

VALUABLE MONUMENTS VALUE THEIR SUBJECT

A LETTER TO THE EDITORS

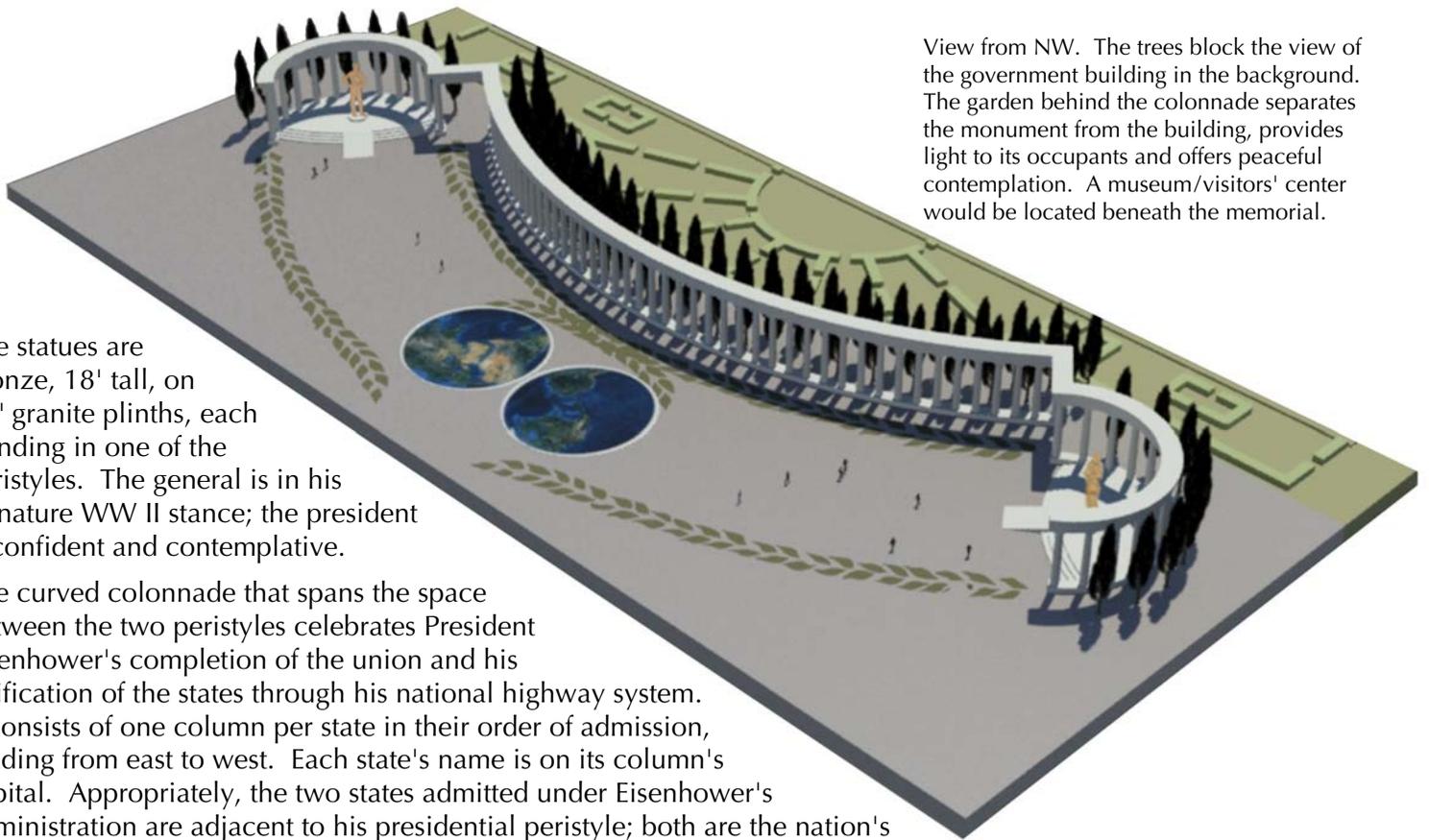


Many of you are no doubt aware of the controversy surrounding the design for the Eisenhower Memorial to be built in Washington DC., on Independence Avenue behind the Air and Space Museum. We submitted the design illustrated here out of respect for General and President Eisenhower, and out of respect for the integrity of Thomas Jefferson's vision for our nation's capital.

Our design was submitted to the National Civic Art Society and Classical America alternative competition, as the original competition was by invitation only.

