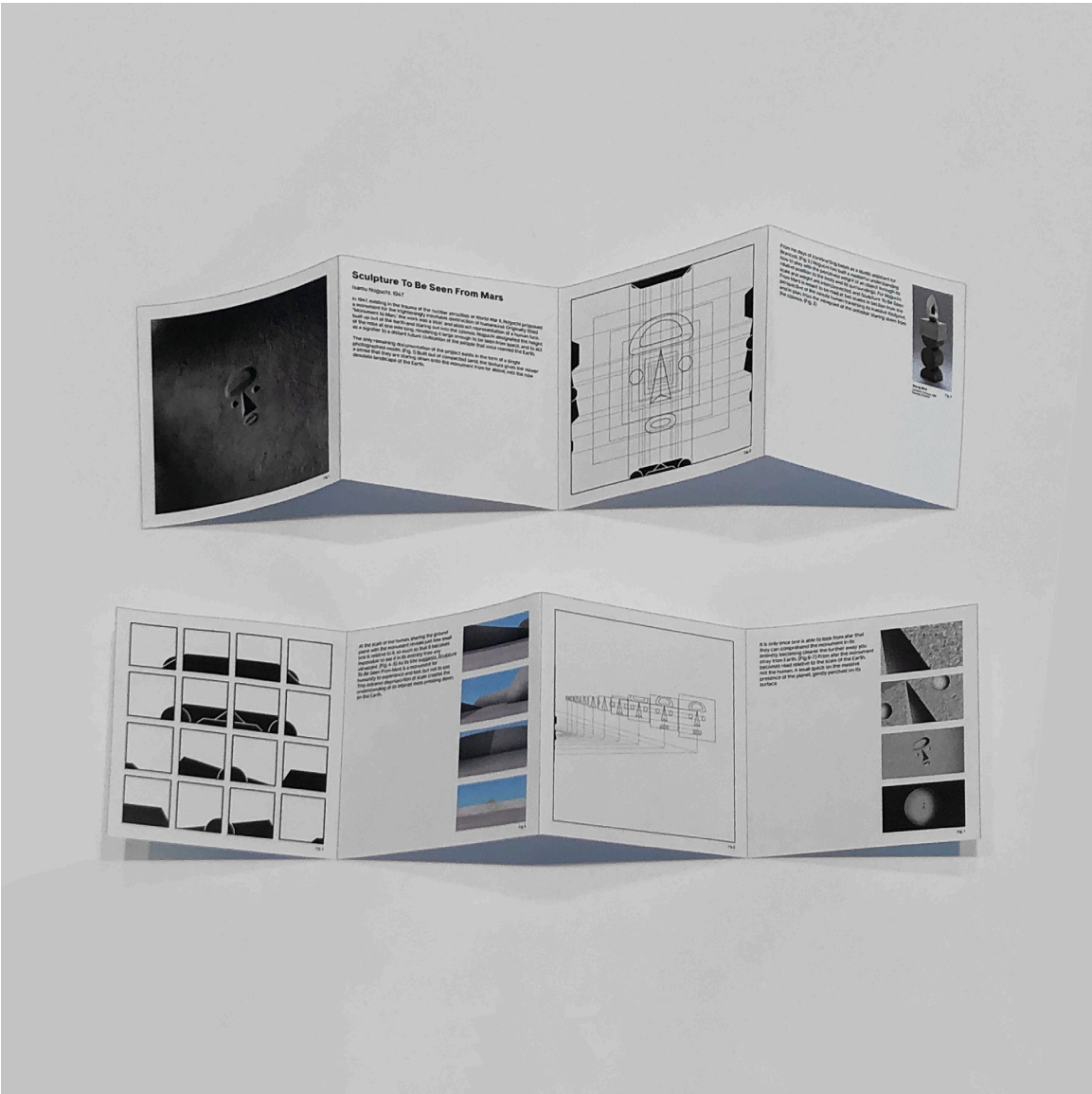




## **Sculpure To Be Seen From Mars**

Isamu Noguchi, 1947

Unbuilt



Exhibition Pamphlet



Fig. 1

# Sculpture To Be Seen From Mars

Isamu Noguchi, 1947

In 1947, existing in the trauma of the nuclear atrocities of World War II, Noguchi proposed a monument for the frighteningly inevitable destruction of humankind. Originally titled “Monument to Man,” the work was a stoic and abstract representation of a human face, built up out of the earth and staring out into the cosmos. Noguchi designated the length of the nose at one mile long, rendering it large enough to be seen from space, and to act as a signifier to a distant future civilization of the people that once roamed the Earth.

