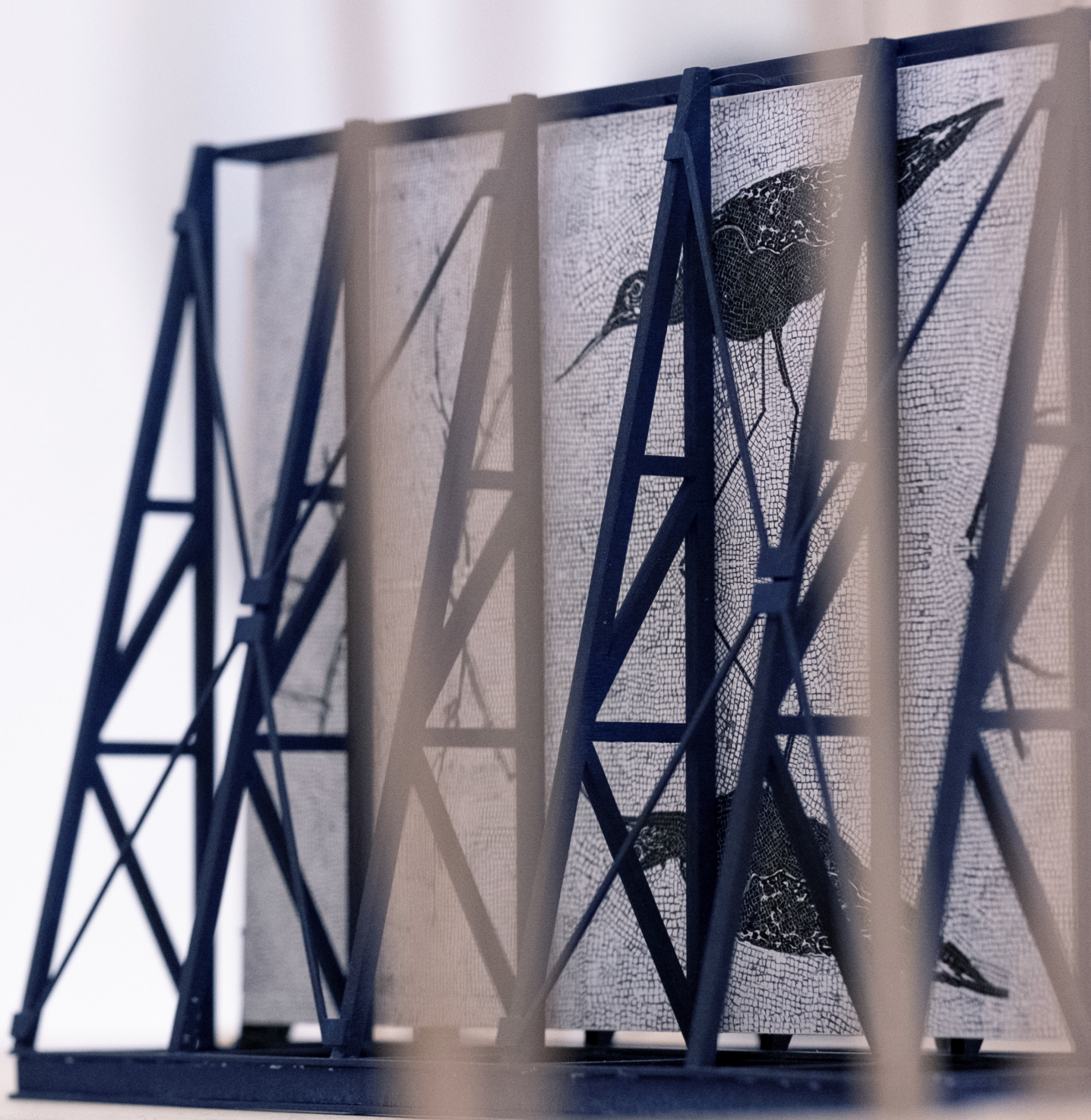


UPHOLDING —
National Memorial for 22 July



Artist: Matias Faldbakken
Project leader / architect: Ingrid Steen-Chabert
Architectural consultant: Erik Langdalen
Typograph: Christopher Haanes
Model photos: Stefan Faldbakken

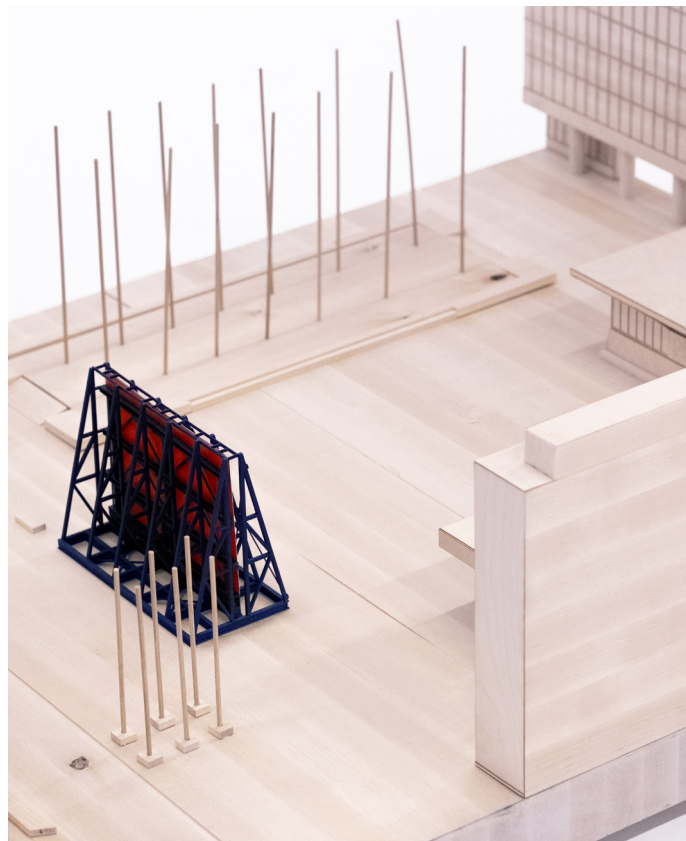
INTRODUCTION

My proposal for a memorial site after July 22 is to create a sculpture at Johan Nygaardsvolds Square. The sculpture will stand on the city floor as a monument. It will also function as a wall, framing the memorial site located between the nineteenth-century Linden alley, the H-block/Western Pavilion, and the entrance pavilion to the 22 July Centre in the Government Quarter in Oslo.

The proposal is based on re-erecting the large steel rig that was built to cut out and relocate Pablo Picasso's artwork *The Fishermen* from the demolished Y-block to the new A-block. In this version, the rig will be filled with a monumental mosaic made of stone.

The motif in the mosaic is taken from Utøya — a drawing of a small wader and some reeds and twigs reflected in the waters of the Tyrifjord. The other side of the structure will show the pattern of the bracing frame, a geometric relief painted in deep blue, deep green, and vivid red. The colour scheme highlights the distinctive structure that supports the mosaic (and previously supported *The Fishermen*). The rig and the mosaic will act as a link between the two scenes of the terrorist attack, the Government Quarter and Utøya.

The artwork is intended to be a dignified and powerful memorial *to* those who lost their lives. At the same time, the work will embody much of the conflicted national history that followed the attack. The sculpture is meant to be experienced as large and insistent, with enough presence to define the



The sculpture frames the memorial site

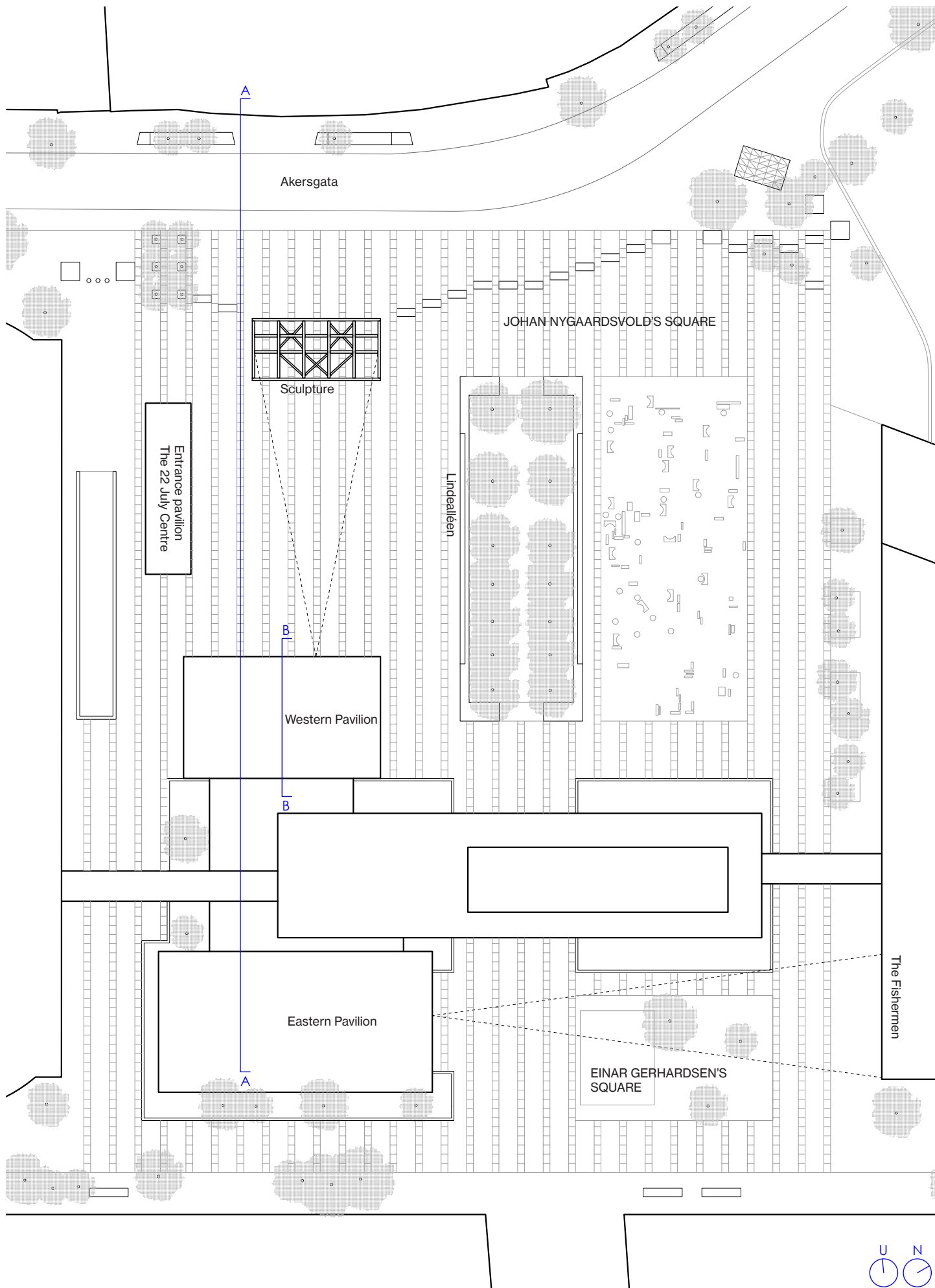
space around it. The mosaic will be intimate and warm, providing a sense of shelter for the memorial site; the structural rig will be contrasted by a large piece of craftsmanship that has tactile qualities and a motif pointing to the small and unassuming.

