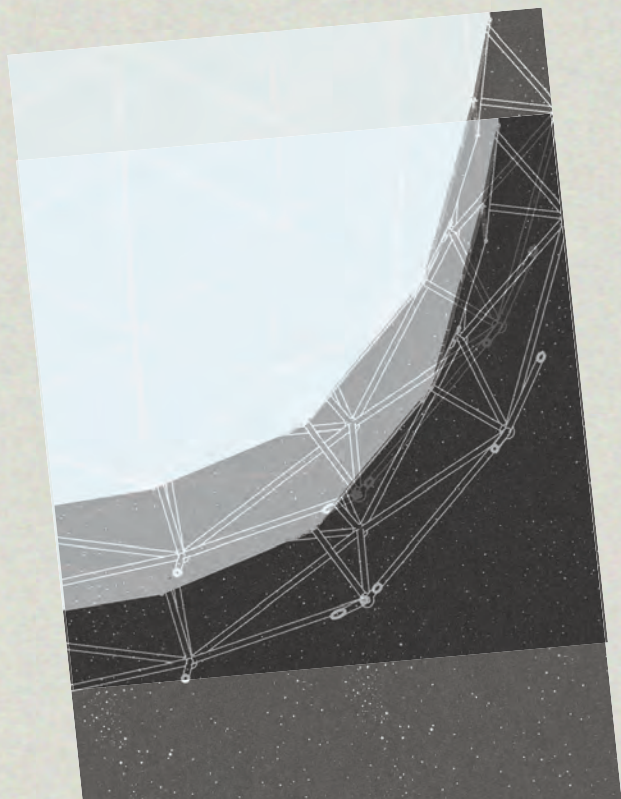


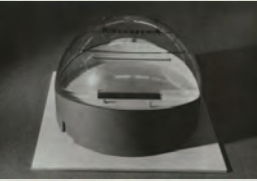
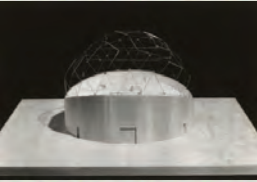
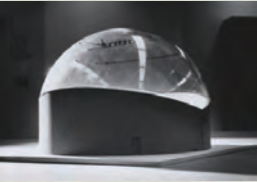
# STATIC MOTION MOTION MOTION

MARTHA GRAHAM DANCE THEATER  
UNBUILT PROJECT  
ISAMU NOGUCHI, BUCKMINSTER FULLER  
1976  
UCLA  
BUSHRA AUMIR  
MODEL BEHAVIOR SEMINAR, SP20  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR NAOMI FRANGOS  
AAP, CORNELL UNIVERSITY





NOGUCHI + BUCKMINSTER  
MARTHA GRAHAM DANCE THEATER



PHOTOS OF ORIGINAL MODEL  
FROM THE ISAMU NOGUCHI  
ARCHIVE

FIG. 1.0 - 1.3

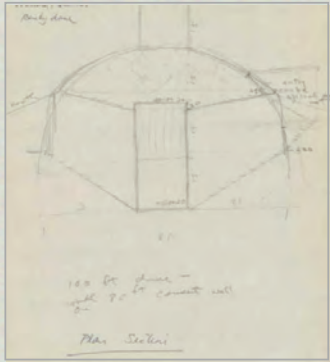


FIG. 2.0

SKETCHES FOUND IN THE ISAMU NOGUCHI ARCHIVE

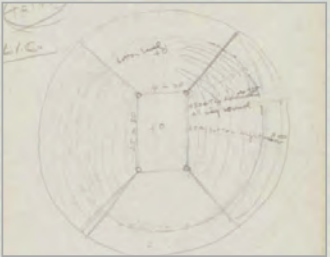


FIG. 2.1

“DRAWING IN ARCHITECTURE IS NOT DONE AFTER NATURE, BUT PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION; IT IS NOT SO MUCH PRODUCED BY REFLECTION ON THE REALITY OUTSIDE THE DRAWING, AS PRODUCTIVE OF A REALITY THAT WILL END UP OUTSIDE THE DRAWING”PG111

UNORTHODOX WAYS TO THINK THE CITY

TERESA STOPPANI

ARCHITECTURE AND DRAWING HAVE A UNIQUE RELATIONSHIP WHERE ONE COMES BEFORE THE OTHER. IN NOGUCHI’S CASE HE MADE MODELS BEFORE DRAWINGS. THIS MAY HAVE BEEN A UNIQUE POINT WHERE DUE TO COLLABORATING WITH AN ARCHITECT THEY MAY HAVE COME UP WITH A SKETCH FIRST OR A ROUGH IDEA OF HOW CONCEPTS WERE COMING TOGETHER.

NOGUCHI FROM EARLY ON WAS HIGHLY INVOLVED IN WORKING WITH THEATER SETS AND THEIR CONNECTION TO SCULPTURE. HE WORKED ON MARTHA GRAHAM’S SETS, WHERE HE WAS ABLE TO PLAY BETWEEN THE LINES OF SCULPTURE AND ITS SPACIAL RELATIONSHIP. FOR EXAMPLE THE MARTHA GRAHAM SET OF THE FRONTIER, WHERE A SINGLE PIECE OF ROPE RAN THROUGH THE STAGE CREATING AN INFINITE VOLUME OF SPACE TO PERFORM AROUND. THROUGH HIS STRONG RELATIONSHIP WITH MARTHA GRAHAM HE WAS ABLE TO WORK WITH AN ARRAY OF TYPOLOGIES BETWEEN SCULPTURE, THEATER AND GARDEN.

WHEN NOGUCHI HEARD OF THE POSSIBLE INTEREST FROM UCLA, TO BUILD A DANCE THEATER. IT WAS ENOUGH OF A REASON FOR NOGUCHI TO COME UP WITH THE INITIAL CONCEPT OF THE MARTHA GRAHAM DANCE THEATER. WORKING ALONGSIDE BUCKMINSTER FULLER HE DESIGNED A HUNDRED BY HUNDRED FTSQ LOT. NOGUCHI SAW THE PROJECT AS A TRIBUTE TO BOTH OF HIS CLOSE FRIENDS, GRAHAM AND FULLER.

“MARTHA GRAHAM DANCE THEATER,” THE NOGUCHI MUSEUM. ACCESSED MAY 17, 2020. [HTTPS://WWW.NOGUCHI.ORG/ARTWORKS/COLLECTION/VIEW/MARTHA-GRAHAM-DANCE-THEATER/](https://www.noguchi.org/artworks/collection/view/marttha-graham-dance-theater/).

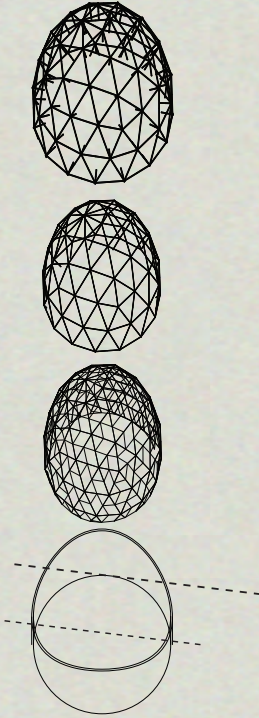
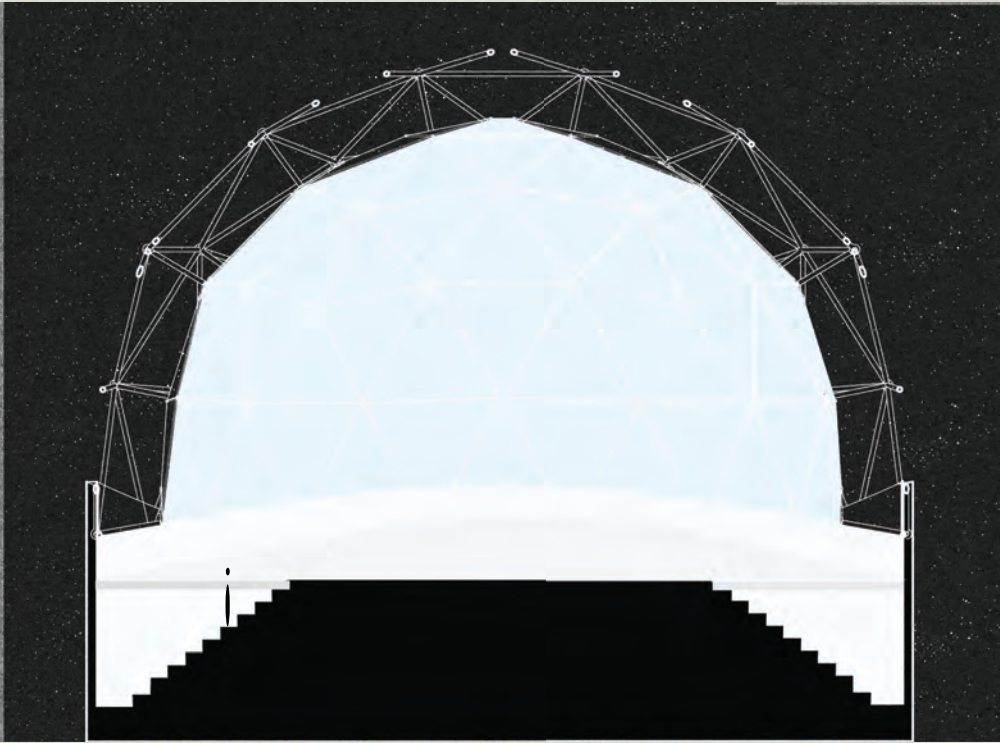


FIG. 3.0



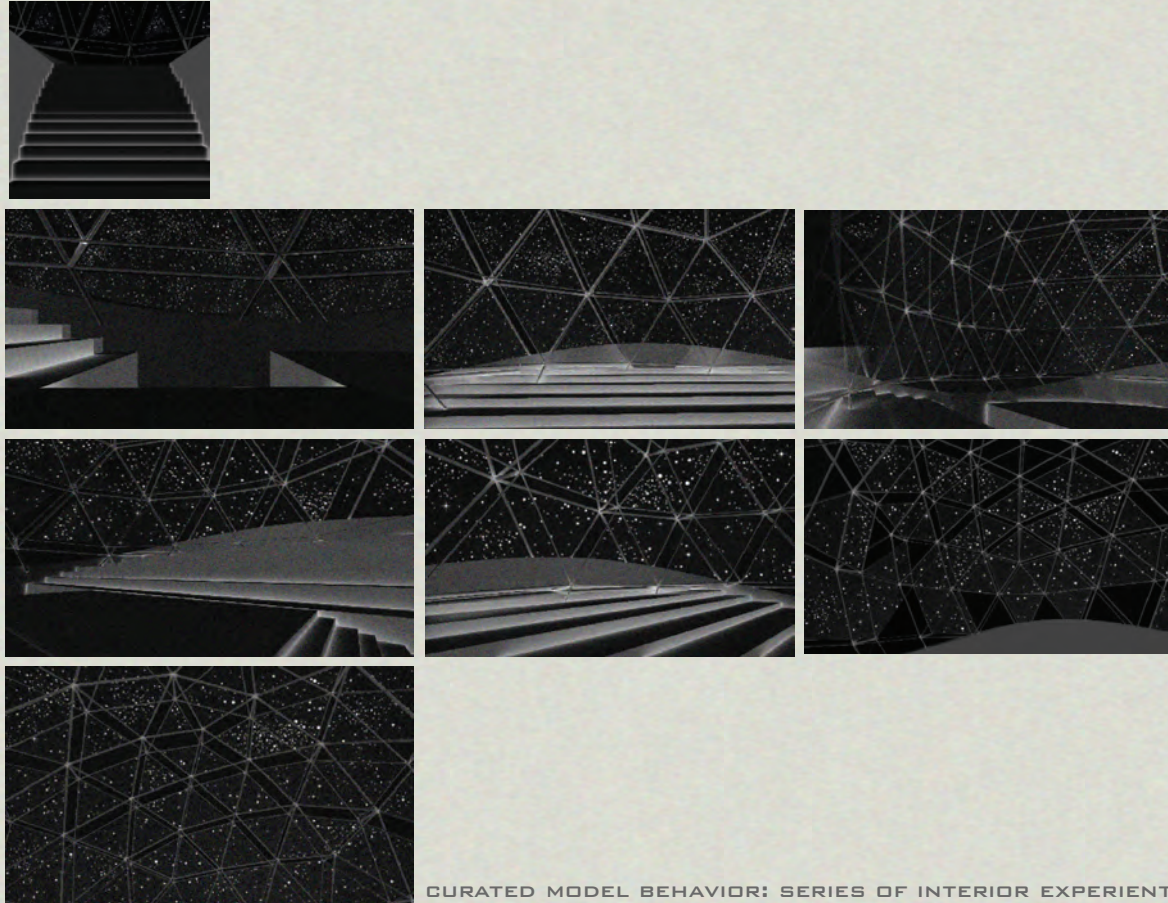
ISAMU NOGUCHI WAS QUOTED IN “A STUDY OF SPACE” BY ANA MARIA TORRES. “THERE IS A JOY IN SEEING A SCULPTURE COME TO LIFE ON THE STAGE IN ITS OWN WORLD OF TIMELESS TIME. THEN THE VERY AIR BECOMES CHARGED WITH MEANING AND EMOTION, AND FORM PLAYS ITS INTEGRAL PART IN THE RE-ENACTMENT OF A RITUAL. THEATER IS A CEREMONY: THE PERFORMANCE IS A RITE. SCULPTURE IS DAILY LIFE SHOULD OR COULD BE LIKE THIS. IN THE MEANTIME, THE THEATER GIVES ME A POETIC, EXALTED EQUIVALENT.” THE CONCEPTUAL THINKING OF NOGUCHI IS SHOWN THROUGH THIS QUOTE AS HE EXPLAINS HOW THE AIR BECOMES CHARGED THROUGH FORM IN SPACE. STATIC MOTION HIGHLIGHTS THE MOVEMENT/PRESENCE OF THE HUMAN BODY WHEN ENCOUNTERED BY A SCULPTURE, OBJECT, THEATER SET OR ANY PIECE OF URBAN LANDSCAPE.

