

National Memorial
for 22 July 2011
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A sculptural place

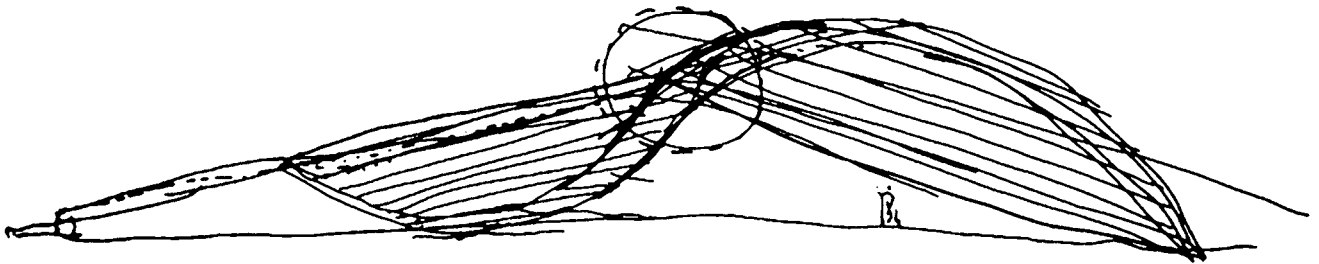
Creating a place that will remind us of the terror on 22 July 2011 at Utøya and Oslo's government quarter is in itself a task that, through the process of creating the place, must both provide room for experienced memories and anticipate future descriptions of memories.

For our part, the painful process has led to conversations about the society we live in that we would not have had without this task in front of us. All the preparatory lectures and presentations from those concerned and others, site visits, conversations with the organizer and other participants in the competition have somehow made the task manageable.

Nevertheless, there is still a degree of uncertainty in giving form to acts of terrorism, which in themselves do not have a concrete form. The dilemma of giving physical form to the terror is that the form can limit individual ideas about the act itself. This uncertainty has led us to believe that the relationship between people and the **place** must be at the center. This means that more than the symbolic value of an object is needed, regardless of how apt the symbolism may be. The place loses value without human interaction. The interaction between people and place must work from the day the memorial site is completed and for many generations to come.

We are looking for associative images, not symbolic ones.

The memorial should, therefore, have both a universal message and a specific one.



Where can we find the boundary between object and place?

A place has more relational dimensions to people than an object. The most direct interpretation can be to look at the limited location of the body in relation to an object as opposed to a larger number of locations in relation to a place. Where am I at all times?

The prepositions in language tell us where we are at any given time in relation to our surroundings and each other. We are **in**, **above**, **by**, **behind**, **around**, **under**, **between**, and **on**. We aim to create a sculpted place.

The prepositions can also tell us something about time and the relationship to time: "Darkness has descended **over** Oslo." At the same time, we distinguish between places where we are through the use of **in**, **on**, and **by**: in the city, on the island, or by the water.

In a more abstract form, the prepositions can also give us insight into how other words can work together: "We believe **in** peace."

The more prepositions that can be used to describe the relationship between humans and physical surroundings, the more clearly the environment appears as a **place**.

We want to achieve high interactivity between the place and people. At the memorial site, one can be at, in, under, in front of, on, and behind. The location of the body is also the location of the senses. This relationship is in perpetual motion.

The Good and the Bad

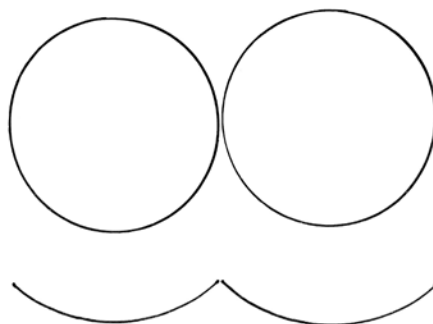
Initially, good and evil can have similar appearances. They might seemingly look the same. It is only when the intention is revealed and evil is practiced that the differences become clear: "A morally evil person is a free person who inflicts suffering on others against their will and without regard for their human dignity" (Lars Fr. H. Svendsen, *What is Evil?*).

When common values, human rights, democratic governance, agreements, and the law are distorted and become the opposite pole of our presumably common understanding of the good, expression and appearance change. However, parts of the similarity remain.

