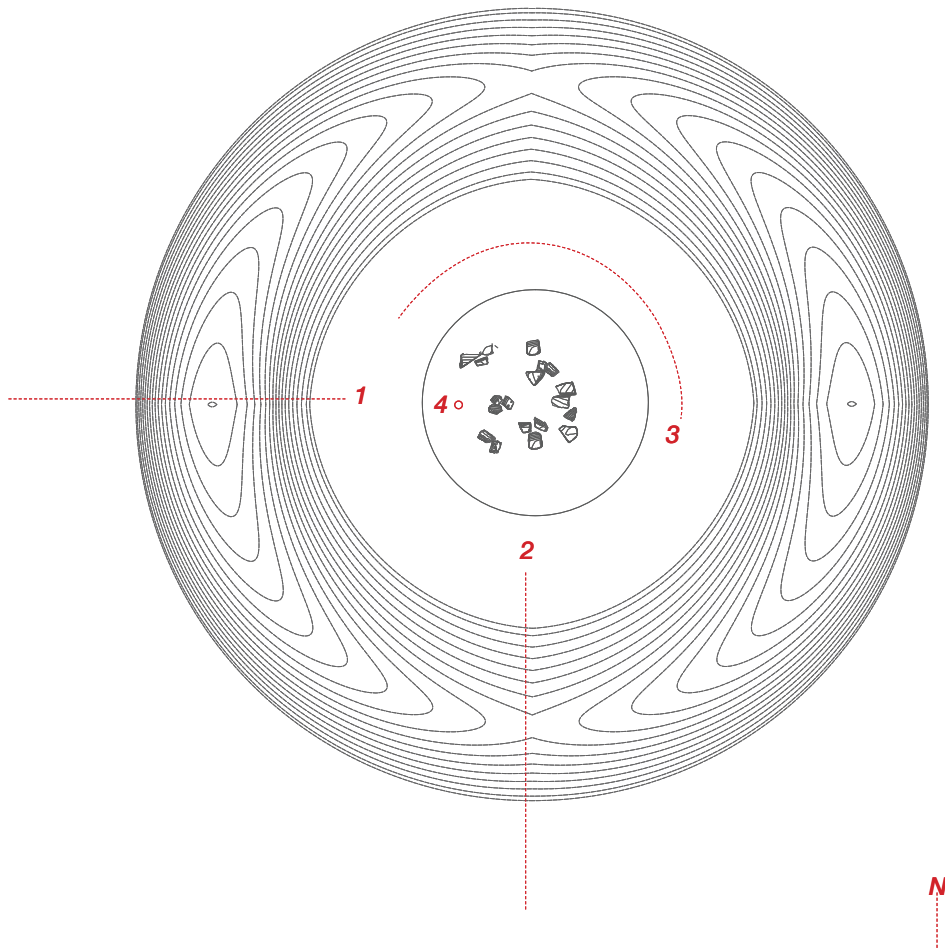


CONTOURED MOMENTUM
ERIN HUANG



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

BODY SPACE DEVICE: play sculpture (c. 1965)



This particular device (Play sculpture, c. 1965) is sited within one half of the museum room, adjacent to Noguchi's backdrop for Graham's Wilderness stair. The largest thing in that particular section of the room, its scale dwarfs This Earth, This Passage, that is immediately next to it. One can't help but draw comparisons between the two pieces, one purposefully elevated and bright in colour, the other sunken to the ground and muted. Both pieces related immediately to the body scale—This Earth, This Passage showing foot prints, while Play Sculpture cradles and invites interaction through its curves.

MODELS FOR SPACES:

model for Sacred Rocks of Kukaniloko
unrealized, (1976)

The most interesting thing about forms left unscaled perhaps is the potential for size—especially in Noguchi's plaster maquettes, the lack of a context creates different potentials for a space—a reading at a certain size versus another could create entirely different spatial experiences. As small, coaster sized models, they could be seen as tactile ceramic tiles, while at his intentioned scale of a playground, they are berms and mounds for play and exploration. The ambiguity/duality of these sculptures allows the viewer to be open minded of how they could perceive themselves to be interacting with the works.





Contoured Playground

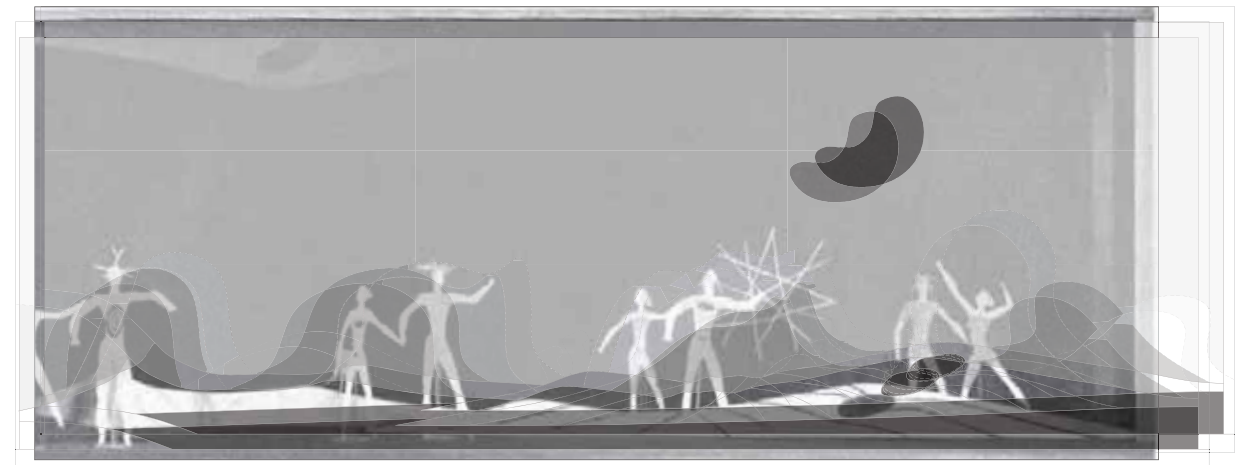
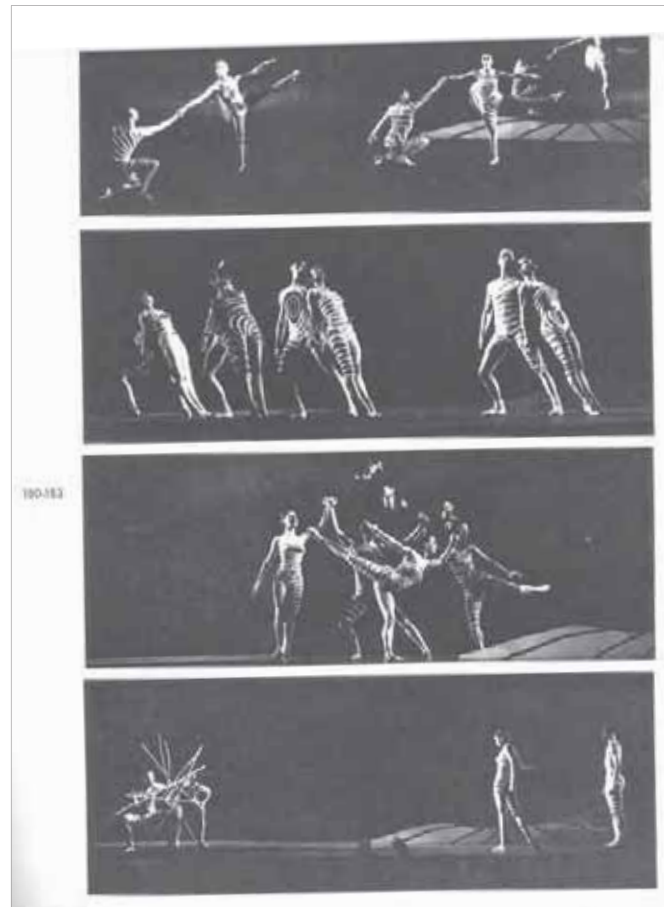
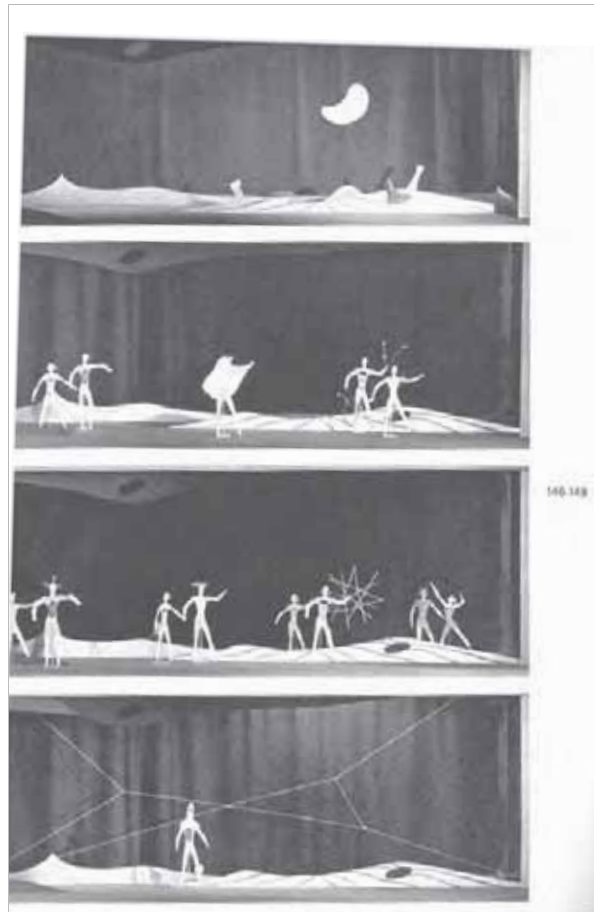
The simple inclusion of scale elements in the 10-foot-square enlargement of Noguchi's contoured playground immediately changes the reading of the space: the work could be taken as a 1:1 built work without the scale elements, or seen as a vast landscape with moving hills and valleys. The staging of the piece as well, affects how viewers behave around the work. Situating the piece at eye level encourages the viewer to see themselves within the piece, rather than standing above the work—certain viewing heights have inherent scales coded into them, the way looking down upon an object would cause the viewer to perceive it as smaller.



