Design Competition Winners Named

Janette Kim and Chloe Town Recognized At SFMOMA Event

ON APRIL 1ST, about 200 Grove supporters gathered at San Francisco Museum of Modern Art for a first official viewing of Living Memorial, the winning entry in the National AIDS Memorial Design Competition. The design uses a forest-fire metaphor to represent the devastation of AIDS, which now kills 8,000 people every day. Within the design is an element of regeneration, offering hope and healing, mirroring one of the Grove’s strongest attributes.

The winning design was selected from more than 200 submitted, and is the creation of New York-based architects Janette Kim and Chloe Town. In selecting the design, the

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A detail from the winning design featuring black fiberglass poles and a sidewalk of charred wood.

ABOVE: Judith Light, her husband, Robert Desiderio, and her manager, Herb Hamsher. Judith hosted the National AIDS Memorial Design Competition Reception and fundraiser for the Grove at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.
Since the last newsletter in October, the Grove has undertaken a re-organization. The most significant change is a reduction in staff from two full-time employees to one. The Grove now has an operations manager instead of an executive director and an office manager. We are proud to announce that Wendi Deetz, whom many of you know as our former office manager, has been promoted to operations manager. The change is part of the Grove’s continuing effort to keep our operating budget to the bare minimum. The Grove owes a debt of gratitude to immediate past executive director Rick Pavich for his years of service to the Grove and his dedicated assistance with this transition.

As a result of the re-organization, the Grove now relies even more on help from our volunteers—its board of directors as well as its dedicated core of supporters. These days, a board member volunteers in the office almost every day of the week. Board co-chair Margarita Gandia deserves special mention, particularly for overseeing the Grove’s weekly bookkeeping, as do board members Jack Porter, Ken Ruebush, Gina Gatta, Thom Weyand (former Grove executive director), and Tom Jensen, who continue to dedicate an extraordinary amount of their time as volunteers. Volunteer Jovanna Luque has also dedicated many hours to helping in the office. To volunteer in the Grove’s office, please contact Wendi Deetz at 415-750-8340.

It is important to point out that the Grove maximizes its donations perhaps better than any other organization via its large force of committed volunteers. What other organization manages over a thousand volunteers per year with only one full-time employee? The Grove sincerely thanks all of you who make this possible.

**WORLD AIDS DAY 2004**

On December 1, 2004, San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom (right) joined more than 500 others at the National AIDS Memorial Grove to commemorate World AIDS Day, the only international day of coordinated action against AIDS.
Seek and Ye Shall Find

By MICHAEL WEISS

In the last newsletter, I wrote about “the spark” of an idea to make a documentary film about the National AIDS Memorial, so that people all over the country could discover and experience the Grove visually and viscerally through the medium of film, the next best thing to being there.

I RETURNED FROM Washington, DC, convinced that a documentary film would be the perfect vehicle to introduce the Grove to the world, but we would need to find the perfect filmmaker.

A few weeks later, I fell asleep while watching something on HBO. When I woke, a different program was on. It was a 1996 Emmy-nominated documentary called “Bubbeh Lee and Me,” about the relationship between a gay young man and his 80-something-year-old grandmother living in a retirement community in Florida. I had heard and read about the film when it came out, had wanted to see it, but somehow never had. The film was delightfully honest, insightful, sweet and sad. I waited through the credits to take down the filmmaker’s name: Andy Abrahams Wilson.

The next day, I did a Google search for Andy, and happily discovered that he was not only close by (Sausalito), but that he had started a film-production company called Open Eye Pictures. I visited his production company’s website (www.openeyepictures.com), reviewed his catalog of award-winning films and his passionate mission statement, and, when I was done, I thought to myself, “Andy Abrahams Wilson is going to be our filmmaker.”

Not wanting to delay this project one day longer, I picked up the phone and called the number for Open Eye Pictures. Andy answered the phone. I introduced myself, and immediately insisted that I wasn’t a crazy person. I explained that I had an idea for a documentary film that needed to be made, and that it would fit in well with his philosophy of filmmaking. I then asked if he wanted to hear more. Fortunately, he did want to hear more. A few weeks later, on the last volunteer workday of 2003, Andy met me in the Grove, where he had never been before, and I gave him his first guided tour of what would become his next great film subject.