The square will be characterized by openness, seriousness, clarity, and calm. It should encompass conflicting emotions. The sculpture will become a gathering point for visitors and serve as a visual backdrop for ceremonies. But it will also be a place where people can retreat and be alone with their memories. The space provides a breathing room on the way into or out of the 22 July Centre. Square and sculpture will be accessible at all hours, yearround.

The sculpture is at once a historical fragment, a readymade, a large-scale artisanal investment, and also a painting of sorts. In addition, it is a new architectural element in the Government Quarter. Above all, it is an object that holds the feeling of shock, loss, and overwhelming despair. But also tranquility, care – and the affirmation of life.



The interplay between the steel structure and the tactile mosaic constitutes an artwork *to* the deceased



THE RIG

The Y-block had to be demolished as part of the process of rebuilding the Government Quarter after the July 22 terrorist attack. However, The Fishermen on the end wall was to be preserved. A moving frame and a bracing frame, both made of red-painted steel and measuring 12 x 15 meters, were constructed to enable the cutting down of the artwork. The rig was subsequently used to relocate the large Picasso drawing, sandblasted into the concrete by Carl Nesjar. While preparations for the move were underway, the artwork was standing on public display in the rig facing Akersgata for an extended period.



The Fishermen was temporary on display in the rig

To me, the rig appeared as a significant object from the transitional phase between the old and the new Government Quarter, and further, between a Norway before and after the attack. It was, quite literally, a tool for rearranging our shared values. The rig bore the break line of the terror and stood there as an unintentional monument to the shock the country endured on July 22.

In addition to being a symbol of the political shifts that followed the attack, the rig could also be interpreted as an expression of protection. For all its brutality, it was a kind of crutch. The rig was, literally, a support structure; it spoke a of language of care. In the broadest sense, it could be seen as an embrace. Henrik Treseng, the engineer at Veidekke who designed the moving frame, said they referred to the frame/arms holding the artwork as "gripping arms."

The rig expresses *disruption* on a monumental scale, but also *preservation* on a monumental scale. It is dual. Stable and safe. Functional. But shocking. Visually, it is a pragmatic abstraction, forced into existence by the events of and following July 22. Metaphorically, it reveals the structure behind a collective trauma.

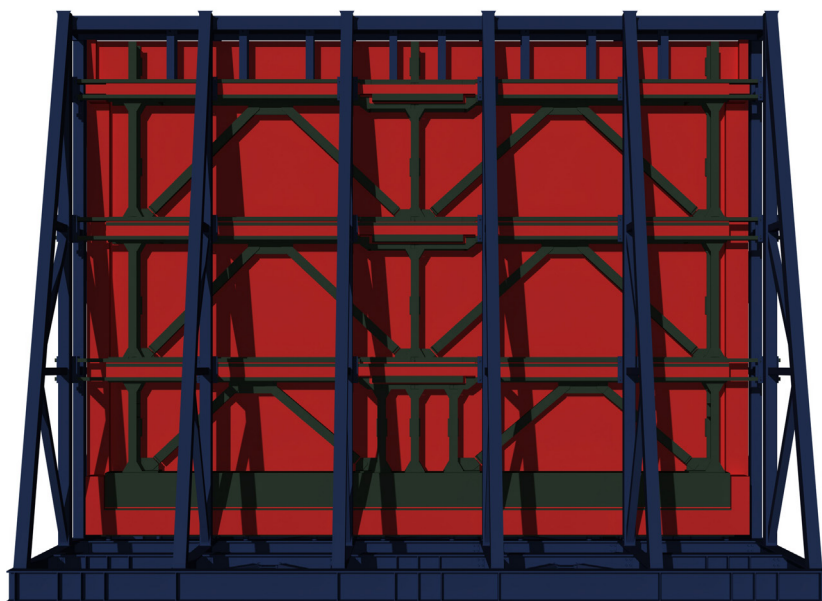
The rig is also an enormous picture frame.

A frame is an object that doesn't belong to the artwork itself — what is called the *ergon* — but to its surroundings, the *parergonal*. The rig is not what the square is *about*, but it can be what the square is *for*, to paraphrase Stian Grøgaard.

My idea for the memorial site is therefore to reconstruct the rig – to preserve it as a document from the years of conflict, reflection, and rebuilding — and to fill it with new content. The rig contributes to writing the history of the Government Quarter, where most traces of the "rearrangement" are now being cleared away. It will complement a historical narrative, from the Linden alley (ca. 1810, the only remaining element from the Empire Quarter), across Henrik Bull's old G-block, through Erling Viksjø's modernist high-rise and pavilions, via the VG newspaper display case from the day of the attack itself, through the absent Y-block — and on to the forward-looking new buildings.

What many experienced as an undignified temporary home for *The Fishermen* can be transformed into something meaningful.

The sculpture will stand monolithic in the square. But a monolith marked by uncertainty, fragility, loss, and doubt. A rickety counter-form to the stable authority of the government buildings. Yes, paradoxically, the rig, through its massive scale, preserves a sense of uncertainty, and places it in dialogue with the *security measures* that will define the area in the years ahead. It expresses something robust, something lasting, and something temporary, all at once. It is an amalgam of construction and obstruction. The term *monumentary*, coined by Jorge Otero-Pailos, could be a relevant reference, it describes situations where the scaffolding and the monument to be preserved flow into one another.



The construction is highlighted with a new colour scheme

THE MOSAIC

In line with the jury's feedback, I will fill the rig with a mosaic.

Stone mosaic is one of the oldest image forms we know. Throughout history, mosaic has been called "painting for eternity." The technique originated in the Middle East several thousand years ago and later developed around the Mediterranean. Mosaics survive volcanoes, fires, and earthquakes, precisely because they are already fragmented. This ancient technique is also acutely contemporary: the principle of arranging small monochrome elements in rows to create a readable whole is, in essence, the same for an ancient stone mosaic as for a digital screen.

One effect of drawing in mosaic — if the stones are allowed to follow the lines in the traditional way — is that the inactive areas around the motif become activated. The visual dynamic between lines, gaps, and individual stones becomes highly productive. The hierarchies between foreground and background are blurred; every part of the image serves an equally important function.

One could say that placing thousands of unique stone fragments side by side to create a unified image — a stable, durable whole — is particularly meaningful in the Government Quarter: a visual metaphor for democracy. No whole without each piece playing its part.



Mosaic from around 100 AD (Vatican Museums, Rome). The white mosaic tiles are activated so that the hierarchy between the figurative objects and the background is erased

In this artwork, a stone mosaic based on a line drawing will stand vertically inside the rig. A simple yet monumental image, 11 meters tall and 15 meters wide. An organic mosaic within a right-angled rig — the "eternal" mosaic vis-a-vis the "temporariness" of the rig. *Line drawing*, by the way, is already an established part of the Government Quarter's visual identity through Picasso, Nesjar, Tandberg, Sitter, and the other artists represented with twotone, graphic works throughout the building's floors. On several levels, the mosaic will also enter into dialogue with Jumana Manna's stone collage to the left of the Linden alley, which also explores themes of democratic representation.



Detail of wall, made after an original by Picasso



Different techniques for motifs in stone are repeated throughout Government Quarter

The mosaic will be made in light and dark granite, with stone pieces measuring 2 x 2 cm, totaling up to half a million stones. The stones are hand-cut and have rough surfaces so that each individual stone is unique. One must imagine a myriad of stones, a highly ornate stone wall, a flowing image based on an intimate hand drawing.

The mosaic will be produced in Italy, where I will be directly involved in the transfer from drawing to stone. It will then be transported in parts to Johan Nygaardsvolds plass. On-site, the mosaic will be cast into a steel frame that is lifted into the rig when finished. During production in Italy, certain areas will be left incomplete so that survivors, the bereaved, or others affected — perhaps schoolchildren — can contribute by placing stones themselves on-site. This co-creation will open up an inclusive dimension of the work.

THE MOTIF

The motif in the mosaic is a bird endemic to the Tyrifjord, the greenshank. It is a small wader typical of inland areas. The greenshank is also a migratory bird and could just as well be Southern European, Asian, or from south of the Sahara. In the mosaic, the bird is rendered in a stylized way — not as an ornithological example.

