# Haus Atlantis

Following Karen Russo’s recent video work “Haus Atlantis,” which blends the genres of documentary, historical essay, and science fiction, the artist readdresses her work’s visual and textual elements in the form of a visual essay.

Built in 1931, Haus Atlantis in Bremen is a combination of patron Ludwig Roselius’ vision to restore the German racial identity by resuming the glory of ancient times, and Bernhard Hoetger’s expressionist, symbolist, and monumental architecture.

Visual Essay / Karen Russo November 10, 2016

## vlcsnap-2016-09-29-10h45m05s317.jpg



[1]

vlcsnap-2016-07-07-17h30m54s401.jpg **[2]**



[3]

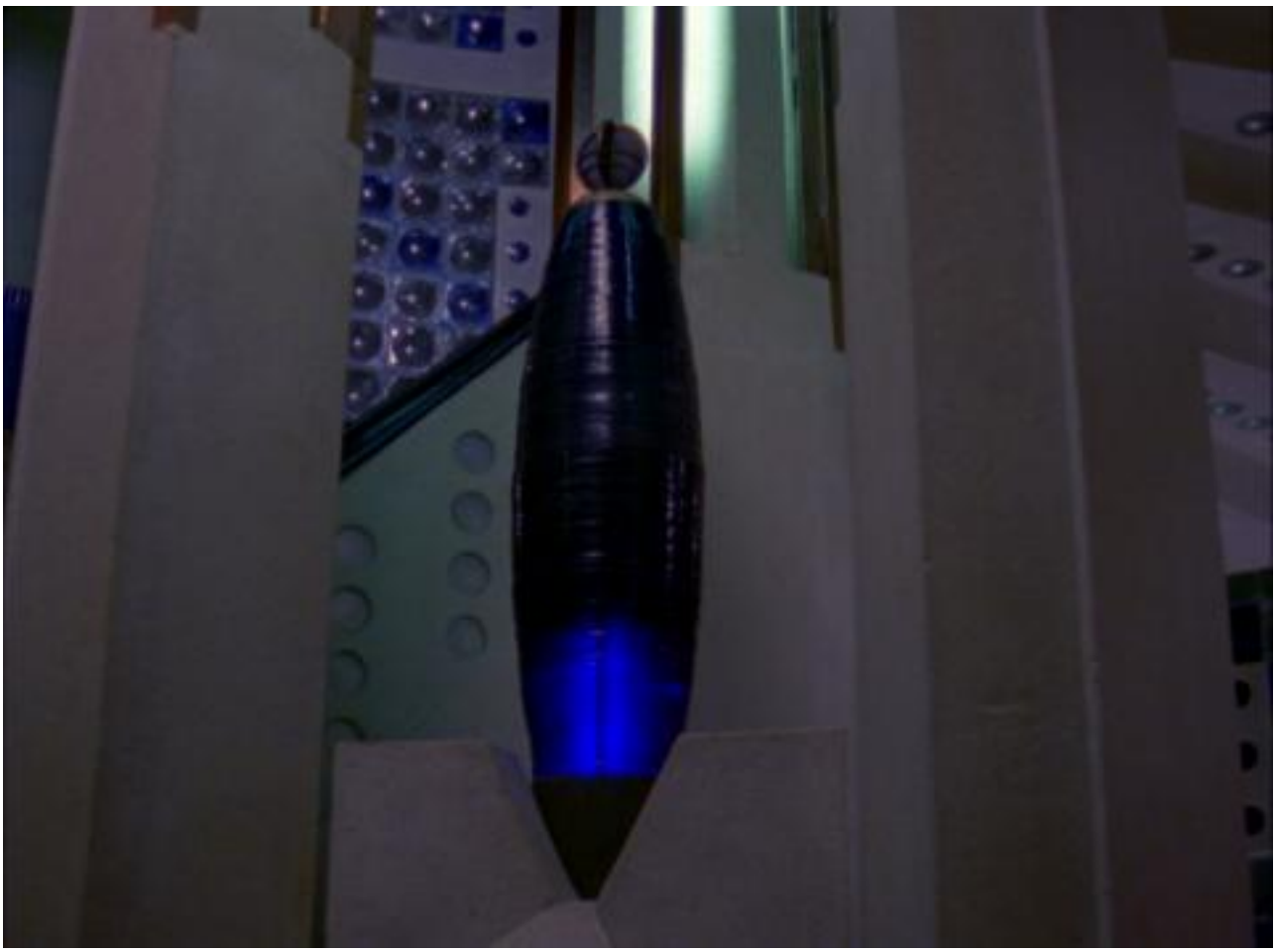
In days of old, the years drifted slowly across the earth, as the earth turned slowly on her axis and she slowly revolved around the sun – from time immemorial. A year that bestowed even one single word on mankind, was a rich one. And in still more ancient times, a word would take a thousand years to emerge. So slow was mankind’s growth.

