



Series: Resilient cities


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# 9/11 Memorial Museum: an emotional underworld beneath Ground Zero

Scorched car doors, salvaged firefighters' uniforms, banners, toys and the hallowed 'last column' to be removed from the World Trade Center clearance ... the relics of the twin towers have been elevated into art objects at the new museum, which opens this month after years of wrangling

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- Echoes of atrocity: the 9/11 Memorial Museum – in pictures
- Take a first look inside the museum on our video tour

 **Oliver Wainwright**  
 The Guardian, Tuesday 13 May 2014  
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Rising up like an apparition ... Snøhetta's 9/11 Memorial Museum on the World Trade Center site. Photograph: Jeff Goldberg/Esto

In the middle of the World Trade Center site in **New York**, tourists squeeze their bodies against the faceted mirror-glass planes of the 9/11 Memorial Museum, eager to sneak a peek at what lies within. Rising up like an apparition behind the reflective glazing, beyond the greasy smears left by noses and sticky fingers, stand two rusted, fire-charred columns, relics salvaged from the wreckage of the twin towers.

"It's proving a popular place for selfies," says the architect Craig Dykers, watching visitors capture their reflected faces melding with the scorched structures inside. "If we can get someone to smile or have a giggle at a



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place of such sorrow," he adds, "we've done our job."


Almost 13 years since the atrocities of 9/11, when nearly 3,000 people were killed in a horrific moment of televised terrorism, the hallowed site of Ground Zero remains as much a place of spectacle as ever. More than 12 million people have visited since the memorial plaza opened in September 2011, to gawp into the voids of the towers' footprints, where endless sheets of water now spill in magisterial cascades into sunken reflecting pools.



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The \$700m museum is set for its ceremonial opening on Thursday, despite anxieties over storage of unidentified remains, entry fees and a video about al-Qaida

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[Link to video: Take a tour of the new 9/11 Memorial Museum](#)

Surrounded by a grove of 400 oak trees, interspersed with little slivers of lawn, these cubic waterfalls are breathtaking in their vastness, compressing the power of Niagara into stately dark squares. They have a silencing effect, which is just as well given the surrounding din of construction, where a ring of office towers is slowly rising to replace the 10m sq ft of commercial space that once stood on the site.

Finally opening to the public on 21 May, the museum completes the \$700m (£415m) undertaking of the 9/11 memorial project, leading visitors on an Orphean descent to the very bedrock below this most charged of sites. With its faceted flanks shimmering above the trees, the portal to this emotional underworld – designed by Dykers' practice, the Norwegian firm Snøhetta – stands as an angular wedge, thrust into the north-east corner of the plaza. A folded shell of metal and glass, inscribed with horizontal pinstripes along its length, the building has ghostly echoes of a tumbling twin tower, a fallen silvery shaft lying kinked and twisted between the pools.

With its angular form looming imposingly into view, it is one of the few remnants of the visual language conjured by Daniel Libeskind in his original masterplan for the site in 2003, [which imagined a circle of fragmented towers rising in a spiral up to a great fractured spire](#). His proposals were drenched with symbolism, from the spire's summit of 1,776 ft, in honour of the year of American independence, to a chink of light that would fall across the site at the same time on September 11 every year. His pitch won the nation's hearts, but not that of the site's leaseholder, Larry Silverstein, who had already hired his own architects and had other plans.



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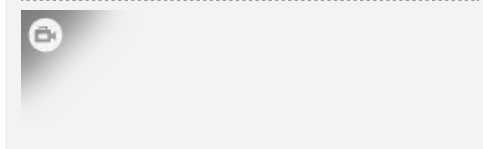
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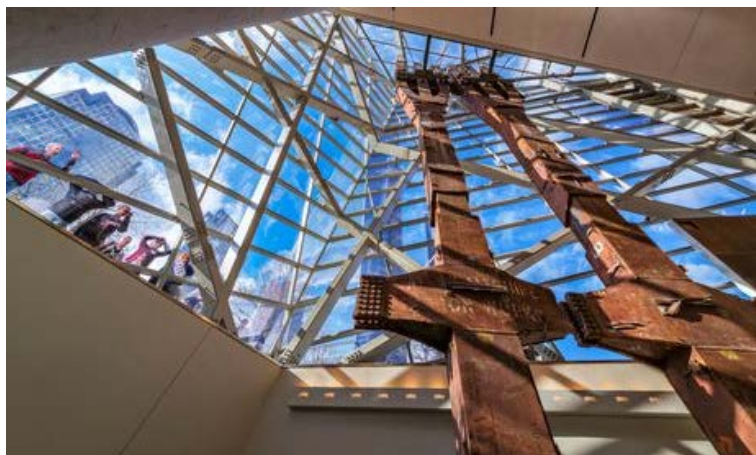


Snøhetta's building has ghostly echoes of a tumbling twin tower.

Since then, commercial realities have seen Libeskind's crystalline rock formation, which looked like something from the planet Krypton, translated into a more corporate affair of office blocks by a handful of Pritzker-prize winning architects, including Lords Foster and Rogers. Now half-finished, it might have been designed as a vertical exhibition of different curtain wall cladding systems. Libeskind's own jagged spear of a tower, meanwhile, [has become a stumpy obelisk by the global giant SOM](#).

