



**HORIZON THEATER REVISED SCRIPT**

Presented to the Liberty Memorial Museum

by Donna Lawrence Productions

in collaboration with Ralph Appelbaum Associates

28 February 2006

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To the Liberty Memorial Museum:

In the following document is a Revised Script with Storyboards for the Horizon Theater. This document reflects input and revision to the Preliminary Script and Storyboards presented to the Liberty Memorial Museum on 2.13.06 and discussed in more detail on February 23, 2006, in Louisville. This submittal includes proposed narration, proposed storyboard frames, description of show flow, general use of lighting and projection, scope of content for the experience, objectives and production assumptions. Work to date has been informed through collaboration with RAA, Technical Artistry and ESI as well as by the lighting effects test arranged by Technical Artistry on January 26, 2006.

Based on your review and approval of this document we will submit a Final Script with Storyboards which will be the basis for image research, soundtrack production, and post-production activities.

We look forward to our workshops and projection demos this week and to working with the outstanding team you have assembled to create this landmark museum experience.

*Donna Lawrence Productions*

### Exhibit Summary and Setting

The Horizon Theater integrates a large-scale video production with a theatrically lighted battlefield tableau featuring large-scale artifacts and recreated objects and figures to showcase a pivotal time in history—the turning point moment in World War I when America faced the fateful decision to enter the War. Narration, personal reflection and media presented amidst a sweeping theatrical environment will convey the vast destruction Europe had already suffered while foreshadowing the profound and long-term effects this decision would have on America and the world. This experience sets the stage for the second half of the visitor's experience in the museum.

### Exhibit Objectives

- To gather the elements of the story—up to this point—into a cohesive picture that allows visitors to grasp the dire conditions of those already engaged in the War as well as the profound decision facing the United States
- To illuminate for visitors the complex environment in America within which this decision was made
- To foreshadow the long-term effects of this decision on America and the world, setting visitors up for the second half of the exhibition

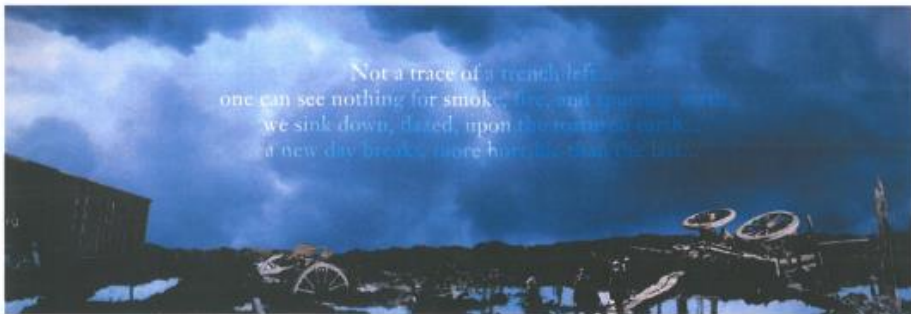
### Production Assumptions

- Program includes a theatrical tableau activated by programmed lighting (by others) and a multi-projector wide-screen production with multi-channel soundtrack and lighting that tie the two elements together into a seamless, synchronized production.
- 10-minute show cycle including an approximately 8-minute program and 2-minute pre-/post-show interval.
- Soundtrack includes narration, first-person reflections, sound effects, natural sound and musical components.
- Imagery is derived from the Museum's existing archives as well as from other sources *procured by the Museum* in collaboration with DLP.
- Video program to be projected on 25' x 100' screen to be provided by others.
- 6 overlapping 25' x 18.75' projections in portrait mode
- Screen projection surface TBD by exhibit fabricator.
- High definition video streams to be provided at resolutions and file format per ESI.
- Additional synchronized projectors or video/lighting instruments (number TBD) will be used for projection onto tableau.
- The show has a dramatic story structure with a clear beginning and end; this will be made apparent to the visitor via a countdown clock.
- High-quality theatrical sound system to be provided by others.
- Synchronized lighting will be provided by others in collaboration with DLP.

Not a trace of a trench left...  
one can see nothing for smoke, fire, and spurring earth...  
we sink down, dazed, upon the tortured earth...  
a new day breaks, more horrible than the last...







