

How to think of a memorial that has to confront an act that wanted a lively growing society of many tongues and relationships to go *silent*?

Each person is a time constellation. On that day, a violent rupture shattered so many possibilities, scattered living constellations. It broke time.

A shard of a clock from the explosion asks us to consider this rupture in time.

A child, born a year to the day after this tragedy told her mother – *“if you had not come back that day, I would not be here today”*

It is from her ‘today’, indebted to life and the ability to give life, that ‘tomorrow’ emerges like a surge.

To think forms of the future we visited the arcs, columns and spokes of time devices from the 18th century observatory Jantar Mantar in Delhi. From that we drew renditions of a 24-hour day. In doing so, an uncanny resemblance between clock hands and the wingspan of a bird emerged.

Birds, as we know, are migrants and travellers. They tell direction and offer visions. They became another guide for the memorial.

We propose a *time-oasis* where we assemble, converse, mourn, reflect and wonder, with 12 bird-clocks poised between rest and ascent with 11 time-telling wingspans, making porous forums with no centre or periphery.

The single column made of glass, like a gnomon in a sundial, will be etched with the 77 names of those who lost their lives on that fateful day. Two arc-screens made of malleable-flexible LED and these will be devices that register the passage of time with the ebb and flow through video, linked to real time data of wind and tidal movements. On commemorative occasions these screens can also act as interface, and invite public expression.

The ground will glow at night, allowing a time of imagination and of dreaming.

The memorial offers time itself as the material of the act of remembrance.

22nd July National Memorial

Raqs Media Collective

6 June, 2024

Silence has been the mode by which monuments and memorials have addressed the enormity of violence and destruction that they remember and caution against. The 22nd July memorial poses however a different kind of existential question:

*How to imagine a memorial that stands opposed to silence, confronting an act that wanted a lively growing society of many tongues, many sounds, and relationships to go **silent**?*

Each person is a time constellation.

So many trajectories, sediments and visions make a life, in each beating heart, in each breathing body.

On that day, a violent rupture shattered so many possibilities, scattered living constellations.

It broke time.

Act 1

Broken Clock Uncanny Resemblances

We spent time studying that day's relic of a broken clock - of Møllergata 19 - which splintered at the time of the explosion. That fracture of time needs to be held in memory, and needs to be worked through.



In our visits to Oslo, we heard of a child, born exactly a year after this tragedy tell her mother something exceptional, when her mother, a survivor, shared with her the significance of her birthday, “if you did not come back that day, I would not be here today”

That child, like all her peers, will grow into the future of Norway, and it is from her sense of ‘being here’, of her ‘today’, indebted to life and the ability to give life, that ‘tomorrow’ emerges like a surge. That surge is what we look to for inspiration.

To us the form of the memorial must speak to time – to the constellations of time that got severed but more so the telling of a new time that will take us into the future, her tomorrow, our collective tomorrow.

“if you had not come back that day, I would not be here today”

To think forms of the future we visited the arcs, columns and spokes of time devices from the observatory of Jantar Mantar in New Delhi.

Jantar Mantar is a constellation of early modern structures used for astronomical observations built in the 18th century. Jantar Mantar has a yantra, a device, that takes us through a symmetric 24-spokes alluding to the hours of the day.

Some hours feel longer, some hours are fused with other, some are shorter, some are rapid – this is how life is lived. 24 hours feel different in experience for each person and each day.



Drawing the variations of a 24-hour day, an uncanny resemblance between clock hands, the internal mechanism of a clock, and the wingspan of a bird in flight emerged.

To our wonder many birds with long travel paths share wingspans that superimpose elegantly on the shifts of compressed and de-compressed hours in the clock movement.



The White Throated Dipper (Cinclus cinclus), the National Bird of Norway has a wingspan that is compact and expressive and yet has similarity with many other birds' wingspan.

Ornithologists say that this plucky bird's ability to survive, and even thrive, under adverse conditions, embodies a virtue that many associate as being 'typically Norwegian'.

