

# Public Art Design of Historical Event Memorial Hall——Taking the Sculpture in the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall as an Example

Xiaohan Li

Qilu University of Technology The University is Located in Jinan, Shandong Province 250300

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**Abstract:** The memorial hall of historical events aims to commemorate important historical events, and its space structure and art display, should be incisively and vividly show the essence of the event. Wu Weishan's sculpture for the Memorial Hall of the Victims of the Nanjing Massacre vividly reproduces the historical scene of the Nanjing Massacre. The memorial sculpture becomes the highlight of the theme of the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall, integrating emotional elements into the shaping of the space environment, and integrating the special quality and appeal of the historical memorial hall with the thoughts and emotions of visitors.

**Keywords:** Public art sculpture historical event memorial Hall Nanjing Massacre

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## 1. Memorial Hall of historical Events

Museum architecture is the construction site of social spiritual civilization, and memorial museums established to commemorate major historical events, in addition to the display function of the general museum, have spirit as the leading function.

The overall design of the nanjing massacre victims memorial from the nature, history, environment, use realistic technique to create the atmosphere of a building, combined with stunning sculptures, aims at is to give visitors a memorable profound feelings, thus further arouse the people to the tragic events in the history of mankind where the recall, memory and thinking.

## 2. The Sculpture of the Memorial Hall of the Massacre victims in Nanjing

The Memorial Hall of the Victims in the Nanjing Massacre is located in a noisy residential area and a modern commercial block, which requires a spatial transition between the mundane life scene and the tragic historical tragedy. The sculpture works here should not only make people clear at a glance, but also attract layers of in-depth, so that the grief of visitors from within. Therefore, taking the epic group sculpture combination form can achieve a powerful narrative effect; It can create ups and downs of emotional resonance between the stories of suffering and visitors.

The first is the house Broken down, which is full of volume, form and tension. Then came the group sculptures of "Escape" with various expressions and bodies; Then there is the voice of the earth, the trembling hand pointing to the sky. This group of group carving takes the triangular decent memorial hall main building as the background, the composition is deep and agitated movement. This movement embraces the audience in a field of compassion; Let each step into the memorial hall, each see a bone, each see a blood coat, can produce infinite grief.

Entering the sculpture plaza from the entrance of the memorial hall, you can see "The destruction". With a height of 12 meters, the work shows the mother who was abused in grief, helplessly holding her dead son to cry to heaven, helplessly bearing humiliation and never yielding to her heart.

This work has become the landmark sculpture of the memorial hall. The tall, bony body has a strong sense of visual impact, which makes people close to look sad, and produces a strong sense of emotional depression. The long walking path at the feet of the sculpture becomes a process for people to reflect on history and purify their minds.

Then came the group sculpture of "Escape", which consists of ten groups of sculptures totalling twenty-one figures. This group of sculptures achieves an extremely strong performance effect by means of extremely exaggerated body and manner: the trembling tendons of the old are vividly carved, and the unwilling eyes of the dead are raised to reveal their fear and hatred in their hearts. This group of figures is almost life-size -- here, the audience emotionally interacts with the sculptures as if they are walking into history.

"Escape" is arranged in a straight line in space, which forms a parallel linear arrangement with the queue of tourists waiting to enter the memorial hall of the victims. The direction of this group of sculptures is opposite to the streamline of the audience, showing a tension of entering history and leaving grief. Visitors can more intuitively feel the theme of life and death expressed by this group of sculptures.

The sculptures in the sculpture square form a flowing movement, which gradually reaches the climax of the whole overture through a series of "dialogue" of body language between individuals and groups.

The "Dead Souls Cry" in the main entrance of the memorial hall is visually connected with the group sculptures in the sculpture

square, which is a very important spatial node in the museum visiting path. The work consists of two large, black, sharp bronze geometric figures, both of which have bas-reliefs carved on their faces. Carved on the left is a naked man falling backwards, his right arm outstretched to the sky. The relief on the right is relatively small, showing civilians under the threat of bayonets. The image of aggressors is omitted, and the narrow and dense bayonets form a special visual focus.

At the entrance of the memorial hall, there is a relief wall with the theme of victory. Relief to the “V” shaped as the basic composition, in the “V” shaped node, there is a Chinese soldier blowing the victory bugler statue, foot on the aggressor’s helmet and broken sword, showing the victory of the people, the victory of justice, but also a symbol of war away from human beings. The sculpture adopts modern design techniques, with the help of the size of the triangle “V” word contrast perspective, forming a magnificent scene.

### 3. Spatial narrative

The group carving in the Memorial Hall of the Victims of the Nanjing Massacre, like the story, has a main line interspersed among them. It successfully expanded the psychological space for the audience to walk into the memorial hall, enhanced the spatial hierarchy of the memorial hall square, and enriched the sense of historical hierarchy of this special site.

The design of the sculpture square of the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall is a systematic and complete whole, which belongs to the memorial place of the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall. The organic combination of public art works and the square and architectural landscape creates an independent urban memorial place. In the design of sculpture plaza, space and works are integrated. In the process of action, visitors experience the artist’s creative concept. The sculpture in the memorial square has a strong public art concept, reflecting a distinct form of sculpture that is different from the traditional monument. The sculpture Plaza with public art as the main body for the first time extends the concept of “memorial field” beyond the high wall of the museum, and its commemorative significance extends to the whole city, thus symbolizing the slaughter and massacre suffered by Nanjing, an important historical and cultural city in Chinese history.

### 4. Conclusion

In the construction of architectural space, the memorial hall of historical events is often shown as the order and organization of a series of scene Spaces, which affects the narrative way of events, and also makes people’s emotions change over time when crossing these Spaces, and finally forms the spiritual feeling of the space as a whole. In the public art design of the Memorial Hall for the Victims of the Nanjing Massacre, the spatial scene is organized according to the development time of historical events, so that the whole sequence from east to west forms a series of Spaces with themes, and the whole space combination forms the prelude, climax and end. The sequential narration makes the spatial sequence have the characteristic of gradual progress, and the audience gradually accumulates emotion on the way of advancing and visiting, and reaches the maximum emotion in some core scene space.

When wandering in the historical event memorial hall, we can feel a kind of beauty of exhibition, its process is like a streamline type of development, regular, hierarchical, aesthetic conception. On the one hand, the artistic sense of space is constructed in the visitors’ senses. On the other hand, its reasonable guiding organization can improve the quality and efficiency of the visit, which is conducive to strengthening the audience’s understanding of historical events.

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### About the Author:

Xiaohan Li (1997.5—), female, Han nationality. Native place: Ji ‘ning, Shandong Province, College of Art Design, Qilu University of Technology, master’s degree in 19th grade, major: Art design, research direction: Handcraft Design.