

George Tsutakawa's Fountain Sculptures of the 1960s:
Fluidity and Balance in Postwar Public Art

by

Nancy Marie Cuthbert
B.A., University of British Columbia, 1992
M.A., University of British Columbia, 1997

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in the Department of History in Art

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University of Victoria

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Supervisory Committee

Dr. Christopher Thomas, Supervisor
(Department of History in Art)

Dr. Allan Antliff, Departmental Member
(Department of History in Art)

Dr. Lianne McLarty, Departmental Member
(Department of History in Art)

Prof. Daniel Laskarin, Outside Member
(Department of Visual Arts)

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Abstract

Between 1960 and 1992, American artist George Tsutakawa (1910 – 1997) created more than sixty fountain sculptures for publicly accessible sites in the U.S., Canada, and Japan. The vast majority were made by shaping sheet bronze into geometric and organically inspired abstract forms, often arranged around a vertical axis. Though postwar modernist artistic production and the issues it raises have been widely interrogated since the 1970s, and public art has been a major area of study since about 1980, Tsutakawa's fountains present a major intervention in North America's urban fabric that is not well-documented and remains almost completely untheorized. In addition to playing a key role in Seattle's development as an internationally recognized leader in public art, my dissertation argues that these works provide early evidence of a linked concern with nature and spirituality that has come to be understood as characteristic of the Pacific Northwest.

Tsutakawa was born in Seattle, but raised and educated primarily in Japan prior to training as an artist at the University of Washington, then teaching in UW's Schools of Art and Architecture. His complicated personal history, which in World War II included being drafted

into the U.S. army, while family members were interned and their property confiscated, led art historian Gervais Reed to declare that Tsutakawa was aligned with neither Japan nor America – that he and his art existed somewhere in-between. There is much truth in Reed's statement; however, artistically, such dualistic assessments deny the rich interplay of cultural allusions in Tsutakawa's fountains. Major inspirations included the Cubist sculpture of Alexander Archipenko, Himalayan stone cairns, Japanese heraldic emblems, First Nations carvings, and Bauhaus theory. Focusing on the early commissions, completed during the 1960s, my study examines the artist's debts to intercultural networks of artistic exchange – between North America, Asia, and Europe – operative in the early and mid-twentieth century, and in some cases before. I argue that, with his fountain sculptures, this Japanese American artist sought to integrate and balance such binaries as nature/culture, intuition/reason, and spiritual/material, which have long served to support the construction of East and West as opposed conceptual categories.

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Acknowledgements

Researching and writing a doctoral dissertation is a lengthy and challenging process, and I find, upon completion, that I am indebted to quite a long list of people: professional colleagues, family, and friends. In addition to acknowledging the support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, I want to thank my supervisor, Dr. Christopher Thomas, for his generous, patient, and thoughtful guidance. I would also like to thank my committee members: Dr. Allan Antliff, Dr. Lianne McLarty, and Professor Daniel Laskarin, for their interest and expertise. Special thanks goes to my external examiner, Dr. Jeffrey Ochsner of the University of Washington, whose commitment to fostering research on Seattle's mid-century art and architecture was evident in his detailed and very helpful comments and suggestions. Other faculty members at UVic who have provided guidance are Dr. Victoria Wyatt, whose input led to a much-improved discussion of the *Fountain of the Pioneers*, and Dr. Carolyn Butler-Palmer. I would also like to thank Dr. Eva Baboula and Dr. Catherine Harding for their kindness and moral support, as well as Sue Corner in STRS, and my fellow graduate students: Marla Steven, Alex Townson and Machiko Oya Townson. Machiko's assistance with questions regarding Japanese art and culture (and a few short translations) was also greatly appreciated. Among my graduate student colleagues, my biggest thanks – for their wit, wisdom, and warm friendship – goes to the intrepid members of the History in Art Thesis Completion Group ("the TCG"): Geneviève Gamache, Fatima Quraishi, Tusa Shea, and Jamie Kemp.

Many people outside Victoria have also provided invaluable assistance with my research; I am especially grateful to Gerry, Mayumi, and Ayame Tsutakawa for answering my questions and showing me many of George's fountain models, sketches, presentation drawings, and other works, as well as *sumi* paintings by Mark Tobey and Alexander Archipenko. In Seattle, I would

also like to thank Michelle Kumata of the Wing Luke Museum, Neal Erickson of Seattle Center Redevelopment, and David Martin of Martin-Zambito Fine Art, who – among other things – helped me track down the copyright holder for Mary Randlett's photographs. Among many helpful staff-members at various libraries and archives in the U.S. and Canada, a few that stand out are Jodee Fenton and Bo Kinney at the Seattle Public Library, Special Collections; Diane Ney at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., and Thirza Krohn at the Aberdeen Timberland Library. In Montreal I benefitted from the expertise of librarians at the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA), where I was able to work for two months thanks to a CCA Collection Research Grant; I also wish to thank the Head of the CCA's Study Centre, Alexis Sornin.

While at the CCA I had the good fortune to meet Deb Watt, who has, along with Dorritta Fong in Vancouver and the women of the TCG in Victoria, been a key presence throughout this project as a supportive friend and intellectual sounding-board. Cathy Campbell also deserves mention, since she introduced me to Seattle architect and planner Ed Burke. The last people to thank – my family – are the most important. As in most things, I have relied on the love and support of my parents, Robert and Florence Cuthbert; my sister, Roberta; my brother-in law, Bob; and my fabulous nieces, Catriona and Isobel.

Introduction

Seattle artist George Tsutakawa (1910-1997) was widely admired as a sculptor and an artist in such two-dimensional media as oil painting, watercolour, *sumi* brush painting and printmaking, but it was his large, abstract fountains in bronze that brought him the most recognition. Though postwar modernist artistic production and the issues it raises have been widely interrogated since the 1970s, Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures for publicly accessible sites in the United States and Canada present a major intervention in the urban fabric that is not well documented and remains almost completely untheorized. My dissertation offers the first study dedicated to Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures. Beginning with his initial commission, for the Seattle Public Library's *Fountain of Wisdom* (1958-1960; fig. 1), I focus on several major fountain projects completed during the 1960s. I will argue that, in addition to playing a key role in initiating and nourishing Seattle's development as an internationally recognized leader in civic public art, Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures provide early evidence of a linked concern with nature and spirituality that has since come to be understood as characteristic of the Pacific Northwest.¹

In the introduction to *Jet Dreams: Art of the Fifties in the Northwest*, Barbara Johns points out that, at that time, "modernism" connoted an optimistic belief in progress, both social and economic. The pursuit of abstraction emerged as the foremost "visual analog of this belief." As an art movement, Johns continues:

¹ The same can be said of the U.S. Pacific Northwest's Canadian counterpart, British Columbia. The area as a whole, encompassing Oregon, Washington, and B.C., is sometimes referred to as Cascadia. See, for example, the collection of interdisciplinary essays on spiritual ecology edited by Douglas Todd, *Cascadia: The Elusive Utopia: Exploring the Spirit of the Pacific Northwest* (Vancouver: Ronsdale Press, 2008).

Modernism proposed a common language of form. It sought themes and visual motifs from cultures worldwide – Western and non-Western, ancient and contemporary – to achieve an assimilation in basic elements of line, shape, and color. Stripped of historical references and gratuitous decoration, freed of the demands of narration or descriptive portrayal, modernist abstraction intended to supersede limitations of specific time and place to become timeless and universal.²

In conceiving and executing his fountain sculptures, Tsutakawa sought to create modern, abstract works of art that were both monumental and universal, "something permanent that defies identity with any epoch or culture," as he once summarized his approach to sculpture in general.³ As my dissertation will demonstrate, his work was deeply informed by artistic and cultural exchanges operating within international networks during the first two-thirds of the twentieth century, and in some cases before. Tsutakawa nonetheless recognized that his fountain sculptures were also firmly rooted in the regional identity of the Pacific Northwest.

Tsutakawa was born in Seattle, but raised and educated primarily in Fukuyama, Japan, before returning to the United States at age seventeen. Trained in a Western artistic tradition at the University of Washington (UW), he earned a Bachelor's degree in 1937 but then spent five years working in the family business before serving in the U.S. Army from 1942 to 1946. Returning to Seattle, he enrolled as a Fine Arts graduate student at UW, and was soon hired to teach in the University's School of Art. In 1950 Tsutakawa received an MFA in sculpture and began to teach classes in the School of Architecture, while remaining a faculty member in the School of Art. This dual teaching role continued throughout the 1950s, until he became too busy with fountain commissions and ended his formal association with the architecture department. In

² Barbara Johns, ed. *Jet Dreams: Art of the Fifties in the Northwest* (Seattle and London: Tacoma Art Museum / University of Washington Press, 1995), 27.

³ "George Tsutakawa; Seattle, Washington; Artist's Comment," Special Collections, Suzzallo Library, University of Washington: George Tsutakawa File, Accession Number 2447-4, Box #1, Folder #6. (Quoted in full later in this Introduction.)

1976 Tsutakawa retired after thirty years of teaching art at the University of Washington, but he continued to teach some courses as an emeritus professor.

The limited number of publications available on Tsutakawa and his work have tended to emphasize the artist's bicultural identity; in 1976 art historian Gervais Reed wrote that Tsutakawa's "thought and speech, his life and his art – combine traditional Japan and modern America."⁴ Reed's comment is evocative, but somewhat simplistic. It glosses over important aspects of Tsutakawa's artistic development, ignoring the impact of European modern art, even in the small town of Fukuyama.⁵ As has been pointed out by Rasheed Araeen, founding editor of the journal *Third Text*, even in the first half of the twentieth century, when "AfroAsian artists from different parts of the world" relocated to the West in pursuit of success as modernists, "they were not entering another culture but a different level of the same culture which they had left behind."⁶ Araeen made this observation in the context of offering a forceful critique of the theory of "hybridity," as articulated by Homi K. Bhabha, the post-colonial theorist most closely associated with the use of that term.⁷ The concept of hybridity and its political implications are

⁴ Gervais Reed, "George Tsutakawa: An Introduction," *Journal of Ethnic Studies* 4, no. 1 (1976): 3.

Japanese history is generally divided into five periods: 1) the Prehistoric age, before the coming of Buddhism and Chinese influence; 2) the Ancient Age, in which the initial close imitation of Chinese civilization was gradually replaced by distinctly Japanese forms, developed under a central court nobility; 3) the Medieval Age, when competing military groups vied for power; 4) the Premodern Age, during which a stable capital for the feudal state was established in Tokyo; and 5) the Modern Age, which began shortly after the American Commodore Perry forced Japan to begin engaging in foreign trade.

⁵ Martha Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, 1983 Sept. 8 - Sept. 19, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, n.p., <http://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/interviews/oral-history-interview-george-tsutakawa-11913>.

⁶ Rasheed Araeen, "A New Beginning: Beyond Postcolonial Theory and Identity Politics," *Third Text* 50 (Spring 2000), 11.

⁷ See, for example, Homi K. Bhabha, "DissemiNation: Time, Narrative, and the Margins of the Modern Nation," in *Nation and Narration*, ed. Homi K. Bhabha (London: Routledge, 1990), 291-322; and Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994).

topics I have wrestled with frequently in the process of writing this dissertation. For Bhabha "hybridity" connotes subversive potential; a hybrid work of art is one that participates in the formation of an "in-between" space that challenges existing boundaries separating the dominant culture from its Other. A hybrid work need not be overtly oppositional; it could be argued that Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures belong in a category with hybrids that are non-oppositional, or perhaps subtly so. Still, as art historian Bert Winther-Tamaki points out in *Art in the Encounter of Nations: Japanese and American Artists in the Early Postwar Years* (2001), within the artistic milieu under discussion, the term "hybrid" was not generally thought of as "a measure of praise for artistic innovation."⁸ More important, however, is the question Winther-Tamaki raises about the supposed ability of hybrid artworks to unsettle cultural distinctions. "How is it," he asks, "that artistic innovations that may now retrospectively be understood as fundamentally hybrid formations were unable in their time to dislodge perceptions of a tautly-drawn native-alien difference? The pervasive ideology of nationalism exerted a powerful disciplining force on the potential of hybrid art forms to effect a blurring of the difference between Japanese and American art."⁹

Araeen's complaint regarding the postcolonial theorization of hybridity is that Bhabha relies excessively on "the idea of exile and constructs his Other on the basis of displacement and loss. This other is the hybrid."¹⁰ He goes on to argue that the many writers who have suggested

⁸ Bert Winther-Tamaki, *Art in the Encounter of Nations: Japanese and American Artists in the Early Postwar Years*. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), 5. In 1935, for example, a prominent New York critic began a devastating review of Noguchi's work by referring to him as "semi-oriental." Quoted in Dore Ashton, *Noguchi East and West* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992), 53. On the other hand, the word "hybrid" was used in a positive sense by Robert B. Hawkins in "Contemporary Art and the Orient," *College Art Journal* 16, no. 2 (Winter, 1957) 120.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Araeen, "A New Beginning: Beyond Postcolonial Theory and Identity Politics," 9.

the word "syncretic" as a viable substitute for "hybrid" – a word they dislike – have failed to understand that "the hybrid in Bhabha's discourse is a specific form of the syncretic whose premises are *predetermined and are fixed by racial and cultural differences*" (original italics).¹¹

While I am not prepared to join Araeen in condemning Bhabha for "collaborating with art institutions in the West in the promotion of what can be described as postcolonial exotica,"¹² reading his essay helped me greatly in clarifying why I was experiencing discomfort each time I considered describing Tsutakawa's art, or qualities of his art, as "hybrid." For this particular study, although I will frequently refer to instances in which it could be said that "non-western culture enters western culture," Bhabha's foremost criterion for hybrid status, I have decided that "syncretic" is, indeed, a preferable term.¹³

Much of my analysis of Tsutakawa's artistic development in relation to his fountain sculptures is directly or indirectly related to his identity as a Japanese American artist living in mid-century Seattle. In a video interview made for the Smithsonian Institution's Archives of American Art in 1987, Tsutakawa was asked directly whether he considered himself to be a Japanese or American artist. His response was, "I am neither; I am both."¹⁴ Elsewhere, he recalled being pleased when critics during the postwar years could not pin him down as a

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid., 12.

¹³ Araeen argues that in Bhabha's discourse the hybrid, unlike the suggested alternative term "syncretic," "does not stand for a process of all cultural interchanges or inter-mixings and what results from them in the contemporary global world; it is something specific which results only when a non-western culture enters western culture. This entry also takes place through specific carriers, artists from other cultures who must carry identity cards showing their cultural origins and must locate themselves within a specific space – an in-between space – in order to enter or encounter the dominant culture. It is assumed that the enunciation of difference – racial or cultural – is essential in empowering these artists. The result is the power of the mule which always carries the burden and the sign of its breeding." Ibid., 9.

¹⁴ *George Tsutakawa Interview* (June 26-27, 1987) Archives of American Art Videotapes, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

member of one of these groups, since "Japanese art critics used to see [a] definite American or modern trend in my work, in my style, and then Americans think my things are very Oriental, very Japanese. Well, it didn't bother me. In fact I was very delighted that they didn't identify me as an Oriental artist or an American artist."¹⁵ He explained elsewhere: "I always wanted to be myself and not identified by any school or trend or fashion."¹⁶ As was typical of American modernism in the postwar period, Tsutakawa's approach married a strong sense of individualism to such collectively oriented worldviews as universalism and humanism.¹⁷ Rejected by many of the influential thinkers associated with postmodernism and poststructuralism, universalism and humanism have been more sympathetically evaluated in recent years by such theorists as Kwame Anthony Appiah. A philosopher who is supportive of Aristotelian universals and what is often referred to as "Enlightenment humanism," Appiah sees "cosmopolitan values as the thread that ties human beings together," and his book *The Ethics of Identity* (2005) has proven indispensable in shaping my dissertation.¹⁸ In addition to influencing some of my ideas and arguments, Appiah's emphasis on how we make sense of human lives through narrative has helped me develop a workable approach to writing about Tsutakawa and his art. In a sense, Appiah's philosophical rigour gave me permission to include what might be viewed as a rather traditional

¹⁵ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

¹⁶ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

¹⁷ Mayumi Tsutakawa, interview by the author, June 23, 2010. Humanistic concerns were also important in postwar Modernist architecture, with such qualities as "symbolic representation, organicism, aesthetic expressiveness, [and] contextual relationships" – all important in Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures – reconciled with and integrated into functionalism, according to Joan Ockman, *Architecture Culture, 1943-1968: A Documentary Anthology* (New York: Rizzoli, 1993), 13.

¹⁸ Kwame Anthony Appiah, *The Ethics of Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 249-254. The quotation regarding cosmopolitan values is from Partha Mitter, writing on another of Appiah's books, *Cosmopolitanism* (New York, W.W. Norton, 2006). See Mitter, "Interventions: Decentering Modernism: Art History and Avant-Garde Art from the Periphery," *Art Bulletin* 90, no. 18 (December, 2008), n.p. (Accessed online through ebsco.)

approach to art history, accepting the importance of carefully considering biography and embracing the pleasure Tsutakawa seems to have taken in anecdote, rather than struggling constantly to prevent such "circumstantial" information from obscuring the more abstract theories and concepts that I am perhaps inclined to over-privilege.¹⁹

In a short but highly informative monograph on Tsutakawa, published in 1990, art historian Martha Kingsbury argues that, even as he was turning towards more publicly oriented forms of art in the late 1950s, Tsutakawa held on to the image of "the artist as a solitary, heroic person." That view had held sway during Tsutakawa's student years but was, Kingsbury states, stronger still "in the Expressionist postwar decades."²⁰ Comparing Tsutakawa's attitude to that of Mark Tobey, whose "paintings addressed universal energies and mankind's fundamental relation to the whole," but "arose from the thoughtful seclusion of his studio," Kingsbury writes that Tsutakawa "felt, like so many westerners, that an ultimately universal expression must come out of insistently individual urgencies."²¹ Tsutakawa's individualist leanings were less important in his fountain sculptures than in the sculptures and paintings he made for exhibition and sale through private galleries, but I agree with Kingsbury that Tsutakawa's approach to art was, like Tobey's, deeply spiritual and grounded in humanist beliefs.

Individualism is often presented as a quintessentially American trait, but humanist philosophy did not originate in the United States, and, as Alexandra Munroe observes in her introduction to *The Third Mind: American Artists Contemplate Asia, 1860-1989* (2009),

¹⁹ The biographical approach goes back to 1550, when Giorgio Vasari first published his *Lives of the Artists*. Though life stories have always been important in art-book publishing, in the 1970s scholars began to question their value and their compatibility with the growing interest in critical theory. This was due in part to art history's turn away from its earlier focus on connoisseurship and artistic genius, and to post-structuralist critiques of the author-function.

²⁰ Martha Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa* (Seattle and Bellevue, WA: University of Washington Press / Bellevue Art Museum, 1990), 81.

²¹ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 81.

"America did not discover Asian art and ideas on its own. In Europe, the move from representation of the visible to an expression of what Russian-born Vassily Kandinsky called 'the inner spiritual side of nature' inspired by the East was ascendant from the late 1800s." European artists' explorations of Asian modes of thought took a number of different routes, among them the Theosophy of Helena Petrova Blavatsky, on which Kandinsky drew in the opening decade of the twentieth century. This enabled Kandinsky to develop what Munroe describes as "his revolutionary claim that abstract art (the formless form) had the greatest potential for expressing cosmic laws. The notion of art as a mystical inner construction charged with the power to transform the viewer's state of mind had a profound impact on American vanguard artists, on whom Kandinsky's debt to Asian logic for his theories of abstraction was not lost."²² Alfred Stieglitz, for example, included excerpts from Kandinsky's treatise *On the Spiritual in Art* (1912) in his journal *Camera Work* during 1913, and Kandinsky's paintings were shown at the Museum of Non-Objective Painting in New York from its inception in 1939.²³

Ironically, it seems the same revisionist tendencies that have been so important in stimulating research on Asian American artists, and in ensuring the inclusion of relatively marginal locations like Seattle and the Pacific Northwest on the art historical map, have also encouraged some neglect of the regional legacy of European modernism. In autumn 1999, Sheryl Conkelton organized an exhibition titled *What it Meant to be Modern: Seattle Art at Mid-Century* at UW's Henry Art Gallery. Prior to its opening, she observed: "the whole of what happened here involves the very important role of ideas from Europe. Most of what you hear is

²² Alexandra Munroe, ed. *The Third Mind: American Artists Contemplate Asia, 1860-1989* (New York: Guggenheim Museum, 2009), 23.

²³ *Ibid.* The Museum of Non-Objective Painting was the forerunner of the Guggenheim Museum.

about Asian-influenced artists, but there was much more going on."²⁴ My dissertation devotes considerable attention to twentieth-century European modernism, particularly the legacy of the German Bauhaus and the work of individual sculptors, including Alexander Archipenko, Constantin Brancusi, and Henry Moore, but also briefly touching on such movements as Purism and International Constructivism.

Unlike early-twentieth-century modernism, which emerged out of the technological, social, and political changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution, that of the mid-twentieth-century arose in the aftermath of World War II, confronting its devastation and seeking a return to normal life. As has been pointed out by Johns and other art historians of the Pacific Northwest, notably Kingsbury and Conkelton, a number of distinct artistic communities contributed to the development of Seattle's postwar modern art. While not necessarily ideologically opposed, they co-existed in what all three writers characterize as less than perfect harmony.²⁵ The two main divisions were, first, what Johns refers to as "a town and gown split between those with and without academic credentials" and, second, a schism between what Kingsbury describes as two distinct versions of Pacific Northwest modernism. Kingsbury identifies these as an "old romantic modernism," generally practiced by painters, which was inward-looking, emotional, and often spiritual, and a newer "alternative modernism" rooted in the socially-oriented and utopian ideals of the Bauhaus and, before that, William Morris.²⁶ Johns states that, unlike the older variety, the newer modernism "found its most radical values in the

²⁴ Quoted in Matthew Kangas, review of *What it Meant to be Modern: Seattle Art at Mid-Century*. *Artguide Northwest* (2000), n.p., <http://www.artguidenw.com/NWArt.htm>.

²⁵ Johns, *Jet Dreams: Art of the Fifties in the Northwest*, 65-70; Conkelton, ed., *What it Meant to be Modern: Seattle Art at Mid-Century*, 8; Martha Kingsbury, "Northwest Art: The Mid-Century seen from the End of the Century," in Conkelton, *ibid.*, 22-25.

²⁶ Johns, *Jet Dreams: Art of the Fifties in the Northwest*, 66; Kingsbury, "Northwest Art: The Mid-Century seen from the End of the Century," 22-25.

transformative power it hoped to exercise in society at large; it manifested itself as design – from architecture to ceramics, engineering to weaving, civic spaces to domestic environments."²⁷ It is important to emphasize that the perception of a split between two "versions" of modernism is closely linked to the "town and gown" division; Johns notes that in Washington state "a modernism that emphasized design.... sprang up primarily around academic centers, as had the theories of composition on which the practices rested."²⁸ At the forefront was Seattle's University of Washington, an institution to which Tsutakawa clearly had strong ties. He nonetheless managed to transcend the Seattle art world's factional atmosphere, maintaining a close friendship with Tobey, for example. As my dissertation will demonstrate, Tsutakawa fused ideas gleaned from each of Seattle's two dominant modernisms in his fountain sculptures and other postwar works. He was able to do so because he combined his knowledge of Euro-American art and culture, particularly modern developments, with complementary ideas drawn from Asian culture, especially that of Japan.

This study will also focus on exploring Tsutakawa's close relationship to design, especially architecture, a central aspect of his work that has scarcely been touched on to date, although the importance of architecture and architectural theory in the development of Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures is acknowledged by Kingsbury in her monograph of 1990.²⁹ Building on Kingsbury's research, my dissertation will demonstrate how Tsutakawa's practice was informed by diverse artistic and cultural sources: Euro-American and Asian, modern and traditional. Elsewhere, Kingsbury has written that during the postwar period in Seattle, "a gap opened between painting (especially) and other visual arts, and to some it seemed like an

²⁷ Kingsbury, *ibid.*, 25.

²⁸ Barbara Johns, "Fields of Vision in Pictures and Objects," in Johns, ed. *Jet Dreams: Art of the Fifties in the Northwest*, 67-68.

²⁹ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 114.

unbridgeable gulf."³⁰ Tsutakawa could not have been among their number; he expanded his practice after the war to emphasize sculpture, including public art, and briefly explored designing furniture and lamps. He also did something more; I will argue that with his fountain sculptures, Tsutakawa went some distance toward integrating and balancing certain binary pairs – nature and culture, intuition and reason, the spiritual and the material – that have, for centuries, served to support the construction of East and West as opposed conceptual categories.

The artist's stated goal of transcending the specifics of time and place and achieving universality, ascribed to his sculptural works in general, was already mentioned above. I will, however, demonstrate that, far from defying identity with any epoch, Tsutakawa's fountains of the late 1950s and 1960s are, today, clearly identifiable as examples of mid-century modernism, as manifested in the overlapping realms of fine art and design. Stylistically this is quite evident, but in numerous important ways the statement also applies to the ideological content of these works. Especially during the 1950s, the popular North American understanding of the term "modernism" tended to overlook the moral imperatives of "good design" and focus only on style, but practitioners sought something deeper and more socially relevant.³¹ Like the "urban optimists" of the interwar period,³² during the early postwar years American artists, architects, and industrial designers often harboured utopian aspirations and dreamed of working together towards a technologically advanced future. As the postwar era progressed, modernist orthodoxies were increasingly called into question. The 1960s was the decade that saw the emergence of social movements collectively referred to as the "counterculture," with attention turning toward

³⁰ Kingsbury, "Northwest Art: The Mid-Century seen from the End of the Century," 25.

³¹ Scott Watson, "Art in the Fifties: Design, Leisure, and Painting in the Age of Anxiety." In *Vancouver Art and Artists: 1931-1983*, ed. Luke Rombout. (Vancouver: Vancouver Art Gallery, 1983), 72.

³² The phrase is borrowed from Barbara Haskell, *The American Century: Art and Culture 1900-2000* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1999), 295.

such causes as civil rights, feminism, and environmentalism. Closer examination of Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures from that decade will reveal a body of work that was, for the most part, in tune with an era of profound artistic and societal change.

Referring specifically to architectural culture in Europe and North America, Joan Ockman suggests that the period between 1943 and 1968 can, from our later vantage point, be thought of as "the interregnum between modernism and what is now called postmodernism."³³ Though modernist architecture established itself as a dominant force during those years, its earlier "heroic" era was, according to Ockman, followed by a period of "increasingly intense questioning," as people found their faith in rationalist thought profoundly shaken by "the revelation of genocide on a previously unfathomable scale of organization and brutality, and the advent of atomic warfare."³⁴ A contrary view is offered by Sarah Williams Goldhagen and Réjean Legault, who dispute the existence of Ockman's "interegnum." In *Anxious Modernisms: Experimentation in Postwar Architectural Culture*, Goldhagen and Legault argue that none was needed, for modernism as it was originally conceived had self-criticism and change built in.³⁵ Though they differ from Ockman on important aspects of modernist architecture's historical development, Goldhagen and Legault agree with her about the widespread philosophical impact of the Holocaust and the atomic bomb, interpreted by many as dramatic evidence of the failure of modern technology.³⁶

³³ Ockman, *Architecture Culture, 1943-1968: A Documentary Anthology*, 13.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Sarah Williams Goldhagen and Réjean Legault, *Anxious Modernisms: Experimentation in Postwar Architectural Culture* (Montreal and Cambridge, MA: Canadian Centre for Architecture / MIT Press, 2000), 11.

³⁶ Goldhagen and Legault, *Anxious Modernisms: Experimentation in Postwar Architectural Culture*, 12; Ockman, *Architecture Culture, 1943-1968: A Documentary Anthology*, 13.

As Jeffrey K. Ochsner has shown in a recent study of American architect Lionel H. Pries, a teaching colleague of Tsutakawa at the University of Washington, beginning in the 1950s the moral implications of modernism's faith in technological progress were subject to increasing scrutiny in the United States.³⁷ In the earliest postwar years, however, Americans were far less likely than Europeans to question whether advances in science and technology were always entirely a benefit to society. The U.S. was not faced with widespread destruction of its cities, and Americans understood that they had their nation's technological superiority to thank for the Allied victory.³⁸ Still, since the 1930s, numerous European architects and artists, many of them Jews, had emigrated to America. It seems likely that both they and Japanese Americans had some misgivings regarding the "technological optimism" of the early postwar period. This complex situation makes it important for a study like this one, devoted to works made during the late 1950s and 1960s by a Japanese American artist – sculptural fountains that were not only technologically innovative but also thematically based on a celebration of the earth's natural cycles – to take at least some initial steps in exploring how these works were related to tensions that accompanied scientific and technological advances in the United States during the postwar era.

As America reinvented itself to accommodate an economy based on consumption, disposable goods, and manufactured obsolescence, there is no doubt the lure of the new and the

³⁷ Jeffrey Karl Ochsner, *Lionel H. Pries, Architect, Artist, Educator: From Arts and Crafts to Modern Architecture* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007), ix, 278. Both Pries and Tsutakawa taught at the University of Washington in the School of Architecture; their years there overlapped between 1950 and 1958.

³⁸ Ochsner, *Lionel H. Pries, Architect, Artist, Educator: From Arts and Crafts to Modern Architecture*, 228.

novel grew stronger.³⁹ Progress continued to be valorised, and this remained true a few years later, when both the Cold War and the Korean War contributed to an uneasy sense of looming danger. In particular, postwar American culture placed a high value on innovation – generally thought to be closely tied to individual creativity and achievement. Such thinking could encompass avant-garde art; since the early 1980s art historians have been aware that American postwar abstraction was quite easily connected to the dominant ideology of the time, which touted the superiority of the "free world" over Communist repression and Third World poverty.⁴⁰ According to Johns, by 1947 the stage was set for major cultural and economic transition in the Pacific Northwest, and during the 1950s modernism was increasingly regarded as "the accepted practice of advanced art."⁴¹ At the same time, modernism found itself troubled by internal tensions, for example "between norm and innovation, assimilation and difference."⁴² Johns argues that these anxieties were largely due to the presence of two conflicting philosophical premises at the heart of the modernist project. As an ideology of progress, modernism represented the promise that the services technology offered to human life would continue to grow as the ability increased for science to control the powers of nature. On the other hand, "the

³⁹ Michael Sean Sullivan, "Prologue: The 1950s," in *Jet Dreams: Art of the Fifties in the Northwest*, ed. Barbara Johns (Tacoma and Seattle: Tacoma Art Museum / University of Washington Press, 1995), 14.

⁴⁰ On the other hand, the implications of that connection have been energetically disputed. See Serge Guilbaut, *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art: Abstract Expressionism, Freedom, and the Cold War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983); and, among others, Michael Leja, *Reframing Abstract Expressionism: Subjectivity and Painting in the 1940s* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); Daniel Belgrad, *The Culture of Spontaneity: Improvisation and the Arts in Postwar America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

⁴¹ Johns, *Jet Dreams: Art of the Fifties in the Northwest*, 28.

⁴² *Ibid.*

reliance upon rational thought denoted separation from the natural world, an existential alienation," while an exaggerated stress on individualism could easily lead to social alienation.⁴³

Both tendencies clashed with East Asian philosophical traditions at the heart of Tsutakawa's fountain designs. The individual's insignificance within the cosmic scheme is an important concept in Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism; it is important that the individual be de-emphasized and the qualities unique to each person subsumed within the broader community.⁴⁴ As for nature, many Eastern philosophies are based on the underlying wholeness of things. Human beings and nature are inextricably interconnected and thus cannot be separated.⁴⁵ In Japan the ancient animistic religion that predated Shinto enshrined the spirits of mountains, rocks, trees, and other natural objects. Nature itself was regarded as a form of religion. Moreover, "throughout the history of Japanese literature, the fundamental religiosity of [the] Japanese expressed itself in a highly refined sensitivity toward the natural environment."⁴⁶ Interviewed by Reed in 1976, Tsutakawa recalled growing up in his grandmother's house in southern Japan. Because "she was from a very old and traditional Samurai family, her whole life was wrapped up in Noh drama and Zen philosophy with all the rituals and ceremonies of Buddhism as well as Shintoism. I grew up in that atmosphere." By the time he returned to

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Jeffrey Wechsler, "From Asian Traditions to Modern Expressions: Abstract Art by Asian Americans, 1945-1970," in *Asian Traditions/Modern Expressions: Asian American Artists and Abstraction, 1945-70* ed. Jeffrey Wechsler (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1997), 140.

⁴⁵ J. J. Clarke, *Oriental Enlightenment the Encounter between Asian and Western Thought* (London: Routledge, 1997), 172, 176.

⁴⁶ *Understanding Japanese Buddhism* (Tokyo: 12th WFB Confab Japan Committee and Japan Buddhist Federation, 1978), 224.

Seattle, Tsutakawa had what he described as "a very good background in Oriental literature and theatre, culture in general."⁴⁷

As will become evident in my discussions of individual fountain sculptures, the theme of nature and its cycles is one that ties together Tsutakawa's fountains as a unified body of work. A traditional Japanese subject, it is one depicted most often through the cycle of the seasons. In a recent essay devoted to representations of "beauty and truth in nature," by Japanese and Western painters, traditional and modern, Gary Hickey states: "the depiction of the natural world, either as an entire landscape or particular components, is the predominant subject of Japanese art. This predilection for depictions of nature was based on an emotional response, for the Japanese felt themselves moving in synchrony with its rhythms."⁴⁸ In particular, Tsutakawa's abstract fountain sculptures celebrate the essential role of the water cycle in nourishing humanity and all forms of life. In the words of American art writer Kazuko Nakane: "The falling water, sound, light and its reflection, and surrounding environment are all part of a configuration that serves as an invitation to contemplate nature."⁴⁹ Interviewed in 1978 for *Northwest*, the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* Sunday magazine, Tsutakawa told Jane Estes: "Our sense of continuity and rhythm is universal in water. Even in childhood I was interested in running water, in the recycling process of water. I remember Mark Tobey talking to me about the life cycle of the universe and the fact that water

⁴⁷ Gervais Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," *Journal of Ethnic Studies* 4, no. 1 (1976): 5.

⁴⁸ Gary Hickey, "Beauty and Truth in Nature: Japan and the West," in *Crossing Cultures: Conflict, Migration and Convergence: The Proceedings of the 32nd International Congress in the History of Art*, ed. Jaynie Anderson (Carlton, Australia: Miegunyah Press, Melbourne University Publishing, 2009), 347.

⁴⁹ Kazuko Nakane, "Facing the Pacific: Asian American Artists in Seattle, 1900-1970," in *Asian American Art: A History, 1850-1970*, eds. Gordon H. Chang, Mark Dean Johnson and Paul J. Karlstrom (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008), 73.

moves about endlessly in its various forms, vapor, ice drops forming in the clouds to be released into the rivers. This recycling always fascinated me."⁵⁰

It would, of course, be wrong to regard the concept of cyclical time as something completely foreign to a Western worldview, but it does differ markedly from the progressive, modernist sense of time as an arrow that moves from past to present to future in a linear manner. That being said, art history still relies to a large extent on the sequential narrative, and a number of sculptural and architectural precedents have been suggested for the stacked forms that characterize the majority of Tsutakawa's fountains. As will be demonstrated in Chapters Four and Five, the artist acknowledged connections to Constantin Brancusi's *Endless Column* (1939) – a work that refers to time in its form and its title – indigenous North American totem poles, and Asian pagodas. Tsutakawa insisted, however, that the major inspiration for his fountains came from what he referred to as the "*obos* concept," first developed in small wood sculptures, drawings, and paintings in tempera.⁵¹ The use of vertically stacked or segmented forms, arranged around a single axis, is, in fact, so prevalent in Tsutakawa's mature work that it could be argued his first *Obos* sculptures, carved in 1956 and 1957, initiated a signature style of the sort that mid-century American modernists often found crucial in building successful careers.

Tsutakawa explained the importance of the *obos* as a form and a concept in an undated artist's statement written sometime before 1967. While his fountains are not directly mentioned, he clearly regarded the *obos* as intimately linked to the building of architectural monuments in a broad range of cultures. Tsutakawa's artist's statement explores spiritual, conceptual, and formal ideas that are central to my dissertation, and will thus recur in the chapters that follow; it also

⁵⁰ Quoted in Jane Estes, "Personality Profile: Not just Your Ordinary Fountain Maker," *Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Northwest Magazine*, December 24, 1978.

⁵¹ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

provides a rare opportunity to read a thematic analysis composed by the artist himself. Though Tsutakawa taught for many years, gave numerous public lectures, and was interviewed many times, he rarely wrote about his work. His "Artist's Comment" is therefore quoted here in its entirety:

Since 1957, I have often used the word OBOS for the title of my sculpture. This title seems to puzzle many observers of my work and I am obliged to attempt an explanation. In 1956 I took a short trip to Japan, and about the same time, I happened to come across a book entitled 'Beyond the High Himalayas' by Justice William O. Douglas, wherein the author tells about Obos which is a pile of rocks erected by the natives of Tibet in thanks to their gods for safe passage over a mountain pass. The Obos is also found on mountain peaks, at sources of water and in sacred places. It is a spontaneous, often crude expression of joy, humility and a desire of the people to become one with heaven and earth. It seems to signify man's basic act to create perfect balance of solid forms in space, his desire to attain greater height to heaven and finally to achieve harmony of man himself with space and earth.

This primitive conception seems to be a timeless and universal one which is evident in the forms of cairns, stone henges and simple rock piling practices found in almost all cultures of the world in various stages of development. I believe that this very early concept eventually led to the construction of pyramids, temples, edifices and all sorts of stone structures, finally giving way to functionalism in architecture. And, I was delighted to see Obos forms in Japan where I found them in highly refined state[s] of finish and often monumental scale, but purely aesthetic and absolutely non-utilitarian in purpose. My friends often find a strong Japanese influence in my work. On the other hand, the critical Japanese eye sees very little Oriental influence in it. I am consciously or sub-consciously trying to create something permanent that defies identity with any epoch or culture, I am concerned with containment within a complex of emotions and simplicity of outward form freeing the space, and absence of distracting surface treatments and textured effects.⁵²

⁵² "George Tsutakawa; Seattle, Washington; Artist's Comment," n.d. In this statement Tsutakawa refers to his *Obos* series, begun in 1956, but does not mention his fountain sculptures. This could indicate that the statement was written before he started work on his first fountain (1958-60), but it might well have been composed later, perhaps to accompany a gallery exhibition that was not concerned with the fountains. What is certain is that the statement was written prior to February 1965, when it was quoted by Henry J. Seldis in an "Exhibition Preview" published in *Art in America*. Tsutakawa quite likely wrote the statement for the show discussed in the Preview, a travelling exhibition organized by Seldis, the *Los Angeles Times* Art Editor, for that city's Municipal Art Department.

While discussing Japanese garden design and such related practices as bonsai and *ikebana* (flower arranging), the eminent English landscape architect Geoffrey Jellicoe once observed: "It is the peculiar quality of the artist that he distorts nature in order to enhance and make visible its inner meaning."⁵³ The importance placed on abstraction in Japanese art was what made it such an inspiration for late nineteenth and early-twentieth century modernists, many of whom saw abstraction as a means of achieving universal understanding through art. The integration of art into all aspects of Japanese life was also admired by Western artists around the turn of the twentieth century. American interest in Japanese attitudes toward both abstraction and the everyday importance of aesthetics was at a peak after World War II, particularly among those artists questioning formalist conceptions of modernism. Greenbergian formalism not only required a separation of arts by medium, by virtue of its supposed autonomy art became alienated from daily life. It could be argued that this, rather than the simpler but clearly related notion of functionality, is what separated design from the fine arts in the decades when high modernism flourished.

As Christopher Wilk points out, a fundamental element of modernism "in the designed world... was the engagement with social – and hence political – issues."⁵⁴ What Wilk calls "the designed world" is based on combining aesthetics and function, meaning that its products cannot be judged by the formalist criteria applied by critics promoting "art for arts sake." In an essay titled "Cultural Colonialism," published in *Third Text* in 2002, Kenneth Coutts-Smith writes: "It appears evident that when (in the vast majority of instances) we speak of a worldwide 'high'

⁵³ Geoffrey Alan Jellicoe, *Studies in Landscape Design* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), 89.

⁵⁴ Christopher Wilk, "Introduction: What was Modernism?" In *Modernism, 1914-1939: Designing a New World*, ed. Christopher Wilk (London: V&A Publications, 2006), 13-14.

culture, a significant part of which is formed by the whole spectrum of the Fine Arts, we are actually speaking of a tradition that is largely restricted to the European experience."⁵⁵

It is perhaps not surprising that Tsutakawa sought a more holistic approach and turned toward design in the 1950s, a decade when he rediscovered his Japanese heritage through his association with other Seattle artists, Caucasian and Asian, convincing him to visit Japan in 1956, his first trip there since leaving as a teenager. Also, in 1950 Tsutakawa began teaching sculpture and drawing to architecture students at the University of Washington, while remaining a faculty member in the School of Art. Though they never occupied the whole of his artistic practice, Tsutakawa was committed to large-scale collaborative projects for publicly accessible spaces. Speaking in interviews about his fountain sculptures and other public art projects, he often mentioned a desire for permanence and sometimes, as in the Artist's Comment cited above, expressed admiration for monumental architecture.⁵⁶ Tsutakawa told Kingsbury: "I think every sculptor, a real, genuine sculptor[,] likes to do big things, permanent things.... I think this is just a born natural desire of almost every sculptor.... And so when they do have a piece of sculpture[:] good size, heroic size, well-placed and he's pleased, this indeed becomes a monument."

The fact that Tsutakawa sought permanence and monumentality in his larger sculptural projects should not be taken to imply that he thought it acceptable for artists to impose their personal visions on the public. Interviews with Tsutakawa make it clear that he was ambitious; he became a university professor as well as a successful artist, both significant achievements for any Japanese American in the immediate postwar years. Nonetheless, he was motivated more by

⁵⁵ Kenneth Coutts-Smith, "Cultural Colonialism," *Third Text* 16, no. 1 (2002): 1.

⁵⁶ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

humanist values, as I have described them above, than by a powerful artistic ego.⁵⁷ In his Oral History interview, Tsutakawa explained his position in clear, simple terms: "One thing I always keep in mind, and I just can't help it, because I still say, if you're making a sculpture for the public places, you are making it for the people to look at.... [I]f they don't like it, you have no business putting a piece of sculpture out in the public."⁵⁸ Along with the ability to work collaboratively, a strong commitment to serving the public is an important quality in an artist who chooses to work in the field of public art. The possible implications of choosing this direction have been summarized by Siah Armajani, a well-known American artist whose work is often closely related to architecture. Interviewed for the *New York Times Magazine* in 1986, Armajani observed: "When you start to work in the public domain, you are suddenly not an outsider, no longer avant-garde. The agenda is not set by you, but by the community or other agency."⁵⁹ In Tsutakawa's case this rarely presented a problem, however. "Fortunately, in most cases, I was left alone and allowed to design whatever I want," he told Kingsbury in their 1983 Oral History interview.

⁵⁷ It has been argued that humanism is itself motivated by ego, in that it is anthropocentric. Critiques of anthropocentrism were not prominent in the rhetoric of postwar environmentalism, but in some cases may have contributed to the Western embrace of Asian philosophies. Generally speaking, the emergence of an anti-humanist stance within the environmental and animal rights movements is a fairly recent development; one well-known contemporary critic who sometimes writes from such a position is John K. Grande; see his essays in *Balance: Art and Nature*, rev. ed. (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 2004).

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Quoted in Douglas C. McGill, "Sculpture Goes Public," in *The New York Times Magazine*, Sunday, April 27, 1986, 47. At that time, Armajani chose to refer to himself as a "public artist," but he later changed his mind. In 1992 Armajani declared that he would be moving away from collaboration, that he would in future prefer to work on his own and be more autonomous. "The whole emphasis in most of those projects is on who can get along best with the others involved," Armajani said, adding that this was "at the expense of vision and fresh thinking." Quoted in Harriet Senie, *Contemporary Public Sculpture: Tradition, Transformation, and Controversy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 92.

In *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art* (2002) Dolores Tarzan Ament lists a total of fifty-nine "Public Commissions" completed by George Tsutakawa, forty-nine of which were fountain sculptures.⁶⁰ The term "public commissions" is somewhat misleading, however, since the majority came from private clients, especially during the 1960s and 70s. In *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, James M. Rupp emphasizes that his definition of "public places" includes "public and private building lobbies and other spaces readily accessible for public viewing."⁶¹ As has been noted in numerous publications analyzing contemporary urban spaces, today there is often little difference between public and private space in the city, since so many sites we have come to regard and use as communal spaces are, in reality, privately owned.⁶² Obvious examples include corporate plazas and shopping malls, and during the 1960s Tsutakawa created fountain sculptures for both types of location. Several are examined in this dissertation, the first study of Tsutakawa's fountains to include analysis of any site other than the Seattle Public Library, a project that was, indeed, a public commission.⁶³ Many more publicly funded projects were completed over the years, for exterior plazas at hospitals, libraries, and government

⁶⁰ Dolores Tarzan Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art* (Seattle and La Conner WA: University of Washington Press / Museum of Northwest Art, 2002), 369-70.

⁶¹ James M. Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places: An Illustrated Guide* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1992), 11.

⁶² See, for example, Neil Smith and Setha Low, "Introduction: The Imperative of Public Space," in *The Politics of Public Space*, ed. Setha Low and Neil Smith (New York: Routledge, 2006), 3; David Harvey, "The Political Economy of Public Space," *ibid.*, 17; Moshe Safdie and Wendy Kohn, *The City After the Automobile: An Architect's Vision* (Toronto: Stoddart Publishing, 1997), 44; and Herbert I. Schiller, *Culture Inc.: the Corporate Takeover of Public Expression* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), Chapter 5.

⁶³ Information on the Seattle Public library site and commission can be found in Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 18-20; and Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p. There and in her monograph on Tsutakawa, Kingsbury also includes some discussion of the controversy surrounding the siting of Tsutakawa's Memorial Sculpture for West Coast Japanese Americans interned during World War II, 1983 (not a fountain), at the Puyallup Fairgrounds in Puyallup, Washington. See Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.; and Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 118.

buildings, as well as for parks, gardens, and university campuses, both in the United States and in Japan.

In the introduction to *Cosmopolitan Modernisms* (2005), a collection of essays tracing cross-cultural episodes in twentieth-century modern art, Kobena Mercer refers to the artists discussed there as "world citizens," who acted within specific contexts. All were, like George Tsutakawa, "curious to explore the creative potential of cultural differences," often in part because (again like Tsutakawa) they experienced the many challenges and opportunities that accompany international migration.⁶⁴ A glimpse into the specific context within which Tsutakawa produced his fountain sculptures of the mid- to late-1960s, several of which are the focus of case studies in my closing chapters, is provided by the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer's* front page from Friday, August 16, 1968 (fig. 2). In the centre is a picture of Tsutakawa, shown with a model of the fountain sculpture he was then designing for the plaza of the new Seattle-First National Bank Building. The planned fountain is not really front-page news – the caption directs the reader to the story on page 31 – but the photograph adds an upbeat, local element. Directly above, the day's main headline announces: "2 Monster Missiles on U.S. Test Pads: Each Scatters 10 Warheads." A second prominent headline sits atop the newspaper's masthead; it reads: "Saigon, Beleaguered Bastion" and promises a "giant reference map" on an inside page. The military emphasis of these two items is balanced by Tsutakawa's image and by a similarly-sized photograph of young John Kennedy, Jr., about to start third grade at a new school.

The *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, better known as "The P-I," promoted itself as "the voice of the Northwest," and the twenty-first century viewer quickly assembles a mental picture of America in the late 1960s: the Kennedys, the Cold War, and Vietnam, as experienced in a West

⁶⁴ Kobena Mercer, ed., *Cosmopolitan Modernisms* (Cambridge, MA and London: Institute of International Visual Arts / MIT Press, 2005), 13.

Coast city. A major urban centre and a city of national importance, in 1968 Seattle was still small enough that the leading daily newspaper purchased its top U.S. and international stories from the *New York Times*, and citizens could expect to see these sharing the front-page with high school football news. Thanks to Tsutakawa and other artists, the support of individuals and the efforts of community groups such as Allied Arts, who worked to fulfil their vision of a "city of fountains," Seattle was also by then widely known as a leader in metropolitan public art. The city's cultural growth would flourish as a result of this role; today it continues to do so.

Methodology

In her monograph on Tsutakawa, Kingsbury proposes that "his success with fountains must, like the success of the great seventeenth-century fountain artist Bernini, arise from the fact that both Tsutakawa and Bernini were grounded in architecture as well as sculpture. Kingsbury insists that "Tsutakawa's fountains in no way emulate Baroque predecessors," but both he and Bernini could call upon "an architectural understanding of spatial design."⁶⁵ Unlike Bernini, Tsutakawa never worked as an architect, but as an art student at the University of Washington he was required to take courses in the history of architecture, and he later taught in the University's School of Architecture as well as in the School of Art. In 1976, Reed summarized what he described as Tsutakawa's "personal concept of fountain design: that the sculptor is giving sculptural form to water as well as to bronze and stone and that the spaces and shapes of his metal sculpture must be inseparably integrated with the shapes and movements and textures and sounds of the water."⁶⁶ Rather than simply "fountain," Tsutakawa preferred the term "fountain sculpture," a fairly common term in mid-century American writing on the subject. The centrality

⁶⁵ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 114.

⁶⁶ Gervais Reed, "George Tsutakawa: An Introduction," 1.

of architectural theories and forms in Tsutakawa's designs has led Kingsbury to suggest that "it might be as accurate to call Tsutakawa's works 'fountain architecture'."⁶⁷ This comment is not meant to challenge Tsutakawa's terminology but to open a line of inquiry that could provide a deeper understanding of a body of work that was and is widely recognized, but has not been sufficiently studied. Indeed, "The Fountains of George Tsutakawa," the first scholarly discussion of these works, was published by Reed in 1969 in the journal of the American Institute of Architects. By that time as, Reed noted, more than twenty Tsutakawa fountains had been built in twelve American cities, "from Anaheim, California, to Seattle, from Honolulu to Washington D.C."⁶⁸

Kingsbury's own discussion of Tsutakawa's fountains is, unfortunately, limited to one short chapter in her book, so she is unable to develop her statement in much depth. My dissertation makes extensive use of architectural history and some reference to industrial design. In the postwar period at the University of Washington, the teaching of both art and architecture, particularly the latter, was strongly influenced by Bauhaus principles. The original Bauhaus was founded by Walter Gropius in 1919, with the goal of unifying the arts and restoring their place in daily life to what it had been before the modern period. In this sense, its guiding philosophy shared something with the holistic approach often found Asian traditions. When the teachings of the German Bauhaus were taken to the United States and gradually disseminated, a process that began in the interwar period, certain aspects were altered to meet the needs of a very different environment. A complex process of reinterpretation also took place with some forms of Eastern philosophy, notably Chinese Taoism and its Japanese descendent, Zen Buddhism. Much like the

⁶⁷ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 114.

⁶⁸ Gervais Reed, "The Fountains of George Tsutakawa," *American Institute of Architects Journal* (July 1969): 49.

Bauhaus, Zen attracted a degree of American interest in earlier decades, but its ideas were widely taken up and popularized during the 1950s. I mention this from the outset in order to emphasize that such processes as intercultural dialogue, migration, translation, and assimilation were not only central to Tsutakawa's life and art; they underpin multiple themes within my dissertation. In general, I conceptualize the transmission of knowledge, attitudes, values, and ideas as a process of exchange or dialogue, much of it intercultural. The term "influence" is often used, but with an awareness of critiques of the concept offered by, among others, Michel Foucault and Michael Baxandall.⁶⁹ I am also indebted to Partha Mitter for her insights on this issue, as expressed in the essay "Interventions: Decentering Modernism: Art History and Avant-Garde Art from the Periphery" (2008). Tsutakawa commented more than once that he was unsure whether certain tendencies in his fountains came about "consciously or unconsciously,"⁷⁰ but, generally speaking, Baxandall is correct when he argues that artists choose intentionally from a range of sources, and their choosing is a purposeful activity.

What Baxandall says about artists is, of course, equally true of art historians. However, Tsutakawa's approach to learning from other artists was both practical and intuitive, whereas ours remain predominantly analytical, though generally based in qualitative methods that do

⁶⁹ For Foucault, influence ranks high among a field of terms that "function to affirm and maintain the continuity and integrity of history, tradition, and discourse" (Robert S. Nelson, "Appropriation," in *Critical Terms for Art History*, ed. Robert S. Nelson and Richard Schiff (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 118. Foucault writes that the notion of influence "refers to an apparently causal process (but with neither rigorous delimitation nor theoretical definition) the phenomena of resemblance or repetition," and the support it provides is "of too magical a kind to be very amenable to analysis." Quoted *ibid.*, 21. Baxandall argues that "'influence' is a curse of art criticism primarily because of its wrong-headed grammatical prejudice about who is the agent and who the patient: it seems to reverse the active/passive relation which the historical actor experiences and the inferential beholder will wish to take into account." Michael Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 58-62.

⁷⁰ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.; "George Tsutakawa; Seattle, Washington; Artist's Comment," n.d.

provide some room for subjective assessments and speculative writing. The main methods used in this study have been site visits and library/archival research, which has involved perusing a great many newspaper articles from the postwar period and after. I have also conducted in-person interviews with two of Tsutakawa's children, Gerard and Mayumi Tsutakawa, and relied on email correspondence with each of them. A few telephone calls and emails were also exchanged between myself and art historian Martha Kingsbury, and emails with one of Tsutakawa's former students, retired architect and planner Edward Burke. I received approval for the interviews from the University of Victoria's Human Research Ethics Board on May 27, 2010.

Extensive archival research was conducted at the following locations: University of Washington Libraries, Seattle; the Seattle Public Library; Seattle Municipal Archives; Vancouver, B.C. Municipal Archives; the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.; the Archives of the National Cathedral, Washington, D.C.; the Henry Madden Library at California State University, Fresno, Special Collections; and the University of Hawaii at Manoa Library, Special Collections. At the University of Washington important archival resources were located in several collections: the Pacific Northwest Collection in Special Collections, and the Archives of Northwest Art in the Manuscripts and University Archives Division, both part of the Suzzallo Library; the Fine Arts Library; and the Built Environments Library. At the Seattle Public Library Special Collections and Fine Arts yielded useful archival material, and I have made frequent online use of the library's new Century 21 Digital Collection. At the Archives of American Art I spent several days consulting the *George Tsutakawa Papers, 1963-1991*, and viewing a number of videotaped interviews with the artist. It is, however, important to note that when Tsutakawa donated his personal papers to the Archives in 1991, some material remained in his possession. While future additions are expected, at this point there

may be relevant material – in the artist's notebooks for example – that is not available to researchers through a public archive.⁷¹

One of the most valuable resources for my research into Tsutakawa's life and work has been the Oral History Project sponsored by the Archives of American Art. Part of the Smithsonian Institution, the Archives allow easy online access to their large collection of Oral History interviews, including Kingsbury's in-depth interview with Tsutakawa, conducted over several days in 1983. The transcript – 119 pages in length, unnumbered but fully searchable, provides a remarkably detailed record of Tsutakawa's early life and his experiences as a student and an artist, all in his own words. In this respect, a lengthy interview conducted by Gervais Reed in 1976 has been almost as important for gaining glimpses of Tsutakawa's personality, attitudes, opinions, and values. The few artist's statements I have uncovered have also been invaluable, and useful information has been found in a number of videotaped interviews with Tsutakawa, originally made for the Archives of American Art or for broadcast on public television.⁷² Unfortunately, two filmed interviews cited in Kingsbury's monograph of 1990 have so far proven untraceable.⁷³

⁷¹ Archives of American Art, Research Collections, George Tsutakawa Papers, 1963-1991. <http://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/george-tsutakawa-papers-10464>.