As if to make up for these generic, if well-detailed, slabs of commerce, the terrain below has been given over to a competing frenzy of form-making, with a series of enthusiastically sculpted structures scattered across the site, all trying to embody hope and anguish, optimism and loss, hurt and healing. There are [the soaring vertebrae of Santiago Calatrava's \\$4bn transit hub](#), still under construction, channelling the wings of a dove and a dinosaur's rib cage; there are the solemn cascading voids; there might one day be [a Frank Gehry-designed performing arts centre](#); and then, nestling among all this, there is the museum pavilion – along with a motley debris of security sheds and ventilation shafts.

In the hands of Snøhetta, the museum building has become Libeskind-lite, his trademark aesthetic of trauma and tragedy filtered through a benign Scandinavian lens. "We wanted to stay true to the feeling of the masterplan," says Dykers, "but the building shouldn't feel too shocking." Within, it is all blond wood and warm, natural tones "to engender a sense of calm, a moment of relaxation before you have to be challenged". Housing an auditorium and a small room for families of the victims, it is well crafted, but has the neutral, rather placid feeling of an airport lounge.



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Two columns (known as 'tridents') salvaged from the twin towers wreckage form the centrepiece of the Museum pavilion. Photograph: Jeff Goldberg/Esto

A victim of the legal and political wranglings [that have plagued this 16-acre swath of lower Manhattan since 2001](#), Snøhetta's building has been slashed to a tenth of its planned size, when it was once to hold a museum of human rights and a visual arts centre. It is now essentially a glorified entrance lobby and mechanical service shed for what lies deep below, the memorial museum proper by the businesslike US firm Davis Brody Bond. "A traditional museum is an icon containing exhibits," says partner Steven Davis, as we process down a snaking staircase from Snøhetta's light-flooded crystal into the ethereal gloom, passing the gnarled base of the two towering columns. "But here the exhibits themselves are the icons."

With a clearly defined space beneath the plaza, hemmed in by rail lines, services and the exposed concrete slurry wall of the original World Trade Center development, the architects have used a long, looping ramp to take visitors on a "meaningful descent" 20 metres below the surface. The route is framed by the two great cubic volumes of the memorial fountains, which plunge down through the ceiling, wrapped in a textured aluminium skin, like spectral cadavers of the twin towers, beneath which is housed the chief content of the exhibition.

Walking along this dark timber route – which is designed to recall the 200 metre construction ramp by which debris was removed from the site – we pass further steel columns, twisted into monstrous claws by the impact of the planes, and a vast chunk of the transmission mast, spilling out its twisted entrails. Everywhere you look there are steel plates of immense thickness, effortlessly curled like pencil shavings, peeled back like the discarded skin of a banana. Raised on plinths or mounted on the walls and dramatically spotlit, these gut-wrenching fragments are treated like Richard Serra sculptures, elevated into art objects with ghoulish glee, in a way that's not entirely easy to stomach.

It is a form of fetishised architectural salvage that makes more sense when it is cleverly stitched into the visitors' route – where, for example, a set of eroded concrete stairs, down which many of the survivors fled to safety, is placed alongside the staircase down which you must walk. At the bedrock level there are also some powerfully understated moves, such as exposing the column foundations that march in a mute line around the perimeter where the towers once stood, marking the threshold between the cavernous, looser lobby area and the sanctified space of the exhibition within.




Inside the museum, items on display are taken from the 10,000-strong collection of objects salvaged from the site: a crushed fire engine and a charred firefighter's axe, salvaged uniforms, flags and toys. Photograph: 911 Museum

The exhibition halls were not complete at the time of visiting, but appear to be densely packed warrens of ephemera, taken from the 10,000-strong collection of objects salvaged from the site: the charred remains of a

firefighter's axe alongside scorched car doors, salvaged uniforms, shoes and hats, flags and toys, posters and banners of encouragement from the nine-month site clearance – all towered over by the hallowed "last column" to be removed from the site, a tattooed totem pole of hopes and memorials. Audio and video of personal recollections is mixed with contemporary reporting, building what the exhibition designers describe as "a multiplicity of subjectivities" through which the visitor is encouraged to navigate – it being deemed too soon for a definitive narrative of events to be appropriate.

It is, in many ways, an apt metaphor for the situation above ground. Every building bears the scars of not only the emotional trauma that is so engraved into these few city blocks, but of the battles that have been fought since 11 September 2001 to agree on anything being built at all. An untold amount of passion, energy and care has gone into the creation of every single piece of the 9/11 memorial museum complex – but these faceted forms are buffeted not just by the anguish and loss of that day, but by the compromise of competing interests that have waged war across the site ever since.



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15 PEOPLE, 19 COMMENTS



**mjback**

14 May 2014 12:30pm

151

"If we can get someone to smile or have a giggle at a place of such sorrow," he adds, "we've done our job."

Wha?



**DesignerBaby** ▶ mjback

14 May 2014 2:09pm

43

Quite. I was there a couple of weeks ago and it was mostly coachloads of foreign schoolkids looking around in confusion at the construction site, and eventually getting bored and taking pictures of themselves besides anything that looked the slightest bit important. Odd way to commemorate the dead.

