

Isamu Noguchi's Utopian Landscapes

The Sculpture of Playgrounds and Gardens

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Isamu Noguchi (1904 -1988)

- Innovative sculptor and designer most active in the 1960's.
- Inspired by his childhood in Japan, the high modernist movement and his involvement in the New York School of abstract artists (prominent in the 1930s).
- Noguchi's work allows us to question the nature and definition of art and design.
- Noguchi wanted to expand sculpture to move beyond the sole purpose of aesthetic, his was a sculpture for the common man.

Playgrounds & Gardens as Sculpture (1933 -1988)

- Lesser-known works are landscapes including playgrounds, monuments and Japanese inspired gardens.
- Landscapes as a medium have inherent social value. Noguchi saw them as an artistic contribution to society.
- Landscapes are a useful form of sculpture and can function as monuments, parks and playgrounds.

Images:

Top Left: *Play Mountain*. (1933). Bronze from original plaster. (Watz, 2009).

Top Right: *Riverside Park Playground*. (1960). Bronze from original plaster. (Watz, 2009).

Center Left: *Acros Fukuoka Building* (1995, Emilio Ambasz & Associates). Fukuoka City, Japan. (Acros, 2009).

Center Right: *Sunken Garden*, (1965-1966). New York, New York. (Witcher, 2011).

Bottom Left: *Moere-numa Koen*, (1988-2004). Hokkaido, Japan. (Motoe, 2007).

Bottom Center: *Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum*, (1975-1988). Long Island City, New York. (Witcher, 2011).

Bottom Right: *Well*, (1982). Long Island City, New York. (Witcher, 2011).