⁷² Kingsbury's Oral History interview led to the making of a video interview for the Archives of American Art in 1987-88. Directed by Ken Levine, it consists of two parts; the first is an interview with George Tsutakawa in his studio, conducted by Mayumi Tsutakawa. See *George Tsutakawa Interview*, June 26-27, 1987, Archives of American Art Videotapes, Smithsonian Institution. The second part consists of twenty hours of unedited footage: interviews with Tsutakawa shot at the sites of some of his fountains in the Puget Sound area and documentation of the artist's trip to Fukuyama, Japan, in 1988 to oversee the installation of his *Lotus Fountain*. Much of the footage shot in Japan is conversations between Tsutakawa and others in Japanese. See *George Tsutakawa in Japan Video Project*, October 17 - November 4, 1988, Archives of American Art Videotapes, Smithsonian Institution. The television documentaries that provided the most information for my dissertation were *Northwest Visionaries*, directed and filmed by Ken Levine (Seattle: 1979); KCTS Seattle, *1st Annual Bumbershoot Golden Umbrella Award, George Tsutakawa*, producer/editor Jean Walkinshaw (Seattle: 1994); and "Essential Art,

Tsutakawa's prolific career as a designer of publicly-sited fountain sculptures – what postwar journalists liked to refer to as a "fountaineer" – began with the *Fountain of Wisdom* at the new Seattle Public Library, commissioned in 1958 and completed in March 1960. Before that work was even unveiled he received commissions for two further fountains, with three more following in 1961-62.⁷⁴ Because my dissertation focuses on the fountains Tsutakawa designed and constructed during the 1960s, all of which were for North American sites, I have written very little on his later commissions for locations in Japan. There were six of them in total, all completed between 1981 and 1990. An appendix is provided with a list of Tsutakawa's fountains, primarily based on Kingsbury's list of "Fountains and Public Sculpture Commissions;" it is also informed by the later, less detailed list found in Ament's book.⁷⁵ The most recent information on the removal or relocation of certain fountains was provided by Gerard Tsutakawa, who was George's assistant on most of the fountain projects. A well-known sculptor himself, Gerard also consults on reinstallations of his father's works, including the *Fountain of Wisdom* at the Seattle Public Library, and sometimes works with his assistants on fountain restorations; a recent example is *Song of the Flower* (fig. 3).

In the introductory essay for *ArchiSculpture: Dialogues between Architecture and Sculpture from the Eighteenth Century to the Present Day* (2004), Markus Bröderlin states that

Spiritual Art: Jacob Lawrence/George Tsutakawa," from the UWTV series *Upon Reflection*. Producer: Al Page; Producer/Director: John Givens; Producer/Writer: John Coney (Seattle: 1990).

⁷³ Both are 16mm films; they are *Birth of a Fountain: Creation of the Seattle Public Library Fountain by George Tsutakawa*, directed and filmed by Dan McQuade (Seattle, 1960, 30 minutes) and *Fountain/Sculpture: The Design and Execution of the Spokane Expo '74 Fountain by George Tsutakawa*, directed and filmed by Ron Carraher (University of Washington School of Art, Seattle, 1974, 18 minutes). Before my research began, the Tsutakawa family also tried unsuccessfully to locate these two documentaries.

⁷⁴ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: An Introduction," 1.

⁷⁵ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 149-52; Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 369-70.

art historians attempting to draw boundaries between architecture and sculpture "have always turned to function as the most obvious criterion for demarcation."⁷⁶ If this logic applied to fountains, one would expect that at least those historical fountains previously used as a source of potable water would be firmly classified as examples of architecture, but this is not necessarily the case. The lack of consensus as to whether fountains should be classified as architecture or as sculpture is clearly demonstrated by the variations that occur when the titles of fountains appear in print. Generally speaking, the titles of sculptures, like other categories of fine art, are italicized in scholarly publications. The names of buildings are not italicized. A quick review of a selection of books and periodicals from both fields – art and architecture – reveals that fountains are an ambiguous category; the use of italics varies between different publishers. Primarily because Tsutakawa preferred the term "fountain sculptures," I have chosen to use italics for the titles of fountains in this dissertation. On a different note, all Japanese names have been written using the Western convention; an individual's given name is followed by his or her surname.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter One begins by exploring the central themes behind Tsutakawa's abstract fountain sculptures, which I liken to those found in a much earlier figurative example, the *Tyler Davidson Fountain* in Cincinnati, Ohio. A brief comparison is sufficient to demonstrate the timeless quality of such themes as water's relationship to nature, spirituality, and community. After outlining Tsutakawa's standard methods of fountain design and construction, I turn to the fundamental connection between fountains and architecture. This is followed by a short section on the important functional aspects of public fountains as they developed, first in the ancient

⁷⁶ Markus Brüderlin, ed., *ArchiSculpture: Dialogues between Architecture and Sculpture from the Eighteenth Century to the Present Day* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2004), 15.

world, and then in Europe and the United States. Next, a summary history of fountains expands that perspective to include some Asian countries, most importantly Japan. The chapter ends with a return to the enduring symbolism attached to fountains, especially in the West; examples are drawn from throughout Tsutakawa's career.

Chapter Two is devoted to Tsutakawa's early biography, from his birth in Seattle in 1910 through his school years in Japan, his return to Seattle, education as an artist, and the upheavals he and his family experienced during World War II. This bicultural narrative is interwoven with the early history of twentieth-century art in Seattle, including the emergence of the "Northwest School." I explore Tsutakawa's friendship with Mark Tobey and its impact on his artistic development, along with those of other artists who could be regarded as mentors, notably Seattle sculptor Dudley Pratt, Pacific Northwest carver Dudley Carter, and the Russian Cubist Alexander Archipenko, with whom Tsutakawa studied for a short time in the late 1930s. Drafted into the U.S. Army shortly after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Tsutakawa served out the war years on American soil, then returned to Seattle. He re-entered the University of Washington and began to study for a master's degree, but was soon balancing his own studies with a part-time teaching position. It led to a professorship at UW, with Tsutakawa teaching in the School of Art and the School of Architecture. Increasingly attracted to public projects and collaborative working methods, he found teaching provided a fertile field where these interests could take root.

Chapter Three focuses on the early postwar period, examining the Seattle art community in light of what has been referred to as the tension between "the individual and the social" in that era's modernist art.⁷⁷ I argue that Tsutakawa is most accurately understood as existing between or

⁷⁷ "The Individual and the Social" is the title of Part V of Paul Wood and Charles Harrison's *Art in Theory, 1900-2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*. 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003).

transcending Seattle's two dominant modernisms, in part because of his close connections to both "Northwest School" artists and the University of Washington. In this chapter I examine aspects of Tsutakawa's teaching career, particularly his involvement in the School of Architecture's Basic Design course, modelled on the famous Bauhaus *Vorkurs*. The impact of Bauhaus ideas in America is an important theme, related to Tsutakawa's approach to abstraction, which I examine here. Next, I discuss the artist's gradual rediscovery of his Japanese heritage, particularly during the 1950s. Popular interest in Zen Buddhism and other aspects of Japanese culture soared in the early postwar period, and many West Coast artists were noticeably affected by these trends. In Tsutakawa's case, they led to a turning point in his artistic career, in part by convincing him to visit Japan in 1956. It was a trip that greatly enhanced his commitment to infusing his artworks with spirituality, primarily by connecting them to nature's rhythms and forces. Chapter Three expands on Tsutakawa's developing practice as a sculptor, leading up to his Asian-inspired *Obos* sculptures and his first fountain commission.

Chapter Four is concerned with the creation and reception of the *Fountain of Wisdom* for the Seattle Public Library, the project with which Tsutakawa first established numerous lasting characteristics of his formal and conceptual approaches to fountain design. I begin by analyzing the symbolism of the *Fountain of Wisdom*, then return to Tsutakawa's approach to abstraction, one he maintained in later fountain sculptures. In part, this means examining connections between Tsutakawa's fountains and the works of some major European modernists: Brancusi, Archipenko, and Henry Moore. I also touch on the issue of typology and postwar debates regarding the future of monumental sculpture. Next, I turn to the commission and execution of the project. This is followed by a discussion of the relationship of the *Fountain of Wisdom* to the modernist building it embellished and the reception that greeted them both on completion. The

chapter ends by examining the broad impact of Japanese ideas on American postwar culture, where a desire to turn recent adversaries into new friends was evident in everything from architecture and garden design to novels, plays, and popular films.

Chapter Five begins with an historical overview of key developments in government support for public art in Seattle, at both the federal and local levels. Also important is the community group Allied Arts of Seattle, which worked to establish a Municipal Arts Commission and to support the construction of more public fountains. I discuss Tsutakawa's attitudes regarding private commissions for fountain sculptures to be placed in publicly accessible sites, then introduce a privately owned "public" sculpture by Henry Moore, located in downtown Seattle. Moore's *Three-Piece Sculpture: Vertebrae* (1968) provides a good entry point for an analysis of connections between large-scale public sculptures, aesthetic concepts of empathy, and the human body. The chapter concludes with a case study of Tsutakawa's only Canadian fountain sculpture, the *Fountain of the Pioneers* (1969) in Vancouver, B.C., a private commission and one that clearly illustrates the importance of the modernist ideal of universalism and its connections to primitivism within the context of Tsutakawa's fountain designs.

Privately commissioned fountains are further examined in Chapter Six, in which I present case studies of a number of Tsutakawa's fountain projects for retail developments in the Pacific Northwest, California, and Hawaii. In addition to the expansion of American consumer culture during the 1960s, increases in private automobile ownership and the growth of residential suburbs in that decade played crucial parts in encouraging the construction of regional shopping malls. This chapter also explores the Seattle World's Fair of 1962, a showcase for modern public fountains. Known as Century 21, the 1962 World's Fair did not feature any fountain sculptures

designed by Tsutakawa. He did, however, submit two proposals to the Seattle Civic Center Fountain Competition, which I examine here.

Chapter Seven is structured around a group of Seattle fountains, separately designed by Tsutakawa and landscape architect Lawrence Halprin for side-by-side locations downtown, next to the Interstate-5 highway. In comparing the approaches of Tsutakawa and Halprin, I focus on the ideas and values behind each artist's work in order to further illuminate certain aspects of Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures, and to review some important points as my study draws to a close. The late 1960s was a period of dramatic cultural change, with American artists and architects seeking ways to challenge various modernist principles, for example by moving sculpture out of the gallery in order to try to engage more directly with members of the public. Before discussing Tsutakawa's *Naramore Fountain* (1967) and Halprin's fountains for Freeway Park (1972-76), I briefly examine what historian Jeffrey Craig Sanders has referred to as Seattle's "urban-based environmental consciousness" an outlook that first emerged in the early 1970s but was, I argue, facilitated by pre-existing regional attitudes regarding the interconnectedness of nature and spirituality. The new ethos was, according to Sanders, informed by the countercultural movements that were emerging by the end of the 1960s, the same decade that saw Tsutakawa establish himself as a leading designer of large, publicly-sited sculptural fountains.

Review of Literature

Andrew Causey, in his bibliographic essay for *Sculpture Since 1945* (Oxford University Press, 1998), makes two important points regarding sources on art from the decades following the Second World War. During the post-war era, Causey observes, the exhibition catalogue became a "leading form of art-book publishing," a status it continues to enjoy. For this reason, exhibition catalogues are crucial for research on post-war and contemporary artists. Also, after 1945 increased public interest in contemporary art resulted in more interviews with artists and encouraged artists to offer explanations about their work. In some cases this led to the writing of art criticism by artists, for instance Donald Judd, or to writing as an extension of artistic practice, as with Robert Smithson. While Tsutakawa was not involved in these two forms of writing, he did compose a few artist's statements, and he granted numerous interviews.

This is significant, for, as Causey explains, "up to 1960 Modernism's sense of the self-sufficiency of a work of art led artists to resist statements, and published interviews were not common. The artist's role was within the studio; making art was a unique practice for which there was no equivalent in words, and an artist writing for publication was felt to risk loss of creative power."⁷⁸ It was only with the emergence of Minimalism and Conceptual art that artists "began to see their work in terms of discourse," as viewpoints shifted to encompass sculpture's external context.⁷⁹ Associated with this development was a growing recognition of public art as a genre or area of cultural activity with its own discourse, distinct from so-called "gallery art" but closely linked to developments in urban planning and discussions related to the practical and symbolic uses of public space. My interest in such issues is what initially led me to the fountain

⁷⁸ Andrew Causey, *Sculpture Since 1945* (Oxford: Oxford U.P., 1998), 272.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

sculptures of George Tsutakawa, though my decision to choose these as the subject of my dissertation was also very much influenced by the constellation of interrelated topics that came into view as my research progressed. Because it was the starting point for my inquiry, I have decided to begin this literature review with a section on public art, presenting a very selective historiography to clarify where my study fits within this broader framework, and then moving on to more specific topics, including fountains, Pacific Northwest modernism, and of course, George Tsutakawa.

Art in Public Places

Since the 1980s, a sizable literature has developed on what is most often referred to as either "public art" or "art in public places." In a decade when thriving economies encouraged increased public and private spending on culture and the arts in the United States and other Western countries, contemporary public art became a focus of critical commentary. This included the complex question of how "public art," as a category, should be defined. In the article "Personal Sensibilities in Public Places," published in *Artforum* in 1981, John Beardsley attempted to differentiate "public art" from "art in public places." Beardsley, a major contributor to the emerging discourse around public art, argued that while the two categories often overlapped, the term "public art" referred only to art that addressed societal concerns, however broadly they might be defined. In contrast, "art in public places" encompassed all "artworks purchased or commissioned for publicly owned or publicly accessible spaces."⁸⁰ Such art was not simply physically accessible; it acquired emotional or intellectual accessibility through its placement. In Beardsley's view, art in publicly accessible spaces was presented "without the

⁸⁰ John Beardsley, "Personal Sensibilities in Public Places," *Artforum* 19, no. 10 (Summer 1981): 43.

restraining authority of either professionalism or wealth.”⁸¹ This opened it up to public inspection and appraisal, which in turn supported art's function as an agent of discourse and possibly education.

Artist Robert Irwin has also been an important figure in the development of American public art. In *Being and Circumstance: Notes Toward a Conditional Art* (Lapis Press, 1985) Irwin proposed four "general working categories for public/site art:" 1) Site dominant, 2) Site adjusted, 3) Site specific, 4) Site conditioned/determined. The labels are fairly simple; unfortunately, the same cannot be said of all Irwin's accompanying explanations.⁸² In fact, I have found it surprisingly difficult to fit Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures into individual public art categories. One of the intriguing aspects of the varied terminologies suggested by artists, critics, and others over the past few decades is the extent to which they not only overlap but actually contradict one other. Perhaps this is one reason public art has, for many, become associated with public controversy, despite the fact that the vast majority of contemporary artworks installed in public places do not elicit negative responses.⁸³

The events that lead to the removal of Richard Serra's *Tilted Arc* from New York's Federal Plaza in 1989 are, nonetheless, among the most famous in the recent history of public sculpture. Harriet Senie, an art historian who has written extensively on public sculpture, examined the Serra case in *The Tilted Arc Controversy: Dangerous Precedent?* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992). In addition to providing information on the commission, the sculpture, and the debate around it, Senie explored how the *Tilted Arc* saga continued to have an impact, affecting larger issues such as government censorship and funding for arts education

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Robert Irwin, *Being and Circumstance: Notes Toward a Conditional Art*, ed. Lawrence Weschler (San Francisco: Lapis Press, 1985), 26-27.

⁸³ Tom Finkelpearl, *Dialogues in Public Art* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2000), 54.

into the 1990s. Tom Finkelpearl devoted the opening section of *Dialogues in Public Art* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2000) to *Tilted Arc* and three other prominent American public art controversies. As his book's title implies, however, Finkelpearl devoted most of it to interviews he conducted with artists and others. Erika Doss has often explored instances of protest and debate in her writing on American public art, notably in the book *Spirit Poles and Flying Pigs: Public Art and Cultural Democracy in American Communities* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995). More recently, Doss authored "Public Art Controversy: Cultural Expression and Civic Debate" for *Monograph*, published at www.AmericansForTheArts.org.

Where art is concerned, the loudest objections tend to be raised when citizens see works they actively dislike, or simply cannot relate to on any level, being purchased with public funds – in other words, their tax dollars. To some extent, this may be a matter of practicality, since complaints about privately financed placements of art in public places are likely to go unheard, especially if an artwork's location is also privately owned.⁸⁴ Since the 1960s, such "publicly accessible" siting on what is, in fact, private property has been increasingly common. Among the first to point this out was Kate Linker, in a frequently cited *Artforum* article from 1981 that still has much to offer, "Public Sculpture: The Pursuit of the Pleasurable and Profitable Paradise." Beginning with a brief history of American civic sculpture, Linker sketched the 1960s as a decade when rapid economic growth and the rise of art's status value led to an increase in corporate subsidies and corporate commissions. By 1980, a time when massive government spending was the norm, three main justifications were commonly offered for these funds being

⁸⁴ There are, of course, exceptions. A recent example from Vancouver, B.C. is *Device to Root Out Evil* (1997), an inverted model of a Puritan church by American artist Dennis Oppenheim. On loan to the city, the privately owned sculpture was placed in a Coal Harbour park, but moved to Calgary in 2008 after drawing complaints from a number of groups. These included condominium owners who felt the artwork blocked their views of the harbour, and members of the public who considered the sculpture blasphemous or found it overly cynical.

directed to public art. Linker summarized these as the credo of “Art for Everyone,” the myth that societies were “remembered by its contributions to the human spirit,” and the idea that artists deserved economic support.⁸⁵ At that time two newer arguments were also becoming popular, research having shown that, first, the arts were a growth industry, and, second, cultural attendance in the United States had recently surpassed sporting events. The most important theme in Linker’s article was the expansion of the belief in the democratic, socially transformative function of public art to include a transformative economic function.

Economic issues remained important to scholars and critics writing on public art in the 1990s and beyond. For example, economic realities were a major focus for Rosalyn Deutsche in *Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1996) a ground-breaking study that explored the relationships between art, architecture, urban planning, and the interdisciplinary discourse often referred to as the politics of space. Among many other books and articles on public art that appeared in the nineties, two of the best were Senie's *Contemporary Public Sculpture: Tradition, Transformation, and Controversy* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1992) and *Art, Space and the City: Public Art and Urban Futures* by Malcolm Miles (London: Routledge, 1997). Both these books took a typological approach, with Senie addressing such topics as memorials and monuments, landscape as art, and functional public sculpture, while Miles classified public art according to type of site, exploring art's role in urban development and the integration of art with such amenities as health services and metropolitan public transit. Each of these authors also provided a conceptual overview of contemporary public art in the 1990s, which offered readers exposure to two different cultural perspectives, as Senie was based in the eastern U.S., while Miles was in Britain.

⁸⁵ Kate Linker, “Public Sculpture: The Pursuit of the Pleasurable and Profitable Paradise,” *Artforum* 19, no. 7 (March 1981): 66.

As Finkelpearl pointed out, forms of public art that do not involve the permanent installation of a work – be it a sculpture, mural, mosaic, or designed landscape – have been produced by artists since the late 1960s; well known early examples include works by Mierle Laderman Ukeles and Vito Acconci.⁸⁶ In the two books just mentioned, Senie and Miles maintained a pattern established in the 1980s, when writing on public art was almost entirely concerned with the permanent installation of objects or environments. A significant shift was, however, underway. The directional change was reflected in the introduction of the term "new genre public art," first used by artist Suzanne Lacy when she edited the anthology *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art* (Seattle: Bay Press, 1995).⁸⁷ The kinds of community-based approaches advocated by Lacy also gained recognition in a less well-known anthology published the same year, *But is it Art?: The Spirit of Art as Activism*, edited by Nina Felshin (Seattle: Bay Press, 1995). Since that time, much of the writing published on art in public places has focused on such forms of practice, but the term "new genre public art" has largely been eclipsed. Among the many alternatives, a favourite is "relational art," best analyzed by Nicolas Bourriaud in *Relational Aesthetics* (Dijon, les presses du Reel, 1998).

In a recent anthology, *The Practice of Public Art* (New York: Routledge, 2008), Cameron Cartiere and Shelly Willis argue that, today, "only public art administrators and officials seem willing to use the term *public art* to describe municipal, county, and state government programs." They suggest that many artists actively avoid the label, aware of an "unspoken consensus in the fine art establishment that public art is synonymous with compromise, dilution, and

⁸⁶ Finkelpearl, *Dialogues in Public Art*, 23.

⁸⁷ Cameron Cartiere and Shelly Willis, eds. *The Practice of Public Art* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 2.

dependency."⁸⁸ Instead of gathering under the banner of public art, or some other collective designation, artists employ a rather bewildering range of descriptors, which may contribute to a sense of fragmentation. On the other hand, it could be necessary if we are to differentiate between, for instance, "place-specific" and "site-specific" installations – either of which may or may not be examples of public art. In the influential study *One Place After Another: Site-specific Art and Locational Identity* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002) Miwon Kwon presents a theoretical framework for examining issues associated with site-specific art. Kwon focuses on relationships between location and identity, which she argues have become less stable in the era of late-capitalism. This makes her book very different from Nick Kaye's earlier *Site-Specific Art: Performance, Place, and Documentation* (London: Routledge, 2000), which investigates the concept of "performativity" as it connects with site-specific practices such as environmental art, installation, and performance. One clear indication of the high level of current interest in this area is the publication by MIT Press in 2009 of Claire Doherty's *Situation*, a collection of primary texts that document the development of location-driven approaches to art and artistic research. Cartiere and Willis suggest, however, that by focusing so intently on "new" genres, art historians have "left uncharted vast territories in the discourse on permanent public artworks."⁸⁹

Though I have an ongoing interest in site-specific forms of public art, and critical, socially engaged projects, Tsutakawa's practice as a fountain designer shared little with such non-traditional genres; so my dissertation research has followed a different path. Still, one other recent book on public art has been very important, Cher Krause Knight's *Public Art: Theory, Practice and Populism* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2008). Also central to my study were two publications specifically concerned with Seattle, a city identified by Linker in 1981 as one of two

⁸⁸ Ibid., 1 (italics original).

⁸⁹ Ibid., 2.

in America being celebrated as successful examples of public sculpture's use as a focus for urban renewal and economic growth.⁹⁰ A few years later, Janice Peck's "Arts Activists and Seattle's Cultural Expansion, 1954-65," was published in *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* (July 1985), providing important details on how Seattle achieved this reputation. In addition to government initiatives, Peck examined contributions made by community organizations, particularly Allied Arts of Seattle. As my dissertation will demonstrate, in the 1960s Allied Arts was crucial in promoting the placement of fountains around the city. For information on individual works of public art, I relied heavily on James M. Rupp's *Art in Seattle's Public Places: An Illustrated Guide* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1992). Rupp has included works by Tsutakawa and other Pacific Northwest artists active in the postwar period and after, as well as sculptures and murals produced under government programs designed to support American artists in the 1930s.

Fountains

For general information on the history of fountains, my chief source has been *Fountains: Splash and Spectacle, Water and Design from the Renaissance to the Present*, edited by Marilyn Symmes (New York: Rizzoli, 1998). This book is devoted almost exclusively to examples from Western Europe and the United States, including several fountains by Tsutakawa. Richly illustrated, it also provided extensive information on the symbolism of fountains, and chapters on "Fountains as Urban Oases," and "Fountains as Spectacle at International Expositions." A more recent (but less informative) book, Rosalind Hopwood's *Fountains and Water Features: From Ancient Springs to Modern Marvels* (London: Frances Lincoln, 2009), also offered a history of

⁹⁰ The other city was Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

fountains, beginning with ancient Egypt and including ancient Greek, Roman, and Moorish examples. On Baroque fountains, an important work is Katherine Wentworth Rinne's *The Waters of Rome: Aqueducts, Fountains, and the Birth of the Baroque City* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011). Also useful is Christopher Thacker's *The History of Gardens* (London: C. Helm, 1979), which includes some sections on historical fountains and waterscapes within the garden context. Although Thacker is primarily concerned with European gardens, there are chapters on the garden traditions of a few Asian countries, including China and Japan. Also worth consulting are two books originally published in German, *Fountains and Springs* by Ernst-Erik Pfannschmidt (London: George G. Harrap, 1968) and Gretl Hoffman's *Modern Fountains* (London: George Godwin, 1981). Both are well-illustrated with black and white photographs, mostly of European fountains, but Pfannschmidt's book includes both traditional and modern examples, while Hoffman's is devoted to twentieth century fountains. Hoffman also provides a technical introduction that outlines such considerations as materials, construction methods, water circulation, plumbing, and electrical components. For more detailed but easily understandable information on the technical aspects of fountain design and construction, another source I found useful was *Fountains and Pools: Construction Guidelines and Specifications* by C. Douglas Aurand (London: E. & F.N. Spon, 1986).

Though modern studies published within the field of landscape design tend to deal with waterscapes and water features, as opposed to sculptural fountains, examples of both and such related innovations as urban green-roofing are included in *Waterscapes: Planning, Building, and Designing with Water*, edited by Herbert Dreiseitl, Dieter Grau, and Karl H.C. Ludwig (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2001). I also gained important insights from *Water: The use of Water in Landscape Architecture* by Geoffrey Alan Jellicoe and Susan Jellicoe (London: A. and C. Black, 1971). The

Illustrated History of Landscape Design by Elizabeth Boult and Chip Sullivan (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2010) is a general study that includes entries on a few major twentieth century designers, notably Thomas Church and Lawrence Halprin. Also helpful to my research was the illustrated overview of historical traditions in Japanese garden design. While publications on well-known architects and landscape architects generally include some information on the water features that were included in their projects, it may be restricted to images. One such book, which nonetheless offered valuable visual insights, was Minoru Yamasaki's *A Life in Architecture* (New York: Weatherhill, 1970). Many books and articles have been published on Halprin's work, including a number that he wrote. Most helpful to my study were the exhibition catalogue *Lawrence Halprin: Changing Places* (San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1986), and Halprin's own *Notebooks, 1959-1971* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1972).

The literature on modernist approaches to fountain design is far from substantial, but information can be found by researching individual sculptors who completed one or more fountains; they include Alexander Calder, Naum Gabo, Isamu Noguchi, and Jean Tinguely. Mining this particular vein, I uncovered a few sources that have informed my thinking on Tsutakawa's fountains; they include *Jean Tinguely: Life and Work*, by Heidi E. Violand-Hobi (Munich: Prestel, 1995), and *Isamu Noguchi: Sculptural Design* (Weil am Rhein, Germany: Vitra Design Museum, 2001). On Noguchi's work, generally speaking, books that focus on public art provide the most complete assessments of his fountain projects. Still, this exhibition catalogue includes excellent essays on other works and some information on Noguchi's fountains.

In December 1964 a short pictorial survey, "Fountains," was published in *Art in America*. It featured a number of recent examples, among them a large photograph of Tsutakawa with the *Fountain of Wisdom*.⁹¹ Considerable insight into the state of American fountain design in the 1950s and 1960s can also be gleaned from one other source that is almost entirely pictorial. *Fountains in Contemporary Architecture*, edited by Minor L. Bishop (New York: American Federation of the Arts, 1965), was published to accompany a photographic exhibition of the same name. Conceived as a travelling "gallery of recent fountains," the show was organized to celebrate and promote the role of fountains "in the poetic enrichment of architecture." In the catalogue, Bishop suggested that fountains were at that time undergoing a renaissance of sorts, after years of having "been deemed too extravagant for our materialistic age." By the mid-1960s, he argued, Americans had become accustomed to an atmosphere of postwar prosperity. They were, in Bishop's words, "sufficiently removed in time from the Depression of the thirties and the World War of the Forties [to] accept the beauty and luxury of flowing water that was once the pride of individuals and cities."⁹² In 1976, a headline appeared in the *Christian Science Monitor* announcing "America's Big Splash: Fountains." By that time, the paper could celebrate "a definite upward trend all over the country." The article described a number of approaches, quoting Tsutakawa, Halprin, and one or two others. Seattle also gained mention, included among a half dozen U.S. cities leading the way in terms of "the quality and quantity of their fountains," a taste of its future success in the broader field of public art.⁹³

⁹¹ "Fountains," *Art in America* 52 (December 1964), 43.

⁹² Minor L. Bishop, *Fountains in Contemporary Architecture* (New York: American Federation of the Arts, 1965), n.p.

⁹³ Diana Loercher, "America's Big Splash: Fountains," *The Christian Science Monitor*, September 8, 1976, 2.

George Tsutakawa

To date, the only substantial study of Tsutakawa's work has been Martha Kingsbury's *George Tsutakawa* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990), published in conjunction with *Eternal Laughter*, a retrospective held at the Bellevue Art Museum to celebrate the artist's eightieth birthday. In addition to its chapter on fountains, Kingsbury's monograph presents the most significant aspects of Tsutakawa's life and career up to 1990. This book has been vital to my research; I benefitted immeasurably from Kingsbury's astute observations and penetrating analysis, and from the high-quality of the reproductions, showing works in nearly every medium Tsutakawa explored over the years. Unfortunately, Kingsbury's treatment of the relationship of Bauhaus ideas to Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures is disappointingly superficial, a matter I will discuss further in Chapter Three. Like Kingsbury, Gervais Reed was a professor of art history at the University of Washington; before that he was curator and later director of UW's Henry Art Gallery. In 1969 and 1976 Reed published two articles on Tsutakawa's fountains, the first a short but well-illustrated essay titled "The Fountains of George Tsutakawa." Appearing in the *American Institute of Architects Journal* (July 1969), this was the first scholarly publication devoted to Tsutakawa's fountains. Reed's second article (sometimes indexed as two separate titles: "George Tsutakawa: An Introduction" and "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains" *Journal of Ethnic Studies* 4, no. 1, 1976) was based on an interview with Tsutakawa. In addition to providing early biographical information, it explored Tsutakawa's blossoming career as a fountain designer in considerable depth. I find it somewhat strange that this longer article, written by an art historian, was published in a journal devoted to ethnic studies, but this may indicate that the art world of the mid-1970s was not particularly interested in fountains, or in Asian American artists.

In 1961 the American Craftsmen's Council published *Architectural Craftsmen of the Northwest*. A substantial volume intended as an illustrated directory, it documented a key sector of Seattle's vibrant postwar craft scene.⁹⁴ Tsutakawa was included in the book, with reproductions of two of his earliest fountains. In February 1966 Jack Uchida, who had by that time worked with Tsutakawa as his engineer on numerous fountain projects, published an article in *Welding Journal* titled "Welding in Modern Metal Sculptures." Uchida examined the important contributions welding was making to sculpture at the time, and promoted the freedom artists could gain by learning the necessary skills themselves, rather than sending their projects out for fabrication – the practice of Alexander Calder, for example. Uchida provided the kind of detailed information on techniques and materials expected by a specialized audience, and he included reproductions of several of Tsutakawa's fountains and smaller sculptures.

In the early 1980s two small catalogues in Japanese and English were published in Japan to mark Tsutakawa's installation of major fountains in that country: *Exhibition of Fountain Sculptures by George Tsutakawa* (Sendai, Japan: Contemporary Sculpture Center, 1981), and *Fountain Sculptures by George Tsutakawa* (Setagaya Ward, Tokyo: Contemporary Sculpture Center, 1982). Tsutakawa was one of the artists profiled by Bruce Guenther, Marsha Burns, and Ed Marquand in *50 Northwest Artists: A Critical Selection of Painters and Sculptors Working in the Pacific Northwest* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1983). Seattle art critic Doloris Tarzan Ament also included a chapter on Tsutakawa in *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002), a biographically-oriented study of a diverse group of artists that Ament presents as either part of or descended from the "Northwest School"

⁹⁴ I would like to thank Dr. Jeffrey Ochsner for bringing this volume to my attention. I share his opinion that Pacific Northwest craft production from the 1940s to the 1980s is in need of much more scholarly attention than it has received to date.

painters. While Ament's book provided me with some useful information, her discussions of Tsutakawa's life and work contained number of factual errors, raising the question of whether her chapters on other artists were entirely accurate, either. This created a lack of confidence that tended to limit my use of this book to facts I could verify elsewhere. A related problem arose with the many articles and reviews published in newspapers wherever Tsutakawa built a major fountain; such sources often contained errors or directly contradicted each other. On the other hand, the newspaper articles, especially, also offered a great deal of information not found in other publications. With one or two exceptions, this review of the literature does not include newspaper articles and reviews or texts originally published in popular magazines; such sources are cited in notes and also appear in my Bibliography.

Pacific Northwest Modernism: Art, Architecture, and Design

For research on the development of modernist art in Seattle and the surrounding region, two works by Kingsbury on the 1930s are essential: a book titled *Art of the Thirties* (Seattle: Henry Art Gallery / University of Washington, 1972), and the section on "Seattle and the Puget Sound" in *Art of the Pacific Northwest: From the 1930s to the Present* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1974). It was September 1953 when *Life* magazine published the influential article "Mystic Painters of the Northwest," which proclaimed the existence of a thematically and stylistically unified "Northwest School." Tobey, Graves, and the two other artists featured were given a new visibility in Seattle, as was modern art itself; Conkelton has noted that "the characteristics named in the article by *Life* editor Dorothy Seiberling were proudly upheld for decades as innovations and standards of practice."⁹⁵ These included subject

⁹⁵ Conkelton, ed., *What it Meant to be Modern: Seattle Art at Mid-Century*, 14.

matter drawn from nature; earthy, muted colour; expressionistic, gestural painting, and "mystical intent." Such shared traits were, as Conkelton observes, somewhat "heavily drawn" to appeal to *Life's* general readership, as well as being attributed to what was actually quite a diverse body of work.

Two fairly recent publications on Northwest modernism have also been important to my research; the first is a very small but highly informative catalogue edited by Conkelton, *What it Meant to Be Modern: Seattle Art at Mid-century* (Seattle: Henry Art Gallery, 2000). This book also contains an up-to-date essay by Kingsbury on mid-century Seattle art, and a good locally focused bibliography. The other important book is a much larger catalogue, *Northwest Mythologies: The Interactions of Mark Tobey, Morris Graves, Kenneth Callahan, and Guy Anderson* by Sheryl Conkelton and Laura Landau (Tacoma and Seattle: Tacoma Art Museum / University of Washington Press, 2003). These two exhibitions both focused on painting, which dominates most books on Pacific Northwest modernism. A significant exception is *Jet Dreams: Art of the Fifties in the Northwest* (Tacoma and Seattle: Tacoma Art Museum / Seattle University Press, 1995). Edited by Barbara Johns, this catalogue brings together an informative group of essays by art historians, curators, and critics to explore regional trends in mid-century modern design, craft, and architecture. These topics appear alongside insightful discussions of painting and sculpture by Johns and others. *Jet Dreams* also includes a considerable amount of historical information pertaining to post-war economic development in Seattle and the surrounding area.

Another important source for my research into post-war economic development, as it related to the growth of U.S. cities and suburbs, was John Findlay's *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture After 1940* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992). The first chapter of Findlay's book is a general discussion of

urbanization in the region, and his Chapter Five, devoted to the 1962 Seattle World's Fair, is subtitled "Downtown and Suburbs in the Space Age." A considerable literature exists on the history of world's fairs, but few have much to say about Seattle in 1962, apart from two new books, published to mark the 50th anniversary of Century 21 in 2012. They are: Paula Becker and Alan J. Stein, *The Future Remembered: The 1962 World's Fair and its Legacy* (Seattle: History Link/HistoryInk and Seattle Center Foundation, 2011), and Knute Berger, *Space Needle: The Spirit of Seattle* (Seattle: Documentary Media, 2012). An older book that provides the basic essentials on each of the many world's fairs is Erik Mattie, *World's Fairs* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998). For a detailed theoretical discussion, see Pieter van Wesemael, *Architecture of Instruction and Delight: A Socio-Historical Analysis of World Exhibitions as a Didactic Phenomenon (1798-1851-1970)* (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2001).

In Chapter Six, where I will discuss fountains at the Seattle's World's Fair, I will also examine a number of shopping malls built in the 1960s that included fountain sculptures by Tsutakawa. Three of these malls – not always so-called then – were designed by architect John Graham, and articles devoted to two of those projects proved to be my most valuable sources for information on postwar shopping malls in general. The first, titled "Design for Merchandising: The Lloyd Center, Portland Oregon," was published in *Architectural Record* in December 1960. The other, "Northgate Regional Shopping Center – Paradigm from the Provinces" by Meredith Clausen, appeared in the *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* in May 1984. My analysis of Fresno's Fulton Mall benefitted from architect and planner Victor Gruen's *The Heart of our Cities: The Urban Crisis: Diagnosis and Cure* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1964), but most information on Fresno came from articles published around the same time in newspapers and magazines. For more information on Graham, and for other Seattle architects

who worked with Tsutakawa, my best source was *Shaping Seattle Architecture: A Historical Guide to the Architects*, edited by Jeffrey Karl Ochsner (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994). On the mid-century history of the University of Washington's School of Architecture, particularly changes in pedagogy and the Basic Design course that Tsutakawa participated in teaching, I recommend consulting Ochsner's more recent monograph *Lionel H. Pries, Architect, Artist, Educator: From Arts and Crafts to Modern Architecture* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007).

Art by Asian Americans

Discussions of Tsutakawa's life and art can also be found in several catalogues published to accompany group exhibitions devoted to Asian American artists. The earliest is *They Painted From Their Hearts: Pioneer Asian American Artists*, edited by Mayumi Tsutakawa (Seattle: Wing Luke Asian Museum, 1994). The book presents works by eighteen Pacific Northwest artists, primarily painters and early photographers, who worked in Washington state between 1900 and 1960. George Tsutakawa is also featured in San Francisco photographer Irene Poon's *Leading the Way: Asian American Artists of the Older Generation* (Wenham, MA: Gordon College, 2001), a book that emerged from an exhibition celebrating some of the Asian Americans who inspired Poon at the start of her career. Written profiles and photographic portraits by Poon are placed alongside works by twenty-five artists active from the 1930s through the 1960s, and in many cases long after that. The book also includes a historical essay by Lorraine Dong, a professor of Asian American studies.

Fifteen years ago, Jeffrey Wechsler argued that scholarly inquiry into mid-century American art's relationship with East Asian art had "been skewed by the obsessive scrutiny of a

few famous names of Abstract Expressionism."⁹⁶ Another contributing factor to the general lack of research on Asian American artists was a serious shortage of documentation. In the late 1980s the Archives of American Art, part of the Smithsonian Institution, launched a project with the long-term goal of assembling materials that documented the activities of artists of Asian American descent. Because of its relatively large Asian population, the Pacific Northwest region was chosen as an initial case study. The Northwest Asian American Artist Project was initiated by the West Coast Regional Center of the Archives of American Art in 1989, and its first phase was carried out by Alan Lau and Kazuko Nakane, who conducted a survey that combined research and personal interviews. The purpose of the survey was to identify artists for archival collecting, and the results were used to produce a comprehensive *Directory of Asian American Artists in Washington and Oregon*. The complete directory, listing artists active between 1900 and 1975, is available from the Archives of American Art. An edited version is included in *They Painted From Their Hearts*.

In the exhibition catalogue *From Asian Traditions to Modern Expressions: Abstract Art by Asian Americans, 1945-1970* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1997) Wechsler set out to survey modernists of Asian ancestry who lived and worked in the postwar United States, particularly during the period dominated by Abstract Expressionism. He included essays on various facets of the relationship between mid-century American abstraction and East Asian art; in addition to the central overview by Wechsler, three other authors contributed essays on topics closely related to my research. They are Yuho Tseng's "'Abstraction' in the Traditional Art of East Asia;" Karen Higa's "From Enemy Alien to Zen Master: Japanese American Identity in California during the Postwar Period;" and Kazuko Nakane's "Personalizing the Abstract: Asian American Artists in

⁹⁶ Jeffrey Wechsler ed., *Asian Traditions/Modern Expressions: Asian American Artists and Abstraction, 1945-1970* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1997), 11.

Seattle." Tsutakawa's work is briefly discussed in Nakane's short essay; artist's biographies and a transcript of a round-table discussion complete Wechsler's book. A full decade passed before the next major publication appeared, 2008's *Asian American Art: A History, 1850-1970*, edited by Gordon H. Chang, Mark Dean Johnson and Paul J. Karlstrom (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press). This large volume (over 500 pages) offered the first comprehensive study of the subject, including a much longer offering by Nakane that is not restricted to abstract art, "Facing the Pacific: Asian American Artists in Seattle, 1900-1970." In addition to the essays, over 150 artists' biographies can be found in this important book.

There are also a few publications from the 1950s that reflect the postwar interest in cultural interactions between Japan and the United States. In 1957 the *College Art Journal* published an essay by Robert B. Hawkins on "Contemporary Art and the Orient," in which Hawkins argued that the world of art had become truly "international" and was no longer "regional and fragmentary."⁹⁷ One major force behind this change was Western contact with Oriental art, which Hawkins claimed had recently lead to "new ingredients of language and content" appearing that "had never been so employed in western art before." In Hawkins's view, these "new aspects" were "being developed most promisingly in the American climate," especially in Abstract Expressionism.⁹⁸ He presented works by Tobey, Willem de Kooning, and sculptor Ibram Lassaw, among others, as examples of innovative American art that was not only fundamentally linear but based on line "of a kind and application which is closely analogous to the Chinese calligraphic line."⁹⁹

None of the American artists discussed by Hawkins were of Asian ancestry, but in the

⁹⁷ Hawkins "Contemporary Art and the Orient," 120.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 121.

last months of 1958, Japanese-born artists living in the U.S. were the subject of an exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston, "Contemporary Painters of Japanese Origin in America." It included such well-known artists as Kenzo Okada and Sabro Hasegawa, and prior to the show's opening an article written by Institute director Thomas M. Messer, titled "Nipponism," was published in *Art in America* (Fall 1958). Messer described a "stylistic phenomenon" he and his staff had noted: "that the work of Japanese artists in this country is not only often characterized by exceptional beauty but that it also has distinguishing features enabling one to single it out from the rest of abstract art." As an observable phenomenon, the "Japanese mode" of Western-style abstract painting must surely "be subject to isolation and rationalization."¹⁰⁰ This scientific objective was the basis for the exhibition, which intended to investigate the recurrence in contemporary art of "certain form constellations," which Messer surmised most often originated in the "calligraphic style" of traditional Japanese drawing and painting.¹⁰¹ These ideas were further explored in the exhibition catalogue, *Contemporary Painters of Japanese Origin in America 1958* by Messer and Anne L. Jenks (Boston: Institute of Contemporary Art, 1958), which also included reproductions of some of the modern abstract paintings, along with traditional Japanese works of art.

Artistic and Cultural Interactions: Japan and the West

The history of cultural interaction between Japan and the West – Europe and the Americas – is clearly a complex subject, and while visual art is a significant part of the story, it becomes more important once it is recognized that there was much more at stake than the acquisition of new stylistic approaches and motifs long associated with, for example, nineteenth

¹⁰⁰ Thomas M. Messer, "Nipponism," *Art in America* 46, no. 3 (Fall 1958), 58-59.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

century japonisme. For an introduction to the subject, an excellent starting point is Michael Sullivan's *The Meeting of Eastern and Western Art* (2nd ed., Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989). The book explores the art of China, Japan, Western Europe, and, to a lesser extent, the United States. The focus is on "fine art," particularly painting, beginning in 1650, when the first Portuguese ships arrived in Japan, and ending around 1970. Sullivan's goal is to demonstrate how the cultures of East and West enriched each other, while maintaining their own unique cultural characteristics. A specialist in Chinese art, he is well-equipped to explain how contact with European ideas affected the development of Asian art, as well as outlining the impact Chinese and Japanese traditions had on artists in the West. Another, older book that consciously seeks a balance between Japanese and Euro-American perspectives on cultural exchange is *Dialogue in Art: Japan and the West* (London: Zwemmer, 1976). Edited by Chisaburoh F. Yamada, this illuminating volume emerged out of an exhibition at the National Museum of Modern Art in Tokyo held in 1968, titled Mutual Influences between Japanese and Western Arts. The book brings together essays by various authors who investigate historical aspects of these relationships; it also includes interviews with several artists and a transcript of a symposium on cross-cultural exchanges in the arts that took place in 1972.

Dialogues, clearly, flow in more than one direction; so, it is ideal when a publication on intercultural exchange is able to present both sides of the equation. Realistically, however, such an endeavor requires expertise not often found in a single researcher or author. Furthermore, as Sullivan points out, "the flow of Western ideas and forms to the Orient," has long been acknowledged by "both East and West," but "the westward flow from East Asia has not

penetrated so deeply into our culture."¹⁰² Others would argue that it has, in fact, penetrated equally deeply, but westerners have been reluctant to recognize the existence or extent of Asian influence.¹⁰³ Of course, there are exceptions; they include the essay by Hawkins introduced above. Also, it would be difficult to argue that the flow of certain "ideas and forms" from Japan to the West in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was not well-documented and accepted as crucial to the history of European modernist art. For this reason, I will limit myself to reviewing a few publications closely related to my main areas of inquiry. Two of them originated as PhD dissertations, Helen Westgeest's useful *Zen in the Fifties: Interaction in Art between East and West* (London: Reaktion Books, 1998), and David J. Clarke's *The Influence of Oriental Art on Postwar American Painting and Sculpture* (New York: Garland, 1988). Rather than focusing on formal analysis for its own sake, Clarke's study endeavours to illuminate the philosophical content of paintings and sculptures, primarily abstract, produced by American artists whose work was reaching maturity in the 1940s and 50s. The range of artists included is broad, with more than fourteen Americans' works considered and related to texts on Asian religions and philosophy by half a dozen authors, ancient and contemporary. Tsutakawa is not among the artists discussed, but Tobey, Graves, and Noguchi are.

Tobey and Noguchi also figure prominently in Bert Winther-Tamaki's *Art in the Encounter of Nations: Japanese and American Artists in the Early Postwar Years* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001). The author describes the book as a critical history of what is, today, often referred to as Japanese-American artistic exchange. Most of the artworks included are from the 1950s, but Tsutakawa is mentioned only once, as a friend of Tobey's. This is not a

¹⁰² Michael Sullivan, *The Meeting of Eastern and Western Art*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989), 1.

¹⁰³ Clarke, *Oriental Enlightenment: The Encounter between Asian and Western Thought*, 5.

survey, however, but a series of case studies that examine a number of American and Japanese artists in relation to a concept Winther-Tamaki calls "artistic nationalism." Japanese calligraphers and potters are important to his study, as well as painters and sculptors. While I am inclined to question some of his judgements regarding Tobey's personal politics, Winther-Tamaki's article, "Mark Tobey, White Writing for a Janus-Faced America," published in *Word and Image* in 1997, provides a thought-provoking analysis that investigates links between Tobey's painting style and both Asian calligraphy and Abstract Expressionism. Some information from this essay can also be found in Winther-Tamaki's book of 2001. My research has also benefitted from *The Third Mind: American Artists Contemplate Asia, 1860-1989* (New York: Guggenheim Museum, 2009), an exhibition catalogue edited by Alexandra Munroe. This volume explores the impact on American artists of Asian art and thought, not including the Islamic tradition, starting with the nineteenth century Aesthetic movement. In addition to Munroe's introductory essay, the texts I found most helpful were "Postwar America and the Aura of Asia," by Harry Harootunian, and "Landscapes of the Mind: New Conceptions of Nature," by Kathleen Pyne and D. Scott Atkinson.

On the subject of Japanese influence, more than cross-cultural exchange, a number of publications from the 1950s and 1960s are also of interest, including an important essay written by Tobey. He first presented "Japanese Traditions and American Art" in 1957 at the 6th National Conference of the U.S. Commission for UNESCO. The paper was published the following year in *College Art Journal* (Autumn, 1958) and republished in *Arts Review* in February 1962. All the books mentioned in this section of my literature review include artists based in various U.S. regions, but interactions with Asia have been especially significant to the historical development of Seattle and other West Coast locales. Cross-cultural exchange between American artists and

those from Japan and other East Asian countries was a defining feature of West Coast modernist art and architecture from the 1930s on. Moreover, according to Tadao Ogura, director of Japan's National Museum of Art, Seattle has "deeper and stronger" historical ties with Japan than either San Francisco or Los Angeles, in part because more Japanese have made it their port of entry when they arrived in the United States.¹⁰⁴ In May 1960, a substantial piece titled "Seattle: Where Far East and Northwest Meet" appeared in the *New York Times*, its publication timed to mark the fifteenth anniversary of the cessation of Second World War hostilities between America and Japan. Written by John S. Robinson, the article was accompanied by a photograph of Tsutakawa, seated beside newly installed *Fountain of Wisdom* at the Seattle Public Library. The text included a short overview of Seattle's historical connections to Japanese culture, then turned to the present, with Robinson noting the importance of Japanese influences on the "vigorous school of Northwest painting," and the choice of Japanese American architect Minoru Yamasaki for a major role in designing Seattle's upcoming World's Fair. Throughout the city, Robinson wrote, one saw Japanese-influenced gardens, art, architecture, and interior décor; indeed, he described Seattle as "a Western Hemisphere outpost of the oriental mood."¹⁰⁵

From the mid-1960s through the 1980s, the Western United States saw a dramatic increase in the number of Japanese gardens built, not only for public enjoyment but also at many private residences. This was especially true on the West Coast, where Japanese gardens were built in large numbers beginning in 1890. A good source on this subject is Kendall H. Brown, "Territories of Play: A Short History of Japanese-Style Gardens in North America," in *Japanese-Style Gardens of the Pacific West Coast*, edited by Brown and Melba Levick (New York:

¹⁰⁴ Tadao Ogura, "Preface," *Pacific Northwest Artists and Japan* (Osaka: National Museum of Art, 1982), 6.

¹⁰⁵ All quotations from John S. Robinson, "Seattle: Where Far East and Northwest Meet," *New York Times*, May 15, 1960.

Rizzoli, 1999). *Los Angeles Times* art editor Henry J. Seldis was another mid-century journalist who was well-informed regarding the strong connections between West Coast culture and those of East Asia. In February 1965 *Art in America* published his "Exhibition Preview: Pacific Heritage," to promote a travelling exhibition by that name, curated by Seldis for the Los Angeles Municipal Art Department, that included "Pacific Coast artists" from the Northwest, California, and Hawaii. The article's premise was that this group, which included Tsutakawa, had "assimilated Oriental notions in a decidedly American way." While consciously rejecting the "Western dichotomies which dictate the separation of body and soul, heaven and hell, birth and death" they did not base their art strictly on "Oriental premises," and therefore, Seldis argued, could not be called "Orientalist." Quoting a statement in which Tobey recalled coming to the realization that, while he could learn much from Chinese and Japanese calligraphy, he "would never be any but the Occidental that I am," Seldis claimed that the artists in the exhibition, "rightly reject the 'Orientalist' label, pointing to the amalgamation of philosophical, esthetic and technical influences found in their work."¹⁰⁶ This was, he wrote, even true of those who had been directly influenced by Asian culture, either through ancestry or through travel.

In the same issue of *Art in America*, Wallace S. Baldinger's "Regional Accent: The Northwest" promoted the concept of regional style, a contentious issue for some modernists, who saw it as incompatible with universalist ideals. Baldinger argued that regional styles were, at heart, reflections of artists' "inevitable reactions to physical environment."¹⁰⁷ This meant there could be no unified "West Coast" art and, furthermore, suggested that the "stronger traces of Japanese influence" found in art from the Pacific Northwest, as compared to Southern California,

¹⁰⁶ All quotations from Seldis, "Exhibition Preview: Pacific Heritage," *Art in America* 53, no. 1 (February 1965), 27.

¹⁰⁷ Wallace S. Baldinger, "Regional Accent: The Northwest," *Art in America* 53, no. 1 (February 1965): 35.

were attributable to "topographical similarities between parts of this section of the country and the Japanese valleys of Honshu," where the ancient art capital of Kyoto was located.¹⁰⁸ Moving away from publications focused on visual art, one of the most important sources for my project has been J.J. Clarke's *Oriental Enlightenment: The Encounter between Asian and Western Thought* (London: Routledge, 1997). Many scholars have examined the relationship between Eastern and Western thought, presenting varying points of view on eras such as the European Enlightenment or the Romantic period and highlighting particular ideas, themes, or controversies. Clarke states, however, that his is the first book to attempt "an overview which seeks to link these together in a way which, both historically and critically, locates orientalism within the broad sweep of the modern Western intellectual tradition."¹⁰⁹

Sculpture and Architecture

In *Sculpture Since 1945*, a survey published in 1998, Andrew Causey states: "There is a history of the relation of sculpture and architecture in the later 1950s waiting to be written."¹¹⁰ That remains true today, and parts of this dissertation may be thought of as my initial contribution to such a history. A number of Seattle architects in the postwar period were unusually forward thinking; Barbara Johns points out that modernism in the region was "fueled by the postwar construction boom and the number of young architects producing thoughtful new work." By the end of the fifties "Seattle was credited with having the highest percentage of architect-designed buildings of any large U.S. city."¹¹¹ Tsutakawa's first fountain sculpture was commissioned in 1958, and I hope my study of his early works in this field of design will help

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 39, 34.

¹⁰⁹ Clarke, *Oriental Enlightenment: The Encounter between Asian and Western Thought*, 9.

¹¹⁰ Causey, *Sculpture Since 1945*, 274.

¹¹¹ Johns, *Jet Dreams: Art of the Fifties in the Northwest*, 29.

illuminate one aspect of Seattle artists' participation in the development of architecture and urban planning in the late 1950s and 1960s. On the general topic of sculpture's relationship with postwar architecture, a useful book from that period is Louis G. Redstone's primarily pictorial *Art in Architecture* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1968). An architect himself, Redstone worked frequently with Victor Gruen, designer of the Fulton Mall in Fresno, California, discussed in Chapter Six of this dissertation. Redstone's book offers a wealth of photographs of architectural sculpture, mosaics, and murals from the 1950s and 60s. Most are from the U.S., including three fountain sculptures by Tsutakawa; Canadian art and architecture is also included, along with a small number of international examples.

Senie considers the situation faced by artists and architects in the postwar era in the second chapter of *Contemporary Public Sculpture: Tradition, Transformation, and Controversy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992). Its title, "Sculpture and Architecture: A Changing Relationship," reflects the fact that sculpture's traditional role as architectural ornament was challenged after 1945 by the growing popularity of the International Style. According to the influential primer first published by Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson in 1932 as *The International Style: Architecture Since 1922*, the movement's Third Principle was "The Avoidance of Applied Decoration." On the other hand, Hitchcock and Johnson approved of "architectural detail" and "related subordinate works of sculpture and painting" when these could successfully "decorate contemporary buildings without degenerating into mere applied ornament." The authors stated that sculpture, unlike mural painting, "ought not to be combined

or merged with architecture. It should retain its own character quite separate from that of its background."¹¹²

The philosophy of modern architecture, based to a great extent on Bauhaus ideals regarding the integration of the arts, called for collaborations between architects and artists. In Senie's view, from the 1960s onward, "this often articulated but elusive goal" was behind much American public sculpture.¹¹³ Hitchcock and Johnson were supportive, observing in the 1966 edition of *The International Style* that "there is an opportunity here for collaboration which may well in the future lead to brilliant results," although up to that point International Style architecture had only provided "an admirable background" for independently conceived works of art.¹¹⁴ Senie points out, however, that Hitchcock had recognized as early as 1947 that as "an exercise in pure form," modern art constituted an unnecessary addition if contemporary buildings were sufficiently well-designed.¹¹⁵ During the 1950s architects in the U.S. and Europe expended considerable energy debating the integration of modern art and architecture, a goal that was widely accepted but not easily achieved. A symposium on the topic took place in spring 1951 at MOMA; in July of the same year a number of its speakers also participated in CIAM 8, a meeting of the Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne in Hoddesdon, England. The theme at Hoddesdon was "The Heart of the City;" the goal was a "reunion of the arts."¹¹⁶ Operating within a framework of urbanism, CIAM believed the city core was the ideal locale in which to work toward integrating "Architecture and other plastic arts" with the aim of

¹¹² Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, *The International Style* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1966), 73-74.

¹¹³ Senie, *Contemporary Public Sculpture: Tradition, Transformation, and Controversy*, 61.

¹¹⁴ Hitchcock and Johnson, *The International Style*, 74.

¹¹⁵ Hitchcock quoted in Senie, *Contemporary Public Sculpture: Tradition, Transformation, and Controversy*, 65.

