

**Stone Bodies in the City:
(Un)mapping Monuments,
Memory and Belonging in Ottawa**



by Tonya Davidson
illustrations by Stephane Davidson

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*Tonya Davidson ©
davidsontonya@yahoo.com*

This is my candidacy exam in zine/colouring book form. I am proposing a sociology dissertation on monuments in Ottawa. I have written an official proposal, but I wanted to have my plan more crystallized. So, I am making this for my defense and my supervisory committee and for my friends— my very supportive friends who are sincerely interested and for those who feign interest—I can't tell the difference and you can all have this book.



Italian War Memorial, Little Italy, Ottawa

Why I love monuments....

Monuments are very particular, sacred urban objects. Unlike other public artifacts, you don't have to pay admission to see them. You can in fact touch them, photograph them and visit

them in the middle of the night to tell your secrets. Many people criticize monuments as quickly becoming part of a naturalized environment after their unveiling. Yet, it seems whenever their naturalized presence is challenged or consecrated in any way, their sacredness is revealed. What is the hold monuments have on us? If they are naturalized and most of the time invisible, why does the vandalization of monuments, whether through public urination or graffiti, inspire discussion in the House of Commons and weeks of editorials?

This is what I am suggesting: a qualitative inquiry into the lives of a series of Ottawa monuments. Considering monuments as 'stone bodies' situated within an environment of memory works and a busy urban landscape, I hope to work as both a cartographer and a biographer. I will map these monuments within their locations. Then, through a critical discourse analysis which will be composed of archival research, participant observation and informal interviews with passer-bys, I will expose official and surprising or subversive moments in the monuments' lives. These biographies will work to 'unmap' the stone map the monuments of Ottawa produce.

Stone Bodies....

Scholars have used many metaphors to study monuments. Monuments are considered as texts, as screens, and as signs. None of these metaphors captured my understanding of monuments. I am interested in developing a framework of understanding monuments as 'stone bodies'.

The idea of monuments as stone bodies works at many registers. Monuments are often literally cast from human bodies, stand-in for lost or martyred bodies, and are engaged with and (re)produced as significant sites through their daily engagement with live human bodies.



Vietnamese Commemorative Monument, Ottawa

Considering the hold monuments have on people, I am drawn to the anthropological literature that talks about objects having agency. These scholars (Latour 2005, Gell 1998, Appadurai 1986) argue that many things exist in-between the object and subject categories. Following the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty, Christopher Tilley (2004) uses bodies as the paradigmatic example of this position of being in-between. Bodies act, move, and grow as subjects yet are also acted upon as objects.

It seems that monuments exist in a similar realm. By moving people to remember and have attachments to certain places, monuments act. In how they are written on, vandalized, and adorned with flowers, they are acted upon. Understanding monuments as stone bodies allows for an engagement with the ghostly, affective properties of monuments and their dynamic social lives.

(Un)mapping...

While monuments can be mapped in place, excepting possibly the census, human bodies cannot be mapped. How does considering monuments as stone bodies affect a methodology of analyzing monuments through (un)mapping? My methodological perspective begins with two basic premises on mapping.

First, monuments act as a cartographic practice. Monuments map histories and narratives of belonging onto a physical landscape.

Second, traditional mapping practices **serve to reify political and social divisions, working to produce racialized and gendered subjectivities**. This is because maps work as traces outlining some aspects of a place at the expense of others, producing representations of places as static, objective entities.

How are these two tenets of mapping practices commensurable with my understanding of monuments as stone bodies? Monuments, as stone bodies, subjected to a variety of discursive and material changes and hooking-up (Huysen 2003) and

constituted by a multitude of discourses on space and memory, cannot be fixed into place. I am inspired by Razack's (2002) concept of 'unmapping' which she describes as the labour of untangling power, identity and place. Unmapping is a cartography in which, the gaps in-between the physical— lines, names on a map, and the ghosts of history are connected.

Central to my unmapping practice is an interest in how monuments produce or (re)produce spaces that welcome and produce particular gendered and raced subjectivities.

Methods...

To do the work of unmapping I will begin by locating and mapping all of the monuments of Ottawa— producing a representation of how they are commonly understood as a static element of the built urban environment. This map will spatially contextual the monuments in relation to each other and their physical landscape. As maps are, this map is a partial beginning of understanding how this set of monuments works.

I will then 'unmap' the monuments I have mapped through critical discourse analysis and participant observation.

