From Design to Completion: The Transformation of U.S. War Memorials on the National Mall

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FROM DESIGN TO COMPLETION: THE TRANSFORMATION OF U.S. WAR MEMORIALS ON THE NATIONAL MALL

by

Sara Jane Weintraub

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Art History in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

2017
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by

Sara Jane Weintraub

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Art History in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
Abstract

FROM DESIGN TO COMPLETION: THE TRANSFORMATION OF U.S. WAR MEMORIALS ON THE NATIONAL MALL

by

Sara Jane Weintraub

Advisor: Harriet F. Senie

This dissertation looks at U.S. war memorials on the National Mall built between 1983 – present. Each memorial designer was selected through an open design competition process and was subject to the same government approval processes. The Commission of Fine Arts (CFA), the National Capitol Monuments Commission (NCMC), and the National Park Service (NPS) all must approve memorials built on the National Mall. In some cases, the memorials shared project architects and sponsoring agencies. The case studies show that the design competition process ultimately shapes the meaning and appearance of the built memorials.

I argue that the guidelines, winning design, sponsoring agency, jury, and approval processes are all mitigating factors in the appearance and meaning of contemporary memorials designed through a competition process, and that the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (1982), the Korean War Veterans Memorial (1995), and the National World War II Memorial (2004) present three models of transformation prompted by the design competition and implementation process. Each case study analyzes the way in which sponsoring agencies reshaped the designs throughout the process, with the consequence that content was driven by the intervening agencies as opposed to the winning designers.
Acknowledgements

I appreciate the help and support of many friends, faculty and colleagues, and institutions throughout the writing of this dissertation. This project began in a seminar on memorials taught by Professor Harriet Senie at the Graduate Center, CUNY. I am immeasurably grateful to my advisor, Professor Senie, for her support, encouragement, and guidance throughout the project. My dissertation advisers at the Graduate Center including Professors Harriet Senie, Sally Webster, Katherine Manthorne, and Jennifer Wingate helped to craft this project and gave me much-needed feedback. I benefited from research opportunities at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. and the National Archives and Records Administration in College Park, Maryland. The American Battle Monuments Commission generously granted me access to the National World War II Memorial records at their headquarters in Arlington, Virginia. Many individuals kindly volunteered to speak with me about the design competitions, and I am particularly grateful to William Lecky, Paul Spreiregen, and Colonel William Weber. I would also like to thank my peers at the Graduate Center including Jennifer Favorite, Sheila Gerami, Cara Jordan, and Marisa Lehrer for their support and friendship. Finally, I would like to thank my husband and daughters for inspiring me every day.
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INTRODUCTION

From Marian Anderson’s 1939 concert that launched the Civil Rights Movement on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial to the commemorative display of the AIDS quilt on October 11, 1987, the National Mall in Washington, D.C., is “the one place, above all, where people come to find the nation and to engage with it as citizens.”¹ The story of the United States is told on the National Mall through its memorial landscape. While initially that narrative was told primarily through memorials to great leaders of democracy,² that focus shifted during a period of zealous memorialization from 1982 to 2004 when three major U.S. war memorials were constructed on the National Mall: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial (VVM, 1982) (Fig. 1.1), the Korean War Veterans Memorial (KWVM, 1995) (Fig. 1.2), and the National World War II Memorial (NWWIIM, 2004) (Fig. 1.3).³ Each was commissioned through an open, democratic design competition process—a process thought befitting to the task of building on the National Mall. But each also resulted in a memorial that differed dramatically from the winning submission. How and why this transpired is the subject of this dissertation.

These memorials have been the focus of extensive critical attention and scholarly review from cultural critics and art historians. But as with the previous memorials, built by major

² For example, major memorials built on the Mall prior to 1982 include the Washington Monument (1848-1884), the Lincoln Memorial (1922), and the Thomas Jefferson Memorial (1943).
³ Erika Doss describes the obsessive memorial-making period in the U.S. after VVM. Erika Doss, Memorial Mania: Public Feelings in America (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2010).
architects and sculptors dedicated to famous men, such writings focused on the memorial as a work of architecture, analyzing the esthetic effectiveness of the structure as an expression of values. Most of this commentary has failed to take into account the history of the competitions that led to these memorials, and significantly, failed to address the process of review and approvals that determined the final appearance of the projects.\(^4\)

This dissertation centers on primary source material including narrative reconstruction and archival research of the three design competitions including the VVM records at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.; the KWVM records at the National Archives and Records Administration in College Park, Maryland; and the American Battle Monuments Commission records of the NWWIIM at their headquarters in Arlington, Virginia.\(^5\) I examined the meeting

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\(^5\) Records of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD. Records of the National World War II Memorial, American Battle Monuments Commission, Arlington, VA. I consulted the latter records in the offices of the American Battle Monuments Commission prior to their transfer to the National Archives and
minutes of sponsoring agencies in order to determine how competition guidelines and juries were assembled, jury selection reports to consider why certain designs were chosen and others rejected, and correspondence files related to the approval process to better understand why and how adaptations were made to winning designs. I studied the design submissions for each competition to determine how these may have been shaped by the guidelines, and looked at which designs were selected in the final rounds to better determine jury mindset. Interviews with participating parties were critical in understanding the design competition and implementation process in each case study. I conducted personal and telephone interviews with project architects, winning designers, jury members, board members, sponsoring agency representatives, and a competition advisor.6

Consulting an alternative body of records, including architects’ correspondence, meetings of sponsoring organizations, and congressional records surrounding the approval process was also key because they relate both the design competition and implementation process to the appearance and content of these memorials. By also referencing traditional art historical source materials such as art and architectural historical journals and books, a more complete, alternative understanding of these memorial projects emerges. These varied sources revealed the impact of the competition and implementation process on these particular memorials, and identified the diverse factors at play in each. This dissertation ultimately argues that in order to understand the final form and meaning of any commemorative project, one must consider not only the memorial in its final physical form but also consider it as the outcome of a process, involving multiple

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6 These interviews include VVM and KWVM project architects, Kent Cooper and William Lecky; KWVM winning designer, John Lucas; KWVM jury members Lauren Ewing and William Weber (also a board member); ABMC representative Mike Conley; and VVM competition advisor, Paul D. Spreiregen.
stakeholders with varying degrees of influence, as well as the expression of the context (physical as well as mythic) in which the memorial exists.

**The National Mall as Commemorative Space**

The three contemporary U.S. war memorials considered in this dissertation have in common their location on the National Mall. The history of this site—its transformation from a series of small, forested parks into a grand commemorative space and even pilgrimage site—is germane to this study, as it reveals the way in which concepts of collective nationalism have become concretized in National Mall memorials from the earliest days of the Capitol through intervening agencies during the design competition process.

In 1791, President George Washington hired Pierre L’Enfant to create a plan for the new capitol city on the Potomac River. Mirroring the system of checks and balances in the newly formed American republic, L’Enfant’s Baroque plan for the city lacked a centralized point of power. Modeled on the French city of Paris, his grand monumental scheme for the city of Washington included a formal geometric pattern with a rigid rectangular grid and broad diagonal avenues linking the dominant buildings in key positions. L’Enfant’s plan envisioned the National Mall as a public walking space, a garden promenade with a dog-leg connection between the President’s House and the seat of Congress—not a monumental space of commemoration.

L’Enfant’s vision for the National Mall wasn’t implemented until the 1901 McMillan plan established the wide, open vista between the Potomac and Capitol and extended the park to include the river’s tidal flats. The Senate Park Commission (also known as the McMillan Commission, named after the Michigan Senator James McMillan who led the effort to create a park improvement plan for the district based on L’Enfant’s original vision) proposed the
McMillan plan. The Commission included the architects Daniel Burnham and Charles Follen McKim, the landscape designer Frederick Law Olmstead, and the sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens. All were key participants in the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago, which inspired the ambitions of the McMillan Commission and sparked the City Beautiful Movement in the United States based on the idea that good design would inspire urban reform. The grand classical display of architecture and statuary implied continuity between the United States and European classical civilizations. The McMillan plan transformed the Mall into an open space punctuated with vistas incorporating symbols of democracy. Two formal axes cross at a right angle so that the four cardinal points lead to monumental structures, including the domed U.S. Capitol building and the White House. At the time, the Washington Monument (1848 - 84) was the only monument on the Mall, but the Commission proposed balancing the Capitol building and White House with memorials for Lincoln (1922) and Jefferson (1943) and inserting a Reflecting Pool. During the twentieth-century, the National Mall was transformed from a space filled with various monuments and botanical clutter to a more clearly articulated commemorative and utilitarian space.

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8 Technically they proposed building monuments to the nation’s founding fathers at cardinal points.
Memorials to Great Leaders

This important commemorative space developed through the creation of a series of heroic memorials to great leaders of American democracy: George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Thomas Jefferson. Expressing a core belief of his day, Thomas Carlyle wrote in 1840, “The history of the world is but the biography of great men.”¹⁰ The British author described history as a series of events determined by the decisions and actions of individual heroes. The earliest memorials on the National Mall came out of this nineteenth-century notion of heroism defined by the greatness of individual men. The commemorative aesthetic of the great men memorials was shaped by the nineteenth-century motivation to publically depict the nation through sanctification of its heroic democratic leaders.

The first monument on the National Mall erected in honor of George Washington (1732-99), the nation’s first president, set the tone for the commemorative landscape. The Washington Monument (1848-85) (Fig. 1.4) became “the fixed, unchanging point around which [the McMillan Commission] wove their dream of a new monumental core.”¹¹ Robert Mills based the 555 ½ foot white marble shaft on the ancient Egyptian obelisk. His original plan (of 1833) included a huge Doric peristyle at the base of the obelisk mounted by an equestrian statue of George Washington, but the monument took fifty years to build with several interruptions and various iterations.¹² Army architect Lieutenant Colonel Thomas L. Casey simplified the plan in 1876 and eliminated the base, so the memorial as completed (more than 50 years after it was initially designed) is less ornate than Mill’s neo-classical plan.

¹¹ Savage, Monument Wars: Washington D.C., the National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape, 4.
¹² The intermittent hiatus was caused by a lack of funds, political turmoil, and uncertainty about the survival of the American Union at the outbreak of the Civil War.
The history of this monument highlights the aesthetic challenges posed by the public memorialization of democratic leaders. In an article on the gradual transformation of the monument, Kirk Savage notes that, after Washington’s death, a “dispute over the nature of the republic” arose, prompting him to consider the first president as a historical invention. As a result, “erecting a national monument to Washington ultimately demanded a symbolic construction of America.” The memorial changed throughout the design process as George Washington’s memory and memorial became symbolic battlegrounds for the disparate interpretations of national identity. Looking to European precedents without referencing monarchy or absolute power, the earliest monument makers were challenged with how to depict the father figure of American democracy. Still, the built monument stands as a phallic and powerful reference to the greatness of the first president and thus, asserts the greatness of the nation.

Architect Henry Bacon and sculptor Daniel Chester French also looked to classical sources in memorializing Abraham Lincoln with a Greek Doric temple and figurative sculpture. The site and design for the Lincoln Memorial (1922) (Fig. 1.5) grew out of the McMillan Commission. The memorial features a solitary nineteen-foot statue of a seated Abraham Lincoln in contemplation, flanked by a circular temple form decorated with inscriptions taken from his Gettysburg address. The interior of the space is deliberately stark so that the viewer’s attention remains focused on the seated figure. Much like the deities revered in Greek temples, the Lincoln Memorial enshrines and sanctifies the former president as a heroic figure.

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14 Ibid.
When the Lincoln Memorial Commission presented Bacon’s design to Congress, there was some debate over the best way to commemorate the sixteenth president, who was known for preserving the Union during the Civil War and for abolishing slavery. Other proposals included the Gettysburg Road Plan, a design for a highway lined with commemorative statuary and connecting Gettysburg with Washington.\textsuperscript{15} Henry Bacon’s design passed by a great majority, although not unanimously, in 1913.\textsuperscript{16} Ultimately, the heroic aesthetic prevailed.

Like the Washington Monument designers, Bacon and French were challenged with how best to depict and commemorate Lincoln.\textsuperscript{17} The need to represent Lincoln as both ideal and real at the same time would similarly plague later designers. Here, the great man aesthetic is evident in the way that Lincoln gazes off into the distant future, beyond the National Mall and other memorials, and also in the large scale of the seated figure on his throne within a stark temple. Lincoln was the first American president to be widely photographed, but the long exposure times make him appear frozen and inaccessible. French adjusted the ideal portrait by softening its features, adding an unbuttoned coat, square-toed shoes, rough hair, and a beard. The sculpture was originally intended to be ten feet but enlarged to nineteen feet to adjust the proportions to the large space. These negotiations over the scale and aesthetic depiction of the great leader, which at that time was contained within the Lincoln Memorial Commission (consulting with the Commission of Fine Arts) magnified as the century went on, as additional parties with vested interest became involved in the design competition process for National Mall memorials.

\textsuperscript{15} Congress feared the costs associated with building such a road. This un-built proposal foreshadows the living memorial trend of the post-war era. For more on living memorials see Andrew M. Shanken, “Living Memorials in the United States during World War II,” \textit{The Art Bulletin} 84:1 (March 2002): 130-47.


\textsuperscript{17} For more on the aesthetic representation of Lincoln, see Christopher A. Thomas, \textit{The Lincoln Memorial and American Life} (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).
Memorial content is determined by public use. Historian Scott Sandage explains, the Civil Rights Movement adopted the symbolism of the Lincoln Memorial. Marion Anderson’s 1939 concert performance on the steps of the memorial, after she was barred from performing at Constitution Hall because of her race, succinctly epitomized the way the Lincoln Memorial was appropriated by the movement. The fact that Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his now-famous “I have a Dream” speech on the site on August 28, 1963, at the end of the March on Washington, only confirmed the site’s perceived centrality to the Civil Rights Movement. The public utilization of the memorials on the National Mall has contributed to the commemorative quality of the site generally. Historian Nathan Glazer describes the National Mall on a trajectory from L’Enfant’s garden vision to a grand depiction of the City Beautiful movement and finally to a pilgrimage site where visitors come to engage with monuments and democratic symbols of the nation. Anthropologist Edith Turner analyzes the way in which the National Mall has become “the people’s home ground,” and what meaning can be imparted from the public space.\(^\text{18}\)

Looking towards the Lincoln Memorial from the base of Capitol Hill, the Ulysses S. Grant Memorial (1902-1924) (Fig. 1.6) is another work designed in the heroic tradition. The large bronze equestrian sculpture of Union General Ulysses S. Grant is flanked by artillery and cavalry soldiers. Like the classical Roman monuments of great leaders on horseback, sculptor Henry Shrady and architect Edward Casey depicted an equestrian Grant on top of a pedestal with bronze reliefs of infantry. The viewer is forced to look up at the great sculptural grouping, emphasizing the greatness of its subject. In contrast to contemporary U.S. war memorials on the

National Mall portraying events, the Grant Memorial commemorates its subject, Grant and the Civil War as a heroic leader in the tradition of the great men memorials.

The Jefferson Memorial (1943) (Fig. 1.7) similarly epitomizes the tradition of heroic monuments for great men drawing upon the language of classicism. While constructed in the twentieth-century, architect John Russell Pope looked back to the nineteenth-century commemorative landscape and a template of forms from the historic past that were used in the great men memorials: the obelisk for Washington, for example, and the columns of Lincoln. Pope constructed a Pantheon-inspired neoclassical domed temple encircled by an Ionic colonnade based on the rotunda that Thomas Jefferson designed for the University of Virginia. Sculptor Rudulph Evan’s nineteen-foot bronze figurative portrait of Jefferson, in knee breaches and a fur-collared coat, stands at the center of the white classical structure. The heroic president is surrounded by symbols of his agrarian and intellectual pursuits (such as books and corn) as well as by quotes from the Declaration of Independence, which he authored.

The administration of Franklin Delano Roosevelt adopted Jefferson as a democratic symbol, drawing parallels between the 1933 New Deal Program and the expansive vision of the Declaration of Independence and Louisiana Purchase. An aesthetic conflict between traditionalism and modernism ensued during the building of the memorial. After World War I and the Great Depression, the neoclassical monument lost steam. Not only did it seem outdated aesthetically but also extravagant from a financial perspective; its $3 million price tag raised

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objections. The Presidential support for the memorial fueled the debate about its final form, and in 1937 Congress withdrew its funding.

In addition to the memorial’s aesthetics, criticism was lodged against its commissioning process, and in particular, the secrecy which shrouded Pope’s selection. Some argued that an open design competition would have been more in line with Jefferson’s own democratic philosophy. Public perception interestingly aligned the open competition process with the democratic ideals of the United States. This early discussion surrounding the Jefferson Memorial commission underscores an emerging consciousness about how the democratic competition process might influence the creation of a national commemorative space, and it foreshadows later debates over building on the National Mall.

Prior to 1910 no federal agency or board reviewed monument proposals for the National Mall. Instead, they were built by small, politically connected groups, for example veterans’ organizations or the Washington National Monument Society. But in that year, President William Howard Taft formed the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA). Its presidentially-

20 Frank Lloyd Wright criticized: “The total confession of impotence that no ignorance whatever can excuse to the young American that will be taxed to pay the bills.” Frank Lloyd Wright, quoted in Judith Dupre, Monuments: America’s History in Art and Memory (New York: Random House, 2007), 116.


22 In January 1909, a committee of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) asked President Theodore Roosevelt to form an independent federal agency to advise the government on architecture and artistic works requiring design. Roosevelt established a Council of Fine Arts made up of 30 members selected by the AIA. President William Howard Taft revoked the Council of Fine Arts legislation after a single meeting due to some speculated funding controversy. See “Art Council No More.” Washington Post, May 27, 1990. Taft established the Commission of Fine Arts in May 1910 as a reviewing (as opposed to an approval) authority made up of seven members selected by the President. Daniel H. Burnham served as the first chairman of the CFA in 1910. Subsequent Presidents expanded the CFA’s
appointed commissioners—a combination of arts professionals and prominent architects—were charged with advising on design and aesthetics issues in federal construction projects. Pope was criticized because he had served on the Commission, which apparently suggested to the public that his selection as architect of the Jefferson Memorial was influenced by some sort of agency bias, or by his familiarity with the construction process on the National Mall. The aesthetic wars over the commemorative representation of Jefferson signaled the first challenge to CFA’s authority over designs built on federal property in Washington, D.C.

The CFA, for its part, was concerned that the pantheon scheme was antithetical to the McMillan Plan, in terms of its obtrusive impact on the vistas. Pope submitted two alternate designs which the CFA preferred, but neither was built. In the making of the Jefferson Memorial, then, the impact of agency intervention in National Mall memorials is felt for the very first time. The issue of intervention will become increasingly critical in the design competition processes that followed, surrounding the commissioning, approval, and implementation of contemporary war memorials.

From Great Men to Experiential Memorials

A paradigm shift in the content of memorials away from the “great man” typology occurred at mid-century, beginning with the planning process for the Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) Memorial (1991) (Fig. 1.8). Ultimately designed by Lawrence Halprin, the memorial represents a transitional format between the early heroic typology and a subsequent mode that responsibilities to include greater aesthetic purview within Washington, D.C. Sue A. Koehler, The Commission of Fine Arts, A Brief History: 1910-1955 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, 1996).

23 John Russell Pope was a member of the Commission of Fine Arts from 1917-1922. He served as Vice Chairman during his last year on the CFA.
characterizes the case studies examined in this dissertation. Although the original impetus for
the memorial was to commemorate a former democratic leader in the grand manner, the final
result consists of a series of landscaped spaces representing President Roosevelt’s four terms in
office, each with figurative sculpture the viewer can move around and explore. The product of a
genuine design competition, Halprin’s memorial design and its creation set the stage for the
ensuing discussion of contemporary competition memorials built on the National Mall.

The intellectual cultural trend underpinning the memorial paradigm shift occurred at the
turn of the twentieth-century when the “great man” conception of historical progress was
replaced by the belief that circumstances create history. Herbert Spencer was one of the earliest
critics of Carlyle’s theories, writing in 1889, "[Y]ou must admit that the genesis of a great man
depends on the long series of complex influences which has produced the race in which he
appears, and the social state into which that race has slowly grown.... Before he can re-make his
society, his society must make him."24 Spencer suggests that great men are primarily products of
their social environment and that their actions would be impossible without the social conditions
built before them. Whereas the early memorials on the National Mall commemorate the heroism
of the individual men they sanctify, the contemporary war memorials signify a new way of
looking at commemoration on the Mall. No longer the static image of history, the contemporary
memorials honor historic events with a new typology of memorials which emphasize human
experience.

The Roosevelt Memorial Commission sponsored a national design competition in 1959,
which received 574 submissions for its secluded 66-acre site in West Potomac Park next to the

New York architects Pedersen and Tilney won the competition with a cluster of eight large, concrete stelae incised with Roosevelt’s best-known quotations. But disparaging the winning design as an “instant Stonehenge,” the CFA rejected the scheme out of concern that it was not harmonious with the other memorials on the Mall. Roosevelt’s children rejected a scaled-down version of Pedersen and Tiney’s competition-winning design and commissioned a new design from Marcel Breuer. Breuer’s proposal was particularly innovative for the time, featuring a pinwheel arrangement of seven tapered triangular stone forms pointing to a 32-foot, dark granite cube inscribed with the president’s portrait. Perhaps foreshadowing the experiential quality that would soon appear in contemporary memorials, Breuer’s proposal included a sound element—excerpts from FDR’s speeches, played on loud speakers. The CFA also vetoed this design, in 1969.

In 1990, a design by Lawrence Halprin finally won CFA approval. Dispensing with the competition structure, the CFA directly commissioned the work from Halprin. His landscape-based design presented Roosevelt’s presidency as a narrative encapsulated in a series of so-called

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25 Technically the FDR Memorial is located on a site just south of the National Mall. Competition guidelines necessitated a relationship to the National Mall, however, and as part of the commemorative landscape it is within the sphere of this discussion.
27 In an interesting prefiguration of the site-specific, environmental quality of the VVM, Breuer described his design at the January 1967 CFA presentation as “something that flows from the land and disappears into the land, very much a part of the land itself, an earth-and-nature-bound piece.” Dupre, Monuments, 179. The audio component prefigures the contemporary impulse to add multi-media and experiential components to built memorials. For more on this trend, see Paul Williams, Memorial Museums: The Global Rush to Commemorate Atrocities (Oxford, New York: Berg, 2007).
28 In addition to the design debates, there were budgetary restrictions during the Vietnam War era that delayed the FDR Memorial in the intervening 21 years.
rooms traversed by the viewer.\textsuperscript{29} This participatory element replaced the strictly viewing quality of earlier “great man” memorials on the Mall. Neil Estern’s sculpture in the third room of the memorial depicts the former president with his chin raised, swathed in a large cape with arms folded over his chair and elevated on a platform; although posturing in the manner of a king, Roosevelt’s haggard face presents a less idealized figure. The memorial continued to change even after it was built, becoming even less of an idealized portrayal as Robert Graham’s sculpture of Roosevelt in a wheelchair was added in 2001 in response to protests by the National Organization on Disability.\textsuperscript{30}

Whereas earlier memorials on the National Mall commemorate the heroism of the individual men they sanctify, contemporary war memorials built after Roosevelt’s memorial conform to a new model of commemoration on the Mall. No longer a static image of men in history, the contemporary memorials honor historic events with experiential memorials. Andrew Shanken considers the “living memorial” trend in the United States after World War II as presenting an alternative to the problem of figuration and monuments. The art historian writes, “Traditional memorials seemed inert, unproductive, and obsolete…. [T]he living memorial idea

\textsuperscript{29} Although the FDR Memorial began its competition decades before the war memorials on the Mall, construction began after the VVM was already completed. The influence of the VVM on the finished product is evident in the way that the FDR Memorial can be read as an extended narrative: the viewer traverses the landscaped rooms of the completed design representing the chronology of FDR’s presidency.

shifted the very object of memorialization, edging away from sacrifice, victory, war, and death toward issues of community and democracy, invoking important elements of national identity in the United States.” The FDR Memorial design competition took place in the wake of the living memorial movement as designers sought new forms of utilitarian commemoration that incorporated public participation. In contrast to earlier monolithic and heroic structures of commemoration, the FDR Memorial represents that transition towards a viewer interaction with the commemorative structure in an outdoor environment.

If traditionally figurative monuments had resulted largely from the direct commission process of the previous era, the more experiential memorial spaces of the contemporary war memorials built on the National Mall would coincide with a rise in popularity of the competition process. The aesthetic issues surrounding how best to represent a democratic leader which held up the construction of the FDR Memorial surfaced within the context of another consideration: how might competing parties effectively advocate for their interests and visions within the competition-based design and agency implementation processes now adherent to memorial building on the National Mall?

From the mid-century forward, the Mall would be treated as sacred ground, where upon disparate groups would exert influence or intervene in order to shape the national commemorative landscape. The CFA played a key role in this process, and thus, in shaping the aesthetic landscape of the commemorative space on the National Mall. As J. Carter Brown, the former chairman of the CFA during the VVM and KWVM competitions once remarked, the agency served as “the single most important force in the Mall’s development.” But they would

31 Shanken, 144.
not constitute the only force: in addition to the CFA, architects, designers, other government agencies, special interest groups, political figures, veterans, and even family members of those participating in specific conflicts or events would come to exert substantial influence on the commemorative landscape.

War Memorials on the Mall

All of the war memorials built on the National Mall resulted from architectural design competitions rather than commissions assigned to a single artist or architect. Each belongs to the new category of living memorials, described by historian James E. Young as “changing and adapting to [their] environment.” The first to appear, Maya Ying Lin’s minimalist design for the VVM (1982) disrupted the conventions that dominated the Mall. In contrast to white, neoclassical structures that emphasize power by projecting vertically, Lin’s dark, abstract monument consists of two granite walls that descend into the earth; its apex, where the walls meet, reaches just over ten feet. They form a V-shape pointing toward the great men monuments to Washington and Lincoln and referencing the larger landscape and context of the site. Each wall has seventy-two panels of seventy names each, listed chronologically according to death date, and two very small blank panels at the extremities. The viewer encounters her own

33 One might argue that the D.C. War Memorial (1931) is the first war memorial on the National Mall, however, the small monument does not commemorate a specific war, nor does it memorialize particular individuals. Located just south of the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool, its circular domed Doric temple honors District of Columbia residents who fought in World War I. It is worth noting that there is a proposed memorial for World War I on the Pershing Plaza site, adjacent to the National Mall. The design competition took place in 2016.

34 James E. Young contrasts this “changing and adapting” memorial to Lewis Mumford’s notion of the “static” monument; see James E. Young, The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 4. Young’s characterization of living memorials differs from Shanken’s discussion of the post-war living memorial trend. Shanken, 144.
reflection superimposed on the chronology of slain veterans’ names on the memorial, which
eschews any direct political statement about the controversial war. It is this capacity to redirect
the viewer’s focus from the subject of the monument to one’s self as that distinguishes it from
earlier memorials and established it as the model for all else that follows. Within the scholarly
literature, the appearance of the VVM in 1982 marks the transitional moment between self-
contained monumentality and phenomenological memorialization, and to this day represents the
paradigmatic project of postmodern memorialization, which derives meaning from the context
and experience of the viewer in addition to that of the built object.\footnote{On the VVM as a postmodern memorial, see Carol Blair, Marsha S. Jeppeson, and Enrico Pucci, Jr., “Public Memorializing in Postmodernity: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial as Prototype,” \textit{Quarterly Journal of Speech} 77, Issue 3 (1991): 263-288.}

If the VVM was identified as signaling the transition to postmodern memorialization
practices, Lin’s design also is thought to have pioneered a new, influential model in memorial
design. In his 2009 book \textit{Monument Wars}, Savage identifies the VVM as the first therapeutic
memorial.\footnote{Savage, \textit{Monument Wars: Washington D.C., the National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape}, 278.} Although the post-World War II period saw a decline in public monuments, there
was a renewed interest in war memorials after the VVM appeared, spurred by the impact of this
new model of memorialization.\footnote{The VVM is the first new soldier monument in the District of Columbia since 1936 (though
the Marine Corps Memorial was dedicated across the river in Arlington). There were no
monuments erected inside the east-west or north-south axes of the National Mall from 1950-
1980, aside from the Boy Scout Memorial (1964) on the Ellipse, which apparently was forgotten
as soon as it was put up.} The controversial nature of the Vietnam conflict (never
technically designated as a war) presented particular challenges in terms of finding appropriate
visual forms of representation. Savage notes that, the VVM is “the capital’s first true victim
monument—a monument that existed not to glorify the nation but to help its suffering soldiers
heal. Maya Lin’s design has bequeathed to us a therapeutic model of commemoration that has

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\footnote{Savage, \textit{Monument Wars: Washington D.C., the National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape}, 278.}
\footnote{The VVM is the first new soldier monument in the District of Columbia since 1936 (though
the Marine Corps Memorial was dedicated across the river in Arlington). There were no
monuments erected inside the east-west or north-south axes of the National Mall from 1950-
1980, aside from the Boy Scout Memorial (1964) on the Ellipse, which apparently was forgotten
as soon as it was put up.}
become the new common sense of our era.”38 The memorial includes all 58,000 names of the war dead as part of its explicit healing purpose. It is the first comprehensive war memorial in this country dedicated to all (as opposed to a distinguished subset) of U.S. troops involved.

While scholars have shown the way in which the VVM established a new memorial paradigm, they have examined the project without taking into account the full institutional and professional context of the project—the role of the design competition in the construction of the new typology has been overlooked. The historiography of the monument fails to look at the role of the competition advisor and the guidelines, for example.39 Although Lin is typically credited with this concept, closer examination of the logistics of the competition reveal that the therapeutic features of the design were prescribed in the competition program, which stated that the winning memorial must include all of the names and furthermore, refrain from making a political statement about the war. The idea of experiential memorialization was thus intimately linked with the competition process of the VVM’s inception.

The features of the design that developed during the competition process are the qualities of the memorial credited with establishing a new category of memorialization, such as the abstract design and the narrative created by the chronological listing of the names of veterans who lost their lives in Vietnam. By examining in detail the ways in which Lin’s design evolved as a result of the competition process, and specifically, how the design responds to the competition guidelines and the impact of the professional advisor in guiding the design to

38 Savage, Monument Wars: Washington D.C., the National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape, 266.
39 Though architectural historian, Daniel Abramson mentions in a footnote that aspects of the design were “in fact predetermined by the competition design program,” he does so in an article focusing on the winning designer’s innovative use of the timeline feature, and not in a discussion of the way in which Lin’s design resulted from a collective process. Daniel Abramson, “Maya Lin and the 1960s: Monuments, Time Lines, and Minimalism,” Critical Inquiry 22, no. 4 (Summer 1996): 685.
completion, this dissertation sheds new light on the memorial. It also proposes an important methodological strategy, in re-centering the investigation to include an examination of the institutional context and procedures through which memorialization takes place.

The competition process also shaped the content and appearance of the KWVM (1995) and NWWIIM (2004), two very different memorials commemorating two very different wars. In remembrance of the “forgotten” war in Korea, the winning Pennsylvania State University team, BL3, designed a group of bronze figurative sculptures in a multi-part memorial that includes heroic references to active service. The built KWVM includes three major elements meant to cohere in a narrative for the viewer: a sculpture, a mural, and a fountain. Frank Gaylord’s oversized stainless steel soldiers on an unidentified mission are reflected in the granite mural, which is photo-etched with 2,400 images of support staff. The memorial also includes a Pool of Remembrance for soldiers killed, captured, and wounded. The design is novel in that the soldiers are depicted with a sense of realism, as opposed to the classical tradition of idealized equestrian victors, though many aspects of the design (such as the reflective wall) were influenced by the VVM.

In commemoration of World War II, Friedrich St. Florian created a classical design replete with fountains, triumphal arches, and stone columns, as well as geographic references to U.S. globalization. St. Florian’s winning design for the NWWIIM conflates several different styles in commemorating World War II. Midway between the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument, the NWWIIM is the centerpiece on the National Mall, as triumphal American history is literally retold as a narrative of great events as opposed to stories of great individuals. The aesthetic style of the NWWIIM is retardataire, but what makes this design
current is the relationship between the memorial and its site. The site defines the content of the memorial at the same time that its presence reshapes the story of the nation.

Like the VVM, both the KWVM and the NWWIIM fall into the new classification of postmodern, living memorials. But like the story of the VVM, it would be ill conceived to credit the architects of these projects solely with the advancement of this new typology. As with the VVM, the sponsors of these memorials emphasized site in the competition guidelines with stipulations for the preservation of the vista and a harmonious relationship with the other National Mall memorials. These conditions focus on the National Mall site as opposed to the content of the wars themselves. As such, the competition process reshaped the actual content of contemporary commemoration.

Each of the architects associated with the three memorials examined in this dissertation was selected through an open design competition, and each was required to follow the same government approval process. Given its siting on the National Mall, each memorial design required the approval of the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA), the National Capitol Monuments Commission (NCMC), and the National Park Service (NPS). As this dissertation will make clear, the initial submission guidelines and subsequent approvals process contributed directly to the specific form and content of the final memorial as well as to the overall creation of a new paradigm of commemoration pioneered by the contemporary war memorials on the National Mall.

Jury members, sponsors, and various government agencies transformed each memorial through the competition and approvals process. They shaped the presence of these key national

\[40\] In some cases, memorials shared project architects and sponsoring agencies. The Architect of Record for both the VVM and the KWVM was Cooper-Lecky Associates of Washington, D.C. The sponsoring government agency for both the KWVM and the NWWIIM was the American
monuments in such profound ways as to change not only their appearance but also their apparent meanings. In response to veteran-initiated protests over Lin’s abstract design, several additions were made to the VVM. Following the direction of the all-veteran board and jury, the project architect for the KWVM altered the appearance and content of BL3’s design. Cooper-Lecky Associates changed what the winning designers intended as a peaceful march of soldiers towards a flag to a depiction of an active battle scene, prompting a contentious lawsuit between the designers, architects, and KWVM advisory board. The NWWIIM’s sponsoring agency, the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC), made various changes to St. Florian’s design in order to secure government approval for the central Rainbow Pool site on the National Mall. Besides eliminating the subterranean museum space, the alterations replaced mournful elements with manifestations of military power. Thus, historical memory is not directly concretized in memorials by winning designers but rather, is mediated throughout the competition process by competing concepts of events and how they should be represented.

The design competition process shaped the content and meaning of the three contemporary U.S. war memorials on the National Mall. This study of the mitigating factors of the design competition, including guidelines, sponsoring agencies, juries, and approval processes, uncovers a new typology of transformation based on the competition process. There are three models of transformation that emerge: VVM additions that reshape its appearance and perceived meaning, KWVM adaptations that changes its content, and eliminations to the NWWIIM that subverts its intention.

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Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC), a presidentially appointed group of retired military personnel responsible for maintaining U.S. military cemeteries abroad.

41 St. Florian’s original design included large sloping white rose berms and truncated columns reminiscent of nineteenth-century children’s grave markers; these were replaced with a colonnade representing the U.S. territories and triumphal arches with references to battle locations.
CHAPTER 1: DESIGN COMPETITIONS ON THE NATIONAL MALL

Design competitions are woven into the history of architecture in the United States. In contrast to the direct commission, the competition process proposes a particularly American ideal of equal opportunity for all. The history of design competitions in the United States and appropriation of the competition as a democratic process highlights specific issues that reemerge in the contemporary war memorials on the National Mall. This chapter provides a frame for the subsequent discussion of contemporary U.S. war memorials built through the design competition process on the National Mall.

Architectural Competitions and Democracy

The competition procedure was employed in the building of two of the earliest symbols of national identity: the U.S. Capitol Building and the White House. These early architecture competitions officially inaugurated the idea of a democratic competition process into the new republic. They highlight the key issues to consider in analyzing the impact of design competitions on the commemorative landscape of the United States. Architecture was an emerging profession in the early history of the United States, virtually unheard of in colonial times. Fine arts and architectural education was available only in Europe, so early architectural practices were derived from European traditions. Architectural competitions were ubiquitous in European practice, both in the academy and the marketplace.

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1 The scope of this dissertation excludes any discussion about vernacular indigenous traditions in the United States.
The National Mall memorials draw upon Classical precedents in using design competitions for war commemoration. One of the earliest design competitions to erect a war memorial is the Acropolis after the Persian Wars in 448 B.C. Though the Council of Athens invited artists to submit to the competition, the citizens of Athens voted publically to select the winning design, linking the idea of design competitions to the democratic process. In the contemporary memorials competitions, the jury is invited and the submissions are open to the public. That the first recorded competition is a war memorial is significant, “the idea of a competition as a democratic procedure for selecting a design confronted … the specific competencies needed to judge architecture representations.”

Famous European precedents include the competition to complete the roof of the Cathedral of Florence and the competition to complete the Louvre. The challenges presented by interests of competing parties that arises in these early examples becomes a fundamental issue in the discussion of contemporary design competitions on the National Mall. For example, the competition to complete the Louvre resulted in a direct commission when the sponsor was ultimately dissatisfied with the results, a story akin to the narrative of the contemporary Korean War Veterans Memorial. Although Italian Gianlorenzo Bernini had won the 1664 competition organized by Louis XIV’s Minister of Finance, Jean Baptise Colbert, ultimately a trio of French architects (Louis Le Vau, Charles Lebrun, and Claude Perrault) earned the commission to complete the Louvre.

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The architectural history of the United States was based on French academic traditions, and the earliest memorials on the Mall looked to European precedents in defining the aesthetic character of commemoration. The French Academy established an annual competition for public buildings in 1720; by 1763 the competition became a central focus of academic education. In an essay on European architectural competitions from the Renaissance to the 1920s, Barry Bergdoll analyzes the way in which the competition system evolved in Europe. He demonstrates how the early European incorporation of the competition process elevated the field of architecture to a more humanistic art form in the Italian Renaissance and later shifted “from a mechanism for defining an architectural elite into a means of broadening access to public commissions” as competitions became a democratic procedure in the market economy in post-revolutionary France.4

Thomas Jefferson was greatly influenced by European ideals looking toward both Renaissance and French models in framing his own aesthetic views, as evidenced in his designs for Monticello (1772) and the University of Virginia (1819). Likely associating competitions with the democratic ideals of the new Republic, Jefferson proposed architecture competitions for the subsequent designs of the President’s House and the House for the new Congress.5 Pierre Charles L’Enfant anticipated being asked to design the Presidential House while working on the plans for the new city and Capitol design. L’Enfant’s reluctance to work as part of a team led to conceptual clashes with Jefferson and George Washington, and the shift from a direct

commission to a competition reflects the democratic ideals of the new seat of government in the early history of the United States.  

The first design competitions in the United States introduced the problematic biases in the jury composition and sponsorship of design competitions. Washington and Jefferson directed the design competitions for the earliest buildings of the new federal city along the Potomac and acted as the de facto jury in consultation with the Government Commission for the District of Columbia. The modest press announcement on March 14, 1792, offered a $500 prize and city lot each for the “best design for a presidential dwelling” and Congress. The submission requirements included floor plans, cross-sections, and a tally of the amount of masonry needed. In the case of the Presidential dwelling, the announcement suggested that entries in which the main part of the dwelling was planned as a separate building with the potential for later additions would have an advantage; this would be a key feature of James Hoban’s winning design. The influence of the competition submission requirements is significant here, as it will be in the upcoming analysis of contemporary memorial competitions.

The submissions for the early federal buildings reflect the democratic spirit of the competitions. In what historian Jeanne Butler describes as a “truly democratic representation,” competitors included politicians, a school-teacher, and two former soldiers. While the total number of entries cannot be determined with certainty, it has been estimated that a total of

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eighteen people took part in the two competitions. Of the Capitol building submissions, only one—that of Stephen Hallet—was submitted by a formally trained architect. A self-trained architect, the physician William Thornton, won the competition for the new Congress’ space, the Capitol building, and James Hoban won the commission for the Presidential residence with his classically inspired design. Architectural historian Chris van Effelen proposes that the open nature of the competition reflected in the number of lay participants inspired an interest in establishing competition standards. Although the number of professional architects working in the Republic at the time was small, van Effelen notes that as a result of the competition, “it had become apparent that clear rules were needed and that the competition culture had to have a professional basis.”

While the range of entrants suggests the competitions were open to all, other aspects of the process appear less democratic. For example, Jefferson submitted a design inspired by Andrea Palladio’s Villa Capra “La Rotunda” (1592) to the competition for the Capitol under a pseudonym (AZ). There is evidence to suggest that Hoban was the preferred candidate for the presidential residence from the outset. He delivered his submission personally and discussed his design with Washington. Issues of preferential treatment and bias also surround the juries in the

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9 No inventory of submissions exists, and many submissions went unrecorded. Ten drawings are preserved in the Office of the Architect of the Capitol (one of these, unattributed), and many preserved letters that suggest submissions were lost. It is estimated that of the eighteen entrants for both competitions, only eight designs for the president’s house were received by the closing date. Jeanne F. Butler, Competition 1792: Designing a Nation’s Capital (Washington, D.C.: United States Capitol Historical Society, 1976).


11 The submission was discovered to be Jefferson’s in 1915. The actual drawing is now lost, but scanned copies of his earlier design drafts for the Capitol and President’s House are held in the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Vietnam Veterans Memorial (VVM) and Korean War Veterans Memorial (KWVM) competitions.

Competition often involves controversy, and the earliest U.S. examples are no different. Thornton’s Capitol submission arrived late, past the deadline and after Hallet had been led to believe he had already won the commission. Thornton was awarded the $500 and the city lot, and Hallet was appointed to help realize Thornton’s design. Hallet made many changes to the plan, which led to his eventual dismissal from the project altogether. There was no guarantee that the competition winning design would be executed to the exact plan in all respects, often evolving due to subsequent influences.\(^\text{12}\)

The competition process evolved, as did the architecture profession in the United States, over time. It wasn’t until after the Civil War that a concerted effort was made to impose standards of fair practice, an effort that continues into the present. Sarah Landau highlights the role of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in establishing best practice policies.\(^\text{13}\) The post-Civil War monument frenzy prompted a renewed interest in the architecture competition.\(^\text{14}\) The newly founded AIA stressed the need for competition regulations in this period, publishing a

\(^\text{12}\) Substantial changes continued to be made to the Capitol after Benjamin Latrobe was appointed as the second Architect of the Capitol. After the War of 1812 Charles Bulfinch increased Thornton’s dome height during a restoration. Jefferson and Thornton’s classical design became grander with a larger central dome in the 1827 completed building. In contrast, Hoban’s design for the Presidential residence was only slightly modified during Latrobe’s tenure and after significant fire damage in 1814. The residence became known as the White House after the Civil War.

\(^\text{13}\) Sarah Landau, “Coming to Terms: Architecture Competitions in America and the Emerging Profession, 1789-1922,” in Lipstadt: 53-78.

\(^\text{14}\) The Grant Monument in New York (1888-89) is among the many examples of the monument frenzy in the antebellum era discussed in great detail in Kirk Savage, Standing Soldiers Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).
competition codebook in 1900. However, there was no official enforcement of designated competition practices such as financial compensation, jury composition, and implementation.\(^\text{15}\)

The regulation of competitions becomes a significant issue in the contemporary American memorial process. Unlike other countries, the United States has no official regulations, only suggested guidelines.\(^\text{16}\) The VVM competition process is a successful example, managed by the professional advisor Paul D. Spreiregen, author of a 1981 AIA pamphlet on design competitions.\(^\text{17}\) In contrast, the KWVM and National World War II Memorial (NWWIIM) results vary significantly, and these competition processes are arguably less successful as models for contemporary memorialization. Many of the problems encountered in the latter two competitions are considered by the regulations proposed by the international

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In an article on Depression-era architecture and advertising, Andrew Shanken suggests that the AIA developed safeguards against competition among individual architects because it favored “a policy in which reputation, as opposed to self-promotion, was the invisible hand directing architectural practice.” Andrew Shanken, “Breaking the Taboo: Architects and Advertising in the Depression and War,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 69, no. 3 (September 2010): 406–29.

\(^{16}\) The need for competition regulations became apparent in nineteenth-century European architecture competitions, but the compliance varied by country. For example, regulations were strictly adhered to in Great Britain and mostly ignored in France. The government supervised competitions in West Germany. Though beyond the scope of this dissertation, an interesting study would compare the national and international impact of the design competition regulations on the aesthetic results.

\(^{17}\) Paul D. Spreiregen wrote *Design Competitions* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1979), which was later adapted into *Handbook of Architectural Design Competitions* (1981).
architect’s association Union International des Architectes (UIA) and supported by UNESCO.

For example, the issue of design authorship is addressed by the provision that a designer will retain copyright of his work (Article 29). In addition, the UIA regulations mandate that “at least one member of the jury shall be appointed by the UIA and this should be stated in the regulations for the competition” (Article 36). The UIA code encourages the employment of a professional advisor, which proved key to the success of the VVM competition (Article 9). When asked whether the AIA competition regulations should be made mandatory, Spreiregen emphatically replies: “Absolutely, it would be an enormous benefit to society. The evidence is not just my opinion. It’s clear proof. Look at Scandanavia, France, Australia. It’s why competitions have such a bad reputation, because they are abused.”

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, American competitions became international, “reflecting the nations’ desire to obtain buildings and monuments equal in quality to those of Europe.” The Beaux-Arts architectural educator William Robert Ware delivered a famous paper on competitions at the AIA meeting in 1899 debating the merits of the process but surmising that competitions could reduce “evils” inherent in the direct appointment of an architect since the client could see what he was commissioning. Ware’s description of the necessary evil of the design competition is often cited in the debate over the competition process, but Ware was referring to the associated costs to the profession and designer in terms of time and money, not to the potential ways in which the process inspires the best design. The historiography of competitions has focused on this debate over the benefits and challenges of the

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design competition, according to Bergdoll either “praised as a democratic forum for talent and public choice or condemned as a lottery whose outcome is inevitably a compromise.”

In the early twentieth century, competitions were most often used in the construction of public buildings. The Nebraska State Capitol (1919), for example, resulted from a two-stage process with a well-authored program. The most famous competition of the period is perhaps the Chicago Tribune Tower competition of 1922. The competition guidelines asked simply for the “most beautiful office building in the world.” There were no style specifications in the program. The competition received 204 submissions, among them a Neo-Gothic design by Howell and Hood, which was selected as the winner. But it was Eliel Saarinen’s submission for a simplified and soaring, set-back tower design that would end up defining the modern skyscraper. The Chicago Tribune Tower competition emphasized the importance and influence of the design submissions that were never built, an issue that is significant in the discussion of the KWVM. The impact of the design program is also evident in the Chicago competition, as it was the competition guidelines that inspired the design that defined the modern skyscraper. As van Effelen notes, “It is not always the best entry which prevails. Often economic factors or the effort necessary to realize the project are the deciding factors.”

Direct commissions were favored over competitions in the federal government projects of the Depression-era and in the postwar period. Post-World War II memorial construction was characterized by the practice of living memorial, which took the form of structures such as community centers, roads, and parks. AIA historian Henry Saylor remarked that competitions

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23 Chris van Effelen, preface in Prinz: 8.
played such a minor role in the mid-century practice of architecture that architects would be surprised to find they were once “the most disturbing factor” in the relationship between the architect and client.  

The Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) Memorial competition occurred in the wake of the postwar living memorial trend. The competition guidelines encouraged a sense of monumentality consistent with the site, which challenged the living memorial suppression of monumentality in favor of functionality. Edmund Bacon acted as professional advisor; the guidelines required a “harmonious” relationship with the architectural and natural setting, ambiguously calling for the “fullest response” to the theme of the memorial which should “look to the character and work” of the former President without actually specifying those qualities. Helene Lipstadt notes the contradictory aspects of the program, between the congressional demand for harmony and an emphasis on the innate monumentality of the nation’s capital with the advisory committee’s recommendation that the form be both abstract and “less dominant” than other memorials. Although the formal instructions were clear, there was no direction or description of the subject of the memorial. The particular challenge of drafting a successful competition program for memorials is evident in the case of the FDR Memorial design.

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24 Saylor’s remarks emphasize the way in which competitions seemed outdated in the mid-twentieth century. The slowdown of the U.S. economy in the late 1950s contributed to the decline of the use of the architectural competition until a revival took place in the following decade. Sarah Landau, “Coming to Terms: Architecture Competitions in America and the Emerging Profession 1789-1922,” in Lipstadt: 89.
competition. The way in which contemporary war memorials respond to this issue of subject matter depends greatly on the parameters of the competition program. The VVM eschews direct references to the Vietnam War with an abstract and iconic design, while the NWWIIM leaves out the atomic bomb, the Holocaust, and Japanese internment in favor of a generic triumphal language of classicism.

The impact that the sponsor can have on the design and content of a memorial is evident in the competition for the FDR Memorial. Though the Roosevelt Memorial Commission established in 1955 included mostly political figures, Congress delegated sponsorship of the memorial design to an advisory committee of professional architects chaired by Pietro Belluschi, then dean of the School of Architecture and Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. This panel of professional architects proposed structuring the project as a competition. Belluschi later served on the jury for the VVM design competition.