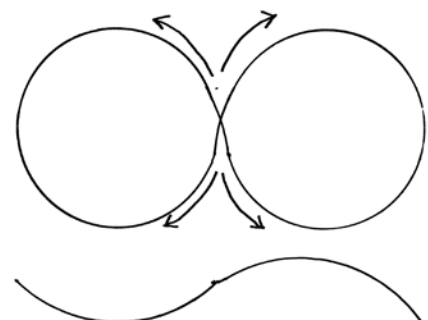
The Memorial Site

1. Two identical spherical forms are placed diagonally in a north-south direction, barely within the memorial site's plot boundary.
The forms are elements from the same spherical main shape. The circular movements contrast against the orthogonal and urban buildings surrounding the memorial site.
The forms are placed diagonally on the plot so that the main direction points towards the opening between the trees in the avenue and along Akersgata.

2. One form is turned upside down to create a vault as a roof over the entrance to the 22 July Center. The other remains a bowl open to the sky.
Due to the forces of gravity, the vault has had to empty all imaginary contents onto the ground. The bowl embraces visitors and whatever contents it may have at any given time.
The bowl's upper edge becomes the vault's lower edge, and vice versa. This infinite movement has no beginning and no end. The knot formed through the twisting between the forms is always in tension, and its ability to stabilize and support one another is crucial to the experience of the place. Without this transition, the two forms would fall apart and become unstable individually. Democracy is our common superstructure, and our governing institutions maintain the humane nature that we must defend at all times.



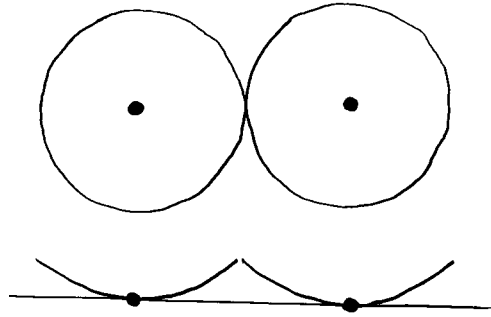
Two seemingly similar forms



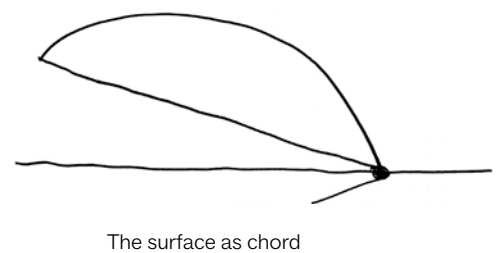
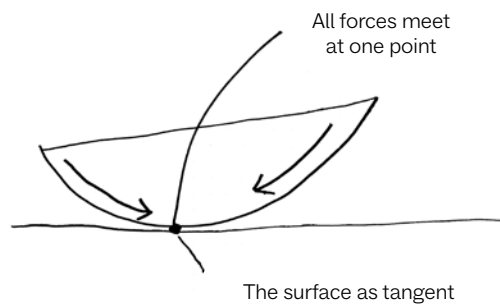
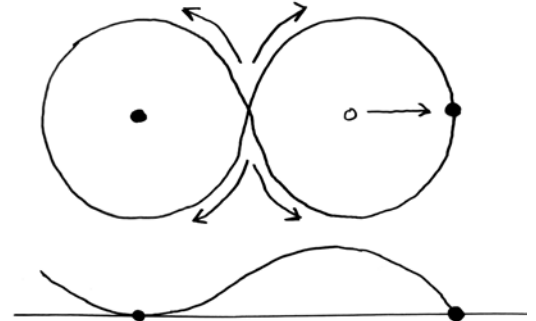
Two seemingly similar forms inverted

3. After the inversion, the contact points of the domes with the ground plane are surrounded by a large water mirror that covers the entire extent of the plot. The water surface acts as a reference surface and is an absolutely horizontal level.

Contact points before inversion



Contact points after inversion

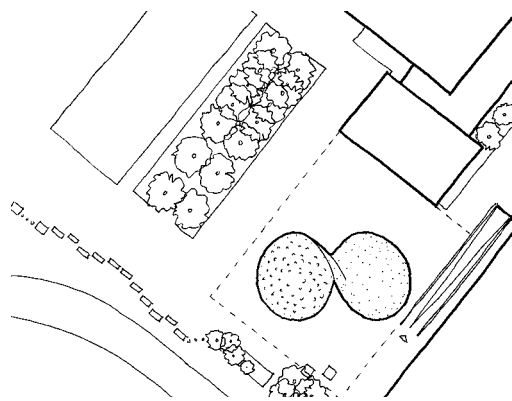
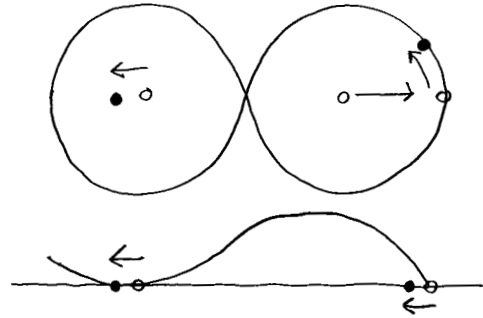


