

22nd July Memorial

A Proposal

Raqs Media Collective



The 22nd July Memorial is of deep significance to the world. In its intention and care, it speaks in more than one way, and in more than one language to the world.

It also poses a fundamental existential question: How can we think of a memorial that has to stand opposed to silence, confronting an act that wanted a lively, growing, society of many tongues, many sounds, and relationships to go silent?

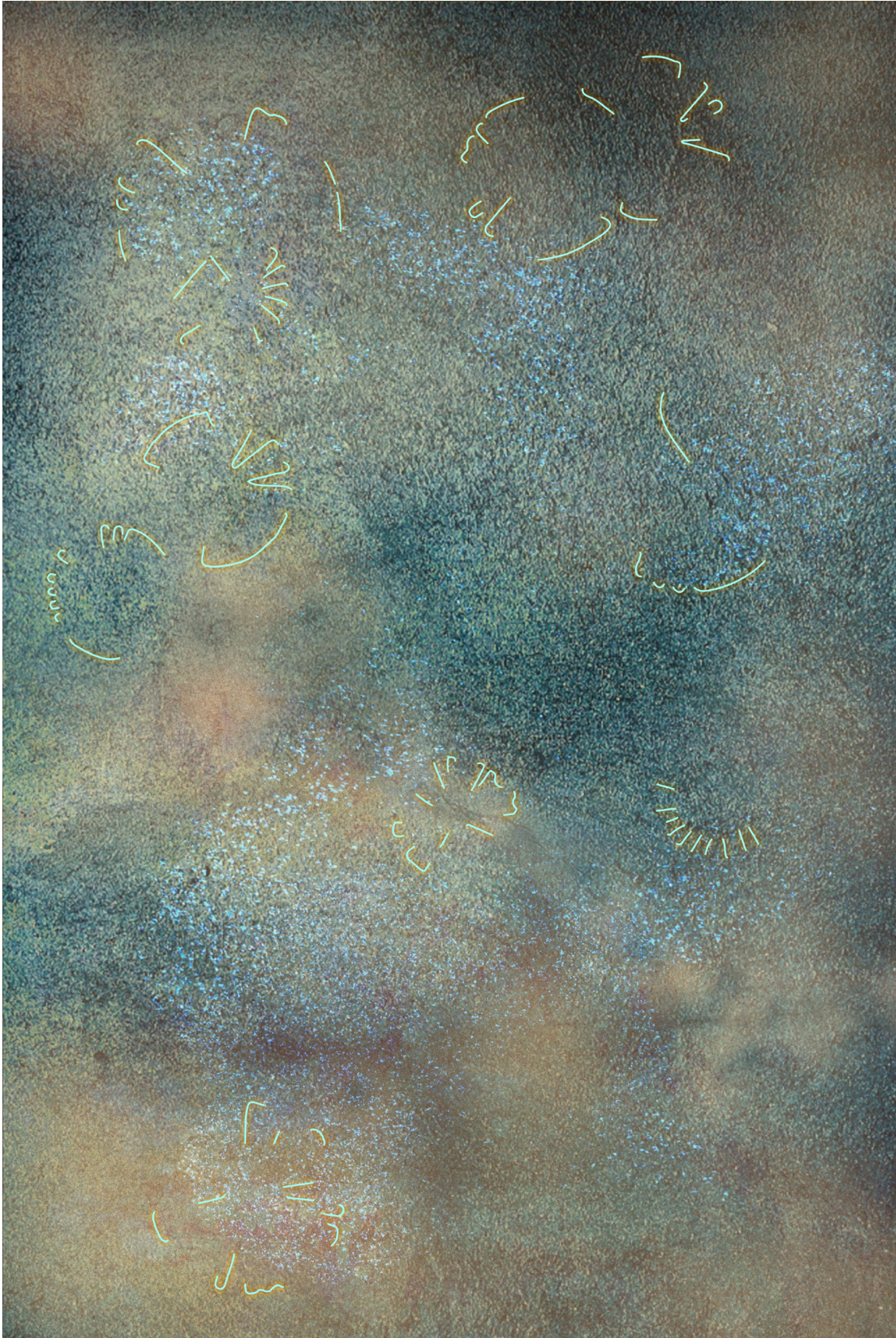
We want the Memorial to generate the affect of what we name as *polyphonic sobriety*. A place that can embrace a multitude, and equally where an individual can attain tranquillity and converse with personal grief. The Memorial can become a unique place that people from all over the world can gather in. Here, they can find expression for dormant grief, attend to the rustling murmur of their un-uttered speech, and address the deep necessity to connect across histories, and geographies.

As guests, we do not name our proposal. The day is of too large a significance to be named by us. Through our construct we offer a concept of a *time-oasis*. An oasis is a place that offers respite and beauty in a difficult time. We offer our proposition by making time itself the material of remembrance, an oasis of time.

To re-awaken memory is to reactivate pathways. The more something is remembered, the deeper the pathways become etched. When memories connect to further memories, recollections thicken.

Memory, we could say, is the scrawling map of this surge and swell.

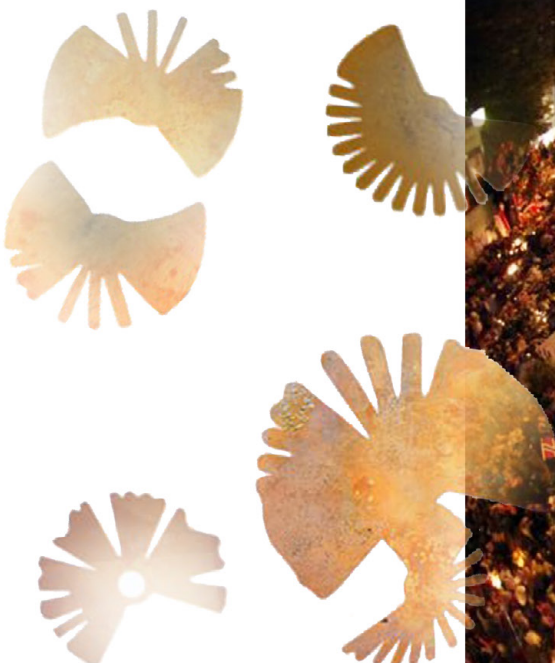
The effort against the erasure of a collective memory relies on the construction of structures and epitaphs as *concrete* bearers of memory's pathways. Memories are then able to flock, making new marks on the difficult and unstable surfaces of historical violence.



*Image: 77 Illuminated Memory Lines inlaid into the concrete ground.

Quotes from our conversations, with survivors and stakeholders:

- * If you had not come back that day I would not be here...
(by a child born exactly a year after 22 July 2011 to her Survivor-Mother)
- * I am a Time witness, my self-description keeps memory alive
(by a mother of a young woman who was killed at Utøya)
- * I want to feel a good sadness
(by a member of the 22 July support group)
- * I do not want to be re-traumatized
(by a civil servant who works in H-Block, overlooking the site.)
- * The experience of leaving the Memorial Centre and the Memorial Site should foreground a feeling of lightness and hope, not heaviness and remorse. But we should remember that this is a space that remembers a politics.
(by an AUF Member)
- * It takes years to love someone again when someone goes through such a moment of cruelty
(by a survivor and volunteer at the 22nd July Memorial Centre.)
- * The day after was a day of grief and a million flowers
(memories of many)



**Image: Bird-Clock Imprint*



**Image: Sea of flowers and light on July 25, 2011, Reuters/Fabrizio Bensch*

To deepen our response to this collective memory, we engaged with personal telling, and with repositories of images, narratives, and analysis spread across forums, platforms and people. We encountered an extraordinary range of felt experience. Haunting words were uttered and sentiments shared, as well of the memory

of a country's outpouring of flowers. And in all situations, people spoke of the urgency of confronting the cruelty of demagogues.