William Lecky, who was one of the project architects for both VVM and the KWVM, focuses on the role of the client as a mitigating factor in design competitions. In comparing commission and competition processes, Lecky suggests that the “divergence from customary prerequisite steps in design procedure” transforms the product of a competition design as opposed to a directly commissioned result.28 The type of sponsor (public or private) shapes the aesthetic outcome of the built result, as is evident in the appearance of the VVM and the KWVM.

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Like the VVM, the FDR Memorial design competition jury was made up of a panel of design professionals.\textsuperscript{29} The jury selected an abstract design and yet, the built memorial includes figuration.\textsuperscript{30} The winning competition design was never built. There was public uproar over its scale and legibility; Roosevelt’s children protested the design on these terms. The memorial design and content underwent a substantial transformation during the CFA approval process as the winning design was ultimately replaced with Lawrence Halprin’s landscaped solution. The FDR Memorial design competition introduces many of the problems inherent in the competition process including the submission requirements, the composition of the jury, challenges in compromising the visions of sponsors, public, and private parties, and even the public transparency of the “open competition process.”\textsuperscript{31}

\textsuperscript{29} The jury included three architects (Pietro Belluschi, Joseph Hudnut, and Paul Rudolph), one landscape architect (Thomas D. Church), and one academic (Bartlett Hayes, Jr., director of the Addison Gallery of American Art at Phillips Academy).

\textsuperscript{30} In a study of classical competition architecture, the architectural historians Hilde de Haan and Ids Haagsma note, “[A] jury whose members share exactly the same views on architecture may not be open to designs which express different ideas from their own.” De Haan and Haagsma, 13. This issue of shared jury preconceptions arises again in the KWVM design competition.

William F. Pedersen, Bradford S. Tilney, Joseph Wasserman, David Beer, and Norman Hoberman won the FDR Memorial competition with an abstract design of eight gigantic concrete slabs inscribed with Roosevelt’s writing. The jury described the way in which the winning design reflected their preconception of a design both traditional and modern that marked time with spacing: “although the basic form is so elemental as to be virtually the outgrowth of tradition, the vast concrete tablets mark the intervening spaces as positive entities, thereby providing a total image which is firmly identified with the 20\textsuperscript{th} century.” Report of the Jury on the Second Stage of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, December 30, 1960, A.I.A. Archives, Washington, D.C.

\textsuperscript{31} The FDR Memorial design competition is only partially recorded. The submissions are in the AIA archives. This relates to the problematic analysis of the competition process that we find in the KWVM (discussed in Chapter 3) where much of the negotiation took place behind closed doors.
It wasn’t until the late 1960s that competitions again became fashionable in architectural projects in the United States, setting the stage for the case studies examined in this dissertation. Open national competitions in particular flourished in the 1960s. Examples include the competitions for the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in St. Louis (1961), Boston City Hall (1962), and the AIA Headquarters in Washington, D.C. (1964). In 1962 Daniel Patrick Moynihan, then working at the Department of Labor, drafted “The Guiding Principle to Federal Architecture,” which recommended the use of competitions in federal architecture.

Competitions continued throughout the 1970s, although they became less frequent and were often invited, as opposed to the open structure employed in the 1960s. This may be attributable to the tension between AIA guidelines and federal recommendations during this period. In 1974, the National Endowment for the Art’s Task Force for Federal Architecture proposed competition selection as an alternative to the standard government selection process, but the AIA wasn’t receptive to competitive principles for federal architecture at the time.

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32 The shift from the modernism of the 1950s toward greater experimentation in architecture and architectural theory in the 1960s contributed to the renewed interest in the competition process as a medium of experimentation. For example, Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown designed the Vanna Venturi house (Philadelphia, PA) in 1966 and created their first “Decorated Shed” concept in 1968. Their postmodern theories were published in the seminal architecture text, *Learning from Las Vegas*. Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, *Learning from Las Vegas: The Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural Form* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1972). Another influential factor in the regeneration of the competition process is the period of economic growth in the United States in the early 1960s, when there was more federal money dedicated to architectural competitions.

33 Moynihan wrote the one page essay as chairman of the committee on federal office space for President John F. Kennedy. Moynihan’s “Guiding Principle to Federal Architecture” emphasized the functional and aesthetic merit of federal architecture, encouraging greater emphasis on design freedom, while insisting that “American architectural thought must…flow from the architectural professional to the Government, and not vice versa.” The principles later became the cornerstone of the GSA’s Design Excellence Program, https://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/101081 (accessed September 1, 2016).
fearing the lack of consensus on competition requirements.\textsuperscript{34} The AIA’s 1972 Code for Architectural Design Competitions restricted its members to competitions approved by the AIA, and in 1976 renounced approving competitions. In 1979, Senator Moynihan (New York Democrat) introduced a bill requiring that architects for major government buildings be selected through design competitions.\textsuperscript{35} The AIA defined the competition as the simultaneous but independent design process of the same project by competing architects, in contrast to a direct commission where designs are prepared by “two or more architects for the same project, on the same site, at the same time.”\textsuperscript{36} At the same time that the AIA was modifying its stance on design competitions for federal architecture, the stage was being set for the most influential memorial design competition in the United States: the VVM.

**New Typology of Competition Commemoration**

The rebirth of competitions in the 1980s coincided with the beginning of the memorial boom. The newly appointed director of the NEA Design Arts Program (then Architecture and

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\textsuperscript{34} The sociologist Margali Sarfatti Larson suggests that the AIA was also concerned with the way in which competitions became a publicity tool during the commercial building boom of the late 1970’s. She writes, “Developers’ competitions, as we shall see thrive on publicity. Publicity is the lifeblood of the symbiotic relationship between developers and glamorous signature architects, as well as a cause of concern for professional architects and their main organization, the American Institute of Architects (AIA).” Magali Sarfatti Larson, “Architectural Competitions as Discursive Events,” *Theory and Society* 23, no. 4 (August 1, 1994): 469.

\textsuperscript{35} S.R. 2080, 96\textsuperscript{th} Cong., 1\textsuperscript{st} sess. (1979). The newly elected senator proposed design competitions as a way to overturn the “old boy network” of the architecture selection process in an effort to overhaul GSA’s public buildings program. The AIA opposed this as it would have designated a chief GSA “architect to ensure good designs were built.” Robert A. Peck, “Daniel Patrick Moynihan and The Fall and Rise of Public Works,” in Robert A. Katzmann (ed.), *Daniel Patrick Moynihan: The Intellectual in Public Life* (Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2004): 68- 97.

Environment Arts) Michael Pittas viewed the design competition as an “intrinsically democratic” process that could create opportunities for architects. With the intention of encouraging local governments to use competitions in building projects, the NEA published the *Design Arts Program Design Competition Manual* in June 1980. The NEA supported a wave of open competitions in the 1980s, including the one for the commission of the VVM. The VVM competition epitomizes the narrative of American democracy, as an unknown architecture student won the national competition. The NEA Design Arts Program gave priority to grants for competitions and backed approximately eighty during this decade.

The favorable economy and postmodern architectural experimentation of the 1980s facilitated the success of the VVM design competition. After 1976, the AIA no longer officially approved competitions, but it did seek to ensure that they were fairly run. The professional organization became an active sponsor advisor. It published the *Handbook of Architectural Design Competitions* in 1981, an adaptation of Paul Spreiregen’s seminal discussion of best practices contained in his 1979 *Design Competitions*. As Spreiregen was the architectural consultant for the VVM design competition, the VVM figures prominently in the public discourse surrounding design competitions in the 1980s.

Ultimately, the success of the VVM reinvigorated the use of architectural competitions in contemporary memorial design in the United States. Debates about the competition process versus direct commissions resonate in the contemporary historiography. De Haan and Haagsma

39 As Lipstadt notes in a footnote in *Experimental Traditions*, design competitions became a topical concern in fiscal year 1983. Between 1984 and 1988, “large scale design competitions of national significance were funded at as much as $100,000 per competition. And in fiscal year 1989, the largest grant was $50,000.” Lipstadt, 18.
suggest, “Competitions are held with the purpose of obtaining the best possible building.”

This seems to hold true in the case of the VVM, where the result of the design competition is undeniably iconic. But what happens when the built product is not the most innovative design? Dennis Sharp describes competitions as “barometers of architectural taste.”

Lipstadt focuses on the process as fundamental to the artistic and professional aspect of architecture, an activity “emblematic of architects’ place in society.”

Both perspectives pertain to the discussion of contemporary war memorials as a new paradigm of commemoration brought about through the design competition process. Spreiregen asserts that the competition process is superior to the direct commission in bringing the best design forward: “It's the most democratic way to do things. It elevates the public expectation of design even for work that’s not done through competition, for everything else. It sets a very high standard of what we should expect of buildings in the public domain.”

In the literature, the design competition emerges as a pivotal factor in the new paradigm of commemoration.

The VVM provides an archetypal story of the democratic process in action. A completely unknown student enters a national design competition, resulting in her design being built at the nexus of the symbolic landscape of American values, the National Mall. As Mary McLeod notes in an essay on American design competitions, “This well-run and popular competition did more than reintroduce competitions to the profession and public; it reaffirmed the mythology of competitions as thresholds to professional recognition and as paths to fame for

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40 De Haan and Haagsma: 9.
42 Lipstadt, 10.
43 Spreiregen, interview with the author.
young unknown designers.”

Commencing with the iconic VVM and continuing with the KVWM and the NWWIM, contemporary war memorials represent a new typology of commemoration on the National Mall. The design competition process contributed directly to this new model of memorialization. Located on the site described by the architectural historian Frederick Turner as “the paramount pilgrimage center of the American nation,” these war memorials bind the American design competition to the democratic ideal of the nation.

From the nation’s beginnings, then, competitions have played a central role in the construction of public buildings, monuments, and memorials. And from the start, they have been associated with basic tenets of democracy. But the process has also been fraught with pitfalls and controversy. The architectural profession (the AIA) has tried to standardize the competition process, and also serve as a governance or in an advisory capacity. For its part, the government, in legislating labor practices, and as part of its project oversight, and as a client, has also aimed to regulate the competition terms and process. Whereas the AIA endeavored to guarantee fairness, the government strove to perpetuate a tradition, whereby all are allowed to participate in shaping national memorial landscape.

When the contemporary memorial boom began, the thinking about the value of competitions had reached a high-water mark, and the success of the VVM competition—which was seen as the embodiment of democratic ideals with its choice of Maya Lin’s design—only confirmed this. Still, and as a detailed analysis of that project will show, the competition was not without controversy, and its procedural apparatus not without influence on the final outcome of the implementation process. The struggles that plagued earlier design competitions in the history of the nation would persist, and would re-emerge in various combinations and configurations,

throughout the development of the VVM, as well as the KWVM and the NWWIIM. Tensions, between client and architect, agency and constituency, led to various accommodations—to the team make up, to the notion of collaborative relations, to the process of implementation, and even to the character and content of the designs themselves. The chapters that follow explore the additions, deletions, modifications, and accommodations that took place after the winning design was selected and the difficult process of building it began.
CHAPTER 2: THE VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL

“Maya Lin designed this work but she did not do it alone.”¹

— Paul D. Spreiregen, Vietnam Veterans Memorial Design Competition Advisor

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial (VVM) (1982) is the result of one of the most famous contemporary design competitions in the United States (Fig. 2.1). A young college student, Maya Ying Lin (b. 1959), entered and won the open competition to build a memorial for Vietnam veterans on the National Mall in April 1981. From among 1,421 anonymous submissions, a jury of eight modernist architects, sculptors, and landscape designers chose Lin’s design for an identical pair of black granite walls submerged into the earth at a 125-degree angle. Leaning toward each other, the walls meet at the monument’s 10-foot-tall apex and extend out onto the Mall in 247-foot-long arms directed toward the neighboring Washington and Lincoln memorials. The surfaces of the walls are inscribed with a complete list of names of the 58,307 American servicemen killed as a result of the Vietnam War.² The names are arranged chronologically by date of death, as opposed to alphabetically, thus creating a narrative that actively engages the viewer. Lin conceived the innovative VVM design during a funerary architecture class at Yale University, but the built memorial is the result of the efforts of a number of intervening parties and agencies.

The design competition shaped the ultimate form the built memorial took through the impact of its guidelines, professional advisor, jury composition, and agency approval process, as well as through implementation of the design into built form. Lin’s design responded to the

² At the 1982 memorial dedication, there were 57,939 names inscribed on the wall. As of May 2015, there were 58,307 names, including those of veterans who were wounded in Vietnam between 1957 and 1975 and who subsequently died as a result of their injuries.
requirements outlined by the sponsor in the competition program with a list of names in a horizontal landscaped design. The professional advisor, Paul D. Spreiregen, wrote that program, selected the all-professional jury, and coordinated the deliberation stage when Lin’s abstract design emerged as the winner among the multitude of submissions. Refinements were made during the implementation stage, as the winning sketch and poetry entry was transformed into the built memorial on the National Mall. The project architect, Cooper-Lecky Associates, contributed the technical process for the application of the names, adjusted the scale, and worked with the federal agencies during the approval process to include a paved walkway that changed the visitor experience of the memorial. After the completion of the competition, the abstract quality of the iconic wall was threatened with the addition of the familiar patriotic symbol of a flagpole, specific inscriptions, and traditional figurative sculpture. This chapter argues that the competition process determined the appearance and content of the built memorial and that the subsequent additions change the essential meaning of the competition-winning design.

**Design Competition**

**Sponsor**

The memorial concept originated with a 29-year-old Vietnam veteran, Jan Scruggs. Scruggs describes his immediate inspiration as the film *The Deer Hunter* (1978), which he viewed on the tenth anniversary of the day his unit had been injured by an explosion of an ammunition truck in Vietnam.³ Scruggs dramatically recalls having flashbacks of the scenes he had witnessed in combat of bodies and organs flying through the air, after the movie screening,

³ Directed by Michael Cimino and starring Robert De Niro, the Hollywood film depicts the impact of the Vietnam War on a trio of Russian-American war veterans returning to a blue-collar, steel mining town in industrial western Pennsylvania.
and having woken his wife the next morning with the proclamation that he would build a
Vietnam veterans memorial: “It’ll have the name of everyone killed.” His early memorial
concept reveals that the complete listing of names was an essential design element for the initial
sponsor of the VVM. Design preconceptions (later spelled out in the competition guidelines)
grew out of the therapeutic motivations of the sponsoring agency, the Vietnam Veterans
Memorial Fund, Inc. (VVMF), which Jan Scruggs founded as a non-profit corporation in 1979.

The VVMF was made up entirely of war veterans with a national reconciliation agenda.
In addition to Scruggs as president, the core administrative figures of the VVMF included Robert
Doubek (an attorney and former Air Force intelligence officer) as chairman and Jack Wheeler
(veteran and assistant general counsel at the Securities and Exchange Commission) as secretary.
The VVMF spelled out its intentions in an early statement made to one of the advisory agencies
for commemorative works in Washington, D.C., the National Capital Memorial Advisory
Committee (NCMC): “The Vietnam Veterans Memorial is conceived as a means to promote the
healing and reconciliation of the country after the divisions caused by the war…. The memorial
will further the psychological readjustment of the veterans of the war, for whom there were no

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4 Jan Scruggs, quoted in Patrick Hagopian, *The Vietnam War in American Memory* (Amherst and
Boston, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009), 80. Hagopian notes that Scruggs’
autobiographical accounts have been taken at face value by other critics and historians.
5 Scruggs portrayed himself as a working-class “redneck,” a “grunt,” and a “determined scruffy
veteran” in Chris Buckley, “The Wall,” *Esquire*, September 1985, 64-68; Elisabeth Bumiller,
Disputes War: The Battle of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial,” *Washington Post*, October 13,
1982. As Hagopian notes, however, Scruggs was in fact highly educated, with a Masters degree
in psychology from American University, Washington, D.C., suggesting that there are
exaggerated promotional elements to the narrative of the creation of the Vietnam Veterans
Memorial Fund.
6 In addition to Jan Scruggs, Robert Doubek, and Jack Wheeler, the VVMF was made up of
James Webb (a marine combat veteran who led the memorial sponsorship committee), Tom
Carhart, Richard Radez, and Art Mosley (all of whom were classmates of Wheeler at West Point
Academy and Vietnam veterans). Though Carhart did not have an official title within the VVMF,
he lobbied for the fund on Capitol Hill and was an enthusiastic office volunteer.
parades.” The proposal for an apolitical memorial to reunite the nation was intended to separate the warriors from the war, which enabled the VVMF to navigate the gauntlet of regulatory agencies with political interests in building a memorial in Washington, D.C.

There were no federal bodies governing memorial construction on the National Mall prior to 1910, and it is within this tradition that a private interest group of veterans conceptualized creating a memorial to Vietnam veterans on the National Mall. VVMF chairman Robert Doubek noted: “We thought the most important thing for the memorial was a prominent site because the Vietnam veterans had been shoved aside for so long.” The significance of the site played into the sponsor’s agenda for overtly reconciling the traumatic conflict. There were other sites proposed, including a remote location along the Potomac River, but the VVMF always envisioned the memorial on the National Mall. Scruggs emphasizes, “Just getting their names on

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7 “Statement of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Inc., before the National Capital Memorial Advisory Committee,” October 24, 1979, 2, The Records of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, carton 33, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. The Secretary of the Interior established the National Capital Memorial Commission in 1973 due to growing interest in the construction of commemorative works in Washington, D.C. The agency was initially an advisory body but later became a regulatory power after the passage of the Commemorative Works Act in 1986. At that time, its name was changed to the National Capital Memorial Commission and the agency gained responsibility for approving and siting memorials in Washington, D.C. Its name was changed again in 2003 to the National Capital Memorial Advisory Commission, although it retained the same responsibilities.

8 Hagopian shows the therapeutic discourse at the roots of the VVMF’s intentions, surmising that the sponsor “espoused a depoliticized version of the discourse of healing and reconciliation that emerged in discussions of Vietnam veterans and the ‘post-Vietnam syndrome’ in the 1970s.” Hagopian, 79.

9 In the wake of the McMillan Commission, the government established the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) in 1910 to advise on monuments and memorials in Washington, D.C. In 1913, President Woodrow Wilson expanded the CFA’s reviewing powers to include a broader range of public structures, including fountains, statues, and coins. The CFA has review authority (not necessarily approval authority) for the design and aesthetics of all public construction in Washington, D.C.

the Mall in Washington, D.C. [was] a way of getting even for their deaths.”

Republican Senator Charles Mathias of Maryland proposed the Constitution Gardens location, halfway between the Washington and Lincoln monuments, during the legislative process. Prior to its rebirth as a park site in 1976, Constitution Gardens had been a fifty-acre landfill. It housed temporary naval buildings until 1971.

The influence of the VVM sponsor is felt beyond the incorporation of names on the memorial itself and the final selection of the site. VVMF Chairman Jack Wheeler proposed a landscape solution in a horizontal format, which became the first of eight design elements that the VVMF reported to the NCMC. Wheeler’s design preconceptions were likely drawn from his experience raising funds for a Southeast Asian memorial on the grounds of the United States Military Academy at West Point (1980) (Fig. 2.2). The West Point memorial is organized around pathways and benches that guide the viewer’s procession through the landscape, as

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11 Jan Scruggs, quoted in Laura Palmer, “The Wall,” GQ 57, no. 7 (July 1987): 140. The significance of the National Mall as a sanctified site for commemoration is addressed in the first chapter of this dissertation.
12 Mathias described the reconciliation of the site as the scene of war demonstrations prior to its 1976 revitalization. Citing its proximity to the Lincoln Memorial, he advocated for the use of the site by drawing parallels between the Civil War and the Vietnam War, both of which he said had divided the nation. Scruggs and Swerdlow, To Heal a Nation, 39. There is an interesting comparison to be made between the therapeutic appropriation of the Lincoln Memorial by the African-American community in the post-Civil War context and the use of the VVM by contemporary veterans.
14 Wheeler surmised that his experience at West Point “showed that in the current America people are most attracted to landscaped-typed memorials” because “they are usable [and] conducive to healing.” John Wheeler, memorandum, October 24, 1983, The Records of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund.
opposed to the traditional figurative and static approach of heroic statuary often used in military commemoration.\textsuperscript{15}

Driven by their interest in a therapeutic memorial for veterans, the committee envisioned a green space that would encourage quiet reflection. For their memorial, the VVMF proposed a design that would include:

- An overall landscaped solution, emphasizing horizontal rather than vertical elements;
- Trees and a spacious garden setting, inviting and hospitable to passers-by; a suitable size, approximately two acres, a system of chimes…to create an aural effect, but no visual disruptions; a display of the names of all of the 57,000 who died in Vietnam; artistic unity throughout the entire memorial; [and] good taste.\textsuperscript{16}

The built memorial incorporates all of these design elements, except for the chimes (although the sheltered granite structure does muffle the auditory disruptions of nearby traffic).\textsuperscript{17} Almost anticipating Lin’s design explicitly, the fund envisioned “a sculptural statement, in one or more pieces integrated into the garden design...[that would] harmonize and enhance the existing landscape.”\textsuperscript{18} The built memorial is a sculptural solution that descends into the earth, harmonizing with its park setting.

The Senate passed the bill authorizing the construction of a memorial in Constitution Gardens “in honor and recognition of the men and women of the Armed Forces of the United States who served in the Vietnam War” on April 30, 1980. The legislation stipulated that the


\textsuperscript{17} It is not clear as to why the chimes were omitted, but it’s possible that the VVMF wanted to emphasize the design elements of the names and site rather than including too many parameters in the design competition.

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid.
memorial be privately funded. The VVMF raised $700,000 by the end of that year and eventually secured the $8.4 million for building the physical memorial. H. Ross Perot contributed $160,000 toward competition costs. The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) gave $5,000 for a preliminary site study, but aside from this, the government’s active involvement occurred after the design competition was concluded. The government approved the winning selection during the implementation stage; the statutory agencies charged with approval power included the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA), National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), and the Secretary of the Interior.19

**Professional Advisor**

The VVMF briefly considered conducting a direct commission process and a closed competition, but ultimately, they decided to run a single-stage open competition following the advice of the NEA.20 All adult Americans were allowed to enter the competition regardless of qualification or experience. Scruggs explained the sponsor’s perception that an open competition “would fit in with the American spirit of solving problems through fair and open contests.”21 The VVMF hired Spreiregen as professional advisor for the memorial design competition in July 1980. As the director of urban design programs at the American Institute of Architects (AIA) and the first director of architectural and planning programs at the NEA, the Washington, D.C. architect was intimately familiar with the city’s design procedures and with

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19 Other federal agencies became involved in the later implementation period, when additions were made to the design. For example, the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) was responsible for the wording of a plaque added to the built VVM.
20 Doubek proposed that the idea to run a design competition came from his own admiration of the Chicago Tribune Tower growing up in the city. He recalled saying, “It ought to be designed through some sort of competition” at his first meeting with Scruggs to set up the VVMF as a non-profit corporation in Washington, D.C. in 1979. Robert W. Doubek, *The Vietnam Veterans Memorial: The Inside Story* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Co., 2015), 10.
21 Scruggs and Swerdlow, *To Heal a Nation*, 50.
key players in the approval process.\textsuperscript{22} He had just published a book on the design competition process, in which he makes a strong case for “a qualified professional who can advise on all aspects of holding the competition.”\textsuperscript{23}

Spreiregen drafted a competition plan estimating a one-year duration from the planning stages to the unveiling of a selected design. After an initial development phase between July and September, the sponsor invited designs in October 1980 with the support of the NEA and AIA. Initial registration for the competition submissions were completed by January 1981, with a final delivery deadline of March 31. The jury was set to convene in May 1981. The competition proceeded efficiently in accordance with Spreiregen’s vision. Spreiregen designed the competition program, authored the guidelines in consultation with the sponsor, selected the jury, and oversaw the competition through the planning and judging stages. His contract with the sponsor notes his duties as “counseling on or performing all those tasks upon which a successful competition depended,” with these falling into “three groups: planning, organization, management.”\textsuperscript{24} The planning and management tasks described are logistical, whereas the organization tasks included writing the competition program and announcement, establishing the

\textsuperscript{22} In addition to his professional experience at the AIA and NEA, Spreiregen had worked on the plan for the Boston Government Center (1959), and the historic preservation plan for the Virginia town of Warrenton. The VVM competition was only his second time as the professional advisor for a design competition. The first was for a “little mural that was going to be torn down anyway” on a building owned by a company in Silver Spring, Maryland. Spreiregen, interview with the author. Spreiregen later won the competition for the Maryland Vietnam Veterans Memorial (1986). Inspired by Lin’s black granite design, Spreiregen’s memorial is composed of 64 triangular stones arranged in a circle inscribed with Maryland’s 1,008 Vietnam War dead and 38 missing. Fern Shen, “Maryland Vietnam Memorial Arises Out of Conflict,” \textit{Washington Post}, May 29, 1989.


\textsuperscript{24} Contract between Paul D. Spreiregen and the VVMF for the VVM design competition, July 8, 1980, The Records of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, carton 13.
jury process, and “follow[ing]-up with government agencies.” Though Spreiregen was present at the agency review meetings, his participation in the implementation of the project was limited after the model of the winning design was presented to the sponsor in 1981: The competition advisor was not employed in an active consulting role during the later implementation phase.

The significance of the professional advisor’s role in a memorial design competition is crucial, and this is particularly evident in the case of the VVM. William Lecky, formerly of Cooper-Lecky Associates (the Architect of Record for the VVM and the Korean War Veterans Memorial [KWVM]), illustrated a chart of the competition process that a memorial design undergoes from its inception to completion, based upon his experience implementing memorial projects in Washington, D.C. (Fig. 2.3). Lecky’s illumination of the competition process places the advisor in an essential position, as the necessary link between the client and the selected architect throughout the design stages.

**Open Competition**

In October 1980, the VVMF announced the national competition with a $20,000 winning prize and additional, smaller sums for runners-up and honorable mentions. The sponsor described the competition method as a process consistent with American democracy: “The competition to design this memorial is in keeping with American tradition.” The announcement locates the VVM design competition within a lineage of iconic democratic symbols built through the use of design competitions. These included the competitions for the U.S. Capitol (1792); the Washington Monument (1848); New York’s Central Park (1858); the

25 Ibid.
26 In anticipation of our discussion, Lecky prepared a chart illuminating the design competition process. William Lecky, interview with the author, McLean, Virginia, March 19, 2014.
Chicago Tribune Tower (1923); the Jefferson Memorial Arch in St. Louis, Missouri (1950); and the Birmingham-Jefferson Civil Center in Alabama (1967). The VVM competition was not restricted to professional architects and open to any individual of legal voting age (above 18).

There was a rash of open competitions for buildings in United States during the decade of the VVM design competition. The NEA gave priority to competition grants and backed approximately eighty competitions during the 1980s through its Design Arts Program. There are a number of design competition manuals among the VVMF archives revealing the basis for the decision to run an open competition for the memorial. The material focuses on the efficiency of running an open design competition. In addition to the NEA Design Arts Program Design Competition Manual of June 1980 and the AIA Guidelines for Architectural Competitions of 1976, the items include comparisons with international competitions.

Design Program

The design competition program forms a crucial link between the sponsor and the designer in an open design competition. In contrast to memorials that are built through commissioned designs, in which the sponsor and designer communicate directly, the success of a

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28 For example, there was an open competition for the New Orleans Museum of Art in 1983 and the Escondido Civic Center in California in 1984.

competition project relies upon a well-articulated program. Spreiregen designed the VVM competition program and authored the guidelines in consultation with the VVMF. Lin’s design explicitly responds to the competition program’s emphasis on site as a principle component of the desired memorial. Her submission features a complete listing of the names of those killed in Vietnam in a horizontal landscaped sculptural format, as suggested by the competition program.

**Site**

Among the 14 explicit guidelines for the memorial design, nine refer to site issues. The physical requirements specify size, scale, harmony and consistency with other memorials on the site, accessibility, and the appropriate design, materials choice, landscaping, and lighting consistent with the proposed memorial’s location on the National Mall. The design concept is addressed in the memorial requirements as follows:

2. The memorial design should be contemplative and reflective in character. It should not challenge or detract from the views of the existing memorials visible from the site.
3. The memorial should be harmonious with its site, an integral part of Constitution Gardens.30

The remaining instructions reflect the sponsor’s concern with getting the memorial built, stipulating that the design stay within budget and include a feasible maintenance plan. Further instructions in the design program prescribe an apolitical memorial with the purpose to “honor the service and memory of the war’s dead, its missing, and its veterans—and not the war itself.”31

The brochure emphasizes the physical site. It includes 18 pictures of Constitution Gardens, site plans, and a history of the planning of the National Mall (Fig. 2.4). In the program, Spreiregen relates Constitution Gardens to Frederick Law Olmstead, noting that the site’s roots

30 “VVM Design Competition Program,” Paul D. Spreiregen personal files.
31 Ibid.
are in “English landscape design, which derived in part from an English appreciation of Chinese garden art.” This connection suggests that the winning memorial design needed to accommodate the intimate scale of Olmstead’s system and the broad geometry of L’Enfant’s axial plan for the city, with grand vistas pointing toward key political icons. The program’s focus on the immediate site relates to the way in which the VVMF emphasized the physical location on the National Mall from the outset. The sponsor secured the location prior to design selection in the competition.

Contestants were encouraged to submit questions about the design requirements directly to Spreiregen by January 30, 1981. The advisor compiled cumulative responses before the final submission deadline of March 31, 1981. The question-and-answer section reiterates a focus on the National Mall site as stressed by Spreiregen:

Do not overwhelm the site. Let the memorial design be an extension of the existing character of Constitution Gardens, not an imposition of it…. Our intention is that the memorial be carefully integrated into the existing Constitution Gardens; that it be an intrinsic part of it, sensitively wedded to it…. We do not want to alter Constitution Gardens or the Reflecting Pool or the Lincoln Memorial.

Both amateurs and professional designers submitted to the VVM design competition. Most of the architects (trained to visually interpret guidelines) incorporated the National Mall site as an essential feature in their designs. Lin’s winning submission responds to the sponsor’s emphasis on site in two ways: by incorporating the National Mall site in its content, as the arm extensions reference both the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial, and through its physical site-specificity. The structure descends into the earth, which becomes part of the built environment.

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environment. The earth seems to rise up into the wall to provide a shelter for the mourning viewers. The memorial is invisible from a distance, forcing the viewer to enter its space.

**Sculpture**

Sculpture was always anticipated as part of the memorial. Specifically, a large structure was expected to accommodate the listing of more than 58,000 names. However, the design had to be somewhat horizontal because of the stipulation that it should not detract from the views of the other memorials on the National Mall. The sponsor envisioned “a landscaped garden containing the inscription of the names of those killed in Vietnam along with a work of sculpture” when estimating its budget for the memorial.34 This is reflected in the program’s description of L’Enfant’s vistas and the landscaping influences of Constitution Gardens. While many of the VVM submissions featured landscaping and sculptural elements, Lin’s design combined the two elements in a large, site-specific sculpture that derives its form and content from its landscaped setting on the National Mall.35

**Names**

In a discussion of Lin’s innovative design, architectural historian Daniel Abramson reflects that, “it has rarely been remarked how much of its design was in fact *predetermined* by the competition design program.”36 The complete listing of names, the horizontality of the

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35 There is an interaction and inversion of interior and exterior space here related to the contemporary earthwork movement, which began in 1967 at the time of the Vietnam War. Earthwork sculptures are notable for their large scale and conditional relationship to their surrounding site. Suzanne Boettger notes that the first contemporary earthwork was Claes Oldenburg’s *Placid Civic Monument*, an excavation project that existed briefly in New York’s Central Park in 1967. Suzanne Boettger, *Earthworks: Art and the Landscape of the Sixties* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).
memorial, and the “reflectivity, and unheroic tone were all more or less mandated in the explicit requirements for a ‘harmonious, conciliatory,’ and ‘contemplative and reflective’ memorial.”  

Many aspects of the design were prescribed in the competition program.

Lin is responsible for the innovative sequencing of the names. As opposed to a traditional listing of alphabetical names, the VVM organizes the names in a chronological fashion according to the date of death. Abramson describes Lin’s method of listing the names on the wall of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial as “unprecedented in monumental commemorative art—that of the pure chronology or time line.” The names begin where the two walls meet and continue along the length of the eastern wall, resuming at the end of the opposite western wall to continue until the last name meets the first, “so that the timeline would circle back to itself and close the sequence.” Based on Lin’s competition design, the experience of the built memorial is one of active discovery as the narrative unfolds in searching out individual names. Lin calls this principle element the “essence of the design.” In fact, Lin’s architecture professor at Yale University, Andrus Burr, may have suggested chronologically ordering the names, though it was her decision to start the chronology at the center. The VVM competition program clearly articulates the sponsor’s interest in a site-specific, apolitical memorial, where the names are a key feature of the design, and in Lin’s submission they found it.

**Brochure Presentation/Aesthetics**

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37 Abramson, 685.
38 Abramson, 680.
40 Abramson, 688.
41 Scruggs suggests that Burr “encouraged her to make the listing of the names chronological.” Scruggs and Swerdlow, *To Heal a Nation*, 59. Lin counters, “I always wanted the names to be chronological, to make it so that those who served and returned from the war could find their place in the memorial.” Maya Lin, *Boundaries* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000), 4:11.
In constructing the guidelines according to the sponsor’s requirements, Spreiregen made graphic design decisions for the competition program. These decisions involved choosing the font, layout, and photographs featured in the brochure. The design and layout of the competition program brochure contribute to the aesthetic sensibility of the design competition (Fig. 2.5). The program’s visual layout balances positive and negative space, and reflects an engagement with the aesthetic vocabulary of Minimalism. For example, the program cover shows a vertical listing of the names of the dead, yet the font size transforms the list into a line rupturing the white space of the page. The horizontal text line listing the title *Design Program, The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Design Competition* bisects the vertical form near the bottom of the page. The overall effect is both geometric and serial, aspects of American Minimalism as characterized by Barbara Rose and Mel Bochner.\(^\text{42}\) In addition to the use of industrial materials, geometric form, and site-specificity, Lin’s winning design shares an aesthetic relationship to Minimalism in the way that the memorial is incomplete without the visitor experiencing it.\(^\text{43}\) Spreiregen designed the competition program with an aesthetic sensibility akin to the winning design, and possibly in the minds of the designer and jurors at the time of the competition, as they followed the directions of the sponsor outlined in the guidelines.

The VVM design program straddles the line between straightforward prescription and liberal guidelines that allow for artistic innovation to prosper. The VVMF was clear about its desired memorial in the guidelines, and yet there was enough room for innovative interpretation. Spreiregen notes, “a competition program should not prescribe, it should seek. [A successful

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\(^\text{43}\) In 1967, Michael Fried defined Minimalism according to the focus on the viewer’s experience, a term he coined as “theatricality,” in contrast to the relational properties of the work of art exemplified by modernism. See Michael Fried, *Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998).
competition program describes] the qualities if it’s a memorial—what the subject is, who is being commemorated and honored, and for what reasons." Design competitions with too strict a prescription problematically resemble a straightforward commission, only without the communication between sponsor and designer. The KWVM (examined in the next chapter) provides an example of the communication challenges that may occur within this type of design competition program. In contrast, overly lenient guidelines run the risk of eliciting a project that will never get built. The design program for the Chicago Tribune Tower competition (1922), for example, was particularly open ended: the guidelines merely asked for “the most beautiful office building in the world,” leaving aesthetic and content specifications open to interpretation.

The submission requirements of the VVM design competition encouraged non-professionals such as Lin to apply. The submissions were limited to two 30 by 40-inch drawing boards with sealed envelopes containing the designer’s name on the back. The guidelines suggested eye-level viewpoints, notation of proposed materials, and illumination of the design’s relationship to neighboring monuments. Mechanical lettering techniques like “paste-on” and “rub-on” were prohibited in order to encourage amateur applicants. Likewise, models and three-dimensional illustrations were not allowed, although photographs of models and sculpture were permitted, as well as the use of colored architectural drawings. The design could also include a brief explanatory text in any format, which enabled Lin to incorporate a hand-written, poetic description of her design in her submission.

44 Spreiregen, interview with the author.
45 Dennis Sharp, in De Haan, 183. Of the 204 entries, it was the submitted designs and not the winning Gothic revival project by Hood and Howells that received critical approval. Saarinen’s second-place design for a skyscraper, which was never built, became a prototype for the modern office building.
46 The VVM design competition was one of the first competitions since the FDR Memorial design competition (1959) to allow color submissions. Lin’s submission is mostly black and white; perhaps this Minimalist sensibility stood out among the color submissions.
Jury

The jury of eight chosen by Spreiregen was made up of two architects (Pietro Belluschi and Harry Weese), two landscape architects (Garrett Eckbo and Hideo Sasaki), three sculptors (Richard Hunt, Constantino Nivola, and James Rosati), and one critic (Grady Clay of *Landscape Architecture Quarterly*). Chaired by Clay, all of the jurors were white men, ivy-league educated, with an average age of 65, and none had served in Vietnam. The fund agreed on the jury make-up proposed by the competition advisor because Spreiregen stressed that “professional status would help attract first-class competitors and minimize professional controversy.” Wheeler had proposed including an African American, a woman, and two representatives of the fund, but the VVMF overruled him.

Spreiregen initially considered five criteria in selecting a jury for the VVM design competition: “Good in articulating design issues; Not known for stylistic bias; Highly respected as Artist/Designer; Geographical Spread/Ethnic-cultural Diversity,” and “Possibly critic of Vietnam War Values.” He devised a fantasy draft for the VVM design competition jury including “ARCH’s: Belluschi, Weese; SCULPT’s: Noguchi, Lippold, (Di Suvero); LAND ARCHS: Sasaki, Eckbo, Clay; General: Dubos, Alistair Cooke, Adam Stochdale, Robert Penn

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47 Although none of the jurors had served in Vietnam, four of the eight members were in fact veterans.
48 This was particularly significant given the role of the Commission of Fine Arts and the aesthetic disputes in selecting a design for the FDR Memorial. Mary McLeod, “The Battle for the Monument: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial,” in *The Experimental Tradition*, ed. Helen Lipstadt (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1989), 18, fn 15. Spreiregen insisted on a professional jury because none of the VVMF members had design experience: “I told them you have to have a professional jury, which they certainly agreed to.” Spreiregen, interview with the author.
50 Unsigned note dated September 3 (assumed to be authored by Paul D. Spreiregen), The Records of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, carton 66.
Warner.” Spreiregen was personally familiar with many of the architect jury members.

Belluschi was his former dean at Harvard, whom he “revered.” He had worked with Weese, Sasaki, and Hunt on other projects. He proposed these particular individuals because he anticipated that they would work well as a group: “They had to be highly accomplished, highly respected in their own field and fully collegial.” The jury plan includes an odd number of jurors to prevent a tie-voting situation, however, the sponsor approved all of the suggested names resulting in an even number of jurors with more sculptors than intended. That the jury included a number of sculptors is notable, because the winning design is essentially a large, abstract sculpture. Spreirgen suggested the sculptors because of his admiration for their work, but the result is that all are white men in the same age range with a similar aesthetic sensibility.

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51 “A Hypothetical Jury,” handwritten and unsigned, likely by Paul Spreiregen, The Records of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, carton 66. Di Suvero appears in parenthesis as an alternate for Spreiregen’s proposed list of seven total professional jury members. Louise Nevelson is also written on the side under the sculpture category.

52 Spreiregen, interview with the author. It is worth noting that Belluschi chaired the jury for the FDR Memorial (1959), which endured multiple controversies, resulting in the winning design never being built.

53 Spreiregen was friendly with the Washington, D.C.-based architect Weese. Because Sasaki was from the East Coast, he proposed the other West-Coast-based landscape architect Eckbo for “geographic distribution.” He was familiar with Hunt through his work for the NEA.

54 Spreiregen, interview with the author.

55 Spreiregen invited the jurors to be vetted by the sponsor group without his supervision. The VVMF “discovered to their delight” that these were real people “some of them watched football on Sundays” and so they accepted all three of the sculptors for the VVM design competition jury. Spreiregen, interview with the author.

56 The sculptor Isamu Noguchi was invited to be on the VVM jury but he declined, stating that he was a “pacifist” who considered the site to be “too beautiful” for a war memorial. See Noguchi letter, The Records of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, carton 66. Spreiregen and the VVMF also tried to conscript a “general humanist” for the jury, but all declined. These included Pulitzer Prize winners James Michener and Herman Wouk, and journalists Eric Sevareid, Alistair Cooke, and Walter Cronkite. The disparity between their biographies and Spreiregen’s proposed qualifications for professional designers suggest that the sponsor wanted them for public relations reasons.
The decision to exclude a Vietnam veteran from the jury was championed by the professional advisor and initially supported by the sponsor. Spreiregen maintains that the sponsor came to its decision to exclude a Vietnam veteran.\textsuperscript{57} Hagopian suspects that the VVMF was afraid that the presence of a veteran on jury “would smack of tokenism, or that the other jurors might defer excessively to them.”\textsuperscript{58} In a later interview with Mary McLeod, Jan Scruggs regretted the omission of a veteran on the jury.\textsuperscript{59} The issue became critical in the later implementation stages when additions were made to the winning design in order to address a deficiency in the memorial perceived by the veterans.

The jury composition speaks to the greater debate over the function of a contemporary war memorial. Hagopian examines the healing properties of the VVM for the veterans of the conflict in Vietnam.\textsuperscript{60} Savage frames it as the first therapeutic memorial whereby the healing content transcends the specificities of the Vietnam War.\textsuperscript{61} The VVM competition advisor emphasized: “The memorial was for the veterans, not for the war. A memorial is something that addresses the subject for the general public. For the veterans, but for the public and future generations even more.”\textsuperscript{62}

\textsuperscript{57} Spreiregen, maintains, “The sponsor group wanted to have a Vietnam veteran on the jury. I thought it would be a bad idea, but I didn’t say anything at first…. I never brought the issue up and one day, they called and said they would not have a veteran on the jury and that was it. I think the reason was they couldn’t figure out which one to have.” Spreiregen, interview with the author.
\textsuperscript{58} Patrick Hagopian, interview with Paul Spreiregen, June 4, 1992, cited in Hagopian, 93.
\textsuperscript{60} Patrick Hagopian, \textit{The Vietnam War in American Memory} (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009).
\textsuperscript{61} Savage defines the VVM as the first “therapeutic memorial,” which “justifies the soldiers not as heroic agents, but as honorable victims who deserve our recognition.” Kirk Savage, \textit{Monument Wars: Washington, DC, the National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 278.
\textsuperscript{62} Spreiregen, interview with the author.
The inclusion of a veteran on a design jury was problematic in that it threatens to weigh down the competition process with the event’s specificity, possibly undermining the commemorative function of the memorial for future generations.\textsuperscript{63} The veteran interest in specificity is reflected in the fact that veterans submitted most of the literal competition entries, which include realistic heroic sculpture, patriotic symbols, and symbols of peace. For example, Charles Liedenfrost, a veteran and art educator at the University of Maryland, depicted a realistic helicopter as a symbol of combat and rescue (Fig. 2.6). Vietnam veteran Christopher Page designed a circular wall with a representational sculpture of combat boots, copied from his own shoes (Fig. 2.7). Garth Bute, a Korean War veteran working as a commercial artist in Indiana, entered a figurative sculpture design of an American soldier helping the Vietnamese, symbolic of the American effort to “lend a helping hand…to help the underdog” (Fig. 2.8). VVMF member Thomas Carhart similarly designed a figurative male soldier pieta, in which he presents himself as the heroic figure in his commemorative design (Fig. 2.9). Carhart’s design of a soldier holding a casualty in his arms on a base formed by a purple heart was literally inspired from his experience in Vietnam, when he lifted the body of a radio operator onto a helicopter. Carhart’s design conveys an aspiration to depict specificity and heroism, a trend common among the veterans’ submissions. The interest in specificity resonates in the didactic focus of the later additions to the built memorial proposed by veterans.

The jury debate is relevant in contemporary memorial design competitions for terrorism memorials in the United States, where divergent juries invariably impact the outcomes. Because of the success of the VVM competition, Spreiregen was initially hired to manage the competition.

\textsuperscript{63} A key example that highlights this point is the KWVM, where a jury of war veterans selected a design based upon an interest in specificity, sacrificing the opportunity for a transcendent design. This issue is discussed in detail in chapter three of this dissertation.
for the Oklahoma City National Memorial (1997 - 2000) (Fig. 2.10). In this case, the Oklahoma City National Memorial Foundation fired Spreiregen because he refused to include any of the victims’ family members on the jury in order to maintain impartiality. In contrast to the iconic design chosen by a jury of design professionals for the VVM, the Oklahoma City National Memorial jury (including six professionals and three family members) selected a mediocre design, a multi-part memorial with a reflecting pool, a field of empty chairs, and a Survivor’s Wall and Tree.

The jury composition of the National September 11 Memorial (2001) design competition (a mix of arts professionals, government employees, and 1 family member) also influenced its outcome (Fig. 2.11). There is a derivative quality to Michael Arad’s design of two cavernous, water-filled footprints of the twin towers, encircled by the names of the victims, and a landscaped green space. Like the VVM design, Arad’s descends into the earth and employs a Minimalist vocabulary of absence and presence. Maya Lin had in fact sketched an idea to “transform the footprints of the former trade center into reflecting pools surrounded by a park.” Lin was an influential member of the National September 11 Memorial jury. Even fictional accounts of contemporary memorial design competitions emphasize jury make-up as a contributing factor in what ultimately gets built. For example, Amy Waldman’s post-9/11 novel based on a fictionalized account of the September 11 Memorial design competition, The

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64 For more on the discussion of the Oklahoma City National Memorial design competition, see Edward T. Linenthal, The Unfinished Bombing: Oklahoma City in American Memory (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).
Submission, features a plot twist hinging on the jury’s token family member, who wants a garden design in contrast to the design chosen by the professionals.66

Deliberations

The VVMF prepared a reading list for the jurors, which focused on veterans’ experience of the war.67 The readings were meant to offer context for the content of the memorial. It is unclear whether the jury actually read any of this source material. The literature was not provided as part of the program instructions for contestants, and Lin insists that she initially avoided any research into the subject matter.68 The winning design encourages reflection on the weight of the collective tragedy and transcends the specific experience of a particular veteran. Guided by the competition advisor, the jury of design professionals managed to select a design with universal appeal and iconic stature.

Spreiregen created a set of instructions for the jury based on the competition program. The guide reiterated the sponsor’s desire for an apolitical memorial listing names and prioritizing

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68 Maya Lin avoided researching the Vietnam War in order to decontextualize her design from its political controversy. She writes, “I made a conscious decision not to do any specific research on the Vietnam War and the political turmoil surrounding it. I felt the politics had eclipsed the veterans, their service and their lives. I wanted to create a memorial that everyone would be able to respond to, regardless of whether one thought our country should or should not have participated in the war.” Lin, Boundaries, 4:09.
the National Mall site. The jury was instructed to select a “design of the highest artistic merit.” This was a significant aspect of the evaluative process, because in addition to selecting a design with commemorative content that conformed to the sponsor’s vision, the instructions directed the jury to consider aesthetic issues. The emphasis on aesthetics is prioritized in that this is the second instruction on the list. Drawing upon their professional experience, the jury of architects and sculptors selected an aesthetically innovative design, which they later described as original and “completely of our time.”

The final instructions focused on logistical issues. The sponsor conveyed a concern with making sure that the selected design would be physically built through reference to the agency approval process (“A design that is consistent with the objectives of the Federal review agencies which are responsible for approving it—the National Park Service, the Commission of Fine Arts, and the National Capital Planning Commission”) and budgetary constraints (“A design that can be built within the limits of our anticipated budget, approximately $3.0 million”). The closing instruction literally asks that the winning design be “buildable, which will be durable in time and will not pose any maintenance difficulties.” Spreiregen has noted that Lin’s design was “very easy to build. The actual construction is very straightforward.”

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69 Site is referenced in the fifth and sixth instructions, seeking a design “harmonious with site,” and a “design for a memorial with a suitable ‘presence,’ one that is neither too commanding or too deferential [toward the neighboring monuments on the National Mall].” “Vietnam Veterans Memorial Design Competition Instructions to the Jury,” The Records of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, carton 66.

70 Ibid.


73 Spreiregen, interview with the author.
The influence of the professional advisor during jury deliberations is significant in the VVM design competition. In addition to coordinating the jury guidelines, Spreiregen designed the space where the entries were exhibited. The jury met for five days, starting on April 27, 1981, in Hanger #3 at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland (Fig. 2.12). The airplane hanger not only offered a tremendous amount of space for the vast number of submissions, but it provided security for the competition proceedings for a memorial dedicated to veterans of a controversial war. Spreiregen carefully curated the display of submissions so that the judging process proceeded efficiently. The overwhelming number of submissions amounted to 1.3 miles of display space. He arranged the exhibit into parallel aisles and located the most promising designs in the center. The advisor calculated the total viewing time required (3 ½ hours) based upon the number of designs (1,432) and interior exhibition space.\(^{74}\)

Spreiregen had examined the designs for rules compliance and divided them according to “roughly four categories of design merit—highly promising, possible, unlikely, and ineligible.”\(^{75}\) He placed the 191 designs that fell into the top two categories in the central aisles without the jurors’ knowledge. Spreiregen also moved these designs around at the end of each judging day to give the jurors “fresh eyes.”\(^{76}\) The jury narrowed the designs to 232 potential winners by the

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\(^{74}\) The total number of submissions was reduced to 1,421 after entries that failed to adhere to the submission requirements stated in the program were eliminated.