The only remaining documentation of the project exists in the form of a single photographed model. (Fig. 1) Built out of compacted sand, the texture gives the viewer a sense that they are staring down onto the monument from far above, into the now desolate landscape of the Earth.

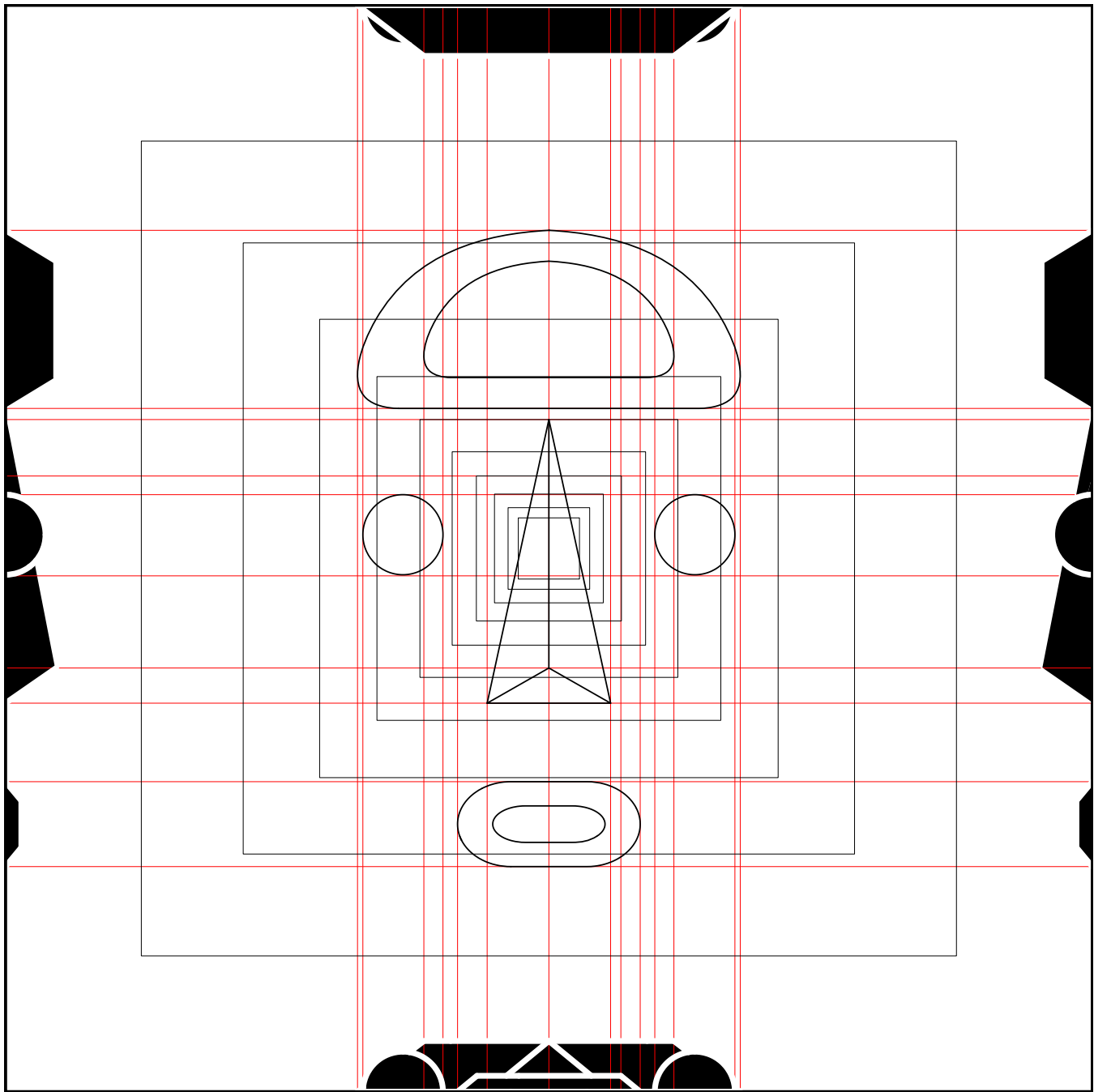


Fig. 2

From his days of constructing bases as a studio assistant for Brancusi, (Fig 3.) Noguchi has built a masterful understanding of how to play with the perceived weight of an object through its relative position to the body and its surroundings. For Noguchi, scale and weight are interconnected, and *Sculpture To Be Seen From Mars* is meant to be read at two scales: in section from the perspective of the minute human traversing its massive footprint, and in plan, from the viewpoint of the onlooker staring down from the cosmos. (Fig. 2)