At each site I will undertake a critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 1995). The purpose of this critical discourse analysis is to engage with the various discourses and texts that circulate and signal towards the lives of the monuments as stone bodies. These texts will include artists' statements, competition

guidelines, legislations, and the various moments when the monuments make the news— both ceremonial and subversive moments.

I will couple the critical discourse analysis with participant observation and informal interviews. Through this ethnographic practice I aim to capture some of the partial, spontaneous passer-by engagements with monuments. I will interview people who happen upon the monuments accidentally, as well as those who deliberately seek out the monuments.



allegorical female figure at the base of John A. MacDonald's monument, Parliament Hill

Situating Monuments...

This dissertation understands monuments as active in both generating memory and producing place. In both cases, monuments do not work in isolation but rather are aspects of broader **'infrastructures of memory'** (Irwin-Zarecka 1994) and **cultural landscapes**.

By locating monuments amongst other forms of collective memory, I will be exploring how monuments are implicated in various "hook-ups" (Huysen 1993). Andreas Huysen explains:

The success of any monument will have to be measured by the extent to which it hooks up with the multiple discourses of memory provided to us by the very electronic media to which the monument as solid matter provides an alternative (255).

Monuments work to generate public memory through their relationships with a variety of other memory works: school curriculums, documentaries, books, Heritage Moment commercials. Monuments also work to generate memory in their own circulation as iconic images on postcards, tourist snapshots or currency.

While monuments have relationships to other memory works, monuments also exist amongst physical aspects of the built environment which produce cultural landscapes: streets, bridges, malls, playground sets. Situating monuments within the cultural landscapes to which they contribute, I will attend to both their visual and material properties.

The significance of monuments in the visual properties of the urban landscape is highlighted by their prominent place in both the city, i.e. at the junction of major intersections, placed around prominent national institutions, and their inclusion as signifying tourist images in publicity material and souvenir postcards. In this study, I will consider each monument as it relates to the 'image of the city' (Lynch 1960), whether it's in the heart of Ottawa, flanked by national institutions, or in a residential neighbourhood nestled in a playground.

Monuments offer up particular contributions to cultural landscapes by virtue of their very symbolic and tactile materiality. Symbolically the type and colour of building materials resonate in particular ways. The National War Memorial in Ottawa is constructed from 7 types of pink, grey and white granite all from Quebec and Ontario (Gardam 1982: 21). This deliberate choice in domestic stone which still only represents the two most powerful, central provinces is indicative of attempts at representing geographical diversity.

Irregardless of their historical representations, monuments, in their structure and mass create miniature places in the midst of busy urban spaces. Attending to the material, I ask how do monuments produce spaces of warmth, coverage, and seclusion or prestigious climbing things for children?

In asking after how monuments work to produce places and generate memory, and considering monuments as nexuses of complex discursive play, I will pay particular attention to their relationships within these two arenas: cultural landscapes and infrastructures of memory.

As Ghostly...

A central objective of this research, tapping into the workings of monuments, is to explore how it is that monuments can “remember otherwise” (Simon 2005). What James Young (1993) calls countermonuments are monuments that offer themselves up to be actively engaged with in certain performative and open ways. Maya Lin’s Vietnam Veterans Memorial offers a key example. This monument, cutting into the earth in a V-formation, inscribed with the names of Vietnam vets, offers itself up to be touched, inspiring the tradition of making rubbings of the monument.

It is my suggestion that monuments offer up certain affordances for memory generation and place making that are and were beyond the scope of the planners and designers intents. Even monuments unveiled at the turn of the century can embody and inspire ways of remembering otherwise.

To understand monuments as ghostly is to acknowledge the multiple stories layered into their inceptions and subsequent lives; it is also to acknowledge that their potentially magnetic pull can be a symptom of past affective investments.

For Avery Gordon, attending to the ghostly means paying attention to what exists in the gaps between the experienced and the empirical, positivism and subjectivism. Engaging with ghosts in social science also means to be open to other ways of conceptualizing time and memory. Avery Gordon (1997) states:

It is sometimes about writing ghost stories, stories that not only repair representation mistakes, but also strive to understand the

conditions under which a memory was produced in the first place, toward a counter memory, for the future (22).

Attending to ghosts teases out the conditions of production of memory works, offering up oppositional readings of moments that are predominantly cast as offering dominant narratives.

By recognizing the ghostly aspect of monuments and the possibilities for monuments to ‘remember otherwise’ it is possible to understand monuments as adding texture to the urban environment which embodies varied understandings of raced and gendered belonging in the city.



This monument to Helen Betty Osborne was unveiled in The Pas, Manitoba in 2000 in commemoration of the life of the young Aboriginal woman who was murdered in 1971 (Cultural Memory Group 2007: 86). While this monument speaks explicitly to gendered, racialized violence and personal memories of Helen, its placement, on the site of a former residential school-

Guy Hill Park school, opens up the space to other memories. No marker remembers the residential school; however Helen's monument names her as a Guy Hill Park school graduate (ibid).

Ottawa...

Ottawa is both an obvious and complicated site for this research. Ottawa is an obvious site in the sense that its role as the national capital has assured it has also become the capital of national monument-making. There are over 60 monuments in Ottawa representing a variety of interests, neighbourhoods and histories. Hockey players, marathon runners, foreign dignitaries, scientists and a librarian are all monumentalized in Ottawa.

Ottawa is also a problematic site for this research. Is mapping or even unmapping monuments in the nation's capital not reinscribing the centre at the expense of the rest of the country's monumentalizing practices? In my research, I am explicitly interrogating what becomes recognized as revered national memories. Ottawa is doubly-situated as a city on the "edge of empire" (Jacobs 1996), a city designed and anointed by Queen Victoria in 1858 to act as an imperial out-post city, as well as a colonial heart, acting, as it does as Canada's capital. I do not suggest the workings of stone bodies in this city are representative of the work of monuments in Canada as a whole, but rather as a further articulation of Ottawa's position as a post-colonial capital city.

Incidentally, Ottawa is also the first city I ever fell in love with, in part the first city I ever knew after leaving a rather idyllic rural upbringing. Part of loving Ottawa was being consumed by the multiple national and local stories,

weaving my personal narratives with broader memories. And so, this also answers in part... why Ottawa?

A Walking Tour of my Case Studies...

It is difficult to select a small sample of monuments in Ottawa. This virtual walking tour will lead you to my choice of 7 monuments.

This tour suggests a starting point and some of the official rhetoric surrounding my case study monuments. This walk suggests much of the 'mapping' which needs to be un-mapped, teased out and complicated: the work of my proposed dissertation research.

The tour begins at Nepean Point, a hill in the center of Ottawa that overlooks the Ottawa River, Parliament Hill, and the Museum of Civilization. This is allegedly the spot from which 17th century explorer Samuel de Champlain surveyed the Ottawa River and environs on his 1613 voyage. Here you will find a monument to Samuel de Champlain that was unveiled in 1915, the 300th anniversary of his second voyage down the Ottawa River. Amongst other things, the plaque names Champlain as "the first Great Canadian".



Champlain, photo Jeff Thomas

Champlain's monument has generated snickers and shame because he is depicted proudly holding his astrolabe (compass) upside-down.

Trudge down the hill, past the underage kids that find Champlain's look-out the epitome of romance, to the adjacent Major's Hill Park.

Stop in Major's Hill Park to visit the monument of the Aboriginal Scout who, from 1924-1999 sat on a ledge at the base Champlain's monument. The Scout's 1999 relocation was the result of Aboriginal protests to its derogatory position at Champlain's feet. In 1996, when Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Ovide Mercredi began the campaign to remove the

Scout from Champlain's monument, callers to phone-in shows and the letters-to-the-editor section of the paper were full of pleas to leave the Scout where he was. Many of these pleas were fuelled by memories of sitting in his lap, enjoying the panoramic photo-op.

Now the Scout is located in the company of a stone Colonel John By (the Engineer of the Rideau Canal) and a monument to two fallen soldiers from the NW Rebellion of 1885 (part of the Riel Rebellion). The Scout's location continues to be problematic as the Scout is wearing historically inaccurate clothes, and is historically de-contextualized. Aboriginal artist Jeffrey Thomas asks, "why did the Indians always have to move?" (2000). From the Scout, walk through the park to Sussex Drive.



On Sussex Drive, directly facing Parliament and across the street from the National Gallery is a monument to Canadian peacekeeping titled "Reconciliation". This monument was unveiled in 1992 by PM Mulroney and Governor General Ray Hnatyshyn with a crowd of two thousand veteran peacekeepers. The monument has been visited by dignitaries such as former UN Secretary-General Kofi Anan, and in 2004 was adorned with anarchist graffiti protesting the war in Afghanistan. With its high jagged V-shape walls, the monument produces a unique hiding place in the middle of an officious, busy Ottawa street.