The wader is light, delicate, and unassuming. It balances on thin legs over the government square, supported by the rig. The smallest and most fragile, monumentalized in half a million stones, serves as a reminder of what must be protected and not forgotten. But the bird has a direction and a gaze. A silent, non-human witness, making a wordless judgment of what we represent, at the very heart of democracy and power. A bird is also a familiar symbol of spirit, soul—a metaphysical elevation. The bird's body seems to be in contact with something beyond. Anyone who has ever held a bird in their hands knows the strange feeling that something almost weightless can be so full of life.

One of the days I was out on Utøya, it was completely still. In every direction, there was a spectacular reflection in the water—sky and earth flowing into each other and becoming one. The elements enveloped everything in an incredible double light, coming both from above and below. I transferred this reflection onto the wader. It became an image expressing silence and calm, but also duality. As if in every world, there is also an upside-down world. A situation where the horizon can disappear in a strange haze. Where every peaceful bird is accompanied by a counter-bird.

In meetings with the Support Group after July 22 and AUF, some mentioned that both the



1:1 mosaic test made by Trivisanutto Mosaics



The stones are cut by hand so that each stone is unique



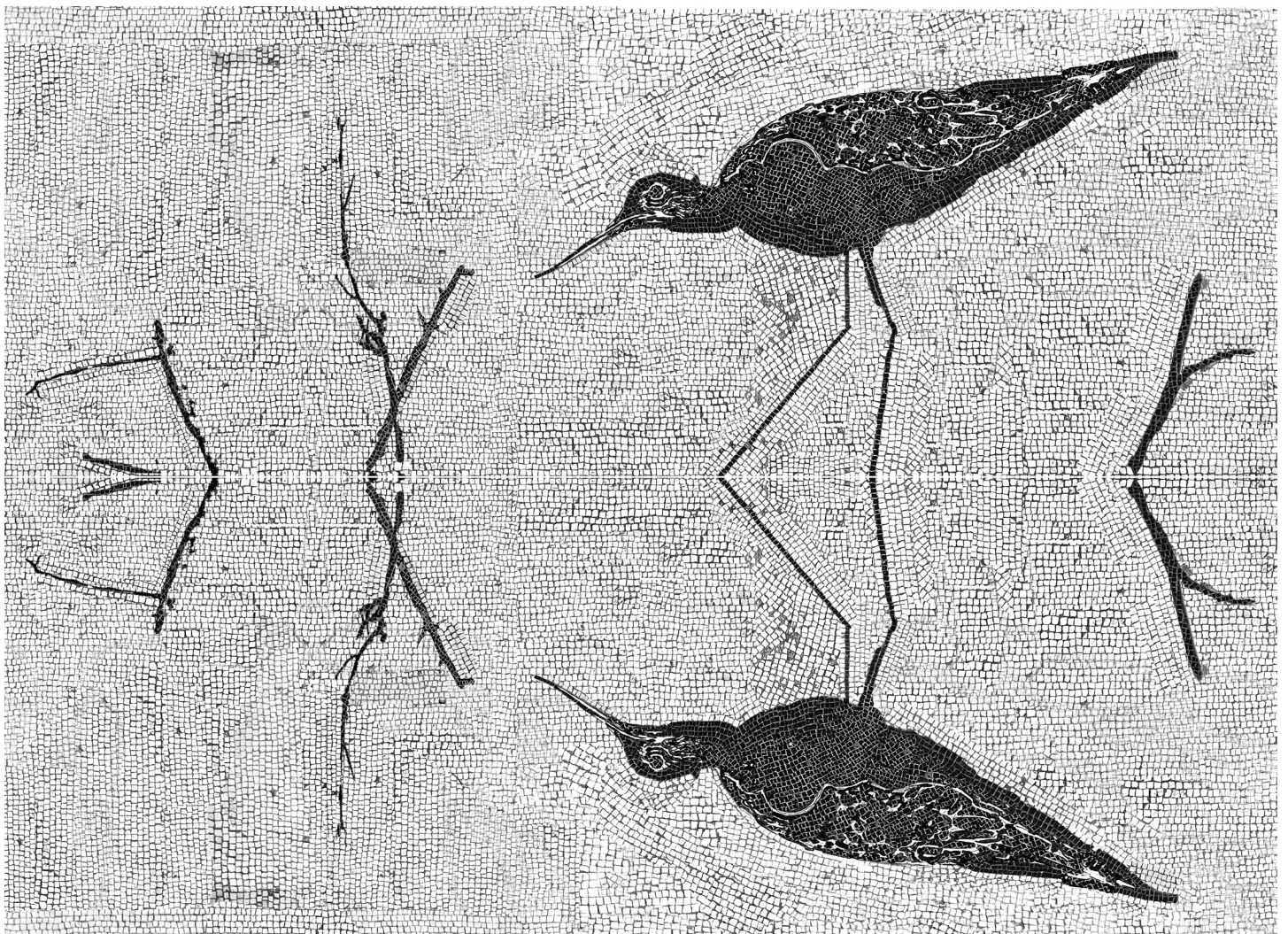
Reflection at Utøya

wader and the reflection motif have the potential to become emblems for the event and the memorial site. That it captures a feeling without being too literal. This has been an important motivation for continuing to develop the motif of the bird and the reflection.

In the first draft, I combined the wader with a geometric abstraction that was also mirrored in the water. I initially thought the abstraction could function as a kind of emotional counterweight to the figurative bird. But as I continued working with the motif, I realized I needed to draw a more conventional landscape to avoid unnecessary complexity (there are already many elements at play in the Government Quarter). I remembered that I had drawn and photographed several trees, twigs, reeds, and grasses while on Utøya, so I brought out these and drew them again. I saw that they could fulfil the level of abstraction I was aiming for. When I mirrored the plants along the waterline, they began to resemble hieroglyphs. Signs in an alphabet one doesn't fully understand. An inscrutable text from the Tyrifjord.



Hand drawings of reeds at Utøya



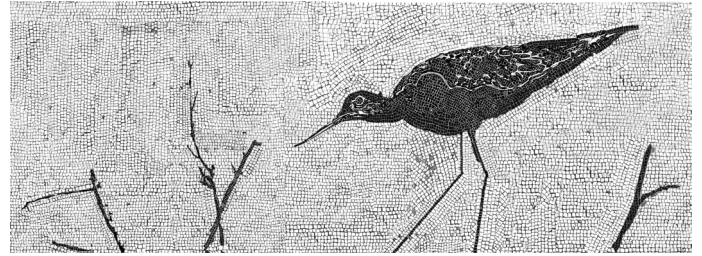
The motif is a reflection of a wader and various reeds at Utøya

Placed within the rig, the reeds, grasses, and the bird's thin legs interact with the steel beams and braces cutting across the image. Rig and mosaic now form a clear, yet still unresolved, whole. The work shifts between figuration and abstraction. The reflection motif is echoed and repeated in the rig, which is also horizontally symmetrical.

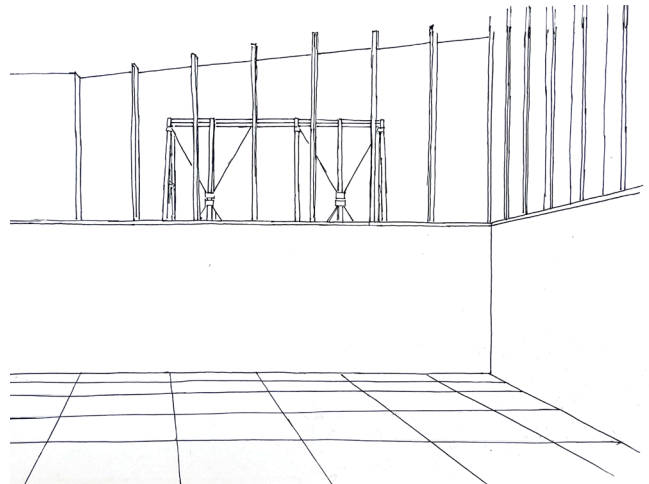
The image is a landscape image — Norwegian, yet universal — peaceful and at the same time Rorschach-like. It hints at incomprehensible stuff beyond our control.

An important point: In the part of the motif closest to the viewer on the ground, the bird is upside-down — an image of disorientation. What the visitor sees up close, is the world turned on its head. From a distance, you gain perspective. And from inside the memorial room in the Western Pavilion (part of the 22 July Centre) you mostly see the upper part of the motif.