Inst_fur_Leistungsprufung_Lungenvolumen **[4]**




[5]

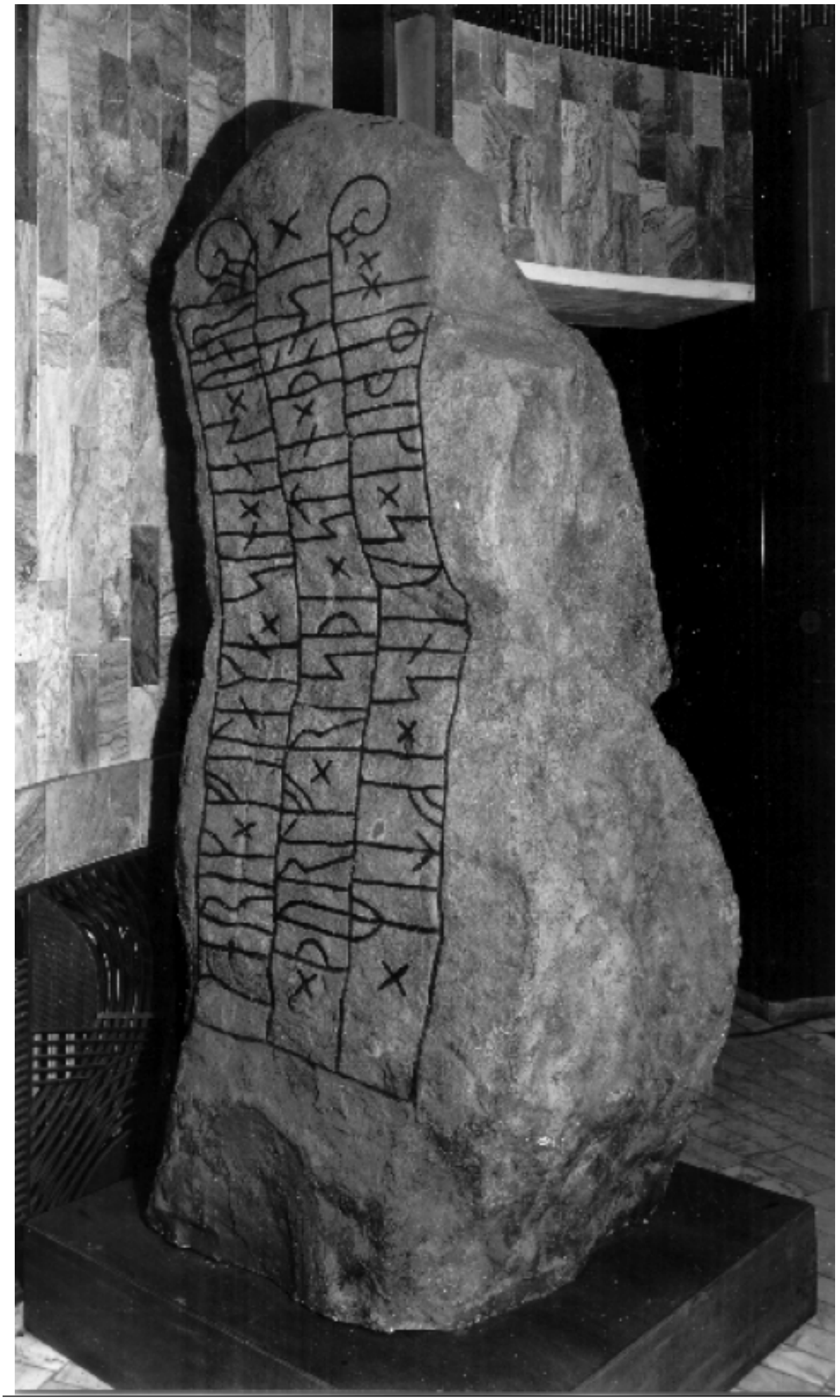
vlcsnap-2016-07-07-17h30m33s934.jpg **[6]**