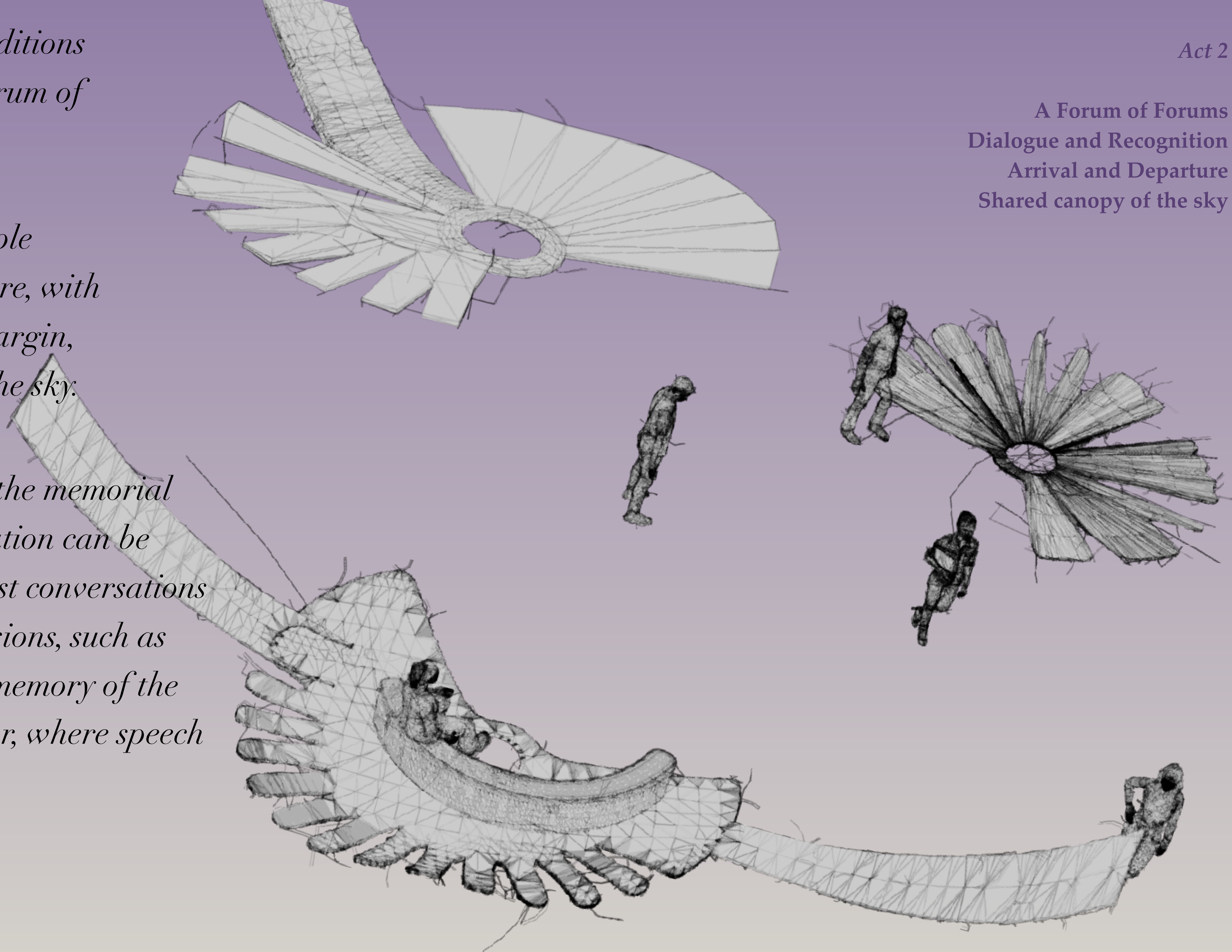


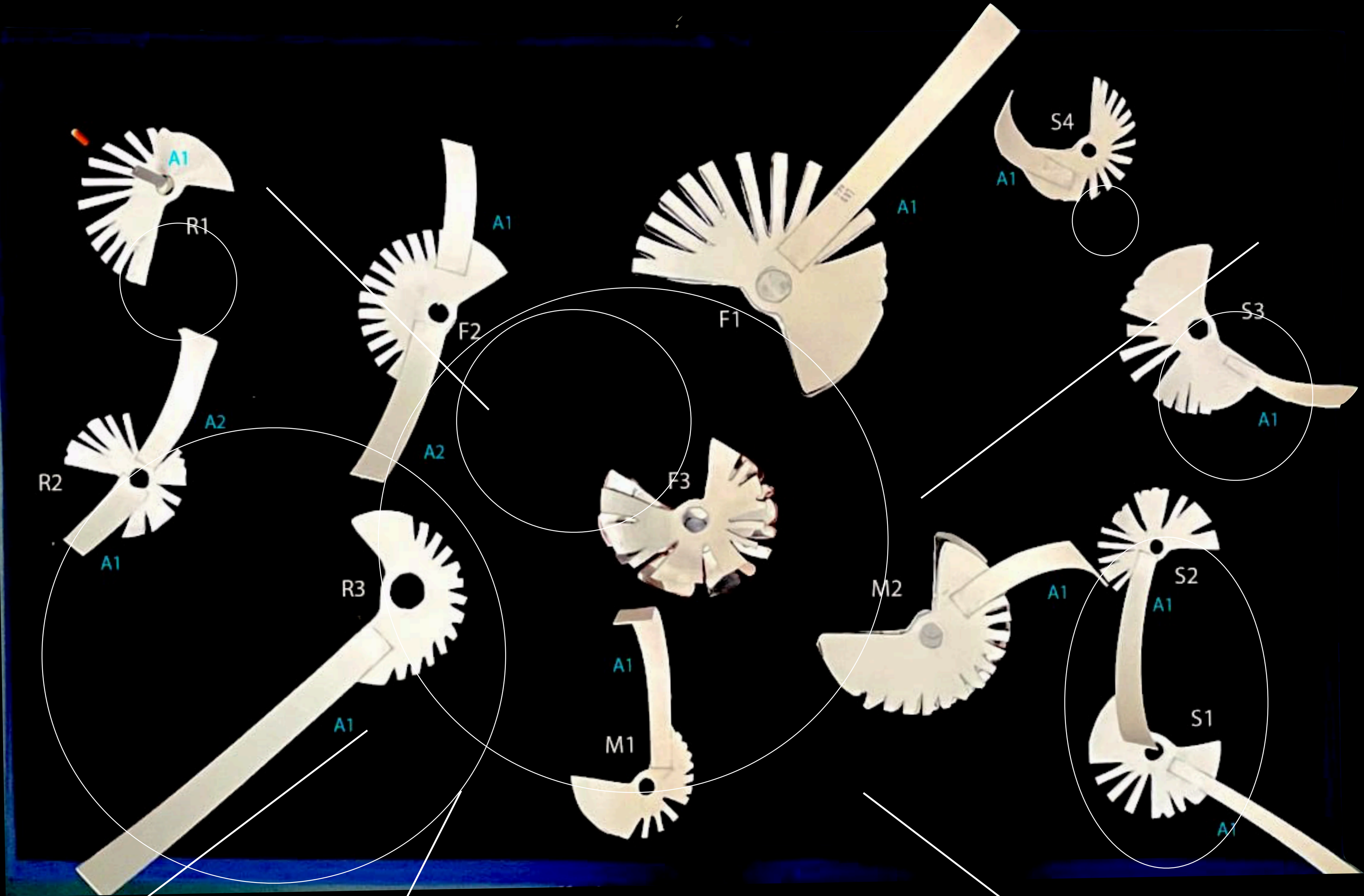
The memorial, in the best traditions of democracy, will act as a forum of forums.

Open and porous, with multiple points of arrival and departure, with no centre, no periphery, no margin, stitching an open canopy of the sky.

This disposition requires that the memorial act as a forum where conversation can be held and embraced. The largest conversations will occur on ceremonial occasions, such as the annual observance of the memory of the tragedy on 22nd July each year, where speech and dialogue will fill the air.

