

FOLLOW THE LIGHT:  
COUNTERMONUMENTS IN THE MEDIUM OF SEARCHLIGHTS

by  
LOLA MARIE CLAIRMONT

Bachelor of Arts in Art History, 2013  
Agnes Scott College  
Decatur, Georgia

Submitted to the Faculty  
Graduate Division of Fine Arts  
Texas Christian University  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

May 2016

FOLLOW THE LIGHT:  
COUNTERMONUMENTS IN THE MEDIUM OF SEARCHLIGHTS

Thesis approved:

---

Committee Chair, Dr. Frances Colpitt, Deedie Potter Rose Chair of Art History

---

Dr. Mark Thistlethwaite, Kay and Velma Kimbell Chair of Art History

---

Terri Thornton, Curator of Education, Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth

---

Dr. Joseph Butler, Associate Dean for the College of Fine Arts

Copyright © 2016 by Lola Marie Clairmont  
All rights reserved

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I would like to thank my thesis committee members from Texas Christian University, Dr. Frances Colpitt and Dr. Mark Thistlethwaite, for their guidance in both my graduate education and thesis. I would also like to thank committee member Terri Thornton, Curator of Education at The Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth for her valuable contributions.

For my feminist education, I would like to thank the faculty of the Women and Gender Studies programs at both Texas Christian University and Agnes Scott College. For their professional guidance, I would like to thank Dr. Donna Sadler, Susan Perry of the Southeastern Museums Conference, and Asheville Art Museum Assistant Curator Carolyn Grosch.

Lastly, I thank my family and fellow graduate students for their patience and support of my educational and professional pursuits.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.....	vi
INTRODUCTION.....	1
Searchlights: History and Medium.....	5
THE WORKS.....	9
<i>Voz Alta</i> .....	9
<i>Spectra</i> .....	15
<i>Bombardment Periphery</i> .....	18
<i>Tribute in Light</i> .....	20
<i>Erlauf Peace Monument and Imagine Peace Tower</i> .....	23
MONUMENTS AND COUNTERMONUMENTS.....	28
Searchlight Works as Countermonuments.....	31
Applied Characteristics of Countermonuments.....	32
The Legacy of <i>Cathedral of Light</i> .....	33
Opposing Monumental Forms.....	35
Engagement, Didactics, and Exceptions.....	37
Postmodern Countermonuments and Mourning.....	40
Conclusion: A Reclamation of the Medium.....	43
IMAGES.....	46
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	52
VITA.....	56
ABSTRACT.....	58

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- Figure 1. Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, *Voz Alta*, Tlatelolco Square, Mexico City, Mexico, 2008
- Figure 2. Ryoji Ikeda, *Spectra*, London, The United Kingdom, 2014
- Figure 3. Joreon Everaert, *Brandgrens (The Bombardment Periphery)*, Rotterdam, the Netherlands, 2007
- Figure 4. Joreon Everaert, *Brandgrens (The Bombardment Periphery)*, Rotterdam, the Netherlands, 2008
- Figure 5. The Municipal Art Society, *Tribute in Light*, New York City, New York, 2002-present
- Figure 6. Jenny Holzer, *Erlauf Peace Monument*, Erlauf, Austria, 1995
- Figure 7. Yoko Ono, *Imagine Peace Tower*, Reykjavik, Iceland on the island of Viðey, 2007
- Figure 8. Albrecht Speer, *Lichtdom or Cathedral of Light*, Nuremburg, Germany, 1933
- Figure 9. Film still from 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox logo, 1934
- Figure 10. Postcard announcement of an exhibition by Joe Hawley, Mel Henderson, and Alfred Young at Berkeley Gallery, San Francisco, California, June 3-15, 1969
- Figure 11. Forrest Myers, *Searchlight Sculpture*, Tompkins Square Park, Manhattan, New York, 1966
- Figure 12. Monument for the 1968 Tlatelolco Massacre, Tlatelolco Square, Mexico City, Mexico, 1993
- Figure 13. Ossip Zadkine, *De Verwoeste Stad (The Destroyed City)*, Plein 1940, Rotterdam, the Netherlands, 1953
- Figure 14. Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev-Gerz, *Monument Against Fascism*, Hamberg-Harburg, Germany, 1986
- Figure 15. Maya Lin, *Vietnam Veterans Memorial*, Washington, District of Columbia, 1982
- Figure 16. Photograph of *Voz Alta* participant, Mexico City, Mexico, 2008

## INTRODUCTION

We erect monuments so that we shall always remember, and build memorials so that we shall never forget. . . .

—Arthur Danto

How do we remember those we have lost? On a personal scale, we may choose to construct small memorial areas, ranging from gardens and benches to grave markers and collected ephemera. But how does a nation mourn a national tragedy? Governments and public art commissions will often build monuments or memorials in an effort to help citizens grieve and heal, as well as to remember the deceased. These memorials and monuments often share a common form: permanent installations of large-scale sculptures with inscriptions about the people and events, located in public spaces. Often, the authoritative voice of the government is present in these inscriptions.

In this paper, I will examine memorials in the medium of searchlights at the sites of violence that occurred in public spaces. While the works discussed here can all clearly be connected by the medium of searchlights and its memorial purpose, no previous scholarship has compared them. In general, the medium of searchlights in art has received little attention from art historians. The works discussed here certainly share in the similarity of employing light and sometimes sound as mediums, all of these works are public artworks that engage their external environments. Public art works “are conceived for larger audiences, and placed

to garner their attention; meant to provide an edifying, commemorative, or entertaining experience; and convey messages through generally comprehensible content.”<sup>1</sup>

The history of this medium will be discussed in the context of the memorials. These memorial public artworks will be identified as either monuments or countermonuments.<sup>2</sup> According to Marita Sturken’s and James E. Young’s essay, "Monuments," in *Oxford Art Online*, “The traditional function of the monument was to establish codes of heroism, triumph, nobility, glorification, and affirmation of a particular regime, state, or leader, to instruct didactically on what should be remembered and to what purpose, and to speak with some permanence to the future as a means of perpetuating the values of the present.”<sup>3</sup>

Contrarily, countermonuments oppose the theoretical framework and aesthetics of traditional monuments. The theory and terminology of countermonuments is most prominently described in the scholarship of James Young in reference to the monuments erected in post-World War II Germany. Scholars have since defined four main characteristics of countermonuments; they “express a position opposing a particular belief or event rather than affirming it; they eschew monumental forms . . . ; they invite close, multi-sensory visitor engagement; and, rather than being didactic, they invite visitors to work out the meanings for

---

<sup>1</sup> Cher Krause Knight, *Public Art: Theory, Practice and Populism* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2008), 1.

<sup>2</sup> There are two different spellings of countermonument, one spelling with and one spelling without a hyphen. In this paper I will use the spelling without a hyphen, in accordance with the scholarship of James Young.

<sup>3</sup> Marita Sturken and James E. Young, "Monuments" in *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics. Oxford Art Online*. Oxford University Press, accessed February 25, 2016, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/subscriber/article/opr/t234/e0362>.

themselves.”<sup>4</sup> The term “countermonument” was coined by James Young, and similar terms for the concept of countermonumentality have since emerged. Contemporary artists produce countermonuments through postmodern approaches to monumental works, and they also contribute to the terminology of the theory of countermonuments with works such as artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer’s self-described “anti-monuments.” These works are postmodern in their approach due to their emphasis on a plurality of voices over a singular, authoritarian voice and the interactivity with the public, qualities lacking in traditional monuments.

The six works that will be examined in terms of monumentality and countermonumentality are Rafael Lozano-Hemmer’s *Voz Alta* from 2008 (fig. 1), Ryoji Ikeda’s *Spectra* from 2014 (fig. 2), Mothership’s *Brandgrens (The Bombardment Periphery)* from 2007 and 2008 (figs. 3 and 4), the Municipal Art Society’s *Tribute in Light*, initiated in 2002 (fig. 5), Jenny Holzer’s *Erlauf Peace Monument* from 1995 (fig. 6), and Yoko Ono’s *Imagine Peace Tower*, unveiled in 2007 (fig. 7). All of these works highlight absence and serve a memorial purpose and employ the medium of searchlights.

Due to the militaristic history of searchlights, tension emerges in their employment for memorials of victims of violence. Searchlights have been generally used for surveillance and militaristic tactical purposes, as well as for advertising in the domestic sphere. The earliest instance of searchlights employed in a monumental context was by Nazi architect Albrecht Speer’s *Lichtdom* or *Cathedral of Light* (fig. 8) at the Nuremberg Rally in 1933. The directionality and functions of memorial searchlights determine the historical references they invoke and critique. For example, when searchlights are grouped and point upwards,

---

<sup>4</sup> Quentin Stevens, Karen Franck, and Ruth Fazakerley, “Counter-monuments: the Anti-Monumental and the Dialogic,” *The Journal of Architecture* 17, no. 6 (2012): 954.

they invoke the *Lichtdom*. However, when searchlights point outwards, horizontally to the ground, they invoke surveillance and law enforcement.

All of the works discussed here have similar subjects of anti-violence, and many are located at sites associated with the tragedies they commemorate. The subjects of the works are victims of violence, whether they are soldiers, victims of war, or political violence. But, the level of viewer interaction differs between the countermonuments. Although the works are located all over the globe, in the United States, England, Mexico, The Netherlands, Austria, and Iceland, each location, with the exceptions of *Erlauf Peace Monument* and *Imagine Peace Tower* are within a city center. These urban locations and the powerful beams of light provide the countermonuments with a vast range of visibility.

While searchlight technology has changed and improved over time, the aesthetic of the searchlight, the strong, singular beam of white light, has not changed. The cultural history of searchlights includes both military and advertising efforts. In general, light, especially light pointing towards or seemingly emitted from the sky, carries the metaphor of afterlife or ascension, and symbolizes the divine and the transcendent. According to traditional iconography, the sky is often conceived as a “symbol of a remote dimension inaccessible to man, the sky is home to the gods and sometimes coincides with divinity itself.”<sup>5</sup> By bringing attention to the sky, the searchlights invoke these spiritual metaphors, as well as more general metaphors about light itself.

Shining a light on a subject is equivalent to searching for the truth, a metaphor linked to the Greek philosopher Diogenes of Sinope (c. 400 BCE), who carried a lamp around during the day in search of an honest man. The historical period of the Enlightenment

---

<sup>5</sup> Matilde Battistini, *Symbols and Allegories in Art* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2005), 186.

established many Western art-historical associations of light with discovery and invention, as implied by its very name. By contrast, darkness has long been associated with ignorance, the unknown, or evil.

### **Searchlights: History and Medium**

By definition, a searchlight is “a powerful outdoor electric light with a concentrated beam that can be turned in the required direction.” More technically, a searchlight generally consists of a carbon arc lamp and a mirrored parabolic reflector. The military history of searchlights begins in 1881, when the Austrian Navy first employed searchlights with machine guns in the Bay of Cataro, and in 1882, when the British Royal Navy strategically used searchlights while battling in Alexandria, Egypt.<sup>6</sup> During World War I, militaries began mobilizing searchlights, thus increasing the variety of searchlight applications.<sup>7</sup> During the World Wars, the tactical advantages of searchlights proved to be plentiful. They could find and/or blind the enemy on the ground or in the air, or provide artificial moonlight. Artificial moonlight, which functioned by shining searchlights upwards and into the clouds and illuminating the ground below, provided visibility for nocturnal ground attacks or aerial bombings.<sup>8</sup>

The best-known spectacle of searchlights from World War II is the Nazi *Lichtdom* or *Cathedral of Light*, designed by Albert Speer for the Nuremberg Rally of 1933. Speer created the *Lichtdom* with 130 searchlights, a significant portion of the Nazi reserve of anti-aircraft

---

<sup>6</sup> Christopher Sterling, *Military Communications: from Ancient Times to the 21st Century* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2008), 395.

<sup>7</sup> Erkki Huhtamo, “The Sky is (not) the Limit: Envisioning the Ultimate Public Media Display,” *Journal of Visual Culture* 8, no. 3 (2009): 337.

