

Resilient Memories

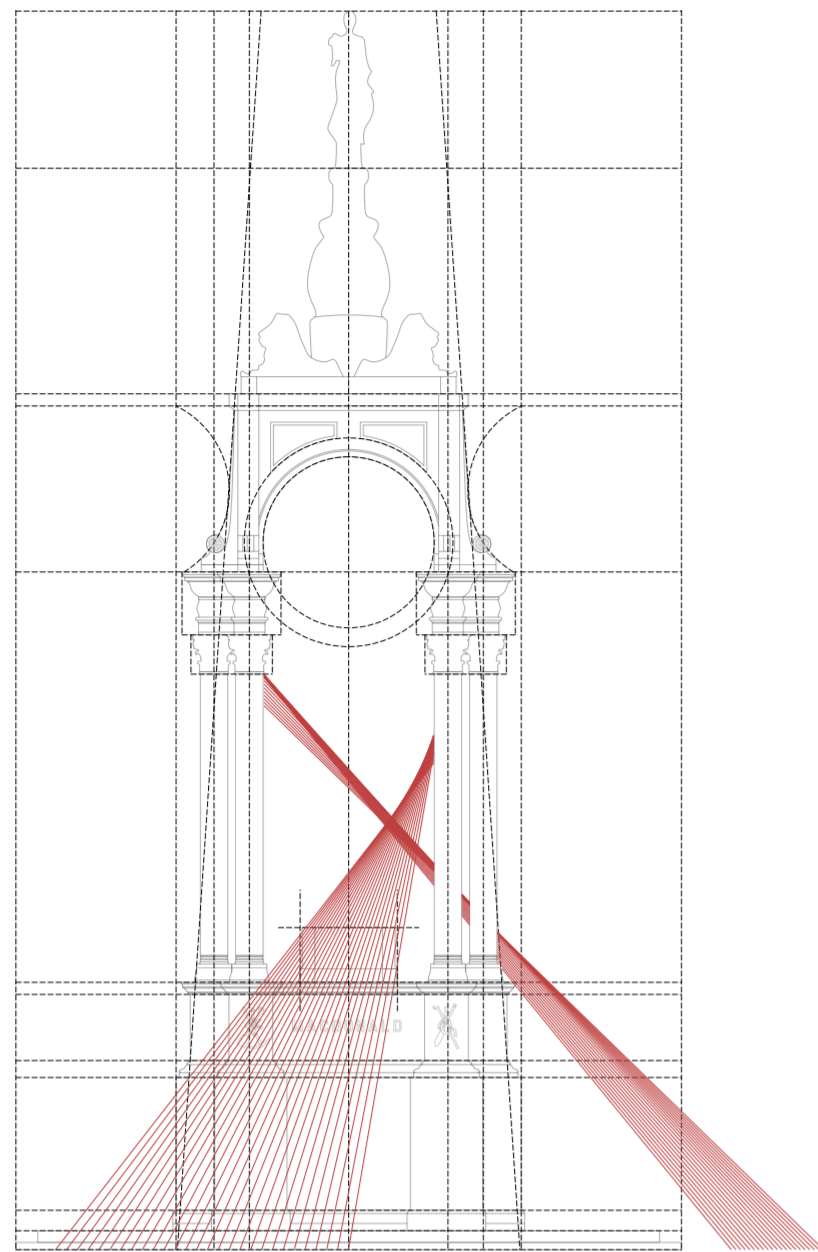
The site of this charrette proposal is situated on the unceded Indigenous lands in Tiohtiá:ke, a place that has long been a place of meeting and exchange for many First Nations. The Kanien'kehà:ka (Mohawk) Nation is recognized as the traditional custodians of these lands and waters.

Although the physical statue of John A. Macdonald has been removed, a large part of his imagery still lives within the space where he once stood. This elevated spatial void confined by the four groups of columns has been intact, so has a large part of Macdonald's colonial legacies. By creating a new visual and spatial language, the proposal challenges these intangible boundaries established by the classical principles: not subscribed to the existing rules of symmetry nor proportion, the threads of nylon fibre disturb the clarity of the existing structure, hence questions the legibility of its monumentality and the authority of its narrative.