\(^{75}\) Robert Doubek suggests that in anticipation of the large number of entries, the VVMF “proposed to the jury in advance of the judging that Spreiregen do a preliminary sifting of designs, by dividing them into four categories.” Robert W. Doubek, *The Vietnam Veterans Memorial: The Inside Story* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Co., 2015), 122.

\(^{76}\) Paul D. Spreiregen, “The Vietnam Veterans Memorial,” in *The Architectural Competition: Research, Inquiries and Experiences*, ed. Magnus Ronn, Resa Kazemian, and Jonas E. Andersson (Stockholm: Axl Books, 2010). When asked how his assessments were made, he notes: “I was an architect. I just knew.” He maintains that his grading system was completely anonymous, “No one else knew my rankings.” He declined to use architecture students to hang the entries in case someone second-guessed the system or tried to influence the competition. He did not keep a record of his assessments so it is difficult to ascertain how he determined the
end of the first day. There were 90 short-listed designs on the third day, which were reduced to 39 by the following morning. The jury selected Maya Lin’s design by the afternoon of the fourth day, presenting their final results to the sponsor at noon on May 1, 1981. When they completed their deliberations, the head of the jury, Clay, declared it was the “best run competition he had ever encountered.”

**Submissions**

The competition attracted a “bewildering variety” of submissions: at the time, it was the largest number of entries for a design competition in Europe or the United States. The open competition was well publicized in the general press and professionally specific journals. The architecture schools at Yale, Columbia, and the University of Virginia assigned the memorial project as a design exercise in their classes. Of the more than 5,000 programs sent out, 2,573 individuals or teams registered, and there were 1,432 entries received by the March 31, 1981 deadline. The entrants included a mix of professionals and amateurs (fewer than half of the entrants were registered architects) and hailed from all 50 states. The deliberations of the jury,

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77 Spreiregen, interview with the author.
78 McLeod, 120.
81 Andres Burr serendipitously heard about the VVM design competition while he was planning his elective course on funerary architecture at Yale. The final design project required each student to prepare an entry for the VVM competition. Lin was the only student to submit her assignment to the actual competition, though her professor also entered the design competition. Donald Langmead, *Maya Lin: A Biography* (Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2011).
82 Though the competition attracted both untrained applicants and professional architects, some professional firms outside of Washington, D.C. are notably missing (Skidmore, Owings, Merrill; I.M. Pei; Peter Eisenman; Michael Graves; Charles Moore; and Robert Venturi). There is also a dearth of famous artists among the applicants to the VVM Design Competition. Mary McLeod suggests either the “very openness of the competition may have discouraged established
and the aesthetic guidelines of the design program that emerge in the submissions, show aspects of the design competition inscribed in the winning design.

The jury awarded the $20,000 first prize to entry 1026, pastel drawings of two black polished granite walls sunk into ground with a poetic hand-written text describing the inscription of the names of all the dead and missing from Vietnam in chronological order (Fig. 2.13). The abstract form is eerily absent of people, so the jurors were left to imagine the viewing experience of the finished piece. The painterly quality of the pastels likely stood out among the more polished architectural presentations, yet Lin estimates that, “ultimately, I think it was the written description that convinced the jurors to select my design.”82 The 850-word text that Lin submitted along with her drawings read in part: “Brought to a sharp awareness of such a loss, it is up to each individual to resolve or come to terms with this loss. For death is in the end a personal and private matter, and the area contained within this memorial is a quiet place, meant for personal reflection and private reckoning.” In her text, Lin explicates the way in which the design encourages a private experience within the public space. The jury intuited the potential quality in Lin’s entry, for example, one juror praised the design as an “empty vessel” into which visitors pour their own meanings and engage with the object.83 Indeed, the memorial did change the way the public interacted with monuments on the National Mall, as visitors actively trace the chronology, take rubbings, and leave personal notes and objects at the site.

The VVM jury surmised that Lin’s winning submission most closely conceptualized the program requirements with an aesthetically unique design. The jury reported:

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82 Lin, Boundaries, 4:12
Of all the proposals submitted, this most clearly meets the spirit and formal requirements of the program…. This memorial with its wall of names, becomes a place of quiet reflection, and a tribute to those who served their nation in difficult times….It is uniquely horizontal, entering the earth rather than piercing the sky. This is very much a memorial of our own times, one that could not have been achieved in another time and place.  

The jury may have been predisposed to seek out a horizontal solution in following the sponsor’s requirement that the winning design preserve the National Mall vistas. One juror reasoned, “The program says simple and meditative. Therefore that means heavy, and not vertical, horizontal not vertical,” while another assessor concurred, “I begin to look for a simple solution of serenity not conflict, one more horizontal.” The group also praised the powerful simplicity of the design, which consisted primarily of the names and little else. The deliberations revealed that the site-specific quality of Lin’s design contributed strongly to its selection as the winner of the design competition. One member praised the design as “superbly harmonious with its site,” while another juror described its relationship to the site as “the most important part of the memorial.” Other qualities that emerged in the jury discussions emphasized the design’s unique horizontality and formal contrast with the other monuments in Washington, D.C.

Lin’s design was unique as a dark horizontal memorial in a city of white vertical and figurative monuments. The jury seems to have been biased toward abstraction and particularly Minimalism during the competition, as one juror proposed a Minimalist design for the memorial.

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87 Lin described her design choices: “I do not think I thought of the color black as a color, more as the idea of a dark mirror into a shadowed mirrored image of the space, a space we cannot enter and from which the names separate us, an interface between the world of the living and the world of the dead.” Lin, Boundaries, 4:14.
into which visitors could pour their own meanings. Among the designs that received meritorious citation, there are a variety of approaches, but most of the runners-up shared a rejection of representation and were spatially integrated with the landscape.

A team of trained architects and a sculptor won the second place $10,000 prize. Marvin Krosinsky, Victor Ochakovsky, and David Fisher designed a looming bronze figurative sculpture supported and joined by two gray granite walls (Fig. 2.14). The submission drawing depicts the memorial from eye-level with the Washington Monument in the background and several people milling about the plaza-like space. The designers intended the sculpture to represent the polarities of the war and ultimate unity of the American people. The team of Russian immigrants had designed several representational World War II memorials in the USSR. Though the jury delivered unanimous results to the sponsor, this design was said to be Clay’s favorite.

The landscape architecture team EDAW led by Joseph Brown, was awarded the $5,000 third place distinction. Brown’s design is of a large semi-circular wall flanked by realistic figures of cast soldiers at each end (Fig. 2.15). Though the competition entries were anonymous, the landscape team was in the unique position of having prior insight into what the sponsor was looking for, as EDAW had been commissioned to do early site studies for the VVMF. The team included the sculptor Frederick Hart, whom the sponsor later commissioned to do an additional sculpture for the winning design.

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89 McLeod, 133.
90 At the time, Frederick Hart was known for his Creation (1978) sculptures on the western façade of the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., which depict the creation story with the figures of Adam, St. Paul, and St. Peter. Hart is now best known for Three Servicemen (1984), a bronze figurative group added to the built VVM.
The second and third place entries shared a site-specific landscape quality with the winning design. Both designs are oriented toward the Washington Monument. Though Krosinsky’s team submission varied from Lin’s design with the addition of figurative content, it also featured a large sculptural element, walls, names, and site-specificity. EDAW’s design similarly constructed a quiet, landscaped space for reflection. This suggests that these shared design features are derived from aspects of the competition, including the guidelines and jury deliberations.

Many of the competition submissions responded to the physical site, as directed by the program. McLeod observes that there are a “surprisingly [large percentage of design submissions] circular in configuration” because of the network of curving paths in Constitution Gardens. For example, Timothy Wood, a Columbia architecture professor, planned a bermed ring bordered with cedar trees on each end with a bronze band of etched names on the retaining walls. The Tuscan column at the center of the circle is inscribed simply, “Vietnam” (Fig. 2.16). Timothy O’Keefe, a self-taught artist, designed two 14-foot sentry eagles carved of white granite frame entrance (Fig. 2.17). In O’Keefe’s design, the names of the dead and missing are inscribed in a “bold ring of bronze” set in a granite wall below a military wreath pattern, with a group of trees at the center to symbolize an eternal flame.

The VVM design competition submissions include a variety of aesthetic styles, from abstract to representational, though a majority are abstract (with a combination of architecture and landscape as determined by the program). Professional architects submitted most of the fifteen designs designated as $1,000 honorable mentions. These included Henry Arnold, the landscape architect for Constitution Gardens. Among the honorable mentions and second and

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91 McLeod, 133.
third place winners, there were twenty-two architects, ten landscape architects, five sculptors, two students, and two designers who received prizes. These totals reveal that there were few amateurs or non-professionals among those selected for meritorious citation. Grady Clay estimates that 25 percent of the submissions were amateur-like, while Spreiregen guesses that amateurs account for eighty percent of the total competition entries.\footnote{Grady Clay, telephone interview with Mary McLeod cited in McLeod, 133, fn 20. McLeod surmises that the disparity between Clay and Spreiregen’s estimates derives from how one characterized the submission form. The jury and competition advisor agree on the perception that there were many amateur designs in the competition judging room.}

Invested parties in the VVM narrative were able to enter the competition because it was anonymous.\footnote{This is within the tradition of architectural design competitions in the United States. For example, Thomas Jefferson submitted a design inspired by Andrea Palladio’s Villa Rotunda to the 1792 design competition for the U.S. Capitol building under a pseudonym (AZ). The submission was discovered to be Jefferson in 1915. The actual drawing has been lost, however scanned copies of his earlier design drafts for the Capitol and for the President’s House are held in the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.} These include EDAW (Frederick Hart), Henry Arnold, Charles Atherton (CFA), W. Kent Cooper (of Cooper-Lecky Associates), Thomas Carhart (VVMF), and even Lin’s professor, Burr, who assigned the project to her class. Consistent with his role as Secretary of the CFA at the time, Charles Atherton’s design is a landscape solution emphasizing the site without imposing on the National Mall. The combination of walkways, trees, and benches also includes a short wall displaying the names of the dead. The design incorporates all of the elements specified in the competition program, including a harmonious relationship with the site and the complete listing of names. The design almost blends in with its location, however, such that it becomes lost on the National Mall. Though the design has a therapeutic quality in providing a quiet space for reflection, the sponsor likely desired a more visible commemoration of the war.
The landscape designer for Constitution Gardens similarly preserved the aesthetics of the site. Arnold was part of a group that submitted entry #235 to the competition, which received an honorable mention (Fig. 2.18). The landscape design of Henry Arnold, Richard Benjamin, P. M. Khandvala, Warren Grain, and Mary Pat Hogan includes a grove of trees, paths, and granite name-posts around a pool filled with water lilies. Likely because Arnold wanted to protect the green space that he helped to design, the landscaping overtakes the memorial focus and the posts inscribed with names are lost in the site.

W. Kent Cooper, Edward Corr, Julia Craighill, and Jeffrey Howard submitted an interesting, ephemeral design for the VVM competition that would have disappeared over time (Fig. 2.19). Kent Cooper’s firm, Cooper-Lecky Associates, was later hired as the Architect of Record for the VVM, charged with implementing the winning design. The design for entry #703 is a metal shroud-like sculpture intended to erode, surrounded by aluminum posts engraved with names that would wash off after 10 to 15 years. The posts would be dismantled so that the green space could be reclaimed for another purpose. Cooper describes, “I thought…that after 25 or so years, we could bury it. We could just fill the thing back in. This is back from my original idea of the ephemeral quality, and then turn it back into a Frisbee field.” The names of the Vietnam veterans would have disappeared before the end of the twentieth century. While the design responds to the competition program’s physical requirements, it is antithetical to the aims

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94 There is an interesting affinity between Cooper’s plan for eroding subjects and Richard Serra’s selection of Cor-Ten steel as a sculptural material in light of its properties of erosion. The influence of Serra on Lin’s winning design has been documented. In particular, Lin’s VVM design has been formally compared to Serra’s Untitled, Pulitzer Piece: Stepped Elevation (1970-71). Serra taught at Yale at the time that Lin submitted her design as part of an architecture class assignment at the university, and the student has acknowledged his influence on her work. Harriet Senie discusses Serra’s work in relation to Lin’s design in The ‘Tilted Arc’ Controversy: Dangerous Precedent? (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 9.

95 Kent Cooper, interview with the author, Washington, D.C., April 12, 2010.
of the sponsor, who wanted a permanent structure to honor the fallen soldiers of the Vietnam
War. Cooper reflects that his design “did not have the iconic power of the wall.” The design
respects the National Mall location without competing with neighboring monuments, but it does
not explicitly honor site-specificity in the way that the sponsor envisioned. When asked about
site-specificity, Cooper responded that war memorials do not belong on the National Mall: “It
has to do with the question of what do you do with a war memorial? It has nothing to do with
the site, but the subject matter. I think we have a place for [war memorials] in Arlington.”

The design submitted by Lin’s professor is one of many submissions that incorporate
patriotic symbols (Fig. 2.20). Andrus Burr, Anne McCallum, Carl Pucci, and Caroline Northcote
Sidnam reference the American flag with names placed on white marble, star-shaped posts with
blue-granite bases. Pink granite ramps lead the viewer to a shallow dome overlaid with a star
and inscribed with a map of Vietnam. The jury awarded an honorable mention to Abner B.
Cohen’s patriotic design, a grove of 50 pleached trees and granite stripes with the names,
“draped softly over a grass mound like a flag over a warrior’s grave” (Fig. 2.21). Cohen had
studied art at Pratt Institute and worked on magazine layouts. In his professional-looking
submission panel, the giant flag is created by the grove of trees and granite strips but the
iconography is visible from above and not immediately apparent to the viewer.

There were a number of subterranean designs submitted to the competition, which spoke
to the horizontality emphasized in the program in order to preserve the National Mall vistas. The

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96 This is further supported by the continued additions to the VVM, including the Education Center discussed later in this chapter. Had Cooper’s design won the competition, the descriptive information on the memorial would be lost at this point, so that there would be no extant memorial to the Vietnam War veterans on the National Mall in 2016. Cooper’s design contradicts the sponsor’s aims to explicitly display information about what the memorial is meant to commemorate.
97 Cooper, interview with the author.
98 Ibid.
viewer enters the memorial from below ground in Anthony Ames’ design (Fig. 2.22). His rotunda design includes the names on the interior drum of the dome. Light is filtered into the space through a broken section of the dome, suggesting to the viewer a spiritual ascent. The design includes a flag permanently displayed at half-mast. The focus on death in the design may have been less appealing than the therapeutic quality of the winning submission. Raymond Yin submitted a sunken granite bowl design under his wife’s name, Laura Davis (who was a U.S. citizen), with the names etched concentrically by year beginning in the ring closest to the center (Fig. 2.23).

Troy West and John Zoldos designed a subterranean space that speaks to the “emerging paradigm of memorial/cemetery hybrid” described by art historian Harriet Senie (Fig. 2.24). Two 40-foot walls are made of 57,692 hollow stones, each with a human-sized hand cast into it. The surrounding site is sown each spring with wildflower seeds. The cast hands and empty stones are surrogates for the body, thus evoking a cemetery function. In this case, the memorial/cemetery hybrid is derived from the sponsor’s emphasis on the therapeutic aspect of the memorial in the design program. Senie shows the way in which the VVM defines the new paradigm through its public use: “The design of the VVM evokes a giant tombstone, thus conflating the function of cemeteries with the purpose of memorials.” In contrast to Lin’s apolitical memorial, West and Zoldos intended their project as an anti-war statement by emphasizing the human loss created by the conflict. The designers’ political sentiments were directly antithetical to the competition program.

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100 Ibid.
The Morphosis team (which included Thom Mayne, Michael Rotondi, Kazu Arai, Ben Caffey, and Judith Newmark) entered a subterranean design that also references the memorial/cemetery paradigm (Fig. 2.25). The horizontal solution creates an underground precinct for the dead with perpendicular marble slabs inscribed with names, whereby each slab represents a different year upon which the names are ordered alphabetically according to date of death (1969 is the largest slab in the design.) The architects conceived their project as a fragmented horizontal Washington Monument, thus counter-referencing nearby monuments in a way that is antithetical to what the sponsor intended.

Many of entries reflected the postmodern architectural trends of the 1980s. Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown defined the postmodern as a rejection of the “high art” view of purist architecture in favor of co-opting low culture into high art/architecture.\textsuperscript{101} The architects framed the shift in terms of the emergence of the “Duck” and the “Decorated Shed,” typologies that embodied iconography in buildings. The duck refers to a building whose system of space, structure, and program are distorted by an overall symbolic form, while the decorated shed cannot communicate without the application of other signs or expressive ornamentation. The postmodern typologies described by Venutri and Scott Brown show up in many of the entries: an enormous peace symbol, a giant pair of combat boots, a massive hand holding the liberty torch, a 45-foot sculpture of a mourning figure, three knights on chargers crossing the rolling cloud of Valhalla, and a huge block punctuated by protruding pieces of a helicopter, a jet aircraft, and a ship. In the jury discussion of the entries “that make use of symbols of some sort like combat

boots,” jury members cautioned that “symbols for memorials do not work. Symbols either mean things to different people or they focus too narrowly.”

In fact, Lin’s winning design originally included symbolic content. Lin’s submission had been adapted from her initial concept prior to the competition. She cited Sir Edwin Lutyen’s *Theipval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme* (1927-32), a cluster of arches reaching 145 feet in a landscape setting, as a source of inspiration (Fig. 2.26). Portrayed by Lin as “a journey to an awareness of immeasurable loss,” Lutyen’s memorial requires the visitor to enter the space in order to view the names of the missing. She described how the idea popped into her head while photographing the Constitution Gardens site, after which she returned to the Saybrook College dining hall at Yale to sculpt the first model in mashed potatoes. During a studio critique, Lin’s classmates suggested making the angle in the wall, aiming the wings at the Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial, and convinced her to remove a sculptural representation of falling dominoes placed in front of the wall. The dominoes referenced the political domino theory that the South East Asian states were dominos in the face of Communism. The symbolic content of the original design varied considerably from the elegant simplicity of the design she submitted to the VVM competition. It is likely that the jury would have rejected her original design because of their interest in a more abstract memorial.

Lin’s design was submitted as part of an undergraduate architecture course assignment as opposed to a polished professional commission. Academic architecture in the United States at the time was based on the Beaux-Arts studio practice. Following the French pedagogical model

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102 Spreiregen notes that the jury was interested in an abstract design to transcend specificity and maintain meaning for future generations. Spreiregen, interview with the author.
103 The first design included a centrally placed sculpture, but her architecture class advised her to delete it. Abramson, 682.
104 Lin refers to Vincent Scully’s description of the memorial delivered during his course at Yale University. Lin, *Boundaries*, 4:11.
where theoretical design problems are set without the consideration of function and physical constraints, the studio atmosphere likely lent itself to greater experimentation. Lin explained, “I designed what I thought was the right solution for a course. But in a way, I think when you’re doing something in architecture school, you’re doing it for yourself.”

Her design benefited from the studio atmosphere of a classroom, such that in contrast to a closed competition or direct commission, the VVM competition process enabled a student designer to win the open competition.

The themes that emerged in the competition submissions are a response to site, horizontality, patriotic symbols, and abstract landscapes. The jury seemed to have been predisposed to abstraction and conveyed an interest in following the sponsor’s requirements set out in the design program. While many of the designs responded to the brochure, Lin’s design transcended the specifications with an aesthetically original design. The jury of art professionals was explicitly instructed to select a design of the highest artistic merit. After they made their selection, however, the jury worried that the design required explanatory material for its public presentation.

**Winning Design**

There is revisionist history in the sponsor’s reaction to the winning design presented by the jury. The jury presented the winning design to the sponsor on May 1, 1981 in its original form. Lin’s design included 200-foot-long walls that were 10-feet high at the vertex, which later grew to 250-feet long in order to accommodate all of the names during implementation.

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105 Lin quoted in Langmead, 80.
The jury evaluated and recommended the design, but the sponsor had “the final authority because it is their project.”\textsuperscript{106} Though some of the board members expressed confusion, the VVMF unanimously supported the jury’s selection at the time. According to Scruggs, Wheeler was the first to comment: “This is a work of genius.” Scruggs said the VVMF applauded without fully understanding the design. Scruggs recalls his comments: “It’s weird and I wish I knew what the hell it is,” and later claimed that he thought it looked like a “big bat.”\textsuperscript{107} Doubek worried that the memorial to the dead left out the living. Meanwhile, Spreiregen remembers that after the VVMF accepted the design, “they were in fact thrilled.”\textsuperscript{108}

The VVMF approved the winning design but there was foreshadowing of the discontent that would arise in the later stage of implementation. While the jury was deliberating, Webb sent the VVMF a newspaper clipping about another Vietnam War memorial design competition in Texas, in which the professional art jury presented a veteran’s organization with a shockingly contemporary design. Webb worried that an unfathomable modern design might emerge from the competition, with his comment, “We’re not going to get an egg carton, are we?” referring to the insulting nickname the Texan veterans group had attributed to their winning design.\textsuperscript{109}

\textsuperscript{106} Spreiregen, interview with the author.
\textsuperscript{107} Scruggs and Swerdlow, 65-66. Though not present during the jury presentation, William Lecky describes how the sponsor was initially dismayed, but “the group slowly began to appreciate the profound impact of the design.” William Lecky, \textit{Designing for Remembrance: An Architectural Memoir} (McLean, VA: Lecky Design Studio Publishing, 2012), 156.
\textsuperscript{108} Spreiregen, interview with the author.
\textsuperscript{109} In 1979, Military Order of World Wars, a Veterans organization, cosponsored a memorial for residents of Travis County, Texas who had died in Vietnam. Like the VVM competition, the sponsoring veterans group enlisted the help of arts professionals (the Austin Contemporary Art Association) to run the competition. Ira Licht, director of the Lowe Museum in Tallahassee, Florida and former director of the NEA’s Art in Public Places program, awarded the winning commission to \textit{Infinity of Life}, a concrete grid set with 98 concrete egg shapes to represent the residents who had died, with two open spaces for foliage to grow. Local veterans were appalled by the design, denouncing it as an “egg crate,” and pushed to replace the winning design with the runner-up, a pair of stone shafts separated by a slit that allowed the sun’s rays to highlight the
The sponsor was concerned that the public reception to the design be “love at first sight” in order to ensure that the memorial would be built on the National Mall. Since the winning design was “simplistic in appearance and execution,” the board required professional drawings for the architectural presentational models. Spreiregen sketched the drawings but noted that Lin’s submission had issues with its contours. In order to secure agency approval, he corrected the contours and wall length in the drawings before helping to prepare the models in the architectural office of juror Harry Weese. The group effort occurred prior to Maya Lin’s physical involvement in the project, and Spreiregen recounted her dismay when she arrived at Weese’s office and found that her design had been changed. This incident set the tone for her relationship with the memorial sponsor and Spreiregen. The critical reception was almost universally positive when the model of the winning design was presented to the press from a boardroom at the AIA headquarters in Washington, D.C.

**Implementation and Additions**

**Architect of Record**

The competition program articulated that the winning designer would be retained as a consultant without expanding upon his or her specific responsibilities during implementation. A competitor had written to Robert Doubek asking for clarification of the competition program, as names of the dead. Ultimately, the veterans compromised with a traditional monument, a granite obelisk topped with a lone star. See “Artist Creates Memorial Sculpture,” *Daily Texan*, November 12, 1979; S. Davis, “Design for Memorial Stirs Monumental Spat,” *Dallas Morning News*, December 24, 1979 and Laurence Jolidon, “War Memorial Controversy Ends with Both Sides Winning,” *Austin American-Statesman*, January 4, 1980. These sources are cited in discussion of the VVM memorial in Hagopian, 97.

110 Hagopian, 97.
111 Lecky, interview with the author.
112 Spreiregen, interview with the author.
to who maintains control of the design after the selection stage. The sculptor and architect Barry Johnston commented:

I don’t really understand what is meant by the words, ‘The winner…will be retained as design consultant through completion of the memorial,’ 2nd paragraph, line 5. But if you mean that the VVMF will take the artist’s design and do the project yourselves or hire a contractor or another designer to manage the construction of the approved concept, leaving the awarded artist with the peripheral role as a ‘design consultant’, then your dedicated architects and sculptors may justifiably feel they are not using their talents to the fullest. If the intention of the VVMF and its advisors is to commission a memorial that will be a lasting testimony to the spirit of those who served in the Vietnam War, then the VVMF committee must be willing to commission art.\textsuperscript{113}

This concern is resonant in the use of an open design competition for military commemoration. Often, the military sponsor’s motivations are incongruous with the designer or arts professional assessment, which is based on aesthetic concerns. This varies considerably from a commissioned project where the designer and sponsor communicate prior to design selection and they work together collaboratively to develop an idea. In contrast, the open competition does not select a designer; rather the process is aimed at selecting a more finished design concept.

Because the winning designer was a student at the time she won the competition, the design required a registered architect to build the project. Lin rejected the initial contract presented to her by the VVMF, in order to maintain greater creative control over the design. The VVMF proposed Spreiregen as architect of record, but Lin pressured the organization to select a “qualified firm that had experience both in architecture and landscape-integrated solutions, and that would be sympathetic to the design.”\textsuperscript{114} Cesar Pelli (Lin’s dean at Yale) proposed Kent Cooper and William Lecky because he believed that they had the experience to realize the

\textsuperscript{114} Lin, \textit{Boundaries}, 4:13.
project without altering her idea.\textsuperscript{115} The Washington, D.C.-based firm Cooper-Lecky Associates was hired as the project architect in 1981, responsible for building the memorial. The VVMF retained Lin as a consultant, and Spreiregen was no longer involved in an official capacity.

Lin’s design underwent a series of changes during the implementation phase. One of the major contributions of the project architect is the addition of a walkway at the suggestion of the National Park Service (NPS). Additional lighting was added later for night-time visitors. The viewer approaches the memorial directly across the lawn in Lin’s winning design (Fig. 2.27). The viewer would have felt a wide cavity in the ground ahead of where the grassy earth meets the wall. The NPS proposed a paved pathway to act as a runoff gutter for some of the drainage issues with the site and in anticipation of the crowds amidst fears that visitors might injure themselves falling from the wall. During implementation, Cooper-Lecky added the narrow stone walkway to Lin’s design. The walkway was later widened when the actual number of visitors exceeded the expectations, as the VVM is now the most visited memorial on the National Mall. The experience of the memorial is changed from phenomenological to processional, as the visitor must now follow a prescribed pathway.

A key feature of the design is the complete listing of names of those missing or killed as a result of service in the Vietnam War. Lin did not include any technical specifications with her submission as to how the names would be installed on the granite wall. Hand-carving 58,000 names on stone would have taken 35 years according to Kent Cooper’s estimate.\textsuperscript{116} The architect of record proposed casting plaques with raised lettering, but Lin insisted on carving the names directly onto the granite. Cooper-Lecky worked with Larry Century of Cleveland, Ohio to come

\textsuperscript{115} Cesar Pelli and Kent Cooper were close friends, having worked together in Eero Saarinen’s studio early on in their career. Cooper, interview with the author.
\textsuperscript{116} Ibid.
up with a new, computer-aided photoengraving technique that could accomplish this. They then enlisted the Binswanger Glass Company of Memphis, Tennessee, to blast the names onto the wall using this process.\textsuperscript{117} The font size was reduced to 5/8 inch in order to maintain an intimate experience with the names and limit the size of the wall. Kent Cooper noted that even Lin was surprised by the visual effect of the names on the reflective surface of the granite, which she had not planned nor foreseen this effect.\textsuperscript{118} The architects were moved to silence in the experience of encountering so many names on a reflective surface that incorporates the space of the viewer.

Lin recalls negotiating with Cooper-Lecky at this stage over the aesthetics of the monument’s proportions, but she sustained her design concept. Cooper described her as a “very keen participant” in the implementation of her design.\textsuperscript{119} The architects debated the width of the wall. The project architect suggested a thicker stone, but Lin had a vision of dematerialization between the wall and earth. She notes, “The architects could not understand my choice of a reflective, highly polished black granite. One of them felt I was making a mistake and the polished surface would be ‘too feminine’.\textsuperscript{120} Lin’s comment speaks to the difficulties she faced as a young woman with little professional experience in the midst of negotiating the construction of a large, commemorative project located at the monumental core of the nation. The VVMF members perceived her as a young, Asian-American woman without a direct connection to the Vietnam War, and this problematically played into the controversies that would result in further

\textsuperscript{117} Larry Century had developed a technology for etching photographic images onto glass. This was the first use of the technique on granite.
\textsuperscript{118} Cooper, interview with the author.
\textsuperscript{119} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{120} Lin, \textit{Boundaries}, 4:14.
additions to her winning design. These took place during the agency approval stage, when veterans pushed for the inclusion of specific references to the content of the war.121

Agency Approval Process

The government agency approval process began after the presentation of the winning design to the public. The memorial construction budget was privately funded, but government approval of the final design was required prior to its construction on federal property. The reviewing agencies included the CFA, NCPC, and Secretary of the Interior.122 The CFA unanimously approved the model of Lin’s design presented by the VVMF on July 7, 1981 (Fig. 2.28). The design also received undisputed approval from the NCPC. Spreiregen was present at these meetings, praising the design’s abstraction, lack of symbolism, and apolitical qualities. Secretary of Interior James Watt gave initial approval, but the growing conservative biases in the wake of the Regan presidency had an impact on the final consensus needed in order to proceed with construction. After its initial agency approval, the emerging criticism of the VVM focused on the lack of specificity and the abstract quality of the design. Veterans complained that the memorial did not commemorate the living in the same way that it honored the dead, in spite of the fact that the competition guidelines specified this character of the memorial.

121 Lin describes her contentious relationship with the VVMF as follows: “I played very dumb for the first nine months of the Vietnam project. I played very quiet and naïve. I knew nothing about the war, its history and politics. But although one of my strong choices was not to read anything about the war, I also didn’t tell them that I had spent three months researching, coming to grips with the whole definition of a memorial in general, just so I could get specific.” Maya Lin quoted in Peter Tauber, “Monument Maker,” New York Times Magazine, February 24, 1991.

122 After the VVM, the National Capital Memorial Commission (NCMC) was created through the Commemorative Works Act of 1986, aimed at restricting the number of memorials built in the capitol by setting a five-year time limit between the signing of the law and securing a permit based on sufficient funds in the bank. This five-year window was later extended to seven when President Bush signed public law 102-216 on December 11, 1991. Reporting to the Secretary of the Interior, the NCMC is responsible for approving and siting memorials in Washington, D.C.
Controversy

The public perception of the memorial changed abruptly in the wake of the CFA meeting in October of 1981, the first meeting where press and television journalists were present. Former VVMF member Tom Carhart appealed to the commission to reconsider their approval of Lin’s design. He denounced the memorial as a “scar…a black gash of shame and sorrow,” because there was no flag of national dedication and “no statuary to help explain the blackness.” Though Carhart was the first fund supporter to publically oppose the memorial, there had been critical dialogue brewing behind closed doors. Webb, Carhart and others began to meet informally at a restaurant in Arlington, VA, where the perceived deficiencies of the memorial design were discussed. It is worth reiterating that although none had served in Vietnam, four of the eight jurors were in fact veterans: Carhart falsely assumed the jury of art professionals was made up of non-veterans. Carhart reinserted the political dialogue into the memorial’s content by framing the design as an anti-war statement devoid of heroism, selected by a jury of non-veterans. He may have been disappointed that his own submission of a stylized soldier memorial had been rejected in favor of its antithesis, an innovative abstract solution.

Carhart’s statements also reflect the splintering within the VVMF as some of its members became divided over the abstract design. There was criticism that the chronological ordering would make it hard to find particular names, but Lin argued that an alphabetical listing would read like an impersonal telephone book. Lin described the chronicle of death as an “epic

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125 In addition to Carhart, James Webb had conflicts with the VVMF over the design, breaking from the group officially in November 1981.
poem.” The lack of inscription mentioning the subject of commemoration (the Vietnam War) was bemoaned, though again the apolitical requirement suggested this. Other disparagement focused on the abstract aesthetics, comparing the design to “something resembling an erosion control project,” and the sunken design, “it is as if the very memorial itself is intended to bury and banish the whole Viet Nam experience.” J. Carter Brown countered that the design had been selected by a jury of professionals, and it had already been approved unanimously by the CFA.

The protests became public and political in the winter 1981 and early 1982. Webb, along with financial supporter Ross Perot, publically raised objections to the design’s color, subterranean quality, and the lack of a flag. In private, Webb unfavorably compared the design to a “mass grave.” He resigned from the VVMF sponsoring committee in November 1981, suggesting that the fund had mislead him into believing that changes would be made to the design. Secretary Watt threatened to block the memorial unless the VVMF pacified the critics. After an overwhelmingly positive reception in the preliminary press, the design was subject to growing critical reviews that focused on the abstract formal aesthetic and lack of specificity in content. The *National Review* called for traditional bronze commemoration (much like the figurative additions that were later added) and demanded a “suitable sculpture--- as if they had died at Gettysburg or the Ardennes.”

\[126\] Lin quoted in Scruggs and Swerdlow, 571.  
\[129\] Webb called instead for the traditional prescription of the monumental canon in Washington, DC: an above-ground, white memorial with a flag. Webb, untitled narrative, published in Hagopian, 196.  
\[130\] “Stop that Monument,” *National Review*, September 17, 1981.
the purpose of the memorial design as “sheer human waste, the utter meaningless of it all.”\textsuperscript{131} Veterans complained there was no heroic statuary and nothing of the lived experience of the war. Webb commented publicly that listing the names in chronological order treats the dead “like the victims of some monstrous traffic attack.”\textsuperscript{132}

Concerned that the memorial would not be built, the VVMF petitioned the White House for support, and Nancy Regan joined the national sponsoring committee. The debate moved behind closed doors in a private meeting moderated by Senator John Warner (Virginia Republican) in January 1982. The closed meeting structure contrasts sharply with the tone of the open competition process, where an impartial jury selected an anonymous winner. Neither the winning designer nor the project architect were involved in these negotiations, which resulted in the approval of a figurative addition to the abstract design. In March 1982, the VVMF agreed to the compromise proposed by General Mike Davison, leader of 1971 Cambodian invasion, to include a flagpole and representational sculpture at the site (Fig. 2.29). At the October 1982 CFA meeting, the fund proposed adding a flagpole with inscription at the apex of the walls, “to symbolize the American service men and women who follow and fight for the principles embodied in the American flag,” and a statue of “a strong, commanding figure symbolizing those who served in Vietnam” to be placed in front of the walls.\textsuperscript{133} For the VVMF, the public commemorative content was more significant than aesthetic integrity: as Scruggs observed,

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{133} The meeting is described in Nicholas J. Capasso, \textit{The National Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Context: Commemorative Public Art in America, 1960 - 1997} (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers, 1998), 94ff.
\end{itemize}
“Aesthetically, the design does not need a statue, but politically it does.” Lin opposed the sculptural additions, and Spreiregen supported her objections based on the validity of the competition process. In October 1982, the CFA agreed to include the flagpole and figurative statue but proposed locating these elements at a distance from the wall.

Outraged, Lin withdrew and asked the project architect to join her. Cooper-Lecky continued to work on the modified memorial out of concern that “there would be no one left to argue the case for a good design solution.” The memorial was dedicated shortly afterwards on November 11, 1982. Lin who had not been present at the groundbreaking in March 1982, returned to the site to see her built design at the dedication. She recalled, “It terrified me. It was a strange feeling, to have had an idea that was solely yours be no longer part of your mind but totally public, no longer yours.”

The flagpole was added in 1983, and the representational sculpture, a year later.

**Additions**

In resorting to familiar symbols of patriotism and figuration, the additions challenge the innovative aesthetic of the competition-winning design. The inscriptions, flagpole, and

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134 Scruggs and Swerdlow, 101. This is contrary to Doubek’s recollection of Scrugg’s initial figurative design concept for the memorial: “an infantryman, maybe holding a gun.” Doubek, *The Vietnam Veterans Memorial: The Inside Story*, 11.

135 The CFA called the proposed location of the sculpture “episodic,” with no relation to the flagpole, and warned of the proliferation of flagpoles on the National Mall. Though the CFA approved the additional features, J. Carter Brown proposed locating them at the southwest entrance of the site for aesthetic reasons. Brown argued that the symmetry would be discordant, the wall would cut off the perspective of the flagpole. He also suggested that outdoor sculpture requires nearby features in order to give it scale. Thomas E. Luebke, *Civic Art: A Centennial History of the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts* (Amherst, MA: University of Amherst Press, 2013), 381. Hagopian describes how the Reagan administration, looking to garner support for its policies in Central America, pushed for a swift compromise in order to use the memorial as a symbol of national unity. Hagopian, 174.

136 Lecky interview with the author.

Frederick Hart’s *Three Servicemen* (1984) (Fig. 2.30) were approved by the CFA in response to veteran criticism of the lack of specificity in Lin’s abstract design. Additions to the built memorial now also include Glenna Goodacre’s Vietnam Women’s Memorial (1993) (Fig. 2.31) and an Education Center (currently under construction). These additions, by various groups including the VVMF itself, reflect the ongoing contentiousness surrounding memories of the Vietnam War and an attempt to reshape its content and meaning. As described in the competition program, the sponsor sought an apolitical memorial to encourage healing, but the additions reframe the fallen veterans as heroic patriots. Lin’s design encourages a therapeutic experience as the viewer descends into the space and encounters the numerous names superimposed on a reflective surface. In contrast, the figurative sculpture, flagpole, and inscriptions strike a heroic tone, and the education center aims to transform the therapeutic content into a narrative of courageous and patriotic sacrifice.

The CFA approved the inscriptions added at the vertex on top of the east wall of the memorial, before the first name and at the bottom of the west wall, after the last name. The memorial’s abstract quality is diluted by the specificity of the text. The inscriptions address a perceived deficiency in the completed memorial design. Because the abstract design includes the complete listing of names of those who are lost or missing as a result of the conflict in Vietnam, the first inscription reinserts the content of the event into the memorial. The prologue on the top of the east wall explicitly states the event commemorated: “In honor of the men and women of the Armed Forces of the United States who served in the Vietnam War. The names of those who gave their lives and of those who remain missing are inscribed in the order they were taken from
This inscription injects the word “war” and its supplementary content into Lin’s apolitical, abstract statement. Even the title of the object, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, had resisted this move, as it left out the mention of the war.

Art Historian Erika Doss notes the way in which war memorials have shifted from monolithic master narratives to “service” memorials, tending to commemorate the veterans rather than the wars they fought. Doss considers why gratitude is so “urgently expressed” in contemporary memorial making, observing that, “saying ‘thank you’ to the ‘greatest generation’ has obviously become a popular commemorative project in contemporary America.”

The epilogue at the bottom of the west wall asserts the patriotic values of those being commemorated, reminding visitors of service-related sacrifice: “Our nation remembers the courage, sacrifice, and devotion to duty and country of its Vietnam veterans. This memorial was built with private donations from the American people.”

The 60-foot flagpole installed in 1983 to pacify critics who perceived the memorial as “anti-war” or “unpatriotic”, flies the American flag twenty-four hours a day. At the base of the staff are the seals of the five branches of military service with an inscription that reads: “This flag represents the service rendered to our country by the veterans of the Vietnam War. The flag affirms the principles of freedom for which they fought and their pride in having served under difficult circumstances.” Like the inscriptions on the wall, this inscription reinserts the event into the memorial for veterans. The flagpole and inscription define veterans as patriotic heroes sacrificing for their country and assert patriotic identification into the commemorative work.

138 Savage notes the way in which the anti-heroic language of lives “taken” undercuts the patriotism implied by those who “gave” their lives in his discussion of the victimization of heroes in the therapeutic model of memorialization. Savage, Monument Wars, 279.
139 Erika Doss, Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 190.
140 McLeod, 123, fns. 48, 49.
In contrast to the open competition jury, the sponsor created an ad hoc selection committee of veterans without any design experience to evaluate the figural sculpture commission. The VVMF managed the process without the oversight of a competition advisor. The panelists included James Webb and Milton Copulos, both opponents to Lin’s design, along with Bill Jayne and Art Mosley who had supported the design. The group of veterans selected Frederick Hart for the commission of a 7-foot-tall bronze representational sculpture of three soldiers.¹⁴¹

Hart trained with Felix de Weldon, who designed the U.S. Marine Corps Memorial (1954) in Arlington, Virginia, which Carhart had cited as a model for military commemoration at the 1981 CFA meeting (Fig. 2.32). Inspired by an iconic photograph, the U.S. Marine Corps Memorial is a bronze figurative statue of six soldiers raising a flag after the Battle of Iwo Jima in World War II. De Weldon’s memorial is the antithesis of Lin’s abstract design. The sponsor had considered Hart for a direct commission before the VVMF board “decided to conduct some sort of competition, so it rejected Hart’s principle concept: ‘a pavilion structure, with design influenced by elements of a Buddhist pagoda…containing two works of sculpture, one a realistic depiction of two soldiers and the second a more abstract form of plexiglass with internal images.’”¹⁴² Thus, Hart was already in the minds of the fund members.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ It is worth noting that Frederick Hart’s commission ($330,000) was significantly larger than Maya Lin’s winning prize. ($20,000).
¹⁴² Scruggs and Swerdlow, *To Heal a Nation*, 50. Doubek recalls being blown away by Hart’s work when the artist initially approached the VVMF for the commission. Doubek, *The Vietnam Veterans Memorial: The Inside Story*, 19.
¹⁴³ He was on the design team that placed third in the open competition. After gaining federal approval for the sculpture and flagpole additions, the VVMF met on March 11, 1982 to go over slides of competition entries with sculpture. Though the second-place design also includes figurative sculpture, it is not representational, making Hart the next selection in third-place.
Hart’s bronze figurative sculpture, *The Three Servicemen* (1984), comprises three male soldiers carrying infantry weapons. Their service branch is indistinguishable from their Vietnam War-era uniforms, and their mission unspecified as they watch over the wall. The lead soldier is a white male modeled on a Marine stationed in the Washington, D.C. area in 1983. The Cuban-American soldier carries a machine gun, and the third figure represents an African-American figure.\(^\text{144}\) This sculpture confirms racial stereotyping while demonstrating that it is impossible to be comprehensively representative with figurative sculpture. The CFA approved Hart’s model in October 1982 for a site near the west entrance to the wall in a grove of trees.

In “The Statue near the Wall: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Art of Remembering,” Karal Ann Marling and Robert Silberman argue that Hart’s figurative sculpture provides the specifics lacking in the wall of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and “the content of Rick Hart’s statue…attempts to supply just those ingredients most wanting in what many of them [the veterans] call the ‘Wall of Hurt’.”\(^\text{145}\) The perceived lack of specificity is traced to the first CFA meeting when the design won its initial approval. If, as one veteran naysayer argued the Minimalist quality of Lin’s design rendered it “inconspicuous and meaningless,” the figurative statue produced by Hart did not resolve the desire for specificity.\(^\text{146}\) Veterans groups continue to make additions to the VVM, both in content and aesthetics.

The VVM was the first war memorial in the capital that was dedicated to all of the troops of that war, as opposed to memorials to particular units or divisions, but comprehensive


\(^{145}\) Ibid.

inclusiveness proved to be an impossible commemorative ideal. The specificity of figurative commemorative sculpture necessarily excludes someone. The concern initially was that after representing one contingent of the war’s participants, there would be no end to the demands to represent others. Asian-American veterans and Native-Americans felt excluded, and even the Canine Corps was upset that a dog was not featured in the composition. After seeing Hart’s statue, Diane Carlson Evans from Falls River, Wisconsin, was moved to build a memorial dedicated to service of women in Vietnam.

Evans formed the Vietnam Women’s Project (VWMP) in 1984 and began a five-year campaign to commemorate her fellow women who had given their lives in Vietnam. Evans had been a nurse in the war and based her fundraising on a 33-inch bronze model of a military nurse by Rodger M. Brodin (1940-1995). The CFA initially rejected the proposal 4 to 1 over concerns that too many additions would dilute the power of the memorial’s granite wall.\footnote{Benjamin Forgey’s criticism of the Women’s Memorial was published the day before the CFA meeting. Benjamin Forgey, “Women and the Wall Memorial Proposal: Honor without Integrity,” \textit{Washington Post}, October 22, 1987, E11. Forgey argues that “The Nurse…has no psychological or physical relationship to the memorial as a whole.”} The VWMP subsequently gained support from five major veterans organizations.\footnote{These groups included the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Vietnam Veterans of America, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and Disabled American Veterans} Public relations efforts, including a \textit{60 Minutes} episode on the contributions of military nurses in February 1989, paid off when the Bill for the Vietnam Women’s Memorial passed in 1988. President Bush signed the legislature to add the memorial to the desired site in Constitution Gardens a year later.

The VWMP competition for the memorial included a jury of both art professionals and veterans. There was a split between the two groups based on preferred aesthetics, with the art professionals favoring an abstract design and the veterans seeking out a traditional bronze figurative design. Though Goodacre’s entry originally received only an honorable mention, the
VWMP eventually settled on her submission: a four-figure sculpture of an injured male soldier, a white nurse holding him in her arms, an African American woman comforting the nurse as she looks skyward, and a third woman kneeling over medical equipment.\textsuperscript{149}

In March 1993, Goodacre’s \textit{Vietnam Women’s Memorial} was approved by all regulatory agencies and installed 300 feet from the wall in a conspicuous grove of trees. While the \textit{Vietnam Women’s Memorial} addresses a perceived lack of representation of the women veterans of the Vietnam War, the very creation of the statues by Hart and Goodacre suggests that an initial response to the Vietnam War needed to have been more gendered.\textsuperscript{150} The names of eight women were added to the wall after completion, including seven Army nurses and one Air Force member.

Sponsored by the VVMF, an underground education center is currently being constructed adjacent to the memorial that will normalize the war in a way that Lin’s design was never intended to do. The VVMF won congressional approval for the underground education center in 2003 and began construction in 2014. The Ralph Appelbaum Associates designed center will tell the story of the war through timelines and a wall of faces. It will also include a display of objects left at the memorial. Instead of a therapeutic space to contemplate the cumulative loss of

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\textsuperscript{149} The two first-place winners were Robert Desmon of Green River, Wyoming, and Eileen Barry of East Islip, New York. The VVMF board members who selected Goodacre were Diane Carlson Evans, Doris Troth Lippman, Judith Helein, Daniel Daly, Wilma Blackman, A. J. Carson, Shirley G. Crowe, and Evangeline Jamison. Correspondence of Carlson Evans and Harriet Senie, January 19, 2006, in Senie, \textit{Memorials to Shattered Myths: Vietnam to 9/11}, 182, fn. 69.

\textsuperscript{150} For a discussion of the gendered subtext behind the evolution of the Vietnam Women’s Memorial, see Karal Ann Marling and John Wetenthal. "The Sexual Politics of Memory: The Vietnam Women’s Memorial Project and the Wall," \textit{Prospects: An Annual of American Cultural Studies} 14 (1989): 341-72. Marling and Wetenthal look not only at the controversy over the building of the memorial but also at the lack of acknowledgement of the women who participated in the war itself. The gendered formal contrast between Lin’s feminine and nurturing design and the masculine idealism asserted in the monumental canon of Washington, D.C. is also implied.
lives, the center intends to stimulate the viewer with interactive and informational content. For example, the “Wall of Faces” will project large-scale images of soldiers on their birthdays with the date and location of their deaths, as words representing core values, such as “Loyalty” and “Courage,” scroll down the wall. The didactic focus of the addition speaks to a perception that the built memorial requires a rewritten history.151

Architectural historian Nathan Glazer characterizes the VVM as the quintessential “mute monument,” in contrast to public monuments that were once replete with symbolism: in the past, “casual visitors needed guidebooks to understand their meaning.” Glazer laments that Lin’s minimal design is a mute monument that asserts nothing: “It does not tell us that these men died for their country, or for liberty, or for democracy, or even that they died in vain. It says nothing except that they died.”152 The additions to the monument (the objects left at the site by visitors, the figurative sculptures, the flagpole, the inscriptions, and the projected education center) respond to this criticism of the VVM as a mute monument. Their sole focus is to add content to the wall.

Directed by the sponsor and the federal agencies that approved the design, the supplementary material was added after the completion of the VVM competition. The original quality of Lin’s design is undermined by the added features, which return to familiar symbols of patriotic heroism and representational statuary. The vertical flagpole, inscriptions, and figurative sculpture literally undercut the horizontal landscape quality and threaten the formal abstraction

151 In 2011, Jan Scruggs noted that the ‘Wall of Faces’ intends to include images of recent veterans killed in Iraq in order to “serve as a memorial until they get one of their own.” Jennifer Favorite looks at the way in which the planned Education Center recasts the dead as heroic and explicitly equates the Vietnam War with the war on terror. See Jennifer K. Favorite, “‘We Don’t Want Another Vietnam’: The Wall, the Mall, History and Memory in the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Education Center,” Public Art Dialogue Vol. 6 No. 2 (Fall 2016).
152 Nathan Glazer, From a Cause to a Style: Modernist Architecture’s Encounter with the City (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2009), 25.
with specificity. The additions made after the competition challenge the very process that procured and shaped the memorial design.