<sup>8</sup> Friedrich Kittler, “A Short History of the Searchlight,” *Public Culture* 11, no. 3 (2015): 389.

searchlights.<sup>9</sup> Speer noted the efficacy of the *Lichtdom*, stating, “I now have a strange feeling when I think that my most successful architectural creation was a phantasmagoria, an unreal mirage.”<sup>10</sup> This intimidating show of the Nazi’s prolific, militaristic searchlight defenses provoked anxiety from the Allies, who also feared the possibility of sky projections featuring the faces or messages of totalitarian leaders.<sup>11</sup> Although the technology required for such projections was non-existent, the trepidations of the Allies exemplify the tremendous physical and psychological effect of searchlights and light technology during the Second World War.

Mass-produced by both Sperry and General Electric companies, searchlights were in surplus after the end of both World Wars. Searchlights became a popular tool for advertising events; one of the most famous examples is their use for movie premieres. The film company Fox Searchlight began using searchlights in their logo in 1934 (fig. 9).<sup>12</sup> Public attractions, such as historical monuments and Niagara Falls, also incorporated illumination from searchlights during this period.<sup>13</sup> To this day, searchlights are still used to signify important events, attracting audiences to performances and sales alike.

For Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, searchlights invoke a different reference—that of surveillance and interrogation. Lozano-Hemmer associates searchlights with the law enforcement of the Mexican-United States border, the searchlights which attempt to find

---

<sup>9</sup> Huhtamo, “The Sky is (not) the Limit,” 388.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 341.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 339.

<sup>12</sup> Huhtamo, “The Sky is (not) the Limit,” 335.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

immigrants crossing the border illegally.<sup>14</sup> Lozano-Hemmer states: “I come from a different, more perverse kind of approach to light. . . . I’m inspired by the light of interrogation, the light that blinds, the light of the migration police pursuing migrants on the border, the predatory light of the Minutemen in Arizona looking for our countrymen, it’s this light that ties in with Goethe’s proposition: the brighter the light, the darker the shadow.”<sup>15</sup>

Although Lozano-Hemmer has employed searchlights in his works on multiple occasions, but generally, searchlights, as a medium, are rarely used by artists. As of the time of this writing, searchlights are expensive; the initial cost for a single searchlight bulb is around one thousand dollars.<sup>16</sup> While the cost of the material may deter artists from using it in their works, there are a few examples of searchlight works that predate the contemporary works discussed in this thesis. Both Mel Henderson and Forrest Myers produced works in the medium of searchlights.

Working in California during the 1960s and 1970s, conceptual and environmental artist Mel Henderson often employed lights in his work to highlight ecological and social issues, such as prison reform. Henderson, who previously encountered searchlights while serving as an Air Force fighter pilot in WWII, directly deployed the medium’s militaristic connotations in his work. On June 3, 1969, Henderson welded the doors of the Berkeley Gallery shut in order to bring his audience’s attention to the thirteen searchlights, titled

---

<sup>14</sup> Rafael Lozano-Hemmer and José Luis Barrios, *Rafael Lozano-Hemmer: pseudomatismos = Pseudomatisms* (Mexico City: MUAC, Museo Universitario Arte Contemporáneo. UNAM, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico City, 2015), 199.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Of *Tribute in Light*, Saskia Levy, the project organizer for the Municipal Art Society, states that the xenon bulbs in the searchlights are valued around \$1,200 each. David Dunlap, “From 88 Searchlights, an Ethereal Tribute,” *New York Times*, March 4, 2002, <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/03/04/nyregion/from-88-searchlights-an-ethereal-tribute.html?pagewanted=all>.

*Searchlights*, installed in San Francisco's South of Market neighborhood (fig. 10). The original intention of this work was to continue the line of searchlights from San Francisco to People's Park in Berkeley, California, where police and university protesters brutally clashed on May 15, 1969 in an event known as Bloody Thursday.<sup>17</sup> Unfortunately, Henderson was hindered by the logistics of this project and was only able to show the searchlights within the confines of San Francisco.

The only other artist of this time working prominently in the medium of searchlights was Forrest Myers. In his *Searchlight Sculptures*, Myers organized four carbon-arc searchlights at the corners of public parks, their lights meeting in the middle to form a pyramidal, tetrahedral shape (fig. 11). These works were executed in Manhattan's Tompkins Square Park in 1966, in Union Square in 1969, at Artpark in Niagara Falls in 1975, and in a park in Fort Worth in 1979.<sup>18</sup>

Given their military history, the choice of searchlights as a medium for memorials to the victims of violence appears counterintuitive, especially given the prominent visual spectacle of the totalitarian Nazi Party's show of power that was *Cathedral of Light*. Noam Lupu writes, "for there is perhaps no greater taboo in the 'sacred space' of Nazi-era memorialization than the reassertion of Nazi ideology."<sup>19</sup> While many of the works discussed in this thesis are not specifically in previously Nazi-occupied spaces, this taboo extends beyond the use of searchlights in WWII and into more contemporary iterations of militaristic and police searchlights. Aware of the historical associations with searchlights,

---

<sup>17</sup> Tanya Zimbardo, "Magic is Everywhere: Mel Henderson (1922-2013)," SFMoMA, December 4, 2013, <http://openspace.sfmoma.org/2013/12/henderson/>

<sup>18</sup> Edward Leffingwell, "Light Industry," *Art in America* 94, no. 11 (December 2006): 128-133.

<sup>19</sup> Noam Lupu, "Memory Vanished, Absent, and Confined: The Countermemorial Project in 1980s and 1990s Germany," *History & Memory* 15, no. 2 (2003): 144.

contemporary artists working in the medium avoid traditional monumental forms to produce countermonuments.

## THE WORKS

### *Voz Alta*

Voices become light; enlightened thought becomes words.  
— participant, *Voz Alta*, 2008

Rafael Lozano-Hemmer is a contemporary artist of Mexican-Canadian descent whose work often integrates technology to investigate its relationship to people. Governmental applications of technology are another recurring theme of Lozano-Hemmer's art, particularly in reference to government surveillance and censorship. In 1989, he graduated from Concordia University in Montreal, Canada, with a bachelor's degree in Physical Chemistry. He currently works as an associate faculty member of the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University. Many of his works include audience participation with technology, from guiding the patterns of searchlights in *Vectorial Elevation*, 1999, in Mexico City, or interacting with multi-leveled video projections in works such as *Body Movies*, 2001-2008.<sup>20</sup>

The artist's website describes *Voz Alta* (translation: "loud voice") as a "memorial commissioned for the fortieth anniversary of the student massacre in Tlatelolco, which took place on October 2, 1968."<sup>21</sup> At a peaceful protest of the Mexican government's exorbitant financial investment in the 1968 Summer Olympics, Mexican police reacted to a student

---

<sup>20</sup> "Rafael Lozano-Hemmer: Projects," <http://www.lozano-hemmer.com/videos.php?id=6&type=Projects>.

<sup>21</sup> "Voz Alta: Relational Architecture 15," [http://www.lozano-hemmer.com/voz\\_alta.php](http://www.lozano-hemmer.com/voz_alta.php).

demonstration by wounding, jailing, and killing protesters.<sup>22</sup> Even today, controversy surrounds the event. While the government confirmed thirty deaths in total, it is suspected that the death toll could be as high as three hundred or three thousand.<sup>23</sup> Regardless of the exact number, recent documents reveal the utilization of military tanks and military snipers posted around La Plaza de las Tres Culturas.<sup>24</sup> It was not until November in 2001 that the government undertook an official investigation of the event.<sup>25</sup>

The 1968 massacre occurred in La Plaza de las Tres Culturas in Mexico City, where *Voz Alta* was stationed from September 25 to October 5, 2008. On the ground of the plaza, participants spoke into a megaphone, which triggered a searchlight situated on the ground, to flash at the Centro Cultural Tlatelolco building in response to their voices. The searchlights not only responded to the voice activation and pauses of the participants, but were also programmed to grow more intense as the participant's voice grew louder. Participants were free to talk about any subject, but the location of the work on the anniversary of the massacre provoked many participants to speak about the massacre. However, other participants used the megaphone to amplify their voices and opinions on general subjects; some even made marriage proposals.<sup>26</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> Kate Doyle, The George Washington University, The National Security Archive, "Tlatelolco Massacre: Declassified U.S. Documents on Mexico and the Events of 1968," <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB10/intro.htm>.

<sup>23</sup> *Mexico News Daily*, "Tlatelolco Massacre Remembered Today: 300 Believed Killed After Security Forces Opened Fire on a Crowd of 10,000," October 2, 2014, <http://mexiconewsdaily.com/news/tlatelolco-massacre-remembered-today/>.

<sup>24</sup> Joe Richman and Anayansi Diaz-Cortes, "Mexico's 1968 Massacre: What Really Happened?" National Public Radio, December 3, 2008, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=97546687>.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> "Voz Alta."

When this searchlight hit the Centro Cultural Tlatelolco building, the former Ministry of Affairs government building, it was relayed to three other searchlights, which shone toward three politically significant parts of the city: the Zócalo, the Basilica of the Guadalupe Virgin, and the Monument to the Revolution.<sup>27</sup> Commissioned by the Tlatelolco Cultural Center of the Mexican National Autonomous University (UNAM), Radio UNAM on channel 96.1FM further carried the voices of participants all over the city to those who tuned in during the duration of the work. When there were no participants to speak into the megaphone, the searchlight on the ground was off, but the three lights atop the Centro Cultural Tlatelolco building continued to flash in accordance with “archival recordings of survivors, interviews with intellectuals and politicians, music from 1968, and radio art pieces commissioned by Radio UNAM.”<sup>28</sup>

By giving participants the right to speak freely about an event kept secret and made taboo by the government, Lozano-Hemmer allowed participants to voice their accounts openly and publicly.<sup>29</sup> He gave them the opportunity to mourn, to be heard, and to be documented.

Of this work, Lozano-Hemmer said, "There is a very big portion of the population in Mexico that does not have a platform for self-expression, and [my] happiness came from the sense of that connection, and the sense of belonging and agency that this particular piece gave to the survivors, and to the neighborhood, and to the people who used the interface."<sup>30</sup> Art historian Robin Adèle Greeley writes, “*Voz Alta* clearly sought to reappropriate Tlatelolco, turning it

---

<sup>27</sup> Robin Adèle Greeley, “The Performative Politicization of Public Space: Mexico 1968-2008-2012,” *Thresholds* 41 (Spring 2013): 21.

<sup>28</sup> “Voz Alta.”

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Stacey DeWolfe, “Anti-Monuments for Alien Agency,” *Mutek*, November 23, 2010, <http://www.mutek.org/en/magazine/190-anti-monuments-for-alien-agency>.

from a site whose history had been carefully managed by a single voice of authoritative power—the Mexican state—into a public space whose history was the result of a multitude of citizen voices.”<sup>31</sup> By giving the participants the platform from which they could say anything without restriction, Lozano-Hemmer disrupted the culture of silence that surrounds the 1968 Tlatelolco massacre and other contemporary government injustices. While this culture of silence is perpetuated by the fear of government retaliation, the participants of *Voz Alta* were able to speak more freely due to their anonymity and the lack of government supervision of the work.

The Mexican government acknowledges the 1968 massacre in the form of a museum and a monolithic monument. The Museo de Sitio Tlatelolco is located at La Plaza de la Tres Culturas and contains exhibition spaces dedicated to the long history of the Plaza. On the museum’s website, the exhibition space *El Memorial 68* is described as

a symbolic space where awareness is built through the reflection of the public about the events experienced during the summer of 1968 in our country. Concepts such as injustice, institutionalized violence, human rights, peaceful protest, political prisoners and democracy are some of the questions that lead to the construction of the collective memory of the country's recent history.<sup>32</sup>

While the exhibition provides didactic texts, artworks inspired by the event, and first-person accounts of the massacre, there is only a meager monument in this public space that lists only a few of the victims’ names. However, in 1993, the Mexican government erected a stone slab with the short list of government-confirmed names of the victims of the massacre, next to the

---

<sup>31</sup> Greeley, “The Performative Politicization of Public Space,” 23.

