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MEETING INEVITABILITIES: HOW ARCHITECTURE CAN AID IN OUR
ACCEPTANCE OF DEATH AND IMPROVEMENT OF LIFE

By

Caitlyn E. Kolling

The Supervisory Committee certifies that this *thesis* complies with North Dakota State
University's regulations and meets the accepted standards for the degree of

MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE:

Stephen Wischer

Thesis Coordinator

DocuSigned by:

Stephen Wischer

CBA6CA6223024AC...

Stephen Wischer

Primary Advisor

DocuSigned by:

Stephen Wischer

CBA6CA6223024AC...

Approved:

05/13/2024

Date

DocuSigned by:

Susan Schaefer Kliman

C9FF1C4ACFB7438...

Department Chair



MEETING INEVITABILITIES: HOW ARCHITECTURE CAN AID IN OUR ACCEPTANCE
OF DEATH AND IMPROVEMENT OF LIFE

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of the
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Caitlyn E. Kolling

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ABSTRACT

Meeting Inevitabilities seeks to explore design in relation to life, death, and memory. In the modern age, there is a significant lack of space for human interaction and connection surrounding the events of death, which further contributes to the divergence of death from life, life from memory, and memory from death. The designs aim to bring forth the divergence in one space, and explode the ideas and design outwards, where these three elements can be perceived together in a new way, in a reversible convergence.

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DEDICATION

To my parents, Brad and Harmony, whom I hope meet the inevitable a very, very long time from
now.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Problem Statement

There seems to be a significant lack of meaningful architecture surrounding the dead in the modern age. Cemeteries have been pushed out of cities, funeral homes do not receive enough attention to design or human feeling, cemeteries are unsettling and unwelcoming, and medicine has advanced so much that hospitals have become less about caring for the dead and dying and more about simply keeping people breathing- sometimes against a persons will.

Many people may feel a strong disconnect between the enormous impact of their loved ones passing, or their own news of a terminal illness, etc. and the very lackluster spaces that many of these important events and gatherings that take place and house these large feelings. If not living in a big city or especially if a family cannot afford to have an extravagant ceremony, the architecture that is designed for the sick, dying, dead, or grieving does not meet the standards that many should expect for these incomparable moments in their lives. Architecture for the grieving, such as funeral homes and cemeteries, don't always have the necessary components to create a comfortable and healing atmosphere, and instead can make the grieving experience dissociative.

How can architecture best serve as a connection between the living and the dead? It is a well-known fact that death is an unavoidable, universal event. No human is free from mortal existence, and spreading this knowledge to use in a conversation proves in many literary texts to be helpful and healing for many dying or grieving people.

It is noted that the reason many people fear death in the modern age is the way technology has been changed since the 18th century, as well as ways of thinking or processing emotions and information. These critical changes, which have driven society forward in science,

economics, and technology, have severely stunted human connection with the dead and memorialization, and because of this, with life.

1.1.1. Research Questions

To understand the best proposal for this thesis, the following research questions are proposed. Architecturally, what is the best way to create a space that many grieving people can feel comfortable in? What are the most effective programs to design for in the unification of life, death, and memory? When did the disconnection between life and death happen, and why should they be reunified?

These questions drove most of the research and led to more interesting finds throughout the process of research. Additional research included architectural and philosophical theory surrounding death and grieving.

1.1.2. Proposed Outcomes

To complete this thesis to its most complete extent, thorough research must be done about cultural representations of death, architectural problems and solutions regarding death and grieving, and specific investigations are to be done using this research to create an impactful design solution. An artefact will be made and used in design investigations for the final thesis design. This artefact is to be inspired and modelled after stories and narratives found through the research and thesis questions, and translated into a model or art piece that addresses a solution to the thesis question in a different medium than the final thesis design. The final thesis design can be inspired by the form, ideas, or process of making the artefact, which is to be displayed in the Memorial Union Gallery at NDSU Memorial Union. The deliverables for the final design include but is not limited to; a defined project type and program, architectural schematic drawings that

accurately portray the final design, final boards, and a final presentation (which will not be shown in the document).

Ideally, this thesis will be used as a reference or a new way to approach design for the dead, dying, and grieving. If better design is implemented for these programs, it could be argued that experiences regarding grief could be more comfortable or supported, alleviating pain for people experiencing these feelings. While there are many ways to design better funeral homes, cemeteries, etc., this thesis can be used as an exploration or introduction into the topic of designing better spaces for grieving people. This discovery is important now more than ever because of the severity of this disconnection between design and grief, and because of the mass amount of people that these programs will affect.

1.2. Objective

The proposed project is an experience, aided by architecture, that encourages and gives space to those who dwell there, to grieve and contemplate death, whether it be their own, a loved ones, or a death of some part of their life or journey in hopes that we can learn how to die well and connect with death, and in turn, truly learn how to live.

When designers, developers, and governments turn more of their attention and care to programs and designs used for ceremonies surrounding death and grieving, a positive change in quality of life may occur. One of the goals of this thesis is to shift the focus from capitalistic ideals, monetary values, and systems, and focus mainly on human emotion and connection.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. Background

The reading in the chapter will provide background information and cultural views surrounding death, why there is a lost connection with the dead, why this connection is important, and how architecture can be used to strengthen this connection and bring this connection back.

2.2. Literature Review

2.2.1. Previous Research

Addressing different cultural views of death is important to touch on as this can facilitate a connection between people of different backgrounds and cultures through representation in the architecture. Mary Cutter tells us that in the 20th and 21st century, death is widely viewed as a loss of physical integration (Cutter, 2019, p. 17), while some still believe that death is a permanent loss of consciousness (Cutter, 2019, p. 37). While Cutter states that there are many ways and manners to define death, the main focus of the design will be based around the existentialist and phenomenological view of death, which Cutter defines as:

Death is a phenomenon experienced by humans. Given that we cannot experience death, we cannot know death itself. We cannot know death itself because we can know death only through the experience of the death of another, or through the death of some aspect of the self while we are living. (Cutter, 2019, p. 122)

If the experience of grief and death, then, is the only way to experience death, how does this bring humankind together? There is a story included in Cutter's book under the chapter "To Be Grieved and How" titled, "Skinny Gotami and the Mustard Seed" from *Access to Insight: Readings in Theravada Buddhism* (Olendzki 2013). The text tells a story of a mother who had

lost her son and became mad. She had gone to seek the advice of Buddha, and brought the body of her dead son to him. Buddha had told the mother to, “go into the village and ask any villager who had not experienced death for a mustard seed”. (Cutter, 2019, p. 181) She had gone to many homes and could not find a single person who had not experienced death. In this time, she had gathered stories about death and found kinship in the villagers. “Through such stories, she began to realize that no human is free from mortal existence.” She had returned to Buddha and said, “It's not just a truth for one village or town, nor is it a truth for a single family. But for every world settled by gods and men this indeed is what is true- impermanence.” (Cutter, 2019, p. 181)

This reinforces the idea that communities can find solace in others as grief and death is a universal unifier- so why are there virtually no spaces to have these connections, and why is there an active push to keep the dead away from the living sector?

Doctor Elisabeth Kubler Ross tells of her view in her book *On Death and Dying*. Regarding the fear surrounding death, Ross mentions, “the more we are making advancements in science, the more we seem to fear and deny the reality of death.” (Kubler-Ross, 1969, p. 7), which Gadamer also echoes in his book, *The Enigma of Health*. He says that because of the industrial age, and advancements in science and modern medicine, death has become much more removed from everyday life. He says now that science has an explanation for life, it makes it less spectacular, and because of this, death has become less spectacular. With new technologies in medicine, death has been removed from the domestic home, and is now just a part of the system. (Gadamer, 1949, p. 62)

An important question to ask and answer is whether technology and medical advancements are the only reasons that the living have removed themselves from the dead. Is there any psychological reason? In her book, Ross delves into the stages of grief, the second

being anger. Because of this anger, there could be a want to cast our loved ones away- repulsion has an impact on how society treats the bodies of the dead. One of the reasons that society may separate from the dead, at least in the grieving cycle, stems from the anger stage of grief. Ross mentions, "The tradition of the tombstone may originate in this wish to keep the bad spirits deep down in the ground." (Kubler-Ross, 1969, p. 5) Because we are angry at our loved ones for dying, though most of us may not admit it, or even recognize that we are feeling that way, we have collectively agreed that dead bodies are unclean or taboo. This is because we hold a disdain for them, as they are a reminder of what we have lost, and so we cast them away.

Suzanne Laba Cataldi, in her essay titled *Embodying Perceptions of Death: Emotional Apprehension and Reversibilities of Flesh* tells her story of when she was a girl attending a funeral of a loved one. She had reached out to touch the dead hand of her family member, and she explains that she had never experienced anything like it. "This lifeless hand was able to communicate the sense of itself." (Cataldi, 2000, p. 192) The perception that the hand had cast onto her is what she explained as horrifying. "It is horrible to sense a hand stripped of its sensitivity- a hand so like yet so unlike our own." (Cataldi, 2000, p. 192) Cataldi says that this void of feeling in the hand is much like shock, and because shock is void of feeling, it may be the closest a person can get to truly feeling death. The feeling of horror when someone touches a dead person's hand reminds them that they are completely alive. (Cataldi, 2000, p. 193) This sense of horror, and this abrupt reminder of death, could be another reason why society has severed a connection with death.

The question then remains, if humankind had regained this connection with the dead, and if the dead do indeed have something to teach humans about the way we live, then why are they

still cast away? Should humankind return to a time and practice of having a strong connection with the dead, and would that connection be beneficial?

In the book *Before Philosophy: the Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man*, Henri Frankfort tells a story of Ancient Egypt, more specifically the importance of location in the creation story, and how the place of creation was also used as a place to bury their dead.

In Egypt, the creator was said to have emerged from the waters of chaos and to have made a mound of dry land upon which he could stand. This primeval hill, from which the creation took its beginning... came into being when nothing at all had yet come into being and the earth was still lying in darkness and obscurity... The equation with the primeval hill received architectural expression also. One mounted a few steps or followed a ramp at every entrance from court or hall to the Holy of Holies, which was thus situated at a level noticeably higher than the entrance. The royal tombs were also made to coincide with it. The dead, and, above all, the king, were reborn in the hereafter... no site promised greater chances for a victorious passage through the crisis of death, than the primeval hill... Hence the royal tomb was given the shape of a pyramid which is the Heliopolitan stylization of the primeval hill... Since the temples and the royal tombs were as sacred as the primeval hill and showed architectural forms which resembled the hill, they shared essentials. And it would be fatuous to argue whether one of these monuments could be called the primeval hill with more justification than the others.

(Frankfort et al., 1949, pp. 30–31)

Ancient thinkers thought of death and their connection to death much differently than how much of western society thinks of death today. Frankfort believes that different categories of perception didn't really exist in the ancient world- everything perceived by the ancient

thinkers was true and alive, even dreams and inanimate objects. Because they did not perceive the emotions elicited from death as any different than emotions elicited from life, it seemed to them that the dead were still very much active in their lives. Frankfort states:

Just as there was no sharp distinction among dreams, hallucinations, and ordinary vision, there was no sharp separation between the living and the dead. The survival of the dead and their continued relationship with man were assumed as a matter of course, for the dead were involved in the indubitable reality of man's own anguish, expectation, or resentment. "To be effective" to the mythopoeic mind means the same as 'to be'.

(Frankfort et al., 1949, p. 21)

What the ancient person had felt in their heart was in every way equal to what they had felt on their skin. Because the dead, and what the dead had made them feel, had *indeed* made them feel, the connection with the dead was very strong, as they were actively touching those that were grieving them. Cataldi, in her modern view, has spoken about the dead touching us as well. She explains that Maurice Merleau-Ponty believed that sight, along with the other senses, are a form of contact, such as eye contact. Cataldi then states that modern people may think of the emotional response that they receive from the world or objects as a way of being touched, which now unlocks a new way to think about how inanimate objects, or the dead, can touch those that are living and grieving. (Cataldi, 2000, p. 191)

The idea of the dead staying alive through those that grieve them, and those that have loved them, is a theme also expressed in *The Dark Interval: Letters on Loss, Grief, and Transformation* written by Rainer Maria Rilke. In his letter written to his friend Nadherna Von Borutin, she learns that by continuing in life, she can truly understand the person she was mourning, and living life how they would want her to to can keep them alive. (Rilke, 2018, p.

