

Martha Graham & Isamu Noguchi

Martha Graham (1894-1991)

-dancer, choreographer, teacher

-since 1924: Martha Graham Dance Company

-modern dance innovator

-many collaborations with other people (stage design/music/choreographers...)

-wide variety of themes and sources (american history, greek mythology...)

Lamentation (1930)



Letter to the World (1940)



“Dark Meadow” with Erick Hawkins (1946)



Isamu Noguchi (1904-1988)

- multidisciplinary artist
- sculptures, furniture, lighting, ceramics, architecture, set designs
- traditional japanese + modernist fusion
- diverse materials: stone, metal, wood, clay
- Martha Graham stage set designs
- public art and landscape integration
- internment camp experience
- global recognition and legacy

“My interest is the stage where it is possible to realize in a hypothetical way those projections of the imagination into an environmental space which are denied us in actuality. The theatre of the dance in particular adds the movement of bodies, in relation to form and space together with music. There is joy in seeing sculpture come to life on stage in its own world of timeless time. Then, the very air becomes charged with the meaning and emotion and form plays its integral part in the re-enactment of the ritual. Theatre is a ceremonial; the performance is a rite. Sculpture in daily life could or should be like this. In the meantime, the theater gives me its poetic, exalted equivalent.”

Collaborations

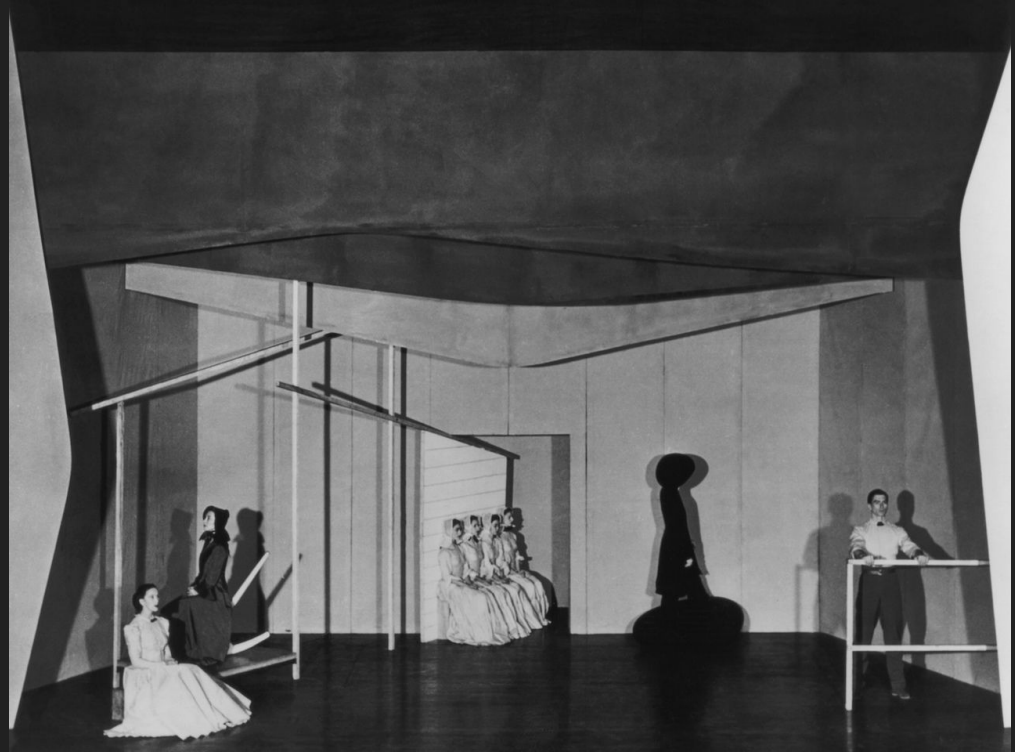
- friendship begins in 1929
- innovative set design & exploratory choreography
- 20 set designs, e.g. *Frontier*, *Cave of the heart*, *Appalachian Spring*
- sculpture comes to life



Cave of the Heart, 1946

Appalachian Spring 1944

- reflects American Attitudes in the end of wartime
- centered around a young couple on their wedding day
- set design composed of a Shaker rocking chair, an American frontier home, wooden fence



What do you think, to what extent is this collaboration still relevant today?

<https://www.holdenluntz.com/artists/barbara-morgan/martha-graham-letter-to-the-world-kick/>

<https://www.chronicle.com/article/martha-grahams-beautiful-harrowing-night-journey/>

<https://vaildance.org/errand-into-the-maze/>

<https://sites.pitt.edu/~gillis/dance/martha.html>

<https://marthagraham.org/portfolio-items/lamentation-1930/>

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Letter-to-the-World>

<https://www.noguchi.org/isamu-noguchi/biography/>

<https://www.vitra.com/en-de/product/designer/details/isamu-noguchi>

Isamu Noguchi - A Sculptor's World, Thames and Hudson, 1967, p.123

<https://magazine.artland.com/artistic-collaborations-martha-graham-isamu-noguchi/>

https://www.hermanmiller.com/en_lac/stories/why-magazine/dance-partners/