**Conclusion**

The success of the VVM, which today is the most visited memorial on the National Mall, has made it a model for contemporary memorial making through the open design competition process. The memorial’s aesthetic triumph is enhanced by the narrative of an anonymous design competition won by a young student, reflecting the democratic process of its conception. Lin notes, “I think it is actually a miracle that the piece ever got built. From the very beginning I often wondered, if it had not been an anonymous entry 1026 but rather an entry by Maya Lin, would I have been selected?”

The trend to commission a memorial design through an open design competition continued on the National Mall, with the KWVM (1995) and the NWWIIM (2004), and throughout the United States, most notably in the design competition for the September 11 National Memorial (2011). Tom Luebke of the CFA observes that contemporary memorial makers are “always trying to redo the magic of Maya Lin.”

Lin created an elegant and original design for the VVM, yet the built memorial is the result of the entire competition process. Lin’s design responded to the sponsor’s guidelines described in the competition program. A professional jury selected by Spreiregen awarded her abstract sketch and poetry with the commission. Cooper-Lecky Associates worked with Lin during implementation to translate her abstract concept into a built product, and the design was

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154 This comment was made at a panel on Public Art Process moderated by Kirk Savage at the College Art Association Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. on February 5, 2016. Luebke notes the influence of the VVM design competition success in a discussion of the aesthetic impact on the National World War II Memorial of the design competition process.
further refined during the agency approval process to include a paved walkway. Determined by
the sponsor, the content of the competition design focuses on the cumulative loss of life, as
opposed to the events of the war. The post-competition additions, however, reframe the
commemorative content into a heroic and patriotic narrative of the Vietnam War. In
transforming the VVM content with a didactic focus, the series of additions undermines the
VVM competition process, which had originally produced a design that responded well to the
therapeutic aims of the sponsor.
CHAPTER 3: THE KOREAN WAR VETERANS MEMORIAL

“I have very mixed emotions about the design competition as a way to get from here to there…. There are so many issues related to who is the client.”¹

―William Lecky, Architect of Record for the Korean War Veterans Memorial

Nineteen larger-than-life-size soldiers outfitted in full military gear march toward a flagpole on the National Mall, in determined pursue of an unidentified mission. Behind the figures, part of the Korean War Veterans Memorial (KWVM), a black granite mural wall honors military support staff, and a dark pool of water below it commemorates the veterans who gave their lives in Korea (Fig. 3.1). Completed in 1995, the KWVM is the outcome of a 1989 design competition. It is not, however, the memorial that was selected as the winner of that competition. In fact, the memorial—as built—barely resembles the winning design.

The competition to design the KWVM continued long after the winner of the formal design competition was announced, as intervening agencies vied to define or influence the memorial’s central concept. It pitted the competition winners against the architect put in charge of implementing their design and the advisory board appointed to oversee the memorial’s creation. The Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board consisted of retired military personnel, all of whom were Korean War veterans. Their oversight of the project prompted debate, resulting in a contentious lawsuit between the designers, the architects, and the advisory board. Ultimately, the designer charged with executing the project significantly altered the initial design scheme during the protracted implementation and agency approval stage, at the direction of the advisory board. The extent of their intervention in the process and the nature of

its influence raised critical issues regarding the sponsorship and jury composition in the design competition. In the end, it was the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board and its vision for the memorial (not that of the architects) that prevailed.

Just after the success of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (VVM, 1982) and the subsequent additions made to the memorial, the KWVM design competition was run by a military sponsor and jury. This chapter examines how the competition jury comprised of veterans from the advisory board ultimately determined the content and appearance of the memorial. It documents specific changes made to the winning design that transformed a peaceful march of soldiers into an active battle scene and provides a context for those changes in the culture surrounding the Korean War. It highlights the influence of the sponsoring agency throughout the process and offers a perspective on how this might have been avoided.

**Early History**

**Sponsor**

In contrast to other prominent memorials on the National Mall, the KWVM does not have a clear narrative addressing its origins. Stories about the founding of the VVM frequently recount the emotional tale of Jan Scruggs having resolved to build a memorial for his fellow Vietnam War veterans after leaving a screening of the film *The Deer Hunter* (1978). The National World War II Memorial (NWWIIM, 2004) accounts similarly involve a veteran, Roger Durbin, who approached his congresswoman in 1987 to lobby for a memorial.\(^2\) The KWVM has no comparable story. Myriad organizations contributed to the project, and the narrative of its origins and development over time contains divergent accounts. Generally speaking, the

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National Committee for the Korean War Memorial initially participated in founding and fundraising efforts; the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) played a key role in moving the idea forward; and the Korean War Veterans Association (KWVA) led the effort to erect the physical memorial.

Histories of the KWVM often overlook the earliest private fundraising efforts of the National Committee for the Korean War Memorial. This organization was incorporated in 1979 as the Korean War Memorial, Inc., the same year as the well-publicized, non-profit Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF), which eventually was responsible for establishing the VVM.\(^3\) Chayon Kim, who according to her own account had been saved by American troops during the Korean War and later came to the United States as a naturalized citizen, founded the corporation. Sociologists Barry Schwartz and Todd Bayma maintain that Kim’s committee was motivated “not only by the desire to erect a proper monument…but also by resentment over the Vietnam War being commemorated before the Korean War even though it was fought later and less effectively.”\(^4\)

The National Committee’s initial goal was to raise $6.5 million and build a memorial three years after necessary legislation was passed.\(^5\) Although the organization solicited between $400,000 and $600,000, it allegedly spent more than that sum on administrative costs and fundraising events.\(^6\) In 1983 Kim was removed from the board when charges of embezzlement

\(^3\) Korean War Memorial, Inc. became known as the National Committee for the Korean War Memorial after 1981.


\(^6\) The exact number of funds raised by the National Committee for the Korean War Memorial has been variously estimated. See “Proposal Touches Off Battle over Korean War Monument,” *New York Times*, May 6, 1984, 66; and Rick Bowers, “Fight Within Hurts Effort for Korean War
were filed against the corporation, and in 1985 the group’s corporate charter was revoked due to insufficient funds. Public figures such as General Douglas McArthur criticized the committee for using their names on its letterhead even though they had no official connection to the group. Ultimately, due to the questionable administrative practices of the National Committee of the Korean War Memorial, it was barred from participating in the project’s realization.

Overlaps in personnel did exist, however, between the National Committee for the Korean War Memorial and the presidentially appointed Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, which was responsible for conducting the design competition for the memorial. Chairman of the National Committee for the Korean War Memorial around 1983, former Marine Corps officer Edward R. Borcherdt later served on the advisory board and design competition jury. John Kenney testified before Congress on behalf of the National Committee in 1984, but he dissolved his relationship with organization members before becoming staff director of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board in 1988: in fact, Kenney’s appointment was contingent upon his dissociating from Kim. The advisory board’s active separation from Kim

Memorial,” *Miami Herald*, July 7, 1985, A9. The *Miami Herald* investigation concluded that most of the money raised by the committee through direct mail solicitations was used to cover administrative costs, with the remainder going straight into the pockets of the organization’s members. Kristin Hass suggests that committee member Myron McKee paid himself $650,000 to raise $600,000; see the author’s *Sacrificing Soldiers on the National Mall* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2013), 32. Although the evidence against Kim presented in the suit was judged inconclusive, Kim’s personal biography and entrepreneurial efforts continue to be questioned. According to Hal Barker of the Korean War Project, [http://www.koreanwar.org](http://www.koreanwar.org) (accessed January 2017), she fictionalized accounts involving political contacts and falsified graduate degrees for financial gain in various business schemes. Hal Barker, telephone interview with the author, March 4, 2014.


8 Kenny spoke before the Subcommittee on Public Lands, Reserved Water and Resources Conservation on October 29, 1985. 99th Congress, 1st session, S.1223.S.J. 184 (Washington: GPO, 1986). Notes in the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board meeting minutes of March 4, 1988, establish that Kenney’s appointment required his distancing himself from Kim:
and the National Committee signals the veterans’ desire to steer clear of controversy in the memorial process. This concern would influence the advisory board’s decision-making throughout the project, from site selection to the sponsoring of the design competition to the construction of the memorial itself.

After the private fundraising committee was dissolved, the ABMC rekindled its earlier interest in creating a Korean War memorial. Founded in 1923 and comprised of presidentially appointed military personnel, the AMBC is responsible for administering, operating, and maintaining military monuments in the United States and cemeteries for American soldiers overseas. The agency sought memorial funding as early as 1967 and even tried designating seed monies for a Korean War memorial in its 1971 operating budget. In 1984 the commission recommended that the government take on the building of the memorial instead of allowing another private group to do so, “to keep it from becoming mired in any conflicts between competing parties.”

[Richard] Stillwell: While Kenney is out [tending a parking meter], I am going to confirm, for your benefit Ed [Borcherdt] and Tom [Dehne], that we did make it very clear up front that a condition of employment was no substantive interplay between John and Mrs. Kim on the activities…
Mr. [James] McKevitt: The Dragon Lady.
Stillwell: …the plans or projects of this Committee, this Board. And, he understands that full well.

Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board Meeting Minutes, March 4, 1988, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 2, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland.

9 The Office of Management and Budget deleted these allocations during its annual reviews. Although why is not clear, the most likely explanation is the ballooning cost of fighting the Vietnam War (1959–75).
In 1985, Korean War sergeant William T. Norris founded the non-profit Korean War Veterans Association (KWVA) with the mission to “preserve the memory of the forgotten war.” The phrase “forgotten war” was first used to describe the Korean War in *US News & World Report* in 1951. Sandwiched between World War II and Vietnam, the Korean War did not attract much attention in the American press at the time. Many veterans had also served in World War II with much more fanfare, and Korea was a more distant foreign locale than Europe for many Americans. The early stationary of the KWVA includes a slogan at the bottom of the page emphasizing their motivation: “No Monument. No Memorial. Only Memories” (Fig. 3.2). In the inaugural edition of their official newsletter, *The Graybeards*, association editors lament the state of funding for a memorial and discourage contributions to Kim’s National Committee, “suspecting that a good share of money collected was being plowed back into fund-raising expenses.” They encourage their members to wait until the ABMC established its authority over the project, so that 100 percent of donations would go to the memorial.

The initial issue of *The Graybeards* also includes photographs of Arlington National Cemetery (1864) in northern Virginia and the *Monument to the First Battle of the UN Forces in the Korean War* (1982) in Osan, Korea, erected by the Korean government (Fig. 3.3). Featured on the page directly following the call for a national memorial, the photograph of the Korean monument is cropped so that only one part of the monument is visible—a figurative sculpture of

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five soldiers actively engaged in a military operation. This image is strikingly similar in subject matter to the KWVM as eventually built, suggesting the possibility that the participating veterans’ aesthetic influences may have had some bearing on the design of the built memorial. Supporting this suggestion is the fact that the KWVA worked closely with the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board to target veterans’ groups in fundraising, and that a veteran’s association representative sat on the memorial’s advisory board.14

Both the divisiveness of key players involved in the early efforts to fund a Korean War memorial and the advisory board’s interest in keeping the memorial’s creation conflict-free are reflected in the project’s historiography. The book authored in collaboration with the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board and published in honor of the 1995 memorial dedication does not mention the National Committee for the Korean War Memorial.15 A 2012 account by William Lecky, partner in the now-defunct studio of Cooper-Lecky Associates, recalls his experience as architect of record for both the VVM and KWVM. There he attributes the Korean War memorial’s origin to the ABMC, suggesting that after the success of the VVM there was a “major sea change in the organization’s mission [that led them] to erect a memorial honoring the veterans of the Korean War.”16 Unlike the narrative of the VVM, in which Scruggs emerges as the allegorical Founding Father, the story of the KWVM credits the establishment of a permanent memorial to a group effort on the part of veterans—veterans wishing to counter the perception of their having participated in a “forgotten” war.

14 Colonel William Weber was an active member of the Presidentially-appointed Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board. His role was to liaise with veterans’ groups in order to make sure that their voices were considered in terms of the type of memorial desired. Colonel Weber currently serves as the chairman of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Foundation.
Legislation

If military veterans provided the impetus for the KWVM, they also drove the legislative process. Korean War veteran James Florio of New Jersey introduced the first Korean War Memorial bill in Congress on April 24, 1985. The “Korean War Memorial Act of 1985,” which called for the ABMC to erect the memorial, was passed on November 6, 1985, with a vote of 406–0. On October 28, 1986, President Ronald Regan signed the “Korean War Veterans Memorial Act of 1986” into law. The final legislation (Public Law 99–572) stipulated the creation of a twelve-member advisory board made up of Korean War veterans and charged its members with recommending a site; selecting the design (with the concurrence of the ABMC); promoting the establishment of the memorial; and encouraging fundraising for its construction and maintenance.

The Department of the Interior was responsible for authorizing the memorial “to honor members of the U.S. Armed Forces,” which was subject to approval by the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) and the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) before government funds could be appropriated. Charged with a similar obligation earlier in the decade, the CFA and NCPC had both supported the abstract and untraditional design by the young architectural student Maya Lin, selected in the 1981 open competition for the VVM.

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17 The bill was initially co-sponsored by G. V. (“Sonny”) Montgomery and John Paul Hammerschmidt, chairman of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs. It later included 135 co-sponsors.
18 Richman, 198. The CFA was established in 1910 in order to protect the aesthetic interests of federal land and capital planning in response to the McMillan Plan. Written in 1902, the McMillan Plan is responsible for turning the National Mall into the monumental core of Washington, D.C. The influential director of the National Gallery J. Carter Brown was chairman of the CFA during the VVM and the KWVM design competitions and approval processes. The NCPC was established in 1924 to similarly assist with planning for the nation’s capital in response to the McMillan Plan.
Congress appropriated $1 million for the memorial: $500,000 for site preparation, design, and planning; and $500,000 for construction. Additional funding would need to come from private sources. The total cost of the memorial was $18,116,699.21. To supplement the $1 million provided by Congress, the ABMC and Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board raised $7 million dollars through the sale of a congressionally authorized commemorative silver coin. The remainder of the funds came through corporate contributions and private donations from veterans and other individuals. Notable among the latter category are funds contributed by readers of Abigail Van Buren’s “Dear Abby” column. Two letters, printed in the nationally syndicated column in late 1988 and early 1989, reportedly generated between $200,000 and $1 million from 27,838 individual contributors.

President Regan appointed the twelve Korean War veterans to the memorial’s advisory board on July 20, 1987. The Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board was made up of

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19 The ABMC and Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board were required to have any additional funding in place before an October 28, 1993 deadline in order to secure a construction permit.
21 The two largest corporate funders were Hyundai Motor America and Samsung Information Systems. On Hyundai’s donated of $1 million toward the design and planning process, see “Monuments: Late Remembrance,” *New York Times*, November 12, 1986. The letters appeared on November 11 (Veterans Day), 1988, and January 2, 1989. The initial one, from former Air Force nurse and KWVA member Kathleen Cronan Wyosnick of San Jose, CA, was featured on its own, accompanied only with a reply from “Abby” petitioning the public to help fund the memorial. After the public responded generously, the KWVA made Van Buren its first honorary member. With regard to the actual amount of funds the columns generated, Richman [204] places the total at $332,000; other sources suggest the number was as low as $200,000 [Highsmith and Landphair] and as high as $1 million [Rankin]. See Carol M. Highsmith and Ted Landphair, *Forgotten No More: The Korean War Veterans Memorial Story* (New York: Chelsea Publishing, 1995); and Margaret Rankin, “Tribute to Heroes of ‘Forgotten War,’” *Washington Times*, May 4, 1990. As with other details of the project (such as its origins), published sourced present contradictory information. Such inconsistency is problematic and reflects the way in which many aspects of the KVWM project were secreted from the public eye, unlike in the VVM project, were the process was more transparent.
seven Army members (Richard G. Stillwell, Conrad K. Hausman, John B. Curcio, Carlos Rodriguez, William E. Weber, William F. McSweeney, and Rosemary T. McCarthy); three Marines (Raymond Davis, Thomas G. Dehne, and Edward R. Borchert); and two Air Force members (Fred V. Cherry and James D. McKeveit). A retired four-star general who was also the son of a four-star general, General Richard G. Stillwell had served in World War II, the Korea War, and twice in the Vietnam War. Stillwell’s seniority made him the logical choice to lead the advisory board. He was nominated as chairman at the board’s first meeting, on September 23, 1987, and officially appointed in November 1987. General Raymond Davis, a Marine Corps legend and a recipient of the Korea War’s 131st Congressional Medal of Honor, was selected as vice chairman. One Anglican woman, one African American man, and one

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22 Curcio was the CEO of Mack Trucks, Inc. in Allentown, Pennsylvania, at time of his appointment.
23 Rodriguez represented the Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association. The Board reunited Rodriguez and Weber, who had served together in Korea. Rodriguez was the first man injured in Weber’s company. Weber described their relationship: “He was completely capable of making his own decisions, but there was just an affinity between us. Two of us... became one vote.” Colonel William E. Weber, interview with the author, Fredericksburg, Virginia, March 26, 2014.
24 Weber had served as a paratrooper in World War II. After being severely wounded in Korea, he returned to service in 1952. At the time, he was the only double amputee serving active duty. “Col William E. Weber,” Veterans History Project, Library of Congress. Weber was largely responsible for liaising with veterans’ associations on the advisory board. In addition to Stillwell, Davis, and McCarthy, Weber worked regularly in the KWVM office in Washington, D.C. during the design competition and implementation.
25 Mc Sweeney was the president and CEO of Occidental International Corporation, a petroleum company with $22 billion in annual profits at the time.
26 Dehne was the representative for Disabled American Veterans.
27 Cherry flew 52 combat missions in Korea, and served in Vietnam until his fighter jet was shot down in the north. He was subject to interrogation and torture for seven years as the first black Prisoner of War in Hanoi.
28 Davis became famous for his heroics in the Battle of the Chosin Reservoir in December 1950. This brutal 17-day battle in freezing weather allowed UN forces to successfully withdraw from North Korea. Richard Goldstein, “General Raymond Davis (War Hero) Dies at 88,” New York Times, September 5, 2003. Interestingly, many of the David Douglas Duncan photographs that inspired the winning design were taken at Chosin Reservoir.
Latino man held positions on the board.\textsuperscript{30}

The legislation specified that the Executive Branch select the advisory board members. Regan’s administration was involved in the controversial addition of Frederick Hart’s figurative Three Soldiers (1984) to Lin’s abstract VVM.\textsuperscript{31} The ABMC initially recommended fifteen veterans to the White House (including several members of Congress, three retired generals, and five representatives of veterans groups), but only Dehne and Rodriguez were appointed from the initial list, which included neither Stillwell nor Davis.\textsuperscript{32} There is an undated, typed list of names on White House stationary containing eight names, including Cherry, Curcio, Davis, Dehne, Hausman, McKeivitt, Rodriguez, and Stillwell, in the ABMC archives of the KWVM, but the details of board selection went undocumented.\textsuperscript{33} Since the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board reported by law to the ABMC, the Executive Branch was ultimately responsible for the member selection of both the advisory board and the AMBC. The ABMC included eleven staff members at the time, and meeting minutes suggest that the advisory board acted fairly independently, with little administrative and fundraising support from the commission.

\textsuperscript{30} The sole woman, Colonel Rosemary T. McCarthy, had served in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps. The KWVM was dedicated just a couple of years after the VVM addition of Glenna Goodacre’s Vietnam Women’s Memorial (1993), which features nurses. Although there were efforts being made to include women in commemorative projects, it is unclear how much influence McCarthy was able to exert on the board. The KWVM commemorates just a few women on the support staff mural wall; no women are featured in the figural group, which occupies the center of the design.

\textsuperscript{31} President Reagan’s Secretary of the Interior, James Watt, lobbied for the Hart sculpture and threatened to delay groundbreaking of the VVM without the addition of the heroic figures. The figurative addition to the VVM was veteran-instigated in the face of the abstract design of the VVM. Regan’s administration may have been compensating with the selection of an all-veteran advisory board for the KWVM.

\textsuperscript{32} Richman, 202.

\textsuperscript{33} Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board Early History, box 1. According to Richman, Weber was suggested by Congressman Hamilton Fish (NY), and McCarthy was likely proposed by a friend of Colonel Hausman. Richman, 202.
The Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board membership changed minimally throughout the memorial-making process.34

**Design Competition**

**Competition Development**

The ABMC and the Baltimore District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) initially outlined the design competition plan in 1986, but the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board took control of the project as soon as it was appointed. Though the legislation stipulated their involvement, early competition proposals drafted by the ABMC and COE made no reference to the advisory board. There was limited discussion about the role of advisory board in the preliminary stages: the ABMC envisioned itself as the jury in the design competition. This changed dramatically, however, once the board was formed in 1987. Without the oversight of an impartial third party, the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board negotiated control over the terms of the competition structure.

Prior to the appointment of the advisory board, Staff Architect Alexandra Crawford of the Engineering Division anticipated an open national competition following the American Institute of Architecture (AIA) guidelines. This occurred in the wake of the VVM competition, which had resulted in the selection of Maya Lin’s innovative design from among 1,451 entries. That open competition established a notable trend in contemporary memorial design commissioning.

34 In 1988, Curcio resigned and was replaced by John Staum, a past commander-in-chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Hausman died in 1988 and Stillwell passed a year before the groundbreaking ceremony in 1991. John R. (Jacob) Comer, past national commander of the American Legion, replaced Hausman. Davis succeeded Stillwell as Chairman, and McCarthy became Vice Chairman of the board in 1990.
procedures.\textsuperscript{35} In hosting an open design competition, the ABMC altered its policy: on overseas military cemeteries, they had simply appointed an architect.\textsuperscript{36} The KWVM design competition is the first national memorial competition directed by the ABMC in Washington, D.C.

During the early planning stage, ABMC engineer Frederick Badger stipulated a key condition for competition entrants that would impact the design selection at the later stages. Badger proposed that the competition be openly advertised but that entrance should be restricted to design professionals. Although the COE would administer the early stage of the competition, the ABMC insisted that they review the professional experience of entrants using Standard Form 255. This would have the effect of limiting the applicant pool and inhibiting another Maya Lin from applying: Lin was a 19-year-old student at Yale University when she won the VVM competition.\textsuperscript{37} Badger anticipated that fifteen architects would present designs to a pre-selection committee including ABMC architect Paul Harbeson before the ABMC would choose the winner (with Badger on the final selection board). The jury at this preliminary stage in the planning differed from the eventual one, which would be made up of the Korean War Veterans Memorial

\textsuperscript{35} Like the COE, the National Committee for the Korean Memorial also had planned an open international design competition, just after the VVM dedication in 1982. See Chayon Kim to Nancy Reagan, September 8, 1989, asking her to participate on the jury for the “international open design competition” for the Korean War Memorial, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 1.

\textsuperscript{36} The ABMC directly commissioned the architect Wallace K. Harrison and sculptor Robert White for the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) Memorial (1983), dedicated to AEF commander-in-chief and first ABMC Chairman General John J. Pershing. The Pershing memorial has an affinity with the built KWVM, where key design elements include figurative sculpture, a large wall, and service-oriented quotes. The 52 by 75-foot stone plaza includes an eight-foot figurative sculpture of Pershing on a pedestal, two 10-foot high walls, and (on the east wall) a quote from Pershing about the devotion and valor of the AEF officers. The consulting architect of record for the Pershing project is John F. Harbeson, the father of Paul C. Harbeson, who acted as the ABMC’s architectural consultant in the KWVM project.

\textsuperscript{37} Badger stated, “All interested designers will be invited to submit past experiences on Standard Form 255 to the Baltimore District. Sculptors, artists and others may submit as long as they are associated with a competent architectural firm.” Badger, Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board Meeting Minutes, December 4, 1986, cited in Richman, 211.
Advisory Board. Like the advisory board, however, the ABMC is composed of military retirees: presumably, the aesthetic and conceptual preferences of the ABMC would have shared an affinity with those of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board—or at least, a greater affinity than with a jury of professional architects and designers.

From the time of their initial appointment, advisory board members anticipated being responsible for design selection. They became the *de facto* jury as soon as they entered the competition discussions. After the 1986 bill passed, Weber wrote in an open letter, “[The] Board will select the designs preferred in priority and recommend these to the ABMC.”38 The Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board maintained control of design selection throughout the period in which the design competition procedures were refined. Harbeson proposed a group of five professional design consultants to guide the jury during the selection phase of the competition. In an internal memorandum, Stilwell cautioned against delegating any real authority to the consultants, stipulating that they were “not to form an advisory team, or panel, but to provide consultation individually each to the strengths or weaknesses of the designs selected on the first ballot.”39 According to the advisory board-authored judging plan, the outside consultants would be available to guide jury members, and their votes would not carry any weight in the design selection process.

The ABMC, COE, and Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board envisioned the design competition as a two-stage process when they refined the competition structure at a February 1988 meeting. In the first round, the COE would evaluate design submissions for technical compliance, selecting twenty to move on to the next round. These applicants would

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receive conceptual guidelines and an honorarium of $1,000 to produce a revised design. Three finalists would be selected from the twenty, and each would receive further design instructions and collect $20,000. The board would select the winner of the competition, who would receive an additional $25,000 and the commission for the monument. Unlike single-stage competitions, which typically elicit highly polished submissions, this two-stage process encourages competitors to submit initial ideas for subsequent development. This strategy might have enabled a better dialogue between the winning designer and the sponsor, but by July 1988 the ABMC and the advisory board refined the competition structure once again, this time to conform to the “time-honored method of a single stage open National Competition” in light of cost and time limitations.⁴⁰ Because the design competition judging plan had been drafted according to a multi-stage process, the shift to a single stage open competition would prove problematic later on, when pinpointing exactly where the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board’s responsibilities for design selection ended became difficult. While the ABMC and COE were still holding meetings to finalize the competition procedures, the advisory board was already discussing site-selection and design ideas in their independent meetings.

**Site Selection**

Site was a fundamental issue for the board of war veterans tasked with creating a visible memorial to a “forgotten war.” This issue was raised at the advisory board’s very first meeting. The board considered four Area 1 sites: Constitution Gardens, at the corner of Constitution Avenue and 17th Street, NW; Ash Woods, near Daniel Chester French Drive and Independence Avenue, SW; Tidal Basin; and a plot along the river in West Potomac Park. The ABMC had already requested that the Secretary of the Interior consider Area 1 on the National Mall, even

⁴⁰ Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board Meeting, December 19, 1989, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 1.
though the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board was in charge of selecting which site to recommended to the National Park Service (NPS) and NCPC. After the advisory board visited all of the sites during the lunch recess of its initial meeting, Constitution Gardens (the current site of the NWWIIM) emerged as its first choice, championed by Weber because it was “on the main path of visitation”\textsuperscript{41} and by Stillwell because “everything else should be damned this is so overpowering.”\textsuperscript{42}

Early site deliberations underline the board’s concern with creating a conspicuous memorial, particularly within the context of the recently dedicated and highly trafficked VVM. Three of the four sites under consideration were directly on the National Mall: the West Potomac Park location was technically adjacent to it. Mary Ann Lasch, a landscape architect with Hellmuth, Obala, and Kassabaum (HOK), presented a site-selection study at the May 1988 board meeting that favored the West Potomac Park site. She noted as its “greatest advantage” the fact that it would be “easy to focus on the message you want to portray,” implying that the memorial would be less likely to be overshadowed by other monuments if located on this adjacent site.\textsuperscript{43} Her alternate selections, in order of preference, were Ash Woods, Constitution Gardens, and Tidal Basin. It would appear that the presentation had little effect on the board’s mindset as, after a discussion of HOK’s report, the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board voted unanimously for Constitution Gardens (9-0) as its choice.\textsuperscript{44} Ash Woods was the undisputed

\textsuperscript{41} Richman, 208.
\textsuperscript{42} Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board Meeting Minutes, May 3, 1988, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 2.
\textsuperscript{43} Mary Ann Lasch, cited in Richman, 208.
\textsuperscript{44} Though these were the official numbers recorded in the Richman book, Weber revealed that there was actually some dissention among the board. The majority preferred the Constitution site, but he noted that some favored the Ash Woods location because a cross was formed in an aerial view—the head at the Lincoln Memorial, feet at the Washington Monument, and the two
runner-up (9-0); Tidal Basin and West Potomac Park had an equal number of votes for the final selections (5-4). Concerned that the “unknown, forgotten war” not remain “unseen,” the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board held resolutely to its initial site preference. Although they invited an outside professional into the discussion, the board ignored her recommendation.

Building a memorial on the National Mall requires site approval by numerous agencies, including the NPS, the CFA, the NCPC, and the newly formed National Capital Memorial Commission (NCMC). Responsible for approving and siting memorials in Washington, D.C., the NCMC was created through the Commemorative Works Act of 1986. Reporting to the Secretary of the Interior, the federal agency was formed to add procedural order to memorial erection in Washington, D.C., in the post-VVM monument building frenzy. The issue was raised during the KWVM legislative process when Senator Malcolm Wallop (Wyoming Republican) caused a delay in the Senate over concerns that numerous memorial requests would threaten the ultimate development of the National Mall. The NCMC includes the heads of eight other agencies including the ABMC, NCPC, CFA, the Department of Defense, and the Department of the Public Building Service of the General Services Administration (GSA), as well as the Mayor arms at VVM and the KWVM. He revealed that this symbolism was appreciated in particular “by those of us on the Board, who were in combat.” Weber, interview with the author.

45 In the meeting where the less central site was proposed, Weber recalled his emphatic remarks, “You want the unknown, forgotten war to be unseen?” Weber, interview with the author.

46 Previously known as the National Capital Memorial Advisory Committee, the government agency was established by the Commemorative Works Act of 1986 and its name changed to the National Capital Memorial Commission. The agency’s name was changed again in 2003 to the National Capital Memorial Advisory Committee. The KWVM was the first memorial created on the National Mall following the establishment of the Commemorative Works Act of 1986.

47 Wallop was instrumental in passing the Commemorative Works Act of 1986, aimed at restricting the number of memorials built in the capitol by setting a five-year time limit between the signing of the law and securing a permit based on sufficient funds in the bank. The five years was later extended to seven when President Bush signed public law 102-216 on December 11, 1991. The legislation that initiated with the KWVM now applies to all memorials in Washington, D.C. This law played a key role in the construction of the National World War II Memorial, which will be discussed in Chapter 4.
of the District of Columbia and the Architect of the Capital. The KWVM was subject to an extensive review process before the competition had even started.

After the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board presented the four sites (in order of preference), the NCMC selected the Ash Woods site on June 28, 1988. They were likely saving the Constitution Gardens site for a future World War II memorial. In September 1988 the Department of the Interior, NCPC, CFA, and ABMC approved the 7.5-acre area on the Mall across from the VVM as the site of the KWVM. The advisory board gathered there with Secretary Hodel and various veterans’ organizations for a formal ceremony on September 26, 1988.

**Competition Program**

The national competition was open to American citizens of voting age. The ABMC and the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board advertised a competition for “a memorial honoring the veterans of the Korean War, to be located near the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C.” in the *Commerce Business Daily, USA Today* and *Stars and Stripes* in September 1988. The competition announcement was also distributed to five hundred art and architecture schools in the United States, and Stillwell was interviewed on *Good Morning America*. The advisory board requested a commemoration of active military service, as opposed

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48 The vote for Ash Woods was not unanimous. Charles Atherton (CFA) and Colonel Frederick Badger (ABMC) voted against Ash Woods in favor of the board’s preferred Constitution Gardens site. Badger was the ABMC representative on the NCMC, but he was not completely impartial as he also served as ABMC delegate to the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board.

49 Stillwell observed in 1988, “a national memorial to World War II…[is] our only competitor with the Constitution Gardens site.” Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board Meeting Minutes, May 3, 1988, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 1. It would seem that a World War II memorial was already being discussed informally: plans for the monument on the Constitution Gardens site would be revealed in 1995.

50 Korean War Veterans Memorial Design Competition Advertisement, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 3.
to a celebratory war memorial, in the announcement: “The purpose of the memorial is to express the enduring gratitude of the American people to all Americans who took part in [the Korean] conflict and to project the spirit of service.”

In Memorial Mania, Erika Doss considers why gratitude is so “urgently expressed” in contemporary memorial making. She observes, “saying ‘thank you’ to the ‘greatest generation’ has obviously become a popular commemorative project in contemporary America.” Doss notes the way in which war memorials have shifted from monolithic master narratives to “service” memorials, tending to commemorate the veterans themselves rather than the wars in which they fought. In this first public announcement of the KWVM, the board highlights the function of the memorial as expressing a sense of gratitude for military service. In contrast to memorials like the NWWIIM that glorify war, rather than honor the veterans who served in it, the KWVM emphasized the memorial’s significance for veterans, even prior to its construction. The motivation to display gratitude for the service of veterans in a “forgotten war” was particularly acute.

The open invitation for the competition closed on December 16, 1988, at which point interested parties submitted registration forms and requested information. Sixteen hundred potential participants indicated interest in receiving the competition program. One thousand seventeen competitors or teams registered by the January 23, 1989 competition deadline. This number is significantly less than the 2,600 teams, or 3,800 individuals, who had initially

51 Ibid.
registered to compete in the VVM competition, suggesting there was less public attention paid to the KWVM design competition.\textsuperscript{53}

The NCMC reviewed the design program (including rules, requirements, and limitations) before it was mailed out on January 30, 1989. In addition to technical and conceptual guidelines, the program incorporated a number of stylistic requirements for the proposed memorial. The “Design Competition Description and Rules for A Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C.” that was sent out to registrants included a twelve-page narrative with a list of twenty-two “Memorial Design Requirements and Limitations,” an aerial photograph of the site, two site plans, and sixteen photographs of Ash Woods.\textsuperscript{54} The program states that the sponsor is the ABMC; the Agent in charge of the “administration of the Competition” is the U.S. Army COE; and the Jury responsible for “selecting the design” is the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board. The submissions were due on May 1, 1989, at which point submitted questions were answered with an official set of responses.

Although the COE prepared the design competition program and the advisory board wrote it in consultation with the ABMC, it was in reality authored by the board. The Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board stressed the centrality of the veteran in the memorial concept in the design competition program. The “Purpose and Philosophy of the Memorial” highlights the experience of the Korean War soldier with the inclusion of a statement by Secretary of Defense Frank C. Carlucci, made on the thirty-fifth anniversary of the ceasefire ceremony: “[The] courage and dedication of our Korean War veterans was as great as in any


\textsuperscript{54} Korean War Veterans Memorial Design Competition Program, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 3.
American conflict. They endured bitter weather, inhospitable terrain, and fanatical attackers.”

This statement conveys a concern with the physical experience of the soldier in the Korean conflict. One of the design consultants present at the judging stage of the process recalled that board members “were very strident in their need for the memorial to show the hell of war, which was hard for us [visual consultants] because we weren’t sure that was what a memorial should represent.”

The board’s interest in a literal depiction predetermined the built result—a figurative sculptural design with details of the bitter weather depicted in the ponchos worn by the figures and in the bands of polished granite on the ground intended to recall Korea’s rough terrain. Like the competition advertisement, the program is peppered with references to the service-oriented values of the veterans. Words such as “honor” and “service” are frequently repeated:

The memorial will express the enduring gratitude of the American people for all who took part in that conflict under our flag. It will honor those who survived no less than those who gave their lives, and will project, in a most positive fashion, the spirit of service, the willingness to sacrifice, and the dedication to the cause of freedom that characterized all participants…. [The] Memorial must radiate a message that is at once inspirational in content and timeless in meaning. The Memorial must be unique in concept, and one that will present a renewable living aspect of hope, honor, and service.

The Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board prescribed a memorial for veterans that would encapsulate their own service-oriented principle in order to prompt appreciation for the soldiers of the “forgotten war.”

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55 Korean War Veterans Memorial Design Competition Program, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 3.
56 Lauren Ewing, telephone interview with the author, March 21, 2014. Lauren Ewing is a New York-based sculptor and installation artist, whose work addresses the relationship of the individual to the institution and memory themes.
57 Korean War Veterans Memorial Design Competition Program, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 3.
58 Ibid.
In *Monument Wars*, Kirk Savage considers a new type of “therapeutic memorial.” The author frames the VVM as the primary example of this memorial model, which “justifies the soldiers not as heroic agents, but as honorable victims who deserve our recognition.” The KWVM program asks visitors to empathize with soldiers as honorable victims of “bitter weather, inhospitable terrain and fanatical attackers.” Savage notes that the birth of the therapeutic model invited other memorials focused on the commemoration of suffering and posits the KWVM as a direct response to the “enormous impact” of the VVM. The perception of societal amnesia influenced the process in terms of the type of memorial desired, the design selection, and even the rush to get the work built amid the agency approval process. The push for a KWVM was triggered by the huge presence of the VVM on the National Mall, and the board looked directly at the VVM in developing the design competition. Supporting this thesis is the fact that the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board archive contains a number of items related to the VVM design competition, including for example multiple copies of Allen Freeman’s article on the success of the VVM competition.

The VVM has been celebrated both for its reflective surface and for the way that the landscaped solution inspires a reflective experience. The two 450-foot granite walls mirror the surrounding space, encouraging the viewer to encounter his/her own image while searching out names on the walls. The board desired a memorial that would prompt a similar emotional experience. In an early site selection meeting, General Davis stated that the memorial would provide “places for people making that walk [between the Lincoln and Washington memorials],

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60 Savage, *Monument Wars*, 279.
to stop and rest their bones and lift their spirits.”

Daniel Abramson suggests that the VVM’s distinctive quality to inspire reflection and contemplation comes from its “unheroic tone.” This quality varies from this board’s interest in presenting a literal interpretation of heroic veterans in the face of harsh weather and threatening enemies. The Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board desired an “uplifting” memorial to honor military service in a specific war: this goal differs radically from the one set out for the VVM. There, organizers intentionally prevented the events of the Vietnam War from serving as the memorial’s content and even prohibited the use of the word “War” in its official name. The challenges presented to the KWVM resided in the prescription for a “reflective and uplifting” design honoring specific military service and, in essence, in the very nature of the Korean War itself.

The design program of the KWVM emphasizes the parameters of the competition over the physical site specifications. Although it includes photographs of the site, the program limits its explication of the physical location in its text. The photos show the site devoid of people and out of context with the National Mall (Fig. 3.4). Even the images used to show views toward major monuments from the site show those monuments faded in the background. In Illustration

63 Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board Meeting Minutes, March, 4, 1988, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 1. Davis is referring to the board’s original selection of Site A in Constitution Gardens. The board later encouraged the project architect to adapt the winning design in order to make a contemplative space to honor the dead in the Pool of Remembrance, a central feature of the memorial.
64 Korean War Veterans Memorial Design Competition Program, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 3.
66 The exception to this is the image in appendix D of a concession stand along Daniel French Drive, which the text notes as “planned to be removed.”
C, for example, subtitled “Facing the Lincoln Memorial from the western portion of the site,” the camera is tilted slightly downward so that the horizon line bisects the image: the viewer encounters an equal share of ground beneath his feet and distant trees and coupled with blurry monument shapes. In contrast, site images contained in the VVM program clearly focus on the monumental setting, featuring the National Mall context from eye-level vantage points (Fig. 3.5). There are at least five photographs that include the Washington Monument (C, D, E, F and H), and the public nature of site is emphasized in an image of a couple walking along the path (O). That competition program resulted in a design that emphasized the landscape of the National Mall site.

The lack of attention given to the site in the KWVM program may have been due to the fact that Ash Woods was not the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board’s first location choice or that their memorial concept was only generally site-specific. Davis’s primary design ideas had focused on Constitution Gardens.67 The advisory board was disappointed after the NCMC selected Ash Woods over Constitution Gardens in June of 1988. The design program shifted focus, but inconsistencies remain evident in the final result. In a discussion on the future of the National Mall, Kent Cooper observed the disjunction between site and structure and asked whether he considered the KWVM to be portable, he replied, “I haven’t really thought about that, but I know that this could be demounted easily... You can just move the soldiers.”68

67 Davis described design ideas based on Site A, the Constitution Ave & 17th Street NW location, in a May 26, 1988 meeting of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board. Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board Meeting Minutes, May 26, 1988, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 1.
68 Kent Cooper, interview with the author, Washington, D.C., April 12, 2010. Cooper’s ideas about portability might also relate to the working method that Cooper-Lecky Associates used in their architecture practice. As described by Lecky, the firm’s standard practice was to create models with movable pieces, so that the architects could adjust things as they worked collaboratively. Lecky, interview with the author.
Cooper’s comments signal the weak relationship between the physical structure and its site location. The minimization of site in the design competition program resulted in a lack of integration between site and monument. The advisory board authored the program, which embedded the competition with the values and preferences of the group. The design competition publications reflected the advisory board’s concept of the KWVM as a memorial for veterans.

**Design Selection**

The Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board convened at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C. on May 15, 1989 in order to view the 543 final submissions. The board’s design committee had drafted the “Design Competition Judging Plan” in early 1989, independent of professional advisement. It included a three-stage ballot process. In the first stage, each juror would select twenty designs. A design required two votes in order to move onto the next round. There was a one-vote stipulation allowing each juror to request that one design without enough votes move to the next stage. The rejected designs were physically removed from the space after each phase of judging in order for the jury to deliberate more efficiently. In the last stage, jury members ranked their first, second, and third place choices from among the twenty-five finalists.

After receiving and inventorying the design submissions, the COE installed them in the Great Hall of the National Building Museum (Fig. 3.6). The presentation of the KWVM designs varied greatly from that of the VVM designs, which took place in Hangar #3 at Andrews Air Force Base, in Maryland. The carefully curated approach to exhibiting the VVM submissions

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69 General Davis was named head of the Design Committee, but Colonel Weber noted that these were loose designations and that all members of the advisory board contributed to design discussions. The board modified the Design Competition Judging Plan on the same day that the jury convened, after the number of judging days was cut in half. The original plan had included a four-stage ballot process and required that a design receive three votes in order to move on to the next round of judging.
had been engineered by the architect Paul Spreiregen. He calculated the total viewing time required (3 ½ hours) based upon the number of designs (1,432) and interior exhibition space (1 1/3 linear miles). He arranged the exhibit into parallel aisles and located the most promising designs in the center. In contrast to the VVM design selection process, there was no curatorial plan for the display of the KWVM submissions. The boards were installed in the Renaissance Revival style museum building’s Great Hall, a sun-lit, carpeted atrium adorned with grand Corinthian columns. The experience of viewing the KWVM designs contrasted sharply with the experience afforded by the airy, industrial enclave of the airplane hangar, which more closely resembled a white cube gallery than a traditional museum.

Spreiregen makes a case for the necessity of a professional advisor or “competition consultant” in Design Competitions. He describes the ideal professional advisor as “a qualified professional (architect, planner, industrial designer) who can advise on all aspects of holding the competition…[and whose] specific duties…are amply spelled out in the various competition codes.” Of the ten jurors who participated in the KWVM selection process, five were former

70 In the receiving warehouse, Spreiregen examined the designs for rules compliance and divided them according to “roughly four categories of design merit—highly promising, possible, unlikely, and ineligible.” He placed the 191 designs that fell into the top two categories in the central aisles without the jurors’ knowledge. Paul Spreiregen, “The Vietnam Veterans Memorial,” in The Architectural Competition: Research, Inquiries and Experiences, ed. Magnus Ronn, Resa Kazemian, and Jonas E Andersson (Stockholm: Axl Books, 2010). Spreiregen also noted in a personal interview that he moved these designs around at the end of each judging day to give the jurors fresh eyes. Paul D. Spreiregen, interview with the author, Washington, D.C., March 28, 2014.

71 For the influence of the white cube on aesthetic experience, see Brian O’Doherty, Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space (1976) (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999). Although the KWVM jury seems to have had its mind set on traditional figuration from the outset, perhaps the viewing experience played a role in the selection of a representational sculptural design, as opposed to a more abstract solution.

Army members, three were Marines, and two were Air Force.\textsuperscript{73} Since the board had appointed itself as the jury, the jury was composed entirely of generals, colonels, and veterans; none of these individuals had professional design experience. The architect Paul Harbeson was meant to guide the board in carrying out the design competition, but his duties were not clearly spelled out in the competition program and his involvement is rarely mentioned in the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board meeting minutes. A partner in the Philadelphia-based firm Harbeson, Hough, Livingston, and Larson, he had been hired as a professional consultant to the ABMC on numerous projects.\textsuperscript{74} The active participation of a professional design advisor might have compensated for the lack of design background of the jury in the KWVM case, but this does not appear to have happened. Rather, it appears that the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board felt a sense of hierarchical ownership over their role in selecting the memorial design, perhaps similar to the chain of command in a military operation.

During the selection stage, Harbeson evaluated the economic costs of entries. In addition, he was responsible for recommending a five-person panel of professional advisors to assist the jury, with none of these advisors having voting rights in the competition. His impact on the competition process is evident in the final economic estimation, but not in the stages of aesthetic implementation.\textsuperscript{75} Harbeson was not privy to the entirety of jury deliberations during

\textsuperscript{73} Although the advisory board originally included 12 members, only ten participated on the jury, as Hausman died prior to the judging and Curcio was absent. Stillwell, Rodriguez, Weber, McSweeney, and McCarthy were Army; Davis, Dehen, and Borcherdt were Marines; and Cherry and McKevitt were Air Force.

\textsuperscript{74} Paul C. Harbeson participated in many federal projects, including 30 bridge and highway works and more than 20 historical restorations, including the Valley Forge Memorial Arch. His firm (now known as H2L2) was founded by his father, John Harbeson, who had also worked as an architectural consultant for the ABMC. “John Harbeson Obituary,” \textit{New York Times}, January 1, 1987.

\textsuperscript{75} For example, it is unclear whether Harbeson was involved in the formation of responses to aesthetic questions during the last submission stage. The competitors mailed in questions
the judging stage. In fact, the board actively sought to minimize Harbeson’s role. In a later discussion over the Cooper-Lecky changes to the design during the implementation stage, Harbeson expressed an opinion that was discordant with the board. Harbeson warned the ABMC that the plans “indicate to me more change in the central design theme than is warranted.”

General Stillwell replied sternly, “I am bemused that a single consultant—however well qualified—could exert such dominant influence on your commission, particularly as he was not party to the two days of discussion regarding the options.”

The “panel of professional consultants…available to advise the Board” during the design selection stage included Archie McKenzie (an architecture professor at Cornell), Arthur Sullivan (Landscape Architecture chair at North Carolina State University), Frederick Osborne (director of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts), Lauren Ewing (visual artist on the Rutgers

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76 In a handwritten fax disagreeing with Harbeson’s opinion of the Cooper-Lecky proposed design modifications, Borcherdt wrote to Stillwell that “he [Harbeson] did not participate in the [jury] deliberations.” Borcherdt to Stillwell, July 21, 1990, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 3. In an interview in 2014, Lauren Ewing recalled that Harbeson was present during the first-round voting, leading to the conclusion that the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board deliberated without the five professional consultants in making their final decisions for the winning design. Ewing, telephone interview with the author.

77 Paul Harbeson letter to Frederick Badger, ABMC, July 18, 1990, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 1.

University faculty), and Ronald Lee Fleming of *Townscape Ltd.* In an article for *Landscape Architecture*, Jory Johnson proposed that the design professionals “played a key role in bringing the winner forward,” but the evidence suggests otherwise. The panel was not part of the jury, and it is unclear in what capacity its members actually advised the board since their role was not clearly defined in the board-authored competition judging plan.

In the first round of judging, the 543 design submissions were narrowed down to 117 entries. Even though only one board member voted for entry #247 (the eventual winner), it remained in the competition as a result of the one-vote design stipulation. After making this first cut, the advisory board stated, “no entry submitted completely met the expectations of the concept statement developed by the board,” suggesting they already anticipated making changes to the final selection.

The Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board asked the five consultants to each vote for twenty entries in the first round for technical comparisons. Their selections, however, were not added to the tally of votes. The consultants did not participate beyond this first round of review. Although Ewing suggested that the panel favored the eventual winner, in fact only two of its five professionals included it in their top twenty selections. The advisory board criticized Harbeson’s initial proposal prescribing a “more intensive level of participation by these

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79 Korean War Veterans Memorial Design Competition Program, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 3.
81 The anonymous pencil ballots are held in the Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 3.
82 Richman, 215.
83 Ewing recalled, “I don’t think that we [the visual culture people] had too much disagreement about the one that was chosen.” Ewing, telephone interview with the author.
consultants” in the design competition.\textsuperscript{84} The board insisted that the design professionals advise in the judging stage according to their individual specialties and not act as a collective voice. This plan minimized their influence in the jury stage of the competition. Asked later about the consulting panel, a board member could not recall their physical presence during design selection at the National Building Museum.\textsuperscript{85} Clearly, the role of the professional consultants was limited; the project architect noted, “they had some architects at their elbow during the selection process, but I never saw them or talked to them. They were not active players once the decision was made.”\textsuperscript{86}

In the second round of judging, only twenty-two entries received two or more votes; three entries advanced through the one-vote design stipulation. Harbeson’s evaluation of the potential cost of each entry took place between the second and third rounds of judging. He estimated that only one of the twenty-five finalists could be built for the budgeted $5 million. At the end of the third round, each juror ranked their top eight designs. When asked about the jury’s mindset during this stage, Ewing’s response emphasized the board’s autonomy: “We were in a tough spot as artists. The generals were in control, had a gut sense of what they wanted—to show what hell war is, because that was what they had been through, and we wanted to honor [the veterans]…to make something visually interesting.”\textsuperscript{87}

A particularly noteworthy event took place during the judging, somewhere between the first and final rounds. Ewing took several board members (including McSweeney, Borcherd, \footnotetext{84}{See Stillwell Memorandum on “Modification of Memorial Design Competition Judging Plan,” March 22, 1989, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 3.}
\footnotetext{85}{Weber did not remember the consultants being present at the jury stage, suggesting that their influence was minimal, though this may also be due to the amount of time that had passed between the judging event and our interview on March 26, 2014 in Fredericksburg, Virginia.}
\footnotetext{86}{Lecky, interview with the author.}
\footnotetext{87}{Ewing, telephone interview with the author.}
and McCarthy) to see the Ulysses S. Grant Memorial (1902–24), located near the base of Capitol Hill (Fig. 3.7). Though the Grant Memorial includes an equestrian statue and classical pedestal figures, the large-scale, multi-figured composition also resembles the eventual winner of the KWVM design competition. In his analysis of how the Grant Memorial represents changing war ideologies in the early twentieth century, Dennis Montegna describes emphasis on “military preparedness and the nobility of self-sacrifice for the nation’s well being.” According to Mantegna, the memorial pays homage to both General Grant and the suffering and sacrifice of the common soldier during the Civil War.  

The qualities of military acumen and self-sacrifice would have resonated with a jury of war veterans looking to build a memorial to honor military service. The Grant Memorial was in the minds of jurors who eventually selected a multi-figured sculptural design. An architect on the winning team even speculated that their design won in part because of the large number of figures it included: “We had more figures than any other…. [We] had 38 statues, and I think that appealed to the military committee.”

The $25,000 first-place win went to design entry #247 (Fig. 3.8), submitted by a group of four professors from Pennsylvania State University’s College of Arts and Architecture: John Paul Lucas, Veronica Burns-Lucas, Don Alvaro Leon, and Eliza Pennypacker Oberholtzer. Oberholtzer resigned from the team, and the remaining members created a contractual entity called BL3. Even though a large group of figural sculpture formed the centerpiece of the winning design, none of its designers were professional sculptors: the final team was made up of

90 Oberholtzer cited a pregnancy as the reason for withdrawing from the team. Lucas, telephone interview with the author.
two architects and one landscape architect. The competition entry was the first collaborative project by the group, as Lucas and Burns-Lucas had only joined the Penn State faculty in 1988. Although its preference for figuration was evident in the winning design, the jury did consider other styles. None of the prize-winning selections, however, could be categorized as contemporary. All of the chosen designs responded to the prescribed program in some fashion with representations of active duty or the inclusion of flagpoles, bodies of reflecting water, and open spaces for contemplation. The $10,000 second-place prize went to entry #27 by Ronald C. Nims of Las Cruces, New Mexico (Fig. 3.9). Nims’s proposal consists of a large stone wall that spirals around a central flagpole with a reflecting pool of water, thus featuring the plaza, flagpole, and reflective pool suggested in the program. Submission #162 by Mark P. Fondersmith of Baltimore, Maryland, received the $5,000 third-place prize (Fig. 3.10). Fondersmith’s proposal features a plaza shaped like the Korean flag, one half submerged in a pool of water and the other half elevated on rocks to signal the terrain encountered by soldiers. A sole figure overlooks the reflecting pool as his poncho blows in the wind, revealing a weapon to indicate he is on active duty. Both the second- and third-place entries include references to military heroism: the monumental stone sculpture of the former, and the heroic, elevated soldier

91 According to Richman, Korean War Veterans Memorial, John Paul Lucas had taken two years of undergraduate sculpture classes at the University of Maryland, but his sculpture training did not extend beyond that. [Richman, 234]. Lucas refuted this claim, citing personal experience sculpting in stone (particularly granite), for his visual culture minor at architecture school. Although ultimately executed in stainless steel, the winning design proposed granite sculpture. Lucas, telephone interview with the author.

92 Interestingly, this design is an abstract landscape solution, but still conservative (unlike VVM). The design took second place with three votes. Although the board as a whole was looking for figuration, an interview with Col Weber revealed a more nuanced view of the individuals on the board. He suggested that in early design discussions of the KWVM, two of the board members wanted something subdued and landscaped, but still traditional. Weber, interview with the author.

93 It is worth noting that even though the winning design did not include ponchos, the final memorial does.
on duty in the latter. Though some of the fifteen $1,000 honorable mentions include figuration (for example, entries #79 and #333), none of the runners-up contained a group of figuration on the same scale as the winning design.\footnote{The honorable mentions include ranked entry numbers 210, 79, 319, 220, and 333, and the unranked entry numbers 25, 28, 82, 88, 216, 227, 243, 355, 357, and 414. Stillwell, memorandum to Chairman of ABMC, “Initial Report, Results of the National Design Competition,” May 26, 1989, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 3.} While there is no official documentation of the jury’s closed deliberations, Ewing confirmed that the advisory board was actively looking for figuration at the judging stage.\footnote{Ewing, telephone interview with the author.}

A “Memorial Design Competition Check List” was included with the ballots so that “each juror [would] use some consistent procedure” in evaluating the entries.\footnote{“Memorial Design Competition Check List,” Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 3.} Based on the competition design program, the checklist’s 19 questions prompted jurors to consider the construction, size, economic limitations, lighting, and most significantly, design concept of each project they nominated. The interest in military values is explicit in the questions asking how a design will “exemplify the value of ‘the willingness to sacrifice’” or “depict the value of ‘dedication to the cause of freedom.’”\footnote{Ibid.} At least three of the 19 questions focus on distilling military service-oriented values from the prospective memorial design, the most overt example being, “How well does this Memorial design project a renewable aspect of hope, honor, and service?”\footnote{Ibid.} Another question echoes the competition program’s emphasis on gratitude: “How well does this Memorial design project the gratitude of the American people to all who served in the Korean War?”\footnote{Ibid.}
The Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board reported the jury’s eighteen winning selections to the ABMC on May 26, 1989. In a memorandum to General Andrew Goodpaster, chairman of the ABMC, Stillwell suggested that the board was of the “unanimous view” that design #247 “captured the nature—indeed, essence—of the Korean War.” He continued: “[It] will be applauded by the major veterans organizations and, in particular, individuals who knew that conflict at first hand…is unique in conceptualization, and radiates…a renewable aspect of hope, honor and service, and above all, will constitute an uplifting experience for viewers of all ages, now and in the future.”

Contrary to Stillwell’s assertion that the jury’s view was “unanimous,” the anonymous tally sheets show that entry #247 was not the undisputed choice. The winning design had four first-place votes, two third-place votes, and two fourth-place votes in the final round. The runner-up (entry #27) received three first-place votes, and design entries #243, #210, and #333 each received one first-place vote. Entry #247 had won through consensus, in the tradition of military decision making “where after debate…everyone rallies together to ensure a successful mission.”

This is another example of the way in which the jury’s military background influenced the voting and design selection process.

#247: The Winning Design

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100 General Stillwell, memorandum to General Andrew Goodpaster, Chairman of American Battle Monuments Commission, June 14, 1989, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 3. The final voting tally sheets are part of the ABMC Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, and these indicate that #247 was the consensus choice in that #247 received four first-place votes, two third-place votes, and two fourth-place votes. Stillwell later recalled, “It was the dialogue that convinced a majority of the jurors of the potential of #247 to achieve our goals.” Stillwell, cited in Richman, 217.

101 Design Competition Judging, Jurors’ Ballots, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 3.

102 Richman, 215.
A disparity exists between the winning design the advisory board believed it had selected and the design that BL3 assumed it had submitted for the KWVM competition. The winning design’s main feature is a column of soldiers marching along an east-west axis through symbolic zones of peace and war before arriving at a flagpole, intended to evoke a peaceful conclusion to the conflict. The 38 figures represented the 38th parallel and also the 38-month duration of war. The advisory board focused on the sculptural aspect of the proposal, as opposed to its larger landscape composition, and selected the design because of the figurative march. Jury members described the compelling feature of the winning design as “the line of soldiers.” Borcherdt recalled, “I saw a column of advancing troops and vivid memories of the reality of war, and this is what the memorial is about.” Weber agreed: “The line of soldiers is what really motivated the board members.” In the set of instructions given to the project architect responsible for translating the winning design into a physical reality, the advisory board wrote, “the basis for selection…was the column of heroic-sized statues, mission bent, advancing on the American flag…only cursory note was taken of the Peace-War-Peace theme.” The jury’s emphasis on the column element and disregard for the landscape theme was the source of the cognitive dissonance that emerged between the advisory board and the winning designers.

The Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board’s initial interpretation of the winning scheme would be upended when they looked more closely at their choice. After the project was selected, the designers drafted an explicatory statement for the ABMC. It described

103 General Davis cited in Johnson: 70.
104 Richman, 234.
105 Weber, interview with the author.
a phenomenological experience not entirely conveyed by the presentation boards. BL3 outlined a narrative shift from war to peace taking place along a sloped ramp. That narrative used the demeanor of each of the 38 soldiers to project the mood of the conflict at a specific moment in time throughout the 38-month duration of war. The earliest soldiers are frightened, untrained, and insecure; but as the memorial developed along the slope, more experienced soldiers appear confident. The final soldiers in the column, occupying the moment in time when a truce is in sight, look assured. Visitor circulation is indicated by a red line punctuated with three white marble squares inscribed with the start date of the war, a blank symbolic pause, and a final marker to signal the end of war. The viewer was meant to walk with the 38 figures, ascending the “symbolic [landscape] of war…flanked by figures whose faces are alert with caution and strong with resolve. The time line, continuing through the relentless environment, is trained on the horizon and the flag beyond.”

After pausing at the second white marble square for a “silent moment of reflection,” the viewer is released into a “ceremonial gathering space below, a metaphor of home” at the final white marble square inscribed “Peace.”

BL3 intended to represent the Korean conflict symbolically. The advisory board envisioned a more literal interpretation of the physical experience in the war. After the selection was made, General Davis penned a jury interpretive statement that shows that either the jury clearly misinterpreted the BL3 design, or, they anticipated adapting it prior to the implementation stage.

You move slowly toward a sign, which reads Korean Veterans Memorial. You see a figure, and as you approach, you see a combat column. You answer their beckon to join them. As you walk with them you observe the combat uniforms, their weapons and equipment. You explore their countenances…vigilant, courageous, resolute, committed to

108 Ibid.
their mission. The faces are American…every racial and ethnic feature is found among them.\textsuperscript{109}

In fact, the winning submission depicts neither specific military equipment nor explicit racial or ethnic features. The adapted memorial as built more closely resembles the design described by the jury in the interpretive statement than it does the original, winning scheme.

The winning design responded to the competition program by making reference to bitter weather and the difficult terrain of Korea in its landscaping. It depicts active service, and contains a flagpole, plaza, and reflecting pool. It focuses on the visual, as opposed to emphasizing textual explication. With the exception of a simple quote, running at the bottom of the first drawing, which dedicates the memorial “to one and one half million American servicemen and women,” the entire text describing the scheme’s concept is superimposed on a silhouette of a soldier on the left side of the second panel. This superimposition leads the viewer to focus on the figure rather than the actual meaning of the text—an outcome reinforced by the small point size of its type.\textsuperscript{110} Without considering the literal explanation of the design, the jury was left to interpret the material visually. When asked whether BL3 would have won if their submission had included greater textural explanation, the project architect speculated, “I’m sure they wouldn’t have.”\textsuperscript{111} This, too, reflects a very different outcome from the VVM competition,

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\textsuperscript{109} R. G. Davis, Jury Interpretation Addenda to Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board Position Paper Draft, written as support material for briefing of two new members appointed to Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, John P. “Jake” Comer and John S. Straum, in June 1990, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 3.
\textsuperscript{110} Photographs of the Designs Submitted for the Korean War Veterans Memorial Competition, 117-KDS, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland. It is also worth noting that the central feature of the design is a group of male soldiers. Though the quote honors “servicemen and women,” the only women depicted are among the 2,400 portraits etched into the Cooper-Lecky mural addition.
\textsuperscript{111} Lecky, interview with the author.
\end{flushleft}
in which many cite the poetic narrative that accompanied Maya Lin’s submission as the key reason for her win.\footnote{Kent Cooper explains, “Maya is a poet at heart and she wrote a one page summary of the idea which is a lyric thing. It captured all the jurors’ imaginations.” Cooper, interview with the author.}

In an article on Lin’s innovative brand of memorial making, Abramson describes the crux of the VVM, “unprecedented in monumental commemorative art,” as “pure chronology or timeline.”\footnote{Daniel Abramson, “Maya Lin and the 1960s: Monuments, Time Lines, and Minimalism,” \textit{Critical Inquiry}, Summer 1996, 680.} Noting that traditional memorial design compresses history into a single figure or representative event, the author highlights the way in which Lin deviates from that standard. The chronological experience of the VVM design clearly influenced BL3’s intentions for their winning scheme, in which the viewer experiences the war’s chronology through the changing landscape and facial expressions of the soldiers. Lucas described the narrative viewing experience of the design: “The path goes up very gradually, and by the time you get to the end, you feel it in your legs a bit. That was the intention. The apex, after you pause at the top, you move quickly to the ceremonial plaza. So, there are kinesthetic and phenomenological conditions that we tried to orchestrate.”\footnote{Lucas, telephone interview with the author.} Unfortunately, the flat drawings submitted for the design competition do not convey this intention adequately. The presentation boards developed by BL3 were “somewhat misinterpreted” by the advisory board because the “layers of symbolic message content…were not clear from the competition submission.” Once the symbolism was explained to the board, “they were dismayed.”\footnote{William Lecky, \textit{Designing for Remembrance: An Architectural Memoir} (McLean, VA: LDS Publishing, 2012).}

BL3 worked collaboratively on their design. They drew their inspiration from a David Douglas Duncan photograph (Fig. 3.11), as well as from interviews with Korean War veterans.
who described experiencing the war on foot.\textsuperscript{116} In the Duncan photograph, the weather and terrain engulf the soldiers marching at the beginning of the war so that the figures appear smaller from a distance. The competition submission drawings incorporate the same distant perspective as the photograph, so that the sculptural march of figures is seen from far away. The aerial perspective in the drawings deviates from the experiential quality described by BL3 in their design statement.\textsuperscript{117} It may have been challenging for a jury without a design background to imagine walking through the memorial as designed, as opposed to seeing it from afar in the photographic style of the submission itself. The jury read the design as a moment of time as opposed to a narrative experience.

Psychologists Roger Brown and James Kulik define the “photographic model of flashbulb memory,” triggered by emotional intensity during a surprising or traumatic event. Frequent rehearsal of the event (for example, talking about the event or exposure to visual stimulus), creates stronger associations and more elaborate accounts.\textsuperscript{118} Sociologist Jeffrey Prager incorporates this notion of flashbulb memory in describing what makes personal memory social. “Flashbulb memories (e.g., connected with assassination of a public figure or with tragic public events, such as 11 September 2001) allow individuals to place themselves in a historical

\textsuperscript{116} “We interviewed a lot of Korean War Veterans…and everyone said, we found the country through our feet. We walked the entire country over and over again, so that’s when the whole theme of walking through the war-torn landscape began in our work, from interviewing Vets and also from the photographs.” Lucas, telephone interview with the author. The designers also cited Rodin’s \textit{Burghers of Calais} (1884–9) as inspiration, describing it as “allegorical representation of the act of a small group of noble citizens who sacrificed themselves in spirit and body to save the innocent.” BL3 Design Statement to the ABMC, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 3.

\textsuperscript{117} Interestingly, the aerial perspective of the submission drawing is visible in the mural wall, a Cooper-Lecky addition that BL3 opposed. The viewer sees the soldiers reflected in the black granite as if from a distance, so there is the same sense of atmospheric perspective as in the competition drawing.

context because, when talking with others about an extraordinary public event, people are able to include themselves in the narrative.”

Without cognitive distance, the jury of war veterans evaluated the design selections through a lens of war related memory. The project architect described what the jury emphasized in the winning design as, “a sculptural moment in time, a photographic moment in Korea, picked up out of Korea, and placed on the Mall.”

Ewing confirmed that during the selection process, the jury “really wanted a picture of war.” During the implementation of the design, the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board would ask the project architect to adapt the narrative into a “simple moment in time concept,” and similarly instructed the sculptor to develop the figures as if portraying a “moment in time.”

Reception to the built memorial picked up on this quality, as David Finn wrote in Sculpture Review, “I had an eerie déjà vu when I approached the Memorial.” The actual material used, which varies from the winning submission, also lends to the photographic quality, as the brushed stainless steel makes the figures appear frozen, as in an old black and white image.

The Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board emphasized the recreation of a specific moment in battle over a more spiritual or conceptual purpose. In a special meeting at the Department of the Interior, the advisory board was asked about their target audience, to which they replied, “the same audience that goes to Gettysburg, in effect, the American public on tour…. [A] time will come when there are no living Veterans of the Korean War so there is a

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120 Lecky, interview with the author.
121 Ewing, telephone interview with the author.
need to preserve the highlights of the war.”124 Another way of framing the “highlights of the war” might be the physical experience of the Korean War veteran. The advisory board was consistent about this aspect from the beginning, drawing upon Carlucci’s description of the soldier who “endured bitter weather, inhospitable terrain, and fanatical attackers.”125 As opposed to a primarily aesthetic evaluation, the design selection was informed by the process and intention of a jury made up of Korean War veterans committed to representing their war-time experience.

This too was in stark contrast to the VVM, where the jury of eight professionals was made up of two architects (Pietro Beluschi and Harry Weese), two landscape architects (Garrett Eckbo and Hildeo Sasaki), three sculptors (Richard Hung, Constantino Nivola, and James Rosatii), and one critic (Grady Clay of Landscape Architecture). The decision to exclude a veteran from the jury was intentional, championed by Spreiregen. In a later interview with architectural historian Mary McLeod, Jan Scruggs regretted the omission of a veteran on the jury.126 The resulting memorials are reflections of their different jury make-ups. The VVM jury of designers selected an innovative, abstract design. Among the many aesthetic qualities that make this memorial successful, the reflective surface and narrative of names incorporates the present experience of the viewer into the meaning of the memorial. By contrast, the KWVM jury selected a design inspired by a still photograph—an image interpreted as battle-clad soldiers marching heroically toward a flag. This jury wanted a military-centered experience to come

124 Question 6 in notes from a special meeting held in the Department of the Interior, December 20, 1989. It is unclear exactly who was in attendance, but it is presumed that the answers were drafted in consultation with the ABMC and the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board. Design Competition Questions, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 4.
125 Korean War Veterans Memorial Design Competition Program, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 3.
alive for viewers, so that they might have enduring gratitude for the servicemen of this forgotten war.

Today the VVM is wildly successful in eyes of the public, although veterans (including Scruggs) initially considered it lacking in something. There were additions made to the VVM in order to address the perceived deficiencies, including Frederick Hart’s figurative sculpture *Three Soldiers* (1984), Glenna Goodacre’s *Vietnam Women’s Memorial* (1993), a flagpole, and inscriptions. Instigated by veterans, the VVM sculptural additions are figurative and reflect an interest in specificity through racial and gender representation. Karal Ann Marling and Robert Silberman argue that Hart’s figurative sculpture provides the specifics lacking in the wall of the VVM: “[The] content of Rick Hart’s statue…attempts to supply just those ingredients most wanting in what many [veterans] call the ‘Wall of Hurt’. “ The Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, made up of veterans conscious of what was lacking in the VVM and interested in a quality of specificity, envisioned a figurative memorial before they even juried the designs. One of the initial “ideas of design” that General Davis presented to the board was “a [figurative] group of troops who are liberating some captives.” The advisory board included several VVM additions in the KWVM competition program, including a flagpole, as well as a suggestion for specific descriptions of terrain and military service. Many of these features appear in the honorable mentions and runners-up of the KWVM design competition.

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127 For more precise veteran critical response, see Karal Ann Marling and Robert Silberman, “The Statue near the Wall: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Art of Remembering,” *Smithsonian Studies in American Art* 1, no. 1 (Spring, 1987): 13. For example, decorated Vietnam veteran Tom Carhart called the Wall, a “black gash of shame and sorrow” because there was no flag of national dedication and “no statuary to help explain the blackness.”


129 Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board Meeting Minutes, March 4, 1988, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 1.
As part of its preliminary planning, the National Committee for the Korean War Memorial handed out six thousand pre-addressed postcard questionnaires at the VVM dedication on November 13, 1982. The cards read, “If you are a veteran, we value your advice and participation in the building of the Korean War Memorial. (1) Above ground, visible, or below ground; (2) modern art or traditional art; (3) decisions by veterans or decisions by architects.” Only 350 questionnaires were returned, but the responses highlight the preferences of veterans. National Committee member Michael Panayotopoulos stated that, with “few exceptions, those responding voiced their disapproval of the Vietnam Memorial, opting instead for a traditional monument, above ground, and based on what veterans want.” These preferences prefigure the way in which the contemporary Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board responded to criticisms of the VVM with a military-centered traditional design.

Patrick Hagopian expands on the aesthetic preferences of veterans within the context of the VVM in an article analyzing the impact of the “post-Vietnam Veterans Memorial context” on the KWVM design process. He maintains, “The recognition of honorable service has become a strong, if historically contingent, association of [representational] statuary”: he attributes mimetic

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130 As discussed earlier, the National Committee for the Korean War Memorial has been written out of the history because of controversial fundraising tactics, but this action shows one way in which the Committee contributed to the KWVM story.


132 Conconi, “Style: Personalities.”

partialities to this association. These aesthetic connotations are relevant to a jury of veterans seeking a design to honor specific military service.

Though the selection had been based on two-dimensional presentation panels, a three-dimensional model was required for the official White House Rose Garden Ceremony on June 14, 1989 (Fig. 3.12). The first meeting between the designers (BL3) and the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board took place a month earlier, in May, when some minor changes were made to the winning design. The board was concerned that the red line included in the design might be interpreted as a reference to Communism, and the designers agreed to remove it. Rodriguez, who was wheelchair-bound, worried that the visitor ramp was too steep for handicap accessibility, and McCarthy wanted greater recognition of the contribution of women. Stillwell and Davis wondered about the design’s potential to encompass all veterans and provide a place to memorialize the personal in public, as Davis recalled, “to tell more literally the story of the other soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen, who supported the ground troops, as well as a ‘sanctuary’, an open chapel, a ‘special place’ to remember.” But all in all, the advisory board noted that they liked the way that a ground war was evoked in the line of soldiers and initially worked together with BL3 to modify the scheme. Their different visions for the memorial would eventually prove problematic, however, in the implementation stage.

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135 The Communist reference would have been particularly salient for the Korean War veterans, who returned home from war to the era of McCarthyism and the Cold War fear of the insidious power of Communism, socio-political factors which contributed to the less than celebratory reception of Korean War veterans in the United States. Ironically, the red line would have guided the visitor through the memorial, addressing one of the criticisms of the design that arose later. Visitor circulation issues resulted in dramatic adaptations to the winning design.
136 While changes were made in response to some board criticism, no efforts were taken at this point to address McCarthy’s call for a greater inclusion of women.
137 Richman, 216.
Implementation and Adaptation

Agency Approval Process

The adaptations made to the BL3 scheme during the agency approval and implementation process completely changed the content and appearance of the proposed memorial. In an early CFA review, Robert Peck remarked, “If a design were a literal process, I suppose architects would become lawyers and lawyers architects, and vice versa, but the disciplines are very different.” Peck warned the advisory board and the ABMC against using the federal agency criticism as a literal guide during the review process. Instead of following Peck’s advice, the board asserted its authority in transforming the design and instructed the project architect to adapt the proposed scheme in direct response to federal agency review. The winning design presented at the Rose Garden ceremony had been given informal approval: at a July 1989 meeting, “it was agreed that the concept could be approved, but there were several details of the design that needed more study.” The reservations initially focused on site and circulation issues, not on design content.

By December 1990, the CFA was presented with a completely different design for review, and the winning designers were no longer active participants in the process (Fig. 3.13).

The ABMC and COE were responsible for selecting an Architect-Engineer firm to implement the winning design. The COE took control of the selection process, posting an announcement for “Design and Related Studies in Connection with the Korean War Veterans

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139 Sue A. Kohler, The Commission of Fine Arts: A Brief History, 1905–1995 (Washington, D.C.: Commission of Fine Arts, 1996), 167. John Lucas noted that the feeling was that the design was favorably received, with only minor revisions required. Lucas, telephone interview with the author.
140 For example, the CFA questioned traffic patterns, plantings, and elements of the plaza around the flagpole.
Memorial” in the Commerce Business Daily on June 22, 1989. Kent Cooper and William Lecky applied for the job after seeing the announcement in the federal bulletin. The Architect-Engineer Review Committee, which included eight members of the Baltimore District of the COE, COE landscape architect Murray Geyer, and Fred Badger of the ABMC, met in August 1989 to review the credentials of ten potential collaborators before inviting four firms to Baltimore for final presentations a month later. In addition to Cooper-Lecky, the applicants included Clarke Rapuano, Inc. (New York), Sasaki Associates, Inc. (Watertown, MA), and EDAW, Inc. (Alexandria, VA). BL3 had approached Sasaki Associates to collaborate before the September presentation, but the group came in third place because the Pennsylvania State team did not have sufficient relevant experience. The COE selected Cooper-Lecky to implement the KWVM because of their “knowledge of the regulatory and approval processes” in federal projects. The firm of Cooper-Lecky Associates had recently served as project architects for the VVM, and they had worked on other district-area projects with the COE requiring consultation with federal commissions or submitting to agency review processes.

In his study of design competitions, Spreiregen lists an “absence of a dialogue between client and architect in the preliminary phase” among the potentially serious problems that can

141 According to Lecky, it was a last-minute decision to apply. “At first, we thought, ‘Do we really want to go through this again?’ But at the last minute, we thought, ‘Let’s go ahead and submit.’” Lecky, interview with the author.
143 In addition to the VVM, Cooper-Lecky Associates completed the restoration of St. Mark’s Episcopal Church (1965) and the re-design of Beaver Valley at the National Zoo (1979). Lecky speculated that this was the reason his firm was chosen to implement the KWVM. “It became apparent…that they needed an architect of record, that these people [the winning designers] were registered professionals, but had never done a project of this size and scope, and more importantly, had not dealt with all of these reviewing agencies [in Washington, D.C.].” Lecky, interview with the author.
arise from a design competition.\textsuperscript{144} The challenges that arose when the project architect and client do not work together until after the selection phase, as was the case with the KWVM, might have been resolved through the continued participation of the project’s initial designer, BL3. Once Cooper-Lecky stepped into the primary role as project architect, the lack of dialogue between BL3 and the sponsoring agency proved problematic.

The Architect–Engineer contract loosely defines the design competition winners (BL3) as project consultants without ascribing specific responsibilities to them.\textsuperscript{145} There were some meetings between Cooper-Lecky and BL3 in the fall of 1989 in order to establish a collaborative relationship, but the design team’s role was minimized during the execution phase, when the COE insisted that Cooper-Lecky work directly with the client, the ABMC. They also reduced BL3’s consulting fee from $180,000 to $50,000 during negotiations. Reporting to the Department of Defense, the COE is responsible for engineering and construction of large federal projects in the public works sector. Evaluating the responsibilities of the winning designers and project architect according to the same standards used in utilitarian federal projects, the agency considered the BL3’s contribution redundant.\textsuperscript{146} The privately run VVM design process saw it differently: Maya Lin remained an active participant throughout the completion phase of the memorial. While technically speaking BL3 retained its consulting role, the COE, ABMC, and Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board dealt primarily with Cooper-Lecky as the design was refined in the agency reviews.

\textsuperscript{144} Spreiregen, \textit{Design Competitions}, 120.
\textsuperscript{145} “Scope of Architect Engineer for the Korean War Veterans Memorial,” April 11, 1990, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 4.
\textsuperscript{146} The Corps Chief of Engineering wrote to Cooper-Lecky in March 1990, “Their [BL’s] proposed involvement should not create a redundancy of personnel or assigned tasks.” Corps of Engineers to Cooper-Lecky, March 26, 1990, cited in Richman, 224.
The board’s role was limited to the initial stages of the competition in the legislature, but they continued to have a strong voice in the design decisions made throughout the implementation phase. Lecky noted, “[The] ABMC thought that the advisory board would serve as the jury and then go back to retirement…but they remained heavily involved throughout the entire process.” The advisory board modified its relationship with the ABMC in August 1989, just after the first CFA meeting when interpretative discussions about the design began. Since the competition had changed from a two-stage process to a single-stage competition, the board argued that their responsibility for design selection continued after the jury stage. Stillwell reasoned that the board had “selected…something more than an ‘idea’ but far short of a fully developed ‘detailed concept.’” The advisory board was compelled to complete the memorial-building mission and asserted its authority throughout the realization of the memorial design. Frederick Osborne and Ronald Fleming, two of the professional consultants during the design selection stage, offered the board their advice when challenges arose during the approval process, however, their expertise was not utilized since there is no mention of them in Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board meeting minutes after the judging stage.

147 Lecky, interview with the author.
148 Stillwell, Update of Memorandum of Understanding, August 2, 1989, to Goodpaster, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 3.
149 The design faced many challenges during the agency approval process, when Cooper-Lecky made changes to BL3 design that resulted in BL3’s resignation from the project. Critics argued that the design was completely different. Osborne and Fleming offered their support to the advisory board in order to help resolve the design issues. Osborne said, “I am writing because the role the Professional Advisors were to play in the jurying was to offer insights from their career experience, to assist in selecting a design that fulfilled the mission of the memorial…The actions taken by the jury and the Professional Advisors have changed dramatically, and I feel the true success of the project is at serious risk and it is a professional responsibility to say so.” Frederick S. Osborne to Stillwell, undated, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 4. Fleming recommended that “a case could be made that design guidance was much more important after the selection than before.” Ronald Lee Fleming to
Before construction could begin, the design was subject to a series of reviews by the National Capital Region of the NPS, the CFA, and the NCPC. The three agencies had to sign off on the first concept and the final submission in order for the design to receive official approval. The CFA had given an unofficial green light early on, when Atherton praised the conceptual design as offering “great promise”: still, Cooper-Lecky was faced with a significant list of reservations from the federal agencies during the approval process.\(^\text{150}\)

During the review period, the NPS, CFA, and NCPC raised 25 concerns, which initially included the steep ramp, landscaping, and the one-way visitor circulation pattern. Practical issues developed into aesthetic reservations when the CFA questioned the comprehensive composition and the proportion of the figurative sculptures during the later stages of the review. At an early meeting, on June 20, 1989, the NPS questioned the loss of mature trees and introduced the idea of pruning the linden plane trees in order to give the impression of battlefield devastation. There were concerns about the narrow walkway, handicap accessibility, and algae in the pools, but mostly the design was celebrated for its potential. The approval vote was a tie at 4 to 4, and the design was returned for review and resubmission. The NCPC praised the design’s symbolism when they approved it on July 17, 1989, though technical site concerns were raised again at this meeting.\(^\text{151}\) The CFA liked the overall concept in their July 26, 1989, review, but they wanted revisions made to the landscaping.

\(^{150}\) Charles Atherton’s commentary at the June 20, 1989 meeting at the National Capital Region of the Park Service, suggests that the overall feedback was positive. BL3 and four members of the advisory board attended the first major Area 1 meeting reviewed by the newly formed agency. Richman. 219.
\(^{151}\) These included concerns that the barrier of trees would block the open field and that traffic in the one-way pedestrian circle would be congested. See Michael Richman, “The Making of the Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C.,” in Richman, 219.
The jury’s interest in a design that accurately portrayed the veteran experience was emphasized in public and critical reception of the adaptations during the 1990-1992 approval process. At the December 1990 CFA meeting, Robert Peck asked Cooper, “I am confused by the line of [the] March; what is its tactical function?” Peck’s question about the precise significance of the action performed by the statues signals his interest in the veracity of the events depicted in the memorial, as opposed to its aesthetic or symbolic interpretation. In response to a *Landscape Architecture* article raising concerns about the memorial’s meaning, Stillwell wrote, “It is out of concern for [the veterans] that the Board (consisting of 12 Presidential appointed veterans who were there) has had countless meetings to ensure that this design truly does tell their story—not in abstract expressions on granite faces, but with a clarity and precision and historical accuracy that brings home the enormity of their sacrifice.” He underlines the phrase “who were there,” proposing that the all-veteran board’s authority resides in its members’ ability to distill the actual truth in design decisions. Stillwell’s letter emphasizes the literal quality of the monument with phrases such as “clarity,” “precision,” and “historical accuracy.” When the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board was asked about the emphasis on realism at another meeting, they stressed factual accuracy, stating the “figures must portray the way it was in proper historical perspective so visitors now and in the future can appreciate the nature of this war.”

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154 In a special meeting at the Department of the Interior on December 20, 1989, the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board was asked, “Why is it important for the statues to be absolutely realistic vs. impressionistic?” (Question 16.) The Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board stressed a concern with literal representation in their answer. It is unclear
During the review period, Cooper-Lecky refined the winning design in order to secure official approval. The adaptations hypothetically were made in consultation with the original design team, but actually these changes were the result of combining input from the advisory board, ABMC, COE, and all of the federal reviewing agencies. To summarize, the major aesthetic changes made to the original BL3 design throughout the review process include a reduction of the number of marching soldiers from 38 to 19, the addition of a contemplative grove of trees called “the chapel,” relocation of the wall, and changing the ceremonial plaza to include a large mural to honor support troops. Guided by an advisory board, which was willing to “do anything to get this memorial built,” the content of the design also shifted from a seemingly peaceful march toward an active depiction of military service.\textsuperscript{155} The evolved design includes three major elements: a column of troops marching up a hill towards the American flag, curved mural walls, and a circular reflecting pool to honor the dead.

\textbf{Cooper-Lecky’s Adaptations}

In June 1990, Cooper Lecky presented the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board with four options to rectify the one-way visitor circulation problem caused by the 5-foot-wide, 320-foot-long path that dramatically altered the winning submission. The solutions were labeled the Bridge, Overlook, Delta, and Valley schemes. The board favorite, the Delta scheme, resolved the circulation issues and responded to the criticism that support personnel were not recognized in the BL3 design by dividing the composition into three parts: a column of ground troops, a mural wall in honor of the support troops, and an area to honor the killed and missing—

\textsuperscript{155} Stillwell, Commission of Fine Arts Meeting Minutes, February 21, 1991, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 1.
the “symbolic implication [being]…the experience of war; the explanation of war; and the cost of war” (Fig. 3.14). The mural was a Cooper-Lecky addition to the original winning design submission.\(^{156}\)

Of all of the proposed schemes, the Delta made the greatest conceptual transformation of the original design. Cooper-Lecky reoriented the east-west axis of the line of soldiers into a diagonal line of soldiers marching south. Prompted by the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, the marching soldiers were reinterpreted to appear actively engaged in battle. The redesigned soldiers were said to be “pulling pins out of grenades, some holding bazookas ready to fire.”\(^{158}\) Stillwell explained, “a narrative story of soldiers responding to unexpected unfriendly fire” addressed the board’s apprehension that the line of soldiers might be “boring.”\(^{159}\) BL3 was outraged by the design changes, which shifted the overall setting of the marching soldiers and altered the content of their design. All that remained of their original design was the slanting walkway between soldiers, the flagpole, and the landscaped areas of barberry and plane trees.

It is unclear how this dramatic deviation became approved by the ABMC, but it has been suggested that it came about through “behind-closed-doors, General-to-General negotiation” between the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board and the ABMC.\(^{160}\) Lecky implied

\(^{156}\) Cooper-Lecky, fax on “Delta Scheme Development” to the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, September 14, 1990, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 4.

\(^{157}\) The original design included a memorial wall with a few brief quotes, but it was a minor element of the overall scheme. Cooper-Lecky developed the wall into a large mural, making it one of the three major elements of the memorial design.


\(^{160}\) Richman, 250.
that Stillwell pushed the changes forward out of fear that the laborious agency approval process would thwart the eventual construction of the built memorial. During the approval process, the design that won the competition was criticized for “not using its axial links to surrounding monuments on the mall.” Cooper-Lecky turned the path of soldiers into a southern diagonal march to align with the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials, and they modified the Delta scheme into a series of curvilinear pedestrian paths based on the “circulation concept…of Constitution Gardens.” Throughout the discussions about the new Delta scheme, there were other additions and modifications proposed that included a United Nations flag plaza, a concave mural wall, and circular freestanding wall panels depicting support troops.

Cooper-Lecky presented the altered design at the December 1990 CFA meeting. The commission was initially positive about the revised design, but they felt it was “misguided” in its assumption that a curvilinear pathway would ultimately be developed on the south side of the reflecting pool. They also had major reservations about the grand scale of the composition. The pathways were eventually changed into V-shaped roads in the final triangle-in-a-circle scheme, and the scale issues were resolved with the reduction in the number of figures. The winning

161 According to Lecky, they first showed their changes to BL3, who “rejected everything that we had done, and asked that we not present any of this to the advisory board.” Cooper-Lecky was persuaded by Stillwell to present the changes to the Board at a confidential meeting. “Stillwell asked Kent and I to come into his office…. [H]e was the ultimate gentleman, but frankly the message was why…haven’t you made any changes and how the hell are we going to get this approved? We said we felt we had to honor BL3’s request not to present changes, but Stilwell said, ‘I admire your sense of ethics, but I want a meeting tomorrow morning [without BL3] and I want to see all of these alternatives.’” The next morning, the board selected the most radically different design. Lecky, interview with the author.


163 Richman, 250.

164 The members of the CFA at the December 1990 meeting included J. Carter Brown (chairman), Neil Porterfield (vice chairman, and also chair of Landscape Department at Pennsylvania State University), Robert Peck, Adele Chatfield Taylor, Joan Abramson, and George Hartman.
designers urgently protested the changes at the 1990 CFA meeting and appealed to the Commission to revert to their original design, which had been “approved…once in concept.”

The CFA deferred judgment for the January meeting, but relations between the advisory board, Cooper-Lecky, and BL3 were irrevocably damaged.

The conflict between the winning designers and the advisory board climaxed when BL3 filed a $500,000 lawsuit on December 19, 1990, against the Corps, ABMC, Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, and Cooper-Lecky Associates, charging that a substitute design was supplied in place of the original one. The lawsuit focused on two key issues: the specific design changes and the board’s authority to change the design without BL3’s consent. The designers objected to the introduction of elements of war and argued that the altered design was less peaceful. Leon asserted: “[Ours] was a dignified walk through the landscape and based on a famous David Douglas Duncan photograph. They have romanticized it by depicting a fictitious battle scene.”

The charges against the Corps, ABMC, and Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board were dismissed by October 1991, and those against Cooper-Lecky on April 9, 1992. The architects’ appeal in June 1992 was also dismissed.

The advisory board’s role after jury selection was a major issue in the BL3 lawsuit when the judge interpreted the case based on what design “selection” entailed. The court found that, since the statute authorizing the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board to select the

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166 Ibid. For press coverage on the lawsuit, see also Benjamin Forgey, “Architects Sue over Redesign of Memorial,” *Washington Post*, December 19, 1990, C1. For further criticism of the design alterations, see a letter written by Burns, Lucas, Leon, Lucas Architects with the subject, “The Korean War Veterans Memorial: A Statement of Concern,” September 25, 1990, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 4. Specifically, this letter voices concern over the “message and character” of the memorial: “[The new design] no longer provides the linear sequence of symbolic movement from peace at home, through war and then again into a place of peace and a return home.”
design was ambiguous, the board’s interpretation of the statute (modifying the design as part of the competition process) was not unreasonable.\textsuperscript{167} The case was dismissed because the competition rules had specified that the government took ownership of the design after the winner was selected and the ABMC could make changes as they saw fit. According to the competition rules, the winner was allowed to review and comment on the development of the design but did not necessarily have the control to maintain the integrity of their design.\textsuperscript{168} The litigation supported a central claim about the jury’s authority because the court ruled that the advisory board’s “active participation in the evolution of [the winning] design” was permissible, confirming that design selection continues beyond the judging stage.\textsuperscript{169}

The lawsuit speaks to the issue of authorial control in design competitions generally. Although the contest rules stated, “the winning design, in effect, becomes the property of the client,” BL3 anticipated a stronger creative voice in the realization of the memorial.\textsuperscript{170} Thus, in addition to conflicting perceptions of the scheme by designer and jury, there was miscommunication about the creative process. The board felt that, consistent with prior ABMC experience, it was selecting a working design; in effect, hiring BL3 to develop a scheme rather than purchasing a finished design. Cooper-Lecky believed that “once you win a competition and take the money, you have sold the design.”\textsuperscript{171} Clearly, problems arise when project architect and client have different ideas about a design concept. This is a problem central to the open design competition where, in the absence of personal communication, an architect’s relationship with his or her client depends upon the clarity and comprehensiveness of the program. The disparity

\textsuperscript{168}Richman, 227. 
\textsuperscript{170}Charles Atherton (CFA), quoted in Gamarekian, 17. 
\textsuperscript{171}Cooper, interview with the author.
between the board’s interest in specificity and the winning designers’ focus on symbolic content ultimately culminated in the judicial proceedings. BL3 withdrew from the project altogether after the lawsuit was decided. The KWVM advisory board maintains, “it was their decision to withdraw from further design work.”

After the new design addressed many of the official criticisms in December 1990, the CFA questioned the cohesion of the overall concept and in 1991 worried about the design’s proportion to the Mall itself. Inspired by the MacMillan Commission’s radial scheme for the east end of the Mall, Cooper-Lecky presented a radial dart-in-the-target scheme at the June 1991 CFA meeting. The column of soldiers was replaced with a fanned out configuration of figures in the proposed scheme. The commission chairman, J. Carter Brown, delayed the vote due to concerns that the 38 steel sculptures would overwhelm the Lincoln Memorial. The discussions between Cooper-Lecky and the federal review agency resulted in a 19-figure composition, which when reflected in the polished granite wall would appear as 38 soldiers. According to Lecky, the figure diminution was “for artistic reasons more than anything else.”

Through a series of informal progress meetings between Cooper-Lecky and members of the CFA, a triangle-in-a-circle scheme was selected in order to best accommodate the reduced, 19-figure composition (Fig. 3.15).

It was also agreed that visitors would view the composition from the perimeter of the triangle as opposed to moving among the soldiers. The viewer was distanced from the sculpture

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172 Richman, 229.
173 Lecky, interview with the author. The advisory board was initially opposed to the figure reduction because they had worked hard to figure out the ethnicities and service designation of each figure represented. At one point the NCPC wanted the number further reduced to 16 as a “symbolic” suggestion of the 19 figures, whereby the subtracted three figures are in the woods and the remaining 16 are visible in open field. Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 2.
in the transformed design, essentially eliminating the participatory nature of entry #247. Ewing doesn’t consider the “transformed” KWVM to be the same jury-selected design, which “had a good experiential component for the viewer who could essentially walk the line.”

Although the advisory board instigated many of the Cooper-Lecky adaptations at this point, the CFA also contributed to the design refinement at this stage of review. The CFA consistently rejected the design in its reviews held between December 1990 and January 1992, when their primary concern was the cohesion of the memorial. Likely divided by divergent artistic concepts of the design, the CFA worried that the disparate elements did not make a unified memorial. At one point Peck lamented:

What is evocative about this design is…that the soldiers almost looked like ghosts coming out of the cemetery. The problem is that the three elements don’t come together yet. It shouldn't be the job of the Commission to make it work. We are not a…design committee so I just sort of lay that out there as a reservation, but it is a serious reservation.

In January 1992, the CFA voted 3 to 1 to give “conceptual approval” to the final design featuring a peninsular insertion into the reflecting pool, figurative sculpture marching toward a flagpole, and a mural wall. The ABMC, NCMC, CFA, and NCPC finally approved the altered design in June 1993.

Spreiregen asserts that the purpose of an open competition is “mainly to select an architect, implying that the design is subject to modification and refinement.” The KWVM design competition suffered from a central misunderstanding of the goals of the competition. As directed by Public Law 55-972, the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board felt their

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174 Ewing, telephone interview with the author.
177 Spreiregen, Design Competitions, 120.
duty was to follow the competition to completion, co-authoring initial ideas and final results. In the selection phase, the jury picked a design concept, as opposed to a completed design or an architect. As a jury member stated, #247 “came closest to what the majority of the board members wanted to begin to work with…the design was simply a point of departure.”178 At the initial board meeting, Davis expressed ideas about selecting aspects of design submissions rather than choosing a winning architect. Weber asked what would happen if someone came in with a “monstrosity that we would obviously reject?” Davis responded, “any idea that comes in can become ours to do something else with…it might be a gem of an idea that we want to use. And, we can pick it out and put in something else.”179 His comments reveal that the advisory board always envisioned itself in an authorial position, piecing together design elements for a salient memorial. The Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board ultimately initiated aspects of the built memorial. For example, Cooper-Lecky adapted the winning design to include a contemplative grove of trees called the “chapel” near the reflecting pool, the Pool of Remembrance. This “chapel” concept can be traced to an early Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board meeting in 1988, when Davis circulated “ideas of design” that included “ancestral memory,” an “amphitheater idea,” and a “Chapel of the Lost.”180

Cooper-Lecky saw its job as bringing to life the client’s vision. Kent Cooper stated, “I felt that the President’s commission is our client. I felt we needed to maintain the integrity that the jury saw in the design…a group of battle-clad soldiers marching in a group toward an

178 Weber, interview with the author.
180 Davis described his design ideas for the memorial, sparked by late-night conversations with other veterans. Davis, Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board Meeting Minutes, March 4, 1988, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 1.
American flag.”

Tasked with adapting the design in order to pass the agency approval process, Cooper-Lecky Associates were guided by what they thought the client wanted. As the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board became more involved than the ABMC had originally anticipated, the board in effect became Cooper-Lecky’s client: “They were the ones we had to satisfy.”

Both architects had performed military service: Cooper, in WWII; Lecky, as an Army draftee in the Korean War.

Cooper-Lecky’s strategy may have resulted from their participation in the implementation phase of the VVM, where Maya Lin had submitted poetry and an abstract “fuzzy drawing,” as Cooper called it, “which shows you the idea,” but had not included a plan of execution. However, the VVM design was itself abstract, whereas the KWVM was figurative and realistic. In contrast to the Pennsylvania State team’s KWVM design submission, Lin’s competition submission suggests that her own ideas were more vague in terms of the implementation. Cooper revealed that Lin hadn’t considered how the names would be incorporated into the wall itself: “[We] asked her—what did you have in mind to get these names on, and she said, ‘I don’t know.’” In contrast to Lin, who was not yet a registered architect, the winning team for the KWVM competition were architecture professors who had spent years

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181 Cooper, interview with the author.
182 Lecky, interview with the author.
183 Kent Cooper stated, “I am a fortunate World War II Vet, saved by the atomic bomb from having to invade Japan.” Cooper, interview with the author. According to a “UVA Alumni News” article, Lecky was enjoying a three-day pass from Fort Sam Houston, Texas, to Monterrey, Mexico, where he saw a contemporary rendition of a Gothic Cathedral that inspired him to become an architect. He enrolled at the University of Virginia shortly after his Army service ended in 1955. UVA Alumni Association, *Virginia* 84–85 (1995): 49. Weber noted the camaraderie established because of the military background of the project architect: “Lecky had the emotion, the feel. He was attuned to those of us on the board who were in combat.” Weber, interview with the author.
184 Cooper, interview with the author.
185 Ibid.
formulating ideas and design solutions. Conflict arose when Cooper-Lecky, conditioned by their previous experience, took an active role in decision-making during the implementation stage. This conflict escalated when the firm prioritized the client’s vision over the winning designers’ concept. Ultimately, this resulted in the orchestration of the project, in large part, by the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board.

Enacted in 1986, Public law 99–572 had authorized the establishment of a memorial on federal land in Washington, D.C., to “honor members of the Armed Forces of the United States who served in the Korean War, particularly those who were killed in action, are listed as missing in action, or were held as prisoners of war.” The Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board was “determined to live up to what the Law determined.” They faithfully based concept and design decisions on the law in the same way that a group of soldiers follow a military directive.  

The Built Memorial

Memorial Sculpture

Although the design competition was an open competition, two of the three major elements of the design evolved in closed processes. In the memorial as finally constructed, those who served are honored with sculpture; those who were killed or listed as missing in action, with a Pool of Remembrance; and those who served as support staff, with a mural. The sculpture and

186 Weber described the board’s mission to carry out the wording of the law, noting how the board was “determined to live up to what the Law determined [which] became an exceedingly difficult thing to achieve.” Weber, interview with the author. Stillwell referenced Public Law 55–972 in Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board meetings during the design competition phase; see for example, “Thoughts on Wall Adornment,” where Stillwell refers to the board’s intention to “carry out the mandate of Congress.” Stillwell Memorandum to Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board on “My Thoughts on Wall Adornment,” December 18, 1989, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 2.
mural are also the design features that went through the greatest transformation, ultimately changing the meaning of the memorial.