**A Forum of Forums
Dialogue and Recognition
Arrival and Departure
Shared canopy of the sky**



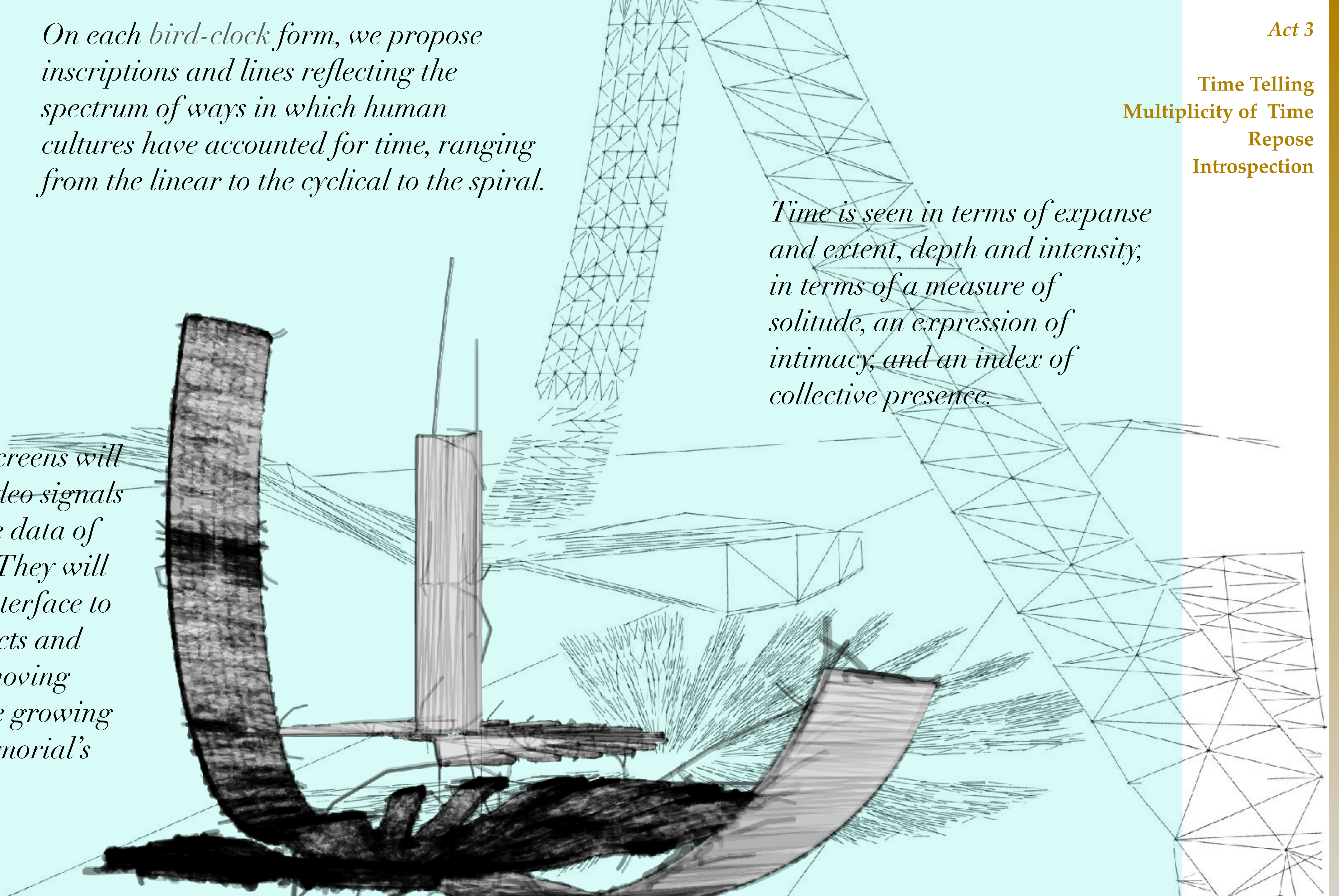


First maquette, April 20, 2025

On each bird-clock form, we propose inscriptions and lines reflecting the spectrum of ways in which human cultures have accounted for time, ranging from the linear to the cyclical to the spiral.

Time is seen in terms of expanse and extent, depth and intensity, in terms of a measure of solitude, an expression of intimacy, and an index of collective presence.

