

A faint, light-colored sketch of a landscape serves as the background. It features a road or path that curves through the scene, with several tall, thin trees or reeds on the left side. The overall style is minimalist and architectural.

RUUSUPUISTO ROUNDABOUT

aalto

a draft

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analysis

The Ruusupuisto roundabout is elevated above its surroundings, like a plateau, in the midst of urban infrastructure with some older trees and young vegetation. Remembering this area as a more intricate and intimate situation, it has now become a very large open place. At the moment it is a void with little to focus on. Of course, there must be a balance between the differing needs: the necessity of a satisfying visual presentation and the safety requirements for the traffic. Even though the physical road environment is the first concern for its development and use, there is also the background and spirit of an area – as explained in the Green Loop art concept. These can be taken into account in the development of an artistic complement. Here we are near, or even between the campus areas of the university and more or less next to the Museum of Central Finland and the Alvar Aalto museum and the art could also appeal to that public.



my first thoughts

I feel a need for something exciting or surprising to happen when one approaches this roundabout – something to complete the vacuum and contrast the openness with more volume or mass – to introduce a reason for the road to make a circular movement around it – something emerging from the surface. I considered using trees to counteract the flat surface made up of roads and the areas enclosed by

them, but I think that vertical elements would only accentuate the horizontality of the place – like a forest accentuates the surface on which it stands. Moreover, there already are and will be more trees outside of the roundabout area. The effect of vertical elements like trees would only be strong when they are more or less exclusive.

a roundabout as art

Art on a roundabout can have specific possibilities which are different from those in other situations or settings. Its evolving views are inherent to its function, the observer views it from predetermined viewpoints before moving around it. The views of a roundabout are always animated and evolve following a predetermined pattern - which is a reason to make use of this aspect. I feel that this is an opportunity that must not be forgotten and certainly exploited. The spatial quality of three-dimensional art is in case of a roundabout not enough in itself. There is much more to utilize.

There is a lot going on around urban situations like Ruusupuisto, which impels me to want to treat the central area of the roundabout as a focal point – as a strong accent in its surroundings, differentiating itself from- and contrasting with the diversity around it. I anticipate that the surrounding area will keep evolving through time and therefore propose to have the roundabout be the work of art itself, instead of it being only a place to locate art.



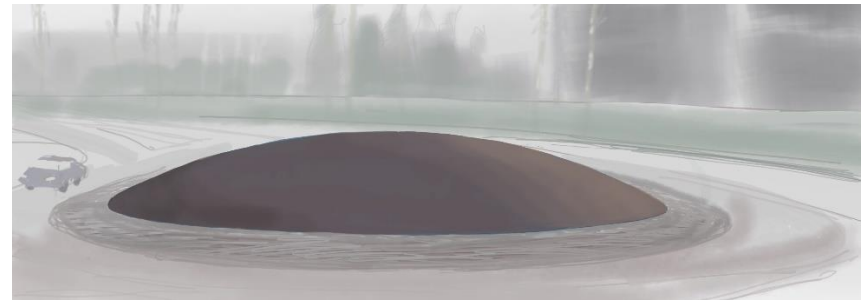
Environmental art makes it possible for people to enter the work. Japanese gardens were in fact a form of environmental art. Zen Gardens can be entered, but there are also ones which are to be viewed only as in the case of a Japanese garden like the one at the Ryōanji Temple in Kyoto, Japan. The similarity with viewing art on a roundabout is that one cannot enter the space. The difference is that in the case of a roundabout one is limited to just being able to see it for a small fraction of a minute. There is only a short time for processing what one saw. Contemplation must be done afterwards from memory - the impact is quite direct.