#### **Prelude (2:00 Pre-show)**

As visitors step onto the overlook platform in the Horizon Theater, they encounter a bleak atmosphere. Peering beyond the platform, they discover a vast scene, dimly visible in cold, gray pre-dawn light. Faint shapes and silhouettes of a wasteland suggest the violent and explosive scenes that have churned the land; ripped ancient trees into charred, splintered stakes; obliterated life—human and animal; and left great gashes in the earth and in the lives of people who have survived the fury of massive slaughter only to face another day of warfare in the trenches of World War I.

The visitor has stepped into a moment-in-time on an eerily cold, damp morning on the Western Front, deep into the story of the War. Details of the physical scene are muted in the hazy, monochromatic light. Slowly moving, mottled lighting suggests a low-lying, stagnant, fog creeping across the scene. Altogether, the environment evokes the unnatural realm of a terrible dream...an uneasy setting for the story. This expansive war-torn landscape stretches into darkness on the visitor's left and right, and seems to continue into the distance directly before the visitor.

A series of simple quotations—remembrances from the time—are projected onto the front wall which rises up out of the muck of the land, seeming to blend into a distant horizon.

*Not a trace of a trench left...one can see nothing for smoke, fire, and spurting earth...we sink down, dazed, upon the tortured earth...a new day breaks, more horrible than the last...*

*Shells of all calibers kept raining in our sector. The trenches had disappeared, filled with earth. The air was unbreathable. Our blinded, wounded, crawling, shouting soldiers kept falling on top of us and died splashing us with their blood. It was living hell.*

*... men die of mud, as they die from bullets, but more horribly. Mud is where men sink and—what is worse—where their soul sinks...Mud hides the stripes of rank, there are only poor suffering beasts...Hell is not fire, that would not be the ultimate in suffering. Hell is mud.*

*A chill of horror came over us. War seemed suddenly to have assumed a merciless, ruthless aspect...we felt as if some horrible Thing, utterly merciless, was advancing to grip us...*

*We always felt the shakes in the ground even...a mile away...all dugouts would shake badly, timbers would be loosened and many men buried in their dugouts and shelters while they were sleeping.*

*...knee deep and in some places waist deep in mud and icy water, which clogged a large number of rifles and rendered them useless...men had their boots and even their clothes pulled off by the mud ...the trenches became veritable death traps...*

*We got annihilated. There was nobody left. I was the only bomber left out of the whole company.*

The audio environment contributes to the mood of the scene. A faint, chilling wind periodically sweeps the landscape. The barely audible, distant sound of heavy machinery on the move—preparing for the next onslaught—drones on. Occasionally, the low-frequency percussion of a distant isolated explosion rolls across the landscape.

Pre-show lighting on the overlook begins to dim, and faint, suspended tones—the first hints of an emerging soundtrack—fade up, setting the tone for the story.





WWI Imagery to 1917  
(note: no american troops)

Battle scenes

No man's land

Artillery

Explosions

Town in rubble

Refugees

Urban poverty

Military caravan



WWI 1914 Imagery  
(note: no steel helmets; soft caps, german spiked helmets)

Battle scenes (France, Germany, Great Britain)

Troops

Artillery barrage

War torn landscape

9/5/14 to 9/10/14  
Battle of Marne halts German advance, brings onset of trench warfare

Exhausted troops



9/15/14  
First trenches dug

Early trench scenes:

Digging Trenches

Trench Conditions

Trench Combat

Continue Trench Warfare

## Main Show

### Over There (3:30)

- 1 *Slowly dissolving up on the screen—hovering over the breaking dawn—is a series of isolated scenes that fade in and out independently. These apparitions, suspended over the horizon, suggest the conditions of life in war-torn Europe by 1917—on the battlefield and off.*
- 2 *Piles of rubble remain where a town used to be. Families trudge along deeply rutted roads, struggling toward the possibility of refuge. Military caravans move artillery, supplies, and soldiers across the landscape. Cities seethe with unrest and dissidence, while the surviving royalty of Europe struggle to maintain the order of earlier times.*
- 3 *We are confronted by the face of hunger and exhaustion at every turn.*

*The narrator begins—quietly and in short, simple sentences that set the stage.*

### 4 **Narrator**

It started as a war between the world's great imperial powers.

