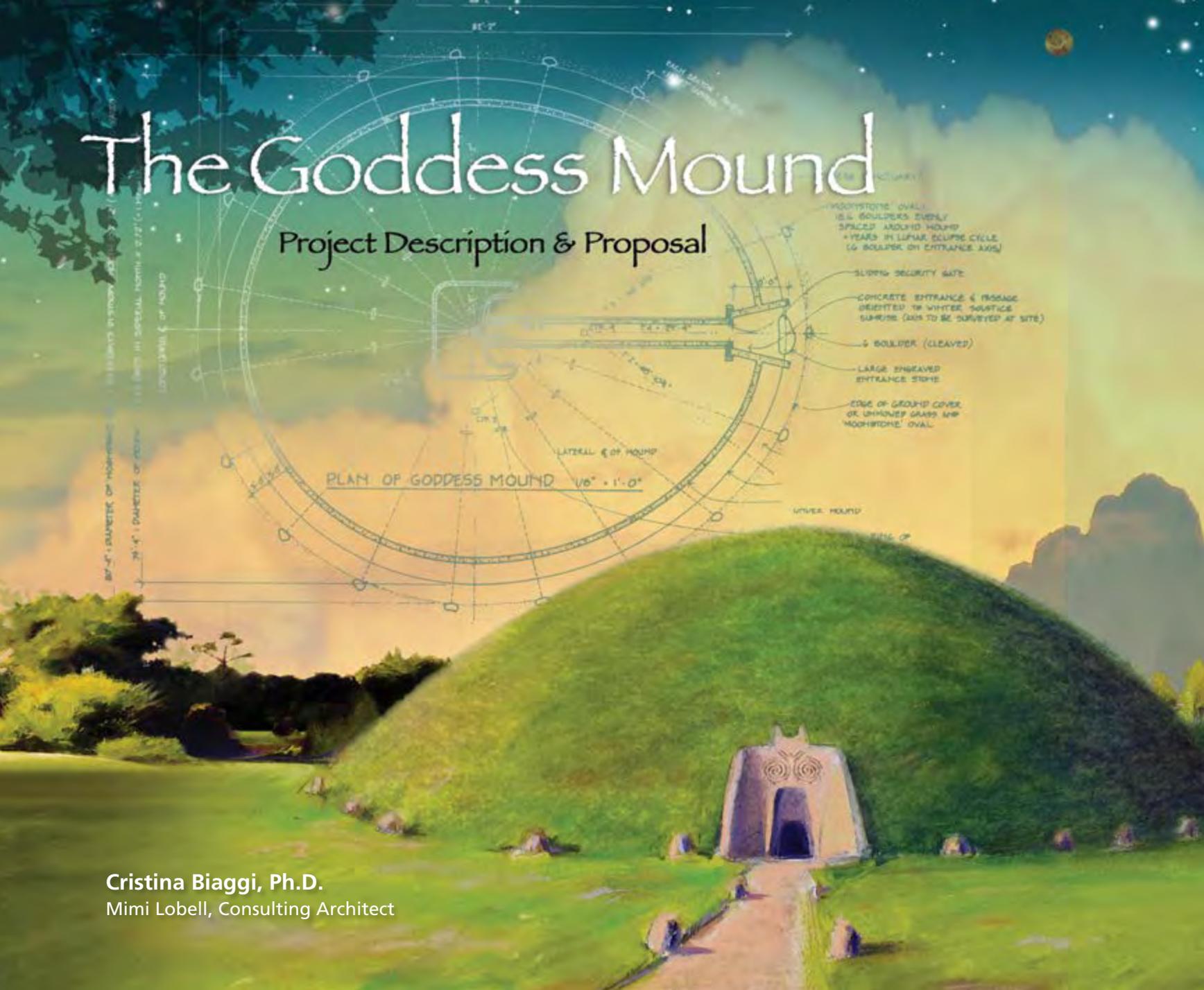
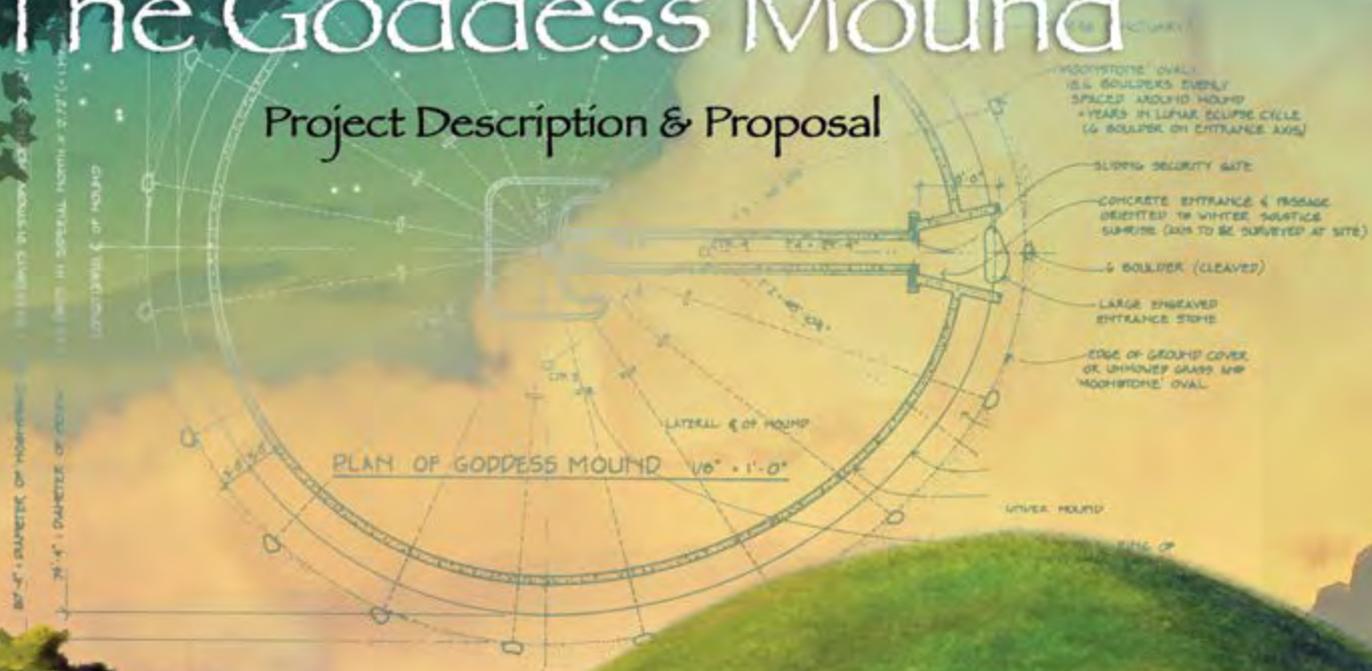


# The Goddess Mound

## Project Description & Proposal



Cristina Biaggi, Ph.D.  
Mimi Lobell, Consulting Architect

## AN INTRODUCTION

After years of studying the archaeological evidence of worship of a female deity in Neolithic and Paleolithic prehistory, Dr. Cristina Biaggi created in her backyard a large papier maché sculpture dedicated to the Great Goddess. This sculpture became the prototype for a formidable permanent outdoor structure that she would like to share with you.