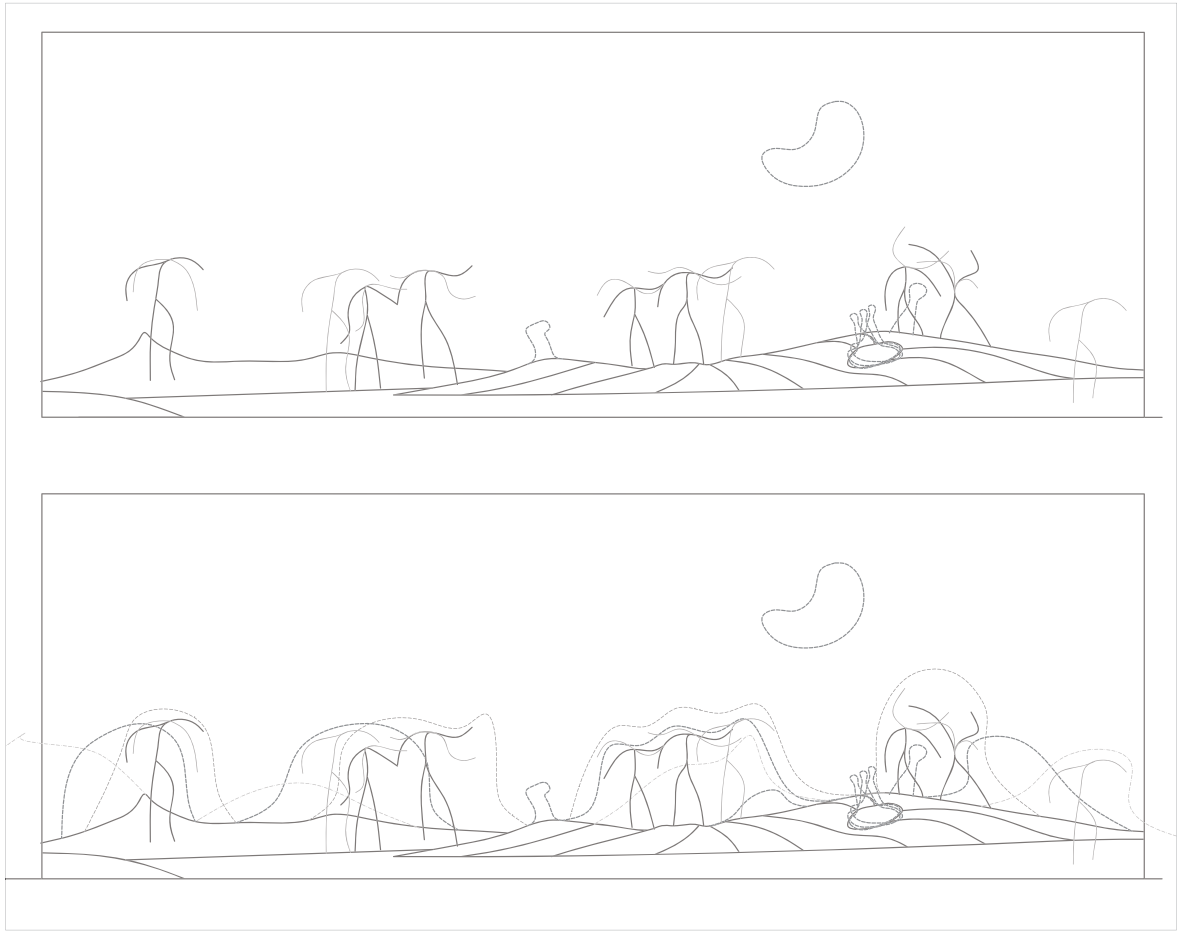
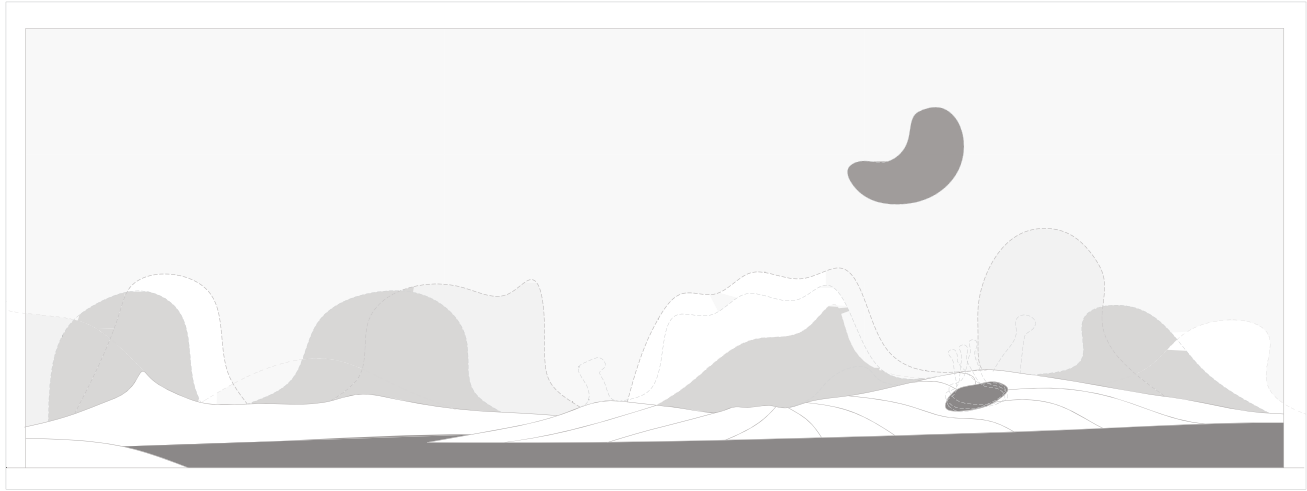
Contract and Release

Certain movements throughout the performance I found to be repeating elements, almost a sort of visual motif within the actions of the dance. Dancers would open, close, or arch their hands in various moves throughout, a visual representation of Ferndandes' and Grahams' principles of contraction and release. Interestingly, these actions would be performed while moving through spaces, and passing through entrances. As well, certain types of body parts would mirror the bigger movement of contraction: fingers clenching, arms bending, feet arching.



