

# MODEL BEHAVIOR

ARCH 4509/6509-103 Cornell AAP- Dept. of Arch. Credits: 3 Instructor: Naomi Frangos  
Time: W. 10:10a.m.-12:05p.m. Location: 144 East Sibley Hall



Model from exhibition *In Search of Contoured Playground*, Photos: Nicholas Knight. ©INFGM / ARS

*"It's extremely interesting to me, this whole business of measurement, of place, of situation, ... You can say that architecture is sculpture as an experience to be completely experienced not just looking at it... You're encased in it."*

Isamu Noguchi, *"Towards a Reintegration of the Arts,"* College Art Journal 9 no. 1 (Autumn 1949): 59.

Sculptor Isamu Noguchi made dozens of models for spaces, often mistaken as sculpture. Yet, Noguchi's surfaces were forms to be inhabited. His small plaster studies resemble initial sketch models many architects use as a form of three-dimensional thinking, imprecise in size, scale, and orientation. His ability to localize, situate, and engage time-space relationships in the form of non-site-specific works gave him an architect's command of scale. His stage set designs find familiarity in his urban forms. Noguchi's aptitude for thinking and working across disciplines helped him to develop a haptic, inter-scalar intelligence based on material intuition.

As Noguchi rarely made drawings, very little "true" measurement or intended scale of his models exists. By studying the work of Isamu Noguchi and other artists who play with scale, such as, Gonzalo Fonseca and David Umemoto, this seminar seeks to unveil the provocative behavior of models as a curated object that recasts subject-object relationships through inter-scalar thinking and imaginable realities. A combination of readings, measuring devices, visualization and representational techniques will be explored as vehicles for gaining insight into the characteristic spaces of various models possessing inhabitable qualities, from the scale of the territory and architecture, to the scale of the body.

Students will analyze models of unrealized or imagined works through reverse engineered drawings and diagrams to decode the internal logic of geometry, proportion, and organization of spaces. Then, using incomplete models, fragments and figures students will generate a new spatial field through a choreography of movements to compose a new model-artifact as a potential space for play. Finally, by construction of maquettes and photography, the new composition will be imagined as a curated exhibit - "room size model" - that entices its visitor to decipher scales and contexts. The final work will be to produce a document of illustrative instructions for a curated exhibition space, including measured drawings of all pieces to be included, how they were established, spatial layouts and contextualized scenes recomposed from imagery and maquettes.

Possible Field trip to The Noguchi Museum and sites of his built work in New York.

*\* Instructor permission is required. Students should attend first class.*