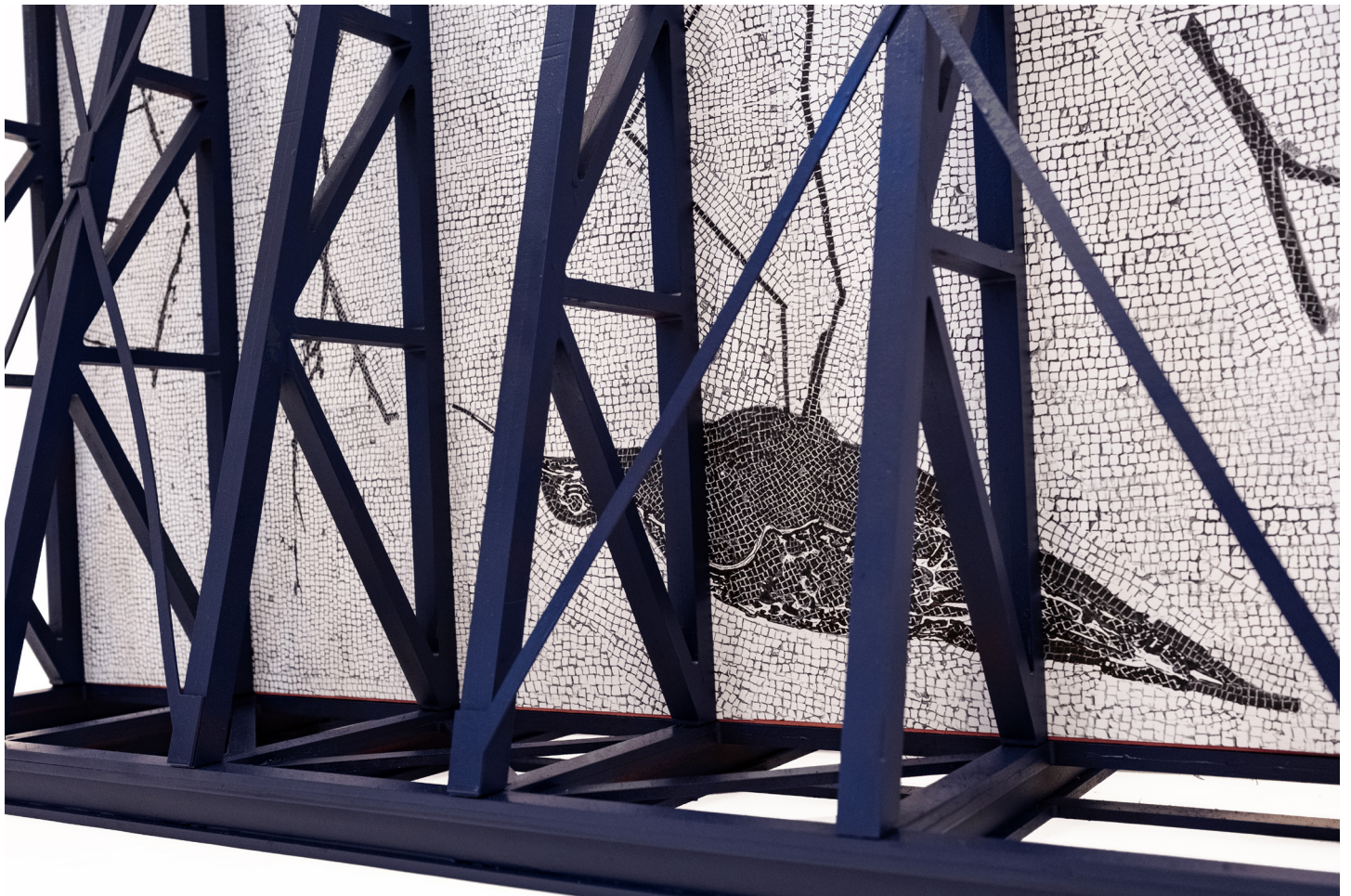
When you stand in front of the mosaic, you are looking in the direction of Utøya, with only two degrees of deviation. The mosaic functions both as a window and as a screen. As Vilém Flusser said: "The image is a screen which hides what it means."



It is mostly the upper part of the motif that is visible from the memorial room in the 22 July Centre



The sculpture seen from the memorial room



In the interaction between rig and mosaic, the artwork fluctuates between figuration and abstraction

COLOUR AND BRACING FRAME

I wish to change the colour of the rig. It might be unconventional to use strong colours at a memorial site, but I want the sculpture to express a sense of vitality in addition to being a monument to a tragedy.

The colour will be most prominent on the side that faces Akersgata. The rig will be painted a deep blue (*Cobalt*—sky and sea), and the bracing frame a deep green (*Tannen*—pine green), which is in the same tonal range as the blue. The steel frame holding the mosaic inside the rig will be painted a clear red (*Reinrot*). This red will also appear as a narrow contour around the mosaic facing the square.

The red colour is warmer and richer than the original red, less industrial, more like a red of the heart. One should be careful to interpret the colour too symbolically, but the red could, for instance, evoke associations with AUF and the Labour Party, which were the stated targets of the attack. In meetings, AUF has emphasized that this should be remembered. If one thinks of the barn and the podium at Utøya, this red will resemble them. The colours are intended to be bold but still feel familiar or “at home.” I’ve tried to hit a frequency with the colour combination — something that captures the range of emotions after July 22.

Strong red is not an unusual colour in the Hammersborg area (examples include the Greek Orthodox Church in Thor Olsens gate, and several houses on Fredensborgveien). Hammersborg is, in general, a relatively colourful area, with the brickred Trinity Church, green Deichman Library, yellow-gray Margareta Church, blue OBOS buildings in the back, and the multi-colored Youngstorget.

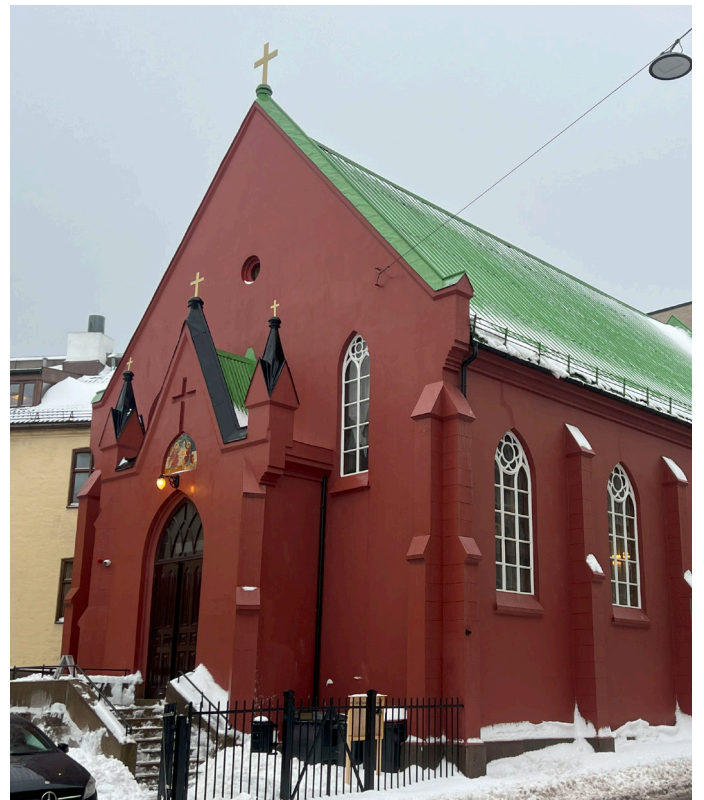


Red at Utøya

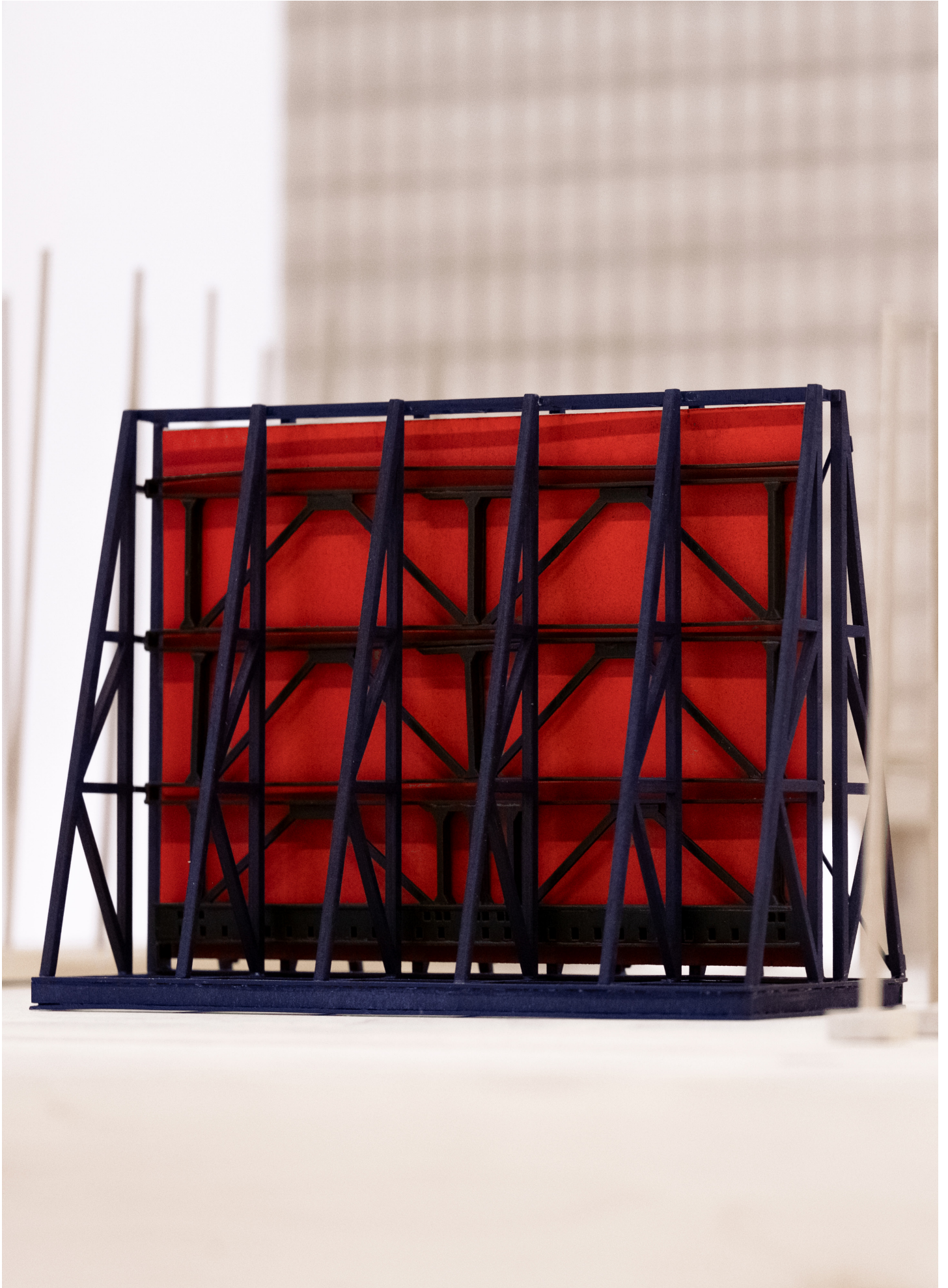
Colouring the rig, the bracing frame, and the steel frame also highlights the engineers’ impressive structural abstraction. This becomes a visual homage to all those who, every day, carry out the practical implementation of decisions made inside what seems to be a robust political system. But the sculptural painting is also a constant reminder of why the rig is there. In a way, it looks like the rig is holding up a picture (ambiguous, emotional) against the large political conglomerate, a message held up *toward* the politicians. Like a sign or a screen, bordering on a protest banner. It insists on what was lost and why. And what must not be forgotten — the deceased.