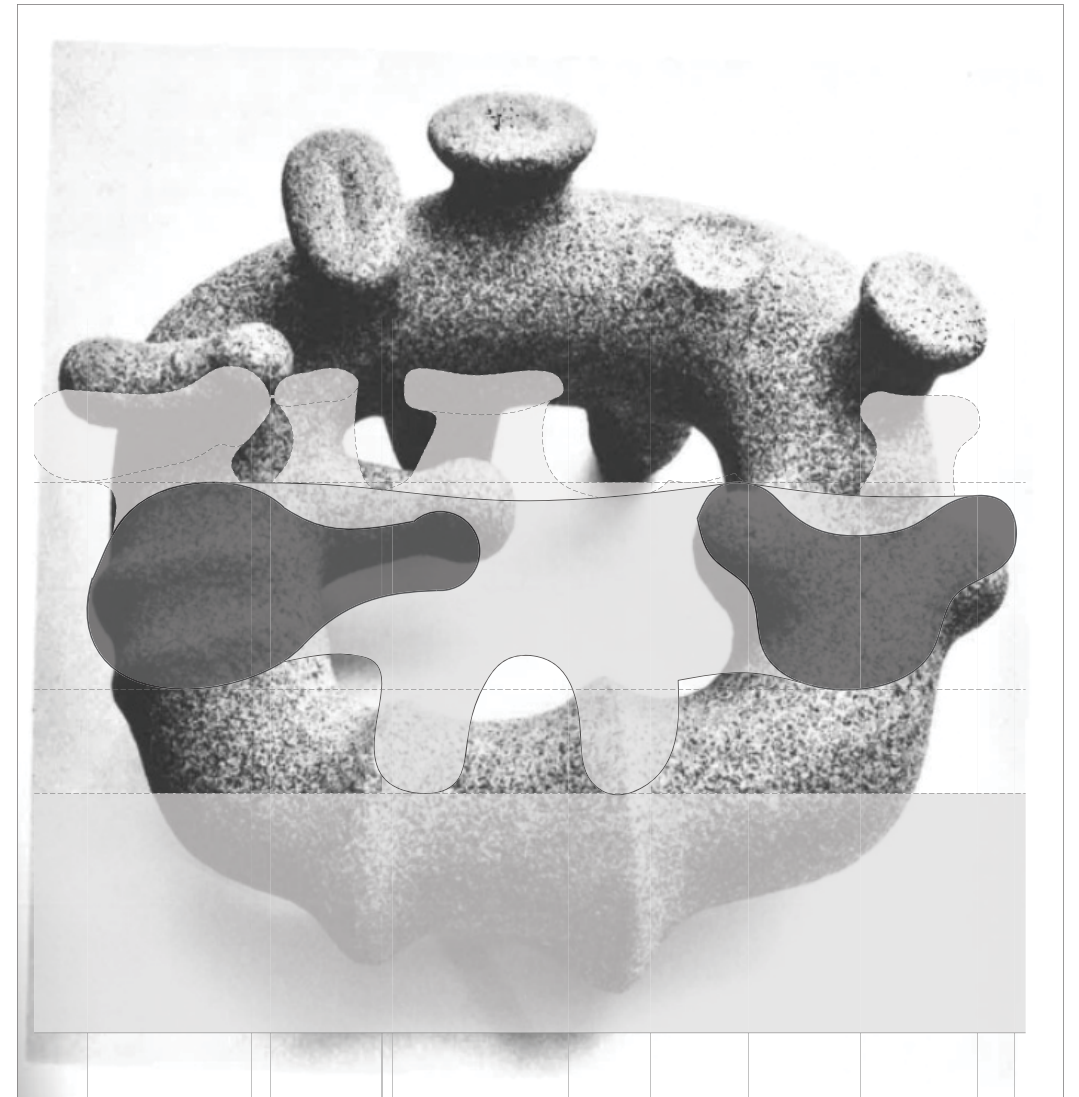


Models of stage set for The Season, 1947; Costumes for The Seasons, 1947. From Isamu Noguchi: a Sculptor's World.





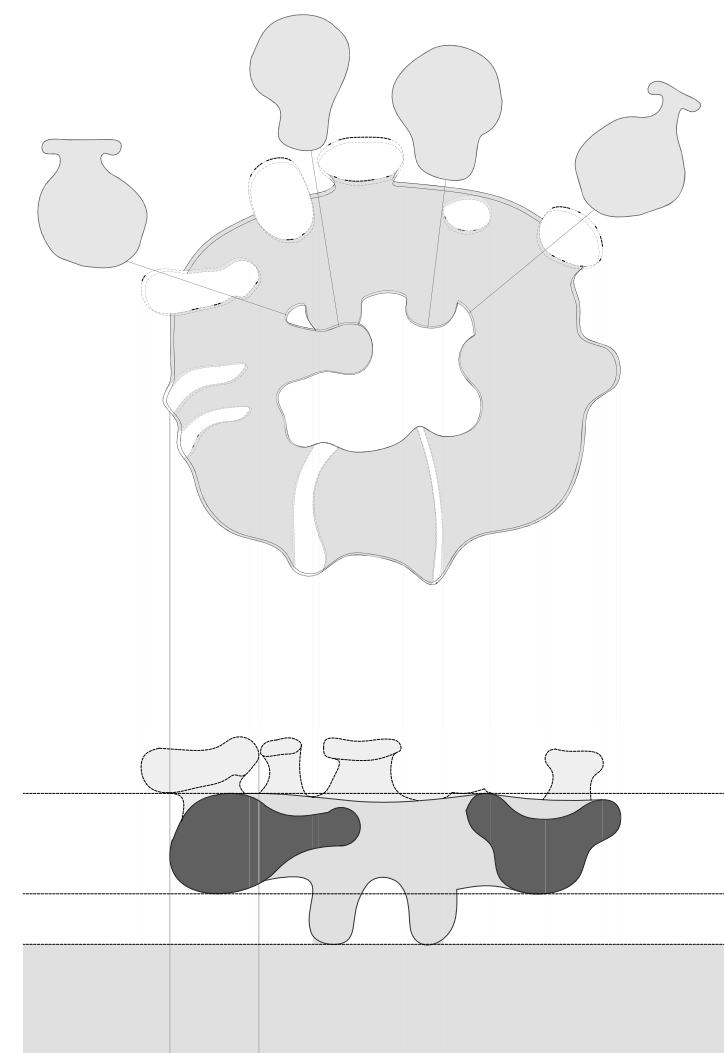
The Ring, 1945-48, Granite. Image from Noguchi Foundation