**Young Bird**  
Constantin Brâncuși, 1928  
Courtesy of MoMA

Fig. 3



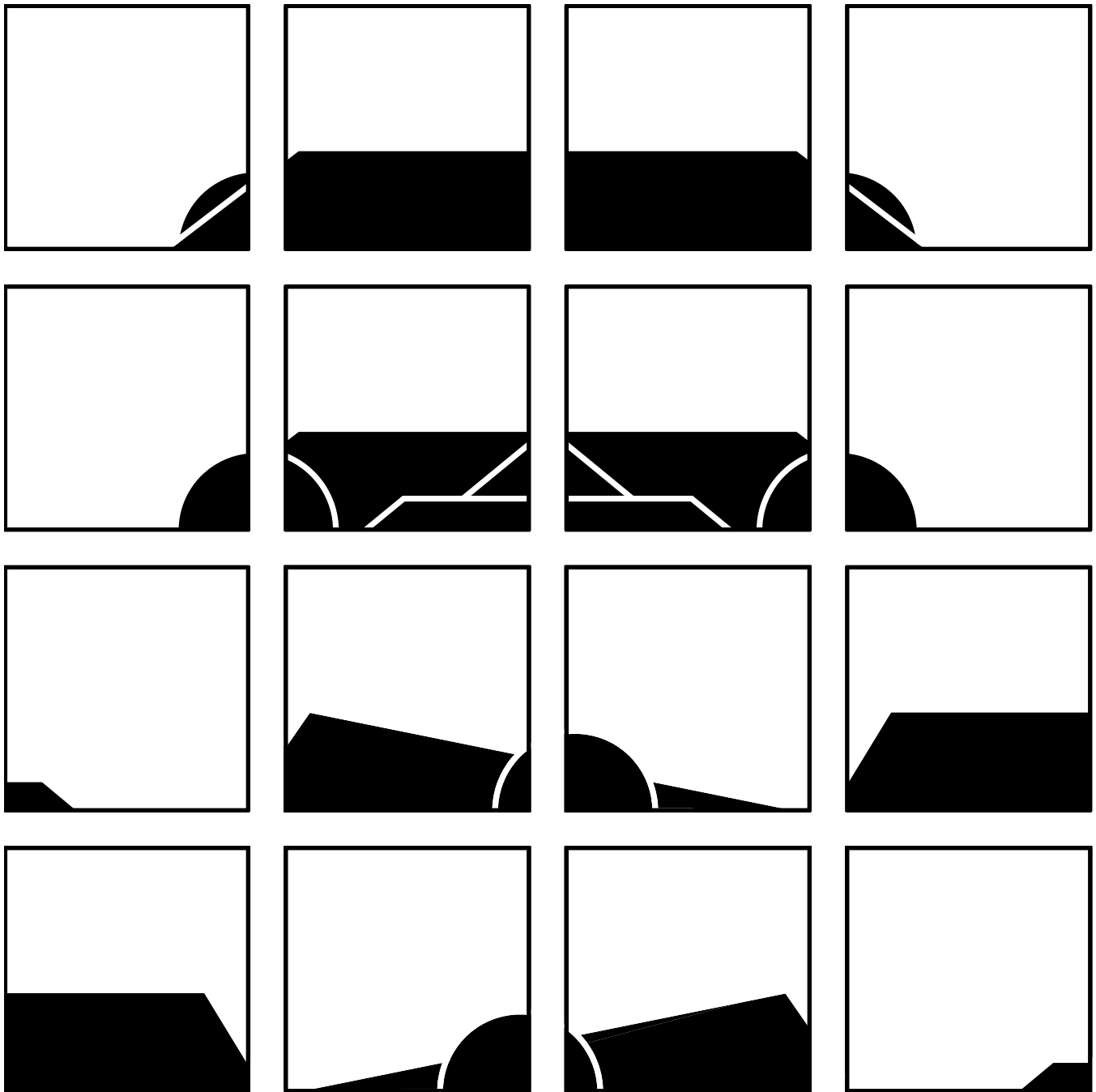


Fig. 4

At the scale of the human, sharing the ground plane with the monument reveals just how small one is relative to it; so much so that it becomes impossible to see it in its entirety from any viewpoint. (Fig. 4-5) As its title suggests, Sculpture To Be Seen From Mars is a monument for humanity to experience and feel, but not to see. This extreme disproportion of scale creates an understanding of its intense mass pressing down on the Earth.