Reconciliation

From here, walk up Sussex Dr. to Wellington St, passing the Chateau Laurier and crossing the Rideau Canal before getting to Parliament Hill and our next two monuments.

Aptly located next to East Block- the location of the offices of the Senate, is a monument to the Famous Five- 5 women who fought for the acceptance of the 1929 Persons' Act declaring that women were persons and therefore able to be appointed to the Senate. This monument is titled, "Women are Persons!" Nellie McClung, Henrietta Muir Edwards, Emily Murphy, Irene Parlby and Louise McKinney sit and stand in a circle, some raising their tea cups in a toast, another holding up a declaration "women are persons". They are larger than life, and offer up an empty chair for passers-by. The monument was unveiled in 2000. This monument is flanked by monuments to John A. MacDonald, an equestrian Queen Elizabeth, and the longest-running (and monument-loving) Prime Minister William Lyon McKenzie King.



Women are Persons!

From the Famous Five, walk along behind Parliament Hill to the next monument, Georges Etienne Cartier, that is in front of the West side of Centre Block. On your way, stop to enjoy the view of the River, Museum of Civilization and the Champlain monument!

Also, stop at the monument to Baldwin and Lafontaine. This monument, also known as the 'whispering wall' was designed by Walter Allward, the designer who also did the famous Vimy Ridge memorial in France (NCC 1963). Sit on one end of the bench and whisper into the wall to your friend sitting at the other end of the bench.

The monument to the 'father of Confederation' Cartier was Parliament Hill's first monument, proposed by Prime Minister John A. MacDonald three days after Cartier's death in 1873 and unveiled on January 29, 1885. At the unveiling, MacDonald cited from a song his friend and colleague sang to him, "Il y a longtemps que je t'aime, jamais je ne t'oublierai" (NCC 1963).

Not just a monument to a nation-building figure or moment, this monument was conceived of as a memorial to John A's friend.



Georges Etienne Cartier

Bid adieu to Cartier and continue to the National War Memorial at the junction of Elgin St and Wellington St. On your way admire the Centennial Flame in front of Parliament Hill, the monument of Sir Galahad (one of two monuments dedicated to a civil servant friend of WLMK's), and Wilfrid Laurier on the West corner of the Hill proudly looking at the

former CP train station— symbolically welcoming newcomers (or so goes the story).



Wilfrid Laurier overlooking the National War Memorial

The location of Wilfrid Laurier's monument was decided on a stroll that Laurier and WLMK took together on the Parliament grounds. Laurier thought this spot on the West corner of the Hill with such a view would be a wonderful spot for the monument to D'arcy McGee. McGee's monument was placed

at the back of the Hill, so WLMK told Laurier that he would guarantee that Laurier would be immortalized at that very spot (Guernsey 1985:98).

Now, you have arrived at the National War Memorial. Depending on the season and time of day, this monument is bound to be the scene of some sort of activity. For some time last summer, there were some Queen's guards, a response to the public urination incident of Canada Day, 2006.

The memorial, designed to commemorate the Canadian contribution to WW1 was unveiled by PM King and King George six months before the outbreak of WW2. The monument is comprised of 22 figures charging through a granite archway, topped with 2 allegorical female figures. The 22 figures were to represent the variety of Canadian services involved in WW1 (Gardam 1982).

In the era after WW1, the government of Canada financially supported a select few national war memorials: the Vimy Ridge Memorial in France, the Peace Tower of the Parliament buildings, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission which attends to Canadian veterans graves in Canada and abroad and the National War Memorial (Shipley 1987: 63).



National War Memorial

Since its 1939 unveiling the memorial, titled “Canada’s Great Response,” has undergone numerous changes and additions. In 1982 the dates 1939-1945, and 1950-1953 were added to the inscriptions on the base (Guernsey 1985: 39). In 2000, the tomb of an unknown soldier was added to the base of the monument (NCC 2008).



tomb of unknown soldier with letter and flower

Walk down Elgin St to our next monument. Stop in front of the City Hall at Lisgar St. You are now in front of the Canadian Tribute to Human Rights. This monument was built to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the signing of the UN Declaration of Human Rights. It was sculpted by Melvin Charney and was unveiled in 1990 in the presence of the Dalai Lama and in the noticeable absence of PM Mulroney (Leger 1996).

On the surface, the first sentence of the UN Declaration of Human Rights is inscribed in English and in French, “All Human Beings Are Born Free and Equal in Dignity and Rights” (Leger 1996: 54). The concrete columns that make up the “House of Canada” are inscribed with “Equality” “Dignity” and “Rights” in 74 languages of Canadian Aboriginal peoples.

The monument has been the site of many gatherings. Most prominently Nelson Mandela addressed a large crowd here on his 1998 visit.



Children line the walk to the Tribute on the day of Nelson Mandela's 1998 visit.

The Tribute has been the site of protests against landmines, poverty, human rights violations in Burma and pro-life vigils. It was also the location of the Mayor of Ottawa's gathering for contemplation after 9/11.

Before you leave this monument, turn around and appreciate the National War Memorial from a distance. During the 1930s, Jacques Greber, the chief urban planner for Ottawa argued with PM King about the placement of the War Memorial. King wanted the monument placed at the end of Elgin to be reminiscent of great European cities such as Paris with its Champs Elysses ending at the Arc de Triumphe. Greber

thought this would be a logistical and traffic nightmare. King won (NCC 1998: 16)

Walk through the Tribute— admiring the Aboriginal language plaques before we continue down Elgin St to our final stop— The Women's Monument in Minto Park off of Elgin St at Gilmour St.

This monument was conceived of, funded and produced by a feminist activist committee known as "Women's Urgent Action," as a response to a series of murders of women in Ottawa in the early 1990s. It was designed by two feminist artists, c j fleury and Mary Fraught, known as the "Agents of Gaia" (Cultural Memory Group 2006: 153).

The monument's inscription in French and English reads: "To honour and grieve all women murdered and abused by men. Envision a world without violence where all women are equal and free". The boulder incorporates many feminist symbols such as waves and an image of the moon's cycles (Cultural Memory Group 2006: 153).

Surrounding the boulder, in a half-circle, are a series of 37 small rocks of different shapes and sizes, facing in different directions, inscribed with the names of women murdered by men in Ottawa. The monument committee was required to stop adding stones for murdered women due to a lack of space (ibid).



The Women's Monument

This monument is often the scene of the annual Dec. 6 memorial vigils commemorating the 1989 murder of 14 women studying engineering in Montreal, and rallies accompanying the annual Take Back the Night marches.

We have finished the walking tour of my case studies.

Conclusion...

Monuments as stone bodies epitomize the liminal state of being simultaneously object and subject. For Miller (2005) things act by virtue of how they function as constellations of networks amongst actors. This is analogous to Lefebvre's (1974) description of the house as a material form concealing multiple networks of power and relations (93). In my research I am interested in exploring how monuments work as urban 'hot

spots': as simultaneously spots of concentrated and contested energies, desires, memories and as things which place certain understandings of history and belonging.