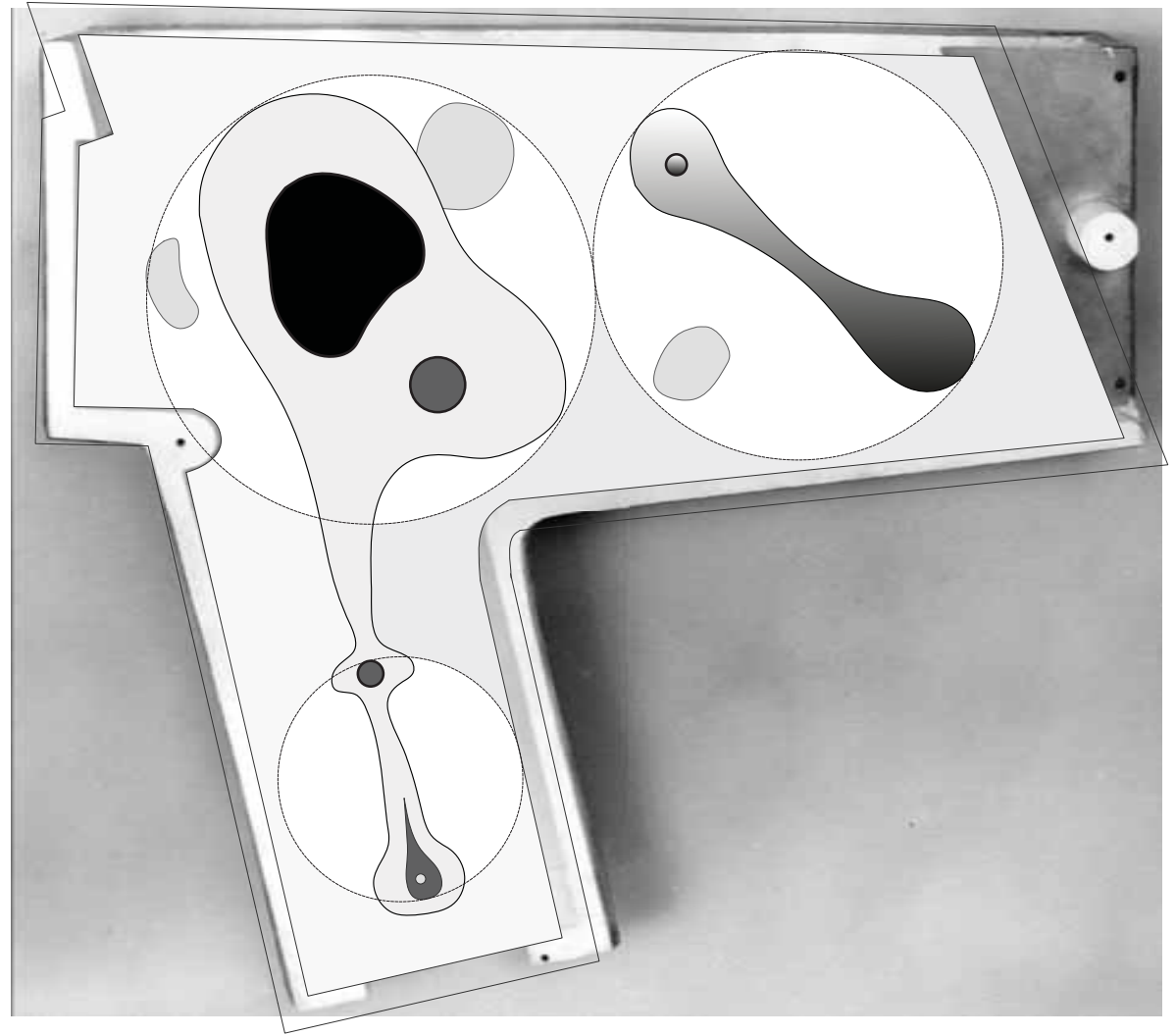
Sectional drawing of sculpture, showing work to ground connection



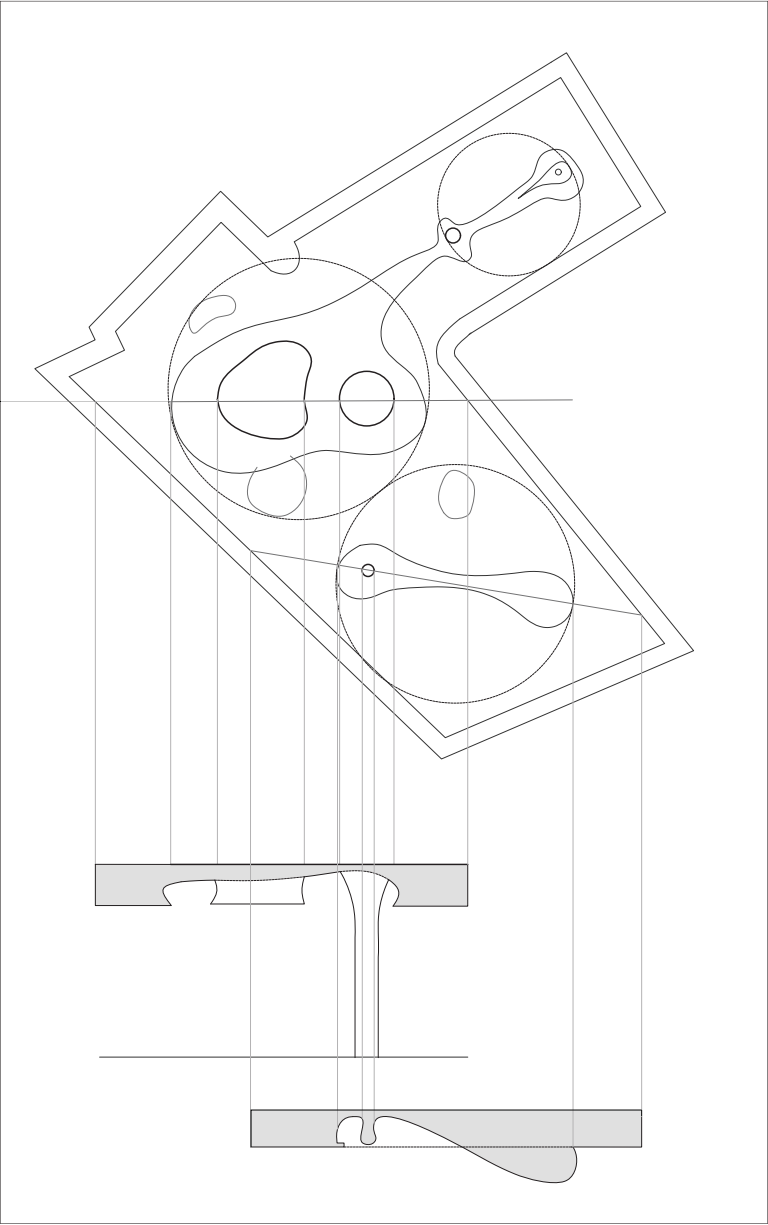
Contoured Momentum



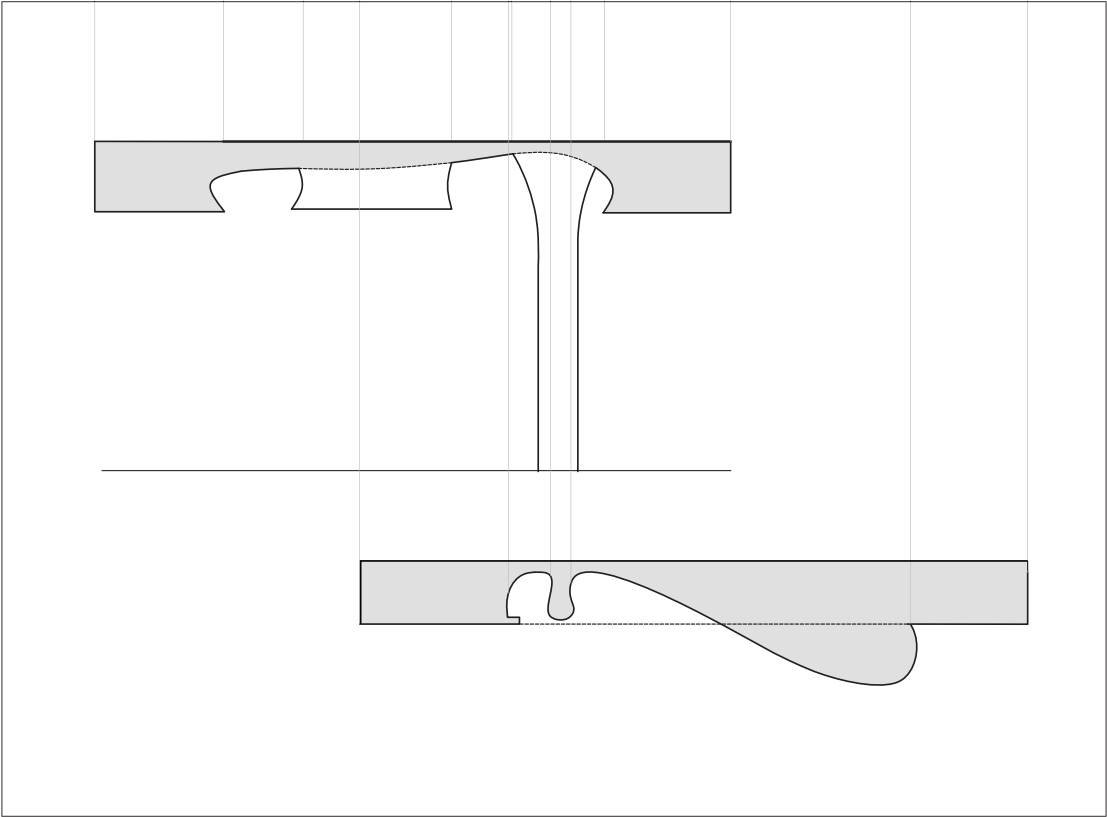
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Model of Ceiling for Magic Chef Building (St. Louis, Missouri), 1946, Plaster.