- 5 *Little over a month, but tens of thousands of lives later, the Allies—Great Britain, France, and Russia—have fought Germany to a stalemate on the Western Front. Germany's plan—to defeat France in a quick knockout blow, then turn its military might against Russia—has failed.*

The war of rapid movement is over.

On both sides, there is but one choice if the armies are to continue fighting ...

### 7 **General Ferdinand Foch (v/o)**

*It is absolutely essential not to retreat; therefore the men must dig in wherever they find themselves and hold onto the ground they now occupy.*

### 8 **Narrator**

The trench war on the Western Front begins.









Projected fog, smoke, explosions, battle scenes  
 Battle scarred landscape  
 No man's land  
 Smoldering horizon

Wide shots that place the trenches in context  
 Soldiers march towards front  
 Artillery caravan  
 Troops in trenches, firing

Scenes of destruction  
 Abandoned equipment  
 Wounded soldiers

Shift to extreme close-ups of faces, eyes:  
 Soldiers  
 Non-Combatants  
 Children  
 Refugees

Devastated landscape shrouded in smoke and haze  
 Stripped Trees  
 Rubble  
 Artillery Explosions

Continue scenes that play off the devastated landscape portrayed in the tableau

Imagery that underscores the grind of the stalemate  
 Evidence of casualties  
 Tattered Troops

9. *The tableau—up to this point lying eerily quiet before the visitor—now explodes with lighting and the sounds of battle. Lighting on the tableau evokes dramatic, violent action.*
10. *For a moment the sounds and imagery engulf the entire theater space. Lighting reveals distinct features of the tableau, and it is clear that we are witnessing the result of trench warfare on the Western front. The sounds of battle subside into the distance, but continue under the narrator.*

11. **Both armies dig in.** Hundreds of thousands of soldiers, reinforced by wave after wave—millions—of new recruits and ever growing artillery forces—battle along a 475 mile front from the English Channel to the Swiss Alps.

12. *Looking down into the abyss of a field—once fertile, green, and productive—we now see that it is churned, scarred, burned, and muddy...pitted and gouged by incessant assault...marked by pools of acidic, dark, and murky waters and splintered trees barely recognizable as such. We see great gashes in the land, and machinery of war half sunk into the mud.*

13. *Behind the tableau, faintly visible on the screen are extreme close-ups of the eyes of soldiers, refugees, children, and others reflecting the millions affected by the War.*

14.

15. **Narrator**  
 For more than two years, the Western Front scarcely changes in length or geographical trace.

16. **General Wilson (v/o)**  
*We took five trenches last night but we have been put out of four of them, chiefly by bombs, and we lost some 1,500 [men] I'm afraid. The movement was good, but the expense was great.*

17. **Narrator**  
 Small gains take days of non-stop onslaught and cost hundreds of thousands of lives. In three years, a third of the soldiers on both sides perish. Neither side can gain a clear advantage.







19

Begin seeing combat in far-away, unfamiliar locations:

11/3/14 Battle of Tanga, Africa

4/25/15 Gallipoli begins (9 mo.)

April 1917 Brit forces advance on Bagdad



22

2/4/15 Germany declares submarine blockade of GB

Begin series of scenes depicting submarine warfare

Photographs and headlines relating to the Lusitania

Survivors, Graves

Diplomatic encounters

"Broaden" the focus to the effects on life in many countries...

on every aspect of life...

Civilians

Devastated farmlands

Battlescenes, Etc.



25

Begin series of scenes in Russia depicting social/political upheaval

Timeline notes:

3/15/17 Nicholas II abdicates

11/7/17 Bolsheviks overthrow Kerensky's govt./Karensky continues Russ's involvement in war

12/3/17 Trotsky signs armistice w/ Germany

German officers and troops in the field

Burned and scarred countryside

People in dire circumstances

18 *The tableau settles into a more subtle but dramatically lighted foreground as the story picks up momentum, intensity, and a sense of growing desperation.*

19 Though stalemated on the Western Front, the conflict has spread quickly to other continents via economic and political ties, and the vast colonial holdings of the European empires.