4. The bowl is tilted slightly up towards the meeting with the vault, shifting the meeting point with the water mirror out of the centre.

In the twist, the vault is stopped just before it has turned 180 degrees. This creates a tension between the forms where the twisting itself is the only connection. Both are out of symmetry.

The contact points are clearly mirrored in the water.

New contact points after adjusted positioning of forms



5. Footpath connections are created through the water mirror up to the entrance, with stairs and a lift to the 22 July Center. To link the sculpture and the entrance more closely, we propose reworking the planned entrance building.

At the same time, a corridor connection is established up to the entrance to the bowl. The actual opening into the bowl is still work in progress and has yet to be finally placed. We wish for the involvement of more people to find how this could best find its place. The entrance to the bowl is crucial to the experience of this room.



Materiality and Design

Materiality use has not been concluded. The outside of the forms are designed as hard surfaces with a rough texture. We have considered several types of metal: beaten, rolled, or cast. They must have a low degree of reflection but still give an impression of the color changes in the surroundings. The water surface must have a high degree of reflection and will, therefore, require a darker color at the bottom of the very shallow water layer.

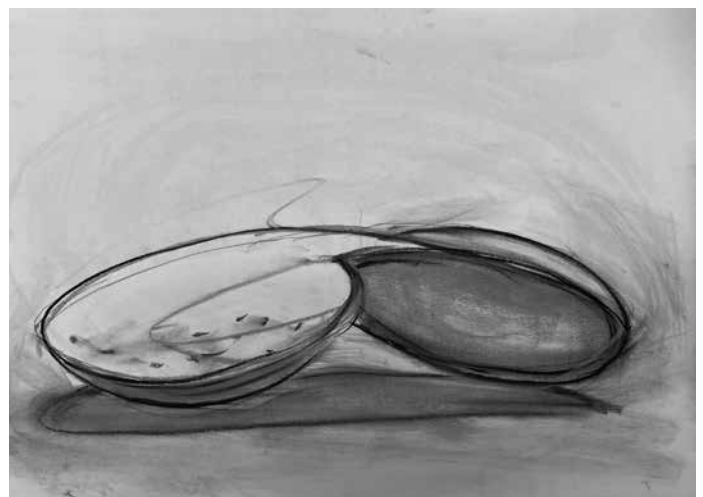
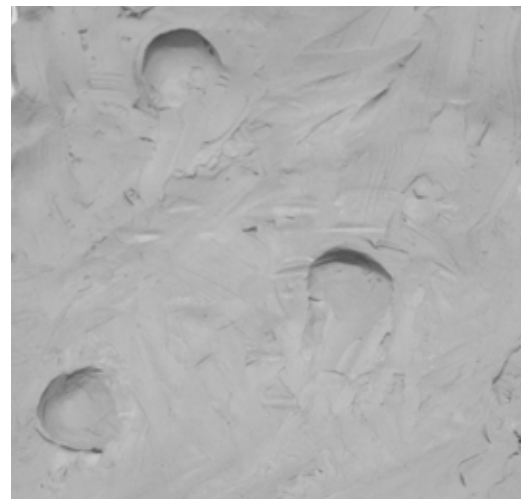
The inside of the forms is designed with a warmer and handmade surface.

We are investigating whether the insides could be sculpted in wood.

Wood is a resilient material carrying and transmitting an emotionally soft resilience that can protect against human misdeeds. Wood is an organic material that has lived and holds within it the history of its own life. As part of the sculpture and the maintenance process over time, we want to introduce maintaining the wood into a ritual.

In the bowl, which is open to the sky with a sloping end, 77 micro-sites are sculpted into the wood. Small seats that stand out among all the seating options in this outdoor space. The vault will have the same wooden underside as inside the bowl, but will be less sculpted and have a smoother surface.

