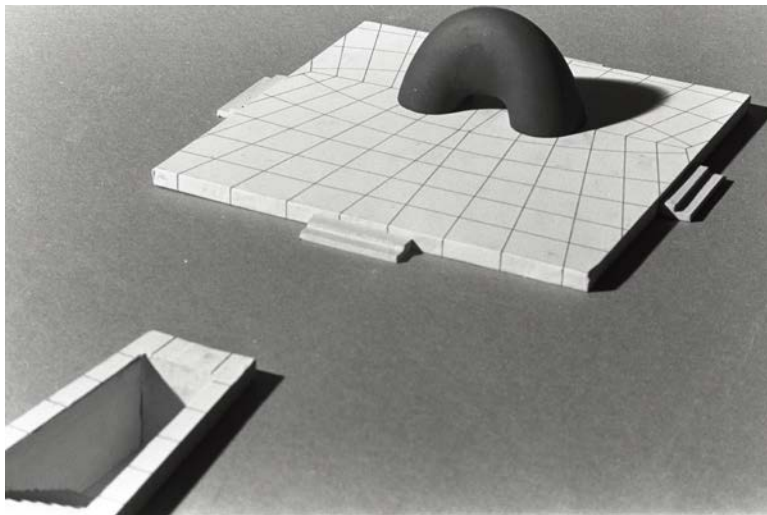


Implied Weight  
Basil Harb

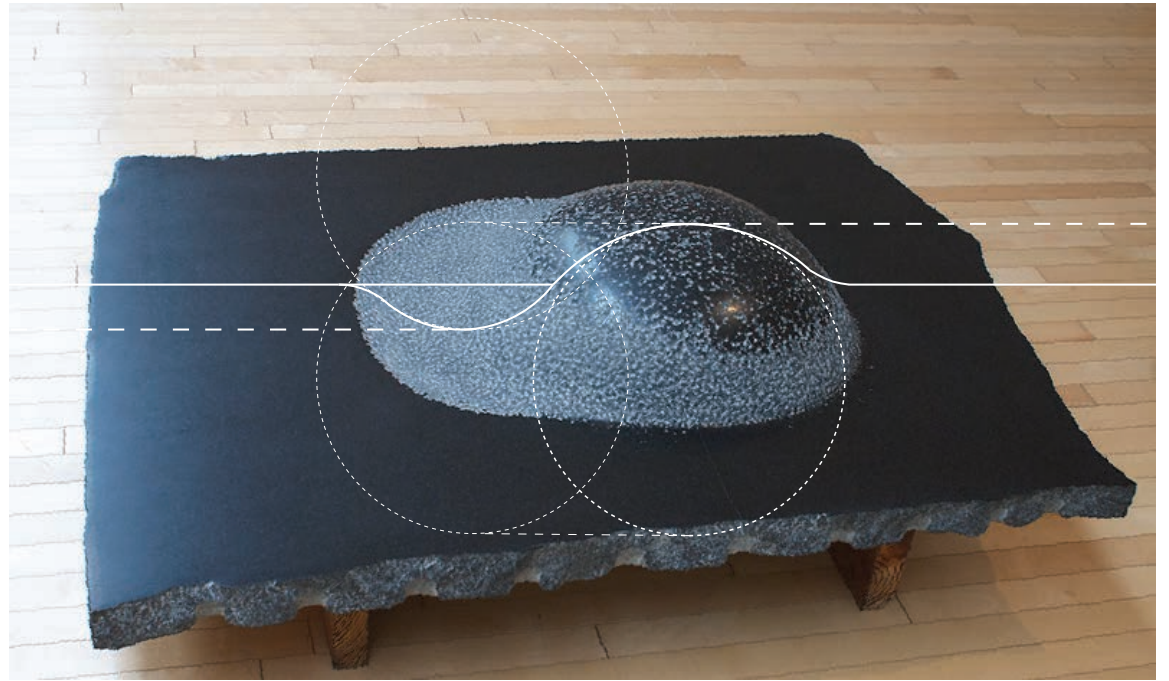
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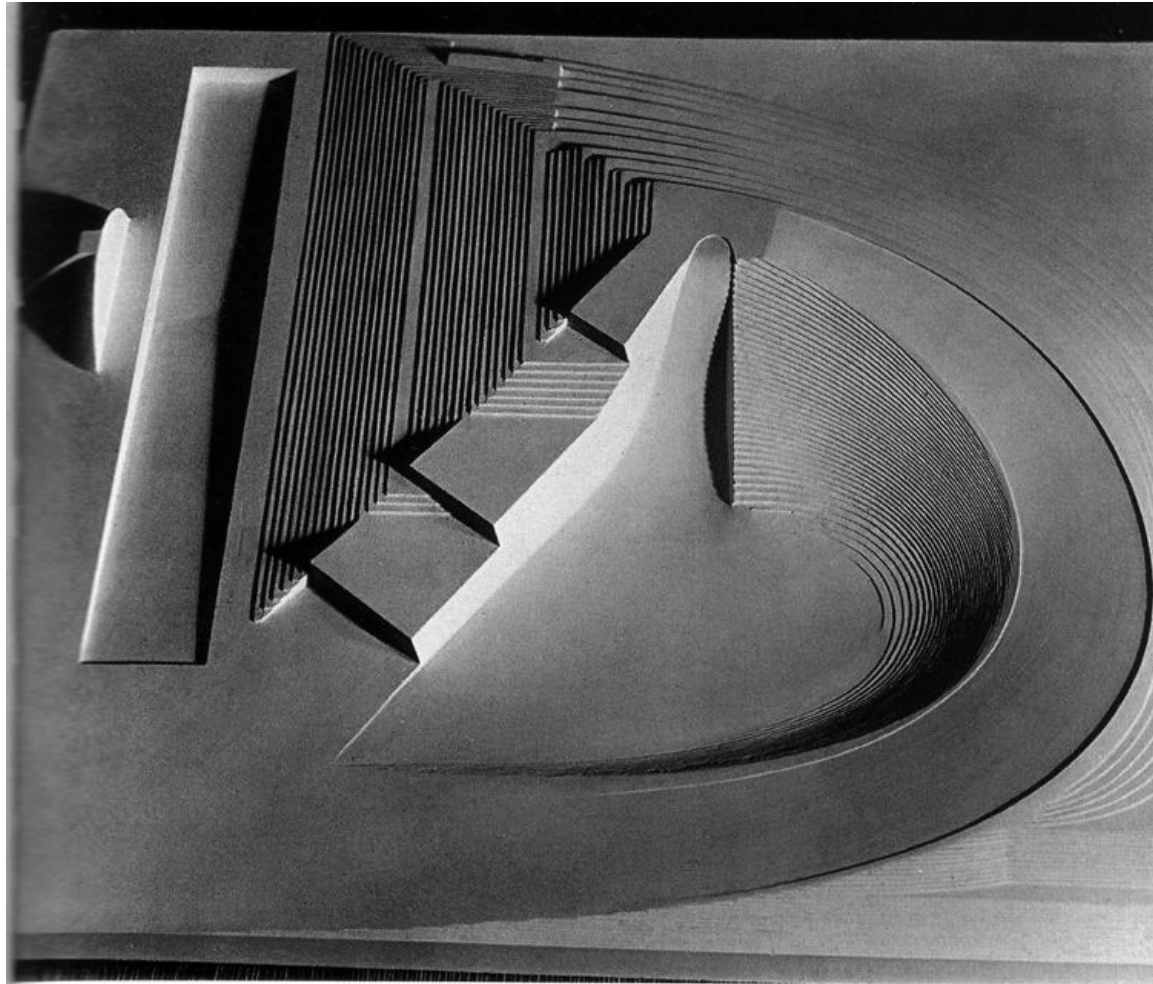


Cornell AAP Department of Architecture  
CURATING MODEL BEHAVIOR Arch 4509/6509 Spring 2020 Seminar  
Instructor: Naomi Frangos, Visiting Associate Professor in Architecture



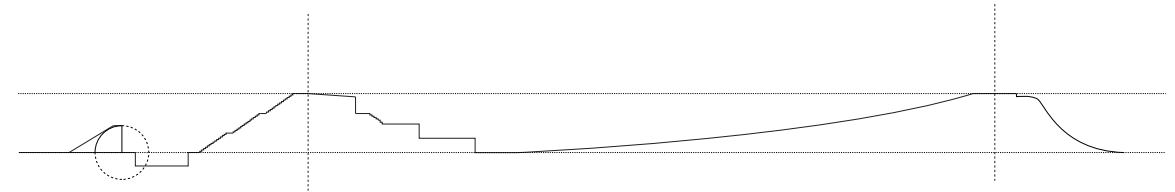
Planet in Transit, 1968. Noguchi Museum, New York.