¹¹⁶ Sigfried Giedion, ed. *A Decade of New Architecture* (Zurich: Editions Girsberger, 1951), 39.

revitalizing their "social function," which included the functions associated with civic monuments.¹¹⁷ The CIAM 8 vision was of "a synthesis of effort contributed by architects, painters, and sculptors working together in close co-operation and true communion as a single team."¹¹⁸

Senie notes that many of America's younger architects remained unconvinced; their views were captured in a survey published by *Architectural Forum* in June 1951, two months after the symposium at MOMA.¹¹⁹ Some architecture critics in the United States did take up the cause, among them Aline Saarinen, who in June 1954 published an article promoting "Art as Architectural Decoration" in *Architectural Forum*. Saarinen viewed "any use of art together with architecture as an extension of the architect's plans."¹²⁰ In the U.S. it remained unusual throughout the 1950s for architects to consult artists, instead, an atmosphere of "polarization" between the two groups prevailed.¹²¹ By January 1959, Ada Louise Huxtable could assert in an article published in *Craft Horizons* that, although the debate continued, "the essential participants – artists, craftsmen and architects – suffering from increasing mutual distrust, are barely speaking."¹²² In "Art in Architecture 1959" Huxtable proposed that the "false ideal of integration" should give way to a new goal based on opposition, what she called "enrichment by juxtaposition; completion by contrast."¹²³ Like Hitchcock and Johnson in 1932, she argued in favour of independent works of art and against "extraneous decoration." But, while Huxtable

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 49.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 39.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 66. See Senie, pp. 66-69, for further discussion of the difference in the attitudes displayed by European and American participants in the ongoing debate, which was regularly reported on in architecture journals, particularly *Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* and *Architectural Design*, in Europe, and in the U.S. the *AIA Journal*.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 68.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ada Louise Huxtable, "Art in Architecture 1959," *Craft Horizons* (January 1959), 10.

¹²³ Ibid., 10-11.

urged architects stop thinking of art as "an afterthought," instead including artists on projects from the beginning, she still thought of the architect as the primary agent, initiating and directing projects rather than engaging artists in a truly collaborative sense.¹²⁴ In Senie's chapter on sculpture and architecture in *Contemporary Public Sculpture*, a majority of the projects discussed are by Noguchi, an artist Senie credits with having "prefigured almost every development of public sculpture" after 1958.¹²⁵ For Noguchi's own views, it is interesting to read his essay "The Sculptor and the Architect," published in 1968 in *Studio International*.

A much more recent publication that I found inspiring, especially in the early stages of my research, was Markus Bröderlin's catalogue *ArchiSculpture: Dialogues between Architecture and Sculpture from the Eighteenth Century to the Present Day* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2004). The German exhibition took an innovative approach, juxtaposing original works of sculpture with models of historic buildings to explore the latter's sculptural properties. The curator's concern was not with architectural decoration but the buildings themselves; as Hitchcock pointed out in 1947, a modern building "was intended to be in itself an abstract plastic composition."¹²⁶ In the *ArchiSculpture* catalogue numerous examples of modernist sculpture are placed next to works of architecture from Western and non-Western cultures. Penelope Curtis takes a very different route in *Patio and Pavilion: The Place of Sculpture in Modern Architecture* (Los Angeles and London: J. Paul Getty Museum / Ridinghouse, 2008), a book that suggested some useful strategies for discussing free-standing sculpture in relation to modernist architecture. As Curtis points out, it was not uncommon for modernist architects to use sculpture to enhance their buildings, but these two creative categories have seldom been considered together. Using seven

¹²⁴ Ibid., 13.

¹²⁵ The year Noguchi completed his first sculpture garden, designed for the Paris headquarters of UNESCO and built between 1956 and 1958. Ibid., 71-72.

¹²⁶ Quoted ibid., 65.

case studies from the mid-twentieth century, Curtis asks: "What does sculpture do to architecture, and what, in turn, does architecture do to sculpture?"¹²⁷

Modern Sculpture

Publications that focus on either modern sculpture or architecture are, not surprisingly, far more plentiful than books and articles devoted to analyzing relationships between sculpture and architecture in the modernist period. Here I will only review those works that have been particularly important to my project, omitting sources that deal exclusively with postwar sculpture; they appear in a separate section below. Carola Giedion-Welcker's *Contemporary Sculpture: An Evolution in Volume and Space* (New York: G. Wittenborn, 1955) has been described by Alex Potts as "the classic formulation" of the "attempt to define a distinctively modern or modernist sculpture." Originally published in German in 1937, the book was immediately translated into English and given the title *Modern Plastic Art: Elements of Reality, Volume and Disintegration*. As Potts points out, these two very different titles "testify to its attempts to encompass an almost unmanageable diversity of impulses."¹²⁸ Giedion-Welcker nonetheless mapped the more important tendencies in modern sculpture from the first half of the twentieth-century in much the same manner as recent surveys, providing insightful commentary that reflected ideas current at the time. Also, for my study it was important to have visual access to sculptures that may have been thought of in an earlier period as defining examples of a particular style, or as refreshingly innovative, but have since fallen out of favour.

¹²⁷ Penelope Curtis, (Los Angeles and London: J. Paul Getty Museum / Ridinghouse, 2008), 7.

¹²⁸ Alex Potts, *The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 145.

Both qualities, revealing writing and intriguing images, are also present in two somewhat later European-authored publications, *The Sculpture of this Century: Dictionary of Modern Sculpture* (New York: G. Braziller, 1959) by Michel Seuphor, and Herbert Read's *A Concise History of Modern Sculpture* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1964). Read's earlier *The Art of Sculpture* (London: Faber and Faber, 1956) provides a more complete introduction to his position with respect to contemporary debates on modern sculptural aesthetics. In *The Art of Sculpture*, Read began from the premise that sculpture had at last become a truly autonomous art, having been progressively freed from its traditional architectural and monumental functions, an evolution that started with Rodin. Rosalind Krauss ranks among the most important American writers on sculpture of the twentieth century; like Read she chose Rodin to begin the very selective survey *Passages in Modern Sculpture*, first published in 1977 (Cambridge MA, MIT Press, 1981). Causey points out that, while its subject was the development of modern sculpture from Rodin to about 1970, Krauss's study was "concerned specifically with the re-location of meaning in sculpture from the core to the surface," and thus can be thought of as presenting modernism "through Minimalist eyes."¹²⁹ Another useful source for my early research was Krauss's "Magicians' Games: Decades of Transformation, 1930-1950," which analyzes sculpture by type; this essay was written for the exhibition catalogue "Two Hundred Years of American Sculpture," published in 1976 by the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

Continuing with survey-oriented publications: one I found myself returning to was Edward Lucie-Smith's *Sculpture since 1945* (London: Phaidon, 1987). Though both text and images seemed rather dated (more so than the year of publication would suggest), Lucie-Smith's book offers a broader representation of British and European postwar sculpture than more recent

¹²⁹ Causey, *Sculpture Since 1945*, 276.

general studies; it also includes a section on kinetic sculpture. English critic Charles Harrison's chapter on sculpture in *Modernism* (London: Tate Gallery, 1997) was very helpful when I was trying to position Tsutakawa's work within a context broader than midcentury modernism in the Pacific Northwest. Oxford University Press has published a series under the imprint "Oxford History of Art" that is generally well-researched and clearly written. Three of its titles have been useful for this project: Andrew Causey, *Sculpture Since 1945* (1998); Penelope Curtis, *Sculpture 1900-1945: After Rodin* (1999); and Alan Colquhoun, *Modern Architecture* (2002). Though Alex Potts begins his analyses in *The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000) with the late eighteenth century and included numerous artists and eras, his book cannot be characterized as a survey. Instead, Potts concentrates on the central issues of modern sculpture's marginal status in relation to painting, which he explores by asking about the particular demands sculpture makes of its viewers.

Among the many books and essays on individual sculptors that contributed to my understanding of Tsutakawa's postwar works, two by Anna Chave should be noted. *Constantin Brancusi: Shifting the Bases of Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993) was particularly helpful in stimulating my thinking about sculptural abstraction and its possible meanings. Chave's more recent "Brancusi and Noguchi: Towards A Larger Definition of Sculpture," published in 2001, was also important for my research; for this essay see the catalogue for the German exhibition, *Isamu Noguchi: Sculptural Design*, mentioned above. Archipenko emigrated to America from Berlin in 1923 and, according to critic Guy Habasque, was largely forgotten in Europe in the decades that followed,¹³⁰ but in the 1960s two substantial books on the artist were published in the United States. Archipenko himself was responsible for assembling the collection

¹³⁰ Guy Habasque, "Alexander Archipenko" (1961), in *Archipenko: International Visionary* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1969), 15.

Archipenko: Fifty Creative Years, 1908-1958 (New York: TEKHNE, 1960), while Donald H. Karshan edited the exhibition catalogue *Archipenko: International Visionary* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1969), which includes the artist's essay "The Concave and Void."

The Bauhaus and International Constructivism

A vast range of publications has appeared on the Bauhaus, but I was able to narrow the field by concentrating on the few historical studies that provide extensive accounts of the dissemination of Bauhaus philosophy and pedagogy in the United States. For my research into Tsutakawa's years as a student and professor at the University of Washington, which brought him into contact with Bauhaus ideas, the most important source of information was Jill E. Pearlman's *Inventing American Modernism: Joseph Hudnut, Walter Gropius, and the Bauhaus Legacy at Harvard* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007). Margret Kentgens-Craig's *The Bauhaus and America: First Contacts, 1919-1936* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999) also offered a view into the earliest period of American reception. Much useful material can be found in Kathleen James-Chakraborty's introduction to the anthology *Bauhaus Culture: From Weimar to the Cold War* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006) and her essay in the same book, "From Isolationism to Internationalism: American Acceptance of the Bauhaus." Of course, it is also important to read what Gropius himself wrote about the Bauhaus; an English translation of his *The New Architecture and the Bauhaus*, originally published in 1925, was published in 1965 by MIT Press.

Circle: International Survey of Constructive Art, a multi-disciplinary collection edited by architect Leslie Martin and artists Ben Nicholson and Naum Gabo (London: Faber and Faber, 1937), has been important as a source of contemporary writings on non-figurative sculpture and

related topics, connected by their authors' interest in the development of Constructivism outside Russia in the period prior to the Second World War. Among its many contributors were Herbert Read, Henry Moore, Antoine Pevsner, Barbara Hepworth, and Piet Mondrian. Also of interest for my research was *Constructing Modernity: The Art and Career of Naum Gabo* by Martin Hammer and Christina Lodder (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000). This large book is the first comprehensive account of Gabo's life and work, and his theories on art and society. For developing an understanding of how American artists responded to ideas promoted by the supporters of International Constructivism, an essay I found very helpful was Joan Marter's "Beyond the Plane: American Constructions 1930-1965," in the exhibition catalogue of that name, edited by Jennifer Toher (Trenton NJ: New Jersey State Museum, 1983). More general treatments of both the machine aesthetic and the preference for organicism, as manifested in various modernist movements, can be found in a substantial volume edited by Christopher Wilk, titled *Modernism, 1914-1939: Designing a New World* (London: V&A Publications, 2006). A very recent contribution to the discourse on early twentieth-century modernism's engagement with the natural world, which some argue has been neglected due to the dominant focus on machines and technology, is the anthology *Biocentrism and Modernism*, edited by Oliver A. I. Botar and Isabel Wünsche (Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2011).

Postwar Sculpture in the United States

As Causey has observed, "while critical writing on sculpture from 1945 to 1960 reflects the primacy of Europe, the explosion of creative energy in the USA around 1960 has been matched by writing."¹³¹ Clement Greenberg's rise took place mainly in the early 1960s, but his

¹³¹ Causey, *Sculpture Since 1945*, 276.

criticism of the 1940s and 1950s is also extremely important for any serious investigation of American postwar modernism. Greenberg's *Collected Essays and Criticism*, edited by John O'Brian, was published in four volumes between 1986 and 1993 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press). A better sense of how Greenberg's ideas were disseminated in the sixties can be gained by reading the selection of essays reprinted in his collection *Art and Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), which was very widely read at the time. Greenberg published the "The New Sculpture" in 1949, then republished it with substantial revisions in 1958 with a new title: "Sculpture in Our Time." In this later version, he argued more forcefully in support of his earlier claim that modern sculpture should be understood as an "optical" art, rather than one primarily based on physical or monumental effects. "Sculpture – that long eclipsed art – now stands to gain by the modernist 'reduction' as painting does not," Greenberg wrote in 1959. His opinion was that sculpture had the potential to become "the representative visual art of modernism," because it was able to provide "the greatest possible amount of visibility with the least possible expenditure of tactile surface."¹³² On David Smith, in whose work Greenberg saw the fullest realization of this ideal, the best book is still Krauss's *Terminal Iron Works: The Sculpture of David Smith* (Cambridge MA, MIT Press, 1971).

Greenberg had proclaimed in his essay of 1949 that Smith was "one of the greatest sculptors of the twentieth century *anywhere*," and in 1956 he called Smith "the best sculptor of his generation."¹³³ Harrison has noted that art critics in England were rather startled by the latter statement; there "the title of 'best sculptor' was widely believed to be reserved for Henry Moore,

¹³² Clement Greenberg, *Collected Essays and Criticism*, Vol. 4: "Modernism with a Vengeance, 1957-69," ed. John O'Brian (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 56.

¹³³ Clement Greenberg, *Collected Essays and Criticism*, Vol. 2: "Arrogant Purpose, 1945-49," ed. John O'Brian (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 140. Original italics.

by virtue of the increasing monumentality and ubiquity of his work."¹³⁴ Younger English artists, on the other hand, were engaged by the later 1950s in "assimilating the implications of Abstract Expressionist painting."¹³⁵ In England, Smith's work was almost unknown at the time, so English artists who took it upon themselves to question the evolution of modernist sculpture did so, according to Harrison, "largely under the impact of American abstract painting."¹³⁶ One such artist was Anthony Caro, taken up by Greenberg and his younger colleague Michael Fried as a major focus of their critical attention from 1963. It is worth noting that Caro had previously been one of Moore's assistants (1951-1953), but between 1959 and 1960 his work changed dramatically, with densely modelled figures in bronze replaced by abstract compositions of cut and welded sheet steel. As Harrison pointed out, in sculptures like 1962's *Early One Morning*, Caro seemed "to fulfil precisely the conditions Greenberg had prescribed" four years earlier when he republished "The New Sculpture" as "Sculpture in Our Time."¹³⁷

The first recognition of Minimalism as a sculptural style occurred in New York in 1963, the year both Donald Judd and Robert Morris had their first solo exhibitions. Just a year earlier, Senie points out, Pop Art had "exploded on the scene."¹³⁸ In 1966 "Primary Structures," an important exhibition at the Jewish Museum in New York, included works by thirteen sculptors working in a Minimal style, demonstrating a number of possible variations within that category. In June 1967 *Artforum* published a special issue on American sculpture; among the articles were Morris's "Notes on Sculpture, Part III" and Michael Fried's influential critique of Minimal

¹³⁴ Charles Harrison, *Modernism* (London: Tate Gallery, 1997), 70.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 70-71.

¹³⁸ Senie, *Contemporary Public Sculpture: Tradition, Transformation, and Controversy*, 130.

sculpture, "Art and Objecthood." The same 1967 issue included Wayne V. Andersen's "American Sculpture: The Situation in the Fifties."

A major exhibition titled "American Sculpture of the Sixties" at the Los Angeles County Museum also took place in 1967. It was curated by Maurice Tuchman, who seems to have had public sculpture prominently in mind; in addition to two floors of the museum, the exhibition occupied two large outdoor areas. Tuchman stated that, overall, he had chosen to emphasize scale, and critic Hilton Kramer identified "scale, materials, and technology" as the most significant new characteristics in sculpture.¹³⁹ A catalogue edited by Tuchman, *Sculpture of the Sixties* (Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1967), included essays by ten well-known critics on different aspects of contemporary sculpture. In 1974 Julia M. Busch published *A Decade of Sculpture: The 1960s* (Philadelphia: Art Alliance Press). This book includes short discussions of new sculptural trends but is mainly of interest for its reproductions, which capture the variety of new materials and techniques many artists were exploring, such as polyesters, plastics, light and rubber, used in everything from figurative works to abstract kinetic sculpture and inflatables.

In "Sculpture in the Expanded Field," an article published in 1979 in *October*, Rosalind Krauss provided a theoretical model capable of addressing the changes in sculptural practice that had been developing since the 1960s. Observing that contemporary sculpture had moved beyond what the terminology of modernist sculpture was intended to describe, Krauss proposed the "expanded field" as a means of defining works that existed outside the historically sanctioned modernist boundaries; this included earthworks and what she called "site constructions." The sorts of works Krauss included were indicative of the changes taking place as modernism gave way to postmodernism; as a group these sculptural works provide strong evidence that art

¹³⁹ Quoted *ibid.*

historians have, in the past, been quite right to label Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures as "modernist." At the same time, I will argue in my dissertation that one of the strengths of Tsutakawa's fountains is that they stand on the cusp of postmodernism, and examples from the 1960s that I will discuss reflect some of the artistic and social questioning common to that transitional period. Tsutakawa designed and constructed his fountain for various types of urban and suburban setting, and, as David Harvey, Frederic Jameson and many others have pointed out, the shift to postmodernism was most often articulated through a discussion of urban change, urban planning and urban life.

Chapter One:
Regarding Fountains

In more than one of his books on the pleasures and potentials of cities, the well-known American urbanist, journalist and people-watcher William H. Whyte described Cincinnati's Fountain Square as "the finest square in the country."¹⁴⁰ Surrounded by offices, stores, hotels, and restaurants, Fountain Square is a hub for urban life in Cincinnati, and the *Tyler Davidson Fountain*, which has stood on the plaza since 1871, is regarded as a symbol for the city. Despite obvious differences in style, historical period, and original conception,¹⁴¹ parallels can be drawn between the *Tyler Davidson Fountain* and George Tsutakawa's modernist fountain sculptures. Cincinnati's much loved fountain, originally designed in the 1840s by a Nuremburg artist, features highly symbolic sculpted imagery. Realistic and allegorical figures and bas-reliefs depict the varied uses of water, which provides practical and pleasurable gifts to the community and nourishes body and spirit. The monumental cast-bronze and granite fountain is crowned by the Genius of the Waters, a classically draped female figure nine feet tall. With the liquid that flows from her outstretched hands, she bestows her blessings upon the city. Below her, on the central level, smaller human figures represent such practical uses of water as fishing, milling,

¹⁴⁰ William H. Whyte, *City: Rediscovering the Center* (New York: Doubleday, 1988), 244.

¹⁴¹ Officially named *The Genius of the Waters*, the Cincinnati fountain was designed in the 1840s by August von Kreyling in collaboration with Ferdinand von Miller of the Royal Bronze Foundry of Bavaria. However, no patron could be found to sponsor the fountain, so it remained unbuilt until Cincinnati businessman Henry Probasco went to Munich in search of a fountain that would stand as a suitable memorial to his business partner and brother-in-law, hardware store owner and city leader Tyler Davidson. Providing Cincinnati with a fountain had been a cherished dream of Davidson's. It was Probasco who requested the addition of the four animal figures; these were designed by Miller's sons and formerly served as drinking fountains. See Marilyn F. Symmes, ed. *Fountains: Splash and Spectacle: Water and Design from the Renaissance to the Present* (New York: Rizzoli International Publication in association with Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution, 1998), 73; and Fountain Square, "Tyler Davidson Fountain," <http://myfountainsquare.com>.

navigation, and power. Finally, at the base, the pleasures of water are depicted through more sculpted bronzes, showing animals and children at play. The fountain's 1871 dedication reads: "Water is not only beautiful in nature and useful in art, but it is rich with meaning in the teachings of religion. It is... a symbol of purity and life in the soul."¹⁴² Together with the communal and civic functions embodied by the fountain itself, this dedication encapsulates a number of the key themes found throughout Tsutakawa's body of work as a fountain designer: beauty, nature, art, and religion/spirituality. He intended his fountains to be reverent works that evoke what he described as "the symbolic quality of water all over the world – the purifying, the cleansing, the offering, the water of life."¹⁴³

Tsutakawa designed and built more than fifty fountain sculptures over the course of his career, and the case studies that follow examine only a small number of these. This chapter therefore begins with some general information on Tsutakawa's standard methods of design and construction. The fundamental connection between fountains and architecture is the next subject to be explored, beginning with the state of this relationship in the 1960s, the decade in which Tsutakawa established himself as a leader in American fountain design. The importance of location is also considered very briefly; as I will demonstrate in Chapters Four through Seven, Tsutakawa's fountains are best described as *site-sensitive* rather than site-specific. Next, I discuss some important functional aspects of public fountains as they first developed in the ancient world, and then in Europe and the United States. This is followed by a short history of fountains that expands this perspective to include some Asian countries, most importantly Japan. When the use of water features in Asian gardens is examined, an issue that is central to my dissertation

¹⁴² Quoted in Symmes, *Fountains: Splash and Spectacle*, 73.

¹⁴³ Quoted in Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 114.

emerges – the opposing attitudes regarding humankind's relationship with the natural world that underpin dominant Eastern and Western cultural traditions.

After returning very briefly to architecture, this time as a source for specific formal elements in Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures, I discuss the importance of sound as a component in his work and in the design of traditional Japanese gardens. As previously mentioned, Tsutakawa's approach to fountain sculpture was informed by diverse artistic and cultural sources. This aided him greatly in his quest to destabilize – or even resolve – such familiar binary oppositions as nature/culture and spiritual/material. His work was not only holistic in the sense of transcending Western dualism; with his fountain sculptures he sought to create a fully embodied aesthetic experience, rejecting the claims made by Clement Greenberg and others regarding the primacy of vision. Sustained discussion of mid-century American modernism will have to wait until later chapters, however. Chapter One ends by returning to the enduring symbolism attached to fountains, particularly within Euro-American culture. This offers a chance to briefly look at selected works from throughout Tsutakawa's career that exemplify his use of traditional themes long associated with fountains or other water sources.

All of Tsutakawa's fountains were constructed from sheet metal, often finished in a deep matte black. The vast majority are made of silicon bronze, which the artist described as a "highly sophisticated tough and permanent bronze, but also malleable and workable and just ideal for sculpture work."¹⁴⁴ Tsutakawa's bronze fountains were made by cutting flat sheets of metal, following markings made from the wood or cardboard templates used to form the trial version. The cut pieces were then shaped through rolling and pressure. Sometimes a built form was used, and the bronze sheet pressed into it to conform to its shape. The next step was assembling the

¹⁴⁴ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 156. Tsutakawa also made three fountain sculptures in stainless steel (1972, 1973, and 1981) and one in aluminum (1974).

fountain using welding, and incorporating the necessary plumbing. Tsutakawa did some of the welding at his home workshop, and he was also responsible for the many stages of cleaning, polishing, patination, and surface finishing. Ament notes that while public fountains may appear to have been a highly lucrative area of artistic specialization, with Tsutakawa's larger commissions often costing over \$100,000, "two-thirds or more of that typically went to site preparation, drawings and detailing, materials, labor, shipping, and installation."¹⁴⁵ In the early 1960s Tsutakawa's eldest son, Gerard, began to work alongside him, gradually learning the welding and fabrication techniques. Around 1970 Gerard took over the technical production from his father, sometimes working on these aspects of the fountains and metal sculptures with assistants, who were often George's students.¹⁴⁶ Gerard also collaborated with his father on some later designs and began to create metal sculptures and fountains of his own; today he is a well-known Seattle sculptor in his own right, creating large works for public sites as well as smaller, gallery-sized pieces.

Fountain designers typically work from preliminary drawings, and some create architectural or sculptural models. The creation of models by architects was a traditional academic practice, but one perpetuated at the Bauhaus workshops. As Tsutakawa's process for designing his fountain sculptures evolved, he arrived at a standard procedure that involved developing the sculptural forms of the fountains by creating small three-dimensional models using diverse materials. These could include cardboard, foil and copper sheets, wire, and ping-pong balls sliced in half (fig. 4). Experimenting with these materials, he discovered the various shapes and combinations that could be generated by folding, turning, removing sections, and juxtaposing or stacking forms. In a second stage of model-making, Tsutakawa constructed small

¹⁴⁵ Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 146.

¹⁴⁶ Gerard Tsutakawa, interview by the author, June 23, 2010.

versions of the fountain sculptures using hammered sheet metal. Making sketches was also important (fig. 5); they were used for stimulating ideas about siting and potential use by people, as well as for working out water patterns and sometimes lighting effects, whether natural or artificial. For example, a sketch Tsutakawa made of his fountain sculpture for the City Hall in Aberdeen, Washington indicates where bright sunlight would illuminate the bronze and which parts would remain in shadow (fig. 6). Presentation drawings and models were also prepared; once the client had agreed to a design, Tsutakawa would begin to collaborate with Jack Uchida, his engineer, on working out the technical requirements.¹⁴⁷ Tsutakawa would also construct scale models, which he used to establish a fountain's relationship to its site. This could include the design of the pool or the fountain's placement within it, proximity to surrounding buildings, and/or the placement of benches and trees.

As my Introduction briefly explained, and Chapters Three and Four will explore in greater depth, the basic form of Tsutakawa's fountains originated in a series of carved wood sculptures he called *Obos*, which were based in part on ritually stacked rock structures of that name, erected by pilgrims in the Himalayas of Nepal and Tibet. What Tsutakawa referred to as the "*obos* concept" is a theme that recurs throughout of this dissertation; it was the formal and spiritual foundation for all his fountain sculptures. In a catalogue essay addressing the need for more exposure and study of postwar abstraction by Asian American artists, Wechsler has noted the art establishment's reluctance "to accept the validity of a culturally bipartite aesthetic."¹⁴⁸ While Wechsler's point is clearly important, I am convinced there are a number of additional reasons that Tsutakawa's work as a fountain designer has received so little scholarly attention,

¹⁴⁷ Henry J. Seldis, "Tsutakawa Fountain to Enrich Area's Art," *Los Angeles Times*, February 17, 1963.

¹⁴⁸ Wechsler, "From Asian Traditions to Modern Expressions: Abstract Art by Asian Americans, 1945-1970," 145.

despite his prolific output and international reputation. One is that urban fountains are often overlooked because they fall between artistic disciplines.¹⁴⁹ They are public sculptures, but many – perhaps most – modernist examples were designed by architects as part of architectural or landscape design projects. This tendency was (unintentionally) illustrated in the mid-'60s by a travelling photographic exhibition titled *Fountains in Contemporary Architecture*. Organized and circulated by the American Federation of Arts in 1965-67, it featured fifty U.S. fountains, of which more than two-thirds were credited to firms headed by architects and designers. The largest number (nine) were by Lawrence Halprin's influential West Coast firm. Other well-represented architects in the exhibition and accompanying catalogue were I.M. Pei and Philip Johnson, each with three examples, and Edward Durrell Stone with seven.

Only sixteen of the fifty fountains had been designed by sculptors, and five of these were by Tsutakawa.¹⁵⁰ In contrast to the complex shapes created by water as it flowed over and through his fountain sculptures and spilled over their curved lips and edges, the thirty-four fountains conceived by architects and designers all used water in one of two basic ways, featuring simple falling planes of water or varied arrangements of spouting jets. Most of the artists' fountains were similarly unimaginative in exploiting the sculptural possibilities of water, which often appears to have been a "splashy addition" to a sculpture in metal and in no way integral to its form.¹⁵¹ Jet fountains were particularly popular in the 1960s and '70s, with designers taking great delight in the use of electronic devices to time the movements of nozzles,

¹⁴⁹ See Alina Payne, "Architectural History and the History of Art: A Suspended Dialogue," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 58, no. 3 (September 1999) for an analysis of how and why architectural history, especially that of the modern age, became distanced from art history during the twentieth century.

¹⁵⁰ Bishop, *Fountains in Contemporary Architecture*. This catalogue was important in advancing Tsutakawa's career; it led to his being contacted by prospective clients outside the Pacific Northwest.

¹⁵¹ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 112, 114.

creating changing water patterns that might be accompanied by lights or music. In his brief introductory essay for *Fountains in Contemporary Architecture*, exhibition curator Minor L. Bishop noted that "water pressure no longer has to be painstakingly created by catering to the forces of nature, such as at the constant fall at Villa d'Este outside of Rome; all that is required is a small recirculating pump." Moreover, "through the science of nozzle design a vast range of expression has been afforded the fountain artist, whereby the shape of the water trajectory, be it cascade, spray, jet, or ring, can provide a significant form in itself without depending upon the more traditional juxtaposition with sculpture."¹⁵²

For Tsutakawa, however, sculpture was an essential element; without it there was no fountain. He did not, for instance, regard most of Halprin's works as fountains; in Tsutakawa's view a landscape-oriented "waterscape" lacked the aesthetic appeal found in a "water sculpture."¹⁵³ The San-Francisco-based firm of Lawrence Halprin & Associates, Symmes writes, "pioneered monumental waterfall fountains that offer the 'experiential equivalent' of awe-inspiring nature" within urban settings.¹⁵⁴ Halprin was well-known for his practice of basing designs on the careful observation of the movement and sounds made by water in natural settings: waterfalls, rivers, streams and ocean shorelines. Tsutakawa's own fountains, in contrast, gain much of their aesthetic impact from the combination of static sculptural forms in metal with moving sculptural forms created by water (fig. 7). The effect is described quite beautifully by

¹⁵² Bishop, *Fountains in Contemporary Architecture*, n.p. These new technologies were even available to middle-class American homeowners wishing to embellish their private domestic spaces. In May 1962 the "Better Living" section of *Life* featured photographs of the petunia and lily designs that could now be produced by German-made "flower fountains" with rapid rotating jets. The accompanying text assured readers that these fountains did not require elaborate plumbing, making it "possible for gardeners without green thumbs to have a dazzling display in the backyard – or by simply lowering the water pressure to have a year round 'water garden' in the living room." Quoted in Symmes, *Fountains: Splash and Spectacle*, 208.

¹⁵³ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 23.

¹⁵⁴ Symmes, *Fountains: Splash and Spectacle*, 133.

Reed: "The water is integral, not incidental to the design. Falling in a series of controlled cascades, it moves in swift and transient counterflow to the ascending structure of the bronze, its fall describing shapes that complement the metal form, extending it beyond itself in space."¹⁵⁵

Most large urban fountains are designed to be decorative, as opposed to purely functional, and Symmes divides them into two categories. In traditional European fountains and their many descendants on other continents, the emphasis is on sculptural and architectural mastery. Although flowing water adds vitality to the structure, with its constantly changing visual effects, its pleasing motion and its splashing sounds, this sort of fountain provides some aesthetic pleasure even if the water is turned off.¹⁵⁶ I would add that, if its scale and grandeur are sufficient, it also continues to be understood as a public monument. Tsutakawa had strong opinions on this subject, which will be examined in later chapters. While the fountains in Symmes's first category give water a supporting, ornamental role, her second category is devoted to fountains where the aesthetic impact is fundamentally, if not exclusively, based on the flow of water. This would include dramatic single jets that rise and fall, as well as fountains where water is choreographed to move in various sequences, and those that rely on cascades of falling water for dramatic effect. Any of these would be quite unappealing if the moving water were absent. Many of the fountains designed by Halprin's firm are examples of Symmes's second type.

The fountains Bishop selected for *Fountains in Contemporary Architecture* also tended to be of two types; but in keeping with the exhibition's theme, the curator based his categories on the ways fountains related to architecture. The catalogue essay explains: "One type is designed independent of its spacial [*sic*] and formal environment, the other is subordinate to it." Fountains

¹⁵⁵ Reed, "The Fountains of George Tsutakawa," 49.

¹⁵⁶ Symmes, *Fountains: Splash and Spectacle*, 14. In his Oral History interview, Tsutakawa stressed that he did not consider his fountain sculptures to be complete without water, although they should still be visually pleasing.

in the second category are "very emphatically conceived as an extension of the building." While they may incorporate sculpture, it is not essential; their primary function is "to enhance the architectural composition." Tsutakawa's fountains are obviously not of this type, but neither do they fit comfortably into Bishop's first category, though this is no doubt where he would have put them. Bishop explains, for instance, that fountains in this group tend to be sculptural, and, like "most sculpture today," are conceived as separate works of art, as opposed to architectural embellishments. They are generally designed by artists, rather than architects, and "this form of 'collaboration' serves to project the free expression of both individuals."¹⁵⁷

These are all characteristics of Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures, but while his works certainly maintain their own identities and resist being subsumed by the architectural projects they are part of, Tsutakawa's design process often involved working closely with architects, particularly landscape architects. This is diminished by Bishop's use of scare-quotes around the word "collaboration." What seems even more foreign to Tsutakawa's working methods is Bishop's further claim that these sculptural fountains are most often conceived separately from their intended sites, then moved to a location within a specific landscape scheme, "or into a lobby interior as a piece of furniture."¹⁵⁸ For major fountain projects Tsutakawa always included at least one site visit, made before he began work on a design to familiarize himself with the location, take photographs and complete preliminary sketches.¹⁵⁹ In addition to studying the space, scale, and size of the site, he would consider whether there was a high concentration of buildings in the vicinity and assess such matters as climate, weather, angles of sunlight, and wind conditions. In areas with particularly cold winters, Tsutakawa considered how the fountain

¹⁵⁷ Bishop, *Fountains in Contemporary Architecture*, n.p.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Gerard Tsutakawa, interview by the author, June 23, 2010.

would look at times when its water supply had to be turned off; the surrounding landscape might be barren, and the sculpture accented with snow. He also envisioned how water would freeze in the fountain, then designed with all these factors in mind. Fountains in Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, North Dakota, and Ohio, for example, were designed to appear spectacular in icy weather, and so was Spokane, Washington's *Expo '74 Fountain* (fig. 8).¹⁶⁰ Even Seattle and Vancouver, B.C., occasionally experience cold snaps capable of freezing moving water, and local newspaper photographers would rush to photograph the magical effects at their favourite Tsutakawa fountains.¹⁶¹

To clarify, I am not attempting to claim that Tsutakawa's fountains qualify as "site-specific" works of the sort analyzed by Miwon Kwon in *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (2002).¹⁶² For one thing, Tsutakawa approached many of his early fountain commissions by offering clients a choice of two or three designs, and those they rejected were sometimes reworked for later projects.¹⁶³ He nonetheless gave the specifics of site and location much more consideration than Bishop's catalogue essay acknowledged. Because he was committed to the specificities of individual sites and clients, Tsutakawa declined requests that he make editions of his fountains, something Henry Moore, for example, often did with his sculptures. In Tsutakawa's case, there was a single trial exception, the small *Fountain of Reflection* (1962), a work suitably scaled for a domestic garden or small office space (fig. 9). Three were completed, from an intended edition of four, but Tsutakawa soon realized that any

¹⁶⁰ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

¹⁶¹ Photographs of the Northgate fountain in normal and freezing conditions are included in Jack M. Uchida, "Welding in Modern Metal Sculpture," *Welding Journal* (February, 1966), 113.

¹⁶² Miwon Kwon, *One Place After another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002).

¹⁶³ As he became more experienced and confident as a fountain designer, Tsutakawa found it was better to offer only one design. This made the process easier for clients, who often found it difficult to choose between two or three options.

benefits were outweighed by the difficulties involved in adjusting each version of the fountain to suit a particular site.¹⁶⁴ In comparison to Tsutakawa's practice, the procedure Bishop envisions sounds almost like the sort of public sculpture that came to be known in the 1970s and 80s as "plop art." A punning term of derision, apparently coined in 1969 by architect James Wines, "plop art" referred to the tendency for large abstract sculptures to be placed on metropolitan plazas with little regard for the surrounding streetscape.¹⁶⁵

Fountain History

In order to begin to grasp the complexities of Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures, it is essential to consider some of the important functional elements of public fountains, first in the ancient world, then later in Europe and the United States. In a book devoted to the use of water in landscape architecture, Jellicoe observes that the natural power of water has been exploited by humans since primitive times. The resulting shapes and patterns can be regarded as cyclical, as seen in the form of the landscape reservoir – its form echoes that of the earliest dammed stream. "On the other hand," Jellicoe writes, "the story of the fountain is a still unfinished one of continuous development." He illustrates his point with a succinct summary of a lineage spanning approximately two thousand years: "Moving from private gardens to public squares and parks and on to exhibitions, and changing from gravity to electricity as the source of power, the

¹⁶⁴ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 116. More information on the different versions of the *Fountain of Reflection* can be found in Chapter Six of this dissertation.

¹⁶⁵ Wines has also been reliably credited with a closely related phrase: "turds in the plaza." Cher Krause Knight, *Public Art: Theory, Practice and Populism* (Malden, MA: Blackwell), 8. More recently the term "plop art" has been reclaimed and repurposed for the 21st century, its original irony reversed by artists, critics and arts administrators working in the field of public art. The best example is the publication of *Plop: Recent Projects of the Public Art Fund* (New York: Merrill Publishers, 2004). This richly illustrated 256-page collection documents projects realized by 45 artists through the New York-based fund.

fountain has become one of the most potent factors in the uplift of the spirit."¹⁶⁶ Because of their overwhelmingly positive effect on people's moods, fountains have long been employed, in various contexts, to help sway public opinion. The most familiar instance of fountain design as political propaganda is perhaps the water garden of Louis XIV at Versailles.¹⁶⁷ Large fountains have also been featured extensively at world's fairs and international expositions; Tsutakawa proposed two for the Seattle World's Fair of 1962, discussed in Chapter Six, and completed another for Expo '74 in Spokane, Washington. Archival sources have revealed that during the late 1960s and early 70s, Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures also appeared on the covers of patrons' annual reports (*Jefferson Plaza Fountain*; fig. 10) and glossy brochures advertising up-to-date office space for lease (*Fountain of the Pioneers*).¹⁶⁸

In ancient times, when the water-flow of fountains still relied solely on gravity, their placement in a given city depended mainly on where its water supply was located – at a higher or lower altitude than the settlement itself. In Egypt small tanks were dug to store water that was hoisted up from the Nile, while the Greeks and Romans built aqueducts to bring water down from mountain springs and rivers. The first fountains were therefore the basins into which water flowed or spouted at the terminus of an aqueduct. At first their spray was valued only because it

¹⁶⁶ Susan Jellicoe and Geoffrey Alan Jellicoe, *Water: The use of Water in Landscape Architecture* (London: A. and C. Black, 1971), 14.

¹⁶⁷ Propagandistic intent notwithstanding, the volume of water at Versailles has never been sufficient to supply all the fountains there for long periods. Even during the residence of Louis XIV it was only possible to keep those closest to the palace operating for part of each day; the other fountains "played" only on special occasions. *Ibid.*, 23. At one point the king even considered abandoning Versailles altogether in favour of a location where the water supply was more plentiful. Symmes, *Fountains: Splash and Spectacle*, 81. On Baroque fountains, also see Katherine Wentworth Rinne, *The Waters of Rome: Aqueducts, Fountains, and the Birth of the Baroque City*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011.

¹⁶⁸ *The Bentall Centre, Promotional Brochure* (1969); *Jefferson National Annual Report: 1972* (Indianapolis, Indiana: Jefferson National Life Insurance Company). Both from Archives of American Art, George Tsutakawa Papers, 1963-1991.

cleansed insects from the surface of the water, but people quickly recognized that it also provided "a delicious stimulus to eyes and ears."¹⁶⁹ It was the Romans who first installed fountains as decorative additions to private gardens and courtyards, and later to a great many public squares. While paintings on ancient vases indicate that the Greeks knew how to manipulate water pressure to create jets and spouts in their fountains, the Romans invented more sophisticated hydraulics, most importantly the water-powered pump. This allowed them to build lively fountains throughout the city of Rome and further afield. Roman aqueducts fell into disrepair during the Middle Ages, and most fountains ceased to function. Medieval fountains were generally found only in the cloisters of monasteries or the small enclosed gardens of noble households. In the fourteenth century Italian scholars rediscovered ancient Roman texts including the *Pneumatica*, a treatise on water-machines and other mechanical marvels invented by Hero of Alexandria. Written c. 100 CE, the *Pneumatica* did not appear in print until 1575.¹⁷⁰ An Italian Renaissance garden that did not incorporate water was considered incomplete, and contemporary advances in hydraulics and mechanics facilitated the invention of new methods for bringing water to gardens on terraced hillsides and new innovations in fountain design for public and private spaces.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁹ Jellicoe and Jellicoe, *Water: The use of Water in Landscape Architecture*, 14.

¹⁷⁰ Christopher Thacker, *The History of Gardens* (London: C. Helm, 1979), 100. The ten "books" that comprise Vitruvius's *De Architectura*, the only substantial treatise on architecture to survive from Antiquity, were also highly significant, as were the writings of Pliny the Younger and others on Roman villas. The fifteenth century humanist and architect Leon Battista Alberti offered practical advice and provided detailed descriptions of ancient Roman villas and gardens, including fountains, as well as explaining the principles of Roman civic design and their contemporary significance. Alberti envisioned his *De re aedificatoria* (On the Art of Building) as a modern equivalent of *De Architectura* and his work encouraged interest in its Vitruvian predecessor.

¹⁷¹ Bandana Purkayastha, "Italian Renaissance and Japanese Zen Gardens: An Approach for Introducing Cultural Landscapes," *Journal of Geography* 94, no. 3 (1995): 424.

In addition to classical sources, the highly ordered and symmetrical gardens of the Italian Renaissance drew inspiration from Moorish design. This and the Mughal style were the two principal types of Persian garden design, carried east and west and adapted for Islamic use by the Arabs after they overran the Persian Empire in 637 CE. Based on the idea of the garden as a representation of Paradise, where four rivers separated the four parts of the world, both styles of Persian garden were typically divided into quadrants, separated by four channels and often featuring a decorative fountain at their crossing. The origin of the water features in Persian gardens was ultimately ancient Egypt, so it could be argued that the syncretism that characterizes Tsutakawa's modernist fountain sculptures is not so different from what can be traced in many traditional European fountains. In Tsutakawa's work, and in his personal history, the merging of cultures simply took place at a highly accelerated rate, one befitting the historical moment. The compression of space-time and increasing globalization have long been regarded as characteristic features of modernity, and both increased dramatically with the coming of the jet age in the mid-1950s.

Interviewed by Kingsbury in 1983, Tsutakawa declared "I can't think of any great fountain built between let's say 1950 and 1960. Now before that it was the World's Fair fountain, like the Chicago World Fair, San Francisco World's Fair, New York World Fair [*sic*]. They built fountains but they were all just glorified Roman fountains."¹⁷² Clearly he saw himself as contributing something new and innovative to the history of fountain design. Having spent much of the preceding quarter century devoting himself to public fountains, Tsutakawa confessed in the interview that he found it difficult to understand why more contemporary artists were not involved in designing fountains, a specialization he continued to find rewarding. He freely

¹⁷² Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

acknowledged that the number of public fountains commissioned in any city was limited by the expense involved, since a bronze fountain sculpture generally costs more than twice as much as the same sculpture on its own, thanks to plumbing, electrical work, hydraulics, and labour expenses required in fountain construction. Moreover, he reasoned, while sculptors might "love to do big things, whether [they're] for the public or not," few can afford to finance very large pieces on their own; a commission or other financial backing is required.¹⁷³ Tsutakawa also cited other practical considerations, such as the need to work collaboratively with architects, engineers, and urban planners, which some artists find onerous. Then there was the challenge posed by winter temperatures that run far below freezing in some regions.¹⁷⁴ Nonetheless, he insisted that where the necessary resources exist, large urban fountains are ideal choices for public art projects.

In Europe, as elsewhere, the earliest public fountains were built for practical purposes. Before indoor plumbing was readily available in private dwellings or other buildings, water for drinking, cooking, bathing, and cleaning had to be collected, either by individuals for their own use or by water carriers who earned a living delivering water door-to-door in barrels. To augment springs and other natural sources, which might be far from people's homes, wells and public fountains fed by channels or aqueducts were often placed in town squares and marketplaces. There they not only provided water; fountains offered another vital community service through their popularity as meeting places and central spots for the exchange of information and gossip. As Cincinnati's Fountain Square demonstrates, along with countless examples in other cities

¹⁷³ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

¹⁷⁴ Although a fountain in such a location would have to be temporarily shut off if the temperature dipped very low, the pipes and plumbing still had to be constructed to withstand added stress during the winter.

throughout the world, the role of public fountains as focal points for communities is one they still play today.

Although the primary function of early public fountains was as reservoirs to collect and dispense potable water, many were also important civic monuments. This is reflected in their architectural or sculptural form and decoration, which were often designed to impress. The symbolic resonance of urban fountains increased over time, as fountain makers and their patrons recognized that a public amenity people visited each day had its own communicative potential. Famous European fountains include Italian favourites from the Renaissance and Baroque periods, such as the Fountain of Neptune in the Piazza della Signoria in Florence. It was sculpted c. 1560-75 by Bartolomeo Ammannati to celebrate Cosimo I de' Medici's creation of an aqueduct that increased the city's water supply and let Florentines enjoy the practical and aesthetic benefits of a continuously flowing fountain for the first time. Among the best-loved Baroque examples is Bernini's *Triton Fountain* in Rome's Piazza Barberini. The fountain's location in a valley meant the forces of gravity could be harnessed by the designer to dazzle the eye, with spurting plumes of water rising a full sixteen feet above Triton's towering conch. For film buffs, especially, other classic images of Rome come to mind, such as Audrey Hepburn cooling her sandaled feet in the spouts of the *Barcaccia Fountain*, in William Wyler's *Roman Holiday* (1953), or the erotic romp of Marcello Mastroianni and Anita Ekberg in the *Trevi Fountain*, in Federico Fellini's *La Dolce Vita* (1960), released the same year Tsutakawa's first fountain sculpture was unveiled.

Tsutakawa liked to refer to his fountains as "fountain sculptures," a contemporary term that emphasized the importance of water itself as a sculpted form, as well as the sculptural origins of his fountain designs. Although he admired some famous European examples, such as the fountains of Versailles and those at the Villa d'Este in Tivoli, he complained that the action

of the water in traditional European fountains was usually very limited and lacking in imagination. In more than one interview Tsutakawa declared that such fountains seem to only "do two things: they either squirt water at the sculpture or the sculpture squirts water at you."¹⁷⁵ One popular theme singled out by Tsutakawa as exemplifying this approach is the nude figure of a small boy urinating into a basin or pool. Well-loved as this genre may be in Europe, when he mentioned such fountains Tsutakawa's tone conveyed a distinct lack of enthusiasm for their trivial subject matter and their dull use of flowing water.¹⁷⁶

Observing that prior to 1945 fountain designers relied on the same methods of construction and much of the same imagery as the ancient Romans had, Tsutakawa pointed out that Western-style sculptural fountains based on classical mythology could be found almost everywhere. In 1956, on his first trip to Asia as an adult, he was very interested to see "Roman fountains" in Tokyo. He mentioned how "even at a small railroad station in a remote out-in-the-sticks town in Japan," he once encountered "Europa and the Bull, spewing water."¹⁷⁷ Tsutakawa was aware that, in many cases, the gods and goddesses that ornament classical European fountains are meant to personify or allude to natural forces, but in his eyes such figures seemed to suggest that nature should be subject to human control, which he refused to accept as a guiding principal.¹⁷⁸ In reference to his own designs, Tsutakawa has been quoted as firmly stating: "I am not interested in Greco-Roman mythology."¹⁷⁹ Nonetheless, his fountains must be

¹⁷⁵ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.; Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 27.

¹⁷⁶ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 18. The most famous, of course, is the *Manneken-Pis* in Brussels, which dates from 1618.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 27.

¹⁷⁸ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

¹⁷⁹ Quoted in Joan Lowndes, "The Fountain of Tsutakawa Will Soon Bubble and Tumble in our City," *Vancouver Province*, April 3, 1969.

seen against the background of the tradition they transformed, which began in Europe and later continued in America.

In the United States, the official introduction of pure drinking water into major American cities such as New York and Boston — the first to develop reliable distribution systems — took place in the 1840s. In both cases this gift to the citizenry was marked by the installation of fountains, and festivities were organized around them. These fountains did not feature decorative architecture or sculpture; they were simply large jets of water. Still, when the jets soared to great heights or stood in groups, their effect was undoubtedly impressive, and the focus on the power and abundance of the water itself no doubt increased their value as symbols of promise.¹⁸⁰ On October 14, 1842, New Yorkers celebrated the completion of the Croton dam, aqueduct, and reservoir system as water from the Croton River, forty miles away, jetted skyward from large fountains in Union Square and City Hall Park.¹⁸¹ In addition to promising clean water, which would end the repeated water-borne epidemics of earlier years, this show of hydro-power offered reassurance that the threat of fire could now be managed by city officials.¹⁸² Firemen joined

¹⁸⁰ Symmes, *Fountains: Splash and Spectacle*, 45.

¹⁸¹ In an earlier attempt to solve the problems of unpredictable quantity and quality, New York's civic leaders had turned to a private company to develop a water distribution system. The Manhattan Company was founded by Aaron Burr in 1799, and for the next forty years, until the Croton system was completed, a small percentage of homes in the quickly growing city was serviced by its convoluted network of wooden pipes. Although the Manhattan Company was ostensibly formed for the purpose of developing a water distribution system, in actual fact the project became an excuse for founding New York's second bank, the forerunner of Chase Manhattan. *Ibid.*, 45.

In the early 1960s, Noguchi created a sunken water garden for the Chase Manhattan Plaza. Tsutakawa also designed a number of fountains for banks, and while, in the interest of brevity, they have not been included in this study, the long-time connection between banks and water management suggests the construction of ornamental public fountains by banking institutions in the U.S. would be a worthwhile topic for further research.

¹⁸² Much of New York had been destroyed in the Great Conflagration of December 16, 1835. That event, which followed outbreaks of Asiatic cholera in 1832 and 1834, had convinced city leaders to undertake the Croton project, the largest undertaking of its kind in the U.S. up to that

marching bands, soldiers, and politicians in a parade through the streets to mark the official opening of the system, while a ceremony took place at City Hall. As the fountain shot water skyward, a choir sang:

Water leaps as if delighted
While her conquered foes retire:
Pale Contagion flies affrighted
With the baffled demon Fire.¹⁸³

As noted above, the very first fountains were created for private gardens in ancient Egypt and Persia. As cultural geographer Bandana Purkayastha observes in a comparison of Italian Renaissance and Japanese Zen gardens, all gardens manifest cultural values, "whether rational, linear designs extol the special position of humans in God's world, or whether an emphasis on natural forms reminds humans of their oneness with nature." A culture represents its understanding of human-nature relationships through its gardens.¹⁸⁴ In his Oral History interview, Tsutakawa observed that, despite having designed many beautiful, elaborate gardens and extensive landscaping for temples, palaces, and the like, Asians in countries such as China,

time. Gerard Koepfel, "A Struggle for Water," *American Heritage, Invention and Technology* 9, no. 3 (1994): 26.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 30.

¹⁸⁴ Purkayastha, "Italian Renaissance and Japanese Zen Gardens", 420. The first Chinese gardens were created to enclose imperial hunting parks, protecting them from the encroachment of agriculture. Developed under the combined influence of Taoism and Confucianism, the earliest hunting parks were generally built to be reproductions of nature, and during the Han period (206 B.C.E. to 220 C.E.) it became popular to incorporate islands and lakes. By the first century C.E. the Buddhist teachings were introduced to China from India, and "it was the amalgam of Confucian, Tao, and Buddhist expressions in the Chinese garden, that was carried back to Japan by the first Japanese ambassador to China in the seventh century." Ibid., 424.

The subsequent development of Japanese garden design can be divided into three principal phases: the paradise garden, the Zen stone garden, and the tea garden. Mitchell Bring and Josse Wayembergh, *Japanese Gardens : Design and Meaning* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1981), 7.

Japan, and Korea never made fountains historically.¹⁸⁵ Pondering this when he began creating his own fountains, he realized that water is widely utilized in traditional East Asian gardens, but only in ways that exploit its natural movement, for example in ornamental streams, ponds and waterfalls.¹⁸⁶ In Japanese gardens, there are also practical devices that rely on running water, such as the *shishi odoshi* (deer-frightening noisemaker).¹⁸⁷ In the most common type of *shishi odoshi*, water from a pipe gradually fills a bamboo tube with an attached pivot. When the weight of the water tips the bamboo tube, it knocks against a hard surface at its base; this produces a sharp, clacking sound to frighten away deer and other animals that might damage plants. The *shishi odoshi* could be considered a type of fountain, as could the *tsukubai*, a feature in traditional Japanese teahouse gardens used to cleanse the hands and mouth before the tea ceremony.¹⁸⁸ Here water from a bamboo pipe falls into a small stone basin, overflows it, and falls again onto rocks and pebbles arranged on the ground for drainage.

¹⁸⁵ Exceptions were modelled on European fountains. See, for example, the 1786 engraving of the *Great Fountain Waterworks (Ta Shui Fa)*, fig. 248 in Symmes, *Splash and Spectacle*. This fountain was part of a summer retreat built for the Chinese emperor Qianlong in Peking (now Beijing). Called Yuan-Ming-Yuan (Garden of Perfect Clarity) and intended to recreate Paradise, this complex of European-style palaces and gardens was designed by two Jesuit missionaries, Giuseppe Castiglione and Michel Benoist, and largely complete by 1768. The many fountains and water features included tall pagoda-like fountains and an elaborate water clock. Although they were based on Western concepts and designs, the style of the fountains revealed an extraordinary combination of cultural traditions, both Chinese and European. *Ibid.*, 243.

¹⁸⁶ The Golden Age of Japanese gardens took place during the Middle Ages, in the Heian period (794-1185) and the Kamakura period (1185-1334). Many enduring design traditions first appeared in this era and some involved water features. See Elizabeth Boult and Chip Sullivan, *Illustrated History of Landscape Design* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2010), 50. The oldest surviving manual of Japanese garden design is the *Sakuteiki*, written by Tachibana no Toshitsuna in the early eleventh century. It categorizes ten distinct types of waterfalls. The author was a half-brother of the Fujiwara regent in power at the time, and his manual takes a spiritual and philosophical approach to garden design. *Ibid.*, 49.

¹⁸⁷ Tsutakawa refers to this device as a *shika-odoshi*, a common variation.

¹⁸⁸ A 1982 sculpture with water by Noguchi, titled *Well (Variation on a Tsukubai)*, is based on these traditional objects. See Katie Clifford, "Zen no Zen: Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum," *Art News* 101, no. 5 (2002): 166.

In Tsutakawa's view, however, a fountain involved a greater manipulation of water than simply diverting the flow of a stream into a pipe. He noted in his Oral History interview that the closest thing traditional East Asia had to Western fountains, in the sense of water being made to perform in an unnatural way, were the man-operated water wheels used to irrigate rice paddies. Such interference, he continued, was acceptable in agriculture, but in a garden one is seeking "to be part of nature's workings." In Japan and other East Asian countries, Tsutakawa insisted, the goal is to live with nature, rather than dominating nature. What he called "the Oriental idea" is fundamentally different from the outlook of "the Renaissance man [who] wanted to be a master of the universe and set himself as the center of the universe."¹⁸⁹ While a fountain designer in Rome or another European city would envision "all the knowledge and all the power and all the control coming from the man,"¹⁹⁰ for a master of Oriental garden design, forcing water in a fountain to spout high into the air could seem like a perversion of its true nature. And, Tsutakawa summed up, "I think some of that thinking goes into my fountain design."¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁹ This point is also made by Hickey, who writes: "Western art, as defined by Renaissance humanism, clearly placed the individual at the centre of the natural world, whereas in Japan, humanity was seen to be connected to nature through emotional ties. Truth in art, defined by visual accuracy, was the outcome of the Western approach, but Japanese artists sought a more abstract representation of the world as their way of expressing an emotional response to nature's beauty." Hickey, "Beauty and Truth in Nature: Japan and the West," 347.

¹⁹⁰ Today the use of terms such as "man" and "mankind" is generally regarded as sexist, but they were standard in the postwar period, and thus appear in statements made by Tsutakawa and others quoted in this dissertation. In contrast, an artist's statement by Tsutakawa published in 1983 uses "humans" instead of "men" or "mankind." See Bruce Guenther, Marsha Burns and Ed Marquand, *50 Northwest Artists: A Critical Selection of Painters and Sculptors Working in the Pacific Northwest* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books), 113.

¹⁹¹ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p. In eighteenth century England a somewhat similar view was espoused by enthusiasts of "natural" landscape design, who considered the fountain an "emblem of artificiality" but found man-made lakes quite acceptable. Garden fountains were reintroduced by Humphrey Repton in the nineteenth century. Thacker, *The History of Gardens*, 277; Jellicoe and Jellicoe, *Water: The use of Water in Landscape Architecture*, 31.

