

HOME FOR THE WANDERER

UNION SQUARE DESIGN

14th Street & Broadway

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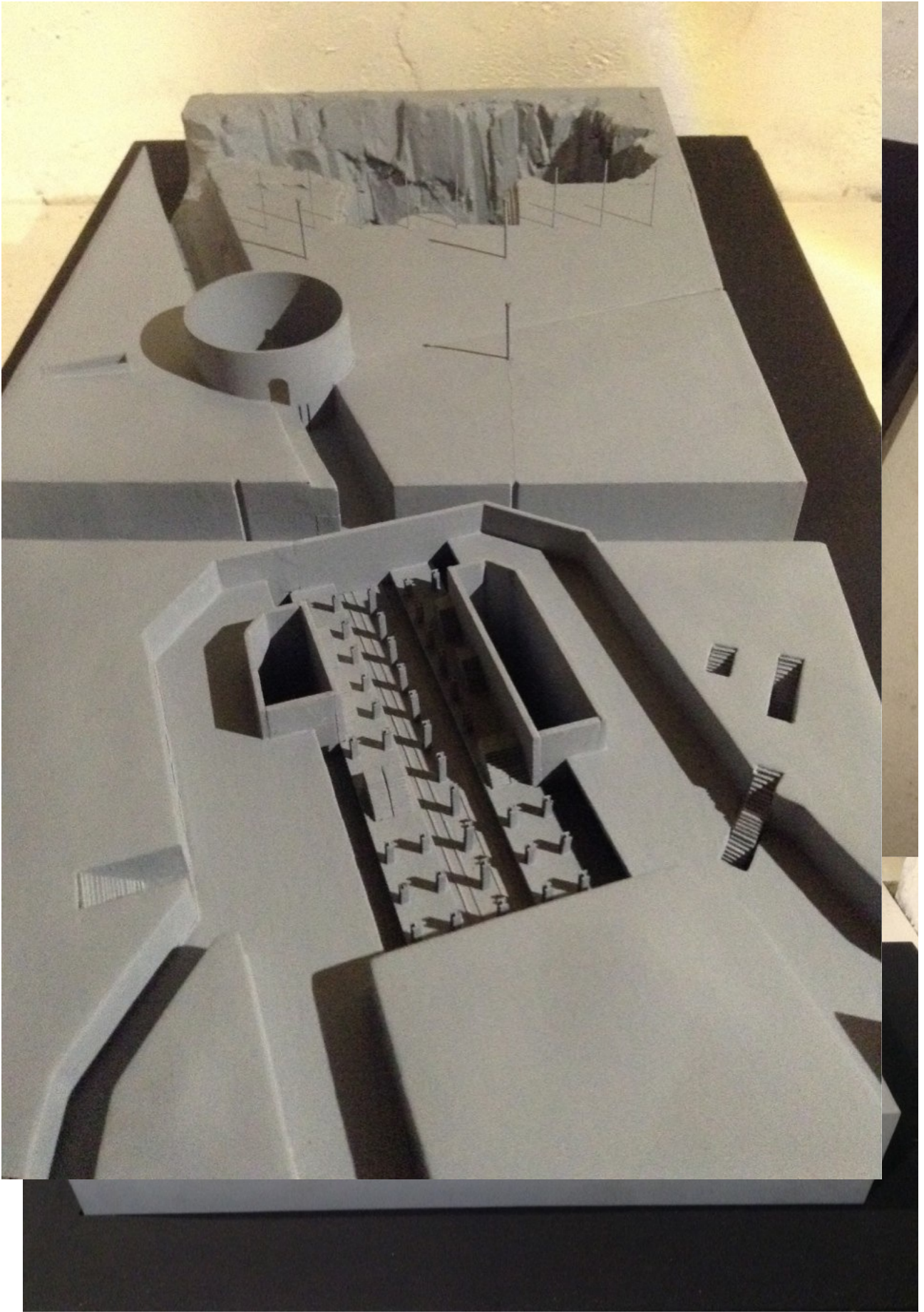
During my final year at Cooper Union I planned to complete the year with the design of a 'Home for the Wanderer'. I had no idea what form it would take but I was intrigued by the question and inherent contradiction; How does one design a home for a person who wanders?

My work on Central Park had taught me that one definition of a garden is a 'home for the mind to wander'. When I discovered the presence of the city in Central Park, it became quite clear where this home should be; within the void in the Park that represents a mansion, *the Mall*. However, I found the idea of building within the sacred space of Central Park undesirable, so I turned to its *parallel* space in the City, on Broadway (New York's Grand Promenade), which is *Union Square*. There I designed a garden as a Home for the Wanderer.

