Veterans Memorial Competition

**Process:**

Three parallel elements—slipping past one another—organize the site: two horizontal and one vertical. Interwoven between these elements is a paved ground plane abstracting the American flag with 13 strips and 50 lights. A genus of maple trees to the north and east help contain the space of the memorial. In contrast to the vertical wall and the 4 flags representing each of the branches of the military, horizontal granite slabs act as seats along the north edge of the private contemplative space. They provide a backdrop to the campus setting and are set at an angle to the horizontal granite slabs representing each branch of the military. The earth-bound siting of the granite slabs evokes the permanence and finality of death. Inscribed in each slab is the name and dates of a major military conflict. The site is divided into a ceremonial space (more public) and an interpretative space. The paved terrace to the west is by its nature public, while the grassy lawn beyond the flags is designed to be a private, contemplative outdoor room. It is in this private space that one is intimately in contact with the memorial.

The vertical element, a black marble wall, has two sides, each serving a specific purpose. The southern elevation that faces the campus, serves as a backdrop to the campus community. The northern elevation reflects the intimate nature of war and loss. The public southern side features an acid-etched mural. The private northern side, however, is the focal point of the memorial. The northern face of the memorial depicts the soldiers lost as something more than simply a name. Each soldier is represented on the memorial by a stainless steel plate. Each plate, detailed with information about the soldier including name, rank, hometown, birth date, death date, department at Northeastern and graduation year, represents the dog tag worn by soldiers during war. By including information beyond simply the name of the individual, one can make connections to the soldiers on a personal level. The dead become more than a soldier, they become classmates, colleagues, neighbors, and heroes. The names and other information about the 400+ soldiers are etched into stainless steel plates, which reflect the faces of the viewers. This reflective quality unites the dead with the living. The stainless steel plate is designed to be touched and lifted; singly reflecting the individuality of each soldier, and collectively representing the mutual bond soldiers form in times of war. The plates are organized by year of death, beginning with the opening of the University in 1898 and continuing to the present. In addition, space is left for the unfortunate inevitability of future conflicts. The voids created by the organization and contrast of the plates, symbolizes the voids that have been left in the lives of the loved ones and the community as well as the loss of life experienced in war. Contrasting with the reflective and movable stainless steel plates is the black marble wall. This wall acts as a anchor and support to the lost soldiers.

Permanent views of the memorial can be seen from Ruggles T station, Huntington Avenue and Centennial Common. A fourth important view is situated along the axis from Snell Library and the Centennial Common. A small grove of trees acts as an edge to frame the view of the moment people interact with the wall.

**Diagram:**

- View of Contestant Garden
- View of Memorial Wall
- View of Stainless Steel Plate
- View of Stainless Steel Plate
- View of Contemplative Garden
- Sectional Perspective
- View from Ruggles Station
- View of Memorial Wall
- Contemplative Garden
- View Corridors
- Public Garden
- Campus Community
- Granite Bench
- Black Marble Wall
- Stainless Steel Panels
- Mahogany Bench
- Military Flags
- Forsyth Street
- Wall Detail
- Stainless Steel Plate