Just after Cooper-Lecky was hired, the COE granted the firm permission to select the sculptor for the (then 38) larger-than-life figures. BL3 had appealed to the ABMC for control of the sculptor selection process at the same time, but Cooper-Lecky ultimately managed the sculpture phase and artist selection. The firm selected John Beardsley, a Washington, D.C.-based arts consultant, to lead a national search for the sculptor. In May 1990, Beardsley chaired a five-person selection panel that initially included John Lucas (BL3), Col. William Weber (Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board), Paul Harbeson (ABMC), Jack Cowart (National Gallery), and Jane Livingston (Corcoran Museum). When Livingston resigned from the review panel, the remaining majority had a vested interest in the design.188

Only 39 sculptors responded to advertising placed in national publications such as Sculpture magazine. The posting, which listed the project as a large stone military commission, may have deterred many contemporary sculptors from applying.189 The four finalists were Frank Gaylord of Vermont, Rolf Kirken of California, Lawrence Ludtke of Texas, and Manuel Neri of California. Neri withdrew from the selection after he learned that the commission was to be realistic and figurative. The finalists were invited to visit the site and given $3,000 to develop design presentations. Gaylord won by unanimous vote based on selection criteria that included

187 Interestingly, John Beardsley was not mentioned in discussions of the sculpture selection phase with William Lecky, John Lucas, or William Weber, suggesting that his role was minor in the process. BL3’s early proposal included three stone and four metal casting estimates ranging from $2 to $6 million, to be executed by Charles Cropper Parks of Wilmington, Delaware.
188 Livingston’s reasons for resignation were not spelled out, but Jack Cowart (National Gallery) observed that the “design is so freighted with allegory that it is apt to turn over and sink before it is ever completed.” Richman, 250.
189 Asked about the low response to the sculpture search, Lecky explained, “most of the good people...didn’t want to be involved in military sculpture...and some of the big guys thought, ‘I don’t have time to devote a couple of years to this project.’” Lecky, interview with the author.
artistic merit, ability to be part of a team, and ability to work quickly. In comparing the aesthetic leanings of the sculptors, Lecky described Gaylord’s work as more “impressionistic” than the other finalists, suggesting that there was room to adapt the sculpture to suit the client’s vision.\textsuperscript{190} Reflecting an interest in efficiency, the selection committee had asked each sculptor, “Are you comfortable with the fact that you will be part of a design collaboration and may need to take direction from Cooper-Lecky and the advisory board?” Gaylord’s response had been, “Absolutely. I will tell you what you ought to do, and then (with a smile) I will do what you tell me to do!”\textsuperscript{191} Like the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, the jury, and the project architects, Gaylord was a veteran, having served as a paratrooper in WWII.\textsuperscript{192} He had depictions of military figures in his portfolio, and Lecky noted that he did “bring [his military service] out in his presentation.”\textsuperscript{193} Among the selection committee members, it was “hands-down” because of Gaylord’s “ability to realistically portray the weaponry” and his “emotional approach” to military sculpture.\textsuperscript{194} The sculptor signed a contract with Cooper-Lecky in June 1990.

The Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board had worked out the types of figures they wanted before the sculptor was selected. The ABMC requested notes on layout and ethnic origin of the figures to accompany the sculptor selection process in September 1989, and the

\textsuperscript{190} To be clear, Lecky does not invoke the term “impressionistic” in the strict art historical sense. He characterizes Gaylord’s work as “impressionistic” in the sense that it allows the viewer to impart his own emotional expression, as opposed to sculptural work that is completely realistic and does not allow the viewer to impart his own meaning. Lecky, interview with the author.


\textsuperscript{192} Gaylord and Weber developed a lifelong friendship while working on the memorial. Weber described “a connection among paratroopers that transcends unit and time. So, Frank and I had an extra special relationship beyond what he shared with other board members.” Weber, interview with the author.

\textsuperscript{193} Lecky, interview with the author. When asked whether Gaylord’s military service impacted his selection by the jury, Lecky replied: “I think it did.”

\textsuperscript{194} Weber, interview with the author.
board responded with very specific instructions for the 38 figures that were to include 19 Caucasian, six Latinos, five African-Americans, two American-Indians, and two Asian-Americans, along with four KATUSAs (Korean Augment to the United States Army). The numbers were derived from ABMC studies of the racial breakdown of Korean War Veterans.\footnote{The number of Latinos was reduced from six to five to match the number of African Americans. This triggered some debate after studies showed that African Americans made up a much greater percentage of troops (10\% of troops), particularly in technical skills areas, suggesting that their service was less valuable than that of Latinos.} When the total number of figures was reduced, twelve Caucasians, three African-Americans, two Latinos, one Native-American, and one Asian-American soldier remained.\footnote{\textit{The KATUSAs were eliminated in the final tally, which is something that many veterans lament. For instance, Weber, who had been evacuated by KATUSAs after losing multiple limbs in Korea, complained that in presenting the war from an American soldier’s perspective the memorial fails to honor the Korean contribution to the war efforts. Weber, interview with the author. This speaks to the greater problem of inclusion and specificity in figurative memorials.}}

Representing race in a monochromatic medium is particularly challenging. Kirk Savage examines racial stereotyping in figurative commemoration in the post-Civil War monument frenzy. He has shown the way in which artists relied on stereotypes of white heroic soldiers in examples such as Thomas Ball’s \textit{Emancipation Monument} (1876) (Fig. 3.16). The inclusion of racial details in the KWVM is significant, since the Korean War was the first instance of integrated U.S. military service in a combat situation.\footnote{\textit{The U.S. Military integrated service in 1949.}} The advisory board’s prescription for racial detailing faced the same challenge Reconstruction artists had faced: finding ways to commemorate race without stereotyping. Ironically, despite the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board’s profiling, all of the figures included in the KVWM look somewhat Caucasian, problematically echoing that image of the white heroic soldier on the National Mall.

Schwartz and Bayma characterize the KWVM as a “monument to pluralism” in its inclusive commemoration of racially integrated military service in the Korean War. They
attribute the interest in ethnic specification to the socio-political context, evidenced in President William Jefferson Clinton’s dedication remarks. The statue and wall, he noted, represent “once more, the enduring American truth: From many we are one.” At the January 1991 CFA presentation, Peck expressed concern over the specificity of each figure in the proposed KWVM and warned the board, “[You] have crossed over the line…to the point of specifying the type of radio, the type of racial features. This sculpture will get to the point where the people will be looking at shoulder patches to make sure their unit is represented.” Peck’s comment speaks to one problem with figuration in general, which is that it is impossible to represent everyone. The Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board’s insistence on specificity threatened its intention to incorporate all of the veterans of the Korean War.

In addition to ethnic specificity, the advisory board outlined the service breakdown of the figurative sculpture. Initially, the board requested 23 Army figures, nine Marines, three Naval officers, two from the Air Force, and one Korean Service Corps member. When the number of figures was reduced, the service itemization changed to 14 Army soldiers, three Marines, an Air Force spotter, and a Naval attaché. The various branches work together in the sculptural depiction of ground combat. This is one instance where the advisory board sacrificed accuracy in order to be commemoratively inclusive. However, the representation of the individuals’ military designation was stressed, as the board insisted on the accurate depiction of weaponry,

198 President William Jefferson Clinton, Jr., quoted in Barry Schwartz and Todd Bayman, “Commemoration and the Politics of Recognition: The Korean War Veterans Memorial,” American Behavioral Scientist 42 (1999), 951. The emphasis on incorporating ethnic specificity is also interesting in light of the Hart sculpture added to VVM just a few years before the KWVM design competition. As Marling and Silverman point out, the veterans sought to compensate for what was perceived as missing in the abstract VVM with Hart’s figurative sculpture group, which included a Caucasian, African American, and Latino soldier.
199 Richman, 236.
200 Richman, 235.
gear, and uniform for each figure. They asked for a spacing of 17 feet between each figure, as 17 feet is roughly how far soldiers should be separated from other men in the field. Weber noted: “Those of us in combat were aggressively involved in the placement of sculptures, particularly how their attention would be directed.” 201

The advisory board’s lack of critical distance in design decision-making is evidenced by the way that they literally inserted themselves into the memorial design. Marines are over-represented in the service breakdown of the figures. Although the Marines’ combat achievements in Korea were great, their number in the field was actually smaller than their relative percentage in the memorial suggests. This is partly due to the board’s concern with specificity, as a firearm team usually includes three or four soldiers working as a group. 202 It can also be attributed to the service breakdown of the advisory board, where a quarter of the members were Marines (three of the original twelve), including Vice-Chairman of the board Raymond Davis, who exerted a particularly strong influence on the project. 203

Four members of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board served as models for the representational sculptures: Davis, Stillwell, Weber, and Cherry (Fig. 3.17). General Davis is the elite gunner in the firearm team of three Marines. Stillwell is the squad leader holding the SCR-536 (“handie-talkie”). Weber is looking out for the enemy, the only figure facing the wall. 204 Cherry is located to the left of Stilwell. In an interview, Weber verified, “if

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201 Weber, interview with the author.
202 A firearm team is the smallest infantry unit used for tactical flexibility in ground operations and is generally made up of a team leader/gunner, scout, and ammunitions man.
203 Weber noted that Davis pushed for the accurate depiction of military service. For example, the chinstraps on the helmets of the three Marines are fastened (in contrast to all of the other soldiers), because Davis insisted that Marines always fasten their chinstraps. Weber, interview with the author.
204 Weber thought he was positioned facing the wall because “in combat you need to look on all sides.” It’s possible that Gaylord placed Weber facing the mural wall of support staff because of
you know those gentlemen, you would recognize them,” and he implied that the sculptor incorporated board members in order to honor them. Gaylord made the decisions about which advisory board figures to use as models and where to place them within the sculptural group.

Although the KWVM honors both dead and living veterans generally speaking, its central feature is a sculptural group depicting its board members, who literally and figuratively became part of the memorial. In this way, the content of the memorial can be read as a re-enactment scene, as opposed to a reflective commemoration (like the VVM) or a grand celebration of war (like the NWWIIM). This raises the greater question of whom the intended audience of the memorial, as built, actually is. While it is important to address the needs of the veterans, however, a memorial also exists for a broader historical audience.

The Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board’s aesthetic influenced the choice of material selected for the sculpture. The BL3 proposal originally called for granite. Lucas had worked with stone and thought the material would facilitate a phenomenological experience, as the larger-than-life stone figures “would overwhelm you, but you are part of them, of the 38 walking through the landscape.” Lucas and his team had interviewed Gaylord and “found him to be a top-notch granite sculptor,” suggesting that the decision to cast in metal was made by the advisory board and project architect. The Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board’s

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his particular role on the board as a liaison to veterans. Cherry is the African-American soldier to his left. Weber, interview with the author.

205 Weber, interview with the author.

206 He also mentioned that he had started coursework toward a Ph.D., where his focus area was ancient archetypes: “I was looking at ancient and medieval architecture in terms of archetypal patterns, human movement, the forms that seem to have the most power in terms of memory.” Lucas, telephone interview with the author.

207 Ibid.
concern with efficiency in time and cost led to the change. The project architect proposed metal in order to “get the level of detail…that the advisory board was looking for with weapons and antennae and helmet straps and canteens and bullets, some fine details would be difficult to do in granite.” The choice of stainless steel reflects an aesthetic bias toward materials such as bronze, which have been traditionally used in military commemoration. As previously noted, the jury had viewed one of the prime examples of military commemoration on the National Mall—the bronze (and marble) Ulysses S. Grant Memorial—during the deliberation phase.

The original BL3 design would have allowed the viewer to walk with the figures, experiencing the work in a theatrical fashion. However, once the circulation pattern was changed, the viewer was forced to view the figures from a distance (separated further by the addition of granite bumpers). The resulting experience is akin to viewing a traditional sculpture on a pedestal. Although the choice of material was driven by the advisory board’s aesthetic preferences, aspects of the installation are more correctly attributed to Cooper-Lecky, as they were informed by the firm’s experience with the VVM. The controversial nature of the Vietnam War led to fears of vandalism and protests at the memorial during construction. Hart’s *Three Soldiers* (1984) was executed through a metal casting process and made inaccessible to the visitors through the use of landscaping. Lecky expressed a similar concern about vandalism at the KWVM as one reason that stone would be a poor choice for its figures, as “somebody could

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208 Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board Meeting Minutes, June 14, 1990, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 1. Weber notes the “difference in cost between stone (upwards of $180,000) and metal (between $25,000 and $60,000) for each statue.” He also remarks that, “In addition bronze has a much shorter delivery time and lends itself to the realistic work recommended by the Board.” As indicated in the meeting minutes, the advisory board consistently expressed concern with anything that might hinder the memorial’s construction.

209 Lecky, interview with the author.
go down with a sledge hammer and attack the sculptures." Placing metal sculptures behind granite bumpers would lessen the risk of vandalism to the KWVM.

Competing concepts of the memorial design also existed at the sculpture stage. Gaylord completed the 19-figure composition as directed by Cooper-Lecky, but he had originally proposed including two allegorical figures at the head and back of the marching line. The lead figure raised his arms in a deliverance pose, which would have added religious overtones to the composition. The inclusion of these figures would have further changed the meaning of the memorial. They were not, however, included in the final design.

Gaylord worked on more than one hundred models over a two-year period in his Vermont studio with his assistant, John Triano, before the full-scale models were cast in stainless steel at the Tallix Foundry in Beacon, New York. BL3 and Gaylord both envisioned the figures at a heroic eight-feet, but Cooper-Lecky and the CFA decided on a height of seven-feet, four-inches after experimenting with the scale on an elevated foam core model. Cooper-Lecky proposed adding ponchos to the sculptures at a meeting in their office in September 1991 in order to

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210 Lecky, interview with the author.
211 Lecky described Gaylord’s idea for including a group of men, praying as they came out of the wood, with one soldier shot and killed. A figure at the top of the hill threw his arms down in celebration that he had reached the top: “He had this layer of symbolism, but I said, ‘we can’t have a dying guy in the middle of a column and another guy celebrating that.’ We certainly didn’t want to show the soldiers scared and praying.” At another point, Gaylord represented the lead figure crouching, but there was concern that it “looked like the guy was taking a crap.” Lecky, interview with the author.

It is also worth noting that the Gulf War (or first Iraq War, August 1990–February 1991) was being waged while the most critical design discussions took place with the various approval agencies. This impacted the overall approval process but is particularly salient to this sculpture discussion. The CFA, in its role as official arbiter of taste, likely realized the question of taste raised by the depiction of a dying soldier on the National Mall at the time.
212 At one point, a suggestion was also made to have the figures moving through a shallow body of water. Cooper-Lecky describe a “rushing brook” flowing at the feet of the soldiers in a summary of the “Changes Made to the Concept Design” for the KWVM, Revised 10/4/90, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 4.
address J. Carter Brown’s concern over the ubiquitous display of weapons and military rankings on the National Mall. The architects thought that the ponchos would unify the composition, as well as hide the particular equipment carried by the figures. The board was pleased with the solution because the ponchos would more adequately suggest the bitter weather and rough terrain of Korea. In the end, this aspect of the sculptural design was derived from the input of the CFA as well as the interest of the board in creating an empathic experience.

A particularly unusual collaboration between the project architect and sculptor occurred before the final casting of the figures. In order to simulate the rough weather, Gaylord depicted the ponchos blowing in the wind, but the project architects worried that the initial effect was more “like a cyclone.” The architect literally stepped in to work on the clay models after they were delivered to Washington, D.C. Lecky noted, “I came to work for three days…and whacked away yards and yards of ponchos.” He also described physically manipulating the soldiers’ faces before the final stage of the lost wax casting process to make them appear younger by filling in “wrinkles and bags under the eyes, to get these guys looking close to twenty years

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213 Lecky, interview with the author. Cooper confirmed that there was some concern over the advisory board’s emphasis on military specificity: “The reason that we did it, was because the president’s commission…wanted to have every damn canteen in, and the people in battle have all of this military hardware all over their bodies. So, we had to cover it up with the ponchos.” Cooper, interview with the author. It is worth noting that while both Cooper and Lecky remember the ponchos as their contribution, there are other recollections of the sculpture process. Weber credits Frank Gaylord with adding the ponchos in order to create “movement in the sculptures.” Weber, interview with the author.

214 Lecky, interview with the author.

215 Lecky stated that Gaylord gave him permission to work on the sculptures because, “Frank knew I was a sculptor when I wasn’t doing architecture.” Asked about his training, he described working in the “subtractive” method, where you “take a block of something and whack away at it,” as opposed to building it up. Lecky also noted that this was unusual for his practice, that he had never physically completed a sculpture as part of an architectural commission. Lecky, interview with the author. It is worth noting that, unlike Gilded Age commissions, sculptural additions are less likely to be part of modern architecture commissions so that the collaborative relationship is less standardized in terms of best practices.
old.” Many people have commented on the ghost-like quality of the sculptures: it is possible that this quality derives from the physical manipulation of Gaylord’s models so that their age seems somewhat ambiguous. In any case, the sculpture process is another instance where multiple parties contributed both to the appearance and meaning of the KWVM.

In an article on the social context that led to renewed interest in commemorating veterans after the VVM, Judith Keene describes the socio-political prescription for the invisible Korean War veteran. She shows that the popular imagery of the Cold War-era United States was of “the American soldier as prisoner of war, who was defeated, emaciated and possibly a brainwashed communist sympathizer.” The all-veteran Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board compensated for the perception of having been forgotten or defeated with a sculptural group of dynamic, larger-than-life American soldiers fighting for their country.

A gendered reading of the design competition is inevitable given the predominantly male participants building a memorial of masculine soldiers in action on the National Mall. Though McCarthy lamented the lack of women in an early Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board meeting, the central feature of the memorial design is the group of all-male figurative sculptures. Some scholars have looked at the figurative additions to the VVM as a gendered response to the anti-monumental memorial designed by a young woman. In the face of the VVM, veterans looking to compensate for perceived absences built something distinctly

216 Lecky suggested that Gaylord’s figures looked to be in their late forties or early fifties, so the architect stepped in to manipulate the sculptures in order to adhere to the accurate age of servicemen depicted. Lecky, interview with the author.
218 Hagopian stated that in a personal interview, McCarthy claimed to have pushed for a greater representation of women in an early board meeting. Hagopian, 239.
masculine—larger-than-life soldiers overcoming difficult weather and terrain to carry out an important (if undisclosed) mission. The only references to women appear on the design element that parallels the VVM: the dark reflective mural wall to honor support staff.

The Memorial Mural

The memorial is essentially hierarchical. The active servicemen make up the central figurative sculpture, while the support staff are depicted on the adjacent mural wall (Fig. 3.18). In addition to controlling the sculptor selection process, Cooper-Lecky directed the search for a muralist. After interviewing five pre-selected graphic designers, Cooper-Lecky’s consultant, Beardsley, chose Louis Nelson of New York on November 29, 1990, for the 164-foot-long mural. The black granite mural wall rises from 4 1/2 to 11 feet, and reflects the 19 soldiers, visually doubling their numbers. The portraits are grouped according to service branches and include the U.S. Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard. The Cooper-Lecky–added mural was not part of BL3’s original design.

The architects cite Nelson’s idea to use the faces of veteran support staff as one of the reasons for his selection. His original concept was to include large, etched faces drawn from David Douglas Duncan’s photographs, and at one point he suggested etching behind-the-lines scenes into the pupils of their eyes. However, the mural wall had to be refigured to reflect the reduced number of sculptural figures after the June CFA 1991 meeting. In the fall of 1991 Nelson’s design included 19 portrait heads that were over ten times life-size to match the 19 soldiers. Cooper-Lecky rejected the idea because of its grand scale and suggested a greater

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220 Citing time pressure as a reason, the firm “hand-picked three or four good graphic people” for consideration, as opposed to running another competition. Lecky, interview with the author.
221 Lecky had recently met Nelson on a jury panel awarding NEA grants. Ibid.
number of smaller heads in a rhythmic pattern on the wall. Nelson and his assistant, Jennifer Stoller, copied more than 2,400 faces from anonymous photos at the National Archives and Air and Space Museum for the portrait photographs on the mural wall. The forward-facing views of actual soldiers, sailors, nurses, chaplains, and other support stuff are meant to stand for and honor all those who served without literally naming everyone, as is done at the VVM.

There is actually a depersonalization in both the mural and sculpture. In *Memorial Museums*, Paul Williams describes the “images of identification…which inscribe the individual with a ‘certain social identity.’” He cautions that the “end result” of putting a ‘human face’ on tragedy “can be depersonalization, insofar as the person or people depicted are often received as little more than representative sacrificial victims of a historical narrative.” In the mural, the faces are transformed into depersonalized victims because there is no way to discover the identity of the faces. From afar, the faces appear as a snowy mountain design, and up close they are simply etched images of generic people. Nelson took his inspiration from the custom of displaying photographs of loved ones on the living room mantelpiece, and his description of the mural wall is often repeated: “This is the nation’s mantelpiece.” However, this custom is for the display of known loved ones, which again begs the question of who the intended audience in the KWVM was: veterans or future generations without a direct link to veterans of the Korean War?

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223 Williams, 73.
224 Schwartz and Bayma, 961. Weber also used the phrase “nation’s mantelpiece” in discussing the mural. Weber, interview with the author.
Memorial

In the adapted design, the textual inscriptions were transformed from symbolic to literal, reflecting the military-centered focus of the sponsor. At the Pool of Remembrance, two marble slabs are inscribed with the numbers of dead and wounded, designated as either American or United Nations forces. The theme of sacrifice in these inscriptions differs from the focus on time in the BL3 design, with its white marble slabs etched with dates to symbolize the chronology of the war. There are also generic, service-oriented phrases added to the memorial. “Freedom is Not Free” is written where the mural wall meets the reflective surface of the circular Pool of Remembrance (Fig. 3.19). The phrase comes from the words above the entrance to the American Legion Headquarters, and the juxtaposition proposes that those commemorated veterans paid for “freedom” with their lives. Although the link is ambiguous, the words reflect a concern with being literal, as if the project architects felt the visual component needed textual explication.

The memorial dedication is inscribed into an 8-ton triangular stone beneath the flagpole, in front of the lead soldier at the apex of the military formation: “Our Nation Honors Her Sons and Daughters/Who Answered the Call to Defend a Country/They Never Knew and a People They Never Met.” Like other aspects of the memorial, the inscriptions speak to the veterans’ perception of the VVM. A two-part textual inscription was added to VVM to describe how the memorial honors the veterans of the Vietnam War and informs the viewer about the chronology in the listing of the names.\(^{225}\) Drawing on the VVM experience, Cooper-Lecky added text to

\(^{225}\) Before the first name on the top right wall, the inscription reads: “In honor of the men and women of the armed forces of the United States who served in the Vietnam War. The names of those who gave their lives and of those who remain missing are inscribed in the order they were taken from us.” The second part of the inscription, after the last name at the bottom of the left wall, reads: “Our nation honors the courage, sacrifice and devotion to duty and country of its
address a perceived lack of specificity in the KWVM design as directed by the client’s concept. Problematically, the specific phrases that were chosen do nothing to illuminate the specific subject of the built memorial: rather, they reflect military service applicable to any conflict.

**Conclusion**

The design competition, approval, and implementation process took three times longer than it did to fight the war commemorated by the memorial. The KWVM groundbreaking ceremony took place on June 14, 1992. The ABMC, NCPC, CFA, and NCMC officially approved the adapted design on June 23, 1993, after four years of reviews. The construction began in 1993, and the memorial was dedicated and presented to the public on the forty-second anniversary of the armistice signing, July 27, 1995. The KWVM lists Cooper-Lecky Associates as the memorial’s designer. There is no mention of BL3 on the physical memorial.

The KWVM is a very different memorial than the winning design presented in the Rose Garden ceremony. BL3’s design featured a column of soldiers marching on an east-west path toward a peaceful flag in a cruciform scheme, framed by a curving twenty-foot-high hedge. In the initial Cooper-Lecky iteration of the winning design concept, the soldiers marched in a direct line through a landscaped terrain toward a flag. The design was completely transformed through the implementation and agency approval process, when the high hedges were replaced by a greater number of lower plantings, and the east-west axis was replaced with a diagonal, upon which the soldiers now march. Guided by the conceptual vision of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, the sculpture is more realistic than symbolic in the final design. The figures appear to be under threat and are actively engaged in their mission, as opposed to calmly Vietnam veterans. This memorial was built with private contributions from the American people.”
marching in a line toward a flag. They are no longer accessible, as granite speed bumps separate
the visitor’s pathway from the soldiers. Through a series of reviews and collaborative
compromises, the implementation stage of the competition process determined the final design of
the constructed memorial.

The influential role of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board is emphasized
in the memorial’s narrative, making the memorial a useful case study for considering the sponsor
and jury as decisive factors of design competitions for memorial making on the National Mall.
In a discussion of the competition process on the National Mall, Spreiregen observes that “a
competitively produced design is no more or less subject to revision than a commissioned
design,” in that both require refinement during the implementation and agency approval
process. The challenge of selecting a design through an open competition is that the winning
design responds to a prescribed competition program, while a commissioned designer
continually adapts the product according to the sponsor’s wishes. In the case of the KWVM, the
sponsors held an open design competition without the leadership of an impartial professional
consultant and then treated the memorial development as a separate commission without making
it clear whom the sponsor was commissioning.

Continued Adaptations

Efforts continue to further adapt the KWVM and seek greater specificity in its design. A
new bill proposed by veterans, if passed, would add a glass Wall of Remembrance to the
memorial inscribed with the names of fallen soldiers and a figurative etching of a sculpture that

226 Spreiregen, interview with the author.
resembles Hart’s *Three Soldiers* (Fig. 3.20). The glass wall is intended to frame the Pool of Remembrance, one of the least successful elements of the KWVM and also one of the aspects of the design that was least changed throughout the process. Former Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board member Col. Weber is leading the effort to add the glass wall, which was designed by Lecky. The architect describes the wall as a complement to the VVM, turning the viewer toward the National Mall.

Looking at the precedent of the VVM, the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board originally intended to include a listing of names on the memorial. This is evident in the design program, which states that a listing “may be included on any portion of the Memorial and may or may not be a principal element of the design.”

During the selection stage, the Memorial Design Competition Check List handed out to jurors also asked, “Does this Memorial design include a display of the names of the fallen and the missing?” The board wanted to avoid being derivative with a wall of names but compensated after the memorial dedication by adding a touch-screen computer kiosk presenting an Honor Roll of service records and photographs of 37,000 killed and missing-in-action near the monument’s west entrance.

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227 Rep Hall, “H.R.318—To Authorize a Wall of Remembrance as Part of the Korean War Veterans Memorial and to Allow Certain Private Contributions to Fund That Wall of Remembrance.”

228 According to Cooper-Lecky, there was a suggestion at one point to have just the Pool of Remembrance as the memorial in order to echo the simplicity of VVM. Richman, 230.

229 For more information on the Wall of Remembrance, see the Korean War Veterans Memorial Fund, http://www.koreanwarvetsmemorial.org/ (accessed December 2016).

230 Memorial Design Requirements & Limitations, Final Draft, December 5, 1988, Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 3.

231 “Memorial Design Competition Check List,” Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, carton 3.

232 The kiosk, located in the chapel-like grove of trees, houses two touch screens (one is handicap accessible). The computer-generated images from a database compiled by the ABMC also include service information and, when available, death information. Like the KWVM itself, the
The proposed wall would list the names of all who were killed in the Korean War, supplementing the abstract statement made by the black Pool of Remembrance. There is also an effort to add something Korean to the memorial to accurately portray the intended location of the figurative sculpture.\textsuperscript{233} In addition to the names, the Wall of Remembrance would counteract the perceived lack of specificity about which war the memorial is commemorating. Personal observations of the site conducted in spring 2014 recorded that visitors circumnavigated the Pool of Remembrance. Typical traffic patterns followed the V-path coming from either side of the sculpture, at the start of Daniel French Drive or from the Lincoln Memorial, and stopped at the flagpole before exiting along the adjacent side of the V-path. The pool is drained in the winter, leaving even less motivation to circle around it. These site observations suggest that the Pool of Remembrance is not successful as a quiet, commemorative space to honor the Korean War dead. At this time, however, the federal agencies responsible for the approval process are skeptical about the continued adaptations to the memorial.\textsuperscript{234}

The greater issue arises over when a built memorial can be considered complete. James Young described a memorial as an ongoing process in comparison to a static monument that, once installed, petrifies history—“seemingly a frozen face in the landscape.”\textsuperscript{235} However, if adaptations are continually called for, one is compelled to question the efficacy of the design specifications that determined the content of the memorial. The changes to the memorial did not

\textsuperscript{233} One idea is to have a design competition among artists in South Korea to design some of the glass panels, so that the designs would be interspersed among the names.

\textsuperscript{234} According to Lecky, the federal agencies caution against the continued additions and adaptations made to memorials on the National Mall. The implication is that the approval process is flawed if the designs need modification after being built.

\textsuperscript{235} James Young, Preface to \textit{The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), x.
necessarily result in a better work, as evidenced in the ongoing efforts to further refine the built product.
CHAPTER 4: THE NATIONAL WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL

“The site drove the design.”

—Michael G. Conley, American Battle Monuments Commission

The sponsoring agency of the National World War II Memorial (NWWIIM), the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC), made various changes to Friedrich St. Florian’s competition-winning design in order to secure government approval for the central Rainbow Pool site on the National Mall (Fig. 4.1). In addition to eliminating the subterranean museum space, the alterations replaced mournful elements with expressions of military power. St. Florian’s original design included large, sloping white rose berms and truncated columns reminiscent of nineteenth-century children’s grave markers; these were replaced with a colonnade representing the United States territories and triumphal arches referencing battle locations. This chapter argues that the emphasis on site and the ensuing approval process determined the aesthetic and functional focus of the NWWIIM, shifting it from a potentially educational commemorative space to a valorization of U.S. military power in the Second World War.

Completed in 2004, the design of the NWWIIM was conservative for its time. Art historian Erika Doss frames it as a response to the abstract, modernist character of the VVM (1982). Her analysis is limited, however, to the final design product and does not take into account the initial design, which was radically changed during the post-competition approval

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1 Michael G. Conley (ABMC), interview with the author, Arlington, Virginia, July 18, 2013.
2 In contrast to the VVM as a memorial for veterans (devoid of specific references to the Vietnam War), Doss considers the way in which the NWWIIM expresses gratitude for those who fought in World War II with a patriotic agenda that weds the nation’s greatness to an idea of military power. Erika Doss, Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 238.
process. Located at the epicenter of the symbolic site of national commemoration, the memorial’s content derives in large part from its pivotal location on the National Mall between the Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial. The competition guidelines focused on the location in prescribing content. The jury noted site issues in their reasons for selecting St. Florian’s design as the winner. The decision to eliminate the educational center and white rose berms were prompted by the need to secure the setting in the federal agency approval process.

The eventual outcome is a straightforward statement about U.S. military power in World War II with the location at the center of the National Mall suggesting that national history is framed by this event (as opposed to a design that had the potential to make a nuanced statement about the event with an educational component). The design follows the reframed content in the altered final product so that the aesthetics are one-dimensional also. The result of this elimination typology shows how the built memorial is a product of its own process. Like the additions that reshaped meaning of the VVM and the adaptations that modified the content of KWVM, the eliminations transformed the NWWIIM from an educational and potentially nuanced design to a simple spatial solution to express patriotic and nationalistic power.

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3 The NWWIIM design competition guidelines specify an undisturbed vista between the Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial, and insist that the memorial design respect its historic surroundings.

4 The design jury recommended the “strength” of St. Florian’s submission is its “association with the classical architecture of the Mall and its environs.” NWWIIM Design Competition Jury Recommendations, October 29, 1996, Records of the National World War II Memorial, American Battle Monuments Commission, Arlington, Virginia.

5 The 8,000-square-foot education and exhibition center was removed from St. Florian’s design in the 1998 CFA hearing. The NPS raised objections to the sharp incline and maintenance needs of the rose berms at the central site. The concern with the physical imposition of these design elements threatened the project’s completion at this site. There was a sense of urgency among aging veterans to initiate construction of the memorial on the central site so decisions were made in order to expedite the approval process.
Early History

Sponsor

Battle of the Bulge veteran Roger Durbin first lobbied his senator, Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio), for a World War II memorial in 1987; he would die before the memorial was completed.6 A long and arduous process unfolded between the initial legislative effort to establish the memorial and the dedication of the built project. The October 1994 passage of the House and Senate Joint Resolution 227 authorized the ABMC to establish a World War II memorial within the monumental core of Washington, D.C. After securing a central National Mall site in 1995, the ABMC enlisted the General Service Administration (GSA) to run a memorial design competition in 1996, but the NWWIIM was not dedicated until 2004 after an extensive agency approval process.

Due to the length of the process to erect the World War II memorial, staffing adjustments took place within the ABMC, but the key players involved in the site and design discussions remained consistent. P. X. Kelley, (retired) commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps and former member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was appointed as chairman of the ABMC in 1989 by George H.W. Bush. He was replaced by Fred Woerner during the Clinton presidency (1993 - 2001) but was reappointed by George W. Bush for a second term in 2001. After the passage of the memorial legislation, Woerner assigned a World War II Memorial Committee made up of former Governor of New York and WWII Army veteran Hugh Carey; former Ambassador and WWII Navy veteran Haydn Williams; Army Brigadier General Evelyn “Pat” Foote (retired); Korean

6 Roger Durbin of Berkey, Ohio had served under General George S. Patton. He was working as a fish fry near Toledo, Ohio in February 1987 when he wrote to ask his senator why there was no memorial on the Mall to honor World War II veterans. Durbin died of pancreatic cancer in 2000, four years before the dedication of the NWWIIM.
War veteran Edward L. Romero; and Navy Vietnam War veteran Rolland “Rollie” E. Kidder. Reporting to Woerner, the World War II Memorial Committee was in charge of site and design decisions.

At the same time, a Memorial Advisory Board (MAB) was formed to handle fundraising responsibilities. General Peter Wheeler of Atlanta, Georgia (Chairman); Sarah N. McClendon of Washington, DC (Vice Chair for Site Advice); and Helen Fagin, Ph.D., of Sarasota, Florida (Vice Chair for Design Advice) held the key positions.\(^7\) Public relations and fundraising positions were filled by Ming E. Chang, Rear Admiral of the Navy (retired), of Concord, Massachusetts (Vice Chair for Ceremonies); Jon A. Mangis of Salem, Oregon (Vice Chair for Veterans Liaison); Jess Hay of Dallas, Texas (Co-Vice Chair for Public Relations and Fundraising and Chairman and joint ABMC/MAB Campaign Policy and Finance Committee); and J. Wm. (Bill) Murphy, J.D. of Fayetteville, Arkansas (Co-Vice Chair for Public Relations and Fundraising). The remaining members of the board included Bill Mauldin of Santa Fe, New Mexico; Miguel Encinias, Lieutenant Colonel of the Air Force (retired) of Albuquerque, New Mexico; Melissa Durbin of Berkley, Ohio; William Ferguson, Sr. of Cleveland, Ohio; and Mack G. Fleming of Seneca, South Carolina. Colonel Kevin C. Kelley of the AMBC served as the executive director.\(^8\) The 1996 Republican presidential nominee Senator Bob Dole and Frederick W. Smith, founder and CEO of Federal Express, worked closely with the board and were instrumental in raising funds for the NWWIIM.

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\(^7\) Peter Wheeler was a retired Georgia Army National Guard Brigadier and Commissioner of Veterans Affairs in Georgia. Sarah N. McClendon was a long-time White House reporter who had served in the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps during World War II and the first Army officer to give birth at a military hospital. Dr. Helen Fagin was a Holocaust survivor and former director of Judaic Studies at the University of Miami, Florida.

\(^8\) Art history student Melissa Durbin was the granddaughter of memorial instigator Roger Durbin.
The MAB formed its own Site Advice and Design committees reporting to Chairman Wheeler, but these committees had no actual control over site and design decisions for the NWWIIM. The ABMC had recently sponsored the Korean War Veterans Memorial (1995), which resulted in conceptual and legal skirmishes when the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board usurped authority over the design process. The ABMC and MAB executed a memorandum of understanding in the fall of 1995 “intended to enhance the cooperative efforts of the ABMC and MAB” by clearly delineating each group’s responsibilities. Signed by Wheeler and Woerner, the memorandum acknowledged that the ABMC and its empowered World War II Memorial Committee had authority over the site, design, and construction of the memorial; whereas the MAB’s “principle responsibility relates to working with the ABMC to generate private and public financial support…[and] provid[ing], upon the request of the ABMC, advice with respect to the Memorial’s site and design.”

In addition to outlining agency duties, the memorandum offers insight into the early content discussions of the memorial. Signed by both the ABMC and MAB, the sponsors noted their intention to establish “an appropriate memorial to the spirit and sacrifices of the American people and of the high moral purpose and idealism that motivated and sustained the Nation’s victorious participation in World War II.” The sponsor explicitly described the memorial as a celebration of U.S. military victory in World War II without mentioning an educational focus. This point would resonate in a discussion of the shift in memorial content during the competition, when the guidelines were adjusted to secure the site during the agency approval stage.

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10 Ibid.
Site

The ABMC’s World War II Memorial Committee and the MAB’s Site Advice Committee held the first joint site-selection meeting with Commission of Fine Arts (CFA), National Capitol Planning Commission (NCPC), National Capitol Monuments Commission (NCMC), National Park Service (NPS), and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on January 20, 1995. The NPS presented six options, which included the U.S. Capitol Reflection Pool (between 3rd Street and the Ulysses S. Grant Memorial), Constitution Gardens (east end between Constitution Avenue and the Rainbow Pool), Freedom Plaza (Pennsylvania Avenue between 14th and 15th Streets), the Washington Monument grounds (Constitution Avenue between 14th and 15th streets, west of the National Museum of American History), the Tidal Basin (northeast side, east of Tidal Basin parking lot and west of the 14th Street Bridge access road), and West Potomac Park (between Ohio Drive and the north shore of the Potomac River, northwest of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial) (Fig. 4.2). The ABMC hired the Washington, D.C. firm of Davis Buckley to evaluate the sites based on the accessibility, historical associations, and proximity to other monuments. The report they created highlighted the conspicuous locations of the U.S. Capitol Reflection Pool, Western Sector, and the Constitution Gardens site; the ABMC selected these as its top choices for the NWWIIM, likely because of their centrality and high visibility in comparison to the alternatives.

11 The U.S. Marine Corp’s Henderson Hall, adjacent to Arlington National Cemetery, was also considered as a site but dropped because it was unavailable at the time. The Tidal Basin, West Potomac Park, and Washington Monument sites were rejected quickly, while the former three sites of the U.S. Capitol Reflection Pool, Constitution Gardens, and Freedom Plaza were more carefully considered during the site selection process, according to agency reviews.

12 The first site, “Capitol Reflecting Pool, Western Sector,” was visually linked to the Capitol, had good pedestrian access, and was close to the frequently visited Grant Memorial. The second site, “Tidal Basin,” was flat but not easily accessible. The third site, “West Potomac Park,” was noted as scenic due to its proximity to the Tidal Basin and a large open field. The Constitution
Haydn Williams reflected that “the site decision was the single most important one made in the history of the National World War II Memorial” and noted that the World War II Memorial Committee and Site Advice Committee were able to reach a unanimous decision on the site ranking at their March 2, 1995 meeting. During the 1995 site selection meetings with the NCMC, CFA, and NCPC, the ABMC asserted their unanimous preference for the Constitution Gardens location. The ABMC wanted a central site to assert the significance of World War II, though none of the original six sites are on the central axis of the National Mall where the NWWIIM was ultimately built. The CFA rejected the Constitution Gardens site on the same day that the NCPC approved the location for the NWWIIM, on July 27, 1995. J. Carter Brown of the CFA was concerned that the Constitution Gardens site did not convey the historical significance of World War II and proposed that it was a “cop-out.”

Gardens site constituted three-quarters of an acre just off the central axis of the Mall, making it easily accessible and visually linked with the core monuments to Washington and Lincoln. The fifth site, “Washington Monument Grounds,” was located in an area west of the Museum of American History, and while it was accessible, the ABMC disliked the crowded location. The sixth site, “Freedom Plaza,” was rejected for not being on the Mall, although it is close to the current plan for a National World War II Memorial to replace the American Expeditionary Forces Memorial in Pershing Park. Davis Buckley Architects and Planners, Site Selection Report for the World War II Memorial, May 9, 1995, Records of the National World War II Memorial, American Battle Monuments Commission. The ABMC ranked the Constitution Gardens site as its number one selection, followed by the Capitol Reflecting Pool.

14 The ABMC required site approval from the Secretary of the Interior represented by the NPS, CFA, and NCPC, as per the Commemorative Works Act of 1986. The Rainbow Pool was not part of the originally proposed Constitution Gardens site, but the ABMC lobbied to incorporate it.
15 The CFA presented letters that argued against the Constitution Gardens site from MAB member Sarah McClendon, David Childs of Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill (who argued that a large memorial would impose on the Constitution Gardens site he had designed), and Frederick Hart (who suggested a completely different site on a traffic circle between the Lincoln Memorial and Arlington Cemetery (see Records of the National World War II Memorial). Childs had designed the Constitution Gardens for the 1976 bicentennial, and he adamantly argued against its
The way in which the Rainbow Pool location entered the site-selection process is not clear. Mills noted that during the June 1995 meeting, Charles Atherton commented, “If I had my own personal preference, I would stick the memorial out in the Rainbow Pool,” but this location was not related to any of the six options presented at that meeting. Rolland E. Kidder of the ABMC World War II Memorial Committee recalled:

Early in the site-selection process, our committee made a visit to 7 or 8 possible sites for the Memorial. It was raining and at the end of a day of visiting these sites in March, 1995 when Haydn stopped us as we walked around the old Rainbow Pool at the eastern end of the Reflecting Pool on 17th Street. “Here, on the east-west axis of the Mall” he said, “is where the Memorial should be. World War II was the defining event of the 20th century for our country. It should stand here between Lincoln and Washington, marking similar events in the 18th and 19th centuries.” At the time he said that, the old Rainbow Pool was not on the list of possible sites that had been given to us by the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA.)

After that meeting, Haydn went to see J. Carter Brown, Chairman of the CFA. Shortly thereafter, the Rainbow Pool was added as a potential site and was subsequently chosen by the ABMC to be the site of the National World War II Memorial. The Rainbow Pool was not one of the sites initially recommended by the NPS, but it slowly emerged as the preferred setting during agency discussions in the summer of 1995. The origins of the Rainbow Pool can be found in the 1901 McMillan Commission, which planned a cross-axial pool as part of the redesign of the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool. Frederick Law

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17 This is taken from Rolland E. Kidder’s August 30, 2016 blog post, “Father of the World War II Memorial,” in which Kidder reflects on his friend, Haydn Williams and his impact on the NWWIIM site and design process, http://rollandkidder.blogspot.com/ (accessed August 2016). In addition to his ABMC appointment, Kidder served four terms in the New York State Assembly and wrote a couple of books including an oral history of 29 World War II veterans from his hometown. See Rolland E. Kidder, A Hometown Went to War (Chautauqua, NY: Sandy Bottom Press, 1997).
Olmstead, Jr. conceived of the body of water to enhance the grandeur of the Lincoln Memorial.\(^{18}\)

It became known as the Rainbow Pool after the public noticed a “perfect rainbow” projected from its 124 water nozzles in October 1924.\(^{19}\) Given its proximity to the memorial dedicated to the Great Emancipator, the site had historically been used for demonstrations and public protests.\(^{20}\) One of the major criticisms that emerged around the placement of the World War II memorial here was that it would take up open space traditionally used for public democratic assembly.\(^{21}\) Olmstead’s vision of the Rainbow Pool as part of the Reflecting Pool was never

\(^{18}\) Completed by the Corps of Engineers in 1924, the original Rainbow Fountain had jets that shot water as high as 35 feet; these ran for 45 mins on weekdays and one hour on Sundays. For more on the Rainbow Pool site and Lincoln Memorial grounds, see Kirk Savage, Monument Wars (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), Susan A. Kohler, Designing the Nation’s Capital: The 1901 Plan for Washington, D.C. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, 2006), and Charles L. Griswold, “The Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Washington Mall: Philosophical Thoughts on Political Iconography,” in Critical Issues in Public Art, ed, Harriet F. Senie and Sally Webster (New York: Icon Editions, 1992), 71–100.


\(^{20}\) For more on National Mall as focal point for public protest, see Scott A. Sandage, “A Marble House Divided: The Lincoln Memorial, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Politics of Memory, 1939–1963.” Journal of American History 80 (June 1993): 135–167. As cultural historian Scott Sandage explains, the civil rights movement appropriated the symbolism of the Lincoln Memorial. In 1939 Marion Anderson performed a concert on the steps of the memorial after she was barred from performing at Constitution Hall because of her race, and Martin Luther King, Jr., delivered his famous “I Have a Dream” speech on the site on August 28, 1963, at the end of the March on Washington.

\(^{21}\) Judy Scott Feldman founded the National Coalition to Save Our Mall (now known as National Mall Coalition) in 2000 as a nonprofit group concerned with preserving the space on the National Mall from ubiquitous development in the wake of the NWWIIM. One of the two team-members who made up the Architect of Record for the VVM, W. Kent Cooper, currently serves on the board of the National Mall Coalition. The group filed a number of lawsuits to prevent the memorial’s construction from starting, based on three legal issues: 1) The EPA requires that the NPS prepare an environment impact assessment. This had not been completed by 2000 because the NPS waived the requirement; 2) The Historical Preservation Act of 1964, section 106 requires that meetings be open to the public, but the public had been shut out of this process and the Rainbow Pool selection had taken place behind closed doors; and 3) The NWWIIM violated the 1986 Commemorative Works Act which states that no new commemorative work should interfere or encroach upon any existing commemorative work. They argued that the Rainbow
fully realized and it fell into disrepair, so it is possible that the federal agencies viewed the World War II memorial project as an opportunity to rehabilitate this part of the National Mall. Prior to the erection of the memorial, the site had most recently been used as a July Fourth fireworks launch site and helicopter reception pad for heads of states.

The Rainbow Pool site was the only remaining central site on the National Mall still under review following an August 1995 conference call between Haydn Williams (ABMC), J. Carter Brown (CFA), Harvey Gantt (NCPC), and John Parsons (NPS). The ABMC argued for the Rainbow Pool location at the September 19th CFA meeting. The CFA unanimously endorsed the site at this time, but there were concerns with visibility and Brown cautioned that a memorial at this site could not go deep into the ground without causing maintenance issues. The NCPC approved the Rainbow Pool site by a nine-to-three margin at the October 5, 1995 meeting; objectors had concerns that a memorial would impose on the central space. The significance of Pool was an intrinsic part of the Lincoln Memorial and that building the NWWIIM would violate the law by encroaching on Lincoln Memorial Grounds. In March 2001, the Justice Department issued a temporary restraining order to prevent the Park Service for beginning construction on the memorial, but two weeks later Senator Tim Hutchinson (R-Ark) filed a bill to eliminate the lawsuit, which passed and so it was dismissed. The protest of the Rainbow Pool site was based on the historical association with the Lincoln Memorial. Eleanor Holmes Norton, the District of Columbia’s delegate to Congress, was one of the more vocal opponents to construction on the site during the agency approval process and worked with the National Coalition to Save Our Mall. “The World War II Memorial defaces a National Treasure,” National Coalition to Save Our Mall, January 2001.

The other sites that emerged from this conference call included Columbia Island and sites along Arlington Memorial Drive. At this point, the Capitol Reflecting Pool and other sites were dropped as alternatives. Pat Elwood voted against the site out of concern that a design would “impact this spacious grandeur.” National Capitol Planning Commission, Transcript of National Capitol Planning Commission Meeting, October 5, 1995, Records of the National World War II Memorial. The concerns raised against the central site at the NCPC meeting resonated later, when public criticism emerged over the proliferation of memorial construction on the endangered National Mall space. Benjamin Forgey cautioned against the overcrowding caused by memorial construction on the National Mall. Benjamin Forgey, “Washington’s Monumental Excess,” Washington Post, June 16, 1990, B1. James Reston, Jr. argued that memorial construction was
the memorial subject was emphasized by the site selection, especially after the agency in charge of preserving the National Mall aesthetics ratified the location on the central spine of the National Mall.

The expedited approval process for the NWWIIM site is astonishing, particularly in light of the fact that the location did not appear on the original site selection list and that the site became possible in a way that was not at all transparent. While criticism of the site review process emerged, federal agencies forged ahead with the design selection. There was a general sense of urgency surrounding the project, as many World War II veterans were dying prior to the memorial’s erection. This may have contributed to the expediency of approvals, as many of the involved agency parties were made up of veterans.