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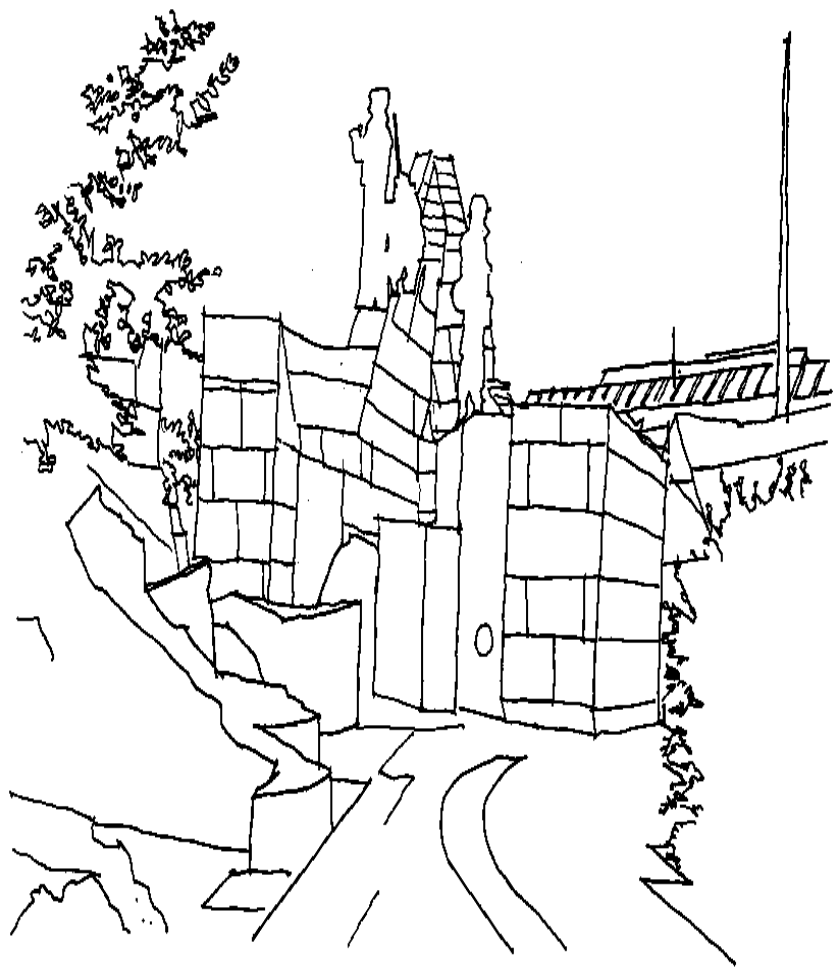
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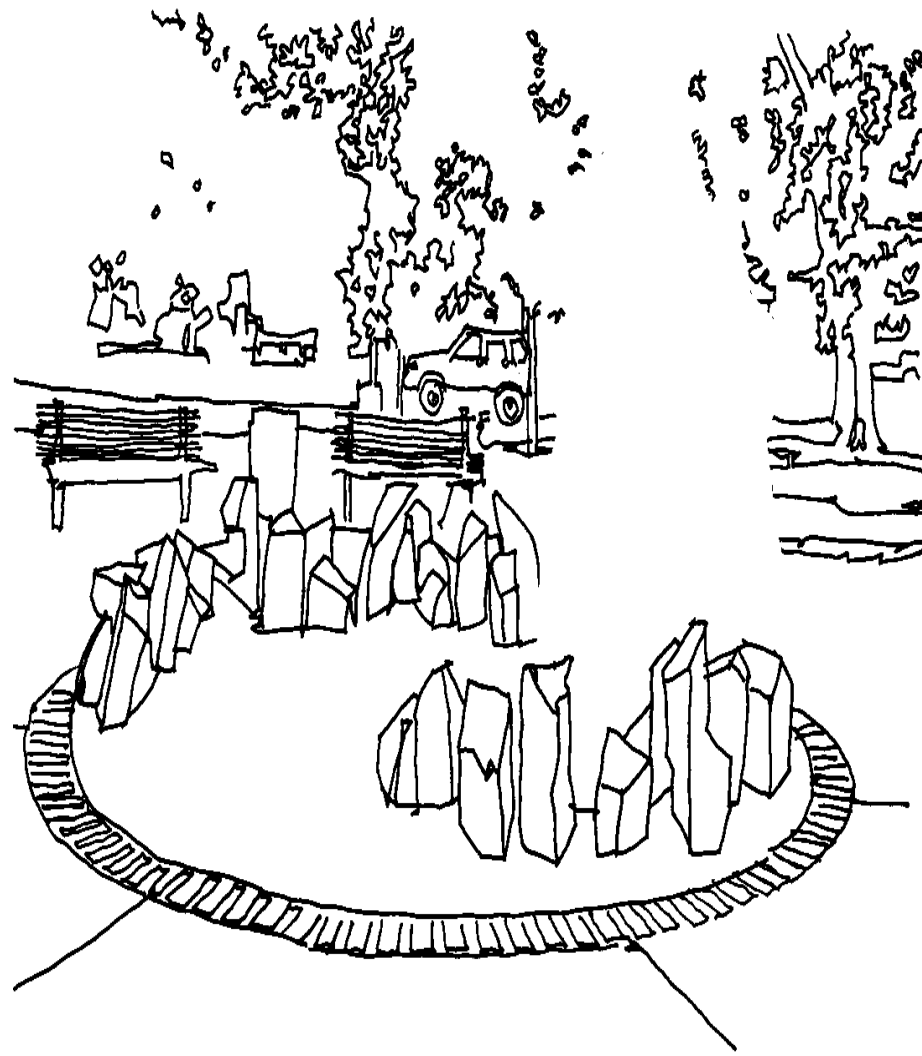
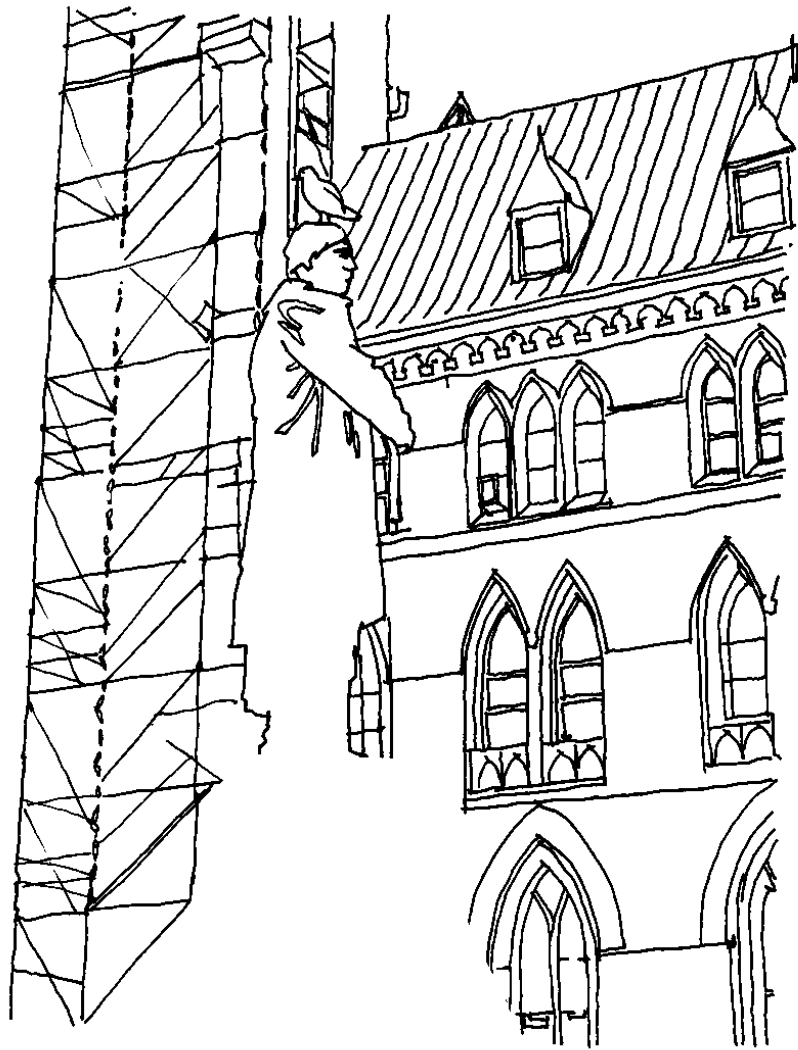
