

"Oppidum Romanum" –

A script by Alexander Korting

A Roman themed area recreating a Roman suburb at 80 A.C. located around a monomental witness of the past, the "Soul Tower" that buries its mystery deep in the catacombs nearby.

- 1) Exterior / Oppidum Romanum
- 2) The Catacombs
- 3) Soul Tower, Observation Tower and part of The Catacombs
- 4) Souvenir Shop
- 5) Roman Nights, dark ride
- 6) Restaurant "Taverna Romana", part of "Roman Nights"
- 7) Indoor Playground "Kids' Empire", part of "Roman Nights"
- 8) Amphitheater

1) Exterior

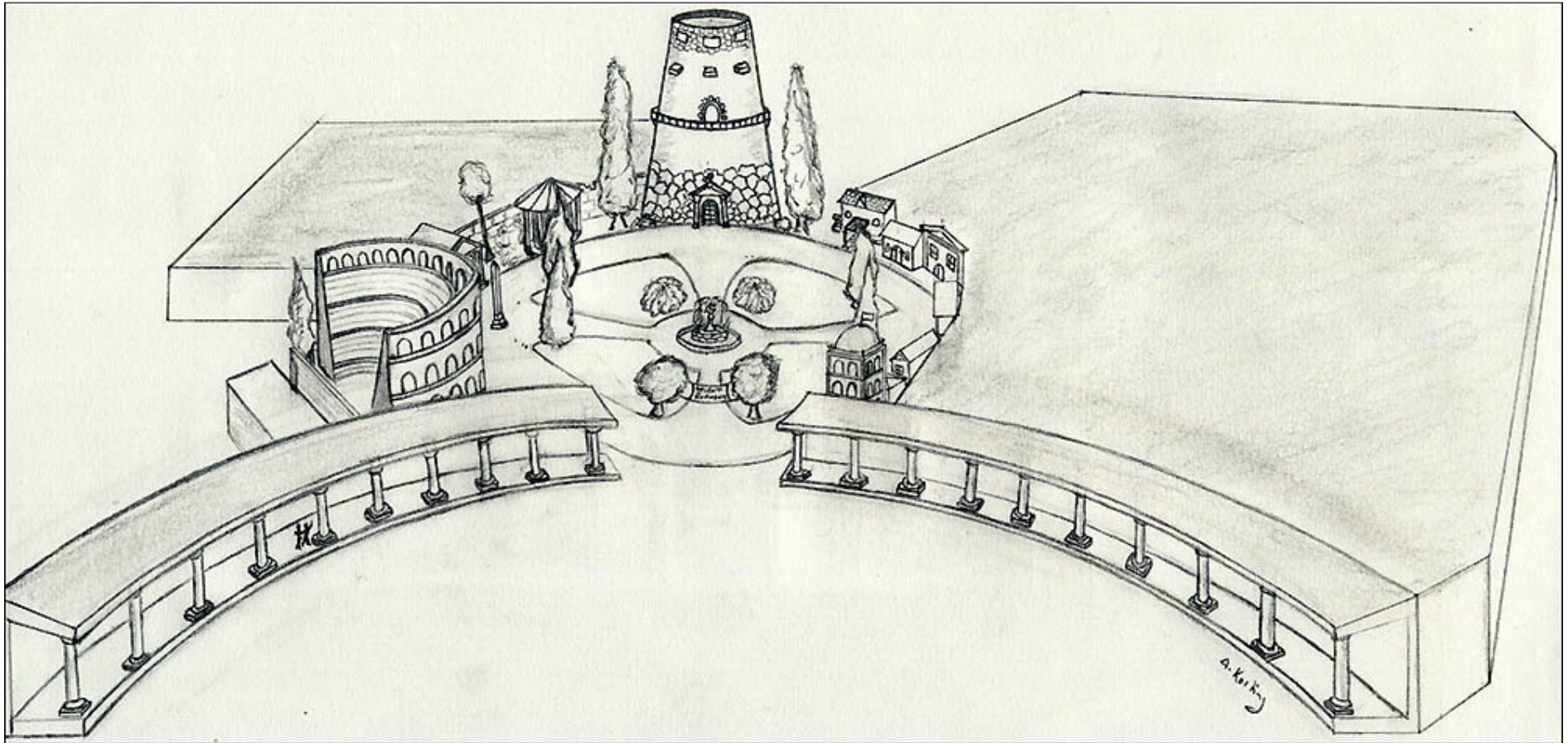
The entry plaza to "Oppidum Romanum" is a dipterian semicircle. As one paces through them, one enters the orbital gardens of the Roman suburb. In the circle's middle there is a huge antique fountain with benches around. Four concrete paths run on it from the outer path of the circle. All sorts of Mediterranean trees grace the gardens and contribute shadowed resting places.

On the opposite of the garden's right side the first line of suburban houses can be spotted. (see point 5, Roman Nights). These houses make up the front of the "Roman Nights" showbuilding.

Straight ahead stands the monumental Soul Tower (see point 4) as Oppidum Romanum's unique landmark. In front of the temple on the left side that serves as the entry to the suburb's catacomb-system stands an obelisk with four water-spitting faces on its basement.

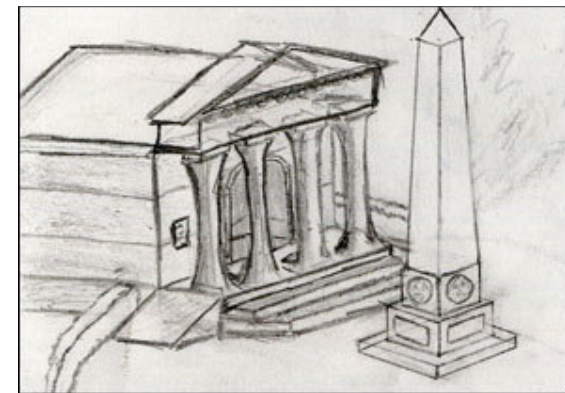
The circular-temple between the catacombs-entry and Soul Tower can be used as decoration or retail space. Behind these three objects runs an old Roman wall which is crumbling in parts but does still conceal the show building of the Catacombs / Soul Tower attraction.

As for the suburb's cultural life there is the huge Amphitheater on the entrance's left side.



2) THE CATACOMBS (Crash of the Phoenix)

On the left side of the suburban city-plaza a compact temple is located, that marks the entrance to the catacombs.



EXT - Temple

Four columns are holding the ceiling of the temple. On the front wall one sees a slate with safety restrictions for The Catacombs.

Right next to it stands a short advertisement-description about it. It says:

NEW!!

Visit Oppidum Romanum's brand new and only catacombs this very day and save 25% on tomb-discounts.

Come in and find out what our world-famous architects have in store for you.

We offer you the most comfortable alcoves you can imagine. [even though won't be able to imagine anything anymore when you really need'em!]

All sizes available!

INT – Temple hall

Inside the temple there's a hall, filling almost all of the space. On each side there is a collonade and a simple design on the walls. At the end of the hall a door leads to a stairway down into the catacombs.

(A second door might be for fast-lane and wheelchairs).

INT – Queue

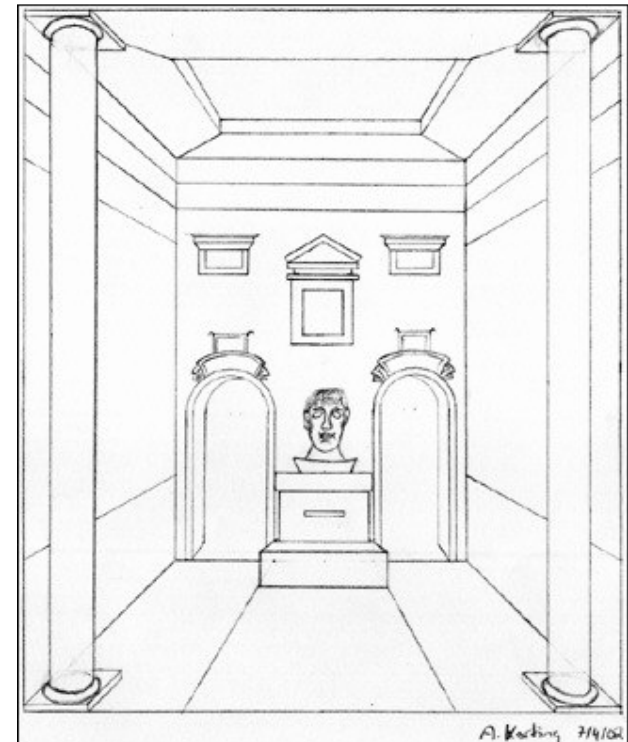
The walls turn into mould and dirt (or rockwork) the deeper one goes downstairs.

