

Indonesia–Japan Peace Memorial:

Honoring Japanese Holdouts' Contribution to Indonesian Independence through the Narrative Design Concept

奥山研究室 23M58062 ケビン マーセリ (Kevin E. MARSELI)

1. Introduction

After World War II, around 900 Japanese soldiers remained in Indonesia as holdouts, and 28 of them later fought alongside Indonesian forces against the Dutch in the foothills of Mount Semeru, Malang, for Indonesian independence. To honor these unsung heroes, this project proposes a peace memorial in Sumberputih Village, East Java, translating their stories into a built environment through the narrative design concept. Associated with postmodernism in the 1980s, the narrative design concept offers approaches that allow architects to poetically embed contextual meaning into architectural elements and manipulate their configuration, encouraging visitors to interpret the built environment. This project builds upon the theories of James Wines, Nigel Coates, and Bernard Tschumi, analyzing their approaches to construct a set of design principles. These principles are then used to rethink the historical context of the Japanese Holdouts and the site, and to express it architecturally.

2. Key Concepts of Narrative Architecture

Narrative Architecture emerged in late twentieth-century architectural discourse as a critical position examining how architecture conveys meaning through engagement with context, experience, and interpretation. Fig. 2 identifies three recurring themes in the architects' design thinking, **Contextual Recognition**, **Narrative Devices**, and **Architectural Expression**, organized horizontally by architect. For **James Wines**, Contextual Recognition combines Psychological Recognition (Pr) of perception, memory, and atmosphere with Literal Recognition (Lr) of tangible site conditions. His Narrative Device of Symbolism (Sd) translates social values into architectural form, while Architectural Expression is led by Formal Expression (Fe) and supported by Behavioral Expression (Be).

Nigel Coates emphasizes Literal Recognition (Lr) based on direct observation of urban conditions. His Narrative Devices include Symbolism (Sd), Metaphor (Md), and Disjunction (Dd), assigning layered meanings beyond function. Architectural Expression prioritizes Behavioral Expression (Be) through movement and spatial sequence, supported by Formal Expression (Fe). **Bernard Tschumi** adopts an Absence of Intended Meaning (Ar) within Contextual Recognition, rejecting representational readings of context. His Narrative Devices of Disjunction (Dd) and Juxtaposition (Jd) construct meaning through contrast, while Architectural Expression is defined by Behavioral Expression (Be) through the interaction of event, space, and movement.

3. Design Proposal

3.1 Site Selection and Analysis

On 3 January 1949, 28 Japanese Holdouts fought alongside Indonesian forces as PGI (*Pasukan Gerilya Istimewa*) and were ambushed by Dutch troops in Arjosari, resulting in the death of their leader, Captain Tatsuo Ichiki (市来竜夫). He was buried at the site by his comrades, establishing the location as a place of historical significance. The site features steep slopes and a water stream, offering strong narrative potential to express the struggle and movement of the Japanese Holdouts. It is surrounded by residential areas, pine forest, and local plantations, and is accessible by bus, car, and motorcycle via local roads (Fig. 3).

3.2 Design Concept and Spatial Strategy

This proposal applies the design thinking framework introduced in Chapter 2 through three interrelated concepts. The Literal Recognition (Lr) of the 28 Japanese Holdout soldiers of PGI is translated through Metaphor (Md) into 28 monuments arranged in a grid, each representing an individual within a collective whole.



Fig. 1 Historical Timeline of Japanese Holdouts in Indonesia

The Psychological Recognition (Pr) of the Holdouts' post-war struggles and life journeys in Indonesia is translated through Symbolism (Sd) into a meandering, organic walkpath that follows the site's contours and is articulated by permeable gates and canopies to express movement and endurance. The broader Psychological Recognition (Pr) of war and peace shared by Indonesia and Japan is translated through Juxtaposition (Jd) by contrasting a warm, open Pendopo-inspired Joglo space with a closed, dark, and heavy industrial concrete volume organized hierarchically through floor levels. These elements are arranged through Disjunction (Dd), where the monuments appear to float at a unified level while the walkpath intersects the concrete volume to generate tension and unexpected encounters (Fig. 4). The monument blocks are defined by void-like openings functioning

as individual galleries with varied shared programs. The Joglo structure uses upper-level glass to introduce daylight into a welcoming courtyard, and the concrete volume employs high voids and narrow slit openings to create an intentionally oppressive spatial experience of war. Along the walkpath, reflection spaces provide rest and contemplation, while its permeable nature allows visitors to temporarily disengage from the memorial journey before returning to the intended pilgrimage sequence (Fig. 6).