20 *The projection screen has become more active, supporting the evolving story with stills and archival footage that shift dramatically from Western front to Eastern front, and from continent to continent, reaching across increasingly expansive territory to establish the sweep and desperate arc of the story.*

21 German U-Boats torpedo merchant and passenger ships in neutral waters without warning. This 'unrestricted' submarine warfare expands the conflict onto the high seas.

22 With the sinking of the Lusitania in May 1915, and the loss of American lives, the U.S. threatens to break diplomatic ties with Germany, a threat that helps halt Germany's submarine rampage.

23 Still, by the end of that year, the war that some are **already** calling 'the Great War' is **becoming** a world war.

24 *Sound effects and imagery evoke dramatic scenes of combat and the devastating effects of war upon people and property. We witness the weariness, the anxiety, the filth, the grind, punctuated by the roar and fog of battle. Explosions move into the distance as narration and first person accounts move the story forward.*

25 By 1917, the Allies' horizons have darkened. Russia—a crucial member of the alliance against Germany and Austria-Hungary—is racked with political upheaval. Russia's ability to sustain a war effort is waning.

26 Germany, desperate for a breakthrough, can now concentrate troops on the Western Front.

27 Farms in Allied countries have had a weak harvest. Food is short. Sensing that the tide is turning, the German war council considers a gamble: reinstating submarine attacks on civilian merchant ships supplying the Allies.





28



Submarine attacks on Allied ships

Naval blockade

German leadership

Continue German leadership

20 It's a race against time, but the Germans believe they can starve the Allies into surrender before Germany itself is strangled by Britain's on-going naval blockade.

They calculate the risk of drawing America into the war.

29 **Admiral von Capelle (v/o)**

*... from a military point of view, America is nothing ... almost no Americans will volunteer for war service ... America has no transport ships ready for service ... America has already produced as much ammunition as she is able to produce ... I repeat, therefore, once more: from a military standpoint, America's entrance is nothing.*

**Lt. Coningsby Dawson (v/o)**

*I read in today's paper that the U.S.A. threatens to come over here and help us. I wish she would. The very thought of the possibility fills me with joy ... it would redeem her in the world's eye.*

30



Screen dissolve to eerie, atmospheric deep red up-glow from the tableau

30 *Over the past several seconds, lighting on the tableau has receded into deep, red hues.*

**Over Here (3:00)**

31 *Against the sobering imagery of World War I as it plays out across continents, we begin hearing in the distance the upbeat sound of a gramophone recording of a popular American tune of the era. As the music grows louder, in striking contrast with war imagery, the entire theater fades to black.*

**Narrator**

32 *To Americans, the war has always been "over there."*

*That is clearly changing.*

*But, to most Americans, neither is the war quite "over here."*

33



Slow dissolve to darkness in the theater

180° period panorama of New York

Montage of images reflecting life in America during the 'teens

33 *Out of the void, for the first time in the show, a large sweep of the projection screen is filled with a single panoramic image—the skyline of New York during this same period. The tone being set—in stark contrast to the story of the unfolding war—is one of optimism, energy, and possibility.*

34 *As the story shifts to this side of the Atlantic, the projection area is used freely and dramatically to paint the multi-dimensional picture of America, a picture full of contradictions as the country moves toward involvement in the War.*

35 *American horizons emerge in sharp contrast to those in Europe; both physically and socially.*



COUCH & SEELEY CO.  
No. 99 Magneto Call Telephone  
TRADE MARK

1922—THE 16-SIZE  
ROAD TIMEKEEPER  
OF AMERICA

HUB  
CLOTHING

BENZ and JUNIN  
The House of Shoes  
HAGERSTOWN, MD.

PREMIER

TOASTED  
CORN  
FLAKES  
KELLOGG'S  
Food Planning  
KELLOGG



Continue montage of America circa 1914-1917:

Rural  
Urban  
Industrial  
Ephemera  
People

Images exuding industrialism and growth transition to...

Social reform movements:  
Suffragettes  
Civil Rights  
Labor protests  
Etc.

Continue scenes of wide range of US citizens

36 In contrast to war-weary Europe, American life during this same period pulses with energy, and for many, optimism. War production for the Allies has spurred the growth of the nation's industrial economy.