“The Goddess Mound,” as it is called, is Dr. Biaggi’s contemporary reinterpretation and adaptation of the ancient stone temples erected in Malta and on Scotland’s Orkney and Shetland islands to honor every woman’s life-giving force, courageous spirit and unlimited potential.

Dr. Biaggi created her unique sculptural structure in celebration of the immeasurable power and influence of women throughout history, women today, and those yet to come. It is intended as a place for inspiration and learning, for quiet moments and lively conversations, for contemplative ceremonies, rituals, and thought-provoking debates.

Dr. Biaggi is seeking a permanent site for The Goddess Mound—a museum, academic institution, sculpture park or open space that is open to people seeking to immerse themselves in prehistory, world religions, archaeology, sociology, women’s and gender studies, astronomy, art history, and personal fields of interest.

We invite you to read Dr. Biaggi’s Artist Statement and become acquainted with The Goddess Mound—its range of meanings and diversity of scholarly applications. Envision, if you will, what this spiritually and intellectually provocative structure can bring to your institution.

### **ABOUT CRISTINA BIAGGI, PH.D.**

For her scholarship, Dr. Biaggi has earned the respect of her peers in the fields of archaeology and prehistory. A student of the classics, art and art history, archaeology, literature, and languages at Vassar, The University of Utah, Harvard and NYU, she is the author of *Habitations of the Great Goddess* and the editor of and contributor to *In the Footsteps of the Goddess: Personal Stories* and *The Rule of Mars: Readings on the Origins, History, and Impact of Patriarchy*. She maintains an active lecture schedule and has spoken at the Smithsonian Institute, the Glastonbury (England) Conference, the Beijing Women’s Conference, The 92nd Street Y, The Society of Women Geographers, The American Museum of Natural History, The Elizabeth Sackler Center for Feminist Art at the Brooklyn Museum.

As an artist and sculptor, Dr. Biaggi works in bronze, clay, wood and other natural materials. She exhibits her work internationally.





## ARTIST'S STATEMENT

As long as I can remember, I have been deeply interested in all things prehistoric and classical. I draw great inspiration from the Great Goddess. To me, the Goddess is the numinous manifestation of all that is and isn't. The Great Numinous doesn't necessarily need to possess one sex or the other but I feel this force as a powerful and loving female presence. Intellectually, I recognize Her as the prehistoric Great Goddess of archaeology and mythology who was paramount to our ancestors long before the advent of a great God.

My journey to know the Goddess has been a long one. I want to share it with you.

I always felt that something was lacking with the traditional religious concept of divinity. Instinctively I knew that there was something more than "God," that God was a later incursion—an addendum. In the early 1970s, while I was seeking a proper topic for my master's dissertation, I read these words from a book that literally and serendipitously fell at my feet in the NYU Library:

*"In the beginning there was woman. The man only appears as the son, as a biological younger and later phenomenon. The female is the older, the more powerful, and the most aboriginal of the two mysterious, fundamental forms...."*

[In fact, it is now known that in the womb we all start out as females; it is only after the first trimester that we become differentiated.]

These words of Helen Diner in *Mothers and Amazons* seemed so right and powerful to me that they launched my own quest for the Goddess. My mind, my whole being, became consumed with the desire to read, to learn as much as possible about this recently rediscovered spiritual force. I began to devour the then few tomes on the Goddess: the writings of prehistorians Jane Ellen Harrison (1850–1928), Robert Briffault (1876–1948), J. J. Bachofen (1815–1887) and E. O. James (1888–1972). Soon after, I discovered the new work of Marija Gimbutas, archaeologist and author of *Gods and Goddesses of Old Europe*, who claimed that the worship of the Goddess was universal during the Paleolithic and early Neolithic throughout Europe and in many parts of Asia, Africa and the Near East. It was at that point that I also came across Michael Dames' *Silbury Treasure: The Great Goddess Rediscovered*, in which he mentioned the work of archaeologist Charles Calder. Calder believed that there was a connection between the religious structures of Malta and Scotland, especially those on the Orkney and Shetland Islands. Dames also suggested that Maltese Neolithic temples were to be viewed as the body of the Great Goddess. The connection between the religious structures of Malta and Scotland was the basis of my book *Habitations of the Great Goddess*, which was derived from the latter part of my Ph.D. dissertation, *Megalithic Sculptures that Symbolize the Great Goddess*.

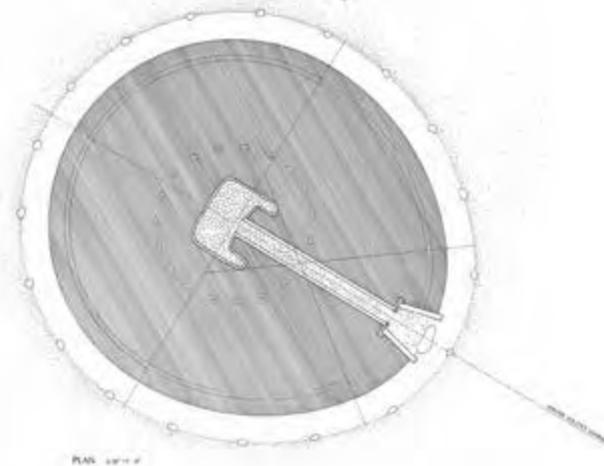
I traveled to Malta in 1979 and then to Scotland in 1981 where I discovered that there were indeed significant similarities in their religious structures and I came to understand in a visceral way that especially Maltese temples were meant to symbolically represent the body of the Great Goddess.

Entering these temples was considered an act of devotion and meant to represent entering into the spiritual body of the Goddess and, therefore, becoming part of her.

In the spirit of this discovery I designed a small maquette of my vision of entering the body of a female figure—the Goddess. Within a large amorphous rock or cairn, I created a reclining female figure in the form of a negative shape, that invites visitors to enter the sacred place. Mimi Lobell, the late brilliant architect, Pratt instructor, and my dear friend, created spectacular architectural drawings depicting my vision.