14) Embracing the connection modern society has with those that are lost can keep them alive, and by continuing this connection, individuals and western society can begin to understand death more completely. In another letter to Kanitz- Menar, Rilke writes that he fears the deaths of the people he had never gotten to know more than the deaths of those close to him, because he believes that you can never lose anything with which you have truly bonded. (Rilke, 2018, p. 7) In holding tight to these values, not only is there a learning experience to be had from the ancient ideals of having a strong connection with our dead, but society can begin to tie these values into the future- people can prepare for their own deaths, or the deaths of those whom they are close to, and more importantly, why they should be doing so.

In the short Netflix film, *Ram Dass, Going Home*, Ram Dass, who serves as an American spiritual leader and guru, introduces this idea that grieving is a door that when opened, can become an awakening. He says:

Death does not have to be treated as an enemy for you to delight in life. Keeping death present in your consciousness, as one of the great mysteries, and as the moment of incredible transformation, imbues the moment with added richness and energy that otherwise is used up in denial. Death is not an error. It is not a failure. It is taking off a tight shoe. I'm one of the strange people that absolutely delights and enjoys being with people as they are dying, because I know I'm going to have an opportunity to be in the presence of truth. So when I sit with somebody, the first thing I have to do is open myself to all my reactions to their predicament. All of it, all of the pain of it. Grieve for the other person's loss. And when they feel heard in the grief, then we can start to meet behind the grief. And I'm faced with the paradox that I, with a human emotional heart, want to take away your suffering. And at the same moment, there's another part of me that

understands that suffering is grace, that suffering is the sandpaper, from the spiritual point of view, that is awakening people. And once you've started to spiritually awaken, you re-perceive your own suffering and start to work with it as a vehicle for awakening. (Peck, 2017)

One of Rainer's main themes in his letters is that those he is writing to should grieve fully and without denial. He believes that if they do not fully immerse themselves in the grieving process, that can hinder the experience of life.

But the price for such refusal, Rilke feared, was a less aware, less intensely lived life, or a life lived on someone else's terms. Not really confronting the presence of death would perhaps let us live a happy and stable life, in a conventional sense. But it would be a life that is less deep and- during the dark moments when we experience a loss or, if we ourselves are spared major afflictions, help others in mourning- ultimately less strong, or even feel less real. (Rilke, 2018, p. xi)

Kubler-Ross says something very similar, from her medical point of view.

Though every man will attempt in his own way to postpone such questions and issues until he is forced to face them, he will only be able to change things if he can start to conceive of his own death. This cannot be done on a mass level. This cannot be done by computers. This has to be done by every human being alone. Each one of us has the need to avoid this issue, yet each one of us has to face it sooner or later. (Kubler-Ross, 1969, p. 17)

Ross mentions, regarding a patient accepting their own death, "Acceptance should not be mistaken for a happy stage... It is as if the pain had gone, the struggle is over, and there comes a time for "the final rest before the long journey" as one patient phrased it." (Kubler-Ross, 1969, p.

113) Acceptance is not reached by everyone, in either grief or dying. Rilke had mentioned that people need to chase the feeling of grief, and to not let it fear them, nor them it. If they go through this cycle completely, either when they are dying or when a loved one has died, people perhaps can learn what death is like, in a way, when they reach the acceptance stage. Cataldi had mentioned in her essay that shock is much like death, as it is void of feeling. Would acceptance be the same? Is acceptance almost a death in itself? While these accounts of acceptance may seem scary or off putting, what comes after it is what individuals should be seeking. Rilke and Cataldi have both expressed beliefs that when humans experience the emptiness of death, they can then understand that life not only can, but should not be that- being alive should mean that people can experience things, and that is exactly what they should be doing, unrelentingly.

When people learn to die, they learn how to live. To have lived well is to die well. This is really all that life is.

How can architecture aid people in completing the grieving process? How can it best serve the experience of death, or create spaces to encourage these experiences?

The Ruin by Georg Simmel gives a hypothesis of philosophy behind ruins, and what makes disintegrating architecture different from other forms of art.

Simmel says that when we build, architecture is grounded in the materials and nature, but because we have crafted it, and planned it, it exists somewhere in our soul. 'The ruin' is a greater phenomenon than other destroyed works of art. Other forms of art just become incomplete works of art, which one can use their imagination to put back together. In architecture, where the building material is lost, nature comes to take its place, making it a whole. (Simmel, 1958)

Simmel's essay can be directly related to death. When people die, as explained and thought by many of the previous authors, they don't go away, really. The dead remain in the

hearts of others, in how they live their lives, and they can fill the gap that is left when the body is gone, much like nature would replace the destruction of the ruin. Like nature taking over a building, there should be a shift of thinking of death to nature taking over the body. Simmel states:

For this reason, the ruin strikes us so often as tragic- but not as sad- because destruction here is not something senselessly coming from the outside but rather the realization of the tendency inherent in the deepest layer of the existence of the destroyed. (Simmel, 1958, p. 376)

The ruin is tragic, but not sad, because it is recognized that in animals and materials, they are being reclaimed by nature in death, but it is sad when a human dies because people tend to think themselves above nature. If the story is told of life and death through architecture, especially as someone is experiencing death, then that could possibly help ground them in nature and reach a state of acceptance.

Simmel had written much about how architecture and nature come together. It is equally important to address how the past and the present come together in relation to architecture. Frederica Goffi, in her book, *Time Matters, Invention and Re-Imagination in Built Conservation*, she explores the construction and drawings of the new St. Peter's Basilica. The iconographic drawings created by Tiberio Alfarano (Figure 2.2.1.1) show a meeting point between the past, present, and future- a journey through time. Janus, the two-headed Roman god of gates, or beginning and endings, "Had the ability to look in two directions in both space and time." According to Goffi. (Goffi, 2013, p. 175) These drawings evoke the presence of Janus. "The presence of two plans, old and new, demonstrates how revelation can be achieved by looking in two directions of space and time simultaneously." (Goffi, 2013, p. 176)

It is to the continuity of time, and the joining of members, that the drawing and the location of the new and old points to. The ichnography is an instrument carrying the imprint of a hallowed configuration, revealing the passage of time and thus making visible and invisible real presence of the hybrid-body of St. Peter's as the union of bride and bride groom. (Goffi, 2013, p. 87)

This idea of hallowed configurations, and the passage of time, is also visited earlier in her book, when talking about “mnemic buildings.” Mnemic buildings, Goffi explains, are buildings that are remembered or perceived to have been there since before memory. The building is so rooted in time and its place that it may even provide images for the collective that don't necessarily align with reality. Because of this “collective image” and memory of a powerful building, when it is lost or demolished in some way, it may provoke a feeling much like the phantom limb. (Goffi, 2013, p. 2) The idea of mnemic buildings can be directly tied to how people think of their loved ones. Some may have been there for as long as they can remember, or they may not remember a time they lived without them or imagine a universe where they never existed. Much like a mnemic building, when people experience the death of a loved one, or experience death, the dead is not entirely lost. The memories stay within the people, and much like the phenomenon of the phantom limb, there may be a connection that still feels very tangible and physical. The dead may invoke feelings even in their absence. Like Janus, when people grieve, it brings about an ability to exist in time and space differently and experience the past in the present.

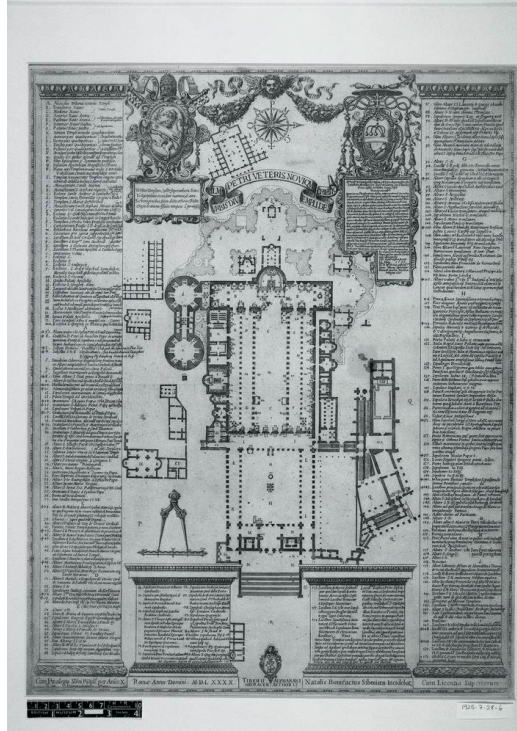


Figure 2.2.1.1 Tiberio Alfarano's St. Peter's Basilica Drawing
 (Source: britishmuseum.org, 1590)

The idea that forgetting is related to death, and memory is connected to life, is explored in *Public Forgetting: The Rhetoric and Politics of Beginning Again* by Bradford Vivian. Vivian writes that the Ancient Greeks told stories about two rivers, Lethe and Mnemosyne, standing for forgetfulness and memory, respectively. Because the Greeks believed that forgetting a name or legacy is when someone would really die, forgetfulness would directly correlate to death, and memory to life. “The intellectual and performative tradition of mnemonics therefore originates in a manifestly negative depiction of forgetting as the opposite of, or even a threat to, communal memory- and, to this extent, as a struggle of life over death...” (Frasconi, 1991, pp. 14–15)(20)

Creating memories and symbolizing the memories of people that are dead and lost is expressed through architecture in terms of trope and spolia. These are explained in detail in the book *Monsters of Architecture: Anthropomorphism in Architectural Theory* by Marco Frascari.

The main themes of the book include bringing back storytelling architecture as well as “making the invisible, visible.” (Fascari, 1991, p. 92) Fascari explains the origins of trope in architecture by exploring the origins of trophies. “...trophies were built using the spoils of the slain enemy; they were set up to appease their souls and prevent the gods’ punishment of the victors. The enemy casualties “were thus ‘turned’, troped, from murders into sacrifices.” (Fascari, 1991, pp. 22–23) Trophies, although morbid, circle back to the idea that keeping the dead’s memory alive can keep the dead alive through memoriam. When these ideas are directly applied to architecture, they can take on a deeper, more artistic meaning.

Architecture is an embodiment of the tropes of sacrifice... A powerful conceptual tool, a trope is a playful interpretation that relates forms that otherwise would never be associated... a trope is a form of thinking which, with the help of cross-referenced images, generates an elemental architecture that establishes an eloquent and intelligible constructed environment for human life. (Fascari, 1991, pp. 14–15)

Taking these bodily elements, these pieces of a puzzle that seem individualized but together tell a story, is something I would really like to consider when designing this memorial for the dead, as all their stories have to come together at one place. When Fascari speaks of spolia, he says that:

This is not an architecture of prefabricated romantic ruins, or of post-modern “instant history”, but it is a way of producing architecture as the assimilation of prior architectural artifacts...Every architectural piece echoes other pieces to infinity, weaving the fabric of the text of cultural itself...We assemble the tropes or building elements into trophies.

(Fascari, 1991, pp. 22–23)

Bringing in pieces of the past, or stories of past lives, in conjunction with a new place to experience and grieve the loss of those that have died, is essential is creating a place that

transcends time, putting those in place where time is not experienced, and where multiple places can be experienced, in order to fully and to the best of their ability grieve, and in turn, learn to really live.

2.2.2. Gap Identification

While the literature review provided valuable and diverse information, there are a few questions that were not fully or completely answered in the limited research time. There, of course, is not just one answer for the best way to design for the dying and grieving. Everyone experiences grief differently, and even though there have been multiple studies of grief and generalizations of the grief cycle, these studies don't completely encapsulate grief in its entirety or grief on a specific and individual level. Because the topic of grief is not numerical but indeed qualitative, the data is not formulaic in nature. This is why the research has a focus on philosophy and psychology. However, even with these more specialized focuses, there is not a clear-cut answer on what architecture can do to help the grieving.

