

The Reflecting Wall at MIT, a 12-by-25-foot wooden replica of a fragment of the wall of the World Trade Center installed next to the MIT Chapel, was proposed and designed by Assistant Professor of Architecture John Fernandez in the days immediately following the disaster in New York. He conceived it as a temporary space where people could pause to reflect on the nearly 3,000 people who died in New York, Virginia and Pennsylvania after terrorists piloted hijacked airplanes.

Fernandez proposed an actual-size wall fragment, abstracted to wood rather than aluminum, of “the icon of New York” in memory of all victims of the Sept. 11 terrorist actions. At the dedication ceremony, he said one of the images that stayed in his mind was that of the people inside who pressed against the skyscraper's windows, trying to escape the flames. “This is the first project I've ever worked on that I wish that it had never been built,” Fernandez said. “But after Tuesday, it had to be built.” One feature that wasn't in the original wall are the slots below the window ledges, which were requested by students for letters, notes and memorabilia.

The Wall was dedicated Friday September 14, 2002 in the afternoon when 400 students, faculty and staff laid roses, candles and notes on the structure. The dedication ceremony at the Reflecting Wall by the walkway to the chapel began at 5:15 p.m. on Sept. 14, just over 48 hours after the request was first voiced.