Around the next corner the catacombs begin.

On each side of the path the walls are covered with breaks (alcoves), always three in tieres. The path winds through the maze of graves.

INT - Crypt

When the big stone is rolled away by a Roman catacombs guard 120 guests enter the crypt. The ceiling is much heihier than before and orbicular. The sides are



covered with two huge columns on each side and mural paintings. A sign on the wall says:

Do not touch.

Do not smudge this all over with your stupid "Veni, vidi, vici". (I came, I saw, I conquered!)

And by the way: Fresh Painted!

Only a few breaks are in these walls. They are bigger than the ones we saw before and all of them are painted golden. Above each a script tells us who the grave is reserved for.

In the back a richly ornated altar stands in front of the wall.

Our tour guide enters from the right and walks behind the altar. He wears a white toga and leather sandals.

Tour Guide

Salve, ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls and slaves, dear mortals.

Thank you very much for your interest in Oppidum Romanum's newest, most innovative and ... only catacombs.

My name is _____us and I am your tour guide.

We're currently standing inside the crypt, which was constructed, ...like everything else around here, by our world-famous independent architect *Baneus Delirius*.

You say you have heard that name somewhere? You might be right!

Mr. Delirius is responsible for pleasuring our fellow Romans with landmarks like "the great wall of Rome", "the leaning tower of Rome" and "The Colossus of Rome".

The spotlight marks three mural paintings that show the aforesaid.

Tour Guide

Along with these awesome catacombs, constructed in the name of "Commerciale Demiseus", Mr. Delirius did also guide construction on Soul Tower that is, as you might know, just around the corner, here at Oppidum Romanum.

Rumors say that this Soul Tower is also a part of this catacomb-system and that Delirius sees it as a way to get up to the gods or whatever.

Well, as long as he keeps up enlarging our badly needed capacity down here, and thus our income, hehe, he may see it as whatever he wants to. And just for the case that we actually

cross Mr. Delirius' way down here: Stay close behind me and please do neither greet nor feed him. Thanks.

Back to business, some parts of the catacombs are still under construction so take care in those areas. Reservations can be made at the end of our tour though.

Dear Guests, come and join me exploring the 40 miles alley-system of Oppidum Romanum's Catacombs!

Guest exit through a side door, masked as a sarcophagus and pass through another dark, narrowed and oppressive grave-alley.

INT – Lucenarium

Guests enter the round well chamber and line up in a semicircle around a barrier to see what the guide is presenting now.

The ceiling is broken by a circular hole which goes up to the surface. Artificial daylight falls on the ground through that hole.

Tour Guide

This is our well chamber, on the shelf. You wonder why it is no longer in operation and what it is for anyway? That's easy: Our workers who we call "fossores" need to get the excavation that is produced by building new and more alleys and graves, out of here. So they transport all the dirt that piles up here in these baskets...

Guide is holding up the basket that lies on the ground. A rope that goes up through the hole is kinked to it.



Tour Guide

... up to the surface in this fascinating new pulley block system.

Work on this level is already finished, that's why this one is no longer in use. But there is still construction going on one level below us.

Do you folks want a show of how this system works in reality?

Guest will agree.

Tour Guide

Then have a look!

The guide puts some stones into the basket and then pulls on the rope and the basket moves up to the hole. Ironically dramatic music appears.

Tour Guide (*still pulling*)

This system is for rent if anyone is interested in particular.

(*taking his hands away and pointing towards the basket on the ceiling*)

Isn't that lovely?

As soon as the guide sets on the rope the basket crashes down on the ground and bursts open a huge hole in the floor. The guide jumps away. The basket crashes down on the level below. Through the new hole the sound of the basket striking on a worker can be heard.

Worker's voice (screaming)

Ahhhh! Ouch, dammit! Who the hell did that? If I get you son of a wolf...

Tour Guide (*towards the guests*)

Errm, you don't know anything about this incident, got that?

The sky turns dark and a thunderstorm comes up. It thunders and begins to rain. A heavy fountain of water come in through the well and refreshes the guests. The water runs down on the level below.

Woker's voice (*desperate*)

Are you bastards trying to submerge us down here?

Tour Guide (*pointing towards the next door*)

Ladies and Gentlemen, we'd better rush into the next chamber now.

And look out for the real cheap graves in the next alley, accustomed quality for less money.

(*looking at the rain coming through*)

These are our good-weather bargains. (*stiff/strained smile*)

INT – Chamber of Decision

This chamber is right in the middle of an alley and doesn't look any different. Two ways lead away from the chamber.

In the middle of the room the statue of The Phoenix stands on a 4-foot-tall patten.

Guests group around it.

Tour Guide (*standing next to the statue*)

Let me show you an example of our fascinating interior design.

This statue was shipped here just a few days ago directly from Greek, where the legend of this mythical bird has its origin.

The phoenix, how people called him, burned itself every 500 years on a pyre and then rose alive from its ashes to live another 500 years. People now see it as a symbol of immortality and resurrection.

(*looking at the two alleys leading away from the chamber*)

Above the left alley hangs a sign saying *Bureau*.

Tour Guide



Now this is interesting. I never saw that sign before! And it's actually pretty new to me that we have any bureaus down here. Refunds aren't request in gernal anyway.

Out of the left alley sounds Baneus Delirius' voice.

Delirius' voice

Did I hear any voices? I must have? Somebody out there?

Tour Guide

No!

(noticing what he has said, he wishpers)

Nah, damn!

Delirius' voice

Any guests out there? If so feel free to visit me in my ... bureau. You're gonna like what I have in store for you.

Tour Guide

Well, if it doesn't take too long and nobody mind, we could really...

The *Buerau* sign severs from the wall on one side and the previous sign comes to the fore. It is a *Soul Tower* sign with the Phoenix symbol next to it.

Tour Guide *(surprised and scared)*

Holy shit! I don't know what trip that guy is on, but we'd better get out of here now. I dissuade you urgently from going into that tower. Or at least not before we contracted a nice grave down here for you. Talking of contracts, how about having the transaction done now on the surface. We can have a good cup of wine too – Needless to say on your bill.

Delirius' voice

Come on get over here all together. No need to be afraid – my bark is worse than my bite. Last chance, ladies and gentlemen!

Tour Guide (*about to leave*)

Well, I can only warn you, but it is your choice now.

Everyone who does not want to get into that tower goes with me now.

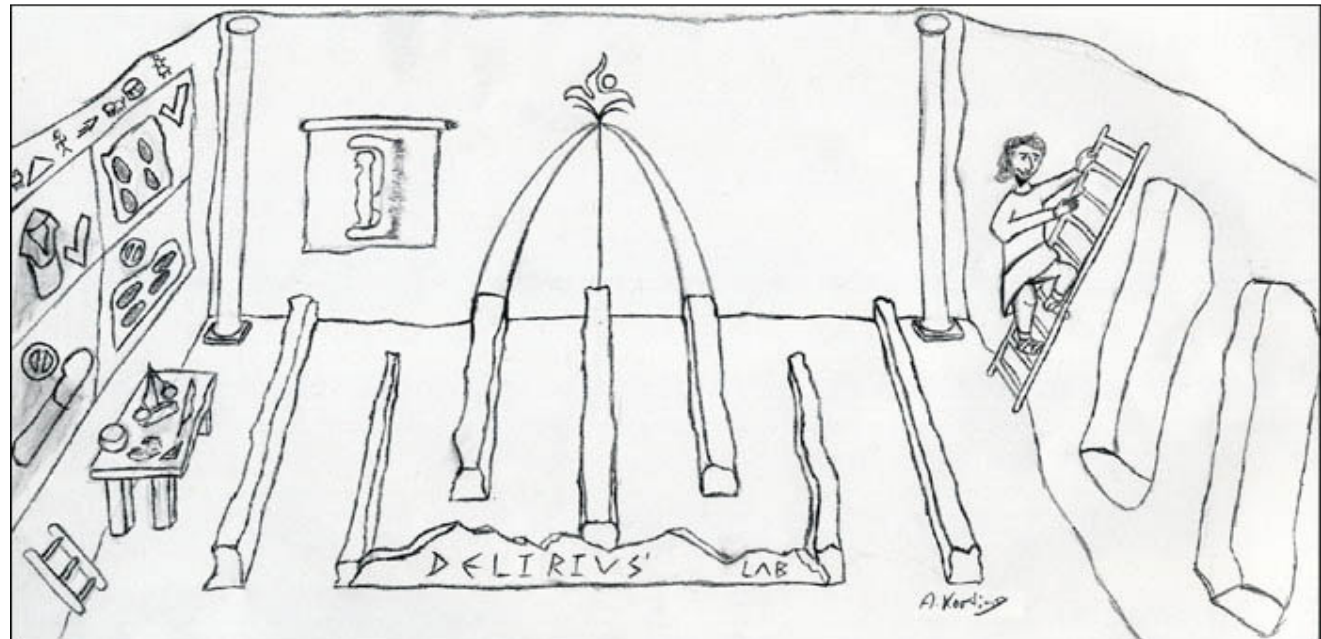
To everyone else: Best of luck!