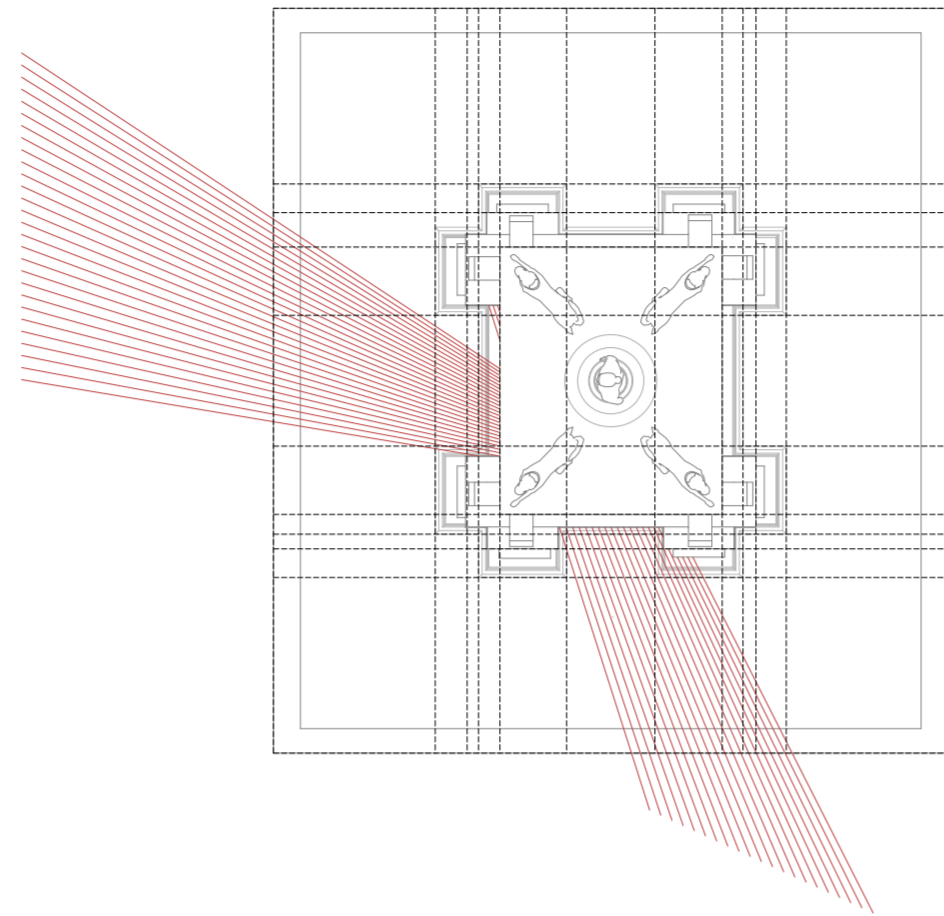
Nonetheless, the Macdonald statue was placed high above from the ground, symbolizing the ruling colonial power landing from a foreign territory. The directionality of this installation invites the audience to look away from the monument—an object made for admiration—and towards the ground on which they all stand. On one hand, it provokes contemplations on the history of the land and memories of the peoples who have lived in this place; on the other hand, as people connect with the land in personalized ways, each viewer would have their own stories to tell. The diverse body of the public audience and the diversity of their memories resist Macdonald's vision of homogeneity for the country, in which only one narrative was allowed and only one dominant civilization (the White settler one) could thrive.