It is in this terrain of the inner life of singularities and collective grief that a memorial has to be able to touch lives, and etch yet newer pathways to an expanding *future of memory*.

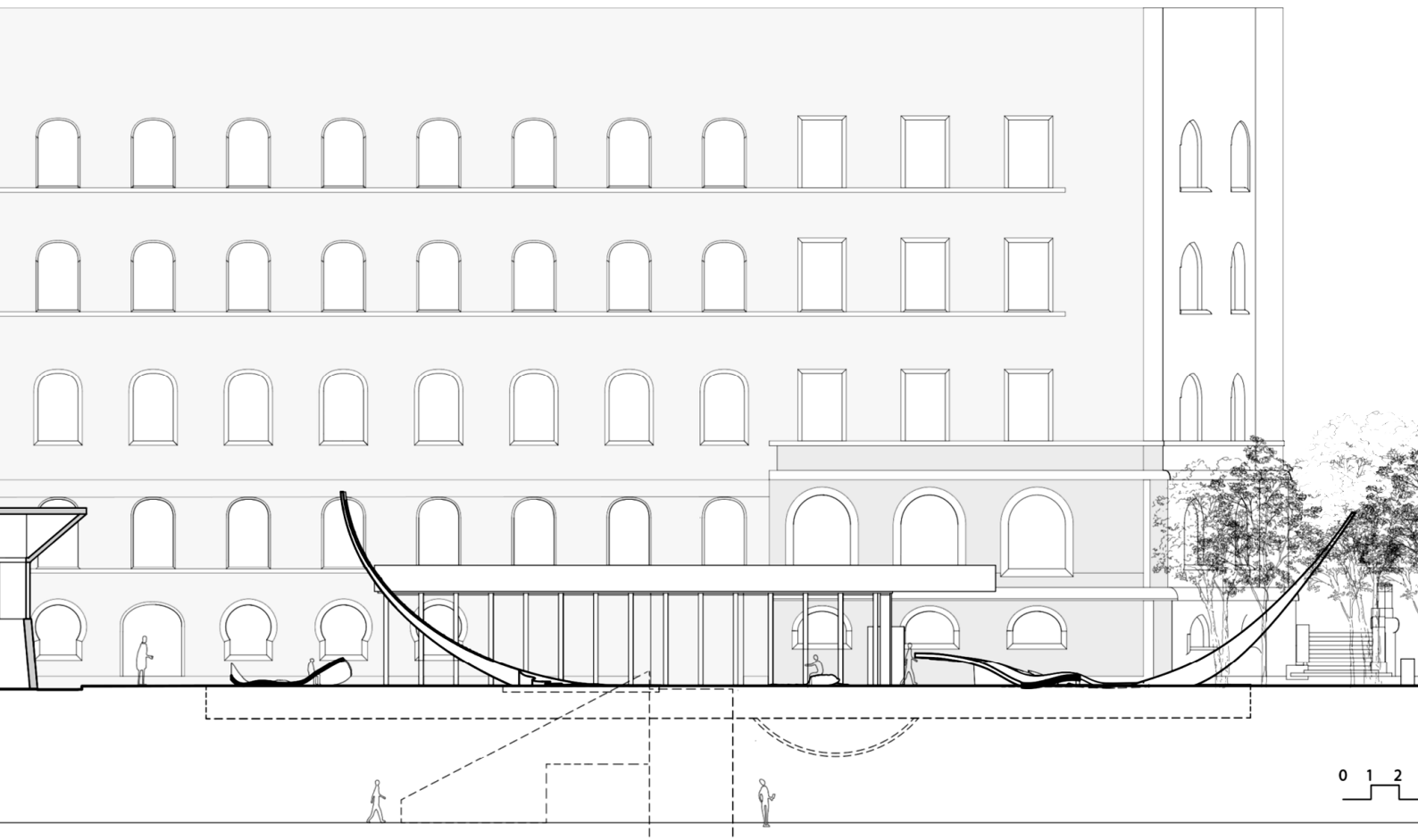


An imaginative expansiveness: embodiments of *jijivisha* (जिजीविषा), a word in Sanskrit evoking the intense desire to live even when one is in the midst of shock, injury, and death.

Over the years, memory lines become faint and discontinuous because the passing of years puts them in hibernation. They cannot be brought to life in the present merely by the act of recall.

That will not suffice to steer us into an understanding of the contestations that are at stake, or the complexity of lives struggling to speak. Memories are all intensities that travel in time. They layer, they obscure, and most importantly they make for entanglements.

Memory-lines seep into our time, resonate in our present conversations, talk to our future time, and dive into other worlds.





A memorial is an offering that transforms memory-lines so as to make strangers familiar to each other, and intelligible to the strangers yet to come (in the future).

In making a concept for the 22nd July Memorial, we sought to create a space that inspires acts akin to the offering of flowers: ephemeral in their mark, and enduring in their compassion.

*Are you my private sadness?
 Are you truly the sadness
 Of a single person?
 Is it conceivable
 that you are mine alone –
 For I cannot understand you
 except to think that you might be
 a secret sadness the flock
 has bidden with me?*

(late Taba Mobammed Ali)



*Shattered clock of Møllergata,
after the explosion*



*Unfurled wingspan of White Throated
Dipper/Fossekal, Norway's National Bird,
in a moment of flight.*



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 the embrace of memory-lines.

Each person is a constellation of, and in, time. So many trajectories, layers, and visions make a life, in each beating heart, in each breathing body. On that day, a violent rupture shattered so many possibilities, destroyed living constellations; it broke time.

We drew variations of the day, with the form of the broken clock as a start. We realized an uncanny resemblance between the clock hands and the wingspan of a bird in flight. That became the icon of the moment for us.

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, our collective tomorrow.