37 *Scenes evoke a young, vibrant, largely agrarian America with its budding industries and growing cities, social problems (such as child labor and urban squalor) and social reformers.*

38 As barons of industry seize opportunities in steel, oil, lumber, and coal, social reformers push to change the conditions spawned by the *growth* of industrial cities. In fields and factories, from suffragettes to civil rights activists, most Americans are pre-occupied with their own destinies, and the majority sees no reason to fight Europe's war.

While President Wilson makes efforts to broker peace in Europe, he tells Americans it is not their war, and most agree.

39 **Pres. Wilson (v/o)**  
*The war is one with which we have nothing to do, whose causes cannot touch us.*

40 **Narrator**  
But the war has already touched many Americans. Tensions are rising...

41 *Imagery and sounds begin to rise in intensity, reflecting the diversity of voices in America, and the heated debate within the country over the war in Europe and whether or not the U.S. should mobilize its military.*

42 The U.S. is a country of immigrants—10 million are from Germany and Austria-Hungary. A large Irish- and prosperous German-American population backs *these* forces.

43 Millions of others back the Allies—Great Britain, France and Russia.

Series of scenes reflecting number and diversity of immigrants in America



36

38

41









Poverty:  
Urban  
Rural  
  
Industry  
Munitions/manufacturing

Imagery featuring Wilson

44 Some see the war as a class struggle, the folly of emperors at the expense of common people.

45 For a few, war is a business decision—a golden opportunity to supply the warriors... while staying clear of the war.

46 As the debate intensifies, President Wilson narrowly wins reelection in 1916 under the slogan, "He kept us out of the war."

47 But in the early months of 1917, few Americans can deny that war, whether the U.S. join it or not, is just over the horizon.



Unrestricted submarine warfare  
Headlines and Images:

On February 3, 1917 U.S. cargo ship, Housatonic

February 17<sup>th</sup>, a German submarine sank Cunard passenger liner, the S.S. Laconia

48 *Panoramic projections now take us to sea and images of submarine attacks on civilian ships and merchant vessels. We see massive explosions and billowing black smoke and hear personal descriptions of ships going down.*

49 Germany's unrestricted submarine warfare resumes and begins to take its toll.

50 **Floyd Gibbons (v/o)**

*At 10:30 p.m., there was a muffled noise. Five sharp blasts – the signal to abandon ... From my position in the lifeboat I could see that we were going to have difficulty in the descent to the water ... 'Lower away!' someone gave the order and we started downward with a jerk toward the seemingly hungry, rising and falling swells ... Then [ the Laconia] slid silently down and out of sight ...*



Laconia victims  
Personal photos  
Letters  
Personal effects  
Funerals/Graves

Newspaper Headings/Articles  
Printed Ephemera dealing with war issues

51 *Images back on American soil emerge through the smoke...*

*We hear the voices of dissent and in support of war, one voice overlapping the next as the story builds momentum...*

52 **Austin Hoy (v/o)**

*My beloved mother and sister, passengers on the LACONIA, have been foully murdered on the high seas. I call upon my government to preserve its citizens' self-respect and save others of my countrymen...*

53 **Sen. George Norris (v/o)**

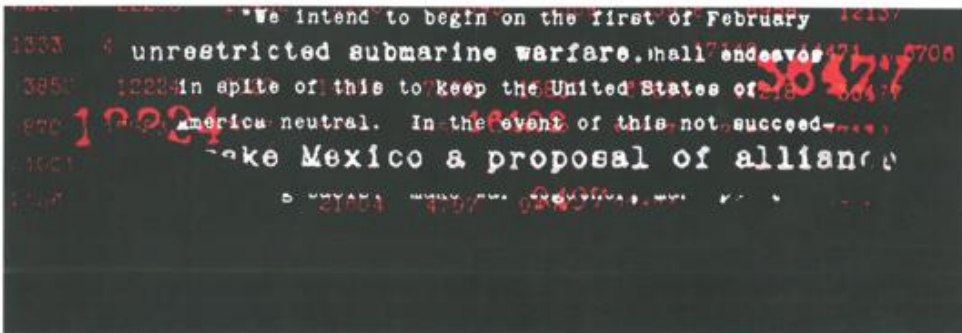
*To whom does war bring prosperity? Not to the soldier. Not to the broken-hearted widow. Not to the mother who weeps at the death of her brave boy...*