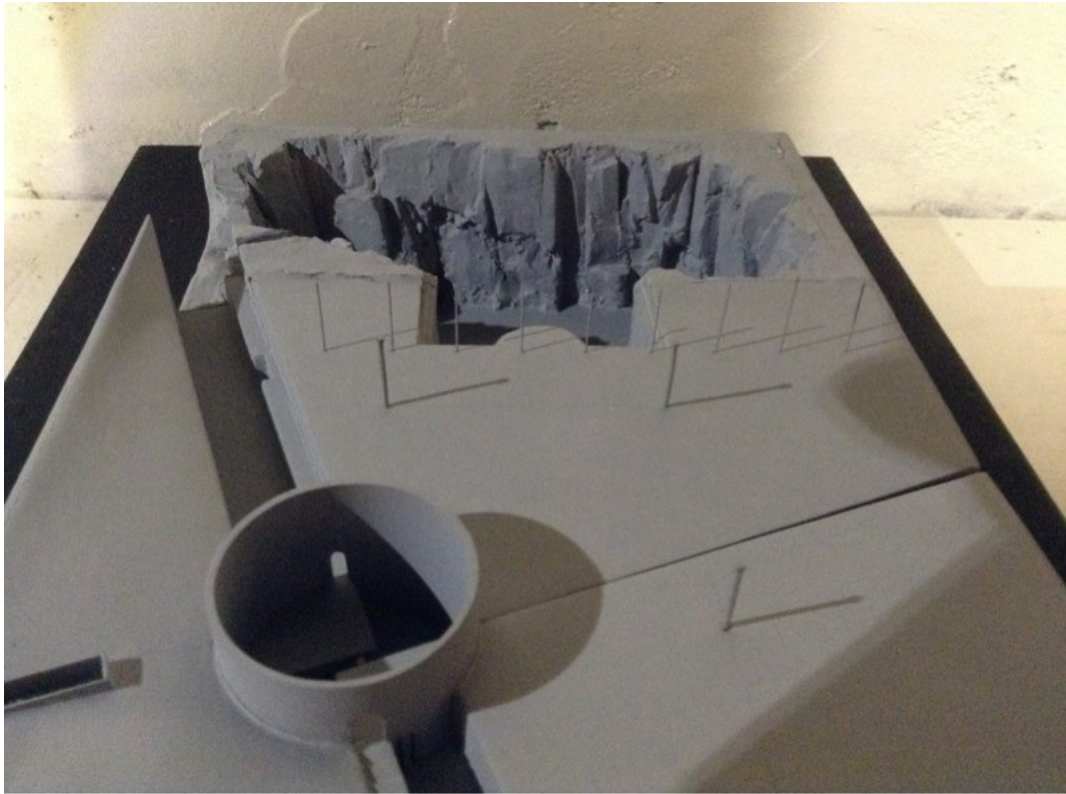
Union Square design

The site is a rectangular space with crosstown streets meeting at its East and West boundaries. For this reason and many others, the Union Square situation can also be seen as similar to that of Central Park. Broadway passes through the site underground, as a subway line. Acknowledging this, the earth is peeled away and exposes the underground train station, recalling the diagonal of Central Park's Grand Promenade.

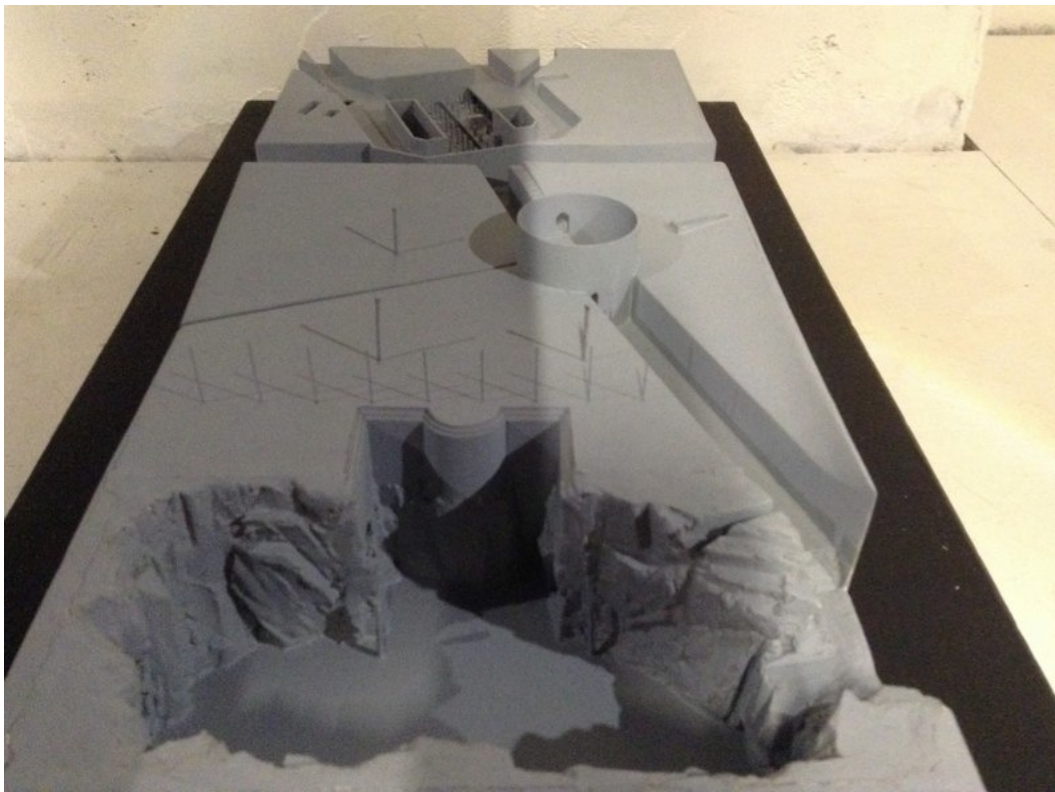
The ordered nature of this South end of the garden is analogous with what Olmsted called the 'lower formal' end of Central Park, including the Grand Promenade and the elements of an English mansion. At the Northern top end of the Union Square design there is a water reservoir, contained in a basin blasted out of the granite base of Manhattan rock. This parallels the rugged 'upper natural' northern end of Central Park. A microcosm of Central Park, the Union Square design offers a multiplicity of layers for one to enjoy peacefully, counterbalancing the often challenging urban surrounds.