landmark

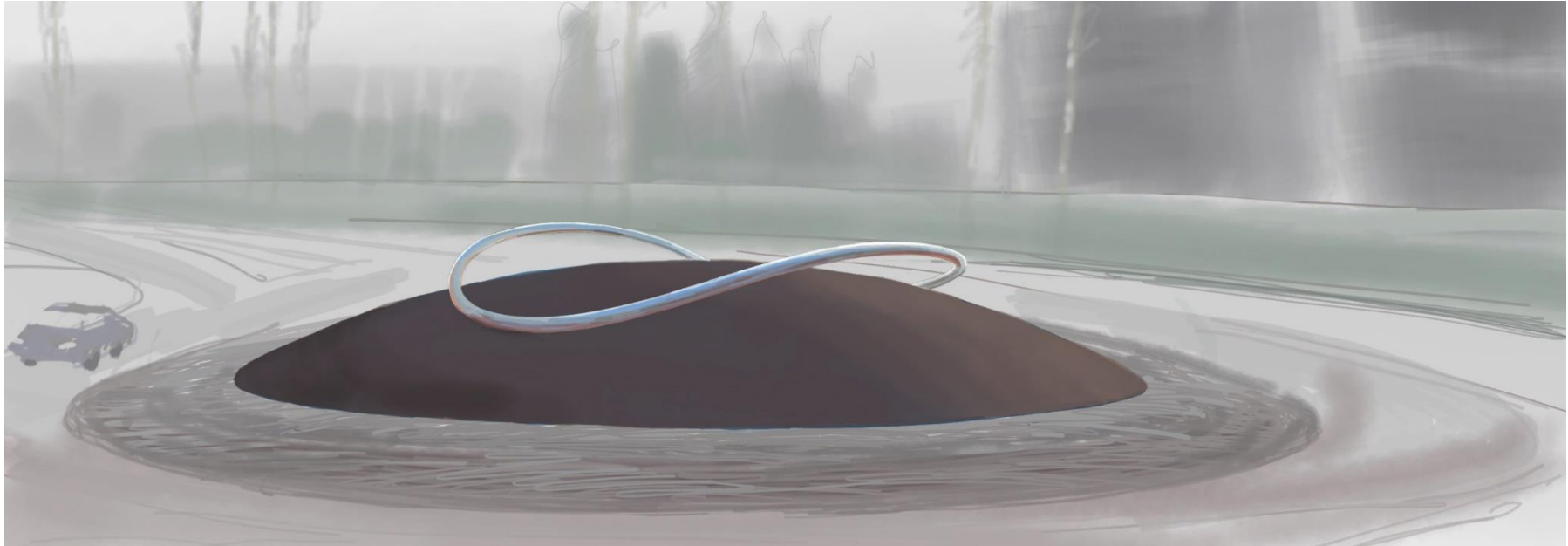
With this proposal for the roundabout I want this artwork to be a landmark which announces the arrival at the bounds of the city center and reflect on the transition to an urban environment as well as refer to the theme of this section of the green loop, which is “Smart Path” referring to the sciences taught at the surrounding university campus (see page 7 for more about this relation).

relief and movement (proposal)

I feel the need to counter the flatness of the roundabout area by introducing visual tactility – relief. I would like the vehicles to revolve around the top of a globe emerging from the ground. Its projection on the ground should be a perfect circle; the surface between the mound and the road is shaped by the layout of the routing.