Based on the maquette, I constructed a full-sized sculpture in my backyard in Palisades, New York. The piece, which no longer exists, was a double-shelled papier mâché structure on a wood and wire armature. The exterior measured approximately 24' x 14' and 8.5' high; the interior measured 18' x 8.5' and 6.5' high.

The sculpture was meant to represent the negative shape of a reclining female figure, six times life-size, lying on her side with one arm draped along her hips and her legs disappearing into the earth below her knees. The exterior of the figure was concealed by the outside structure that had the appearance of a large irregular beige-colored rock with rounded sides and top. A recessed red oval doorway on the right representing the figure's navel was the main entrance into the sculpture's sacred internal space. The experimental mock-up was constructed of temporary papier mâché material and designed as the first of a series of large outdoor sculptures that focused on internal space and represented the body of the Great Goddess.



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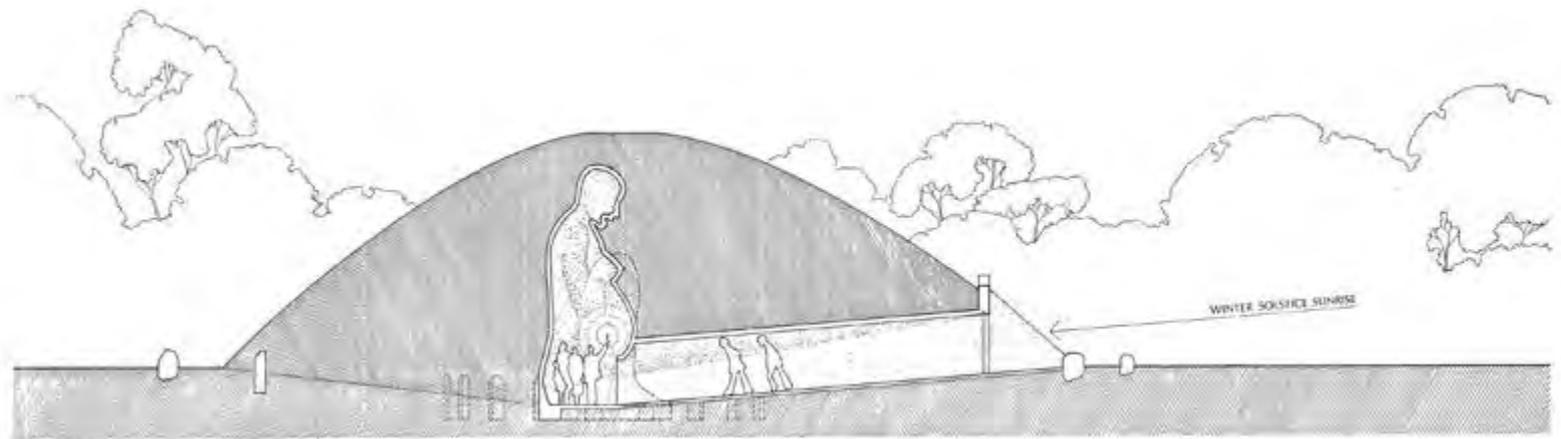
*“Archaeologist Marija Gimbutas was enthusiastic in her appreciation of the sculptural work and scholarship of Cristina Biaggi. The Goddess Mound, especially, was dear to her heart because it continues the Old European tradition found in the sacred architecture of the temples of Malta and in the megalithic tombs of Western Europe, which symbolize the body of the Goddess. The Goddess Mound is constructed in order to be entered, so that the womb space within can be experienced. It is a place of meditation that is greatly needed in this time, which Marija Gimbutas profoundly understood.”*

— **Joan Marler**

Founder President and Executive Director  
The Institute of Archaeomythology

The sculpture of the Great Goddess that I envision creating will be permanent and constructed of materials that will withstand wind and weather. It will be a temple to be entered. The sculpture will be twofold: an outside earth mound covering the inside negative space of a female figure giving birth. The exterior earth mound, approximately 25' high and 74' in diameter, will be covered with wild grass. The inside figure, made of concrete or a similar material that will be shaped by an armature, will be approximately 22' high and 14' wide. The figure will be depicted as squatting in birth-giving position, her legs spread apart and drawn to the sides, her arms tightly clenched under her knees. This was the classic and ancient birth-giving position and remains so in many technologically less advanced cultures today. The floor of the figure will be 3.5' underground and will be entered through a passageway leading from the outside doorway directly into the figure's vagina, the birth-giving passageway that all women share. The inside of the figure will be painted an overall red ochre, the color of death and rebirth from the Paleolithic through the Neolithic periods. Swirling black spiral designs and pictographs, inspired by Paleolithic and Neolithic symbology, will be depicted on the walls.

Both the maquette that was in my backyard and final sculpture I anticipate building were inspired by Maltese and Scottish temples and tombs from the Neolithic period. The form, location, internal spatial arrangements, associated finds, inscriptions and sheer number of Maltese and Scottish structures, as well as similar structures in the rest of Europe and North Africa, suggest strong religious beliefs centered on a deity of death and fertility—a Goddess. Megalithic monuments from the Neolithic period abound throughout Western Europe, many of which were tombs covered with a mound or cairn and some had decorated interior spaces. For generations these structures were used as places of burial or worship. Rituals were enacted on the grounds outside the structures.



SECTION THROUGH ENTRANCE 3/16" = 1'-0"

Drawing on my years of study, I am convinced that the first deity worshipped by our Stone Age ancestors was female. There is confirmation for this statement in the matriarchal societies throughout the world that are pre-patriarchal. I define “matriarchal” as the eminent anthropologist Peggy Reeves Sanday does: from Matri=mother and arche+primal, the core. Therefore, a matriarchal society is one where women are honored but do not subjugate men. They are considered the “prima materia” of a society. In some areas, namely Europe, the Middle East, and parts of Asia, there is abundant evidence that in the early Neolithic period women were considered the core of society, a fact that is being thoroughly studied (See *Societies of Peace: Matriarchies Past Present and Future*, edited by Heide Goettner-Abendroth, 2009). In other areas including China and the Americas, there is newly accumulated evidence to support this. (See Goettner-Abendroth).

Drawing on the archaeological record, mythology and anthropological analogy, we glean that these early matriarchal societies enjoyed an egalitarian existence, expressed their artistic natures, basked in a spiritually rich life, worshipped a female deity, and engaged in no warfare.

