

The Alexandria Commission for the Arts  
Statement on Waterfront Planning

Public Art on the Waterfront

The Alexandria Commission for the Arts is appointed by City Council to advise the City on issues related to the arts. In April 2008, an ad hoc committee, formed by the chair of the Public Art Committee, was assigned the task of exploring the potential of public art on the waterfront. Headed by Susan Cohen and made up of 10 individuals including artists, architects, arts administrators and Alexandria residents, the group worked on this issue over the course of a year and then presented the concept proposal to the Public Art Committee. The Public Art Committee, along with City staff from the Office of the Arts, worked with the group to further refine their ideas and then presented them to the Commission for the Arts. The Commission supports and endorses the results of this group effort and has provided the City Department of Planning and Zoning with a concept for art on the waterfront. We look forward to working with the City and community throughout the planning process in an effort to incorporate public art in the updated Waterfront Small Area Plan.

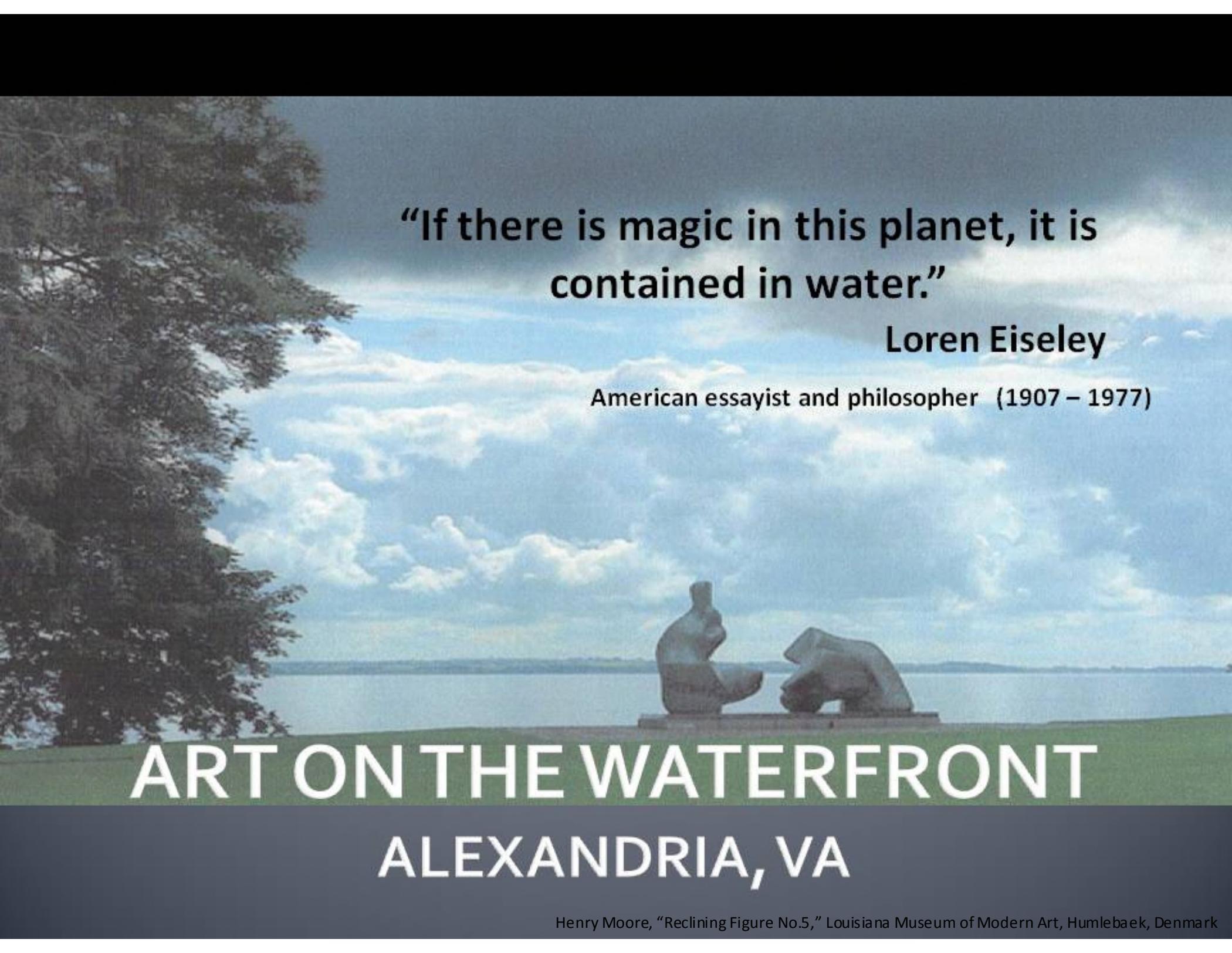
Our concept for public art on the waterfront is based on the belief that art has the potential to be a strong unifying element on the waterfront. Art can create a sense of place and community. It can express universal emotions. It can celebrate history. It can delight and it can please.