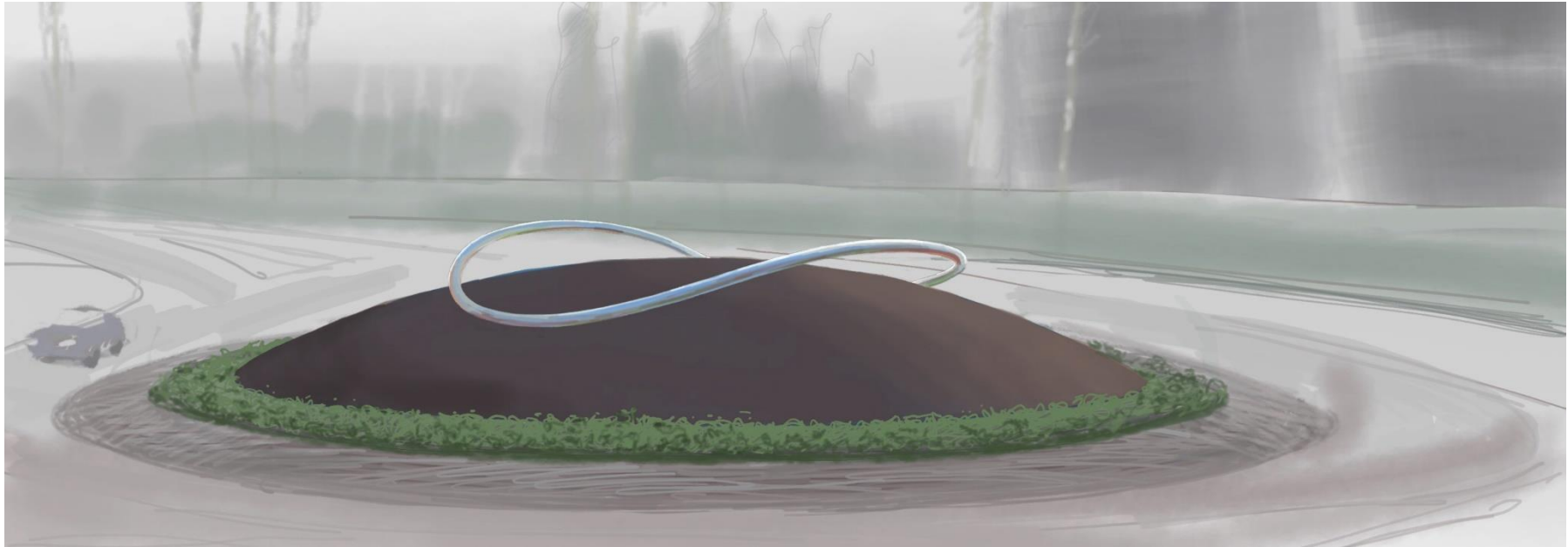


I propose to make the surface of the globe to be of the same material as is present in the direct road-environment – asphalt. We all know this material as used in horizontal or flat surfaces, but its sculptural possibilities can expand our view. At first, I thought of the characteristic terra-colored asphalt which has been used in paving some roads in other areas. But since the pavement of the surrounding roadway is black, and the fact that I am introducing an additional element - a stainless-steel loop, I want the focus to be on the interaction between the loop and the mound, not on the differing color of the asphalt, which would presumably raise irrelevant questions; so I am in favor of using the same material and color as the pavement. Then the attention will go to the shape itself, and not to an alien object.



Like the vehicles, I would like a lemniscate-like ring or loop to seem to orbit the convex shape on which it rests. When driving around the mound the curved ring will seem to rotate in a wave-like motion when observed from the moving vehicle. It will seem to be turning in the opposite direction as the direction of the moving observer; this is similar to this other example: <https://youtu.be/4zrzENol6D4>. In that way the circular motion of the loop reflects the concentric movement of the vehicles. It can also be read as a symbol for the green route which encircles the central part of Jyväskylä, rising and dropping in altitude.

My hope is that it will be possible to have no obtrusive barrier between the convex shape and the vehicles; I prefer to keep it open like presented in the illustration above. It could be possible to have some posts around it or to have the surface between the road and the hill slope upwards. Otherwise the area between the paved part and the asphalt dome could be planted with low growing plants (next page).



The top view of the asphalt sphere is round, as I mentioned earlier. Since the total central area of the roundabout is shaped by the way the road and its lanes have been laid out, it is not round. This rest area can be paved with stones, which I prefer - or planted with low growing plants; the top view of the roundabout would be like the plan on the next page.



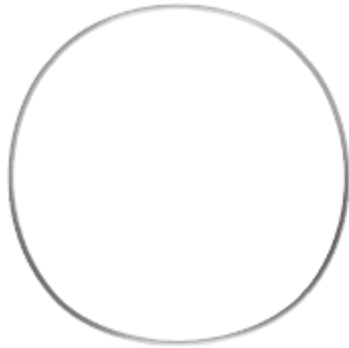
measurements

When the diameter of the central area up to the roadside is 30 m, the convex asphalt shape's diameter would be 21 m and the stainless-steel loop will measure 15 m across. The diameter of the pipe, out of which the loop is to be constructed, would be 219mm x 6.35mm or 8.18mm wall thickness - thus 43 kg/m. The total weight would be a little more than 2000 Kg.