<sup>32</sup> English translation from museum website, “Memorial 68,”  
<http://www.tlatelolco.unam.mx/museos1.html>.

historic Santiago de Tlatelolco church in the Plaza (fig. 12). Of this monument, Greeley writes, “An inert monolith reiterating the outmoded tenets of commemorative statues and plaques, it has proved unable to rejuvenate the plaza as a symbolic public space.”<sup>33</sup> This carefully mediated, government-approved monument does not provide an effective public space for the collective mourning. Since traditional public monuments celebrate or reaffirm a nation’s power, it would be counterintuitive for the Mexican government to commission a monument that criticizes its own or the army’s authority.

In addition to his interactions with monuments, Lozano-Hemmer also incorporates architecture into his works. *Voz Alta* is the fifteenth work in Lozano-Hemmer’s *Relational Architecture* series.<sup>34</sup> The artist invented the term “relational architecture” to describe “the technological actualization of buildings and the urban environment with alien memory;”<sup>35</sup> this term is clearly influenced by Nicolas Bourriaud’s text, *Relational Aesthetics*, in which Bourriaud defines relational art as “an art taking as its theoretical horizon the realm of human interactions and its social context, rather than the assertion of an independent and private symbolic space.”<sup>36</sup> Relational architecture employs audiovisual effects to change the “dominant narratives of a specific building or urban setting.”<sup>37</sup> Lozano-Hemmer states: “in

---

<sup>33</sup> Greeley, “The Performative Politicization of Public Space,” 24.

<sup>34</sup> The organization Rhizome features a definition of relational architecture on its website, which reads: Relational architecture can be defined as the technological actualization of buildings and public spaces with alien memory. Relational architecture transforms the master narratives of a specific building by adding and subtracting audiovisual elements to affect it, effect it and re-contextualize it. Relational buildings have audience-activated hyperlinks to predetermined spatiotemporal settings that may include other buildings, other political or aesthetic contexts, other histories, or other physics. from “Relational Aesthetics,” <http://archive.rhizome.org/artbase/2398/fear/relarc.html>.

<sup>35</sup> Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, “Relational Architecture, General Concept,” *Nettime*, January 30, 1988.

<sup>36</sup> Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics* (Dijon: Les Presses du Réel, 2002), 14.

<sup>37</sup> Lozano-Hemmer, “Relational Architecture, General Concept.”

relational architecture, buildings are activated so that the input of the people in the street can provide narrative implications apart from those envisioned by the architects, developers, or dwellers.”<sup>38</sup> In *Voz Alta* the sounds of the participants’ voices and the corresponding searchlights flashing in the direction of three politically-charged locations alter the government-determined “dominant narrative” of the city structures and allow the participants’ input to create a new narrative for the structures.<sup>39</sup> The agency invoked by *Voz Alta* and the inclusion of prominent city architecture thus qualifies the work as relational architecture.

In his discussions of relational architecture, Lozano-Hemmer also refers to his works as anti-monuments, clearly distinguishing them from the tradition of monuments. On this topic, he states:

a monument is something that represents power, or selects a piece of history and tries to materialize it, visualize it, represent it, always from the point of view of the elite.

The anti-monument, on the contrary, is an action, a performance. Everybody is aware of its artificiality. There’s no inherent connection between the site and the installation. It’s something that people may partake in, ad hoc, and knows it’s a deceit, a special effect. The anti-monument for me is an alternative to the fetish of the site, the fetish of the representation of power.<sup>40</sup>

---

<sup>38</sup> Derrick De Kerckhove, *The Architecture of Intelligence* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2001), 68.

<sup>39</sup> Greeley writes extensively about the architectural location of the ground searchlight and participants of *Voz Alta* who are situated next to apartments designed by Mario Pani, which Greeley finds to be exemplary of the empty promises of the government to push Mexico towards a modern age of social justice.

<sup>40</sup> Alex Adriaansens and Joke Brouwer. “Alien Relationships from Public Space” in *TransUrbanism* (Rotterdam: 2\_Publishing/NAi Publishing, 2002), 155.

Lozano-Hemmer's definition of an anti-monument includes the conditions of a countermonument in addition to an element of performativity. The temporality of the event, its short duration, and the elements of audience interaction and performativity also suggest that *Voz Alta* is an anti-monument. Fulfilling the conditions of countermonumentality, activating the surrounding architecture in the work, and engaging the audience in performative participation, *Voz Alta* is an example of a countermonument, relational architecture, and an anti-monument; these categories are not mutually exclusive and often intermingle in these works.

### *Spectra*

The lamps are going out all over Europe; we shall not see them lit again in our lifetime.  
—Sir Edward Grey, British Foreign Secretary, August 1914

Paris-based Japanese artist Ryoji Ikeda works in the mediums of sound and light and is well-known for his minimal electronic compositions. His works often incorporate mathematics, data, and science in immersive performances, concerts, and installations. Sound and mathematics merge in his works; of this relationship, Ikeda says, “to me, sound is a property of physics; vibrations of air. Music is, in essence, a property of mathematics; without mathematical structures, sounds are merely sounds.”<sup>41</sup>

In the 1990s, Ikeda became a member of the multimedia art group Dump Type. During this time, he began employing light as a medium in his work.<sup>42</sup> He has produced several albums of his sound art, and in 2014 received the Prix Ars Electronica

---

<sup>41</sup> “An Interview with Cyclo: Ryoji Ikeda and Carsten Nicolai,” [http://www.moma.org/explore/inside\\_out/2013/10/01/an-interview-with-cyclo-ryoji-ikeda-and-carsten-nicolai/](http://www.moma.org/explore/inside_out/2013/10/01/an-interview-with-cyclo-ryoji-ikeda-and-carsten-nicolai/).

<sup>42</sup> Robert Such, "Japanese Artist Ryoji Ikeda Lights up Amsterdam," *Architectural Record* 196, no. 8 (2008): 161.

Collide@CERN Award. Ikeda has had about forty solo exhibitions of his works, including *micro | macro* at ZKM Centre for Art and Media in Karlsruhe, Germany, and *datamatics* at Espai d'Art Contemporani de Castelló in Spain.

Ikeda began creating his *Spectra* series in 2001 and continues to produce *Spectra* works to this day. While there are few studies of Ikeda's visual works and even fewer about the *Spectra* series, the public nature and visibility of *Spectra* installations most often solicit responses from news sources. The artist's detailed website includes descriptions of twelve installations of his *Spectra* works in cities all over the world.<sup>43</sup> According to the artist's website,

*Spectra* is a series of large scale installations employing intense white light as a sculptural material. The installations are designed in response to specific gallery spaces or public sites selected by the artist. White light is one of the purest forms of transformation from electricity. We see a pure state of energy. Through these installations we witness how the pure transformation transforms the environment itself and ourselves. White light includes the full colour spectrum. With the light-installation, the perceiver receives colour information into his/her eyes instantly and so intensely that he/she cannot see anything, just like in darkness. The installation therefore becomes almost invisible. Consequently, the art works provoke a feeling of something indescribable, something sublime and unearthly, something unforgettable.<sup>44</sup>

From August 4 to 11, 2014, Ikeda's London iteration of *Spectra* could be seen for miles around. *Spectra* consisted of forty-nine equally spaced xenon searchlights and a sound

---

<sup>43</sup> "Spectra," <http://www.ryojiikeda.com/project/spectra/>.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

system that were placed in Victoria Tower Gardens in London.<sup>45</sup> During the duration of the work, viewers could walk in-between the searchlights in the garden, listening to the ambient meditative sounds produced by Ikeda. *Guardian* contributor Sean O’Hagan described the experience of the music in this work as “waves of subsonic sound punctuated by beeps and hisses, emanating from four sets of speakers pointing inwards towards the light.”<sup>46</sup>

Commissioned by the mayor of London as part of the publicly funded 14-18 Now: WWI Centenary Art Commission, the work was organized by the London-based public art organization ArtAngel, which later produced a short video documentary of the project through the perspectives of multiple viewers.<sup>47</sup> The group 14-18 Now organizes an annual event titled *Lights Out*, during which they ask Londoners to turn out all but one light or leave out a single candle from 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. on August 4 to commemorate the day Great Britain officially declared war on Germany in 1914. It was during the 2014 *Lights Out* event that Ikeda’s work first shone in an unusually dark London. This particular variant of *Spectra* is the only one in the series thus far that doubly serves a memorial purpose; Ikeda’s other *Spectra* works transform their environments, but none mark a commemorative date.

Ikeda commented on the viewer’s experience of the work, stating, “When you experience it, any kind of context is suddenly gone. From a distance, it looks monumental and solid, but when you are in it, it is entirely meditative.”<sup>48</sup> Based on ArtAngel’s documentary film, it is clear that even viewers who saw the work from a distance were

---

<sup>45</sup> From this point forward, the 2014 London iteration of *Spectra* will be referred to simply as *Spectra*, since other works in his *Spectra* series will no longer be discussed.

<sup>46</sup> Sean O’Hagan, “Spectra: the dazzling Column of Light over London,” *The Guardian*, August 5, 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2014/aug/05/ryoji-ikeda-spectra-first-world-war-artangel>.

<sup>47</sup> “Ryoji Ikeda: Spectra,” <https://www.artangel.org.uk/project/spectra/>. The documentary video about the work can be found at this link.

<sup>48</sup> O’Hagan, “Spectra.”

moved to a meditative state of mind. In a meditative tone, one contributor remarked, “all living things on the planet are linked, aren’t they?”<sup>49</sup>

Ikeda’s London *Spectra* of 2014 shares many qualities with Lozano-Hemmer’s *Voz Alta*. In addition to including searchlights as their primary medium, both works ran for several days, were commissioned by public art organizations, and served memorial capacities. Both directly engage the public, but while *Voz Alta* incorporates participants’ voices into the work, *Spectra* allows visitors to walk among the searchlights in the midst of Ikeda’s sound recordings.

### ***Bombardment Periphery***

If the city died that day, it was the evidence of reincarnation.  
—Derek Otte

Another work that commemorates the day of a military aerial bombing is *Bombardment Periphery* by Mothership, a Rotterdam-based artist collective, which, in 2007, memorialized the massive Luftwaffe aerial strike on Rotterdam on May 14, 1940.<sup>50</sup> During this attack, the city center was demolished: about twenty-four thousand houses were destroyed and about nine hundred citizens were killed.<sup>51</sup> The periphery of the burned city center is now referred to as the Fire Boundary. Guided by archival maps, Joroen Everaert,

---

<sup>49</sup> “Ryoji Ikeda: Spectra.”

<sup>50</sup> The translation from Dutch to English in this case is tricky at best. “Brandgrens” literally translates into “fire border” or “fire limit” and refers to the perimeter of the area of the city destroyed in WWII.

<sup>51</sup> David Zabecki, *Germany at War: 400 Years of Military History* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2014), 1114.

founder of Mothership, organized *Bombardment Periphery* as part of *Rotterdam 2007: City of Architecture*.<sup>52</sup>

*Bombardment Periphery* consisted of one hundred and twenty eight Space Cannon searchlights that were lit from 10:45 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. on the night of May 14 and the morning of May 15 in 2007.<sup>53</sup> It was repeated on the same date and at the same time in 2008, at the bequest of the mayor.<sup>54</sup> The lit searchlights produced an outline in the clouds above the city of the area affected by the WWII bombing. The 2008 *Bombardment Periphery* altered the 2007 piece by adding eight searchlights that faced towards one another, which intersect over Ossip Zadkine's 1951 monument, *De Verwoeste Stad (The Destroyed City)*, situated in Plein 1940, a prominent pedestrian square in the city center (Fig. 13).<sup>55</sup>

*The Destroyed City* depicts an agonized figure with its arms thrown upwards and open chest cavity. The work was unveiled on May 15, 1953, when much of the city was still in ruins. Engaging with the symbolism of *The Destroyed City*, the 2008 *Bombardment Periphery* expands its commemorative references to include memorial works by past artists. Mothership frequently produces public artworks in urban areas. While several artists in the collective work with differing mediums of light, the two iterations of *Bombardment Periphery* are their only projects utilizing searchlights. The similarities in medium and memorial context also connect *Bombardment Periphery* to *Voz Alta* and *Spectra*, while the

---

<sup>52</sup> Little is published about *Rotterdam 2007: City of Architecture* or *Bombardment Periphery*; the main sources for these works and events come from the organizations' websites.