The tour guide and guests who do not want to get into the tower leave through the right alley and get back to the surface through the tour guide's office.
The remaining guests walk through the left alley.

INT – Delirius' Lab

Guests enter the architects' lab. This is a medium-size room, with columns in each corner and lots of scrolls and measuring-sticks on a table standing on one side. On a ladder that leans on a wall stands Delirius in his grating red toga. His grey beard is about one foot long, kinked at its end. His face is thin and he is looking insane. He is carving another Phoenix symbol into the wall next to a lever.

Above his head on the right side is a complex and confusing construction of all sort of wheels and ropes that are running from the lever that is in the middle of the wall, within to Delirius' reach, to the big stone wall with a Phoenix painted on it. Guests have grouped into 30-person groups in front of this wall. The complex system of wheels and ropes guarantees an impressive opening mechanism of the stone wall later on.



On the left wall several simple paintings describe the development from vertical standing Egypt sarcophagi to brand new vertical Roman graves.
The history of the usual horizontal graves below is crossed out.
He then turns around and begins to talk to the guests.

Delirius [Animatronic]

Salve!

Thanks for joining me down here in my lab.

Well, first of all let me apologize for those misunderstandings up there.

Please feel homy the best you can, I know this lab is a mess, but I'm pretty busy in developing a brand new kind of grave. I bet it's gonna be a bestseller!

If you will take a look to the left, it'll be a pleasure for me to present it to you.

When asked about what graves have to look like, people always say "horizontal". I tell you:
They don't know any better.

Fact is, though, that the ancient Egypt already invented a more comfortable position – vertical ones; in those days on term of sarcophagi.

Unfortunately people forgot about them and lead up to what you know as usual loculi. Take a look to the wall on the left where the real history of graves is documented.

So one can say that all I have to do is to reinvent the good ol' vertical graves.

Believe me - you will love them!

A scroll that covers the central wall on the left side of the Phoenix-door unfolds and shows a diagram of a person standing inside a vertical grave. Coloured arrows display the stress done to singular body parts.

Delirius [Animatronic]

The special design that of these new graves that you can see on this study helps us to guarantee you the most comfortable graves you have ever experienced. A special security system, that we call "shoulder harness" will make sure to keep you position.

Comfort is so important because customers usually stay in there for quite a long time and, as you might now, they transfer dead people into the beyond, safe & secure, that's what I'm still working on.

And that is where you get involved. You're not only the very first ones to learn about my work – you are also invited to help me doing the first public tests.

I need your judgement about it.

Due to the size of your group we will have to do several tests with each 30 persons.

Delirius pulls the lever on his left and the complex mechanism of ropes and gearwheels is put into motion. The big door on the central wall slowly opens.

Delirius [Animatronic]

Come in and feel the eternal comfort!

The first group of 30 guests enters.

The doors close again.

Delirius [Animatronic]

While you're waiting you might want to see my most recent discovery. I have these little stones and those strapped into the right machine create a wonderful spectrum of light. Turn the candles off please!

The light is dimmed off and a simple lasershow is projected on the right of the Phoenix-door on the central wall. A distant soundtrack is played. The lasers show the soul tower and the Phoenix ascending inside it. It burst out of it and into the sky.

After the next 30 people are let into the grave testing area, the lasershow continues.

It now shows comical scenes from Delirius' construction of Soul Tower.

The last group waiting in Delirius' Lab also experiences the last part of the lasershow, that is a wild projection filling out the whole room.

INT – Grave Testing Area / Soul Tower

As guests enter this room in groups of 30 they see the vertical graves lined up in a circle in a stone wall in the middle of the room. A narrow path bypasses this ring of 30 vertical graves. Small candles glow between each of them. Everything that is above them is consumed by the darkness. One cannot see a ceiling but nothing else either.

Three cast members help the guests to get into position in the graves. They are standing in them and are secured by what seems to be a saddle and a shoulder-harness.

Suddenly the room is fulfilled by the voice of Delirius.

Delirius [voice]

Dear guests, thanks for taking part in this public test of these new graves.

As a matter of fact I think you should know that this test is not about comfort at all. It's about eternity.

I've been working on these special graves for such a long time, now they are completed. Did you really believe that I take up such an effort for the comfort of simple graves? Did the whole thing not sound *a little* ridiculous to you?

Did you really believe that I create a construction like Soul Tower out of pure boredom and the longing for just another monument?

Open your eyes, you benighted! You are already inside Soul Tower – you are a part of Soul Tower!



A sudden lightning goes up the tower to reveal its dimension.

Delirius [voice]

Yet do not be aghast at this congnizance.

Feel honored to be part of an event which will go down in history.

Where the Tower of Babel failed, is where I begin, as this tower is not a monument, it is a machine!

The ground around the graves is no longer dark but reveals a complex consturction of cogwheels in all forms and sizes, that slowly begin to warm up.

Delirius [voice]

In the way of the Phoenix, who rises to a new life after his death, this machine will get the dead right up this tower and into the beyond where they will be resurrected. Once alive again we will get them back down here, safe and secure.

And this aid of immortality will be my goldmine!

But just for the sake of it, dear guests, in one way I was honest to you.

You are really doing the first public test, just in a way you didn't expect it.

Now rise out of your living ash and ascend up Soul Tower.

[dramatic voice:] Slaves, set the machine going!

Along with a dramatic soundtrack in the background the cogwheels under the floor rotate faster and the graves are slowly ascending up the tower. As soon as this happens the visitors feel a squall in their face that extinguishes the candels beside the graves.

Once put into motion the soundtrack changes to a child's singing that gets more intensive the higher the graves go.

The top of the tower is filled with fog and one cannot see the ground anymore. The ascent is interrupted abruptly.

From far below the visitors can hear a voice calling.

Voice

Doc Delirius, something happened. They are not ascending anymore.

The music in the background gets more intensive again and suddenly beams of colorful light break through the fog and seem to “scan” each visitor from head downwards. When the lasers pass the visitors’ breast they abruptly stop and the sound of a beat fulfills the tower. The beat of a beating heart.

Delirius [voice from below]

Oh my god it seems not to work, because they are alive. God beware!