3 - 4 m



4 - 7 m



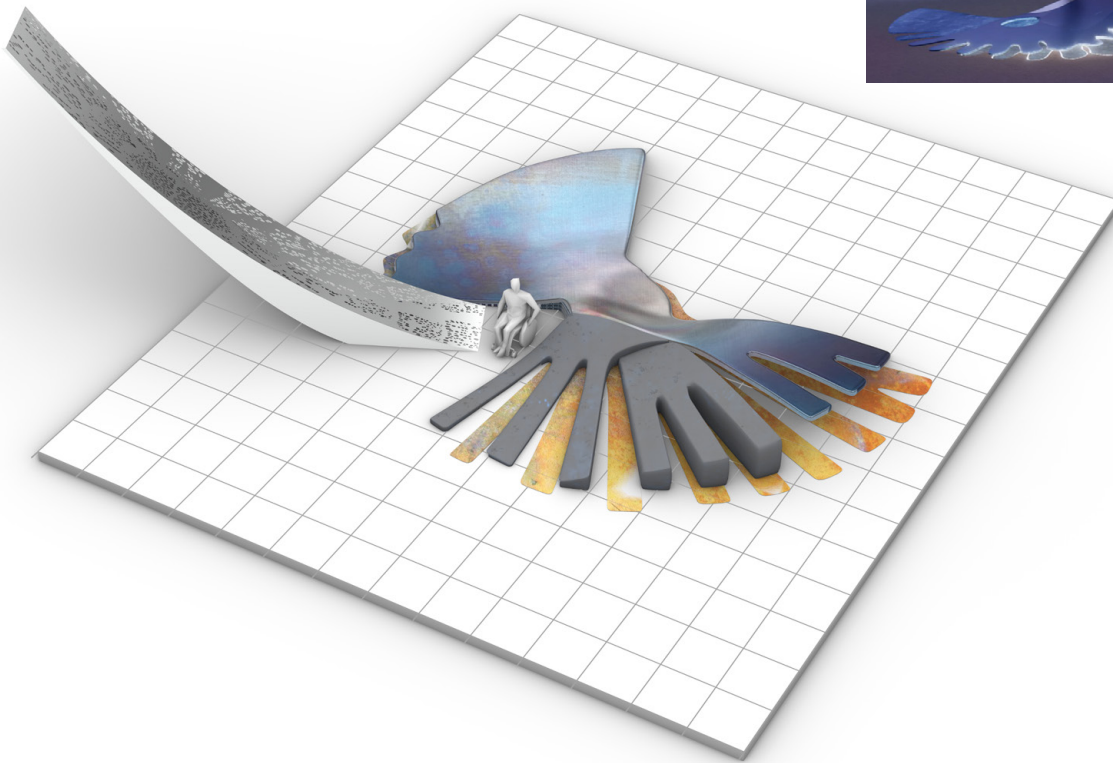
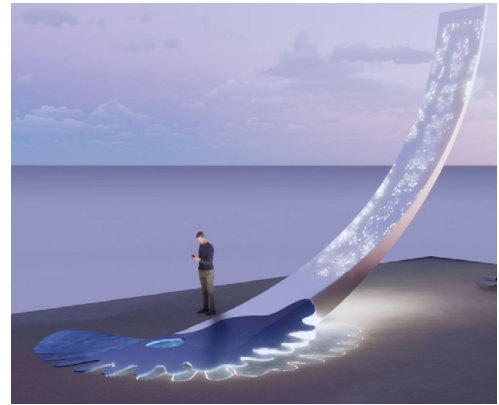
7 - 9.5 m



Jantar Mantar
Astronomical Observatory 18th
Century CE, Delhi
Time Keeping Devices

We all know that in the days of our lives some hours feel longer, some hours become fused with others, some are shorter, some are swift – this is how life is lived. 24 hours are different in experience for each person and each day. Living is an overflow of time, in the past, present and in the future. The broken and missing part of the clock-face however can no longer be measured in hours. Life-times have been taken away, and brutally halted in their journey.

Our bird-forms are each expressing both the fact that the cut part can never be replaced, and that the hours are felt differently. They do a double-act of acknowledging what is missing of those gone away, and the experience of lived time for those of us in the present.



The bird-clocks offer another specific double act of time too, through their shadows on the ground.

These shadow-imprints are the shadow of the day-after of the event. They carry the warm tones reminding us of flowers that were offered in the millions. They carry the limit of time that the day left as a shadow on the ground.

The bird-forms elevate from the imprint towards the sky, they offer flight with the strength drawn from moments of collective endurance.



The Conference of the Birds
Farid-ud-Din 'Attar,
12th Century CE, Iran
A Flock of Birds
Becomes a Parable for Democracy

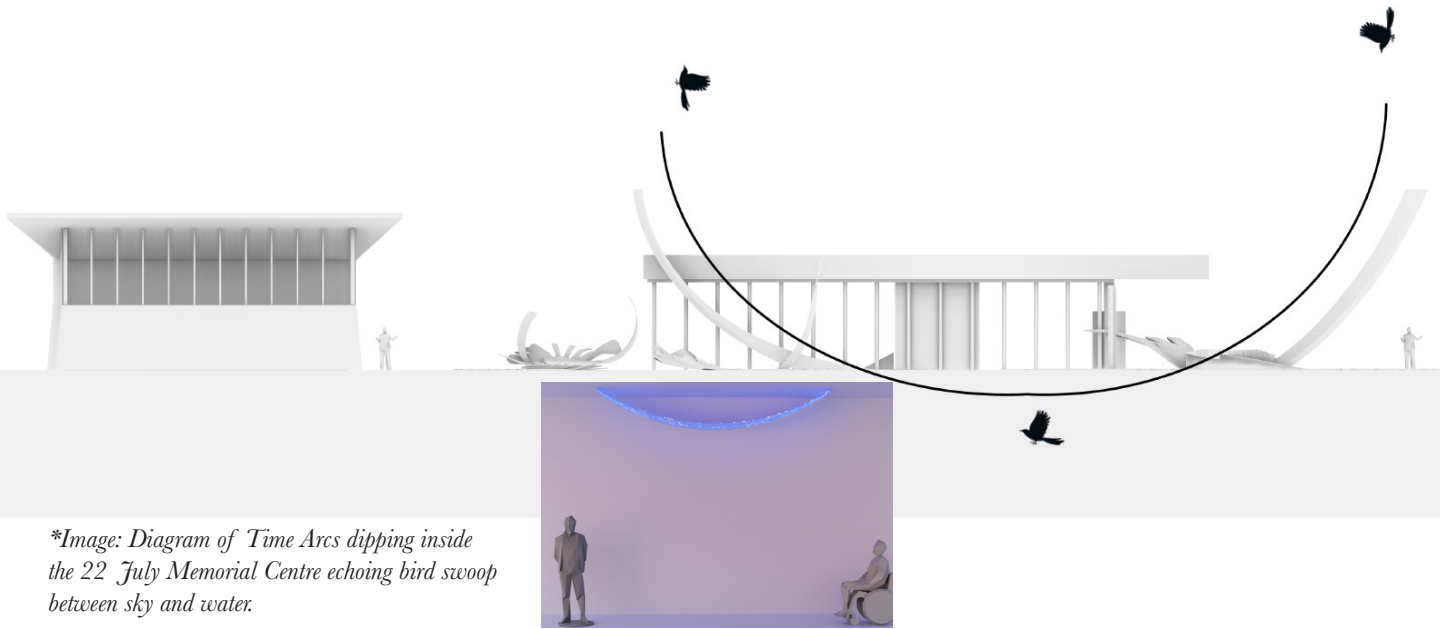
**Image: Congregation of 200 people on a summer afternoon*

In different mythological traditions, birds tell direction, they offer visions, they gather and fly together. They are messengers, migrants and travelers par excellence. We are thinking of the number of people of different ethnicities and nationalities, from Iraq, Turkey, Kurdistan, Somalia, Nigeria, India, Sri Lanka, Georgia, Thailand and other places, who, together with ethnic Norwegians, made up those who died and those who survived the 22nd of July.

The proposal for the memorial expresses itself as an arena that welcomes speech and dialogue as it builds on collective remembrance and introspection. It becomes a place that brings people together into relationships of mutual recognition and respect – and into wonder at the possibilities of common futures.

It is a form that the world can listen to, and echo, and share. There is no hierarchy of ways of being in this place. Nor is the space oriented in any hierarchical axis of front and rear, or centre and margin. It is possible to walk a few steps, in any direction, from anywhere in the space, and still meet an arc, a marvel, and reflect on one's own presence.

In the best traditions of democracy, it is in fact best seen as a forum of forums, with micro-forums within it. 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.



**Image: Diagram of Time Arcs dipping inside the 22 July Memorial Centre echoing bird swoop between sky and water.*

Our clocks are also birds, and our birds are also clocks. Clocks speak to time, birds are creatures of the air, as well as the ground. Their ascent and descent connect earth, water, sky. They soar and they dive.