Another gap in the research of course is the complete lack of evidence and conclusive data on what happens after death. Designing for the dead, or ceremonies regarding death, would of course be easier if designers knew how to design for the journey, or if there even is any. There is also not many case studies or precedents regarding architecture for funerary ceremonies that cater to every religion, or a completely secular ceremony space, as every culture has different rituals regarding death and grief.

That said, it is important for this thesis to focus heavily on the demographics of the project location and cater to those selected. The project format can then expand and change according to demographic and site, as well as with more research on the topic of grief and death.

2.3. Project Type

After careful consideration of what project type would best bridge the connection between the living and the dead, it was decided that the design focus will be a cemetery design and planning project. The cemetery site and connections between the required cemetery buildings will be the main focus of the design, with less of a focus on the details of each individual building. Programming will also be a focus of the final design, and planning where certain events should or will take place as well as a curation of processions and celebrative or mourning events. The design may have multiple sites and multiple buildings and is not entirely limited to a cemetery.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Approach

The method that will be used to complete this thesis and reach a final design conclusion will be a combination of the following. First, finding and studying relevant art pieces, building typologies, and other precedents that will serve as either a direct study for the final design or for inspiration in the design of the artefact. Secondly, an artefact will be made. An artefact is best described as:

...an essential part of the design process...exploring the interwoven relationship between our material creations and the narrative potential of design...Like poetry itself, artefacts and the transformations born from them both draw from life and inspire the imagination to 'leap', provoking 'newness' in our perception, forever changing our understanding of the world. (Wischer, 2012, p. 132)

By creating and modelling an artefact, new and different ways of viewing or understanding a certain design or way to design can be evoked. Using aspects of the artefact, design choices can begin to emerge either directly through form or in approaches or design intention. Finally, sketches and models will be used for design exploration.

3.2. Case Studies/ Precedents

3.2.1. Igualada Cemetery

Igualada Cemetery by architect Enric Miralles and Carme Pinos is a cemetery located in Barcelona, built in 1994. ArchDaily writes about the cemetery, saying, "Miralles and Pinos conceptualized the poetic ideas of a cemetery for the visitors to begin to understand and accept the cycle of life as a link between the past, present, and future." (*AD Classics*, 2011) The cemetery is placed on a sloped landform, creating a new axis that many other cemeteries do not

possess, and creates a new experience for the visitors of the cemetery. ArchDaily says, “The circulation through the cemetery adheres to a more processional effect that focuses less on the organization of the burial plots, but rather the experience.” (*AD Classics*, 2011) The architects of the cemetery also wanted to emphasize the experience of the people that the deceased had left behind. In an artist description, they say, “As part of a competition to replace an older cemetery, Enric Miralles and Carme Pinos envisioned a new type of cemetery that began to consider those that were laid to rest, as well as the families that still remained.” (*AD Classics*, 2011) Igualada Cemetery works well as a case study in the importance of procession and focusing on experience. Studying the verticality of the work, and the impact that the design decisions have on user experience is important as well. Natural and local materials are used throughout the design as well, seamlessly blending the cemetery into the landscape, creating a comforting connection with the natural world.



Figure 3.2.1.1 Igualada Cemetery Monastery
(Source: archdaily.com, 2011)



Figure 3.2.1.2 Igualada Cemetery Landscape
(Source: archdaily.com, 2011)

3.2.2. Steilneset Memorial

Steilneset Memorial was chosen as a study in memorialization, specifically on tragic subjects. According to Arch Daily, Peter Zumthor (architect) simply describes his collaboration with Bourgeois (designer) in an interview with ArtInfo as the following, “I had my idea, I sent it to her, she liked it, and she came up with her idea, reacted to my idea, then I offered to abandon my idea and to do only hers, and she said, ‘No, please stay.’ So, the result is really about two things- there is a line, which is mine, and a dot, which is hers... Louise’s installation is more about the burning and the aggression, and my installation is more about the life and the emotions.” (*AD Classics*, 2012) The two buildings act as a pair, one a journey (Zumthor’s), and one a destination (Bourgeois). The two buildings contrast in materials and forms, with Zumthor’s being a long, narrow walkway guiding the user to Bourgeois’ glass building, hosting a fire and mirrors. The two buildings focus on memorialization, but also focus on change. Presenting the

visitors with information and hard truths allows for reflection, and this reflection could be the reason why history doesn't have to repeat itself.



Figure 3.2.2.1 Steilneset Memorial, Zumthor
(Source: archdaily.com, 2012)



Figure 3.2.2.2 Steilneset Memorial, Bourgeois
(Source: archdaily.com, 2012)

3.2.3. Femmes Martyres

Femmes Martyres is an art installation by artist Anselm Kiefer at his art studio and home La Ribaute. Femmes Martyres is a collection of artworks that showcase cast resin busts of women, as well as a symbol or object replacing their head. “They assert themselves as evidence, this army of women composed of white dresses cinched at the waist, open at the upper body, inspired by the nineteenth century or bridal gowns, their heads taking the form of object/symbols.” (*La Ribaute*, 2022) This art piece is used as a way to retell history, bringing women to center stage in many impactful historical stories. This series isn’t necessarily a memorialization piece, but instead a way to reimagine history, bridging the past and the present through artwork.

La Ribaute is also an immense site for the celebration of permeability: between art and life, lead and stone; a celebration of the feminine and the spiritual rather than the bravado of construction; of ruin and dispersal rather than construction and solidification; of membrane and margins rather than wall and land. In this way, an opposition is drawn between a rereading of the feminine and the masculine, where the latter yields, where Kiefer equally brings into play stereotypes of history and those of art and architecture, as much as the tropes of his own legend. (*La Ribaute*, 2022)

Kiefer allows his work to manifest in more ways than one. Using these principles of permeability and temporality, aging and natural cycles can be used in the final design of the thesis.



Figure 3.2.3.1 Anselm Kiefer's Studio
(Source: gagosian.com, 2022)

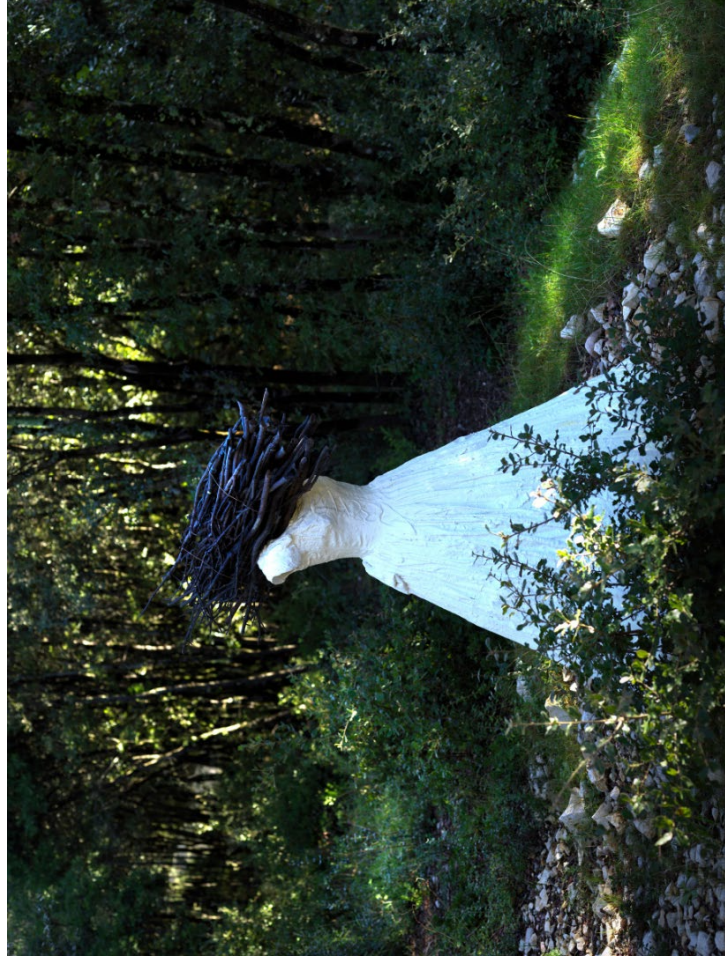


Figure 3.2.3.2 Tusnelda, Femmes Martyres
(Source: gagosian.com, 2022)

3.2.4. Cite Memoire

Cite Memoire are a series of historic works born from the minds of Michel Lemieux and Victor Pilon whose pieces entrap the viewer of the work into a collision of worlds that first rips the viewer out of the present and their mind, and secondly pushes them to seek a looking glass into the past.

Cite Memoire cracks open the fabric of the present and displays large, dynamic images onto buildings of significant historical meaning. These projections should not be reduced to simple movies or motion pictures. While they each show a different story in a different time period, the stories are entirely changed when in contact with the unfamiliar brick walls and presented to the people of the future. The art and the surrounding city, the changing traffic lights, the high-rises, and the bustling sounds of buses and cars create a symphony that when put together form an irreversible change to how people may view their surroundings.

Seeing the history and memory that this piece evokes allows a viewer to become empathetic with the individual stories.

The artists, in their mission to create a multi-dimensional experience, had also included an audio that narrates the individual stories of each projection. This piece of the work is described by Lemieux as, "...intimate. They are talking into your ear. And then you look up and you see the giant images- and the effect is between the spectacular and the intimate." (Schwartz, 2020) This weaving between the spectacular and the intimate stretches the viewer's mind once again, making it porous, giving the viewer openings in the mind which they can step out of, openings which are needed to begin that conversation with the piece of art that they are seeking to understand.

Making contact with a piece of work, especially with architecture that encapsulates many different emotions and levels of emotion is imperative. The exhibit of Cite Memoire allows its viewers to do this in a very simple way. The art asks the participant to understand it. When the viewer stands on the concrete sidewalk, and approaches the exhibit, every step the participant takes turns into a transformative experience. The piece is immersive in its storytelling and history, and if the viewer becomes an active participant, their perception of life may change after this single experience. Allowing and designing these transformative elements or pieces for the cemetery is essential in making a connection between the past, present, and future.



Figure 3.2.4.1 Joe Beef's Funeral
(Source: montrealgazette.com, 2020)

3.3. Project Location

To bring meaning into the final design in the most basic and fundamental way, the project location must be chosen for its rich history and story. Using the previous research regarding fear of death, cultural views on death, and focusing on the separation between life, death, and

memory, the project location naturally wanted to be somewhere with a historical significance that strongly aligned with these elements, and also a place where many people have a similar mindset about the stories or events that had taken place on the site or the general location.

Within the last hundred years or so, there has been an abundance of stories that show how much death, and the modern view of death, has negatively impacted life. The way that society has learned to act upon the fear of death often causes more devastation in the name of self-preservation (World War II, Gaza, etc.). When ideologies, religions, lifestyles, or values seemingly meet an end or are threatened, the actions taken because of this fear can be disastrous and immediate.

A well-known historical case in the United States is the Salem Witch Trials, where the fear of death struck the community so hard, it caused the deaths of 25 innocent men, women, and children. Because of the resonating themes surrounding the Trials in comparison to this thesis project, Salem, Massachusetts was decided to be a good candidate for the project location. The Trials are a very well-known historical event that encapsulates the problem surrounding the initial actions surrounding the fear of death, and because an overwhelming amount of people in the U.S already know of the event and understand the negative effects of the Trials, the stories host this proposal well.

3.4. Site Selection

Two different areas of Salem were selected for this project- one to cater directly as a memorial and as a representation of the thesis problem, and the other to look at the larger picture, and address how architecture can improve the conditions of how western society views death today. This section of the document will address why the sites were selected; however, Chapter 4

will give a more in-depth look into the stories of the site and why the final design reaches the intended goals in part due to the site location.

