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National Ideas Competition for the Washington Monument Grounds www.wamocompetition.org

People's Choice Winners Announced for National Ideas Competition for the Washington Monument Grounds

Washington, D.C., May 17, 2012: Winners of the People's Choice for the National Ideas Competition for the Washington Monument Grounds were announced today at the National AIA Convention in Washington DC. This multi-stage competition attracted participants from around the world, and an international public vote has resulted in two winners.

The People's Forum by Karolina Kawiaka creates a national gathering place at the base of the Washington Monument. Karolina writes that the original plan for Washington DC "... defined two axes representing presidential leadership and democratic governance. 200 years later that vision is realized by a civic place that tells the story of the Washington Monument, creates a public forum for gatherings and completes a vision of the Mall as America's front lawn."

You and Me by Jin Woo Lim creates an interpretive pathway around the monument. Jinwoo's presentation declares that "I propose a broad circular pathway that will create new relationships between visitors and the monument, the city and nature as the visitors move around it. Walls, slopes and steps rise and fall along the path, causing visitors to experience the presence of the Monument in different ways at different points."

The competition came out of a realization that while the Washington Monument continues to be the defining feature of the Washington skyline – and the centerpiece of the nation's most important symbolic open space – at ground level its vast open space remains unfinished. The conversation created by the competition has quickly gained momentum since its inception in 2010.

A special exhibition, **Someday in the Park with George**, highlighting the history of the groundbreaking Competition and entries selected by the jury will be on display at the Virginia Center for Architecture in Richmond, Virginia until June 24. The exhibition was developed by a team of graduate students from the Museum Studies Program at The George Washington University. The competition is also part of exhibits currently at the National Building Museum and the National AIA Convention - both in Washington DC.

The competition has facilitated free discussion outside the highly sensitive political world of government review agencies, and it has inspired a diverse public to engage in a conversation about landscape, sustainability, architecture, planning, democracy, history, civic life and more. It suggests that planning for the future of the National Mall should begin at its center. The competition has received glowing press attention and has sparked numerous design competitions for other parts of the National Mall. The website www.wamocompetition.org will continue to serve as an educational resource for students, educators, and citizen.

For more information, www.wamocompetition.org.

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