Smart Path - construction of the loop

Being a part of the Älypolku, the Smart Path, I will explain how the shape of the stainless-steel loop has come to be:

We can construct a circle with four minor arcs, each with a central angle of 90° . When that angle is more than 90° they must be joined by tilting every other segment, in which way the ring will become spatial. This is why the in the top view the loop does not project as a circle and is a form made up of four segments of ellipses conjoined to form- or transitioning into - a continuous closed curve. We can see that in the illustration above of the top view of the roundabout, where I rotated it by 45° to give motorists from the approaching roads a view of the element's lemniscate projections.

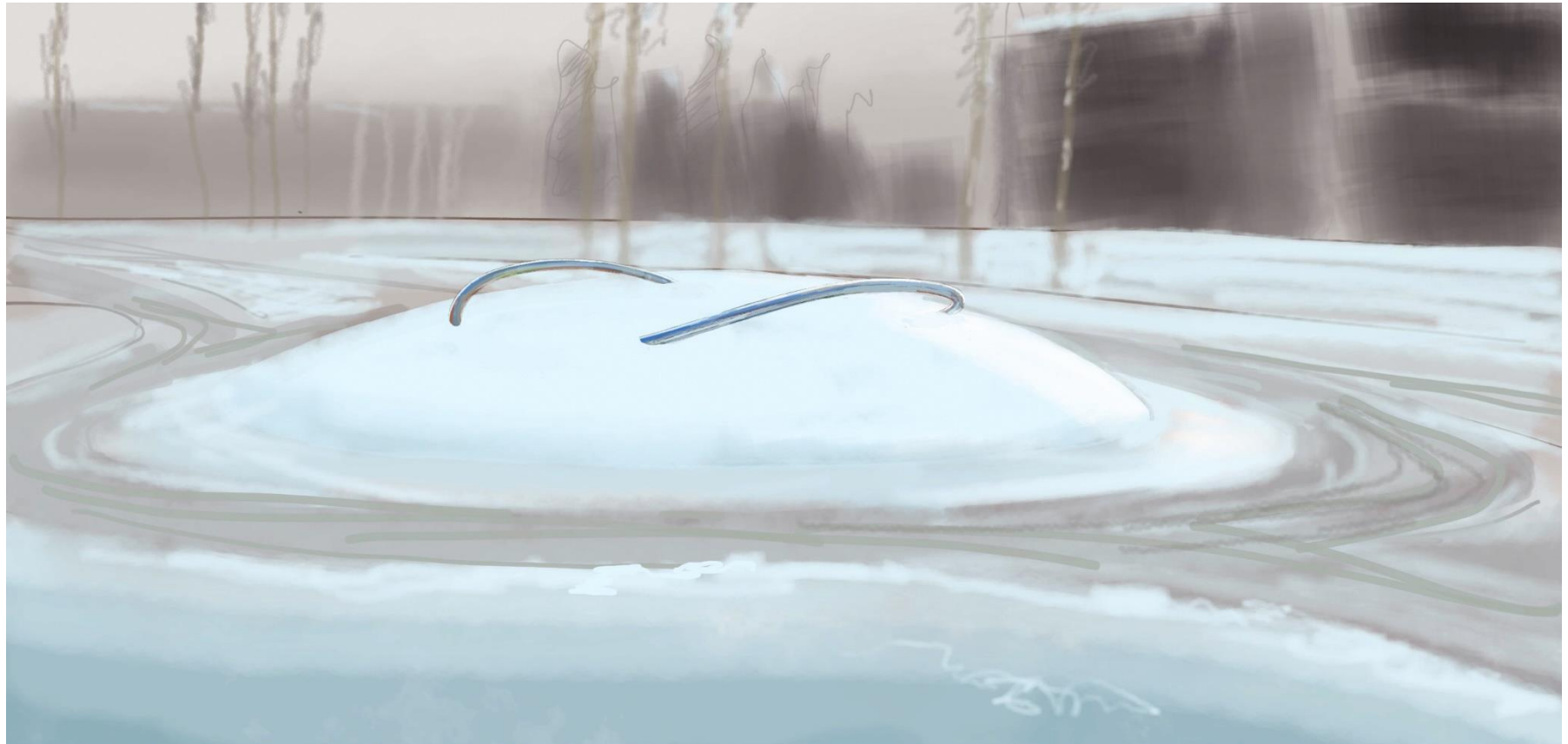


maintenance-free

There will be hardly any maintenance necessary. The stainless-steel can be cleaned with soap and water when needed. The asphalt can be cleaned with water also.