See next newsletter for Part 3: “Beg, Borrow, and Steal”

Protecting the Beauty of the Grove

MANY OF YOU MAY NOT KNOW that the heart of the agreement that created the Grove, between the National AIDS Memorial Grove and the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department on behalf of the city, is a commitment to pay the salary of the park’s gardener for this area (currently the wonderful Tony Mariano) in perpetuity. For this purpose, the Grove has established an endowment over the last ten years. The financial experts who helped the Grove set the initial target of $1.5 million did so in a time when interest rates and projections on returns were much higher than they have actually been lately.

As a result, the organization has continued to add to the endowment each year in keeping with its new goal of $2.25 million. So far, thanks to your ongoing support, the organization has been able to continue to pay the gardener’s salary from the operating budget, thus protecting the endowment funds by allowing the interest generated to go return to the invested funds and help the principal to grow. The endowment is currently a healthy $1.85 million, up $350,000 from 2002 when the endowment was established. The Grove needs your continued support to ensure that it will always be maintained as a beautiful and sacred area in Golden Gate Park, one befitting the National AIDS Memorial. Each dollar you give is leveraged by the Grove’s army of volunteers and helps to bolster the endowment. Thank you for continuing to volunteer, to attend Grove events, to send checks, and to enjoy the Grove.

“The heart of the agreement that created the Grove... is a commitment to pay the salary of the park’s Gardener in perpetuity.”

BOARD UPDATE

Besides the reduction in staff, the Grove’s board of directors has undergone some changes. The Grove thanks former board co-chair, Gary Pike, for his years of outstanding commitment and service to the Grove (he left the board in December, but continues to help the Grove with its public-relations needs) as it welcomes new board members Neal Schwartz, Jamie Ennis, Layne Varholdt, and Jon Zimman. Neal, Jamie, Layne, and Jon have long histories with the Grove and have already been serving on the Grove’s memorial feature, communications/development, site, and finance committees.
In Recognition of Your Support, We

Thank You

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SPECIAL THANKS


ONE MAN'S LEGACY

IN OCTOBER 2004, the Grove was honored to receive an extraordinary gift - a bequest from the estate of Bill Xenos. William Kingston Xenos was born in St. Louis, Missouri in 1942. He graduated from UCLA, and lived all his adult life in San Francisco. He was not a man of great wealth, but, through his care and planning, his legacy gift is by far the largest individual gift the Grove has received to date.

You can remember the Grove in a bequest provision in your will. You may specify an asset, a sum of money, a percentage of your estate, or a variety of other designations.

Life-income gifts, such as charitable trusts, can provide the satisfaction of making a contribution to help maintain and support the Grove while providing the continuity of financial support for yourself and your family.

Other types of planned gifts include direct gifts of securities, life insurance policies, IRAs, and real estate that can benefit the Grove and also serve the needs of the giver. Because every situation is unique, it’s important to seek professional advice from your lawyer, financial advisor, or a professional estate-planner when considering or making a planned gift. You can also help the Grove update its records by calling or sending a letter about your intent.

View (circa 1902) of the site in Golden Gate Park that would soon be transformed into the de Laveaga Dell, a Victorian garden that was later neglected, and eventually became the National AIDS Memorial Grove.
New York Architects Selected

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competition’s world-class jury stated that one of Living Memorial’s several strong points is that it respects the Grove board’s wish to be able to use the Meadow, and most of the Grove, unimpeded. The design, if built, would extend out from the Belevedere, leading down to the east end of the Meadow.

Thom Weyand, Co-chair of the Competition Committee, told event attendees "Living Memorial is a gutsy, provocative yang that complements the Grove’s serene and nurturing yin." Judith Light, honorary co-chair, also spoke, and said, "in no uncertain terms this potentially controversial memorial element in the beautiful Grove will further galvanize the international fight against AIDS."

The Grove’s board of directors is pursuing the feasibility of building the winning design.