Breaking Away from the Classical Principles

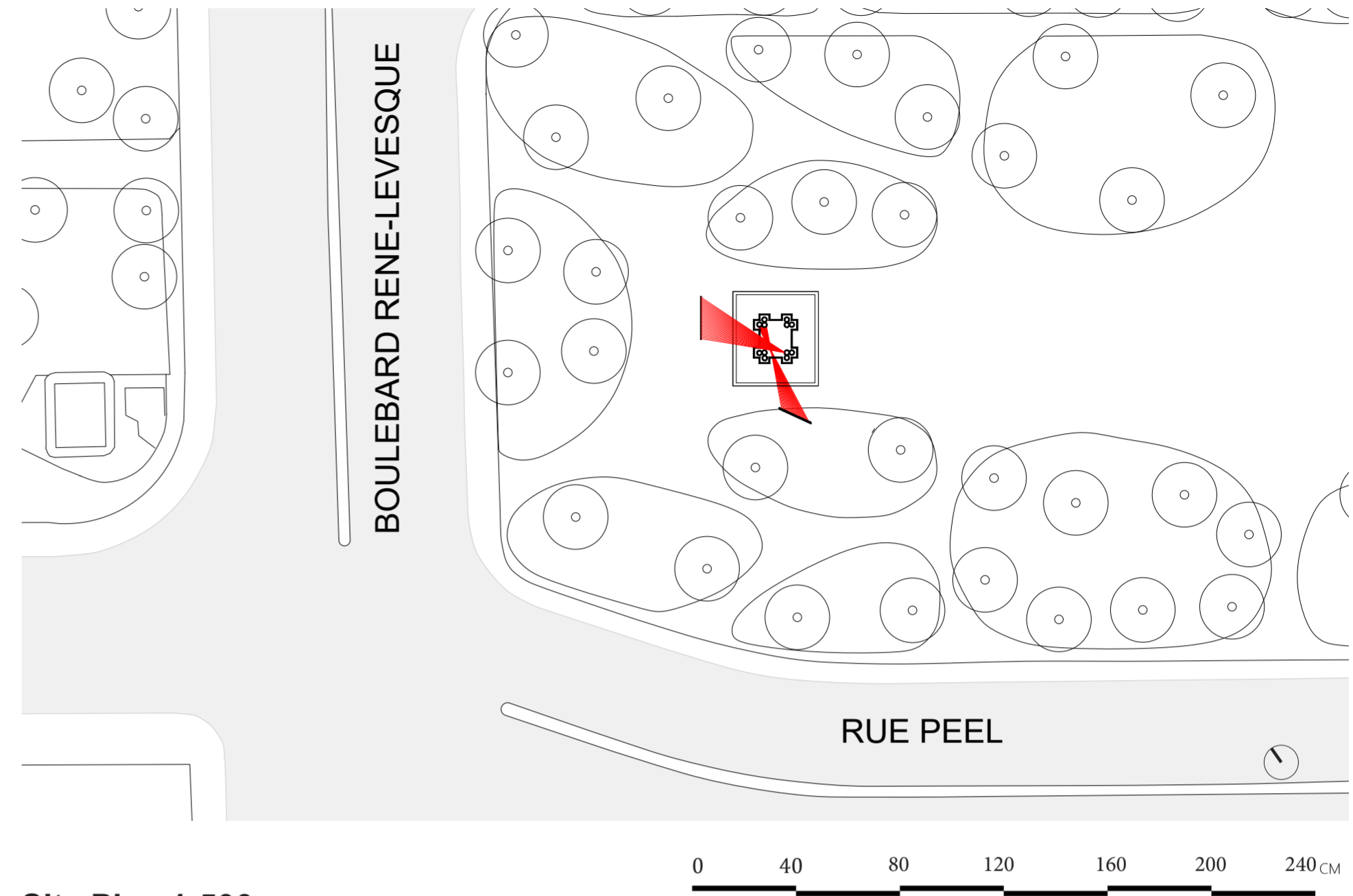


Elevation View

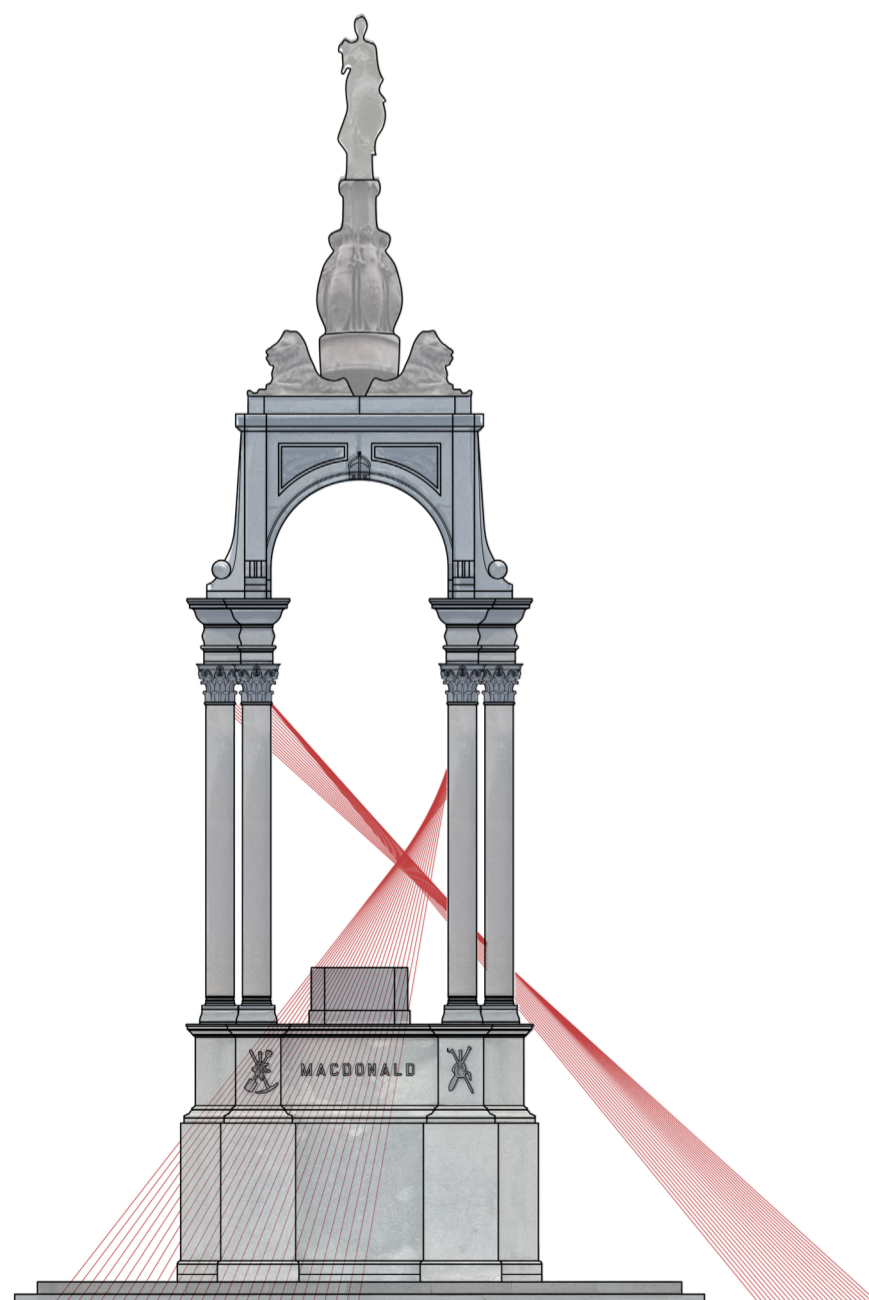


----- Original grid of the statue
 ——— Boundary of the statue

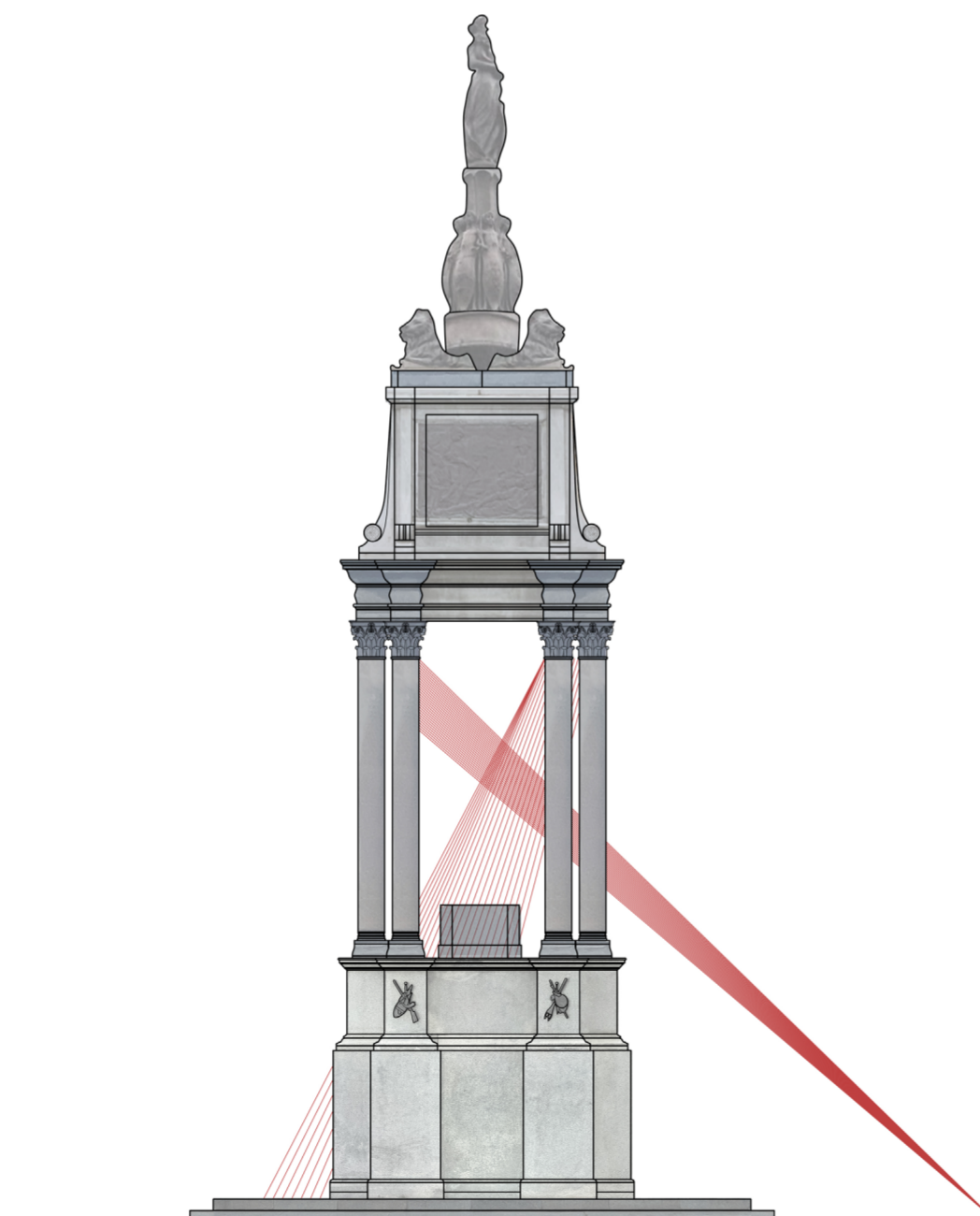
Plan View



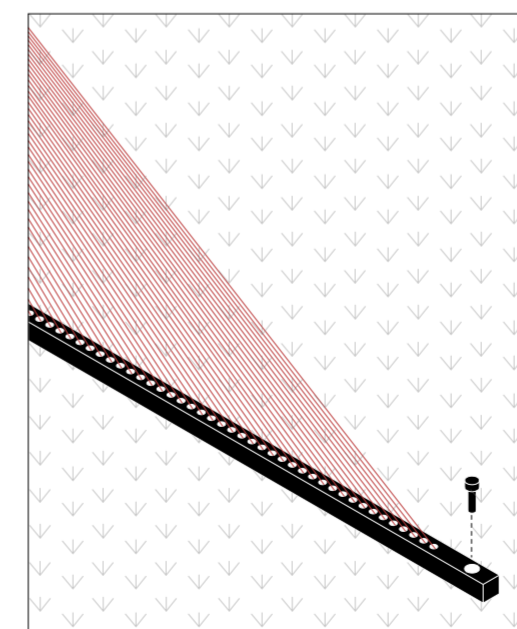
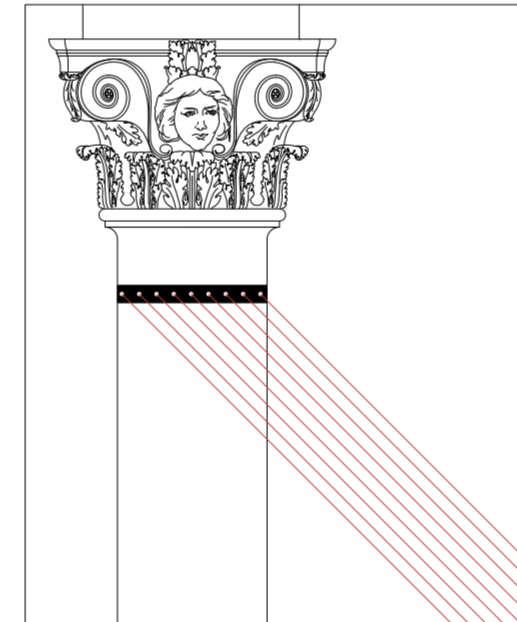
Site Plan 1:500



Elevation 1:100



0 200 400 600 800 1000 1200 CM



Installation Detail 1:20

We think the materiality of the textile best expresses the idea of resilience. As opposed to the seemingly solid and unbreakable masonry of the monument, the threads are volumeless, soft, and easily changeable. However, they could endure great external forces because of their flexibility and adaptivity, which the stones lack. Metaphorically, we hope it could commemorate the resilience and strength of the vast communities under the oppression of settler-colonialism and systematic racism for centuries. We also hope the dialogue between the two opposite materials will continue to inspire thinking about the presence of the unseen, the strength of the powerless, and the durability of the temporary.