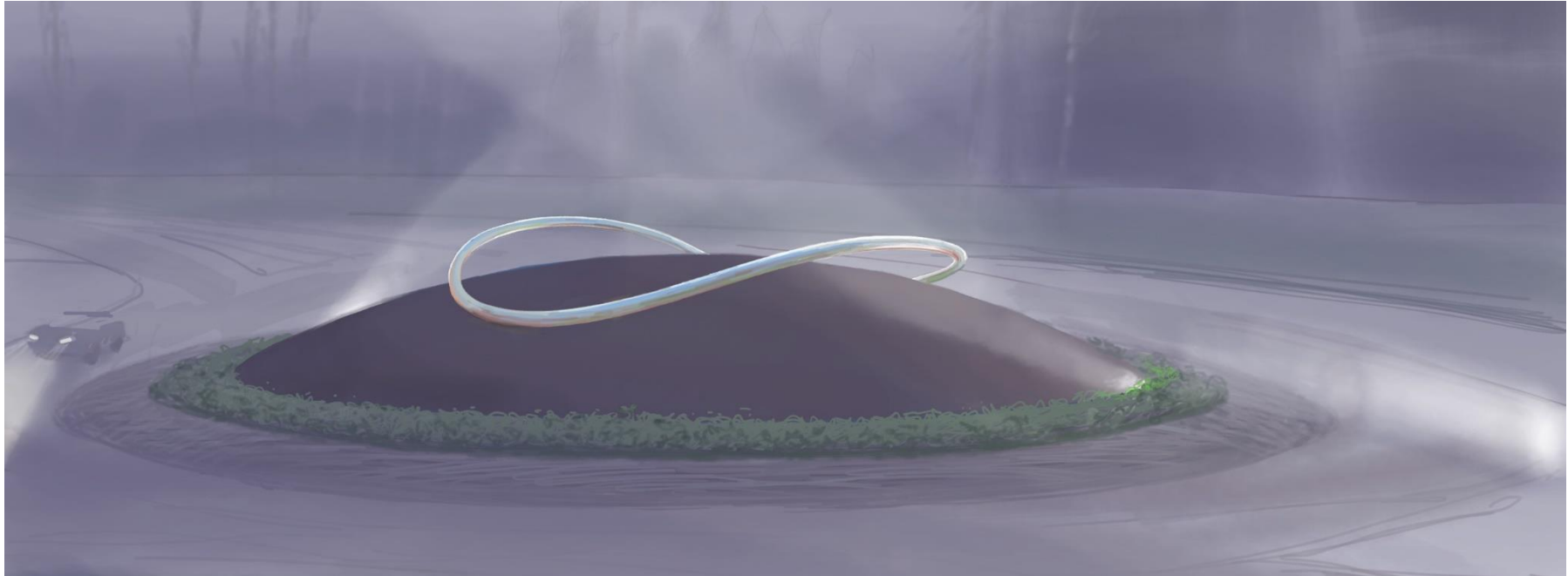
winter

During winter everything is transformed. One can say that the loop will distinguish itself from the white blanket of snow from which it emerges; or one can see it as a transformation into another phenomenon on the roundabout – two curves hovering above the surface of a white mound; the thickness of the snow cover will determine the length of the two elevated arches.



lighting

The lighting should be discussed with specialists in the field. I would like the light fixtures to be as inconspicuous as possible, like illustrated below. Otherwise it will be possible to have it lit from above with fixtures attached to the street lights surrounding the roundabout. Since the stainless-steel has a reflective surface, that effect will remain strong, but in another way.



The lighting from below with two or more light sources will be more dramatic. Of course, in winter the thickness of the layer of snow will block the light. Raising the lights would present a problem for oncoming traffic. So, if the blocking of the light is problematic, the choice can be to illuminate from above; but I feel that the dramatic effect of lighting from below outweighs the disadvantage of having periods of the work not being illuminated. Choosing for one option would not have to exclude the other - alternating between them.