Through the windows of the surrounding, higher buildings, one will be able to clearly read how the surface inside the bowl disappears into the vault and, conversely, how the underside of the bowl becomes the outer surface of the vault. The constant changes in the reflections in the water mirror will make every day unique.

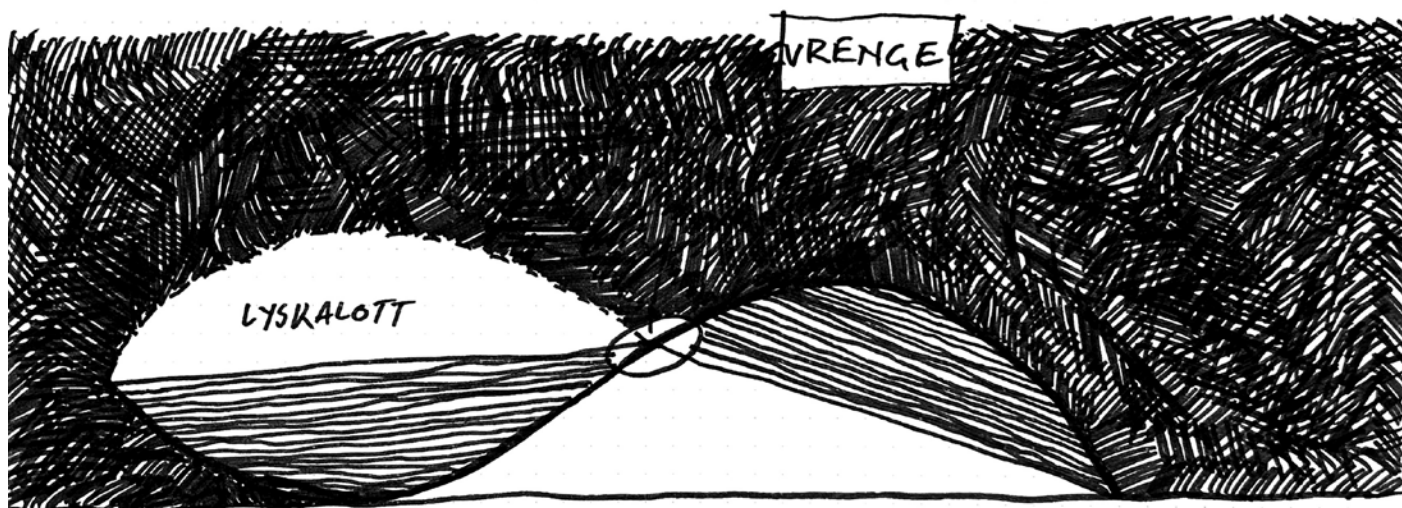
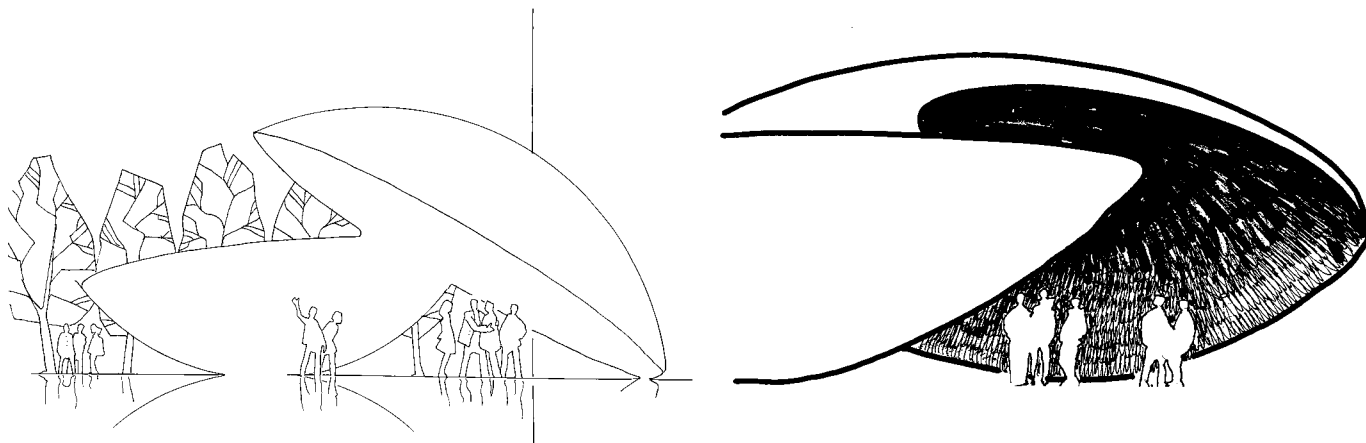