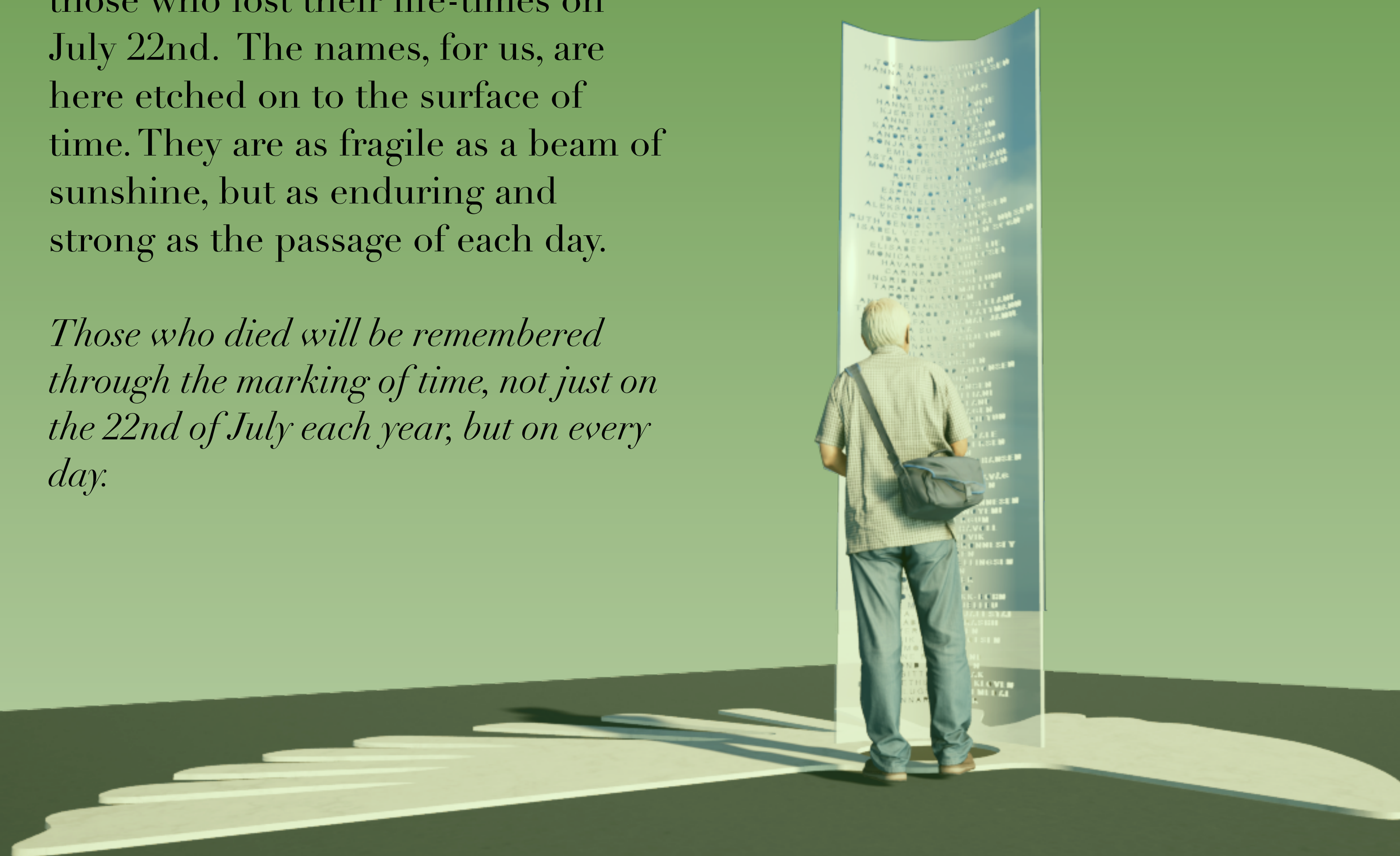
Two LED arc-screens will tell time with video signals connected to live data of wind and tides. They will also act as an interface to invite creative acts and expressions in moving images, from the growing group of the memorial's custodians.



Public & Personal Observance

The memorial offers a gesture that brings together remembering all those who lost their life-times on July 22nd. The names, for us, are here etched on to the surface of time. They are as fragile as a beam of sunshine, but as enduring and strong as the passage of each day.