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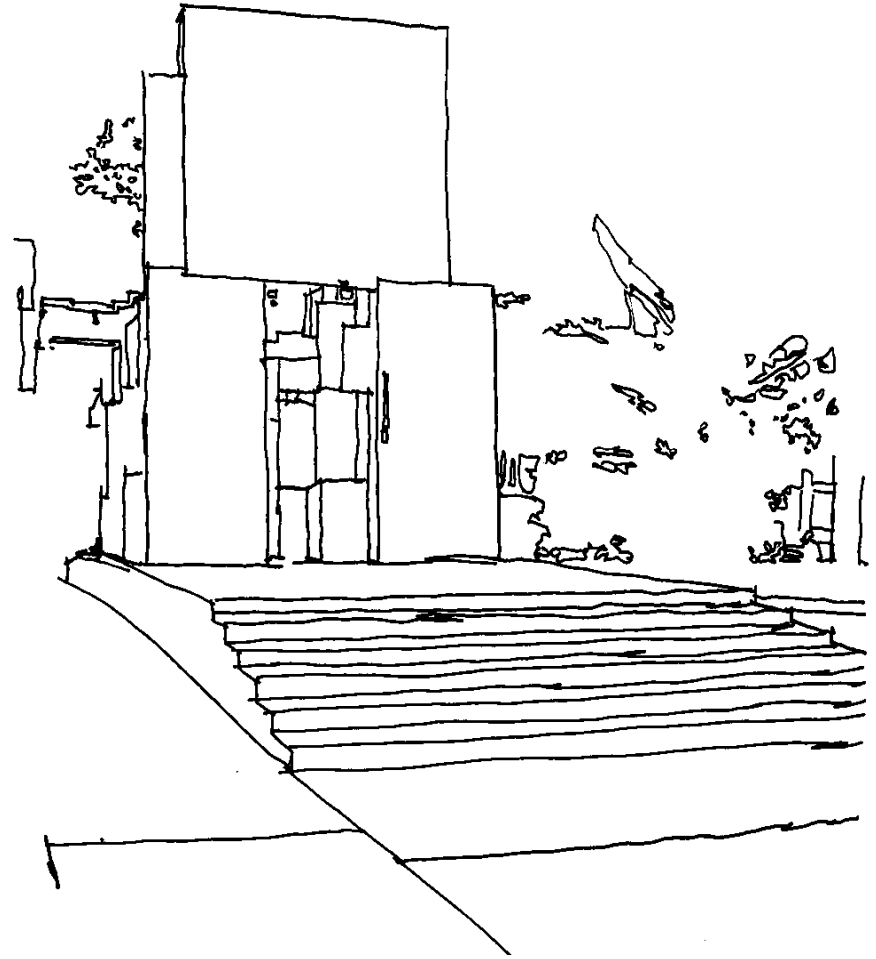
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***all photos by the author, unless indicated otherwise**