The Trinity Church and the Deichman Library



The Greek Orthodox Church

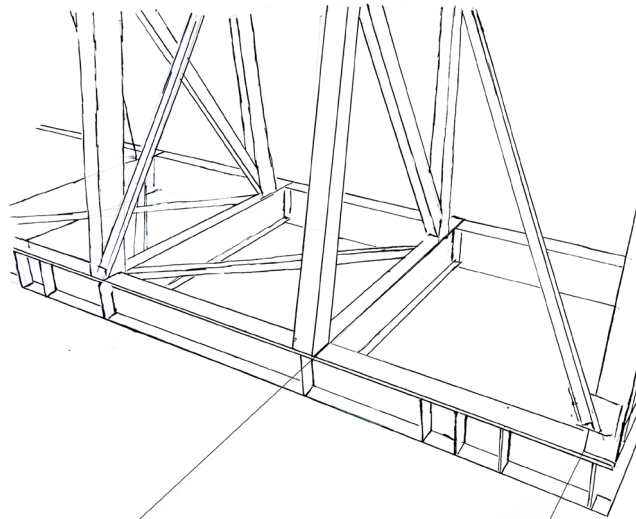


The coloured rig seen from Akersgata with the H-block as a backdrop

THE NAMES

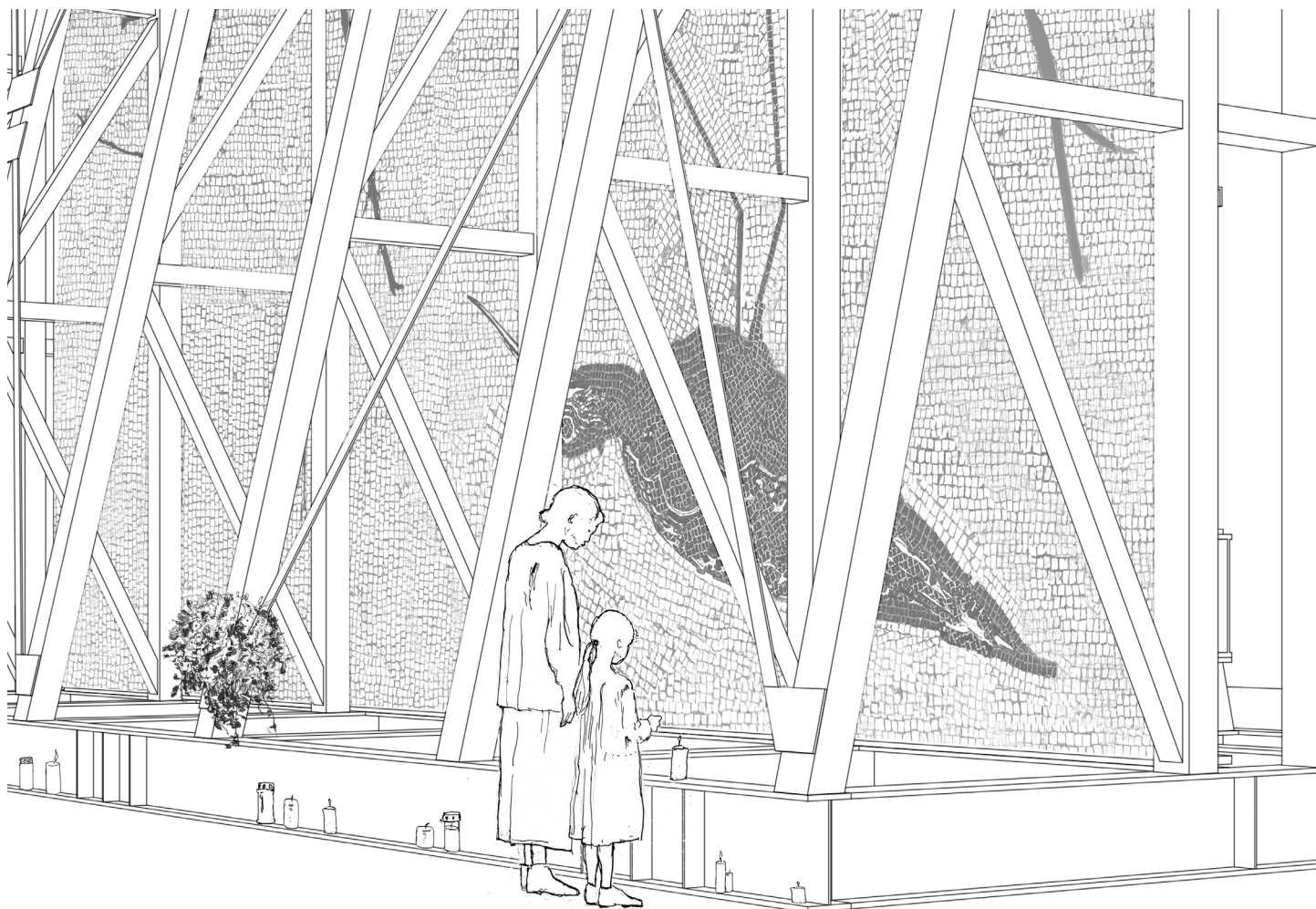
The names of the 77 people who died will be engraved on the top of the base beam of the moving frame, on the mosaic side facing H-block. After clear input from the Support Group after July 22, the ages of the deceased will also be included. You must enter the square to approach the names, and they will be sheltered by the mosaic. There are five spans between the six vertical beams, and the names will be distributed across these. Each span/flange is about 3 meters long and 30 cm deep. It's important that the names are legible and have enough space around them, room that allows the bereaved to photograph the name of their loved ones without capturing others' names in the frame.

This side of the sculpture — with the names below and the towering mosaic above — will take on the character of an altar. Not in a religious sense, but still as a symbolic space for communication between what is present and what is absent. The sculpture will always be open to acts of remembrance. Flowers can be laid by the names, and wreaths can be placed or hung. The lower flange of the base beam will also serve as a natural shelf for placing lit candles.



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Names and ages are engraved into the top of the bottom beam, at a dignified and accessible reading height



The sculpture is open open to acts of remembrance

One suggestion is to make small holes between each name and age where a flower could be placed. The 22 July Centre has a tradition of marking what would have been the birthdays of the deceased with a flower in the Centre and online, and I envision this tradition continuing and moving out into public space through this work. The beam is 60 cm high, slightly taller than a park bench, but low enough that a child can place their hands on top. It offers what is called a dignified reading height.

A personal observation: On my mother's grave, her name is engraved horizontally on the top of a black granite block. When I visit her in winter, I brush away the snow, and it always rests perfectly inside the engraved letters as white script. That is a nice thing.

Typographer and calligrapher Christopher Haanes is assisting with the typesetting and engraving of the names. The engraving will be deep enough to ensure readability, to create a tactile experience, and to resist erosion. Over the past two years, Christopher has developed his own fonts, and we are working with one of them for the sculpture—a font that will be unique to the memorial. These fonts are not for sale or otherwise publicly available. The one we are using is a *humanist grotesque* called Haanes Sans.



FORNAVN MELLOMNAVN ETTERNAVN · 19

The illustration above shows how a flower can be placed in a hole between name and age. The font will be unique to the memorial site, here exemplified by a *humanistic grotesque*



When you look at the names and the mosaic, you turn towards Utøya



On the bench, sheltered by the roof of the Western Pavilion, you can sit in seclusion and experience the memorial site

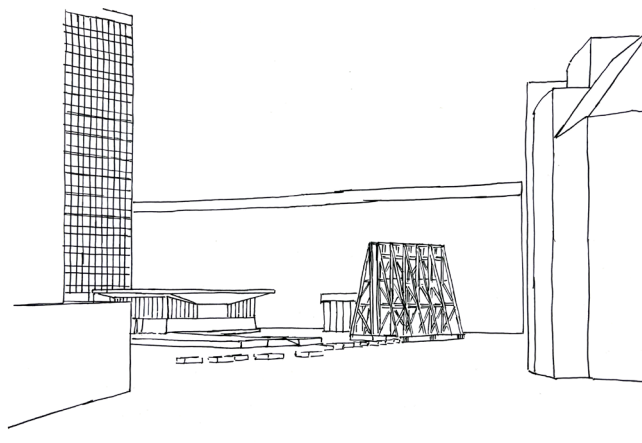
INTERPRETATION

During the preparatory work, there were some questions about how to explain or communicate the rig and the motif. Put simply, one can say that the rig refers to the Government Quarter, and the motif to Utøya, and that the work becomes a link between the two crime scenes. But I often think more about what a sculpture *does* as an object, as much as what it *narrates*. The elements (the mosaic, the motif, the steel rig, the colours, the square) become emotional dimensions in concrete form. The sculpture and the space will be a physical experience rather than a "reading." To put it bluntly: a work of art is not an information poster. The information and details are found inside the 22 July Centre. The encounter with the object in the square is something else. One quality of art is that something that cannot be conveyed can still be experienced.

PLACEMENT AND INTERACTION WITH THE SURROUNDINGS

A central question not clarified during the presentation after Stage 1 was the sculpture's placement, its interaction with the surroundings, and the design of the square itself. It also wasn't clear how the memorial site would be used and experienced by visitors, both on ordinary days and during ceremonies.