Presently, in this era of growing attention to woman’s place in history, I believe the creation the Goddess Mound structure is very important. Women scholars and some men as well working in a diversity of fields are conducting research from a feminist perspective and making valuable discoveries about the heretofore overlooked contributions of women through the ages. Some are studying old data from various disciplines and arriving at creative new conclusions from a feminist perspective, thus expanding our consciousness of what is valuable and precious in human endeavor.

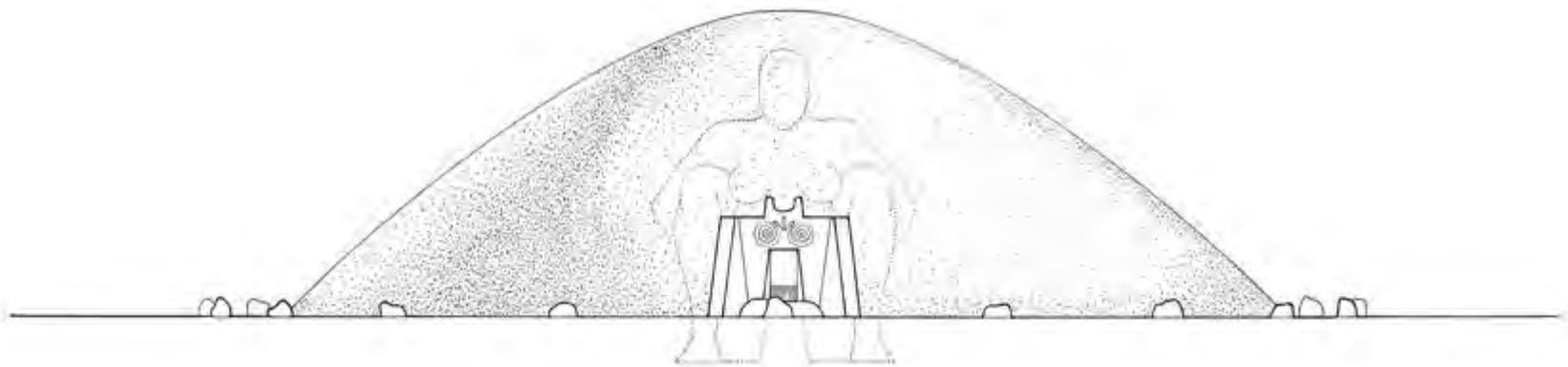
The Great Goddess, the supreme deity of early peoples, has been re-emerging in the 20th and 21st centuries as an inspiring symbol of women’s growing consciousness and importance. The need to make the Goddess accessible as an embodiment of “feminine sensibility” is assuming new-found significance in times of growing militarism.

I regard my architectural sculpture as a tool for renewing our critical thinking about architecture as habitable sculpture in harmony with the environment, and about sculpture as a symbolic embodiment of the Goddess’s presence and character, together forming an architectural whole with the landscape and related to human need. Sculpture in the Western world seems to have lost the mystical, magical presence and power it held in Neolithic times when a temple or sculpture was considered to be the body of the deity.

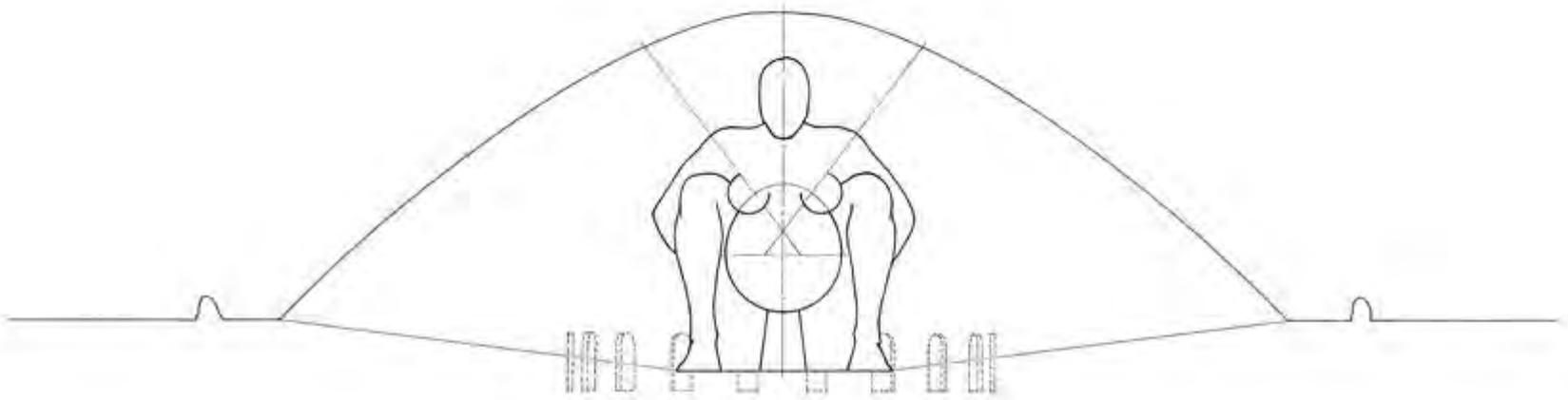
In creating the Goddess Mound, I hope to restore a sense of the magic and mystery of an inspiring space, one that evokes the dark caves of the Goddess—the places of rebirth and revitalized consciousness. I want to create a sculpture that is a sacred place inspired by the past with great significance for the present and the future.

— Cristina Biaggi, Ph.D.