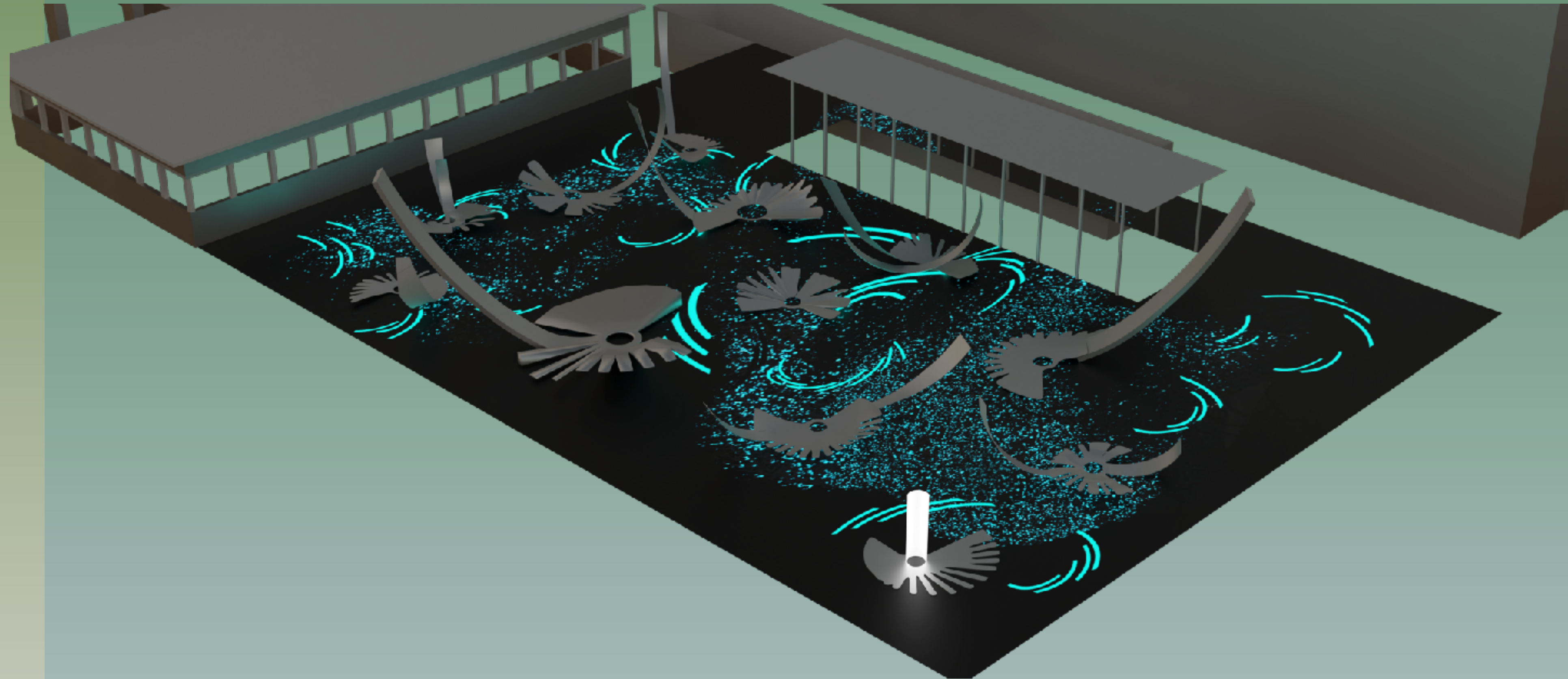
Those who died will be remembered through the marking of time, not just on the 22nd of July each year, but on every day.



The floor illumination evokes the pattern made by a murmuration of birds.
An echo of the metaphor of flight that pulses through the memorial.

Illuminated Murmuration
Collective Futures
Singular Memory

At night, in murmurations we find the force of emergence that transforms unpredictable coming together into things of beauty.



The time tides in the arc-screens will offer an intensity and vibrancy depending on the hour, and the 77 lines on the ground will offset this with their steadiness.



How do we think of a memorial after a rupture of constellations of time?
We make time itself the material of the act of remembrance.