One of the main goals of this dissertation is to demonstrate the importance of architecture in inspiring Tsutakawa's ideas and shaping his practice as a fountain designer. That said, very few of his fountains refer to Western architecture directly. Two that quite clearly do are *Spirit of the Spring* (1974) in Troy, Michigan, and the *Chalice Fountain* (1983) in Toledo, Ohio. *Spirit of the Spring* is a column in openwork bronze, composed of rounded forms that echo the shape of the oversized, lunette-like cavities atop the Somerset Inn, the work of architects Volk and London (fig. 11).¹⁹² The *Chalice Fountain* (fig. 12) was designed for a spacious plaza at Toledo's Government Center; its architect was Minoru Yamasaki. Both Tsutakawa and Yamasaki had studied at the University of Washington and in 1932 or 1933 they had become acquainted.¹⁹³ By 1983, Yamasaki was the widely recognized architect of the World Trade Center in New York, and this, I suggest, was the building Tsutakawa chose to quote in his fountain. The fountain sculpture's large curved prongs adapt and invert the design of the Trade Center's plaza-level piers, which form elongated arches before springing into triple bundles of 'reeds' that rise through the height of the building (fig. 13).¹⁹⁴

At the same time, the *Chalice Fountain* resembles the upper parts of a small metal sculpture mounted on a wooden base, which Tsutakawa made sometime prior to 1966 (fig.14). Early that year it was published in an article written by engineer Uchida, and there the 14-inch sculpture was described as a "symbolic trophy," created for the Seguin School of Seattle, part of an organization that aided children with intellectual disabilities. According to Uchida, the

¹⁹² Louis G. Redstone and Ruth R. Redstone, *Public Art: New Directions* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1981), 119.

¹⁹³ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 32.

¹⁹⁴ On Yamasaki's earlier work, see his autobiography: *A Life in Architecture* (New York: Weatherhill, 1979). Although numerous publications exist on the World Trade Center, no other retrospective monographs have been published to date. Regarding the architectural references made in Tsutakawa's fountains, I would like to thank Dr. Christopher Thomas for his assistance with terminology.

sculpture represented a child "blessed by the upturned arms which depict mental health, physical health and happiness."¹⁹⁵ This exemplifies Tsutakawa's tendency to design his fountains using fairly generalized abstract forms that are open to many interpretations. In 1970 he designed a fountain sculpture for Seattle's Group Health Cooperative with forms and symbolism very similar to those found in the Seguin trophy. In the later work the upward curves represented mental, physical, and spiritual growth, and Tsutakawa replaced the "child" with a central lotus to show "the essence of earth, water, and sky."¹⁹⁶

The Pleasures of Fountains

The word 'fountain' originally denoted a natural water source, especially a spring,¹⁹⁷ but today it is generally understood to refer to an artificial structure designed to both move and contain water, while providing human beings with refreshment and/or aesthetic pleasure. A man-made fountain must therefore consist of two basic components: the source of the liquid flow or trajectory; and the basin, pool, or other receiver that captures and contains the water. To quote Symmes: "the solid sculptural or architectural structure is designed to manipulate and shape the fluidity of water into delicate or grand jets and sprays, or to channel it into refined or thundering flows and falls."¹⁹⁸ Fountain designers carefully choreograph the cascades of water so that it smoothly hugs the surface beneath it in some places. This is referred to as *laminar flow*, while *turbulent flow* designates the frothy white splashes that are produced in places where the smooth

¹⁹⁵ Uchida, "Welding in Modern Metal Sculpture," 115.

¹⁹⁶ Victor E. Picou, Susan F. Kronzer, and Beth Alberti. "Resolution #3 - 1977: Recognition of Memorial Fountain, Seattle.

¹⁹⁷ *The Canadian Oxford Dictionary* provides the following etymology for 'fountain': "Middle English from Old French *fontaine* from Late Latin *fontana* fem. of Latin *fontanus* (adj.) from *fons fontis* a spring."

¹⁹⁸ Symmes, *Fountains: Splash and Spectacle*, 13.

flow is interrupted, causing water to move away from the surface structure and mix with the air.¹⁹⁹ Experimenting with flow – what Tsutakawa called "playing around" with water – was a crucial part of his process when designing a fountain. He would manipulate hoses in the yard, for instance, or hold a spoon beneath a kitchen tap and observe how water passed over different forms and through openings.²⁰⁰ The movement of water over curved metal shapes, the sounds of the water and the light it reflects – all of these were integral to Tsutakawa's concept of form. He recognized that when we approach a fountain the experience is not solely visual; it is also aural and frequently tactile. One does not have to place a hand under the falling water to feel its cooling touch on a hot afternoon.

Numerous techniques were available for manipulating sound. Listing examples, Tsutakawa cited the size and shape of a fountain's pool, the design of its walls, height and placement of jets, and the dimensions of waterfalls.²⁰¹ It was important that the sounds made by his fountains should vary to suit their locations. His *Rain Fountains*, for example, are composed of numerous slightly curved metal discs, stacked one above the other. Water drips through holes in these discs, creating a sound the artist likened to "a soft Seattle rain."²⁰² These are among the few fountain sculptures Tsutakawa made using stainless steel rather than bronze. *Rain Fountain No. 2* (1972) was originally designed for a small courtyard at the library of Burien, Washington. It was appropriately quiet, producing a low, dripping sound, then turning off briefly before starting again. Another quiet fountain was produced in 1965 for the head office of Charles Luckman Associates, a Los Angeles architecture firm. Created for a central interior court, it emitted a sound Tsutakawa described as "barely a trickle," just enough to make the entire space

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 196, n. 34.

²⁰⁰ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 101.

²⁰¹ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 29.

²⁰² Quoted in Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places: An Illustrated Guide*, 262.

"sparkle." Some Tsutakawa fountains were more dramatic, including one the artist said produced "a loud sizzling sound."²⁰³ As Symmes points out, moving water can produce an infinite range of forms and sounds; it is impossible for two jets of water or two waterfalls to be exactly alike.²⁰⁴

Writing on sensory perception in *Art as Experience* (1934), the American philosopher, psychologist, and educational reformer John Dewey argued that music is "at the opposite pole from the sculptural. As one expresses the enduring, the stable and universal, so the other expresses stir, agitation, movement, the particulars and contingencies of existences – which, nevertheless, are as ingrained in nature and as typical in experience as are its structural permanences."²⁰⁵ For this reason, Dewey also wrote that "the ear and eye complement one another. The eye gives the *scene* in which things *go on* and on which changes are projected – leaving it still a scene even amid tumult and turmoil. The ear, taking for granted the background furnished by cooperative action of vision and touch, brings home to us changes as changes."²⁰⁶ These statements are helpful in illuminating the role that sound plays in Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures, and it comes as no surprise to learn that Dewey spent a considerable amount of time in the Far East.

Sound is an important component in traditional Japanese garden design. Rocks surrounding small waterfalls are carefully placed to amplify the noise of the falling water. The clacking sound of the *shishi odoshi* has been mentioned, but in addition to frightening away deer,

²⁰³ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 23. At least one of Tsutakawa's sculptures, an abstract work in bronze made prior to February 1966, also explored his interest in sound effects. Called *The Spirit Box*, it was made for an outdoor setting, where the wind would cause the open pipes that pierce the box to whistle. A photograph of this work appears in Uchida, "Welding in Modern Metal Sculpture," 115.

²⁰⁴ Symmes, *Fountains: Splash and Spectacle*, 10.

²⁰⁵ John Dewey, "Art as Experience (1934)," in *The Collected Works of John Dewey, 1882-1953*, eds. Jo Ann Boydston and Larry A. Hickman (Charlottesville, VA: InteLex Corporation, 1996), 241.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 239.

it has a secondary function that supports Dewey's statement. Punctuating the quiet of the garden at regular intervals, its rhythmic knocking reminds the people there of the ongoing passage of time.²⁰⁷ A more musical Japanese garden device that employs water to produce sound is the *suikinkutsu*, which literally translates as "water *koto* cave." It consists of a ceramic jar with a hole in the bottom, buried in the earth upside down, traditionally next to a *tsukubai*. Water drips through the hole, landing in a small pool of water inside the ceramic chamber. This results in a pleasant splashing sound, which echoes against the walls of the jar and is thus amplified, while the source of the sound remains hidden from view. Since the soothing tones occur during and shortly after washing, the act of washing one's hands at a teahouse is sometimes described as "playing the *suikinkutsu*." All the components of the *suikinkutsu* are carefully 'tuned' with each other to ensure a ringing sound resembling a bell or a *koto*, a Japanese zither. In Japan, the visual and aural pleasures of water are even exploited in such prosaic functional architectural features as downspouts. Those added to large, traditionally designed houses consist of small metal cups, linked in a chain. As each cup overflows, the water passes to the next, creating a dynamic pattern and relaxing sounds.²⁰⁸ A Japanese rain chain of this kind can still be found at the Seattle home Tsutakawa shared with his wife and children.²⁰⁹ It hangs from a back porch beam near the garden, and the West Coast climate assures it is frequently played.

Because of the way Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures allude to the water cycle, Japanese art critic Sumio Kuwabara has said they manifest "the primeval joy and sanctity of life."²¹⁰

²⁰⁷ Bring and Wayembergh, *Japanese Gardens: Design and Meaning*, 202.

²⁰⁸ David E. Young, Michiko Young, and Hong Yew Tan, *Introduction to Japanese Architecture* (Hong Kong: Periplus Editions, 2004), 115.

²⁰⁹ Ayame Tsutakawa still lives in the house, and three of the couple's four children have homes close by.

²¹⁰ Sumio Kuwabara, "The Fountain Sculpture of George Tsutakawa," in Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 14.

Kuwabara sees references to vegetation in the fountains' abstract forms, and some of Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures are quite clearly based on plant-life. Examples include his flower-like fountains for Northgate Shopping Center (1962; fig. 7), the leafy base and tall, blossoming stalk of the *Naramore Fountain* (1967; fig. 58), the stylized tree-shape of *Song of the Forest* (1981), and the small but beautiful *Song of the Flower* (1987; fig. 3) It should be emphasized that, for the vast majority of his fountain sculptures, Tsutakawa's use of abstraction, combined with his sculptural manipulation of water, encourages multiple interpretations. For instance, although it is one of the fountains Tsutakawa based on the form of a chalice, the *East Cloister Garth Fountain* (1968) at Washington D.C.'s National Cathedral can also be thought of as a floral fountain. In 1969 the art critic for the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* described its upper section as "a bronze calyx enclosing a flower formed of sprays of water."²¹¹

In contrast to Kuwabara, Kingsbury writes that Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures most often "take the plant allusion toward geometry rather than toward botany."²¹² She points to Japanese family crests, called *mon*, which Tsutakawa acknowledged as a formative influence on his sense of design.²¹³ Describing the blend of Japanese and American design elements and art objects at Tsutakawa's Seattle home, Reed wrote in 1976 that the family's *mon* hung in the entry hall, next to the helmet and breast plate of a samurai knight.²¹⁴ Often based on leaves, trees, or flowers, Japanese family crests blend organic and geometric elements in hundreds of variations (fig. 15).²¹⁵ Tsutakawa told Reed that his family's was based on the hanging wisteria. In his Oral History interview of 1983, Tsutakawa discussed his fountain sculptures at length, and he said of

²¹¹ Hayman, "Molding Metal and Water," 12.

²¹² Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 95.

²¹³ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 34.

²¹⁴ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: An Introduction," 2.

²¹⁵ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 92.

his fountains at one point: "In most cases they're related, at least in my mind, to natural forms. And I'm always fascinated by growing things. Plant forms and flowers and leaves and trees."²¹⁶ While the views of Kingsbury and Kuwabara differ somewhat on the subject of Tsutakawa's botanical references, both authors recognize the strong spiritual dimension in his fountains, which is closely tied to his preference for organic forms. To quote Kuwabara: "The mechanism of the fountain sculpture propels water through a circuit invisible to our eyes, causing it to unfold as a brilliant metaphor of flowers and trees. Needless to say, the sacredness of the flowers and trees, which also possess symbols of regeneration, is heightened by the sanctity of the water."²¹⁷

Symbolism

This chapter began with symbolism, an integral aspect of Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures; I will now introduce a number of examples that demonstrate his reliance on symbolic traditions from Euro-American and Asian sources, drawn from various points in his career. Some of the fountains mentioned here will be examined in more detail in later chapters. A chronological list of Tsutakawa's fountains, with their locations, materials, and dimensions, is included as an appendix.

The symbolism of fountains has long-standing connections to religion, and the fact that the vast majority of Tsutakawa's commissions were thoroughly secular does not obscure the presence of broad spiritual meanings. As the artist himself pointed out at least once, cultures worldwide associate water with spiritual blessing and cleansing; for him an example that resonated powerfully was a practice in Japan, where "Buddhist monks come and cleanse themselves before they go into the temples. They duck under water flowing out of a high rock

²¹⁶ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

²¹⁷ Kuwabara, "The Fountain Sculpture of George Tsutakawa", 14.

through pipes of bamboo."²¹⁸ According to Jellicoe, in Persian paradise gardens moving water symbolizes "heaven brought to earth as an active force,"²¹⁹ and in the Judeo-Christian tradition the image of the fountain as the source of life is one that resonates throughout the Old and New Testaments. It is a theme with cosmological significance, having ancient ties to baptism and ideas of Paradise, as evidenced by the depiction of the Heavenly Jerusalem beneath the Fountain of Life in ancient mosaics and medieval Gospel illuminations.²²⁰ The Fountain of Life is a symbol of salvation and grace, described in Revelations 22:1 as the "pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb." Perhaps its most familiar depiction in art is the central fountain in the Ghent Altarpiece, painted in 1432 by Jan van Eyck. Symmes states that, in Neo-Platonic thought, "the belief that the fountain as an overflowing source is a symbol of the One or God, ... [is] consonant with the belief that the fountain, the origin of all knowledge, is God."²²¹

Writing in *Fountains: Splash and Spectacle* on "Fountains as Metaphor," Naomi Miller points out that in earlier centuries figurative sculpture was a prominent feature in Western fountain design, and that its symbolism was primarily drawn from sources such as classical mythology, the Bible, and local history. This gradually changed as classical and Biblical allusions became less widely understood over the course of the twentieth century. Miller argues that in the fountains of more recent times, "the metaphor has become nature – the seas, mountain streams, rivers, cascades and falls, and the underlying motion inherent in the flow of water."²²² Today there is a growing tendency for North Americans to think of themselves as spiritual, but

²¹⁸ Quoted in Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 114.

²¹⁹ Jellicoe and Jellicoe, *Water: The use of Water in Landscape Architecture*, 31.

²²⁰ Symmes, *Fountains: Splash and Spectacle*, 57.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, 59.

²²² Naomi Miller, "Fountains as Metaphor," in Symmes, *Fountains: Splash and Spectacle*, 73.

not necessarily religious, and to seek spiritual sustenance in the natural world.²²³ Certainly, in many cases the sculptural decoration on fountains of earlier centuries has alluded to the power of nature through myth, depicting such classical figures as Neptune, Triton, Venus, playful nymphs and river gods. However, according to Miller, the stress now lies not with these personifications of natural forces, but with the dynamic properties of the water itself, in accordance with the words of Heraclitus: "All is flux, nothing stays still."²²⁴

Miller's subject is Euro-American fountain design, but part of what makes Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures unique is the way they combine Western traditions and concerns with East Asian attitudes toward nature and its cycles. What Miller ascribes to Heraclitus can be traced just as accurately to the fundamental Eastern concept of the Tao, which originated in China, but was transmitted to Japan as one of the major roots in the intellectual genealogy of Ch'an Buddhism, and further evolved there as Zen Buddhism.²²⁵ Compared to some other Eastern traditions, the impact of Zen on literature, fine art, and popular culture in postwar Europe and America is well-known, especially for its influence on 1950s Beat culture. Zen's importance to Western modernists goes back further than this; the subject is discussed in later chapters. In Tsutakawa's case the reception of Zen in the West is a factor that became interwoven with his Japanese ancestry and exposure to Shinto and Taoism, his bi-cultural upbringing, and his career as a Pacific Northwest artist specializing in fountain commissions.

²²³ See David Landis Barnhill, "The Spiritual Dimension of Nature Writing," in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Ecology*, ed. Roger S. Gottlieb.

²²⁴ Quoted in Miller, "Fountains as Metaphor," 73.

²²⁵ Simon P. James, *Zen Buddhism and Environmental Ethics* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2004), 15.

"Movement, flux, [and] the vitality of nature itself are manifestations of the Tao."²²⁶ Often translated as 'the way,' the Tao is the all-encompassing essence of being, the "existence and actions of all things in the universe, known and unknown.... All natural actions and occurrences that flow unencumbered, unfolding as they will through time, are models of the Tao."²²⁷ These ideas are reflected in Tsutakawa's many statements concerning the importance of the global water cycle as an overall theme in his fountains. He also relied on Eastern modes of thought when explaining the underlying elemental structure of his fountains:

A fountain involves three elements: heaven, earth and water. Heaven is where everything is – space; earth is where the material comes from – bronze or stone; but what really makes a fountain is water, the most elusive and mysterious element of all. It can transform itself from mist to gushing liquid and also solidly as ice or snow, then again evaporate into nothing. Water implies change and movement in a continuous rhythm. If I can capture this and incorporate it into a design, that is my aim.²²⁸

Tsutakawa's very first fountain, the *Fountain of Wisdom* at the Seattle Public Library, takes up the ancient association of the fountain or fountainhead with wisdom, knowledge, and ideas. Discussing this particular fountain with Gervais Reed, Tsutakawa stated its primary theme concisely: "without knowledge we can't live; without water we can't live."²²⁹ Clearly, the concept of a Fountain of Wisdom is one well-suited to a library or a school. It is a theme that originates with the classical Muses and their ties to the mysteries of grottoes and, through grottoes, fountains or springs. As Miller points out in an essay on French garden grottoes, while it is customary to invoke the Muses for artistic inspiration, they also possess "the knowledge which conquers the fear of death and the underworld." They are all-knowing; Virgil, for one, begs the

²²⁶ Wechsler, "From Asian Traditions to Modern Expressions: Abstract Art by Asian Americans, 1945-1970," 106.

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Quoted in Lowndes, "The Fountain of Tsutakawa."

²²⁹ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 27.

Muses to bestow their knowledge of the cosmic laws, not the gift of poetry. The grotto is itself a source of wisdom, where one may search for obscure, forgotten knowledge – wisdom to which the Muses hold the key. Miller writes: "Knowledge may be transmitted through the magic content within the rock, through mysteries, through transforming elements — water, light, and sound."²³⁰ Following the *Fountain of Wisdom*, a number of other fountain sculptures crafted by Tsutakawa were commissioned for libraries and post-secondary institutions. In 1972 the Burien branch of the Seattle Public Library acquired a Tsutakawa fountain of its own, *Rain Fountain No. 2*, mentioned above. Fountains at post-secondary institutions include the *Obos 69 Fountain* (1969), part of the Franklin D. Murphy Sculpture Garden at the University of California, Los Angeles; the untitled fountain sculpture at Seattle Central Community College (1973); and Pennsylvania State University's *Fine Arts Court Fountain* (1973). Tsutakawa's last fountain, designed in 1992, was for Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington.

The concept of a Fountain of Wisdom or Knowledge is also found in the Judeo-Christian tradition, in which "knowledge of God is a fountain of life."²³¹ In Jewish mysticism the *mem*, the letter of 'water' (mayim), symbolizes the fountain of the Divine Wisdom of the Torah (inner.org). Proverbs 13:14 advises: "The law of the wise *is* a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death" (original italics).²³² In light of the wealth of symbolism relating fountains to knowledge and to Christianity, it is fitting that Tsutakawa was commissioned to design a fountain sculpture to celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of Seattle University, founded by the Jesuits in 1891. The *Centennial Fountain* (fig. 16) was installed in 1989 and its flame-like silhouette adopted as

²³⁰ Naomi Miller, "Domain of Illusion: The Grotto in France," in *Fons Sapientiae: Renaissance Garden Fountains*, ed. Elisabeth B. MacDougal (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1978), 204.

²³¹ Symmes, *Fountains: Splash and Spectacle*, 57.

²³² *King James Bible, Proverbs 13*, <http://ebible.org/kjv/PRO13.htm>.

the university's emblem. The changing face of the student body is shown on the front cover of a book by Walt Crowley, published to commemorate the centenary. It bears a photograph of five students, an ethnically diverse group of men and women, posing with a priest in front of the Tsutakawa fountain. Behind this image is a larger photograph depicting the faculty and class of 1914; it is a group of about thirty, all white and all male.²³³

Christian symbolism also plays a key role in the *East Cloister Garth Fountain* (1968) at the Washington, D.C. National Cathedral (fig. 17). One of several fountains Tsutakawa based on the form of a chalice, it unites modernist sculpture with neo-Gothic architecture quite memorably through its placement. The chalice has ties to the Christian Eucharist, and through its association with the Holy Grail is also an ancient symbol of the search for truth and redemption. For Morris Graves the chalice was a personal symbol of spiritual birth that could also be a symbol of consciousness, a state of mind that became a consistent theme in his paintings.²³⁴ It is motif that appears in works by a number of well known Northwest painters working in the same period as Tsutakawa, including Graves and Leo Kenney. The lotus flower is another motif rife with symbolism, this time of Asian origin, used in almost all Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures and also found in works by Graves and other Pacific Northwest artists. Both chalice and lotus blossom appear in Kenney's *Offering of Seed II*, painted in 1953.²³⁵ Symbolic elements may also blend with more direct representations; in 1988, for example, former classmates of Tsutakawa's in the Japanese town where he attended school sponsored the acquisition of his *Lotus Fountain* for the grounds of the newly opened Fukuyama Art Museum (fig. 18). Completed that year, the museum

²³³ See Walt Crowley, *Seattle University: A Century of Jesuit Education* (Seattle: Seattle University, 1991).

²³⁴ Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, xvi, 131.

²³⁵ For a reproduction, see *ibid*, 2. This painting is in a private collection. Due to copyright restrictions, the image cannot be included here.

stands on the grounds of a seventeenth-century castle, on a site that used to be part of the castle moat. When Tsutakawa used to play there as a child, the moat was often filled with lotus blossoms. According to Ament, he "designed the fountain to recall those remembered flowers."²³⁶

Among the fountain sculptures' recurrent symbolic themes is the age-old notion of healing waters, a concept which can be religious in some contexts, but is also related to therapeutic hot springs and similar geological phenomena. An idea familiar across many cultures, the theme of healing waters makes fountains a suitable addition to hospitals, clinics, and medical schools. Tsutakawa designed a number of fountain sculptures for such facilities. The first was an untitled fountain he made in 1967 for the School of Public Health at the University of California, Los Angeles, a site that provokes associations with the fountain of knowledge as well as health and healing. The following year a small fountain sculpture was commissioned for the Minor Clinic in Everett, Washington, and in 1970 Tsutakawa designed a larger fountain for Seattle's Group Health Hospital. In Bellingham, Washington, an eight-foot-tall fountain sculpture was added to the Northwest Medical Center in 1976. It is also tempting to speculate that such health-oriented symbolism, or perhaps even the legendary Fountain of Youth, might have occurred to the board of directors of at least one of the homes for the aged that commissioned works from Tsutakawa in 1987. That year he designed a small fountain sculpture, *Song of the Flower*, for the Keiro Nursing Home in Seattle (fig. 3), and the much larger *Marianwood Fountain* for the grounds of the Marianwood Nursing Home and adjacent Bellewood retirement community in Issaquah, Washington. Marianwood and Bellewood are run by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace Health and Hospital Services, and, as Sister Joan McInnis noted at the

²³⁶ Ibid., 148

dedication, the fountain symbolizes "the renewal of life through a continuous process."²³⁷ While present in all Tsutakawa's fountains, such symbolism is particularly appropriate in the context of healthcare services for the elderly.

The cycle of life is an appropriate theme with which to conclude a chapter on the history of fountains, as well as this brief survey of some prominent symbolic motifs in Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures. Later chapters of my dissertation will also include some discussion of Tsutakawa's reworking of traditional symbolism; examples thus far have primarily been Western in origin, those analyzed below are often Asian. Before that, however, Chapters Two and Three will summarize and contextualize important events, experiences and relationships in Tsutakawa's life and career up to 1958, when he received his first fountain commission. The focus will be on aspects of the artist's biography that serve to illuminate his artistic philosophy and the basis for his bi-cultural approach, his emerging interest in public art, and his modernist re-visioning of traditional sculptural fountains in bronze.

²³⁷ Quoted in "George Tsutakawa," n.d., Marianwood Extended Healthcare Services Brochure. University of Washington Art Library, Vertical Files, George Tsutakawa.

Chapter Two:
Becoming a "World Citizen" and Artist

Tsutakawa's early biography and the complexities of his identity as an American-born artist of Japanese descent, living and working in Seattle during the post-war period, are crucial to his later career as a multi-faceted artist specializing in fountain design. I will therefore sketch in the early development of twentieth-century art in Seattle, along with important aspects of Tsutakawa's family history and events of his formative years. Much of the information in this chapter is drawn from the Oral History interview Martha Kingsbury conducted with Tsutakawa in September 1983.

Tsutakawa was born in Seattle in 1910, and his Japanese-born parents named him George because he shared his birthday (February 22) with George Washington. He was the fourth of Shozo and Hisa Tsutakawa's nine children, and the second eldest son (fig. 19). Even though George's eldest sister, Tomoko, was the only child born in Japan, the legal names given to his siblings were all Japanese.¹ George's father was an innovative businessman whose successful import-export business moved goods between Seattle and the Japanese ports of Kobe, Osaka, and Tokyo. The company imported Japanese food, clothing, and art supplies to America, then took lumber and scrap metal to Japan on their return trips. Shozo Tsutakawa had moved to Seattle in 1905 and, soon after, had purchased the family home, a large house in a fashionable part of the city's Capitol Hill district. The transaction was made through his lawyer because at that time first-generation Japanese were not permitted to own property in the United States.²

When George was seven years old, he and one of his brothers were sent to live with their

¹ George was called Joji in Japan, but that was not his legal name. Mayumi Tsutakawa, email message to the author, September 12, 2010.

² Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 150, n. 2.

maternal grandmother in the small castle town of Fukuyama, on the coast of Western Japan's Inland Sea, so they could receive a Japanese education. His older siblings were already in Fukuyama, and the younger children followed as they reached school age. As an old feudal city, Fukuyama was highly cultured, whereas George's father came from a farming community in the mountains, a place he regarded as too backward for his children's schooling. Furthermore, George's maternal grandmother came from an old Samurai family, and was herself well educated and very strict. As George later explained, it was common practice at the time for Japanese immigrants in the U.S. to have their children educated in Japan if they could afford to. His parents, like others, were not allowed to own land and did not expect ever to be granted American citizenship. They therefore planned to earn money in the U.S. and eventually return to Japan. Tsutakawa's parents thus thought it essential to educate their children in the language and culture of Japan. Besides, George recalled, they were much too busy working to look after children.³ Eventually George's father and his second wife also came to live with them in Fukuyama, the children's mother having died in the 1918 flu epidemic. In 1924 Shozo Tsutakawa was forced to relinquish his house in Seattle on account of the Alien Land Act. He deeded the house to a Caucasian friend, and despite such restrictions on his ownership of property, his Seattle-based business continued to thrive.⁴

Although he spoke no Japanese when he first arrived in Fukuyama and found the language very difficult to learn, George adapted within a year or two. He learned how to fit in with the local children and became accustomed to the rigours of the Japanese school system, which was far more strict and regimented than the one he had experienced during two years of school in the U.S. The Japanese schools he attended from 1917 to 1927 were modelled on those

³ Ibid., 135; Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains, 6.

⁴ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 20.

of Germany and England, and children attended six days a week. Science, literature, and history were compulsory subjects, and students learned a great deal that was European in origin and focus. The Japanese had adopted European-style schooling as part of a concerted attempt to master European cultural systems after Japan was opened up to international trade in the mid-nineteenth century, after centuries of self-imposed isolation. Foreign-imposed trade relations followed, and the Japanese decided that learning about European history and thought was useful as a strategy to help them retain their own autonomy. By the time Tsutakawa arrived in Japan, over half a century of effort was beginning to pay off, particularly in the areas of technology and trade. The introduction of European culture into the educational system had also led to the emergence of variously mixed forms of literature and art.⁵ Even after he returned to live permanently in Japan, Tsutakawa's father maintained close ties to the United States, where he frequently travelled on business. He encouraged his children to appreciate European cultural forms, and Kingsbury notes that one of George's sisters owned the first piano in Fukuyama.⁶ Still, constant close contact with relatives of his grandparents' generation, who remained devoted to venerable Japanese traditions, meant that these were also a significant influence during the artist's early years.

Some elder members of the family were quite exceptional in the degree to which they cultivated various Japanese arts. George's maternal grandmother, whose home he and his siblings shared in Japan, was well-educated in Japanese poetry, calligraphy, music, and both Noh and Kabuki theatre. A patron of various local cultural groups, she regularly took George and his brother to traditional dramatic productions and exhibitions of flower-arranging. The children were also sent each week by their grandmother to study with a local Zen master, a potter,

⁵ Ibid., 19.

⁶ Ibid., 20.

calligrapher, painter, and tea master. He would tell them stories designed to teach them about religion and philosophy, and he taught them pottery-making, and about the traditional tea ceremony. On his father's side, according to family lore, George's grandfather was so devoted to the arts he had nearly driven their wealthy and long-established landlord family to bankruptcy. It was said this grandfather had owned all the land surrounding his house, as far as the eye could see in every direction. In his younger days, however, he reputedly abandoned his responsibilities of managing the family properties in Ibara, a village in Okayama Prefecture. He went instead to spend a number of years in Kyoto, Japan's ancient cultural capital, where he immersed himself in the traditional Zen arts. There he studied literature and calligraphy and established himself as a master of both the tea ceremony and flower arranging. When he returned to the family village, he brought other masters with him and established a fabulously artistic household that, according to George Tsutakawa, cost so much to run that "one day the fields were sold, the forests lost, the mountains too...."⁷

Ignoring the determined westernization that was dominating Japan at that time – the period of the Meiji restoration (1868-1912) – his paternal grandfather devoted himself to the practice of the traditional arts, and was still doing so during George's childhood years in Japan, though by then he was living out his retirement in a village near Ibara. Luckily he was able to do so in comfort, for George's father was a shrewd businessman who had managed to buy back much of the property his own father had lost. Still, the elderly patriarch had little time for his grandchildren, except for George, who visited him and his wife several times each year. Although he never taught the boy calligraphy or flower arranging, he insisted George watch him while he worked and always shared the tea ceremony with him. Decades later Tsutakawa would

⁷ Quoted in Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 20.

state that the importance of symbolic meaning in his work as a fountain designer could be linked to "the tea ceremony and the liquid offering."⁸

Although he did not realize until much later how much of an impact both sets of grandparents had on him, Tsutakawa did decide at an early age that he wanted to be an artist. However, for a young man in 1925, that meant following in the footsteps of Europeans. Kingsbury writes that his vision of what art should be lay outside Japan, "in the bohemian subculture of Paris, in the romantic individualism of European literature, in the transforming liberty of French modernism."⁹ Tsutakawa's ambitions were sparked, in part, by a small group of local painters who had studied in Tokyo. They brought reproductions of works by Picasso and Matisse back to the small southern town of Fukuyama, where they introduced interested young people like Tsutakawa to the early-twentieth-century Parisian avant-garde. Tsutakawa first became interested in drawing through his fascination with the work of these artists and the European works he saw reproduced in Japanese art magazines that reported on the Paris art scene. His early exposure to art practice was almost entirely Western; he has stated that even in Japan he had almost no training in traditional Japanese painting or *sumi-e* (ink painting). The latter would find an important place in Tsutakawa's artistic practice starting in the 1950s, when he began then to turn away from European modes of expression in order to better explore his Asian heritage. In the 1920s, however, it seemed that only European art mattered. Japanese artists and members of the intelligentsia with whom Tsutakawa was acquainted at that time were, in his words, "just all-out for European culture. And every day they were talking about Schopenhauer and Tolstoy and Shakespeare and paintings by the European painters – Rubens

⁸ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.; Reed, George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 25.

⁹ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 22.

and Corot, Cezanne, Van Gogh just dead serious. And they didn't pay any attention to Japanese art."¹⁰ In Tsutakawa's view, many Japanese artists of the early twentieth century saw themselves as being in competition with Western art, and this required learning its history and techniques. However, he has also noted a very strong revival of interest in traditional arts in Japan beginning in the 1950s or '60s.

In interviews with art historians conducted in the mid-1970s and early 1980s, Tsutakawa expressed frustration with the tendency of Americans to assume Japan had been isolated and unaware of Western literature and music, popular culture and modern art until 1945, when the American occupation supposedly ushered the country into the twentieth century.¹¹ In reality, European philosophy, literature and classical music had been widely studied. As a youth, Tsutakawa played baseball and attended Hollywood movies with his friends, as well as Japanese Westerns, sword-fighting movies and melodramas. Even in the 1920s, Fukuyama had three movie theatres, two showing Hollywood features, subtitled in Japanese, with such stars as Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton and Harold Lloyd. Furthermore, Tsutakawa has noted that when he began his artistic career in Seattle, most locals still considered modern art very radical. Artists working in modern styles were frequently awarded prizes in the Northwest Annual exhibitions, which predated the opening of the Seattle Art Gallery in 1933, but their work was not entirely accepted.¹² By that time, modernist innovations like expressionism were nothing new to Tsutakawa and some of Seattle's older Japanese artists, who had already been exposed to European modernism in Japan. Their cosmopolitan outlook contrasted sharply with the attitudes being promoted at that time by Seattle's downtown newspapers. According to Tsutakawa, local

¹⁰ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

¹¹ *Ibid.*; Reed, *George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains*, " 10.

¹² Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

critics and journalists enjoyed making fun of modern art, and occasionally tried to ignite a controversy.¹³

In his own description, the decade he spent in Fukuyama left Tsutakawa "thoroughly Japanized," but although he attended Hiroshima Prefecture High School, a venerable institution with a distinguished reputation, he did not excel academically. "I was a very bad student," he explained to Gervais Reed, "I didn't study; I became a kind of nuisance and shame to my family. All my brothers and sisters were very smart, always making A's, and I was flunking all the time. My father really got disgusted with me."¹⁴ At age seventeen Tsutakawa left high school without graduating and worked briefly with carpenters who were building a house for his father in the Kobe area. Rejecting his son's declaration that he intended to become an artist, his father put him on a steamship as soon as the new house was finished, sending him back to Seattle alone to help with the American end of the family business. George had forgotten the English he knew as a child, so in 1927 he found himself for a second time in a foreign country where he did not speak the language. He had family waiting for him in Seattle, but the effect of these sudden, repeated moves across the Pacific was still profound. The first time, at age seven, he had said goodbye to his mother, with whom he was never reunited. At seventeen he was, in effect, exiled from Japan by his father and, though they resumed contact twenty years later, they never saw each other again. Tsutakawa would later come to cherish a letter he received after writing to tell his father he had been hired to teach art part-time at the University of Washington. The elder Tsutakawa told his son to go ahead and follow his own path, at last accepting George's decision to make art his life's work.¹⁵

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 8.

¹⁵ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 50.

Seattle is a young city, but one that by the early years of the twentieth century had already started to develop beyond its beginnings as a pioneer town and emerge as a regional centre. By that time the Pacific Northwest had arrived at a sense of identity, one due in large part to the Klondike gold rush, and in 1909 Seattle celebrated and promoted itself by hosting its first World's Fair, the Alaska-Yukon Pacific Exposition. The fair, in which Japan also participated, was envisioned as a demonstration of cooperation among people from around the world. It was designed to display the value of commercial trade with the Pacific Rim; a further goal was to encourage Americans who visited to relocate to the area. A number of public sculptures were produced as urban improvements in time for the 1909 Exposition, including an ornamental watering fountain for animals in Pioneer Square. Crowned by a bronze bust of the city's namesake, Chief Seattle, the fountain became the first public sculpture of the Duwamish leader.¹⁶ Seattle grew quickly, more than quadrupling its 1900 population of just over 80,000 to exceed 365,000 by 1930.¹⁷ Still, apart from war memorials, the city would commission no further works of public art until 1958, when Tsutakawa was invited to create a fountain for the new Seattle Public Library.

This is not to suggest that culture and the arts were stagnant; throughout the first half of the century Seattle residents committed to their development were hard at work. The prominence of Asian artists and their varied artistic traditions within Seattle's cultural mix was evident early on, a balance befitting the city's West Coast location and relatively large Asian population, at this point composed almost entirely of immigrants from China, Japan, and the Philippines. Seattle was also important as a transit point for artists and other travellers from Asia and elsewhere,

¹⁶ Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 12, 21.

¹⁷ King County as a whole experienced similar growth. Its population passed 110,000 in 1900 and by 1930 was over 460, 000. Walt Crowley, Seattle – Thumbnail History, HistoryLink.org, Essay 7934, http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=7934.

whether headed for the Eastern United States or to Europe via the Panama Canal. At the turn of the century settlers arriving in the Pacific Northwest from points further east within North America encountered existing communities of East Asian immigrants, drawn somewhat earlier by trade opportunities and the construction of railroads. But as Kingsbury points out in a catalogue essay on "pioneer Asian American artists" in Seattle, during the early twentieth century restrictions increased on Asian immigration, citizenship, and property ownership. If the area's Caucasian population chose to treat existing Asian communities and traditions with honour and esteem, it was largely because they assumed their time was past. It was therefore appropriate to grant them a nostalgic form of recognition similar to that bestowed on local Native American traditions. It was clear to those of the dominant culture that the future lay with Euro-American artistic practices, museums, and the like.¹⁸

The Seattle Fine Arts Society, established in 1906, supported a continuing program of art shows, lectures, and instruction. The Society's first public exhibition, in 1908, was a display of more than four hundred Japanese prints, borrowed from sixty-three Seattle residents. Also, from 1914 to 1920, the Fine Arts Society hosted annual solo exhibitions by Yasushi Tanaka, a Japanese American painter in oils, and beginning in 1916 held annual exhibitions of work by regional artists.¹⁹ Referred to by locals as the Northwest Annuals, these group shows were crucial to artists who had, as yet, few opportunities to exhibit. The Seattle Camera Club was formed around 1925 by a group of Japanese American photographers. It published a bilingual

¹⁸ Martha Kingsbury, "Art in Seattle, 1900-1960," in *They Painted from their Hearts: Pioneer Asian American Artists*, ed. Mayumi Tsutakawa (Seattle: Wing Luke Asian Museum, 1994), 13.

¹⁹ Kazuko Nakane, "Personalizing the Abstract: Asian American Artists in Seattle." In *Asian Traditions/Modern Expressions: Asian American Artists and Abstraction, 1945-1970*, ed. Jeffrey Wechsler (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1997), 186.

journal called *Notan*, Japanese for "light-and-dark."²⁰ Starting in 1929 the Northwest Printmakers, a large and very active group, also held annual exhibitions of works by local and international artists.

Renamed the Art Institute of Seattle in 1931, the Fine Arts Society gained a permanent home in 1933 with the opening of the Seattle Art Museum (SAM) in a new Art Deco building in Volunteer Park. The building and the collection it housed were donated by a Society member, Richard E. Fuller, and his mother, Margaret McTavish Fuller. The Seattle Art Museum joined, and somewhat overshadowed, the Henry Art Gallery at the University of Washington. Opened in 1926 to showcase Horace C. Henry's donated collection of nineteenth-century landscapes and other European and American paintings, the Henry Art Gallery also provided a program of temporary exhibitions. The Seattle Art Museum set an unusually inclusive example owing to the focus of its permanent collection: most of the objects had been acquired early in the 1930s, while Fuller and his mother lived briefly in Japan. Asian art was then relatively inexpensive, and Fuller had not held back on his purchases.²¹ As a result, unlike visitors to major art museums in those American cities able to boast of collections of paintings by European masters, art enthusiasts in Seattle were exposed to magnificent examples of traditional Asian ceramics, sculpture, textiles, jades, and furniture, as well as a limited number of paintings. The museum gradually acquired works by American and European artists, and more Asian paintings and prints were also added. Today the SAM website notes that its first "blockbuster" show was an exhibition in 1940 that featured Japanese works from the collection of Seattle banker and businessman Manson F.

²⁰ See David F. Martin and Nicollette Bromberg, *Shadows of a Fleeting World: Pictorial Photography and the Seattle Camera Club* (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 2011).

²¹ Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 6.

Backus and attracted 73,000 visitors, an amazing number for the time and clearly indicating a high level of local interest in Asian art.²²

Throughout the 1930s an informal association of Seattle painters also existed, which came to be known as the Group of Twelve. Some members were locally born and others were immigrants. A quarter of the group was Japanese, a trio that included Kenjiro Nomura and Kamekichi Tokita, old friends of Tsutakawa's whom he had first met as a teenager in the late 1920s after he returned to Seattle from Japan. A generation older than Tsutakawa, Nomura and Tokita earned a living by painting signs for Japanese and Chinese businesses in Seattle. They owned and operated the Noto Sign Shop until the beginning of World War II, when the business was confiscated and the two painters sent to internment camps. In 1933 the Museum of Modern Art in New York (MOMA) presented *Paintings and Sculpture from Sixteen American Cities*.²³ Seattle was one of the cities featured, and paintings by Nomura were included along with works by Kenneth Callahan, three other local painters, and one sculptor.²⁴ In 1937, the same year Tsutakawa left the University of Washington with an undergraduate degree in sculpture, a local private press released a modest publication, *Some Work by the Group of Twelve*, that contained brief statements by the artists and reproductions of their paintings. In their statements, Tokita and Nomura each referred to the challenges of reconciling their Japanese heritage with Western art. However, as Kingsbury points out in *Art of the Pacific Northwest* (1974), both painters worked in a style best characterized as social realism. As such, their approach to exploring formal

²² Seattle Art Museum, "History." <http://www.seattleartmuseum.org/aboutus/History/History.asp>.

²³ New York's MOMA was founded in the spring of 1929, and Alfred H. Barr was appointed its first director. The museum's first exhibition, "Cézanne, Gauguin, Seurat, Van Gogh," opened later the same year.

²⁴ The other painters were Peter Camfferman, Walter Isaacs, and Ambrose Patterson; the sculptor was Halford Lembke. Each had a single work reproduced in the exhibition catalogue. Martha Kingsbury, "Seattle and the Puget Sound," in *Art of the Pacific Northwest: From the 1930s to the Present* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1974), 48.

similarities and differences in historical artworks from the West and the East was very different from "the fascination with intuitive and spontaneous inner vision and Zen philosophy that was later said to characterize all of the Northwest's relations to the Orient in matters of art."²⁵

In Seattle, Tsutakawa used his recently acquired carpentry skills to build himself a shack behind his place of employment, the Tsutakawa Company store, where he sold Japanese foods to local restaurants. Soon he also came into contact with members of Seattle's nascent community of Asian artists, a loosely affiliated group that offered one another encouragement and support. It was important to him to establish links to the broader Japanese community, but he was particularly anxious to meet established Asian artists like Nomura and Tokita who were painting in predominantly Western styles.²⁶ To learn English, Tsutakawa first attended special English classes for Asians born into American citizenship, held at a local elementary school.²⁷ After a few months he was sent on to Broadway High School, where he was five years older than his classmates but managed to finish his high school diploma. A number of other Asian students were also attending Broadway to learn English while Tsutakawa was there; this included at least three who later achieved recognition as artists. Fay Chong and Andrew Chinn were of Chinese descent, while the third, Tsutakawa's good friend Shiro Miyazaki, was Japanese. Tsutakawa also first met Morris Graves at the high school; he was one of a small group of artists who would sometimes drop by at lunch hour. Although the language barrier caused Tsutakawa inevitable difficulties, the determination of his high school teachers to see him accepted to the Art

²⁵ Kingsbury, "Seattle and the Puget Sound," 52-53. An exhibition of paintings by Tokita and Nomura was recently held at the Seattle Asian Art Museum (SAAM). "Painting Seattle: Kamekichi Tokita and Kenjiro Nomura" ran from October 22, 2011-February 19, 2012.

²⁶ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 29.

²⁷ American-born Japanese were citizens by birth, but immigrants born in Japan were not eligible for citizenship until 1952, when the Immigration and Nationality Act (also known as the McCarran-Walter Act) was passed.

Department at the University of Washington served as a strong incentive. Eventually, he found he was able to relearn English relatively easily by studying French. He tackled that language with enthusiasm, since his true goal at the time was to live as an artist in Paris.²⁸

Encouraged by one of his high school art teachers, who had introduced him to block-printing in linoleum and wood, Tsutakawa submitted some works to the Northwest Printmakers. This group not only exhibited their own members' work, but also organized significant shows of borrowed artworks from other parts of the U.S., which were usually held at the University of Washington's Henry Art Gallery. Although he was still an amateur artist, Tsutakawa was accepted into the group, and beginning in 1930 he showed with them regularly until the end of his career. Vernacular subjects of the sort favoured by the Social Realists in the interwar years dominate his earliest prints. Many of these were inspired by his experiences working during the summer months in fish canneries in Alaska, a common seasonal job for Asian Americans.²⁹ Some summers the work was sparse, giving him time to visit coastal Native villages, especially on his journeys to and from the canneries via the Inland Passage. Tsutakawa met some of the Native carvers, who made objects for sale to tourists as well as for their own use. He was particularly impressed by the carved reliefs on the ceremonial longhouses, an admiration for First

²⁸ Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 137.

²⁹ Architect Minoru Yamasaki, mentioned in Chapter One, also worked summers in Alaska canneries. While he has spoken of an atmosphere of exploitation, mistreatment and racism, it seems Tsutakawa only wished to share positive memories in interviews. For example, he recalled that a summer working in the canneries paid enough to cover a year's tuition at UW, plus streetcar fare. On Yamasaki's experience see Yamasaki, *A Life in Architecture*, 17; and Bert Winther-Tamaki, "Minoru Yamasaki: Contradictions of Scale in the Career of the Nisei Architect of the World's Largest Building," *Amerasia Journal* 126, 3 (2001):165. On Tsutakawa's experience see Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 13-14; and Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

Nations motifs he would eventually manifest in his *Fountain of the Pioneers* (1969) at the Bentall Centre in Vancouver, BC., which I discuss in Chapter Five.

For the next decade, Tsutakawa devoted his attention increasingly to printmaking and sculpture. In 1932, at age twenty-two, he became an art student at the University of Washington. Founded in 1918 by Ambrose Patterson as the School of Painting and Design, the School of Art had increased its teaching staff and broadened its scope considerably in 1930. At that time it was headed by Walter Isaacs, who succeeded Patterson as Director in 1922.³⁰ Tsutakawa has described the art training he received at the University of Washington during the 1930s as "a very organized curriculum; kind of Bauhaus, Beaux Arts and Parisian atelier."³¹ At first his courses were traditionally academic, with one or two years of charcoal drawing from plaster casts followed by instruction in composition. Not until their second or third year were students who wished to study sculpture allowed to begin modelling in clay from the nude, and sometimes casting the results in plaster. Making the dramatic shift from a late Beaux-Arts training to a practice based on modernist ideas was a challenge Tsutakawa shared with others of his generation.³²

Tsutakawa remembered his early art courses at UW as conventional and somewhat dull, but he worked hard at them. He was rewarded not only by acquiring technical skill, but also by

³⁰ Isaacs served as Director until he retired at the end of the 1954 school year. He was replaced by Boyer Gonzales, who left the position in 1966 or 1967. Gonzales was followed by Spencer Mosely. Information provided by James Rosenzweig, Student Reference Specialist, University of Washington Libraries, email message to the author, Sept. 30, 2010.

³¹ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 14.

³² A more famous figure, a few years older, who faced the same dilemmas was architect Louis Kahn, of whom Neil Levine writes: "Kahn, like the modern architects of the two generations before him, had to deny a significant part of his training and almost all of what he saw being produced in order to make himself modern. His was the last generation to have to do that." Neil Levine, *Modern Architecture: Representation & Reality* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 280.

gaining access to more innovative instruction as a senior student. At first drawn to ceramics, he soon turned to studying sculpture, primarily under the guidance of Dudley Pratt. Tsutakawa explored carving in stone, fired terracotta, and a small amount of casting in metal. Since UW's School of Art had no facilities for the latter, students were allowed at certain times of the year to make use of the casting department in the School of Mining and Engineering.³³ Isaacs, a painter, promoted collaborations of this sort and also fostered connections with the Department of Architecture. Isaacs had studied art in Paris and advanced pedagogical methods for art education at Columbia Teachers College, and he drew on both experiences to devise a new curriculum that would not fall short in the areas of theory, design, and craft. Crucially for Tsutakawa, the time Isaacs spent in Paris had left him with international connections that enabled him to invite members of the European avant-garde to be visiting instructors at UW.³⁴ The number that came and taught was small but included Amédée Ozenfant in 1938 and Johannes Molzahn, a Weimar-trained painter and printmaker, in 1940.³⁵

Thanks to the efforts of Isaacs, as an undergraduate before the war Tsutakawa was able to study sculpture for a time under Alexander (formerly Aleksandr) Archipenko. Tsutakawa later told Reed, "I was a great follower of Archipenko. I learned so much from him, so much about form, sculptural form. And space! The whole idea of space in sculpture. He was one of my masters."³⁶ Writing on Archipenko in 1914, when the sculptor was living in Paris, Apollinaire had praised his solemn religiosity, calling him "a mystic."³⁷ Tsutakawa was likely drawn to this

³³ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

³⁴ Matthew Kangas, "Pacific Northwest Crafts in the 1950s," in *Jet Dreams: Art of the Fifties in the Northwest*, ed. Barbara Johns (Seattle and London: Tacoma Art Museum / University of Washington Press, 1995) 83.

³⁵ Kingsbury, "Seattle and the Puget Sound," 48.

³⁶ Reed, *George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains*, 14.

³⁷ Guillaume Apollinaire in *Archipenko; International Visionary*, ed. Donald H. Karshan, 12.

aspect of Archipenko's approach, in addition to his formal innovations. In *The Sculpture of this Century* (1959), Michel Seuphor included this quote from Archipenko: "It should be noted that despite the varied character of my work, there is no intellectual or dogmatic rule underlying my art. Its basis is purely spiritual and it flows from the universal law of creation that we perceive in experience. This law obliges me to explore the unknown and to invent the means of capturing it in new forms."³⁸ Archipenko often referred in his own writings to the "spiritual quality" of the best works of art, and this may have been something he helped Tsutakawa discover was important within himself. Assessing his debt to the Russian artist in 1994, an elderly Tsutakawa observed in a television interview: "I think he really taught me the meaning of modern sculpture."³⁹

Born in Kiev in 1887, Archipenko attended art school there before moving to Moscow in 1906; it was two years later that he relocated to Paris, where he learned about ancient and medieval sculpture through museum visits. Around 1910 Fernand Léger introduced Archipenko to Cubism, and the Ukrainian quickly became one of that movement's most important sculptors. He continued to work with the human figure, analysing its forms and abstracting them into geometric shapes. In 1912 Archipenko began to experiment with concave and convex forms as a means of varying the smooth surfaces of his sculptures, an innovation that produced dynamic interplays between protrusion and recession, presence and absence, light and shadow (fig. 20). It was this sort of optical reversal that suggested to Archipenko that he try opening up his sculptures with actual holes. The American art historian George Heard Hamilton claimed that this was "the first instance in modern sculpture of the use of a hole to signify more than a void, in

³⁸ Quoted in Michel Seuphor, *The Sculpture of this Century: Dictionary of Modern Sculpture* (New York: G. Braziller, 1959), 231.

³⁹ KCTS Seattle, *1st Annual Bumbershoot Golden Umbrella Award, George Tsutakawa*.

fact the opposite of a void, because by recalling the original volume the hole acquires a shape and structure of its own."⁴⁰

Having immigrated to New York from Berlin in 1923, Archipenko was living in Los Angeles in 1935 and 1936, and he travelled north to teach summer courses at the University of Washington.⁴¹ The following year he would move to Chicago, accepting an invitation from László Moholy-Nagy to teach and head the Modelling Workshop at the New Bauhaus. Archipenko's classes at UW were mainly for graduate students, but Tsutakawa was permitted to join them. In 1951 Archipenko returned to the University of Washington to teach a summer workshop; Kingsbury points out that a number of figurative sculptures and drawings Tsutakawa produced around this time reveal Archipenko's continued influence.⁴² It would also be important, but not as overtly visible, in the creation of his fountain sculptures after 1958. In Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures, as in Archipenko's works, the use of holes creates a contrast between solid and void; this device is discussed in more detail in Chapter Four.

Though crucial to his development as an artist – including his fountain sculptures, as I will soon demonstrate – the time Tsutakawa spent studying with Archipenko was relatively brief. The bulk of his instruction in sculpture came from Pratt, who taught at UW from 1925 to 1952, and he also studied with Dudley Carter, a local wood carver. Pratt was a talented sculptor who received many public and private commissions for works in the Seattle area. They included a

⁴⁰ Quoted in Chilvers, Ian. *Oxford Dictionary of Twentieth Century Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 24-25: Archipenko.

⁴¹ Archipenko Foundation Timeline. http://www.archipenko.org/aa_chron_1919.html. Some sources on Tsutakawa date Archipenko's UW summer courses as taking place in 1936 and 1937, but the years listed by the Archipenko Foundation in their chronology appear to be the correct ones, and they corroborate information in a Chronology created by George and Mayumi Tsutakawa. Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 143.

⁴² Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 53. Kingsbury states that Archipenko's summer workshop took place in 1952, but 1951 is the year listed in the Chronology prepared by the Archipenko Foundation. http://www.archipenko.org/aa_chron_1947.html.

sculpture for the city's police headquarters and his modernist *Gold Star Mother* (1950), an over-life-sized figurative relief in Carrara marble. Pratt created sculptures for numerous buildings on the University of Washington campus; for example, he embellished the Henry Art Gallery with a decorative relief panel and four figures representing "the cradles of premodern art:" medieval Europe, Greece, Egypt, and Asia. Pratt had studied art at Yale University and in Italy, then in Paris with Antoine Bourdelle just before taking up his teaching post in Seattle.⁴³ Tsutakawa apprenticed by assisting Pratt in the preparatory stages for commissions for sculptures in carved stone, fired terracotta, and sometimes cast metal, so his sculptural education was a broad one that incorporated a technical dimension. As a student Tsutakawa tended to emulate the style of Pratt's works for public places, many of which possess what Kingsbury has described as a "fiercely compact massiveness" common to sculpture made for world's fairs or government buildings during that era. It is, as she points out, a style that effectively conveys such qualities as "power, simplicity, and resounding certainty."⁴⁴

Pratt's recognition of the value of local materials may have influenced Tsutakawa as a student in the 1930s. He and his classmates sometimes joined Pratt on day trips into the nearby Cascade Range to gather quality local soapstone from old talc mines there. Tsutakawa also learned about the importance of materials as integral to sculpture from another sculptor, Dudley Carter, who studied briefly with Pratt. Working primarily in cedar, Carter tended to leave the ragged textures of the logs visible, along with their axed surfaces. Born in New Westminster, B.C. in 1891, Carter had spent his early years well away from the city; according to Rupp, until age fifteen he had known only three white people apart from his family.⁴⁵ Largely self-taught,

⁴³ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 31-32; Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 56, 176, 303

⁴⁴ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 32.

⁴⁵ Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 288.

Carter was a part-time artist who mainly supported himself as a forest engineer and logger and with a small business dealing in cedar products. As a timber cruiser for a lumber company, Carter was able to put aside some of the best logs for his own use at a work yard outside Seattle. From these he carved figures for large public sculptures that were unusual for the time in their raw materiality, though similar in volume and scale to much of that era's public sculpture. Besides absorbing ideas about materials, Tsutakawa was influenced by Carter's occasional borrowing of Native American legends and motifs. This reinforced his existing interest in Native art, acquired during summers working in Alaska.

Carter's debt to local indigenous traditions was clear in his first major sculpture, *Rivalry of Winds* (1932), which depicted a Duwamish legend. For the San Francisco World's Fair of 1939/40 he produced a work that greatly resembles a West Coast totem pole, the massive *Goddess of the Forest*, carved from a single redwood log. *Goddess of the Forest*, which stood in Golden Gate Park until 1986, was carved at the fair as part of a special program called "Art in Action," which ran from June 1 to September 29, 1940. Tsutakawa may well have been present for this: he definitely attended the fair that year and saw *Goddess of the Forest* at some point.⁴⁶ Conceived by Timothy Pflueger, a well-known San Francisco architect who was one of the fair's organizers, "Art in Action" invited artists to create works on site, enabling the public to directly experience the process of creation. Diego Rivera was also among the featured artists. He had been commissioned to paint a large fresco for installation in a new library building at a local college, a project for which Pflueger was the principal architect, but one that remained unbuilt.⁴⁷ While he worked on the fresco, titled *Marriage of the Artistic Expression of the North and of the*

⁴⁶ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 39.