Play Mountain. Noguchi Museum, New York.

## Playscape



“Play Mountain was my response based upon memory of my own unhappy childhood — the desolate playground on a cliff in Tokyo which I approached with dread. It may be that this is how I tried to join the city, New York. To belong.”

“The child’s world would be a beginning world, fresh and clear.”

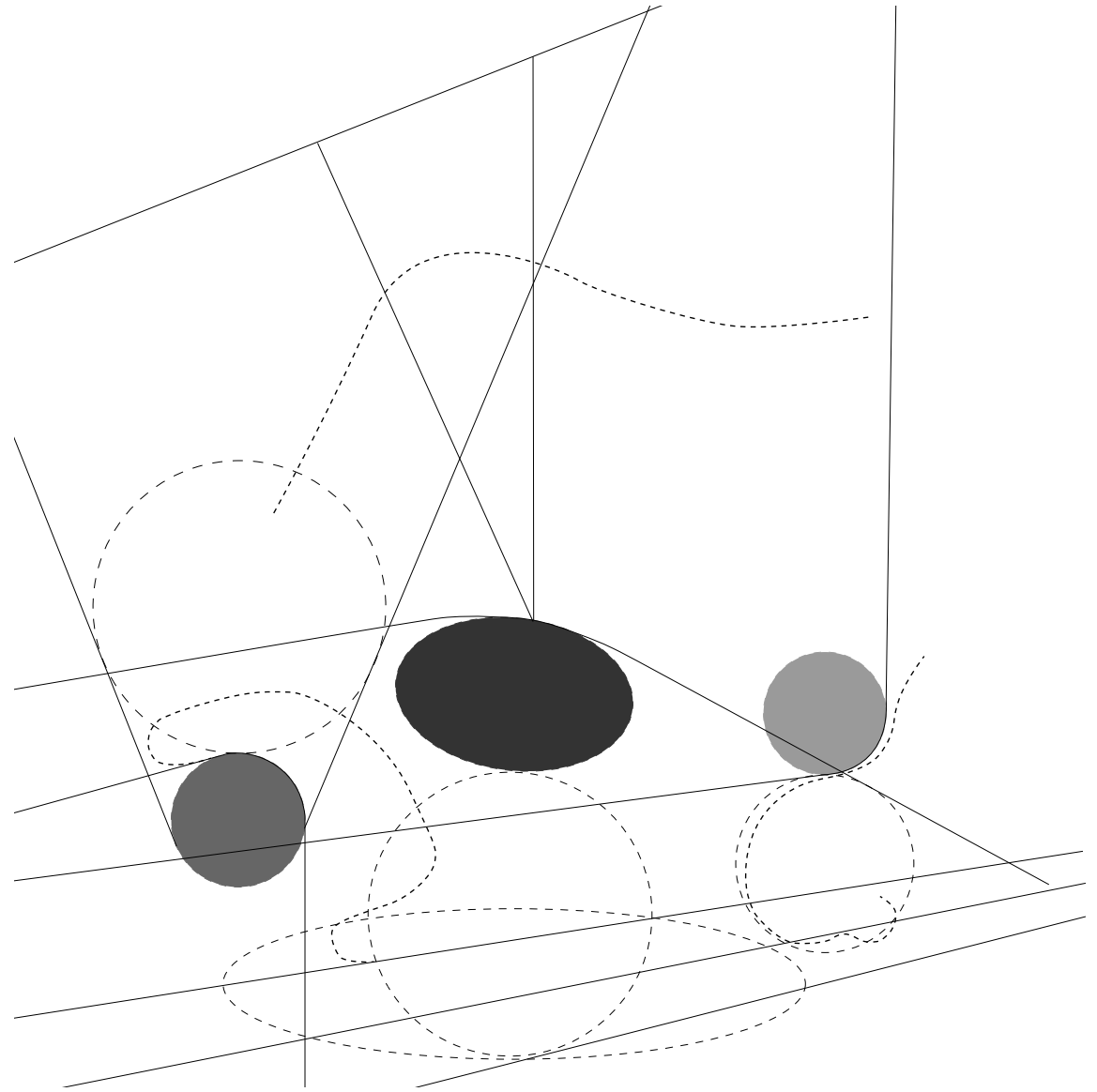
Oral history interview with Isamu Noguchi, 1973 Nov. 7-Dec. 26. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

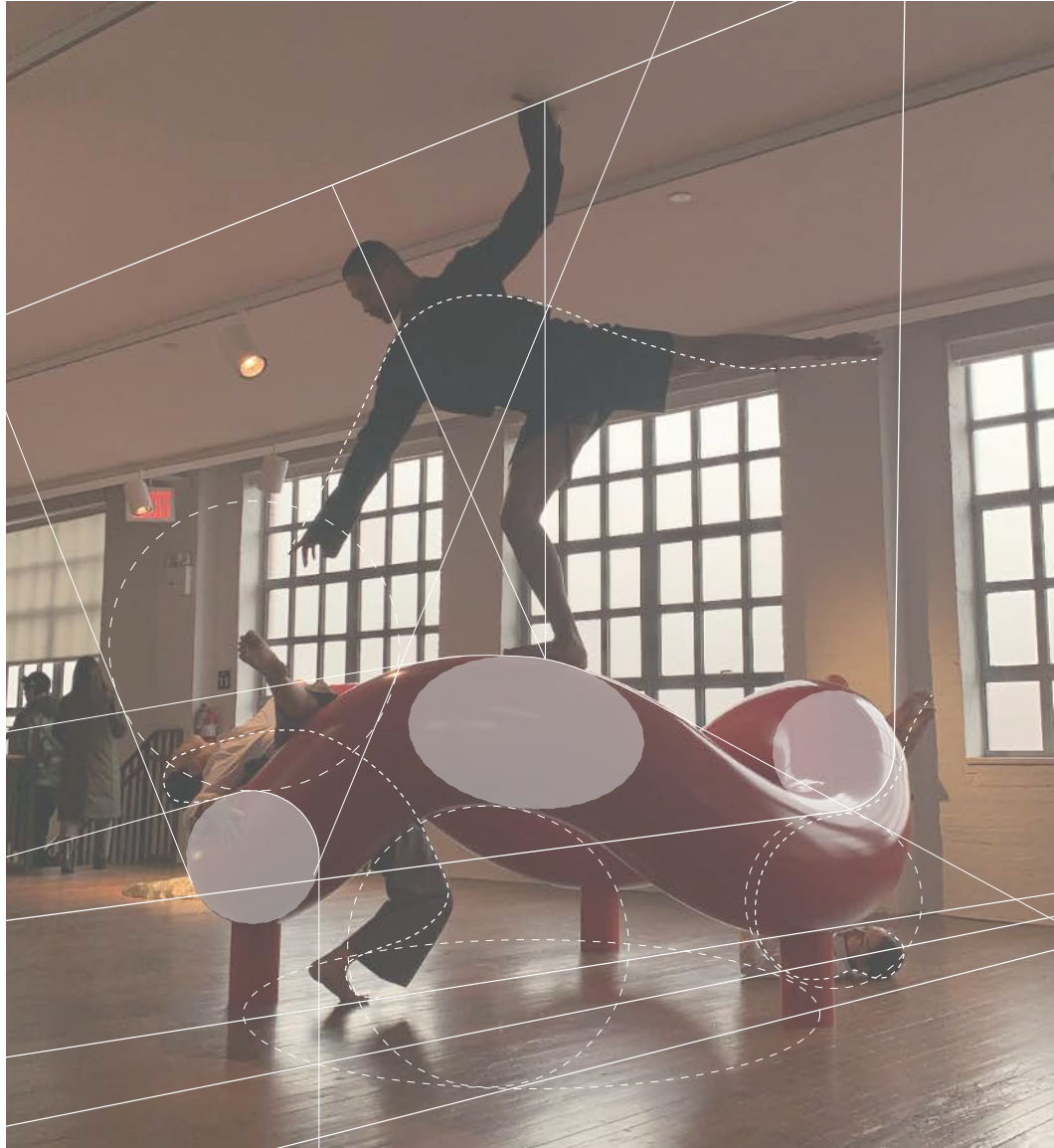
Noguchi’s Space Mountain proposed a playground composed exclusively of shaped earth. Without any playground equipment, children would interact with the primary forms of a pyramid and curved slope as the playscape; this would encourage children to run, jump, climb and slide, as activities engendered from the simple forms of the earth. His design also deviated from the standardization and mass-production of playground design, a clear slate for ‘creative play’ and a reform in urban playground design.