3.4.1. Proctor’s Ledge

To address the events of the Trials more directly, it is proposed that there will be a series of sites near Proctor’s Ledge, the location of the execution of 19 of the victims of the Salem Witch Trials. These series of sites are located on a set of parallel and linear pathways. These three pathways represent three different perspectives of death throughout time. The first of the three sites will be Gallows Hill, where the executions were originally thought to have taken place for hundreds of years.

The second site will be located equidistant from Proctor’s Ledge and Gallows Hill in the opposite direction, landing on a abandoned, paved plot of land.

The third site will be on the hill adjacent to the existing Proctor’s Ledge Memorial designed by Martha Lyon.



Figure 3.4.1.1 Proctor’s Ledge and Surrounding Area Overhead Map (Source: Google Earth Pro, 2022)

3.4.2. Fort Lee

Uniting the people of the past, present, and future through death on a specific site for the final design led to Fort Lee. Fort Lee is an earthwork fort in Salem, near many of the trial memorials that are located in what used to be known as Salem Town. It is one of the few remaining earthwork Revolutionary War forts that have remained intact and was noted to have never seen any notable action. Fort Lee has been almost completely abandoned, forgotten after the end of the Civil War. It is now severely overgrown, full of litter, and is a popular spot for vandalism and all-terrain vehicles.



Figure 3.4.2.1 Fort Lee Overgrowth
(Source: historicsalem.org, 2001)

Fort Lee brings to the table a unique opportunity to not associate this cemetery in a specific point in time, but throughout it. Much like the drawings of St. Peter's Basilica, and the knowledge from Goffi about mnemonic buildings and their transcendence of time, this historical landmark can be used as a center of gravity to bring together the stories of the past, present, and future. Because the fort is said to have first been built in the 17th century, Fort Lee acts much

like a “primeval hill”, the point that predated the important stories that had taken place in Salem, a place that was built for potential sacrifice, a place where creation and death were prepared to meet, but, at its core, was built to repel that very meeting. With the acceptance of death, of taking into its earth those who have died and those who are mourning, Fort Lee can once again become alive through new architecture and programs supporting and inviting people to enjoy this abandoned place.



Figure 3.4.2.2 Fort Lee and Surrounding Area Overhead Map
(Source: Google Earth Pro, 2022)



Figure 3.4.2.3 Fort Lee 1976 Aerial Photo
(Source: historicsalem.org, 2001)

3.5. Artefact

In an attempt at a more artistic and theoretical approach to design exploration, multiple renditions of an artefact were built and changed in order to best conceive the main ideas and goals of the thesis project. The main goal of the artefact was not to bring to attention the fact that death exists, but instead, to highlight a new way to approach the grieving cycle or introduce a new and different way to think about death. Using elements from different precedents and prior literary reviews, the artefact should accomplish these things: to show the unification of grief, to showcase Cataldi's view of reversibility (to use moved is to be touched), showcasing memories and fragments of time, and not holding back in regard to imagery, as shock value may simulate a instinctual reaction to death.

3.5.1. Artefact- Part I

The first part of the artefact involved crafting a series of blankets, each representing the life of a woman or girls that was impacted by the Salem Witch Trials. These blankets, more specifically baby blankets, are a symbol used to form a connection with the outside viewer. Many people have an emotional connection to a baby blanket or a precious item from their childhood, representative of innocence, comfort, and childlike wonder. Due to the material, the stories of the girls, shown through the baby blankets, are now expressed in a medium that many people understand and emphasize with. The wear and tear that the blankets then undergo are based on stories of their lives before the Witch Trials. The wear and tear, representing death, provides an instant connection point for the viewer to understand these events, and allows for them to weave together each of the girls' individual stories. The idea of showcasing the baby blankets with the wear, tear, and decay, is to show that if the blankets were pristine and untouched, stories and memories could not be easily imagined, and the life and memory represented by the blanket would be hollow, if not nonexistent. The stories of the victims could not be seen if the blanket was shielded from a destructive state.



Figure 3.5.1.1 Martha Corey's Blanket



Figure 3.5.1.2 Mary Warren's Blanket



Figure 3.5.1.3 Rebecca Nurse's Blanket



Figure 3.5.1.4 Bridget Bishop's Blanket

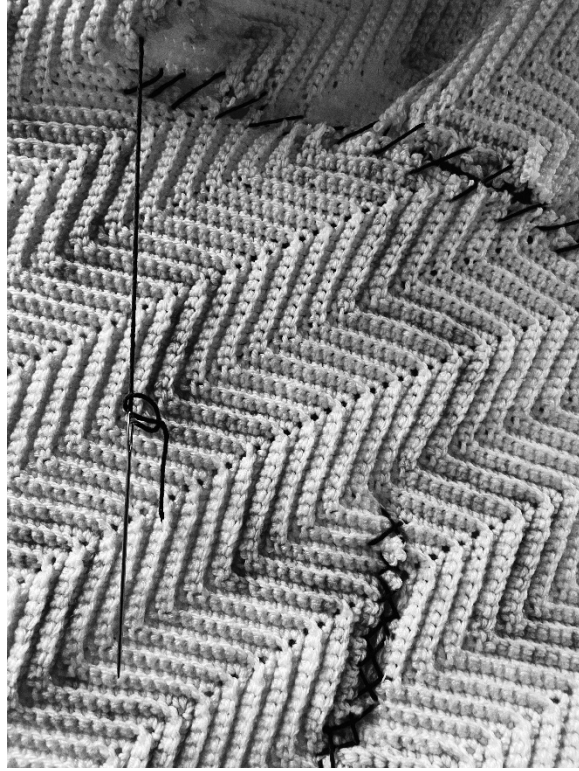


Figure 3.5.1.5 Mary English's Blanket



Figure 3.5.1.6 Tituba's Blanket

3.5.2. Artefact- Part II

The second part of the artefact address the overall story of the victims- the Witch Trials. The work brings the individual stories together as a medium to understand the overall story. Memories flash and appear on the blankets in the form of projections. The dynamic movements, brought to life by the pulling of a rope attached to each blanket, both haunt and bring the piece to life. The memories that unite all of these women keep them alive more than three centuries later. The projections onto these blankets tell a story of their interactions, of individual fragments, and of the big picture. These stories are laced together, revealing a different perspective each time their life and memories are pulled into focus. If a participant in the artwork pulls a rope, the blanket get pulled into the projection, and depending on how high a blanket is pulled, or how many blankets are pulled at once, a different story is told. Each interaction with the piece is new, and existing worldviews can change how the piece is interpreted or viewed. While the artefact doesn't focus on the peaceful parts of the girls' lives, taking a step to understand the actions that were forced onto them may give the viewers insight to think about the fear of death and their actions in a new way.

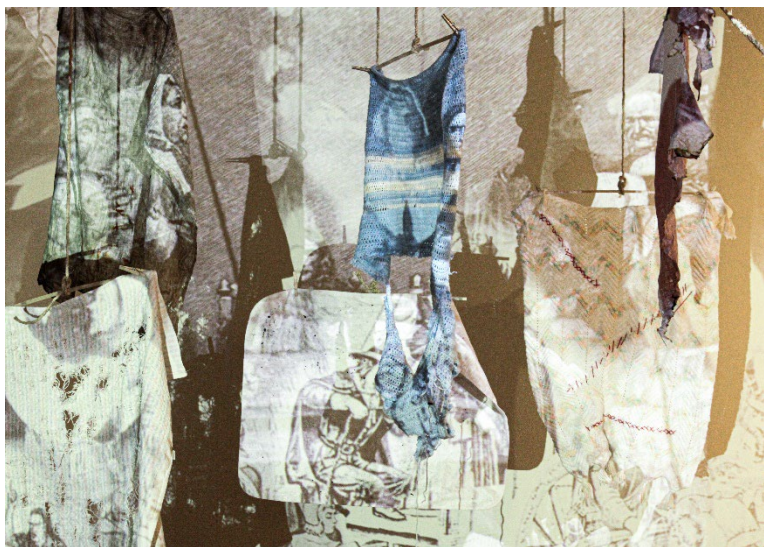


Figure 3.5.2.1 Artefact in the Memorial Union Gallery

3.6. Programming

A mix of traditional western cemetery programs and new programming needs for this cemetery were used to make a comprehensive list of programs that will take place within Fort Lee Cemetery and the Proctor's Ledge memorial sites.

3.6.1. Proctor's Ledge Programming

Proctor's Ledge and the surrounding sites are meant to show the disconnect between life, death, and memory in the modern age. It is also meant to work in tandem with the existing Proctor's Ledge Memorial by Landscape Architect Martha Lyon. To do this, the three sites must be separated, as they will each represent a certain point in time, as well as either memory, death, or life. The only specific programming decision made for these sites is to design a Memorial Building for the 19 victims of the executions that had taken place there. A less specific program for these sites is to provide a space for community members to gather, and one to reflect.

3.6.2. Fort Lee Programming

Two different categories were used in curating a program for Fort Lee: the first, to use the previous case studies to highlight the necessary programs for a cemetery and buildings in the cemetery. The second, to use the previous research and precedents to enhance the program further, which will allow the cemetery design to become a new, transformative experience unlike many of the cemeteries built in the area or in the U.S.

The necessary components of the program include burial plots. Usually, a cemetery holds around 1,000 plots per acre of land, however, because of the other programmatic elements that will fit in the 11 acre site, a goal has been set to designate at least 2,500 burial plots, or about 5% of the Salem population. A mausoleum will also be on site, and will be used for both coffins and urns, to expand the options of burial within the cemetery. A crematorium will also be on the

cemetery site. A main cemetery building, which will have a directory and general information about the cemetery, can be used to keep out of the cold and to easily find a loved one.

The expansive components of the program include a non-denominational ceremony space for funerals or gatherings to take place. Instead of an offsite funeral home, the family can choose to have a gathering on site, and then attend the burial directly after the ceremony, no travel needed. Another aspect of the cemetery is to include many landscape and processional features, each used to not only aid in the grieving process, but also to serve as memorials for the people either buried on site, or for those which should be memorialized, such as the victims of the Salem Witch Trials and Almshouse. A chapel or small building used for peace or sanctuary will be on site to cater to different grief stages or for the people that need isolation. The existing park on site will be cleaned up and preserved to keep people coming to the park with their family. The park can be used as an outdoor celebration or memorial space but is intended to be used as a normal park, bringing the living and lively activity into a place normally designated for the opposite can bridge that separation between the living and the dead. The more comfortable people get being around death or around grief, the stronger that bridge gets. In order to bring together life, death, and memory, a building or landscape element will be implemented that showcases tangible items as a memory. The cemetery can then activate all of the senses when addressing memorialization and ceremony.

3.7. Sketches/ Mass Models

After the completion of the artefact, sketches and mass models were completed as further design exploration. These drawings and models are all inspired slightly by the artefact, as well as the previously mentioned precedents. For example, Igulada's verticality inspired open levels and views within the cemetery, and blocked verticality in the Proctor's Ledge Memorial Building.

The proposed Proctor’s Ledge Memorial Building has two processions into the building, one long and enclosed, the other open to nature and ascending. These are inspired by the processional experience of Steileset Memorial. These are just a few examples of many.

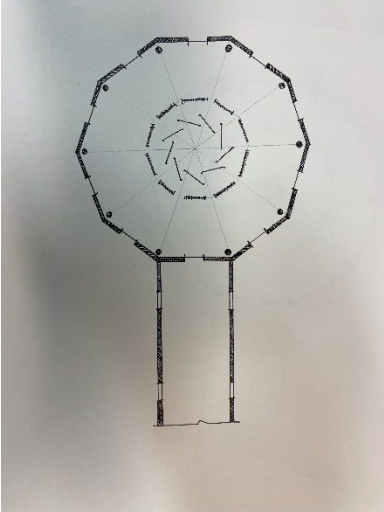


Figure 3.7.1 Proctor’s Ledge Memorial Building Bottom Floor Plan

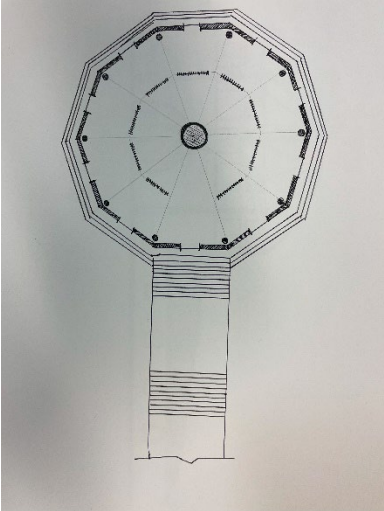


Figure 3.7.2 Proctor’s Ledge Memorial Building Ground Floor Plan

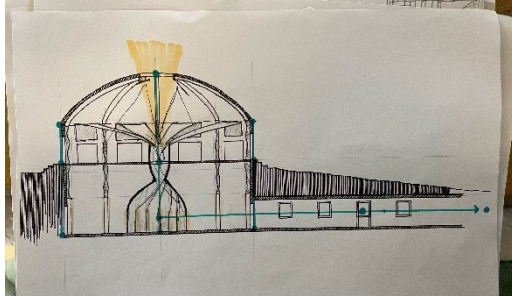


Figure 3.7.3 Proctor's Ledge Memorial Building Section

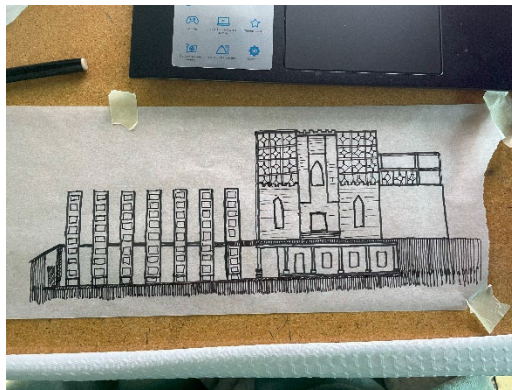


Figure 3.7.4 Mausoleum and Sanctum Section Sketch

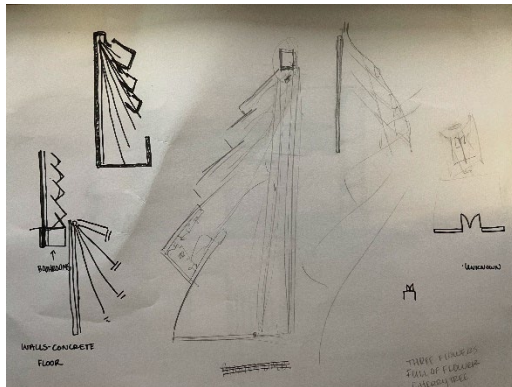


Figure 3.7.5 Memory Museum Plan Sketches

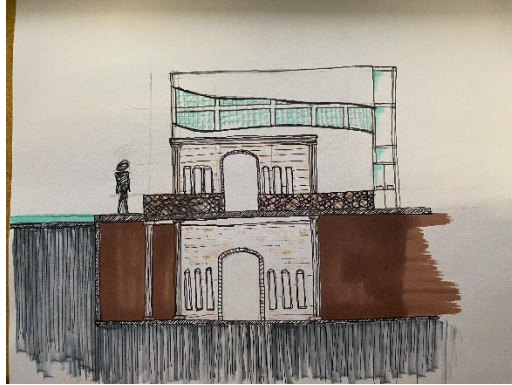


Figure 3.7.6 Sanctum and Directory Sketch, Draft 1

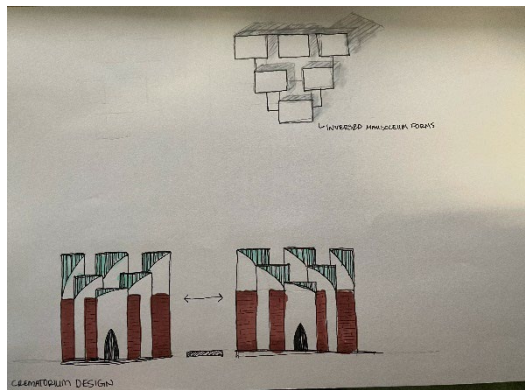


Figure 3.7.7 Crematorium Sketch



Figure 3.7.8 Ceremony Building and Memorial Walk Sketch



Figure 3.7.9 Proctor's Ledge Memorial Building Mass Model 1

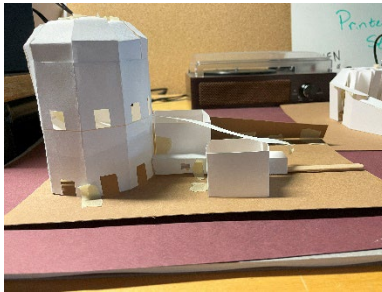


Figure 3.7.10 Proctor's Ledge Memorial Building Mass Model 2

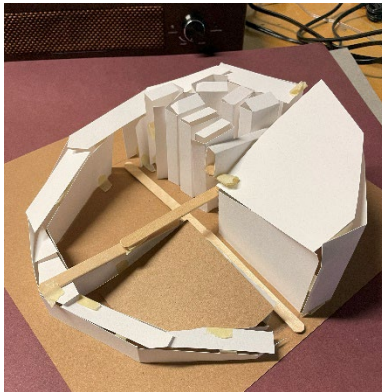


Figure 3.7.11 Fort Lee Cemetery Mass Model 1

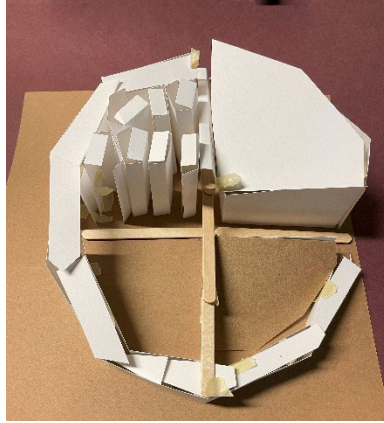


Figure 3.7.12 Fort Lee Cemetery Mass Model 2

4. RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1. Project Objective

To reiterate the project objective, the project is designed to be an experience, aided by architecture, that encourages and gives space to those who dwell there, to grieve and contemplate death, whether it be their own, a loved ones, or a death of some part of their life or journey in hopes that we can learn how to die well and connect with death, and in turn, truly learn how to live.

The goal of this design is to turn the attention from the systems and routine of death and grieving, and to human emotion and connection surrounding the topics of death and grief.

4.2. Project Design and Documentation

4.2.1. Proctor's Ledge Memorial Building and Site Design

The proposed Proctor's Ledge sites and designs of the thesis are meant to define and exaggerate the modern view of death and grief as well as the separation that is continuously growing between life, death, and memory, specifically throughout time. Along with the separation of life, death, and memory, there is a separation to the way western culture views history (the past), the present (current day), and the future (more specifically change). The three sites will be a series, located on a set of parallel and linear pathways. These pathways represent the different perspectives of death throughout time.

PROCTOR'S LEDGE



Figure 4.2.1.1 Overall Proctor's Ledge Site Plan

The first of the three sites, located on Gallows Hill, represents how society viewed death historically. To portray a shift from memory to truth, from past to present, a proposed path is to be excavated from the site on Gallows Hill, where the executions of the Salem Witch Trials were originally thought to be located and moved to become the underground path leading to a new memorial building on Proctor's Ledge. This underground path is brought back to life using the earth from Gallows Hill to lead into the basement of the memorial building.

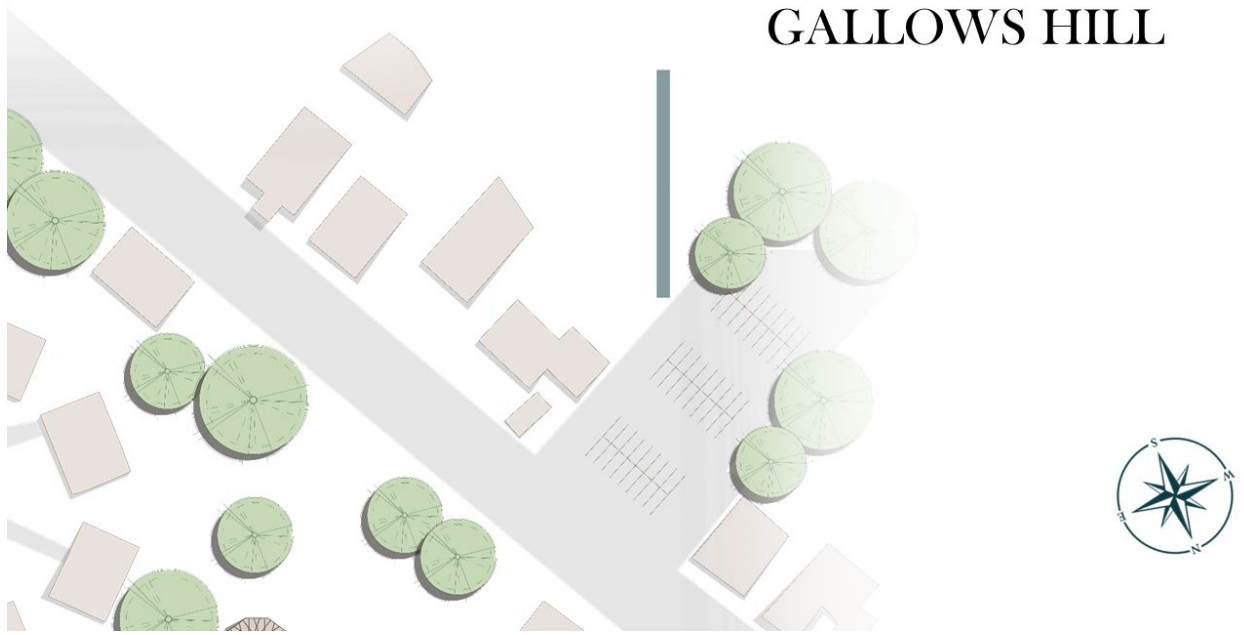


Figure 4.2.1.2 Gallows Hill Site

The second of this series of sites, equidistant from Proctor’s Ledge and Gallows Hill sits an abandoned, paved plot of land. After renovating the lot into a park area, the excavated stone from Proctor’s Ledge forms a garden bed to serve the local community. The end of a journey for the stones in their designated place at Proctor’s Ledge now contributes to sustained new life as a community garden. This site represents how we may view death in the future- a harmony of memory, life, and death.



Figure 4.2.1.3 Community Garden Site



Figure 4.2.1.4 Community Garden Near Proctor's Ledge

To understand the breakdown of the memorial building is to understand how western society currently views death and dying. As previously mentioned, there is a very distinct separation of history, life today, and upcoming generations. Many people don't think about how history affects the present, and how this current moment will affect the future, just as many people don't believe that death and those who have died have a direct connection with those that are living, and that memory is eventually all the life that people will have left. This blatant separation is integrated into the design of the memorial building.

When first visiting the building, a long, grand approach to the ground floor of the building guides the visitor to the main entrance. The white marble walls and columns echo under the feet, and the stark contrast of the thick, black fabric hung in the middle of the room immediately draws attention. The fabric reaches down through the floor and reaches towards the carved ceiling of the dome. Looking up, the introdos is ornamented with pictures and words, the last words of the people that were executed here in 1692, demanding attention in relation to the plain white walls of the building.

The dome, extending over the heads of the visitors, makes the visitors look to the future, using imagery of the past.

Martha Lyon's Proctor's Ledge Memorial features the names of the victims, a sharp reminder of the treatment of the 19 innocent people. This thesis' memorial building takes this sentiment and enriches this idea, working as a partner to the existing memorial. Recognizing how circumstances and treatment was for the victims gives an opportunity to act differently in the future.

The lower-level entry, a long underground stretch, leads into a nearly identical space of the main floor. The black fabric leaks a warm light that travels down the center of the floor from

the oculus of the dome, the only natural light in the dark space. The weariness that the space evokes brings people face to face with their fears, and specifically is meant to unite the fear of death with the past. Taking an active step to conquer this fear, taking a step into the dark room and physically moving the thick fabric to step into the light, a connection between the past, present, and future is found through the connection of the floors. By taking this active approach by moving the fabric and stepping through, a convergence of life, death, and memory can happen.



Figure 4.2.1.5 Proctor's Ledge Memorial Building Elevation

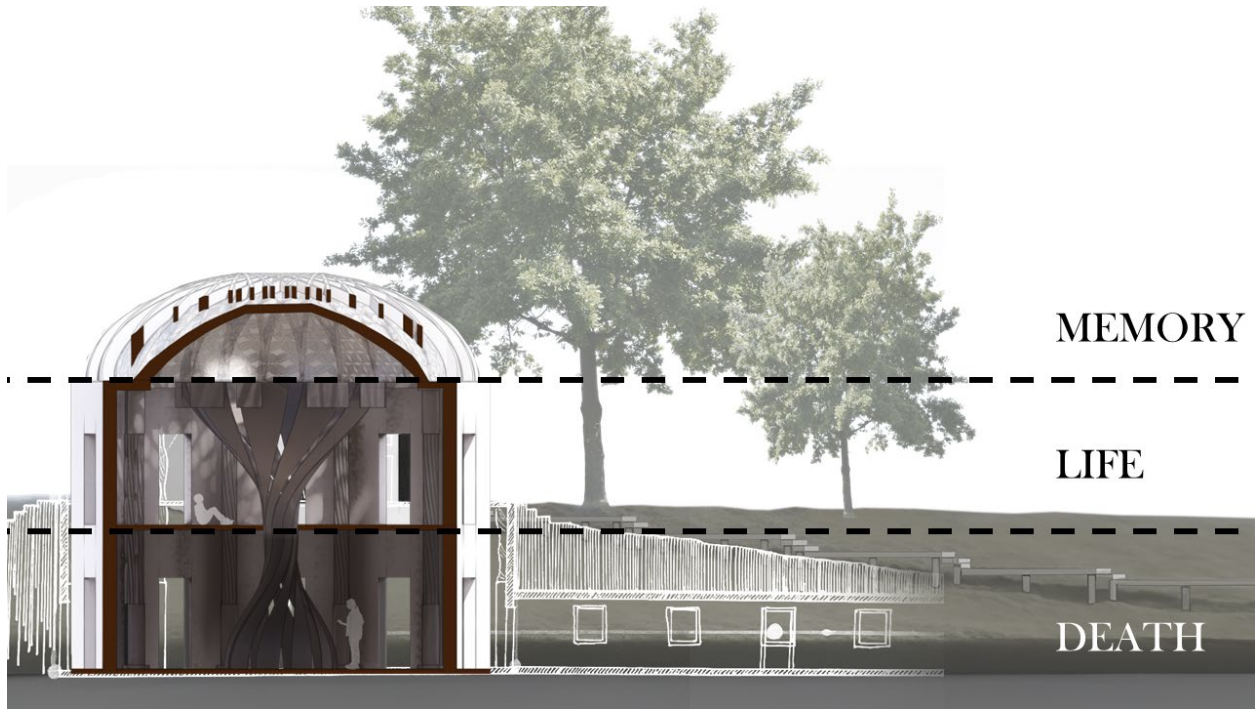


Figure 4.2.1.6 Proctor's Ledge Memorial Building Section



Figure 4.2.1.7 Proctor's Ledge Memorial Building Dome

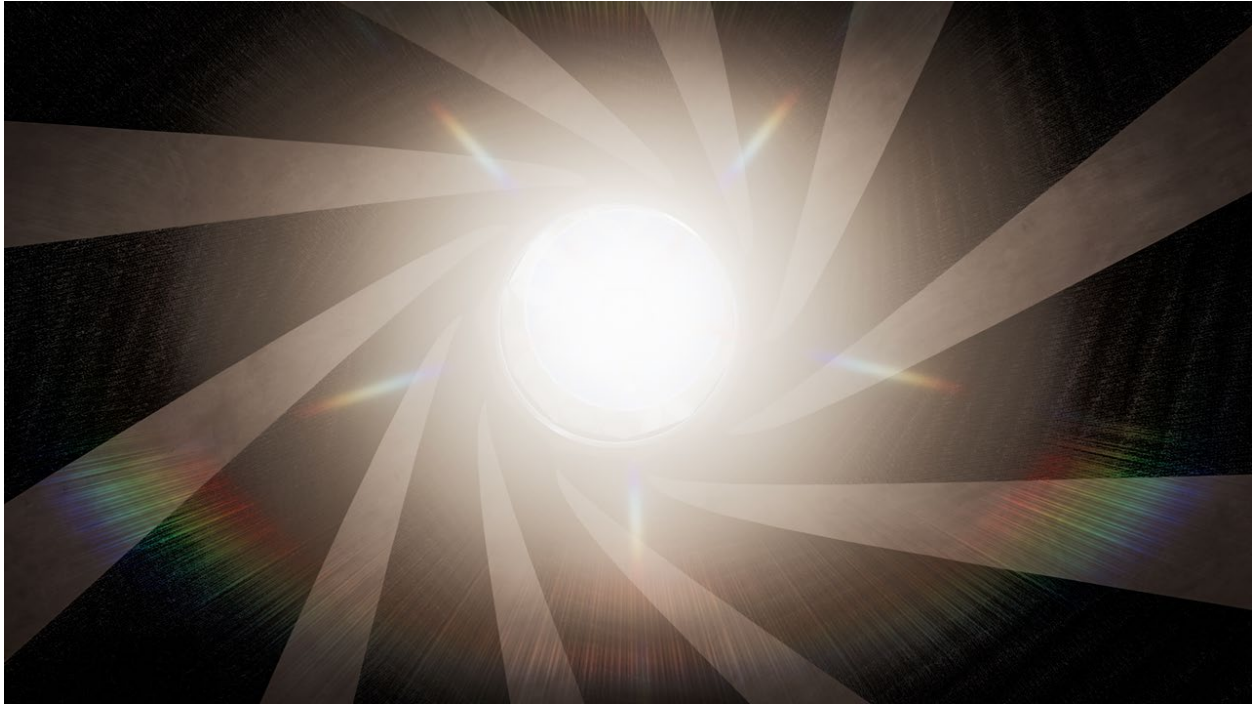


Figure 4.2.1.8 Proctor's Ledge Memorial Building Oculus

4.2.2. Fort Lee Cemetery Design

The Fort Lee Cemetery is a proposed newly constructed cemetery and renovated park area on Salem Neck. Choosing this site is a perfect opportunity to implement the main ideas of this thesis into the bones of the project. The site exists in nearly all generations of the town's memory, as it was built quickly after settlement and still exists today. It is a symbol of grounding and permanence. In contrast to the Proctor's Ledge Memorial Building and adjacent sites, the three parallel axes are connected through a journey. This journey is based on ancient ideas of death- the Greek Funerary processions.

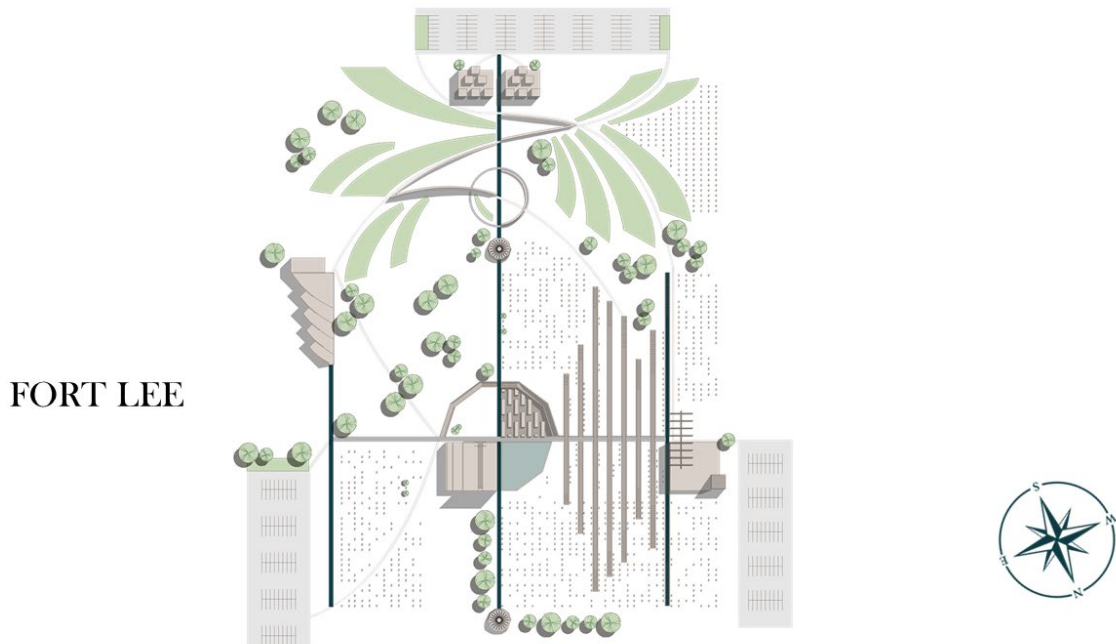


Figure 4.2.2.1 Fort Lee Cemetery Site Plan

The journey starts at the ceremony space (Figure 4.2.2.2, 4.2.2.3) used for funerals and memorial services- the prothesis, the laying out of the body for friends and family to mourn. The ceremony building features log exterior walls, inspired by colonial cabin builds, where families gathered, and memories were made. The ceremony space is a fragment of a historic colonial home, creating a familiarity during a time of grief for the families and friends. A white steel framing structure, inspired by a typical colonial shipping boat, is used as a trellis for greenery and structural columns for the ceremony building, bringing in another piece of history and memory.

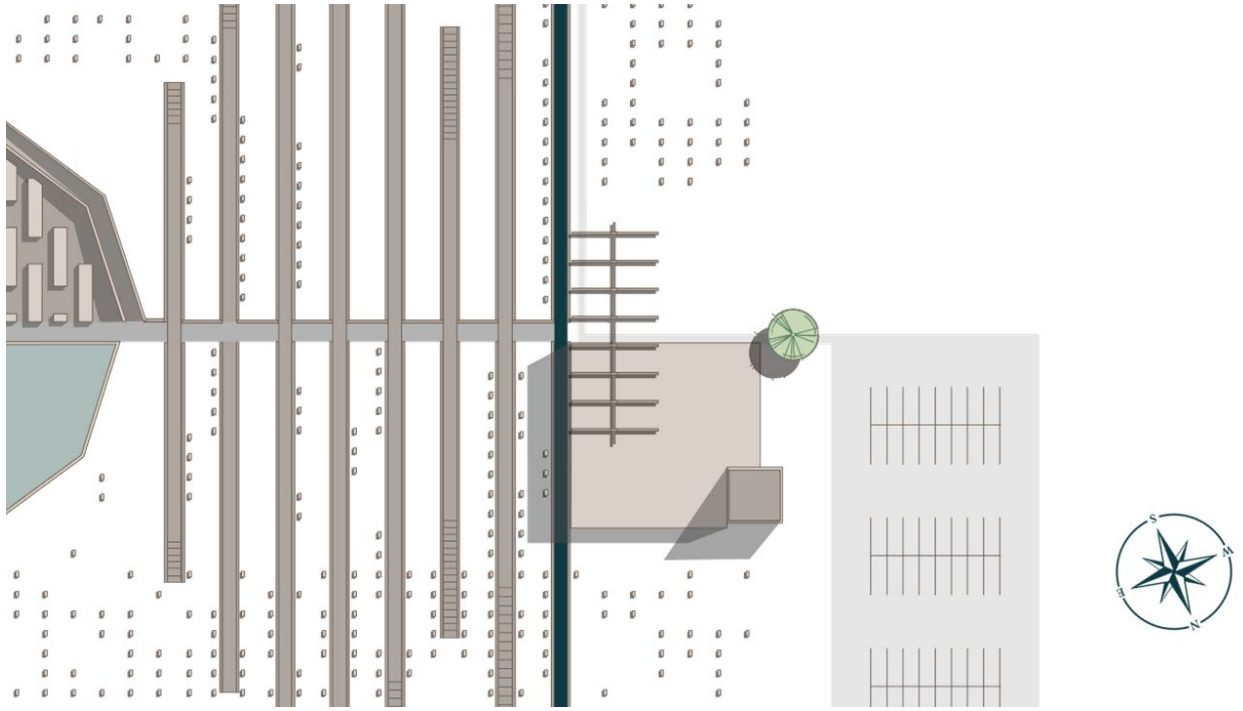


Figure 4.2.2.2 Ceremony Building Site Plan



Figure 4.2.2.3 Ceremony Building Elevation

After the prothesis, the march from the family home to the burial site was made. This part of the journey is called the ekphora. The ekphora, or the funeral procession, took place just before dawn, and many people joined in the walk to the final resting place. The funeral procession on site takes place through the receding memorial walks.