4. Conclusion

This proposal narrates the story of Japanese Holdouts in Indonesia through design elements that embed contextual meaning and invite interpretation. The project aims to honor these figures of the Indonesian Revolution while celebrating the enduring peace and diplomatic relationship between Japan and Indonesia.

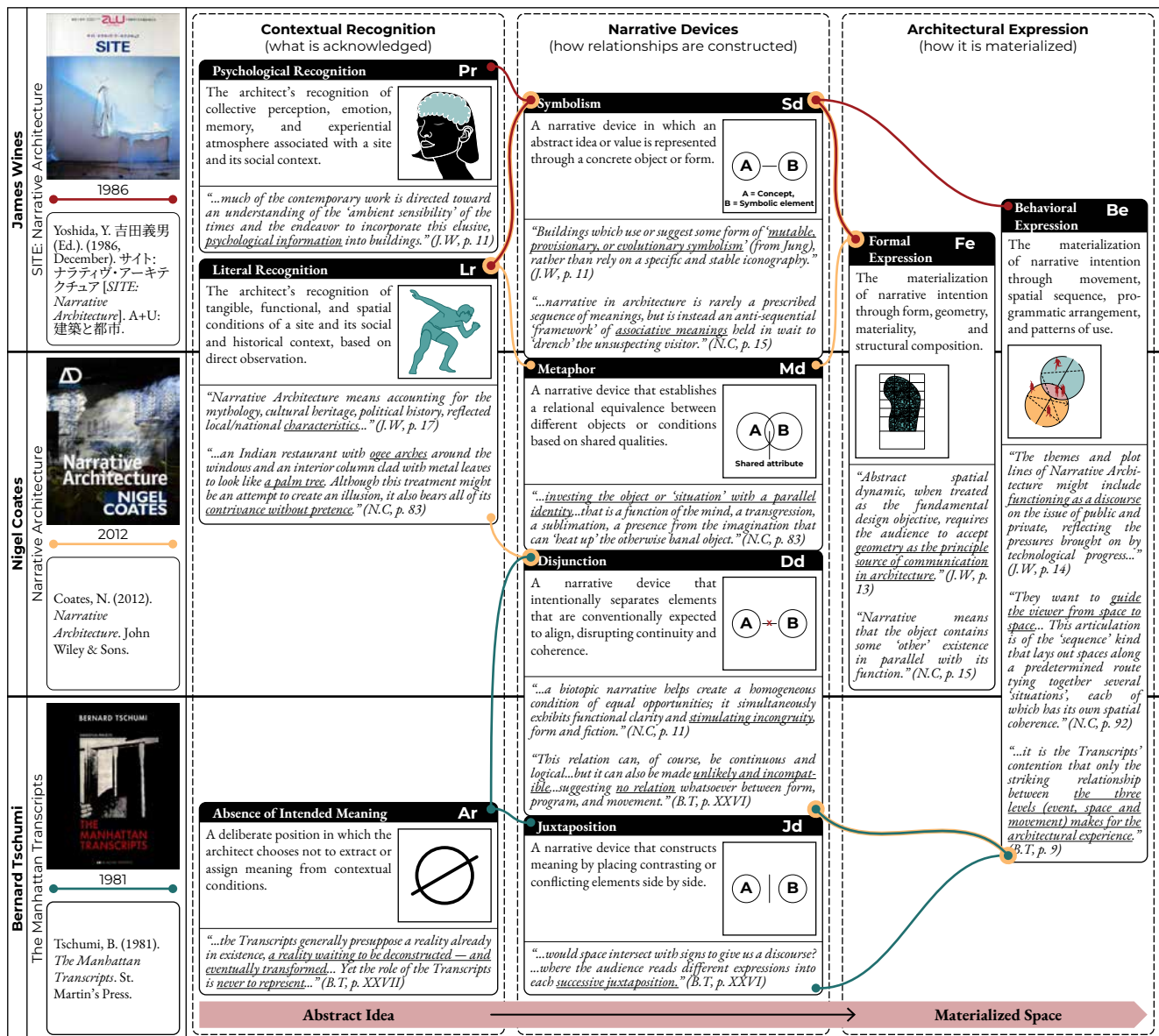


Fig. 2 Mapping Narrative Architecture: Key Concepts, Processes, and Theoretical Positions