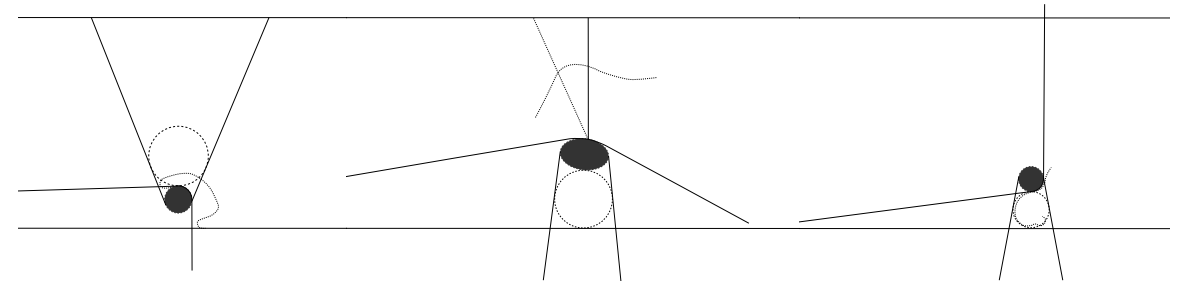


Play Sculpture, 1975. Noguchi Museum, New York.

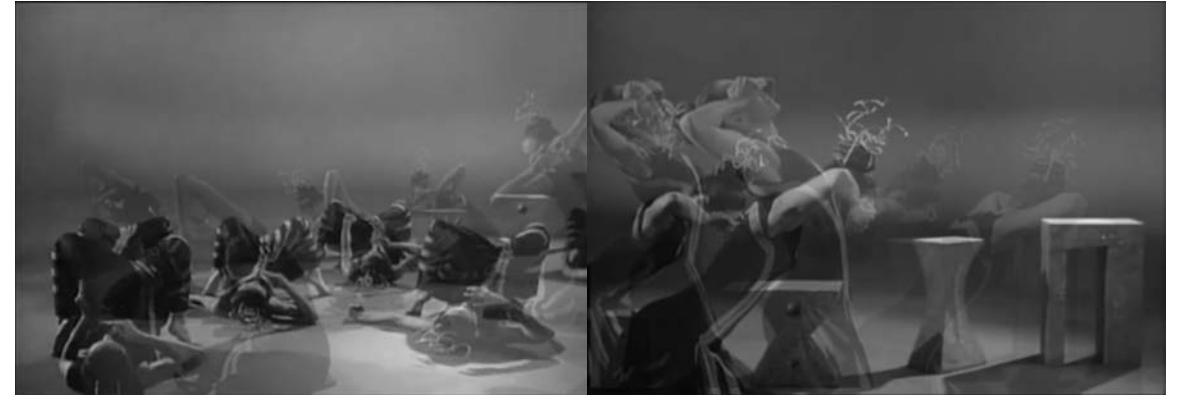
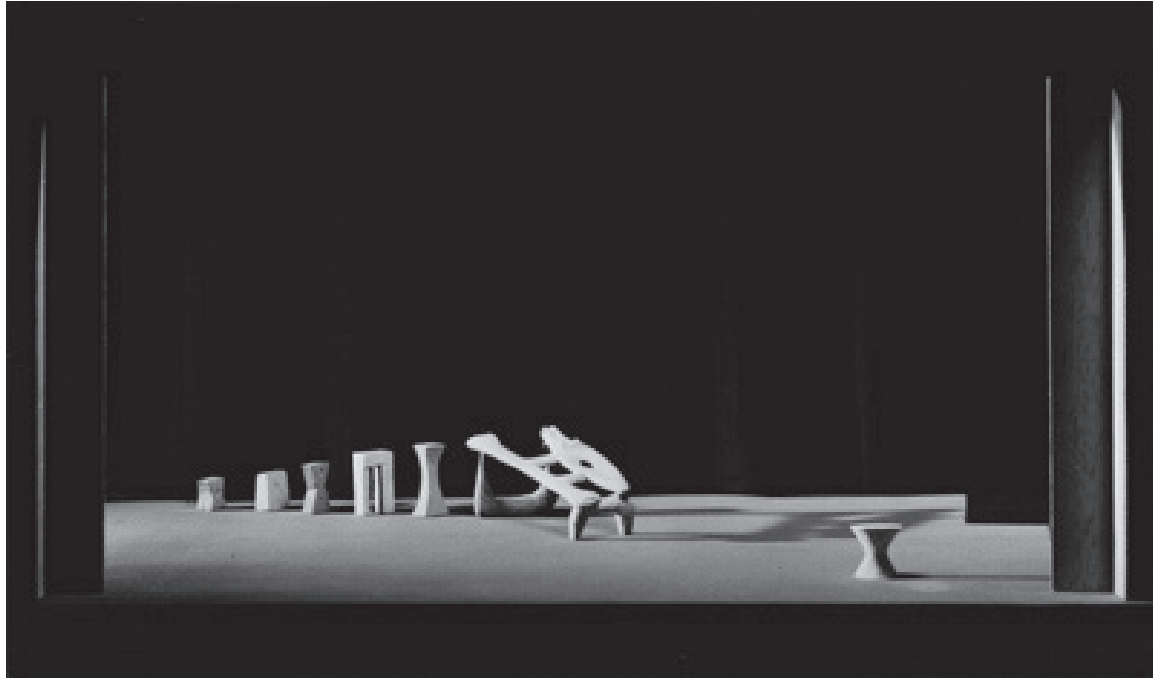




## Play Sculpture



Watching a young girl interact with this model displayed the influence the sculpture has on an individual's behaviour when interacting with the model: both the young child and the dancers behaved in similar ways, circulating the sculpture, tracking the movement of the undulating form. Both the dancers and the child placed their weight on the sinking planes of the sculpture. The dancers engaged with this sculpture even further, exploring the relationship between the object and the continuous planes of the wall and floor. These drawings attempt to represent the tensions created between these boundaries and the undulating planes of the play sculpture and how they are in dialogue with the weight of the human body, as it rises or falls with the object, pushes against or moves with it.