<sup>53</sup> Space Cannon is a brand of searchlight that several of the artists discussed here employ in their works.

<sup>54</sup> Mothership, "Brandgrens 2008," accessed February 29, 2016, <http://www.enterthemothership.com/projecten/kunst-in-opdracht/brandgrens-2008-2/>.

<sup>55</sup> "Image of *Ruined City*: Ossip Zadkine," accessed February 29, 2016, <http://www.nieuws.top010.nl/beeld-de-verwoeste-stad-ossip-zadkine>.

directionality of the searchlights can only draw similarities to *Spectra* and the work to be next discussed, *Tribute in Light*.

### ***Tribute in Light***

*Tribute in Light* is one of the most poignant reminders of the tremendous losses we suffered on that day, as well as the resilience we as a city displayed in the aftermath of September 11.  
—Municipal Art Society President Vin Cipolia

September 11, 2001, marked a national tragedy for the citizens of the United States, one that cannot be forgotten by those who lived through that day. In addition to the attack on the Pentagon and the diverted attack that resulted in a plane crash in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, terrorists hijacked two planes and flew them into the World Trade Center, colloquially referred to as the Twin Towers, in New York City. As the nation sprung into war, victims of the trauma sought meaningful spaces to mourn, and plans emerged to pay tribute to the victims of 9/11.

According to the *New York Times*,

The idea of recreating the towers, at least intimating their presence in spectral form, occurred almost simultaneously to John Bennett and Gustavo Bonevardi of Proun Space Studio in Manhattan, which specializes in architectural computer modeling; to Julian LaVerdiere and Paul Myoda, two artists who had worked on the 91st floor of the trade center; and to Richard Nash Gould, a New York architect. Mr. Gould took his idea to the Municipal Art Society, a civic organization whose concerns include public art and public spaces. On Sept. 19, the society's chairman, Philip K. Howard, wrote a letter to Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani, asking him “to consider placing two

large searchlights near the disaster site, projecting their light straight up into the sky.”<sup>56</sup>

A collaborative effort, the Municipal Arts Society lists several contributors on the “Tribute in Light” section of their website, adding Creative Time, John Bennett, and Gustavo Bonevardi with lighting consultant Paul Marantz and events producer Michael Ahern.<sup>57</sup>

Although *Tribute in Light* has received little attention from art history scholars, the significance of this work as a visual reminder of the architecture and memorial to those lost 9/11 cannot be understated, especially for the survivors of the attacks.

*Tribute in Light* consists of eighty-eight Space Cannon searchlights, separated into two square columns, each side of the squares containing eleven searchlights. On a clear night, *Tribute in Light* can be seen from as far as thirty miles away.<sup>58</sup> Originally titled *Towers of Light*, the columns of light symbolically represent the Twin Tower structures. The name change resulted after victims’ families protested that the name *Towers of Light* placed emphasis on the loss of the buildings rather than the loss of people.<sup>59</sup> The work was first shown on March 11, 2002, and intended to continue to every night afterwards until April 14, 2002. Due to warnings from aviary experts that the light drew too many birds to the swarm of insects, throwing birds off their natural migratory paths, the Municipal Art Society concluded that *Tribute in Light* should only be lit once a year, on the anniversary of 9/11.<sup>60</sup> *Tribute in*

---

<sup>56</sup> Dunlap, “From 88 Searchlights.”

<sup>57</sup> “Tribute in Light,” <http://www.mas.org/programs/tributeinlight/>.

<sup>58</sup> Municipal Art Society of New York, “Tribute in Light: Assembling the Lights,” September 11, 2008, <https://vimeo.com/1712057>.

<sup>59</sup> Jade Yuan, “Tribute in Light: The First Memorial,” *New York Magazine*, August 27, 2011, <http://nymag.com/news/9-11/10th-anniversary/tribute-in-lights/>.

<sup>60</sup> Brandon Keim, “9/11 Memorial Lights Trap Thousands of Birds,” *Wired Magazine*, September 14, 2010, accessed February 29, 2016, <http://www.wired.com/2010/09/tribute-in-light-birds/>.

*Light* was funded by the Municipal Art Society for the ten years until the 9/11 Memorial Museum began to fund the annual *Tribute in Light* in 2012.<sup>61</sup>

The 9/11 Memorial, which opened in 2010, consists of a park-like space with reflecting pools designed by architects Michael Arad and Peter Walker. The exterior reflecting pools occupy the space where the Twin Towers once stood.<sup>62</sup> Visitors can walk around the square pools and read the names of the victims in brass along the edges of the pools as water cascades down into a basin, where it is then recycled back into the pools. At night, the pools are lit along the interior edges of the lip and bottom, generating a much more hopeful tone than if the pools had been left unlit.

Due to the location of the reflecting pools at the exact site of the former Twin Towers and the possible hindrance the lights would pose to those mourning on 9/11, *Tribute in Light* is not located in the memorial area. The searchlights that compose *Tribute in Light* are set up several blocks down from the memorial site at the Battery Parking Garage on Morris Street.<sup>63</sup> Despite this displaced location away from the original site of the Twin Towers, for the one night a year *Tribute in Light* contributes to the skyline of New York. From a distance, the lights appear ephemeral and even ghostly, but their general location in the Financial District offers viewers an idea, for some, a memory, of what the skyline of the city looked like before 9/11.

New York City has a long history of public artworks. While *Tribute in Light* is the only consistently produced public work that employs searchlights, there is another work

---

<sup>61</sup> “Tribute in Light,” <http://www.mas.org/programs/tributeinlight/>.

<sup>62</sup> “About the Memorial,” <http://www.911memorial.org/about-memorial>.

<sup>63</sup> Pearl Gabel, “9/11 Tribute in Light: A Behind-the-Scenes Look at How the Sept. 11 Tribute Takes Shape,” *New York Daily News*, September 11, 2014, <http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/9-11-video-behind-scenes-september-11th-tribute-light-rehearsal-article-1.1936161>.

nearby that uses light as a medium: Jenny Holzer's *For 7 World Trade* (2006). 7 World Trade Center is a smaller building in the still unfinished rebuilding of the World Trade Center complex. Its glassed-in lobby, while not open to the public, allows viewers to read Holzer's scrolling LED text. The fourteen foot tall, sixty-five foot wide LED screen in the lobby features poetic selections of texts about the history of New York City.<sup>64</sup> While this work by Holzer does not serve a memorial function, her *Erlauf Peace Monument* employs light to mark a site of peace and remember the victims of WWII.

### ***Erlauf Peace Monument and Imagine Peace Tower***

While the earlier discussed works are all temporary, some memorials in the medium of searchlights are permanent installations. Despite the similar medium of searchlights and commemorative functions, Holzer's *Erlauf Peace Monument* and Yoko Ono's *Imagine Peace Tower* differ from the previously mentioned works in both their permanent placements and the additional materials the artists employ around the lights.

Jenny Holzer is a world-renowned artist whose work prominently features text and investigates power dynamics of governmental, societal, and patriarchal systems. Some of Holzer's texts are written by the artist and are often inspired by actual events and accounts, while other texts derive from a variety of sources, such as anthologies and declassified government documents. She has a prolific body of public art works, producing stone benches and frequently working in the medium of light in the form of projections and LED (light-emitting diode) lights. The only instance of Holzer utilizing a searchlight in her work is her

---

<sup>64</sup> Glenn Collins, "At Ground Zero, Accord Brings a Work of Art," *New York Times*, March 6, 2006, <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/03/06/nyregion/06wall.html>.

1995 *Erlauf Peace Monument*. As author Joan Simon notes of the work, “for the first time, Holzer’s field is both earth and sky, night and day.”<sup>65</sup>

Holzer’s *Erlauf Peace Monument* is located in Erlauf, Austria, a symbolic site of peace for the Second World War. After Hitler’s suicide on April 30, 1945, the Axis powers’ troops soon began to surrender en masse. United States Brigadier General Stanley Eric Reinhart met with Soviet General Dmitrii Drichkin in Erlauf, Germany on May 8, 1945, to accept their surrender as part of the official German unconditional surrender. Inaugurated on May 8, 1995, Holzer’s *Erlauf Peace Monument* commemorates the victims of war as well as celebrates a place of peace.

Aesthetically, *Erlauf Peace Monument* is unlike the other works. It is permanently installed; in this case, the searchlight is surrounded by a hexagonal Bethel white granite column. Two walkways—one hundred and twenty degrees apart—lead up to the column. Each walkway has twenty-two paving stones with selected inscriptions from Holzer’s text, *Erlauf*; one walkway is in English, and the other is in German. Some inscriptions share the same message, but are in English on one side and German on the other. For example, the phrases, “A MEMORY OF DOMINANCE,” “THE SOLDIER BITES YOUR STOMACH,” “JEWS ROBBED,” and “PARENTS QUIET WHEN YOU ARE TAKEN” are written in both German and English on opposing sides of paving stones. The choice of the German language for the text on the pavers is appropriate, since German is the official language of Austria. Choosing English as the opposing language to German in the monument visually invokes the historical binary opposition of Allied and Axis forces that met peacefully at that

---

<sup>65</sup> Joan Simon, “Other Voices, Other Forms” in *Jenny Holzer* (Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz, 2008), 17.

location in 1945. Connecting the two languages in the same memorial suggests a synthesis in service of peace.

The way in which the stones are positioned also contributes to the narrative of the monument. In order to read the stones, the viewer must begin with the English walkway, which has text facing outwards towards the viewer. As the viewer walks to the center circle of paving stones, the text once again faces the viewer as he or she moves away from the searchlight column. Taking the viewer on a linear journey, from English to German, Holzer recognizes and equates the pain of both Allied and Axis victims. By translating the exact same phrases into both German and English, Holzer reinforces the idea that both sides were victims of the violence of the war, equating the pain and experiences of English-speakers and German-speakers. Ending the journey with the native tongue of Austria, Holzer not only connects the viewer with the victims of the past but also brings the viewer into the present moment of the country.

Holzer calls some of her site-specific memorial works “anti-memorials.”<sup>66</sup> But Joan Simon states that *Erlauf Peace Monument* is “a monument to peace rather than an ‘anti-memorial’ to war,” because of white plants in the garden and the “different tone of writing.”<sup>67</sup> Simon specifically cites the phrases inscribed on the stones, “WHO GAVE MILK/ WHO MADE BEDS/ WHO LIVED IN THE WOODS/ WHO RAN TO THE RIVER/ WHO DIED LOOKING/ WHOSE THOUGHTS ARE MISSING.” But Simon does not seem to consider the critical tone of the rest of the text in its horrific recollection of

---

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 17.

wartime events, such as “EYE CUT BY FLYING GLASS,” “DYING FROM KNOWING,” “PARENTS QUIET WHEN YOU ARE TAKEN.”<sup>68</sup>

Reading the phrases while walking on the stones, the viewer is meant to meditate on the terrors of war. Holzer sees a dichotomy in her work between peace and war, saying “The peace components are the white flowers and search light, visible for miles at night. The war part is the text that is on the paving stones.”<sup>69</sup> While it may seem counterintuitive that a medium that so directly references militarism could be a symbol of peace, Holzer seems to engage the transcendent, hopeful symbolism of pure light beams. However, the militaristic associations of the searchlight suggest that the searchlight could just as easily be associated with the war parts of the work. The connection Holzer forges between the medium and peace implies a reclamation of searchlights as a symbol of peace, despite their violent history. Additionally, as an anti-memorial to war, the work focuses on the atrocities and the victims’ experience, and thus can also be considered a countermonument.

Less dichotomous in its approach, Yoko Ono’s more recent work, *Imagine Peace Tower*, located in Reykjavik, Iceland, celebrates peace and hope for a peaceful future. Unveiled on October 9, 2007, in celebration of John Lennon’s birthday, *Imagine Peace Tower* consists of a large metal well, which holds several searchlights that converge into one column of light. It is lit annually and continuously on the nights from Lennon’s birthdate to death date, October 9 to December 8. It is also lit on certain holidays.<sup>70</sup> On the metal well, the words “imagine peace” are inscribed in twenty-four different languages. The title’s inclusion

---

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> “Interview: Joan Simon in Conversation with Jenny Holzer” in *Jenny Holzer* (London: Phaidon Press, 1998), 33.

<sup>70</sup> The *Imagine Peace Tower* is also lit annually from October 9–December 8, December 21–31, February 18, and March 20–27.

of the word “imagine” would also serve to confirm its dedication to Lennon, who wrote his famous song, “Imagine” in 1971. This song and *Imagine Peace Tower* allude to Ono’s and Lennon’s well-known anti-war protests during the Vietnam War.

Both Holzer’s and Ono’s works celebrate peace and use searchlights in order to call attention to the idea of peace. Also, both artists employ texts to guide the reader; Holzer’s text encourages readers to consider the conditions of victims, while Ono’s text demands that the reader actively imagine peace. This directive does not explicitly ask the viewer to imagine a peaceful world in particular, but is open to interpretation. Ono’s work has a particularly hopeful tone, the word “imagine” suggesting a possibility of peace in the future. Similarly, to *Erlauf Peace Monument*, the searchlight of *Imagine Peace Tower* invokes militaristic connotations, while the text promotes anti-violence. This combination of medium and text in *Imagine Peace Tower* suggests that the reader should imagine a peaceful world without war. Both Holzer and Ono, through the interactivity of texts with the viewer and openness to multiple interpretations work, take a postmodern approach in the creation of countermonuments.

The details of these six works—*Voz Alta*, *Spectra*, *The Bombardment Periphery*, *Tribute in Light*, *Erlauf Peace Monument*, and *Imagine Peace Tower*—reveal both their subtle and obvious differences. Some works encourage greater viewer interaction and include sound, while others remain inaccessible to the public on an intimate level and call for quiet observation. *Erlauf Peace Monument* and *Imagine Peace Tower* are fixed in their permanent locations, unlike the mobile searchlight works. The temporality of the works, as well as the transience of their medium lends to the larger metaphor of light as representative of temporary, fleeting mortality. With the history of searchlights and their implications in mind,

the similarities and differences of these works can be investigated in terms of monumentality and countermonumentality.

### MONUMENTS AND COUNTERMONUMENTS

In their essay “Monuments,” Marita Sturken and James E. Young differentiate the function of a monument from its aesthetic. They argue that monuments are classically rooted in the Western art historical, specifically Roman, tradition. Verticality is a common trait of monuments. For the purpose of durability of both art and ideals, traditional monuments are made with sturdy materials, such as stone, as is the case of *The Washington Monument* in Washington, D.C. Monuments also often serve as markers of significant places, such as battlefields. Obelisks and triumphal arches are good examples of monumental forms employed from the Roman Empire and into the twentieth century.

Sturken’s and Young’s essay also draws connection between monuments and memorials, although the terms at times seem indistinguishable. They write,

Insofar as all monuments do speak to the question of remembering, they can be seen as memorials. . . Yet, there are often important cultural and aesthetic reasons to distinguish them. Monuments are a means to honor the past, whereas memorials focus specifically on paying tribute to the dead. Memorials can take many forms (including specific days), but monuments are always concerned with the process of remembering.<sup>71</sup>

The theory of countermonuments is most prominently described in the work of James Young. In his book, *At Memory’s Edge*, Young thoroughly discusses the concept and applies it to his discussion of the work of Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev-Gerz, *Monument Against*

---

<sup>71</sup> Sturken and Young, “Monuments.”

*Fascism*, located in Hamberg-Harburg, Germany, and installed in 1986 (fig. 14).<sup>72</sup> Located in a public area, *Monument Against Fascism* encouraged viewers to write on and sign the twelve-meter tall, lead-coated square column of the monument. As soon as the accessible part of the monument was covered with signatures, it was lowered into the ground. From 1986 to 1993, the *Monument against Fascism* was lowered into the ground eight times, until the monument was flush with the ground. Young identifies this work as a countermonument, stating, “*A Monument against Fascism*, therefore, would have to be a monument against itself, against the traditionally didactic function of monuments, against their tendency to displace the past they would have us contemplate—and finally, against the authoritarian propensity in monumental spaces that reduces viewers to passive spectators.”<sup>73</sup>

In their collaborative essay, Sturken and Young also highlight the aesthetic opposition of countermonuments to monuments by asserting that “the countermonuments of Germany, which have attempted to reckon with the remembrance of the Holocaust, have not simply broken the codes of monuments, but actively opposed them by refusing to rise above the ground, speak to heroism, or, indeed, to espouse a sense of history.”<sup>74</sup> Beyond Germany, another commonly referred-to countermonument is Maya Lin’s 1982 *Vietnam Veterans Memorial*, due to Lin’s aesthetic choices of horizontality, reflectiveness, and the ideological decision to list the names of all the American soldiers killed in the war (fig. 15). The choice of dark material, rather than light, for the *Vietnam Veterans Memorial* also places the work in opposition to monuments’ typical white marble.

---

<sup>72</sup>Jochen Gerz: Public Space, “Monument Against Fascism,” accessed February 29, 2016, [http://www.gerz.fr/html/main.html?art\\_ident=76fdb6702e151086198058d4e4b0b8fc&](http://www.gerz.fr/html/main.html?art_ident=76fdb6702e151086198058d4e4b0b8fc&).

<sup>73</sup> James Edward Young, *At Memory's Edge: After-Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 96.

<sup>74</sup> Sturken and Young, “Monuments.”

While few artists identify their works as countermonuments, Lozano-Hemmer refers to *Voz Alta* as an “anti-monument.” In his publications, Lozano-Hemmer does not overtly state his relationship to the theory of countermonumentality, but he is clearly working within its confines. Lozano-Hemmer’s definition of “anti-monument” places an additional performative element on Young’s definition of “countermonument.” Both countermonuments and antimonuments refer to works that critique the authoritarian nature of monuments.

Architectural scholars have taken particular interest in Young’s theory of countermonumentality and have added qualifiers to the term. The most comprehensive article to date refining Young’s typology of countermonuments is “Counter-monuments: the Anti-monumental and the Dialogic,” published in the *Journal of Architecture* in 2012.<sup>75</sup> The authors of this article— Quentin Stevens, Karen Franck, and Ruth Fazakerley—employ “anti-monumental” as an adjective to describe countermonuments. The authors categorize countermonuments as either anti-monumental or dialogical. The difference between the terms is in their relationship, or lack thereof, to a preexisting monument: anti-monumental countermonuments use the anti-monumental strategies of countermonuments, whereas dialogic countermonuments are designed to counter or critique a pre-existing monument.<sup>76</sup> Stevens, Franck, and Fazakerley recognize the potential cross-pollination of the terms by citing the form of Lin’s memorial as anti-monumental, but its context as dialogical.<sup>77</sup>

As previously mentioned, these authors list four main characteristics of countermonuments originally proposed by Young: countermonuments, “express a position

---

<sup>75</sup> Stevens, Franck, and Fazakerley, “Counter-monuments.”

<sup>76</sup> “Counter-monuments,” 952.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 967.

opposing a particular belief or event rather than affirming it; they eschew monumental forms. . . ; they invite close, multi-sensory visitor engagement; and, rather than being didactic, they invite visitors to work out the meanings for themselves.”<sup>78</sup> With these categories in mind, it is now possible to examine the aesthetic and contextual properties of *Voz Alta*, *Spectra*, *Bombardment Periphery*, and *Tribute in Light* in terms of countermonumentality. While these works differ aesthetically from the *Vietnam Veterans Memorial* and *Monument against Fascism*, the same principles of countermonumentality apply. Following the *Journal of Architecture* definition, the memorials in the medium of searchlights can qualify as countermonuments.

### **Searchlight Works as Countermonuments**

While every work may not necessarily manifest every characteristic of countermonumentality, overall, each exhibits the essence of countermonumentality. Young’s characterization of countermonuments is based on the qualities of *The Vietnam Veterans Memorial* and *Monument against Fascism*. In addition to satisfying the general conditions of Young’s definition, the searchlight works introduce two new aspects that should be considered as indicative of countermonumentality: mobility and temporality.

Both *Vietnam Veterans Memorial* and *Monument against Fascism* are permanent structures. With the exceptions of Holzer’s and Ono’s works, the searchlight countermonuments are mobile, capable of being relocated, and their materials repurposed. Ikeda’s *Spectra*, for example, has been transported around the world as he installs the searchlights in different locations. Most of the searchlight works are temporary, often only installed for a night or a few days. Not only are the works temporarily in place, but their

---

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 954.

medium, light, is also temporary. Unlike *Vietnam Veterans Memorial* and *Monument against Fascism*, searchlights are temporary and portable, which relates to them exemplifying countermonuments.

### **Applied Characteristics of Countermonuments**

The first characteristic of Young's theory of countermonuments is ideological rather than aesthetic; countermonuments "express a position opposing a particular belief or event rather than affirming it."<sup>79</sup> Every one of the searchlight works fits within the construct of this first condition. None of the searchlight works celebrate a public or government figure, which differentiates them from traditional monuments. Although the works, with the exception of *Imagine Peace Tower*, occupy spaces with violent histories, they do not resemble the ideological premises of site-marking traditional monuments. Rather than conform to the tradition of monuments used to mark battlefields with the names of triumphant soldiers who fought and died for the cause of the war, these works do not list any names. Instead, the works commemorate victims of violence. Rather than glorifying or idealizing war, the searchlight works convey a message of non-violence. Furthermore, the works remind the viewer that innocent citizen casualties are also the victims of war and violence.

Some of the works are overtly anti-violent, such as *Imagine Peace Tower*, which includes the words "imagine peace" on its base; *Erlauf Peace Memorial*, a text emphasizes the harrowing experience of individuals in war; and *Voz Alta* amplifies the silenced voices of survivors. The searchlight work of the most overt political critique is Lozano-Hemmer's *Voz Alta*, which opposes the Mexican government's treatment of the aftermath of the Tlatelolco Massacre. As previously stated, Lozano-Hemmer's searchlights also recall the surveillance

---

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

lights along the border of Mexico and the United States. By giving the power of the searchlight to the people, Lozano-Hemmer transforms a tool of terror into a means of telling individual truths, while simultaneously seeking the government's acknowledgment of its shrouding the 1968 massacre.

The control the participants' voices have over whether the searchlight beams into Mexico City and their voices amplify turn the searchlight from a government tool of surveillance and suppression into a platform of public, free, individual expression. The megaphone and the grounded searchlight in *Voz Alta* are directed at the meager, state-sanctioned monument to the victims of Tlatelolco (fig. 16). Thus, participants yell in the direction of the monument, while the searchlight responding to their voices beams above the monument to the top of the Cultural building. From there, one of the three searchlights shines directly at the *Monument to the Revolution*, thus connecting and literally highlighting the absence of a significant and numerically accurate monument to the victims of the Tlatelolco Massacre, bringing attention to the historical injustice and the details of the tragedy suppressed by the Mexican government. By controlling the searchlights, pointing them back into the city, and highlighting the flaws of government inaction, Lozano-Hemmer repurposes the searchlight to facilitate the participants's quest for truth rather than as a tool of government surveillance and fear.

### **The Legacy of *Cathedral of Light***

The second characteristic of Young's countermonuments is that "they eschew monumental forms."<sup>80</sup> Yet, this trait is complicated in regard to recent searchlight projects. The militaristic searchlights employed in Speer's *Cathedral in Light* underline associations

---

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

with totalitarianism. The choice of the word “cathedral” is surprising considering the Nazi intolerance of religion: particularly Catholicism and Judaism. Nevertheless, the pared down columnar forms of the anti-aircraft searchlights evoked and asserted the monumentality and power of traditional authority.