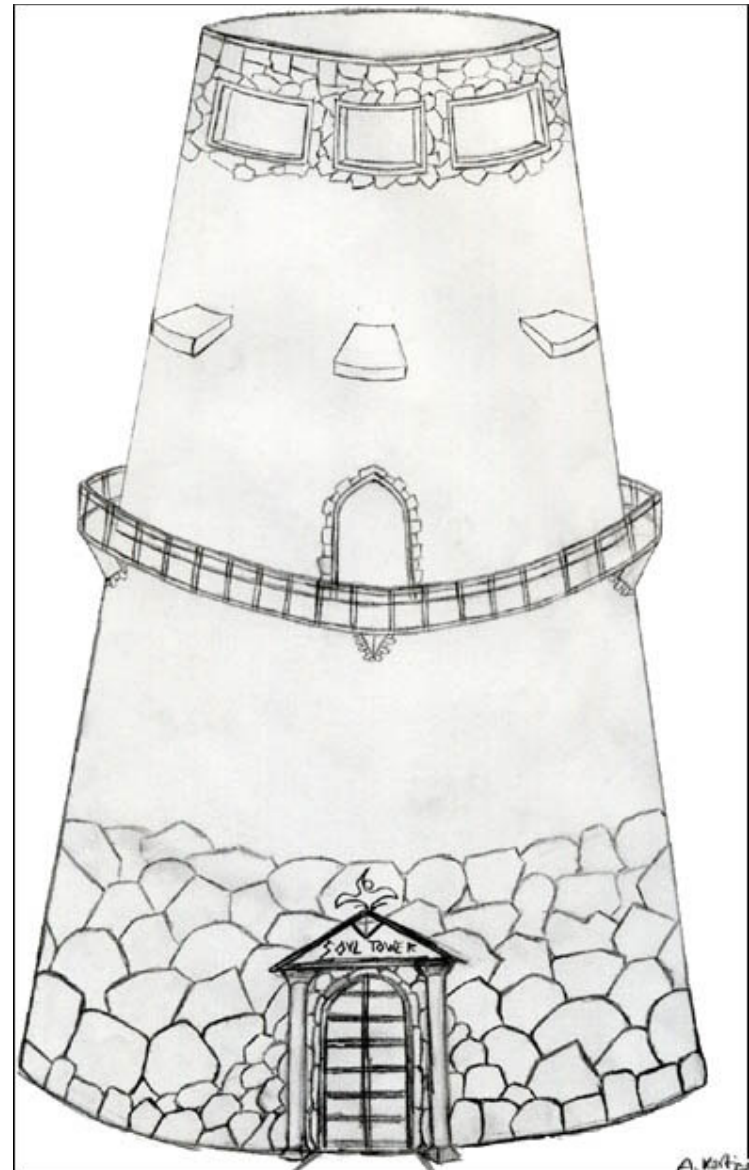
The beat gets faster and faster, the soundtrack sets in again and at the most intense point the light goes off and the graves are dropped back to the ground with a loud rumble. Once their fall has stopped the roar gets louder and when some small candles are lit by Delirius’ slaves they see that the inner side of the tower seems to have collapsed.

Once the visitors are “rescued” out of their graves by the ride ops, they exit through the only non-rubbished door and walk up a ramp that winds around the inner side of the tower. In some parts the rocks seem to crash down.

When the guests are on the level of Oppidum Romanum again, they exit through a door in Soul Tower and are back on Oppidum Romanum’s suburban streets.

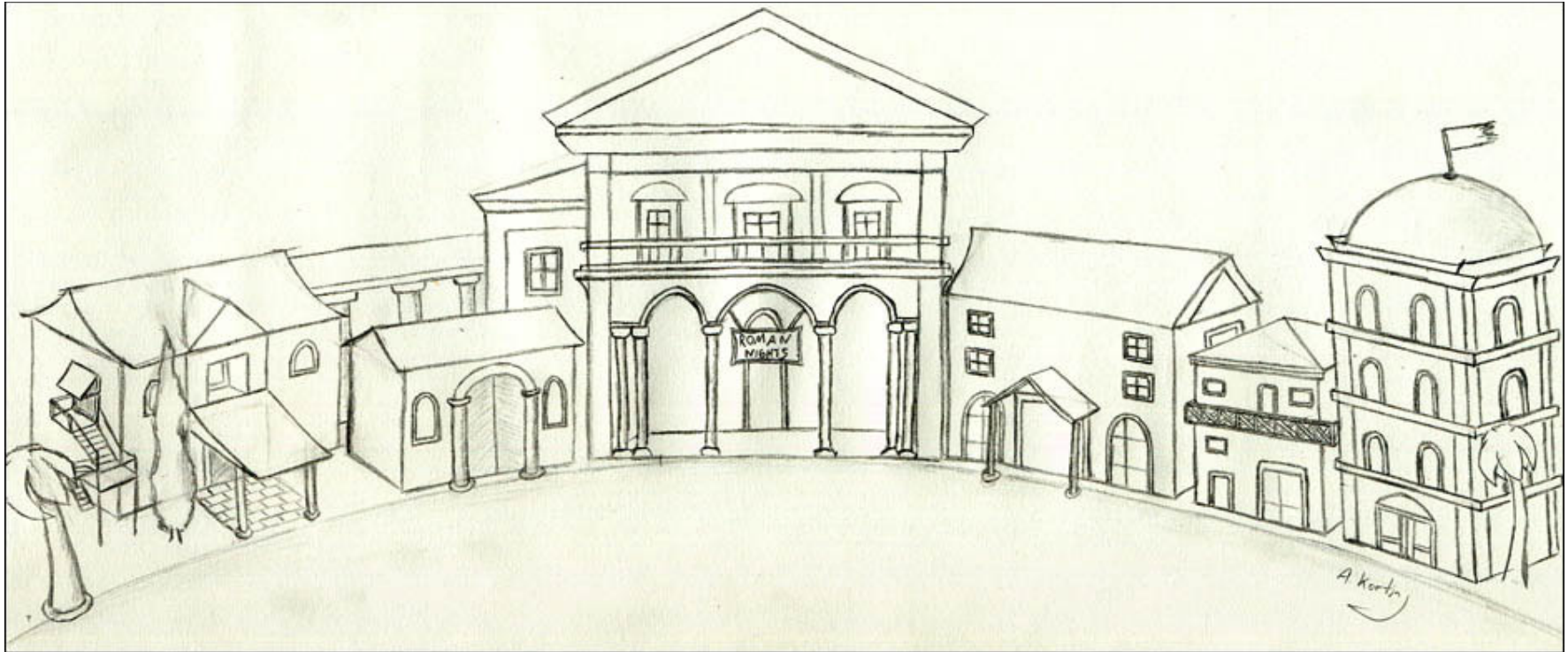
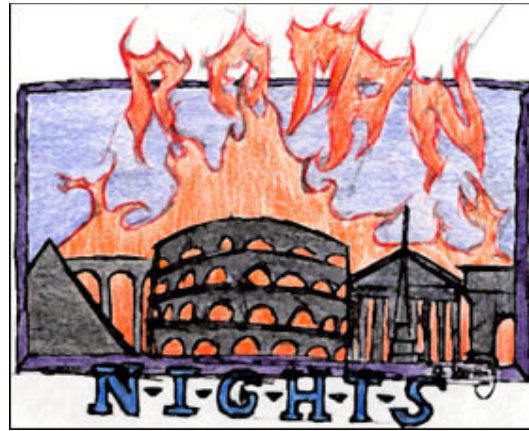
3) Soul Tower

The door on Soul Tower’s front side leads to a ramp which descends to The Catacomb’s exit area and ascends to two different “Soul Tower Observation Ramps” which give the guests a breathtaking view over Oppidum Romanum and beyond.



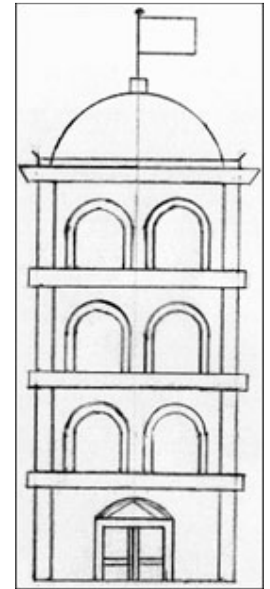
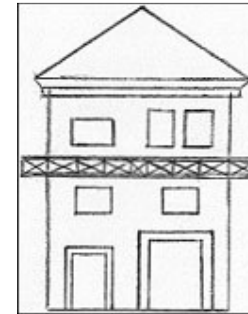
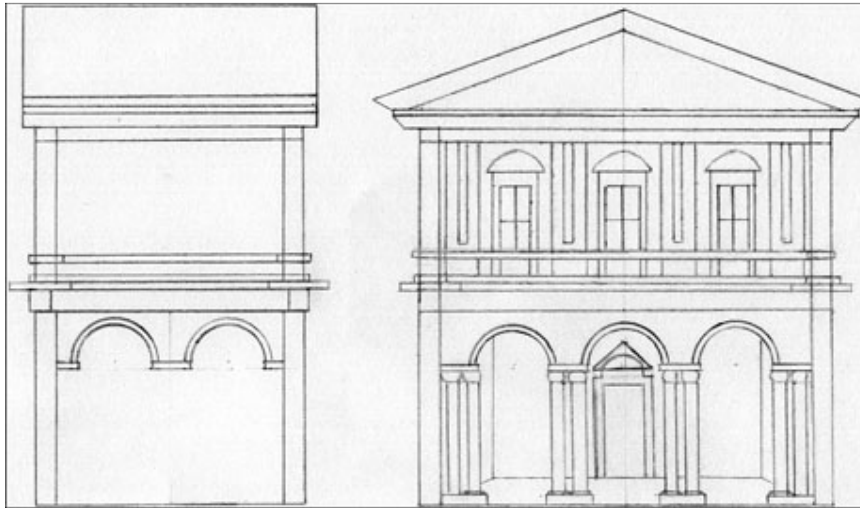
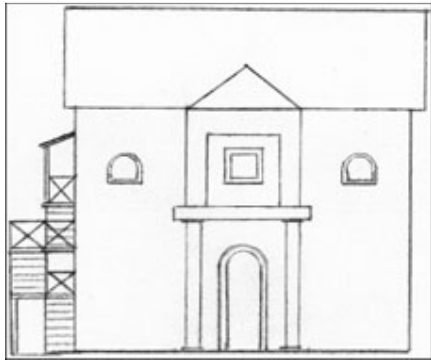
4) Circular Temple - Retail

5) ROMAN NIGHTS



In the suburban street, guests walk along a row of Roman houses, all of them are as different as they could be. The most pompous house with three decal sheets as entrance is in the middle of the street.

