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ONE WORLD, ONE LEGACY

AC's architectural panel discusses the reflection of the One World Trade Center NYC and designing buildings in legacy

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QUESTION TIME

WHAT IS THE MARK OF A GREAT BUILDING, CREATED IN LEGACY?



My partner recently travelled to NYC and Boston with work. Whilst in New York City he visited the World Trade Center Memorial Fountain, a colossal space that represents the fallen towers and leaves a historic footprint in New York's landscape. Next to the beautiful, sombre design stands the One World Trade Center, a building, known across the globe as a mark of remembrance and respect. I have received countless pieces of news about the design of the building, by SOM Architects, my most recent being a piece about the elevators that have been installed by ThyssenKrupp – five elevators servicing the observatory that represent a significant engineering feat. It surpasses expectations and whisks visitors up to the 102nd floor in just 60 seconds. There is much more to be said about the engineering and design, but

what struck me as I read, was a sense of triumph in this building, of the whole building, that signifies the dawn of a new era and marks the latest stepping stone in this remarkable city, moving on and redefining it's architectural position in the world. The World Trade Center towers will forever remain in our minds, so one World Trade Center must do something else, it must serve as a guardian of the space where the towers once stood, a memorial for the people and the city, and must strive forward architecturally into a new future. What, in your opinion, is the mark of a great building, created in legacy? What is it about One World Trade Center that makes us look up so wonderously towards it? And, what other designs that have been created in memoriam do you recall, and why do they work?

**CORA KWIATKOWSKI,
STRIDE TREGLOWN**

Buildings created in legacy are often a means to overcome the horrors of the past. There are different responses in different cities – New York is hoping that thoughtful, ambitious urban design will make the city whole again whilst creating an area for reflection. Buildings play an essential part in defining a city – they are often a statement about the history, future ambitions or how the city wants to be seen. The Lower Manhattan skyline is now dominated by One World Trade Center and has become a new civic icon for the whole country through its symbolic value. The building sets new standards of high rise and itself is more than just a celebration of modern architecture, it encompasses the hope

of many Americans for a better and more peaceful future and becomes a symbol of surviving the terror attacks. It is now hoped that the area around the tower can develop again into a vibrant district, moving on from the past. The memorial itself is a symbol for hope and renewal, helped by reflection pools and surrounding trees with the 'survivor tree' in its centre.

But New York is not the only city having to overcome and wanting to remember tragic events in its past. The Holocaust Memorial in Berlin by Peter Eisenman is set within a large square, clearly away from the hustle and bustle of the metropolis. Based on the events in history, 19,000 sqm of city centre land have been handed over to the memorial rather than giving in to the commercial temptation and building a new office quarter.

This scheme works very well in that it is kept to a human scale and visitors can walk around in it, having a disorienting experience. The sense of becoming slightly uncomfortable is wanted in this case and gives the visitor time and space for reflection with the memorial's tilting grey pillars towering over.

In my opinion, a memorial can be abstract and should not necessarily need to present historical information – in this case about the Nazi campaign against the Jews. It is more important to remember the silent terror itself – the memorial resembles a vast field of nameless tombstones.

Museums or libraries are often legacy buildings as well – housing an art collection or having been erected with the benefactor's donation. These buildings are testament to people's desire to leave something behind and let other people enjoy the works of art they collected.

The Museum Brandhorst in Munich by Sauerbruch and Hutton is one of the more recent examples, housing more than 1,000 works by seminal artists from the 20th and 21st centuries, collected by Udo and Annette Brandhorst. Architecturally, the museum has not only set new standards with regard to facade design and sustainability but also to facade design. The building looks like an abstract painting itself with 36,000 vertical ceramic rods in 23 different coloured glazes and reflects its function in the city as a space for living art. Walking past the building, the vivid surface of the facade seems to alter and shimmer. Visitors are not only amazed by the exhibitions but also fascinated by the building itself – both are well visited and are, 6 years after the opening, an important addition to the museum quarter.

Closer to home, one of the oldest and most bizarre collections in London is by Sir John Soane who established his house as a museum by Act of Parliament himself in 1833, requiring that his vast collection of architectural items, art and antiquities be kept as they were at the time of his death. We now wander around his house in amazement and



Images: ThyssenKrupp has installed the elevators in North and South America at One World Trade Center in New York

marvel at the hidden treasures. Successful projects generate human emotions, move us and leave a legacy for future generations – from the more sombre memorials of tragic events to the celebration of the survivors and creative works.