Contoured Momentum

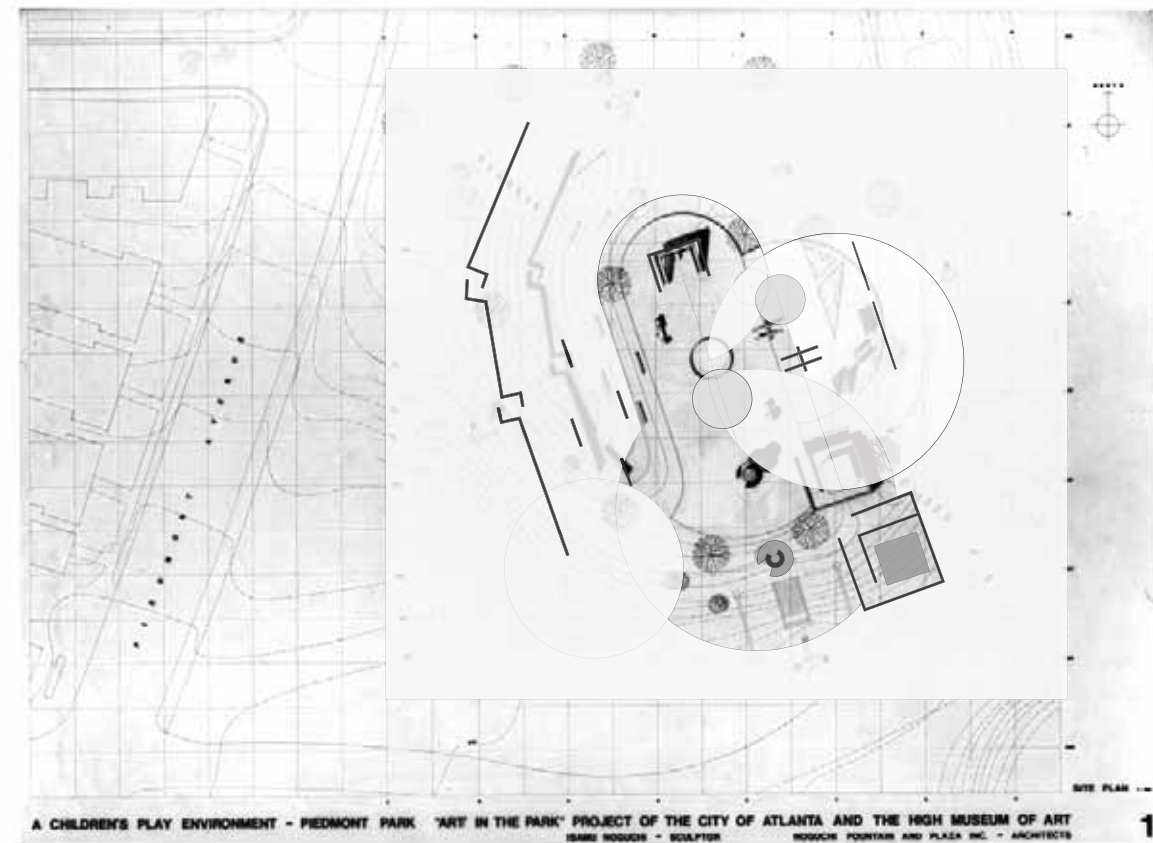


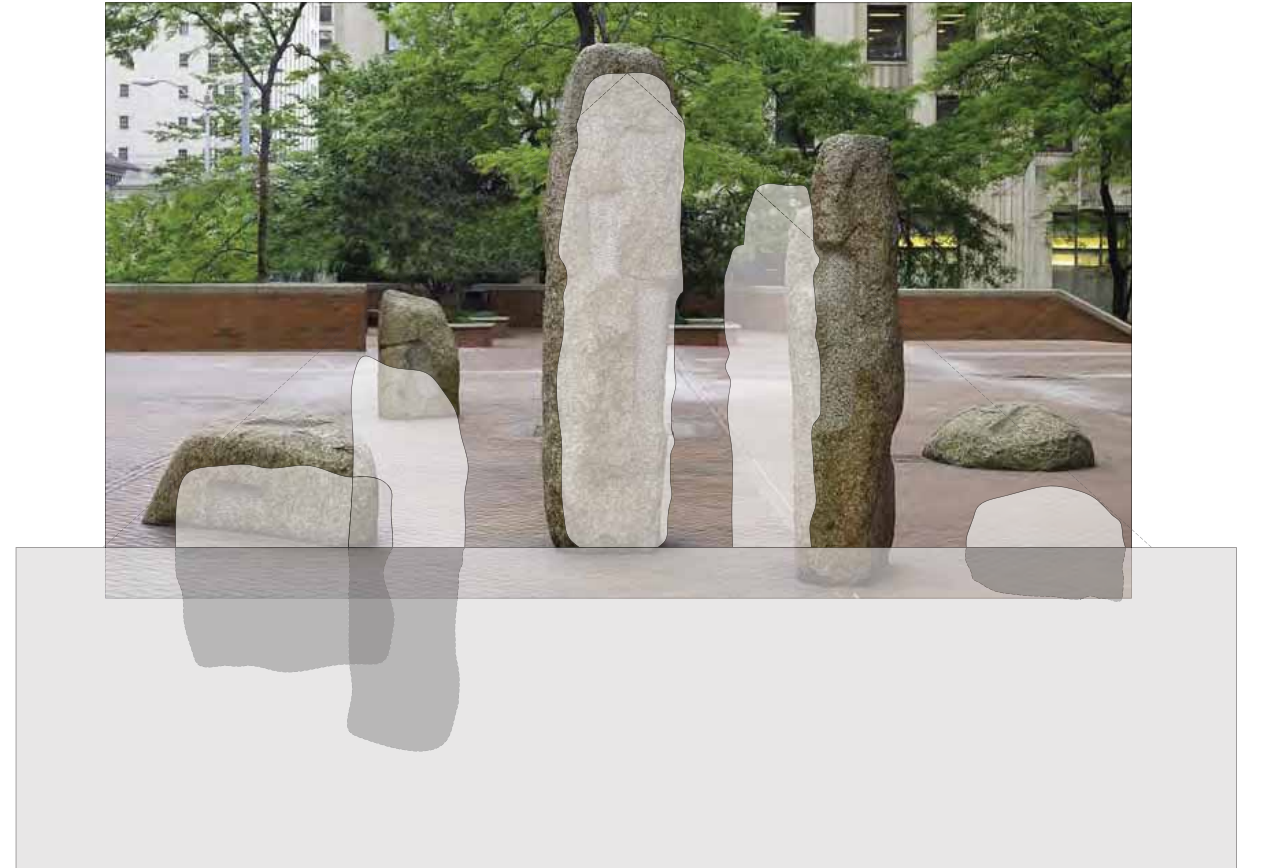
Erin Huang



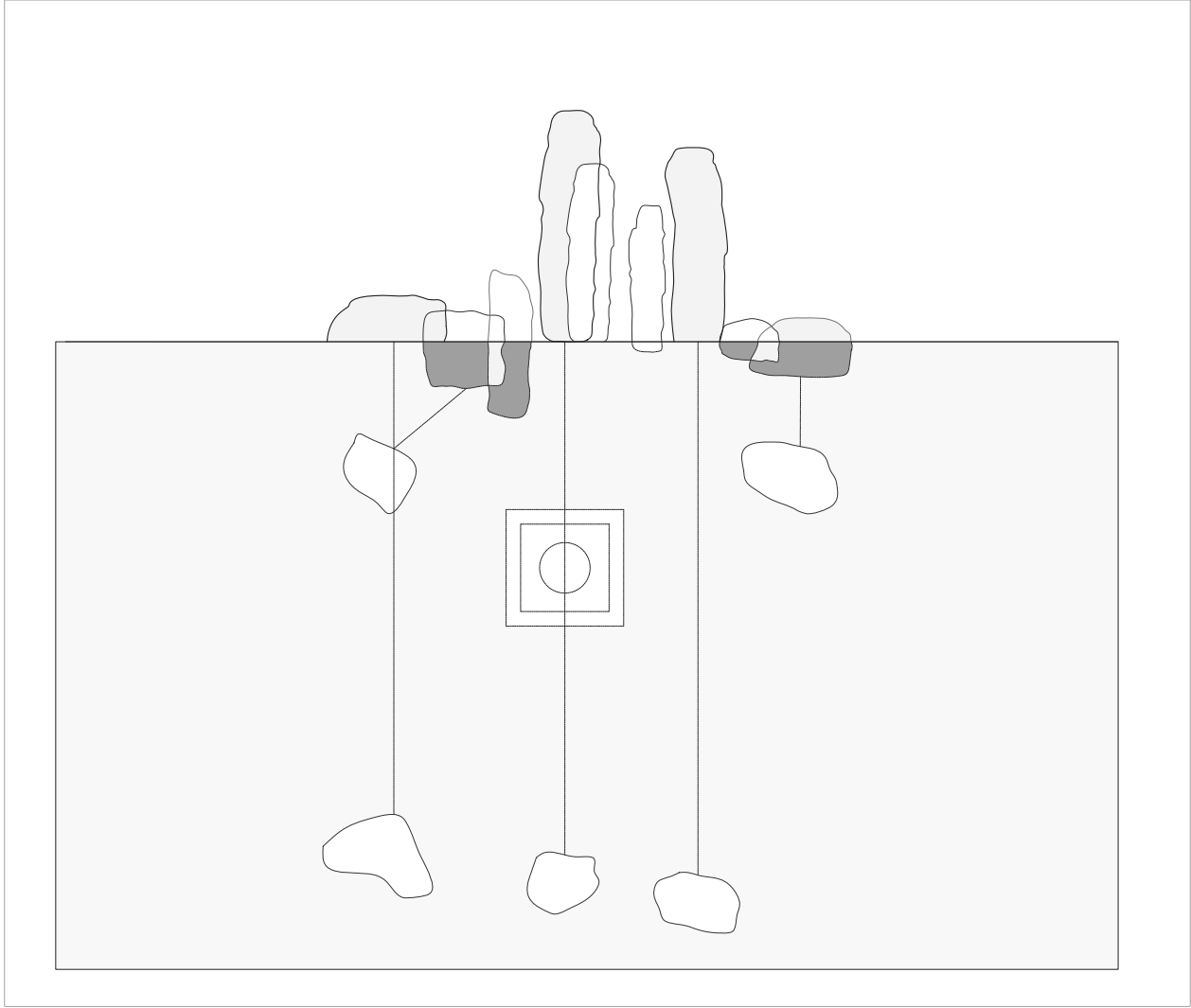


Piedmont Park, Atlanta, Georgia. 1976.