[7]

Nowadays, the earth spins faster. It races round the sun. To us, a day seems nothing but a day, a year – a year. But some day it will be reckoned that one of today‘s days was akin to a primeval hour, and a day in the future will feel like an hour of today’s.

80_lowres.png **[8]**



[9]

vlcsnap-2016-09-29-10h54m53s721.jpg **[10]**



[11]

Time is also matter. But the human mind, in its quest for the everlasting, is slowly conquering it. Atlantis House will put a question to mankind. Whether or not that question is well posed, only time can tell.

05.1.1.1.9 Ausdruckstanz im Himmelssaal 'Spiel und Gegenspiel'.JPG **[12]**



[13]

Haus Atlantis, Karen Russo (4) **[14]**



[15]

The hardships of the Ice Age, which shaped the people we know today as the Nordic race, also shaped a system of thought that determined man's creative power and developed an understanding

which ensured our survival. Thus the notion of infiniteness broke upon us in all its blazing light.

Haus Atlantis, Karen Russo (reflection) **[16]**



[17]

vlcsnap-00054.jpg **[18]**



[19]

These ideas, however, were eclipsed by the clash of the Nordic race and the children of sunnier climes, who had never encountered the bitter problem of grinding hardship. Thus it was, as the sun shone down unceasingly on their delight in the world's abundance, that Creation’s great plan was put to flight. So, the sublime notion of an eternal life, acquired through ice and hard endeavor, decayed into oblivion.

## Haus Atlantis, Karen Russo (5) **[20]**



[21]

vlcsnap-00023.jpg **[22]**



[23]

The material world prevailed over the spiritual. But still the Northern People endured and as the inhabitants of the whole world grew fertile, and the races of North and South intermingled, all those who bore Northern blood within them still recognized that ancient yearning to find resurrection through being, becoming, and passing away in a more pure and sublime form.

## Haus Atlantis, Karen Russo (6) **[24]**



[25]

83_lowres.png **[26]**



[27]

So when Jesus Christ, the mighty prophet, the Son of God, appeared and proclaimed the Gospel, it was the people imbued with northern blood who first raised their hands and fell to their knees, recalling unto themselves the great wisdom of their bloodline.
Atlantis House leads us back into the dawn of mankind.

vlcsnap-00064.jpg **[28]**



[29]