**CHRISTIAN GARNETT,
GARNETT + PARTNERS**

A cenotaph is an "empty tomb" or a monument erected to commemorate a person or group of people whose remains are elsewhere.

THE EXPERTS...

Our industry experts provide a compelling insight into the topical issues of the day



**CORA KWIATKOWSKI
SENIOR ASSOCIATE,
STRIDE TREGLOWN**

Cora joined Stride Treglown in 2006 and has been responsible for a wide range of projects in the UK – offices, residential, and education. Her previous working experience in Germany, Sweden and Switzerland also included urban design as well as transport projects.



**CHRISTIAN GARNETT
FOUNDER, GARNETT + PARTNERS**

Christian trained at Sheppard Robson Architects and later worked with Sir Terry Farrell & Company and Franklin Israel's office in Los Angeles as a project architect. Christian returned to his beloved London in the early 1990s to launch his own practice, Garnett + Partners.



The word derives from the Greek: **κενοτάφιον** = kenotaphion (kenos, one meaning being "empty", and taphos, "tomb"). In 1919 Sir Edwin Lutyens (1869 – 1944) designed the United Kingdom's The Cenotaph in Whitehall. It was built in 1920 in solid stone and is an exact replica of an earlier wooden and plaster structure. The paired back architecture and imposing location in Whitehall created a classical memorial for the nation to direct its grieving. Nearly 100 years on the Cenotaph remains the focal point for the Annual National Service of Remembrance, which is televised across the world each year. The Cenotaph is a beautifully detailed object, superb proportions, simple geometry, entasis, the use of a convex curve. It is a proud, majestic, monument with more than a hint of solemnity.

The One World Trade Centre in New York like the Cenotaph, is a state memorial, not a religious one, but on an altogether different scale and ambition. The WTC memorial complex not only commemorates the catastrophic events and tragic loss of innocents but implants into the fabric of the city a symbol of renewal that reshapes its identity for future generations. The sense of mystery and awe, of human frailty, absence and soaring spirituality are profound. Architecture and urban design has been used to create a place where the city comes together

to remember from generation to generation, as symbol of renewal and hope. This shared or cross cultural 'sacred' space is all the more remarkable for having been created without the overt use of religious imagery.

Some of the most striking and moving designs created in memoriam for me are the votive churches of Venice. Built to give thanks for the deliverance from a series of plagues during the late medieval period, close to my heart and the most breathtakingly beautiful is the The Chiesa del Santissimo Redentore, commonly known as Il Redentore. The new church was commissioned from Andrea Palladio by the Republic to commemorate the end of the 1576 plague, which killed 70,000 people, Titian among them, 30% of Venice's population. Palladio's last and his finest project was completed in 1572 some twelve years after his death. Set on the island of the Giudecca, the building combines a stone façade with exquisite proportions and use of geometry with striking and dramatic internal spatial volumes. Every detail is conceived as part of a greater whole. The restraint and simplicity of the interiors feel almost abstract and modern, and the sense of peace and spirituality is overwhelming.

Every year on the third Sunday in July a bridge of barges is built from the Zattere so that Venetians can make the pilgrimage across the wide canal of the Giudecca. The night is loud

with fireworks – for thirty hours no ship can leave the inner port of Venice.

Part of the city fabric, yet separated from the day to day life, the building is designed to work on several levels. Seen from afar its bold pristine geometry gives the building an unmistakable glistening outline on the horizon when seen from St Marks Square. A podium of 15 steps, the façade seen close up from the Giudecca reveals a sophisticated layering of shapes providing scale and drama. Inside the sparse interiors allow the incredible timeless volumes to be expressed and the light floods in through the thermal windows.

The building stands as an ever present reminder, commemorating the deliverance every year, while being an object of beauty it also engages in the life of the City. Like the World Trade centre, architecture and ceremony combine, providing something to be shared by the whole city. As a monument it embodies the sentiments of the grieving, provides a focal point for their memory, along with a sense of hope, transcendence and renewal.

Our panel of contributors are experts in their field and have experience in a vast area of architectural design including; landscape, public sector and private residencies. If you would like to contribute as a panelist email: jade.tilley@onecoms.co.uk



"A CITY IS NOT AN ACCIDENT..."



...BUT THE RESULT OF COHERENT VISIONS AND AIMS."

Leon Krier



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