It's the house of Lucius Alliancus, as one can see from what is carved in the wall next to the door. Dangling from the rooftop a multicolor-sign saying "Roman Nights".



INT – Lucius Alliancus' house

As the guests enter the house to visit their friend Lucius who asked them to come urgently, they find it to be oddly empty. Everything seems to be left on a run. The fireplace is still glooming, there are even some destroyed scrolls in front of it waiting to be consumed by the fire. In the kitchen-part of the house dinner is left on the table, some bread as well and the candels are continuously burning down.

The walls are covered with family-portraits, just on one wall there is a map of Rome with lots of red line and arrows standing for the way a possible fire would go.

On the floor of the kitchen we discover a broken slate with a Latin text on it. The word one can make out because it is underlined is 'NERO'.

On a stool next to a window a parrot sits in his cage and croaks.

Parrot

Ahrk, Invaders!! – You can take me but there will be people to stop you.—

Nero – Neeero. – Nero is a do-ho-rk.

Created by the moonlight outside the house the guests can see the shadows of two soldiers walking onby.

Parrot

Nero is a dork!

Soldier #1

Who said that?

Soldier #2 (*sounding naïve*)

Ehm, certainly not me sir! I believe it came out of that house there, sir.



The shadows point towards Lucius' house.

Soldier #1

Nah, that's impossible, Lucius Alliancus was arrested on order of the emporer earlier today. They say he knew about *it*.

Soldier #2

Err, knew about what, sir?

Soldier #1's shadow disappears from the window.

Parrot

Fire! ... Fire!

Soldier #2

OK sir, fire, sir. --- Ahhhhm, what sort of fire, sir?

Soldier #1 rushing back 'on scene' again.

Soldier #1

Who said fire? Nobody said anything whatsoever about fire, you get that?

Soldier #2

But you...

Soldier #1

No fire! You'd better shut up!

Parrot

Nero is a dork!

Soldier #1

Yeah right, I'll tell him later, you might get a bonus for that

Soldier #2

Uh thanks, you think so...?

Soldiers disappear and window lighting fades out.

The parrot mumbles some more about fire.

The door opens and we can step out of the house on the streets. It has become dark outside.

EXT – Suburban Alley



Under the dark sky the guests walk on the streets of a suburban alley. The houses are illuminated by some old street lamps. On a small square the queue goes around a bright blue illuminated Roman fountain which is oranted with another Phoenix-symbol. Smoke raises out of some funnels and the whole scenery appears to be quite peaceful.

From time to time a window opens and out leans an old and shaggy man who speaks to the guests who pass along. His monologues differ each time.

Man in the window [Animatronic]

Listen strangers, your friend Lucius from next door *[he points to the house that the guests have just come out from]* has left this place in a hurry and went to Rome. He said he has urgent matters to settle. It's about the emporer he said.

* * *

Something odd is going on here, I could bet something's gonna happen this very day.

* * *

I feel that something is in the wind. Maybe your friend Lucius was right and the danger is impendent.

* * *

Boy, is this crowded today. Why did your friend Lucius invite you all and then leave in such a hurry to Rome?

* * *

Yeah right, Rome lies straight ahead. And now will you be silent please? I'm sorry you have to wait, but security controls at the city gate got a lot stronger when rumors about possible firebugs were spreath some days ago.

They don't let everybody in anymore, you know?



A signpost at a crossing shows the obvious directions to Rome. Obvious because a “limes”, that is a Roman wall, cuts off the suburban harmony and thus shows the borders of Rome. Two watchtowers surround the heavy wooden gate which seems to be the only way to get inside Rome.

The Roman soldier on the wall above the gate greets the guests as “alien” and lets in groups of 100 guests.

EXT – Marketplace



The following place is marked by a obelisk in its middle and the surrounding unobstrusive house-facades. Two narrow, dark alleys fork from the place.

After entering the forsaken marketplace the guests see what appears to be Downtown Rome with its landmarks like the Colosseum, temples and arcs.

This is actually a model which appears to be the city at some distance.

Out of a sudden this model blows up and the heat is blown into the guest's faces. Rome is burning. While the artifical fire is still burning and smoke ascends, a soldier comes out of each dark alley and draws his sword.

Soldier #1

Surrender, strangers!

Soldier #2

Enemies of the Roman people, we seize you in behalf of the Emporer!

Guest [taped voice]

We are peaceful visitors and didn't do anything!

Soldier #1

Incendiaries, that is what you are and that is the word of Great Nero.

You will be brought into prison and then left to the heat of the people whose property you just inflamed.

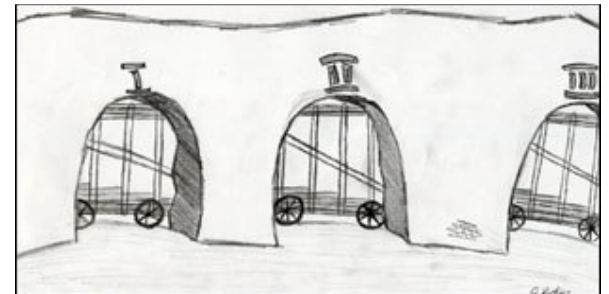
We know how to deal with strangers like you...

Soldier #2

Follow me to the transports.

EXT - Loading station

With one soldier leading the way through the alley behind the gate on the opposite side of the burning model and one guarding from behind, the guests are brought to a bridge with five carriages behind it. One can only see the prisoner cages behind the



horses that are hidden by the bridge's pillars. The presence of the horses is undoubted, due to the snort, tramp and other noises they produce.

On their way to the bridge the captured guests can see another carriage with a cage behind it and a horse [Animatronic] in the front. A line up of prisoners [Animatronics] is waiting to be loaded into the cage. The whip [Animatronic] on the horse reminds the soldiers to hurry because the fire is rapidly approaching.

The guests are now understanding what awaits them and can imagine the horse pulling their carriage later on.

At the loading station the guest are divided into groups of 20 and loaded into their cage.

The Vehicles

Each cage is driven by its electronic motor in front of it, at the place of the imaginary horse. Between the horse/motor and the cage there is a wooden baffle, the other sides of the cage are more or less open except to some stanchions that should keep the prisoners from escaping, but do not block their view.

The cage's roof is opaque too, due to some installations on it.

To get them the best view the guests are seated backwards in rows of five, "enchained" by lapbars.

A speaker on the baffle plays the synchronized sounds of the horses and the dialogs of the whips, as well as the soundtrack which underlines the dramatic of certain scenes.

Note: Throughout the whole ride guests experience the smell and the heat of the fire, mostly in a very faint way, but in some parts more intensive.

When the cages are loaded and "locked", one by one they are carried away.

Soldier #1

Whips, bring those bastards to the prison. May they burn up there.

EXT - Transition

The vehicles drive off, the whips spur on the horses. The scenery is dark, here and there are the outlines of a tree are identifiable.

Whip #1

Hell of a fire, huh?

Whip #2

You say it, I'm just glad my family is out the city today.

I heard some say they have it under control though.

Whip #1

I hope you're right, Marcus. Let's just bring the scum back there where they belong.

The vehicle is brought to a halt.

Whip #2

They closed down the road, ... "due to maintenance works, sincerely, The Emperor's Highway Board Department".

Whip #1

Oh, I didn't know things like that exist. When was it introduced? And what is a highway anyway?

Whip #2

Maybe Nero brought this up with all his crazy plans and changes last term, you know they discussed it a lot.