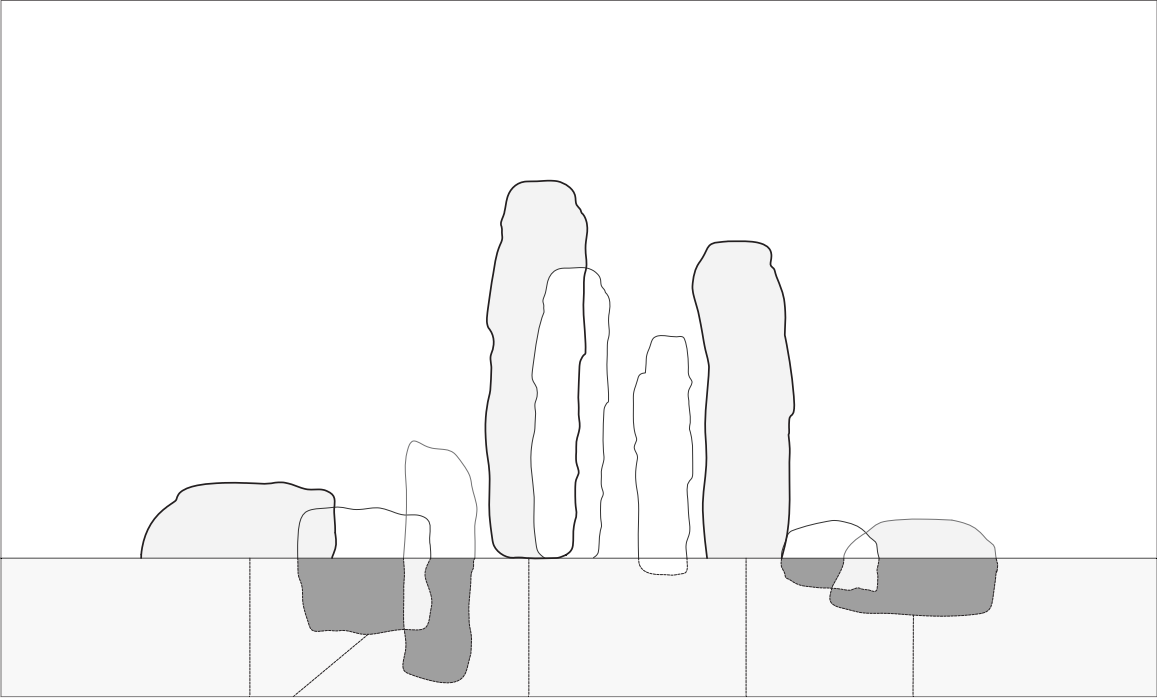




Landscape of Time, 1975. Seattle, WA; Granite. Seen and Unseen, 1962. Bronze. Images from the Noguchi Foundation.



