

# Sculpture

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**Martha Jackson-Jarvis**  
**Charles Ginnever**  
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**Left: Jaime Plensa, *Primary Thoughts*, 2001. Stainless steel, psychiatric couch, neon, and sound, 290 x 264 x 264 cm.**  
**Below: Jukata Sone, *Highway Junction 405-10 from Jungle Island* (detail), 2003. Marble.**

The strength of Sone's installation was primarily conceptual, so much of the meaning was entrusted to the viewer's cognitive leaps—we were invited to springboard off the artist's indexical markers. This meant that the physicality of the work was subordinated to the artist's over-arching ideas—a point evident in both the overall spatial array of the installation and in the carved marble works (which are said to have been created from models that were shipped to China, where stonecutters reproduced them). Specifically, the overall scale relationships in the installation were not well elaborated. Notwithstanding its long list of exotic plants and flowers, the garden was not really large or compelling enough to be

interesting in and of itself. The paths were small and felt slightly cramped in the cavernous warehouse, and the bulky wooden pedestals on which the marble carvings were set interfered with their integration within the installation. The flat, milky consistency of the Chinese marble and the appearance of the carving presented a machine-like finish. So, the viewer's imagination was necessarily activated by the act of scrutinizing the miniaturized landscapes and mentally localizing familiar roadside monuments and buildings. This imaginative participation in the work was facilitated by the viewer's desire to envision the larger environment on a more understandable scale, much as it works within the tradition of architectural models.

One corollary effect of the installation occurred as viewers glanced outside of the museum through the huge roll-up doors open to the adjacent parking lot and what little remains of the Robert Irwin garden. The inevitable contrast

between the industrial front yard of the museum and the ephemeral plot of "enriched" earth inside the converted warehouse set the mind off on alternate reveries or paranoid scenarios about the fate of urban design. Thus, the failure of utopian impulses in contemporary urban development emerged from around the corners of Sone's installation. It took the literal form of marble tombstones for the freeways and emerged as a sort of thwarted nostalgia for a recognizable cityscape. Even with its shortcomings, *Jungle Island* fascinated with its minute and abstract aerial landscapes. We activate them in our mind's eye as we seek to map our various urban movements into more comprehensible patterns.

—John O'Brien

## Los Angeles

### Yutaka Sone

MOCA at The Geffen  
Contemporary

For his first solo U.S. museum exhibition, Yutaka Sone presented *Jungle Island*, an interactive installation that consisted fundamentally of a walk through a jungle garden, replete with crisscrossing trails. Four marble sculptures derived from aerial photographs of major Los Angeles freeway interchanges were interspersed along the route. The intended metaphors were immediately visible, as well as predictable, for anyone familiar with L.A. The sculpture's impact centered on the paradoxes of living in a car culture: drivers develop an awareness of geophysicality from the viewpoint of a car window while knowing very little (tactilely or perceptually) about what they see every day.

Sone juxtaposed the life-sized walkways that guided one through the artificially maintained garden with the miniaturized and much more abstract roadways. At every junction of his garden paths, a marble intersection was planted. *Jungle Island* gave viewers a refreshed understanding of how we move through the space known as L.A. and offered to the imagination a condensed version of what is experienced in our everyday vehicular movements around the metropolis.



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