Artists creating contemporary monuments from searchlights are aware of the historical weight of the medium. Lozano-Hemmer states, “With the very large interventions the question of the spectacular is often raised. When I did the project in Mexico City using searchlights, a technology with terrible connotations derived from Albert Speer’s fascist spectacles of power, I was aware that those theatrics had an underlying quality: intimidation.”<sup>81</sup> After receiving approval for his proposed *Bombardment Periphery* project, Everaert learned of the Nazi monument, but decided that the specific context of the searchlights changed their connotations.<sup>82</sup> While the creators of *Tribute in Light* did not draw the comparison to *Cathedral in Light*, scholars, such as Harriet Senie, have noted the visual, but not the ideological connections to *Cathedral in Light*.<sup>83</sup> Regardless of artistic intentions or previous knowledge of the work, searchlights as a medium cannot escape the legacy of Speer’s *Cathedral in Light*; however, they can reference the use of searchlights for Nazi monumentality and use postmodern approaches of interactivity and a plurality of voices to construct new associations and power dynamics.

The association of searchlights with the military has changed over time. With the advent of digital technologies, searchlights are no longer used in combat. They are, however, still used by the government for surveillance, which Lozano-Hemmer’s work references.

---

<sup>81</sup> Adriaansens and Brouwer, *TransUrbanism*, 156.

<sup>82</sup> Joreon Everaert, Telephone conversation with author, February 24, 2016.

<sup>83</sup> Harriet Senie, *Memorials to Shattered Myths: Vietnam to 9/11* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 152.

Searchlights are still a popular form of advertisement and signify importance in their contemporary urban settings. When searchlights were in surplus after the First and Second World Wars, they were sold to the public for domestic purposes, such as advertising. However, the medium's advertising function allows the countermonuments to advertise themselves, announcing their own self-importance and drawing attention from miles away to the site marked by the lights. Lozano-Hemmer makes this connection in his work, stating that he uses "large-scale technologies of amplification that are usually reserved for publicity stunts and corporate events."<sup>84</sup>

### **Opposing Monumental Forms**

Monuments are traditionally created in durable materials to reflect the resiliency of their ideals through time. The durability of a monument's medium, usually of some type of stone, is symbolic of the stability and longevity of the idea or institution the monument recognizes. Countermonuments, in their opposition to the monument, challenge the strength of traditional monuments. The searchlight works contest that strength through their ephemerality and temporality, in contrast to the timelessness of monuments and suggesting alternative, unstable histories. One of the most obvious conditions of monumentality that opposes these searchlight countermonuments is the condition under which traditional monuments are meant to be seen: in the daytime, in the light. The searchlight works must be seen at night, since their medium makes them visible only in the dark. Rather than lighting a monument or state building to emphasize their importance or grandeur, the light of these countermonuments is the form. However, an exception to this formal approach is *Voz Alta*, which by engaging with the architecture of Mexico City, placing the control of light public

---

<sup>84</sup> *TransUrbanism*, 146.

fixtures within the hands of the people and not government officials. This mandatory condition of darkness speaks to the impermanence and ephemerality of the medium, further undermining the durability and stability of traditional monuments.

Traditional monuments are also typically vertical, and some of the searchlight works, *Spectra*, *Bombardment Periphery*, and *Tribute in Light*, consist of vertical beams of light. Unlike traditional monuments, however, these vertical lights are not limited to the physical constraints of durable mediums like stone and so they continue into the atmosphere and space into what appears to be a never-ending column of light. The directionality of horizontal beams, such as those in *Voz Alta*, makes reference to the surveillance searchlights at nations' borders. *Voz Alta*'s ground searchlight shoots upwards at the Cultural Building, relaying three other searchlights to point horizontally and outwards into the city. This horizontality conveys the act of searching. But, the additional horizontal beams of the 2008 *Bombardment Periphery*, which first crisscrossed at the Zadkine sculpture then slowly rose towards the sky with the accompaniment of music transitions from horizontal to vertical associations. Considering the interaction with the government-sanctioned Tlatelolco monument, *Voz Alta* can be categorized as a dialogic countermonument. Like Maya Lin's *Vietnam Veterans Memorial*, *Voz Alta* fits the conditions of both anti-monumental and dialogic countermonuments.

On the other hand, *Bombardment Periphery* does not critique the monument *Destroyed City* and is therefore only anti-monumental and not a dialogic countermonument. Compared to the other searchlight countermonuments, the 2008 *Bombardment Periphery* is the only work that employs moving searchlights; in this work, eight additional searchlights surround and point at the Zadkine monument, then move their beams slowly upwards, and

finally stop to point vertically into the sky. Although these searchlights are moving in what may resemble the movement of military searchlights seeking planes, the searchlights of the 2008 *Bombardment Periphery* first meet at Zadkine's sculpture *The Destroyed City* before their choreographed vertical ascension. The lights do not search the sky but rather reinforce the narrative of the city rising from the despair portrayed by Zadkine's monument.<sup>85</sup> All other examples of searchlight countermonuments remain stationary, avoiding any connotations of the militaristic employment of anti-aircraft searchlights. If the artists had chosen to orient their lights to resemble anti-aircraft searchlights looking for planes, the effect of the works in spaces devastated by destructive planes—London, Rotterdam, and New York—would be potentially traumatic to the survivors of those tragedies and recall the terror and disempowerment of war. Additionally, the action of several searchlights moving across the sky would resemble grand openings, as demonstrated in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox logo.

### **Engagement, Didactics, and Exceptions**

The third categorization of Young's countermonuments is that "they invite close, multi-sensory visitor engagement."<sup>86</sup> This element of engagement occurs in the audience's interaction with *Voz Alta*, which the viewers control with their voices, and *Spectra*, which the viewer can walk through and hear Ikeda's sound compositions. Lozano-Hemmer finds that "the contribution of personal interactivity is precisely the transformation of *intimidation* into *intimacy*. . . ."<sup>87</sup> The viewer's control of the searchlight in *Voz Alta* is important to Lozano-Hemmer's definition of the anti-monuments, which includes performativity. The ground-

---

<sup>85</sup> In a phone conversation with Everaert, he stated that "moving searchlights tell a different story" in *Bombardment Periphery*. Telephone conversation with author, February 24, 2016.

<sup>86</sup> Stevens, Franck, and Fazakerley, "Counter-monuments," 954.

<sup>87</sup> Geert Lovink and Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, "Interview with Rafael Lozano-Hemmer" in *Vectorial Elevation: Relational Architecture no. 4* (Mexico City: CONACULTA, 2000), 53.

level searchlights of the 2008 *Bombardment Periphery* also permitted viewers close interaction with the searchlights. To engage with *Tribute in Light*, visitors must depend on vision alone; its rooftop location is completely inaccessible to the public.

Young's final condition of countermonuments is that "rather than being didactic, they invite visitors to work out the meanings for themselves."<sup>88</sup> None of the works expressly state their intentions with plaques or employ qualifying words, such as "great" to describe the events or in their titles. *Erlauf Peace Monument* commemorates the peace agreement reached in Erlauf at the end of WWII, so the inclusion of the word "peace" in the title is appropriate to its context. *Imagine Peace Tower* is more demanding in its title, directing the viewer to imagine peace, but it does not direct the viewer to imagine peace according to any social or political agenda. The text inscribed on both of these works is not didactic and leaves viewers with room for their own interpretation.

Even though the participants in Lozano-Hemmer's work could voice their overt criticism of the government, the artist simply provided the platform for and not the subject of the accounts of the participants. Most of the searchlight countermonuments are part of larger commemorative events. *Tribute in Light* is part of the city and museum's 9/11 commemorative ceremonies, *Spectra* is part of ArtAngel's *Lights Out*, and *Bombardment Periphery* is part of the Year of Architecture.<sup>89</sup> *Voz Alta* is the only searchlight countermonument that is not part of a larger commemorative ceremony; the absence of a government-sanctioned commemoration reinforces the critique of the government's official treatment of the aftermath of the massacre.

---

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> "Rotterdam 2007 was the Year of Architecture," last modified January 23, 2013, <http://www.rotterdam2007.nl/?p=12>.

However, not every work in the medium of searchlights fits both the ideological and aesthetic categories of a countermonument. For example, Holzer's *Erlauf Peace Monument* features a perpetually illuminated searchlight that is surrounded by a plain white, granite column and is permanently installed. The continuously lit and motionless searchlight evokes the imagery of an eternal flame, further enhancing its memorial status. While the powerful and consistent searchlight of the work could be regarded as glorifying the idea of war, Holzer's poetry on the paving stones focuses on the experiences of the soldiers and victims of war, replacing a monument's traditional glorification of victorious battles with individual experiences. This decentering is indicative of a countermonument, as is the sensory experience of walking on the stones.

Another example of a complicated work in terms of monumentality and countermonumentality is Yoko Ono's *Imagine Peace Tower*. The duration of the lighting, from John Lennon's birth to death dates, suggests that the work is a memorial to Lennon, and the multi-lingual message of "imagine peace" is decidedly anti-violence. Unlike the other works, *Imagine Peace Tower* focuses on the death of one man, Lennon, while the other works focus on the deaths of many victims of war or political violence. While Lennon did not die in a war, Lennon's violent death further aligns him with the victims of political violence. Due to the commemorative nature of the work, *Imagine Peace Tower* is not only anti-war, but also calls for peace on a societal level. Its permanent installation and metal cylindrical base also make the aesthetics of *Imagine Peace Tower* more like a monument than countermonument, whereas the ideology of anti-violence and the emphasis on the proliferation of peace qualify the work as a countermonument.

*Erlauf Peace Monument* and *Imagine Peace Tower* fail to satisfy all the ideological and aesthetic conditions of Young's definition of countermonuments. Young's definition does not include the ephemerality and temporality that characterize searchlight countermonuments. By including these qualifications, the majority of the searchlight works fit most if not all of the categories of countermonuments.

### **Postmodern Countermonuments and Mourning**

Some authors argue that the role of monuments has changed in postmodern times. Mario Carpo posits that

contemporary monuments have long stopped celebrating great deeds, as their specialty is to register grave errors; they do not exalt achievement but deplore abomination; ...the heroes we now tend to remember are most often the innocent victims of someone else's crimes. . . . Monuments can no longer point to the future because the postmodern construction of history does not provide one, or it provides too many. Historical monuments have no place in posthistorical times.<sup>90</sup>

Carpo speaks to both the individual, experiential interpretation and cultural relativism of postmodernism. In a society of postmodern thinkers, Cher Krause Knight also recognizes the challenge of contemporary monuments to maintain their relevance and appropriateness in changing cultures and public perception.<sup>91</sup> Therein lies the strength of temporary countermonuments—they are able to change and adapt relevant and appropriate subject matter. The postmodern embrace of multiple voices is also populist in nature, since “the artist does not impose a single interpretation upon some imagined homogenous audience, but

---

<sup>90</sup> Mario Carpo, “The Postmodern Cult of Monuments,” *Future Anterior Journal of Historic Preservation Theory and Criticism* 4, no. 2 (2007): 54.

<sup>91</sup> Knight, *Public Art*, 141.

keeps meaning free-flowing, without privileging one level of understanding over another.”<sup>92</sup>

While the multiple associations of searchlights with advertising, the military, and surveillance might prove challenging or inappropriate to a traditional, modern monument, countermonuments embrace a postmodern approach in their decentering of a single, authoritarian voice and subject.

Postmodernism has also affected the aesthetics of monuments and countermonuments. Young, summarizing the work of historian Saul Friedlander, suggests that a work addressing the dilemmas of a singular historiography has “an aesthetics that devotes itself primarily *to* the dilemmas of representation.”<sup>93</sup> Searchlight countermonuments not only oppose the traditional forms of monumental representation, but also question and reclaim the narrative surrounding the medium of searchlights. Secondly, Friedlander suggests that a work addressing a violent history (specifically the Holocaust) “resists closure, sustains uncertainty and allows us to live without full understanding” in an anti-redemptive manner.<sup>94</sup> Without didactic authority over the retelling of historical events or even representations of the events or victims, the searchlight countermonuments are open to the interpretation and uncertainty to which Friedlander refers. Their minimal aesthetic further enhances this openness, allowing individuals to bring their own meaning, interpretation, and even voices to the work.