Summer and Winter, Night and Day

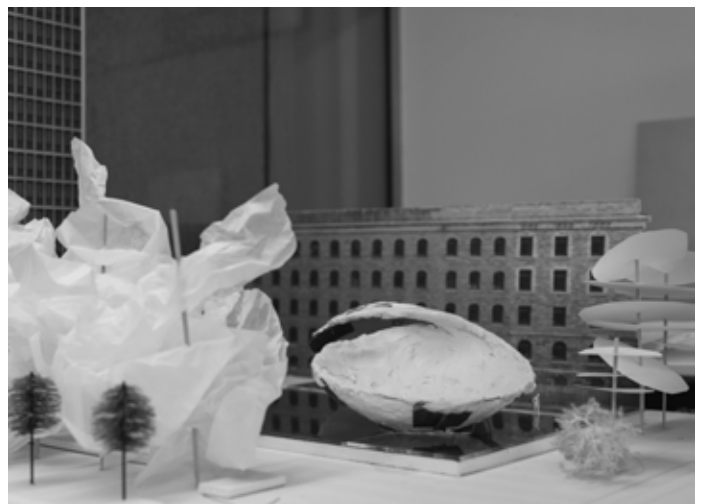
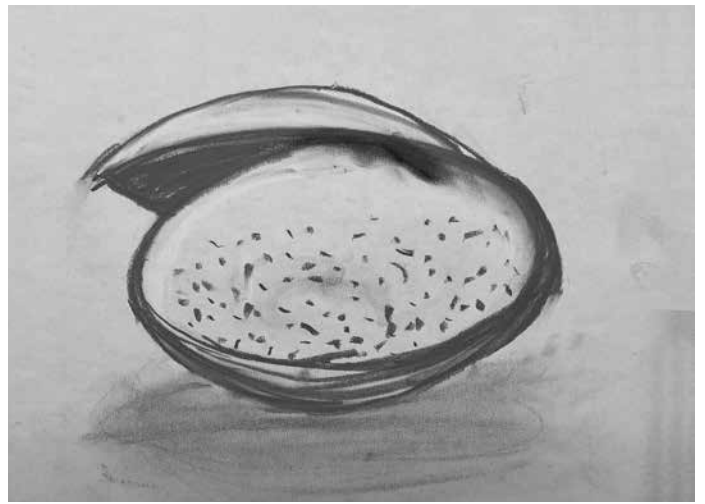
It is thought that the seasons will dominate with their characteristic features.

In winter, the snow stays in the bowl until it melts and flows out. Under the vault, the entrance is protected, and the snow remains on the surface of the vault. Access to the 22 July Center is secured and illuminated under the vault throughout the year. Especially in winter, the lighting and activation of the memorial site will be of great importance. Above the bowl, we plan a light volume with the same size and shape as the inside of the bowl. This immaterial twin forms the ceiling above this room in winter. It can be turned off to admire the starry sky. The water mirror can be emptied or frozen.

In the spring, the activity in the bowl will increase. We imagine that it will be open on special days for gatherings and smaller events that will increase in frequency until 22 July. In the same way, as in the spring, the autumn will gradually reduce the activity outside, and the focus will be to a greater extent on the 22 July Center and the vault above it.



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Epilogue

We have tried to make the memorial an inclusive place for everyone. Visitors can walk, stand, and lie under, in, and over both the forms that create the place. This intimacy between place and people is universal and gives a collective sense of ownership to the place. It can be touched and felt. Cognitive and emotional influences will be experienced individually and collectively. The two forms are themselves embracing through a reversed and eternal movement. One is open to the sky like a bowl; the other is turned upside down towards the ground like a protective vault. They are both equal in size and part of the same spherical shape. They are similar but opposite.

Visitors to the 22 July Center will enter under the vault to reach the entrance down to the space below. The bowl becomes a defined outdoor space for smaller gatherings and individual contemplation. Both are mirrored in a pool, which at the same time becomes the absolute horizontal surface contact between the bowl and the lowest point of the vault. The distorted image is forever controlled by our common, democratic, and moral values.