We could take a ride through the Circus then, it's a shortcut anyway.

Whip #1

Gee!

The vehicle turns right and after some moment enters Circus Maximus through Arc Maxime, the three-arched port on the Circus' long side entrance.

EXT – Circus Maximus

The Circus has the figure of an oval and an “island” in the middle of the arena. On this island are various things like a obelisk.

Whip #1

What an honor it is to drive on these hoary grounds. The circumstances aren't the most gratifying ones though. Hey doesn't this smell odd here?

A small dose of oil-smell is blown into the cage. The carriage passes the island on its left side. When it passed the beginning of the island two kneeling figures on the further left side are rousen. One lits a torch and lets it drop. He shouts “*For Nero*” and both run into the darkness of the arena. The torch obviously falls on a lane of oil and enlightens a fire that follows the the speeding off carriage and does also set the island on fire.

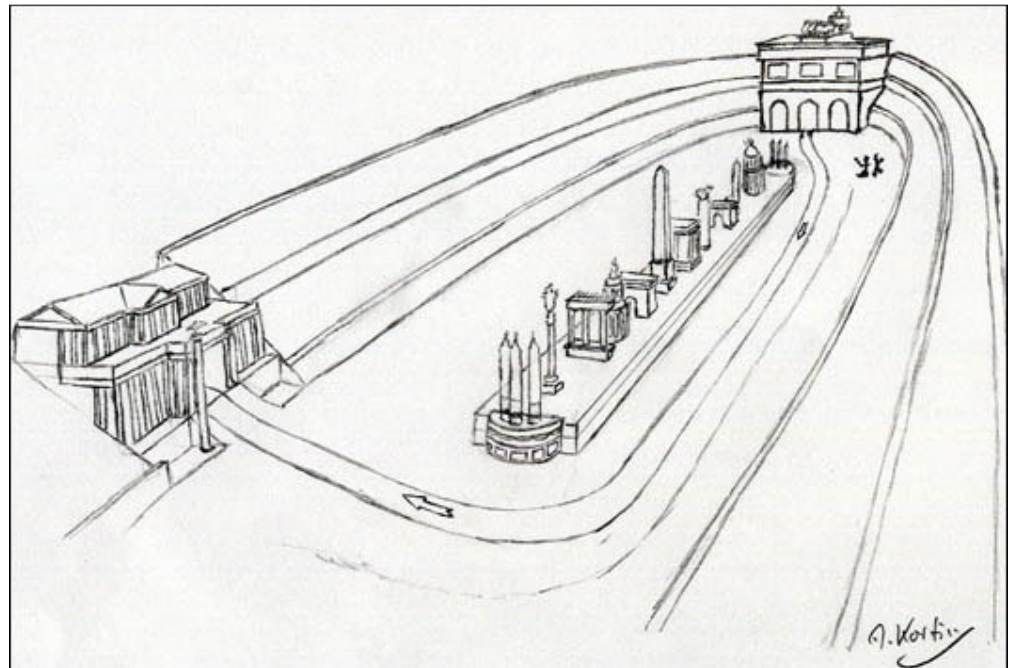
Whip #2

What the hell is going on here? Fast, get to the right, the fire is spreading!
Get out here through the temple.

Whip #1

Up the stairs? – Are you kidding?

The vehicle makes a sharp turn to the right and escapes the fire by ascending a small flight of stairs and driving into a temple that is part of the arena. The stairs are a plain ramp actually and the cage is bumbed up and down by a hydraulic system.



INT – Circus Maximus Temple

Inside the well-decorated temple the carriage bends 180° to the left...

Whip #2

I know a way out of here. Hold on! And keep your arms and legs inside your cage at all the time.

Whip #1

What are you talking about?

Whip #2

I don't know honestly ... I just hope the cellar is still passable.

...and rushes through an unobtrusive door into the cellar.

INT – Circus Maximus Temple's Cellar

After rushing down another staircase the guests are transported through the cold temple's vault. Some fog is on the ground and spiderwebs adorn the old masonry.

Whip #1

Ha-haaa-haaatschi!

Awakened by the whip's sneeze, a dozens pairs of red eyes open and in the light of a torch the startled bats follow the carriage and approach it in seconds. The torch extinguishes by the sudden movements and the guests only hear how the bats are racing into their cage and by the sharp wind blown into their faces and hair they feel and imagine the bats passing their heads. The vehicle turns right at the end of the vault and exit through an overgrown open gate into the temple's gardens.



EXT – The gardens

Behind the rambling vegetation the dark sky is plunged into a deep red and smoke ascends from somewhere behind these gardens.

Whip #1

Watch out! The gate is closed.

Whip #2

We have no time! If we don't pass the alleys fast enough they might be a trap. Crouch!

The guests hear a gate break, the horses snicker and feel the rumble as they roll over the broken gate.



EXT – The alleys



The alleys are the ghettos of Rome. The houses are wasting and their owners –or occupants– mostly stay inside. Most buildings have two stories.

The fires have already reached this part of the town, but there seems no other way than getting through them. Behind most windows and doors the flames are bursting.

While entering, the guests can see a frightened Roman who tries to escape from his burning house. He ropes down from the second floor with a rope of several sheets tied together. Unfortunately the upper sheets catch fire, break off and the person drops into the wastebucket on the pavement.

Whip #1

Poor fellas, look what you've done to them!

You'll be rotting in your cells forever. Or you'll be lion-snacks.

On the opposite side an older man pulls a piece of luggage behind him –all his belongings– and even this catches fire.

The shutters on another house are knocked at without much success for the one inside.

The carriage passes a line that is spread above the two sides of the streets. The clothing on it is burning.

Whip #2

See the line? Their stuff should be pretty dry now, haha.

Nobody laughs.

Whip #2

Haha-h-em. I was saying they are a little on the warm side. Hehehe.

Still nobody laughs.

Whip #1

Dude, that isn't funny!

Whip #2

Yea sorry, I got a pretty *dry* sense of humor. [*He tries to restrain his laughter but cannot*]

As they pass the arc of a courtyard's gateway they hear a woman's voice screaming.

Woman's voice

Good Zeus, no, not our wine!

The wine on the courtyard seems to explode and a fireball comes out of the gateway, shortly after the guests have passed it.

A few feet further a lumpy fellow plunders a fruit and vegetables-booth that was left behind. He puts all kind of stuff in his pockets and when he tries to walk away all the stolen things slide down into the legs of his trousers and he cannot move any further. On the opposite side of the road some chicken are on fire and cackle around scared.

Whip #2

Two grilled chicken please! [*laughs again*]

Whip #1

To take along please – we are in a hurry! [*joins his laughter*]

On another two-story building three man hang on the balcony on the second floor.

Hanging Person

Hold on friends, someone will come and save us.

With a loud crack the balcony breaks apart in its middle and the two pieces sway to the side of the house.

When the carriage has passed another crossing into a dark alley a burning dog shoots out of the darkness and chases the cage for a bit...

Whip #2

Still hungry?

Whip #1

Yep. I think I take the hot-dog. *[both fall into laughter again]*

...until he runs into the next dark alley again. *[and there completes its circle to wait for the next carriage to chase].*

On the next corner a big tree is burning. A man on a self-made ladder reaches up into the tree and gets his cat out of the flames in one piece.

Right after dropping the cat on the ground a big carbonized branch breaks off the tree, falls on the ground and smashes the cat. *[The bottom side of the branch is concaved and the branch does not really smash the cat, it just mantles it].*

Before leaving the alleys a dark figure with a torch comes out of another corner and lits the cage. The cage's backside starts burning pretty quickly but a fellow citizen standing at his window throws the contents of his water-bucket on the cage a few houses later and extinguishes the fire. The water does of course not only hit the cage... After his erasure the man at the window puts his thumb up to the guests and assumes a big white grin.