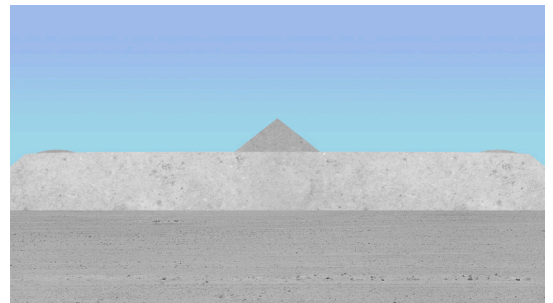
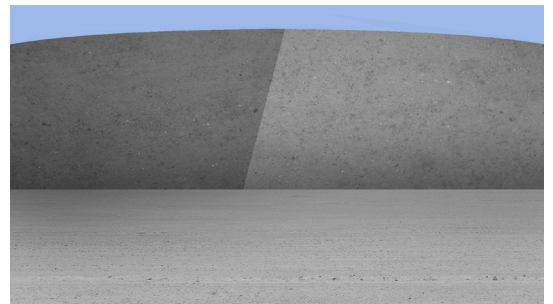
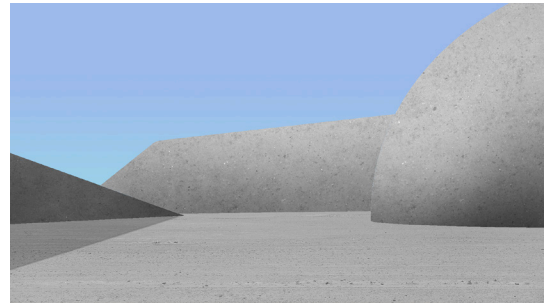
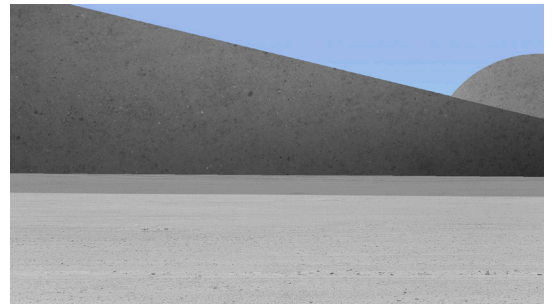


