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9/11 Memorial Visions: Innovative Concepts From The 2003 World Trade Center Site Memorial Competition



Innovative
Concepts from
the 2003 World
Trade Center
Site Memorial
Competition 9/11
MEMORIAL
VISIONS
LESTER J. LEVINE



Synopsis

More than a billion people watched the 9/11 World Trade Center destruction unfold on television, making it the greatest shared event in world history. Reflecting this fact, the 2003 World Trade Center Memorial Design Competition was open to anyone, drawing 5,201 entries from 60 countries, all of which were posted online. Most designs were the greyscale hardscape of typical memorials. A few were radically imaginative. Some engaged memory with sound, color, movement, technology or visitor participation. Others reached across the globe, cyberspace, even outer space. These imaginings stirred questions about their creators. Who were they? What were they thinking and feeling? How did the concept develop? This book, based on a first ever review of the entries, tells the personal stories of more than 180 designers whose creative perspective translated an horrific event, giving deeper thought to the relation of memorial spaces to history, geography, technology and cultural diversity.

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Customer Reviews

When the competition for a 9/11 memorial was announced less than 2 years after the attacks, the site itself was still being cleaned up, wounds were still open, foreign wars were building, the drama was still unfolding. There was a lively debate whether a competition to design a memorial without historical perspective or societal consensus was simply too soon. Jettisoning itself into this stew of raw emotions, the competition drew about 5200 entries, more entries than any other design competition in history, and as a result, it offers us today a fascinating time capsule that captures

who we were and what we were thinking shortly after those events that instantly changed our world. The actual winning entry is not relevant to this book; the real story is (stories are) the manner in which the events of 9/11 are reflected in the 5000+ "mirrors" that are the entries. Using a very personal first person style, Les Levine has organized the entries by themes such as "memorials That Move," "Imagining Beyond Boundaries," "Memorial Imaging," and others. He provides personal commentary and excerpts of interviews he conducted with many of the designers. Through this exploration of how 9/11 should be memorialized (some cliche and some highly original), we understand and appreciate the complexity of our reaction to it as a society. Thanks to this book, we can see ourselves at that moment through the creativity of these artists, architects and others who offered their own distillations of that day, and perhaps it is this virtual time capsule of 5000 ideas with their companion guide that form a true and durable 9/11 memorial.

The range and inventiveness of the various proposals shown in this book is astonishing and inspiring, which is, of course, the point. A reminder of how creative the human spirit can be. Moving, and well worth the read.

Fascinating and well researched. An incredible global creative effort that would have been forgotten without this book.

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