In close dialogue with Ingrid Steen-Chabert and Erik Langdalen, I have decided on a location at the edge of the designated area, approximately

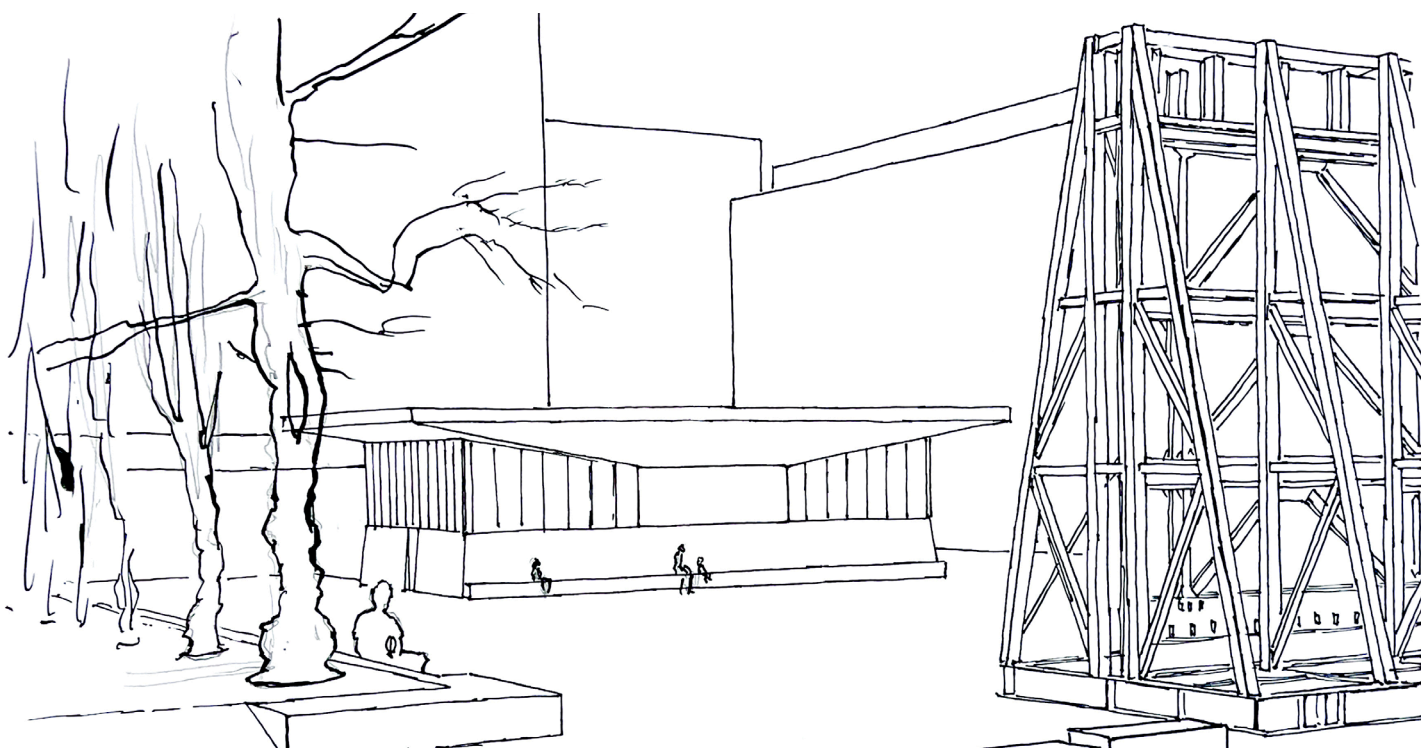


The sculpture is visible from a long distance and will become an important part of the cityscape

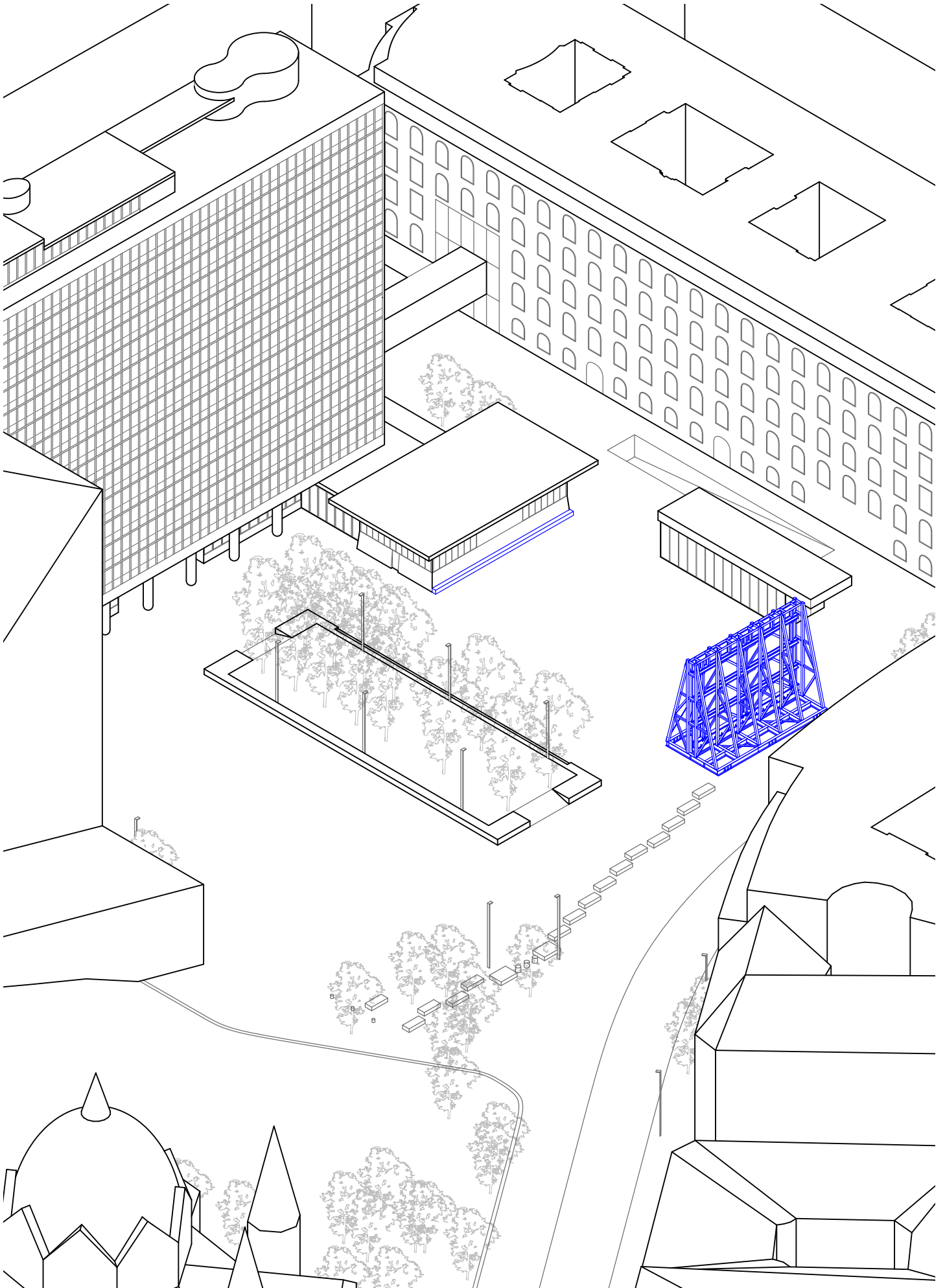
where *The Fishermen* was stored, but with the rig positioned parallel to Akersgata, not perpendicular. The mosaic faces the H-block, while the painted frame faces Akersgata and the city.

An alternative is to place the sculpture just outside the designated area. This involves a minor relocation without changing the angle. This would create more space for the memorial square while still offering a clear delineation of the site. We consider both options good but maintain the first as the primary placement. To finalize the exact location, we plan to build a full-size mock-up of the rig on wheels to test positioning on-site.

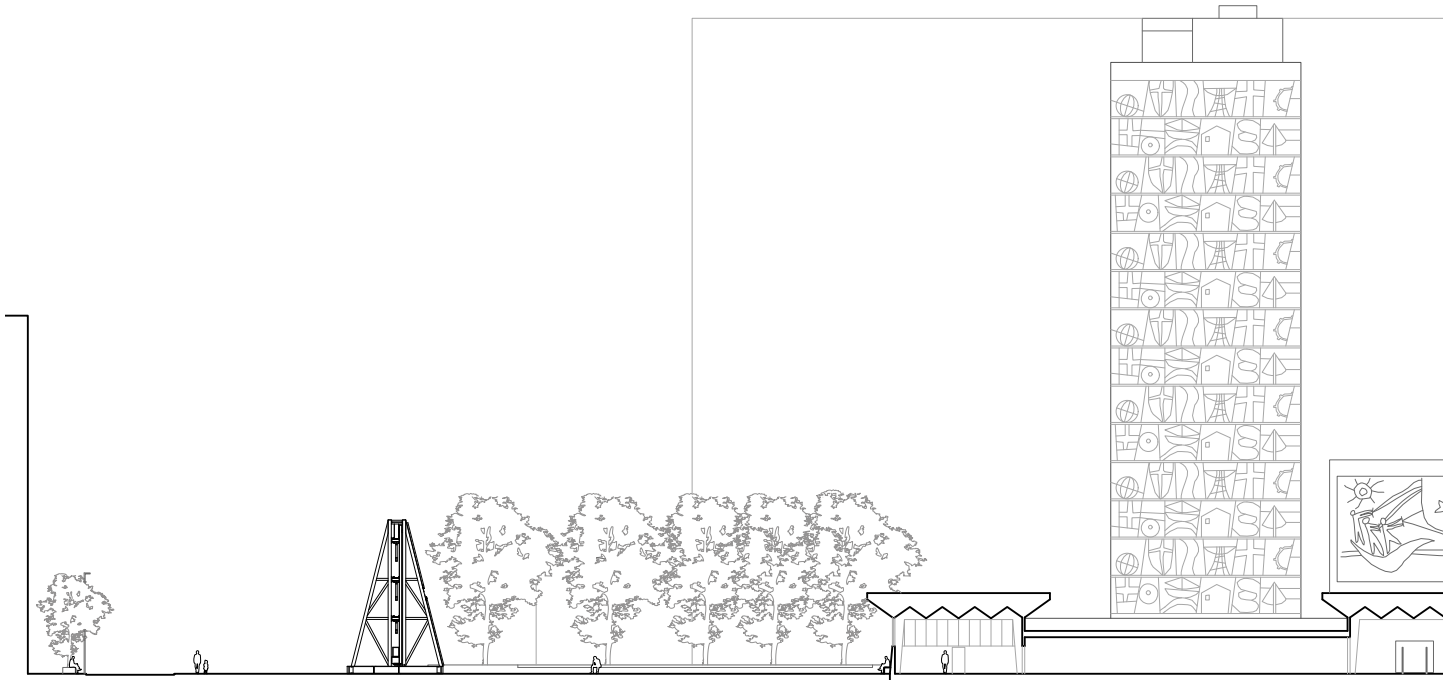
In both scenarios, the sculpture actively utilizes the existing elements of the square rather than adding more. It creates two distinct situations: one between the mosaic and the Western Pavilion, and one between the rig and Akersgata 59 (R5).



In interaction with the Linden alley, the Western Pavilion and the entrance pavilion to the 22 July Centre, the sculpture frames the memorial site



The axonometry shows the two elements that are being added (blue)



Site section AA 1:600. Note Picasso's *The Fishermen* on the east side of the H-block

Situation 1:

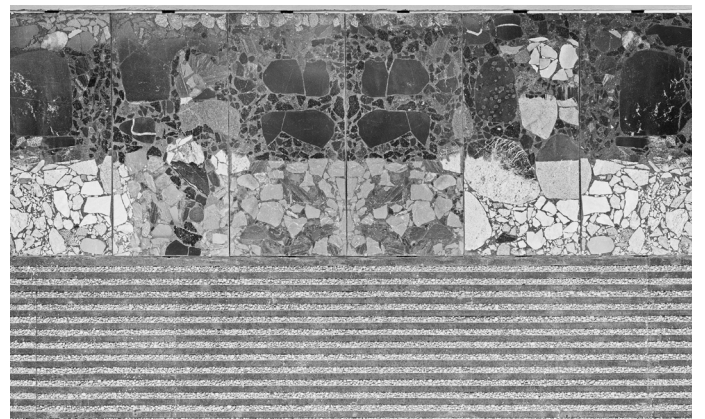
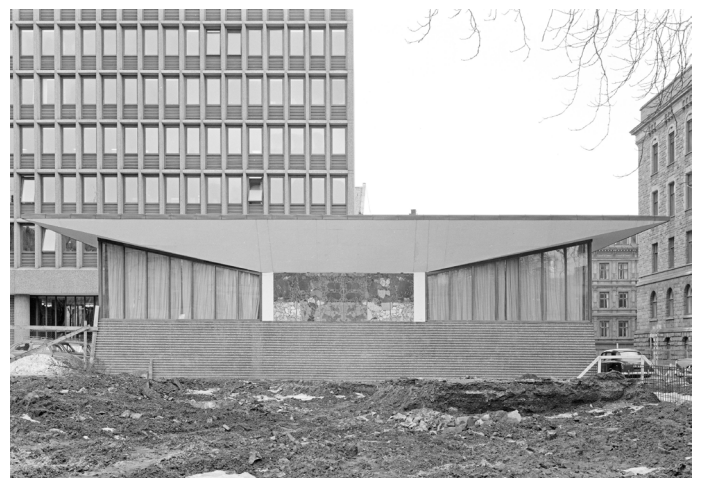
Linden alley defines the memorial site to the north, the H-block / Western Pavilion to the east, the entrance pavilion to the 22 July Centre to the south, and the placement of the sculpture will form a "fourth wall" to the west. The elements naturally defines and encloses the site as a square. It also includes the already existing bench along Lindealléen as part of the memorial. The space will appear open, clean, and airy.

The strongest spatial dynamic will be between the mosaic wall and the outer wall of the Western Pavilion. These two walls – poles – will face each other. On one side, a stone collage of Conglo Concrete by Odd Tandberg; on the other, the mosaic.

We want to take advantage of this tension and propose adding a stone bench along the entire length of the Western Pavilion wall. Here one can sit and take in the space and the sculpture, sheltered beneath the slanted roof of the Pavilion, with one's back against its iconic striped wall. The bench will be made from larvikite, the same material used for the benches along Linden alley and for the darker sections of the square's paving, it will feel like a natural part of the Government Quarter.

In summary, we will only add two elements to the square: the sculpture and the bench. They will highlight the formidable Western Pavilion and bring it forth as a vital structure within the memorial. On the east side of the H-block, one finds a similar spatial relationship between the Eastern Pavilion and Picasso's *The Fishermen*, now hung above the entrance to the A-block. The size of *The Fishermen* and the mosaic will correspond, creating a new

connection throughout the Quarter. Regarding lighting, the same type of profile lighting from the Western Pavilion toward the mosaic can be used as from the Eastern Pavilion toward *The Fishermen*. This will strengthen the relationship between the memorial and Einar Gerhardsen's square.

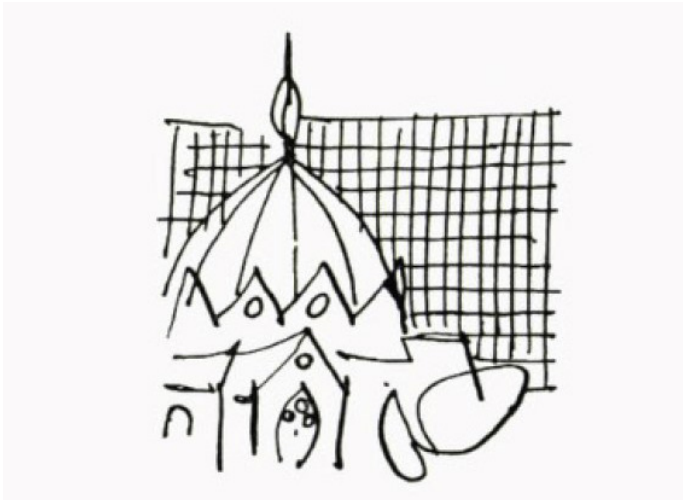


Motif in Conglo Concrete and walls of sandblasted natural concrete are characteristics of the Western Pavilion



Situation 2:

Between the sculpture and the sidewalk edge of Akersgata, there will be an area approximately 13 meters long (and about 25 meters from the rig to R5). Furthermore, directly across (the now car-free) Akersgata, two benches are planned along the sidewalk in front of R5. From there, one can sit and take in the painted front of the sculpture and its geometric complexity. This painted “facade” faces the city and functions as an added surface in front of the H-block — perhaps even a facade between facades. A counterpoint to how the arcade of the Bazaar Halls lies in front of Møllergata 19, which in turn lies before the new D-block façade on the opposite side. It’s also a small nod to Erling Viksjø, who described the H-block as, precisely, a background for linework: “... the government building whose raster facade is architecturally meant to serve as a backdrop for and reinforce the rich and powerful lines of the Trinity Church.” (Byggekunst No. 1, 1959)



Hand drawing by Erling Viksjø



The relation between the rig and the H-block



The sculpture creates a space towards Akersgata

Paving

We’ve chosen to leave the square’s paving as designed by Team Urbis, with tiles of light granite and dark larvikite. By keeping the established paving used throughout the Government Quarter, we ensure a sense of cohesion. We long considered marking the square with a change in pattern or stone but chose instead to trust that the sculpture itself has enough presence to define the space. We aim to add as little as possible, leaving room for what matters. Relevant references include known plazas that succeed in bringing people together precisely because they are open with a central gravitational point, for example Judenplatz in Vienna or Place de la République in Paris.



Judenplatz Holocaust Memorial in Wien

Proportions and Continuity

In the situation model, we discovered that the rig and mosaic feel correctly proportioned to the square and surrounding buildings. This may be because the Y-block, with its prominent accent wall, was scaled in proportion to the square and lingers as an echo. The format of the wall/mosaic is given, familiar, and well-tested, making the sculpture feel like a size we are used to.

The sculpture's placement somewhat closer to Akersgata gives it a strong presence in the city. One will be able to see the sculpture from high up Ullevålsveien and far down Akersgata. The memorial does not close in on itself.

A formal observation that may be relevant: triangles are a key design element in the new Quarter. The slanted roofs of Viksjø's pavilions, the triangular shapes in the rig, and not least the pyramid-like quality of the new A-block with its cut-off corner.

One might describe the memorial as a place to breathe before and after visiting the 22 July Centre. Gatherings at the sculpture, seeing it anew from the memory room, and returning to it with new thoughts, new knowledge, before going one's separate ways.

DURABILITY

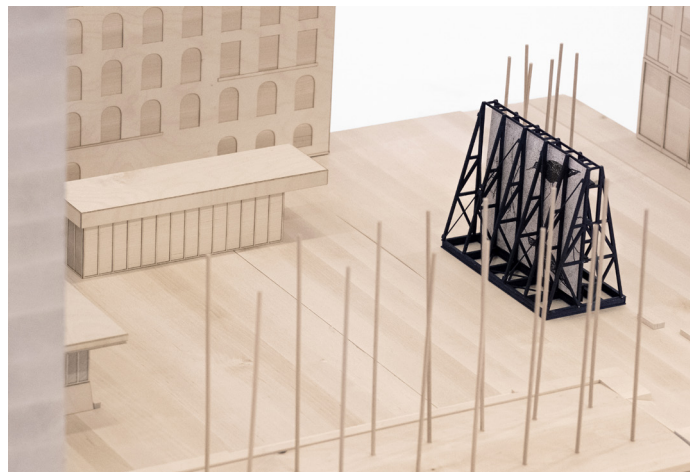
The sculpture will function even "if the power goes out" (cf. the Plague Monument in Christ Park—Oslo's oldest monument, from 1654, a stone's throw away). The steel rig and mosaic will withstand all seasons and remain through the demanding Norwegian winter, in sun, snow, rain, all year long. It will hold up over time, and although its meaning may shift over the years, it will not be possible to overlook.