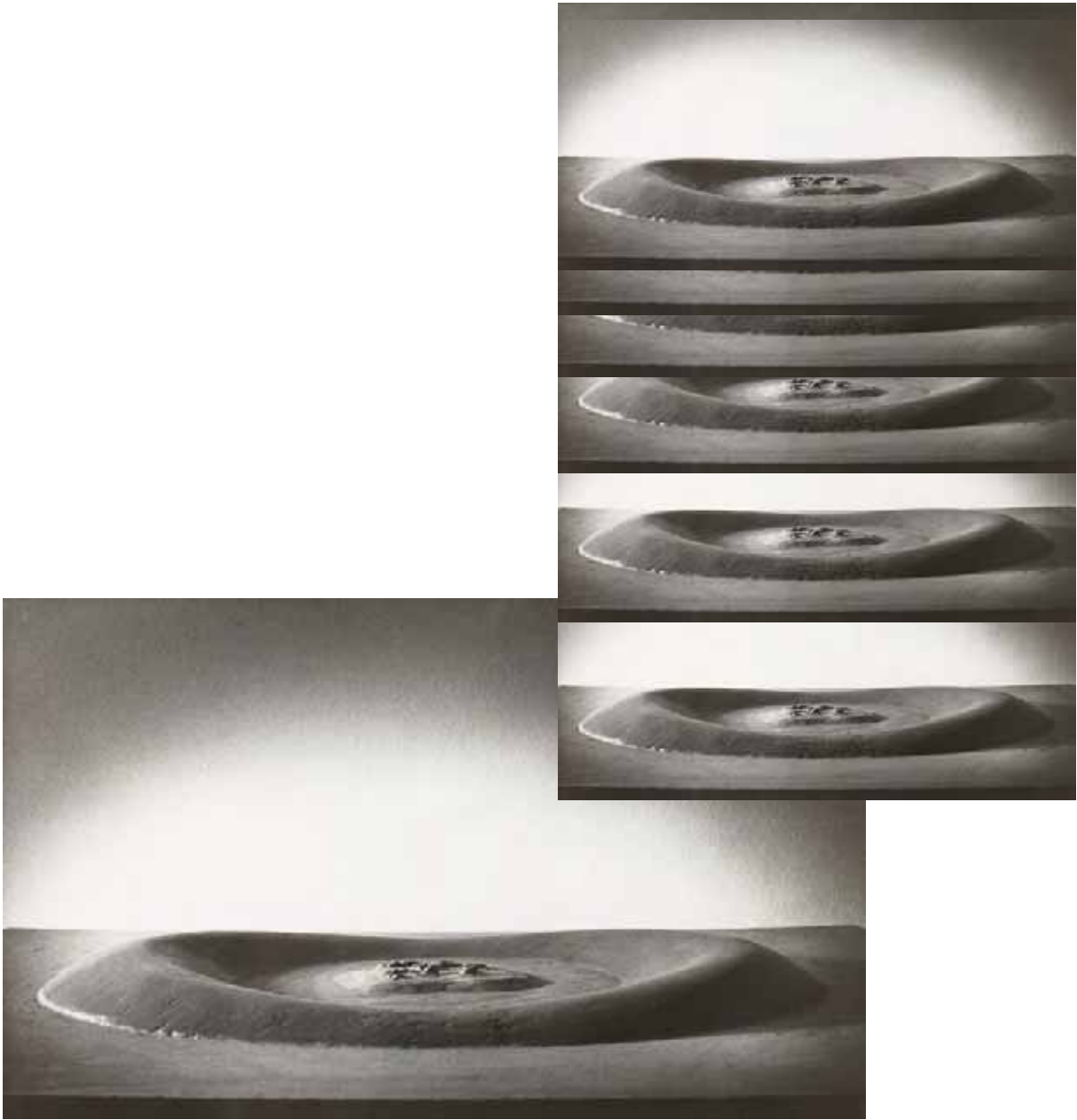
Contoured Momentum



Erin Huang



Model of the Sacred Rocks of Kukaniloko, plaster. 1976. Image from the Noguchi Foundation.



Print photograph of a bronze model of Kukaniloko Rocks, cast 1976. Image from the Noguchi Foundation.



Kukaniloko Birthing Site as it currently stands, in Oahu, Hawaii. Image from Karen in Honolulu.



View of Waimea Ridge mountains, east of the site. Image from Joel Bradshaw.

As for Kukaniloko that is another story. It seems the Del Monte Company who runs the pineapple fields cannot forfeit even so small an area of their profitability.

What strikes we as strange us why did Mr. Preis delay as long when he could have signed the contract right off.

I have heard that the building in front of which my work was to be located was actually built as a trade off between the State and the East West Center whereby the State University got the Kennedy Theater Building in return, involving an exchange of an estimated \$8,000,000.

The State managed to get the building made for \$5,000,000, presumably making a profit of \$3,000,000 at the expense of the East West Center. It seems the governor refused to allow the State Foundation to pay for my work on the grounds that it was part of the building which was not his.

I was told that Mr. Preis had asked the attorney general for an opinion and was told that the land still belonged to the State, but this did not dissuade the governor.

Actually of course my work there could perhaps better be considered a landscape object rather than a sculpture in the ordinary sense. It can in no way be considered a decorative part of the building.

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May I write in conclusion that I am mainly distressed at the injustice this does to what might have been a real addition to the interest and beauty of Hawaii. It should be clear that I was intending to make a gift to the people of the islands, certainly not for money. Should I ever be asked to do anything further I can assure you it will be for money, as that seems their only language. They do not know how expensive a sculptor I am, nor do they probably care.

I suggest that further information may be gotten from Mr. John Hara the architect of the building, from Mr. Paul Yamanaka (Tel: 445 7791) and from Mr. Prithwish Naogy of the Art Department of the University (Tel: 958 8251 h. 988 6974) all of whom were at the various meetings held at the East West Center. And why not the governor? I note that copies of my contract were also sent to Eileen R. Anderson

Thomas L. Calvert
Albert Tarumoto
John Wisnosky
Masaru Yokouchi

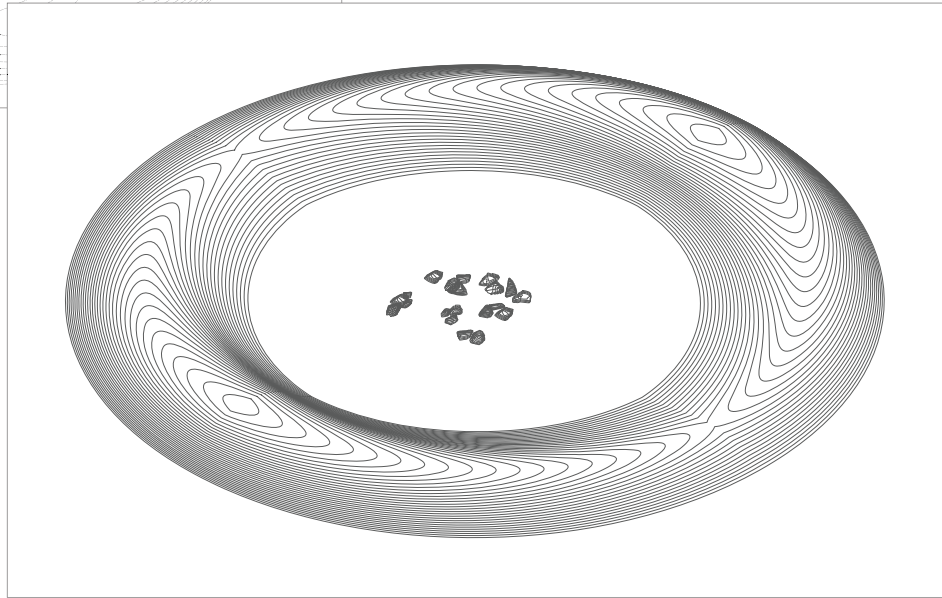
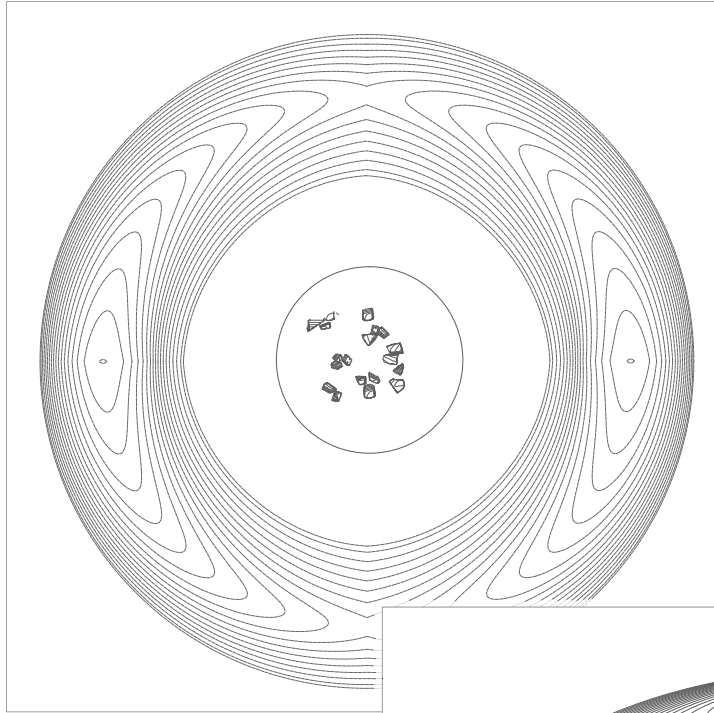


Isamu Noguchi

March 25, 1977

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In statement about Sky Gate, March 25th, 1977. From the Noguchi Foundation.



“The outside world must not come in, so the windows are usually sealed off...The purpose of such a setting is not unlike the purpose of religious buildings...They too were designed to eliminate awareness of the outside world.”