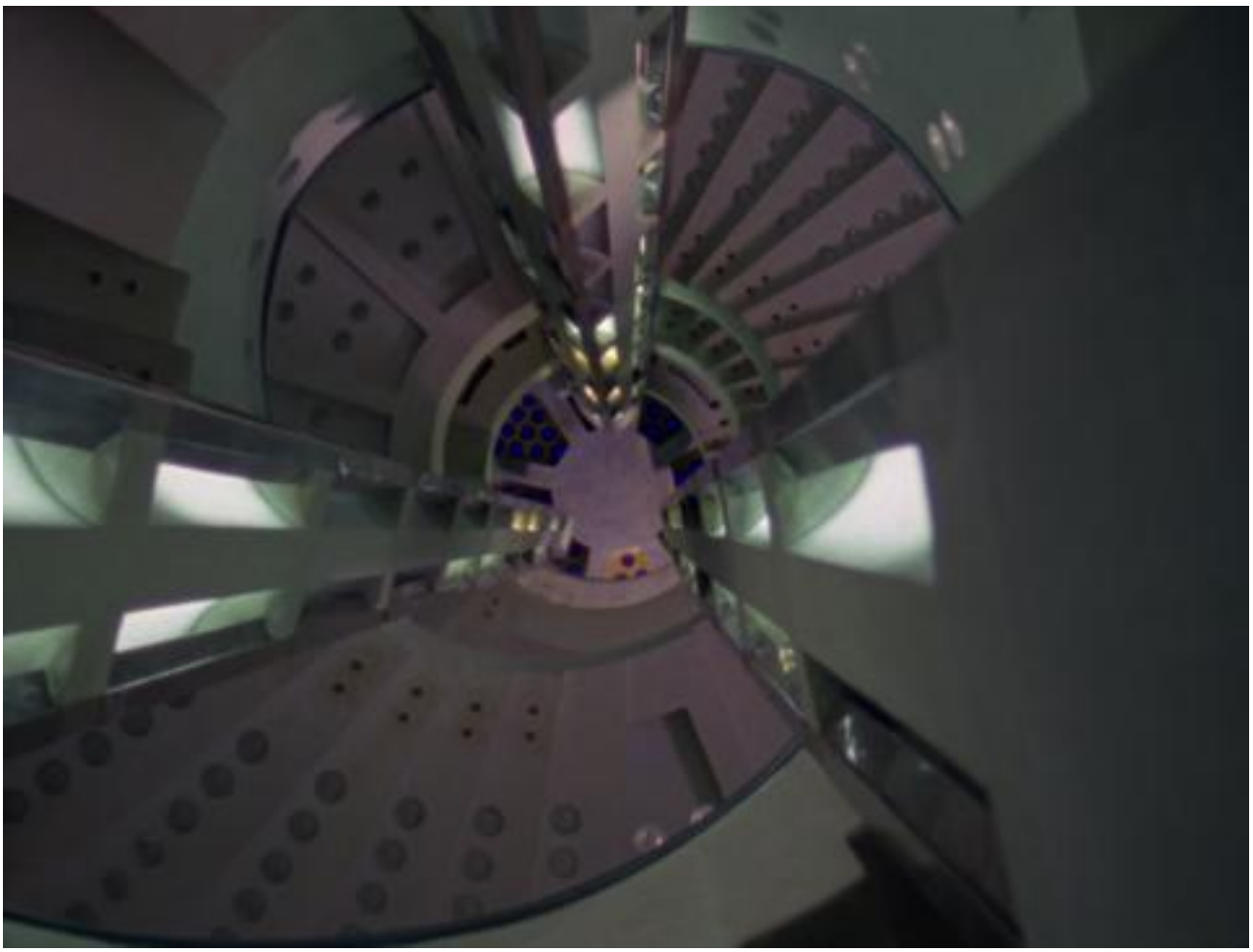
9Russo_Haus Atlantis film still_16mm film_2015.jpg **[30]**



[31]