Fig. 5



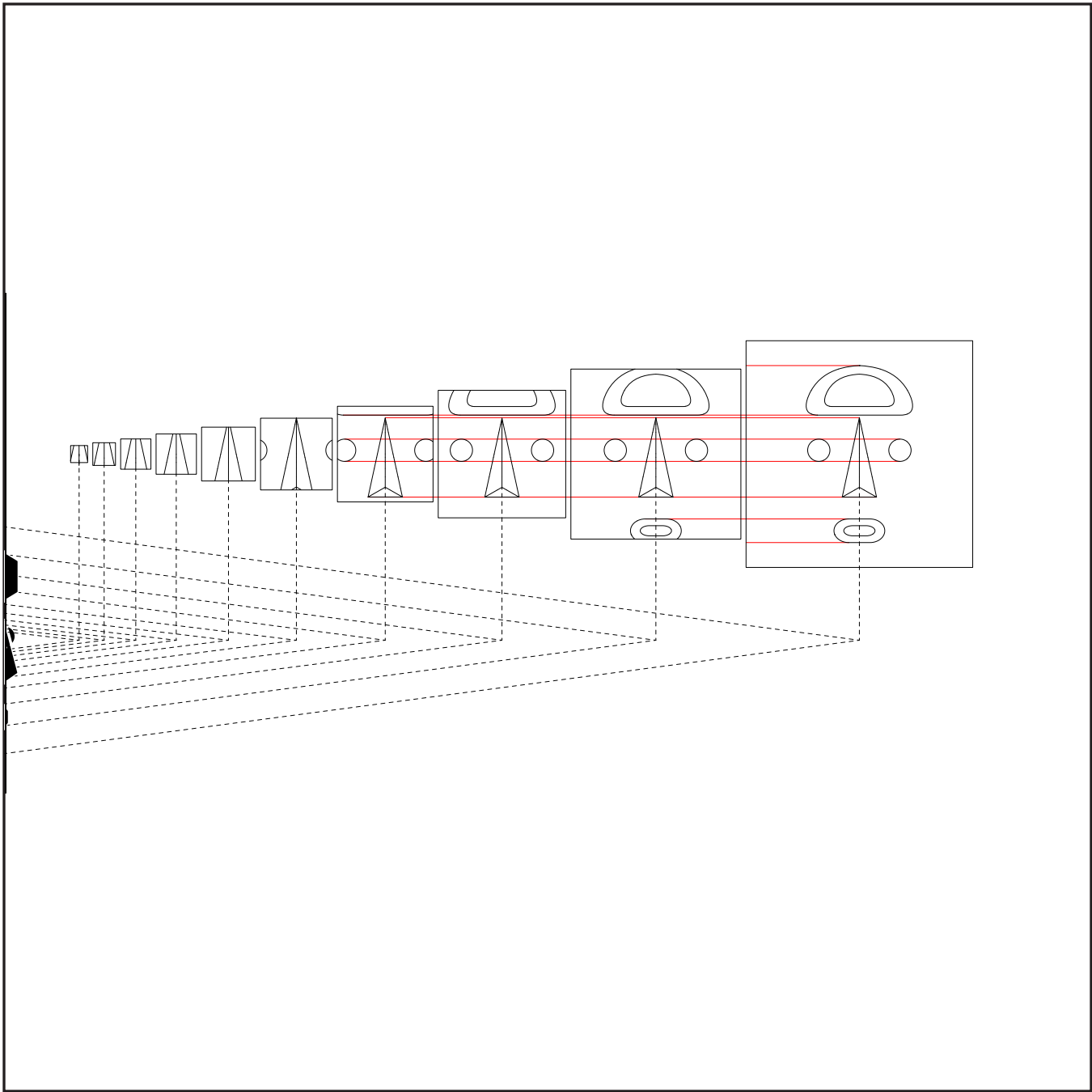


Fig. 6

It is only once one is able to look from afar that they can comprehend the monument in its entirety, becoming clearer the further away you stray from Earth. (Fig.6-7) From afar the monument becomes read relative to the scale of the Earth, not the human. A small speck on the massive presence of the planet, gently perched on its surface.

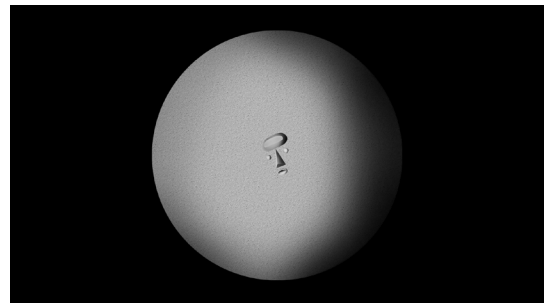
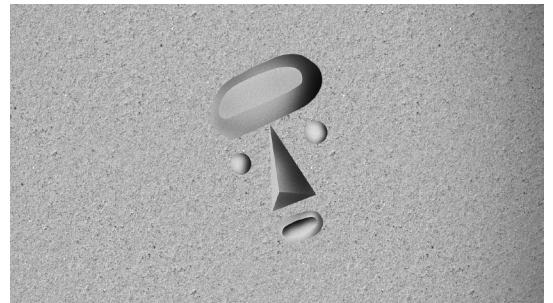
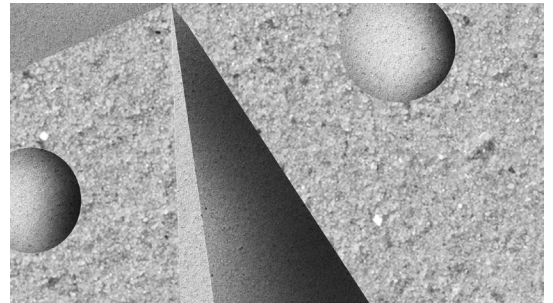
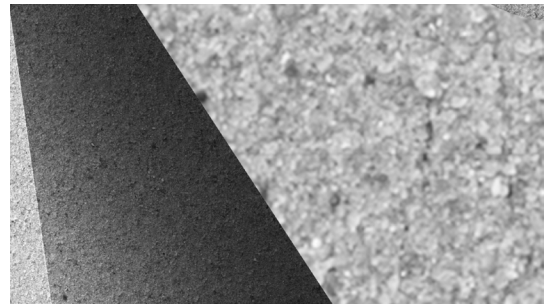


Fig. 7