

*In the morning still half asleep,
on the leash the dog,
as he went alone
towards the highway,
where he met no one.
Loud yet to his ears
the deaf grey and nothing
but sheet metal and concrete.*

*Before his feet
a sudden green,
and people faraway who
greet the sky,
heard silence
as never so loud.*

*Two becomes one and
one becomes everything.
Where else could one
find a park above the
autobahn so still,
where noisy cars
driving below - on and on?!*

Edouard Manet's painting „Le déjeuner sur l'herbe“ served as inspiration for the new park on the A7 tunnel in Hamburg-Schnelsen. Where once avalanches of cars pushed along in the open air, today a vegetative biodiversity thrives. Residents meet for picnics, neighbourhood children play football safely, allotment gardeners grow fruit and vegetables. A 3.0 ha green roof on the ‚Schnelsen lid‘ made Manet's picturesque illusion of breakfast in the countryside a built reality.

For this purpose, 44,500 tonnes of earth was moved within the 560 m long park, 150 trees were planted and a total of 42 small gardens were laid out on a 1.4 ha area. During the 12-year planning and construction period, the selection of perennials and shrubs was constantly adapted to the rapidly changing urban climate and from monitoring the soil conditions on the lid.

The park has reunited the formerly divided Hamburg district and set numerous impulses in the active district life shortly after its opening. The park above the formerly dividing motorway corridor has matured into a green district centre, an open space that connects people, brings them together and enhances the sense of life and values of the community.

Shortly after its completion, the park was christened with the name of Dorothea Buck, a sculptor from Schnelsen who campaigned for the destigmatisation of mentally ill people. The neighbourhood park on Frohmestrasse, which is located within the park, is also named after people who were involved in a medical context and who lived in Schnelsen. Therefore, Geschwister-Tölke-Platz is dedicated to the sisters Erika and Ilse Tölke, who supported numerous social projects and cancer research with their charitable foundation.

All this testifies to a direct and intimate bond between the citizens of Schnelsen and their new park on the A7 Autobahn.