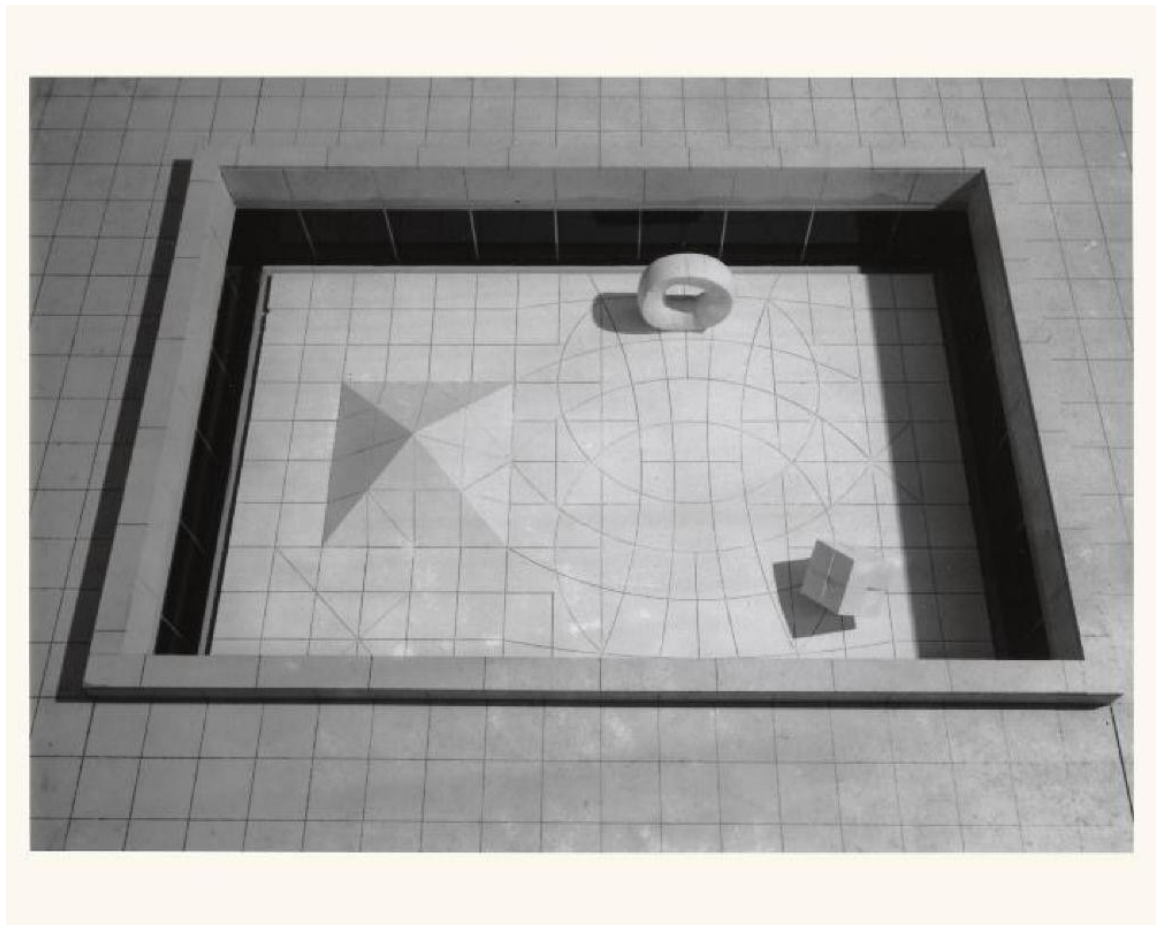


## Night Journey

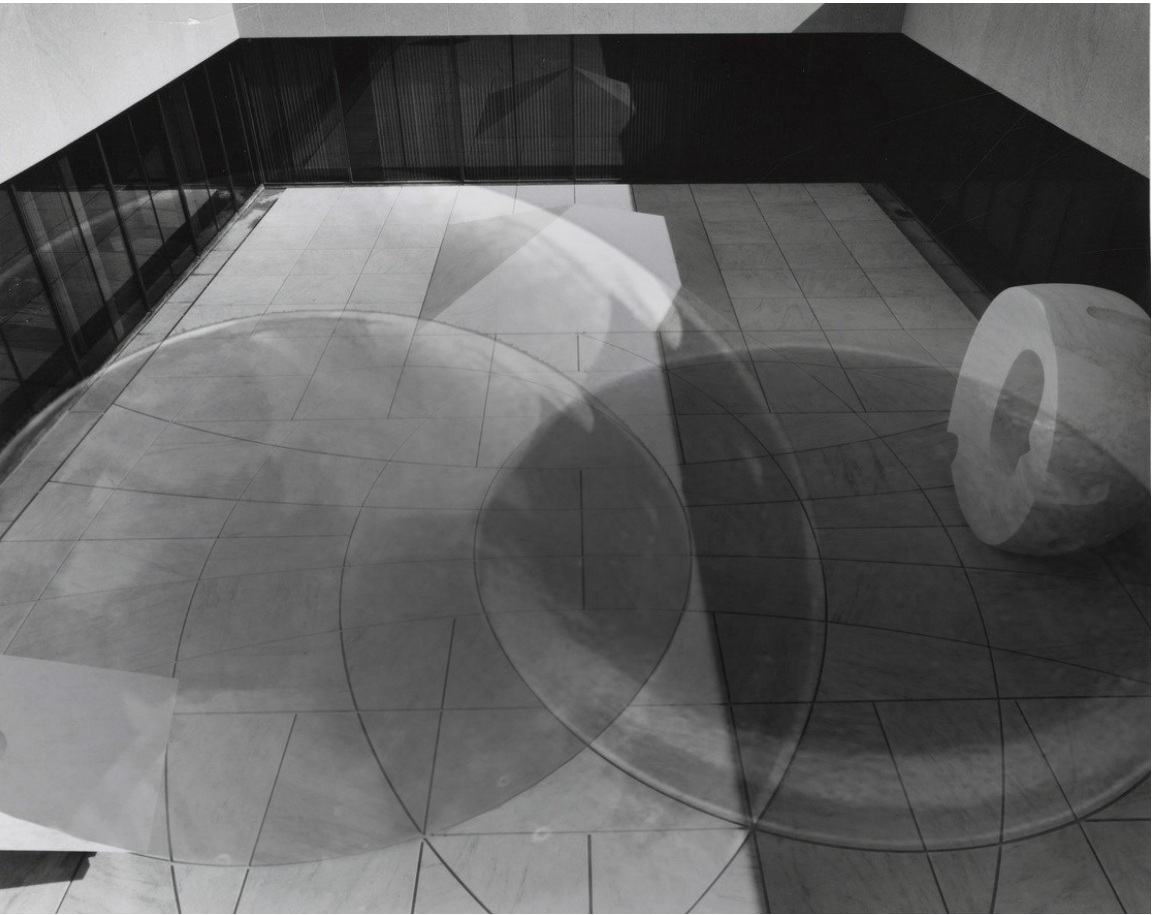
“She wanted pathways, she wanted different levels,” Janet Eilber, Martha Graham Company artistic director, said at the rehearsal.