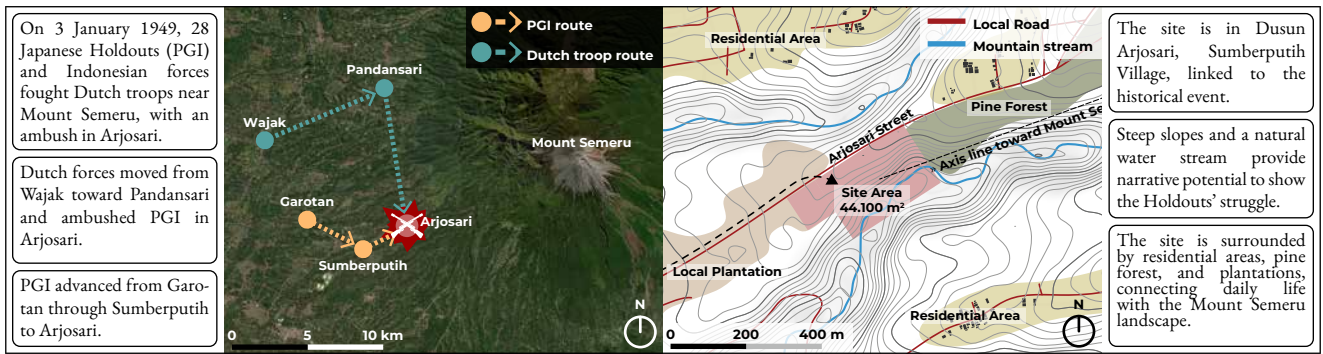


Fig. 3 Site Selection and Analysis

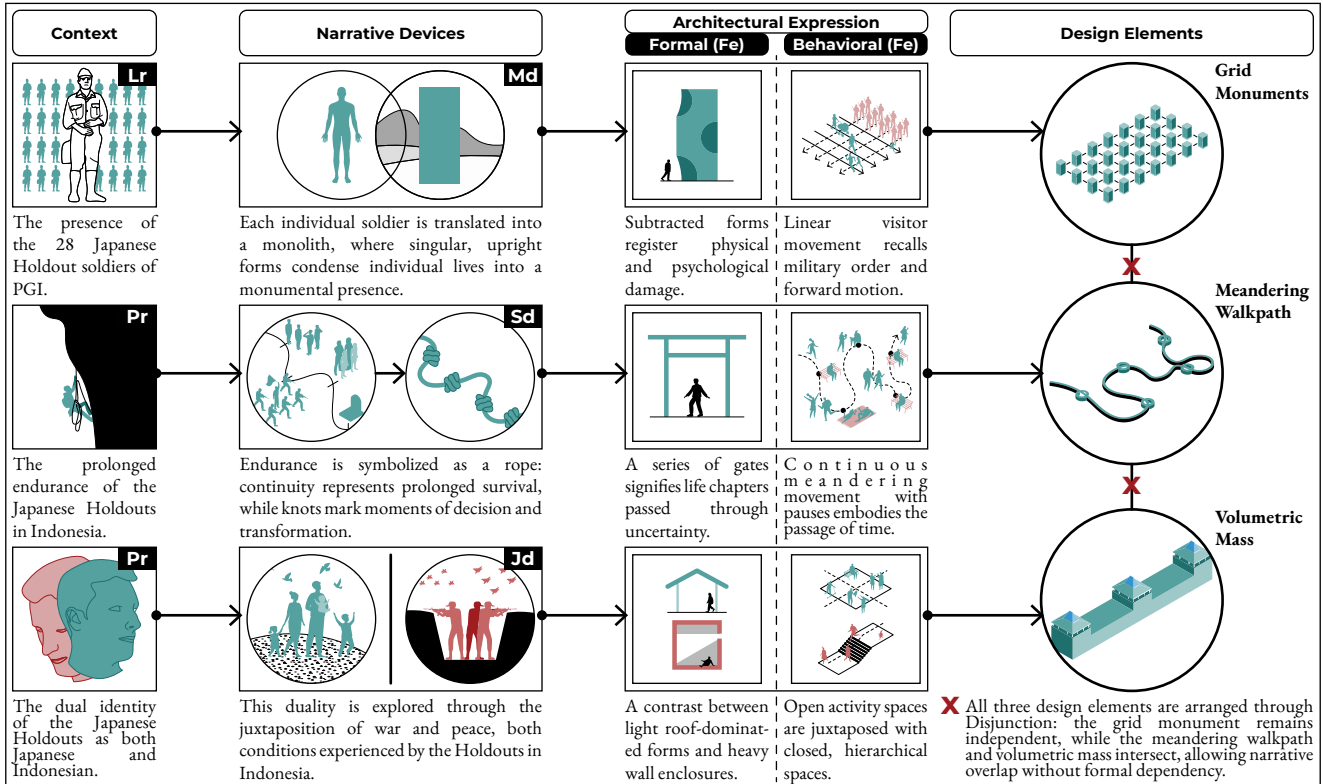