Our bird-clocks too, soar, and dive.

The 'arc' of the dive breaks through the ground and forms an illuminated curve that extends into the general area (behind the admissions desk) of the 22nd July Memorial Centre that is situated underneath the memorial site itself. This curve is LED screen, suspended from the ceiling of the Memorial Centre.

This curve of the dive is also a bridge between the Memorial and the Memorial Centre, between what is under the ground, what is on the ground, and what soars above the ground into the sky. It is a bridge between swooping down, a dive to the ground and a soar up, and a moment under (both ground and water).

The flexible P4 LED RGB mesh that closes the 'dive' curves in a glowing arc on the ceiling of the Memorial Centre. Visitors to the Memorial Centre can look up from the necessary density of ideas and information to a luminous accent that transports them with beautiful animation, using nature metaphors, including tide and weather patterns.

**Image: Late evening in Spring*



Someday in the proximate future, a civil servant will look down from the H-Block high-rise at the memorial, and as snow falls on its forms, he will be reminded that the vigilance it takes to keep a society open, to make democracy, is not only a form of government but the substance of everyday life.

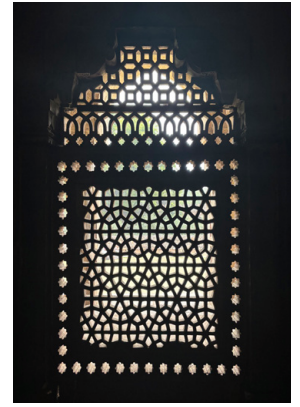
Jaali/ Mesh

All the arcs are laser-cut with jaali, inspired by a characteristic feature of traditional and modern buildings in Delhi. A jaali (jali, meaning “net”) is the term for a latticed screen, with an ornamental pattern constructed through the use of calligraphy, geometry or natural patterns. In the case of our time-arcs, the pattern comes from the channels of flow of life-matter in plants.

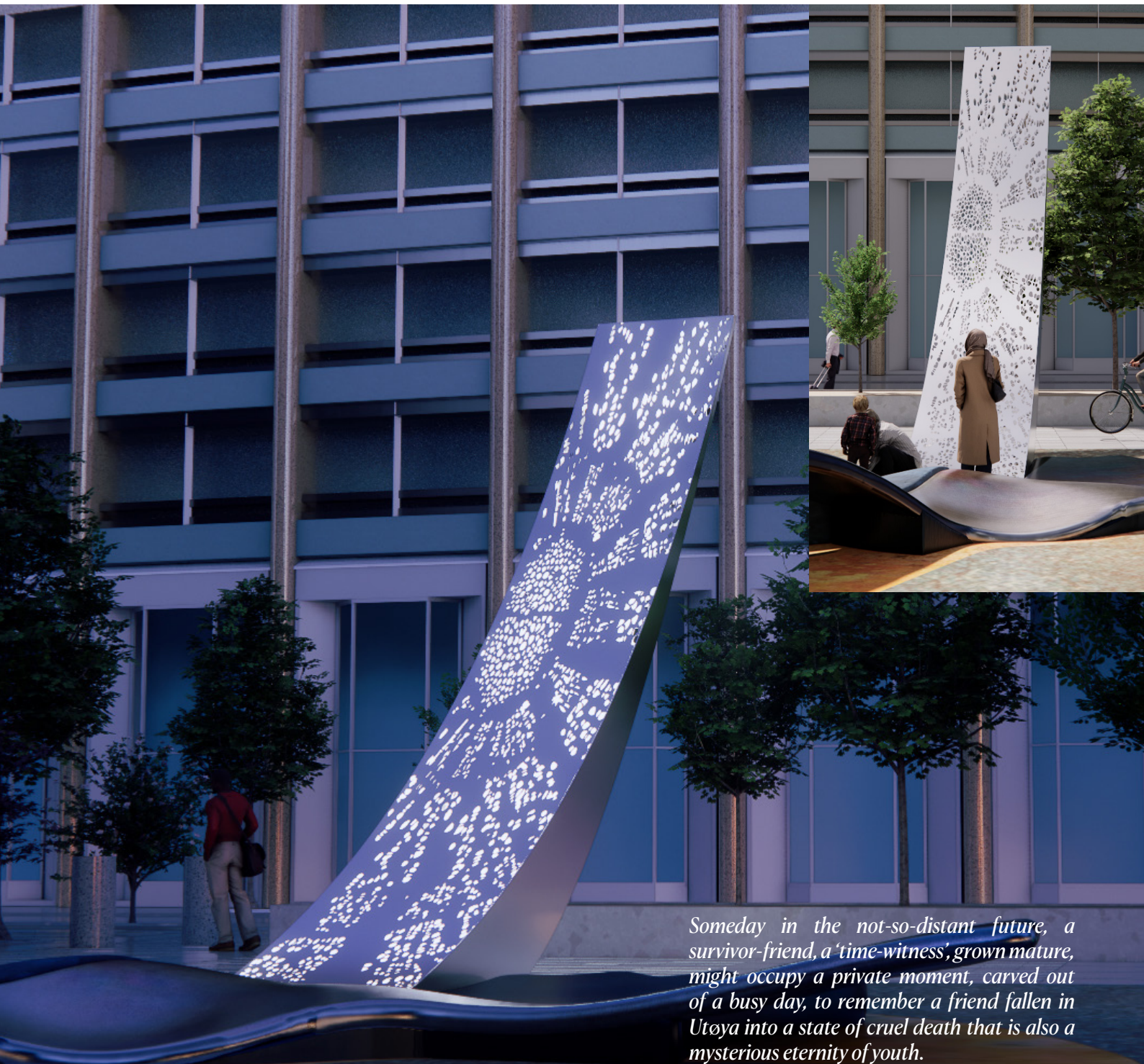
Jaalis let air in, they help structures breathe. Porosity permits structures to be stronger.

This holds too for societies.

They also make for a play of light and shadow: in the day with sunlight, and at night with an inner glow, lit by a careful placement of LEDs that come on as light falls. The jaali-arcs are made of aluminium, using a metal that is light and the form soaring - the affective experience of the work.



Window screens in Mortar
16th Century CE, Delhi
Surface and Light



Someday in the not-so-distant future, a survivor-friend, a 'time-witness', grown mature, might occupy a private moment, carved out of a busy day, to remember a friend fallen in Utøya into a state of cruel death that is also a mysterious eternity of youth.

**Image: Illuminated laser-cut aluminium Time Arc at night.*

Concrete

The ground of the memorial is made from concrete that expresses earth (ochre, the world's oldest pigment) and water (blues of Norwegian water and sky). This will be flecked with mica, that gleams in the light and adds depth to colour. The concrete will also contain Ringerike stone - calcareous shale - which is found on the ground of Utøya. Often, this stone features fossils - graptolite, mollusc fragments, a few partially preserved trilobites. From these, it can be inferred that the stone dates to the lower Paleozoic. The mixing in of this material will be a subtle gesture, endowing the site with a profound temporal depth. It will be another play with time.

Part of the bird-clocks will also be made with concrete. The concrete parts will be where people can sit on, and it will have a smooth surface that invites touch. The way the concrete will curve will assure the eye of its strength, and welcome the bodies of the visitors.

Concrete is in consonance with 20th Century Norwegian traditions, and is closely connected to the architectural history of the Government Quarter.