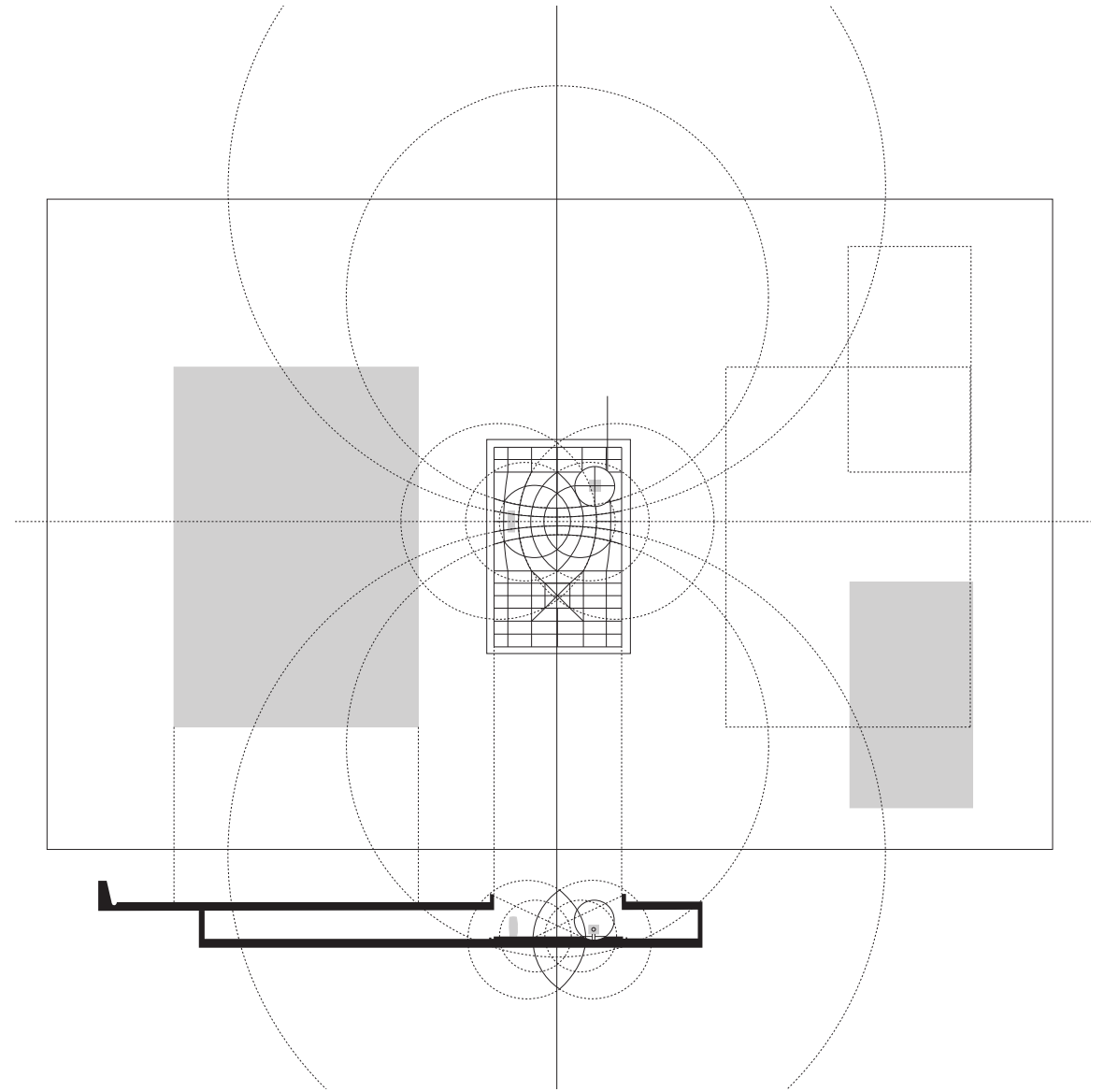
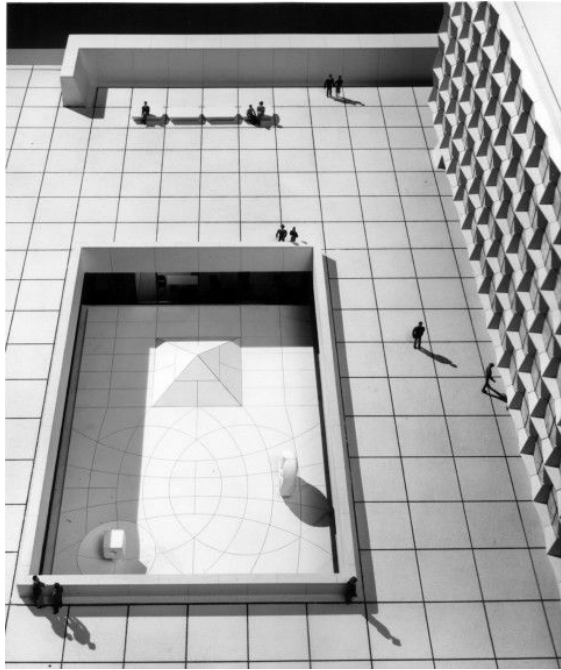
“I didn’t have that contact that I might have had to one-half parent anyway. So I was an appendage on a stranger; that is to say....”





Photograph of the Sunken Garden, Beinecke Library, New Haven.





Model for Sunken Garden, Beinecke Library, New Haven.





This Tortured Earth, 1942-43 (Cast 1977).



Seen and Unseen, 1962 (Cast 1963).



The big Bang, 1978.

*“Our imagination expands as far as our expanding knowledge and beyond. We were already there in orbit, Bucky and I. New York was our city that glimmers in the distance, and we talked of time and cosmic space.”*

*- Isamu Noguchi*

Noguchi’s artworks and their careful placements speak to his consideration of the sculpture’s weight and how it informs the ground condition below it. Many of his sculptures appear to sink into or emerge from the ground of the gallery or garden. In some, noguchi constructs this ground plane himself, only to be manipulated or deviated from. Where these constructed planes end, they project an unseen, infinite plane from which his sculptures deviate.



Exhibit at the Noguchi Museum







Dome of the Rock, 1968

Dome of the Rock and the Wailing Wall



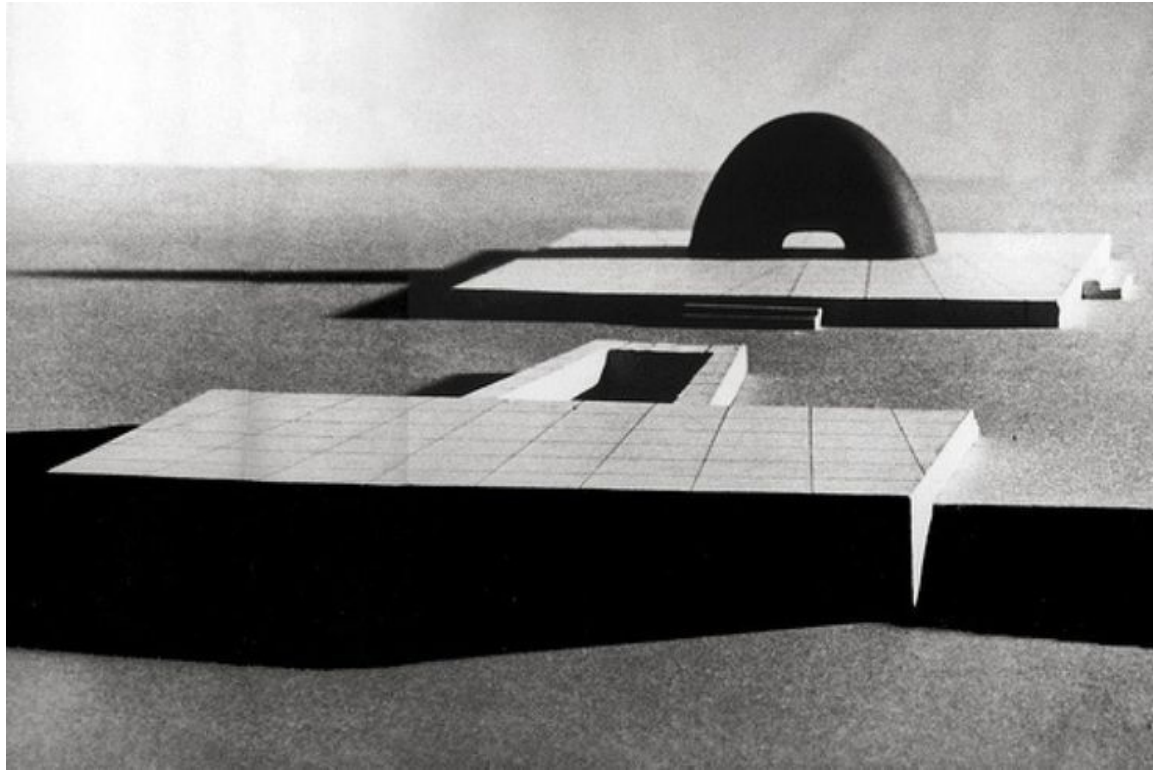
*The model gives itself to us as a mute object. What to do with it, how to use it, what to draw from it, that is left to us. This is the first important ambiguity or multi-valency of the model.*

*The ex-post reactivation (re)engages the model in a different way. ... a process of discovery that engages with the already produced outcome of the model, and produces further knowledge.*

*The model can play with disembodied scales: inside and around models we can fly, crawl, defy gravity, place ourselves in impossible positions,*

