

## **The Noguchi Museum Celebrates 40 Years of Art, Innovation, and Legacy**

**A Yearlong Celebration Honoring Isamu Noguchi's Enduring Influence  
Begins May 2025**



Photo: Sara Luckey. © The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum / Artists Rights Society (ARS)

New York (April 2025) — **The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum**, founded by renowned Japanese American sculptor **Isamu Noguchi** (1904–1988), proudly marks its **40th anniversary in 2025**, celebrating four decades of preserving and sharing the visionary work of one of the most significant artists of the twentieth century.

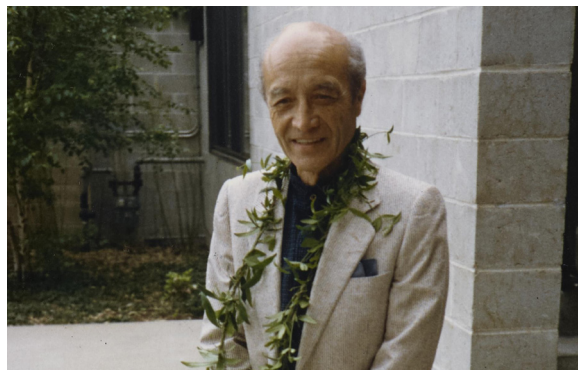
Since its opening in May 1985, The Noguchi Museum has been dedicated to preserving, exhibiting, and interpreting Noguchi's artistic legacy, offering visitors a unique experience within a space designed by the artist himself. Located in a converted 1920s industrial building in Long Island City, Queens, the Museum is considered one of Noguchi's greatest works, seamlessly blending sculpture, architecture, and nature across its galleries and serene outdoor sculpture garden.

The 40th anniversary celebration, beginning May 2025, will feature a yearlong series of special exhibitions, educational programs, and public events that highlight Noguchi's influence across sculpture, public art, design, and architecture, while also looking ahead to the Museum's future.

"Having had the privilege of working alongside Isamu Noguchi, I witnessed firsthand his tireless pursuit to redefine what sculpture could be. His work constantly blurred the boundaries between art, design, and space, and this Museum stands as the ultimate expression of that vision: a total work of art where sculpture, architecture, and landscape come together as a single, immersive experience," says **Amy Hau, Director of The Noguchi Museum**.



Isamu Noguchi, Masatoshi Izumi, and crew working on the garden of the Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum, 1985. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 13119. ©INFGM/ARS



Isamu Noguchi at the opening of the Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum, May 1985. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 13097. ©INFGM/ARS

“For 40 years, The Noguchi Museum has carried forward his vision. This anniversary is an opportunity to reflect on Noguchi’s lasting impact, celebrate the ways his influence continues to shape contemporary art and design and look ahead to the Museum’s next chapter—one that remains rooted in his spirit of innovation and openness.”

## EXHIBITIONS

Throughout 2025 and 2026, The Noguchi Museum will present a dynamic lineup of exhibitions, drawing from its unparalleled collection of sculptures, drawings, models for public projects, and archival materials to explore Noguchi’s artistic process and far-reaching impact.

### **Against Time: The Noguchi Museum 40th Anniversary Reinstallation**

August 28, 2024 – January 11, 2026

Coinciding with The Noguchi Museum’s 40th anniversary, *Against Time*, curated by Matthew Kirsch, Curator and Director of Research at The Noguchi Museum, returns over sixty works from the permanent collection to the second floor. Taking inspiration from Isamu Noguchi’s own arrangements and intentions for these spaces in the earliest years of the Museum (1985–88), the exhibition reveals Noguchi’s lifelong interest in themes such as transformation, mortality, weightlessness, and humanity’s coexistence with nature; and explores how his many unrealized environmental projects were a well of ideas that he refined and adapted within later realized projects.

### **Temitayo Ogunbiyi: You will wonder if we would have been friends**

June 18 – November 2, 2025

The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum presents *Temitayo Ogunbiyi: You will wonder if we would have been friends*, the first solo U.S. museum exhibition by Nigeria-based artist Temitayo Ogunbiyi. On view from June 18 to November 2, 2025, this exhibition features interactive sculptures, musical installations, and botanical drawings that explore themes of play, community, and global connection. Drawing inspiration from Isamu Noguchi’s innovative playground designs, Ogunbiyi expands on his concepts, creating site-specific works that invite both physical interaction and reflection. Through sculptures like her musical instruments and copper alloy grinding stones, and installations designed for community engagement, Ogunbiyi bridges the gap between past and present, art and nature, with a focus on fostering dialogue across cultures.



Installation view, *Against Time: The Noguchi Museum 40th Anniversary Reinstallation*. Photo: Nicholas Knight. ©INFGM/ARS



Temitayo Ogunbiyi, *You will play in the nuance and grow community*, 2023. Instrument. Brass, wood, stainless steel. Commissioned by the Van Abbemuseum. Photo: Boudewijn Bollmann. Courtesy of Temitayo Ogunbiyi



Isamu Noguchi at the debut of *Unidentified Object*, New York, 1979. Photo: Donna Svennevik. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 04144. ©INFGM/ARS

Curated by Matthew Kirsch, this exhibition offers a dynamic, cross-temporal conversation between Ogunbiyi's contemporary work and Noguchi's legacy, emphasizing art's potential to connect people and inspire collective reflection.

