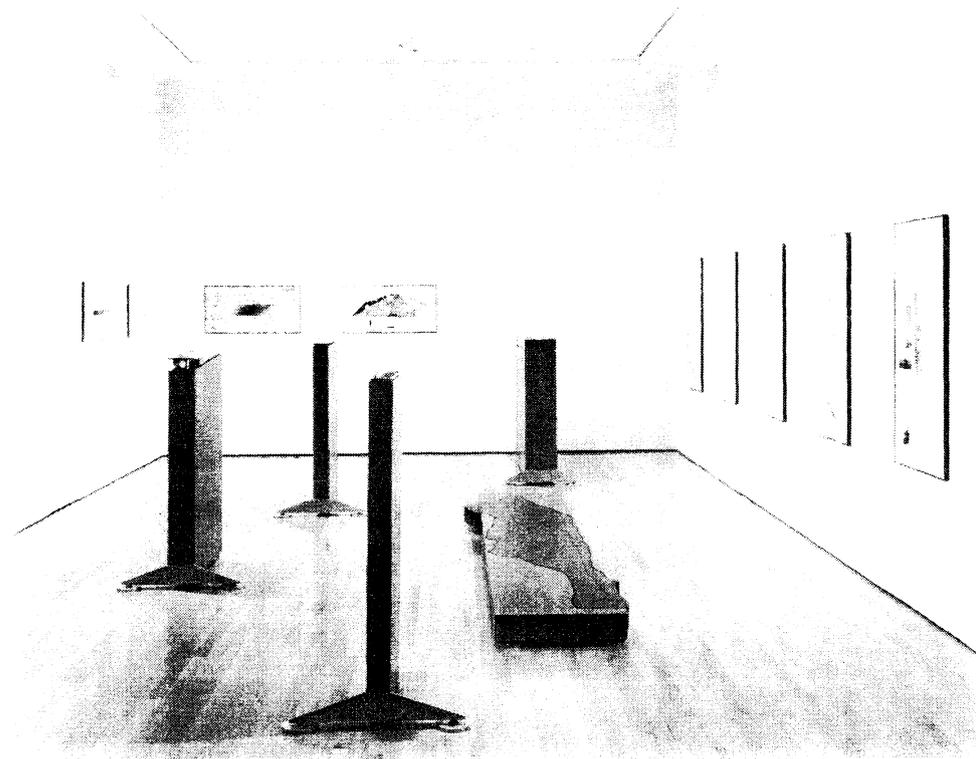


Visible Cities: An Installation Commemorating Robert Moses' Panoramic Model of New York City (Queens Museum of Art, 1995/6)

1997 ACSA Design Award

WELLINGTON REITER
Massachusetts Institute of Technology



If Manhattan is a vessel, it is like all vessels of limited capacity. As such, the island has been forced to decide what it will keep for itself and what it must jettison. Inevitably, it has been the fate of the four “outer” boroughs to serve as overflow space and, as a result, they are frequently repositories for that which either cannot fit on the island or is deemed undesirable.

This process of exportation has spawned a collection of wonderfully idiosyncratic sites, each dedicated to the purpose of housing that which could not remain on Manhattan—wild animals, garbage, giant globes, and Civil War generals (with one notable exception). These locations have assumed powerful identities, becoming “cities” in their own right and

exhibiting some of the same artifice, density, and encyclopedic variety that characterize Manhattan itself.

This project is about joining parallel events that occur both on and off the island in an effort to reveal satellite cities which orbit Manhattan and which allow it to masquerade as a self-sufficient whole. To that end, selected buildings have been exported from Manhattan and fused with reciprocal sites (one from each borough) into composite entities. The format of these new “cities” employs a ship-like template borrowed from the self perception of the island and pertinent references such as the *Intrepid*, docked on the West Side highway, and even Noah’s Ark, the ultimate representation of an encapsulated world.

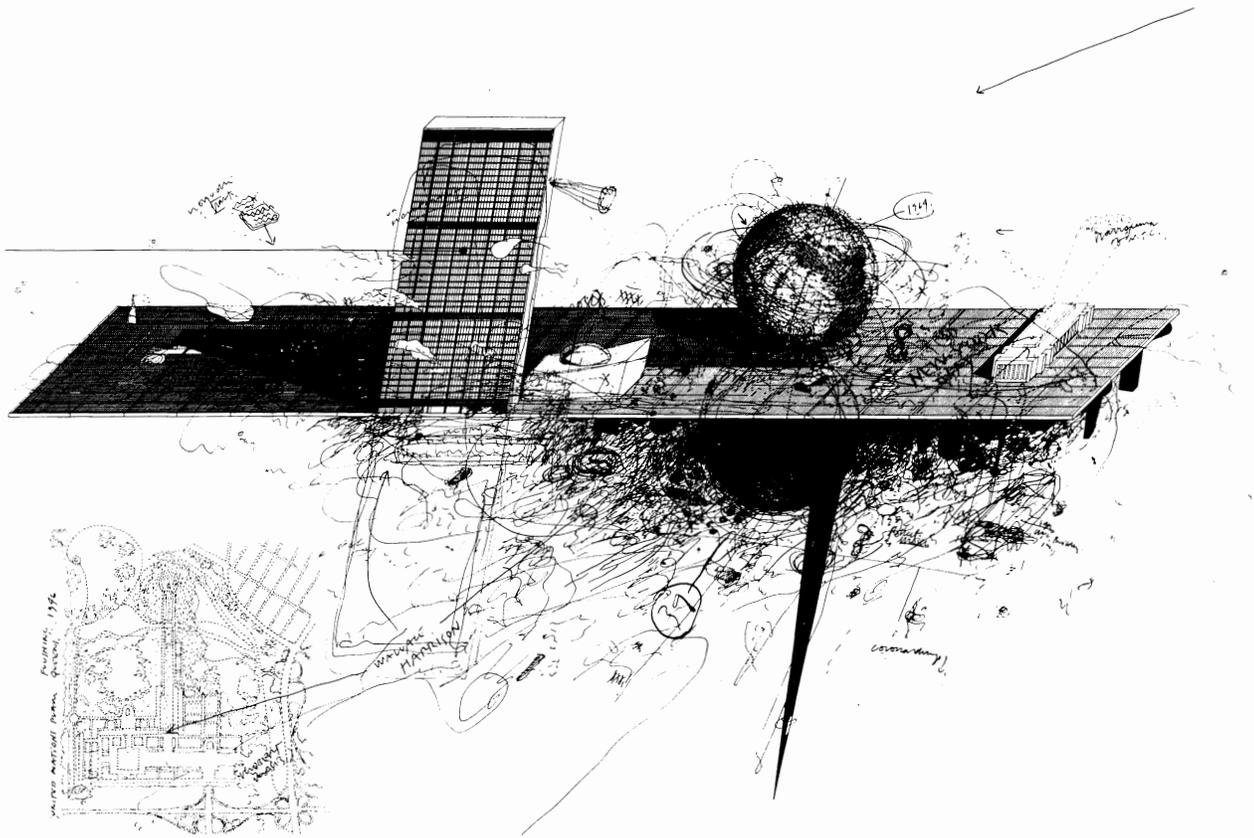


Fig. 2. city of the work, from Visible Cities installation



Fig. 3. city of man-made objects, from Visible Cities installation