25 President George W. Bush signed Public Law 107-11 (“An Act to expedite the construction of the World War II Memorial in the District of Columbia”) on May 28, 2001 authorizing the site and design in order to expedite the construction process for the NWWIIM. Bob Dole stated at
After the site selection, the ABMC formed a World War II Memorial Design Committee to manage the memorial design process in the fall of 1995. The group was made up of ABMC members Haydn Williams, Hugh Carey, Pat Foote, and Douglas Kinnard, and MAB member Helen Fagin. President Clinton publically marked the site of the NWWIIM at a Veterans Day dedication ceremony, with the bronze plaque reading “At this site will be erected the World War II Memorial—A Monument to the spirit and sacrifice of the American people and a reminder of the high moral purposes and idealism that motivated the nation’s call to arms as it sought victory in concert with its allies over the forces of totalitarianism.”

**Design Competition**

The NWWIIM design competition was initially conceived as a single-stage competition, but it was adapted to a two-stage process in June 1994 as a result of the decision to administer the competition through the Design Excellence Program of the General Service Administration (GSA), guided by its chief architect, Edward Feiner. The ABMC officially gave the GSA responsibility for running the competition in March 1996 after consulting with the NPS, CFA, and NCPC. This occurred in the wake of the lawsuit between the ABMC and the winning

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26 Ambassador Haydn Williams wrote to Bill Lacy (GSA): “The CBD now clearly separates Stage I as an open and inclusive invitation to all...while still retaining the GSA Design Excellence Criteria for Stage II.” Haydn Williams, Letter dated June 6, 1994, Records of the National World War II Memorial. There is some discrepancy over these dates. The ABMC records indicate that the two-stage process was initiated on April 17, 1996. See “Fact Sheet, World War II Memorial Design,” November 4, 1996, Records of the National World War II Memorial, American Battle Monuments Commission.
architects for the Korean War Veterans Memorial. The ABMC did not want another controversial, litigation-plagued competition process.\textsuperscript{27}

The Design Excellence Program entails a two-stage competition process for commissioning federal building projects.\textsuperscript{28} In the first stage, interested firms are invited to submit portfolios reflecting past projects and experience to a review panel. A short list of three to six finalists is created and those architects asked to submit design concepts and make presentations to the panel in the second stage. The review panel ranks the finalists and makes recommendations before a winner is selected. This is very different from the single-stage open competition process of the VVM and KWVM, where finalists were selected from an anonymous, open pool of submissions.

The competition structure was refined as the agencies adapted the Design Excellence Program to an open competition. The ABMC tried to find a compromise between the open competition, which remained in vogue after Maya Lin won the VVM competition, and GSA’s traditional competition process. The result, however, was neither open nor closed. The strategy was problematic, because the two processes are very different. Initially, according to the guidelines posted in the \textit{Commerce Business Daily} on April 19, 1996, the criteria were to be weighted as follows: 1) Past Performance on Design (40 percent); 2) Lead Designers Vision (30 percent); 3) Philosophy and Design Intent (20 percent); and 4) Lead Designer’s Resume (10 percent).\textsuperscript{27}

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\textsuperscript{27} See Chapter 3 for more on this lawsuit. Haydn Williams noted that the ABMC “looked very carefully at the experiences of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Korean War Veterans Memorial.” Haydn Williams, cited in Benjamin Forgey, “Competition Set for War Memorial,” \textit{Washington Post}, April 17, 1996, C6.

\textsuperscript{28} The GSA’s Design Excellence Program was founded in 1994 to cut costs and streamline the process by which architects and engineers are hired for federal building projects. It was established during the post-VVM popularity for open competitions. For more on the program, see General Services Administration, Public Building Service, \textit{Design Excellence Program}, http://hydra.gsa.gov/pbs/pc/ds_files/excellence.html (accessed December 2016).
percent). The breakdown based half of the criteria on prior design experience, which excluded the possibility that a student or inexperienced architect could win the competition. Mills further notes that the number of drawings and amount of paperwork required by the June 1996 deadline was “sure to burden the resources of any small firm, let alone an independent architect.”

The ABMC and GSA changed the structure of the competition on May 17, 1996 in response to criticism of the process as “exclusionary” and “undemocratic.” The new guidelines reduced the consideration of past design performance to 30 percent and increased that of the lead designer’s vision to 40 percent. However, the evaluations still precluded the opportunity for a less experienced designer to enter the competition. The criticism of the “elitist” process continued as students and architects gathered to protest at the GSA’s pre-submission meeting, held three days later.

While the NWWIIM design competition remained a two-stage process, in response to the protest the sponsor opened the competition to all and eliminated the previous design experience qualifications. The GSA tapped Bill Lacy, president of SUNY Purchase and director of the Pritzker Architecture Prize, to act as professional advisor for the design competition. Like

\[\text{[29] Mills, 109.}
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\[\text{[32] Lacy was the executive director of the Pritzker Architecture Prize from 1988 to 2005, overlapping with J. Carter Brown of the CFA who served as Chair of the jury from 1979 to 2002. Sponsored by the Hyatt Foundation, the international $100,000 Pritzker Architecture Prize is awarded annually to a living architect or architects whose built work demonstrates “a combination of those qualities of talent, vision, and commitment, which has produced consistent and significant contributions to humanity and the built environment through the art of}
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Spreiregen, Lacy had experience as the former director of the Architecture and Design Program of the NEA. Lacy pushed for an open design competition. New rules declaring an open competition for the NWWIIM appeared in the *Commerce Business Daily* on June 11, 1996. The adapted competition structure was similar to the VVM and KWVM in that the first stage evaluation was based entirely on the design itself. Its dual stage structure, however, varied from the earlier competitions. The structural modification underscores the significance of a professional advisor in the design competition process. As discussed in Chapter 2, Spreiregen successfully coordinated the VVM design competition, whereas as emphasized in Chapter 3, the absence of a strong advisor in the KWVM design competition contributed to its weaknesses.

**Stage One**

Guided by Lacy, the first stage was conducted as an anonymous competition open to any U.S. citizen of voting age, with a limit of one entry per designer. The first stage evaluation was based solely on the design submission: a sketch or illustration in black and white or color mounted on a 20 by 20-inch foam core panel. The designers were asked to integrate supplementary descriptive material of their design into the border. A jury selected five designers to move on to the second stage of the competition “based on the Designer’s submittal of a
preliminary design vision and narrative of design intent.” The jury members’ identities were unknown to competitors so that the entrants could not shape their designs according to the tastes or design preferences of the jurors.

The design requirements in the first stage focused on spatial and site issues, as opposed to aesthetic quality. The guidelines asked for a sketch of the preliminary design vision, explication of the design, location of the memorial on the site, and the scale of the principle elements of the design. The way in which World War II would be conceptually commemorated was left open to interpretation as the only real content requirement was that the design, “capture a unique moment in American history.” In addition to the sketch or illustration of the preliminary design vision in black and white or color mounted on a 20” x 20” quarter-inch foam core board, the designers were asked to integrate three elements into the border: “1) narrative describing their intentions and philosophy as they related to the memorial; 2) the location of the memorial on the site; 3) the scale of the principal elements of their design.”

The name, address, and 25-word biographical sketch were to be affixed in an unmarked envelope on the back of the foam core board so that the entries could be evaluated anonymously.

Though the aesthetic requirements were left open, there were clear spatial guidelines for the memorial. In addition to the external site restrictions, the memorial required sufficient interior space for a commemorative hall, interactive education facilities, and an auditorium. The “underground space for memorial elements, educational facilities, and visitor information services” would have to be located below grade in order to preserve the vista.

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By August 12, 1996, the ABMC had received 407 submissions—dramatically fewer than the number received for the VVM competition (1,421) and somewhat fewer than for the KWVM (543) competition. There were engineering challenges written into the first stage that may have precluded less experienced architects from applying; for example, the stipulation that the memorial be built on a flood plain only eight and a half feet above river level, and the rehabilitation of the Rainbow Pool as a significant feature of the design. The latter requirement also implied that the jury was interested in having a water element in the winning design.  

Finally, the stipulation that the new memorial could not “detract from the Mall’s east-west vista formed by the rows of elms bordering the Reflecting Pool between the Lincoln Memorial and Washington Monument” may also have discouraged potential entrants to the competition.

Spatial solutions that preserved the vistas on the site were prevalent among the designs submitted in the first stage. The site restrictions proved constricting, with most of the entries...
sharing a similar footprint and spatial organization due to the Rainbow Pool stipulation. The memorial design had to contain enough below-grade interior space for the educational and public gathering areas, but at the same time, it needed to provide enough above-ground space for commemorative services and ceremonies. Because of this mandated feature, many of the designs proposed landscape solutions. For example, Entry 3 expanded the water feature to create a stream bisecting the Rainbow Pool site, framed by a concrete mountain landscape inspired by the “purple mountain majesties” of the patriotic song “America the Beautiful” (Fig. 4.3).

More than half of the designs were traditional and incorporated military emblems and other overt symbols of patriotism. Multiple entries featured American flags, stars and stripes, eagles, and globes. Entry 80 depicted a giant 1940s-era flag encased in a transparent glass structure (Fig. 4.4). Entry 36 proposed an architectural representation of the flag, with seven red towers depicting stripes etched with the names of veterans on their surface (Fig. 4.5). Star-shaped columns formed a colonnade around a flame at the center of the Rainbow Pool in Entry 76 (Fig. 4.6) and Entry 244 included glass stars in its design. A giant bald eagle swoops down in Entry 35 (Fig. 4.7). Earth was portrayed as a globe or map in many designs. For example, both entries 272 and 118 featured globes to suggest the global dominance of U.S. military power in World War II (Fig. 4.8). There was a map etched into the Rainbow Pool in Entry 253 (Fig. 4.9).

Most of these designs relied on conventional symbols to represent the United States in abstract

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40 The review of these designs was based on a preliminary visual examination of the entries that took place in the ABMC offices in 2013, prior to their extensive archival organization. There was limited access to the primary material granted as of May 2017, while the designs were in the process of digitization before being accessioned into the Records of the National World War II Memorial at the National Archives and Records Administration in College Park, Maryland. As a result, only entry number, as opposed to designer name, identifies the designs.

41 Katherine Bates wrote the poem “Pikes Peak” in 1895, which was later set to music as “America the Beautiful.” Bates was inspired by the American landscape during a train trip from Wellesley, MA (where she taught English) to Colorado Springs, CO.
terms, rather than addressing the program requirement to “capture a unique moment in American history.”

In addition to trite patriotic and military symbolism, some entries did make reference to military service in World War II. For example, Entry 40 recreated a battle scene with figurative soldiers in a semicircular arena facing a tall American flag (Fig. 4.10). Some of the World War II–specific designs went on to the second round, including Brian and Katherine Ambroziak’s design modeled on a military bunker and Bernard J. Wulff and William C. Jackson’s bell garden inspired by World War II victory bells. These designs advanced to the finals because they followed the program in referencing a specific moment in history. However, that vague requirement failed to limit the content to a specific aspect of the war that the memorial is meant to commemorate.

A large number of theatrical and multi-media designs used water and light elements to signal victory. The site’s prominence and the sponsor’s emphasis on the centrality of this war to America’s history contributed to the proliferation of designs aimed at creating a big visual impact. There were a surprisingly large number of submissions with bright vertical light beams projecting into the expansive sky, including entries 70, 72, 308, and 326 (Fig. 4.11). Light beams and even holograms were proposed in the multi-media competition submissions.42

42 Robert Kramer and Lita Albuquerque described their Stage 1 design submission in a letter to Robert Dole. The three-part memorial and exhibition space included the Rainbow Pool and two Halls of Living Memory placed on the on the curving perimeters of the north and south sides of the site to represent military and civilian fronts. Within each hall, the life-sized bronze figures of the two Rainbow Pool fountains to come alive: “The holographic personalities bring the war to life as they tell their own story.” The design also contained transparent glass columns in the center of each hall with holograms of wartime letters floating in space as recitation is heard. Robert Kramer and Lita Albuquerque, letter to Robert Dole, undated, Dole Correspondence 1999-2000, Records of the National World War II Memorial.
Fire was utilized for a victory torch effect in designs like Entry 251 (Fig. 4.12). A dramatic, fireworks launch site occupied the center of Entry 11 (Fig. 4.13). These theatrical aspects are derived not only from the subject but also from the site, which had been used for Fourth of July fireworks. VVM project architect William Lecky suggested that the preservation of the Rainbow Pool inhibited innovative designs. Lecky wrote, “The Rainbow Pool…has minimal historic significance. There is no unique, material, detailing, sculpture, engineering or design inherent in this element. Basically, the decision to retain the Rainbow Pool and the fireworks staging area reduces the design options from a wide spectrum of opportunities to a very minimal and confined selection of choices.” He contrasts the NWWIIM design competition guidelines with those of the VVM, where “very little restraint [was] put on the competition rules. The result of that competition speaks for itself.”

Water was a prescribed element of the memorial because of the Rainbow Pool site, but many submissions used water pressure to convey a triumphal message. For example, Entry 272 shot a geyser up from the center of the Rainbow Pool, reimagined as a giant globe (Fig. 4.14). Entry 95 also featured an eruption of water with a geyser-like effect (Fig. 4.15). Four fountain jets, symbolizing the four freedoms, project vertically from the Rainbow Pool in Entry 63, which also included white laser beams to frame the neighboring Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial at night (Fig. 4.16). Two entries that went on to the second round contained explosive water and fire elements. Rafael Viñoly’s design surrounded the Rainbow Pool with a ring of fire; St. Florian’s featured triumphal water features.

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Stage one submissions were designs that expressed U.S. victory in World War II and preserved and highlighted—rather than reimaged—the existing site, as a result of the requirements specified in the competition guidelines. Designers responded to the requirement to preserve the National Mall vista in different ways: some used traditional, landscaped solutions, while others used transparent material, such as glass. For example, there were fifty glass rods submerged in the Rainbow Pool above a below-grade exhibition hall in Entry 274 (Fig. 4.17). Entry 63 etched names into glass columns around the body of water and pentagon-shaped exhibition hall. The sponsor apparently was interested in this type of transparency, as two of the glass designs moved on to the second round.44

Other designs incorporated negative space in order to preserve the sightlines. Entry 2 opened a convex globe into quarters so that the vistas were visible through the empty space (Fig. 4.18). Similarly, Entry 98 also used a split globe and its empty space to emphasize the vista (Fig. 4.19). Negative space framed the views through bisected pyramids in Entry 5, which also included a multimedia element (Fig. 4.20). That design included a visitor center next to a pyramid-shaped entrance, where a computer-driven screen flashed names of fallen soldiers and a “continuous, long tape recording of muffled drums” played at all times. The way that designers used negative space to frame the views contributed to a number of symmetrical designs, such as Entry 45, in which twin obelisks flank the Rainbow Pool site. The numerous bisected globe designs similarly incorporate negative space (Fig. 4.21). The parallel inverted V-shaped structures of Entry 58 overtly proclaim victory with white V-shapes that are above ground and

44 Two of the six designs that moved onto the final stage of the design competition included glass features. These included designs by Rafael Viñoly, and Marion Weiss and Michael A. Manfredi.
flank a row of American flags (Fig. 4.22). Entry 100 featured two parallel and symmetrical granite walls dotted with a grid of lights to commemorate the fallen (Fig. 4.23).45

While the jurors in the first stage remained anonymous to the designers, they were informed by the guidelines only that the evaluations would be conducted by an “Architect-Engineer (A-E) Evaluation Board consisting of individuals from the private sector and government, World War II veterans, and other experts appropriate to the project, a majority of whom will be design professionals.”46 This differed from the VVM competition, in which the opinion of designer professionals took precedence in the evaluation, and also deviated from the KWVM competition, in which a jury of veterans determined the result. The Evaluation Board for the first stage included a mix of architects and veterans headed by architect Hugh Hardy of Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates, New York. The remaining architects and design professionals included Max Bond of Davis, Brody and Associates, New York; *Boston Globe* architecture critic Robert Campbell; Ed Feiner, GSA Chief Architect; landscape architect Mary Margaret Jones of Hargreaves Associates, San Francisco; Diane Hauserman Pilgrim, curator at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum, New York; and architect Cynthia Weese, dean of the school of architecture at Washington University in St. Louis. The veterans and military-focused evaluators were the commander of the Women’s Army Corps Colonel Mary Hallaren (retired); engineer and former Tuskegee Airman Luther Smith; military historian Russell F. Weigley of Temple University; Haydn Williams of the ABMC; and Marine Corps Commandant General Louis H. Wilson (retired).

45 Many of the designs were derivative of neighboring memorials, most notably the VVM. This design, for example, is similar to the VVM with its dark granite walls. Entry 40 (discussed above) similarly shows a figurative battle re-enactment scene, which recalls the KWVM.  
The A-E evaluation board selected six finalists in a two-day review process held on August 15 and 16, 1996, ending the first stage of the competition. The board members evaluated the entries hung on portable panels on the ground floor of the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C. and commented on numbered tally sheets. Three rounds of judging on the first day narrowed the 407 submissions to twenty-five. On the second day, the jurors selected six finalists: Brian and Katherine Ambroziak; Diana Balmori; Friedrich St. Florian; Rafael Viñoly; Marion Weiss and Michael A. Manfredi (Weiss/Manfredi Architects); and Bernard J. Wulff and William C. Jackson.

Stage Two

The shortlisted designers were invited to participate in a “detailed conceptual design competition” in the second stage of the competition, commencing just two weeks later on August 21, 1996. The program read, “An independent design Jury of notable Americans, the majority of whom will be nationally recognized design professionals, will review and evaluate the proposed designs.”

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47 This location also housed the KWVM jury as it met to determine the winning design for that memorial competition, which resulted in a figurative selection. The traditional setting and display of designs in this case varied from the carefully curated evaluation of VVM designs in the airplane hangar, where the jury picked an abstract winner (see chapter 1). The evaluation context may have influenced the ultimate selection of a traditional design for the NWWIIM.

48 Brian & Katherine Ambroziak were the least experienced of the finalists, both having graduated from the University of Virginia and Princeton University schools of architecture in 1992 and 1996, respectively. Diana Balmori was a Yale professor and the head of Balmori Associates, celebrated for designs such as the World Financial Center Winter Garden, New York. Friedrich St. Florian was the former dean of the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) architecture program and best known for theoretical work and domestic architecture at the time. Rafael Viñoly was the head of Rafael Viñoly Architecture, an international firm that had designed the Tokyo International Forum in Japan and the Philadelphia Regional Performing Arts Center. Marion Weiss & Michael A. Manfredi were partners in Weiss/Manfredi Architecture, and had designed the Women’s Memorial and Education Center at Arlington National Cemetery and the Olympia Fields park and Community Center in Illinois. Bernard J. Wulff & William C. Jackson were architects at the Washington office of RTKL Associates, the fourth largest design firm in world at the time and had worked on diverse projects from the Little Rock Courthouse in Arkansas to the Grand Hyatt hotel in the Caymen Islands.
design concept and make recommendations to the WWII Memorial A-E Evaluation Board.”

The dual-stage design competition expanded the evaluation process so that multiple juries influenced the final results in the second stage. This is in contrast to the independent professional jury of the VVM competition, which selected an abstract innovative design, and the military-centered jury of the KWVM competition, which resulted in a more literal and figurative design.

Significantly, the second stage was not anonymous. The official program and announcement published in the Commerce Business Daily on August 23, 1996 reiterated the requirement for a unique memorial that blended with its surroundings but noted changes in the evaluation process based on five criteria. In the second stage, the design concept counted for 60 percent of the total score, as opposed to 100 percent in the first round. The remaining 40 percent was based on the quality and experience of the team, including professional qualifications and the ability to work in a timely fashion. This contrasts with the two single-stage open competitions in which past experience was not factored into the evaluation. The bias in this type of process is toward experienced designers. The ABMC is likely to have chosen this method in order to avoid the legal complications that arose in the KWVM competition.


50 The five evaluation criteria for Stage Two published in the Commerce Business Daily were: 60 percent for design concept, which was expected to be an amalgamation of art, landscaping, and architecture that took advantage of the memorial’s location; 15 percent for past performance of the project team in managing comparable projects; 10 percent for the suitability of team for the type of work required by the memorial; 10 percent for professional qualifications of project team and individuals on it; and 5 percent for the ability of the team to accomplish the work in a timely fashion. “National World War II Memorial Design,” Commerce Business Daily, Aug 23, 1996. American Battle Monuments Commission, The National World War II Memorial Design Competition Program, pp. 2–9.
Another deviation from earlier competition procedure was that the ABMC clearly stated that finalists could either serve as the project architect or “collaborate with the Architect-Engineer of Record.” The Architect-Engineer of Record was required to submit Standard Forms 254 and 255 based on previous design experience, which effectively increased the influence that design team identity played in the outcome of the competition. It would be determined by the design itself and the design team’s credentials. The finalists could propose their own implementation teams, which would be subject to approval by the ABMC. The expanded teams were now made up of Friedrich St. Florian and Leo A. Daly; Diana Balmori and Cesar Pelli; Marion Weiss and Michael Manfredi (Weiss/Manfredi); Rafael Viñoly; Brian Ambroziak and Ayers/Saint/Gross Inc.; and Bernard Wulff and William Jackson of RTKL Associates Inc.

The sponsor met with the finalists to convey the new guidelines for the second stage. The ABMC expanded their interior spatial requirement to 8,000 square feet of exhibition and ceremonial space. Ambassador Haydn Williams told the six, “What you will be designing will symbolize and memorialize a moment in time which, in profound ways, changed forever the face of American life and the direction of world history.” He stressed that the memorial needed to be humble and “respectful of its surroundings” and to have what he called “its own unique identity.” 51 This meant that while the memorial could extend underground or horizontally, it could not have a significant vertical element at the center; the highest points would have to be at north-south ends. The designers were required to create seven boards each and submit to interviews with the design jury. Unlike in the first stage, in the second stage the finalists knew the identities of the design jury and thus could tailor their submissions accordingly.

51 Haydn Williams, ABMC August 29 orientation meeting, Records of the National World War II Memorial.
The designers were given a modest stipend of $75,000 for final submissions with a two-month due date of October 25, 1996 to modify their existing designs and to accommodate the expanded interior space. Each of the final designs incorporated the interior space below grade. Although the second stage guidelines did not explicitly require this, the move was implied in the requirements for a large interior space in a memorial design that also preserved the National Mall vistas and incorporated a rehabilitated Rainbow Pool. In addition, all of the final designs responded to the second-round guidelines with a type of oculus light source on the sub-grade interior space. The finalists did not view each other’s memorial designs before the second stage submission. They first saw their fellow competitors’ memorials at a symposium held at RISD on April 26, 1997 and a few months later on view at the Mellon Auditorium in Washington, D.C. between June 17 and June 22, 1997.

Brian and Katherine Ambroziak’s design featured a series of monolithic structures meant to represent the bunkers used in World War II—structures highly symbolic of survival (Fig. 4.24). The visitor would enter the underground hall through a bunker on the north side of the Rainbow Pool, descending into a space illuminated with the same light fixtures used in 1940s London War Rooms. The underground space included four small rooms screening newsreels in chronological order and a large central hall with a map of battle sites etched into the floor, an eternal flame, and an oculus open to the elements. The visitor would exit the memorial on a ramp, which circled around an inaccessible bunker room containing a sculpture of a grieving mother looking down at a gold star to represent her dead son. The vista created by the bunkers drew attention to the cross axis of the Mall, from Jefferson Memorial to the White House, as opposed the primary axis of the Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial. The design

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52 Brian Ambroziak’s grandfather had been a fighter pilot in World War II.
incorporated the underground interior space implied in the program and preserved the sightlines, however, the vista varied in this case. This perhaps made it less appealing to the sponsor, who had specifically requested the preservation of the Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial vista.

While the Ambroziak memorial created a narrative of the war, it did so by incorporating obvious and heavy-handed symbolism, such as the grieving mother sculpture. In contrast, Diana Balmori’s abstract design created a sense of space as opposed to a specific narrative of war (Fig. 4.25). The exterior space included a 377-square-foot alabaster cube at the center of the black granite Rainbow Pool. The cube was incised with a glass star at the center that glowed at night and let in natural light to the underground space during the day. The interior space below the cube included a central hall of honor, a 425-seat auditorium, an exhibition area, two visitors’ centers, and a gift shop. Like the Ambroziaks’s design, the interior space included educational material in the form of interactive monitors, letters, soldier memorabilia, and a timeline of the war. Balmori’s design adhered to the guidelines in preserving the vista and incorporating interior space, but the exterior space is subdued compared to the other entries. The sponsor likely wanted something grander.

Rafael Viñoly’s design expanded the site with a larger footprint than Balmori’s entry and included an outdoor theater (Fig. 4.26). In addition to rehabilitating the Rainbow Pool, Viñoly added two pools to represent the Atlantic and Pacific. These contained semicircular colonnades of 26-feet high glass prisms, one for each state or territory of the United States at the time of World War II, and a timeline of events corresponding to each theater of war. The Rainbow Pool was surrounded by a circle of fire, which created a strong mist when interacting with the water, symbolic of the destructiveness and final victory of World War II. The exterior elements of fire
and water were meant to be an organic accompaniment to the architecture, however, there are some obvious technical problems and maintenance issues in the adjacency of fire and water misting. Like the other finalists, Viñoly incorporated a below-grade interior space designated as a hall of remembrance, with a skylight allowing an interior vantage point of the Rainbow Pool’s glass floor.

Weiss/Manfredi’s vertical memorial challenged the parameters of the competition program more than any of the other finalist’s designs (Fig. 4.27). The design included a grid of fifty 39-foot-tall glass columns placed within a rehabilitated Rainbow Pool, so that the historic site would be preserved within a completely new memorial design. Weiss and Manfredi wrote that the columns symbolized “the collective efforts of United States citizens during World War II.” Whereas the exterior served a commemorative function, the interior housed educational content along with a museum model. The columns provided a light source for the below-grade spaces, which included a hall of honor, theater, archive, exhibition space, and a library. Although these modern translucent features offered a compelling visual counterpoint to the traditional Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial, their symbolism was likely too abstract for the sponsor.

The design offered by Bernard J. Wulff and William C. Jackson of RTKL Associates also contained vertical elements, but imbued them with overt symbolism taken from the victorious sound of bells pealing at the end of World War II, as well as the Christian overtones of ringing church bells (Fig. 4.28). The 30-foot-tall bell colonnade was divided into four 75-foot segments.

54 The sponsor emphasized the classical architecture of the National Mall in the competition guidelines. The jury praised the traditional aspects of their winning selection, St. Florian’s neoclassical design, and emphasized the powerful way in which his design complemented the existing aesthetic quality of the site.
separated by the length of a World War II Liberty Ship (442 feet). Clustered in groups of 48, 192 bells would play four twelve-note octaves at different hours, depending on the wind. Modeled on the bells of a French church, the auditory element of the design meant that visitors would hear the memorial before encountering it.\(^5\) In order to preserve the above-ground vista, the designers hid the bells among trees and placed the other memorial elements below ground. As in the other finalist’s designs, the visitor followed a descending path into an underground interior space, here including a hall of honor, gallery, 300-seat auditorium, and memorial chamber (with timelines of the war and inscriptions of Franklin Roosevelt’s “Four Freedoms” speech of 1941). Wulff and Jackson renamed the black granite Rainbow Pool the Pool of Peace and installed an oculus at its center to allow light to descend into the interior space, but the main feature of the memorial design remained an immaterial auditory experience. This may have been too subtle for the design jury seeking to make a significant statement on a central site on the National Mall.

Friedrich St. Florian treated the site differently than the other finalists (Fig. 4.29). Whereas the other designs rehabilitated the area around the Rainbow Pool at its existing grade, St. Florian’s design lowered the entire plaza by about fifteen feet: the memorial was below grade, but at the same time nothing was subterranean. The design stood out because visitors would “enter its exhibition halls without feeling as if they were going underground.”\(^6\) It contained two identical halves to represent the Pacific and Atlantic theaters, and a colonnade of fifty 40-foot-high columns (twenty-five on the north and twenty-five on the south), one for each

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\(^5\) The bells were modeled on those of the Chapel of Notre Dame du Haut in Ronchamp, France, designed by Le Corbusier in the 1950s. There, the bells create a sound that visitors hear before they are able to identify the source.

state. The aesthetics of the colonnade matched that of the Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial. Its fluted columns were truncated at the top, their capitals cut off to signify the loss of soldiers who had died in battle. Behind the columns, two ten-foot-tall earthen, rose-covered berms accommodated the educational and exhibition space including a 400-seat auditorium.

The tone of the classically inspired design that St. Florian submitted to the second stage of the NWWIIM design competition was both celebratory and mournful. The exuberant waterworks included in the scheme were inspired by the architect Charles Follen McKim’s writings on European models completed after his tour of Rome, in which he suggested that the monument to Washington should not feature a man on horseback but rather a fountain; he also stated that the framing of the view was as important as the view itself. Modeled on the Greek and Roman columns truncated for young soldiers whose lives had been cut short in battle, the symbolic columns and the white roses lent a tragic ethos to the memorial design. The classical influences complemented the National Mall aesthetic, which was important to the sponsor, as evidenced by Williams’s insistence that the designs be respectful of the site.

Two juries evaluated the final designs in the second stage for “originality, appropriateness, feasibility, and compliance with project requirements.” The design jury

57 McKim’s complete writings are in the Library of Congress. See Charles Follen McKim Papers, Diary, 1863-1867, and Letterbooks, 1891-1910, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Charles McKim, Daniel Burnham, and Frederik Law Olmsted went to Europe in 1902 to study urban design models as part of the McMillan Commission. It was never built, but the preliminary plans included Washington Monument Gardens (nine city blocks around the Washington Monument with fountains, terraces, and formal paths around a central element of a great round pool in a sunken garden. The site would have been just east of the current site of the NWWIIM. Susan A. Kohler, Designing the Nation’s Capital: The 1901 Plan for Washington, D.C. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, 2006). St. Florian’s design is similarly centered on a sunken pool.


appraised the designs for aesthetic and conceptual merit, while the A-E Evaluation Board reviewed the compliance requirements and professional experience of each designer. The second-stage design jury was made up of a mixture of architecture professionals and military personnel. David M. Childs chaired the design jury. In addition to his position as senior partner at Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill, Childs had been a principal designer of Constitution Gardens in the 1970s and the chairman of the NCPC from 1975 to 1981; thus he had insight into the agency approval process awaiting the winning design. The remaining members of the design jury included Hugh Hardy, a partner at Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates; New York Times architecture critic Ada Louise Huxtable; Houston-based architect John S. Chase; landscape architect Laurie Olin; San Francisco-based architect Cathy J. Simon; National Gallery of Art Director Earl A. Powell III; Pepsico CEO Donald M. Kendall; Admiral Robert L. Long (retired); and General John W. Vessey (retired, the former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff).60

Supervised by Bill Lacy, the design jury spent three days reviewing designs and interviewing the candidates in Washington, D.C. in October 1996. After visiting the Rainbow Pool site, the ten-member design jury deliberated over the finalists’ design boards set up on easels in Blair House on October 29, selecting a winner at the end of the day.61

In order of preference, the design jury selected Friedrich St. Florian, Diana Balmori, and Rafael Viñoly as their top three choices. The jury report focused on site issues in the list of strengths it identified in St. Florian’s design:

- Creation of a distinctive precinct and appropriate character for a memorial

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60 The design jury changed slightly from the time it was announced in August 1996 to the time it met in October 1996. Though originally part of the NWWIIM design jury, E. Faye Jones and Elliot L. Richardson were not present during the design jury evaluations. See Records of the National World War II Memorial.

61 Blair House, also known as the President’s Guest House, is located adjacent to the White House in Washington, D.C.
• Association with the Classical architecture of the Mall and its environs
• Successful manipulation of contours to create above-grade educational opportunities
• Ample space for ceremonial events
• Arresting landscape feature of berms and white roses
• Creative conjoining of the Reflecting Pool and Rainbow Pool

Two of these aspects of the design listed as strengths (the above-grade educational opportunities and the landscape feature of berms and white roses) were eliminated during the agency approval process. The remaining features focus on site issues in terms of the aesthetic and physical relationship of the proposed memorial to the National Mall setting. The jury’s perceived weaknesses in St. Florian’s memorial—including the design of the “sculpture, column design, end walls and openings on north-south axis”—were also addressed during the review process.

Hugh Hardy noted that the design jury was divided in their loyalty to classical versus contemporary designs but “The big gestures were so clear and evocative that they [St. Florian’s team] won the day.” Hardy suggested that some jurors, particularly Laurie Olin, had preferred Diana Balmori’s design aesthetically, while other jurors were concerned that St. Florian did not have an international reputation comparable to that of Viñoly. The jury report praised Balmori’s original design:

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63 Ibid.
64 Nicholaus Mills, interview with Hugh Hardy, October 5, 2002, and Laurie Olin, November 21, 2002, in Mills, 133. Prior to winning the NWWIIM design competition, Friedrich St. Florian had spent his entire career in academia. He grew up during the World War II years in the small town of Graz, Austria and was twelve years old when the Americans arrived in Graz to signal the end of the war. After undergraduate studies in that city, he won a Fulbright scholarship to study at Columbia University School of Architecture. Bypassing work in an international firm, he went straight from the Master’s program to teach at RISD, where he spent most of his professional career, splitting his time between Providence and Rome (working in RISD’s European Honors Program). In addition to domestic projects, his previous work included proposals for the National Opera House in Norway, the New England BioLabs in Ipswich, Massachusetts, and a design for the Pedestrian Skybridge and Winter Garden in Providence (now complete).
• Compelling use of landscape features and dramatic alabaster square
• Simple in execution but appropriately grand in scale
• Original concept that utilized the horizontal dimension of the site to contrast with the verticality of the adjacent monuments
• Provision for pageantry in and around the memorial

However, there was concern that the memorial was not grand enough to commemorate the subject on the National Mall. The jury reported that her design “lacks visibility and memorability required by a national memorial and this particular site” and described the “abstract nature of [the] design” as a weakness, suggesting that they sought a more classical design for aesthetic compatibility with the traditional site. Viñoly’s design was praised as an “inventive concept” with “dramatic design features” in light of its creative expansion of the Rainbow Pool. However, his design threatened to create “a possible distraction on the Mall,” and lacked both “an appropriate memorial ambiance” and adequate ceremonial space in the eyes of the jury.

The jury noted in their report that the remaining three designers (Weiss/Manfredi, Ambroziak, and Wulff and Jackson) were eliminated from consideration without establishing a ranking order. The reasons cited for these rejections centered on National Mall site issues, both in terms of visibility and aesthetic consistency with other memorials. The jury expressed concern that Weiss/Manfredi’s design might diminish the National Mall views and listed the “possible detraction by the glass columns of the east-west Mall vista” as a primary weakness of this memorial, which rendered it inconsistent with the sponsor’s requirements. On the other hand, Wulff and Jackson’s memorial lacked significant “memorial presence” for the symbolic setting at the center of the National Mall. The jurors viewed their design as incomplete in its

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66 Ibid.
67 Ibid.
failure to adequately address the landscape elements and subject matter. The content of
Ambroziak’s design was rejected by the jury, which questioned the “inappropriate symbolism of
bunkers” for the World War II memorial. The jury picked up on the sponsor’s interest in an
assembly space and cited the lack of appropriate provisions for ceremonial space as a problem
with all of the rejected designs.68

The A-E Evaluation Board began their deliberations the following day, October 30, in the
offices of the General Services Administration. Headed by Hugh Hardy, this board included
Max Bond Jr., Robert Campbell, Edward A. Feiner (GSA), Colonel Mary Hallaren, Mary
Margaret Jones, John Chase, Air Force Captain Luther H. Smith (retired), Dr. Russell F.
Weigley, Ambassador Haydn Williams (ABMC), and General Louis Wilson (retired). The A-E
Evaluation Board interviewed each design team, which included the lead designer and proposed
project architect. The board based their recommendation to the ABMC on both the merit of the
design and the qualifications of the team to execute the design. Each design team was vetted for
past performance, specialized experience, technical competence, professional qualifications, and
the capacity to accomplish the work within the required time frame. Because each concept was
technically compliant, the evaluation board noted that the design concept was the “deciding
factor” in choosing the lead designer and Architect-Engineer of record.69

After the conclusion of the interview process, Hardy chaired a group meeting in front of
the display of the finalists’ proposed memorial designs. Although the report noted that he did not
disclose the final evaluations of the design jury, Hardy did serve on both juries.70 The
evaluations in this case were conducted through a group discussion, as opposed to anonymous

68 Ibid.
69 Ibid.
70 Hugh Hardy chaired the NWWIIM A-E Evaluation Board in addition to serving on the design
jury, suggesting that these two juries were not completely independent.
ballot process, so it is likely that the design jury discussions influenced the Architecture-
Engineer evaluations.

On October 31, 1996, both the design jury and the A-E Evaluation Board unanimously
selected St. Florian’s memorial and design team to win the NWWIIM Competition. They were
also in agreement of the selection of Balmori Associates and Cesar Pelli Associates as the
runner-up. However, they deviated in order of preference on the remaining list of finalists, as the
Evaluation Board placed Weiss/Manfredi Architects in the third position, followed by Rafael
Viñoly Architect, PC, Ayers/Saint/Gross and HNTB with Brian Ambroziak, and Wulff and
Jackson of RTKL Associates, Inc. The A-E Evaluation board report noted debate over the
submissions by Balmori, Viñoly, and Weiss/Manfredi. So whereas St. Florian was the
unanimous winner, the remaining rankings emerged from consensus.

The design jury had focused on St. Florian’s successful treatment of the Rainbow Pool.
The Architecture-Engineer jury emphasized instead the traditional and classical characteristics of
the memorial, substantiating its selection based on the aesthetic context of the site:

It exhibited a sense of place, and created an architectural presence that was directly
associated with the context of Classical Washington. In doing so the design solved the
problem of below-grade functions, integrated the Reflecting Pool and Rainbow Pool and
most importantly, developed a design that had a recognizable image with landmark
qualities. Both the Design Jury and Evaluation Board commented favorably on the fact
that it ‘looked like a memorial’ and possessed monumental character appropriate to the
nature of the project and its site. The creative use of berms of white roses promises to
provide another memorable feature of the Memorial.\(^7^1\)

The board’s favorable description of the winning design as displaying “landmark qualities” and
the look of “a memorial” is notable in that it implies that this jury was referring to classical and
familiar models on the National Mall in evaluating the suitability of the final submissions. In

\(^7^1\)“World War II Memorial A-E Evaluation Board Final Consensus Report,” Records of the
National World War II Memorial.
fact, their evaluation of Balmori’s abstract memorial underlines this suggestion that the jury preferred a traditional model:

This design was the most abstract in nature of the entries and in many ways one of the most challenging due to its somewhat radical alteration of the Rainbow Pool and the use of provocative landforms. It was the only design that eschewed the use of vertical elements as a means of creating a monumental character, opting instead for a horizontal design that did not compete with the more visible monuments on the Mall. The ‘alabaster island’ that is central to this proposal was attractive as were other compelling ideas of ‘time and space’ axis, and the provision for ceremonial marches around and through the Memorial. Although the stark simplicity of the white square within a dark rectangle was intriguing, in the end it was felt that it lacked the kind of visibility and identification that the Memorial should possess and lacked a strong association with World War II. Its purity of concept was its strength as well as its major weakness.\(^\text{72}\)

Though the board admired the elegant simplicity of Balmori’s abstract design, they pointed to its minimal and abstract quality as the major weakness of the potential memorial.

The evaluations of the two glass column designs reflected a concern with the aesthetic compatibility of modern materials on the site replete with classical monuments.

Weiss/Manfredi’s design was rejected for its modern materials. In addition, the board questioned whether it was stylistically appropriate for the site:

The most distinctive feature of this submission was the introduction of a cluster of monumental glass columns into the Rainbow Pool, 50 in number, representing the unity of the states in World War II, and serving as both an iconic feature above ground and as a means for lighting the underground spaces. Much of the discussion centered on the feasibility of these columns, technically and functionally, and whether or not they were appropriate devices to introduce onto the Mall. While the poetic and visual qualities of the columns were acknowledged, there were concerns that the Memorial relied too much on this idea for its successful execution.\(^\text{73}\)

The jury also challenged whether Viñoly’s memorial was appropriate or relevant for the site as a consequence of its non-traditional materials:

This design was arguably the most developed and beautifully presented of all the entries.… The overall design contained many dramatic features—a colonnade of

\(^{72}\) Ibid.
\(^{73}\) Ibid.
prismatic glass columns, a grand circular Hall of Honor below ground that was open to the sky and surrounded at grade level by a cascade of fire, water, and mist, and a greatly expanded Rainbow Pool—all of which were admired but questioned as appropriate either in scale, or relevance for a memorial on this particular site.\textsuperscript{74}

The A-E board and design jury came to the same conclusions in rejecting the remaining two design teams. The board surmised that Wulff and Jackson’s design showed “the least development and appeared to be incomplete both in its presentation and in its understanding of the requirements for a successful memorial on such a prominent site.”\textsuperscript{75} The symbolism of the Ambroziak design struck both juries as dubious, in that the bunker’s defensive quality was antithetical to the victorious tone the sponsor hoped to convey with the World War II memorial. The A-E jury wrote of the problematic “central premise on which [Ambroziak’s] design was based—that of a largely underground experience that was derived from the belief that bunkers and defensive fortifications were appropriate philosophical metaphors for the World War II experience.”\textsuperscript{76}

When the final tallies were calculated for design concept/composite score, the team of Bernard Wulff and William Jackson of RTKL Associates Inc. scored a mere 360/760 out of 1000. Brian Ambroziak with Ayers/Saint/Gross, Inc. and HNTB received 400/800. The remaining teams were closer in score: Rafael Viñoly Architects received 440/840; Weiss/Manfredi Architects, received 480/880; and Balmori Associates with Cesar Pelli and Associates, received 540/940. The winning design team of Friedrich St. Florian with Leo A. Daly achieved a score of 600/1000 for design concept/composite.\textsuperscript{77}

\textsuperscript{74} Ibid. 
\textsuperscript{75} Ibid. 
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid. 
\textsuperscript{77} The first number refers to the score for each design concept. The second number is a composite score of the quality and experience of the team, including professional qualifications and the ability to work in a timely fashion, and the design.
Chaired by Williams, the ABMC WWII Memorial Site and Design Committee affirmed the design jury and A-E Evaluation Board’s winning recommendation to the ABMC on Nov 6, 1996. The ABMC Advisory Board gave their approval on November 18, and two days later the ABMC gave official agency support to St. Florian’s winning design for the NWWIIM design competition. The ABMC also approved St. Florian’s project team, made up of Leo A. Daly III (Leo A. Daly Associates) as the A-E of record, George Hartman (of Hartman-Cox, a Washington, D.C. architectural firm), James van Sweden (of Oehme, Van Sweden and Associates, a Washington, D.C. landscape architecture firm), Raymond J. Kaskey (sculptor, of Brentwood, Maryland) and Nicholas Benson (stone-carver, of Newport, Rhode Island).

**Implementation and Elimination**

The ABMC modified the winning design with St. Florian before it was presented to the public in a White House ceremony on January 17, 1997. The ABMC decided to scale down its requirements for 8,0000 square feet of interior space and to eliminate the 400-seat auditorium. This resulted in a lowering of the Rainbow Pool by only six-feet, as opposed to the 15 feet

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78 The architecture and engineering firm of Leo A. Daly Associates had managed various federal projects. Raymond J. Kaskey was a sculptor and an architect, whose commissions included the Ronald Reagan Courthouse in Santa Ana, California, the Olympic Centennial Park in Atlanta, Georgia, the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, D.C., and the Portland Public Services Building in Portland, Oregon. James A. van Sweden’s landscape commissions included the Nelson A. Rockefeller Park on the Hudson River in New York City, the International Center Embassy campus in Washington, D.C., and the Frederik Meijer/Michigan Botanic Gardens in Grand Rapid, Michigan. Nicholas Benson was a third-generation stone carver and owner of the John Stevens Shop. Founded in 1705, previous John Stevens Shop Commissions included the Iwo Jima Memorial in Arlington National Cemetery, the Kennedy Memorial in Arlington Cemetery in Virginia, and the Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery, Alabama.

designated in the winning entry. The design at this stage included the sunken plaza, 50 truncated columns, earthen berms to the north and south, and the reduced interior spatial requirements.

President Clinton presented World War II veteran Bob Dole with the Medal of Freedom at the White House ceremony when the competition design was unveiled. The public image of the memorial became a political tool of cross-party national unity, as this took place right after Clinton had defeated Dole in the 1996 presidential election. Dole later became the Chairman of the National World War II Memorial Campaign and led the fundraising efforts to get the memorial built. The memorial raised $197 million in private donations in addition to the $16 million in federal funding.\(^8^0\)

Changes

The ABMC had discussed eliminating the interior space of the memorial in the first stage of the competition, prior to the evaluation of the design entries. The guidelines were published, but the winning designs had not yet been selected when a series of critical articles appeared between July and September 1996. Architecture critics questioned if the amount of interior space required in the program would be impossible to build on the Rainbow Pool site. Deborah Dietsch wrote that only “an unmonumental monument—low, limited, and landscaped” could meet the ABMC requirements. She argued that “such deference” would be at odds with a memorial meant to remind Americans of such a colossal conflict.\(^8^1\) Her argument explicitly described the VVM, a low landscaped memorial, as the antithesis for this design competition. It

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\(^8^0\) The twelve-member MAB was officially in charge of fundraising, but Dole and Frederick W. Smith, CEO of FedEx Corporation, led the corporate fundraising efforts. Donations were also solicited through a direct mail campaign led by veterans’ groups including the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, and others.

suggested that verticality was necessary to make a big impact, proposing that a memorial like the VVM would be aesthetically inappropriate for World War II.

The public debate concerning the internal space requirements raised a fundamental problem with content of the guidelines. The design competition called for a memorial museum and yet desired a strictly commemorative structure for celebration of patriotic pride within the context of World War II. Roger Lewis characterized the vast interior spatial requirements as “bizarre to build what amounts to a museum at a site such as this, to create a huge subterranean structure with little or no visual and architectural presence on the Mall.”

Benjamin Forgey proposed eliminating the interior space because it blurred the distinction between a museum and memorial. The ABMC clarified their intentions in the Washington Post, in an article written by Ambassador Williams on the “misunderstanding of our intention.” The sponsor explicitly stated that while it wanted the memorial to have interior space, it did not want a curator or a museum to house historical matter. This conflicted with the ABMC guidelines for interior space to house an education center.

Paul Williams describes the memorial/museum paradigm as an emerging trend in contemporary memorials. Williams writes, “While [traditional] First and Second World War

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85 Security issues may have played into this intention to create a large interior space for ceremonial gathering. Kirk Savage has described the impact of September 11th on the construction of the National World War II Memorial. The threat of terrorism at symbolic spaces of national significance loomed over the memorial construction at the epicenter of the National Mall. It is conceivable that the federal agencies anticipated safety concerns at a site constructed for large gatherings of the public contained within an interior and potentially vulnerable place. Kirk Savage, Monument Wars: Washington, DC, the National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 297-314.
memorials communicated intangible values like honor, sacrifice, and spirit, the postwar period has seen an emerging expectation that ordinary and often conflicted attitudes towards a specific conflict might be materially represented.”

The debates over how to treat the interior spatial requirements of the NWWIIM design competition speak to this contemporary trend in memorial making. Whereas critics perceived the proposed design in terms of this hybrid model, it seems that the ABMC anticipated a memorial to convey intangible values of honor, sacrifice, and spirit with an internal space for dramaticizing those values through ceremonies or educational displays. Williams concludes that memorial museums offer a ritualistic place “in which visitors can ‘practice space’ in their own idiosyncratic manner in casual outings with no fixed, determined structure.”

The spatial function of the memorial museum “provide[s] the coordinates for the imaginative reconstruction of the ‘memorie’ of those who visit memorial sites but never knew the event first-hand.”

The first stage program guidelines for a hall of honor, interactive education facilities, and auditorium would have served the function suggested by Williams as characterizing the hybrid model of a memorial museum. The sponsor prescribed a memorial museum when it sought a more traditional memorial paradigm.

The ABMC drafted an internal mission statement with four goals for the NWWIIM design to honor those who served at home and abroad (Fig. 4.30).

Drawing upon a traditional memorial typology, the purpose statement contained generalized commemoration concepts with

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87 Williams, 103. Williams draws on Michel de Certeau’s phenomenological distinction of static and permanent place in contrast to organic and fluid space in his study of the benefits and drawbacks of fixing memory at a particular site. Michel de Certeau, The Practice of Everyday Life trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).
88 Williams, 102.
89 An undated notecard containing the draft statement was among the early ABMC internal meeting records of the National World War II Memorial. Records of the National World War II Memorial.
words such as “honor,” “remember,” and “recognize,” while the educational focus of the competition guidelines was notably absent. This lack of consistency between the intended purpose and the competition guidelines sent to participating designers reveals a shifting focus in the memorial’s meaning during the competition process. The most salient point of the purpose statement is reflected in the ABMC’s fourth goal: “to recognize the leadership role of the U.S. in preparing for peace and the post-war world.” The ABMC framed the United States as heroic and emphasized its military dominance in the World War II narrative depicted by the memorial. This in turn was supported by the memorial’s location at the epicenter of the National Mall. The memorial’s meaning extended beyond remembrance of the specific event or veterans. The NWWIIM content was an expression of national pride or prowess and a place for citizens to reenact that triumphal narrative.