Feel a bit sorry for the New Yorkers in all this... they're having to deal with Lower Manhattan becoming their main tourist attraction whilst searching for a way to honour and remember those that died. It wasn't THAT long ago, after all. For all the good intentions of this museum, i'm not sure that it's really helping.



**CaptainWillard** ▶ DesignerBaby

14 May 2014 2:50pm

33

Actually between Wall St, Federal Hall, Brooklyn Bridge, City Hall, South St Seaport, Bowling Green, the Statue of liberty, and the World Trade Center, my neighbourhood has literally always been crawling with tourists and TV/Movie crews. You kind of get used to it.



**Wiebe Otten** ▶ DesignerBaby

14 May 2014 3:48pm

44

"Odd way to commemorate the dead "

14 PEOPLE, 16 COMMENTS



**Starfcker**

14 May 2014 12:35pm

85

American sentimentality at it's finest and most indulgent



**Richard Clegg** ▶ Starfcker

106

14 May 2014 2:20pm

And just how would you commemorate the unnecessary and tragic loss of life on such a scale? Presumably you have visited this place to offer such an intelligent, insightful, well thought comment? I thought not, just more carping crap from a sideline heckler.



**JoJo McJoJo** ▶ Starfcker

12

14 May 2014 2:34pm

It adds to the beauty of the world. What more ever needs to be said in defense of anything?



**somebodysomewhere** ▶ Richard Clegg

14 May 2014 2:48pm

This comment was removed by a moderator because it didn't abide by our

6 PEOPLE, 6 COMMENTS



**The\_Truth\_Hurts**

48

14 May 2014 12:40pm

Apparently no one is really sure what happens with the \$25 entry fee...



**Strummered** ▶ The\_Truth\_Hurts

72

14 May 2014 2:53pm

The high entry fee makes it seem more like a morbid theme park than a museum - It is a tragic shame and in my opinion disrespectful to the dead. I was in NYC around that time and the years following and was hoping for something more subdued.



**FreedomFromHope** ▶ The\_Truth\_Hurts

25

14 May 2014 3:26pm

Apparently everything's for sale.

I did like the fountain memorials though. Something about them felt low-key but respectful. But I guess that's never enough.



**BarkingMad** ▶ The\_Truth\_Hurts

28

14 May 2014 3:42pm

Come and pay your respect to those that died. That will be \$25 please

3 PEOPLE, 4 COMMENTS



**RememberGiap**

46

14 May 2014 12:51pm

The highjacking of the memory of the dead , to deny the ' heresy of doubt ' .



**NoOneYouKnowNow** ▶ RememberGiap

14 May 2014 4:16pm

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**NoOneYouKnowNow** ▶ RememberGiap

7

14 May 2014 5:17pm

By the way, it's not a museum--it's a reliquary, complete with the remains of the martyrs:

<http://www.npr.org/2012/03/05/147992047/families-protest-burial-of-remains-at-sept-11-memorial>



**JoJo McJoJo** ▶ RememberGiap

14 May 2014 10:52pm

I take it you think the JFK memorial should include some screed about the CIA and the Freemasons?



**PlainClothes**

14 May 2014 12:51pm

5

*"If we can get someone to smile or have a giggle at a place of such sorrow," he adds, "we've done our job."*

- I know not exactly the same but reminds me of the Berlin holocaust memorial:

*while grindr's CEO was "deeply moved" by how app members "take part in the memory of the holocaust", others found using the memorial as a backdrop for hook up profiles to be disrespectful*

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Memorial\\_to\\_the\\_Murdered\\_Jews\\_of\\_Europe#Criticisms](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Memorial_to_the_Murdered_Jews_of_Europe#Criticisms)

11 PEOPLE, 26 COMMENTS



**MG75**

14 May 2014 12:52pm

74

I thought the idea was to not let terrorism win, but now--although I realize it's not the intent--a huge swathe of downtown NYC is an expensive and permanent reminder of what terrorism did. Can't help but think the protagonists would see this as a victory, and a shrine to their achievements. Wish there was a way of memorializing the people who were lost in a different way, that wouldn't let the terrorist act leave such a mark upon the city.



**JoJo McJoJo** ▶ MG75

34

14 May 2014 2:41pm

My thoughts exactly. What I had hoped after 9/11 is that in place of the Twin Towers, two different twin towers would have been built that were so gigantic and so artistically magnificent - and built so quickly - that it would make every anti-American bigot piece of shit the world over despair. The fact that that didn't happen - that more than a decade on, the WTC site is still unfinished - is a resounding triumph for the scum of the Earth who did it.



**ID0531716** ▶ JoJo McJoJo

14 May 2014 3:59pm

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**Lion Prey** ▶ MG75

14 May 2014 4:08pm



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**mrkhawaja1944**  
14 May 2014 12:53pm

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**Jamil Ashgar**  
14 May 2014 1:02pm

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10 PEOPLE, 14 COMMENTS



**Unconstituted**  
14 May 2014 1:02pm

82

Something vulgar about it. Perhaps not the design. Maybe it's the idea. Instinctively I feel uncomfortable with it.

It's too everydayish to be of any real value in understanding the complex web of affairs that led to the anger that caused those deaths.



**JoJo McJoJo** ▶ Unconstituted  
14 May 2014 2:42pm

41

A very tactful way of letting it be known that you blame the victims. Thanks for your input.



**MikeRichards** ▶ Unconstituted  
14 May 2014 2:52pm

14

It might because it's new. It's hard to imagine not having the Imperial War Museum nowadays, but when it was founded it must have created a certain amount of unease.



**Shimo** ▶ MikeRichards  
14 May 2014 3:45pm

10

"among a certain type of lefty" hehe finish the sentence



**followthemonkey**  
14 May 2014 1:02pm

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2 PEOPLE, 2 COMMENTS



**nugent71**  
14 May 2014 1:10pm

70

Is the hijackers passport on show?



**nevado** ▶ nugent71  
14 May 2014 10:00pm

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8 PEOPLE, 8 COMMENTS



**RobO83**

14 May 2014 1:11pm

34

Selfies and giggling at the memorial doesn't seem appropriate at all to me.

What's next selfies at funerals? Whatever happened to showing respect in a dignified fashion.



**2000overdrive** ▶ RobO83

14 May 2014 1:25pm

55

Mobile phones and the internet have given a wide-reaching public voice to morons around the globe. And what do they use that voice for? To let the world know they are morons.



**Wans** ▶ RobO83

14 May 2014 2:15pm

11

What's next selfies at funerals?

Perish the thought.



**StanOne** ▶ RobO83

14 May 2014 2:16pm

15

RobO83



**AlienLifeForce**

14 May 2014 1:29pm

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**Saad Ajmal**

14 May 2014 1:31pm

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**YorkerBouncer**

14 May 2014 1:33pm

31

Grief tourism turned up to 11.

10 PEOPLE, 15 COMMENTS



**Ian Keaveny**

14 May 2014 1:34pm

77

i have been cured of the disease of democracy by touching the new and holy relics of the twin towers.A place of miracles and wonders , one step away from the fall of empire, this is the way, step inside.



**BrooklynNonHipster** ▶ Ian Keaveny

14 May 2014 2:45pm

10

Brilliantly stated and lost on by most.



**JoJo McJoJo** ▶ Ian Keaveny

14 May 2014 2:50pm

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**PastieFace** ▶ BrooklynNonHipster

14 May 2014 3:43pm

You're not feeling anyone - you didn't understand what he's wittering on

6

2 PEOPLE, 2 COMMENTS



**sanvegas**

14 May 2014 1:52pm

I visited the 9/11 memorial earlier this year and thought it was very well done. I like that it stands in the footprints of the twin towers, and I really like the waterfalls and the fact they fill the exact shape of those footprints.

I was touched by reading the names of those who died and saddened by the flowers that were on some names to make the persons birthday had recently occurred.

I took photos while I was there, of the memorial. I did not take any photos of myself or my friend as we felt it would be disrespectful; we were there to pay our respects afterall. I find the selfie comment in this article disgraceful.

The memorial is free, as it should be. I don't agree that the Memorial Museum should be charging \$25 - the same charge as entry to the vast MET museum incidently

37



**boleyngroupie** ▶ sanvegas

14 May 2014 6:31pm

fyi, you are not required to pay admission to the MET and the Natural History Museum, \$25 is the *suggested rate*. *you don't have to pay anything if you don't want to. but, special workshops, seminars, etc. are not free. i live in nyc and pay \$5 or so, since i got to see a couple of rooms or exhibits, not the entire museum.*

*\$24 for the 9/11 museum does seem a bit high for me. i would like to know where that money goes to as well.*

2

4 PEOPLE, 5 COMMENTS



**InShockAndAwe**

14 May 2014 1:53pm

Osama would be proud he left such a lasting effect

11



**FatBettySwollocks** ▶ InShockAndAwe

14 May 2014 2:24pm

Nah his sorry ass is fish food.

26



**InShockAndAwe** ▶ FatBettySwollocks

14 May 2014 4:31pm

Clearly his memory lives on... and now its making money!

In the UK we tried to forget what the IRA did to the UK... we do not make builds, and charge admissions, to immortalise the pain... Same in Russia with the bombings they had before their winter Olympics. They tried their best not to give any spot light to the idiots that tried to ruin it.

The US admin seems never to want people to forget, to keep the fear real

19

and ever lasting...



**WinstonX** ▶ InShockAndAwe

14 May 2014 4:50pm

This comment was removed by a moderator because it didn't abide by our

3 PEOPLE, 4 COMMENTS



**ID5606196**

14 May 2014 1:56pm

10

I was at the site in Dec last year, the "museum" wasn't open at the time but there were lots of people posing for photos which i just felt was wrong, and the queuing system and tickets sales etc all felt too much like a theme park attraction. My wife felt the same way. The new tower is stunning and the waterfall memorials are a good place for reflection. However like others have said, this seems a bit self-indulgent and not quite the right tone. That pic of inside the museum looks like something from an old planet Hollywood restaurant!!



**conedison** ▶ ID5606196

14 May 2014 2:37pm

13

I think it's wrong to judge any museum/memorial on the basis of what other visitors do while you're there. I saw tourists taking furtive photos of each other inside the Holocaust Museum in DC. I didn't allow them to define the experience for me.



