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## *Preface*

Denn die philosophischen Probleme entstehen,  
wenn die Sprache feiert.

Philosophical problems arise when language  
goes on holiday.

Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*  
(Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2001), § 38.

“My lectures are not for tourists!”

Wittgenstein quoted in *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A  
Memoir*, by Norman Malcolm (1970, 28)

In 1913, while still a student, and shortly after his father's death, the Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889 – 1951) felt the need to escape from his Cambridge life. He used his newly acquired inheritance and went on a month-long vacation along the coast of Norway with his secret lover and fellow student David Pinsent (1891 – 1918). They played dominos and went on walks. According to Pinsent's diary they were both 'mad about Schubert' and started performing Schubert songs together, Pinsent would play the piano while Wittgenstein, a whistle virtuoso, whistled the part for the voice. For Wittgenstein, this would be the first of many trips to Norway. A year after his first visit, he started the construction of a small wooden home-away-from-home, a place he called 'little Austria', on a secluded hilltop outside of Skjolden in Luster, Sogn og Fjordane. At the far end of Norway's deepest and longest fjord, Ludwig Wittgenstein would work on his two greatest achievements, *Tractatus Logico Philosophicus* and *Philosophical Investigations*.

His teacher Bertrand Russell (1872 – 1970) would later recollect his failed attempt to stop Wittgenstein from nesting in Norway:

“I said it would be dark, and he said he hated daylight. I said it would be lonely, and he said he prostituted his mind talking to intelligent people. I said he was mad, and he said God preserve him from sanity.”

Ray Monk, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius* (London: Penguin, 1991), 91.

Wittgenstein would, not surprisingly, try to avoid the summer tourist season. But why was a central cultural persona hiding in the social periphery? Like Augustin of Hippo, who was inspired by the hermit St Anthony of the Desert, Wittgenstein seemed to believe in, or at least romanticise about, the lonely ascetic, and the philosopher solitaire.

We started to wonder what would happen if we, as a group, where to intrude on this site chosen

by our modern, would-be hermit for its secluded solitude? The proposal seemed to carry with it a certain sense of hopeful mysticism, combined with a hint of ill-advised plagiarism.

'I can't imagine that I could have worked anywhere as I do here' Wittgenstein wrote in a letter from Skjolden to the philosopher G. E. Moore (1873 – 1958) in October 1936. And again, in his notes collected in *Culture and Value*, Wittgenstein expresses the importance of the location:

"When I was in Norway during the year 1913–1914 I had some thoughts of my own, or so at least it seems to me now. I mean I have the impression that at the time I brought to life new movements in thinking (but perhaps I am mistaken)."

Wittgenstein, 1980, *Culture and Value*, p. 20e

And so Skjolden became the destination for our *Wittgenstein on Vacation*. Somewhere between pilgrims and tourists, we arrived in 'little Austria'. Our vacation was meant to last for three days, but gave rise to a project that would go on for three years, and end in the unveiling of the world's largest monument to Ludwig Wittgenstein.

The original aim of the project was to simply *go on vacation*. But we got lost — somewhere beyond grammar.

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*Wittgenstein on Vacation – Little Austria*, took place at the ruin of Ludwig Wittgenstein's house in Skjolden, Luster municipality, Norway, the 22nd to the 24th of August, 2015. We arranged a free bus ride and a all-expenses-paid three day vacation from Oslo to Skjolden for ourselves and 20 guests; Vilde von Krogh, Michael Hare, Kaja Breckan, Eivind Røtnes, Ana Maria Bresciani, Antonio Cataldo, Trine Guribye, Constance Gjertnes, Frode Sten Jacobsen, Ingebjørg Torgersen, Zinja Gjengstø, Eyvind Schøyen, Håkon Hoffart, Kavian Kasper Braanaas, Jan-

Fredrik Bjerck, Kirsten Dirksen and her family of four. Siri Hjorth performed as Ludwig Wittgenstein at the ruin of his house, based on the diary he wrote while staying in Skjolden. We organised a series of talks, games and late night sessions throughout the stay. The trip is part of a YouTube-documentary by Kirsten Dirksen; *Philosopher's hut deep in the fjord: Wittgenstein in Norway* (2016). Dirksen makes videos about simple living, self-sufficiency, small (and tiny) homes, craftsmanship and philosophies of life.

*Wittgenstein on Vacation – Escaping Cambridge*, consisted of a performative lecture at the National Gallery Auditorium in Oslo the 6th of January 2016 where we presented our take on Wittgenstein's philosophical investigations, and told the story of how the vacation unfolded. Hjorth personified the house of Wittgenstein, and performed its imagined dream of moving back to its original location – as a musical.

*Wittgenstein on Vacation – The Wittgenstein Monument*, was the final instalment of the project, and consists of a monumental talking sculpture erected in Skjolden, by the road leading to Wittgenstein's house. It is to date the world's largest monument to Ludwig Wittgenstein – seven times four times three meters. Constructed with 6 tons of twenty-five 200-year-old pines, it portrays a hand that ends in an open mouth — a 'hand-mouth'. The monument proclaims monologs, and periodically whistle if you push its button. *The Wittgenstein Monument* was produced by traditional artisans at Hjerleid Craft Centre in Dovre after a ceramic model by us, under the auspices of Helle Hundevadt and the woodcarver Njål Andreassen, assisted by Steinar Moldal, Karl Aksel Jermstad, David Hayden and Svein Opstad. The monologue is performed by Siri Hjorth and extracts inspiration from *On Certainty*, a collection of notes on matters related to knowledge, doubt, scepticism and certainty. Its starting point is Wittgenstein's response to a paper given by G. E. Moore called *A Proof of the External World*. In this paper, Moore tries to prove that there is a

world external to our senses by holding up his hand and saying 'here is one hand'. Wittgenstein was known as a master whistler, and the sound piece consist of whistled excerpts from two compositions; a neoclassical style Norwegian composition by Harald Sæverud called *Kjempeviseslått* or *Ballad of Revolt*, which he composed in 1943 while walking in the mountains in the proximity of 'Little Austria', as well as a composition transcribed for the left hand by Wittgenstein's famous one-armed pianist brother Paul Wittgenstein, *Bach-Brahms-Wittgenstein: Chaconne from the Partita for solo violin No. 2 in D minor*. Whistling performed by Anton Bredeveien.

*The Preliminary Model of the Wittgenstein Monument* was in concert with the unveiling exhibited at Fondazione Prada in Venice, together with a replica of Wittgenstein's house, whistling the same tunes inside the foundations baroque Palazzo Ca' Corner della Regina, at the exhibition *Machines à penser*, relating to Wittgenstein, Heidegger and Adorno's time in exile and retreat, curated by Dieter Roelstraete. The exhibition included works by; Gerhard Richter, Goshka Macuga, Anselm Kiefer, Leonor Antunes, Paolo Chiasera, Alec Finlay, Ian Hamilton Finlay, Alexander Kluge, Patrick Lakey, Mark Manders, Jeremy Millar, Sophie Nys, Mark Riley, Ewan Telford, Guy Moreton and Susan Philipsz.

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The paramount object of the Fritt Ord Foundation is to protect and promote freedom of expression and the environment for freedom of expression in Norway, particularly by encouraging lively debate and the dauntless use of the free word. The director of Fritt Ord is the Norwegian Wittgenstein enthusiast and author Knut Olav Åmås.

### OCA

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