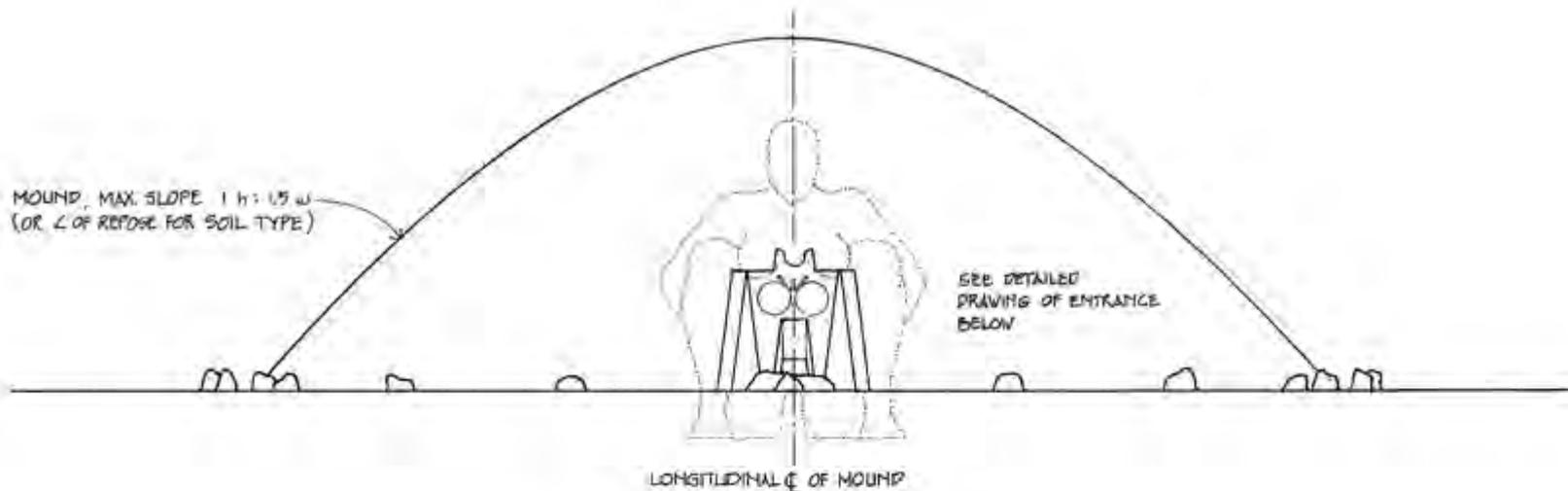




ENTRANCE ELEVATION  $3/16" = 1'-0"$



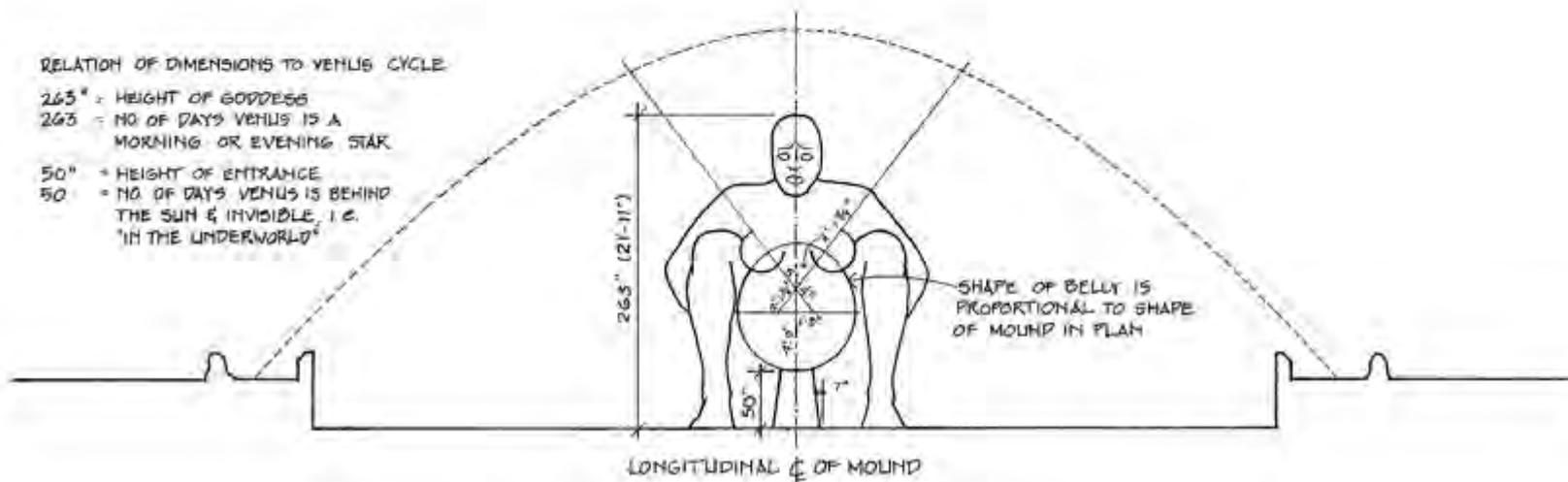
ELEVATION OF THE GODDESS  $3/16" = 1'-0"$



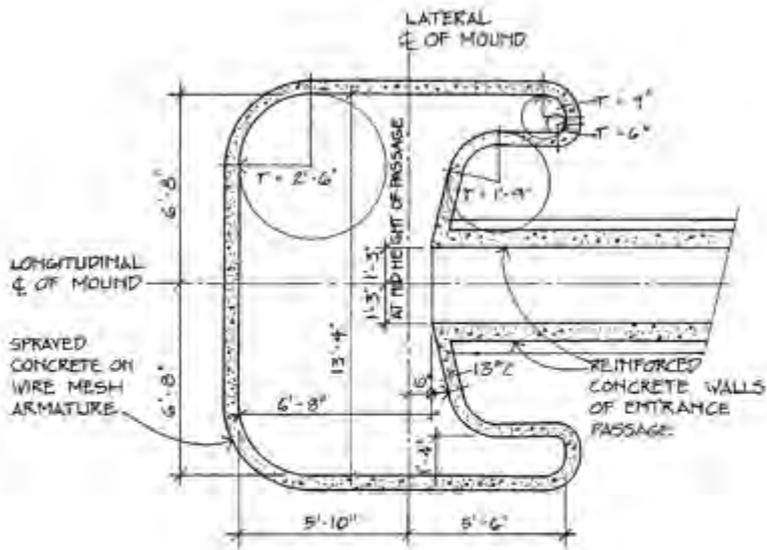
ENTRANCE ELEVATION 1/8" = 1'-0"

RELATION OF DIMENSIONS TO VENUS CYCLE

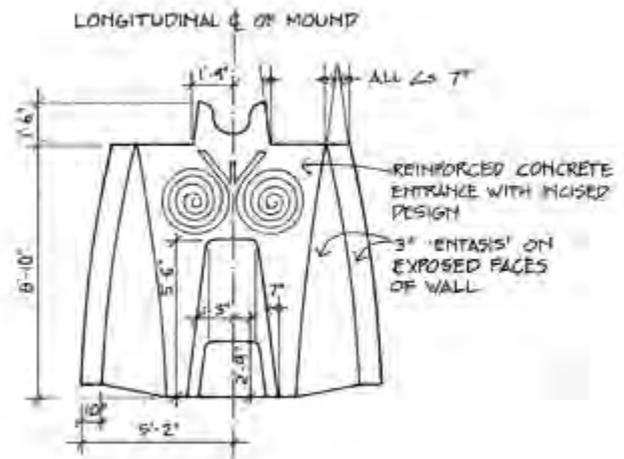
- 263" = HEIGHT OF GODDESS
- 263 = NO. OF DAYS VENUS IS A MORNING OR EVENING STAR
- 50" = HEIGHT OF ENTRANCE
- 50 = NO. OF DAYS VENUS IS BEHIND THE SUN & INVISIBLE, I.E. "IN THE UNDERWORLD"