**uncleal06** ▶ conedison

15 May 2014 7:47am

1

It's wrong to compare this with the Holocaust Museum. The Holocaust dwarfs 9/11 significantly. I'm tempted to say that the US really needs to get over itself and move on. Tempted to, but I'll refrain for fear of upsetting people and being branded an 'anti-American bigot' (always the go-to option for shutting down debate).



**conedison** ▶ unclean06

15 May 2014 7:52am

Please read what I wrote - `any museum/memorial'.

5 PEOPLE, 5 COMMENTS



**monkeyballs**

14 May 2014 1:58pm

10

I can't stand Liebskind. Irregular, uncomfortable angles and spaces is his forte. Anyone who has been to the horrible Imperial War Museum North in Salford will attest to this. Absolute shocker of a building. I feel sorry for New Yorkers if the memorial looks anything like this.



**DurhamPeter** ▶ monkeyballs

14 May 2014 2:51pm

3

I'm not a huge fan of Liebskind, but his original design for 1 WTC was much better than the one that eventually came to fruition. They had the chance to build something striking, a building that would become an icon of New York City. Instead they chose the next most bland thing to a box.

**Voltaire21** ▶ monkeyballs

14 May 2014 2:51pm

3

Well this is an extract of how the Guardian described it(remember reading it at the time and found it again):

Set in a hard landscape, this harshly metallic museum blossoms like some savage fortification or expressionist engine of war into Trafalgar's industrial skyline. Composed of what Libeskind describes as three "interlocking shards representing the nature of conflict on land, in the air and on water", the great aluminium-clad, steel-framed building is as polite as a Grand Slam bomb. It is clearly not here to please in any conventional way, yet it is deeply impressive and will doubtless attract more than the 300,000 a visitors a year the museum reckons on.

It also defies the cartoon-like postmodern offices and apartment blocks that pout unconvincingly along the banks of the revived Manchester Ship Canal at Salford Quays. And it is a convincing riposte to the building it faces across the canal basin, the equally steely yet architecturally confused Lowry Centre.

It is a building with the power to disorientate and disturb visitors, encouraging them to reflect on the perils, the mechanics and above all the human cost of war. Just as well, then, that Libeskind has provided two ways into the core of the £28.5m museum from its crooked, bunker-like entrance. Inside and to the right, visitors can ease their way into a generous foyer that directs them into the earth and water sections, or shards. The first of these is the cavernous principal gallery of the building, housed under a massive roof that follows the curvature of the Earth, and the second is the waterside cafe and restaurant.

If visitors turn to the left, though, they can ride a zinc-clad lift up the vertiginous air shard. The lift, like a prop from *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari*, climbs tenaciously up a skeletal perimeter wall angled, unnervingly, at 4.5 degrees off the vertical through a criss-crossing of steel beams to arrive at last at a walkway and viewing platform 95ft above the canal. Wind, rain and even snow can beat and whistle through hundreds of unglazed floor-to-roof slits in the walls of the museum's 180ft leaning tower that wraps around the lift, the walkway and the platform.

This experience is magnificent, but it is not for the faint-hearted. The walk from the lift to the cage-like viewing platform is across a meshed steel floor: you can see down to the entrance far below. If the aim is to make visitors consider the aerial perspective of modern warfare and the precariousness of the life below that it seeks to destroy, it succeeds.

I remember laughing a good 5 minutes at that last paragraph...I would give a grand of my hard earned money if any punter who visited the museum can give me word for word the same emotion of reaching the viewing platform. The whole review made me squirm and laugh in equal measures...

**JoJo McJoJo** ▶ monkeyballs

14 May 2014 2:53pm

6

Fortunately the vast majority of Libeskind's design was abandoned, and

**GarishDarkness**

14 May 2014 2:06pm

6

Scorched car doors, salvaged firefighters' uniforms, banners, toys and the hallowed 'last column' to be removed from the World Trade Center clearance

Oh well, I'll certainly look forward to that then!

This article should be headlined how and how not to remember 9/11. Anything this article does not 'remember' is worth remembering!

2 PEOPLE, 2 COMMENTS



**cmarie10**

14 May 2014 2:07pm

65

In the end, everything in the U.S.A. becomes a commodity

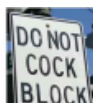


**CaptainWillard** ▶ cmarie10

14 May 2014 3:02pm

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8 PEOPLE, 12 COMMENTS



**dallo**

14 May 2014 2:10pm

31

whatever anti-american / conspiracy theory comments this article will attract I thought the the two water fountains were very well done, understated and pretty non-american in their design and production. the single tree, the only to survive the event, is quite touching. other arguments aside imho its been done well.



**dogpresent** ▶ dallo

14 May 2014 2:36pm

9

What do conspiracies have to do with your architectural analysis of the building?



**osnaj** ▶ dallo

14 May 2014 2:53pm

4

yes...

Manhattan needs many more fountains, large and small, and not just in large open epic {?} spaces, but also tucked for daily sanctuary, small concerts etc.

The soundscape aspects alone are vital. To counter the large background city noise, but also to give room for small, private contemplation, conversations, calm.

see: [Paley Park a wonderful pocket park located at 3 East 53rd Street in Midtown. May 1967, Designed by Zion and Breen](#)

The missing elements are free access, and rain cover. Rain cover is missing for so many public spaces // wierd..