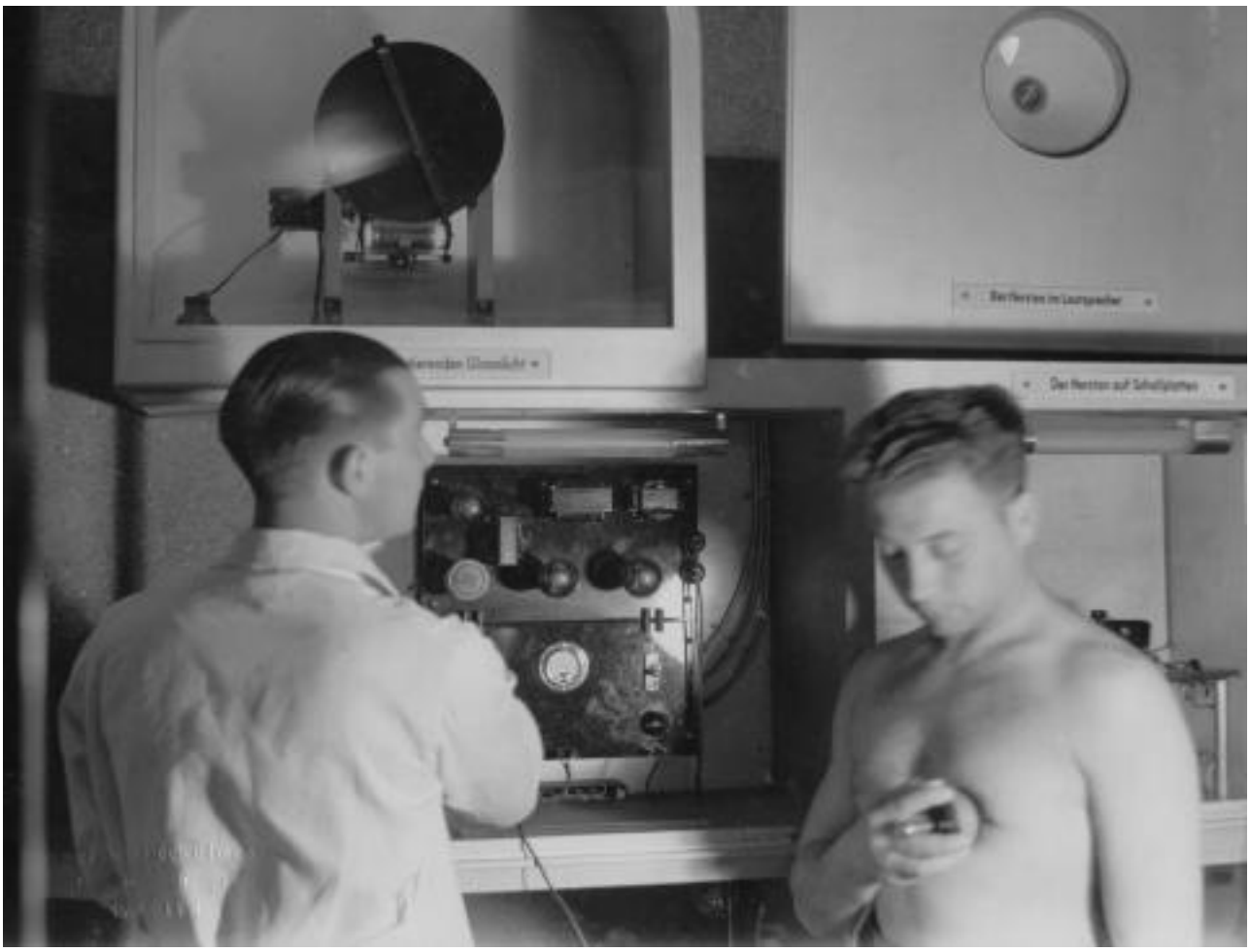
If we are to know what lies at the heart of things, we must tear away the blindfold which mankind wears. In deep commune with the cosmos, organic life emerges – Man emerges. The primeval atom and the universal spirit form Man's substance and soul. Devoid of soul, Man’s knowledge is merely bestial. It cannot be called knowledge.

vlcsnap-2016-07-07-17h31m36s280.jpg **[32]**



[33]

[Haus Atlantis, Karen Russo (7)](#) **[34]**



[35]