Continue headlines and imagery suggesting range of views and voices

- 54 **Harold Studley Grey (v/o)**  
*For my part I am a conscientious objector from the word go. They may shoot me if they like, but they won't make me fight....*
- 55 **Sen. George Norris (v/o)**  
*Belligerency would benefit only the class of people who will be made prosperous... who have already made millions of dollars, and who will make hundreds of millions more....*
- 56 **Arthur Bullard (v/o)**  
*The war is upon us and we all – individually in the privacy of our own hearts, collectively as a nation – must decide what we are going to do about it...*



Close-up view of Zimmermann telegram

- 57 *Sounds of the debate quickly recede into the distance as tension mounts and giant headlines paint across the screen announcing the stunning contents of the "Zimmermann telegram"*
- 58 **Narrator**  
 Germany has long been at work on American soil through acts of industrial sabotage and attempts to bribe politicians. Now, news breaks that German Foreign Minister Arthur Zimmermann has secretly offered to finance Mexico in a war against the United States.
- 59 More threatening, Germany urged Mexico to persuade Japan to join the fight.
- 60 Within weeks, President Wilson asks Congress to declare war on Germany.



Wilson signing war declaration

American Soldiers training, mobilizing, heading off to war:  
 Training  
 Marching  
 Camps  
 Troop trains/Ships  
 Draft  
 War posters/signs, etc.

- President Wilson (v/o)**  
*...Gentlemen of Congress...the present German submarine warfare against commerce is a war against mankind...It is a war against all nations... O[] advise that the Congress declare the recent course of the Imperial German Governmet to be in fact nothing less than war against the United States...]*
- 61 *Scenery now shifts to panoramic collages that evoke both the American mobilization and the total effort of the on-going war.*
- At this moment in time, it is not clear whether America's decision has come in time to save the Allies... whether Germany's gamble on unrestricted submarine warfare will pay off... whether some as yet unforeseen event will change the outcome of the war.









62

Scenes of optimism contrast sharply with devastation depicted in the tableau:

Optimistic US troops  
Portraits/group shots  
Festive atmosphere



65

Video imagery of American soldiers in combat are projected onto tableau surfaces:

Trenches  
Fighting  
Artillery  
Tanks  
Gas attacks  
Devastation  
Casualties

Atmospheric projections on the screen heighten the focus that has returned to the stark reality of the tableau



68

Projected quotation

### **The Moment (1:30)**

62 *Distant strains of "Over There" mix with the sound of crowds cheering and imagery of enthusiastic recruits in training, sweethearts waving goodbye and beaming soldiers pulling out of port. In stark contrast, dramatic pools of light on the tableau fade up on the ghastly reality of the front.*

63 *As the hopeful images projected on the screen drift into slow motion and fade back into the cold light of an emerging dawn, pools of light on the tableau slowly dissolve into video projected directly onto various features of the tableau, foreshadowing American soldiers on the Western front. These images continue as the narrator offers a few, final questions for reflection...*

#### **64 Narrator**

The war will change America, leaving in its wake a broader expression of democracy, a new era in the politics of women and minorities. What will this mean to a *world* America hoped to make safe for democracy?

65 The war will thrust America onto the global stage. No matter who wins, can America retreat again into isolationism?

The war will transform America's industrial and military might: If the Allies prevail, how will America use its postwar power?

66 *Video projections on the tableau disappear into the stark lighting of the show's opening scenes. Features of the tableau now recede into hints, outlines, and silhouettes as the narrator offers a final thought to lead visitors out of the theater...*

67 There is one certainty—America's horizon has changed.

68 Global war has collapsed all horizons into one; beyond this moment in 1917 lies the future of the world.

*A simple quotation, reflecting upon this moment in time, dissolves up on the screen, suspended over the cold and ravaged landscape...*

*We've come full-circle as visitors on the overlook exit the theater, and those arriving for the next show prepare to enter.*