

UPCOMING 2019 EXHIBITIONS

Gabriel Orozco: Rotating Objects

April 17–August 11, 2019

This installation of ten works by Gabriel Orozco (b. 1962)—seven *Roto Shaku* and three *Obi Scrolls*—will complement the Museum’s major exhibition *Changing and Unchanging Things: Noguchi and Hasegawa in Postwar Japan* (see below). All created in Tokyo in 2015, Orozco’s works will provide a contemporary parallel to Isamu Noguchi and Saburo Hasegawa’s efforts to create modern art that developed Japan’s traditional craft cultures.

The *Roto Shaku* are made from a standard length of lumber that the artist has wrapped in a range of colored tapes. Employing his signature geometries, Orozco establishes a counterpoint between multiple traditions of abstraction and seeming abstraction: decorative patterning, practical mark making (as for measurement), and the theories of signs, symbols, and structures that underlie much of modern Western painting.

Orozco’s *Obi Scrolls* were fashioned by incising, rotating, and reversing sections of fragments of antique kimono sashes (*obi*). The results were then mounted on scrolls as paintings, thereby transforming the textile fragments into a subject and, in the process, moving the marginal to the center, converting conventions of wrapping into explicit content, and challenging Western and Japanese understandings about the relationship between the applied and fine arts.

Changing and Unchanging Things: Noguchi and Hasegawa in Postwar Japan

May 1–July 14, 2019

This major traveling exhibition focuses on the intense and consequential friendship between artists Isamu Noguchi (1904–1988) and Saburo Hasegawa (1906–1957). Until his early death, Hasegawa was among the most renowned contemporary Japanese artists in the United States, credited with introducing European abstraction to Japan in his role as an art historian, critic, and art theorist. The brief yet productive relationship between the two artists was kindled during Noguchi’s visit to Japan in 1950, as together they sought to understand and process the fragmented, postwar world and the potential of art in reassembling it. Noguchi and Hasegawa were each thinking deeply about the relationship between tradition and modernity and between indigenous and foreign influences in postwar art and culture in Japan and in their own work. Together, they undertook a wide-ranging study of traditional Japanese design, culture, and aesthetics. They visited a variety of historic sites across the country (temples, palaces, and gardens) and debated modernization with and without Westernization, with the ultimate goal of making modern art in Japan through the “true development” of its traditions. The exhibition

will trace the impact that Noguchi and Hasegawa's time together had on their contemporary and subsequent work. The exhibition will be on view at the Yokohama Museum of Art, in Japan, from January 12 to March 24, 2019; The Noguchi Museum from May 1 to July 14, 2019; and the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco from September 27 to December 8, 2019.

Two-Part Collaboration with Artist Brendan Fernandes

Noguchi: Body-Space Devices

Opens May 15

The first of a two-part exhibition with the brilliantly uncategorizable artist Brendan Fernandes (b. 1979), a dancer (trained in Martha Graham and ballet techniques), choreographer, and sculptor, *Noguchi: Body-Space Devices* will comprise an installation of works from The Noguchi Museum's collection, selected by Senior Curator Dakin Hart in collaboration with Fernandes. At the heart of Noguchi's conception of sculpture is the production of a powerful set of invisible forces between object, viewer, and space. As a whole, the works on view in the exhibition reflect Noguchi's lifelong interest in turning sculpture into a civic practice, from motivating the movement of an individual body in relationship to an object, to the flow of a company of dancers seeking collective meaning from a set, and, finally, social progress.

Brendan Fernandes: Contract and Release

Opens September 11

In September, *Body-Space Devices* will be reconfigured as the site of a multidisciplinary collaboration with Fernandes. He will add custom-designed scaffolding, created in collaboration with Norman Kelley Architecture, to the existing installation as a means of reframing it, along with six versions of a "training device" for dancers that he modeled on the blade-like (non-rocking) rocking chair that Noguchi created for Martha Graham's *Appalachian Spring*. The dancers' labor will consist of keeping Fernandes's rocking chairs still while seated in second position. *Contract and Release*, which takes its title from a foundation of Graham technique, is the second iteration in a developing series of autobiographical examinations exploring the different movement vocabularies that have made Fernandes the artist and mover that he is. (The first, *The Master and Form*, commissioned by the Graham Foundation in Chicago, examined the relationship between the mastery of form and pain and pleasure in ballet technique through the use of a series of sculptural devices for altering the body to achieve ideal technical positions.) *Contract and Release* will be activated with performances by dancers several times over the course of the exhibition using Noguchi's sculptures and Fernandes's chairs as devices.

In Search of Contoured Playground

Opens August 21

In a small first-floor gallery, the Museum will present *In Search of Contoured Playground*. Isamu Noguchi first created the design for his *Contoured Playground* in 1941, utilizing "earth modulations" to construct a compact landscape in which children could play. Like many of Noguchi's playground designs, it was never built. However, he cast his 2-by-2-foot plaster model—shorn of play equipment—in bronze and included this cast, along with many other models for spaces, in the Museum's permanent collection.

For this exhibition, developed in collaboration with Naomi Frangos, Associate Professor of Architecture at the New York Institute of Technology, the Museum will treat *Contoured Playground* as a piece of theoretical architecture. The centerpiece of the installation will be a 10-foot-square enlargement of the model—featuring Noguchi’s original proposals for equipment (known from just one archival photograph). The exhibition will also include a 1:1 scale silhouette of the topography of *Contoured Playground* as if one were standing in the middle of the playground, the bronze cast of the original model, and a number of other schematic interpretations of the overall scheme, providing visitors a multitude of ways to experience this unbuilt space.

Models for Spaces

Opens August 21

Over the course of his career, Isamu Noguchi made, commissioned, and collaborated on dozens of models for actual and theoretical spaces. A small first-floor gallery at the Museum will feature five designs for projects that are either little known, or for which the models have rarely been shown. These include *Model of Gardens for Connecticut General Life Insurance Company*, 1956–57 (fabricated 1999–2000 by AT Architects); *Memorial to Buddha on the 2500th Anniversary of Buddha’s Parānamnirvana*, 1957 (partially reconstructed 1978); *Sacred Rocks of Kukaniloko*, 1976; *Model for Heaven (Tengoku)*, also known as *Interior Garden for Sogetsu Flower Arranging School*, c. 1977–78; and *Model for California Scenario, Costa Mesa*, c. 1980–82 (fabricated by Fuller & Sadao, P.C.).

Each model, representing a specific project for a real space, will be installed to emphasize how Noguchi used it, with materials that explain how he wanted the actual space to function. As a whole, the exhibition will reflect Noguchi’s conviction that sculpture is the manipulation of our experience of space. In his words, “if sculpture is the rock, it is also the space between rocks and between the rock and a man, and the communication and contemplation between.”

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