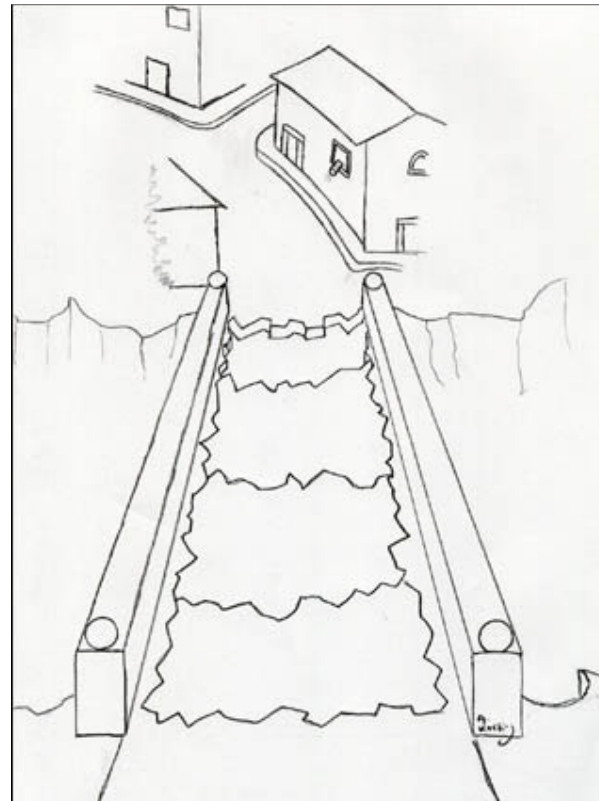
EXT – Bridge

The carriage exits the alleys and passes a bridge.

Whip #1

OK, just over the bridge and we are downtown.

The railing of the bridge is burning and when entering the bridge the guests hear a load crack, followed by the breaking off of the first piece of the bridge that they have just passed. They hear the piece spalsh into the water below.



The other pieces of the bridge brake off too, always right after passing them. Afterwards the bridge is no longer existent.

[Along with clever lighting the pieces are lowered to a degree that they cannot be seen anymore, the vehicle's transportation rails are not altered though, but they are no longer illuminated].

EXT – Rome Downtown

Right after the bridge they pass through an arc which breaks into itself while passing it. The link of the top smashes against the cage and shakes it.

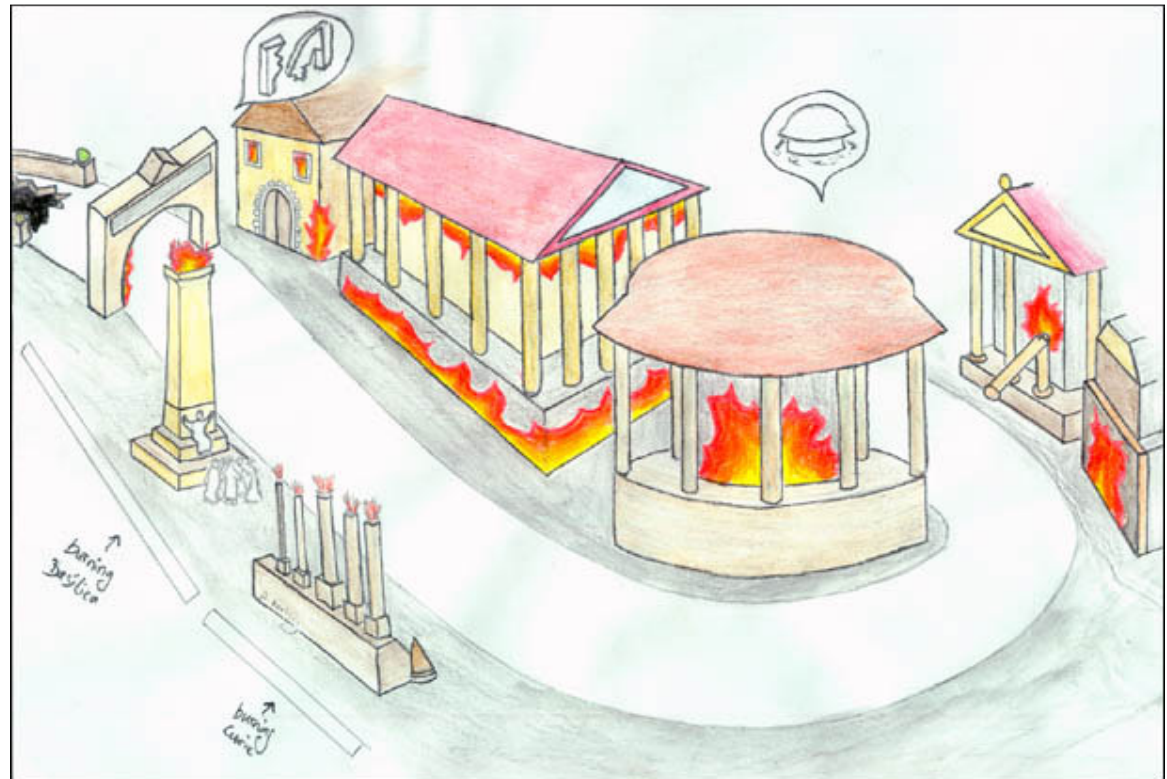
The vehicle goes on driving through what used to be Rome. Lots of temples and columns facades are in the background and some more and some less popular landmarks are in the front. They pass the burning temple of Vador and Pollux and the burning Basilica Emilia façade. In front of it stands the Foca-column and a man in a white toga sits on its steps, surrounded by other men. It's the senate.

Sitting man

If we blame it on the Christians, like Nero advised us to, we can get rid of them at the moment. Let's vote about it.

The carriage drives on and the prisoners see all men standing around the column lifting their right hand for a vote.

On the right side the Rostra-columns stand. These are four columns in a row.



These bowl down each other one by one.

The vehicle now makes a 180° turn to the left and thus drives around the Vesta-temple which lies in this curve. It's a round temple with a big basement and a circle of columns on it, carrying the roof. The room between the columns is burning and suddenly the columns seem to brake and the roof smashes down on the basement with a big bang.

[In reality the columns and the room between them are only layered into the empty basement].

Whip #2

Gosh, it's all going to hell. What can we do?

The carriage approaches the aqueduct as from a temple nearby a column seems to collapse and drops onto the whips.

Whip #1 [screams]

By Zeus, the column comes down!!

Both whips scream and are killed by the column. The guests hear the fall of the horses, which snicker load, and the carriage rolls over the bodies as the guest feel and see.

The scared horses speed up. The guests see a sign for the prison that points in a different direction than the horses chose. These cross below the aqueduct from where a bunch of people bleed some water which they pass on to extinguish the fire on another temple. It is a row of seven persons. The first one fills the buckets with water, the second and the thrid pass them on. Man #4 takes a piss to fill one bucket, whereas person #5 takes a pull at a bucket. Person #6 curses at the previous two because they do not pass on the buckets and person #7 empties the buckets in the fire.

The street is now lined with torchs and the horses pass the the Constantin-Arc and the red illuminated Meta-Sudan-Fountain. Then they race right into the next big building.



INT – Colosseum

The carriage is pulled through a way of darkness before it enters the arena of the Colosseum. Parts of it are burning in front of them, on his tribune stands the emperor, madness in his eyes. He watches the deadly spectacle. The guests see him as the horse turns the cage around. Before they have made their way to the middle of the arena and passed the lions-paddock with frightened animals.

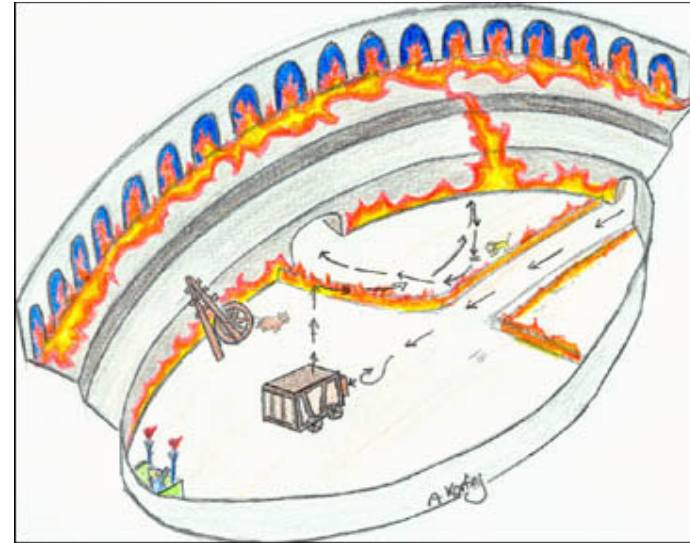
Nero turns away from the fire and speaks to the guests.

Nero

There they are. Too bad your two guides didn't make it. Isn't it wonderful? The fire ... it lives, it breathes, it is way too much alive to kill it again. The city's recovery will grant me reputation, more than you can imagine. And one day it will burn again and consume everything.

Too bad I can't blame you twice because you will no longer be available then.