Despite their engagement with the subject of death, the works do not represent death in any form. Instead, the white beams of light emerging from the works qualify the works as what Erika Doss terms “minimalist memorials;” she states, “Many artists and critics believe

---

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>93</sup> Young, *At Memory's Edge*, 6.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

that minimalism is, in fact, the only adequate art style for today's memorials, and in particular, for the commemoration of traumatic histories."<sup>95</sup> Doss argues that abstraction may be the answer to how to publicly depict unrepresentable histories, especially histories that may be associated with excessive violence. Writing about the proposed 9/11 memorial, Michael Kimmelman finds that contemporary minimal memorials employ the "theatricality and ambiguity of minimalist sculpture" to draw "blank slates onto which we project our deepest commonly held feelings."<sup>96</sup> The pure, white beams of light of the searchlight countermonuments give the viewer the "blank slate" experience of an abstract memorial.

Sturken and Young find that despite countermonuments' resistance to the aesthetic traditions and authoritarian voices of modern monuments, countermonuments still serve the same social function as traditional monuments as symbolic sites of mourning.<sup>97</sup> Similarly to the currently accepted standards of postmodern approaches to ambiguous monuments and countermonuments, author Erika Doss asserts in her book, *Memorial Mania*, that "traditional forms of mourning no longer meet the needs of today's publics. . . ."<sup>98</sup> In seeking atypical, non-traditional forms of mourning, countermonuments arise as a solution for public commemoration.

Sometimes, these non-traditional sites of mourning consists of objects gathered by grieverers in what Doss describes as "temporary monuments" or monuments that are constructed by mourners, generally immediately after a tragic event and at the site of the

---

<sup>95</sup> Erika Lee Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 123.

<sup>96</sup> Michael Kimmelman, "Out of Minimalism, Monuments to Memory," *New York Times*, January 13, 2002.

<sup>97</sup> Sturken and Young, "Monuments."

<sup>98</sup> Doss, *Memorial Mania*, 62.

event.<sup>99</sup> Temporary monuments often consist of personal effects of the victims as well as generic tokens of comfort, such as stuffed animals, specifically purchased for a memorial. These possessions often represent and celebrate aspects of the deceased's life and his or her relationships.

The searchlight countermonuments differ from Doss's temporary monuments in that the searchlights countermonuments, with the exception of *Imagine Peace Tower*, are all commissioned works. Temporary monuments tend to spring up as a community effort without a central organizer. The searchlight works also have no involvement with material possessions. Despite the use of searchlights for advertising purposes, particularly to draw consumers to a store, the searchlight works oppose the consumerism and consumer-based identity perpetuated by temporary monuments. None of the searchlight works encourage their audiences to participate in any sort of consumerism, and the viewers of the works do not interact with the works in the same manner as they might a temporary monument, bringing victims' personal items to the site of violence as a form of ritual mourning. Once again, the searchlight works appropriate their common cultural association, in this case, of advertising, and defer from their involvement in a larger system, in this case, of capitalism.

### **Conclusion: A Reclamation of the Medium**

Despite the historical associations of searchlights with Nazism, anti-aircraft searchlight military tactics, and police surveillance tools, these works from around the world incorporate searchlights in the form of countermonuments that promote peace as opposed to political violence. In this rejection of the traditional forms of monumentality and recognition of the violent history of searchlights, exists a narrative of reclamation: searchlights once used

---

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

by government institutions for the purposes of war or surveillance are now employed by citizens to remember those lost to political violence. Similarly, searchlights used by businesses to advertise and attract shoppers are now employed by individual artists to memorialize without engaging in consumer culture.

This reclamation of the medium of searchlights defies the valorization of war, governments, and consumerism. By reversing the original purpose of searchlights, from their military function to a commemorative function, the works change the dynamic of searchlights in a monumental context and distance themselves from the totalitarian show of power that was *Cathedral in Light*. *Voz Alta* gives authority back to the people through the use of a highly visible tool, a searchlight, and turns the fear associated with a surveillance searchlight into a beacon of hope and awareness of political commentary on government secrecy. The repurposing of wartime material suggests not only ingenuity, but also a shift in the power of the searchlight from intimidation to celebration in the case of advertisement and commemoration in the case of countermonuments. Similarly, Ryoji Ikeda, by allowing participants to walk among the searchlights and by providing meditative musical compositions changes the tone of the dynamic from intimidation to reflective intimacy.

The narrative of reclamation can be further extended to sites of violence in now public spaces. *Voz Alta* draws viewers to a former public protest space, thus calling attention to the possibility of protest occurring again in that space. The works located in urban centers draw people to public spaces, which give viewers the potential for public discussion, organization, or even protest. As Patricia Phillips states, “these public areas and particularly squares serve as the physical and psychic location where change was made manifest. The kind of agitation, drama, and unraveling of time that defines ‘public’ occurred most vividly

and volatily in the commons.”<sup>100</sup> Grief and mourning can be powerful tools of social change. As these works bring together the public in commemoration of those who have died violently and unjustly, the opportunity for consciousness-raising, social reform, and mobility emerges.

By connecting *Voz Alta*, *Spectra*, *Bombardment Periphery*, and *Tribute in Light* by medium and context, these works can be interpreted as contemporary countermonuments. In framing the medium of the searchlight within its former military and modern advertising histories, a narrative of the medium’s reclamation emerges. By placing the works within the scholarship of countermonumentality and the historic context of *Cathedral in Light*, the works reveal that they have flipped the script of totalitarianism and violence represented in monuments to commemorate the very victims of political acts of violence. Transforming a medium that would normally recall the horrific violence of war, these artworks gather people who seek solace and comfort for the victims of violence and hope for a peaceful future.

---

<sup>100</sup> Patricia Phillips, “Temporality and Public Art,” *Art Journal* 48, no. 4 (1989): 333.



Figure 1  
Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, *Voz Alta*, Tlatelolco Square, Mexico City, Mexico, 2008  
Megaphone and four searchlights  
Reproduced from  
[http://www.lozano-hemmer.com/voz\\_alta.php](http://www.lozano-hemmer.com/voz_alta.php)



Figure 2  
Ryoji Ikeda, *Spectra*, London, The United Kingdom, 2014  
Searchlights and musical composition  
Reproduced from  
<http://www.ryojiikeda.com/project/spectra/>



Figure 3  
Joreon Everaert, *Brandgrens (The Bombardment Periphery)*, Rotterdam, the Netherlands, 2007  
Space Cannon searchlights  
Reproduced from  
<http://www.enterthemothershship.com/projecten/kunst-in-opdracht/brandgrens/>



Figure 4  
Joreon Everaert, *Brandgrens (The Bombardment Periphery)*, Rotterdam, the Netherlands, 2008  
Space Cannon searchlights  
Reproduced from  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:080514\\_Brandgrens\\_007.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:080514_Brandgrens_007.jpg)



Figure 5  
The Municipal Art Society, *Tribute in Light*, New York City, New York, 2002-present  
Eighty-eight Space Cannon searchlights  
Reproduced from  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tribute in Light - 11 September 2010 - 1.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tribute_in_Light_-_11_September_2010_-_1.jpg)



Figure 6  
Jenny Holzer, *Erlauf Peace Monument*, Erlauf, Austria, 1995  
Bethel White granite walkways, searchlight set in Bethel White granite column, white plantings, Text: *Erlauf*, 1995, Permanent installation  
Courtesy of the Artists Rights Society (ARS), NY  
Photo: Christian Wachter  
© 2016 Jenny Holzer, member Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York



Figure 7

Yoko Ono, *Imagine Peace Tower*, Reykjavik, Iceland on the island of Viðey, 2007

Searchlights, metal well

Reproduced from

<http://imaginepeacetower.com/light-house/>



Figure 8

Albert Speer, *Lichtdom or Cathedral of Light*, Nuremberg, Germany, 1933

Anti-aircraft searchlights

Reproduced from

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cathedral\\_of\\_light#/media/File:Bundesarchiv\\_Bild\\_183-1982-1130-502,\\_N%C3%BCrnberg,\\_Reichsparteitag,\\_Lichtdom.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cathedral_of_light#/media/File:Bundesarchiv_Bild_183-1982-1130-502,_N%C3%BCrnberg,_Reichsparteitag,_Lichtdom.jpg)



Figure 9

Film still from 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox logo, 1934

Reproduced from

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4rRQYVvKRO8E>

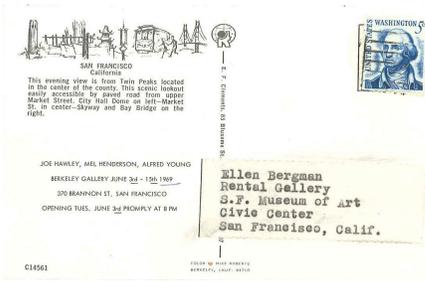


Figure 10

Postcard announcement of an exhibition by Joe Hawley, Mel Henderson, and Alfred Young at Berkeley Gallery, San Francisco, California, June 3-15, 1969

Courtesy SFMOMA Research Library and Archives

Reproduced from

<http://openspace.sfmoma.org/2013/12/henderson/>



Figure 11

Forrest Myers, *Searchlight Sculpture*, Tompkins Square Park, Manhattan, New York, 1966

Four carbon-arc searchlights

Reproduced from

<http://evgrieve.com/2009/08/searchlight-sculptures-over-tompkins.html>



Figure 12

Monument for the 1968 Tlatelolco Massacre, Tlatelolco Square, Mexico City, Mexico, 1993  
Stone, estimated 15' tall by 7' wide

Reproduced from

<https://gringopotpourri.files.wordpress.com/2014/12/tlatelolco-6-memorial-to-massacre-of-october-2-1968.jpg>



Figure 13

Ossip Zadkine, *De Verwoeste Stad (The Destroyed City)*, Plein 1940, Rotterdam, the Netherlands, 1953

Bronze, estimated 18' tall

Reproduced from

<http://www.nieuws.top010.nl/beeld-de-verwoeste-stad-ossip-zadkine>



Figure 14

Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev-Gerz, *Monument Against Fascism*, Hamberg-Harburg, Germany, 1986

Lead column

Reproduced from

[http://www.gerz.fr/html/main.html?art\\_ident=76fdb6702e151086198058d4e4b0b8fc&](http://www.gerz.fr/html/main.html?art_ident=76fdb6702e151086198058d4e4b0b8fc&)



Figure 15

Maya Lin, *Vietnam Veterans Memorial*, Washington, District of Columbia, 1982

Two gabbro walls, 246' 9" long

Reproduced from

<http://www.washington.edu/alumni/communities/chapters/washington-dc/>



Figure 16

Photograph of *Voz Alta* participant, Mexico City, Mexico, 2008

Reproduced from

<https://encrypted->

[tbn1.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcSZfIdyeBfrWDzzYTivQv1tUlydBKkHN9i6WRTRHF2zST9MmpfdtA](https://encrypted-tbn1.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcSZfIdyeBfrWDzzYTivQv1tUlydBKkHN9i6WRTRHF2zST9MmpfdtA)

## Bibliography

- 1418 Now. "Lights Out." Accessed February 29, 2016. <https://www.1418now.org.uk/lights-out/>.
- 9/11 Memorial. "About the Memorial." Accessed February 29, 2016. <http://www.911memorial.org/about-memorial>.
- Adriaansens, Alex and Joke Brouwer. "Alien Relationships from Public Space" in *TransUrbanism*. Rotterdam: 2\_Publishing/NAi Publishing, 2002: 138-158.
- Artangel. "Ryoji Ikeda: Spectra." Accessed February 29, 2016. <https://www.artangel.org.uk/project/spectra/>.
- Battistini, Matilde. *Symbols and Allegories in Art*. Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2005.
- Bourriaud, Nicolas. *Relational Aesthetics*. Dijon: Les Presses du Réel, 2002.
- Carpo, Mario. "The Postmodern Cult of Monuments." *Future Anterior Journal of Historic Preservation Theory and Criticism* 4, no. 2 (2007): 50-60.
- Centro Cultural Universitario Tlatelolco. "Memorial 68." Accessed February 29, 2016. <http://www.tlatelolco.unam.mx/museos1.html>.
- Collins, Glenn. "At Ground Zero, Accord Brings a Work of Art." *New York Times*. March 6, 2006. Accessed February 29, 2016. <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/03/06/nyregion/06wall.html>.
- Danto, Arthur C., Gregg Horowitz, and Tom Huhn. *The Wake of Art: Criticism, Philosophy, and the Ends of Taste*. Amsterdam, the Netherlands: G+B Arts International, 1998.
- De Kerckhove, Derrick. *The Architecture of Intelligence*. Basel: Birkhäuser, 2001.
- DeWolfe, Stacey. "Anti-Monuments for Alien Agency." Mutek. November 23, 2010. Accessed February 29, 2016. <http://www.mutek.org/en/magazine/190-anti-monuments-for-alien-agency>.
- Doss, Erika Lee. *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.