Fig. 4 Design Proposal Concept

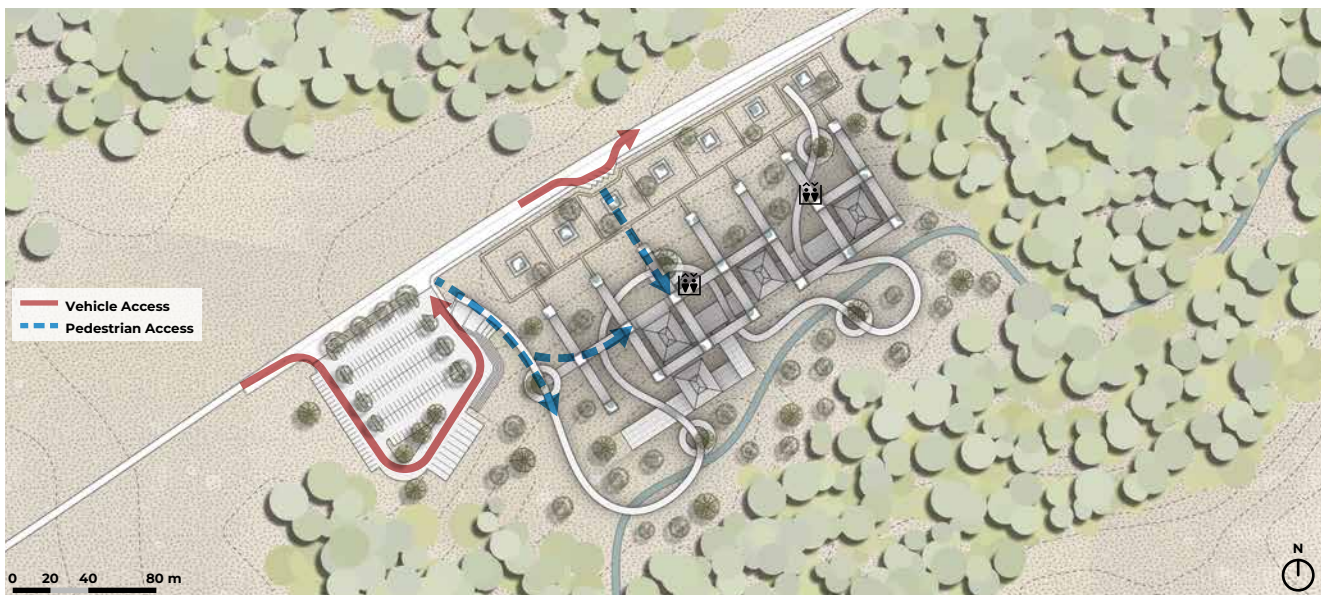


Fig. 5 Site Plan (1: 4000)

