two Spirits



5) Freedom and the Stars



6) The Flying Golem