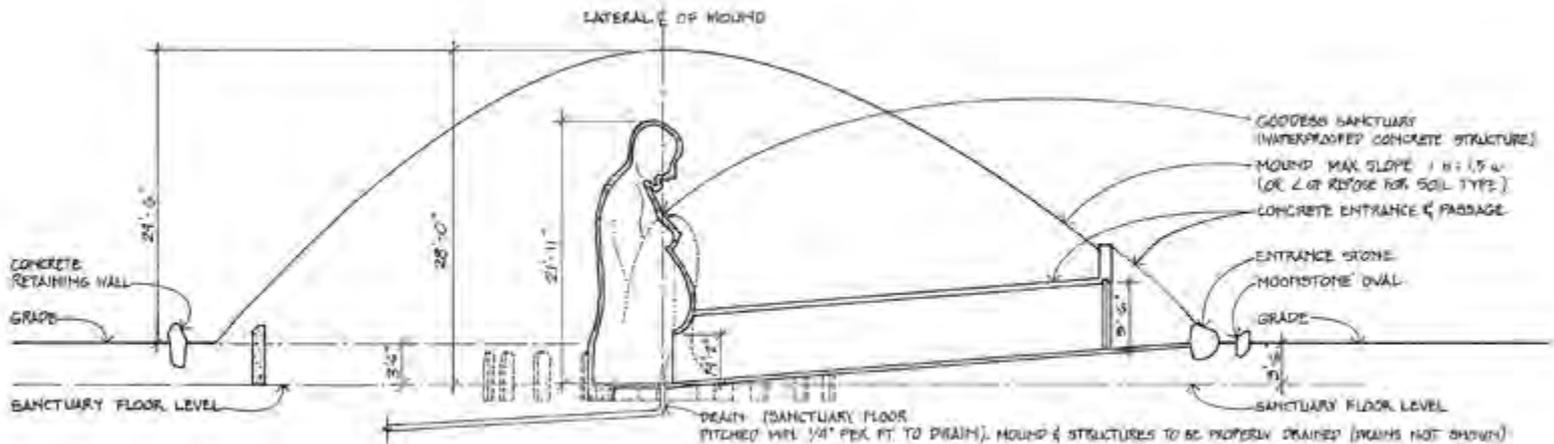
ELEVATION OF THE GODDESS 1/8" = 1'-0"



PLAN OF GODDESS SANCTUARY  $1/4" = 1'-0"$



ELEVATION OF ENTRANCE  $1/4" = 1'-0"$



SECTION THROUGH LONGITUDINAL CENTER LINE  $1/8" = 1'-0"$



## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The architectural design of the Mound was influenced by many prehistoric precedents, and, like them, it incorporates several kinds of astronomical alignments and metaphors.

### **SOLSTICE AND EQUINOX ALIGNMENTS**

Archaeoastronomers have found that the most common horizon alignments in ancient structures and stone circles are toward sunrise and sunset on the Solstices and equinoxes. These quarter points of the year established the planting and harvesting cycle and were especially important to Goddess-worshipping Neolithic farmers.

#### **Winter Solstice Sunrise Entrance Alignment**

The most important alignment is from the Mound's entrance and passage to the Winter Solstice Sunrise, celebrating the moment of the sun's annual rebirth from the darkest day of the year. The Newgrange Passage Mound in Ireland was similarly oriented when it was built over 5,000 years ago. To this day people enthusiastically witness the hierophany of the rising Solstice sun penetrating the dark of the mound's inner chamber.

#### **Other Alignments**

The relationship between the Mound and the surrounding landscape will, wherever possible, create exact alignments to Solstice and Equinox sunrises and sunsets.

#### **Mound Siting**

The final location and orientation of the Goddess Mound will depend on precise on-site surveys and observations of the significant sunrises and sunsets.

### **LUNAR METAPHORS**

The Mound's astronomical metaphors are of two types: those involving proportional dimensions and those involving numerical motifs. Through these the Mound and Sanctuary honor two heavenly bodies traditionally associated with the Goddess: the moon and Venus.

Of all the heavenly bodies, the moon has the oldest links with women. Alexander Marshack has deciphered carefully kept records of lunar cycles in Upper Palaeolithic artifacts associated with female figurines, some over 20,000 years old! Some of the reasons for this link are well known: the correlation between women's menstrual periods and the moon; the effect of the moon on tides, fertility, birth, and growth, which are also provinces of the Goddess; the waxing and waning of the moon as a symbol of pregnancy and of a woman's entire life cycle from maiden to mother to queen to crone (see Donna Henes).

The Goddess Mound symbolizes the moon through the various ways astronomers measure lunar cycles and eclipses.

### **The Moonstone Oval = 18.6 Year Cycle of Lunar Standstills**

Surrounding the entire mound is an oval of 18.6 evenly spaced boulders, all of similar size and about 30 inches high, called the Moonstone Oval. (The partial or .6 boulder located at the entrance would initially be the same size as the other, but would have a 4/10ths of its mass cleaved off.) The number of boulders, 18.6, is a numerical motif relating to the 18.6 year cycle of lunar standstills, the time it takes the moon to complete the circuit of its orbital extremes. This figure is also seen in Stonehenge's Aubrey Circle of 56 holes, which Gerald Hawkins claims marked 3 complete lunar cycles ( $3 \times 18.6 = 55.98$ ) and was used by its builder to predict eclipses.

### **The Namestone Circle = 18.03 Year Saros Cycle of Lunar Eclipses**

Hidden within the mound is a ring of 18 dressed stones called the Namestone Circle. Each stone is similar to a tombstone and is to be engraved with several names by which the Goddess has been known the world over.

The hidden nature of these stones was inspired by beautifully engraved stones turned inward against the body of the mound away from human eyes at Knowth, Dowth, and Newgrange in Ireland. The tombstone shape recalls the importance of the Goddess as a deity of death as well as birth, thus the names were not "dead and buried," but rather are gestating like seeds in the womb of the Earth Mother awaiting rebirth. The number 18 is a numerical motif referring to the 18.03 year saros cycle, an important repetition of lunar eclipses recognized by several ancient cultures.