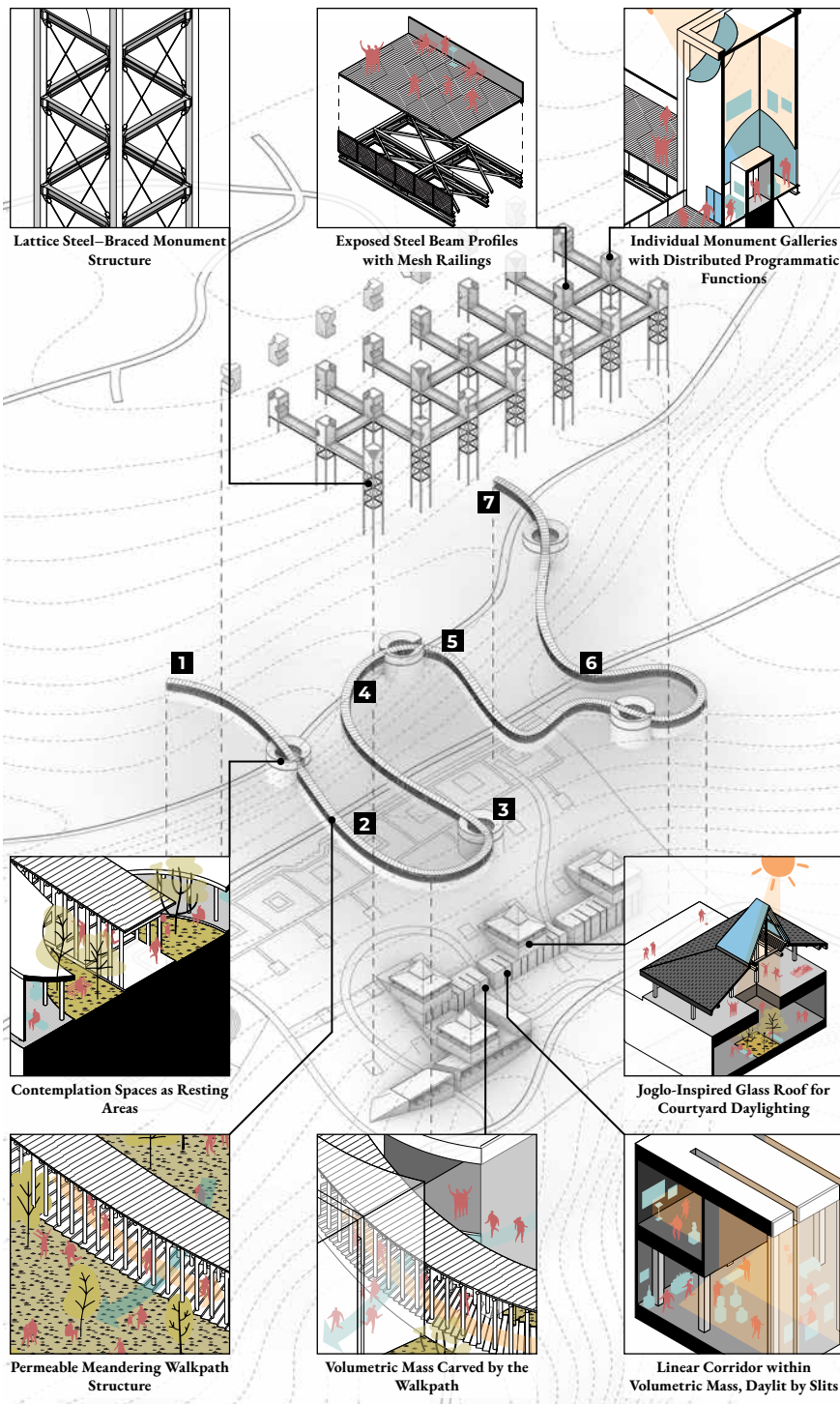


Fig. 6 Exploded Axonometry Showing Design Strategies (1:4000)

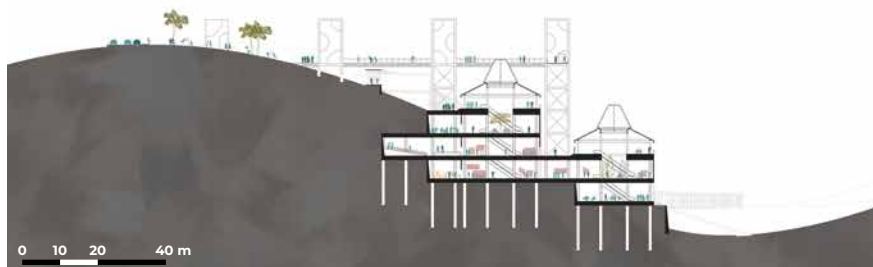


Fig. 7 Section (1:2000)



Fig. 8 Spatial Narrative Sequence