The developer trend in 1980s was a clever contract with city. Bit glassed in spaces with public access, but private buildings, greenhouse sandwichery ""green"" spaces. I was told the deal swapped better planning permissions = better/larger building footprints at street level in exchange for public entry to the enlarged cathedral-corporatist entry lobbies. And Tax breaks probably too. {Ed Koch & David Dinkins years}

IBM building on corner of Madison and 57Street had some lonely indoor bamboos, and was a popular useful meetings/resting space for many. Best there was the installation of live Tibetan Monks, in-residence on a small dais in a show window creating then destroying a colored sand mandala during a few weeks.

There were many cruel years when any form of shelter against rain, wind, or even sitting was curtailed by gates or vicious designed attempts to prevent anyone sleeping on a bench. The targeted was of course homeless citizens. Followed by anti-skteboarding teenagers. And then post 911 the propanoic trend to redesign everything according to some unwritten countra-terrorist manual...

Just so very wrong and so hoping that the trees and fountains of WTC911 memorial might restore some useful urban space to the living/working population.



**JoJo McJoJo** ▶ dogpresent

14 May 2014 2:56pm

8

I think he/she is saying that people shouldn't be distracted by reviving

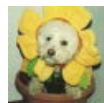


**usreader721**

14 May 2014 2:33pm

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2 PEOPLE, 2 COMMENTS



**Stephen Schultz**

14 May 2014 2:37pm

6

The desire to see these artefacts may be a natural human instinct, and I suppose the public pressure to create this museum was intense, but is it healthy? What if it becomes the most visited attraction in NYC? What would that say of the nation's psyche?



**RickyRat** ▶ Stephen Schultz

14 May 2014 3:13pm

6

You won't catch me going there.

6 PEOPLE, 6 COMMENTS



**BrooklynNonHipster**

14 May 2014 2:40pm

72

It's unfortunately no accident that the above-ground design of this new museum resembles toppled over buildings. The interior artifacts then drive home the point. For me and many Americans, 9/11 has come to represent a complete overreaction by an installed presidency that led to a horrific and costly invasion of Iraq which had nothing to do with the twin towers. We've also lost our personal privacy in the name of "safety" and everyone is now considered a suspect. In the coming decades, people will look back on these very specific events that led to the real decline of our once-proud nation.



**RickyRat** ▶ BrooklynNonHipster

14 May 2014 3:13pm

19

The worst thing is that our people still have not come to reflect on the cause and effect relationship of American behavior to the tragedy of 9/11.



**outfitter** ▶ BrooklynNonHipster

14 May 2014 3:23pm

4

Whatever the topic (and here we are discussing a memorial) liberals will always harken back to Bush! The response to the attack was bound to include hasty decisions and mistakes, but say what you will, al Qaeda is not the threat to the homeland it was on 9/11. The fact that there was an unnecessary war in Iraq and mission creep in Afghanistan under Obama - the "right war" according to the President - doesn't take away from the fact that the training camps are gone and so is Bin Laden.

A determined enemy will always find a way to attack but what would you prefer, a hardened security with consequent loss of privacy or business as usual until the next attack? The real criticism is that there is too much security theater and not enough effective security. Parts of the airport checks and NSA vacuuming up every bit of data in the world are perfect examples of ineffective security that should be subjected to a costs benefit analysis.



**nelliexnox** ▶ BrooklynNonHipster

14 May 2014 4:15pm

That's a fair point

3 PEOPLE, 5 COMMENTS



**gruniadreader666**

14 May 2014 2:47pm

16

I get the impression they have fallen in to the classic trap of representing an enormous tragedy with an enormous or in this case a collection of enormous monuments.

The cenotaph for instance show poinancy is not related to size. I recently came across the 7/7 memorial and felt that really said what was needed.

The problem with physically huge monuments is also their very size can make them feel too oppressive, like they are jingoistically ordering you to mourn rather than leaving you to conteplate loss on your own terms, which is what true mourning is about .



**JoJo McJoJo** ▶ gruniadreader666

14 May 2014 2:58pm

9

Huge events should have huge memorials. I just wish we put this same kind of effort into memorializing human triumphs, and not just tragedies.



**gruniadreader666** ▶ JoJo McJoJo

14 May 2014 8:38pm

3

If I where to design it I would have just left the corner steels seen in the museum as a memorial with all the names engraved in to a memorial stone or plaque, I would place this in a garden with plenty of seating with some privacy to allow people the space to mourn.

The worry is this all seems more like a tourist trap than a place for reflection. Go to any cemetery and your will find the memorial that touches you the most will not be the most elaborate or largest monument but one that is on a human scale.



**JoJo McJoJo** ▶ gruniadreader666

14 May 2014 10:01pm

2

The actual memorial is the waterfall pools with the victim names surrounding



**Lion Prey**

14 May 2014 3:05pm

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**jackrousseau**

14 May 2014 3:06pm

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12 PEOPLE, 17 COMMENTS



**PokeyPokey**

14 May 2014 3:10pm

18

A memorial I get, but a museum? Do they have a waxwork of Osama giving it a cheesy grin and two thumbs up?



Knowing Americans they'll be some kind of gift shop and fast food outlet.....