### **The Moonstone Oval Diameter = Synodic Lunar Month in Megalithic Yards**

The synodic period of the moon, the number of days between successive full moons, is 29.53 days. A megalithic yard, which Alexander Thom asserts is the common unit of measurement in prehistoric megalithic structures is 2.72 feet. The lateral (short) diameter of the Moonstone Oval equals the number of days in the synodic lunar month, 29.53, translated into megalithic yards by being multiplied by 2.72 feet. The resulting measurement, to the nearest half inch, is 80' 4".

This and the next two items are astronomical metaphors based on dimensional proportions.

### **Mound Diameter = Sidereal Lunar Month in Megalithic Yards**

The sidereal period of the moon, the number of days between the moon's successive passages by a given star is 27.32 days. The lateral (short) diameter of the Goddess Mound is the number of days in the Sidereal lunar month, 27.32, translated into megalithic yards. The resulting measurement, to the nearest half inch, is 74' 4".

### **Mound Height = 28 Days of the Visible Lunar Cycle**

The height of the Mound from the floor of the Sanctuary is 28 feet, which represents the number of days in the cycle that the moon is visible in the night sky. In the popular imagination, this is the length of the lunar cycle. The 28 day cycle is used by Native Americans, though not by astronomers. It is the most commonly cited average length of women's menstrual cycles.

Symbolically, the top of the mound represents the full moon and the fullness of the pregnant Goddess whose belly is the mound itself. The dark of the moon is symbolized by the darkness at the floor of the inner Sanctuary where the Goddess is giving birth to the new moon, along with all of creation.

### **VENUS METAPHORS**

After the moon, Venus is the brightest body in the night sky. It is the only planet that Western Civilization has named for a female – the Goddess Venus, the Roman version of the Greek Aphrodite – and its sign is the female symbol. In ancient Mesopotamia, Venus was represented by Inanna/Ishtar, and the Goddess's legendary descent into the Nether World was a metaphor for the times in its orbit when the planet is invisible because it is in front of the sun (for 8 days) or behind it (for 50 days). Between these disappearances, it spends 263 days as a Morning Star and 263 days as an Evening Star. Venus's movements baffled astronomers until Galileo was able to observe its moon-like waxings and wanings with a telescope and understand its orbit. Scientists still debate the reason for Venus's rotational direction, which is the opposite of the other planets.

Venus's disappearances influenced another major mythological system: that of the Mesoamerican God Quetzalcoatl, who represented the planet in the New World. After his death, Quetzalcoatl was subjected to various trials in the underworld (as was Inanna/Ishtar). His triumphant resurrection as the Morning Star, the form in which he was most beloved, is an example of the "Dying-and-Resurrecting-God" motif in mythology. Another example is Jesus's resurrection at Easter, a time of year traditionally associated with fertility (eggs, rabbits, *estrus*, Spring flowers and budding trees). The transformation of the male through death and resurrection is part of the *rebirth* imagery of religion that the Goddess Mound seeks to reclaim.

The journey through the underworld can be seen also as a journey through the unconscious realms of the psyche, always a vital part of the path to enlightenment or individuation, and always an initiation into the deeper mysteries of the Goddess. Since the Mound embodies the elemental birth-giving Goddess, and entering Her is symbolic of entering the underworld to accept death and rebirth – the death of the ego and the rebirth of Goddess-blessed being – it is appropriate to incorporate Venus imagery into the design. This is done through the dimensional proportions of the Sanctuary itself.

### **Height of the Goddess Sanctuary = 263" = Venus as Evening/Morning Star**

The height of the Sanctuary structure, 21' 11" = 263, which stands for the number of days Venus is a Morning or Evening Star. Thus, the outer dimension of the Goddess symbolizes the visible phases of Venus, which, in turn, relate to the visitor's perception of her of his conscious life in the world.

### **Height of the Sanctuary Door = 50" = Venus "in the Underworld"**

The door to the Goddess Sanctuary is 4' 2" high (one must stoop, but the passage is considerably easier than in one's first birth experience). This equals 50", symbolizing the number of days in Venus's greater period of disappearance when it's mythologically said to be "in the underworld." A person entering the Sanctuary is, in effect, recapitulating Inanna/Ishtar's (and Quetzalcoatl's) descent into the Nether World and entering the depths of her own psyche.

### **PREHISTORIC PRECEDENTS**

We have seen how the concept and design of the Goddess Mound have been influenced by Maes Howe, Silbury Hill, Newgrange, Stonehenge, Upper Palaeolithic artifacts, and various Scottish and Maltese megalithic structures. Because of the archetypal nature of its imagery, the Goddess Mound relates to so many works of art and architecture that it would be impossible to note them all here. But a few additional direct sources of inspiration bear mentioning, along with notes on some design concepts not yet described.

### **Engraved Entrance Stone**

The large reclining stone at the entrance to the Mound is designed to evoke the beautifully carved entrance stone at Newgrange, with its enigmatic spirals and lozenge motif. It is also related to spiral-engraved entrance stones at Maltese temples such as those at Tarxien.

### **Entrance Structure**

The sloping walls of the entrance structure are inspired in part by the so-called Treasury of Atreus at Mycenae. Although this was built after the era of purest goddess worship and female-centered civilization in the Eastern Mediterranean, it perpetuated traditional forms built by the earlier cultures, such as the womb-like *tholos* tombs of Crete and "beehive" houses at Khirokitea on Cyprus.

### **Explanatory Illustration**

To inform the visitor of some of the meaning of the Goddess Mound, a diagram of its astronomical correlations and underground Goddess Sanctuary will be inscribed in the concrete at the entrance. Explanatory drawings are similarly incorporated into the entrances of some of the Maltese temples.

### **Spiral and Yoni Motifs Above the Entrance**

The double spiral above the entrance is based on a design from a Goddess Temple at Tarxien, Malta. In a broader sense, it is related to spiral designs found universally in Neolithic art and pottery. These may have symbolized the spiraling movements of atmospheric and earthly current that the early farmers felt they had come to know and harness.

Above the spiral is an inverted triangle, a venerated *yantra* in India that represents the generative yoni of the Great Goddess in her aspect as the cosmic creative principle.

## **Horns of Consecration**

Above the yoni, surmounting the whole entrance structure, are the Horns of Consecration. As old as the Hall of Bulls at Lascaux, this symbol figured prominently throughout the Old World and was specifically connected with female deities at shrines in Çatal Hüyük, Beycesultan, Dendura, Crete and Sabatinovka, among others.