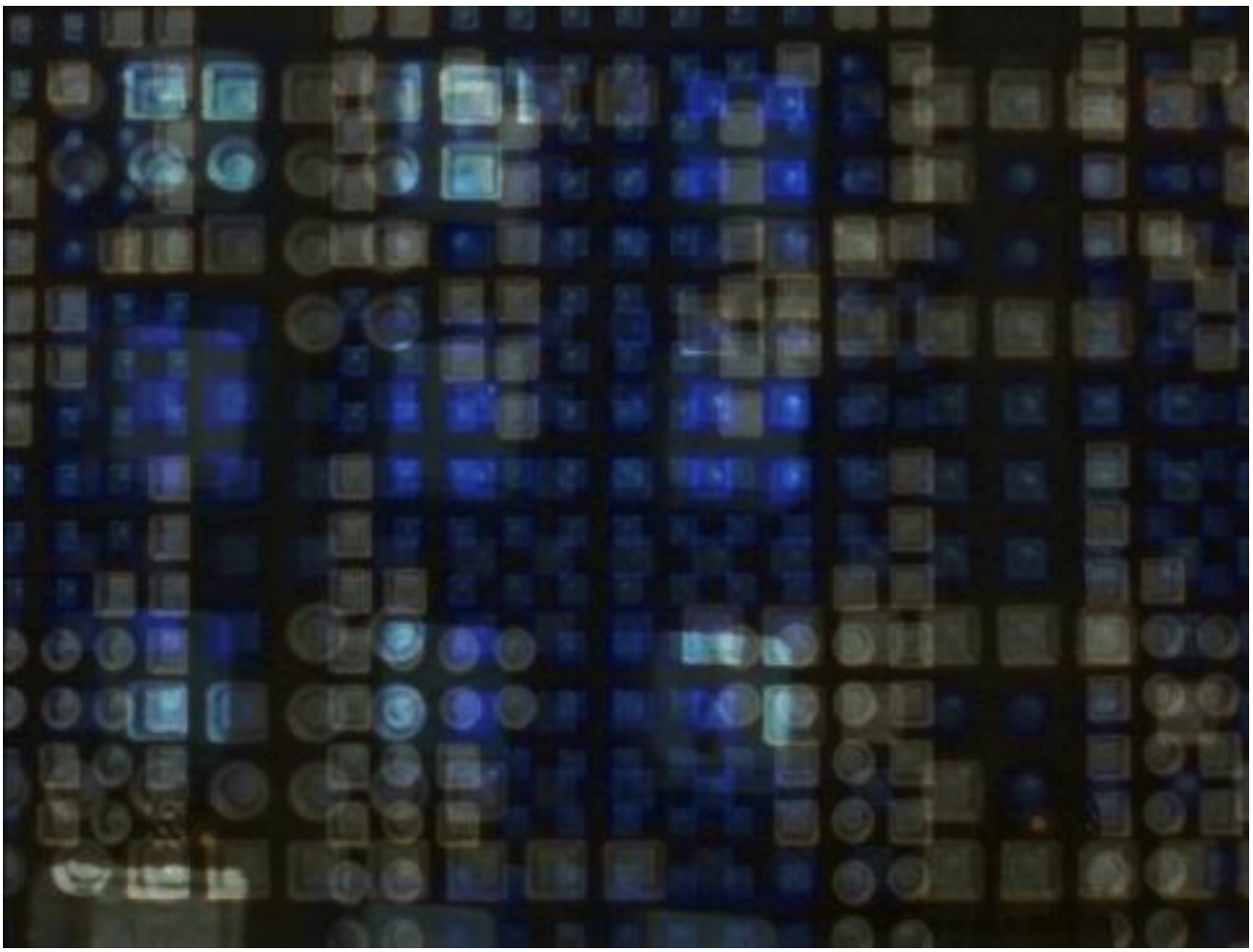
Pronouncing the past, ruling the presence, and auguring the future, the Tree of Life towers over Atlantic House. The Three Norns bear its mighty roots, pointing the way, through ancient interpretation, to spiritual sacrifice. Amidst the cycle of eternal life, they raise the Saviour’s cross, now freed from of Man’s image, bearing only the Sun's shield of truth, towards Heaven.

vlcsnap-2016-09-29-10h52m43s608.jpg **[36]**



[37]

vlcsnap-2016-07-07-17h36m14s671.jpg **[38]**



[39]

A noble woman was doomed to die
In keen anguish.
A rift sprang asunder,
Man’s glimpse into Eternity.
Man’s need was born
To shape his Destiny.
Untaught, alone,
Will and Need became his strength.

## Haus Atlantis, Karen Russo (8) **[40]**



[41]

vlcsnap-00069.jpg **[42]**



[43]