Colouring Book...

Monuments are often grey, black or various pale shades of granite. The basic element of a colouring book is to add a variety of colours to the image according to the artist's whim.

I have here line drawings of the 8 monuments that make up my proposed research.

With these drawings I hope to produce a basic yet inspiring way to engage with these stone bodies.

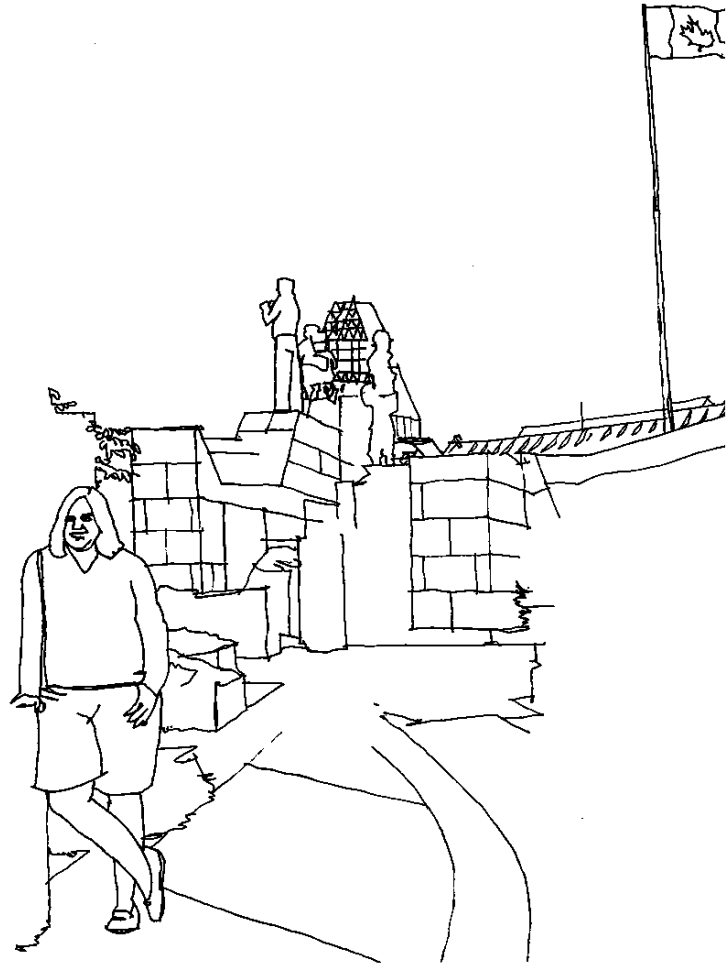
I have purposefully left out aspects of the image, for example, what was originally in the monument's hand or engraved on the plaque. With the basic presupposition that monuments have dynamic social lives with meanings that are not set-in-stone so to speak, what would you have these monuments say, do, hold?

This is also part of the challenge- find what's missing!

In a performance art piece, Jeffrey Thomas staged photographs at the monument to Champlain, specifically at the ledge which had for 60 years been home to the unnamed Aboriginal Scout. One of the participants had this to say about her approach towards being photographed at Champlain:

I didn't look for Champlain, but I thought about the displaced Scout. I listened for what had been taken away, not just from this monument but from the monument Champlain said, "This, is mine." The stone remembers differently (Cynthia Hammond in Thomas 2001).

This is just a zine providing short engagements with two-dimensional hand drawn images of monuments. These are monuments of which you may know very little or very much. In any case, it is my hope or intention that by colouring, making little etches; filling in the blanks, new suggestions can emerge about how monuments can remember differently.



Colouring Book