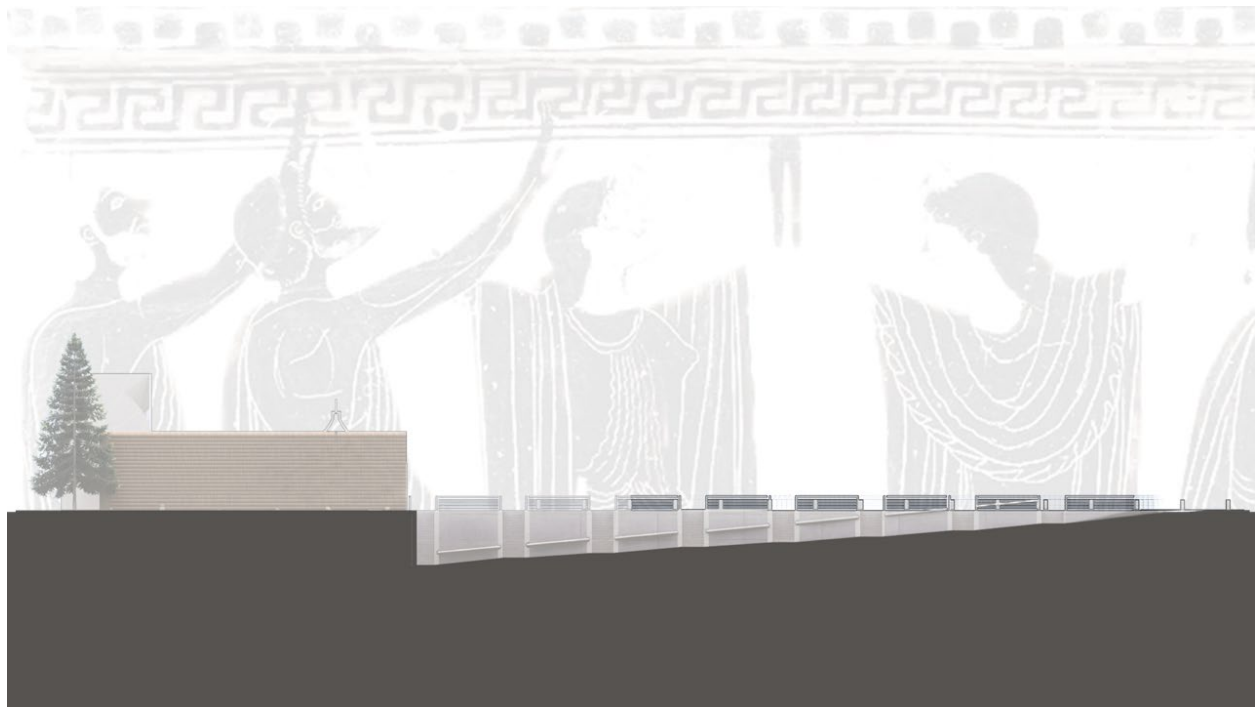


Figure 4.2.2.4 Funeral Procession- Site Section

The walls of the memorial walks feature illuminations, each horizontal line representing a person's lifespan, and each light representing a year of life. Over time, the wall builds stories of interaction, generations, and history. As the cemetery, town, and generations age, the memorial walls become more vibrant and full of life, continuing the story and timeline of Salem. As more people are laid to rest in the cemetery, and process through the memorial walks, they contribute to the permanency and architecture of the cemetery.



Figure 4.2.2.5 Memorial Wall and Ceremony Building, New



Figure 4.2.2.6 Memorial Wall and Ceremony Building, Middle-Aged



Figure 4.2.2.7 Memorial Wall and Ceremony Building, Old

The ascending trail through the memorial walks brings the procession from the darkness into the light as the funeral procession walks from the lower level to the ground plane. This ramp manifests dawn for every funeral procession, as the Greeks had practiced the ekphora before dawn. The procession eventually reaches the ground plane, the end of the journey for the deceased, or the interment, the burial of the dead. The cemetery offers cremations services, 3,000 burial plots, and around 340 spaces in the mausoleum. The mausoleum is made with a mix of granite overlay and rammed earth concrete, using the earth that was excavated to make the memorial walks.

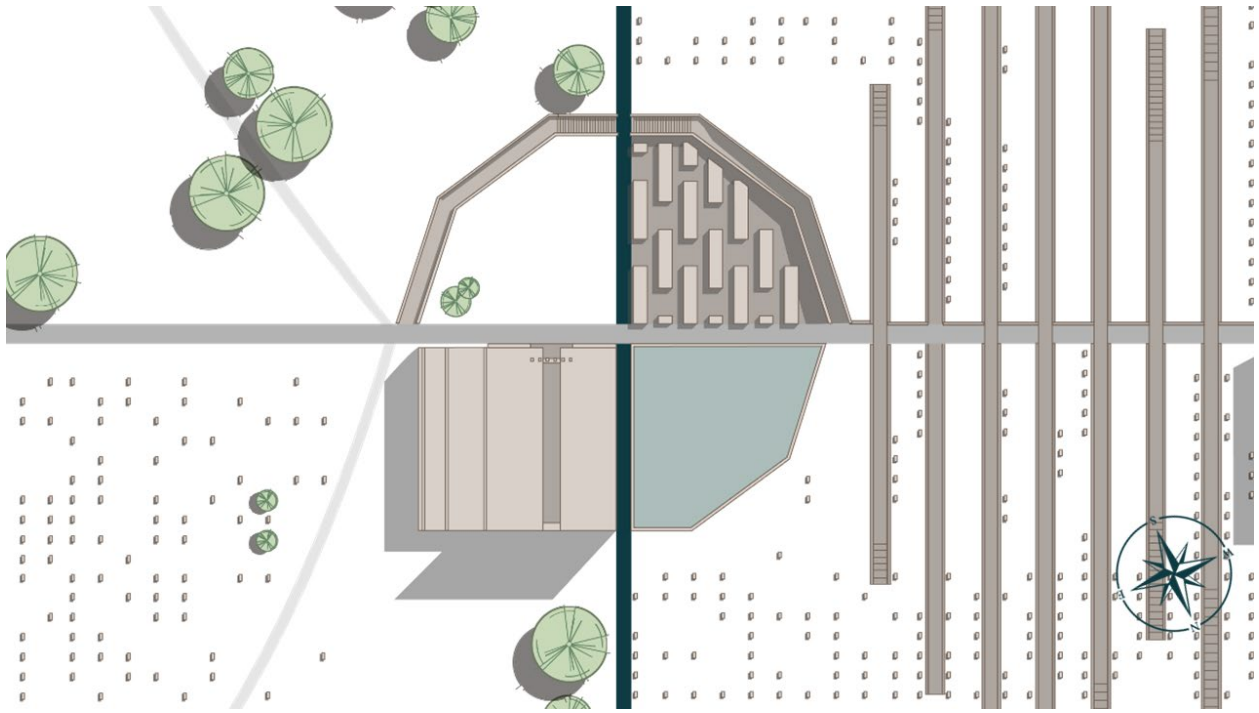


Figure 4.2.2.8 Mausoleum and Sanctum Site Plan

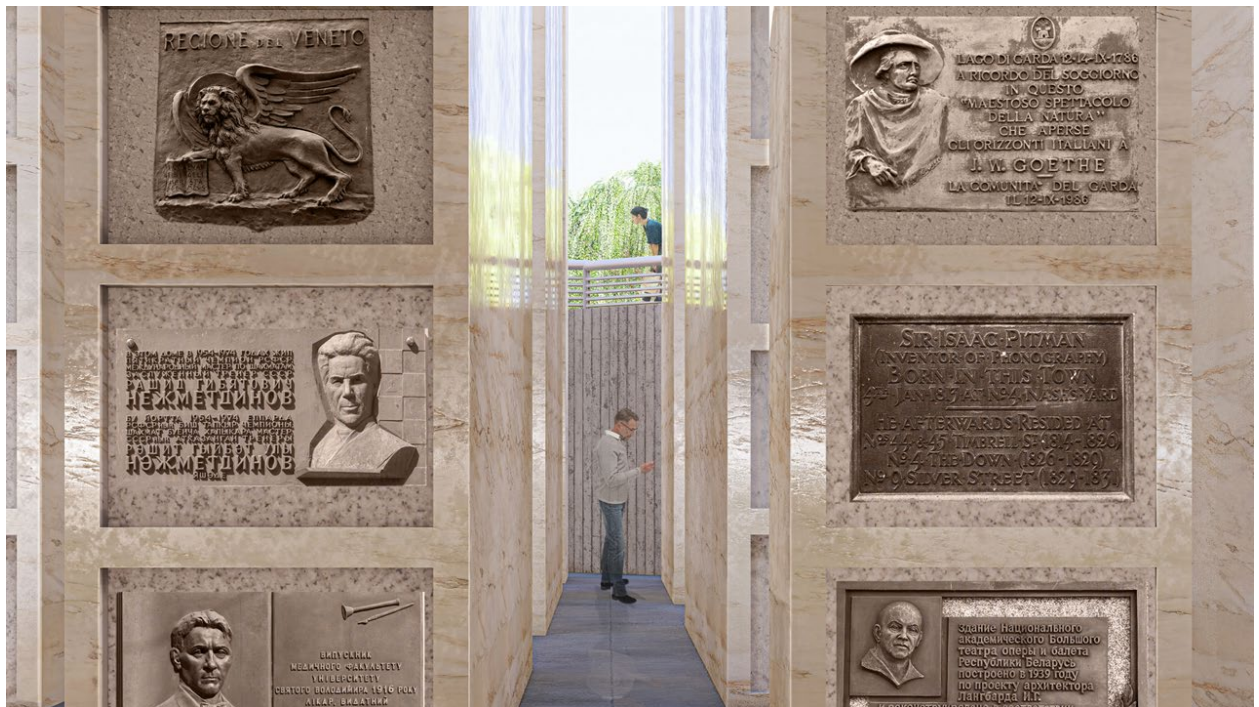


Figure 4.2.2.9 Mausoleum Perspective

After the burial, it is likely that a gathering would take place. The perideipnon, or the post-funeral gathering, is when the Greeks would spend time together, share stories, reminisce, and draw comfort from one another. The sanctum, a safe space to grieve the loss of loved ones, is located in the center of the site, near the mausoleum and past the memorial walks. (Figure 4.2.2.10) The top floor of the sanctum features a cast of a Unitarian Universalist church, home of the congregation of the First Church in Salem. (Figure 4.2.2.11) Taking this fragment of history and time and integrating it into new construction brings the memories of comfort with it. Across the sanctum sits a reflection pool for a different grief experience, and an outdoor lawn in front of the sanctum for outdoor gatherings. The bottom floor, level with the mausoleum, is a digital directory, not only used for wayfinding or locating grave sites or memorial lights, but as an archive, a collection of stories linked to the map submitted by loved ones, a way for them to connect at any point, date, or time.



