

Project

Cemetery in the City

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This thesis rethinks the modern cemetery as a Memento Mori at the scale of the city: an everyday reminder of life's transience amidst the usual urban distractions. The project seeks to remedy an avoidance of death plaguing our modern culture. Shifting this relationship with mortality begins with our spaces of death. An integration of architecture, landscape, and urban design, through materiality, can help people find spirituality in the city. A new typology, the cemetery draws inspiration from a history of burial, cultural rituals, and shifts in contemporary spirituality.

The cemetery is sited in downtown Boston, spanning the Fort Point Channel. The design manifests as a bridge constructed of human remains (figure 1); ashes are cast into concrete tiles that constitute the surface (figure 2). Rather than "going back to the earth," here, remains "go back to the city." Loved ones can imprint, embed, or mark the concrete. Material becomes monumental, and remains become mundane.

Program including a chapel (figure 3), viewing room (figure 4), library, and event space, are designed to orient the visitor upward toward the sky, downward toward water and reflection, or outward toward the city and collective society. The cemetery becomes a landscape of memory. It acts as a street, park, and public space (figure 5), connecting citizen to city. It is an ever changing creation of the community; growing with the area around it, and as memories are made and left there.

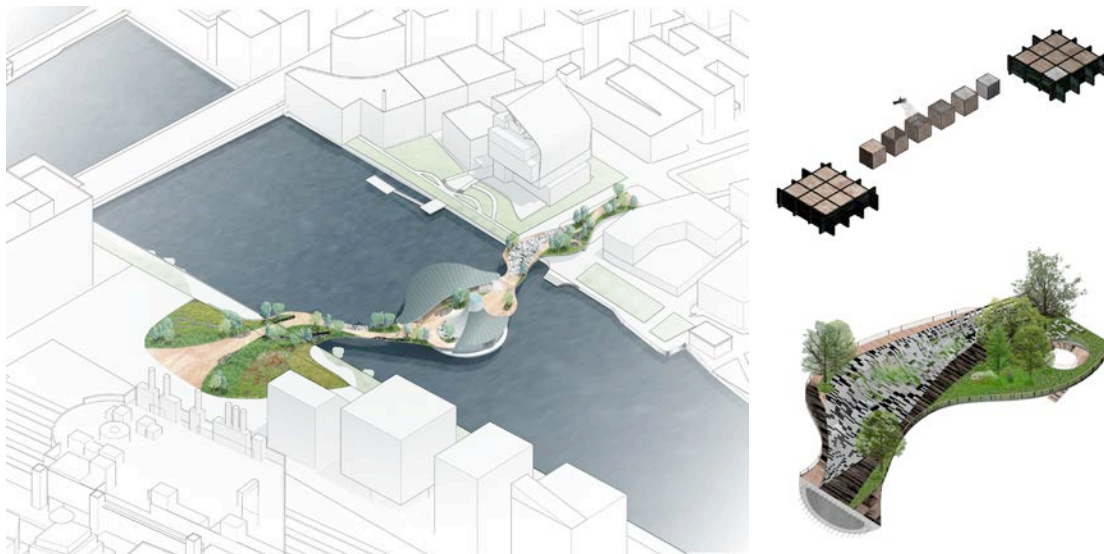


Figure 1: Axonometric View of Cemetery
Figure 2: Diagram of Graves and Span



Figure 3: Chapel
Figure 4: Viewing

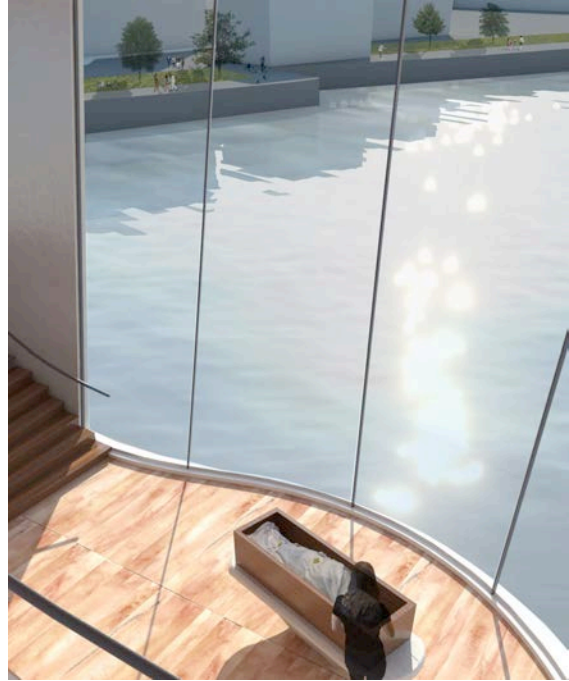


Figure 5: Plaza, chapel on the left, library on the right

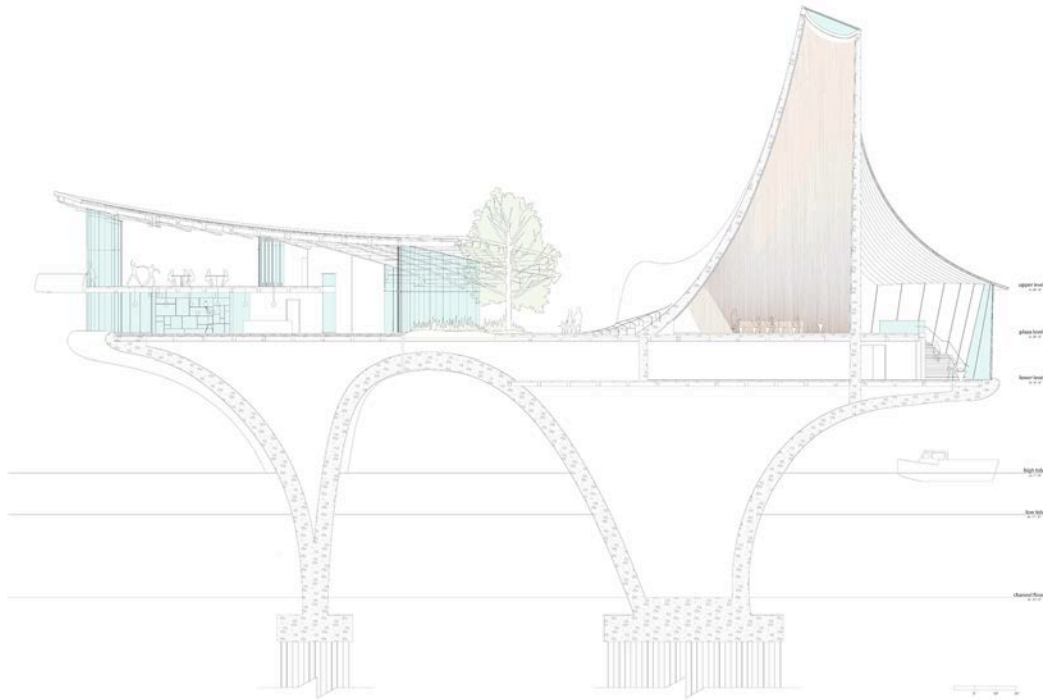


Figure 6: Section through plaza, library and event space (left), chapel and viewing (right).

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