### **Noguchi's New York**

February 4 – July 5, 2026

In 1922, Isamu Noguchi first moved to New York—a city that would remain his on-again, off-again home for the remainder of his life. Though he was an avid traveler who built meaningful connections and temporary homes around the world, Noguchi always returned to New York. It was here that he created some of his most iconic artworks and imagined countless others, both realized and unrealized. This exhibition examines Noguchi's deep and dynamic relationship with New York City, exploring how its material, cultural, social, and political landscape indelibly transformed his artwork and thinking, and how he in turn transformed the city. It also highlights Noguchi's unflagging attempts to give back by sculpting communal spaces for exploration and play—efforts often thwarted, most notably by the influential NYC Parks Commissioner Robert Moses. Curated by Kate Wiener, Curator at The Noguchi Museum, and organized on the 40th anniversary of The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, this exhibition celebrates the Museum itself as one of Noguchi's most profound gifts to this city he called home.

### **PROGRAMS & SPECIAL RELEASES**

As part of the 40th anniversary celebrations, The Noguchi Museum will introduce special programming and exclusive releases over the course of the year that pay tribute to Noguchi's artistic legacy while offering new ways for audiences to engage with his work. In a historic reissue, the Museum will release a new printing of its catalogue, *The Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum*, including a hardcover edition—the first since the 1980s—as well as a printed folio of ephemera commemorating the anniversary. Additionally, the Museum will unveil the ST2 Akari stand later this year, marking the first time in decades that this design will be available for purchase in the U.S. In keeping with Noguchi's commitment to interdisciplinary collaboration, the Museum will also host special performances, panels, and events. These programs will highlight Noguchi's expansive artistic vision, reinforcing his belief that art should exist as a dynamic experience across disciplines.





Anne Souder in Martha Graham's *Cave of the Heart* (1946). Photo: Melissa Sherwood.  
Courtesy of Martha Graham Dance Company

Among the year's signature events is the third annual **Noguchi at Night**, taking place on **Friday, May 9**, from 6 to 9 pm. This celebratory evening invites guests to experience the Museum after hours, with pop-up solo performances by the **Martha Graham Dance Company** animating the Museum's galleries and outdoor spaces, and celebrating Noguchi's long collaboration with Martha Graham. This year's program will also spotlight culinary offerings with passed dishes from **chef Kiyo Shinoki**, known for his work at Takumen, Taku Sando, and Tonshin, as well as specialty cocktails from Suntory Global Spirits. Guests can expect an evening of art, movement, and community. Noguchi at Night exemplifies the Museum's mission to create immersive, multidisciplinary encounters with art in an atmosphere that is both celebratory and reflective. Proceeds from the evening benefit The Noguchi Museum.

On **Sunday, May 11**, the Museum will host a celebration with special public programming throughout the day. At 10 am, Museum members will enjoy an early-access morning reception with a shinobue performance by **Fumi Tanakadate** of **Kaoru Watanabe Taiko Center**. The Museum is open to all visitors from 11 am to 6 pm. Guests will be invited to explore the exhibition *Against Time* with a series of educator-led tours in English, Spanish, and Japanese, along with art-making activities in the galleries. Celebrations will continue in the afternoon with a traditional **Taiko drumming performance** by **Barbara Merjan** and **Fumi Tanakadate** of the **Kaoru Watanabe Taiko Center** at 4 pm. Visitors will also be gifted a commemorative Isamu Noguchi poster in honor of the anniversary. For a detailed schedule, see [noguchi.org/events](https://noguchi.org/events).

## MUSEUM HISTORY

The Noguchi Museum, originally named the Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum, was the first museum in the United States established by a living artist to display their own work. Noguchi envisioned the Museum as a "total environment"—a space where visitors could engage with his work without barriers or interpretation, fostering personal and introspective connections.

Spanning 27,000 square feet across two floors, the Museum houses the world's largest collection of Noguchi's work, including sculptures in stone, metal, wood, and clay; models for public projects and architectural designs; set designs for theater and dance; and his iconic Akari light sculptures, handmade in Japan since 1951.

Beyond its collection, the Museum serves as an international hub for Noguchi research, managing his complete archives and catalogue raisonné, and overseeing traveling exhibitions and loans to institutions worldwide.

For 40 years, The Noguchi Museum has been a beacon for artistic exploration, cultural dialogue, and design innovation, welcoming audiences from around the world. As the Museum enters this milestone year, it remains committed to expanding its impact, engaging new audiences, and continuing Noguchi's legacy of experimentation and openness.

## **ABOUT THE NOGUCHI MUSEUM**

Founded in 1985 by category-defying Japanese American sculptor Isamu Noguchi (1904–1988), The Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum (now known as The Noguchi Museum) in Queens, New York, was the first museum in the United States to be established, designed, and installed by a living artist to show their own work. Itself viewed as among the artist's greatest achievements and holding the world's largest collection of his works, the Museum features open air and indoor galleries in a repurposed industrial building and a serene outdoor sculpture garden. Since its founding, it has served as an international hub for Noguchi research and appreciation. In addition to managing the artist's archives and catalogue raisonné, the Museum exhibits a comprehensive selection of Noguchi's material culture, from sculpture, models, and drawings, to his personal possessions. Provocative installations drawn from the collection, together with diverse special exhibitions and collaborations with practitioners across disciplines, offer a multifaceted view of Noguchi's art and illuminate his enduring influence. **[noguchi.org](https://noguchi.org) | [@noguchimuseum](https://www.instagram.com/noguchimuseum)**

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