- O’Doherty, Inside the White Cube

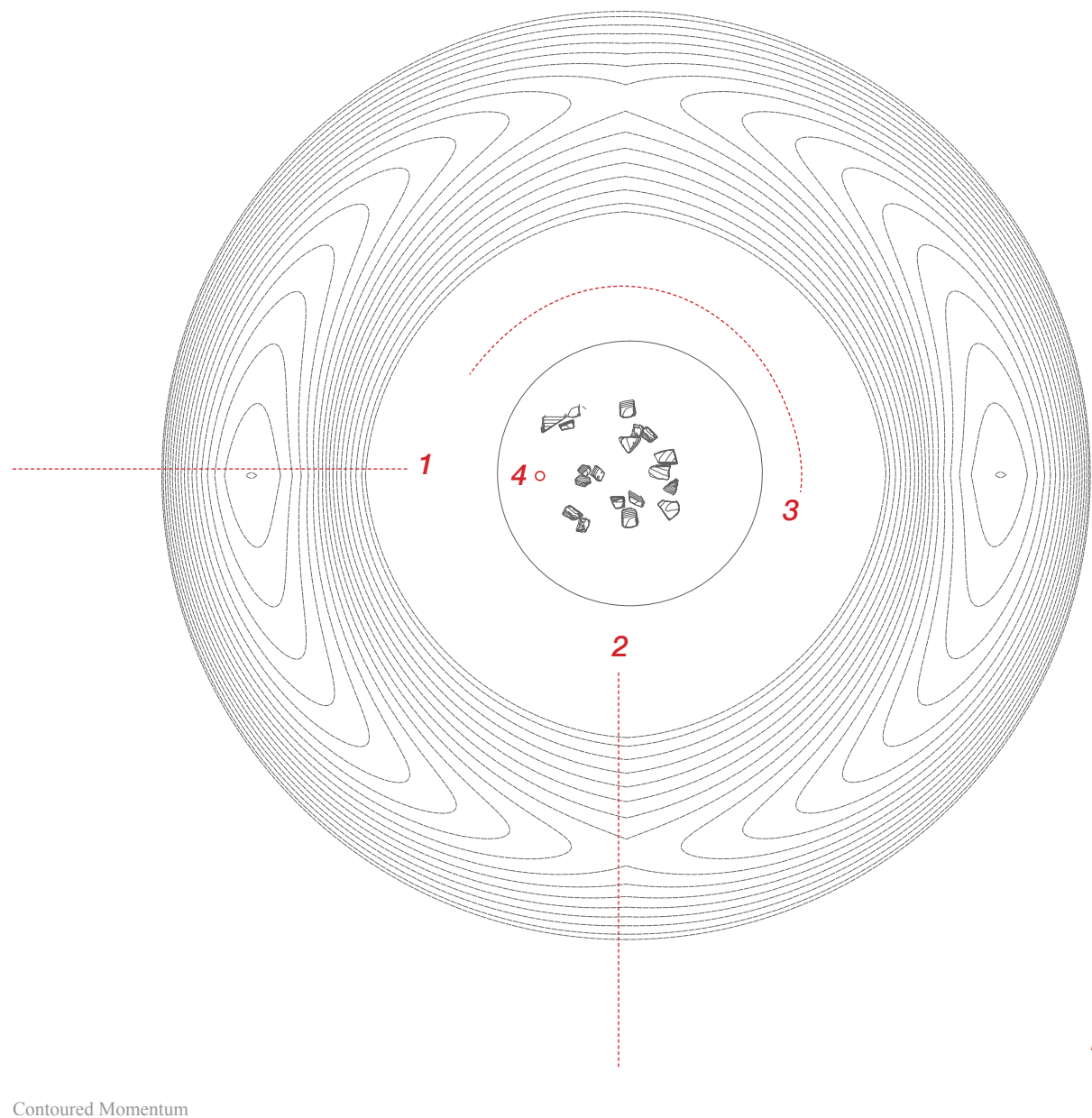
Sculpture, it could be said, had ceased being a positivity, and was now the category that resulted from the addition of the not-landscape to the not-architecture.

- Rosalind Krauss, Sculpture in the Expanded Field

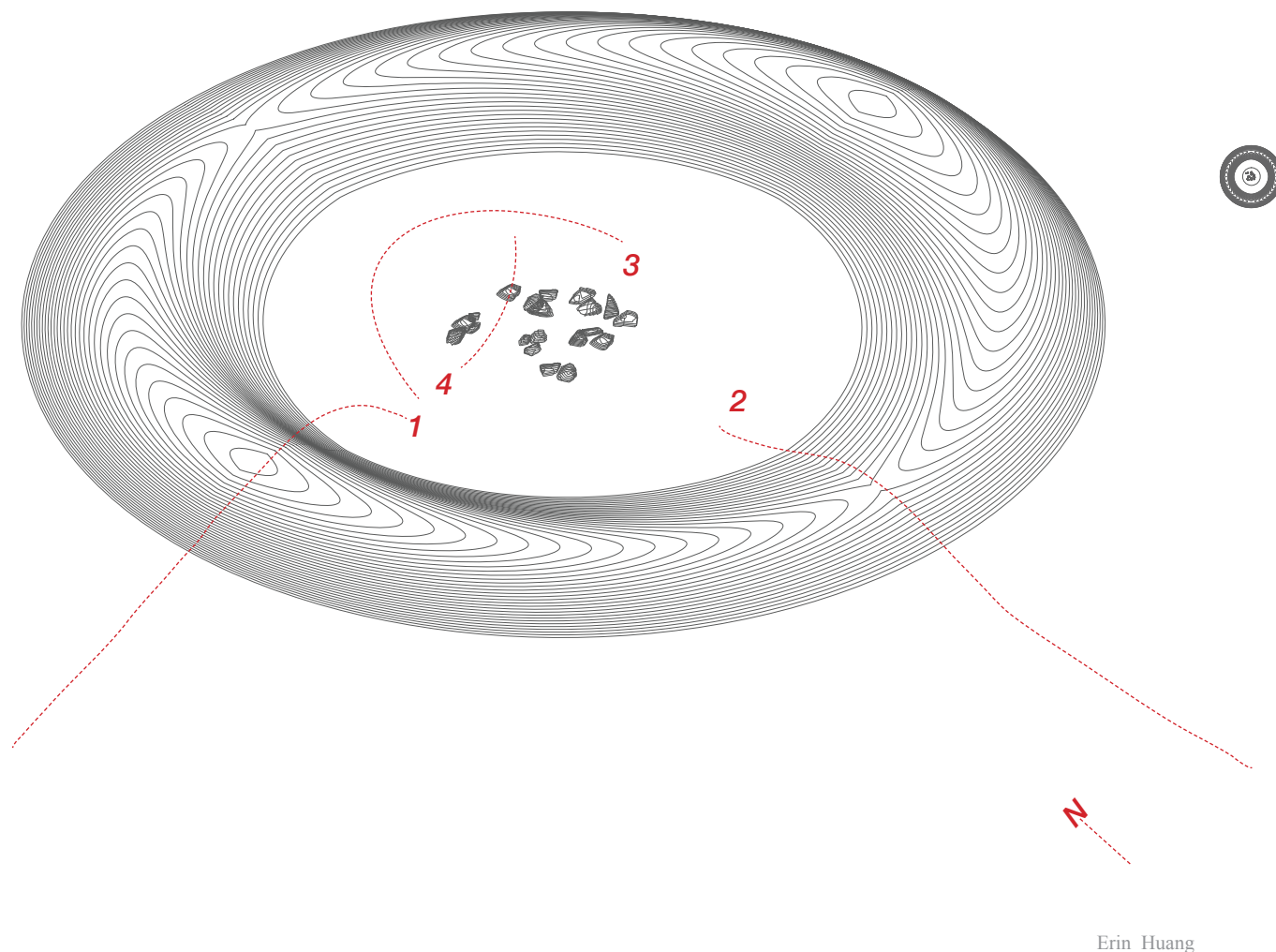
“There’s no meaning assigned to a model, the model is only activated when it engages relations outside of itself, when it creates meaning or concepts that are beyond the model as object.”

- Teresa Stoppanni, Unorthodox Ways to Think the City





Contoured Momentum



Erin Huang