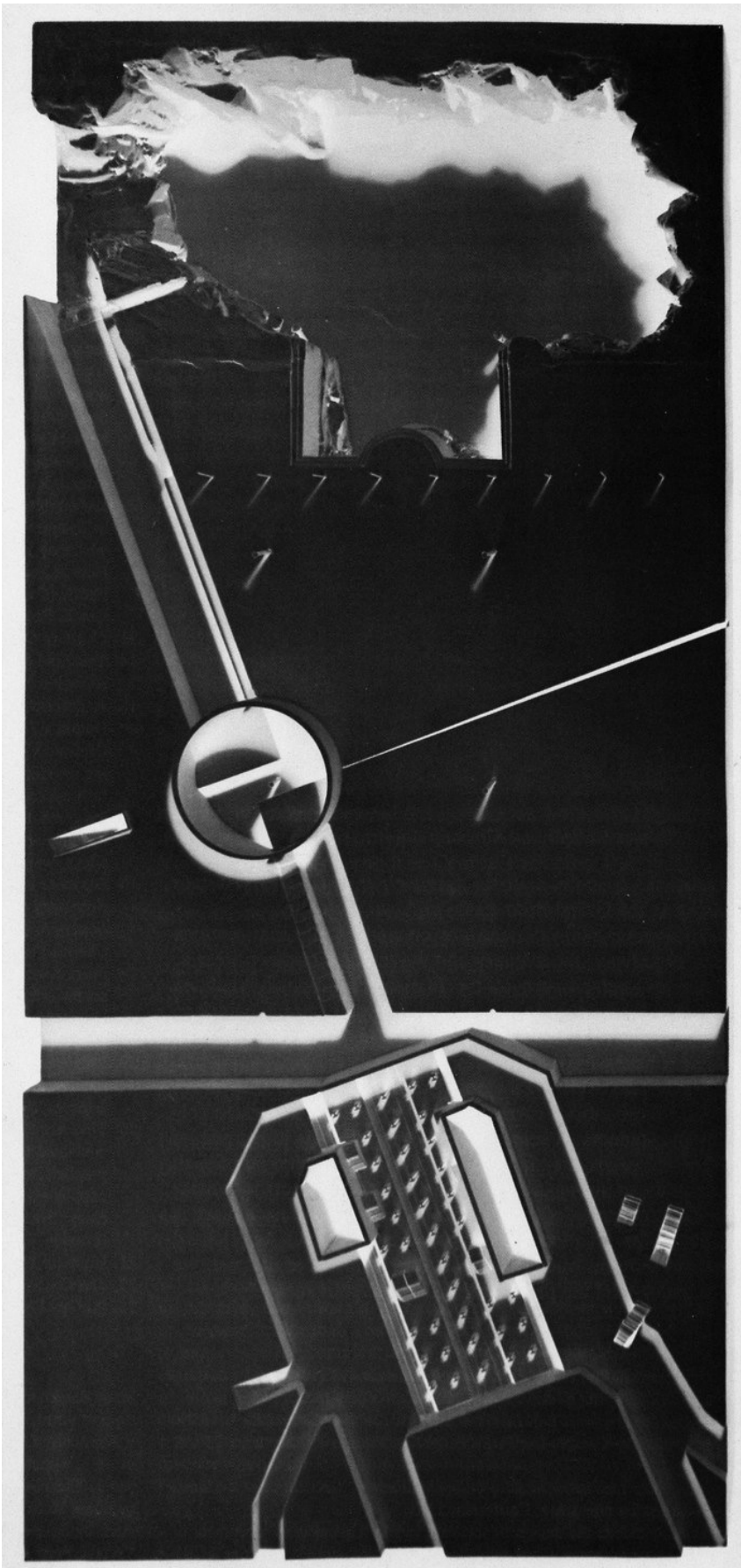
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