- Dunlap, David. "From 88 Searchlights, an Ethereal Tribute." *New York Times*. March 4, 2002. Accessed February 28, 2016. <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/03/04/nyregion/from-88-searchlights-an-ethereal-tribute.html?pagewanted=all>.
- Fish, Carlijn. "Watch: Commemoration Film Bombing Rotterdam." *NRC Handelsblad*. May 12, 2015. Accessed February 29, 2016. <http://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2015/05/12/kijken-herdenkingsfilm-bombardement-rotterdam-de-stad-heeft-wel-een-hart>.
- Gabel, Pearl. "9/11 Tribute in Light: A behind-the-scenes look at how the Sept. 11 tribute takes shape." *New York Daily News*. September 11, 2014. Accessed February 29, 2016. <http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/9-11-video-behind-scenes-september-11th-tribute-light-rehearsal-article-1.1936161>.
- Greeley, Robin Adèle. "The Performative Politicization of Public Space: Mexico 1968-2008-2012." *Thresholds* 41 (Spring 2013): 18-31.
- Huhtamo, Erkki. "The Sky is (not) the Limit: Envisioning the Ultimate Public Media Display." *Journal of Visual Culture* 8, no. 3 (2009): 329-48.
- Holzer, Jenny, David Breslin, Elizabeth A. T. Smith, Philippe Büttner, Fondation Beyeler, Museum of Contemporary Art (Chicago, Ill.), and Whitney Museum of American Art. *Jenny Holzer*. Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz, 2008.
- Jochen Gerz: Public Space. "Monument Against Fascism." Accessed February 29, 2016. [http://www.gerz.fr/html/main.html?art\\_ident=76fdb6702e151086198058d4e4b0b8fc&](http://www.gerz.fr/html/main.html?art_ident=76fdb6702e151086198058d4e4b0b8fc&).
- Joselit, David, Joan Simon, Renata Salecl, and Jenny Holzer. *Jenny Holzer*. London: Phaidon Press, 1998.
- Keim, Brandon. "9/11 Memorial Lights Trap Thousands of Birds." *Wired Magazine*. September 14, 2010. Accessed February 29, 2016. <http://www.wired.com/2010/09/tribute-in-light-birds/>.
- Kimmelman, Michael. "Out of Minimalism, Monuments to Memory," *New York Times*, January 13, 2002.
- Knight, Cher Krause. *Public Art: Theory, Practice and Populism*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2008.
- Leffingwell, Edward. "Light Industry." *Art in America* 94, no. 11 (December 2006): 128-133.
- Lozano-Hemmer, Rafael. "Relational Architecture, General Concept." *Nettime*. January 30, 1988.

- Lozano-Hemmer, Rafael, and José Luis Barrios. *Rafael Lozano-Hemmer: pseudomatismos = Pseudomatisms*. Mexico City: MUAC, Museo Universitario Arte Contemporáneo. UNAM, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2015.
- Lozano-Hemmer, Rafael. *Vectorial Elevation: Relational Architecture no. 4*. (Mexico City, México): CONACULTA, 2000.
- Lupu, Noam. "Memory Vanished, Absent, and Confined: The Countermemorial Project in 1980s and 1990s Germany." *History & Memory* 15, no. 2 (2003): 130-64.
- Mexico News Daily. "Tlatelolco Massacre Remembered Today: 300 believed killed after security forces opened fire on a crowd of 10,000," October 2, 2014. Accessed February 29, 2016. <http://mexiconewsdaily.com/news/tlatelolco-massacre-remembered-today/>.
- MoMA. "An Interview with Cyclo: Ryoji Ikeda and Carsten Nicolai." Accessed February 29, 2016. [http://www.moma.org/explore/inside\\_out/2013/10/01/an-interview-with-cyclo-ryoji-ikeda-and-carsten-nicolai/](http://www.moma.org/explore/inside_out/2013/10/01/an-interview-with-cyclo-ryoji-ikeda-and-carsten-nicolai/).
- Mothership. "Brandgrens 2008." Accessed February 29, 2016. <http://www.enterthemothership.com/projecten/kunst-in-opdracht/brandgrens-2008-2/>.
- Municipal Art Society of New York. "Tribute in Light: Assembling the Lights." September 11, 2008. <https://vimeo.com/1712057>.
- Municipal Art Society of New York. "MAS Begins Production of Tribute in Light." Last modified August 25, 2010. Accessed February 29, 2016. <http://www.mas.org/mas-begins-production-of-8th-annual-tribute-in-light/>.
- Municipal Art Society of New York. "Tribute in Light." Accessed February 29, 2016. <http://www.mas.org/programs/tributeinlight/>.
- O'Hagan, Sean. "Spectra: the dazzling Column of Light over London." *The Guardian*. August 5, 2014. Accessed February 29, 2016. <http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2014/aug/05/ryoji-ikeda-spectra-first-world-war-artangel>
- Phillips, Patricia C. "Temporality and Public Art." *Art Journal* 48, no. 4 (1989): 331-5.
- "Rafael Lozano Hemmer: Projects," <http://www.lozano-hemmer.com/videos.php?id=6&type=Projects>.
- Rhizome. "Relational Aesthetics." Accessed February 29, 2016. <http://archive.rhizome.org/artbase/2398/fear/relarc.html>.

- Richman, Joe and Anayansi Diaz-Cortes. "Mexico's 1968 Massacre: What Really Happened?" National Public Radio. December 3, 2008. Accessed February 29, 2016. <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=97546687>.
- "Rotterdam 2007 was the Year of Architecture." Last modified January 23, 2013. Accessed February 29, 2016. <http://www.rotterdam2007.nl/?p=12>.
- "Ryoji Ikeda: Spectra." Accessed February 29, 2016. <http://www.ryojiikeda.com/project/spectra/>.
- Senie, Harriet. *Memorials to Shattered Myths: Vietnam to 9/11*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Sterling, Christopher H. *Military Communications: from Ancient Times to the 21st Century*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2008.
- Stevens, Quentin, Franck, Karen, and Fazakerley, Ruth. "Counter-monuments: the anti-monumental and the dialogic." *The Journal of Architecture*, vol. 17, no. 6 (2012): 951-972.
- Sturken, Marita and James E. Young. "Monuments." *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics. Oxford Art Online*. Oxford University Press, accessed February 25, 2016, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/subscriber/article/opr/t234/e0362>.
- Such, Robert. "Japanese Artist Ryoji Ikeda Lights up Amsterdam," *Architectural Record* 196, no. 8 (2008): 161.
- Top010.nl. "Image of *Ruined City*: Ossip Zadkine." Accessed February 29, 2016. <http://www.nieuws.top010.nl/beeld-de-verwoeste-stad-ossip-zadkine>.
- "Voz Alta: Relational Architecture 15," [http://www.lozano-hemmer.com/voz\\_alta.php](http://www.lozano-hemmer.com/voz_alta.php).
- Yuan, Jade. "Tribute in Light: The First Memorial." *New York Magazine*. August 27, 2011. Accessed February 29, 2016. <http://nymag.com/news/9-11/10th-anniversary/tribute-in-lights/>.
- Young, James Edward. *At Memory's Edge: After-Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.
- Zabecki, David T. *Germany at War: 400 Years of Military History*. Santa Barbara, CA, USA: ABC-CLIO, 2014.
- Zimbardo, Tanya. "Magic is Everywhere: Mel Henderson (1922-2013)." SFMoMA, December 4, 2013. Accessed March 28, 2016. <http://openspace.sfmoma.org/2013/12/henderson/>.

## VITA

Personal Background	Lola Marie Clairmont Born in Atlanta, Georgia June 11, 1990
Education	Bachelor of the Arts Major in Art History Agnes Scott College, 2013  Master of Arts, Art History, Women and Gender Studies Certification, Texas Christian University, 2016
Fellowships and Awards	Kimbell Fellowship, Texas Christian University, 2014-2016  Mary Jane and Robert Sunkel Art History Awards, Texas Christian University, 2014-2016  Stipend to Attract Remarkable Students (STARS) Award, Texas Christian University, 2014-2016  North Carolina Museums Council Internship Award, North Carolina Museums Council, 2015
Professional Experience	Prewar Curatorial Intern, Whitney Museum of American Art, Summer 2016  Curatorial Intern to Dr. Catherine Craft, Nasher Sculpture Center, Spring 2016  Graduate Student Lectureship, Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Fall 2015  Curator of <i>Building Up: Selections from William Campbell Contemporary Art</i> Moncrief Cancer Institute, Fall 2015  Curatorial Intern,

Asheville Art Museum, Summer 2015

Permanent Collection Assistant,  
Texas Christian University, Fall 2014

Co-curator of *States of the Union: Selections from  
TCU's Permanent Collection*  
Texas Christian University, Fall 2015

Intern at Southeastern Museums Conference (SEMC),  
Southeastern Museums Conference, Spring 2012

Gallery Intern,  
Whitespace Gallery, Spring 2011

#### Volunteer Experience

Museum Advocate  
American Alliance of Museums, Spring 2014

Marketing Plan Coordinator  
Living Walls, Spring 2012

## Abstract

At the Nuremberg Rally in 1933, Albrecht Speer organized 130 anti-aircraft searchlights to form the *Lichtdom* or *Cathedral of Light* as a display of Nazi power and militaristic dominance. Since 1933, few artists have employed searchlights in their work, and even fewer in a monumental capacity. However, several contemporary artists have recently utilized the medium in their public works: Rafael Lozano-Hemmer's *Voz Alta* from 2008, Ryoji Ikeda's *Spectra* from 2014, Mothership's *Brandgrens (The Bombardment Periphery)* from 2007 and 2008, the Municipal Art Society's *Tribute in Light*, initiated in 2002, Jenny Holzer's *Erlauf Peace Monument* from 1995, and Yoko Ono's *Imagine Peace Tower*, unveiled in 2007.

Located on politically-charged sites of violence, these works serve as memorials as well as countermonuments. As interpreted by the scholarship of James Young, countermonuments oppose the traditional ideological and aesthetic approaches of monuments. These searchlight works not only meet the qualifications of countermonuments, but also incorporate elements of temporality and ephemerality. Despite the laden associations of searchlights with militarism, surveillance, and consumerism, the contemporary searchlight countermonuments defy these associations both aesthetically and ideologically and place the power of the medium in the hands of the participants in commemoration of victims of political violence.

The transformation of the singular, authoritarian voice of the monument and the authoritarian use of searchlights to an experiential, postmodern countermonument can be

traced in the viewer's interaction with the work and the work's formal elements, such as directionality. Ultimately, these works reclaim an authoritarian tool in the form of populist countermonuments that provide viewers with the opportunity to publicly mourn the victims of political violence and imagine a peaceful future.