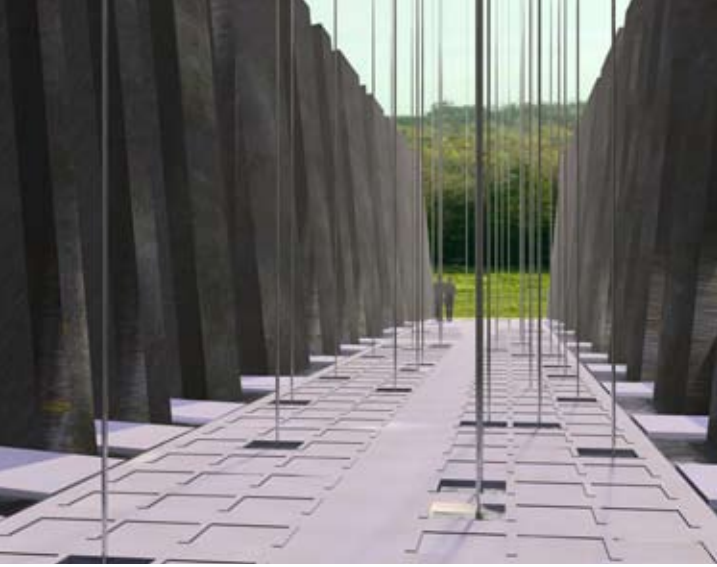


FLIGHT 93 CENTER MEMORIAL

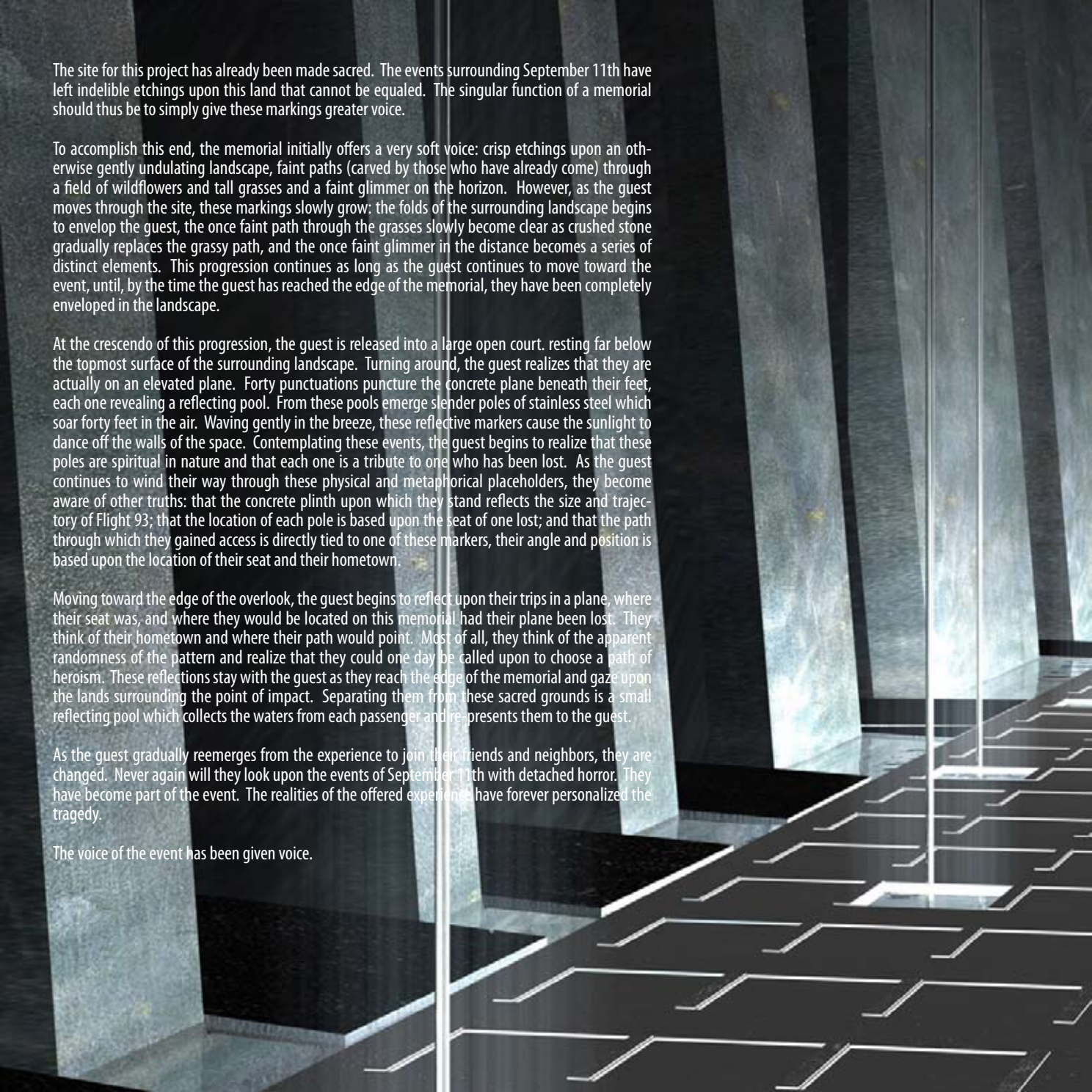
SOMERSET, PENNSYLVANIA

The site for this project has already been made sacred. The events surrounding September 11th have left indelible etchings upon this land that cannot be equaled. The singular function of a memorial should thus be to simply give these markings greater voice.

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2004 [5 WEEKS]





The background image shows a memorial space. It features several tall, narrow, light-colored concrete pillars standing on a dark floor. The floor is marked with white, geometric, stepped patterns that resemble a grid or a path. The lighting is dramatic, with strong shadows and highlights, creating a somber and contemplative atmosphere.

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To accomplish this end, the memorial initially offers a very soft voice: crisp etchings upon an otherwise gently undulating landscape, faint paths (carved by those who have already come) through a field of wildflowers and tall grasses and a faint glimmer on the horizon. However, as the guest moves through the site, these markings slowly grow: the folds of the surrounding landscape begins to envelop the guest, the once faint path through the grasses slowly become clear as crushed stone gradually replaces the grassy path, and the once faint glimmer in the distance becomes a series of distinct elements. This progression continues as long as the guest continues to move toward the event, until, by the time the guest has reached the edge of the memorial, they have been completely enveloped in the landscape.

