Finally I do a presentation drawing.  From this I construct a series of models in architectural space?  Will it engage people?  Will it be large and overpowering?  This project is supported by the generous contributions of The Holland Foundation, Iowa West Foundation and The Sherwood Foundation.

When looking at one of Paley’s sculptures, it is only far to comprehend it from different perspectives. A passing place does not allow one to experience the sculpture Moment; study from various angles is necessary.

Notice the way Paley challenges the steal to create the beautiful ribbons and waves. These contrast with the more austere geometric shapes and allow for a feeling of soft gentleness winding through the sculpture. Moment is on fourteen feet high and made of CorTen steel with patina finish. It is part of Joslyn Art Museum's program of changing outdoor sculpture on the University's campus. It is a large-scale sculpture 18x16x14 inches, Steel, 45x36x28 inches, fabricated in 2007.

Discussion Questions
What forms do you see in Moment?

What do you feel when you view Moment?

Is metal a good medium for this composition? Why or why not?

How would Moment change if it was fabricated in plastic?

Why did Paley shift from the small scale of jewelry to the large scale installations, like Moment?

How would you describe Paley’s works in terms of their scale?

What is “Architecture”?

How would you describe Paley’s process?

How do you feel about Paley’s gateway to Iowa, Odyssey?

Paley’s Process

In the book Breaking Ground:  A Century of Craft Art in Western New York, editor Barbara Lovenheim asked Albert Paley about his design process when he creates a site-specific sculpture. It is best to understand this process in Paley’s own words:

My design process starts with defining the problem and ends with solving the problem. What will be the piece do? How will it function with the building? A design for a cathedral is different from a design for an athletic institute. What is the scale? Propositions? Symbolism? How will the piece interact with the architectural space? Will it engage people? Will it be large and overpowering? Will it fit into the budget? Then I must find the space to define the feeling experience so I can make them manifest in sculpture.

I begin a series of drawings in free form, then I follow an idea or a theme. Finally I do a presentation drawing. From this I construct a series of models in architectural space. How will the piece interact with the architectural space? Will it engage people? Will it be large and overpowering? Will it fit into the budget?

When engineering or requires? Finally, the finish! When I want to make an emotional statement, I often use color in the piece. At that time, I understand engineering as well as design. But I can change my ideas during construction, since my work is fluid, dynamic process. It’s similar to creating a musical score; it evolves in the process of creation.

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ALBERT PALEY
AMERICAN, born 1944

MOMENT
2009, CorTen STEEL
WITH PATINA FINISH

Lent by Gerald Peters Gallery
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Photo courtesy Paley Studios Ltd. (Rochester, NY)