FEASIBILITY

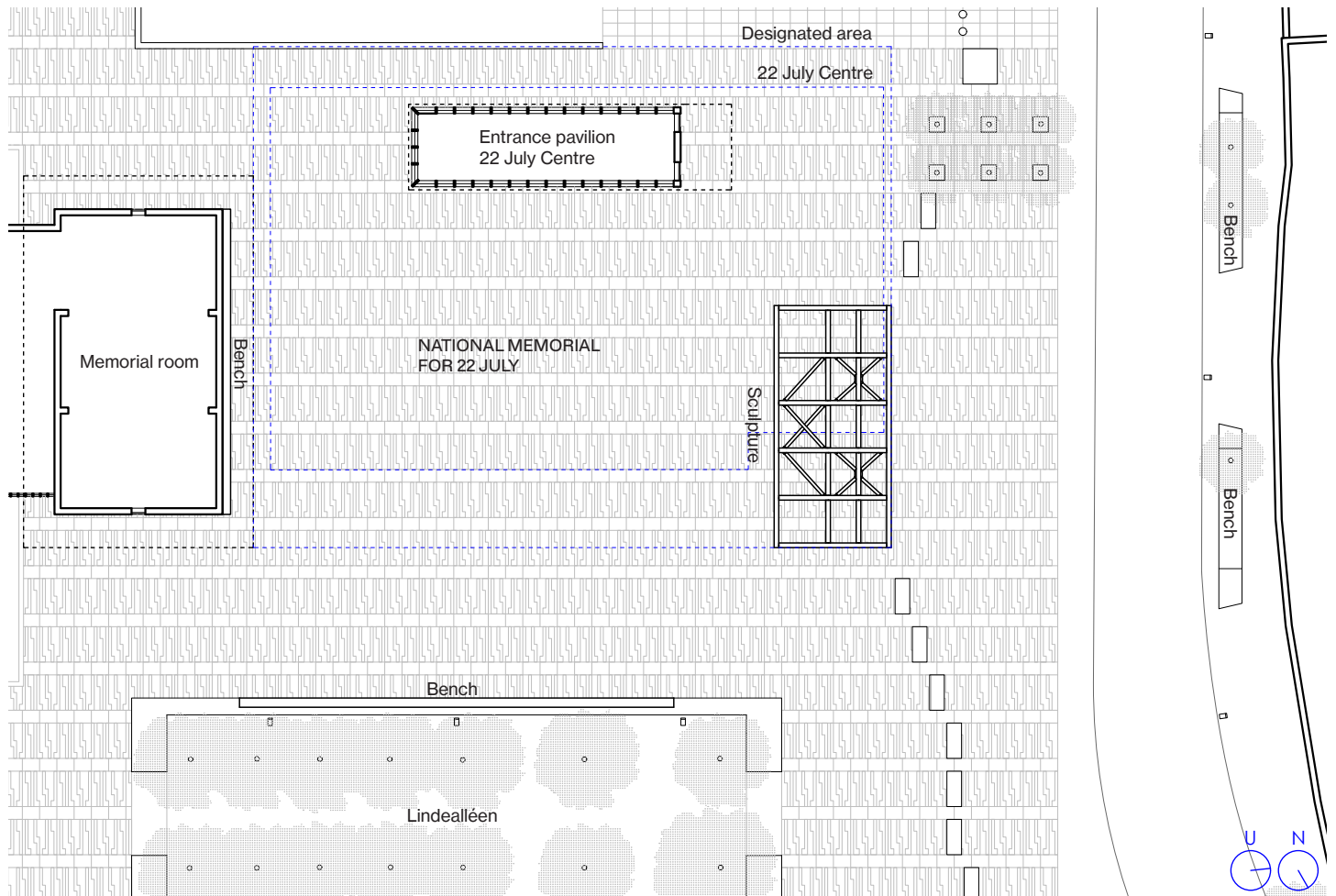
All major elements of the work have previously been executed by the involved parties. Byemark Stål has already built the rig once. Matias has created a monumental mosaic (13 x 20 meters for the Norwegian Scenic Routes in Rondane) on time and within budget. The Italian mosaic studios Fantini Mosaici and Trivisanutto Mosaics, with whom we've been in close dialogue, have long experience in monumental mosaics and are authorities in the field. They've produced mosaics for churches and temples, restored ancient mosaics, and undertaken major commissions for artists like Frank Stella, Luc Tuymans, and Christopher Wool.



Triangular motifs in the rig



Together with the existing surroundings, "UPHOLDING" creates the memorial site



Plan 1:450



The sculpture appears as a familiar figure in the Government Quarter

Most of the square's paving is already completed by Team Urbis under Agaia, and the proposed bench along the Western Pavilion will use the same materials as those along Lindealléen, from the same workshop in Larvik. The profile lighting from pavilion roof to artwork will follow the same model on both sides of the H-block.

Since the implementers have previous experience with the key components, they've been able to provide concrete and detailed budgets and time estimates. With these conditions in place, it is realistic for the project to be completed by summer 2026, 15 years after the attack.

CONCLUSION

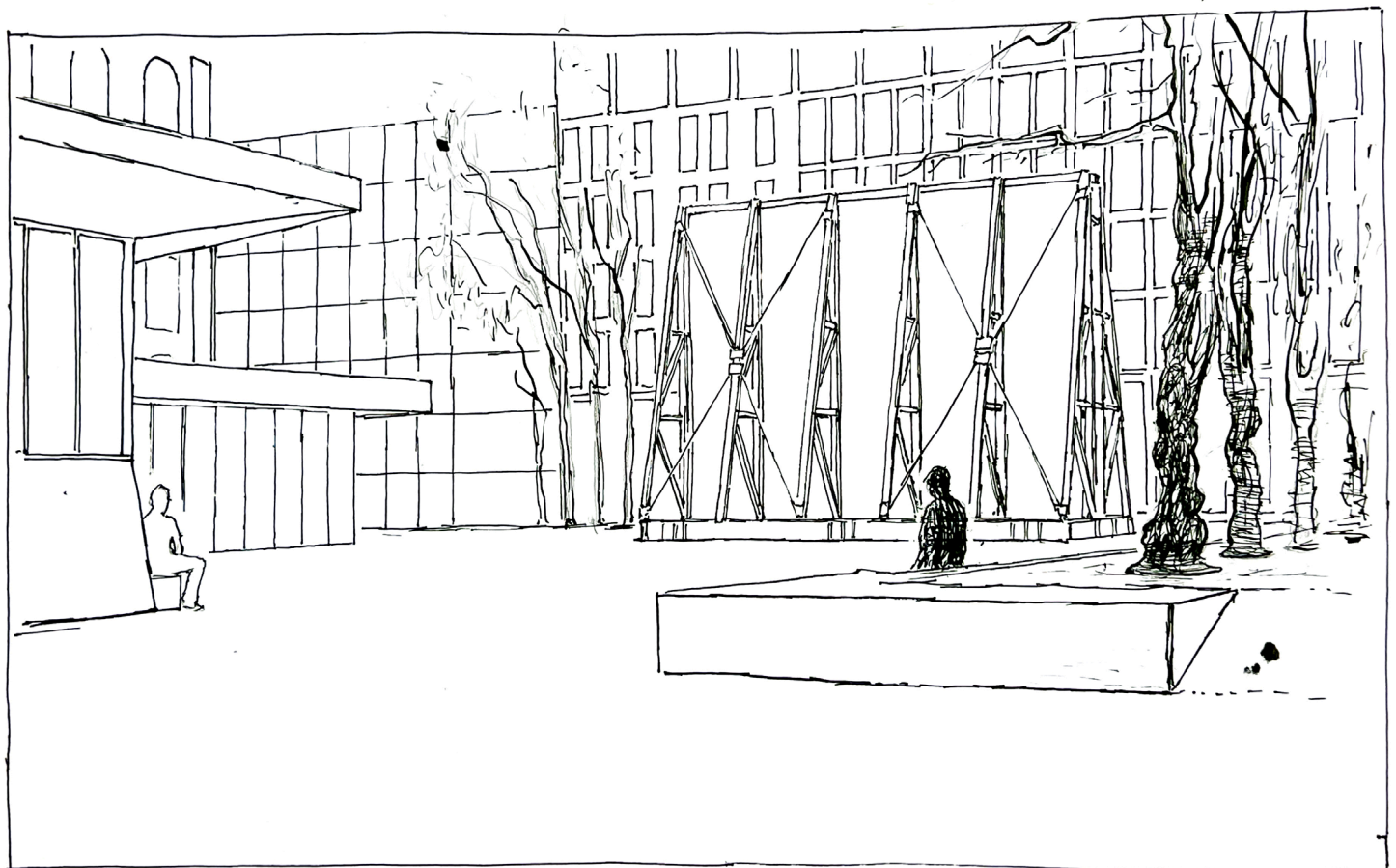
An open square with a substantial element at its centre creates space. Space for ceremonies, state visits, and events with chairs placed out. Space for school groups, casual passersby, and tourists. Space for unprogrammed use. Openness and spontaneity are the keywords for our memorial site.

Most importantly, the square will offer space for the bereaved, with secluded, protected benches under the pavilion roof and linden trees. And plenty of room to simply be present.

The sculpture is open to interpretation, and the level of detail in the mosaic, with hundreds of thousands of unique stones, means that one can discover something new with each visit. This can offer a sense of calm or comfort, like frescos in churches where the eye always has something to rest on.

Instead of designing an environment, I have wanted to make an artwork *to* those who died on July 22, and for those they left behind. The proposal has therefore also been a question: Can this rig hold up what is worth preserving?

I hope and believe this sculpture on the square can be a powerful and lasting preservation of the memory of those who were killed on July 22, 2011.



A new memorial site for 22 July, for present and future generations