

Spare Cemetery Marker Eloquently Pays Tribute To A Mother's Life

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This project won the 2013 Architizer A+ Jury Award in the Memorials category. See the full list of winners [here](#).

Kariouk Associates' spare, poetic [Cemetery Marker](#) proves that architecture doesn't need to be big and flashy to make a statement, and that sometimes the simplest designs are the most powerful.

The gravesite is for an unidentified mother, who had left a note for her children to be read after her death. The note wasn't so much a will—she had nothing material to leave her children, according to the architects' statement—but a collection of wishes for them. "The sole request on her own behalf," reads the project description, "was that her gravesite become a garden."

The architects took this wish to heart when conceiving her grave marker, located on a grassy expanse in South Canaan, Pennsylvania. They scattered five cast bronze plates over the site at varied heights above the earth. As time goes by, grass will grow in between these markers, and the plates will oxidize and blend into the landscape. [Read more.](#)

A stanza from Audre Lorde's poem "Prologue" adorns the tops of these plates, reading, "The children remain like blades of grass over the earth and all the children are singing louder than mourning...And the grasses will still be singing." The sides of the marker are inscribed with the message the woman left for her children: "Trust and joy must be the foundation of our family life. Kindness, responsibility, self-fulfillment, courage, and modesty are keys to a happy and satisfying life. Affection, a sense of beauty and poetry are life's essential inspiration and adornment."