⁴⁷ San Francisco Junior College, now City College of San Francisco. See "The Diego Rivera Mural Project: Art in Action." City College of San Francisco. <http://www.riveramural.com/article.asp?section=mural&key=1004&language=english>.

South on this Continent but commonly known as *Pan American Unity*, Rivera was so impressed by Carter's skill with the axe that he incorporated three views of the sculptor into the mural's central panel. In Rivera's eyes, Dudley Carter was the embodiment of "the ideal of the pure North American artist, drawing on native artistic traditions and using traditional tools, free of European influences."⁴⁸

Tsutakawa, on the other hand, was undoubtedly subject to European influence in its traditional and modernist forms, first in Japan, then at high school in Seattle, and after that as a University of Washington art student, and through his associations with Tobey and other artists. At the World's Fair in San Francisco Tsutakawa was able to view works by many important European modernists in person for the first time. He later recalled seeing sculptures by Rodin, Maillol and others, including several works by Archipenko – a torso by the Russian artist particularly impressed him. There were also paintings by Matisse, Picasso, and the French Cubists, and the Fair featured a Van Gogh exhibition that Tsutakawa found extraordinary.⁴⁹ It is likely he also spent time exploring the displays at the Japanese pavilion, which focused on traditional crafts and other forms of cultural expression.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Arno Schniewind, Roger Baird, and Dale P. Konkright, *Rescuing Dudley Carter's Goddess of the Forest* (Norfolk, Virginia: Wooden Artifacts Group of the American Institute of Conservation, Postprints Archive, 1996), n.p. http://cool.conservation-us.org/coolaic/sg/wag/1996/WAG_96_schniewind.pdf.

⁴⁹ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

⁵⁰ With Europe at war, few foreign countries participated in the San Francisco World's Fair of 1939/40. Japan was among those that did, and its government erected a pavilion that included a tearoom with a rock garden, as well as interior displays that focused on tourism and culture. For information on Japanese gardens at this and other World's Fairs, including Seattle's Twenty-first Century World's Fair, held in 1962, see Kendall H. Brown, "Territories of Play: A Short History of Japanese-Style Gardens in North America," in *Japanese-Style Gardens of the Pacific West Coast*, ed. Melba Levick and Kendall H. Brown (New York: Rizzoli, 1999). Brown states: "by the end of the nineteenth century, Japan realized that the growing scale and number of international expositions provided a unique opportunity to influence world opinion at a time

A few years later Tsutakawa would be exposed to Purism; on Ozenfant's recommendation, Isaacs invited Swiss potter Paul Ami Bonifas to lead the School of Art's modest ceramics department, a position he held from 1945 to 1959. Tsutakawa returned to UW not long after Bonifas arrived, to study and to teach, and the two artists became friendly. According to Kingsbury, Tsutakawa studied ceramics with Bonifas while working towards his Master's degree, but he also benefitted from their conversations, for Bonifas greatly enjoyed philosophizing and talking about art.⁵¹ As the former secretary to the French Purist Group, founded in 1918 by Ozenfant and Charles-Édouard Jeanneret (later Le Corbusier), Bonifas retained the Purist commitment to simple functional forms, clean-lined shapes, and the rejection of ornament for its own sake, but he was not an advocate for the machine aesthetic.⁵² The existing literature on Tsutakawa includes some discussion of Archipenko and Bonifas; both artists are acknowledged by Kingsbury as influences on his approach to sculpture, and Archipenko's use of the void is linked to the fountain sculptures specifically.⁵³ Virtually no mention is made of Purism, perhaps because some aspects of that movement seem incompatible with Tsutakawa's approach. Still, I would argue that Purist ideals, as seen by an artist with close ties to architecture, after the midcentury popularization of International Modernism in the U.S., are reflected in the last line of Tsutakawa's artist's statement from c. 1967 when he speaks of "simplicity of outward form" and an "absence of distracting surface treatments and textured

when Japan's burgeoning industrial and military power was transforming the nation into an international power." *Ibid.*, 16.

⁵¹ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 55.

⁵² Matthew Kangas, *School of Art 1920-1960* (Seattle: University of Washington, 1988), n.p.

⁵³ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 53, 55.

effects."⁵⁴ Echoes of Brancusi can also be heard; his influence on Tsutakawa's fountain designs will be discussed in later chapters.

The irreverent inventiveness of Dada offered another intriguing direction for American artists to explore. Tobey had been inspired by some aspects of Dada while living in New York, but it was new to most Seattle artists, as were other avant-garde movements.⁵⁵ Graves and Tobey both befriended John Cage after the experimental composer came to work as a dance accompanist at Seattle's Cornish School of Allied Arts in 1938. While Tobey encouraged Cage's growing interest in Zen philosophy and Japanese aesthetics, Graves gained a close friend with whom he could share ideas on possible links between the spontaneity of Zen and Dada performance strategies.⁵⁶ It is evident from paintings made in the early 1940s that Tsutakawa's growing awareness of the possibilities inherent in sculptural space was enhanced by his interest in Surrealist abstraction, with its organic forms and amorphous interior spaces (fig. 21). Malcolm Roberts and Leo Kenney were the Northwest painters most closely associated with Surrealism, but Graves, Tobey, and others were also fascinated by the possibilities it suggested.⁵⁷ Tsutakawa recalled in his Oral History interview that "the French school," Dada, and Surrealism were just

⁵⁴ "George Tsutakawa; Seattle, Washington; Artist's Comment," n.d. Reproduced in full in my Introduction.

⁵⁵ Kingsbury, "Seattle and the Puget Sound," 42.

⁵⁶ Kathleen Pyne and D. Scott Atkinson, "Landscapes of the Mind: New Conceptions of Nature," in *The Third Mind: American Artists Contemplate Asia, 1860-1989*, ed. Alexandra Munroe (New York: Guggenheim Museum, 2009), 95; Helen Westgeest, *Zen in the Fifties: Interaction in Art between East and West* (London: Reaktion Books, 1998), 55; Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 37.

⁵⁷ As far back as the 1970s Kingsbury complained that the written history of modern art in the Pacific Northwest has been distorted owing to a lack of attention to Surrealism and an overemphasis on the region's environmental characteristics and the influence of Oriental art. See, for example, Kingsbury, "Seattle and the Puget Sound," 71-72. While the Henry Gallery's exhibition, *What it Meant to be Modern* (1990) seems to have addressed this situation to some extent through the artworks shown, the essays in the accompanying catalogue are very brief. The impact of Surrealism on Pacific Northwest art remains an area in need of further study.

starting to reach the Northwest, primarily through art magazines.⁵⁸ Kingsbury has cited an unnamed local insider as commenting that, despite the tendency for people to remember the late thirties and early forties as a period dominated by the Depression and the WPA, in fact for many artists of the time "the thing to do" was Surrealism. She argues that their focus was thus on a type of art that implied a degree of exclusivity, since it was generally not accessible to the masses in its form or its content.⁵⁹ While this is largely true, it could also be argued that Surrealism was more democratic than some forms of realism, since both artists and viewers had the option of approaching it as an entirely new visual language, without relying on extensive prior exposure to European art, traditional or avant-garde.⁶⁰ As Conkelton has shown, the "sensuous ambiguity" of the Symbolists, expressionistic distortions, and the splintered planes of Cubism could also be seen in works by the region's more progressive painters. It is important to emphasize that for most Seattle artists at this time the exploration and adaptation of these modern European trends was quite self-conscious. The process of coming into their own and developing more unique styles was a gradual one.⁶¹

As a student in the University of Washington's School of Art, Tsutakawa was required to take courses in the history of architecture. Since the Architecture School was housed in a different building from the art department, Tsutakawa soon got to know some of the architecture students. Once he chose to declare a major in sculpture he spent much of his time alongside these future architects, as their curriculum included courses in clay modelling and plaster casting with Dudley Pratt, and Tsutakawa spent long hours at work in the sculpture studio. Through this

⁵⁸ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

⁵⁹ Kingsbury, "Seattle and the Puget Sound," 71.

⁶⁰ I would like to thank Dr. Christopher Thomas for pointing this out, particularly with regard to artists.

⁶¹ Conkelton, *What it Meant to be Modern: Seattle Art at Mid-Century*, 10.

cross-disciplinary educational process, he met Minoru Yamasaki, whose work is discussed at several points in this dissertation. Yamasaki is probably best described as an acquaintance, but Tsutakawa also met other future architects who would remain his friends over the coming years. Among the most notable were Victor Steinbrueck and Paul Hayden Kirk. Steinbrueck came to favour a rigorously functional approach to design in the 1940s and 50s and later became an advocate of socially oriented architecture and a noted supporter of architectural preservation in Seattle.⁶² Ament refers to Steinbrueck and a number of his contemporaries as "activist architects" because of their involvement in the Action Better City program, launched in 1967 to work toward architectural improvement.⁶³ Kirk began his career in the late 1930s as a residential architect, and in the postwar period was influenced by Mies van der Rohe, the California "Case Study" houses, and traditional Japanese architecture.⁶⁴ Kirk favoured building materials that gave his own work a strong regional flavour, and as his commissions for religious and public buildings increased, he became known for intricate detailing, often in wood. Like many of his colleagues in Seattle and elsewhere, Kirk gradually moved away from the formal language of International Modernism, which he eventually rejected outright, calling it "an architecture which has been imposed on the land by Man."⁶⁵

⁶² Ochsner, *Lionel H. Pries, Architect, Artist, Educator: From Arts and Crafts to Modern Architecture*, 266.

⁶³ Action Better City (A:BC) was started by Fred Bassetti under the aegis of the American Institute of Architects. Other members listed by Ament are Al Bumgartner, Ibsen Nelsen, Ralph Anderson, Richard Haag, and Laurie Olin. Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 231. Haag was one of the landscape architects who collaborated with Tsutakawa in the early 1960s, see Chapter Six of this dissertation.

⁶⁴ The importance of Japanese design traditions as an influence on postwar architecture in the Pacific Northwest is briefly discussed in Chapter 4.

⁶⁵ Quoted in David Rash, "Paul Hayden Kirk," in *Shaping Seattle Architecture: A Historical Guide to the Architects*, ed. Jeffrey Karl Ochsner (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994), 253.

While attending the University of Washington, Tsutakawa also met George Nakashima, who had graduated from the Architecture Department some years earlier and would become, in the 1960s, a well-known designer and maker of handcrafted wood furniture. With all these contacts in the field, it can safely be assumed that Tsutakawa was beginning to think about relationships between art and architecture even as an undergraduate.

By 1936 George had saved enough money for his long-dreamt-of trip to Paris but was prevented from going when one of his uncles suffered a stroke and he was given new responsibilities at the Tsutakawa Company. George decided to defer his degree and take another year of courses, with the result that, though he declared sculpture as his major when he graduated in 1937, he had earned enough university credits to choose between sculpture, printmaking, or painting.⁶⁶ His artistic career was again postponed, however, when he was made manager of the Tsutakawa Company store after graduation. A quarter century would pass before George could finally make his first trip to Europe: in 1963 he spent four months travelling through ten countries with his teenage son, Gerard, visiting museums and many noteworthy fountains. In the meantime, family obligations came first. During the Depression years, the store sometimes cashed the government cheques of artists who were on the rolls of the WPA or extended them credit for purchases.⁶⁷ With George in charge, the Tsutakawa store became a gathering-place for local artists, and he forged important friendships with a number of artists who came to be

⁶⁶ Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 137.

⁶⁷ The WPA's Federal Art Project (1935-1943) paid salaries to artists for many purposes, including self-directed work, the execution of agreed-upon artworks, and teaching art. It was extremely important for the financial and psychological support it offered artists during the Depression. Graves was on its rolls in 1936 and 1937, as was Tobey for a short time in 1938, following his return to Seattle from England. Graves was also included in MOMA's 1939 exhibition of works for WPA projects, the first New York showing of his work. Guy Anderson taught at the Spokane Art Center, one of the many community art centres established under the WPA. Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 46; Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 351.

associated, to a greater or lesser degree, with the "Northwest School" of painting. The best known today are Tobey, Graves, Callahan, Guy Anderson, Malcolm Roberts, and William Cumming.⁶⁸

In local art parlance, Seattle artists who did not teach at the University of Washington, a group that included the Northwest School painters, were referred to as "downtown artists." Tsutakawa recalled in his Oral History interview that "the downtown artists, during the war and after, just barely existed." Many depended on the WPA for a small cheque to keep them alive. The university artists, however, were professors and had a regular salary they could depend on. Although, like other university professors, they were not paid well during the Depression, they were at least comfortable, and this unequal situation created what Tsutakawa described as "a sense of jealousy or unfairness" that divided the two groups.⁶⁹ In addition, the Seattle Art Museum had become, in Ament's words, "the de facto 'art club' of the group who originated the style known as the Northwest School. They worked there, showed their art there, and received financial and emotional support from [museum director Richard] Fuller."⁷⁰ In contrast, the Henry Gallery's mandate was to exhibit works by artists affiliated with the university. Although this was not the Henry's sole focus and Tsutakawa later credited the university gallery with working hard to strike a balance between the two groups, Kingsbury states that the situation created "the basis for a subtle town-gown split."⁷¹

Having left the university after graduation, Tsutakawa was to some degree accepted as one of the "downtown artists," despite being primarily occupied with managing a grocery store

⁶⁸ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 36.

⁶⁹ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

⁷⁰ Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, xiv.

⁷¹ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.; Kingsbury, "Seattle and the Puget Sound," 42.

with more than ten employees. At this time he did not regard himself as a professional artist, however, but more as a Sunday painter and friend to local artists.⁷² "Sunday painter" was to some extent a literal description; busy with the Tsutakawa Company store most of the week, he spent every Sunday painting landscapes on the Duwamish River with Nomura, Tokita, his high school friend Miyazaki, and others. Putting sculpture, with its physical demands, aside, at this time Tsutakawa focused instead on painting. He studied watercolour with Ray Hill, who taught him to emulate English technique, and learned the basics of fresco technique from Ambrose Patterson, who had trained with muralists in Mexico in 1934.⁷³

Although Tsutakawa made studies for murals, he did not continue with fresco; the fundamental knowledge he received from Patterson was recognition of the importance of public access to art.⁷⁴ From Dudley Pratt he had learned a great deal about how to handle large public commissions involving collaboration with architects, engineers, and construction crews; this would prove useful when his own career turned to designing public fountains. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, however, Tsutakawa was focusing what energies he could devote to art on painting. Despite the attraction he felt to the various murals he saw while visiting San Francisco for the World's Fair, he believed he had chosen a different direction: by giving up sculpture he had turned away from publicly oriented art and instead embraced private expression.⁷⁵ As he later stated, his primary concern was with whether a work of art was aesthetically pleasing; that its maker might be "a communist or imperialist or ... capitalist artist" was no concern. "[I]f he's a

⁷² Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.; Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 36.

⁷³ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

⁷⁴ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 32.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 39.

good artist, he's a good artist."⁷⁶ In fact, he felt sorry for artists who were attacked on the basis of their political views, as he recalled Rivera, Orozco, and Siqueiros had all been when visiting the U.S. from Mexico to complete public mural projects. Tsutakawa's tendency to want to place aesthetics above politics would remain, even after he returned to sculpture and public art became the focus of his career.

In his Oral History interview, Tsutakawa also insisted that he never felt obliged to choose sides politically or to identify himself with any particular artistic school. The latter was a position many of his fellow artists also embraced, notably Tobey, who found the concept of "schools" based on cultural geography especially problematic. The importance to Tobey of the Bahà'i faith is evident in an artist's statement he wrote not long after World War II ended. In the catalogue for the MOMA exhibition *Fourteen Americans*, Tobey declared that the national and regional are stressed "at the expense of the inner world" and "the understanding of this single earth."⁷⁷ This may or may not be true, but critics and art historians find it useful to group artists for discussion, while for dealers an artist's membership in a "school" can make their work more marketable. Moreover, the existence of a recognized regional "school" can bolster civic pride – as it soon would in Seattle. So, despite the views of some of the artists involved, around 1947 numerous writers, first nationally and then locally, began to refer repeatedly to a "Northwest School."⁷⁸ As Ament points out, many argue that no such school existed, and they are quite correct: "No formal group met in agreement; no manifesto was issued."⁷⁹ While a shared preference for small, intimate works with dense structures and muted colour is apparent, there was no strict stylistic

⁷⁶ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

⁷⁷ Quoted in Kingsbury, "Seattle and the Puget Sound," 59.

⁷⁸ On the Northwest School and a later generation of Washington artists that arguably developed from seeds it planted, see Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

unity. Still, the term "Northwest School" is familiar to anyone who has had much contact with the region's modern art.

A key characteristic of the "school" was first attached to works by Morris Graves, and thus defined in print some years before anyone thought to posit the existence of a "Northwest School" of art. Included in shows at MOMA in 1939 and 1942,⁸⁰ Graves was the first Northwest painter to achieve national recognition, and by 1944 "mysticism" was a property widely ascribed to his painting, which was also thought to bring together Occidental and Oriental traits. The two qualities are, of course, related; since the late nineteenth century Asian art had been admired by Western artists who sought to express what they perceived as the mystical relationship between the inner self and the material world. It is thus not surprising that Asia – to borrow a phrase from a recent exhibition catalogue — "supplied a grammar of mysticism" for modern American painters from the earliest years of the twentieth century.⁸¹ By 1945 other Seattle artists were being discussed along similar lines to Graves. Tobey, the next local painter to earn acclaim from East Coast critics, was also being called a mystic, though Conkelton claims he "angrily rejected the label in public and in private" and Callahan also objected to it.⁸² Secondly, a flexible set of formal characteristics had come to be accepted as a unifying element, furthering the notion of a Northwest School. These formal traits included biomorphic figuration – generally partly abstract and consisting of anthropomorphic forms or symbols suggesting a human presence, such as

⁸⁰ In 1939, as previously mentioned, four of Morris's paintings appeared in MOMA's exhibition of works for the W.P.A. Federal Art Project. In 1942 over thirty of his works were included in *Americans 1942, 18 Artists from 9 States*.

⁸¹ Pyne and Atkinson, "Landscapes of the Mind: New Conceptions of Nature," 89.

⁸² Sheryl Conkelton, "Pantheons of Dreams," in *Northwest Mythologies: The Interactions of Mark Tobey, Morris Graves, Kenneth Callahan, and Guy Anderson*, ed. Sheryl Conkelton and Laura Landau (Tacoma and Seattle: University of Washington Press / Tacoma Art Museum, 2003), 94.

writing or totems; a dense and rhythmic handling of paint, lack of perspectival depth, and often a tendency towards gestural, linear or curvilinear modes of mark-making.

As theories were put forward linking the two painters and attempting to account for the popularity of their work, an image of "Northwest art" took shape that, as Kingsbury has pointed out, "drew some artists within its circle and decidedly omitted others."⁸³ In 1946 *Art News* could confidently refer to Callahan as "part of that group of Northwest painters whose homogeneity within a wide range of experiment is probably the most interesting regional art manifestation in America."⁸⁴ The exclusion of many worthwhile developments from the history of art in the Pacific Northwest because they did not fit the dominant paradigm is just one reason Kingsbury and others have been critical of the continued reliance on the label "Northwest School."⁸⁵ Even thirty-five years ago it was clear to Kingsbury that:

the web of discourse and conceptualization that gathered around the art became as dense and constricting as the skeins of white that surrounded Graves's birds or proliferated over Tobey's surfaces. As in the paintings, so in the writings about them, there is a persistent ambiguity about whether the lines represent an illuminating energy radiating from the subject itself or a binding trap for the creatures entangled in it.⁸⁶

A third quality that came to define the Northwest School was based on the region's climate, geography, and to a lesser extent its vegetation. Often it was related to the supposed mysticism of the artists involved; an early example appeared in a 1947 catalogue for a travelling exhibition, *Ten Painters of the Pacific Northwest*, which was shown in five Eastern museums. In the introduction, Harris Prior briefly mentioned the shared sources of the artists concerned,

⁸³ Kingsbury, "Seattle and the Puget Sound," 55.

⁸⁴ Quoted in Kingsbury, "Seattle and the Puget Sound," 59.

⁸⁵ See, for example, Kingsbury, "Seattle and the Puget Sound," 55; Johns, "Fields of Vision in Pictures and Objects," 67.

⁸⁶ Kingsbury, "Seattle and the Puget Sound," 55.

which he claimed included Western European painting, Oriental traditions, and Northwest Coast Native carving. He then declared that what he found most intriguing was "the mysticism of these painters," which he believed arose "mainly from the region itself."⁸⁷ Prior declared that "no sensitive person can live long in the Pacific Northwest without being profoundly affected" by the climate and natural environment.⁸⁸ He wrote poetic descriptions of the huge Douglas firs, the ocean shore, rugged snow-capped mountains, and glacial streams, and also noted the "annual miracle" of spawning salmon, as well as less positive but reliably sublime occurrences like devastating forest fires. Although Prior did not directly address the atmosphere of introspective gloom that suffuses many of the paintings, the source of this much-noted regional artistic quality is implied in some of his statements. "Because of the long rainy season, the forces of growth and decay are everywhere accelerated," he wrote, and elsewhere, "cold crystalline fogs close in for days at a time during the winter, forcing man to turn inward for sustenance."⁸⁹ In the exhibition, photographs of the area were hung next to the paintings to emphasize the environmental connection.

Whether or not the importance of Asian artistic and philosophical traditions to the development of Northwest modernism as a whole has been overstated, as Kingsbury has suggested more than once,⁹⁰ several of the future "Northwest School" artists whom Tsutakawa befriended in the late 1930s were very interested in such traditions and thus keen to learn about his Japanese heritage. Their extensive knowledge, which they applied in their own art practices, would become very important to Tsutakawa. As Kingsbury points out, the appreciation the

⁸⁷ Quoted in Kingsbury, "Seattle and the Puget Sound," 59.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 60.

⁹⁰ Kingsbury, "Seattle and the Puget Sound," 71; Kingsbury, Martha, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.; Kingsbury, "Art in Seattle, 1900-1960," 19.

Western artists in his circle had for Asian art occurred in a very different context than the one he had experienced through his grandparents' devotion to traditional arts in Japan. Graves, for one, exposed Tsutakawa to the study of Asian artefacts in what she describes as "an atmosphere more like European bohemianism.... a bohemianism with distinct elements of Dada and Surrealism that these young artists were creating out of the imposed limitations of a provincial Depression outpost."⁹¹ Still, a tendency toward bohemianism or even eclecticism in their approaches to studying aspects of Asian culture or collecting Japanese artefacts does not necessarily suggest the American artists who embraced Eastern philosophies and art forms were lacking commitment or understanding.

One factor that contributed to the informal education of a number of the Northwest School painters was Fuller's policy of hiring artists to work at the Seattle Art Museum. Not only were local artists a vital part of the local community, which Fuller was committed to serving; in his view it was one of the museum's responsibilities to exhibit art produced in the region.⁹² Several prominent Northwest painters worked briefly at SAM, but Kenneth Callahan was a fixture there, working half-time from 1935 to 1953. He began as an assistant, performing various low-level tasks, but his knowledge of the region's art and artists was soon recognized and he was promoted to assistant director and later to curator.⁹³ Some of the insights Callahan gained through his close contact with the museum's extensive collections of Asian objects and pictorial art were no doubt passed on to Tsutakawa and other interested colleagues. Curator Elizabeth (Betty) Willis, a close friend of both Graves and Tobey, has also been singled out by Tsutakawa

⁹¹ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 37.

⁹² Conkelton, "Pantheons of Dreams," 44.

⁹³ Ibid. Callahan also wrote reviews of art exhibitions and events, first for *The Town Cryer* and later also for the *Seattle Times*. As Conkelton points out, this gave him power and visibility in the small local art community.

as "a great collector and promoter of Oriental art," one who brought back a sizable collection of folk art from Japan and reminded him of alternatives to his study of Western tradition.⁹⁴

Graves and Tobey had each travelled to Japan and other East Asian countries before Tsutakawa met them, and would do so again later. As a teenager Graves had dropped out of high school and joined the Merchant Marine. Working on an American Mail Line Ship, he made three trips to Manila, Japan, China, and Hawaii. He explored as much as his shore leave permitted, especially in Japan, and impressions left by his experiences and early encounters with Asian aesthetics can be seen in even his earliest paintings. In an interview in 1956, Graves described how he had been deeply affected by his sense that Japanese art and culture were dominated by "the acceptance of nature – not the resistance to it."⁹⁵ As shown in the previous chapter, Tsutakawa would make a very similar statement in the early 1980s regarding the influence of Japanese attitudes to nature on his fountain designs. Beginning in the early 1930s, Graves began to attend the Buddhist temple in Seattle. There he was introduced to the concept of Zen and the meditative goal of raising consciousness by quieting the mind.

Of the artists considered part of the Northwest School, it was Tobey who would influence Tsutakawa most; so it is necessary to take a somewhat closer look at his career. Born in Wisconsin, Tobey moved to New York City at age twenty-one to pursue a career in fashion illustration. Instead he became a moderately successful portrait painter and caricaturist, publishing a few drawings in the *New York Times*. Shortly after moving to Seattle in 1923, Tobey was introduced to Chinese ink painting through his friendship with Teng Kuei, a Chinese

⁹⁴ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 16.

⁹⁵ Quoted in Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 111.

student at the University of Washington.⁹⁶ This encounter challenged his Western ideas about painting and opened up new artistic possibilities. During this first brief residence in Seattle, Tobey taught at the Cornish School, but he soon left for Europe, where he stayed from 1925 to 1926. Part of this period was spent travelling around the Mediterranean.

Since 1918 Tobey had been a member of the Bahà'ì World Faith, a modern religion with roots in Islam, founded by a Persian named Baha'u'llah in 1863.⁹⁷ Not surprisingly, the places he chose to visit included Bahà'ì shrines as well as historic Muslim sites. Tobey was particularly attracted to the fluidity of Persian and Arabic calligraphy, an important point since the "white writing" style he is known for tends to be discussed primarily in relation to East Asian calligraphy and/or American Abstract Expressionism. What is more significant in relation to his mentoring of Tsutakawa is that one of Bahà'ì's objectives is the meeting of East and West. This also became a cherished goal for Tobey; for him the essence of Bahà'ì was "that Man would gradually come to understand the coherence of the world and the unity of mankind."⁹⁸ Bahà'ì teachings stress that world peace should be sought through a shared faith and world brotherhood; followers embrace the creed that "no race or nation is superior; that all must enjoy equal

⁹⁶ Teng Kuei is referred to in some accounts as Teng Baiye; see, for example, Pyne and Atkinson, "Landscapes of the Mind: New Conceptions of Nature," 94.

⁹⁷ For in-depth discussions of Tobey's beliefs, see Arthur A. Dahl et al, *Mark Tobey: Art and Belief* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1984); and Edward Rulief Kelley, "Mark Tobey and the Baha'i Faith: New Perspectives on the Artist and his Paintings" (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1983). Landau notes: "Kelley provides the most comprehensive description of Tobey's early years and suggests that he met Hartley in Paris through [Gertrude] Stein." Laura Landau, "Points of Intersection: Chronicling the Interactions of Tobey, Graves, Callahan, and Anderson," in *Northwest Mythologies: The Interactions of Mark Tobey, Morris Graves, Kenneth Callahan, and Guy Anderson*, ed. Sheryl Conkelton and Laura Landau (Tacoma and Seattle: University of Washington Press / Tacoma Art Museum, 2003), 97, n. 7.

⁹⁸ Westgeest, *Zen in the Fifties: Interaction in Art between East and West*, 46.

opportunities and share equal responsibilities."⁹⁹ It is a religion with universalist and utopian ideals that correspond in some ways to those associated with international modernism.

Returning to Seattle in 1927, Tobey moved frequently for the next three decades – between Seattle and New York, as well as to Chicago, England, and a number of other European countries. A turning point in his career came in 1930, when MOMA's first director, Alfred H. Barr, selected several of Tobey's paintings for the *Painting and Sculpture by Living Americans* exhibition. The following year Tobey was given a solo show at New York's Contemporary Art Gallery. Painter Marsden Hartley, who enthusiastically supported Tobey's work and was one of the American modernists Tsutakawa most admired, provided a catalogue essay for this exhibition.¹⁰⁰ Tsutakawa explained that after his own return to Seattle in 1927 he worked very hard "to forget everything about Japan and become Americanized." In addition, as an art student during the 1930s he became absorbed in learning to draw, paint, and sculpt in the European academic tradition. While getting to know Graves and Tobey, he recalled being quite perplexed as they repeatedly questioned his focus on "trying to paint like a European master" rather than investigating Japanese artistic traditions. Gradually, through their encouragement, he awakened to the importance of his heritage.¹⁰¹

From 1931 until 1933 Tobey was teaching in Devon, England, at Dartington Hall, a progressive school and cultural centre. There he became acquainted with colleagues who shared his ideals regarding the union of East and West: Aldous Huxley and Arthur Waley, both writers, and Bernard Leach, a well-known potter. In 1922 Waley had published *Zen Buddhism and its*

⁹⁹ Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 21.

¹⁰⁰ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.; Landau, "Points of Intersection: Chronicling the Interactions of Tobey, Graves, Callahan, and Anderson," 16; 97, n. 4.

¹⁰¹ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

Relation to Art; Helen Westgeest suggests this book contained observations that also aroused Tobey's interest in Zen.¹⁰² Leach, who was born in Hong Kong in 1887, had lived in Japan prior to founding the Leach Pottery in St. Ives, Cornwall in 1913, along with Shoji Hamada.¹⁰³ He continued to be absorbed in Japanese culture and invited Tobey to join him on a trip to China and Japan. In 1934 they sailed from Naples to Hong Kong, continuing on to Shanghai, where they visited Tobey's old friend from Seattle, Teng Kuei. Tobey and Leach then travelled separately to Japan. He spent one month in a monastery outside Kyoto, meditating and studying Zen painting.¹⁰⁴ The contemplation of landscape is, along with meditation, a central technique Zen Buddhists have traditionally used to achieve enlightenment. This helps explain why art critics have so often credited Tsutakawa's fountains with encouraging contemplation, even when large volumes of water have been used to create dramatic visual and aural effects. Tobey returned to Seattle in fall 1934 and resumed his painting career. Back in England in 1935, he produced his first canvases in what would become known a decade later as his "white writing" style (fig. 22).¹⁰⁵

Like Tobey, Leach was a member of the Bahà'ì faith, and in an interview given in 1971 he criticized Western culture for being excessively dualistic. Leach related how, as early as 1910, he had come to realize "that the East is not in opposition to the West, but that the East is complementary to the West, and that an interpreter is needed." It might be said that, with Tobey's

¹⁰² Westgeest, *Zen in the Fifties: Interaction in Art between East and West*, 46.

¹⁰³ In 1952 Leach, Hamada, and Sōetsu Yanagi, all prominent supporters of the Mingei folk-art movement in Japan, visited the U.S. after attending the First International Conference on Pottery and Weaving at Dartington Hall. In 1963 Hamada was invited to teach at the University of Washington. Nakane, "Facing the Pacific: Asian American Artists in Seattle, 1900-1970," 75.

¹⁰⁴ Winther-Tamaki, *Art in the Encounter of Nations: Japanese and American Artists in the Early Postwar Years*, 47.

¹⁰⁵ The term "white writing" was first used in 1944 in an *Art Digest* review of Tobey's solo exhibition at the Willard Gallery in New York. Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 366.

guidance, Tsutakawa later became such an interpreter. It is likely that Tsutakawa also had some direct contact with Leach when the potter came to the University of Washington as a visiting professor in 1952. Citing British historian Arnold J. Toynbee, whom he praised for having identified the twentieth century as "the century of deepening of contacts between East and West," Leach stressed the necessity of creating "unity among all human beings – and not by conquest." This was a tendency he identified with through Bahà'i and also saw as furthered by the fact that "now, through science, communications are international so that all of mankind can participate."¹⁰⁶

In the United States, the climate of isolationism that had dominated the late 1930s had, by the 1940s, been superseded by a spirit of internationalism. According to Serge Guilbaut, "the entire political spectrum supported U.S. involvement in world affairs."¹⁰⁷ In 1941, Henry Luce published the influential essay "The American Century" in *Life* magazine, arguing it was time the American people seized hold of world leadership, much as England and France had done in the nineteenth century. Wendell Willkie's book *One World*, on the nation's best-seller lists in 1943, combined Luce's prediction and its optimism with Woodrow Wilson's call for a world at peace committed to American values, and therefore "safe for democracy."¹⁰⁸ After World War II, supporters of internationalism would focus their energies on the building of the United Nations

¹⁰⁶ Chisaburoh F. Yamada, *Dialogue in Art: Japan and the West* (London: Zwemmer, 1976), 316.

¹⁰⁷ Serge Guilbaut, "The New Adventures of the Avant-Garde in America: Greenberg, Pollock, or from Trotskyism to the New Liberalism of the 'Vital Center'," trans. T. Repeucek, *October* 15 (1980): 68, n. 19.

¹⁰⁸ Allan Weinstein and David Rubel, *The Story of America: Freedom and Crisis from Settlement to Superpower*, (New York: DK Publishing, 2002), 534.

Headquarters in New York (1947-52). A painting Tobey completed in 1951 bears the name *Universal City*; as Johns points out, the title "identifies it with midcentury aspirations."¹⁰⁹

Tsutakawa's Japanese American identity came to the fore during the war years, particularly after Pearl Harbor was bombed on December 7, 1941. On the Pacific Coast, Japanese Americans were suddenly deprived of their civil rights and property, and many were shipped to detention camps inland. Because Tsutakawa's father was not an American citizen and resided primarily in Japan, the family business was confiscated as alien property. The family, like so many others, was never compensated. In an interview years later, Tsutakawa recalled, "We lost everything. That was a big company, warehouse full of merchandise and half a dozen trucks...."¹¹⁰ The families of Tsutakawa's two uncles were sent to an internment camp in Minidoka, Idaho. One uncle was also interned there, but for reasons that were never fully explained, the other was judged to be more of a security risk and was sent to a high-security camp for Japanese nationals in Lordsburg, New Mexico.¹¹¹ George's older sister Sadako and her family went to Tule Lake, in northern California. Of the nine children born to George's parents, he and Sadako were the only ones who had left Japan and returned to live in the United States.

¹⁰⁹ Johns, *Jet Dreams: Art of the Fifties in the Northwest*, 65. Johns includes a black and white reproduction of Tobey's painting.

¹¹⁰ Quoted in Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 39.

¹¹¹ Imprisoned in New Mexico for three years, away from his wife and children, this uncle (also named George) petitioned the American military government repeatedly, requesting that he be returned to Japan. He also wrote many letters asking his nephew, as a member of the United States Armed forces, to speak to the camp commander on his behalf. Although the younger Tsutakawa was able to get a furlough and travel from Arkansas to New Mexico, there was little he could do to help. Still, his Uncle George was eventually repatriated to Japan through India, along with his family. Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.; For information on the different types of internment camps and other issues related to the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II, see Tetsuden Kashima, *Judgement Without Trial: Japanese American Imprisonment during World War II* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003).

Sadako had married into a Japanese family that operated a grocery business in Tacoma. At the Tule Lake camp, where he visited his sister, George would later meet his future wife, Ayame Iwasa.

As a *Nisei*,¹¹² a second-generation Japanese American who was a U.S. citizen by birth, George was eligible for the draft. Unlike the many *Nisei* who were drafted out of West Coast internment camps, he was called up immediately after Pearl Harbor. Along with most *Nisei* who received draft papers, Tsutakawa struggled at first with the decision to serve a country that was ignoring the rights of his family and friends. But while some chose to resist and were imprisoned, he was drafted into the U.S. army as an infantryman in early 1942.¹¹³ Years earlier in Fukuyama, in the late 1920s when Japanese militarism was on the rise, Tsutakawa and all his male classmates had been enlisted in the Japanese army. Each was given a rifle to maintain throughout the year, and the students were taken on annual or semi-annual training manoeuvres in the mountains with the regular army. Tsutakawa thus had the unusual experience of serving in both the Japanese and American armies, albeit under very different circumstances.¹¹⁴

Tsutakawa trained first in Arkansas, and while he agreed with the other Japanese American inductees, who felt that during their journey to Camp Robinson they were treated more like prisoners than soldiers, once they arrived they were generally treated the same as all the other soldiers, and the locals found them indistinguishable from Chinese or other Asians.¹¹⁵ After about a month of basic training, Tsutakawa was called by the camp commander, who had heard

¹¹² In the U.S. and Canada, members of Japanese communities adopted the terms *Issei*, *Nisei*, and *Sansei* to refer to first, second, and third generation Japanese immigrants. These words are formed by combining the relevant Japanese number (*ichi*=one, *ni*=two, *san*=three) with the Japanese word for generation (*sei*).

¹¹³ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 39.

¹¹⁴ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

¹¹⁵ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 40.

that he was an artist. The commander asked him to paint his portrait, and this was followed by portraits for other officers, and eventually a mural for the officers' club. This was the first actual mural Tsutakawa had ever painted, and it led to several more on subjects requested by the United Service Organizations (USO). When his unit moved from Camp Robinson to Camp Fannin, in Texas, Tsutakawa continued painting murals. Not long after their arrival in Texas, the unit was sent on to Camp Shelby, Mississippi, where the army was organizing all-Japanese-American teams for active duty in Italy. Though a decade older than most of the other recruits, Tsutakawa was briefly a member of the famed 442nd Japanese American combat team, an outfit that became one of the U.S. army's most decorated. However, he did not join them for jungle training, nor did he travel to Italy. While in Mississippi, Tsutakawa was hospitalized and underwent minor surgery; while he was recovering, his unit shipped out. Because he had lived in Japan and also had a university education, it was decided he could serve the army best by teaching the Japanese language to officers, so he spent the remaining two years of the war employed at the Military Intelligence School at Fort Snelling, Minnesota.

Although Tsutakawa did not have the chance to create a great deal of art while in Minnesota, he did find that furloughs and travel were readily available, which allowed him to spend many days at the Minneapolis Art Institute, studying its collections. He also journeyed occasionally to Chicago, where he was particularly moved by the van Gogh paintings in the city's Art Institute. According to Kingsbury, these reminded him of "the brilliant gold and endless blue" found in the wheat lands of central Washington state.¹¹⁶ During this time, he also made his first visits to Boston and, in spring 1943, to New York City. Perusing the city's commercial galleries and art museums, Tsutakawa was greatly impressed by a large exhibition of

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 47.

Kandinsky paintings at the Museum of Non-Objective Art, now the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. He later remembered this as the first time he saw original non-objective art, rather than reproductions in magazines and books.¹¹⁷ At MOMA Tsutakawa found many of his own ideas about modern art affirmed by such artists as Miró and Brancusi.¹¹⁸ He was also excited to be able to see an important show of Henry Moore's work at the Buchholz Gallery. This was Moore's first major show in the United States — an exhibition of forty watercolours and drawings. As Kingsbury suggests:

Tsutakawa undoubtedly found the works deeply sympathetic, for they depicted sculpturesque figures of that bony, eroded character already associated with Moore's three-dimensional work, and their hollows, holes, and suave contours would have been familiar from Tsutakawa's own work under Archipenko. The figures were set into deep landscapes of curvilinear forms simplified to an eerie greyness and rolling with an organic energy of their own. They recalled Tsutakawa's sense of the central Washington land forms, and they surely confirmed his satisfaction with his own self-portrait of that same year.¹¹⁹

While the figure in Tsutakawa's self-portrait certainly suggests the influence of Archipenko, and possibly Moore, the landscape background is clearly indebted to Surrealist conceptions of painterly space, as seen in works by de Chirico, Dali and Tanguy, for example.

In New York, Tsutakawa also made a point of going to Rockefeller Center to look at a recent sculpture by Noguchi, one of his first major public artworks. Created in 1939-40 for the Associated Press Building, *News* is a monumental relief made from nine tons of cast stainless steel. Like many artists of the day producing large-scale works of public art, Noguchi employed a blocky Cubist-derived style of figuration for this depiction of reporters and photographers at work.

¹¹⁷ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

¹¹⁸ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 48.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 47.

Noguchi is without question the most famous of the many Japanese American modernists active before and during the postwar period. While he and Tsutakawa exhibit certain compelling similarities in terms of biographical information and some important aspects of their sculptural work, it must be emphasized that there are also crucial differences between the two. One of the most important concerns ethnicity and race as factors in individual identity formation. Both men were born on the U.S. West Coast in the opening years of the twentieth century, and both went to school in America and in Japan. Unlike Tsutakawa, however, Noguchi was of mixed parentage. His story is well-known: born in Los Angeles to unmarried parents – his father a well-known Japanese poet, his white mother an American writer and editor – the former Isamu Gilmour adopted his father's surname when he decided to become an artist.¹²⁰ Writing in *Art News* in 1946, American critic Thomas Hess proposed that Noguchi had "fused in his art the East and the West as they were fused in his body."¹²¹ Tsutakawa and Noguchi can each be understood as interpreting Euro-American modernism through the filters of Japanese aesthetics and cultural values, but as Wechsler stresses in his study of Japanese American artists in the postwar period, "the interweaving of Asian and Western experience in individual artists' lives was often a complicated matter."¹²² Each artist should be considered in light of their own unique history, and it could be argued that, because he was of mixed race, Noguchi's experience of trying to forge a secure sense of ethnic and national identity was even more complex than Tsutakawa's.

According to his daughter Mayumi, Tsutakawa came to admire Noguchi highly; he felt that in some ways they shared the experience of dual identity, and he greatly valued Noguchi's

¹²⁰ Isamu Noguchi, *A Sculptor's World* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1967), 15.

¹²¹ Quoted in Wechsler, "From Asian Traditions to Modern Expressions: Abstract Art by Asian Americans, 1945-1970," 66.

¹²² *Ibid.*

transcultural vision.¹²³ The experiences of the two artists during the Second World War were, however, very different. As stated above, Tsutakawa was drafted shortly after Pearl Harbour was attacked by the Japanese. Noguchi was in Hollywood at the time, having driven to California from New York with the painter Arshile Gorky. As a New York resident, Noguchi was not required to participate in the relocation of Japanese Americans that was taking place on the West Coast, but the situation made him acutely aware of his ancestry. He wanted to do something to help his fellow *Nisei*, so in early 1942, around the time Tsutakawa was enlisting in the U.S. Army, Noguchi organized the group Nisei Writers and Artists Mobilization for Democracy in California. Later the same year, Noguchi voluntarily entered the Colorado River Relocation Center in Poston, Arizona, as a gesture of solidarity.¹²⁴ He had first shown proposals for public works of art in 1935, along with an artist's statement that proclaimed, "sculpture can be a vital force in man's daily life if projected into communal usefulness."¹²⁵ Noguchi entered the internment camp planning to improve the living conditions there, utilizing his own designs for recreation areas, gardens, and a cemetery.¹²⁶ According to the artist's own account, it soon

¹²³ Mayumi Tsutakawa, in conversation with the author, Seattle. June 23, 2010. In her monograph on Tsutakawa, Kingsbury briefly assesses his connection to Noguchi (pp.137-139). She draws attention to significant differences in their works, life experiences, and artistic interests, as well as some clear similarities. Although Tsutakawa knew of Noguchi's work by the early 1940s, he states in his Oral History interview that they did not meet until the late 1950s or early 1960s. After that, Noguchi sometimes visited Tsutakawa when passing through Seattle, then a major transit hub on the journey from the Eastern U.S. to Japan. The two artists also got together in Kyoto in 1969; at that time Noguchi was in Japan to work on a group of fountains for the 1970 World's Fair in Osaka, and Tsutakawa was on an extensive research trip through Asia and Europe with his wife, Ayame. Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p. Kingsbury notes that in November 1988 Noguchi hosted a large formal luncheon for George and Ayame at his Shikoku Island studio in Japan. Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 139.

¹²⁴ Ana Maria Torres, *Isamu Noguchi: A Study in Space* (New York: Monacelli Press, 2000), 52.

¹²⁵ Quoted in Ingrid Schaffner and Donna Ghelester, "Mr. Expanding Universe: Isamu Noguchi's Affiliations Across the New York Art World(s) of the 1930s," in *Isamu Noguchi: Sculptural Design*, ed. Vitra Design Museum (Weil am Rhein, Germany: Vitra Design Museum, 2001), 88.

¹²⁶ Torres, *Isamu Noguchi: A Study in Space*, 53.

became apparent that none of his plans were to be implemented, so he left the camp on a temporary leave of absence and never went back.¹²⁷ Instead, he returned to New York to resume his career as a sculptor.

Anna Chave quotes Noguchi as stating that in the New York of the 1930s he had been aware of "a sense almost of indecency that one could be occupied with art without some noble, moral cause behind it." He was guided by a similar feeling during the war, when he "felt that if the world were to survive, sculpture had to be an important part of the living experience and not just something for collectors to buy."¹²⁸ His disappointment over not being able to realize his vision at Poston brought about a dramatic but temporary ideological shift; as Noguchi later wrote in his autobiography: "The deep depression that comes with living under a cloud of suspicion, which we as Nisei experience, lifted and was followed by tranquillity [*sic*]. I was free finally of causes and disillusioned with mutuality. I resolved henceforth to be an artist only."¹²⁹ Noguchi stated elsewhere that the time he spent at the relocation camp "was a period of profound reappraisal for me of the place of art in the social context. Along with my disillusion with Marxist inconsistencies came a reappraisal of art in and for itself."¹³⁰ Tsutakawa, on the other hand, embraced public art and collaborative projects after the war. He did so without losing sight of his principles regarding the need to separate art from politics, however. By the end of 1949, Noguchi had published a short essay in the *College Art Journal*, which called for "a reintegration

¹²⁷ Noguchi, *A Sculptor's World*, 25. It took several months to obtain permission for such a leave; in total Noguchi spent seven months at the relocation centre in Poston. Torres, *Isamu Noguchi: A Study in Space*, 53.

¹²⁸ Quoted in Anna Chave, "Brancusi and Noguchi: Towards "A Larger Definition of Sculpture," in *Isamu Noguchi: Sculptural Design*, ed. Vitra Design Museum (Weil am Rhein, Germany: Vitra Design Museum, 2001), 62-63.

¹²⁹ Noguchi, *A Sculptor's World*, 26.

¹³⁰ Isamu Noguchi, "Sculpture as Invention." In *Isamu Noguchi: Sculptural Design*, edited by Vitra Design Museum (Weil am Rhein, Germany: Vitra Design Museum, 2001), 155.

of the arts toward some purposeful social end," in the face of a moral and spiritual crisis brought about by two world wars and "the blight of industrialism." The essay opened with the statement: "in the creation and existence of a piece of sculpture, individual possession has less significance than public enjoyment. Without this purpose, the very meaning of sculpture is in question."¹³¹ In actual fact, both artists continued to create works for private collections and public enjoyment, and did so for many more years. Noguchi, however, dedicated himself to three-dimensional art and design, whereas Tsutakawa also created paintings and prints for gallery exhibitions.

Wechsler points out that "the current stature of Noguchi as a major twentieth-century artist who successfully linked two cultures is of rather recent vintage. The fact that his work straddles both East and West was troubling to many mid-century observers because it simply did not fit within a category."¹³² Tsutakawa, too, met with this difficulty frequently, but while he may have tired of the question, he claimed he felt pleased when people wondered if he should be thought of as an American artist or a Japanese artist. He said this was because, to him, it did not matter.¹³³ Noguchi, on the other hand, consciously took on alternate roles as it suited him, playing the urbane cosmopolitan or the Japanese scholar/monk, with the latter becoming more dominant as he aged and spent more time in his studio in Japan and less in New York. Winther-Tamaki points out that, while such biculturalism has become relatively common for artists in recent decades, it was very unusual for Japanese and American artists during the postwar period. In the early postwar years, writes Winther-Tamaki, "artistic nationalism was so pervasive as to

¹³¹ Isamu Noguchi, "Towards a Reintegration of the Arts," *College Art Journal* 9, no. 1 (Autumn, 1949): 59.

¹³² Wechsler, "From Asian Traditions to Modern Expressions: Abstract Art by Asian Americans, 1945-1970," 71.

¹³³ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

be unnamed and hardly noticed."¹³⁴ Later on, the relationship was warmer, but it remained unequal: "in the vast majority of artistic transactions across the U.S.-Japan border in the postwar years, one of the two national cultures was invariably subordinated to the other. The foreign culture may have been appealing, inspiring, or threatening, but one clutched to the seat of one's identity in the home culture."¹³⁵

Tsutakawa returned to Seattle at the end of the war, now thirty-six years old. Once again he built a small shack to live in, this time behind his sister's house. Since the family business had been taken with no compensation, he had no obligation to return to working for it and could devote his attention to forging a career as an artist. With the help of education funds available under the G.I. Bill, enacted in 1944,¹³⁶ he was able to return to the University of Washington as a graduate student in art. He also spent one semester teaching Japanese language classes in the university's Far East Department. In January 1947, George Tsutakawa married Ayame Iwasa at the Nichiren Buddhist Temple in Seattle. His new wife was a California-born Japanese American who, like George, had been sent to live with her grandmother in Japan at a very young age and received her early education there. When she was thirteen her mother remarried, and Ayame returned to the United States. Her brother remained in Japan to continue his studies and was later drafted into the Japanese army. He died in Hiroshima when the U.S. dropped the atom bomb on August 6, 1945, having been transferred there just two weeks before.¹³⁷ In addition to being *Nisei*, both George and Ayame were *Kibei*, a term often used in the 1940s to refer to Japanese

¹³⁴ Winther-Tamaki, *Art in the Encounter of Nations: Japanese and American Artists in the Early Postwar Years*, 2.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 3

¹³⁶ Commonly known as the G.I. Bill, the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 provided a range of benefits for returning WWII veterans, including low-cost mortgages and the payment of tuition and living expenses for those wishing to attend colleges or vocational schools.

¹³⁷ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 50.

Americans who had been born in the United States, educated in Japan, and then returned to live in the U.S.¹³⁸ According to Mayumi Tsutakawa, this shared cultural identity and a mutual love of the arts was what brought her parents together and helped them to overcome a thirteen-year age difference.¹³⁹

While living at the Tule Lake camp during the war, Ayame and her family had, like many internees, turned to cultural traditions as a way to enrich their lives and maintain a degree of continuity to counter constant fears of being deported back to Japan. Still a teenager at the time, Ayame worked on strengthening her talents as an accomplished *koto* player and performer of Japanese classical dance. When she first met George at Tule Lake, Ayame was quite shocked to see a Japanese man in a U.S. army uniform. She struggled with this to some extent – not surprisingly, given the anti-American emotions that prevailed at the camp and her brother's role as a soldier fighting for Japan. Tule Lake was a high-security relocation camp that housed many Japanese loyalists, particularly among the older generation, and these included Ayame's stepfather.¹⁴⁰ However, Ayame herself was, as she has recalled, quickly won over by George's intelligence and gentleness. The in-laws of George's sister Sadako, the Moriguchi family, assuaged any fears Ayame's mother may have had about her daughter marrying an artist. The

¹³⁸ The Japanese characters for *Kibei* mean "returned to America." According to Paul Spickard, "the practice of sending or taking Nisei to Japan reached its height during the early 1920s. About half the Japanese born in America were taken to Japan in those years, and most of them remained there. This movement of Nisei and their families continued through the early 1930s and then tapered off.... Many [Kibei returned] to the United States expecting to become the new generation of community leaders, revered for their Japanese education and cultural knowledge, ready to instil proper attitudes and behavior in young Japanese Americans. There was a rude awakening. Far from being greeted with new honors and responsibilities, they found themselves disregarded by the Issei, who no longer had visions of a triumphal return to Japan, and disdained by the Nisei, who were more interested in bobby socks and ballgames than in things Japanese." Paul R. Spickard, *Japanese Americans: The Formation and Transformations of an Ethnic Group*. Rev. ed. (New Brunswick, N.J. and London: Rutgers University Press, 2009), 96-97.

¹³⁹ Mayumi Tsutakawa, interview by the author, June 23, 2010.

¹⁴⁰ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 50.

elder Moriguchis were interned at Tule Lake along with Sadako, her husband, and their five children. Following Japanese custom, the Moriguchis acted as go-betweens in arranging the marriage of George to Ayame. Before the war, the Moriguchis had been the Tsutakawas' competitors in the import-export trade, but unlike the Tsutakawas they planned to continue in their family's traditional business. They promised that George would have employment with them.¹⁴¹ When the war ended, Sadako's husband, Tomio, opened Uwajimaya, a Seattle import store specializing in groceries. It remains a well-known shopping destination in the city's International District, catering to a pan-Asian clientele. Beginning in 1970, Tomio Moriguchi would become very active in the Japanese American redress movement, which began in Washington State in the late 1960s.¹⁴²

Partly because she shared his passion for the arts, Ayame also supported her husband's chosen career-path, despite financial hardships in the first years of their marriage. This situation did not take long to improve. In 1947 Tsutakawa was not only a graduate student in the University of Washington School of Art; he was also teaching there part-time. The previous year he had taught Japanese in the Far East Department for one semester. It was still unusual for a Japanese American to be given a teaching position at the university, but Tsutakawa was hired because of the shortage of instructors that developed after 1945 as returning troops who were, like him, eligible for education funds under the GI Bill entered university in large numbers.¹⁴³ He was soon made a full-time art instructor and in 1950 was awarded an MA in sculpture.

¹⁴¹ Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 139.

¹⁴² See Robert Sadamu Shimabukuro, *Born in Seattle: The Campaign for Japanese American Redress* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001).

¹⁴³ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p. Ochsner observes that, while a small number of new students enrolled at UW in 1945, "the fall of 1946 brought an explosion in student numbers." In 1947 more than half the student body was made up of veterans, leaving the university's facilities severely overcrowded until the completion of postwar construction in

Tsutakawa's access to an unusual cross section of Seattle's artistic factions – the university and the downtown artists, Asians and non-Asians – sometimes led him to act as an intermediary. For example, in the late 1930s he had served as go-between when Tobey, wanting to broaden his knowledge of Japanese culture, sought out Nomura and Tokita. Tsutakawa has described how Japanese Americans at that time were often extremely modest, in large part because they were immigrants, earned little money, and generally worked at occupations thought of as "low class." Even though many ran their own businesses, as Nomura and Tokita did, they regarded themselves as inferior and were therefore very humble.¹⁴⁴ Although they were previously acquainted with Tobey, who had not yet achieved substantial fame, Nomura and Tokita felt strongly that it was not right for them to speak directly to "great artists" like him.¹⁴⁵ According to Tsutakawa, during the postwar years this sense of inferiority diminished significantly but did not entirely disappear. While he acknowledged that his teaching position was part of what bolstered his sense of being "equal with the American artists," he remarked in his Oral History interview that his outlook also reflected a broader change in attitude. Tsutakawa was quite sure that other successful Japanese American artists of the younger generation felt equally secure in their professional status, even if they were not art professors. As an example, he named Paul Horiuchi, a Seattle artist born in Japan. This suggests that Tsutakawa believed the feeling of acceptance he had experienced while developing his career extended beyond the often deeply-felt differences between *Issei* and *Nissei*.

1949 and 1950. Ochsner, *Lionel H. Pries, Architect, Artist, Educator: From Arts and Crafts to Modern Architecture*, 264.

¹⁴⁴ A similar comment regarding the Japanese assumption of white superiority during the 1930s was made by the eminent Japanese scholar, sinologist, literary and social critic Yoshimi Takeuchi in a 1960 lecture titled "Asia as Method." See Yoshimi Takeuchi and Richard Calichman, *What is Modernity?: Writings of Takeuchi Yoshimi* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 150.

¹⁴⁵ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

To his dismay, as he settled into his new role as art professor, Tsutakawa found the gulf between "town and gown" becoming ever wider. Feelings of mutual jealousy intensified as the Northwest School painters began to experience critical acclaim. They would soon become so celebrated, locally and nationally, as to virtually eclipse other talented Seattle artists. Among those marginalized were progressive artists who taught at the University of Washington, a group sometimes referred to today as "the university moderns."¹⁴⁶ At the same time, the inequity of the downtown artists' financial situation was particularly glaring, now that the government programs of the 1930s were defunct. Sensitive to the struggles of his "downtown" friends, Tsutakawa tried without success to overcome the old division and arrange for some of the Northwest School painters he had known before the war to lend their expertise to university programs. The only concrete result was one seminar talk given by Callahan. On several occasions Boyer Gonzales, director of the School of Art beginning in 1954, accompanied Tsutakawa to Tobey's studio and tried to convince the painter to teach at the university, even part-time. Tsutakawa recalled that Tobey had no interest in teaching, but according to Matthew Kangas the painter was Walker-Ames professor of art at UW during the fall 1959 quarter.¹⁴⁷ In the mid-1950s Tobey tried repeatedly to convince Tsutakawa to leave his position at UW and devote himself full-time to his art, but with a young family to support, Tsutakawa did not see this as a practical option.¹⁴⁸ As Tsutakawa later admitted, he was also quite unsympathetic to what he perceived as some of the downtown painters' determination to perpetuate the romanticized image of the "starving artist." He wondered whether their avoidance of university programs was really due to an aversion to

¹⁴⁶ Kangas, *School of Art 1920-1960*, n.p.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 53.

institutionalized art instruction.¹⁴⁹ These frustrations aside, Tsutakawa's commitment to teaching and his relationships with his students became very important to him over the years, as did the continued contact he maintained with some former pupils as they forged their own careers. He was increasingly attracted to public projects and collaborative working methods, and teaching provided a fertile field where these interests could begin to take root.

My next chapter will consider some aspects of Tsutakawa's teaching career, particularly his involvement in the UW School of Architecture's Basic Design course. I also expand on Tsutakawa's developing practice as a sculptor, connecting his work in the 1950s and beyond to various aspects of European modernism – though not as fully as I would like, for space is limited. As mentioned in my introduction, in 1999 Henry Art Gallery curator Sheryl Conkelton called for more research into the impact of European ideas on mid-twentieth-century Seattle artists.¹⁵⁰ As far back as 1974 Kingsbury complained that the emphasis typically placed on "nature, the Orient, and accompanying philosophies" as sources of inspiration for modernist painters in the Pacific Northwest had "totally obscured the importance of excellent German art and Surrealism."¹⁵¹ It needs to be stressed that Kingsbury made this statement in an overview of Northwest modernist painting; her later discussions of Tsutakawa clearly articulate the importance of nature and East Asian culture in his art. In the chapters that follow, I will also pay considerable attention to their central positions within Tsutakawa's body of work as a sculptor.

¹⁴⁹ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

¹⁵⁰ See Kangas, review of *What it Meant to be Modern: Seattle Art at Mid-Century*, n.p.

¹⁵¹ Kingsbury, "Seattle and the Puget Sound," 71. Before finding fame as a novelist, Tom Robbins was an art critic for *The Seattle Times*, *The Seattle Post*, and *Seattle Magazine*. In 1970 he expressed his frustration with the standard view of regional art, suggesting that his readers "hurry to seize the term 'Northwest art,' nail it in a Haida coffin, weight it down with a ton of bronze bird sculptures and sink it in the deepest part of Puget Sound, marking the spot with a buoy decorated by quasi-Chinese calligraphers." Quoted *ibid.*, 77.

Nonetheless, I agree with Conkelton and Kingsbury that much more research is also needed into the effects of early twentieth-century European modern art on the growth of Pacific Northwest modernism. This is particularly true for sculpture, which deserves more attention in general.

Chapter Three:

"A Very Strong Bauhaus Student:" Postwar Modernism In Seattle and Elsewhere

In Western Europe, developments that led to the outbreak of the Second World War also destroyed much of the social structure that had previously supported the artistic avant-garde. Refugees from totalitarian regimes generally made their way to Paris in the 1930s, with some moving on to London. There were also many artists and intellectuals who went to the United States, some to take up teaching positions, but a larger influx occurred after the fall of Paris in 1940. Of course, some European artists had entered the U.S. before 1930, Archipenko in 1923, for example, and Marcel Duchamp for the first time in 1915. It was in the early postwar period, however, that the centre of the avant-garde was completing its shift to New York from Paris. Alexandra Munroe observes that America's artistic "coming of age" was proclaimed by Clement Greenberg in 1947, when the New York critic identified Jackson Pollock as "the most powerful painter in the United States."¹ With this statement, Munroe argues, Greenberg placed "the work of a contemporary American artist above modern European masters," many of whom were at that time living in the U.S., and "his sentiments reflected America's will to assert cultural leadership of the 'free world' in the postwar era."²

This was a goal Greenberg shared throughout the 1950s and '60s with Harold Rosenberg, his chief critical rival, who in December 1952 published "The American Action Painters" in *Art News*, the first introduction of that much-used term. The article did not name any particular

¹ Clement Greenberg, "The Present Prospects of American Painting and Sculpture," *Horizon* 16, no. 93/94 (October 1947), quoted in Alexandra Munroe, "With the Suddenness of Creation: Trends of Abstract Painting in Japan and China, 1945-1970," in *The Third Mind: American Artists Contemplate Asia, 1860-1989*, ed. Alexandra Munroe (New York: Guggenheim Museum, 2009), 30.

² Munroe, *ibid.*

artists, but action painting came to be most closely associated with Pollock, though Rosenberg actually admired Willem de Kooning most among the Abstract Expressionists.³ By 1955, seeking to assert the national origins of the first modern art movement the U.S. could call its own, Greenberg was promoting the use of the term "American-type painting" over the more widely-used "abstract expressionism" and "action painting." In Greenberg's view, "abstract expressionism" alluded too closely to modern European art. On the other hand, according to Munroe, "action painting" suggested "sources in the gestural abstraction of East Asian calligraphy and ink painting." As I will demonstrate shortly, Greenberg categorically rejected any claims of Asian influence.

This chapter will focus on the first decade after 1945, a time when modernist sculptors in the United States found themselves in an awkward situation with respect to the rise of Abstract Expressionism, a painterly approach to art not easily transferable to sculpture. Examining the tension between "the individual and the social" in postwar American art,⁴ my main concern will be its manifestations within the Seattle art community. As noted above, Kingsbury and Johns have characterized the period's artistic production as characterized to a large extent by dual modernisms. The first might be termed an "art for art's sake" approach, focused on painting and relatively introspective. The second, practiced by craftspeople and designers, as well as artists, was more concerned with the needs of society and oriented toward design. Working from this rubric of internal division, I examine Tsutakawa's postwar career as an artist and teacher, leading up to his *Obos* sculptures and his first fountain commission. I argue that Tsutakawa is most accurately understood as existing between or transcending Seattle's two dominant modernisms,

³ Chilvers, *Oxford Dictionary of Twentieth Century Art*, 527: Rosenberg, Harold.

⁴ Borrowing a phrase from Wood and Harrison, *Art in Theory, 1900-2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, Part V.

due in part to his connection to "Northwest School" artists and the University of Washington, but also to his gradual rediscovery of his Japanese heritage. With the influence of the Bauhaus prevalent at UW, and painters like Tobey and Graves who were knowledgeable about Zen and other aspects of Eastern culture urging Tsutakawa to look to his ethnic roots, examining these overlapping networks of influence can provide a good deal of insight into his creative development.

The Pacific Northwest remained firmly on the periphery of the contemporary art world in the early postwar period, though Tobey and Graves had by that time exhibited successfully in New York, notably at the 1939 World's Fair and the Museum of Modern Art in the 1940s.⁵ In a recent essay in *Art Bulletin*, Partha Mitter suggests that proposing alternative or regional modernisms can be an effective strategy for "decentering modernism," in order to facilitate a fuller understanding of non-Western contributions that are not part of the art historical canon. Investigations into alternative or regional modernisms can also shed light on artists based in decidedly Western locales that experienced degrees of marginalization, in this case George Tsutakawa in Seattle. Mitter writes, "other modernisms were silenced as derivative or suffering from a time lag because of their geographic locations. Yet the significant point is that the center-periphery relation is not only one of geography but also of power and authority that implicates race, gender, and sexual orientation. Viewed from this perspective, the concept of the periphery

⁵ Tobey and Graves were included in the exhibition "American Art Today," which opened at the World's Fair in Spring 1939. In 1940 Graves took part in MOMA's "Contemporary Unknown American Painters" and in 1942 was included in "Americans 1942: 18 Artists from 9 States" and an exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art. Tobey was part of the Metropolitan Museum of Art's "Artists for Victory" exhibition in 1942, and the museum purchased his painting *Broadway* (1935-36), for its collection. In 1943 both Tobey and Graves were included in "Romantic Painting in America" at MOMA. For further exhibition information, see the "Timeline" in Conkelton and Landau, *Northwest Mythologies*, 149-162.

assumes important theoretical significance."⁶ Keeping the Pacific Northwest in mind while examining the specific brand of modernism promoted by the artists and critics of the New York School in the 1940s reveals a serious contradiction between the ideal of universal humanism they espoused and the realities of cultural life in the United States. During the war years, though "discourse about the creation of a truly 'American' art often elided race in order to stress universal humanism," the U.S. government made the decision to intern Japanese Americans residing on the West Coast.⁷ This action made Japanese American artists keenly aware that differences of race and nationality could still be painfully divisive, as did the negative attitudes Tsutakawa encountered when he returned to Seattle after serving in the U.S. Army. He later said of the University of Washington: "The art school was so good to me.... There was still a lot of antagonism – not personal, but on the whole. For Isaacs to give me a teaching position in the midst of all this – to encourage my art – that means so much."⁸

Comparing postwar paintings by well-known Seattle-based artists with similar works produced outside the area, Martha Kingsbury remarks in *Art of the Pacific Northwest* (1974) that painters in other parts of the U.S. and in Europe had, like their West Coast colleagues, clearly embraced "spontaneity as a technique, gestural rhythms as a means of characterization and image building, and extension toward the edges as an organizing and unifying principle." She further observes that "cosmic dramas incorporating vague totemic suggestions and iconic figuration had appeared in a number of places since the war." For Kingsbury, all of this raises the question of whether, during the 1950s, Seattle's better known painters were truly valued for their uniqueness

⁶ Mitter, "Interventions: Decentering Modernism: Art History and Avant-Garde Art from the Periphery," n.p.

⁷ Amy Lyford, "Noguchi, Sculptural Abstraction, and the Politics of Japanese American Internment," *Art Bulletin* 85, no. 1 (March, 2003): 145.

⁸ "Tsutakawa Named 1984 Outstanding Alum." *The Washington Alumnus Digest* (Spring 1984): 1.

as much as "for what they eventually shared with other developing art."⁹ This is an important issue and one that should lead to our asking, also, what prompted some less-than-positive reactions from major American critics to works by Tobey and Graves. Such opinions are relevant, since, as a unified body of work, Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures shared some aspects of their overall sensibility with paintings by Tobey and Graves; most importantly, all three artists succeeded in evoking personal spiritual beliefs through Asian-inflected approaches to abstraction.

Both Winther-Tamaki and Munroe have argued convincingly that Tobey's attachment to Asian art played a large part in limiting his success with American audiences.¹⁰ With Graves, there was another issue. By the late 1930s, critics who favoured abstraction and distrusted "subject matter" had begun to express dislike for what Conkelton describes as "the overt religiosity of his art," which incorporated imagery from Asian belief systems but was, in reality, more spiritual than religious.¹¹ In 1944 Greenberg, who had previously written admiringly of paintings by Graves, argued that his work was conservative because it attributed too much importance to "symbolical or 'metaphysical' content."¹² Going further back in the history of modernist painting to Kandinsky and Mondrian, J.J. Clarke, a specialist in East Asian thought, has pointed to the discomfort of Western critics and historians with esoteric forms of Asian spirituality as one of the reasons "the influence of the East on the birth of the modern movement in painting" was for so long "played down."¹³ Mitter, too, blames much of this neglect and the

⁹ Kingsbury, "Seattle and the Puget Sound, 69-70.

¹⁰ Bert Winther-Tamaki, "Mark Tobey, White Writing for a Janus-Faced America," *Word and Image* 13, no. 1 (1997): 285. Alexandra Munroe, ed., *The Third Mind: American Artists Contemplate Asia, 1860-1989*. New York: Guggenheim Museum, 2009, 77-91.

¹¹ Conkelton, "Pantheons of Dreams," 76.

¹² *Ibid.*, 74.

¹³ Clarke, *Oriental Enlightenment: The Encounter between Asian and Western Thought*, 103.

formalism that resulted on the frequent dismissal of spirituality and metaphysical thought in early twentieth-century Europe and early-twenty-first century America.¹⁴ Such negative responses may help explain why Tsutakawa, despite his openness regarding the Himalayan *obos* as an inspiration, felt he needed to emphasize in a public address, shortly after the installation of the *Fountain of Wisdom* that “the form that I am using is not religious at all. It’s simply this very basic form.”¹⁵

Tsutakawa also drew much inspiration, artistic and spiritual, from the natural world. In the recently published anthology *Biocentrism and Modernism* (2011), Oliver A. Botar and Isabel Wünsche argue that "nature-centric ideologies," which the book groups together using the designation "biocentrism," have been neglected within modernist studies, despite having played an important role in Euro-American art and culture from the late-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries. The opening of this period, Botar and Wünsche point out, closely follows "the rise of the science of biology during the nineteenth century," while the end date is slightly earlier than the emergence of the environmentalist movement of the 1960s. Nonetheless, they contend that biocentrism, succinctly defined as "nature Romanticism updated by the biologism of the mid- to late-nineteenth century," has been overlooked, ignored, or denied by historians of modernism, who have instead emphasized "its anti-natural, so-called 'mechanistic' aspects."¹⁶ While it would be incorrect to attach to Tsutakawa's point of view all the qualities these two authors ascribe to the discourses they label "biocentric," some do apply, and often these are closely linked to his spiritual beliefs. It is my contention, furthermore, that the ethical dimension of Tsutakawa's

¹⁴ Mitter, "Interventions: Decentering Modernism: Art History and Avant-Garde Art from the Periphery," n.p.

¹⁵ Seattle Public Library, Address Given by Mr. George Tsutakawa, 2.

¹⁶ Oliver A.I. Botar and Isabel Wünsche, *Biocentrism and Modernism* (Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2011), 2.

approach to art, which included his eventual decision to specialize in publicly-sited fountain sculpture, cannot be separated from his reverential attitude toward nature and its processes. This in turn was interwoven with his humanism; a fundamental aspect of Tsutakawa's interest in "the importance of water to life and to existence" was, he once explained, that "water influences the whole atmosphere where man has to live."¹⁷

As discussed in Chapter One, until the rise of twentieth century modernism, and well after for artists trained in the Beaux Arts tradition, classical figurative fountains were the norm in Europe and in North America. These fountains generally featured symbolic imagery based on Greco-Roman mythology or the Bible, but in recent times such sources have largely been replaced by what Naomi Miller describes as natural metaphors, with designers finding their inspiration in rivers, waterfalls, the "underlying motion inherent in the flow of water" and choosing to emphasize the dynamic properties of water in its own right. Miller points out that this can be traced back to Heraclitus, the pre-Socratic Greek philosopher who stated: "All is flux, nothing stays still."¹⁸ Interviewed in the late 1960, Tsutakawa used similar terms: "Water implies change and movement in a continuous rhythm. If I can capture this and incorporate it into a design, that is my aim."¹⁹ What Miller does not explain in her essay on "Fountains as Metaphor" is that the rediscovery of Heraclitus by twentieth century artists and designers did not arise on its own; it was part of a larger development known as "process philosophy" inspired not only by Heraclitus but by Eastern traditions, especially Buddhism.²⁰ For example, I argued in Chapter One that the idea of constant flux can be linked not only to Heraclitus but to the Asian concept of

¹⁷ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 25.

¹⁸ Quoted in Miller, "Fountains as Metaphor," 73.

¹⁹ Quoted in Lowndes, "The Fountain of Tsutakawa."

²⁰ Clarke, *Oriental Enlightenment: The Encounter between Asian and Western Thought*, 118.

the Tao. The modern French philosopher Henri Bergson was also an important influence on process philosophy, and Bergson was himself indebted to Eastern metaphysics.²¹

There are also numerous points of correspondence between process philosophy and the sculpture of Archipenko, and in 1956 the sculptor recalled that he had been directly influenced by Bergson during his early Cubist explorations.²² Archipenko credited *Creative Evolution* (1907) with inspiring his use of sculptural voids, specifically citing a section in which Bergson analyzes the way human intellect distorts our understanding of reality. According to Bergson, if one encounters an object or situation unexpectedly, one's intellect will be inclined to define that circumstance negatively rather than positively. In such cases, we tend to conceptualize "what we have as a function of what we want," that is to say, "we speak of an absence of this sought reality wherever we find the presence of another."²³ In *Cubism and Culture* (2001), Mark Antliff and Patricia Leighton explain that "Bergson applied this critique to ideas negatively defined in contrasting pairs, such as Hegel's dialectic, with its thesis and antithesis, and to concepts of contradiction and disorder, declaring them to be illusory constructs imposed on the plenitude of durational change."²⁴ Archipenko played with Bergson's idea when he introduced voids into such sculptures as *Standing Woman* (fig. 20) or the well-known *Woman Combing Her Hair* of 1915. In Bergsonian terms, Archipenko's sculptural void – encountered unexpectedly where one expects to find the woman's head – makes it possible for "us to fill this illusory gap with our own durational consciousness." Because the human imagination intuitively suggests alternative

²¹ Munroe, *The Third Mind: American Artists Contemplate Asia, 1860-1989*, 23.

²² Brancusi, too, had a strong and well-documented interest in Bergson. According to curator Sebastiano Barassi, Bergson is "regarded as 'the artist's philosopher' for his influence on on much early 20th century art." Sebastiano Barassi, "New Visions for a New World," in *Immaterial: Brancusi, Gabo, Moholy-Nagy* (Cambridge, UK: Kettle's Yard, 2004), 15, 5.

²³ Quoted in Mark Antliff and Patricia Dee Leighton, *Cubism and Culture* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2001), 98.

²⁴ Quoted *ibid.*

possibilities, "the delineated void within the figure's arm paradoxically resolves into a presence: a female head in profile."²⁵ As Guy Habasque observed in an essay published in *l'Oeil* in 1961, "this way of 'signifying' the head... [became] common practice in the work of Archipenko" and greatly influenced other modernist sculptors, "notably Henry Moore."²⁶

By the time Archipenko arrived in Seattle for the summer courses he taught in the mid-1930s, his sculpture had evolved into a richly varied practice that still combined abstraction with figuration. From Archipenko, Tsutakawa learned about the importance of space as a sculptural element with its own aesthetic integrity. In her monograph on Tsutakawa, Kingsbury makes a comparison between the Seattle artist's modernist fountains and the sculpted fountains of Bernini in Rome, and her insight could also be applied to some of Archipenko's sculptures, where no water is present. Kingsbury writes: "the works each [Tsutakawa and Bernini] created are outstandingly complex interactions of solid and void, and of still and moving shapes."²⁷ In fountains designed by Bernini and by Tsutakawa, the dynamism of curved lines and open forms is reinforced by the actual movement of the water, but Bernini's sculptures are ample proof that the perception of movement can be created by modelling traditional sculptural materials. In Archipenko's case, his search for affective dynamism was not limited to the use of voids and volumetric contrasts in his sculptures. In 1924 the artist invented a kind of kinetic painting that he called "Archipentura" that used an engine to "produce the illusion of movement by a painted subject," as Archipenko explained. The movement was real, however, and Archipentura stands as one of the first attempts to introduce mechanical movement into visual art. Archipenko

²⁵ Quoted *ibid.*

²⁶ Guy Habasque, "Alexander Archipenko" (1960) in *Archipenko; International Visionary*, edited by Donald H. Karshan. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1969, 17.

²⁷ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 114.

described it as "a new art form which makes use of time and space. So Archipentura paints time."²⁸

In a sense, Tsutakawa could be seen as paying homage to Archipenko when he later combined monumentality and movement in his fountain sculptures. The two artists shared an admiration for the qualities of monumentality and permanence found in Egyptian art and architecture, for example. Archipenko once wrote about the art of ancient Egypt in terms very similar to those Tsutakawa would use to express what he valued in the Himalayan *obos*. For Archipenko "the Egyptian style" was characterized by "a mysterious calm, a spiritual magnitude and fabulous beauty. This is the consequence of Egypt's religiously profound and refined contact with the universe, with its infinity and eternity."²⁹ In his own work, however, Archipenko merged this atmosphere of monumental stillness with a dynamic interplay of form and line, and Tsutakawa followed his mentor's example, particularly in his fountain sculptures. As I will demonstrate in Chapter Five, some of the fountains Tsutakawa designed in the 1960s also alluded to "primitive" or tribal art, a source of imagery valued by the Abstract Expressionist painters, and before that by the Surrealists, but also very important to Archipenko.

Tsutakawa's interest in public art began to emerge some time before he embarked on his first fountain commission, making itself felt by about 1950, as we will see. For American artists engaged in progressive painting and sculpture, the early postwar period was a time when the wind was shifting decisively in the opposite direction. The tension between "the individual and the social" that characterized postwar art in the United States has been discussed by many art historians, and the reasons for artists' turning toward expressionism, away from social realism,

²⁸ Alexander Archipenko, *Archipenko: Fifty Creative Years, 1908-1958* (New York: TEKHNE, 1960) 65-67.

²⁹ Quoted in Karshan, ed. *Archipenko; International Visionary*, 52.

elucidated. The situation is succinctly captured by Harrison and Wood when they observe that though the "impulse to expression" had subsided in Europe during the interwar period, with the forefront of cutting-edge art occupied at that time by abstraction and Surrealist automatism, the events of the Second World War and its aftermath were so overwhelming that "avant-garde artists appear once again to have been thrust back into themselves. At its most basic, this internal exile was a way of avoiding subservience to, and maintaining some independence from, the dominant culture."³⁰ The world of myth and dreams offered rich sources of creative content, and for some artists "the inner and the mythical were made to coincide as expressive resources to face a modern world otherwise beyond description."³¹ Like an earlier generation of artists, this post-war avant-garde turned to "the archaic and the unconscious," with Surrealism serving as the principal reference for these within recent European art. André Breton and the European Surrealists had taken up the psychoanalytic theories of Sigmund Freud, which they sought to join to the social philosophy of Karl Marx. American artists instead embraced Karl Jung's theory of the unconscious, attracted by its emphasis on the visual nature of primary thought processes, as opposed to Freud's focus on verbal language. They were also drawn to Jung's explorations of the primitive and his theories regarding universal archetypes.³²

There were, of course, other philosophies that American avant-garde artists were drawn to, in addition to Jung's ideas. One was European existentialism, which captured the attention of certain critics but was, some have argued, more important to these intellectually oriented writers

³⁰ Wood and Harrison, *Art in Theory, 1900-2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, 558.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² Belgrad, *The Culture of Spontaneity: Improvisation and the Arts in Postwar America*, 57. What Belgrad calls "the art of spontaneity" involved an interest in improvisation, open form, and the creative act that was transdisciplinary, appearing in music, performance, painting, dance, and poetry. Though associated with 1960s counterculture and most influential during that era, the culture of spontaneity was, according to Belgrad, "fully articulated in avant-garde practices between 1940 and 1960." *Ibid.*, 1-2.

than it was to most artists. Rosenberg, in particular, relied on an existentialist vocabulary, for instance when he declared influentially that the act of painting was of greater significance than the finished work of art.³³ Daniel Belgrad states in *The Culture of Spontaneity: Improvisation and the Arts in Postwar America* (1998) that "existentialism was far less central to the work of the postwar avant-garde than it has been made out to be."³⁴ Harrison and Wood point out that "the angst which was for so long a feature of the European post-war condition had less to breed on in the United States."³⁵ Individualism was, in addition, the dominant cultural ideology in America, which had the effect of depoliticizing existentialist individualism as an artistic stance, even if a particular American artist worked hard to remain aloof from consumer-oriented capitalism. Still, like the Abstract Expressionists in America, existentialist thinkers sought "to articulate a reality that exceeded conventional concepts and forms." The two groups also shared an attitude that "condemned abstract thinking as a falsification of experience."³⁶

Both characteristics were also to be found in Zen Buddhism, and Belgrad argues that Zen philosophy, along with a number of Western "field" theories, was more important than existentialism to postwar avant-garde artists in America. "Field" theories, among which Belgrad includes Zen, are philosophies that "posit the existence of a continuous field of energy that is prior to any experience of individuality." In Belgrad's view, the two most significant were the "gestalt therapy" of Paul Goodman and "process philosophy," already mentioned above, a school of thought in which Eastern ideas, especially those of Buddhism, play a prominent role.³⁷ J.J.

³³ Chilvers, *Oxford Dictionary of Twentieth Century Art*, 9: action painting.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 104.

³⁵ Wood and Harrison, *Art in Theory, 1900-2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, 559.

³⁶ Belgrad, *The Culture of Spontaneity: Improvisation and the Arts in Postwar America*, 104.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

Clarke's *Oriental Enlightenment: The Encounter Between Asian and Western Thought* introduces process philosophy:

Process philosophy represents a direct challenge to a central tradition of Western philosophy that goes back to Aristotle. This latter tradition rests on the belief that the fundamental constituents of the material world are enduring substances, that is to say distinct entities which persist through time and to which all complex phenomena are ultimately reducible. By contrast with this, process philosophy maintains that the basic constituents of reality are events or processes. Reality is viewed as being like an ever-flowing river, dynamic and mobile, and that the changes we perceive taking place are not merely the reshuffling of unchanging particles but are in some way radically creative.³⁸

The major names associated with process philosophy, which, according to Clarke, "has flourished chiefly in America," are Alfred North Whitehead and Charles Hartshorne. John Dewey is also important, as are William James – psychologist and philosopher of religion, pragmatism, and emotion – and semiotician Charles Sanders Peirce, though Clarke quotes Peirce as speaking "contemptuously of 'the monstrous mysticism of the East'."³⁹ Hartshorne, who became the leading promoter of process philosophy, had in-depth knowledge of Buddhism and, according to Clarke, he "was much more concerned than Whitehead to integrate it with his own speculations." Hartshorne, for example, wrote that "enduring substances in a living world constitute an elemental confusion contrary to both logic and life, a fact taken into account by countless Buddhists for two thousand years."⁴⁰

The growing popularity of Abstract Expressionist painting during the early postwar period made it a difficult time for sculptors, who found themselves confronted by a seemingly impossible demand – that they find a sculptural equivalent for a style that was inherently "painterly." European sculptors were affected, as Herbert Read noted in 1964, but the situation

³⁸ Clarke, *Oriental Enlightenment: The Encounter Between Asian and Western Thought*, 118.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴⁰ Quoted *ibid.*, 118.

was more prevalent in the U.S.⁴¹ Internationally, the best-known American sculptors at the time were Calder and Noguchi, and neither took up this particular challenge, despite producing forward-looking work in the 1940s and 1950s. According to Edward Lucie-Smith, the mainstream of development was then occupied by such sculptors as Seymour Lipton, Theodore Roszak, and Ibram Lassaw, New York-based artists whose works were more amenable to being labelled "Abstract Expressionist" by critics.⁴² Wayne Anderson, looking back on American sculpture of the 1950s for *Artforum* in 1967, observed that by the mid-'50s critics in the U.S. were shifting their attention away from subject matter based on dreams, "personal mythologies, and social opinions," eschewing emotional expression in sculpture in favour of "the strictly formal and monumental."⁴³ While this change was good for both Calder and Noguchi, "the work of Lassaw, Grippe, Roszak, Lipton, and Hare, was pretty much put aside as irrelevant for the new situation."⁴⁴ In Seattle, however, some writers continued to rely on the public's familiarity with Abstract Expressionism well into the 1970s; in a newspaper article on his fountains published in April 1974 Tsutakawa was hailed for achieving international recognition as "the action sculptor."⁴⁵

Of course, in the 1940s and 1950s the success Tsutakawa would achieve as a sculptor of fountains was still in the future. Nonetheless, his years away from school, particularly his time in the army and his exposure to mural painting while enlisted, had brought about a change in his interests and goals as an artist. He had also retained a fascination with the work of the Mexican

⁴¹ Herbert Read, *Modern Sculpture: A Concise History* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1964), 119.

⁴² Edward Lucie-Smith, *Sculpture since 1945* (London: Phaidon, 1987), 43.

⁴³ Wayne Anderson, "American Sculpture: The Situation in the Fifties," *Artforum* V (Summer 1967): 64.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 66.

⁴⁵ "His Fountains Make an International Splash," *Seattle South District Journal*, April 11, 1974.

muralists, which he and most of his fellow art students had learned about at the University of Washington. During the Depression years a number of Seattle artists had been greatly impressed by Mexico's mural program. Callahan had visited Mexico in 1931, encouraged by the U.S. government's flourishing interest in supporting visual art and by the social conscience of the Mexican muralists.⁴⁶ Ambrose Patterson, with whom Tsutakawa studied fresco briefly as an undergraduate, trained with muralists in Mexico in 1934. By mid-century, however, artistic values in America had changed, and he found that his teaching colleagues did not share his new interest in public art. The prevailing mood had turned toward a more individual, introspective, and often romantic form of modernism, which favoured what Kingsbury describes as "deeply private works, expressions of fierce intensity and moral authenticity."⁴⁷

It was in this climate that the "Northwest School" rose to prominence, and despite the divisions that existed between the downtown artists and the university modernists, for a time there was a shared sense that public art belonged to an earlier era. It was viewed by some as too close to propaganda and by others as insufficiently personal, in part because of its tendency to rely on collaborative processes. Still, in the Pacific Northwest, as in other places, some modernists were troubled by the turn toward individualism and "art for art's sake" philosophies that followed the socially oriented art movements of the 1930s. The individualism that dominated some spheres, particularly abstract painting, tended to promote a highly atomistic and introspective approach. As Johns points out, this could result in "an isolated and hermetic art,

⁴⁶ Kingsbury, "Art in Seattle, 1900-1960," 17. Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.; Kingsbury, "Seattle and the Puget Sound," 51.

⁴⁷ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p. In fact, both Tobey and Graves were included in an exhibition titled "Romantic Painting in America" at MOMA. The exhibition ran from November 17, 1943 to February 6, 1944. Conkelton and Landau, *Northwest Mythologies*, 154.

thus losing communication and social value."⁴⁸ In a catalogue essay for the Henry Art Gallery's exhibition, *What it Meant to be Modern: Seattle Art at Midcentury* (1999), Kingsbury describes this individualistic, introverted, and sometimes pessimistic modernism as an "older modernism," based on such romantic ideals as revolution and freedom.

It is clear that George Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures constitute an extensive and important body of work. I have suggested a few explanations for their relative neglect; they include Seattle's geographic isolation and the city's lack of status within the art world, where the best-known American critics rarely raised their eyes to look beyond New York City. In Chapter One I also argued that fountains, as a category, tend to fall between sculpture and architecture. Many fountains, whether sculptural or more architectural, could be considered examples of craft, applied art, or design, which would make them appear less interesting to some critics and art historians. This tendency is clearly illustrated by a remark made by Henry J. Seldis, generally a strong supporter of Tsutakawa's work as a fountain designer. In a preview of a major group exhibition published in *Art in America* in 1965, Seldis praised "some excellent bronze pieces by Tsutakawa, who may well become one of the country's leading sculptors unless he allows himself to be swamped by the growing demand for his fountains."⁴⁹ Another significant factor is that large, permanently-sited public sculptures are not well-suited to museum exhibitions, except when these are photographically-based, as with Bishop's Fountains in Architecture exhibition in the 1960s, or when curators combine photographs with scale models, as in *Northwest Artists in Japan* at the National Museum of Art, Osaka (1982) and the more recent *George Tsutakawa: The Making of a Fountain* at the Wing Luke Museum in Seattle, May 30 – November 23, 2008.

⁴⁸ Johns, *Jet Dreams: Art of the Fifties in the Northwest*, 28.

⁴⁹ Seldis, "Exhibition Preview: Pacific Heritage," 30.

In this chapter, I would like to consider another possibility – that Tsutakawa's fountains have, to some extent, been marginalized even within the art history of the Pacific Northwest because they embody traits associated with both conceptions of modernism Kingsbury presents: an "old romantic modernism," generally practiced by painters, and a newer "alternative" modernism.⁵⁰ Kingsbury writes that the "older modernism" was "always personal" and placed a high value on individual freedom and unfettered self-expression. "The deeply emotional and transcendently spiritual were its parameters, and the intimacy of mark-making was among its important means."⁵¹ For Clement Greenberg and his followers, modernism began in the 1860s with the paintings of Édouard Manet, and the movement's most compelling ideas continued, with few exceptions, to be expressed in that medium. The development of modern art continued, through the work of Paul Cézanne, until it reached a turning point with the invention of Cubism by Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque. Progress toward non-objective abstraction continued and was realized by Vassily Kandinsky. After the Great War ended abstract painting carried on, until the post-World War II period brought the achievements of New York-based American artists.

A different, but closely related, historical trajectory emerges when the lineage of modernism is traced through developments in architecture and design. Cubism and abstraction remain crucial – in *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* (1960), Reyner Banham states that the "aesthetic discipline" of modern architecture "was to come from the realm of painting and sculpture, from that development towards purely Abstract art"⁵² – but the philosophies of the Bauhaus also become very important. Johns states in *Jet Dreams* that Seattle, and particularly the

⁵⁰ Johns, *Jet Dreams: Art of the Fifties in the Northwest*, 66; Kingsbury, "Northwest Art: The Mid-Century seen from the End of the Century," 22-25.

⁵¹ Kingsbury, "Northwest Art: The Mid-Century seen from the End of the Century," 25.

⁵² Reyner Banham, *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* (London: Architectural Press, 1960), 87.

University of Washington's School of Art, were home to "a modernism founded on principles of design.... Painters, sculptors, and printmakers shared with architecture and interior design an interest in composition and structure."⁵³ This was Kingsbury's newer "alternative" modernism, and Bauhaus tenets were central. Originally founded in Weimar in 1919, the Bauhaus brought together two earlier educational institutions, the Kunstgewerbeschule (Arts and Crafts School) and the Hochschule für Bildende Kunst (Institute of Fine Arts) under the direction of architect Walter Gropius. One of his primary goals, as stated in the Proclamation of the Weimar Bauhaus, published in 1919, was to unify the arts, including "fine art," craft, design, and architecture.

According to Kingsbury, for Northwest artists the tensions between these dual modernisms – inwardly versus outwardly focused; oriented toward painting versus craft, design, and architecture – were especially strong in the postwar years.⁵⁴ As in many other aspects of life and art, Tsutakawa had a foot in each camp. He continued to create paintings and sculptures for gallery exhibitions throughout his life and maintained close friendships with some of the painters associated with the so-called "Northwest School," but I would argue that by choosing to make fountain commissions the focus of his career, Tsutakawa demonstrated a greater allegiance to the theories and practices that Gropius developed at the Bauhaus, and later at Harvard. According to Edward Burke, an architect and planner who attended the University of Washington during the late 1950s, Gropius was one of two leaders in the field highly favoured by many architecture faculty; the other was American designer George Nelson.⁵⁵ Gropius was committed to working towards replacing the individualistic era of art for art's sake with a new age, in which artists would dedicate themselves to design that spoke to all people. He reasoned that this democratic

⁵³ Johns, *Jet Dreams: Art of the Fifties in the Northwest*, 62.

⁵⁴ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 22.

⁵⁵ Edward Burke (Seattle architect, planner and former student of Tsutakawa's), email message to the author, February 8, 2011.

design would be universally accessible or "international" in a way that was analogous to music, an idea that may have proved attractive to Tsutakawa and others. Ament has pointed out that an unusually large number of Pacific Northwest artists who came to prominence in the postwar period had strong connections to or training in classical music.⁵⁶ Composers write music using a familiar twelve-note structure or key understood by almost everyone, and the new abstract "language" Gropius proposed would be "the visual equivalent to a musical key," an "optical key," as he put it.⁵⁷ Interviewed by Kingsbury for the Smithsonian's Oral History Project in 1983, Tsutakawa described himself as having been "a very strong Bauhaus student" during the postwar years – especially the 1950s, the decade he spent teaching at the University of Washington's School of Architecture as well as the School of Art.

What emerges from studies of Pacific Northwest modernism that include applied art and architecture as well as painting and sculpture is that, at least in this region, the practical separation between fine art and functional design in the postwar era was much less marked than the art historical tendency to focus almost exclusively on painting would indicate. Not surprisingly, architectural historians have been more inclined to recognize solid connections, in this region and elsewhere. Writing in 1984, Heinrich Klotz went so far as to suggest: "It may well be that a single modernist form – the kidney-shaped table... – contributed more to the victory of 'modern' architecture than all that Mies, Gropius, and Le Corbusier ever did."⁵⁸ According to Klotz, it was "the postwar ideal of the 'curvilinear style'," prefigured by Alvar Aalto and Oscar Niemeyer, that truly secured the modern movement's international acceptance.

⁵⁶ Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, xvi.

⁵⁷ Jill E. Pearlman, *Inventing American Modernism: Joseph Hudnut, Walter Gropius, and the Bauhaus Legacy at Harvard* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007), 204.

⁵⁸ Heinrich Klotz, *The History of Postmodern Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988), 16.

Nearly all Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures feature curved geometric and/or organic forms, and, while Klotz does not directly mention organicism, his comments on furniture design are illuminating:

The decisive effect was not that of the streamline as such, which played a very important role in the 1920s and the 1930s by taking away the impression of weight associated with the forms in everyday use; now these forms were endowed with a sense of existential ease, with curves and an élan supposed to propel people into a cheerful and smooth rhythm of living. In such forms the shape itself is elevated into a symbolic figure to which associations and emotions attach themselves.⁵⁹

According to Klotz, "the breeziness of curved forms" was among the most successful remedies adopted by Western designers and architects who "sought to dispel the gloom of the war."⁶⁰

More than a few painters and sculptors also seized on the strong commercial impetus to promote American design in the postwar period as a strategy for increasing public interest in modernist art. Conkelton notes that, with the postwar economic boom encouraging Americans to purchase newly built homes, Seattle's "designers and decorators sold works by local artists as they designed new house interiors."⁶¹ In 1947, while still a graduate student, Tsutakawa had his first opportunity to exhibit his work professionally in Seattle, as part of a two-person show. It took place at Frederick & Nelson, then the city's leading department store.⁶² The other artist exhibiting was Blanche Morgan, a painter and interior decorator who managed the store's interior decoration department; the show was well attended and covered in the press. In the early postwar period it was not uncommon for department stores in the U.S. and Canada to host art exhibitions

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 16-17.

⁶¹ Conkelton, *What it Meant to be Modern: Seattle Art at Mid-Century*, 10.

⁶² Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p. According to Conkelton, the exhibition space at Frederick and Nelson was known as the Little Gallery. Conkelton, *What it Meant to be Modern: Seattle Art at Mid-Century*, 13.

on their premises, a practice developed for the purpose of marketing up-to-date domestic interiors furnished in modern styles. Original works of modern art were presented as essential accents for those who sought to create an impression of affluence combined with progressive taste, and works by young artists like Tsutakawa were often priced within reach of those with relatively modest incomes. Also, while department store exhibitions were focused on retail sales, the late 1940s and 1950s also saw the proliferation of community arts councils, amateur arts and craft organizations and other, related groups in cities and towns across North America. An important part of their mandate was the promotion of democratization through art and design, a popular postwar ideal that was based on participation and education. Good design was thought to create good citizens, so those citizens – particularly women, recognized by this time as controlling most retail spending within their households – were encouraged to study art appreciation and take classes in painting or pottery, for example.⁶³

Beginning in the late 1940s, Tsutakawa found himself drawn to the creation of functional artworks and objects that blurred the line between sculpture and design. He made chairs and tables in wood and lamps in bamboo and silk, inspired at first by his need to furnish the home he now shared with Ayame. Soon he began to make lamps for sale and, though he made very few overall, in 1947 a number of lamps were included in Tsutakawa's first gallery show, a two-person exhibition at Seattle's Studio Gallery.⁶⁴ Bonifas admired the lamps Tsutakawa was

⁶³ See, among others, Johns, *Jet Dreams: Art of the Fifties in the Northwest*; Rhodri Windsor Liscombe, *The New Spirit: Modern Architecture in Vancouver, 1938-1963* (Montréal and Vancouver: Canadian Centre for Architecture / Douglas & McIntyre, 1997), and Watson, "Art in the Fifties: Design, Leisure, and Painting in the Age of Anxiety."

⁶⁴ Kingsbury points out that while both Tsutakawa and Noguchi designed lamps, stylistically their approaches were quite different. She argues that Tsutakawa's lamps seem much further removed from Japanese tradition than Noguchi's famous Atari lamps. Furthermore, Tsutakawa exhibited his lamps a few years before Noguchi's first appeared in publications. Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 54, 139.

making at this time, encouraged the fledgling designer's endeavours, and offered advice. While still living in Europe, the potter had designed vases and plates that his assistants later executed for mass production.⁶⁵ Tsutakawa sold a small number of lamps; he found that his hanging lamps, in particular, appealed to people who were building houses in modern styles, designed by local architects.⁶⁶ He briefly considered commercial production of some of his furniture designs, but according to Kingsbury decided against it because of the difficulties involved in securing patents.⁶⁷ In addition to learning from Bonifas, but to a lesser degree, Tsutakawa also increased his knowledge of functional design through a casual acquaintance with George Nakashima, who was close friends with Morris Graves.

In sculpture and in painting, Tsutakawa said, he regarded space and form as his primary concerns.⁶⁸ This characteristic first emerged prior to WWII, and while there were other contributing factors, Tsutakawa believed it was enhanced to a fairly equal extent by his training in painting and sculpture, particularly his time with Archipenko, and by his frequent contact with architects and their methods, first as a student, and later as a teacher and an artist working on architectural commissions. Tsutakawa recalled that around 1947, the year he started teaching art at the University of Washington:

The whole art world, so to speak – which included painting, sculpture, architecture, music, drama, and even literature – was very influenced by the Bauhaus theory... which had to do so much with the relationship of the total space – and everything in it, including time, and light, and movement, rhythm, and scale. I mean, size, volume, weight, and vibration; we were always talking about this.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.; Kangas, *School of Art 1920-1960*, n.p.

⁶⁶ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

⁶⁷ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 54.

⁶⁸ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

Tsutakawa went on to say that he was sure Bauhaus ideas had influenced every area of fine art, architecture, and design. One result was the creation of a shared vocabulary that could be used by students and professors working in separate disciplines. Another, of more interest to Tsutakawa, was the development of integrated models of study and practice, notably the Basic Design course he participated in teaching at UW.

Just as the philosophies of the Bauhaus were taking root in the United States, a major art world event demonstrated that the romantic, individualistic side of modernism continued to dominate fine art. In 1948 Tobey brought the international spotlight to bear on Seattle by winning the top prize at the Venice Biennale,⁷⁰ an achievement that put him ahead of the painters of the New York School. None of them had been recognized in this way; in fact, the next American to place first in Venice would be Robert Rauschenberg in 1964. According to Winther-Tamaki, observers in the United States paid little attention to Tobey's achievement; there was much more celebration when Rauschenberg won. By 1964 the use of familiar national symbols like the American flag by such artists as Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns was establishing itself as a kind of "universal language" – one much more accessible than Tobey's "abstract script."⁷¹ Well before the 1960s, American critics had noticed a tendency for qualities that emphasized the artist's process – "flung pigment, free gesturalism, spontaneity, and chance"

⁷⁰ The previous American winner, in 1895, had been James Abbott McNeill Whistler. Another painter greatly influenced by Japanese art, Whistler, like Tobey, chose to live in Europe. Tobey's work tended to find more acceptance in Europe; from 1960 on he lived in Basel, Switzerland. In 1961 a retrospective exhibition of Tobey's work was held at the Louvre in Paris. Tobey kept his studio in Seattle, returning each summer until the late 1960s. According to Ament, he became bitter toward Seattle; later in life he told friends the city had benefitted from his fame without ever truly appreciating his paintings. *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 41.

⁷¹ Winther-Tamaki, "Mark Tobey, White Writing for a Janus-Faced America," 89.

– to be regarded as having some Asian ancestry.⁷² As Wechsler observes, this "caused great concern among certain New York critics," who fought back by pointing to what they argued were particularly American traits in the new style of painting, in contrast to what they viewed as unrelated aspects of Eastern art. According to Wechsler, "one favored device was to emphasize the aggressive, no-hold-barred 'action painting' side of Abstract Expressionism. This was seen to go beyond the sense of calm and meditative restraint inherent to much Eastern art, as well as its gently nuanced and subtle color harmonies." At times this strategy degenerated "into something resembling a 'macho' aesthetic. One critic stated that an authentic artist puts 'himself in tune with natural laws... [dancing] as he would with a woman – and if he is a *masculine* artist, he leads'" (original italics).⁷³

To a great extent, Tobey's work was overshadowed by later Abstract Expressionist painters. Some of these artists, notably Robert Motherwell and Franz Kline, had also been moved by the gestural brushwork of Asian calligraphy, but were not always willing to admit as much; Winther-Tamaki insinuates that Kline's reticence was encouraged by Greenberg.⁷⁴ Seeking to promote Abstract Expressionism as an indigenous American modernist style, Greenberg downplayed external influences and categorically dismissed any claims of Asian influence on the painters of the New York School. In the essay "American-Type Painting" (1955) he declared:

Kline's apparent allusions to Chinese or Japanese calligraphy encouraged the cant, already started by Tobey's case, about a general Oriental influence on "abstract expressionism." This country's possession of a Pacific Coast offered a handy received idea with which to explain the otherwise puzzling fact that Americans were at last producing a kind of art important enough to be influencing the French, not to mention the Italians, the British and the Germans. Actually, not one of the original "abstract

⁷² Wechsler, "From Asian Traditions to Modern Expressions: Abstract Art by Asian Americans, 1945-1970," 74

⁷³ Quoted *ibid.*

⁷⁴ Winther-Tamaki, "Mark Tobey, White Writing for a Janus-Faced America," 89.

expressionists" – least of all Kline – has felt more than a cursory interest in Oriental art. The sources of their art lie entirely in the West.⁷⁵

Winther-Tamaki notes that, in discussions of his painting, Tobey's supporters and his detractors tended to focus on its relationship to Asian culture – Japanese and Bahà'ì – with Seitz, for example, claiming in a MOMA catalogue of 1962: "Tobey's fusion of East and West was surely the most specific, influential, and culturally significant America has seen."⁷⁶ Tobey's interest in Japanese art was not limited to painting and calligraphy; he was, for example, an enthusiastic admirer of Japanese theatre.

The Henry Gallery at the University of Washington recognized Tsutakawa's achievements with a solo exhibition in 1950, and soon his work was being widely shown.⁷⁷ Still, a list of his regular venues during this decade, which included a regional country fair, makes it clear Seattle was still some years away from being able to think of itself as a sophisticated metropolitan locale. Kingsbury notes that "he showed regularly at the Puyallup Fair Art Exhibition, Pacific Northwest Arts and Crafts Fair, Northwest Annual, Northwest Watercolor Exhibition, and Northwest Printmakers' Annual," as well as being active in Northwest Sculpture Society.⁷⁸ Tsutakawa was certainly busy; in 1953, for example, he mounted three solo exhibitions in institutional spaces and contributed works to nine invitational exhibitions and two competitions. He also participated in four group shows, including a very successful one at Seattle's Dusanne Gallery that featured works by local Japanese artists.

⁷⁵ Clement Greenberg, "American-Type Painting" (1955, revised 1958) in *Art and Culture: Critical Essays* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), 220.

⁷⁶ Quoted in Winther-Tamaki, *Art in the Encounter of Nations: Japanese and American Artists in the Early Postwar Years*, 46.

⁷⁷ Tsutakawa was given a second solo exhibition at the Henry in 1965.

⁷⁸ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 147.

Seattle had only two commercial galleries in the early 1950s, the other being the Studio Gallery. Zoë Dusanne had opened her gallery in 1950; it was housed in her Lakeview home.⁷⁹ In addition to Tsutakawa, she represented John Matsudaira, Horiuchi, Nomura, and Tokita (fig. 23).⁸⁰ Until Otto Seligman opened his gallery in 1953, Dusanne was also Tobey's Seattle dealer.⁸¹ Dusanne's was the first commercial gallery in the city to exhibit both European modernism and contemporary American art, including works by local artists, a fact that increased the prestige attached to having one's work shown there.⁸² Tsutakawa also had a solo show at the Dusanne Gallery in 1953 and another in 1958.⁸³ It seems that, rather like Tsutakawa, Dusanne was able to function without paying too much attention to the divisions between Seattle's different artistic communities. Conkelton points out that she showed the "downtown" artists as well as university professors and graduates. Moreover, Dusanne actively combined works by local artists with European examples, providing direct visual connections.⁸⁴ It seems likely that this practice contributed to educating the Seattle artists she represented, as well as gallery visitors. Also, in the latter 1950s the Seattle Art Museum established lecture series that featured important art historians and writers to the city,⁸⁵ which no doubt further broadened the local art community's exposure to modern European art and ideas.

Tsutakawa was not the only Seattle artist whose exposure increased in 1953. In late September a feature article appeared in *Life* celebrating the "Mystic Painters of the Northwest:"

⁷⁹ Dusanne's house was designed by architect Roland Terry, a leading practitioner of Northwest modernism and a graduate of the UW School of Architecture. I would like to thank Dr. Jeffrey Ochsner for providing this information.

⁸⁰ Tokita had died shortly after the war, but according to Tsutakawa his work was included in the exhibition. Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

⁸¹ Conkelton and Landau, "Timeline," *Northwest Mythologies*, 161.

⁸² Conkelton, *What it Meant to be Modern: Seattle Art at Mid-Century*, 13.

⁸³ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 147.

⁸⁴ Conkelton, *What it Meant to be Modern: Seattle Art at Mid-Century*, 13.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

Tobey, Callahan, Anderson, and Graves. A brief text on each was accompanied by a photograph of the painter and one or two colour reproductions of his works (fig. 24). Tobey, described as the "pioneer and dean of Seattle artists," is pictured on the opening page of the piece. Two decades older than the younger generation he inspired, who "have moved off into their own mystical realms," Tobey wears a dark jacket and tie and a pensive expression. The caption beneath the photo describes him as "painter-philosopher Mark Tobey," who "sits meditatively beneath his art... and panels of Chinese writing which influenced it."⁸⁶ On the following pages Callahan and Anderson are shown amid the clutter of their studios; as Caroline Jones has shown, by this date publishing photographs of American modernists in their working environments had become an established means of capturing an aura of individual genius.⁸⁷ The *Life* article's introductory paragraph stresses that the four artists share one crucial trait. Although their painting styles are unique, and range "from realistic to non-objective," they all "embody a mystical feeling toward life and the universe. This mystical approach stems partly from the influence of the Orient whose cultures have seeped into the communities that line the U.S. Pacific Coast."⁸⁸ The artists of the Pacific Northwest are, the writer adds, further united by their tendency toward symbolism and the centrality of nature in their works.

It is therefore fitting that the article should end with a large photograph of Graves, "the best known and least seen of all the Seattle painters."⁸⁹ Perched on the sturdy root of a large, moss-laden tree, the "bearded recluse" wears jeans and sneakers, and rests his chin on his hand like a backwoods version of Rodin's famous *Thinker*, or perhaps Durer's *Melancholia*. It is clear

⁸⁶ "Mystic Painters of the Northwest," *Life* 35 (September 28, 1953), 84.

⁸⁷ See Caroline A. Jones, *Machine in the Studio: Constructing the Postwar American Artist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

⁸⁸ "Mystic Painters of the Northwest," 84.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 88.

the article published in *Life* played a major role in establishing the characteristics of the Northwest School and solidifying its importance. Callahan was given a retrospective at the Seattle Art Museum in 1954, an event that received national coverage in *Time* magazine. He was referred to as "one of the artists ... who make Northwest Mysticism the most commanding regional art movement in the U.S. today."⁹⁰ In 1956 the Whitney Museum in New York held a retrospective of Graves's work, and the following year the status of the Northwest School was confirmed when the United States Information Agency (USIA) for Europe and Asia sent works by the four painters featured in *Life* on a world tour, together with pieces by four New York sculptors, in an exhibition titled *Eight American Artists*.⁹¹

The "mystic" label was one Graves may have embraced but other, more down-to-earth painters clearly took with a grain of salt. When the *Life* article appeared, Callahan had already been showing his work in New York with considerable success for three decades, ever since his inclusion in the first Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary Art at the Whitney Museum in 1933. He enjoyed recounting how he had worried when, in the late 1940s, one of that city's critics first used the term "mystic" to describe him. Friends advised Callahan not to be concerned, but told him: "If when you get back to Seattle you try to act like a mystic and paint like a mystic, then you will have to worry."⁹² While Callahan could not think of himself as a mystic – his artistic

⁹⁰ Quoted in Kingsbury, "Seattle and the Puget Sound," 61.

⁹¹ Ibid. A branch of the state department, the USIA organized various travelling exhibitions of American modern art at the start of the Cold War, intended to demonstrate the nation's cultural progress to foreign audiences. Objections were raised by conservatives at first, but soon postwar abstract art became an accepted Cold War weapon, widely regarded as a powerful symbol of American freedom and individualism. See Guilbaut, *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art: Abstract Expressionism, Freedom, and the Cold War*. A number of later studies argue for a more complex analysis of the politics of Abstract Expressionism than Guilbaut's Marxist approach; see, for example, Leja, *Reframing Abstract Expressionism: Subjectivity and Painting in the 1940s*.

⁹² Quoted in Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 68.

inspiration mainly coming from nature and Western art history – he did believe that "what most artists are trying to get at is the inner being of a person or thing, and how is it related to all other things and beings."⁹³ As a Bahà'ì, Tobey was motivated by a form of universalism that was more grounded in humanism than Callahan's concern for all "things and beings," though Conkelton argues that the close relationship and exchange of ideas between the four "Northwest School" painters from 1939 to 1941 relied on a "basis of shared humanistic values."⁹⁴ Tsutakawa also considered himself a humanist,⁹⁵ but in more than one interview spoke against Western anthropocentrism and in favour of the holistic Asian view "that man should be a part of nature and live harmoniously with it."⁹⁶

Japonisme and Edward Said's Orientalism

In European art history, the exotic appeal of foreign cultures is, of course, closely linked to the opening of international trade routes, with fashions in the decorative and fine arts reflecting power relations, politics and economics in ways that may be simple or complex. Though it can be traced further back, the taste for decorative styles based on art from East Asia, often in combination with European patterns and motifs, is generally presented as starting with *chinoiserie* in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with *japonaiserie* following in the nineteenth. In 1854 Japan was forcibly opened to trade with the U.S. by the American Commodore Matthew C. Perry; the signing of the Kanagawa Treaty ended centuries of isolation during which the Japanese had engaged in very limited trade with a few European countries.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Conkelton, "Pantheons of Dreams," 71.

⁹⁵ Mayumi Tsutakawa, interview by the author, June 23, 2010.

⁹⁶ George Tsutakawa, "Personal Statement," *Pacific Northwest Artists and Japan* (Osaka: National Museum of Art, 1982), 93.

Perry's action brought the reign of the feudal shoguns to a close and under the new regime, that of the Meiji emperors, Japan embarked on a period of modernization. Vastly increased trade led to Europe and America experiencing an influx of Japanese objects, such as brightly coloured woodcut prints, ceramics, furniture, and textiles, which were sold to collectors or exhibited to wider audiences at international expositions. The London Exhibition of 1862 was the first world's fair to include contributions from Asian countries; India and China as well as Japan were featured.

In addition to decorative objects with designs derived from Japanese art, *Japonisme* encompassed paintings and prints depicting Japanese subjects. The term was coined in 1872 by the French critic, collector, and printmaker Philippe Burty "to designate a new field of study – artistic, historic and ethnographic."⁹⁷ For scholars, Japonisme has since become further differentiated from decorative *japonaiserie*; it is instead associated with the deeper effects of Japanese aesthetics on Western artists and art movements. In some cases these were formal only, in others both formal and philosophical. Exemplifying the latter are those Post-Impressionist painters who thought they glimpsed a socialist or anarchist utopia in *ukiyo-e* prints, with their seemingly naïve or archaizing imagery and graphic style. A lengthy list of European artists inspired by Japanese art and culture could be provided; some of the key groups and individuals are the British Aesthetic Movement, which included the American-born James Abbott McNeill Whistler, the French Impressionists and Édouard Manet, and the Post-Impressionists.