The concrete surface will change over time, leading to a 'fading', and will have a patina over the years. If desired, it can be easily renewed through a simple treatment that will refresh the concrete.

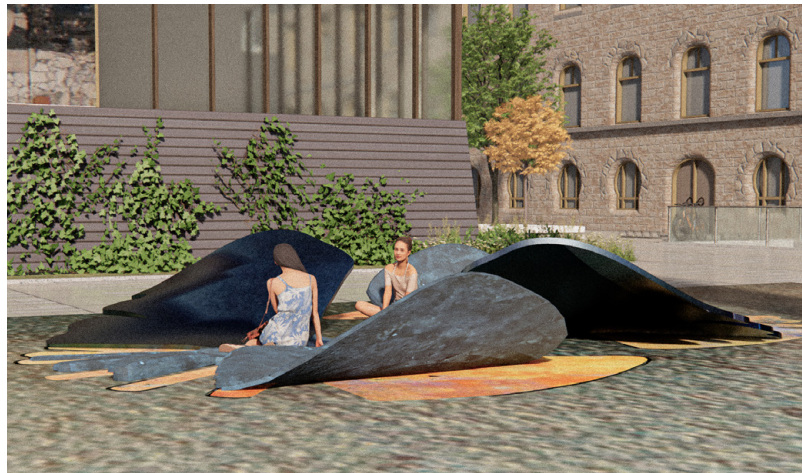
This 'mutability' of the concrete can be seen as a metaphor for memory – the future will decide whether to allow the fade and patina, or to re-cover the forms with a new layer. Every future reflects on the past.



Ringerike Stone from Utøya



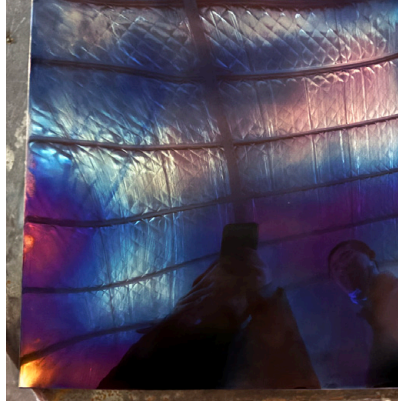
Experiments with Pours & Mixes



**Images: Concrete forms*

One day, a bereaved parent, sister, brother, lover will find solace in leaving flowers, again, in a private ritual on the birthday of a lost beloved, at the foot of an arc soaring into the sky. Grief, never forsaken, could mellow over time.

Blue



(We have tested the metal forms (burnished steel) with a global production agency and it is realisable within the resources allocated).



Someday in the coming future, a memorial could also become a means to heal the past, take responsibility for the present, and embrace the future.

**Image: Profile image of the largest Bird-Clock & Time Arc*

With blue we propose a threshold state that refuses given divisions in life. Like twilight, it encompasses both day and night, both life and submergence.

We intend to make parts of the bird-clocks with heat-treated steel. The heat-treatment turns steel an azure blue, again invoking a sense of the aerial and the marine – two elements that so abundantly express the horizon.

Heat-treated steel has added resilience and strength by having been tempered by fire. Norwegian society was tempered by the events of 22 July.

We are also testing samples with blue pigments and ground stone to arrive at an expressive blue in the concrete of the bird-clocks.

Name-Stele



**Image: Name-Stele*

One day in the uncertain future, a group of students and their teacher, having understood and discussed everything they received in the 22nd July Centre, will stand at the memorial for a deeply felt epiphany regarding the vitality of an open society.



**Image: Illuminated Name-Stele viewed from Linden Alley at night.*

The Name-Stele is a unique form in the space. It is inspired by a gnomon - a sundial. On its curving embrace are etched the 77 names of those who lost their lives on that fateful day. Made of creamy Norwegian marble, it will hold care, and the names will glow in both day and night. A thin metal sheet embedded within will make sure that the names are easy to read.

The font we will use to carve the names in marble is 'Leif', a font designed by a Norwegian Type Foundry - Norske Skriftkompani. The names, for us, are here etched on to the surface of time. Inspired by the idea of the passing light of time, they are as delicate and 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 every day.

The ground of the Memorial will be etched with 77 forms (one for each life lost), echoing the bird-clocks. These, as well as the lighting of the Name-Stele, will use LED lighting channels, with sensors to respond to light conditions. The designing has been done keeping in mind that lamp fixtures can be changed when needed.

As light will fall, the space will be a luminous zone, the night a time of dreaming and reflection.

Within the space, circuits and routes make themselves known intuitively. Navigating from one formation to another is a transition along tonalities in which the body will find itself modulating between specific features as well as the entire experience of the space. The differentiated permeability of the site, and of how bodies interact within it, is expressed in form as well as realised as affect. Flows - in space, with people - permit life-forces to be expressed.

We flow to you from Delhi, a city with its own overlapping shadow of histories of sectarian

polarisation of different kinds. Some of the hatred that we have heard in our cities even made its way into the pages that framed the unspeakable acts of the 22nd of July, 2011.

Narratives and histories are distorted and deployed to fuel animosities with genocidal impulses. It is equally important for us that the 22nd July Memorial be a pivotal reminder that people - in movement, diverse but with a shared destination in a collective tomorrow - constitute both the living present and the future of living in the world today.