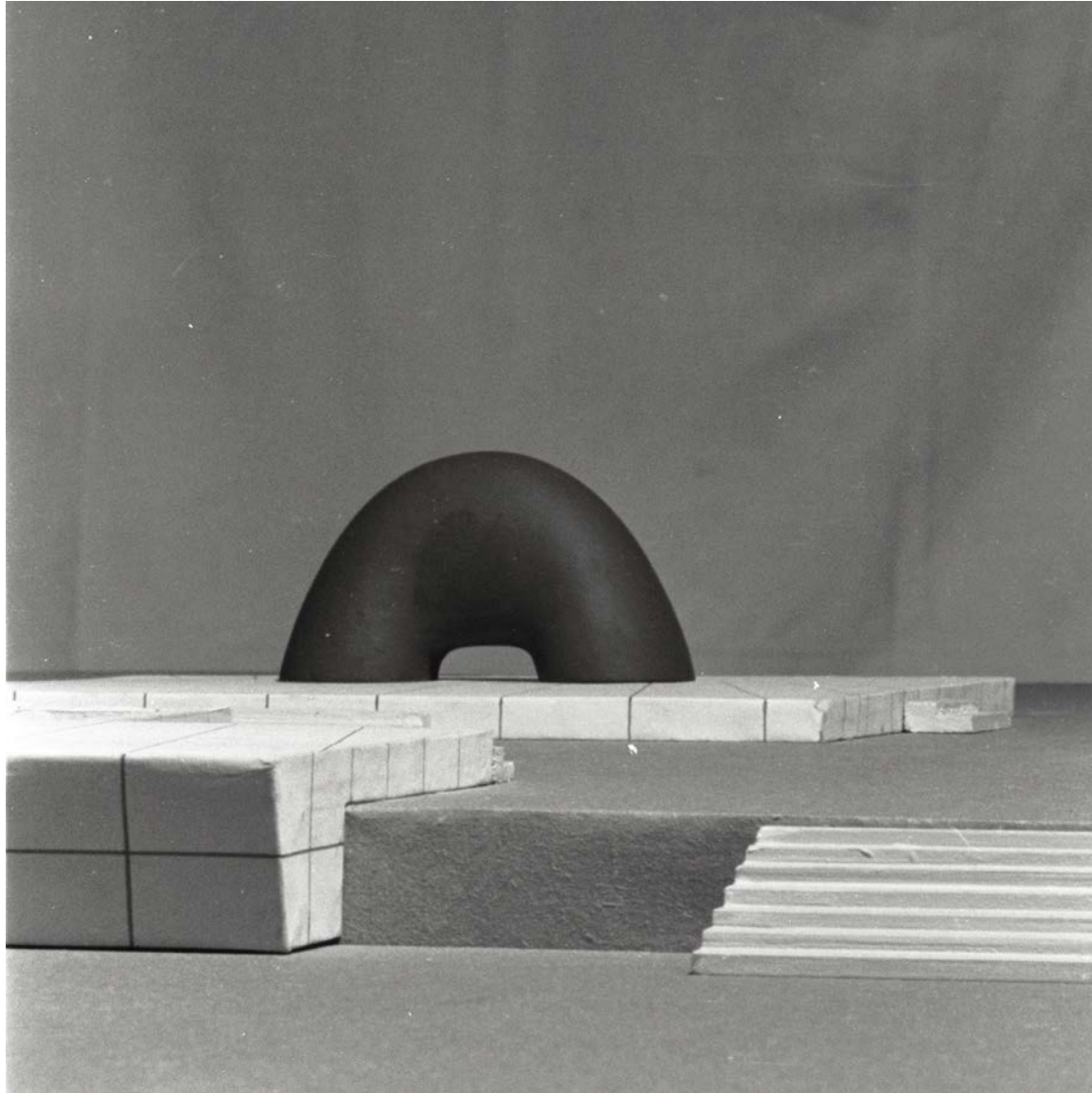
*Spatial critiques, they critically extend the architectures they address, in a way reactivating them.*

*- Stoppani, Unorthodox Ways to Think the City*



Models for Memorial for the Dead of Hiroshima, 1952.





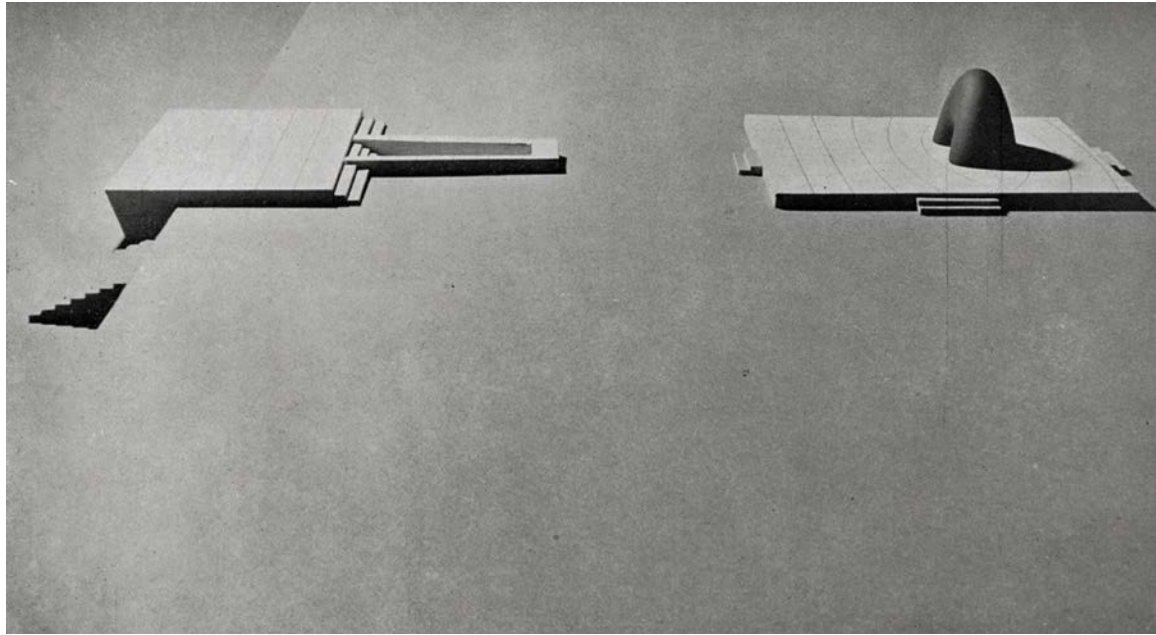
Model for Memorial for the Dead of Hiroshima, 1952.



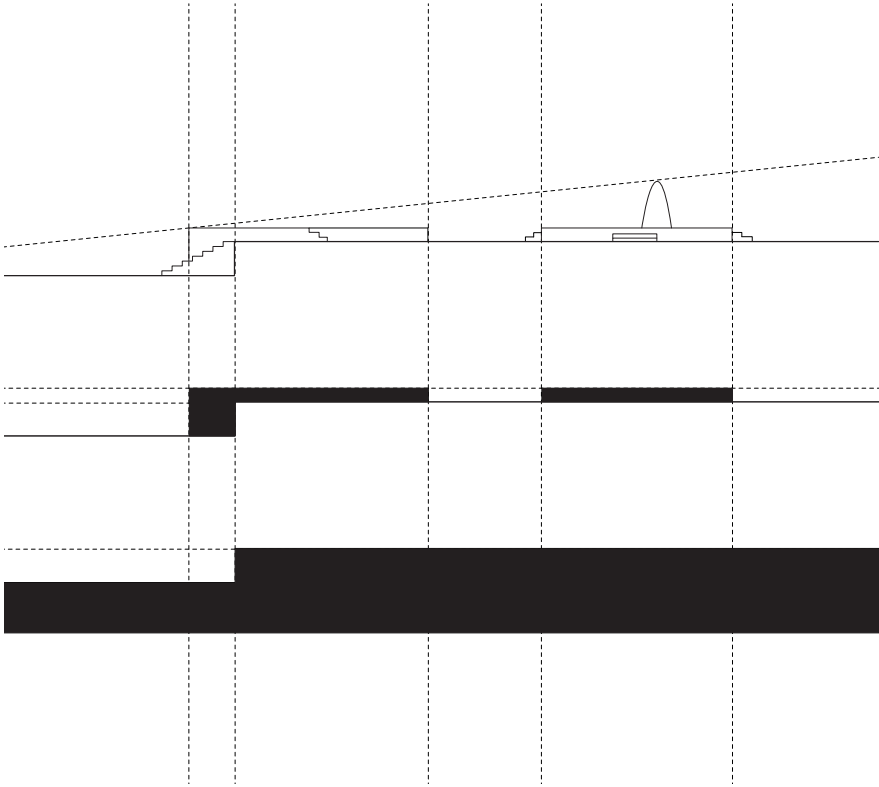
Noguchi's memorial design looked to encapsulate the many emotions surrounding the tragic event that occurred only a short number of years before. He wanted to show the destructive power of atomic science and nuclear war, the pain and agony of loss, the solace of a final resting place, and the hope of rebirth.