**sadhu** ▶ PokeyPokey

2

14 May 2014 3:37pm

But of course. Mc Donald's will possibly get the contract.



**PastieFace** ▶ PokeyPokey

28

14 May 2014 3:47pm

America - the last country on Earth it's ok to be racist about.



**Crossroadnalities** ▶ PokeyPokey

13

14 May 2014 3:50pm

Knowing Americans they'll be some kind of gift shop and fast food



**Crossroadnalities**

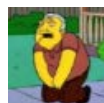
3

14 May 2014 3:13pm

9/11 hurt.

But millions will never connect to this building.

2 PEOPLE, 3 COMMENTS



**follyhunter**

7

14 May 2014 3:14pm

I just don't like Daniel Libeskind's style.



**follyhunter** ▶ follyhunter

3

14 May 2014 3:23pm

His next project will be a Holocaust Memorial in Canada. Whatever for I don't know, but he seems to be the memorial type.



**gruniadreader666** ▶ follyhunter

4

14 May 2014 8:26pm

If you read how he described the Berlin Jewish museum he makes it sound like a holocaust theme park, its all about being an experiential experience which for me seems to trivialize the holocaust more than it mourns it.

A slit of light in a cramped roof in todays Berlin does nothing to convey the sheer unrelenting horror of human beings shoved into cattle trucks on the way to death camps and Libskinds assertion to me comes across as no more weighty and as crass to claim the same about an over crowded commuter train.

Post modernism is an art form that just cannot handle loss let alone something as horrendous as the holocaust. Why do you want to be clever, witty , ironic or hip about something that the mear thought makes your body weak, your sprit fade something so crushing anything that tries to represent it looks kitch and inadequate.

At the heart of it all the holocaust points into you soul and says you and everyone you know could be either side of the fences. That normally good people can do terrible things, out of fear, out of weakness, out of anger a man can turn on a former friend. This is a unpalatable thought .

It cannot be represented by walls at odd angles and strategically placed

windows.

4 PEOPLE, 4 COMMENTS



**Barbara Saunders**

14 May 2014 3:16pm

18

I am no fan of fetishised horror.



**JoJo McJoJo** ▶ Barbara Saunders

14 May 2014 11:04pm

1

It's a much saner and more humane kind of memorial than the pompous tributes to ancient dictators and religious charlatans that cover the European landscape.



**uncleal06** ▶ JoJo McJoJo

15 May 2014 7:51am

1

Europhobia. It's kind of the stand-by for Americans who run out of ideas.



**gruniadreader666** ▶ JoJo McJoJo

15 May 2014 9:35am

1

cough ,cough Lincoln, Jefferson etc

Most past leaders are monsters by todays standards. Londons Trafalgar square is a tribute to various war criminals of empire but so to is Washington littered with memorials to presidents who committed horrendous atrocities.

Lincoln massacred native Americans, much like Cromwell massacred the Irish yet both a celebrated for other achievements that are still admirable today.

All societies are based on a myth system that select important events from history. Some events may be true others false and most a mix of the two but they all help to tell a story of what a nation believes it stands for today

This museum in effect continues that tradition and it does concern me a that this museum is more about defining the national story than it is about those who lossed loved ones.

4 PEOPLE, 4 COMMENTS



**AbacusFinch**

14 May 2014 3:19pm

18

I should have thought this might have been a section of a greater museum about the failed War on Terror that would hold the war criminals Blair, Bush and Cheney to account. Alas, we'll have to give it a few decades for the history books to catch up.



**JoJo McJoJo** ▶ AbacusFinch

14 May 2014 11:08pm

1

Considering that there hasn't been another mass-casualty terrorist attack on US soil since 9/11, I wouldn't call it "failed." It is unsustainable, but it has so far - at massive and unnecessary cost - achieved the basic objective of preventing a repeat.

That said, I agree that history needs to be told as it happened, and not tiptoe around Bush's tyrannical exploitation of 9/11 for fear of offending the Nazi

trash who supported him.



**SympatheticTory** ▶ JoJo McJoJo

4

14 May 2014 11:44pm

As long as Americans are now safe. Fuck the rest of the world I suppose was the underlying theme.



**uncleal06** ▶ JoJo McJoJo

15 May 2014 7:52am

Haha. Boston ring any bells? Didn't see that one coming did they?

3 PEOPLE, 3 COMMENTS



**JonnnyA**

14 May 2014 3:24pm

29

Sponsored by The Isaac Newton Foundation for the Promotion of a Sound Understanding of the Newton's Laws of Motion.



**AlexanderA** ▶ JonnnyA

3

14 May 2014 8:04pm

Easily my favourite comment!



**JoJo McJoJo** ▶ JonnnyA

3

14 May 2014 11:11pm

Gravity is just a theory. More evidence needs to be gathered. /Petroleum industry

5 PEOPLE, 6 COMMENTS



**Gilbert3**

14 May 2014 3:26pm

23

And remember y'all, all comments that would be viewed as offensive and tasteless if applied to anything or anyone other than Americans and 9/11 are perfectly permissible because you're the arbiters of what's morally acceptable in the world today.



**RickyRat** ▶ Gilbert3

9

14 May 2014 3:28pm

Feeling defensive today, Gil?



**PokeyPokey** ▶ Gilbert3

4

14 May 2014 6:58pm

What happened on the 9th of November?