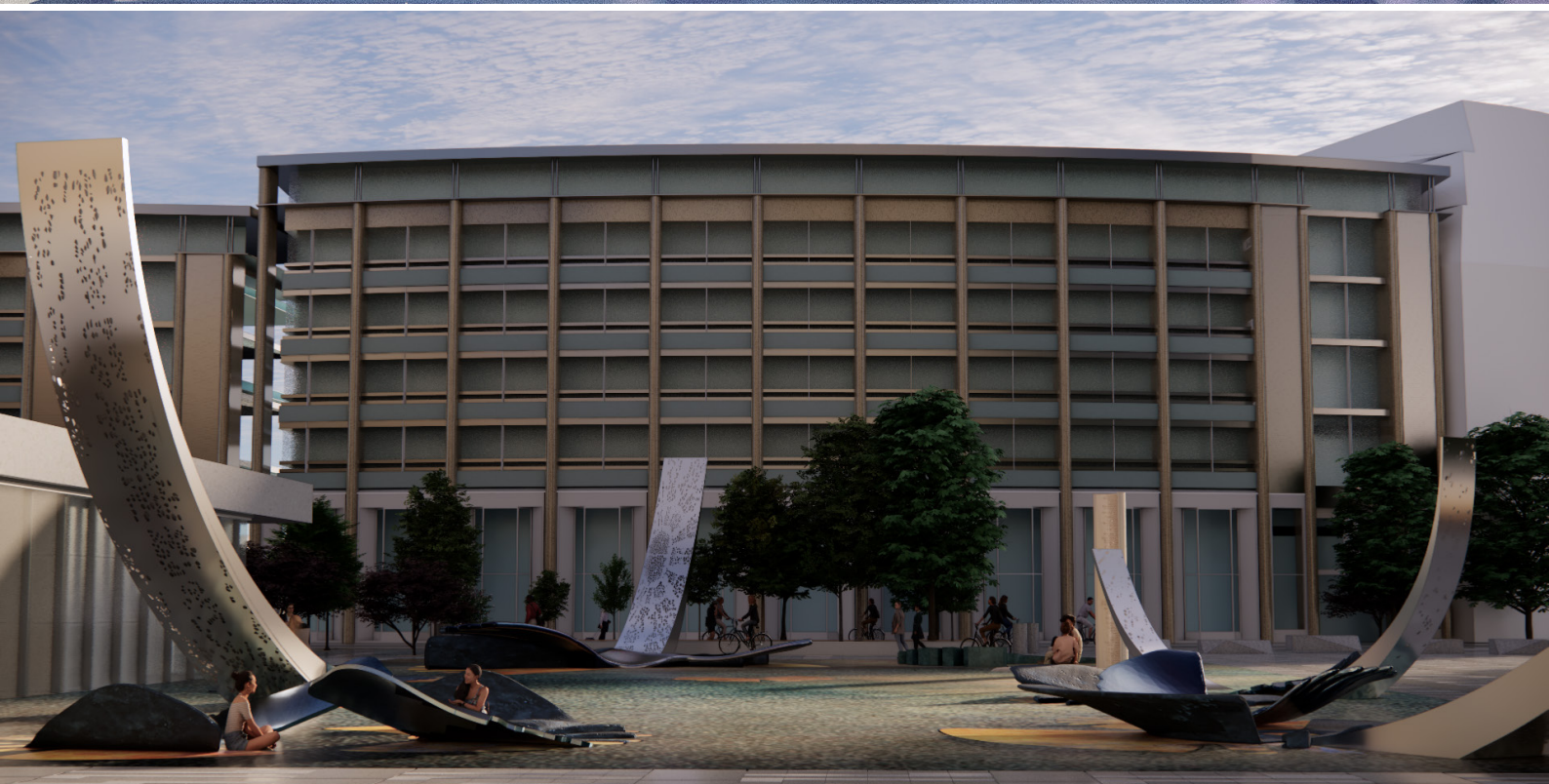


Image: The memorial viewed from direction of the Remembrance Room

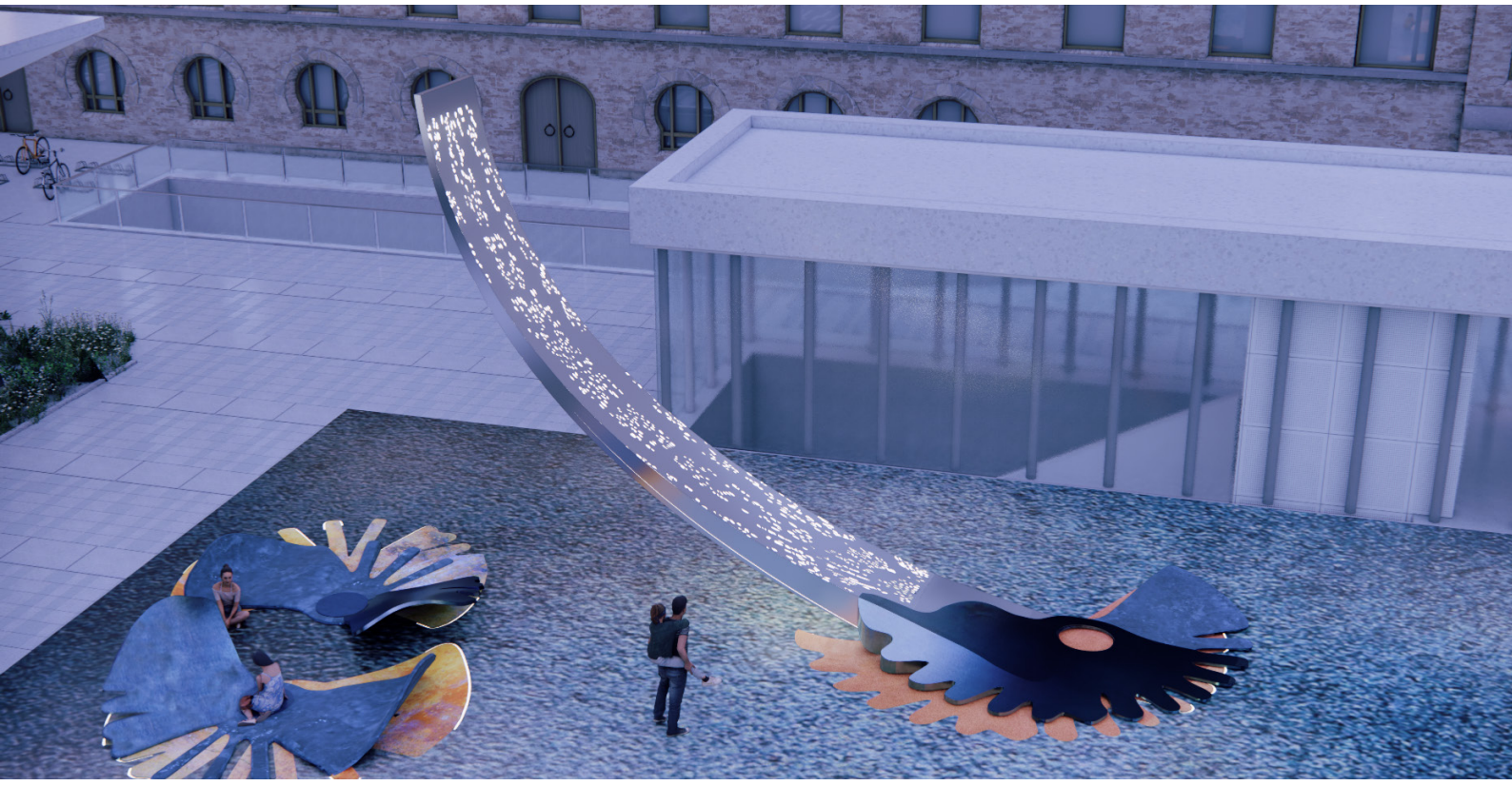
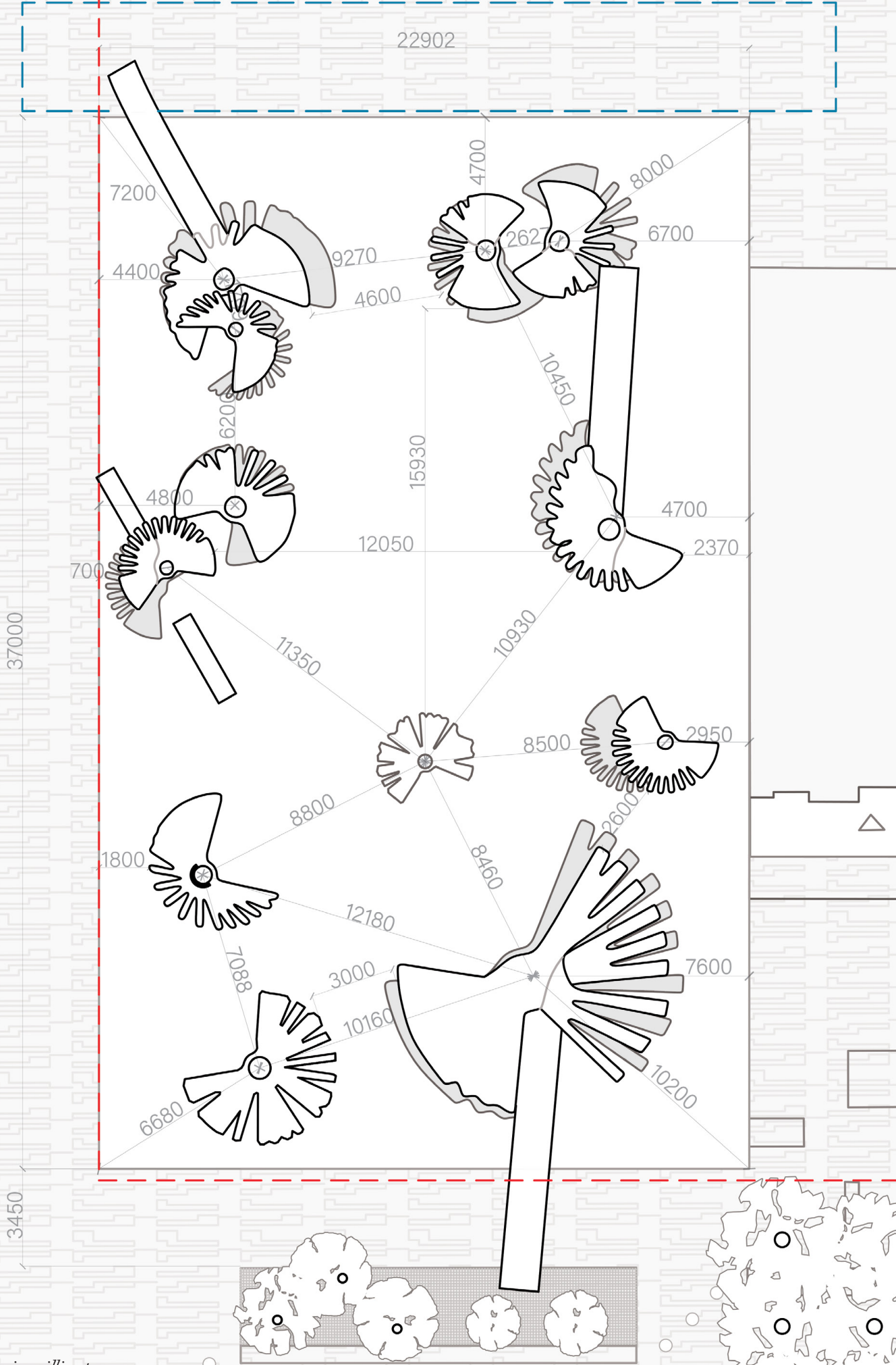