*Ran Zwigenberg (2015) The most modern city in the world: Isamu Noguchi's cenotaph controversy and Hiroshima's city of peace, Critical Military Studies, 1:2, 102-115*

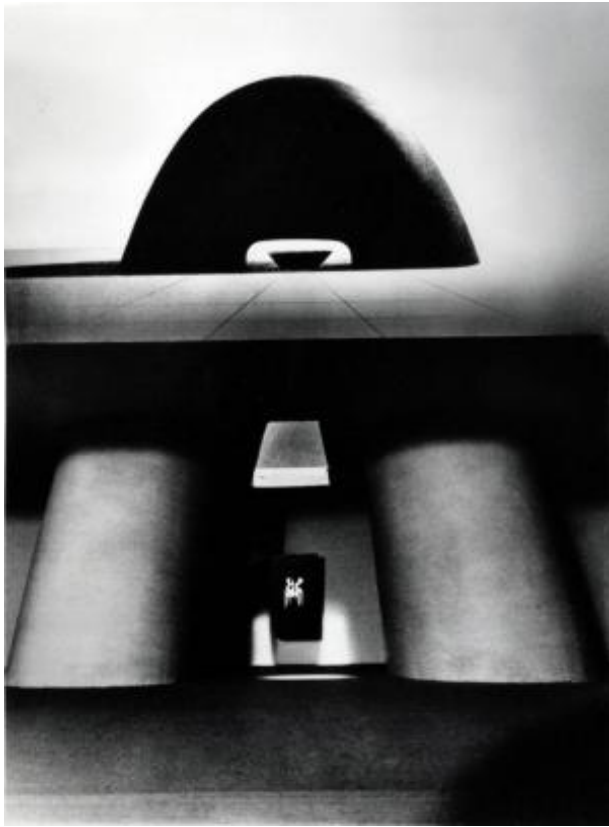
Noguchi composed a scheme considering the permeability of the ground plane; his sculpture emerges unassuming, to light and clarity, with its influence etched into his constructed platform. Once the viewer descends through the ground plane, they recognise the immense weight below the sculpture; the heavy mass impacted beneath the ground. There is an imbalance of forces surrounding the ground plane, but what is implied is that the space above the ground affords space for new growth.



Model for Memorial for the Dead of Hiroshima, 1952.

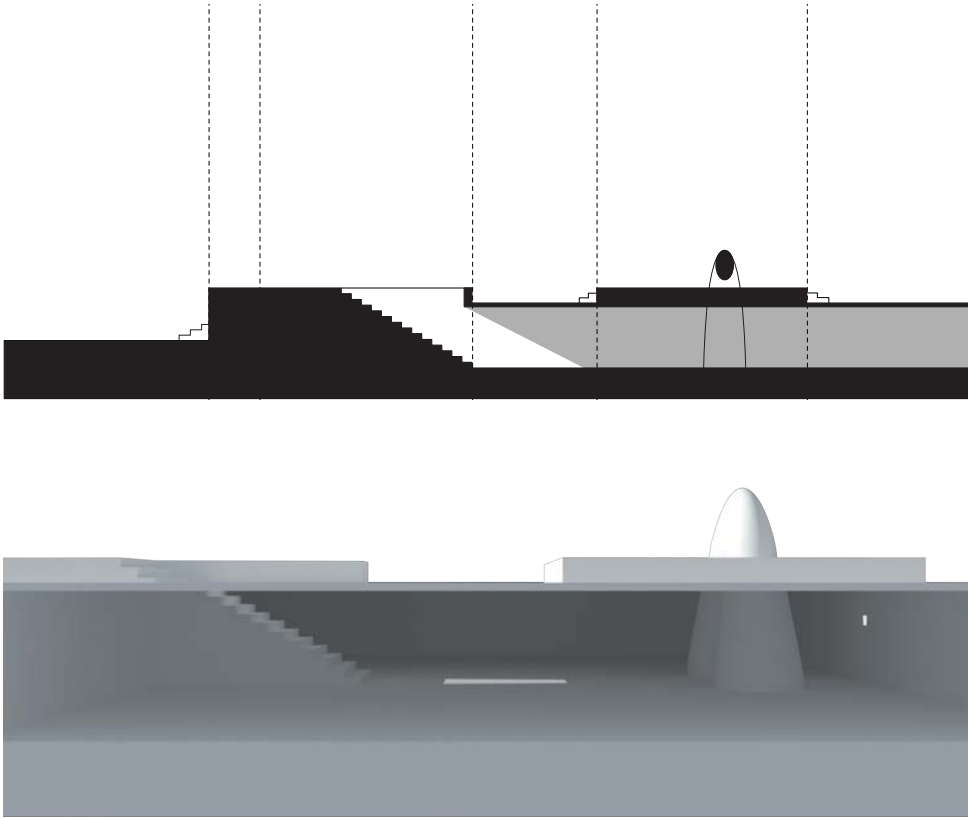


Analysis Diagrams  
Built Plane - Platform - Ground



Collaged Model of Memorial for the Dead of Hiroshima, 1952.