"This place and some of the ideas presented in this competition will set a new standard for the design and its process about future memorials." TOSHIKO MORI

Design Competition Entries Published

THANKS TO THE TIRELESS efforts of three talented California College of Art (CCA) professors, Neal Schwartz, Raul Cabra and Dung Ngo, and the generous financial support of Wells Fargo Bank, the National AIDS Memorial was able to create and publish the book Emergent Memory: The National AIDS Memorial Competition in the short time period between the judging of the competition entries and the April 1st event to unveil the winning entry. Neal Schwartz, principal of Schwartz and Architecture as well as an associate professor of architecture at CCA and a member of the design competition committee, edited the book. Raul Cabra and his firm, Cabra Diseño, provided the graphic design. Dung Ngo provided editorial support.

The book explores the complex themes emerging from the international design competition for the National AIDS Memorial. It presents a selection of the 201 entries from 21 states and 24 countries, featuring the winning design, 4 finalists, 7 honorable mentions and 13 entries of note. The book also includes a 4-page color gatefold exhibiting all of the juried entries. In addition, this publication places the design of the National AIDS Memorial within the context of other recent efforts at memorializing and expands upon what the competition jurors defined as a paradigmatic shift in the way we understand the role of memorials in our culture.

Toshiko Mori, Chair of the Department of Architecture at Harvard University Graduate School of Design and one of the competition jurors observed: “This place (the National AIDS Memorial) and some of the ideas presented in this competition will set a new standard and an important precedent for the design and its process about future memorials.” Mary Miss, environmental artist, sculptor, and filmmaker said, “Here we have finally lowed the judging. The roundtable section also contains the analysis of Sunil Gupta, a London-based artist and cultural activist, Walter Hood, Professor of Landscape Architecture at the College of Environmental Design, UC Berkeley, Joseph Rosa, Helen Hilton Raiser Curator of Architecture and Design for the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Ken Ruebush, designer and co-chair of the board of directors of the Grove and Reed Kroloff, competition advisor and Dean of the School of Architecture at Tulane University.

This beautiful, hard bound book also includes three essays, “Fathoming” by Neal Schwartz, editor of Emergent Memory, “Remembrance of Things Present” by Mabel O. Wilson, associate professor of architecture and visual studies at CCA and a partner in KW:a, and “Emerging Memories” by Michael Weiss, a member of the Board of Directors of the Grove. Emergent Memory is currently available for sale at www.aidsmemorial.org and will be available at select architectural and design bookstores nationwide.

Chloe Town and Janette Kim, contest winners.
Please Help Us Save

We are trying to move towards electronic communications in order to save our organization money and to save environmental resources. Please sign up for the e-mail version of future newsletters, the e-Newsletter, and help us with this effort.

To sign up for the e-Newsletter, go to www.aidsmemorial.org and click on the box.

WAYS TO SUPPORT THE GROVE

Donate on our website at www.aidsmemorial.org or at www.groundspring.org.

Donate through United Way of the Bay Area.

Donate through corporate or organizational programs that match your gift.

Shop at Under One Roof, located at 549 Castro (between 18th and 19th), and look for Grove identification tags (MEM GRV) on merchandise.

Donate your unwanted household items, furniture, and clothing to Community Thrift Store, located at 623-625 Valencia Street near 17th Street, and designate the Grove as beneficiary.

Shop at Cole Street Hardware and tell them you want your purchase to support the Grove.

Getting to the Grove

The Grove is located in the eastern end of Golden Gate Park at the intersection of Bowling Green Drive and Middle Drive East. It is easily accessible by public transportation on SF Muni Metro or buses. (Muni route info: 415-673-6863) By car: From downtown follow Fell Street west until it enters the park. Stay in the right lane and follow it onto JFK Drive. Turn left at the first stop sign. From the south, follow 19th Avenue north into the park and turn right at the first intersection onto MLK, Jr. Drive. Turn left at the second stop sign. From the north, follow Stanyan Street south to the park entrance and turn right. Stay in the right lane and follow it onto JFK Drive. Turn left at the first stop sign. For detailed directions, including bike paths and pedestrian access, please visit our website at www.aidsmemorial.org or call 415-750-8340.

In the interest of conservation, this newsletter is printed on recycled paper.