In putting this presentation together, the Art on the Waterfront Committee took into account the history of each park and its distinct personality. Aware that some properties are private, and that others were purchased with Open-Space Funds, the Committee's mission was to respond to Alexandria's Art Policy with an exciting concept. Our presentation shows art from all over the world, from Providence to Tokyo. However, public art for the Alexandria waterfront must work specifically for our waterfront and for our city.

We see the creation of an Art Walk along the Potomac River as uniting all the different parks and buildings, and as establishing an exciting arts destination. Featured in the Art Walk are artist-designed conversational seating, a Boxcar Theater on the old railroad spur, temporary sculpture exhibits and a sculpture park. The "Art on the Waterfront" concept includes water-sited and view-framing sculptures, and sculptures relating to Alexandria's historical heritage. Each park would have sculpture reflecting its unique character. The Art Walk also features the Torpedo Factory Art Center, and proposes a Cultural and Performing Arts Center and Potomac River Museum.

If the suggestions in this presentation come to pass, people will be able to follow the Art Walk along the river, visit with the artists at the Torpedo Factory Art Center, explore the Potomac River Museum, picnic in a park among the sculptures and watch a dance performance at the Boxcar Theater. Or they may visit favorite art treasures along the Art Walk, and discover new ones.

For our full "Art on the Waterfront" presentation, please visit [www.alexandriava.gov/arts](http://www.alexandriava.gov/arts).



**“If there is magic in this planet, it is  
contained in water.”**

**Loren Eiseley**

American essayist and philosopher (1907 – 1977)

# ART ON THE WATERFRONT

## ALEXANDRIA, VA



Dale Chihuly, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania



Marta Pan, Hakone Open Air Museum, Japan



Concept image for the Boxcar Theater



Bosma Dance  
Alexandria, Virginia



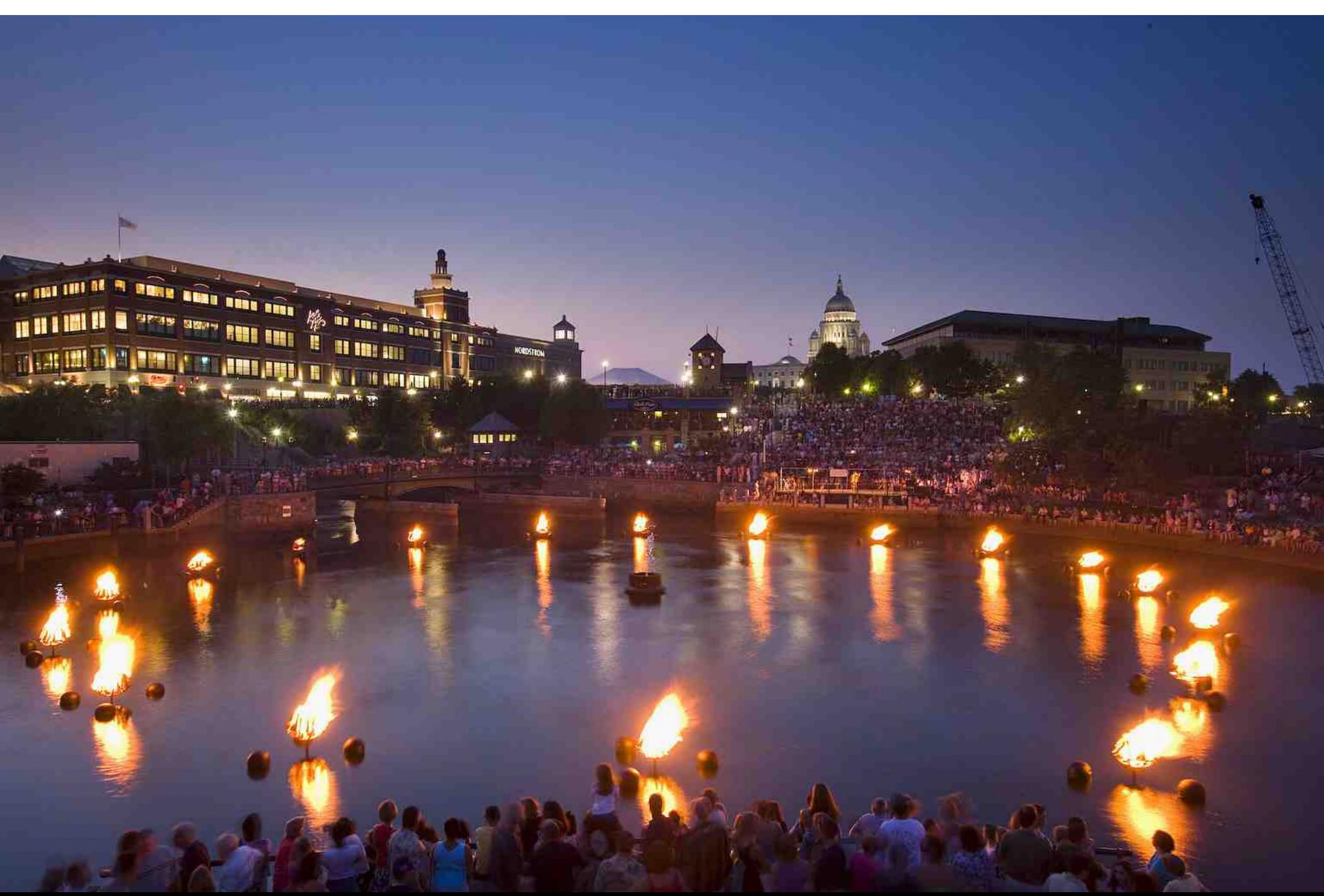
La Jolla Playhouse grounds, University of California at San Diego