TORRES, ANA MARIA. ISAMU NOGUCHI: A STUDY OF SPACE. NEW YORK: THE MONACELLI PRESS, INC., 2000.

FIG. 4.0



NOGUCHI + BUCKMINSTER  
MARTHA GRAHAM DANCE THEATER



CURATED MODEL BEHAVIOR: SERIES OF INTERIOR EXPERIENTIAL QUALITIES

FIG. 5.0 -5.7



FIG. 6.0

UNFORTUNATELY THE MARTHA GRAHAM DANCE THEATER WAS THE LAST PROJECT THAT NOGUCHI DESIGNED FOR HER. IT WAS MEANT TO BE A TRIBUTE TO MARTHA GRAHAM AND BUCKMINSTER FULLER. OTHER THAN THE DYNAMAXIAN CAR THIS WAS ONE OF THE ONLY OTHER MAJOR PROJECTS THAT BUCKMINSTER FULLER AND NOGUCHI COLLABORATED ON. BUCKMINSTER'S GLASS AND METAL DOME SITS ON TOP OF A BASE THAT NOGUCHI DESIGNED. THE BASE IS AN UNDULATING FORM THAT ENGAGES THE VIEWER. IT DIVIDES ITSELF INTO TWO PARTS; THE DARKER NARROWER AREA UNDER THE STAGE THAT HAS SPACE FOR PERFORMERS TO CHANGE OUTFITS AS WELL AS SOME PROGRAMMATIC SPACE FOR THE AUDIENCE TO WAIT BEFORE THEIR SHOW AND STORAGE SPACE FOR THE VARIOUS SETS. THE UPPER LEVEL IS WIDE OPEN TO THE SKY BRINGING IN THE OUTER UNIVERSE INSIDE TO BECOME PART OF THE PERFORMANCE. THE AUDIENCE'S DYNAMIC EXPERIENCE STEMS FROM THE GROUND PLANE SHIFTING TOWARDS THE SKY. IT GIVES THEM AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE WIDER UNIVERSE THEY INHABIT AS THEY STEP INTO THE GEODESIC DOME UNDER THE STARRY SKY.

TORRES, ANA MARIA. ISAMU NOGUCHI: A STUDY OF SPACE. NEW YORK: THE MONACELLI PRESS, INC., 2000.



May 27, 1975

Mr. R. Buckminster Fuller  
3500 Market Street  
Philadelphia, Pa.