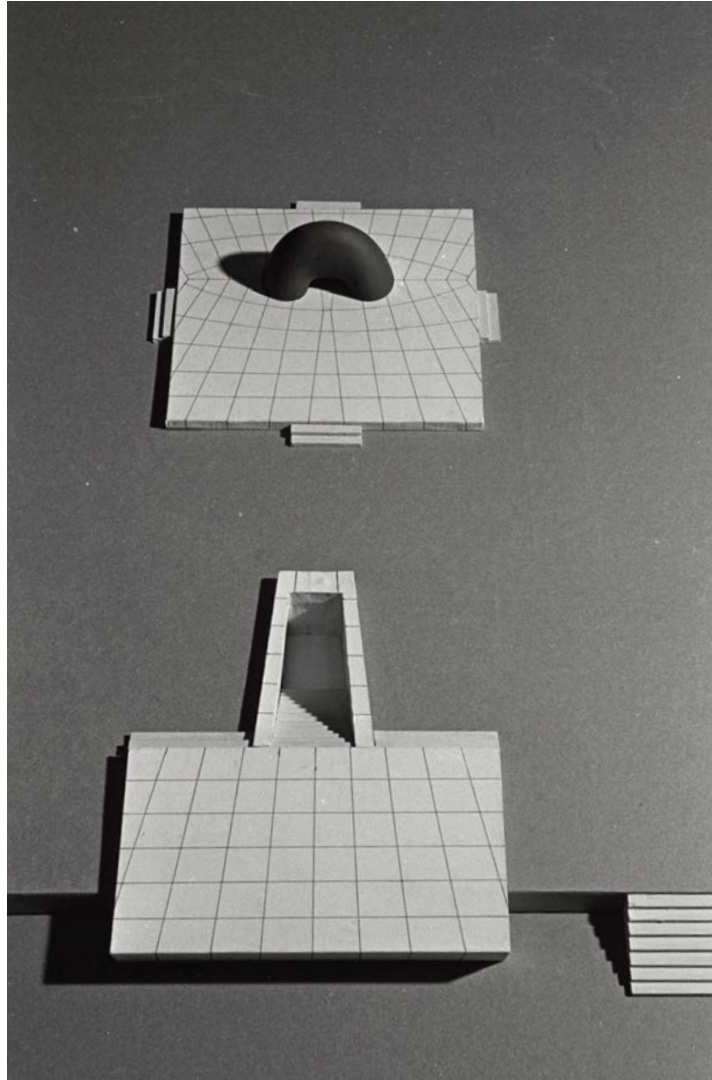
Implied Weight



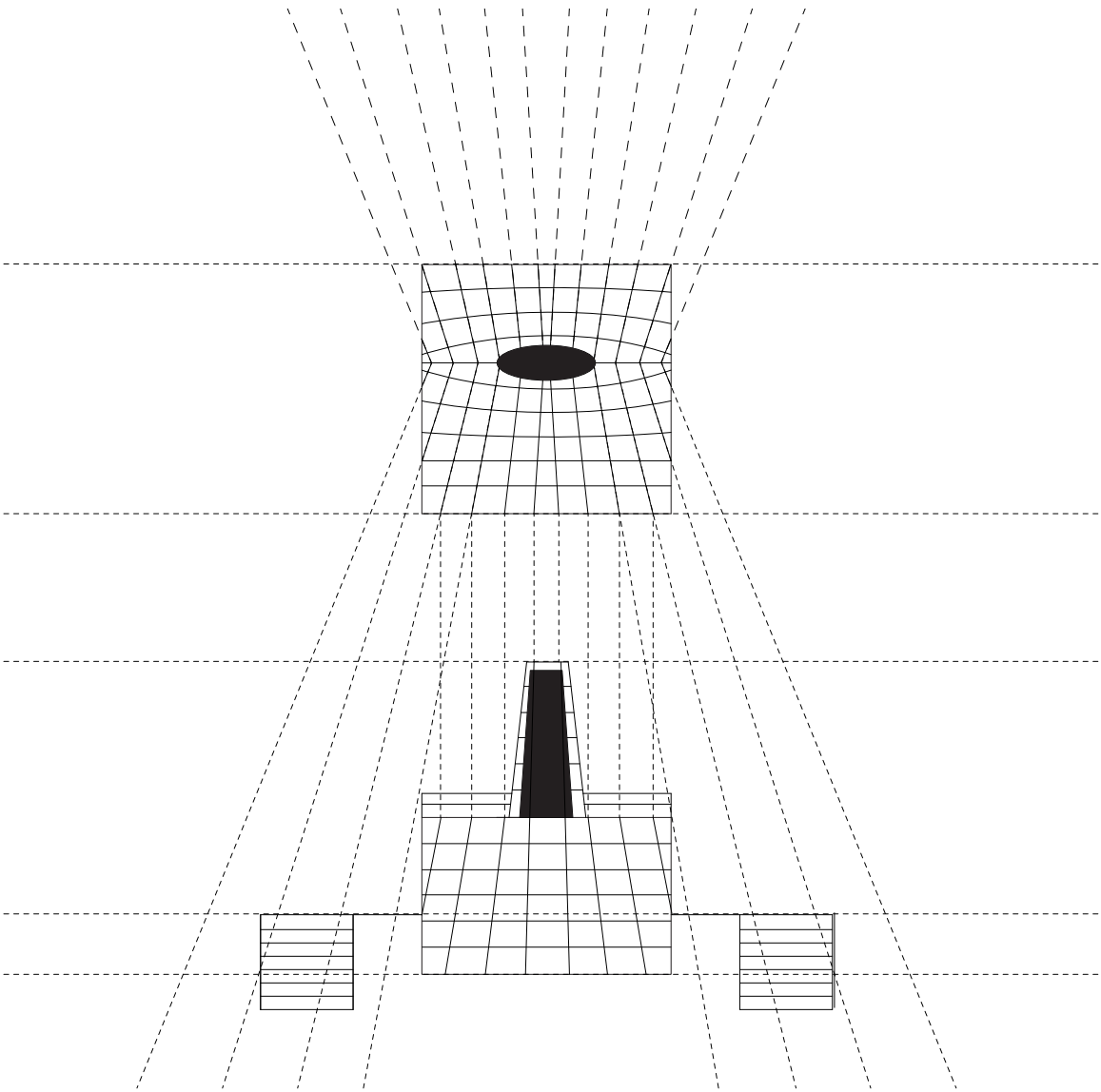
Section Diagram

Basil Harb

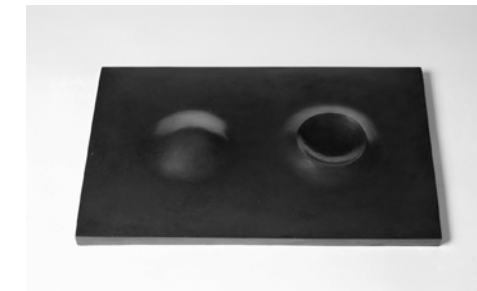
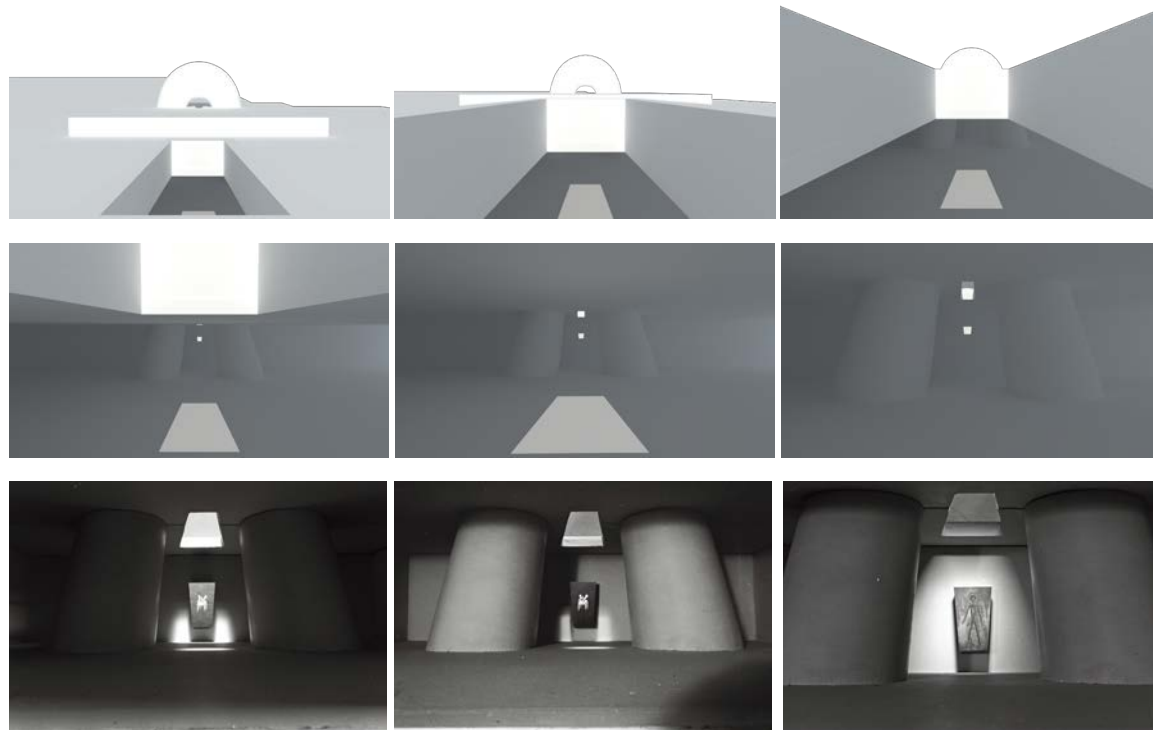




Model for Memorial for the Dead of Hiroshima, 1952.



Plan Analysis



Model for Beinecke Sunken Library 1963.

A curated digital experience enables unique opportunities for viewership. Through rendered movements through the modelled scheme, we can experience the way Noguchi intended the weight of his sculpture to be perceived and the forces at play transgressing through the ground plane. When observing both sides of this plane at once, the viewer can come to understand the dual nature of the public work; on one side, the descent of the viewer through the ground plane accesses a dark, heavy space for mourning within the earth, meanwhile his sculpture rises through the ground plane, to an open, bright platform symbolic of new growth. In both conditions, Noguchi intended for the memory of the rest of the sculpture to remain within the viewers mind, balancing the powerful experiences at all times.