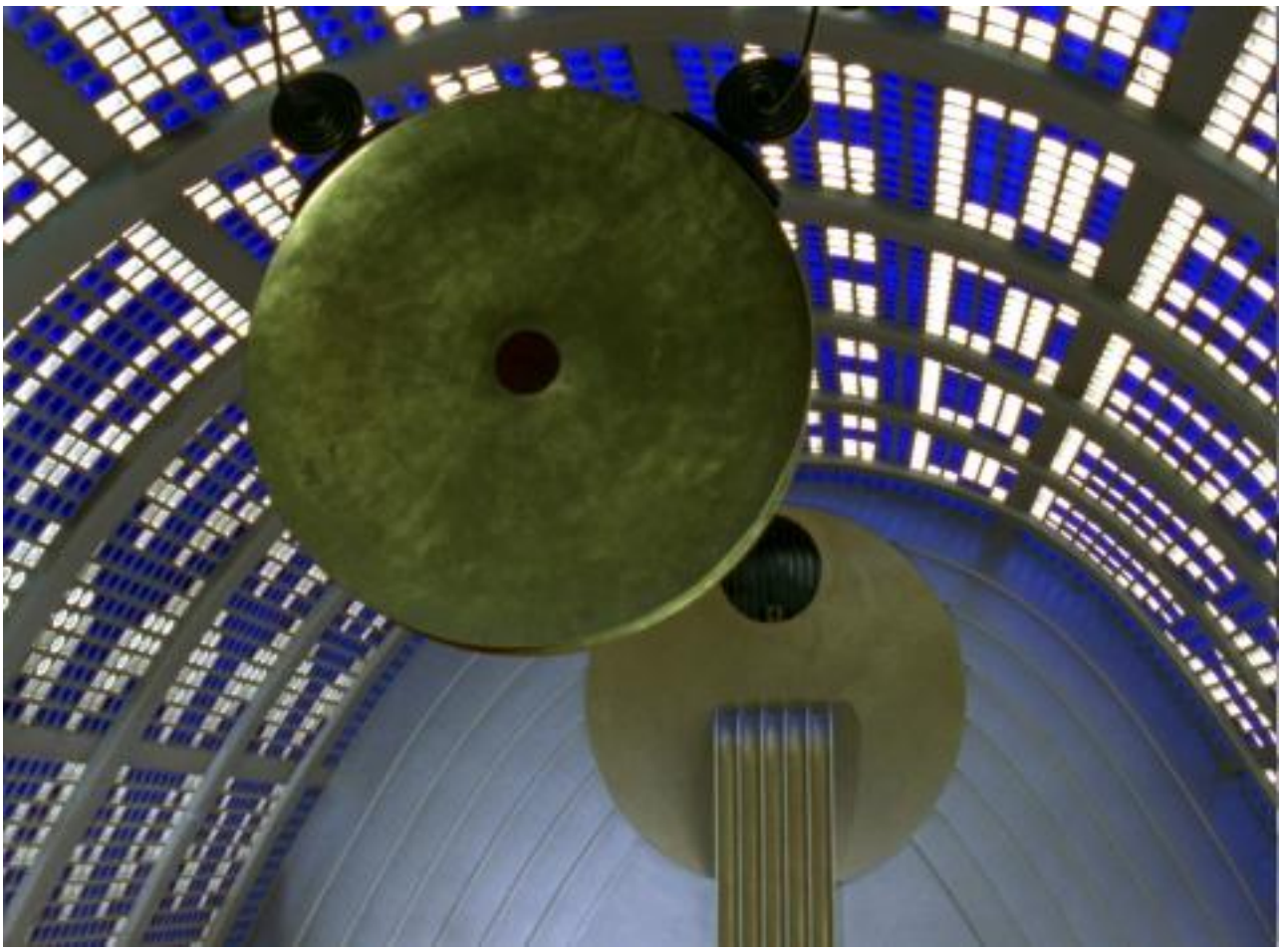
The Dead and heavenly Living
Compelled his Need.
The Will was his alone
Born of bitter lessons.

05.1.1.6.3 Institut fu╠ıor Ko╠ıorperkultur im UG, Herztrainungsra╠ıoder.JPG **[44]**



[45]