**JoJo McJoJo** ▶ Gilbert3

1



14 May 2014 11:26pm



Snittle-faced, animalistic batmenancing and deliberate lie promotion counts



**krislej**

14 May 2014 3:27pm

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**sadhu**

14 May 2014 3:27pm

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**krislej**

14 May 2014 3:28pm

committed\*

6 PEOPLE, 6 COMMENTS



**AndyOC**

14 May 2014 3:33pm



\*\*Pedant hat firmly in place\*\*

Nothing happened on the 9th of November, it was the 11th of September - 11/9, rather than 9/11.



**RickyRat** ▶ AndyOC

14 May 2014 3:39pm



Depends on several things, including which side of the pond you live on and whether you've ever served in the US military, where they use the NATO, thus European, format for dates. Go back a few decades in Britain and you'll find the same format to which you are objecting.

Do you want to tell everybody that driving on the righthand side of the road is wrong while you're at it?



**sadhu** ▶ AndyOC

14 May 2014 3:41pm



In America they put the month first. They are weird in that way. The same way that they still use inches, feet and miles.



**GabrielTheToad** ▶ AndyOC

14 May 2014 3:49pm



Seriously? This is what you came here to say?



**UltraNationalist**

14 May 2014 3:34pm

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**OffensiveUnsuitable**

14 May 2014 3:49pm



In the hands of Snøhetta, the museum building has become Libeskind-lite

That's a mean way to describe the Norwegians. Libeskind is heavy-handed Snøhetta, more like.

8 PEOPLE, 9 COMMENTS



**TheKernel**

14 May 2014 3:53pm

20

Perhaps we can expect a US Government contribution to a museum commemorating the hundreds of thousands of civilians who died needlessly either as a direct result of American military intervention or through the interminable civil wars precipitated by there illogical (and nakedly imperialist) "War on Terror".

No?

Evidently some innocent lives are worth more than others.



**TheKernel** ▶ TheKernel

14 May 2014 3:55pm

6

Just to clarify, I'm not anti-American per se. In the event of such a hypothetical construct, I would expect a proportionate representation from UK coffers.



**imaloserbaby** ▶ TheKernel

14 May 2014 3:58pm

10

You're right, but that's no reason for the people of a city not to commemorate innocent people who lost their lives within that city.



**Hootenannys** ▶ TheKernel

14 May 2014 4:40pm

5

I'm sure the citizens of Afghanistan & Iraq will commemorate the people

2 PEOPLE, 2 COMMENTS



**sadoldpedant**

14 May 2014 3:55pm

3

The Frank Gehry link is behind a Wall Street Journal paywall. I'm not giving money to them. How about a proper link?

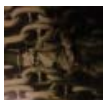


**CharlesCU** ▶ sadoldpedant

14 May 2014 4:22pm

2

... but why would you want to? It's Frank Gehry and therefore you already know what it's going to look like.



**Marshalllofcharlton**

14 May 2014 3:55pm

10

I've no problems with memorials and indeed one for the 9/11 victims is a deserving case if ever there was one. Now without wanting to sound disrespectful, there is part of me that thinks this is all a little bit OTT.

Is it just me or are there others who feel the same?

2 PEOPLE, 2 COMMENTS



**Karen Alexander**

14 May 2014 3:56pm

5

I think it looks beautiful and people have a choice to visit or not depending on how they feel about it. I think I might visit it to pay my respects and to reflect on the event. All I can say is, if it isn't your cup of tea, stay away.



**Hootenannys** ▶ Karen Alexander

14 May 2014 4:43pm

6

Or people haven't got \$25 to spend (per person). I don't like it really- It feels exploitative (especially in an incredibly rich city).



**waltjabsco**

14 May 2014 3:58pm

6

\$25 to get it ????????????????????



**CompassionateTory**

14 May 2014 3:58pm

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2 PEOPLE, 2 COMMENTS



**gottliebvera**

14 May 2014 3:58pm

25

Most of that money should have gone to help those firefighters and other personnel who are still struggling with health problems. Typical American...everything for show.



**simonsays247** ▶ gottliebvera

14 May 2014 4:29pm

2

We're talking about a *lot* of money here. Also, see The Zadroga 9/11 Victim Compensation Fund Benefit Program

2 PEOPLE, 2 COMMENTS



**LiberalinCalif**

14 May 2014 3:59pm

10

Perhaps we will in our magnificent humanity and regard for the citizens of the world also tape a sheet of copy paper on one of the walls listing the innocent civilians murdered by our drones in Yemen and elsewhere.

After all, we are a compassionate and selfless defender of the innocent and the downtrodden the world over. It is what makes us a great nation.

This all just makes me cringe.



**Hootenannys** ▶ LiberalinCalif

14 May 2014 4:46pm

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### Echoes of atrocity: the 9/11 Memorial Museum – in pictures

14 May 2014

Almost 13 years after 9/11, here is a first look at the Memorial Museum that will complete the \$700m memorial project. The building, by Norwegian architects Snøhetta, has eerie echoes of a falling twin tower. Two giant, fire-charred columns rise up like fists in the entrance, leading visitors down to an emotional underworld of architectural salvage

14 May 2014

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5 May 2014

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