It is strange that after the early debates concerning the memorial’s internal space, the ABMC actually expanded their spatial requirements to 8,000 square feet during the second stage of competition. After selecting the winner among these finalists, the sponsor then reduced the amount of internal space in the memorial design. This reflects a lack of clear direction on the part of the sponsor that certainly played into the final appearance of the NWWIIM. Furthermore, the very aspect of St. Florian’s design that had appealed to jurors (the way in which the visitor could descend into the interior space) was exactly the design feature eliminated in the implementation process. The underground facilities were only removed during the agency approval process, but the ambiguities of the content requirements began at the earliest stages of the competition. These inconsistencies, which were written into the competition guidelines, determined the site specifications and ultimately shaped the built memorial.
Agency Approval Process

The winning design was subject to the approval of the NCPC, CFA, and NCMC. The ABMC presented the modified version of the competition-winning design (which no longer included an auditorium) at the first agency approval meeting in July 1997. The entire review process took four years, requiring twenty-two public hearings before official approval was finally granted in 2001. Simply put, the competition-winning design contained educational and tragically commemorative content, whereas the agency-approved design celebrated U.S. military triumph. The content of the design changed throughout the review process. Mike Conley of the ABMC noted that the memorial was completely different before the approval process and that the sponsor felt the result was more successful: “the site made the basic elements of the design, but the public approval process influenced the memorial that we ended up with.” This transition took place over time, with adjustments and modifications added incrementally.

1997

At the first federal approval meeting of the NWWIIM, held on July 24, 1997, the CFA expressed its support for lowering the Rainbow Pool and including the water features but felt the design needed a “simplified program.” J. Carter Brown cautioned against the contradictory symbolism of the truncated columns as “tragic and celebratory” and questioned the large footprint of the memorial. Most significantly, Brown worried that the interior spaces in St. Florian’s design confused the requirements of a museum with those of a memorial. Brown’s statements echoed the earlier public criticism, suggesting that the winning design at this point still reflected the content inconsistency of the guidelines.

90 Conley, interview with the author.
St. Florian noted the impact that the site had in shaping his design at the earliest agency meetings. His description of his memorial stressed the site more than the historical context of the war memorial subject. He stated, “From the beginning, our design was very much influenced by the existing historic Rainbow Pool, which became the centerpiece of our design.”  

The NCPC questioned the grand scale of the design expressing concerns at the July 31, 1997 meeting that at 33-feet tall it would “overwhelm the site.” Speaking on behalf of the Committee of 100 on the Federal City, Paul Spreiregen challenged the “architectural heft of the memorial.” There was some question over the design of the berms when the NPS raised safety concerns about their steep slope and the possibility that the roses would become thorny, windswept messes in the winter. The NCPC presented public criticism of the winning design on the Rainbow Pool location. American studies professor Richard Longstreth wrote to Harvey B. Gantt with strong objections to the design, remarking that he believed it “ranks among the very worst proposals ever made for the monumental core. Nothing—from John Russell Pope to Maya Lin—would be suitable for this location.” Longstreth argued that St. Florian’s design deviated from the McMillan Plan and would result in a desecration of “one of the greatest civic spaces that ever existed.”

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92 Paul D. Spreiregen in *Transcript of the National Capital Planning Commission Meeting*, July 31, 1997, Records of the National World War II Memorial. The Committee of 100 on the Federal City was founded in 1923 to safeguard the aesthetic and urban planning values of the L’Enfant and McMillan Plans for the nation’s capital. It was one of many agencies protesting development on this site out of fear that a proliferation of memorials on the National Mall would diminish its character.
93 Richard Longstreth, letter to Harvey V. Grant (NCPC), June 9, 1997, Records of the National World War II Memorial.
with the design at this point. Spreiregen explained, “The Mall is the symbolic, living expression of our democracy. It is not an expression of war.”  

1998

The greatest changes to the memorial design occurred in 1998. In reaction to agency concern over the vertical elements and landscape features, St. Florian eliminated the truncated columns and rose berms. The symbolism of lost life was replaced with a colonnade of 56 granite pillars arranged in a semicircle around the memorial plaza with the two triumphal arches on opposite sides. Each pillar was inscribed with the names of 48 states, seven territories and the District of Columbia. The arches were incised with the names of the two theaters of the war, campaigns, and key battles: the northern arch for “Atlantic” and the southern one, “Pacific.” In addition, the ABMC elected to officially remove the education center from the NWWIIM in order to maintain more ceremonial space on the site. The mournfully commemorative tone was replaced with a celebratory frame. The educational content was transformed into a celebration of U.S. military victory in World War II. The impact of agency involvement on the NWWIIM design is particularly apparent at this stage. 

The sponsor was involved in design alterations throughout the agency approval process. The ABMC Content Subcommittee held a meeting to address CFA and NCPC objections to the “massiveness of the initial design” and their “displeasure with large vertical structures” on

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95 The agencies were conscious of their impact in shaping the design. During the September 1997 NCPC meeting, Mr. Dixon asked the Chairman, “What happens if we tweak this into something that looks like somebody who didn’t win [the national competition]?” Chairman Gantt replied, “That’s a problem, in my opinion, for the ABMC, not the NCPC.” National Capital Planning Commission, Transcript of the Commission Meeting, July 31, 1997, Records of the National World War II Memorial.
February 23, 1998. The subcommittee amended the memorial’s content during these discussions. Dr. Helen Fagan, chair of the committee, noted, “The original memorial had been conceived with an intent to educate. In order to keep the site, this intent had been changed. Hence, the Memorial should no longer been seen as strictly representational, but more metaphoric [and] allegoric.” Ambassador Williams concurred that the original intent of the legislation was to build “a museum and a memorial, but we have come past telling the story of the war. The new vision…should be both commemorative and celebratory and it should honor the nation. Within the monument, the power of three principle ideas should be used: sacrifice, unity, and the spirit of America. A global aspect must also be present.”

In addition to content refinements, the sponsor continued to have aesthetic impact on the physical features of the memorial design. J. Carter Brown suggested that a great seal of the United States replace the Light of Freedom within the Rainbow Pool. Williams argued that the torch represented a passage of the torch of freedom to future generations. He stated that the ABMC wanted something aesthetically different from the VVM; they did not want to inscribe the names of the fallen because this had become the iconic feature of the VVM memorial. He characterized the VVM “as a place of common grief, hope and faith,” concluding that “it essentially becomes an empty tomb.” The way in which Williams described the impact of the names on the VVM’s granite walls suggested that the ABMC was only interested in a memorial

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96 Meeting Minutes of the Content Subcommittee, February 23, 1998, Records of the National World War II Memorial. The Content Subcommittee was a subcommittee of the ABMC Site and Design Committee, so there were overlapping members. The meeting minutes note that those present at the February 1998 meeting included Ambassador Haydn Williams, Dr. Helen Fagan, Evelyn Foote, Douglas Kinnard, Dr. Miguel Incinias, and Mr. Rolland E. Kidder.
98 Ibid.
99 Ibid.
with celebratory content, in contrast to the mournful tone of VVM. In the end, the sponsor actively shaped the design during its implementation.

The initial guidelines included an education center and a large interior space to support didactic materials; the elimination of these features changed the focus of the memorial design. Because this change occurred after a design had been selected, the built structure is really the result of the implementation and modification of the design during the agency approval process. The active players during the approval stage were the sponsor, federal agencies, and the designers: the result reflects a collaboration of these parties.

Dr. Fagin synthesized the 1998 discussions of the World War II Content Subcommittee in a memorandum sent to the ABMC. The ABMC was the umbrella agency for the World War II Content Subcommittee so this allowed the sponsor to reaffirm its desired memorial content. Fagin summarized the sponsor’s refined concept in themes:

We must proceed with our projections of what we consider to be the sine qua non(s) for the Memorial’s content. There are several common themes resounding in your individual approaches, which are the absolute “musts”

1. Honoring all who served in the Armed Forces during WWII
2. Honoring the Home Front
3. Celebrating the American people united in a common and just cause
4. American effort in restoring and preserving Democracy in the world
5. Important global and domestic legacies of WWII

All five of the memorial themes described by the sponsor focus on distilling military values from the World War II narrative. The third and fourth themes literally defined the NWWIIM as a celebration of U.S. military might on a global stage. At this point, the educational content was glaringly absent from the memorial meaning.

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St. Florian and the ABMC eliminated the interior space for the May 21, 1998 CFA and July 9, 1998 NCPC presentations, but the impact of the revised scheme was somewhat subdued according to the agency response. The design was more compact. The size of the existing Rainbow Pool was reduced by 15 percent in order to preserve the elms at the north and south ends. The footprint of the lowered plaza became more oval (as opposed to two half-circles joined by an elongated area). The designer shrunk the fountains on the arches in accord with the new scale. When St. Florian presented his reworked scheme to the NCPC, he emphasized the site: “The memorial plaza is the principle feature…[and] the central unifying element that embraces all other architectural and landscape elements.” He described the central plaza in theatrical terms, “where the significance of victory takes center stage.” Two granite memorial arches anchored the north-south axis as “signifiers, points of reference.” There were bronze laurel leaves within each arch to “celebrate the victory won and the triumph of liberty over tyranny.” Even those elements meant to represent the loss of life were framed in terms of the victory narrative. The Sacred Precinct had waterfalls, a curvilinear wall with an inscription on it, and a vaguely defined Light of Freedom. The granite wall embedded into the cascading waterfalls at the western apex of the memorial was meant to “remember the sacrifice without which victory is not attainable.”

The CFA unanimously endorsed the modified design, but Brown cautioned the memorial still lacked an “artistic unity.” On July 9, 1998, the NCPC voted eight to two in favor of the design. But they expressed concern that the memorial had become too subtle, without a

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101 Friedrich St. Florian, NCPC meeting minutes, July 9, 1998, Records of the National World War II Memorial.
102 Friedrich St. Florian, NCPC meeting minutes, July 9, 1998, Records of the National World War II Memorial.
connection to the war; they described the revised scheme as “garden-like.”\textsuperscript{103} In addition, the NCPC requested direct pedestrian access to the memorial plaza from the west, additional seating, and more definition of the landscape treatment. Additional comments and critiques were delivered by twelve registered speakers who attended the NCPC meeting: two supporters from veterans’ organizations and ten opposition speakers, including architecture critics and preservation agencies representatives.\textsuperscript{104}

1999

In response to the various critiques, the designer expanded the symbolic elements, as opposed to the overall footprint of the memorial, and added classical flourishes. For the May 20, 1999 CFA and June 3, 1999 NCPC meetings, St. Florian widened the eastern approach from west Potomac Park to the plaza from 25 feet to 170 feet, installed ramps, and changed the slope of the path. The designer enlarged all of the symbolic elements, including the arches, pillars, and Sacred Precinct from 21 square feet to 24 square feet at the base and raised their height from 36 to 41 feet.

Raymond Kaskey, the sculptor on St. Florian’s design team, suggested adding ceremonial baldacchinos—classical symbols of victory—to the arches to augment the narrative content of the memorial design (Fig. 4.31). Each arch was adorned with a bronze baldacchino featuring four eagles on narrow columns, each holding a stainless-steel ribbon in its beak with a laurel wreath hanging from it, to symbolize triumph in battle. Visitors would see the classical symbols

\textsuperscript{103} NCPC meeting minutes, July 9, 1998, ABMC Records of the NWWIIM, Records of the National World War II Memorial.
\textsuperscript{104} Stan Wajtusik (Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge) and Ken Haapala (Brotherhood Knights of the Vine) voiced support for St. Florian’s design. Richard Bartik, Jim McGrath (D.C. Tenant Advocate Coalition), Elena Sturdza (Architect), Deborah Dietsch, Jeff Lee (American Society of Landscape Architects), Don Hawkins (Committee of 100, Historic Preservation Committee), Richard Bush (D.C. Preservation League), Lisa Jorgenson, Charles Cassell, and Gwyn Jones (Sierra Club) voiced opposition.
of the baldacchinos when looking up through the oculus of the arches. This enhanced the sponsor’s vision of the memorial design as a reminder of the U.S. military victory in World War II.

The fifty-six stone arms adorned with metal grillwork (symbolic of the states and territories) were enlarged into fifty-six 15-foot-tall stone pillars adorned with bronze oak and wheat wreaths (symbolic of the country’s military industrial strength) (Fig. 4.32). The stone pillars had slits in their centers and were placed at 6-foot intervals around the plaza so that the Mall’s north-south vista remained unobstructed. The open space was meant to suggest the loss of war, as had the decapitated columns, but the mournful symbolism was completely lost in this design. The Sacred Precinct became a cenotaph. It was adorned with a wreath and a broken plane of basalt stone with a crater at its center. The dark fissured stone was meant to show the brutal toll of the war, but again the symbolism was weak. The wall with the inscriptions was transformed into a background for the cenotaph, with the Light of Freedom moved front and center to burn twenty-four hours of the day.

The CFA unanimously endorsed the modified and embellished design on May 20, 1999. J. Carter Brown praised the “extraordinarily improved” design but felt it still required refinements. The Sacred Precinct had too many elements, and Brown worried that the Light of Freedom might be confused with an actual tomb by visitors coming from Arlington National Cemetery. On June 3, 1999, the NCPC approved the preliminary site and building plans in a nine to two vote.

St. Florian added a Field of Honor full of gold stars to the floor of the Sacred Precinct in the fall of 1999. The gold stars were reminiscent of those hung on banners during World War II
to signify the death of a loved one. However, the ABMC did not like the idea of visitors walking on the stars and further modifications to the design were the result of second stage jury contributions during the agency approval process.

Haydn Williams of the ABMC and Ed Feiner of the GSA asked members of the design jury and A-E Evaluation Board to participate in informal reviews of the NWWIIM design during the CFA and NCPC agency approval process. The informal advisory group known as the ABMC WWII Memorial Site and Design Committee, met with St. Florian’s design team nine times between April 1997 and April 2000 and contributed to many of the adaptations as the design was refined. The advisory group particularly impacted the final result in the Sacred Precinct’s field of stars. The ABMC WWII Memorial Site and Design Committee suggested elevating the stars by moving them from the floor to the Freedom Wall. As a result, the entire Sacred Precinct was simplified to emphasize the visual impact of the 4,048 gold-plated stainless steel stars on the 9-foot Freedom Wall—one star for every one hundred of the more than 400,000 Americans who died in WWII (Fig. 4.33).

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105 When an American left to fight in the war, the family often displayed in their window a flag with a blue star on a white field within a red border. If the family received a telegram of death, they would replace the blue star with a gold one to signify that family’s sacrifice. The suggestion to include the gold stars in the memorial can be traced to the ABMC Content Subcommittee. In March 1998, a committee member proposed, “honoring the gold star mothers” in the NWWIIM. The sponsor’s committee also insisted on “a central focal point [that] should contain strong symbolism and a powerful message (Torch of Freedom, Ceremonial Space) to become the identification mark for the Memorial.” In contrast to the CFA proposal to move the Light of Freedom, the sponsor and designer insisted on placing it in the center of the Rainbow Pool through the final iteration of the design. Dr. Helen N. Fagin, “World War II Memorial Content Subcommittee Memorandum on ‘Synthesis of Your Submittals Re: Content,’” March 28, 1998, Records of the National World War II Memorial.

106 This occurred in the wake of the sticky legal situation the ABMC faced during the agency approval process for the KWVM. As discussed in Chapter Two, the winning designers sued the ABMC when their design was modified during the implementation process. The sponsor had served as the jury in this particular case.
The design was finally approved at the July 20, 2000 CFA and September 21, 2000 NCPC meetings (Fig. 4.34). At this time, the two arches were heightened again (from 41 feet to 43 feet) and the bases of the fountains were also enlarged. The landscaping was modified to include a shaded garden at the northwest corner of the site, and the elm walkways around the memorials were changed from asphalt to brushed concrete. The waterfalls around the Freedom Wall were reduced from three tiers to one tier. St. Florian moved the Light of Freedom to the center of the Rainbow Pool, which received preliminary approval, although the specifics of the sculpture were deferred. The parameters were set in terms of location, size, and height, but the ABMC considered the Light of Freedom as a “work in progress…. a center piece of the Memorial.”

Members of the public opposed this design during the final approval meetings. NCPC Chairman Gantt noted that the committee heard the testimony of 108 citizens at what he described as the “longest public hearing of citizens participating in this process.” VVM architect of record Kent Cooper criticized the memorial for allowing the individual sacrifice it commemorated to be “swallowed by glitter.” Judy Scott Feldman of the National Coalition to Save Our Mall argued that the memorial was dominated by “imperial and triumphal symbols.” And a former NCPC member Ann Loikaw described the memorial as “a granite and marble Stonehenge.” In addition to aesthetic protests, public criticism also focused on the prominent

107 Haydn Williams (ABMC), letter to John G. Parsons (NPS), June 30, 2000, Records of the National World War II Memorial.
location of the project. An editorial in the *Wall Street Journal*, for example, accused the
memorial of “Mauling the Mall.”

In spite of these objections, the CFA gave its unanimous approval, while the NCPC
passed the design by a slim margin of seven to five. The NCPC had gone from unwavering
support to a more contested approval of the design with each modification. Mills suggests this
was because the NCPC was made up of a more diverse group of the CFA including not just
presidential appointees but also appointees of the Secretary of the Interior, Secretary of Defense,
the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, the House Committee on Governmental
Reform, the General Services Administration, the Mayor of Washington, and the District of
Columbia Council. The CFA still had concerns about the Freedom Wall and its stars, which
had a machine-made, “cookie-cutter” appearance. J. Carter Brown suggested a more sculptural
interpretation “to avoid repetition.” The design received final approval but with deferred
decisions about the Field of Stars on the Freedom Wall, inscriptions and relief panels at the east
entrance (later approved by ABMC commissioners appointed by George W. Bush in 2001), and
night lighting.

**Built Memorial**

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similarly censured the memorial as the “wrong thing” in the “wrong place.” “Wrong Thing,
Wrong Time,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 10, 2000. *USA Today* published an article less critical of
the design, which asserted, “There’s nothing wrong with the proposed National World War II
Memorial that a change of location couldn’t fix.” “World War II Memorial Misplaced,” *USA

111 Mills, 161. All four of the Washington representatives and Presidential appointee Margaret
Vanderhye voted against the final memorial design in the NCPC meeting. NCPC, September 21,
2000, Records of the National World War II Memorial.

112 J. Carter Brown, CFA hearing, July 20, 2000, Records of the National World War II
Memorial.
The NWWIIM groundbreaking took place in September 2001. The GSA managed the memorial construction process. There was a significant amount of time between the event and the erection of the memorial built to commemorate it. The NWWIIM took 17 years to build from the first legislation on December 10, 1987 to the initial public opening on April 29, 2004. This varied considerably from the VVM and KWVM projects, where the time span was much shorter. This may have impacted the purpose of the memorials. For example, VVM has been described as a therapeutic memorial in contrast to the celebratory content of the NWWIIM.  

Historian Kristin Haas has pointed out that, unlike the Vietnam War, World War II has been uncritically accepted and made sacred, so the memorial concept is an idealized vision of the “good war.” The winning designer confirmed this sentiment when he described the built memorial: “The World War II Memorial is not about healing. The World War II Memorial, like the Lincoln Memorial, like the Washington Monument, is a statement about an absolutely significant moment in our history.” However, the identification of which significant moment in history is not clearly commemorated in this memorial. Marc Fisher described his interviews with twenty teenagers at the memorial on opening day, saying “only two could tell me what the war was about.” He synthesized the issue: “A memorial… has a duty to tell a story. This

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113 Savage defines the VVM as the first “therapeutic memorial,” which “justifies the soldiers not as heroic agents, but as honorable victims who deserve our recognition.” Kirk Savage, Monument Wars: Washington, DC, the National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 278.


115 St. Florian, interview with Nicholaus Mills, November 12, 2001, in Mills, 143.
memorial tells us nothing more than a big war happened and Americans died and we are proud of them and we are powerful.”

The “central unifying element” of St. Florian’s design is the oval-shaped memorial plaza over the former Rainbow Pool. The built memorial is replete with the symbolism of victory. Two granite, 36-foot memorial arches act as “signifiers, points of reference” along the north-south axis of the National Mall with bronze laurel leaves inside to symbolize victory. The arched pavilions mark the Atlantic and Pacific theaters of World War II. Each pavilion contains a bronze Baldachino in which four eagles perch on four columns to symbolize the branches of armed force (Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines). The eagles hold laurel wreaths in their beaks, and the pavilion floors are inlaid with bronze victory medals around which are inscribed: “1941-45,” “Victory on Land,” “Victory at Sea,” and “Victory in the Air.” The theme of U.S. victory is reinforced with mostly American materials. The predominantly granite memorial is made up of about 17,000 individual stones. The stones in the vertical pillars are of Kershaw granite from South Carolina. The horizontal paving stones are of Green County granite from Georgia. The coping stone around the Rainbow Pool is Mount Airy granite from North Carolina and the pool tiles are of Academy Black granite from California.

The visitor enters the space along ceremonial stairs and ramps. There is a granite wall embedded in cascading waterfalls; two quotations incised into the memorial’s granite remember home-front contributions. A quote by FDR reads, “They have given their sons to the military services. They have stoked the furnaces and hurried the factory wheels. They have made the

117 St. Florian’s comments, NCPC hearing, July 9, 1998, Records of the National World War II Memorial.
118 St. Florian’s comments, NCPC hearing, July 9, 1998, Records of the National World War II Memorial.
planes and welded the tanks, riveted the ships and rolled the shells.” Small bronze reliefs placed on the approach ramps are overshadowed by the inscriptions, which add to the visual noise level of the memorial. The visitor is confronted with ubiquitous textual messages about victory, together with the exuberant sound of water. For example, the Battle of Midway inscription reads, “They had no right to win. Yet they did.” Dwight D. Eisenhower is quoted, “You are about to embark upon the great crusade toward which we have striven these many months.” General George Marshall’s statement, “We are determined that before the sun sets on this terrible struggle our flag will be recognized throughout the world as a symbol of freedom on the one hand and of overwhelming force on the other,” is also displayed.

What should a NWWIIM “look like”?

In June 2000, Haydn Williams of the ABMC wrote to the NPS with a summary of the final submission of St. Florian’s design. This was in anticipation of the final agency reviews by the CFA, NCPC, and D.C. Historic Preservation Review Board in the summer of 2000.

Williams reviewed the sponsor’s mission with the memorial:

Design Objectives:

1. To create a memorial that inspires is a testimony to the passion, optimism, courage and heroism of the WWII generation of Americans and to create a place of beauty that will be the stage for the remembrance and celebration of the virtues of the defining event of the 20th century.

2. To create a memorial that is timeless in an architectural language that transcends style and reaches into the realm of the classical spirit

3. To create a memorial that is sensitive to its site and surroundings. To create a design that is respectful of the open vista between the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monuments, that is highly transparent and preserves views across the Memorial in all directions.119

The objectives clearly articulated the sponsor’s interest in a classical aesthetic, both in terms of its perceived “timeless” quality and its sensitivity to the National Mall site, replete with classical architecture. During the evaluation process, both “the Design Jury and Evaluation Board commented favorably on the fact that it ‘looked like a memorial’ and possessed monumental character appropriate to the nature of the project and its site.”\(^{120}\) The commentary raised a central question about what a memorial for World War II should “look like.”

Criticism of the classical aesthetic of the NWWIIM was an issue. A satirical cartoon compared the design unfavorably to the work of Adolph Hitler’s chief architect, Albert Speer (Fig. 4.35), a comparison reiterated by architectural critic Deborah Dietsch, who described the monument’s pared-down classicism as “painfully reminiscent of designs by [the] Nazi architect.”\(^{121}\) The Washington Post’s March Fisher bemoaned the “hodgepodge of cliché and Soviet-style pomposity,” asserting that “if it tells any story at all, it is so broad as to be indecipherable.”\(^{122}\) Thomas M. Keane of the Boston Herald described the memorial as “vainglorious, demanding of attention and full of trite imagery.”\(^{123}\) Inga Saffron of The Philadelphia Inquirer emphasized the fascist connection when she wrote, “this pompous style was also favoured by Mussolini.”\(^{124}\)

\(^{120}\) “World War II Memorial Jury Recommendations,” Records of the National World War II Memorial.
Critics emphasized that the memorial’s style was not just anachronistic but also that it was out of place on the National Mall. It was labeled “Inadequate and out of Place.”\textsuperscript{125} Christopher Knight of the \textit{Los Angeles Times} wrote, “This memorial merits approval. Except for one thing: It’s in the wrong place. Despoiling one of the most powerful public spaces in America to build it will disfigure the memory of the war in ways those veterans surely don’t deserve.”\textsuperscript{126} Art historian Roger Lewis added, “[The] Memorial is envisioned as a space rather than an object, a place to be rather than an object in place”: in his view, it should be redesigned.\textsuperscript{127}

The aesthetic criticism of St. Florian’s design has merit. There are striking similarities between the Austrian-born architect’s NWWIIM design and Speer’s design for the Nuremberg rally grounds, the Ehrenhalle (1929) (Fig. 4.36). Both designs feature an unadorned version of classicism in faceless stone. The memorial wreaths of St. Florian’s design seem to replace the swastikas of Speer’s earlier work. The irony is that St. Florian’s classical design was stripped down during the review process (for example, through the replacement of truncated columns with pillars): thus, the Fascist character of the final design is, at least substantially, the result of the prolonged agency approval process.

Much of St. Florian’s built work, like that of his postmodern contemporaries, draws on historical sources. His design for the Providence Skybridge (completed 2000), part of the Providence Place development in Rhode Island (Fig. 4.37), combines influences in a postmodern style. He stated in his CFA and NCPC testimony that he was inspired by the classical aesthetic

\textsuperscript{125} L. Wheeler, “WWII Memorial’s Site in Middle of Mall is under Attack,” \textit{Washington Post}, June 6, 2000, B1.
of the National Mall, that the competition guidelines had emphasized, in his initial design for the project.\footnote{Friedrich St. Florian, NCPC meeting minutes, July 9, 1998, Records of the National World War II Memorial.}

In his 2007 book, From a Cause to a Style: Modernist Architecture’s Encounter with the American City, historian Nathan Glazer looks at how the Mumford-inspired paradox of modernism and monumentality played out on the Mall landscape. Glazer suggests that the “problem” with the World War II Memorial is not just its reliance on classical iconography but also its attempt to create a modern memorial to World War II: “That is the problem with the World War II Memorial—a huge oval of columns, with something like wreaths on top, and with two triumphal arches at the short ends. It does seem like a throwback. But what could a truly modern World War II memorial be?”\footnote{Nathan Glazer, From a Cause to a Style: Modernist Architecture’s Encounter with the American City (New York, NY: Princeton University Press, 2009), 127.} In the wake of World War II, architect Philip Johnson proposed a “mound” of dirt as a memorial.\footnote{Andrew Shanken, “Planning Memory: Living Memorials in the United States during World War II,” The Art Bulletin 84, 1 (March 2002): 144.} Glazer offered Peter Eisenman’s Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe (2003) (Fig. 4.38) as a counterpoint to the NWWIIM, in that it uses columns and stealae in a modern way. But it is not really the aesthetic vocabulary that makes the NWWIIM challenging; it is the characterless design that was as a result of the competition process.

Savage frames the NWWIIM as “an antidote to much its twentieth-century history. The memorial is a rejoinder particularly to Lin’s Vietnam Veterans Memorial—white granite instead of black, plaza instead of park, loud instead of hushed, overflowing with words and images instead of minimalist.”\footnote{Kirk Savage, Monument Wars, 298.} The NWWIIM design competition occurred more than a decade after
the VVM competition was completed, with a very different motivation—to celebrate a united victory in World War II, as opposed to healing a divided nation. The resulting design is the product of the sponsor’s interest in conveying this narrative at the epicenter of the National Mall. Architectural historian Andrew Shanken notes that the criticism of the NWWIIM—for example, of its excessive grand scale, classical and faceless design—echoed arguments developed in the living memorial trend. He writes, “Traditional memorials seemed inert, unproductive, and obsolete…. [T]he living memorial idea shifted the very object of memorialization, edging away from sacrifice, victory, war, and death toward issues of community and democracy, tapping into important elements of national identity in the United States.”

The NWWIIM celebrates democracy in a way that is similar to living memorials conforming to Shanken’s description; in general geographical terms of the role of the U.S. in World War II without any specific references to the events of the war.

The style issues raised in the public criticism of the NWWIIM underscores the way in which the aesthetics developed in response to the elimination of key elements of the design during the agency approval process. The built memorial is a product of the competition and implementation process; it bears scant resemblance to the winning design.

**Conclusion**

The memorial’s meaning changed during its implementation. Whereas the winning design contained a mournfully commemorative content and an educational center, the built memorial represents geographic and military triumph. This is dramatically expressed in the central aspects of the built memorial including the memorial plaza, grand arches and colonnade.

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132 Shanken, 144.
with geographical references, and triumphant jets of water. The commemorative content is limited to the Sacred Precinct, which emerged as a direct result of the agency approval process. Lost next to the spectacular jets of water and vertical elements, the Freedom Wall is on the west side of the memorial, low enough to view the Reflecting Pool and Lincoln Memorial. The 4,048 gold-plated stars commemorate the lives lost. However, the stars are somewhat generic in meaning because, other than their number, there are no specific references to World War II veterans. The inscription below the Freedom Wall reads, “Here We Mark the Price of Freedom.” Unlike the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Korean War Veterans Memorial, the NWWIIM title also eliminates a link to the particular veterans of World War II. Furthermore, the specific names referenced in the earlier memorials contrast with the geographic elements of the latter work: the names of states, territories, and battles are the only specifically named elements on the NWWIIM. The stars are physically inaccessible from the viewer’s space, thereby eliminating the potential for an empathetic experience. The Freedom Wall and adjacent fountains severed the historical connection between the Rainbow Pool and Reflecting Pool. In contrast to the guidelines specifying its preservation, the Rainbow Pool is no longer experienced by the viewer as part of an ascent to the Lincoln Memorial.

The NWWIIM is a spatial solution, determined by guidelines for an underground education center and site issues effecting the memorial’s occupation of the Mall. However, as the parameters were transformed, the design also changed to conform to the adjusted spatial requirements. This resulted in the site determining the design and content more than the subject of the war that the memorial is meant to commemorate. As Thomas Leubke of the CFA

\[133\] It is worth remembering here that the impetus for the memorial began as a veteran’s initiative.
surmised, “The problem with the [National] World War II Memorial is that it was designed as a spatial solution and not an aesthetic one.”

After the site was selected in 1996, the NCPC established a Memorials Task Force to examine the idea of making the cross-axis of the National Mall a no-build zone. In 2000, a Joint Task Force on Memorials made up of representatives from the NCPC, CFA, and NCMC concluded that building should be prohibited on the cross-axis linking the Capitol and Lincoln Memorial in one direction and the White House and Jefferson in the other. In 2003, there was an amendment to the Commemorative Works Act of 1986 that banned additional building at this location. The NWWIIM was the last memorial built on the spine of the Mall.

The greatest changes to the memorial project occurred during the agency reviews, when intervening parties determined the siting and design of the NWWIIM. The sponsor invalidated the competition guidelines it had created as it eliminated the educational interior space and modified the design according to spatial parameters as opposed to aesthetic-based considerations or content. With the significance of the NWWIIM competition itself thus negated, the memorial must be understood as a product of the design’s implementation.

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134 This comment was made at a panel on Public Art Process moderated by Kirk Savage at the College Art Association Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. on February 5, 2016.
CONCLUSION: ADDITION, ADAPTATION, AND ELIMINATION

The design competition is an intrinsic component of contemporary memorialization on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. This dissertation looks at three United States war memorials built on the National Mall between 1983 and the present whose designers were selected through an open design competition process. In some of these cases, the memorials share project architects and sponsoring agencies. In all of these cases, the memorials were subjected to the same government approval process.¹ As these studies show, the design competition process—with its guidelines, sponsoring agencies, juries, and approval processes—proved to be a mitigating factor on the competition-winning designs, ultimately shaping not only the form or appearance of the built memorials but also their content and meaning. Detailed analysis of the design competition and implementation processes involving the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (1983), Korean War Veterans Memorial (1995), and National World War II Memorial (2004) reveal the ways in which the appearance and content of the projects were driven by sponsoring and intervening agencies, as opposed to the winning designers exclusively. From this analysis, three different models of transformation emerge: formal additions that reshape the appearance and perceived meaning, adaptations that change the content, and eliminations which subvert the intention and use of the memorials.

¹ Due to their placement on the National Mall, the memorials required the approval of the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA), National Capitol Monuments Commission (NCMC), and the National Park Service (NPS).
Maya Lin won the 1981 Vietnam Veterans Memorial competition with a design for a subterranean, black granite wall incised with the names of deceased veterans placed in chronological order according to the date of their death. Her design was selected from among 1,421 anonymous submissions by a jury of professional designers and critics. The professional advisor, Paul Spreiregen, directed the open design competition. He wrote and designed the competition program, selected the jury, and carefully curated the judging stages of the VVM competition, ultimately determining the outcome of the competition from which an iconic memorial design by an unknown architecture student took form.

Lin’s design was subject to the appropriate federal agency review process. During this period, the project architect, Cooper-Lecky Associates, worked with the winning designer to develop the abstract sketch into a finished product to be built on the National Mall. The additions made to Lin’s design include a figurative sculpture, flagpole, and text, which are less innovative and arguably detract from the aesthetic impact of Lin’s innovative concept. Competing parties contributed to the additions during the federal approval process after the competition concluded.

The VVM literature ascribes the authorship of the iconic memorial to Maya Lin. Historian Patrick Hagopian describes the psychiatric and political discourse that spurred the VVM—the “therapeutic discourse of wounds and healing” that would generate memorial efforts across the United States. But although Hagopian carefully analyzes the contributions of various parties to the built memorial, he nevertheless still attributes the final outcome to the competition-winning designer. In Kirk Savage’s discussion of the memorials on the National Mall, the art

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historian identifies the VVM as the first “therapeutic memorial,” thereby defining a new and influential model in memorial design. His discussion of the Mall memorials focuses on the built results, however, without an extensive analysis of the memorials as products of a distillation of the designers’ ideas and mitigating factors of the competition process. With the exception of a footnote addressing the influence of the competition guidelines on Lin’s design in an essay authored by Daniel Abramson, the VVM scholarship emphasizes the aesthetic and sociological impact of the built memorial. The expanded study of the competition process and its various parties that is contained in this dissertation recalibrates the notion of the autonomous monument maker to accommodate a perspective of collective authorship.

The VVM case study emphasizes the influence exerted by the professional advisor and of the design competition process itself, which were directly responsible for the appearance and content of the built memorial. The chapter proposes the essential role of the competition advisor, who guided the process such that a visionary but very sketchy drawing created by an unknown architecture student was transformed into a built reality. The subsequent additions changed the essential meaning of the competition-winning design by adding a level of specificity to an otherwise abstract concept. As built, the completed memorial includes additional elements that were the result of the agency approval and implementation process.

**Adaptation**

There is no substantive critical literature on the Korean War Veterans Memorial. Kristin Hass looks at the representation of soldiers in the National Mall war memorials with a chapter on

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the Korean War Veterans Memorial, however her research skims over the competition process.⁵ Of all the memorials situated on the Mall, this one in particular merits a competition-focused study, as the winning design was transformed during the competition process into something else entirely.

The adaptations to the Korean War Veterans Memorial competition design highlight the roles of the jury and sponsor. The sponsor instigated specific changes to the winning design—adding a mural wall, enlarging the scale of the soldiers while reducing their number from 38 to 19, expanding a chapel-like area to honor the dead, and most importantly, making the figures look as though they are in battle rather than marching peacefully toward a flag. The built Korean War Veterans Memorial scarcely resembles the competition-winning design.

In this case, the sponsor ran an open design competition but then treated the project as a direct commission. The sponsor and self-appointed jury, all of whom were decorated veterans of the American Battle Monuments Commission, selected a winning design by John Paul Lucas, Veronica Burns-Lucas, Don Alvaro Leon, and Eliza Pennypacker Oberholtzer. They adapted the winning design to fit their concept of a figurative memorial that would convey the physical experience of service in the Korean War as a memorial for fellow veterans. The study of this memorial emphasizes the way in which intervening parties adapt a design throughout the competition process. Here, the winning design is not reflected in the built Korean War Veterans Memorial. The competition-winning designers have been erased from memorial authorship, which only lists the project architect on the physical memorial.

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Elimination

Historians have written about the process to erect the National World War II Memorial as it was being built. Nicolaus Mills’ study looks at the various parties involved in the process and notes that the built result varies considerably from the concept prescribed at the start of the competition. Both Kristin Hass and Kirk Savage frame the NWWIIM as a response to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, drawing on the evidence of the built product. However, if we reconsider the way in which the design competition process of the former impacted the latter, a richer understanding of the memorial design itself emerges.

The sponsoring agency of the National World War II Memorial, the American Battle Monuments Commission, made various changes to Friedrich St. Florian’s competition-winning design in order to secure government approval for the central Rainbow Pool site on the National Mall. In addition to eliminating the subterranean museum space, the alterations replaced mournful elements with manifestations of military power. St. Florian’s original design included large sloping berms of white roses and truncated columns reminiscent of nineteenth-century children’s grave markers; these were replaced with a colonnade representing the U.S. territories and triumphal arches with references to battle locations.

The greatest changes to the memorial occurred during the agency reviews, when intervening parties determined the site and design of the National World War II Memorial. The sponsor invalidated its own competition guidelines as it eliminated the educational interior space and modified the design according to spatial parameters, as opposed to ones grounded in

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aesthetic or content ones. The National World War II Memorial as built would have been ineligible to win its own design competition and does not reflect St. Florian’s intentions.

**Contemporary Design Competition Memorials**

None of the case studies examined in this dissertation resulted in memorials that were exactly as prescribed at the beginning of their respective competitions. Each offers a unique model of change: through formal additions that reshape the appearance and perceived meaning of the memorial; adaptations that change its content; and eliminations that subvert its intention and use. Whether through additions, adaptations, or eliminations, the U.S. war memorials on the National Mall were all shaped by their design competitions.

These observations lead to deeper reflection on the nature of contemporary memorial building. In a straightforward commission, the sponsor prescribes both the content and appearance of the built memorial, often by working closely with the designer throughout the design process. In contrast, memorials born of design competitions take on lives of their own, as various parties impact them throughout the competition and implementation processes. The decisions made along the way may radically change their appearance and meaning, with the winning design often not reflected in the memorial as built. This suggests that the entire process of design and implementation, with its mitigating factors and intervening agencies, ought to be examined in the critical study of competition-built memorials. This dissertation, then, with its identification of three distinct models of change, presents a new typology for the study of contemporary memorial building beyond the National Mall.

The issues of additions, adaptations, and eliminations raised by these case studies are prevalent in contemporary design competition memorials. For example, jury composition played
a role in the Oklahoma City National Memorial (2000) two-stage design competition. (Fig. 2.10) In this case, family members of the victims and survivors made up a majority of the jury, a situation that ultimately resulted in the departure of competition advisor Paul Spreiregen. Family members and survivors evaluated the first stage design entries before the jury convened in March 1997 to consider the 624 submissions. The jury unanimously selected a design by Locus Bold Design (Berlin, Germany) for an outdoor symbolic sculpture as part of the multi-part memorial which includes a memorial museum and an institute devoted to anti-terrorism. Hans-Ekkehard Butzer, Torrey Butzer, and Sven Berg’s sculptural design focused almost entirely on the victims with a with a plan of empty chairs beneath a canopy of trees to recall those who had died in the 1995 bombing of the Oklahoma Federal Building. The chairs functioned as surrogate grave markers for family members of the victims who made up the majority of the jury.

Contemporary design competition memorials are still discussed in terms of the winning designers; the scholarly literature refers to Maya Lin’s Vietnam Veterans Memorial. But the field could be expanded if the studies looked at the designer as just one aspect of the collective creative process that shapes the built results. Open design competitions like the Vietnam Veterans Memorial are perceived as democratic processes, a perception that no doubt encouraged their use for projects built on the National Mall. The National Mall is an essential public space in the formation of national identity and national memory. The axis of the Capitol, 

7 The second stage jury members included four professionals, nine survivors, and two family members.
8 Harriet F. Senie has shown how this memorial functions as a symbolic cemetery as family members gather to leave mementos during anniversaries, a feature anticipated by the designers who envisioned the chairs as a place for family and friends to “leave behind tokens of love.” Harriet F. Senie, Memorials to Shattered Myths: Vietnam to 9/11 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016): 71.
Lincoln Memorial, and Washington Monument is the setting for presidential inaugurations, public protests, and the site where citizens symbolically act out democracy. However, as this dissertation has shown, there are mitigating factors and agencies that impact the process and ultimately shape the way in which a design generated by the process of open competition is realized.
Introduction Illustrations


Figure 1.4. Robert Mills and Thomas L. Casey, Washington Monument (1848-85). Image via www.nps.gov.
Figure 1.5. Henry Bacon and Daniel Chester French, Lincoln Memorial (1922). Images via www.nps.gov.
Figure 1.6. Henry Shrady and Edward Casey, Ulysses S. Grant Memorial (1902-24). Photograph by the author.
Figure 1.7. John Russel Pope and Rudolph Evans, Jefferson Memorial (1943). Image via www.nps.gov.
Chapter 2 Illustrations

Figure 2.2. Southeast Asia Memorial (created by the West Point classes of 1960 through 1969 in memory of their classmates who fell in battle in the Vietnam conflict), U.S. Military Academy, West Point, N.Y (1980). Photograph by Patrick Hagopian. Hagopian, *The Vietnam War in American Memory: Veterans, Memorials, and the Politics of Healing*, 86.
Figure 2.3. William Lecky, Competition Process Sketch, constructed during interview with the author, McLean, VA, March 19, 2014.
Figure 2.4. Paul D. Spreiregen, Vietnam Veterans Memorial Design Program (includes 18 photographs of Constitution Gardens site and site plans site). Courtesy of Paul D. Spreiregen.
Figure 2.5. Paul D. Spreiregen, Vietnam Veterans Memorial Design Program (Cover). Courtesy of Paul D. Spreiregen.
Figure 2.7. Christopher Page, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, 1981. Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Records, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Figure 2.10. Locus Bold Design, Field of Chairs, Oklahoma City National Memorial, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (1997-2000). Photograph by Beatrice Murch, [www.beatricemurchphotography.com](http://www.beatricemurchphotography.com)
Figure 2.11. Michael Arad, National September 11 Memorial, New York, NY (2001), Photograph by the author.
Figure 2.12. View of hangar at Andrews Air Force Base with the 1,421 entries for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial competition. Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Records, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Walking through this porthole area, the memorial appears as a rift in the earth—a long, polished black stone wall, emerging from and receding into the earth. Approaching the memorial, the ground slopes gently downward, and the low walls emerging on either side, growing out of the earth, extend and converge at a point below and ahead. Walking into the grassy site contained by the walls of this memorial we can barely make out the carved names upon the memorial’s walls. These names, seemingly infinite in number, convey the sense of overwhelming numbers, while conveying their individuals into a whole. For this memorial is meant not as a monument to the individual, but rather as a memorial to the men and women who died during this war, as a whole.

The memorial is composed not as an unchanged monument, but as a moving composition, to be understood as we move into and out of it; the passage itself is gradual, the descent to the origin site, but it is at the origin that the meaning of this memorial is fully understood. At the intersection of these walls, on the right side, at this wall’s top is carved the date of the first death. It is followed by the names of those who have died in the war, in chronological order. These names continue on this wall, appearing to re-enter into the earth at the wall’s end. The names resume on the left wall, as the wall emerges from the earth, continuing back to the origin, where the date of the last death is carved, at the bottom of this wall. Thus the work beginning and ending, the war is “complete,” coming full circle, yet broken by the earth that bounds the angling open site, and contained within the earth itself. As we turn to leave, we see three walls stretching into the distance, directing us to the Washington Monument to the left and the Lincoln Memorial to the right, thus bringing the Vietnam Memorial into historical context. We, the living are brought to a concrete realization of these deaths.

Brought to a sharp awareness of such a loss, it is up to each individual to realize or come to terms with this loss. For death is in the end a personal and private matter. and the area contained within this memorial is a quiet place meant for personal reflection and private recollection. The black granite walls, each 200 feet long, and 10 feet below ground at their lowest point (gradually ascending towards ground level) effectively act as a sound barrier, yet are of such a height and length so as not to appear threatening or obscuring. The actual area is wide and shallow; allowing for a sense of privacy and the sunlight from the memorial’s southern exposure along with the grassy park surrounding and within its wall contribute to the serenity of the area. This this memorial is for those who have died, and for us to remember them.

The memorial’s origin is located approximately at the center of this site; it leads each extending 300 feet towards the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial. The walls, contained on one side by the earth and 10 feet below ground at their points of origin, gradually lessening in height, until they finally recede totally into the earth at their ends. The walls are to be made of a dark, polished black granite, with the names to be carved in a simple, clean letter, No such height allowing for nine inches in height for each name. The memorial’s construction involves measuring the area within the walls’ boundaries as to provide for an easily accessible descent, but as much of the site as possible should be left untouched (including trees). The area should be made into a park for all the public to enjoy.

Figure 2.20. F. Andrus Burr, Anne McCallum, Carl Pucci, Caroline Northcote Sidnam, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, 1981. Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Records, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Figure 2.23. Raymond Yin (submitted under Laura Davis), Vietnam Veterans Memorial, 1981. Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Records, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Figure 2.25. Thom Mayne, Michael Rotondi, Kazu Arai, Ben Caffey, Judith, Newmark (Morphosis), Vietnam Veterans Memorial, 1981. Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Records, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Figure 2.27. Artist’s rendering of Maya Lin’s winning submission (1981). Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Records, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Figure 2.28. Model of Maya Lin’s design presented at October 1982 CFA hearing. Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Records, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Figure 2.29. Proposal for location and drawing of flagpole and sculpture. Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Records, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Figure 2.32. Felix de Weldon, Marine Corps Memorial, Arlington, VA (1954). Image via www.nps.org.
Chapter 3 Illustrations

Mr. Robert Tuttle
Office of Presidential Personnel
The White House
Washington, D.C., 20500

Dear Sir:

The membership of this Association is made up of Korean War Veterans. As you may see on the bottom of this stationary we have been concerned about no monument to honor those of us of the "The Forgotten War".

With the recent passage of Bill H.R.2355, the realization of a memorial to honor the Korean War Veterans, it seemed that a twelve man advisory board was to be appointed.

As you will note we have a committee within this Association whose Chairman is Lewis L. Millett. (Col. Ret.) recipient of the Medal of Honor (Korea). Prior to our Action, Resignation and Memorial Service at Arlington, Virginia this year, Col. Millett and I met for two days planning what action must be taken. During this time Col. Millett contacted other Medal of Honor recipients of the Korean War and asked them to serve on this committee also.

Because of the dark cloud that has been afflicting other private fund raising organization for the Korean War Memorial we did not want this to happen. At a time this Government is trying to cut Budget Cost we are sure that additional help will be needed. The membership of this Association are willing to support this committee to see that this memorial is completed.

No Monument - No Memorial - Only Memories
Americans' Forgotten War

B  Looking northeast to the Washington Monument from the northwest portion of the site

C  Looking northwest toward the Lincoln Memorial from the western portion of the memorial site
Figure 3.4. Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board and ABMC, Korean War Veterans Memorial Design Program. American Battle Monuments Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.
C Looking eastward across Henry Bacon Drive into the memorial site, in summer.

D Standing in the memorial site, looking eastward. From left to right one can see the dome of the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History, the dome of the U.S. Capitol, the dome of the Library of Congress, the towers of the Smithsonian "castle", and the Washington Monument.
Figure 3.5. Paul D. Spreiregen, Vietnam Veterans Memorial Design Program. Courtesy of Paul D. Spreiregen.
Figure 3.6. Great Hall of the National Building Museum, Washington, D.C. Image via www.nbm.org.
Figure 3.7. Henry Shardy, Ulysses S. Grant Memorial (1902-24). Photograph by the author.
Figure 3.8. Veronica Burns Lucas, Don Alvaro Leon, John Paul Lucas, and Eliza Pennypacker Oberholtzer, Korean War Veterans Memorial (1989). Photographs of Designs Submitted for the Korean War Veterans Memorial Design Competition, American Battle Monuments Commission, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.
Figure 3.9. Ronald C. Nims, Korean War Veterans Memorial (1989). Photographs of Designs Submitted for the Korean War Veterans Memorial Design Competition, American Battle Monuments Commission, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.
Figure 3.10. Mark P. Fondersmith, Korean War Veterans Memorial (1989). Photographs of Designs Submitted for the Korean War Veterans Memorial Design Competition, American Battle Monuments Commission, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.

Figure 3.11. David Douglas Duncan photograph (1950). David Douglas Duncan, *This is War: A Photonarrative of the Korean War in Three Parts* (1951), 1.
Figure 3.13. Cooper-Lecky Associates, Korean War Veterans Memorial Design (1990). American Battle Monuments Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.
Figure 3.14. Cooper-Lecky Associates, Korean War Veterans Memorial (June 1990). American Battle Monuments Records of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.
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