Soldiers, lift them into the lion cage.



Two soldiers appear at a big machine what seems to be a crane with a huge wheel, constructed out of wood and moved by the energy of a bull in front of it.

The top of the crane approaches, hits the carriage and latches.

Then the whole carriage is lifted into the air; when the guests are on same height with Nero they face his mad laugh again, before they are moved above the lions cage and descend feet by feet and drop on the ground for the last part.

[At the point that the first carriage turns around in front of Nero a second one can enter the arena. With their onboard speakers the different sounds will not collide, whereas the vehicles could feature sound insulation.]

As soon as the first cage is lifted into the air, the second one can turn around and a third one enters the arena.

When the first cage hits the ground again, the second one can be lifted up and cage#4 enters. In this way the guests do never see another cage]

The lions come closer and the first one attacks the cage, while a second one hurts the horse which sort of screams and then spurs off in a hurry. It breaks the cages fence...

Nero

No, stop them, they escape. Watch out for the lions..!

...and exits the Colosseum.

EXT – Woods / Exit

The scared horse pulls the carriage in a hurry through the cold Roman night until it gets into a wooded part of the city what is either a park or a small forest.

It is very dark and the horse can't really find its way, crashes into a rock, what makes the cage shake and crack. The bolt and the lapbars break open and the guests hear the horse run away. When they get out of the cage they can see the horses marks in the muddy floor of the woods. The cage looks at if it has crashed into the wall real bad [whereas the rock does only hide the motor part].

Through a entrance of a cave near the crash site shines a glimpse of daylight and the guests walk out.

The fake rock is lifted then and the carriage rolls back to the station.

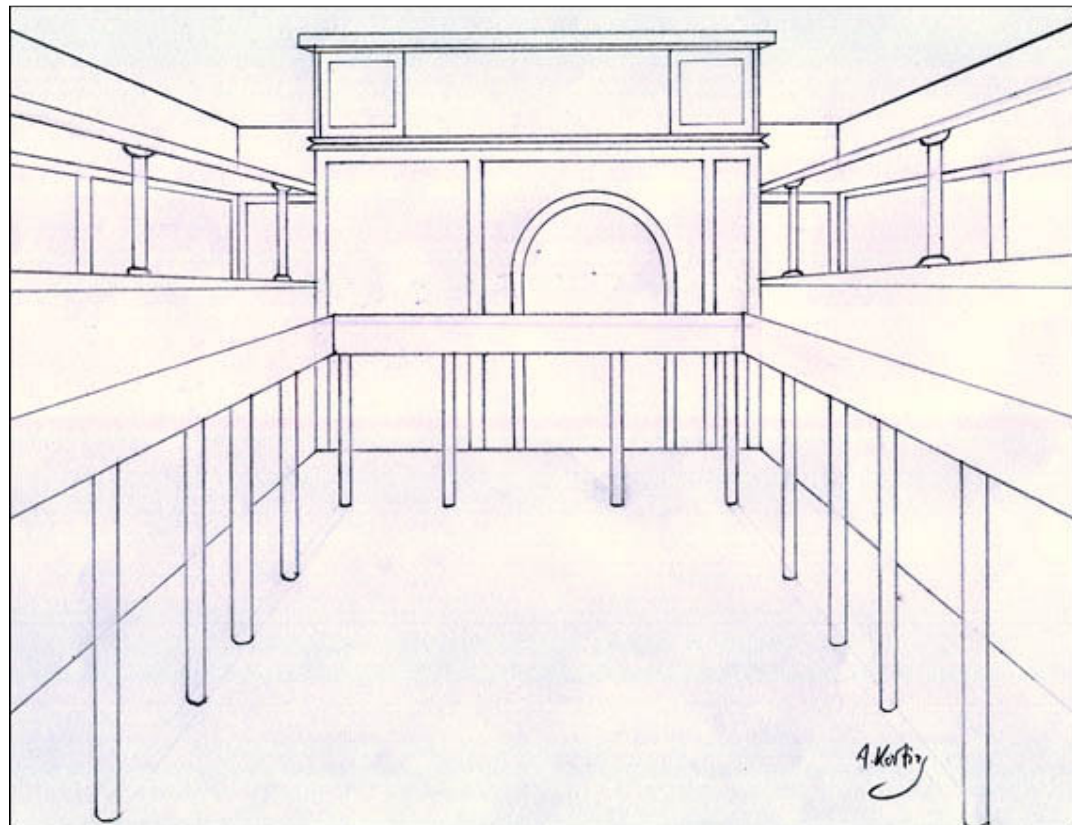


EXT – Outside

Outside the cage is a small path that leads the guests back to Oppidum Romanum or another part of the venue.

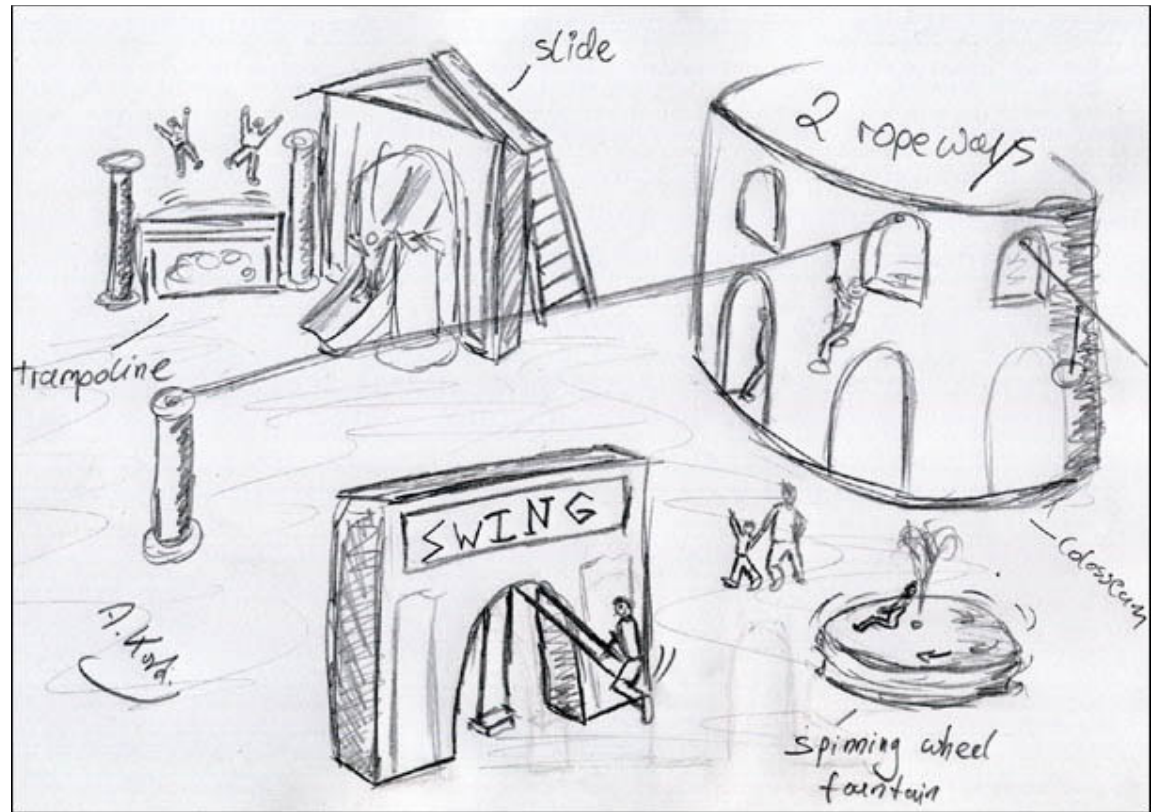
6) Restaurant “Taverna Romana”

Taverna Romana is an enclosed family restaurant serving Roman specialities. It is a part of the Roman Nights showbuilding, thus the entrance is the most left building of the Roman Nights façade. The restaurant's courtyard (see picture on the right) seems to be open-air under an artificial night sky.



7) Indoor Playground “Kids’ Empire”

The “Kids’ Empire” playground is located next to the restaurant and allows kids to enjoy themselves while their parents dine at Taverna Romana. Typical playground rides are worked into smaller versions of popular antique Roman landmarks.



8) Amphitheater

The Oppidum Romanum Amphitheater presents various shows each day. The theater offers the possibility to perform plays, comedies, musicals or magic shows. The stage is simple but ornated like it used to be in these times.