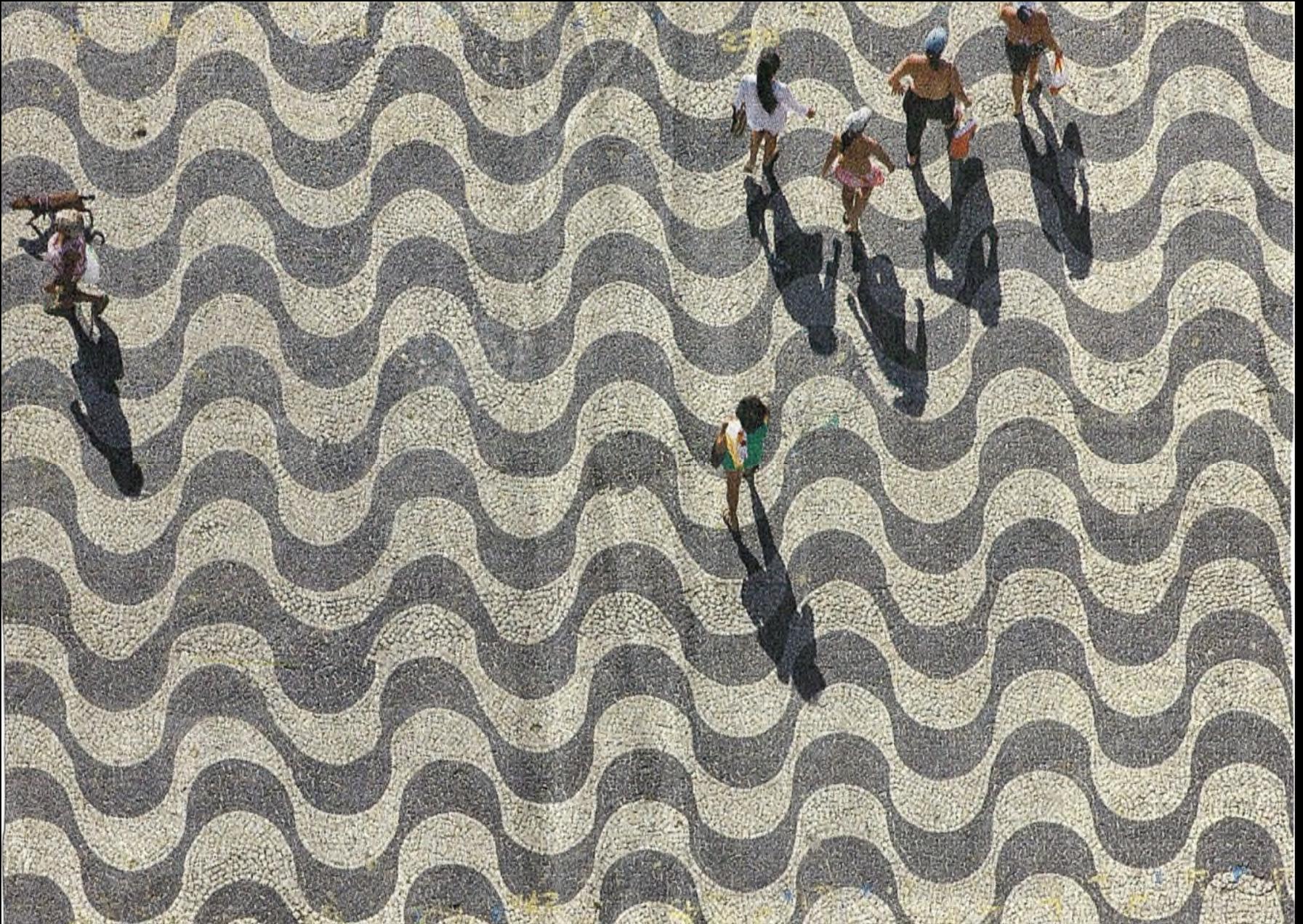
London, England



Yerba Buena Park, San Francisco, California



Outdoor festival : " WaterFire," Providence, Rhode Island



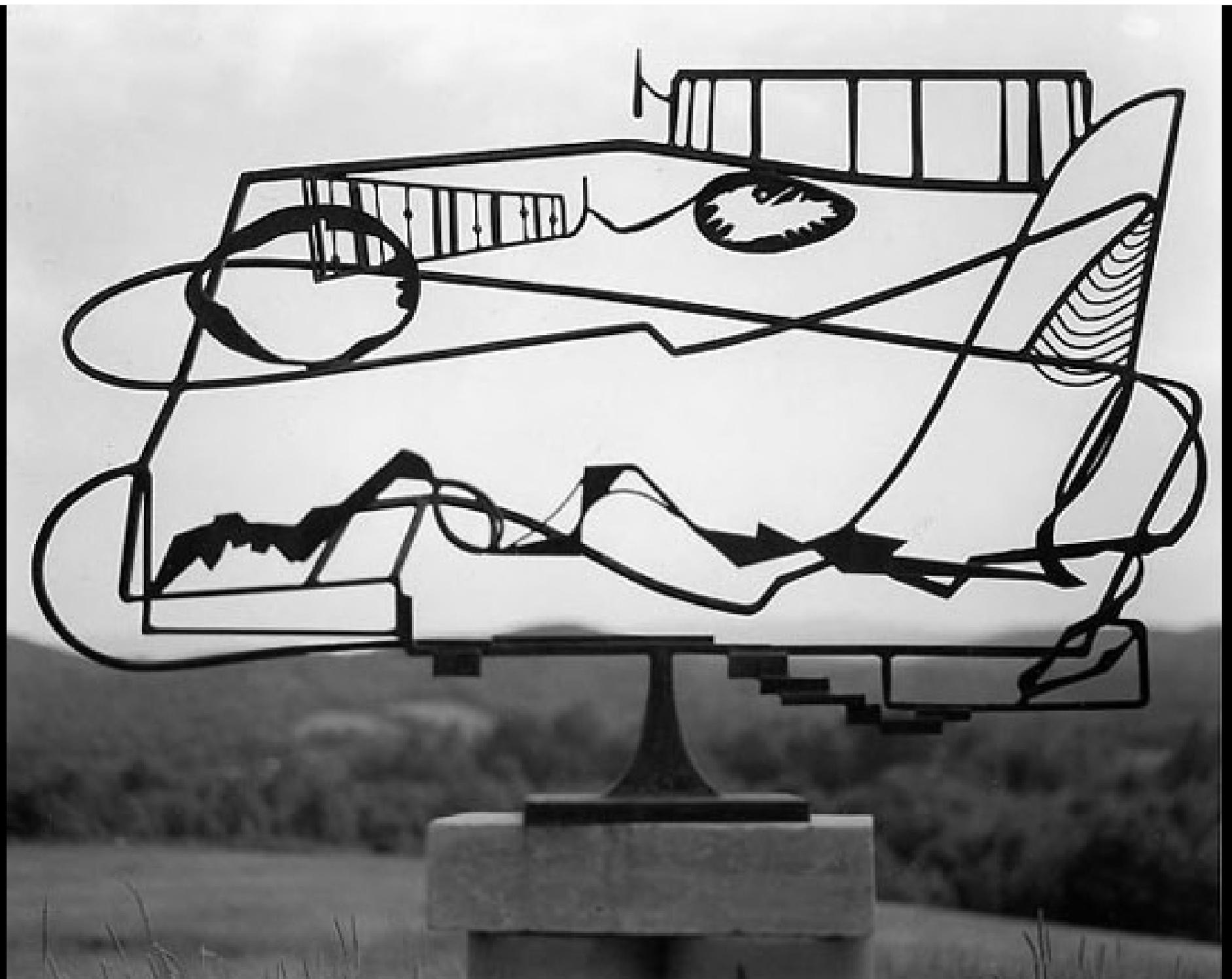
Burle Marx, "Sidewalk," Copacabana Beach, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



Elizabeth Poole, Drawings on the Water, Noosa, Queensland, Australia



Roppongi Hills Lights, Tokyo, Japan



David Smith, Hudson River Landscape, Whitney Museum of Art, 1951



Garden Maze, Hakone Open Air Museum, Hakone, Japan



Aristides Demtrios, Joie de Vivre, 2003 ARS



Dale Chihuly, "Float Boat," Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania