

1570 Olympus Avenue  
Berkeley, CA 94708  
October 6, 1982

Mr. Jan C. Scruggs, President  
Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund  
1110 Vermont Avenue, N.W.  
Suite 308  
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Jan:

Unfortunately I shall not be able to attend the Fine Arts Commission meeting to be held to review the proposed addition of a sculptural group by Frederick Hart to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial design. (However, Mr. Mosely of your staff has asked me to write a letter expressing whatever comments I may feel which would be helpful in consideration of the final design.)

Obviously because I have not seen the **proposed** sculpture nor its relation to the memorial wall, I cannot express an opinion as to its design or artistic merits. Moreover, it is properly the province of the Fine Arts Commission members to decide this question rather than mine.

I would like to note, however, that in a competition a jury may select a winning design, not because it is so perfect that it cannot be improved, but because it is the best of the lot. I remember at least several jury members at the time of evaluating the winning submission expressing views on how the design should be modified to be suitable for public use. The matter of public safety as one approached the wall from the upper side was one question. Matters not only technical, but aesthetic were also discussed.

Thus, it is not certain that the design by Ms. Maya Lin need be irrevocably compromised by the changes which may be required by technical, visual, or indeed, programmatic needs.

As I understand it from verbal descriptions given to me, the proposed sculptural group by Mr. Hart is

not part of the visual mass of the wall, but is placed at some distance and in opposition to it. Often works of other artists, if sensitively done, enhance the totality of a design. I hope this latter is true.

Sincerely yours

*Hideo Sasaki*

Hideo Sasaki

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1110 VERMONT AVE NORTHWEST SUITE 308  
WASHINGTON DC 20005

(COPY OF MESSAGE SENT TO J CARTER BROWN DIRECTOR NATIONAL GALLERY OF  
ART WASHINGTON DC)

AS A MEMBER OF THE JURY AND WITNESS TO THE ARDUOUS PROCESS SO WELL  
MOUNTED BY THE VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL FUND I VIEW THE ADULTERATION  
OF MAYA LIN'S DESIGN BY ANY DISSIDENT GROUP AS ARBITRARY, CAPRICIOUS  
AND DESTRUCTIVE AND THE APPROVAL OF SUCH BY ANY REVIEWING AGENCY OR  
AUTHORITY IRRESPONSIBLE AND BEYOND THE PALE OF DUE PROCESS. ART IS  
UNCOMPROMISABLE

HARRY WEESE

10:26 EST

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