Our objectives are to use the monument's majesty to attract visitors, and then to use its symbolism to integrate the career of General and President Eisenhower into the grandeur of the American experiment in democracy. In our view, successful monuments are impressive and meaningful to their visitors—they evoke emotions that identify with their subject and its broad context. We believe this design inspires respect for Eisenhower for the relevance of his accomplishments to our times, and promotes an aesthetic that is appropriate to his memory and to the dignity of the national capital.

18' golden bronze of General Eisenhower



View from NW. The trees block the view of the government building in the background. The garden behind the colonnade separates the monument from the building, provides light to its occupants and offers peaceful contemplation. A museum/visitors' center would be located beneath the memorial.

The statues are bronze, 18' tall, on 18" granite plinths, each standing in one of the peristyles. The general is in his signature WW II stance; the president is confident and contemplative.

The curved colonnade that spans the space between the two peristyles celebrates President Eisenhower's completion of the union and his unification of the states through his national highway system. It consists of one column per state in their order of admission, reading from east to west. Each state's name is on its column's capital. Appropriately, the two states admitted under Eisenhower's administration are adjacent to his presidential peristyle; both are the nation's westernmost states and are westernmost in the colonnade. As General Eisenhower fought to preserve American ideals and independence, the sum of columns in the colonnade of states and the two peristyles is 76, in honor of the year of our Declaration of Independence. The long colonnade thrusts its center closer to visitors. This contributes an elegant curve to the memorial and accomplishes much of the perceptual sag-cancelling effect observed in the Parthenon's convexly-curved steps.

The olive branches of peace in the plaza surface symbolize Eisenhower's priority on the achievement and maintenance of world peace through cooperation between nations. They are variegated-green granite, flush with the pedestrian surface.

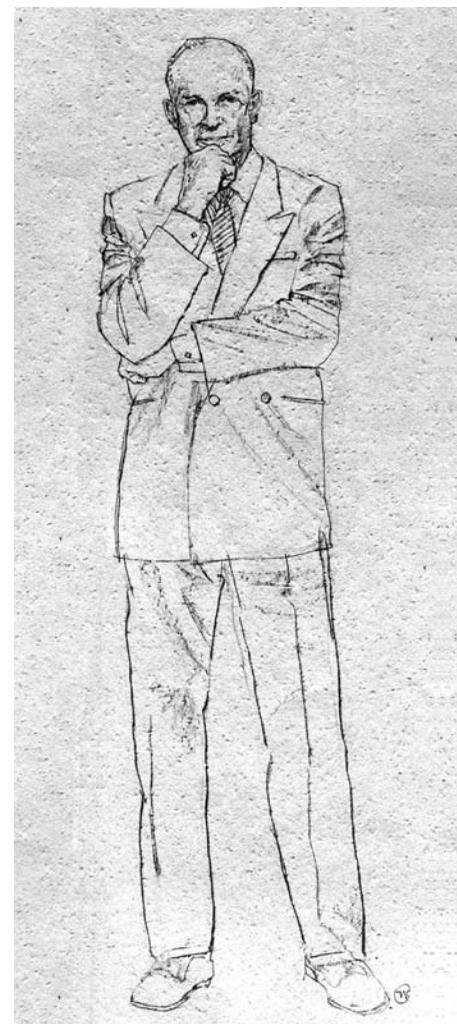
The olive branches connect the peristyles with two monumental images of the Earth. The old-world hemisphere, where General Eisenhower defeated the Nazis, faces General Eisenhower, while the new-world hemisphere faces President Eisenhower. The Earth is depicted in its natural state, without political borders, to evoke the ideal of a single planet at peace. Each hemisphere is 70' in diameter, made of terrazzo, flush with the surface with a non-slip grit texture. In certain natural-light conditions they will glisten as if submerged in shallow water.

The architrave of the east peristyle reads: SUPREME COMMANDER ALLIED FORCES EUROPE 1943 - 1945 in 20" V-groove letters. The lettering in the center of the 50-state colonnade reads: DWIGHT DAVID EISENHOWER and the architrave of the west peristyle reads: PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES 1953 - 1961. Optionally, a frieze can be placed on each peristyle's architrave, depicting Eisenhower's careers as general and president.

We would hope that much of our community is sympathetic to the fundamentals expressed in our proposal.

Sincerely,

Bruce Wolfe, Fellow, NSS: Sculptor and portrait artist
 Rob Firmin, Associate Member, NSS: Architectural concept and designer



18' golden bronze of President Eisenhower