A multifaceted symbol, the Horns of Consecration can signify the sacred bull or cow (e.g., Hathor), the crescent of the waxing or waning moon, the vulva of the Goddess, the gateway between the primal duality, and a valley between two mountain ranges (as in Egypt). It usually frames something highly revered – a sacred mountain on Crete, the solar disc in Egyptian art, the entrances to Dogon shrines in Africa, the axis to the holy-of-holies in New Kingdom Egyptian temples, an altar at Beycesultan, and so forth.

In the Goddess Mound, it is hoped the Horns of Consecration will resonate with all of these meanings. They frame the Goddess's vaginal passage through which one enters and leaves the Sanctuary.

## **Egg-Shape of the Earth Mound and Belly of the Goddess**

Alexander Thom, Scottish engineer famous for his study of Stonehenge, found that most prehistoric stone "circles" in the British Isles were actually either flattened circles or egg-shaped. Each of these shapes had their own geometric derivation, which Thom describes using the megalithic yard as the unit of measure. The Goddess Mound's shape (in plan) is precisely constructed according to Thom's principles of egg-shaped stone circles. Specifically, it is proportional to a stone circle at Clava Cairns near Inverness in Scotland.

Since the Mound and the belly of the figure underneath both represent the pregnant womb of the Great Mother, the belly of the Goddess Sanctuary is also egg-shaped (in elevation) and is exactly proportional to the Mound.

## **"Fairy Rings"**

If it were possible to get mushroom spores to create "Fairy Rings" around the Mound, that would be ideal. Since that probably will not happen, the effect of ripples of plant life encircling the Mound will be achieved through landscaping. Rings of ground covers of different textures, colors, and flowering periods will encircle the Mound, spreading its "energy" into the surrounding field.

## **GEOMANCY**

The siting of the Mound will be determined in part by the astronomical considerations described earlier, and in part by geomancy (*geo* = earth, *mancy* = divination). The art of "earth divination" was developed most highly in China, where it was widely used until it was outlawed after the Communist Revolution. But it was used also in many parts of the ancient world to determine the most propitious sites for buildings, tombs, towns, road, and the like.

To the geomancer, the earth is a living body (e.g., the goddess) with currents of energy coursing through its surface much like the meridians of energy perceived in the human body by acupuncturists. Since they function like acupuncture needles in the earth's surface, building and other structures must be carefully positioned lest they adversely affect the flow of energy and create dis-ease in humans and the earth.

The earth energies that are manipulated (which appear to be low level magnetic currents) are sometimes called "Telluric Currents" in the West, after the Roman earth spirit Tellus, and "Dragon's veins" in the East. Many spirit beings in folklore – mermaids, sprites, nymphs, genies, fairies, and especially dragons and serpents of all kinds – are personifications of these energies, and the legends about them colorfully encode folk wisdom about the earth.

Some myths can be interpreted in terms of the imagery of geomancy. Apollo's slaying of the Python at Delphi to wrest control of the Oracle from the Earth Mother Gaia is a vivid metaphor for the new Indo-European heroes' and gods' theft of the earth's most sacred sites from pre-existing priestesses and goddesses. It also captures the heroic nature-conquering rather than nature-embracing stance of the new culture. The Dragon-Slaying theme of so many heroic epics is another metaphor for the patriarchal destruction of the earth's Telluric currents (see Neumann).

Though geomancy is not a living tradition in the West (aside from the skills of a few dowzers), we will try in the siting of the Mound to apply as many sound geomancy principles as can be reconstructed from research into the subject.

## **CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE**

### **Materials**

The entrance, passage, and Goddess Sanctuary will be constructed of reinforced concrete with red-ochre painted interiors and stone, slate, or concrete floors. Water resistant coatings and good drainage will protect the structure from rain seeping both through the Mound and down the sloping entrance passage. Since the Sanctuary is underground, insulation will not be used. The Mound will be constructed of packed earth, with a slope not exceeding the soil's angle of stability. The surface of the Mound will be sown with wild grass, ground cover, or perhaps wheat.

### **Mechanical Systems**

The structure need not contain electrical wiring or plumbing (other than the pipes required for drainage). Ventilation shafts will be incorporated into the design.

### **Security**

The sliding security door at the entrance to the Mound will prevent vandalism (however, it must be operable from inside as well as outside to avoid accidental entrapment). To prevent erosion or deterioration of the Mound, people should be discouraged from climbing it, except perhaps at special times of the year.



## MEANINGFUL USES OF THE GODDESS MOUND

The Goddess Mound should play an important role in the life of its ultimate environment in countless ways, limited only by the imagination.

First, it should be known that Dr. Biaggi envisions the Mound as a vitally alive outdoor sculpture, a place of enormous fascination to people of all ages and personal paths, and a place for respite and renewal. The uses for the site will vary from being a place for escape from the realities of the present, connection with the past, and anticipation of the future.

As with anything new, it will be necessary for the Mound's adoptive community to create excitement and establish a deep and ongoing interest in it. People will have to be "sold" on the many ways they can enjoy the site year-round and reminded regularly with an enticing and full schedule of programs relevant to the particular interests and culture of the community.

The opening year of the Mound should be celebrated with a symposium and/or lecture series and an exhibition exploring the cultural and symbolic meaning of the Mound, its artistic and architectural antecedents, and the emergence of Goddess imagery in contemporary art.

The structure should be open and staffed at appropriate times. The site invites being used by groups and individuals for many reasons, including:

- outdoor classrooms for students of ancient history, world religions, women's and gender studies, archaeology, astronomy, art history, sociology, anthropology, world peace, and more
- an ongoing program of seasonal events that coincide with the Solstices and Equinoxes and other times of the year when the Mound is most meaningful, especially at this time when the earth and its beings are subject to the effects of global warming
- music, dance and theatre performances
- an annual Distinguished Lecture series
- quiet moments of contemplation and private meditation
- lively conversations and provocative debates
- ceremonies, large and small—occasions of commitment, birth, memorial events, recognition of significant accomplishments

These are but a few of the ways the Goddess Mound could be incorporated into the life of its home community.

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*"Cristina Biaggi's Goddess Mound will be both a sacred place in itself and a long overdue link to the sacred earthworks that were on this continent long before Europeans arrived. It will be a tribute to matrilineal cultures that honored women and men, sky and earth, spirit and nature; an honoring of the past – and a path to the future."*

– Gloria Steinem

Co-founder of *Ms. Magazine*, writer,  
lecturer, editor, and feminist activist

*"Cristina Biaggi's work –  
seminal, gorgeous, provocative.  
No one like her!"*

– Olympia Dukakis

Film and Stage Actor