Image: Bird clocks, illuminated memory lines, Time Arc at late evening



Someday in the near future, a visitor to the 22nd July Memorial site in Oslo, may find herself able to pause in a site dedicated to the memory of a tragedy and celebrate the gift of being in an open society, a welcoming country, and a friendly city.



all measures in millimeter.



Image: All Elevated Metal & Concrete Bird-Clocks, Marble Stele & Aluminium Time Arcs

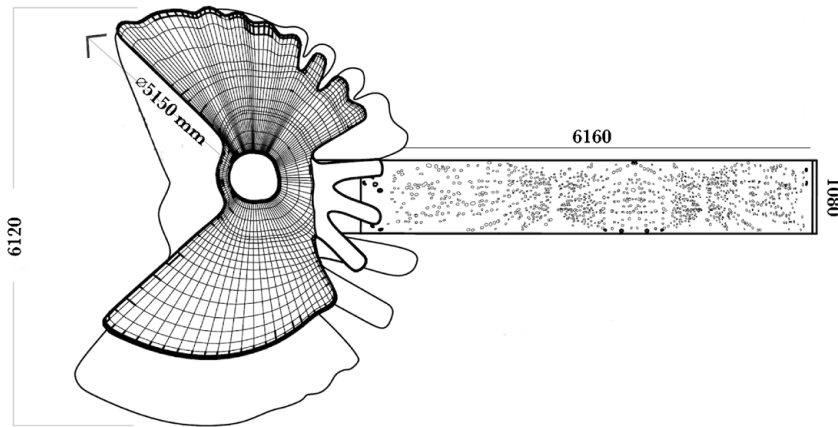


Image: Detail, Bird Clock & Time Arc with Jaali perforations.



Image: Ochre Imprints

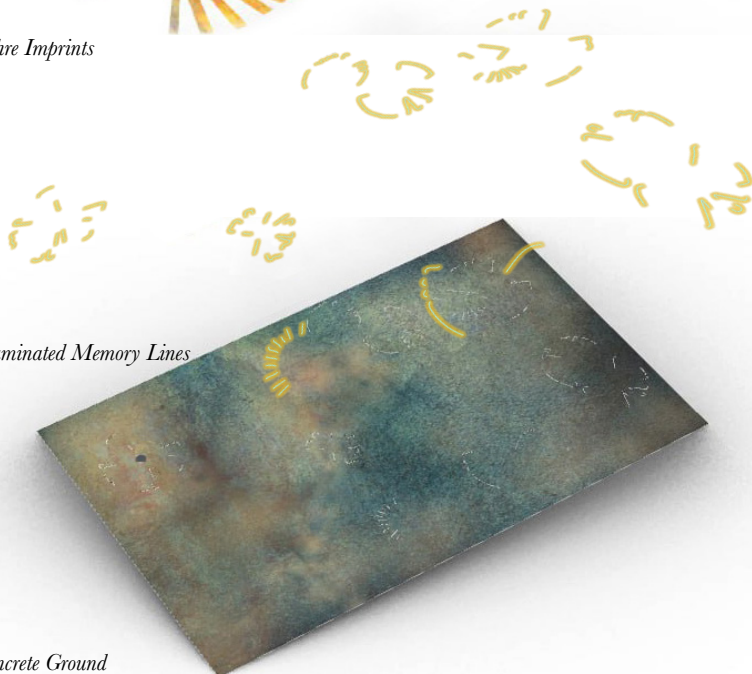
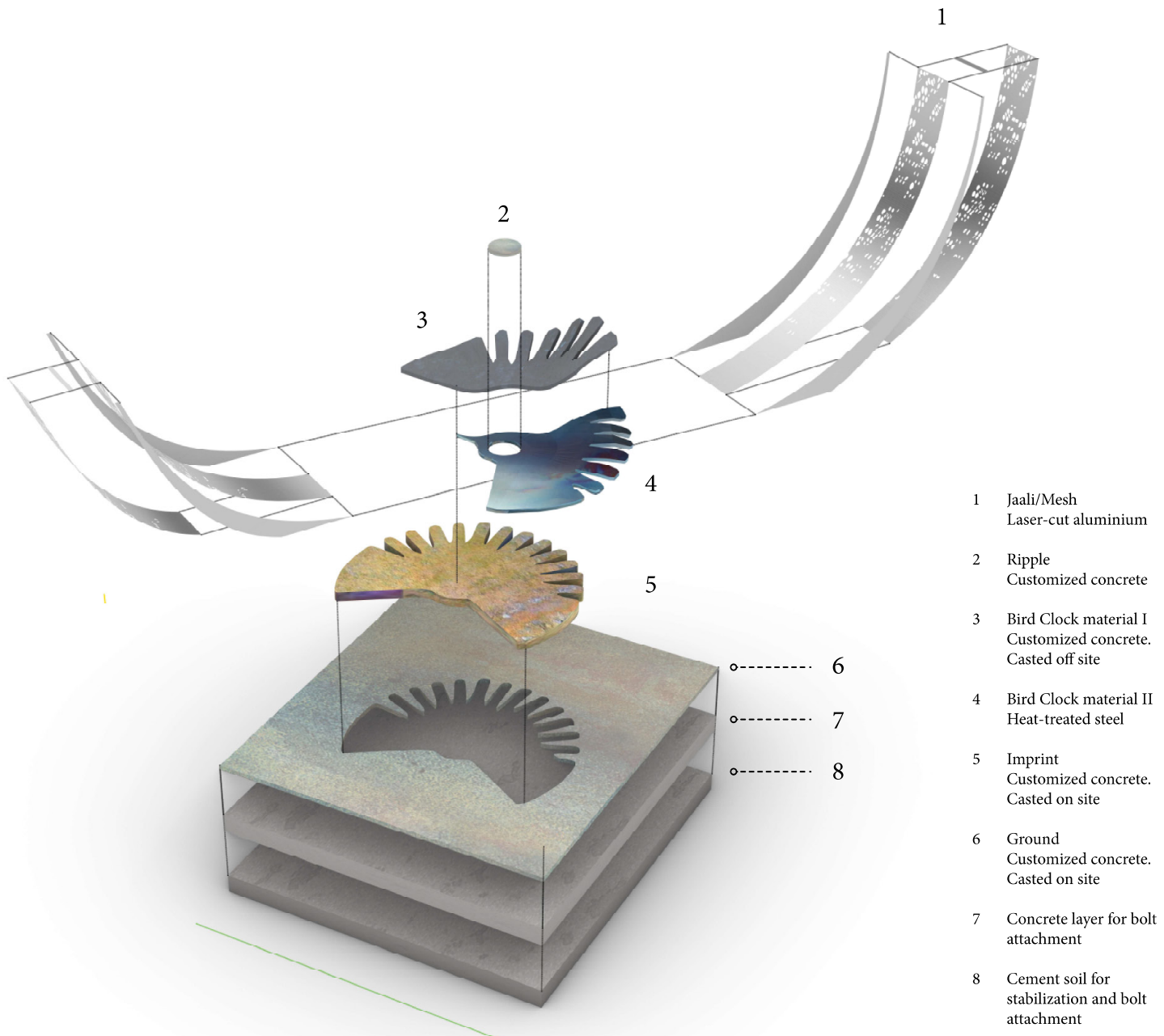
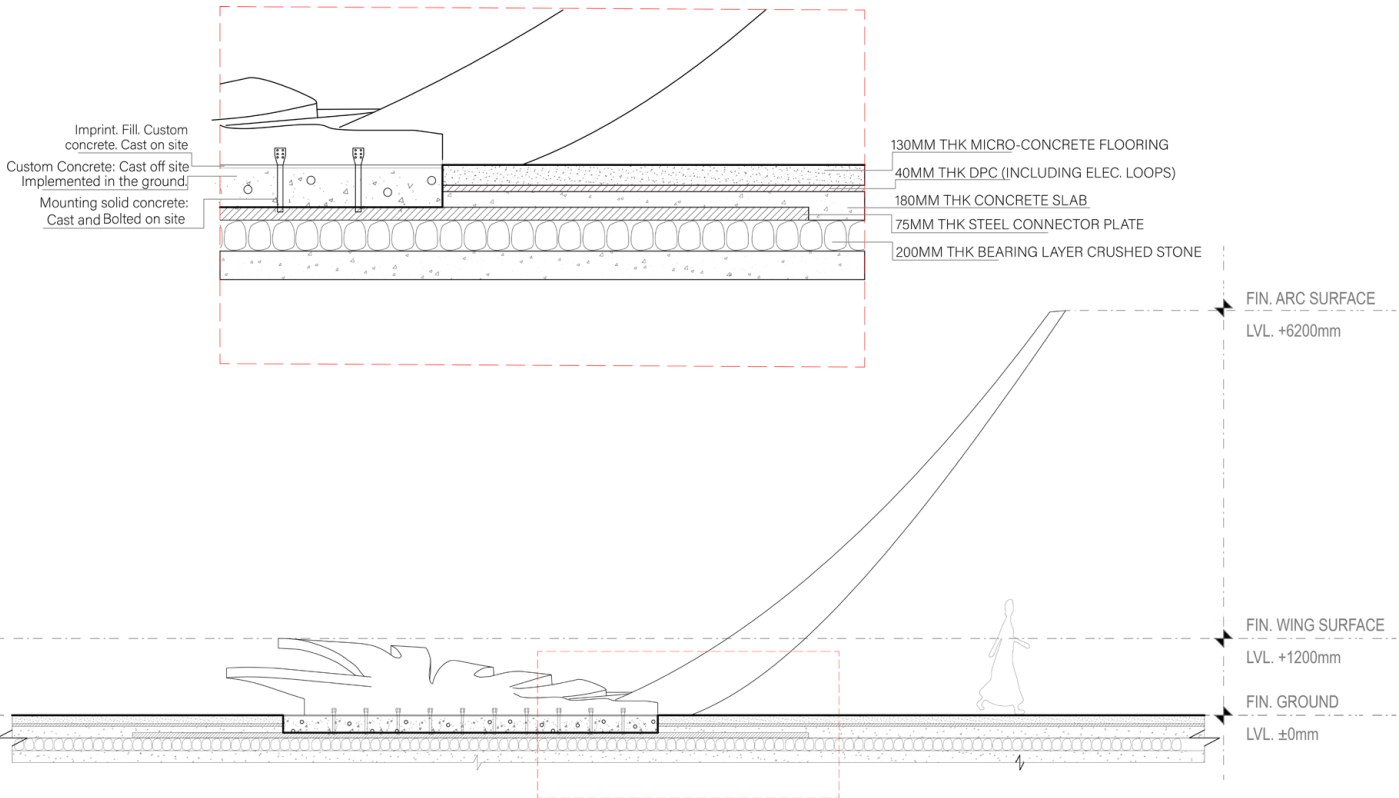


Image: Illuminated Memory Lines

Image: Concrete Ground

Constituents

- Twelve (12) bird-clocks, of varying heights (from flush on the ground to rising as high as 6 meters.)
- Seven bird-clocks, made of concrete and metal, are elevated, with rounded edges, suitable for sitting on.
- Two bird-clocks are concrete imprints on ground - one is flat, and the other rises to sitting elevation.
- All the bird-clocks have a shadow-imprint. The colours of the shadows are inspired by the colours of the flowers offered all over by people the day after. The shadow, therefore, of the day before.
- Four bird-clocks have soaring arcs, the longest of which is 7 metres, and the shortest is 3.5 metres. Together, they make bird-dive trajectories in space.
- The arcs are made of laser-cut aluminium.
- Eleven bird-clock forms are made of concrete, steel, as well as concrete + steel.
- The Name-Stele is a convex, curving column, 4 metres high, carved out of Norwegian marble. It is embedded within a marble bird-clock form.
- The arcs, and the marble stele, are illuminated with light fixtures. In the arcs, there are sensors that control the coming on of light when day falls.
- The ground is made of concrete in ochres and blues, and will be richly textured.
- There are 77 markings of light on the ground, echoing the bird-forms: one each for a life lost on the 22nd of July
- The descent and rise of the arcs 'meets' underground in the 22nd July Memorial Centre in a gentle curve, suspended from the ceiling, made of a flexible LED mesh. This will have animation which uses nature metaphors, including tide and weather patterns.
- Materials are treated concrete, heat-treated burnished steel, laser-cut aluminium, translucent marble, LED module and illumination.



- 1 Jaali/Mesh
Laser-cut aluminium
- 2 Ripple
Customized concrete
- 3 Bird Clock material I
Customized concrete.
Casted off site
- 4 Bird Clock material II
Heat-treated steel
- 5 Imprint
Customized concrete.
Casted on site
- 6 Ground
Customized concrete.
Casted on site
- 7 Concrete layer for bolt
attachment
- 8 Cement soil for
stabilization and bolt
attachment