Figure 4.2.2.10 Sanctum and Mausoleum Perspective



Figure 4.2.2.11 The First Church of Salem, Unitarian Universalist Church
(Source: firstchurchinsalem.org, 2023)

The fourth and final events of the journey are the Acts of Remembrance, which are meant to give the mourning a way to physically engage and express their feelings. They did this by creating grave markers, decorating, or leaving offerings. On Fort Lee Cemetery, the Acts of Remembrance are celebrated in a designated memory museum. The memory museum is a collection of donated personal items from those whose final resting place is the cemetery. Much like the memorial walls, as the years go on, the memory museum gains more life and collects more stories. As these stories are added to the collection, the collective narrative changes and adapts, offering an opportunity for many diverse and unique visits to the museum. The museum can be a place to spark memories, encapsulating them into tangible items, and allows for precious moments of remembrance. The floor plan of the museum allows for galleries to be placed in pockets, which can be seen individually, or the farther that someone walks along and through the pathway, many exhibits can be seen at once, symbolizing a journey through life.

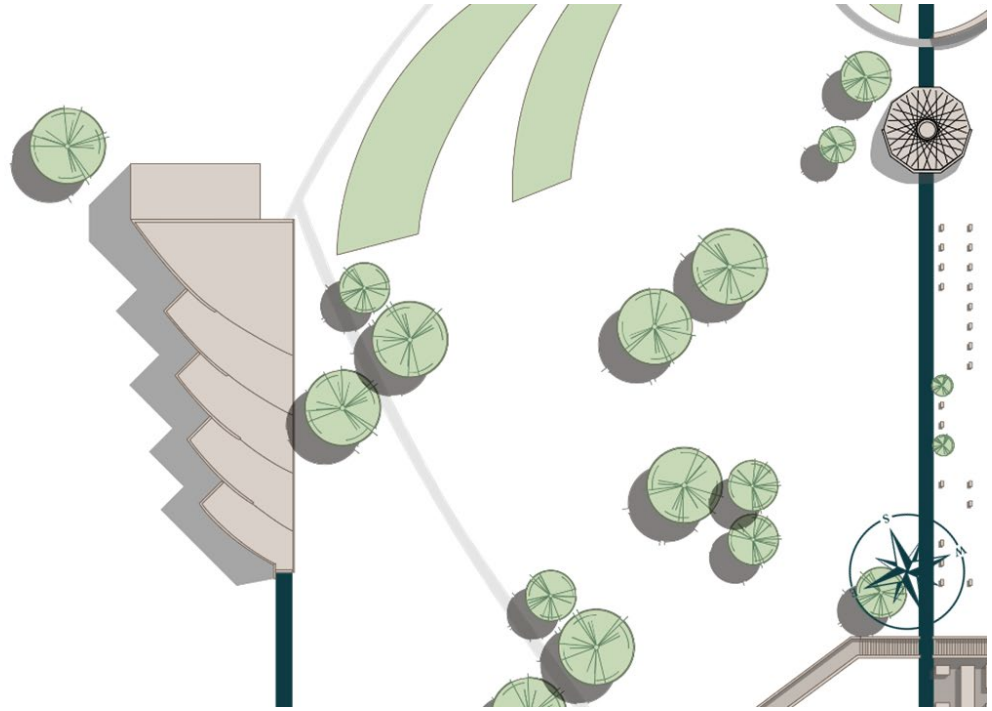


Figure 4.2.2.12 Memory Museum Site Plan



Figure 4.2.2.13 Memory Museum Exhibit Space, New



Figure 4.2.2.14 Memory Museum Exhibit Space, Middle-Age



Figure 4.2.2.15 Memory Museum Exhibit Space, Old

When not at the site for a ceremony, there are a multitude of different ways to experience the site. Although the site is aligned and designed in a linear and parallel manner, the experiences taking place in the cemetery don't necessarily need to happen in a linear fashion. The site has many connecting pathways and winding sidewalks to create a new experience for the site, reminiscent of the bike trails that used to be on site. For casual visitation, a long procession through the middle of the site starts at the crematorium. The placement of this building as a welcome is intentional and carefully thought out. Walking between the two buildings creates a new perspective or hinge point. The first building many people visit after death is a building many have never imagined being in or walking through. This shift of mindset, which may be subtle, can change the way many think about the journey through the cemetery.

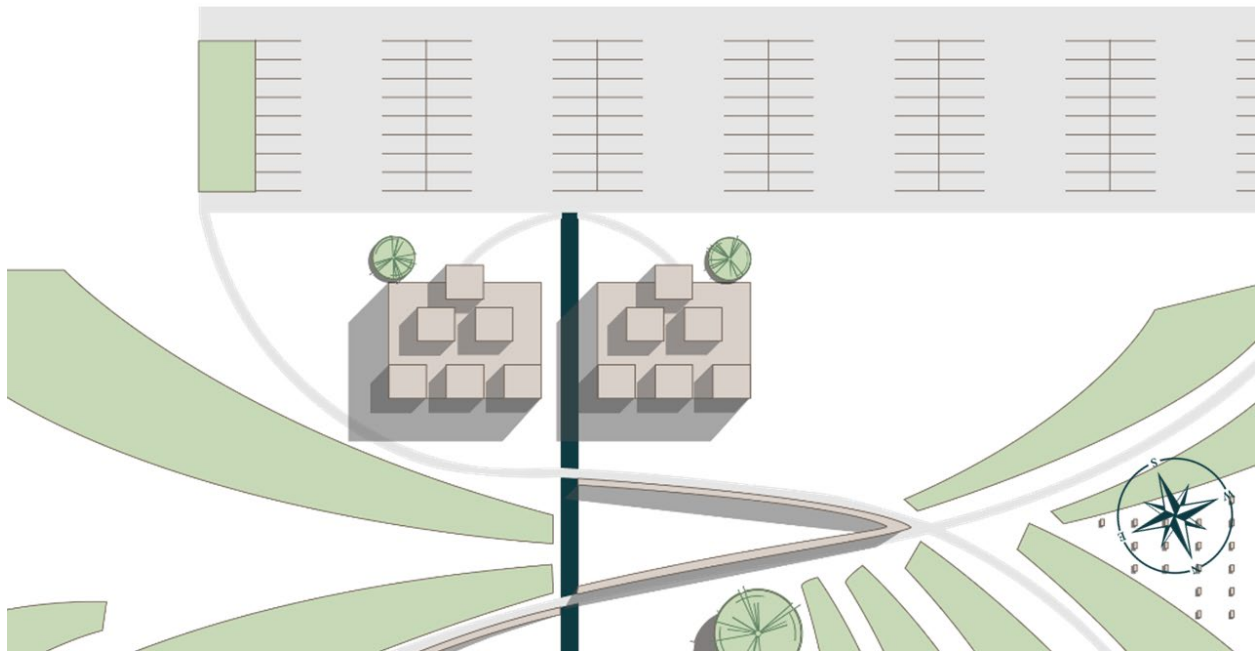


Figure 4.2.2.16 Crematorium Site Plan



Figure 4.2.2.17 Crematorium Perspective

Continuing along the path, five gates should be passed under when making the way up the approach. These gates and their respective green walls serve as permanent memorial spots, or representative resting places, for the many people in Salem throughout time that didn't receive the right to a marked, permanent resting place. Those who have died at Proctor's Ledge, Ipswich Jail, Salem Almshouse, Salem Quarantine Hospital, and in the chemical fire of the Korn Leather Company will always have a distinct place for memorialization and flowers abundantly surrounding them. The form of this approach was inspired by the path through Salem Commons, a historical and recognizable landmark for the locals, ensuring a sense of familiarity and comfort.

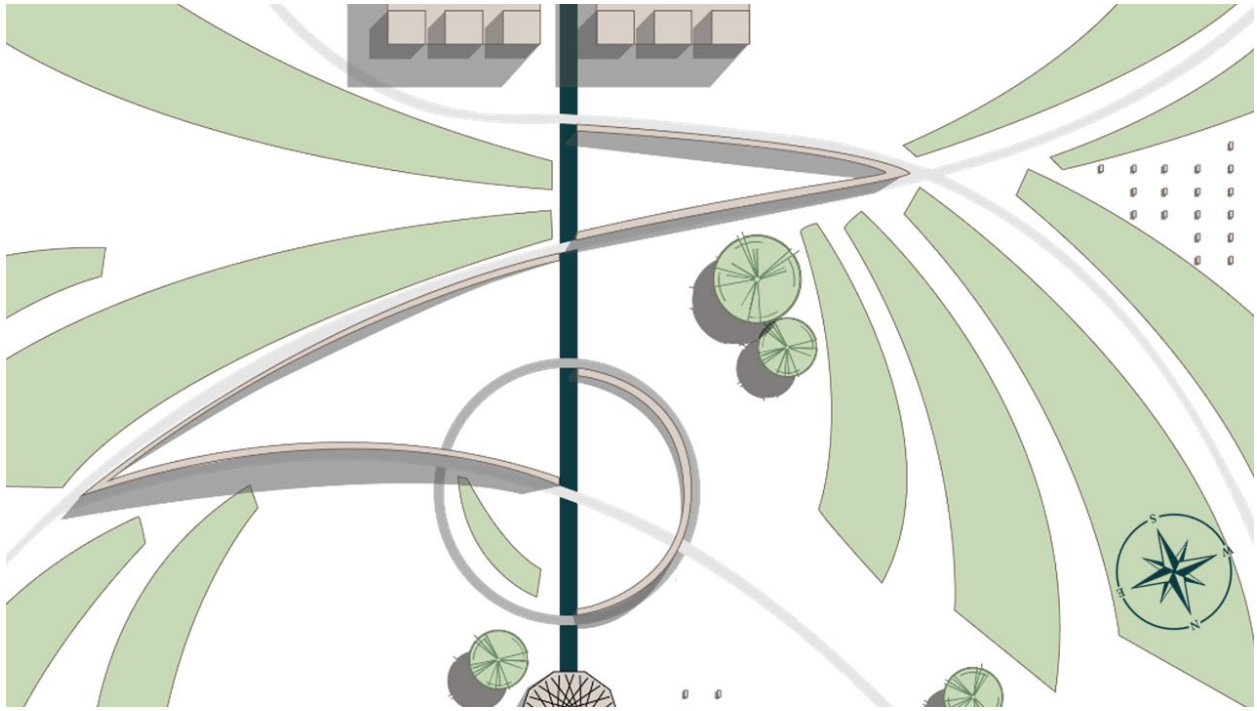


Figure 4.2.2.18 Landscape Memorial Procession Site Plan



Figure 4.2.2.19 Landscape Memorial Procession Perspective

Pavilions modeled after the Proctor’s Ledge Memorial Building are placed throughout the sites. They call on bodily memory and scale to connect the Proctor’s Ledge Memorial site to Fort Lee Cemetery. By doing this, the design invites comparisons and contrasts between the two sites, highlighting the different approaches to the representation of history, present, and future. In more practical programmatic uses, the pavilions could be used for shade, gatherings, or just a place to sit and relax.



Figure 4.2.2.20 Proctor’s Ledge Memorial Building Pavilion Perspective

Following the path through the mausoleum and sanctum brings visitors to Fort Lee. While Fort Lee is kept mostly separate from the cemetery to keep its identity intact, it is a good place to wrap up the journey of memorialization, especially for locals, as the Fort can evoke many different memories and narratives of Salem before the cemetery was built. The locals began with their memories of Fort Lee, and they can end with a new perspective of the collective design.

4.3. Conclusions

Allowing interactions, grieving cycles, and celebrations of life within the design is essential. Most importantly, these experiences must happen in tandem with one another for the success of this proposal. The vibrancy of a fulfilling life does not exist and cannot exist without a connection with death. This place and the people that dwell here, either grieving, celebrating, living, dying, stranger or friend, is a gravitational point that rips down the veil between the realms of the living and the dead. Dying well is to have lived well. An example must be set using architecture and interactions, and soon after, the connection may be bridged in the lives of individuals.

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