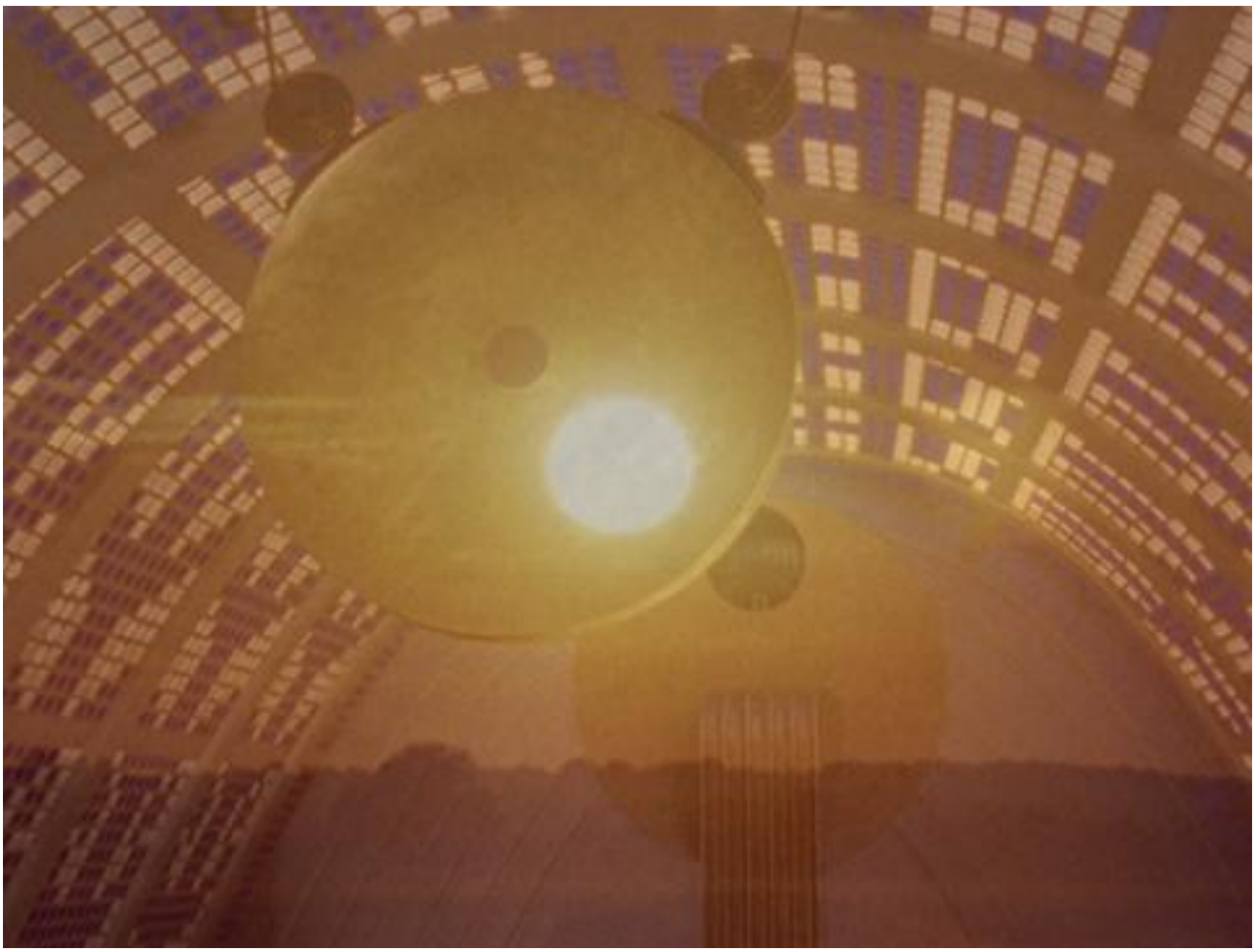
[Haus Atlantis, Karen Russo (9)](#) **[46]**



[47]

There still stands
A street in Bremen saying:
Follow the way
Of those who came first.
In small beginnings
Is mastery learnt.
So seek once again
The skill of the Master,
To rouse from the dead
To bring back the life.

vlcsnap-00065_lowres.jpg **[48]**



[49]

vlcsnap-2016-07-07-17h38m07s136.jpg **[50]**



[51]

There still stands
A street in Bremen saying:
Today I stand
One day I may fall,
As nothing is final
And eternal all.

*This visual essay is comprised of images culled from Karen Russo's work [52], and excerpts from Roselius' 1931 speech1 upon the completion of Haus Atlantis, translated to English by Jason Morell and Juergen Ghebrezgiabiher, and to Hebrew by Uri Shani.

**Karen Russo's exhibition "Haus Atlantis [53]" was shown at Große Kunstschau, Worpswede between June 19 and October 23, 2016

- 1. Roselius, Ludwig. Reden und Schriften zur Böttcherstrasse in Bremen. Bremen : v. Halem, 1932

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[52] http://www.karenrusso.co.uk/en/video/69

[53] http://www.worpswede-museen.de/en/summer-2016the-roaring-twenties-expressionism-in-worpswede/karen-russo-haus-atlantisgrosse-kunstschau.html