As for the United States, Munroe introduces *The Third Mind: American Artists Contemplate Asia, 1860-1989* with this provocative statement: "The use of Asian art and thought

⁹⁷ Oxford Art Online, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Art Terms*: japonisme. http://www.oxfordartonline.com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/subscriber/article/opr/t4/e937?q=japonisme&search=quick&pos=2&_start=1#firsthit.

to inspire new forms of artistic expression is one of the greatest forces in modern and contemporary art in America. It is also the least appreciated." Munroe's overview of Asia's effect on American art and literature begins with the nineteenth century transcendentalists Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, who studied religious and philosophical texts from India and China as part of their "quests for a wholeness of self in relation to cosmic nature." Later artists who sought to abstain from European empiricism and utilitarianism followed the American transcendentalists in looking "toward Asia to forge an independent artistic identity that would define the modern age – and the modern mind – in a new ... understanding of existence and consciousness."⁹⁸ After 1860, however, the Asian impact on the American vanguard was dominated by Japanese art and Zen Buddhism, partly due to the strength of America's political and economic ties with Japan. The artists most affected included James Abbott McNeill Whistler and members of Alfred Stieglitz's circle, among them Marsden Hartley, a painter Tsutakawa greatly admired.⁹⁹ Already well-versed in the mysticism of the American transcendentalists, Hartley first encountered the writings of Kandinsky in Paris in 1912, and the two men met the following year in Berlin.¹⁰⁰ To quote Munroe: "American art evolved in significant ways through a process of appropriation and integration of Asian sources that runs consistently from the 1860s to the 1980s, when globalization came to eclipse earlier, more deliberate modes of cultural transmission and reception."¹⁰¹

A similar statement could be made regarding developments in American architecture. In 1893 Frank Lloyd Wright attended the Chicago World Exposition, where a visit to the Japanese

⁹⁸ Munroe, *The Third Mind: American Artists Contemplate Asia, 1860-1989*, 21.

⁹⁹ In the original transcript for Tsutakawa's Oral History interview, Hartley was not included as one of the early twentieth century painters he most admired. Tsutakawa made very few changes to the transcript, but he ensured Hartley's name was added.

¹⁰⁰ Pyne and Atkinson, "Landscapes of the Mind: New Conceptions of Nature," 89.

¹⁰¹ Munroe, *The Third Mind: American Artists Contemplate Asia, 1860-1989*, 21.

pavilion introduced him to the architecture of that country, lending support to concepts he later claimed to have formulated independently.¹⁰² Tim Benton writes that modern architects were particularly fascinated by Japanese houses, "which seemed to combine intensely human and intimate values with the clean, uncluttered surfaces and brightly lit spaces that matched Modernists' expectations."¹⁰³ Japan's domestic architecture had provoked interest from westerners at least since the 1870s, and a detailed study was made around that time by Edward Morse, an American who published his findings in 1885 as *Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings*, a book that remained in print for many decades.¹⁰⁴ Japanese architecture, and domestic architecture in particular, had much to teach West Coast architects in the U.S. and Canada in the mid-twentieth century. That subject will be discussed very briefly in Chapter 4; at the moment it is enough to mention a replica of a traditional Japanese house and garden, exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in the summers of 1954 and 1955 as "a gift of the Japanese people."¹⁰⁵ Architectural critic Lewis Mumford praised the house in one of his columns for the *New Yorker*; calling it "the finest piece of architecture New York has seen since last year's Frank Lloyd Wright retrospective."¹⁰⁶ The house at MOMA was designed by architect Junzo Yoshimura based on sixteenth and seventeenth century prototypes, but the 1950s also saw the

¹⁰² Arata Isozaki, *Japan-ness in Architecture* (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 2006), 5.

¹⁰³ Tim Benton, "Modernism and Nature," in *Modernism, 1914-1939: Designing a New World*, ed. Christopher Wilk (London: V&A Publications, 2006), 317.

¹⁰⁴ Paul H. Varley, *Japanese Culture*, 3rd ed. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1984), 292.

¹⁰⁵ Quoted in Sheila K. Johnson, *The Japanese Through American Eyes* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988), 96.

¹⁰⁶ Lewis Mumford, *From the Ground Up: Observations on Contemporary Architecture, Housing, Highway Building, and Civic Design* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1956), 178.

birth of what is sometimes called "Japonica," a style of Japanese design that was, according to Japanese architect Arata Isozaki, "produced under the influence of American taste."¹⁰⁷

Close ties exist between *japonaiserie*, Japonisme, Japonica, and other such fashions in art or décor and the subject explored by Edward Said in *Orientalism* (1978). That ground-breaking study focused, however, on the Middle East – "the Orient" as represented by and for the West, primarily during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Said explained that he analysed orientalism "as a dynamic exchange between individual authors and the large political concerns shaped by the three great empires – British, French, American – in whose intellectual and imaginative territory the writing was produced."¹⁰⁸ The importance of Said's book is not in question, but in the years since its publication, its arguments have been critiqued and extended by scholars in a broad range of academic fields. Literary historian Lisa Lowe, for example, has questioned "the assumption that orientalism *monolithically* constructs the Orient as the Other of the Occident," while J. J. Clarke has sensibly asked, "why construe orientalism as just *one* story, as a *single* narrative?"¹⁰⁹ In relation to Japan, Munroe and others have pointed out that Said's "colonial discourse" thesis is clearly problematic when applied to the country itself, and cannot be easily transferred to those parts of East Asia where Japan was the Imperial power in the years prior to 1945, the start of the American occupation that followed the Second World War.¹¹⁰

In writing *Orientalism*, Said drew upon Foucault's discourse theory – his ideas concerning the relationship between power and knowledge – and Antonio Gramsci's theories on hegemony. As Clarke points out in *Oriental Enlightenment*, Said focused his account on

¹⁰⁷ Isozaki, *Japan-ness in Architecture*, 33-40.

¹⁰⁸ Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993), 14-15.

¹⁰⁹ Lowe quoted in Clarke, *Oriental Enlightenment: The Encounter between Asian and Western Thought*, 9; *ibid.*

¹¹⁰ Munroe, *The Third Mind: American Artists Contemplate Asia, 1860-1989*, 26; Clarke, *Oriental Enlightenment: The Encounter between Asian and Western Thought*, 27.

antipathy, presenting "orientalism as a 'master narrative' of Western Imperialism which constructs and controls its subjugated other," and upon this framework Said built "a powerful ideological critique of Western liberalism." While Clarke does not dispute "the repressive and discriminative nature of much Western discourse about non-European peoples and cultures," which has been documented and discussed in numerous valuable studies that followed Said, he argues that "a richer and often more affirmative orientalism" also exists, but has been neglected.¹¹¹ Further exploration is warranted, Clarke writes, and not least because orientalism differs from other expansionist discourses in the unusual "degree to which the colonised ideas have been elevated above those of the coloniser." Not only is orientalism too complex for it to "simply be identified with the ruling imperialist ideology," according to Clarke it is not unusual, in the Western context, to find that orientalism represents "a counter-movement, a subversive entelechy, albeit not a unified or consciously organized one, which in various ways has often tended to subvert rather than to confirm the discursive structures of imperial power."¹¹²

Said's focus on the Middle East allowed him to ignore what Bernard Faure, a leading scholar in the field of Ch'an and Zen Buddhism, has dubbed "secondary orientalism," referring to "an inversion of the signs of traditional orientalism" that occurs when westerners become convinced of the failure of rationality and look to Asian religions, and Zen in particular, for an

¹¹¹ Clarke himself portrays orientalism as, in his words, "tending to confront the structures of Western knowledge and power and to engage with Eastern ideas in ways that are more creative, open-textured, and more reciprocal than are allowed for in Said's critique." He adds that, in his view, "European hegemony over Asia represents a necessary but not a sufficient condition for orientalism." Ibid., 8-9.

¹¹² Clarke, *Oriental Enlightenment: The Encounter between Asian and Western Thought*, 9. Similar claims have been made by other critics. See, for example, Dennis Porter, "Orientalism and its Problems," in *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader*, ed. Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman (New York, Columbia University Press, 1994), 150-161. Perhaps in response to such criticisms, in *Culture and Imperialism* Said placed much more emphasis on the moments of resistance – what he called "counterpoints" – that may be found within narratives written from a colonial perspective (66).

"authenticity" the West has supposedly lost.¹¹³ This sometimes occurred at the recommendation of twentieth-century Asian thinkers who advocated a particular form of Eastern spirituality; Munroe names several well-known Asians who taught in the West, but in mid-century America the outstanding figure was Daisetz Suzuki, who moved to the U.S. in the late 1950s and lectured at Columbia University.¹¹⁴ Suzuki's writings first entered the West in the inter-war period, but the defeat of Japan in 1945 meant that cultural barriers were lowered further and a broader audience emerged. Like other Eastern thinkers, Suzuki was well-educated in Western traditions and disseminated his ideas in academic settings as well as more popular contexts. J.J. Clarke raises an important point when he notes that Suzuki and others who brought "Eastern wisdom" to the West often subtly altered their own teachings in the process, whether consciously or unconsciously. Another factor to be considered is "the exponential growth of immigration of Eastern peoples to the West," resulting in more direct interaction between cultural groups. Clarke concludes that "orientalism in the twentieth century has increasingly become a matter of complex interaction between cultures, involving a variety of interweaving agendas and ideological interests, rather than simply a matter of remote projection by one Western discourse concerning the East."¹¹⁵ Munroe, however, argues that, like some earlier promoters of Asian thought in the West, Suzuki participated in "the circulation of a number of Western Orientalist tropes that remain tied to a problematic essentialization and reification of 'East' and 'West' that replicates

¹¹³ Bernard Faure, *Chan Insights and Oversights: An Epistemological Critique of the Chan Tradition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 6.

¹¹⁴ Important earlier examples include Okakura Kakuzō and his contemporary Swami Vivekananda, who promoted the spirituality of Japan and India, respectively. Okakura was the author of *The Ideals of the East* (1903) and *The Book of Tea* (1906). Vivekananda, the leading disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, founded Vedanta societies in Europe and America. Munroe, *The Third Mind* includes essays on each of these influential thinkers.

¹¹⁵ Clarke, *Oriental Enlightenment: The Encounter between Asian and Western Thought*, 100.

many of the fundamental assumptions of Euro-American world-views, most notably the universalized discourse of world religions."¹¹⁶

Tobey had read one of Suzuki's books on Zen in the late 1940s and had also become friends with Tamotsu Takizaki, a Seattle antique store owner and master of *kendo* (Japanese swordsmanship). Takizaki knew a great deal about Zen philosophy, and he guided Tobey as he explored the ideas in Suzuki's book.¹¹⁷ In 1956 or 1957 Tobey read Eugen Herrigel's *Zen in the Art of Archery* and began to apply its principles to his paintings in oil and tempera.¹¹⁸ Herrigel's 1948 classic, originally written in German, was published in English in 1953 and was one of the most significant sources of information on Zen philosophy for post-war American artists. Like Tobey, they were struck by Herrigel's approach: his application of philosophical matters to a practical skill. For artists, this seems to have translated into "a new attitude to the creative process, emphasizing qualities of spontaneity, effortlessness and a close identification with the work."¹¹⁹ In addition to artists, writers and curators in the U.S. became increasingly attracted to Zen and other aspects of Far Eastern culture in the immediate post-war years, as did their audiences. Its appeal was strong in the 1950s, the 60s, and into the 1970s – decades associated with the Beat and hippie movements and the emergence of the varied but ideologically similar movements generally referred to as "counterculture." Numerous authors have pointed out that the Beats largely misunderstood Zen and often distorted its teachings. J.J. Clarke cites Charles Prebish's accusation that the Beats ignored "the very basis of Zen monastic life and its incumbent discipline," facilitating a transposition "of the 'ecstatic' quality of Zen Experience into

¹¹⁶ Munroe, *The Third Mind: American Artists Contemplate Asia, 1860-1989*, 43.

¹¹⁷ Nakane, "Personalizing the Abstract: Asian American Artists in Seattle," 188.

¹¹⁸ David J. Clarke, *The Influence of Oriental Art on Postwar American Painting and Sculpture* (New York: Garland, 1988), 49.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 48.

inappropriate erotic and alcoholic terms."¹²⁰ J.J. Clarke, Prebish, and others concede, nonetheless, that the Beats were of central importance in introducing Buddhism to America.

J.J. Clarke writes that it was a time when many in the West felt "unsatisfied by established traditions and creeds, and it is not surprising that Zen, with its aesthetic purism, its non-dogmatic spirituality, and its promise of instant enlightenment," was welcomed in America.¹²¹ As Wechsler points out, however, this held a certain irony. After a period of intense anti-Japanese propaganda, accompanied on the West Coast by internment, confiscation of property, and the resulting disintegration of Japanese communities, it might seem more likely that the promotion of Asian culture – and Japan in particular – would have met with reserve or even distaste.¹²² Instead the opposite occurred, in the art world and also in popular culture, through novels and non-fiction books written by westerners and, beginning in the early 1950s, the arrival of Japanese films and performing artists, exported with the intent of promoting tourism.¹²³ Following the end of America's occupation of Japan (April 28, 1952), U.S. tourists embraced the country, and travel magazines encouraged those unable to visit to discover how the Japanese infused art into every aspect of life. An article by James Michener, for example, was published in *Holiday* magazine just four months after the occupation ended. Michener described Tokyo, Kyoto, and various aspects of Japanese culture, and he offered an invitation to readers:

¹²⁰ Clarke, *Oriental Enlightenment: The Encounter between Asian and Western Thought*, 104.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 98.

¹²² Wechsler, "From Asian Traditions to Modern Expressions: Abstract Art by Asian Americans, 1945-1970," 71.

¹²³ Between 1942 and 1987, thirty-four different books dealing with Japan appeared on the *New York Times* best-seller list. A table including years, authors, titles, and the number of weeks each book remained on the list can be found in Johnson, *The Japanese Through American Eyes*, 15. Akira Kurosawa's classic *Rashomon* (1950) opened in New York in December 1951, shortly after winning the grand prize at the Venice Film Festival. In December 1954, New York audiences were treated to Teinosuke Kinugasa's film *Gates of Hell* (1953), which had won the Cannes Film Festival's grand prize the previous spring. In 1954, live Kabuki theatre was also seen in the U.S. for the first time when the Azuma Kabuki Dancers visited New York. *Ibid.*, 96.

"For the past seven years Americans have occupied Japan as victors. Their occupation has been just and gentle, reflecting credit on each nation; but from now on Americans who visit Japan will do so as guests of a sovereign country. If you are one of the lucky ones, you will find in Japan a land of exquisite beauty and a people devoted to its cultivation."¹²⁴

Closely related trends emerged within the realms of fine art and high-brow culture; for example, as early as 1948, New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art opened an exhibition of contemporary Chinese paintings. This met with positive reviews, and soon the art of Japan was brought to the fore, with contemporary developments a noteworthy focus of interest. Among these shows was MOMA's *New Japanese Abstract Calligraphy*, a 1954 exhibition that Wechsler observes was especially important because it placed recent examples of Japanese art "directly in the home base of the New York School."¹²⁵ In the opinion of Winther-Tamaki, the decade's most significant institutional recognition of Japanese and Japanese American painters took place in Boston with *Contemporary Painters of Japanese Origin*, a 1958 exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Arts.¹²⁶ This event was preceded by an article by the Institute's director, Thomas Messer, titled "Nipponism," which attempted to formulate a stable set of formal characteristics that could be used to establish Japanese American painting as a distinct category. Major group exhibitions of works by Japanese artists, living in Japan or the U.S., were featured in venues on

¹²⁴ Quoted in Johnson, *The Japanese Through American Eyes*, 94. Michener had already chronicled his travels throughout Eastern and Southern Asia, describing local cultures and the lives of people he met, in *The Voice of Asia* (1951). He wrote in that book: "Today Asia is of utmost importance to Americans. What happens there may make or mar us as a nation. We need to know what makes Asia tick." Ibid. Michener also published three books on Japanese prints and a novel, *Sayonara* (1954), which illuminates the racism of the Occupation period through the story of a romance between an American military officer and a Japanese woman.

¹²⁵ Wechsler, "From Asian Traditions to Modern Expressions: Abstract Art by Asian Americans, 1945-1970," 71.

¹²⁶ Winther-Tamaki, *Art in the Encounter of Nations: Japanese and American Artists in the Early Postwar Years*, 64.

the East and West Coasts, but assimilationist tendencies proved too strong for Messer's "Nipponism." Surveys of American art, something of a museum staple in the 1950s and 60s, seem to have been intent on including Asian American artists but equally preoccupied with claiming them as "simply American," even if they were very recent arrivals.¹²⁷ Japanese American artist Satoru Abe, who moved from Hawaii to New York in 1948, has described "a Japanese craze" existing among intellectuals and artists during the post-war period.¹²⁸

The trend was not confined to high culture, in the 1950s and 60s Japan appeared as the setting for books in a wide range of genres. They ranged from *The Teahouse of the August Moon* – a novel by Vern Sneider that was published in 1951, became a play that won both the Pulitzer Prize and a Tony Award in 1953, and then a movie starring Glenn Ford and Marlon Brando in 1956 – to Ian Fleming's *You Only Live Twice*, a 1964 James Bond novel that features a Japanese "suicide garden." Kendall H. Brown observes that many of these publications demonstrate a significant change that followed the West's postwar "rediscovery of Japan." In comparison to what she describes as the "quaint and charming" image of the culture that prevailed during the first half of the twentieth century, "this new wave of Japanese influence was promoted as a more perceptive understanding of the spiritual depths of Japanese culture."¹²⁹ In keeping with this new attitude, in 1957 American philosopher Alan A. Watts published *The Way of Zen*, which became an academic and popular success; by 1958 *Time* could report "Zen Buddhism is growing more

¹²⁷ Wechsler, "From Asian Traditions to Modern Expressions: Abstract Art by Asian Americans, 1945-1970," 71.

¹²⁸ Quoted *ibid.*, 74.

¹²⁹ Brown, "Territories of Play: A Short History of Japanese-Style Gardens in North America," 11.

chic by the minute."¹³⁰ More than Watts or Suzuki, the American fashion magazine *Mademoiselle* provides ample evidence. The magazine was aimed at young, unmarried women, and its January 1948 issue included an article titled, "What is Zen?" Observing that this Eastern philosophy had recently become part of "cocktail party conversation," *Mademoiselle* attempted to educate its readers on the basics. The article was illustrated with reproductions of works by Graves and Tobey, as well as Japanese art.

Perhaps benefitting from the prevailing disposition toward Japanese culture and art, Tsutakawa received some international exposure in 1955, when one of his watercolours was accepted into the São Paulo Bienal, where it later sold. His first solo exhibition at the Seattle Art Museum took place in 1957, and he was given another in 1985. By 1955 the Tsutakawa family had grown to include four children — three boys and one girl. George and Ayame were raising them in a large old house overlooking Lake Washington, and their home became a social hub for local and visiting artists during the 1950s. Regular visitors included the younger Japanese Americans who had shown with Tsutakawa at Zöe Dusanne's Gallery in 1953.¹³¹ Tobey was a frequent guest; his friend Takizaki, with his knowledge of Zen, was another influential visitor. In addition to socializing at the Tsutakawa home, Tobey often welcomed Tsutakawa and his wife as guests in his own studio. There they would watch him work and talk with him as he showed them works from his collection of Asian art, which included *sumi* paintings, landscapes, and Zen paintings on small scrolls. Tsutakawa has described Tobey as sometimes talking for up to half an

¹³⁰ Quoted in Karin Higa, "From Enemy Alien to Zen Master: Japanese American Identity in California during the Postwar Period," in *Asian Traditions/Modern Expressions: Asian American Artists and Abstraction, 1945-1970*, ed. Jeffrey Wechsler (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1997), 192.

¹³¹ Nomura and Tokita were no longer alive, never having fully recovered their health, nor their livelihoods, following the wartime internment.

hour about a single artwork, analyzing its formal qualities and philosophizing. The older artist ignited his interest in *sumi* and Zen philosophy in particular, and Japanese painting in general.¹³²

In his interview with Reed, Tsutakawa recalls that because of such artists as Tobey, Graves, and George Nakashima (mentioned above?), by the early 1950s "there were all these movements, directions, discussions, talks about Oriental art in the Seattle area." It was not only artists who contributed; as previously mentioned, Tsutakawa credited Betty Willis with firing his interest when she "brought back a whole collection of Japanese folk art."¹³³ A former curator at the Henry Art Gallery, from 1948-1950 Willis was curator at the San Francisco Museum of Art. At that time, she also became involved in showing and selling Japanese folk art in the U.S. for Tokyo's Mingei Kan National Folk art museum. In 1951 Willis travelled to Japan to work as "a consultant to the Mingei Kan on the quality and marketing of modern folk art."¹³⁴ Also, from 1950-51 Willis was curator and acting assistant director of the California Palace of the Legion of Honor, where she was in charge of exhibits. She was instrumental in bringing a series of exhibitions to the United States that showcased the decorative arts of Japan, China, and Korea.

In addition to Tsutakawa's becoming, in his words, "Americanized" during his time in the army – no doubt an essential survival strategy for a soldier of Japanese descent – his earlier years at UW had, he recalled, consisted of "a very intensive course in formal Western civilization. But then all these new ideas about Oriental Art – new to me too – came out. So I said, Jesus, I've got to go back there to Japan and see what's going on. I had forgotten about all these things although

¹³² Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

¹³³ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 16.

¹³⁴ "Biographical Note," Elizabeth Bayley Willis Papers 1933-1988, University of Washington Libraries.

http://digital.lib.washington.edu/findingaids/view?docId=WillisElizabethBayley2583_019.xml.

I grew up there.¹³⁵ In late 1956 Tsutakawa returned to Japan for the first time in twenty-nine years. Since the war, he had been corresponding more often with family there, and his interest in Japanese art forms and materials increased steadily. His visit lasted only a few weeks, but that was enough to rekindle the cultural influences of his early years. The first part of the trip was spent as an expert, guiding a half-dozen American tourists through Kyoto, Nara, Hiroshima, and Narajima. When they returned home he began his own journey, in part as an attempt to recover his personal history. After spending time with his stepmother and other relatives in Fukuyama and attending a memorial service there to honour the memory of his father, he travelled to Tokyo. His paintings were showing at the Yoseido Gallery, along with works by Horiuchi and fellow Seattle artist Glen Alps, and Tsutakawa attended the opening of the exhibition.¹³⁶

In his interview with Reed, Tsutakawa recalled that his "whole attitude toward art, my sculpture, everything changed" with the rediscovery of his Japanese roots. Aspects of the culture that his grandparents had "kind of forced" on him in childhood, now "began to mean something. It all came back to me: the Japanese house, garden, flower arrangement, simple little things like that, as well as drinking my cup of tea."¹³⁷

The trip to Japan was, indeed, a turning point for Tsutakawa, followed as it was by the first of his *Obos* paintings and sculptures, and in 1958 his first fountain commission. In retrospect, 1956 was an ideal time to embark on this new direction. Kingsbury writes: "the artistic environment of the late 1950s in Seattle was more and more sympathetic to sculpture. Though issues of painting and Abstract Expressionism seemed to dominate in the official art world, a growing groundswell of interest in the the old issues of public art, of sculpture, and

¹³⁵ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 16.

¹³⁶ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 75.

¹³⁷ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 16.

permanence, occurred in many quarters."¹³⁸ For example, from 1956 through 1958 sculptors gathered regularly at Northwest Institute of Sculpture meetings. Tsutakawa's UW colleague Everett DuPen was one of the organization's leading figures. "For both meetings and members" the group reached out to Eastern Washington, Vancouver, B.C., and Portland, Oregon.¹³⁹ As a result, a great deal of information was exchanged, on topics that ranged from demonstrations of working methods to discussions of goals and opportunities. This meant Tsutakawa was able to participate in a local outburst of artistic exploration and energy, and he found that he became more prolific.¹⁴⁰ Nonetheless, when Tsutakawa showed the *Obos* sculptures alongside his paintings in a Dusanne Gallery Show of 1958, local critics "treated the sculpture as works of secondary importance."¹⁴¹

Tobey was a painter, known best for his "white writing" style; but during the winter of 1957-58 he was going through a "black brush" phase. That was how the artist wrote in a letter to his New York dealer, Marian Willard. As Ament points out, Tobey's preferred painting method emphasized line and spontaneity, as did *sumi*, so it is no surprise he felt a strong affinity for this Japanese art form.¹⁴² Tsutakawa, Horiuchi, Tobey, and Matsudaira would talk together until late at night, often while working at improving their skills at *sumi-e*.¹⁴³ Even Archipenko, who visited Seattle in 1956, tried his hand at *sumi* during one of the small dinner parties frequently

¹³⁸ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

¹³⁹ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 84.

¹⁴⁰ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 16.

¹⁴¹ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 84.

¹⁴² Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 34. In November 1957 the Willard Gallery mounted an exhibition devoted to Tobey's *sumi* paintings.

¹⁴³ *Sumi-e* or Japanese ink painting is generally referred to in the West simply as "*sumi*," the Japanese word for "ink."

held at the Tsutakawa house.¹⁴⁴ George later had the resulting painting, a tall, semi-abstract, and somewhat geometric figure, professionally mounted on a vertical scroll. Like all Japanese children, Tsutakawa had received instruction in writing with a *sumi* brush on soft paper while at school, but though exposed to examples of Japanese art during childhood, he had no formal training in *sumi* painting as a means of artistic expression.¹⁴⁵ Horiuchi, on the other hand, had studied the technique as a youth in the village where he grew up.

Tsutakawa respected both Tobey and Graves for their understanding of Zen and other aspects of Japanese culture and thought, which they had begun to study decades before it became the focus of widespread but often superficial curiosity in post-war America and Europe. In his opinion, they also "understood the true meaning" of *sumi* painting far better than the American Abstract Expressionists, such French modernists as George Matthieu, and even certain contemporary Japanese painters, notably calligrapher Shinoda Toko. All, he felt, relied too much on big, bold, sweeping gestures in their *sumi*-influenced works. Tobey and Graves, on the other hand, produced paintings with great depth and subtlety, and were able to rely on their manipulation of the brush to create an atmosphere or bring out certain unique qualities in nature, whether representing an animal, a bird or a plant.¹⁴⁶ Assessing Tsutakawa's fountains, one writer has recently suggested that falling water, rather than sculpted metal forms, can produce liquid abstractions similar to those made with brush and ink. To quote Kazuko Nakane's evocative description of the *Fountain of Wisdom*: "The fountain retained the stability in delicate balance he had found in the *Obos*. Abstract curved forms welded from dark bronze sheets created

¹⁴⁴ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p. According to the Chronology prepared by the Archipenko Foundation, during 1956 the artist taught at the University of British Columbia. He likely visited Seattle at that time. The *sumi* painted by Archipenko was exhibited at UW in 1988 and dated 1956. Kangas, *School of Art 1920-1960*, n.p.

¹⁴⁵ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

an open structure that was completed by the sound, light, and calligraphic movement of the flowing water."¹⁴⁷

Discussing his "white writing" with a Seattle newspaper columnist in 1957, Tobey declared: "What I had learned in the Orient affected me more than I realized.... I had a totally new conception of painting. The Orient has been the greatest influence of my life."¹⁴⁸ Tobey was speaking of art, but as his painting was intimately linked to his spiritual life, the fervour with which he embraced Asian methods and points of view seems to exemplify "secondary orientalism," as formulated by Faure. This was certainly the case with Tobey's friend, the potter Bernard Leach, who stated in 1971: "The standards of Buddhism depend on nonself and nonduality. A well-made work has no egotism and is like a seashell on the shore. Thus, the well-made work *is* nature, and such an object is what Christianity means by adoring God. That is why I have to find a way to bridge East and West. The East can awaken the West."¹⁴⁹ The concept of secondary orientalism has received its share of attention, though other authors may not have used Faure's term.

In *Oriental Enlightenment*, J.J. Clarke devotes several pages to "orientalism as a corrective mirror" or "self-questioning strategy."¹⁵⁰ In a memorable turn of phrase, he describes the East as having played "the role of Socratic gadfly on the Western body, stinging and cajoling it into critical reflection by holding up to view radical alternative conceptions." To some extent, this has enabled Europe to see itself and its history "from the outside."¹⁵¹ As Clarke points out, in

¹⁴⁷ Nakane, "Personalizing the Abstract: Asian American Artists in Seattle," 189.

¹⁴⁸ Quoted in Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 25-26.

¹⁴⁹ Yamada, *Dialogue in Art: Japan and the West*, 317.

¹⁵⁰ Clarke, *Oriental Enlightenment: The Encounter between Asian and Western Thought*, 28-30; 218-225

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 107.

some instances, Western civilization has even turned to the East for "therapy and for cure."¹⁵² Carl Jung did so in the 1930s, and his theories were absorbed and creatively utilized by Jackson Pollock, and also by Lawrence Halprin and many other artists whose productive years overlapped with Tsutakawa's. While I have no evidence of therapeutic benefit, a number of European architects, including Le Corbusier, were inspired by the "modernism" of Katsura, Kyoto's seventeenth-century Imperial Palace. Gropius visited Katsura in the 1950s, and in 1960 he provided the foreword for Japanese architect Kenzō Tange and Japanese American photographer Yashuro Ishimoto's book on the complex, *Katsura: Tradition and Creation in Japanese Architecture*.¹⁵³

Examining the exhibition catalogue for Pacific Northwest Artists in Japan, shown in Osaka in 1982 and then in Seattle, it is fascinating to see how Tsutakawa presents himself to a Japanese audience. In his Personal Statement, he speaks of teaching at the University of Washington during the 1950s, and having "fair success at exhibiting and selling my paintings and sculptures while enjoying and struggling in the American professional lifestyle." But, Tsutakawa goes on to say, "in time, I became somewhat weary of the direction so-called modern art was taking. I became suspicious of the Western world view developed since the Renaissance in which man assumes a central position of control of all things through science and technology. He seems to be bent on separating humans and nature and destroying nature to build his own artificial dream world."¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² Ibid., 29.

¹⁵³ Yashuro Ishimoto, Walter Gropius, and Kenzō Tange. *Katsura: Tradition and Creation in Japanese Architecture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960). For a very different approach to Katsura and a critique of Ishimoto's modernist photographic representation of it, see Isozaki, *Japan-ness in Architecture*.

¹⁵⁴ Tsutakawa, "Personal Statement," *Pacific Northwest Artists and Japan*, 93.

Reassessing Tsutakawa's Connection to Bauhaus Ideas

When interviewed by Kingsbury the following year, Tsutakawa recalled that by the end of the 1950s he had begun to question Western modernism and the direction it was taking, becoming more interested in Asian art and in art's relationship to people. A slight tinge of anti-modernist and anti-Bauhaus sentiment is noticeable in the conversation, though close reading reveals more negativity coming from Kingsbury's side than from Tsutakawa's. This is likely due in part to the atmosphere of the early 1980s, but today we are well past the high-point of postmodernism, and considerable reassessment and revision of Bauhaus history has taken place in recent years.¹⁵⁵ My research has shown that, in fact, Tsutakawa's approach in designing his fountain sculptures had much in common with the original ideals of the Bauhaus. He also shared some of the attitudes and values that Gropius promoted in the United States during the 1950s.

A tendency exists for "Bauhaus" to be used as an umbrella term to cover the various movements that embraced the machine aesthetic as a guiding principle of modernist art, architecture, and design.¹⁵⁶ Some short-cuts are clearly necessary when writing a short essay, or an article or book for a non-specialized audience, but the result may be misrepresentation of complex circumstances. In Kingsbury's monograph on Tsutakawa, this kind of misrepresentation occurs more than once with regard to the philosophies and teachings of the Bauhaus. Mies van der Rohe stated in 1933: "It is incorrect not to distinguish between the different periods of the Bauhaus; the Bauhaus under Gropius's directorship was different from the Bauhaus under

¹⁵⁵ See, for example, Kathleen James-Chakraborty, ed., *Bauhaus Culture: From Weimar to the Cold War* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), and Jeffrey Saletnik and Robin Schuldenfrei, eds., *Bauhaus Construct: Fashioning Identity, Discourse and Modernism* (London: Routledge, 2009).

¹⁵⁶ Tsutakawa occasionally did the same thing himself. In his Oral History interview, for example, he erroneously referred to his teacher and friend Paul Bonifas, former secretary to the Purist group, as "one of the founders of purist school and Bauhaus school." Kingsbury, Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa, n.p.

Hannes Meyer, and again the Bauhaus that I directed was different in nature from the latter."¹⁵⁷
 American versions of Bauhaus teachings were, not surprisingly, often very different again.

In addition to teaching in the School of Art, beginning in 1950 Tsutakawa taught drawing and sculpture in the University of Washington's School of Architecture. For almost ten years he was a faculty member in both departments; he estimated two-thirds of his teaching time was devoted to architecture students.¹⁵⁸ The course Tsutakawa was hired to teach in the School of Architecture was modelled after the introductory design course at the Bauhaus, an example of the controversial changes introduced by the UW architecture department as it attempted to respond to the new postwar environment. As Ochsner has shown, in the 1930s the architecture faculty at UW had consisted of four core faculty: "a tight-knit group, sharing a pedagogical system and working in concert over the five years of the curriculum."¹⁵⁹ The enlarged postwar faculty, needed to teach the greatly increased number of students, was different. Like many of their students, some younger faculty members were impatient with what they viewed as outmoded attitudes and methods. For instance, Ochsner states that during the 1940s and 1950s, Victor Steinbrueck favoured "a strictly functional approach to design," while Wendell Lovett "emphasized experimentation with new structural systems, materials, and technology."¹⁶⁰ A few faculty members sought continuity as part of a more gradual evolution, but they found themselves outnumbered. The School of Architecture at UW implemented a new pedagogy informed by that of Harvard's, which was itself based on that of the Bauhaus and International Style modernism.

¹⁵⁷ Quoted in Kentgens-Craig, 109.

¹⁵⁸ Kingsbury, Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa, n.p.

¹⁵⁹ Ochsner, *Lionel H. Pries, Architect, Artist, Educator: From Arts and Crafts to Modern Architecture*, 266.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

The dean of Harvard's Graduate School of Design was Joseph Hudnut, a man whose own education had followed a traditional Beaux-Arts approach, but who had, according to Ochsner, embraced modernism after absorbing the theories of Dewey and the city planner Werner Hegemann.¹⁶¹ Hudnut came to believe it was essential for architecture and planning to direct their attention to the real issues facing society, and for urban planning to be recognized as the proper basis for design. In Hudnut's view, it was part of the purpose of education to directly address the community; this meant that architecture students required instruction in sociology and economics, as well as methods of construction. Each of these demands was also met by UW's new postwar curriculum. At Harvard, and before that at Columbia University, Hudnut had replaced Beaux-Art approaches to teaching with new programs, intent on developing a pedagogy that would "make design education more practical, scientific, and professional and that would foster collaboration among students and across disciplines."¹⁶² In 1936 he hired Walter Gropius, and the former director of the Bauhaus became head of the Harvard Graduate School of Design's department of architecture in 1937.¹⁶³ As Ochsner has observed, Hudnut thus acquired a leading

¹⁶¹ Ochsner, *Lionel H. Pries, Architect, Artist, Educator: From Arts and Crafts to Modern Architecture*, 267.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁶³ Gropius resigned from the Bauhaus in 1928, moving to England in 1934 and remaining there until he went to Harvard. He continued to write, publish, and conduct research, remaining in the forefront of modern architecture. *Ibid.*, 257. Pearlman notes that student enrolments in architecture schools across the U.S. showed a marked increase even before the war. In response to economic improvement and the widespread expectation of a surge in American building, numbers jumped 25% in the fall of 1938, a return to pre-Depression numbers. That was Gropius's first full academic year at Harvard; as a result, the Graduate School of Design saw an increase of as much as 40%. Pearlman, *Inventing American Modernism: Joseph Hudnut, Walter Gropius, and the Bauhaus Legacy at Harvard*, 108

European modernist – celebrated as an educator and a practitioner – who would not only put the new program into operation but "embody the new direction of the school."¹⁶⁴

Hudnut's hiring of Gropius, referred to by Italian critic Bruno Zevi as "a bomb placed in the foundations of academic training,"¹⁶⁵ set off an important chain-reaction; other leading European modernists soon took up academic positions in the U.S.: Moholy-Nagy at the New Bauhaus, Chicago, in 1937, and Mies at the Armour Institute, Chicago, in 1938. By 1945, Harvard had fully implemented its new modernist program, and it served as a model for others from the late 1940s to the 1960s, first in the U.S. and later also in Europe.¹⁶⁶ In 1953 the Spanish modernist José Luis Sert replaced Hudnut as the dean of the Harvard GSD; Sert proceeded to hire more European modernists to teach there, among them Sigfried Giedion and Naum Gabo.

At the University of Washington's School of Architecture, Tsutakawa taught drawing and sculpture as part of a team of instructors who collaboratively offered a course called Basic Design to sophomores, a required step before they encountered more complex design problems in third year courses. Classes also included students from the Art School's Industrial Design and Interior Design programs.¹⁶⁷ The Basic Design course at UW was modelled on one that Gropius had been trying for years to introduce at Harvard, which was itself based on the famous *Vorkurs* at the Bauhaus. In all three incarnations the course was intended to provide new students with what Gropius described as "personal experience and self-taught knowledge which finally leads

¹⁶⁴ Ochsner, *Lionel H. Pries, Architect, Artist, Educator: From Arts and Crafts to Modern Architecture*, 267.

¹⁶⁵ Quoted in Pearlman, *Inventing American Modernism: Joseph Hudnut, Walter Gropius, and the Bauhaus Legacy at Harvard*, 108.

¹⁶⁶ Ochsner, *Lionel H. Pries, Architect, Artist, Educator: From Arts and Crafts to Modern Architecture*, 267; Pearlman, *ibid.*

¹⁶⁷ I would like to thank Dr. Jeffrey Ochsner for pointing this out.

up to a creative attitude."¹⁶⁸ Pearlman observes that "more than any other course, Basic Design embodied Gropius's design philosophy and embraced his two primary aims in teaching – to foster individual creativity and to establish a 'universal language of form' accessible to all people, regardless of their nationality or social status."¹⁶⁹ These two goals were seen as being integrally related. Gropius believed Basic Design was essential and began working in 1937 towards implementing it at Harvard's GSD, but due to severe opposition from Hudnut and the disruption of the war years, he did not succeed in officially establishing the course until 1950, at which point it gained a new name: Design Fundamentals.¹⁷⁰ Aspects of Basic Design were in place throughout Gropius's time at GSD, however.¹⁷¹

By choosing to establish a Basic Design course, and especially by using that particular name, the University of Washington was clearly aligning itself with Gropius and his lifelong goal of forging "a new unity" between art and technology. With Basic Design, Gropius sought to develop a "common language of visual communication" suitable for the current machine age. This should not suggest, however, that he allowed no room for organicism; the proposal Gropius submitted for the course at Harvard stated that Basic Design was intended to "develop and ripen intelligence, feeling and ideas, with the general object of evolving 'the complete being' who, from his biological center, can approach his problems with instinctive certainty."¹⁷²

At the University of Washington, Basic Design was a highly structured, year-long course, and each instructor was responsible for a particular phase. Most of the instructors were

¹⁶⁸ Pearlman, *Inventing American Modernism: Joseph Hudnut, Walter Gropius, and the Bauhaus Legacy at Harvard*, 204.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 203.

¹⁷⁰ Pearlman, *Inventing American Modernism: Joseph Hudnut, Walter Gropius, and the Bauhaus Legacy at Harvard*, 218.

¹⁷¹ At Harvard's GSD there had also been an earlier version of Basic Design, very loosely based on Bauhaus principles, taught by George Le Boutellier from 1948-50. See Pearlman, *ibid.*, 206.

¹⁷² Quoted *ibid.*, 204.

architects, and the fundamentals of architectural drawing were taught, as was some figure drawing, but the focus was on design problems that took up the abstract language first developed at the Bauhaus. According to Ochsner, the problems assigned to Basic Design students started out quite simple; the first was to devise a composition using two elements: a dot and a square. Students were, however, soon required to move on to more advanced problems in two- and three-dimensional composition (fig. 25) and then to develop solutions for uncomplicated problems in architecture, landscape or interior design.¹⁷³ Assignments were of short duration and generally allowed for the exploration of a number of issues; for example, students asked to devise "a structure to hold a common brick" one foot off the ground would have to consider the weight-bearing capabilities of the materials used, as well as their appearance.¹⁷⁴ As for Tsutakawa's own teaching methods and instructional style, he occasionally presented slide shows of his own work or that of other artists, but this was not typical. According to Seattle architect and planner Edward Burke, a student of Tsutakawa's in Basic Design during the late 1950s, "George did not use a written curriculum when teaching and never used a lecture technique. He would assign projects then use the student's work to illustrate the points he wanted to make." Each instructor in Basic Design would assign problems relevant to their area of responsibility, but they all participated in each other's critiques, with the instructor who posed the problem taking the lead.¹⁷⁵

One assignment given by Tsutakawa in Basic Design stands out as based on an understanding of holistic or embodied aesthetics. Students were asked to produce a small sculpture – what Tsutakawa called a "feelie" – to be held in the hand and experienced primarily

¹⁷³ Ochsner, *Lionel H. Pries, Architect, Artist, Educator: From Arts and Crafts to Modern Architecture*, 268.

¹⁷⁴ Edward Burke, email message to the author, January 28, 2011.

¹⁷⁵ Edward Burke, email message to the author, February 8, 2011.

through the sense of touch, though it was also expected to be visually attractive. Burke's response to this design problem was a small sculpture in pine, chosen so the grain would create an attractive pattern when the soft wood was carved. Burke polished the finished piece with beeswax, ensuring it shone brightly and felt smooth to the touch. The sculpture was shaped so it fit easily in the palm of one hand, while being handled by the other; Tsutakawa having said the sculptures would be evaluated mainly on how they felt. Burke recalls being amazed by the variety he saw in students' completed "feelie" assignments.¹⁷⁶ In *The Art of Sculpture*, Herbert Read described "a class of small objects" the Chinese and Japanese had developed, generally carved out of jade, amber, or ivory. Such objects were meant to be treasured and were sometimes "carried in the pocket and fondled from time to time," in much the same way as some people carry favourite pebbles. Read was aware of a few pieces of modern sculpture made "with the intention that they be fondled," but his point was that "the sensation of palpability, so evident in the small object, is felt by the sculptor toward his carving, *whatever its size*."¹⁷⁷ The aesthetic reaction to the imagined sensation of touch is also extremely important to the viewer, and it exists whether or not a sculpture has been made by carving; the urge to touch sculptures produced using additive techniques can be equally powerful. It is, Read continued, "one of the essential faculties engaged in the appreciation of sculpture."¹⁷⁸ Read also included a quotation that stressed the sculptor's "sense of physical possession." In Moore's words, the sculptor "gets the solid shape, as it were, inside his head – he thinks of it, whatever its size, as if he were holding it completely enclosed in the hollow of his hand. He mentally visualizes a complex form

¹⁷⁶ Edward Burke, email message to the author, January 28, 2011. I would like to thank Ed Burke for his insights, especially for telling me about Tsutakawa's "feelie" assignment and providing a photograph of his own "feelie" sculpture.

¹⁷⁷ Quoted in Herbert Read, *The Art of Sculpture* (London: Faber and Faber, 1956), 74 (original italics).

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

from all around itself; he knows while he looks at one side what the other side is like; he identifies himself with its center of gravity, its mass, its weight; he realizes its volume, as the space that the shape displaces in the air."¹⁷⁹ In addition to forcing Basic Design students to consider the importance of haptic experience, I would suggest that Tsutakawa's decision to assign a hand-held sculpture was intended to make these future architects and designers aware of the need to develop the kind of intuitive understanding of mass, volume, and spatial displacement Moore described.

At the time Tsutakawa was involved in teaching the Basic Design course, the five-year architecture program at UW included two years of "pre-architecture" studies consisting of academic courses and an introduction to architectural theory, drawing, and design. For Tsutakawa, teaching about 150 architecture and design students each year, alongside a few other artists and a varied group of architectural specialists: "architectural draftsmen, some theorists, historians, some practitioners, professional architects," as he later described them, was in a sense similar to his earlier apprenticeship with Washington sculptor Dudley Pratt.¹⁸⁰ Basic Design made Tsutakawa part of a well organized, long-term collaboration, an experience Kingsbury suggests helped prepare him for the increasingly complex projects he would take on from the late 1950s. She points particularly to his fountain commissions, the focus of his art after 1960.¹⁸¹ Teaching in the School of Architecture brought Tsutakawa into a more interdisciplinary, Bauhaus-based environment than the School of Art offered. The artist once described being "really shouted down" at a School of Art faculty meeting around 1950 when he raised the idea of students being trained to do mural painting and other large-scale projects, and to study both

¹⁷⁹ Quoted in Read, *The Art of Sculpture*, 74.

¹⁸⁰ Quoted in Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 53.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

painting and sculpture.¹⁸² Tsutakawa's exposure to the collaborative atmosphere at the School of Architecture contributed immensely to determining his future as an artist. While he continued to privilege art that was aesthetically moving, formally balanced, and free of obvious political partisanship, his new commitment to a socially oriented art gained further strength. Teaching Basic Design also furthered Tsutakawa's association with many prominent Northwest architects and brought him fountain commissions from students who went on to become architects.¹⁸³ In 1984 Tsutakawa would receive an honorary lifelong membership award from the Seattle Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, an unusual achievement for someone not trained in the profession.

Although he was not religious, Tsutakawa's approach to art was deeply spiritual, and closely bound to his feelings about nature. According to his former student, Burke, Tsutakawa was always "deeply spiritual in discussing art," not only when teaching but during their later acquaintance; for example, Tsutakawa was greatly affected by *obos* he saw in Nepal in 1977.¹⁸⁴ Tsutakawa noted in an interview given in 1994 that his fountains continued a tradition found in Buddhism and Shinto, where water is always used to signify the power of life. He was nearing the end of his life, and he mentioned, too, that seeing the mountains of the Northwest always served to remind him that he was "in god's hands."¹⁸⁵ This statement could be interpreted in many ways, but it seems to reflect the Japanese understanding view of man and nature as being one. In her monograph on Tsutakawa, Kingsbury states: "While he takes a Western architect-designers positive attitude toward total space and environment and toward complex technical

¹⁸² Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

¹⁸³ Mayumi Tsutakawa, interview by the author, June 23, 2010.

¹⁸⁴ Edward Burke, email message to the author, Feb. 8, 2011.

¹⁸⁵ KCTS Seattle, *1st Annual Bumbershoot Golden Umbrella Award, George Tsutakawa*, videocassette, 1994, producer/editor Jean Walkinshaw.

means, Tsutakawa is by no means a pure Bauhaus formalist. He desires that the fountains be as evocative, as reverent, as the *Obos*. He means them to participate in 'the symbolic quality of water all over the world – the purifying, the cleansing, the offering, the water of life.'¹⁸⁶ Here Kingsbury relies on binary logic and uses juxtaposition to imply opposition, in this case between the rational, technical West and the spiritual, nature-centred Orient. This could be seen to reinforce essentialist stereotypes regarding Asia; however, what concerns me at this juncture is that Kingsbury's comment seriously undervalues the importance of Bauhaus ideas in the development of Tsutakawa's fountains.

Reducing the teachings of the Bauhaus to "pure" formalism ignores the social goals on which the school was originally structured, though Kingsbury has acknowledged these in a later essay on Pacific Northwest modernism.¹⁸⁷ Also, to be fair, some of Tsutakawa's own statements in interviews with Kingsbury effectively cleanse the Bauhaus of its utopian aspirations; one example was quoted earlier in this chapter. Still, it is unfortunate that, by focusing exclusively on the school's promotion of industry and technology, as well as alluding to its embrace of geometric abstraction without providing further analysis, Kingsbury obscures whatever spiritual elements did exist at the Bauhaus. Admittedly, spirituality was most important during the school's earliest years; Johannes Itten, in particular, actively supported a metaphysical direction. Itten left the Bauhaus in 1923, but he was responsible for designing the *Vorkurs*, on which the Basic Design Course at the University of Washington was ultimately based. Alan Colquhoun points out that between 1919 and 1923 "the Bauhaus abandoned its Expressionist ideology and began to absorb the ideas of *Neue Sachlichkeit*, *De Stijl*, and *L'Esprit Nouveau*." Still, the school's original programme was, in Colquhoun's words, "predicated on the belief that artistic

¹⁸⁶ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 114.

¹⁸⁷ Kingsbury, "Northwest Art: The Mid-Century seen from the End of the Century," 25.

culture was threatened by the materialism of industrial capitalism and could only be saved by a spiritual revolution."¹⁸⁸ Tsutakawa would voice similar concerns many decades later; in 1976 he complained to Gervais Reed about the lack of spiritual content in contemporary art, which struck him as overly "materialistic."

Spiritual concerns were clearly present when Gropius published his *Programme of the Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar*. There he wrote:

Let us create a new guild of craftsmen, without the class distinctions which raise an arrogant barrier between craftsman and artist. Together let us conceive and create the new building of the future, which will embrace architecture and sculpture and painting in one unity, and which will rise one day toward heaven from the hands of a million workers like the crystal symbol of a new faith.¹⁸⁹

The "new building of the future" that appeared on the cover of this pamphlet – a woodcut by Lyonel Feininger – closely resembled a Gothic cathedral. Faceted like a Futurist painting, the woodcut image was similarly intended to look forward, but the chosen medium and the picture of a cathedral also looked backward to German folk art traditions, pre-modern connections between art, architecture, and religious community, and the importance of the medieval craft guild as an original Bauhaus ideal. Reinhold Martin has argued, however, that with all its expressionistic elements, it was the technological modernity of Feininger's woodcut that mattered most. He argues: "the organic luminosity emanating from Bruno Taut and Paul Scheerbart that underlay the image was now being passed through the prism of the machine – not to kill off the organicism but to breathe new life into it."¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁸ Alan Colquhoun, *Modern Architecture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 160.

¹⁸⁹ Quoted in Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*. 4th ed. (London: Thames & Hudson, 2007), 123.

¹⁹⁰ Reinhold Martin, *The Organizational Complex: Architecture, Media and Corporate Space*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), 46.

Karen Koehler has recently described the woodcut on the pamphlet's cover as "a visualization of the ideas expressed within the text – an illustration of the 'crystal symbol of a new faith.'"¹⁹¹ Although Feininger's cathedral graced the cover of a 1919 publication, Gropius continued to use the phrase "the new faith" well into the 1950s.¹⁹² Like so many others in post-World War II Europe and America, he also questioned the role of technology in art and everyday life. Ochsner writes: "By the 1950s, it was apparent that the crusade for Modernism had been won. But this triumph opened the way to a new debate. Technological optimism was increasingly open to question."¹⁹³ Ochsner cites a number of examples revealing a shift in American architectural discourse, which he argues was "prefigured by Joseph Hudnut's 1945 essay "The Post-Modern House," in which the pioneer advocate of modernism revealed his skepticism about technology as a source of expression." Regional approaches had also begun to challenge the universal aspirations of the (European) International Style; this would develop into a major topic of discussion by the late 1940s. Many of the emerging critiques of technology, mechanization, and standardization were centred, like Hudnut's, on the domestic sphere. In 1953 Elizabeth Gordon, editor of *House Beautiful*, wrote an article titled "The Threat to the Next America," that questioned the direction taken in much recent architecture and "argued that technology should be subservient to humanistic values."¹⁹⁴

Similar questions were being raised in the visual arts, particularly on the West Coast, where Henry Seldis noted in 1965 that many Northwest artists shared Mark Tobey's "conviction

¹⁹¹ Karen Koehler, "The Bauhaus Manifesto Postwar to Postwar: From the Street to the Wall to the Radio to the Memoir," in *Bauhaus Construct: Fashioning Identity, Discourse and Modernism*, ed. Jeffrey Saletnik and Robin Schuldenfrei (London: Routledge, 2009), 17.

¹⁹² For example in 1956; see Walter Gropius, "Reorientation," in Gyorgy Kepes, *The New Landscape in Art and Science* (Chicago: P. Theobald, 1961), 94.

¹⁹³ Ochsner, *Lionel H. Pries, Architect, Artist, Educator: From Arts and Crafts to Modern Architecture*, 278.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

that the ultimate reality is indivisible and does not admit multiplicity – as they share his fear that man might mechanize himself out of existence. In their art they probe an inner world that allows for no break between nature, art, science, religion and personal life."¹⁹⁵ Alina Payne has recently described the Bauhaus as negotiating binary oppositions, much as Tsutakawa did: "There is no doubt that the Bauhaus occupies a liminal space on the threshold between two worlds.... for many it straddles the world of objective and ostensibly rational thought and that other, subjective and driven by feeling." This dual existence hints at its intellectual appeal...¹⁹⁶ Payne suggests this "dual existence" is part of the intellectual appeal of the Bauhaus, a suggestion I find intriguing, since Tsutakawa's constant balancing or "straddling" of dualities – such as public/private, rational/intuitive, East/West – was high on the list of factors that made me want to find out more about his fountains.

Abstraction and non-objectivity

The *yin-yang* is an East Asian symbol familiar to many westerners, and the image of two halves that flow round each other, separated by a smoothly curving line but at the same time "intimately joined within the perfect wholeness of a circle" is easily comprehended as signifying harmony and balance. Jeffrey Wechsler has written that "among the most valued of aesthetic goals in traditional East Asian art is that of harmony. A consonance of all elements, including a balance between qualities that are apparent opposites (active/restful, dark/light), is crucial to a

¹⁹⁵ Seldis, "Exhibition Preview: Pacific Heritage," 29.

¹⁹⁶ Alina Payne, "Bauhaus Endgame: Ambiguity, Anxiety, and Discomfort," in *Bauhaus Construct: Fashioning Identity, Discourse and Modernism*, ed. Jeffrey Saletnik and Robin Schuldenfrei (London: Routledge, 2009), 247.

successful work of art.¹⁹⁷ In Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures, as I will demonstrate shortly, this quest for balance encompassed a closely related principle, the need for harmonious balance between human beings and nature. Unlike the yin-yang symbol, which Wechsler notes appears sometimes "as an abstract icon of contemplation" in works by modern Asian American artists, the abstract shapes found in Tsutakawa's fountains and other sculptures should be distinguished from non-objective abstraction.

Though not always recognizable as such, Tsutakawa's sculptural forms were generally based on real-world forms or phenomena. He employed what Neil Levine describes as "abstraction in the pre-twentieth-century sense of the word ... a transitive concept, a process of simplifying, clarifying, and reducing to its essentials a pre-existing model or subject."¹⁹⁸ Like modernist sculpture's dictum of "truth to materials," this approach to abstraction is traditional in Japanese art, and thus well-suited to the merging of Euro-American and Japanese influences found in Tsutakawa's sculpture.¹⁹⁹ Wechsler also points out that Eastern art "seldom departs from the laws of nature." For this reason, modern artists living in Asia were often resistant to making the step into completely non-objective art. An imaginative envisioning of reality could be stretched nearly indefinitely but not snapped and released to drift without any connection to it.²⁰⁰ The same could be said of many Europeans; Wechsler's characterization certainly fits Brancusi and is also appropriate for some of Archipenko's less traditionally figurative works.

This "abstraction of simplification and elimination" differs from non-objective abstraction, an early twentieth-century development, in which, as Levine states, "work started

¹⁹⁷ Wechsler, "From Asian Traditions to Modern Expressions: Abstract Art by Asian Americans, 1945-1970," 58.

¹⁹⁸ Levine, *Modern Architecture: Representation & Reality*, 220.

¹⁹⁹ Wechsler, "From Asian Traditions to Modern Expressions: Abstract Art by Asian Americans, 1945-1970," 100.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 76.

from the manipulation of non-representative forms themselves, meaning ones that did not refer to existing natural of historical images or models. Generally these would be purely geometric – lines, planes, or solids – but they could also be more free-form," as in the sculpture of Arp and some of Kandinsky's paintings.²⁰¹ The difference is not always readily apparent, of course; though Brancusi's search for "essence" led him to reduce natural forms to a simplicity that bordered on the abstract, his sculpture was never non-objective, nor did he accept the term "abstract" as applicable to it. Gabo wrote in a letter to Read that "abstract" was not the basis of his Constructivism: "The idea [Constructivism] means more to me. It involves the whole complex of human relation to life. It is a mode of thinking, acting, perceiving and living...."²⁰² Tobey also distanced himself from non-objective painting when he told *Newsweek* in November 1961: "Pure abstraction for me would be a painting where one finds no correspondence to life – an impossibility for me. I have sought a unified world in my work and use a movable vortex to achieve it."²⁰³

In the introduction to this dissertation I quoted in full Tsutakawa's artist's statement of c.1967, and in Chapter Two I referred again to its last lines in connection with Purism and International Modernism, with their avoidance of extraneous detail and ornament. A few words from that same passage, in which Tsutakawa spoke of an "absence of distracting surface treatments and textured effects" in his sculpture, are also relevant here. Brancusi's earliest works were influenced by Rodin, but it was not long before he turned away from the lively surface animation associated with the French master. In 1907 Brancusi began to develop a distinctive sculptural style, and it emerged out of his belief that "what is real is not the external form but the

²⁰¹ Levine, *Modern Architecture: Representation & Reality*, 220.