Dear Bucky,

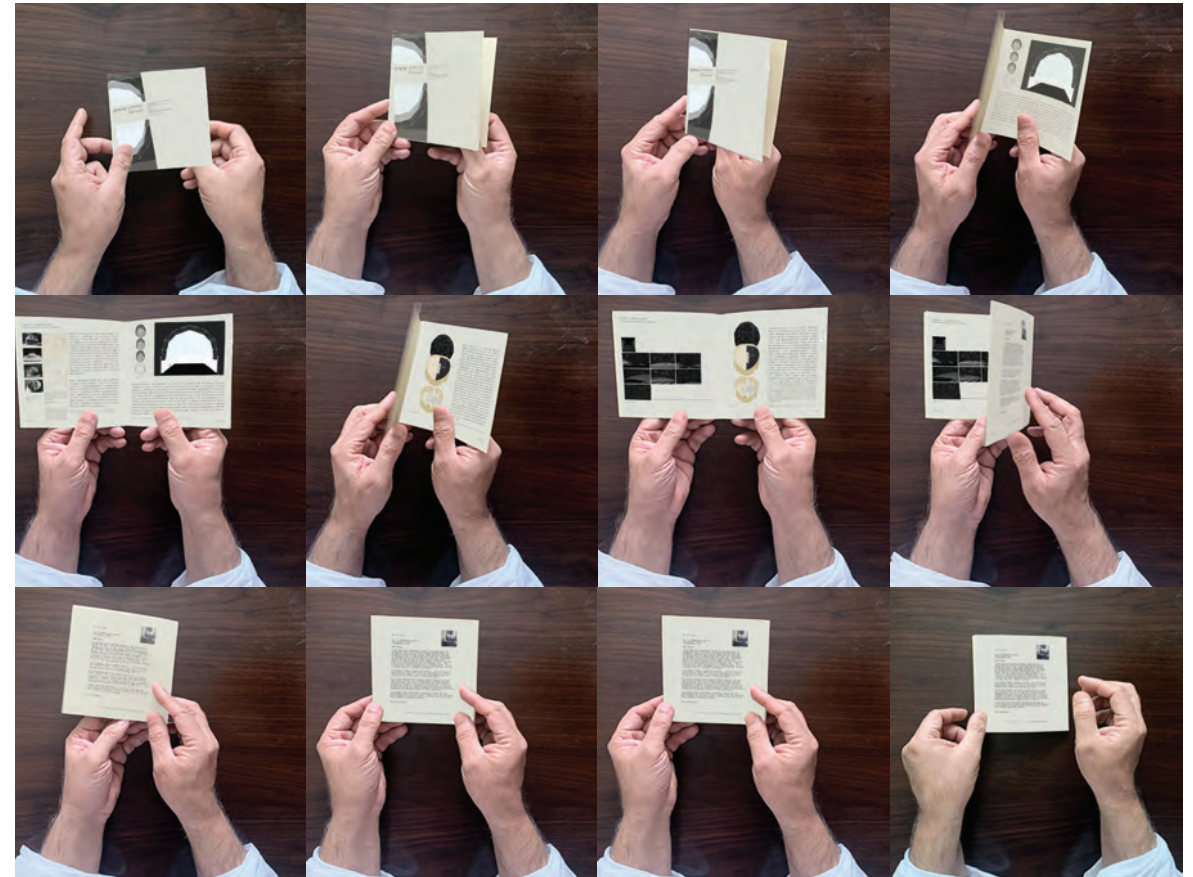
I had been trying for some years to find the means of saving the sets I had done for Martha Graham from the ravages of time and use. First there was the National Collection of Art in Washington and then the new museum at Purchase, both of which did not work out. Then when Martha told me she was inclined toward California I thought why not a theater of the dance of which the sets could be a functioning as well as memorial part. And I called on Allegra and selected a possible site. It is for this spot that I designed such a hypothetical theater. I thought also of a project for Shoji.

I am afraid I made a terrible mistake. The first was in the assumption that UCLA would be interested in a purely Martha Graham theater. The second that Martha would be interested in a role which was anything less.

In considering what went wrong I should like you to know that I had nothing to do with Martha's decision against participation. As I see it this must have come from her reading of Allegra's proposals for the school. It was not a question of was it a theater, which was what interested me with the sets, but whether Allegra's ideas for her school coincided with Martha's ideas for her own future.

I pray that this unfortunate incident to which my only contribution was that of good will shall in no way interrupt our friendship of so many years - and that some day we may still realize something together.

Ever faithfully,



Courtesy of, The Isamu Noguchi Archive