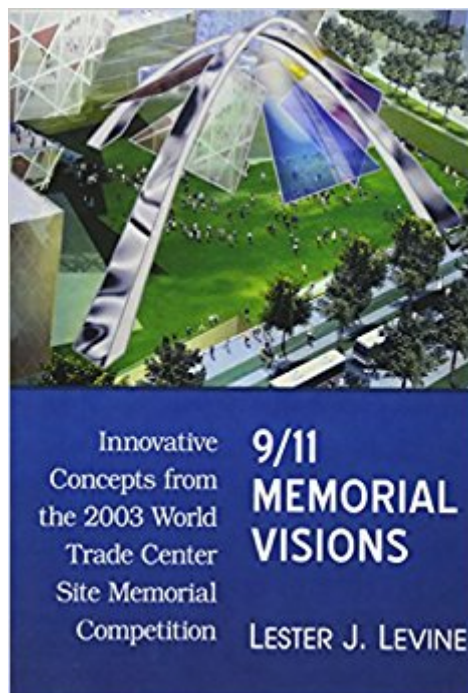




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# 9/11 Memorial Visions: Innovative Concepts From The 2003 World Trade Center Site Memorial Competition



## Synopsis

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

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Recommended" --Choice "A valuable resource for anyone who seeks understanding of the commemoration and meanings of the attacks on the World Trade Center of September 11, 2001.

Lester J. Levine has brought together some 180 submissions deemed to be among the most compelling, commemorating their aims and importance. Levine offers sensible categorizations of the memorial entries that help make sense of this overwhelming body of work, while at the same time giving individual works their due. Seeing submissions that weren't selected, and learning about their

creators through first-hand interviews, we gain a rich sense of 9/11's impact on ordinary people, and the creative parameters of the memorials of the imagination that are a now crucial part of this event's historical significance. Written with clarity and empathy, 9/11 Memorial Visions offers new insights into the visual culture of memory in general and the traumas of 9/11 in particular." --Michele H. Bogart, author of *The Politics of Urban Beauty: New York and Its Art Commission* "This fascinating and heartfelt book tells the story of the World Trade Center memorial competition in 2003, a call to re-imagine a site of horrible devastation and death that drew some 5,201 entries in what is considered the largest design competition in modern memory. Levine's account of their proposals and motivations is a valuable addition to the growing body of literature on memory and commemoration in modern America."--Erika Doss, University of Notre Dame, author of *Memorial Mania; Public Feeling in America* "Too often, discussion of memorials focuses on their physical characteristics. In this book, Lester Levine investigates the emotional, motivational, and human impulses behind the competitors schemes." --Jayne Merkel, a New York-based architectural historian and critic

Lester J. Levine is a management consultant and poet. He lives in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

When the competition for a 9/11 memorial was announced less than 2 years after the attacks, the site itself was still being cleaned up, wounds were still open, foreign wars were building, the drama was still unfolding. There was a lively debate whether a competition to design a memorial without historical perspective or societal consensus was simply too soon. Jettisoning itself into this stew of raw emotions, the competition drew about 5200 entries, more entries than any other design competition in history, and as a result, it offers us today a fascinating time capsule that captures who we were and what we were thinking shortly after those events that instantly changed our world. The actual winning entry is not relevant to this book; the real story is (stories are) the manner in which the events of 9/11 are reflected in the 5000+ "mirrors" that are the entries. Using a very personal first person style, Les Levine has organized the entries by themes such as "memorials That Move," "Imagining Beyond Boundaries," "Memorial Imaging," and others. He provides personal commentary and excerpts of interviews he conducted with many of the designers. Through this exploration of how 9/11 should be memorialized (some cliché and some highly original), we understand and appreciate the complexity of our reaction to it as a society. Thanks to this book, we can see ourselves at that moment through the creativity of these artists, architects and others who offered their own distillations of that day, and perhaps it is this virtual time capsule of 5000 ideas

with their companion guide that form a true and durable 9/11 memorial.

With an undeniable passion and appreciation of this historic event, the author has painstakingly organized, assembled, and shed light on some of the more intriguing and unusual ideas that resulted from the 9/11 Memorial Competition. Some of the concepts presented are rather far-fetched and unrealistic while others are very thought provoking and engaging. As an architect and designer, I truly appreciate the care that was taken to research and prepare this compendium of unique memorial ideas. A must read for anyone searching for hope and inspiration and interested in seeing how others cope with tremendous loss via expressions through design.

This is a very interesting book about some of the over 5000 entries sent in for the 9/11 memorial design competition. This historic event had a profound impact on the world, and when this contest was opened up to anyone (not just professional architects and artists) people from around the world sent in their memorial ideas. Instead of more traditional memorials, the designs included in this book use sound, light, and technology to give tribute to the lives lost on 9/11. In the wake of such a tragic event, the creativity shown by those who were inspired to submit a design to the memorial competition illustrates that there is still good in this world.

In all fairness, you don't have enough stars for me to rate this book. That is simply because Mr. Levine, in his many months of research in writing this book, selected me, one of the 5,201 World Trade Center Memorial Site designers from around the world, to be one of the 180 designers that he included in the book. I know what went into his effort, which is a passionate extension of what each of the designers went through.

Participating in the 9/11 Memorial competition was my fiduciary responsibility as an NYC Architect and Resident. I wanted to contribute. When Lester contacted me to tell he was including my submission in his new book, I was humbled to participate. What's even more wonderful is to now be able to view all the selected submissions and here their story as to what motivated them.

This interesting book includes background on some of the 9/11 Ground Zero designs, the designers' thoughts and motivations. Many have an unusual viewpoint or way of translating their thoughts and feelings into their memorial designs.

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

Excellent work, for both the architect and regular reader alike – well organized, educational, and pleasure to dive into!

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