At the crescendo of this progression, the guest is released into a large open court, resting far below the topmost surface of the surrounding landscape. Turning around, the guest realizes that they are actually on an elevated plane. Forty punctuations puncture the concrete plane beneath their feet, each one revealing a reflecting pool. From these pools emerge slender poles of stainless steel which soar forty feet in the air. Waving gently in the breeze, these reflective markers cause the sunlight to dance off the walls of the space. Contemplating these events, the guest begins to realize that these poles are spiritual in nature and that each one is a tribute to one who has been lost. As the guest continues to wind their way through these physical and metaphorical placeholders, they become aware of other truths: that the concrete plinth upon which they stand reflects the size and trajectory of Flight 93; that the location of each pole is based upon the seat of one lost; and that the path through which they gained access is directly tied to one of these markers, their angle and position is based upon the location of their seat and their hometown.

Moving toward the edge of the overlook, the guest begins to reflect upon their trips in a plane, where their seat was, and where they would be located on this memorial had their plane been lost. They think of their hometown and where their path would point. Most of all, they think of the apparent randomness of the pattern and realize that they could one day be called upon to choose a path of heroism. These reflections stay with the guest as they reach the edge of the memorial and gaze upon the lands surrounding the point of impact. Separating them from these sacred grounds is a small reflecting pool which collects the waters from each passenger and represents them to the guest.

As the guest gradually reemerges from the experience to join their friends and neighbors, they are changed. Never again will they look upon the events of September 11th with detached horror. They have become part of the event. The realities of the offered experience have forever personalized the tragedy.

The voice of the event has been given voice.

