

MEMORIAL INSTALLATION DEDICATED TO FOUR CONCORDIA PROFESSORS (1996), Eduardo Aquino, Johanne Sloan and Kathryn Walter

This is the fourth stop on the Public Art, Public Memory tour.

As you enter the atrium through the east De Maisonneuve Boulevard doors of the Henry F. Hall Building, you may see or imagine four granite picnic tables where students and university workers are often gathered to study or have lunch. Take a closer look at, or imagine, these tables and their surroundings. What do you notice?

In 1992, four engineering professors — Phoivos Ziogas, Matthew McCartney Douglass, Michael Gorden Hogben, and Aaron Jaan Saber — were shot and killed in the Department of Engineering's offices on the ninth floor of the Hall Building by another professor. Two years after the tragic incident, the university put forth a call for proposals for a memorial. In 1996, this work by artist/architect Eduardo Aquino, art historian Johanne Sloan and visual artist Kathryn Walter was installed.

Often, memorials are monumental artworks. The traditional equestrian statue, or a cenotaph might come to mind: impossible to miss granite, stone, and bronze, elevated upon a towering plinth. This memorial sculpture by Concordia alumni Aquino, Sloan and Walter takes an unconventional approach to commemoration.

If there's space at one of the tables, and you are able to, take a moment to sit down. The granite slabs that comprise the benches echo the traditional materials of memorial installations, especially their engravings. The victims' names and their favourite quotations span the tabletops. Surrounding the tables are small concrete blocks with a familiar shape: the Hall Building's likeness populates the space in between the tables.

This collection of tables and stools make up the only area to sit, work, rest, or socialize on the Hall Building's ground floor. It is a liminal space between the public sphere outside and the one inside the university walls, a space that people otherwise only pass through. How does this artwork memorialize the people who died in this event? While other forms of memorial sculpture are often made to be the focal point of a given space, this memorial blends easily into the ecology of everyday life. It is possible that you could move by them and not know that the benches are an artwork until you specifically engage with them. In this way, the work mirrors the experience of memory itself. The placement, materiality and function become just as important to the commemoration as the visual experience of the artwork. It is interactive and

social, pointing toward the inherent sociality of education, university life and the roles of these four professors within it, not to mention the collective loss that is their untimely deaths. This work offers a place for restful contemplation, and a literal support to sit and to study — a fitting tribute to those who dedicated their lives to teaching and seeking knowledge.

To continue this tour, click on *Untilted*, by Rose-Marie Goulet with Effets Publics.