

Diederik Oostdijk

Bells for America

*The Cold War, Modernism, and the Netherlands
Carillon in Arlington*

The Netherlands Carillon stands out in the American memorial landscape. Situated between Arlington National Cemetery and the Marine Corps War Memorial, the modernist bell tower is at odds with its surroundings, much in the same way that its prominent place is at odds with its absence in American memory.

Given to the United States in the 1950s by the Dutch government for America's role in the Dutch liberation during World War II and for the Marshall Plan aid, the carillon owes its conspicuous placement to the Cold War. Diederik Oostdijk traces the history of this monument, from the pageantry surrounding its presentation through its fall into disrepair and plans for its renewal. In so doing, he resolves the paradox of the carillon's placement in Arlington.

Interweaving art history, campanology, landscape architecture, literature, musicology, and diplomatic history, *Bells for America* recounts how the Netherlands and the United States reconstructed their national identities and fostered an international relationship in the postwar era through public art.

"A fascinating story of a monument hidden in plain sight. It is as a work of writing that the book stands out—a work of feeling. Bells for America is a meditation on human society, on its failures and blunders and hopes. Almost always inharmonious, such a society still dreams of making perfect sounds."

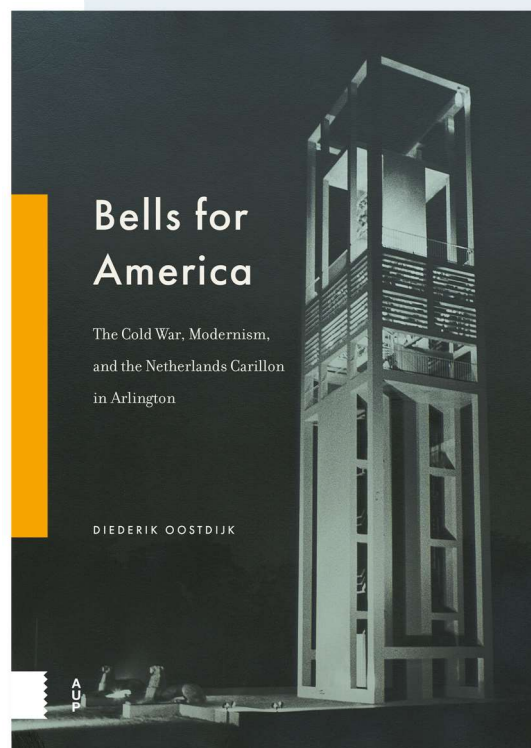
Alexander Nemerov, Carl and Marilyn Provostial Professor in the Arts and Humanities, Stanford University

"A great accomplishment of Oostdijk's history is to reveal the passions and machinations behind the carillon's deceptive simplicity. It is the rare piece of architecture writing that exposes what you can't see simply by looking at the work."

Bradford McKee, *Landscape Architecture Magazine*

"Oostdijk's book recounts the bumpy ride of the Netherlands Carillon. In Washington, nothing that big and prominent is without controversy."

John Kelly, *The Washington Post*



Diederik Oostdijk is Professor of English Literature at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. He is the author of *Among the Nightmare Fighters: American Poets of World War II* (2011).

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