²⁰² Quoted in Read, *Modern Sculpture: A Concise History*, 114.

²⁰³ Quoted in Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 41.

essence of things. Starting from this truth it is impossible for anyone to express anything essentially real by imitating its exterior surfaces."²⁰⁴ Brancusi's statement is more philosophically grounded than Tsutakawa's reference to "distracting surface treatments and textured effects," but the smooth, polished forms that resulted have some similarities, particularly when each sculptor worked in metal.²⁰⁵ Henry Moore wrote: "Since the Gothic, European sculpture had become overgrown with moss, weeds – all sorts of surface excrescences which completely concealed shape." In Moore's view, Brancusi had managed to make sculptors once again "shape-conscious."²⁰⁶ Tsutakawa's approach to sculpture was also highly "shape-conscious," in his fountains he utilized varying degrees of abstraction and devised forms that ranged from the geometric to the botanical – more often than not, combining them.

Tsutakawa had seen sculptures by Brancusi when he visited art museums in New York during the Second World War, and he may have also seen some in Chicago. The Romanian sculptor's work had been admired and collected by Americans since 1913, when it caused a sensation as part of the Armory Show in New York. Tsutakawa once said of Brancusi, "I think he had more guts than any modern sculptor, American or European, and a great sense of harmony and unity."²⁰⁷ The Museum of Modern Art published numerous exhibition catalogues with reproductions of Brancusi sculptures during the 1930s and 40s, but in terms of directly influencing Tsutakawa, Kingsbury argues that his most important exposure to Brancusi's work came in the mid-1950s, close to the time Tsutakawa produced his first *Obos* sculptures. In 1955 Brancusi was given his first major U.S. retrospective at New York's Guggenheim Museum; it ran

²⁰⁴ Quoted in Chilvers, *Oxford Dictionary of Twentieth Century Art*, 89: Brancusi, Constantin.

²⁰⁵ Brancusi also carved many sculptures in stone, which he polished to a perfectly smooth finish, but he preferred to retain a rougher surface in his wood carvings.

²⁰⁶ Quoted in Read, *The Art of Sculpture*, 75.

²⁰⁷ Quoted in Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 83.

from October until January 1956 and was covered extensively by American art magazines, as well as *Life* and *Newsweek*.

A photograph showing Tsutakawa at work on his sculpture *Leaning Column* (1966; fig. 26) is clear evidence of his debt to the stacked forms of Brancusi's *Endless Column*. Like his fountain sculptures, Tsutakawa's *Leaning Column* is made from sheet metal, but while Brancusi's *Endless Column* of 1937 was crafted from iron and copper, an earlier, smaller version was carved in oak.²⁰⁸ The form was partially inspired by the rough-hewn wood furnishings and architectural decorations of the Carpathian mountain villages of his childhood, a frequent source of imagery for the artist. A similar preference for roughly textured wood can be seen in at least one of Tsutakawa's *Obos* sculptures and in some traditional Japanese architecture. The polished metal of *Leaning Column* is, however, smoother and more streamlined than either of Brancusi's *Endless Column* sculptures – more like a machine-made object, perhaps; but as Kingsbury points out, Tsutakawa's also resembles bamboo, East Asia's "original segmented column."²⁰⁹ Brancusi's sculpture sometimes comes close to architecture, most famously in *Endless Column* and the *Gate of the Kiss* (1937-38), public sculptures developed for the same site, a First World War Memorial at Tirgu Jiu. Such hybrids appear frequently in the catalogue for *ArchiSculpture* (2004), a major European exhibition that examined the history of exchange between the disciplines of architecture and sculpture, and curator Marcus Brüderlin proposes that Brancusi, through "the reduction of his sculptures to archaic forms and simple volumes" transposed Romanesque architecture "into a modern context."²¹⁰

²⁰⁸ Potts, *The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist*, 136.

²⁰⁹ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 124.

²¹⁰ Brüderlin, *ArchiSculpture*, 18.

When Tsutakawa eventually began working in fountain design, it was with the sense that a shift toward modernism needed to be made in this field. In his interview with Reed, the artist observed that fountains throughout the Western world had been constructed using the same methods right up to 1945. Although he admired individual examples, European fountains incorporating sculpture had, in Tsutakawa's view, changed little since ancient Roman times, through the Baroque period and into the twentieth century, while spray fountains without sculpture continued to be based on the Moorish and medieval style developed in Spain.²¹¹ Interviewed some years later by Kingsbury, Tsutakawa recalled being surprised that by the 1950s fountain design was still not evolving in keeping with modernist sculpture. This situation struck him as being at odds with the spirit of the times. In his words: "new architecture, new city planning, new bridges, new highways, new reservoirs, parks, and new abstract sculpture, everything was just going full swing in all direction, all kinds, and all sizes imaginable."²¹² Still, few fountains were being built, and, in Tsutakawa's opinion, none were produced between about 1950 and 1960 that stood out as great works or suggested a new, modern direction.

That buildings should embody the spirit of the age, or *Zeitgeist*, was a principle already established in the field of architecture, especially by Giedion's *Space, Time and Architecture*, first published in 1941. William Curtis writes that Giedion, an art historian, "was obsessed with the spiritual fragmentation of his own time and saw modern architecture as a unifying agent."²¹³ One of the earliest histories of modern architecture, *Space, Time and Architecture* was considered required reading in architecture schools throughout the 1940s. It had a profound effect on the discipline, promoting Bauhaus ideals regarding the unification of the arts. Not

²¹¹ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 27.

²¹² Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

²¹³ William J.R. Curtis, *Modern architecture since 1900*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Phaidon, 1987), 10.

surprisingly, many artists also read Giedion's book, and some, like Mark Tobey, read it more than once. In 1953 Tobey wrote to Marian Willard, his New York dealer, saying that he had met Giedion and subsequently reread *Space, Time and Architecture*. According to Conkelton, Tobey found "that Giedion's ideas aligned with his own sense of history – not as a discrete set of experiences to be used as guidelines, but as a flowing continuum with his own time."²¹⁴

As one of the leading founders and the first secretary general of the Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM),²¹⁵ Giedion was an early and vocal supporter of geometrical modernism, rationalism, and functionalism. *Space, Time and Architecture* was a work with an undisguised agenda; Ochsner states that Giedion's "emphasis on an architecture of technology became a powerful orthodoxy that shaped the professional and academic discourse of the early postwar years.... The professional and educational emphasis that had previously been on fine art, and on the continuity of culture, shifted to engineering, technology, and experimentation."²¹⁶ As Ochsner points out, however, technological optimism could not endure long and had started to fade by the mid-1950s. An element of doubt began to assert itself much earlier, though somewhat later in the U.S. than in Europe. A powerful illustration of the new atmosphere was provided by the editors of the Los Angeles-based periodical *Arts and Architecture*, who chose to include an image of an atomic explosion on the cover of the December 1946 issue (fig. 27). The explosion is part of a photomontage by Herbert Matter, who envisioned it occurring inside the head of a human figure, shown in silhouette. The face is turned toward a diminutive globe – apparently far away, but still close enough that a map of the Americas is visible.

²¹⁴ Conkelton, "Pantheons of Dreams," 91.

²¹⁵ A position he held from 1928 to 1956.

²¹⁶ Ochsner, *Lionel H. Pries, Architect, Artist, Educator: From Arts and Crafts to Modern Architecture*, 264.

In 1956 Gropius contributed an essay titled "Reorientation" as an introduction to *The New Landscape in Art and Science*, a book by Gyorgy Kepes.²¹⁷ There the founder and former director of the Bauhaus called for a restoration of the balance between technology and nature, science and art. A short excerpt will be enough to demonstrate that the changes in outlook Tsutakawa described himself as experiencing in the late 1950s, a time when he questioned the machine aesthetic and sought a more humanistic approach, were very much in line with those of Gropius himself. My point is that Kingsbury was incorrect in implying that Tsutakawa's artistic evolution as he learned more about his Asian heritage was also a personal critique of "Bauhaus" philosophy. It is clear when one reads the Oral History transcript, the source for much of the information in Kingsbury's monograph, that Tsutakawa continued to value what he referred to as "genuine Bauhaus teaching," as opposed to later developments that were, he felt, little more than formalist exercises. He told Kingsbury that he understood the Bauhaus approach "to be a very total thing" and closely connected to "man and his living and his thinking."²¹⁸ According to Gropius, human beings had lost the ability to see "our complicated life as an entity," and the extreme specialization characteristic of "the scientific age" was primarily to blame.²¹⁹ Gropius observed that prior to the twentieth century – even during his own childhood – life had moved at quite a different pace:

²¹⁷ *The New Landscape in Art and Science* was included in bibliographies distributed to University of Washington architecture students in Basic Design, as well as more advanced courses in the 1960s, as is an earlier book by Kepes, *Language of Vision* (1944). Philip Thiel, "Grade I Design Bibliographies," Archives of the College of Architecture and Urban Planning Library, University of Washington. Though certainly not as influential as Giedion's *Space Time and Architecture*, *Language of Vision* was also considered required reading in architecture programs across the U.S. in the postwar period. Martin, *The Organizational Complex: Architecture, Media and Corporate Space*, 59.

²¹⁸ In contrast, some mid-century examples of modernist art seemed to Tsutakawa to be "like extensions of Bauhaus design exercises," the sort of thing he assigned to students in the School of Architecture. Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

²¹⁹ Gropius, "Reorientation," 94.

Art and architecture had developed organically as legitimate parts of people's daily life in accordance with the slow growth of civilization. With the advent of the age of science, with the discovery of the machine, this established form of our society went gradually to pieces. The means outgrew man. The sweeping changes which took place during the last half century of industrial development have achieved a deeper transformation of human life than had the whole span of the centuries since Jesus Christ. As the great avalanche of progress in science rolled on relentlessly, it left the individual bewildered and unhappy, unable to adjust, and lost in the whirlwind of those changes. Instead of striving for leadership through moral initiative, modern man has developed a kind of Gallup-poll mentality, a mechanistic concept relying on quantity instead of quality and yielding to expediency instead of building up a new faith.²²⁰

This hardly sounds like a vote for the continuation of the machine aesthetic, unless it is balanced by nature. "Is the maker of the rose or the tulip an artist or a technician?" Gropius asked rhetorically in 1956. "Both, for in nature utility and beauty are considered constitutional qualities, mutually and truthfully interdependent. The organic form process in nature is the perpetual model for every human creation, whether it results from mental strife of the inventive scientist or thinker or from the intuition of the artist."²²¹

It was just two years after the publication of Gropius's essay that Tsutakawa began to work with architects on commissions for public fountains. While there is no direct causal relationship, I would like to suggest this near-coincidence is evidence of the growing interest in what Gropius called "reorientation," the reintegration of nature and technology. Tsutakawa's tendency to combine organic abstraction with the machine aesthetic's geometry and precision reflects the union of the natural and mechanical sciences that all fountains could be said to embody. One of their most attractive qualities is the way fountains visibly embody the interrelationship of scientific reason and the laws of nature. Observing that, in Britain, early seaside resorts like Brighton were first developed at the start of the industrial age, Jellicoe

²²⁰ Ibid., 95.

²²¹ Ibid., 94.

pointed to a "subconscious appeal to return to water," the milieu from which the human race emerged as amphibians millions of years ago. Jellicoe writes: "the underlying attraction of the movement of water and sand therefore seems to be biological. If we look more deeply we can see it as the basis of an abstract idea linking ourselves with the limitless mechanics of the universe." These words have often been quoted in writings on gardens, both Western and Japanese, but Jellicoe goes on to consider the art of sculpture:

The laws of nature created from water the first scientific piece of hard sculpture – the shell. . . . Shells are not works of art as we recognize the term, but rather works of organic engineering. Their perfection is absolute. Perhaps more than any other animal shape they have moulded our sense of beauty. They are based on geometry, but biologically and not mathematically. Their shapes repeat, but not exactly.²²²

The seashell is a perfect example of the combination of biology and art – one we will see again in Chapter Four. Proponents of organic functionalism in architecture often used the seashell as a metaphoric ideal; it encapsulated the balance between natural and constructed forms that they were seeking, and, I would argue, Tsutakawa was as well. In *Inventing Bergson: Cultural Politics and the Parisian Avant-Garde* (1993), Mark Antliff points out that in Le Corbusier's Algiers project of 1931 to 1942, the architect replaced the language of "geometric order" and "rationality" he used in earlier projects with "spatial metaphors for biological evolution. The city was now termed a 'shell' in order to signal its capacity for organic growth."²²³ Another temporal metaphor taken from nature and applied to architecture was "the law of the meander," an idea drawn from river systems. For Le Corbusier, "the river's winding course"

²²² Jellicoe and Jellicoe, *Water: The use of Water in Landscape Architecture*, 9-10.

²²³ Mark Antliff, *Inventing Bergson: Cultural Politics and the Parisian Avant-Garde* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press), 184.

became a metaphor for the creative process, an association Antliff argues has much in common with Bergson's "correlation of human creativity and creative evolution."²²⁴

A large bowl shaped very much like a shell is part of the fountain sculpture Tsutakawa designed for the City Hall of Aberdeen, Washington, in 1977 (fig. 28). Installed in a courtyard, the ten-foot high fountain consists of three main elements, stacked along a central pipe. The shell-like bowl is at the bottom, with an open-sided sphere in middle and a second, slightly tilted bowl – somewhat smaller, less like a shell, and pierced with a circular opening – at the top. Tsutakawa called this fountain *Heaven, Man and Earth*; basing its components on a symbolic triad of Chinese origin often found in Japanese garden design.²²⁵ When asked to summarize the philosophical and spiritual content of his fountain sculptures, he tended to refer to three main elements, represented symbolically in the stacked forms of his fountains and his *Obos* sculptures. At least once the artist spoke of "heaven, earth, and water," in this context, but on most occasions he referred to heaven, earth, and man (though not always in that order). Tsutakawa also stated that the Himalayan *obos* that served as his original inspiration "seems to signify man's basic act to create perfect balance of solid forms in space, his desire to attain greater height to heaven and finally to achieve harmony of man himself with space and earth."²²⁶

This concern with balance and harmony is present throughout his work, especially in the fountain sculptures, which developed out of the "*obos* concept." The triad of heaven, earth, and man could be interpreted as pointing out the need for ecological balance, with human beings

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ Mitchell Bring and Josse Wayembergh, *Japanese Gardens: Design and Meaning* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1981), 152.

²²⁶ Tsutakawa, Denver Art Museum Summer Quarterly, 1964, quoted in Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 91.

carefully placed within the natural order.²²⁷ It strikes me as significant that Japanese designs based on the earth, heaven, and man triad "do not always demand the physical presence of exactly three elements."²²⁸ Considerable variation is permitted, whether one is composing flowers or arranging garden stones. The majority of Tsutakawa's stacked sculptures, both fountains and *Obos*, include three main elements or shapes, but some consist of two or four. Three is the number most commonly used, however, for aesthetic and symbolic reasons. As one book on Japanese gardens points out, the use of three components is ideal for creating "a dynamic balance of odd numbers" and thus is not limited to garden design, "but lies at the heart of Noh theatre and the art of flower arrangement."²²⁹

The complexities of Tsutakawa's artistic and ethnic identities are illustrated by the fact that it was Tobey and Graves who sparked his interest in his Japanese heritage; Tobey in particular fostered his exploration of *sumi-e* and his decision in the late 1950s to give up oil painting and watercolour and focus instead on using *sumi* to create abstract paintings and landscapes.²³⁰ *Sumi* painting remained important to Tsutakawa's practice for the remainder of his career; even after his retirement from the University of Washington he continued to give courses on *sumi* as a professor emeritus.²³¹ Tsutakawa credited Tobey with teaching him "about the importance of my heritage and what to look for in Asian art... Then I realized that when I was a

²²⁷ Unlike the fountains, the individual elements in some of the *Obos* sculptures appear to be balanced quite precariously, for example *Obos No. 5*, 1957, reproduced in Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 76.

²²⁸ Masao Hayakawa, *The Garden Art of Japan*, vol. 28 of The Heibonsha Survey of Japanese Art, 1st English ed. (New York: Weatherhill/Heibonsha, 1973), 168-169.

²²⁹ Günter Nitschke, *Japanese Gardens: Right Angle and Natural Form*, trans. Karen Williams (Cologne: Taschen, 1999), 25.

²³⁰ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

²³¹ Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 150.

child in Japan I was seeing these things all the time ... I was surrounded by these things."²³²

While Tsutakawa's remark would probably strike many as ironic, this kind of experience was not especially unusual for Asian Americans.

Isozaki has suggested that something similar occurred repeatedly in Japan's own history, arguing in *Japan-ness in Architecture* (2006) that, rather than being "self-defined," the purified stylization that has come to be regarded as "essentially Japanese" by both foreigners and natives often evolved in response to external stimuli and pressures placed on an isolated nation. For example, reflecting on Japanese influence in Wright's buildings, Isozaki notes that Tenshin (Kakuzō) Okakura, author of the celebrated *Book of Tea* (1906), first learned about Japanese aesthetics from the American philosopher Ernest Fenellosa. Okakura wrote the *Book of Tea* "in English now known to have been influenced by Emerson, a fact illustrating the extent to which he espoused an external gaze."²³³ In the early 1930s, architect Bruno Taut arrived in Japan as a refugee from Nazi Germany. Almost immediately, he was taken to view the rarely visited and virtually unknown Katsura Imperial Villa by a group of younger Japanese architects, some of them trained in Europe, who sought to enlist him as a spokesman. Isozaki observes that "no Japanese text on Katsura can ignore the importance of Taut's account of it," but this is a well-known fact; his real point is that "the discursive device of Japan-ness that once appeared to have been informed mainly by Taut and to have coalesced in the mid-1930s, had in fact been constructed piecemeal over the previous decade – mainly by those Japanese architects privileged to study contemporary modern buildings in Europe."²³⁴ Returning to the mid-century experiences of Japanese Americans, Winther-Tamaki has claimed that Minoru Yamasaki's espousal in the

²³² Quoted in Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 75.

²³³ Isozaki, *Japan-ness in Architecture*, 4-5.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, 9-11; 256.

1950s of humanist values associated with Japanese traditional architecture, which involved moving away from some aspects of International Modernism, was partly inspired by postwar American enthusiasm for Japanese culture.²³⁵

Even Tsutakawa's specific experience of learning from Tobey was not entirely unique. Wechsler has described how "in a curious twist of East/West interaction, the American painter Mark Tobey, a significant figure in the application of Eastern art within Western modernism... was a crucial inspiration for several Asian American artists." In addition to Tsutakawa and Horiuchi, these included Nomura, Sumiye Okoshi, Frank Okada, and Fay Chong. As Wechsler points out, all of them certainly knew something of the forms and techniques of *sumi* painting before meeting Tobey, but his "learned but open-minded approach to Eastern art added sparks of insight to their own knowledge and practice."²³⁶ Horiuchi recalled that, among other things, he learned from Tobey not to simply look at nature, but to "feel it."²³⁷ Horiuchi is known best for his abstract collages, but like Tsutakawa's, his works often "represent an interest in capturing natural processes or imagery, consciously or subconsciously."²³⁸ Horiuchi himself once listed his sources as "earth and sky, growth and the seasons," noting that despite the consistency of his inspiration, there are always "new ways of seeing and thinking about these things."²³⁹ He

²³⁵ Winther-Tamaki, "Minoru Yamasaki: Contradictions of Scale in the Career of the Nisei Architect of the World's Largest Building," 171. In November 1960, in an address to the Royal Institute of British Architects, Yamasaki discussed his admiration for traditional Japanese architecture. He highlighted two areas: serenity and scale. See Minoru Yamasaki, "A Humanist Architecture for America and its Relation to Traditional Architecture in Japan," *Architectural Association Journal* 76 (January 1961), 185.

²³⁶ Wechsler, "From Asian Traditions to Modern Expressions: Abstract Art by Asian Americans, 1945-1970," 66.

²³⁷ Quoted in Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 86.

²³⁸ Wechsler, "From Asian Traditions to Modern Expressions: Abstract Art by Asian Americans, 1945-1970," 96.

²³⁹ Quoted in Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 88.

summed up the guiding philosophy of his art as "seeking beauty and truth in nature."²⁴⁰ This approach links his abstract collages and paintings to Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures, and both artists accepted the Japanese belief that human beings are part of nature and each should be treated with care and respect. Ament quotes some advice the Zen master Takizaki once gave Horiuchi: "Think good of others. Do good to others. If the man becomes good, then the artist will be good."²⁴¹

According to Ayame, before they were married George's circle of friends was mainly limited to Caucasians, and he listened primarily to Western music; but she brought more Japanese elements into his life.²⁴² In addition, the Seattle office of the U.S. State Department had both George and Ayame on a list of fluent Japanese speakers who could be called on to help entertain Japanese artists, musicians, writers, and scholars. In the 1950s a growing number of such visitors were travelling to the United States, and often the State Department helped coordinate some aspects of their plans. The Tsutakawas made these guests feel at home, and as a result many lasting friendships were established.²⁴³ George and Ayame's friendship with musician Johsel Namkung and his Japanese wife, Mineko, was also important. Ethnically Chinese but born in Korea, Namkung would soon become a well-known Seattle photographer, but for most of the 1950s he was employed by Northwest Orient Airlines. Fluent in Korean, Chinese, and Japanese, he began working for Northwest Orient as an interpreter and host. Educated at the Tokyo Conservatory of Music, Namkung would often bring visiting Japanese dignitaries and artists for evenings of conversation and music at the Tsutakawa home.

²⁴⁰ Quoted *ibid.*, 91.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*

²⁴² *Ibid.*, 141.

²⁴³ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 73.

Namkung was hired by Northwest Orient in 1951 as part of the company's attempt to encourage international travel between Asia and the United States.²⁴⁴ In 1947 Northwest Airlines, as it was known until 1950, had become the first airline to offer passenger service on the "Great Circle Route," flying via Alaska from the U.S. to Tokyo, Seoul, Shanghai and Manila.²⁴⁵ In 1949 Northwest introduced the first commercial passenger flight from Seattle to Japan. Flying to Tokyo via Anchorage, Alaska, this was also the first one-stop international flight from the recently opened Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (Sea-Tac).²⁴⁶ The introduction of commercial passenger flights from Seattle to Japan furthered the existing sense of interconnection between the two regions. Beginning in the late 1950s, international destinations grew still more accessible as commercial jet travel became commonplace. Moreover, the most important technological innovations in this area were contributed by Seattle's own Boeing Company.²⁴⁷ In his Oral History interview, Tsutakawa reflected on the negative aspects of such

²⁴⁴ Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 199.

²⁴⁵ "Northwest Orient Airlines" was the name taken by Northwest Airlines in 1950 to promote its new postwar system of transpacific flights. It was used in advertising, but the airline continued to be officially registered under the name "Northwest Airlines." Originally known as Northwest Airways, the Minnesota-based company was formed in 1926 to carry mail for the U.S. Post Office Department. Passenger service began the following year, and in 1931 the Northwest sponsored Charles and Anne Lindbergh on a test flight from New York City to Tokyo. This pioneering venture was designed to prove that flying via Alaska, using what became known as the Great Circle Route, could take as much as 2,000 miles off the journey. During the World War II, Northwest Airlines aided in the fight against the Japanese Empire by flying soldiers and military supplies to Alaska from the Northwestern U.S. When the war ended, the airline's experience with sub-arctic flights led the federal government to choose Northwest as the primary airline flying over the North Pacific. Delta Skyteam, "History," <http://news.delta.com/index.php?s=18&cat=39>.

²⁴⁶ Built in 1944 for use by the U.S. military, Sea-Tac was first used for commercial flights in 1947.

²⁴⁷ The first operational Boeing 707 was rolled off the production line in 1957. With this aircraft, the U.S. soon led the world in commercial jet manufacture. The Boeing 747, first flown in 1969, entered commercial service in January 1970. Judy Rumerman, "Boeing's Post-War Commercial Aviation Activities," U.S. Centennial of Flight Commission, http://www.centennialofflight.gov/essay/Aerospace/Boeing_postwar_comm/Aero20.htm.

progress, the manner in which increased globalization had resulted in decreased differentiation between such cities as New York, Tokyo, London, and Los Angeles. As if anticipating French anthropologist Marc Augé's thesis in *Non-places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity* (1992),²⁴⁸ Tsutakawa mused, "they really do look very much the same. And this I think is true with almost everything. We eat the same food. You get on an airplane and stop at any airport around the world and they have the same menu.... And we wear [the] same things and we look at the same movies and pictures... radio, television. Everything is becoming so unified and controlled."²⁴⁹ Henri Lefebvre proposed in *The Production of Space* (1973) that: "The spatial practice of a society secretes that society's space: it propounds it and presupposes it, in a dialectical interaction; it produces it slowly and surely as it masters and appropriates it."²⁵⁰ Tsutakawa's resistance to the loss of such human qualities as individuality or regional differences in clothing or cuisine was based in the same system of values that led him to question the direction his own art was taking in the late 1950s. He pondered aloud whether "mass production," instead of realizing the universalist goals of International Modernism, was not actually "leaving people out" by making everything "prescribed" and limiting available choices. "They talk about freedom," Tsutakawa said, "but I wonder if we're getting freedom. I don't think we are, you know."²⁵¹

Namkung resigned from Northwest Orient Airlines in 1956 to apprentice with photographer Chao-Chen Yang. Following East Asian tradition, he worked unpaid for nine months in Yang's commercial studio. Around the same time, Mineko Namkung opened an art

²⁴⁸ Marc Augé, *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity* (London: Verso, 1995).

²⁴⁹ Kingsbury, Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa, n.p.

²⁵⁰ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (1974), trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 38.

²⁵¹ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

gallery called Hanga, where she introduced local collectors to contemporary woodblock prints from Japan. Johsel Namkung's turn to photography was largely inspired by hikes to glaciers and other areas in the Pacific Northwest that he, Tsutakawa, and a few others sometimes took with a much older Seattle photographer, Dr. Kyo Koike, a physician born in Japan in 1878. Tsutakawa was inspired by these treks as well, but for him the primary attraction was Koike's knowledge of the natural world. Tsutakawa has described how Koike "would tell us about all the rocks and all the pebbles and all the plants and everything along the way; it was just marvelous following him. Then he'd take pictures."²⁵² According to Ament, the most sophisticated art produced locally in the first quarter of the century was by members of the Seattle Camera Club,²⁵³ and Koike had been one of its founders. At that time the Club had few Caucasian members. In articles Koike wrote for *Notan*, the Club's bilingual journal, he forcefully advocated the fusion of Eastern and Western ideas.²⁵⁴

I have discussed Tsutakawa's trip to Japan in fall 1956, a journey that lasted only a few weeks, but was, Kingsbury argues, undertaken when the artist was "on the edge of a fundamental breakthrough." Reconnecting with his early years in Japan enabled him "to bring everything together" and find a new direction upon his return to Seattle.²⁵⁵ Toward the end of 1956, Tsutakawa created the first of his *Obos* sculptures (fig. 29), a series of small abstract works made from stacked forms in carved wood, generally cedar.²⁵⁶ From these sculptures he would soon

²⁵² Quoted in Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 70.

²⁵³ Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, xiv. On the Seattle Camera Club, see Martin and Bromberg, *Shadows of a Fleeting World: Pictorial Photography and the Seattle Camera Club*.

²⁵⁴ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 70.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 75.

²⁵⁶ The first *Obos* sculpture was made from teak, possibly carved from pieces of wood salvaged from the beam of an old ship. (This information comes from Ament *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 144; however, Ament also writes that *Obos No. 1* was made from

evolve the basic form that characterizes the majority of the seventy-five fountain sculptures he designed between 1958 and 2002, beginning with the *Fountain of Wisdom* for the Seattle Public Library. Most of Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures are, like this first one, made up of a stacked or segmented series of forms and designed around a single vertical axis. These are features identified by Tsutakawa as originating with what he calls "the *obos* concept," mentioned in my introduction. In Kingsbury's view, the "upreaching containing elements" found in two of Tsutakawa's *Obos* sculptures also foreshadow his fountains.²⁵⁷ When considering their curved upward lines and bowl or dish shapes, I would argue that the transition from *Obos* sculpture to fountain sculpture is more readily apparent in two temperas based on the *Obos* theme that Tsutakawa painted in 1957 (fig. 30). Though he would not receive his first fountain commission until the following year, the textured blue backgrounds and wave-like orange swirls suggest flowing water surrounding solid geometric forms.

The *Obos* sculptures, which range in height from approximately two to three feet, are based on ritually stacked stone structures found in Tibet and the Indian Himalayas. Terminology varies by region, but in Ladakh and Nepal these cairn-like piles of rocks are called *obos*. In general, *obos* stand five to six feet tall, while slightly more architectural structures, up to fifteen feet in height, are known as *chorten*.²⁵⁸ Both types of stone stacks are built by travellers as spontaneous tributes to the power and beauty of nature. While an *obos* can be made by an individual, construction is more often a gradual communal effort. For example, those erected at mountain passes can become very large, as each person who safely journeys that way may add a

cedar, which is incorrect.) The later *Obos* were not numbered in sequence, and exactly how many were made is not known. Martha Kingsbury, phone conversation with the author, June 2010.

²⁵⁷ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 91.

²⁵⁸ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

stone to the pile as a gesture of thanks. It is also customary to tie a prayer flag, a brightly coloured cloth streamer, to a rock or a stick that one plants among the stones. With each gust of wind that causes the fabric to flutter, prayers written on it are carried to the god or goddess of the pass.²⁵⁹ In addition to such potentially dangerous locations as steep gorges and mountain passes, *obos* are erected at spiritually auspicious sites and scenic viewpoints. According to Tsutakawa, they can also be built to offer thanks at sources of water and mark their locations for future visitors.²⁶⁰ This makes the eventual transformation of the *obos* into a spiritual subtext for his fountain sculptures particularly appropriate, contributing an important dimension to their symbolic meaning.

The initial idea for the *Obos* series came from a description in a book Namkung recommended to Tsutakawa. Called *Beyond the High Himalayas*, it was a first-hand account of a recent Asian journey made by William O. Douglas, a U.S. Supreme Court Justice. Tsutakawa's *Obos* sculptures do not bear a close resemblance to the broad heaps of irregularly shaped stones described by Douglas, but these were not his only source of inspiration. The artist recalled that, as he read about Himalayan *obos* and *chorten*, he quickly realized the stone structures Douglas had seen were related to stone piles of various kinds found in other parts of Asia, including a type that is common in Japan.²⁶¹ The much smaller Japanese structures, referred to as *seki-to* or “stone towers,” share the Himalayan *obos*’ identity as anonymous and often collaborative folk expressions, but *seki-to* vary widely in location. Their meanings, when known, are quite fluid, but small stacks of balanced stones are such a common feature of Japanese life they rarely elicit

²⁵⁹ William O. Douglas, *Beyond the High Himalayas* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, 1952), 124.

²⁶⁰ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.; KCTS Seattle, *1st Annual Bumbershoot Golden Umbrella Award, George Tsutakawa*.

²⁶¹ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

comment. For example, heaps of pebbles are tossed up onto the beams of *torii* gates at shrines and temples, an action Kingsbury explains originated as "a kind of homage to the place, a pagodalike [*sic*] skyward gesture."²⁶² In modern Japan, however, throwing and balancing these stones is more likely to simply be an amusing pastime for youngsters.

Traditional motivations have proven more durable in other situations, some very like the ones that prompt travellers to build *obos*. Japanese pilgrims, for example, make prayers for safe journeys by carefully balancing piles of single stones on a vertical axis. Stacks of stones, again usually singly stacked, can also convey meaning in one other area of life that may be indirectly related to Tsutakawa's *Obos* sculptures and fountains. According to Japanese tradition, stones are piled along the banks of the river of the dead, put there by the unresolved souls of deceased children who are trying to accumulate sufficient virtue to pass over to the land of the departed. The lucky ones will be saved by the Buddhist bodhisattva Jizō, guardian of infants and children, but demons will snatch up the souls that linger too long on the riverbed, dragging them off to hell.²⁶³ The practice thus developed of symbolizing Jizō with a stone pile, usually carefully stacked and composed of smoothly rounded and regularly shaped stones. Although they are made from wood, some of Tsutakawa's *Obos* sculptures certainly fit this description. *Seki-to* signifying Jizō might be found along a pathway, at the crossing of a road, within the precinct of a Buddhist temple or Shinto shrine, or close to a house where a child once died. Commonly built to mourn lost children, including those that have died in-utero, the stone stacks may also be constructed by thankful parents whose child has survived an illness. While in most cases these small stone towers stand alone, they can number in the hundreds at some important religious

²⁶² Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 80.

²⁶³ Stuart D. B. Picken, *Buddhism, Japan's Cultural Identity* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1982), 43.

sites. They are often augmented with a small red cloth; tied like a kerchief or bib to the uppermost stone, a gesture meant to send warm clothing to the small departed spirit²⁶⁴. The addition of the red cloth also creates a visual resemblance to figurative sculptures of Jizō that are clothed and tended by devotees. This, in turn, links the *seki-to* to the simplest folk art depictions of the Buddha.²⁶⁵

Having thought about the Himalayan *obos* since first reading Douglas's book in the 1950s, Tsutakawa finally saw some himself in 1977, while trekking in Nepal with a small group of outdoor enthusiasts from Seattle. On the trail to a base camp, at an elevation of about 16,000 feet, he encountered both *obos* and *chorten*, standing together in one area. Recalling this scene in his Oral History interview, Tsutakawa described his awe at seeing twenty or thirty stacks of stones against a vast valley, with Mount Everest rising in the distance. It was a moving sight, the "most exciting experience I had in my whole life," Tsutakawa told Kingsbury, in large part because it confirmed the artistic direction he had decided to embark on years before. Tsutakawa also stressed that the *obos* concept continued to inform his designs for fountains and his other sculptures.²⁶⁶ The artist emphasized that, for him, the anonymous authorship of the Asian *obos* and *seki-to* contributed significantly to their attraction. Kingsbury argues that, in contrast, Tsutakawa's own *Obos* sculptures and fountains embrace Western artistic ideals through their striking individuality, resulting from a single artist's vision.²⁶⁷ As I suggested in my Introduction, it could be said that the *Obos* sculptures initiated a signature style for Tsutakawa, that the frequent use of vertically stacked or segmented forms, often arranged around a single axis, became associated with the artist in a way that was helpful in marketing his fountain sculptures.

²⁶⁴ *Understanding Japanese Buddhism*, 144.

²⁶⁵ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 80.

²⁶⁶ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

²⁶⁷ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 80.

A very different point of view, one that did not privilege individualism in the manner associated with modernism in the West, was expressed by Kuwabara in the short introduction he wrote for Kingsbury's monograph on Tsutakawa. Observing that the first *Obos* sculptures and fountains had taken shape shortly after Tsutakawa returned from a visit to Japan, Kuwabara speculated on possible causes for this new development:

Art is created by an individual artist, and as long as it is one person's creation, it seems hardly possible to overcome the limits inherent to that individual. To attempt to transcend such limits, it is first necessary to effect a fundamental transformation in one's customary ways of thinking. In other words, it is necessary to discard the thinking that remains tied solely to the self and to entrust that self to the workings and the order of the great natural world. Such trust could undoubtedly lead to a new and expansive vision of the world, unlike anything previously experienced. I imagine that something like this experience enabled Mr. Tsutakawa to achieve a personal revolution in his thinking.²⁶⁸

The *Obos* sculptures were well received when first exhibited in Seattle. They sold quickly, with three purchased for museums and others acquired by discerning private collectors. One of them was Pietro Belluschi, a leading modernist architect based in Portland, Oregon.²⁶⁹

Like Tsutakawa's fountains, the *Obos* sculptures are syncretic works of art, bringing together a number of different cultural traditions and merging them with the artist's own ideas. Though deeply inspired in the 1950s when he read the descriptions of *obos* in Douglas's book, *Beyond the High Himalayas*, when Tsutakawa carved his *Obos* he had not yet visited Nepal. Interviewed by Reed in 1976, the year before he made the trip, Tsutakawa confided that when he produced the sculptures: "I had really never seen any 'Obos.' ... In a way it's my own invention."²⁷⁰ The same could be said of the "*obos* concept" that Tsutakawa developed as a "universal" extension of the Himalayan tradition, and out of which his fountain sculptures

²⁶⁸ Kuwabara, "The Fountain Sculpture of George Tsutakawa," 13.

²⁶⁹ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 76.

²⁷⁰ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 16.

emerged a few years later. In his *Obos* series and in his fountains, Tsutakawa blended formal languages and spiritual beliefs originating in the Himalayas, Japan, Europe, and North America. In 1982 he explained how his interest in Asian art and culture had grown in the late 1950s and early 1960s in a personal statement, written for the catalogue that accompanied the exhibition *Pacific Northwest Artists and Japan* when it opened at the National Museum of Art in Osaka:

For me, 1960 or thereabouts was a time to take a look at the philosophy and art of the Orient – particularly Japanese art – that I had become familiar with in my youth. Through my travels and my studies of traditional Japanese arts I was able to reaffirm my conviction in the Oriental view of nature which sees man as one part of nature, a part that must live in harmony with the rest of nature.

From 1960 on, I attempted to express this relationship between man and nature in my works. My *sumi-e* drawings are a direct response to nature; my fountain sculptures are an attempt to unify water – the life force of the universe that flows in an elusive cyclical course throughout eternity – with an immutable metal sculpture.²⁷¹

The qualities of the Himalayan *obos* that resonated most strongly with Tsutakawa were their elemental nature and his feeling that "they honor the earth and point to heaven."²⁷² The same could be said of the *Fountain of Wisdom* and the many vertically-oriented fountain sculptures that followed. In a public presentation given at the Seattle Library shortly after the *Fountain of Wisdom* was unveiled, the artist explained that the stacked form was based "on some very primitive sculptural forms that developed in this case in Tibet and spread all over Asia and Europe." He went on to describe how "the idea of piling forms – simple forms such as rocks on top of one another . . . spread to China and Japan and other Asiatic countries where it took on

²⁷¹ Quoted in Kuwabara, "The Fountain Sculpture of George Tsutakawa," 13. Kuwabara's text differs from the English version of the statement that appears in the bilingual catalogue (quoted above); probably Kuwabara used a translation of the Japanese version.

²⁷² Quoted in John Douglas Marshall. *Place of Learning, Place of Dreams: A History of the Seattle Public Library* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004), 108.

other more elaborate forms like stupa or pagoda, and many others.”²⁷³ In addition to its reverential simplicity, what attracted Tsutakawa most to the Himalayan *obos* was its vernacular status. The artist's initial impression when he read about *obos* in the 1950s, confirmed by the sherpas he met while trekking in Nepal in 1977, was that it was "natives who erected these things. They're not professionals, they're not craftsmen, they're just plain travelers" – although every now and then a "Buddhist lama" might pass through and add a rock to the pile.²⁷⁴

Tsutakawa did not say so, but the vernacular origins of the Himalayan *obos* made it particularly appropriate as the primary inspiration for a category of public art that he would continue to develop over the next thirty years. This was a very different artistic enterprise than the *Obos* sculptures, in which he reworked the same Asian folk tradition to create autonomous modernist sculptures for American collectors. In the chapters that follow, I will investigate the new, more public direction that Tsutakawa embarked on with his sculpture at the end of the 1950s. Beginning with his first fountain commission, the *Fountain of Wisdom* for the Seattle Public Library, I present case studies of several fountain sculptures, all of them major projects that Tsutakawa completed during the 1960s.

²⁷³ For a comparison of the pagoda and its forerunner, the Indian stupa, see Young, Young, and Tan, *Introduction to Japanese Architecture*, 31.

²⁷⁴ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

Chapter Four:

"It rains all the time in Seattle. Why build a fountain?"

The *Fountain of Wisdom*, commissioned in 1958 for the secondary, courtyard entrance of the new Seattle Public Library, was completed by Tsutakawa in 1960 (fig. 1). The new modernist library (fig. 31) had been designed by Bindon & Wright Architects, a Seattle firm, to replace the Carnegie Library of 1906, a classically inspired building that stood on the same downtown site. At the Carnegie Library, a large wall fountain in bronze had adorned the main entrance staircase, facing Fourth Avenue (fig. 32). The library building of 1960 occupied an entire block on Madison Street between Fourth and Fifth Avenues, with its main entrance on Fourth and the fountain plaza on Fifth. Today another, newer version of the Seattle Public Library occupies the same downtown block as the previous two incarnations. Completed in 2004, it was designed by Rem Koolhaas and his Rotterdam-based Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA), in partnership with the Seattle firm of Loschky Marquardt & Nesholm Architects (LMN). The *Fountain of Wisdom* is still there, but it now stands beside the main entrance at the corner of Spring Street and Fourth Avenue (fig. 33). The Library site, therefore, is very different from and yet subtly reminiscent of its appearance a century ago. My concern here is not the current face of the Seattle Library, however, but its second, mid-twentieth century incarnation. This chapter explores the creation and reception of Tsutakawa's *Fountain of Wisdom*, the project with which he first established numerous lasting characteristics of his formal and conceptual approaches to fountain design.

The *Fountain of Wisdom* was not only Tsutakawa's first fountain sculpture, but Seattle's first public art commission since 1909, and the process of its design and construction presented the artist and civic authorities with numerous challenges. This chapter introduces the major

issues involved, which will also serve to elucidate aspects of Tsutakawa's later career. I begin by analyzing the symbolism, general and specific, attached to the *Fountain of Wisdom*, then turn to its formal elements and consider the approaches to abstraction that Tsutakawa chose for this work and maintained in later fountain sculptures. In part, this means examining connections between Tsutakawa's fountains and the works of a few European modernists, including Brancusi, Archipenko, and Henry Moore, as well as touching on such topics as modernist debates regarding the future of monumental sculpture. Next, I turn to the commission and execution of the *Fountain of Wisdom*. Chapter One provided some general information on Tsutakawa's methods of fountain design and construction; here his initial and subsequent responses to a specific design problem are examined. These steps were not completed without some major adjustments – necessary before Tsutakawa's original vision could be translated into a working fountain for the library site. This is followed by a discussion of the relationship of the *Fountain of Wisdom* to the modernist building it embellished and the reception that greeted them both on completion. The chapter ends by examining the broad impact of Japanese ideas on American postwar culture, where a desire to turn recent adversaries into new friends was evident in everything from architecture and garden design to novels, plays, and popular films.

The *Fountain of Wisdom*: History, Symbolism, Form

The central branch of any large city's public library is, of course, highly symbolic, as well as being important as a functional building. In Seattle's case, additional civic history and symbolism was attached to the new building's location. A half-century before the completion of Tsutakawa's *Fountain of Wisdom* for the new Seattle Library, the Fourth Avenue approach to the Carnegie Library's columned façade and main entrance had been ornamented with a much more

traditional Beaux Arts wall fountain, completed in 1910. Made from stone and cast bronze, it was known as the *Lion's Head Fountain* after its central sculptural motif, a lion's head from which water flowed into a shell-shaped basin.¹ An architect's rendering of the *Lions Head Fountain* from c.1909 features a classically draped female figure holding a staff (fig. 34). Her presence is a reminder that a grand public fountain recalling those of ancient Rome or Renaissance Italy is a suitable addition to a classically-inspired building, and perhaps more important, that such allusions to classical architecture and public works serve to emphasize the philosophical basis of the library itself. Free access to educational resources was a democratic ideal, one that philanthropist Andrew Carnegie realized by endowing libraries in cities throughout the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom.² Tsutakawa's *Fountain of Wisdom* takes up a related theme with its symbolic treatment of the human desire for knowledge or wisdom. No overt classical references are present, however, in his work for the Seattle Library nor in any of his later fountain sculptures, any more than the International Style architecture itself alludes to classical models. Nonetheless, I would argue that a desire for historical continuity probably contributed significantly to Bindon & Wright's decision to include a fountain in their design for the library of 1960. Given the emotional attachment of community members to the Carnegie Library, a fountain was, indeed, an ingenious solution. A bronze fountain sculpture by Tsutakawa, when placed on this particular site, could be simultaneously progressive and

¹ The *Lion's Head Fountain* was designed by M. Somervell of Somervell and Cote, Architects, a Seattle firm. The lion's head itself was sculpted by Finn Haakon Frolich, then moulded and cast by H.B. Staley. "Seattle Library Fountain," *Pacific Builder and Engineer* 6 (1908), 357; Mary T. Henry, "Frolich, Finn Haakon," HistoryLink.org, Essay 8849. http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=8849.

² See Abigail A. van Slyck, *Free to All: Carnegie Libraries & American Culture, 1890-1920*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995). I would like to thank Dr. Christopher Thomas for bringing van Slyck's architectural and socio-cultural history to my attention.

reassuring, introducing an exciting new era in the history of the Seattle Public Library while carefully maintaining a connection to the past.

Discussing the specific symbolism of the *Fountain of Wisdom* in his interview with Reed in 1976, Tsutakawa explained that: "Fountains capture the rhythm, the movement and the transformation of the water. And man tries to grab it, tries to control it."³ This statement could apply to any of Tsutakawa's fountains, but a further symbolic element is specific to this first commission. Tsutakawa went on to relate human attempts to master the flow and transformative cycle of water, described above, to the endless quest for knowledge, gained through reading at a library for example. The transformative nature of water becomes a metaphor for knowledge, which will ideally be transformed itself, into wisdom. Tsutakawa described the large form with "five fingers" near the base of the *Fountain of Wisdom* as representing "the five fingers of a hand." When one tries to grasp it, knowledge, like water, "is a most elusive thing. Most of it slips through.... And man continually tries to grasp this knowledge in order to attain wisdom." This statement reflects the Zen Buddhist belief that true wisdom (enlightenment) is impossible to grasp with the rational mind. Taoism is one of the major roots of Zen Buddhism, and "the Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao;" meditation and the contemplation of landscape are forces more powerful than words.⁴ As stated earlier, Tsutakawa's Japanese upbringing exposed him to the philosophies of Shinto, Taoism, and Zen, and he later learned more about Zen through his friendship with Tobey.

Like the vast majority of Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures, the *Fountain of Wisdom* was constructed from sheet bronze. It was then finished with a deep matte black patina, its surfaces

³ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 27.

⁴ Clarke, *The Influence of Oriental Art on Postwar American Painting and Sculpture*, 45.

shining just enough to reflect the streams of water spilling over its lips and edges.⁵ These were carefully designed so that flat planes of liquid create a dynamic visual contrast to the curved forms of sculpted metal. In the *Fountain of Wisdom*, as in many later fountains by Tsutakawa, the basic structure is a stacked series of abstract forms, symmetrically arranged around a vertical axis. The shapes in the *Fountain of Wisdom* are predominantly geometric, based on the sphere or the ovoid. Tsutakawa placed a high value on symmetry in his fountain sculptures, and Kingsbury observes: "In terms of modernist painting or sculpture, the symmetry of the fountains is almost defiantly traditional. This symmetry links them to architecture."⁶ It also lends a subtle classicism to the fountains, and contributes greatly to the monumental quality of some of the larger works.

In his Oral History interview, Tsutakawa agreed with Kingsbury that his ideas regarding symmetry came "from study and observation of architecture," which he said included the East and the West, from the time of the pyramids to the present. In Tsutakawa's opinion "the success and rightness of the symmetrical design" was dependent on all parts being correctly proportioned and balanced. He told Kingsbury it was very easy to build something perfectly symmetrical and able to stand upright, such as "a church, or a steeple, or skyscraper," but much harder "to make it interesting" through the "complexity of proportions" he employed in his fountain sculptures. Most difficult of all was "to make something that's symmetrical and beautiful at the same time,"

⁵ In a public presentation on the *Fountain of Wisdom* given April 28, 1960 at the Seattle Library, Tsutakawa explained that the material used was called "Evidur 1010." The bronze contained some silicon, which made it "one of the most durable copper alloys known today." Tsutakawa noted that, in addition to being very malleable, Evidur 1010 allowed for "the beautiful coloration that I was visualizing." Seattle Public Library, "Address Given by Mr. George Tsutakawa on April 28, 1960 at 12:15 p.m. in Auditorium A & B," 1. University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, Pacific Northwest Collection, Artist Files.

⁶ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 101.

a goal not even achieved, in Tsutakawa's opinion, by every cathedral or Greek temple.⁷ Despite referring in passing to Eastern and Western architecture, Tsutakawa did not discuss Asian architecture in the Oral History interview, apart from mentioning pagodas and stupas as descendents of rock cairns and *obos*. The role of symmetry in East Asian architecture cannot be analyzed in any detail here, but generally speaking, asymmetry was favoured by the early Japanese people, while the Chinese preferred symmetry. Because Japan's traditional architecture was based on Chinese sources, the taste for asymmetry emerged gradually and was more prevalent in domestic architecture, whereas monumental buildings constructed under Chinese influence were more symmetrical. This included Zen monasteries, built symmetrically around a central axis.⁸

For Japanese audiences, Tsutakawa's preference for symmetry may have contributed to making his fountain sculptures appear more Western. He mentioned in interviews that Japanese viewers were far less inclined than Americans to remark on Asian characteristics in his art; they sometimes mentioned seeing similarities to Brancusi's work, but most simply commented generally that Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures were "not Japanese."⁹ In one of his books on Zen Buddhism, Suzuki wrote that "symmetry inspires a notion of grace, solemnity, and impressiveness, which is again the case with logical formalism or the piling up of abstract ideas. Western thought has symmetry intrinsically connected to the intellect and the intellectual

⁷ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.; "Essential Art, Spiritual Art: Jacob Lawrence/George Tsutakawa," from the UWTV Series *Upon Reflection* (Seattle UWTV, 1990).

⁸ Young, Young, and Tan, *Introduction to Japanese Architecture*, 6, 66.

⁹ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 31.

primarily aspires to balance while the Japanese are apt to ignore it and incline strongly toward imbalance."¹⁰

Balance is, like symmetry, very important in the fountain sculptures Tsutakawa designed. As previously mentioned, Kingsbury suggests a number of possible sources for the fountains' vertically stacked or segmented forms; they include Japanese pagodas, North American totem poles, and the modernist sculptures of Constantin Brancusi, especially his iconic *Endless Column* (1937), which Tsutakawa acknowledged as an important influence on his own sculpture. One possibility Kingsbury does not suggest is the stone lanterns found in Japanese gardens, which are generally composed of stacked forms. In Kingsbury's view, Tsutakawa fountains evoke cross-cultural associations, and Tsutakawa himself insisted that all his fountains – whether stacked or not – should be understood as continuations of what he called "the *obos* concept," developed in his Asian-inspired *Obos* sculptures but implicitly linked to stacked stone monuments in other places and times.¹¹

Typology and its Meanings

An echo of Brancusi's tendency to repeatedly use the same forms in his sculptures, and to make versions of the same sculpture in different materials, is noticeable in Tsutakawa's fountains and other sculptural works. Certain forms recur throughout his body of work as a fountain designer; they include a pronged half circle or lotus (Seattle Public Library, 1960; Bentall Centre, Vancouver, B.C., 1969); a partial ovoid with a small lotus inside it (Safeco Plaza, Seattle,

¹⁰ Quoted in Rychlak, "Sitting Quietly: Isamu Noguchi and the Zen Aesthetic," 197. While some of Noguchi's sculptures are symmetrical, his frequent use of Zen aesthetic principles such as asymmetry, imbalance, poverty (*wabi*), and aloneness (*sabi*) is among the things that make his work very different from Tsutakawa's.

¹¹ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

1973; Fukuyama Fine Arts Museum, 1988); an elongated leaf shape resembling a flame (Commerce Tower, Kansas City, Missouri, 1964; Seattle University, 1989); and a roughly rectangular form with two or more open sides (Ala Moana Center, Honolulu, 1966; Franklin D. Murphy Sculpture Garden, UCLA, 1969). One of the most important is the full sphere or ovoid with rounded holes punched through its surface or its sides opened to varying degrees to facilitate and direct the flow of water. Seen first in the *Fountain of Wisdom*, the pierced ovoid reappears in many of the fountains that follow. As Kingsbury points out, in the context of a fountain sculpture, an ovoid or sphere could be interpreted as a seed, an eye, or perhaps a globe. This is, she writes, "an important instance of how mutable and elusive are the fountains' suggestions."¹²

Henry Moore observed: "There are universal shapes to which everyone is subconsciously conditioned and to which they can respond if their conscious control does not shut them off."¹³ At the same time, the tendency toward geometry and the repetition of forms – especially when executed in metal – link Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures to the machine aesthetic. Purism's *objet-types*, Bauhaus teachings, Constructivism, and even the industrially fabricated, modular forms of Minimalism are called to mind. The mutable suggestions Kingsbury refers to are possible, not because the shapes in Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures are like clouds in a summer sky, but because his approach was similar in some ways to that of Gabo. As John Lessard points out in a recent essay, "in place of the more subjective processes of carving and molding, Gabo assembled forms from constituent parts that tended, in turn, to allow the generation of new possibilities.... His constructive method, in other words, created a rubric of forms that could be

¹² Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 92.

¹³ Quoted in Read, *Modern Sculpture: A Concise History*, 177. Read's italics omitted.

manipulated much as if they were meant for mass production, rather than the creation of one-off aesthetic objects."¹⁴

Reflecting on the influence of Theo van Doesburg's abstraction on the Bauhaus and individual modernist architects, Neil Levine points out that "the untrammelled new world of space [abstraction] opened up spoke directly of transcendent spiritual values through its universally understandable, rationally ordered, and reproducible system of forms. Such a utopian vision dovetailed neatly with the social and political aims of modern architecture, which called for mass housing of a prefabricated, standardized sort grounded in a functional and hygienic rigor."¹⁵ The standardized forms of the machine aesthetic have much in common with the universal archetypes posited by Jung, the essential forms found in Zen art, and the "elemental forms" of Nipponism, with its simple circles, bars, and squares.¹⁶ When "machine modernists" sought to unite art and the machine, overcoming the division between industry and culture was not their only goal. As Christopher Green reminds us, they were also intent on breaking down "the dualist opposition between the spiritual and the material that was fundamental to Hegelian thinking."¹⁷

What I refer to here as a "type" should not be confused with an edition. As noted in Chapter One, Tsutakawa declined requests that he make editions of his fountains. He produced only one, the small *Fountain of Reflection* (1962), of which three versions exist. This was done as a trial, but Tsutakawa decided the benefits of producing a numbered edition were limited,

¹⁴ John Lessard, "From Lamps to Enlightened Materialism: Naum Gabo and the Problem of Functionalist Design," *MODERNISM/modernity* 17, no. 4 (November, 2010): 780.

¹⁵ Levine, *Modern Architecture: Representation & Reality*, 221.

¹⁶ Messer, "Nipponism," 59.

¹⁷ Christopher Green, "The Machine," in *Modernism, 1914-1939: Designing a New World*, ed. Christopher Wilk (London: V&A Publications, 2006) 74.

given that each individual fountain still had to be adjusted to suit its site.¹⁸ Moore was well known for producing public sculptures in editions; his *Three-Piece Sculpture: Vertebrae*, discussed below, is from an edition of three. In addition to the version in Seattle, one stands outside the Jerusalem Museum in Israel, and another is at Perry Green, Moore's estate in Hertfordshire, England. The casts are identical, but unlike Tsutakawa's fountain sculpture, Moore's two and three-piece works are well-suited to on-site variation. Rupp states that "each is unique in that the three sections of each sculpture are positioned differently. Moore did not believe that a single arrangement was required."¹⁹

In her Oral History interview with Tsutakawa, Kingsbury raised the question of whether many twentieth-century sculptors perhaps thought of "sculpture" as a category almost identical to "monument." She then described "a kind of static, self-enclosed object, almost archaic in many people's minds," which, in her view, eliminated "the on-going liveliness of that interchange between water and material," a quality central to Tsutakawa's fountains. The artist replied that he believed monumental sculpture could be both energetic and up-to-date; he recalled seeing "examples of [the] so-called best public sculpture around the world," and gradually realizing that "whether it's abstract or not ... [it is] all monumental."

The Issue of Monumentality

During the 1940s and throughout the early postwar period, the future of the monument was a subject that provoked intense debate. In 1943 Giedion, Sert, and painter Fernand Léger, all in New York taking refuge from the war, collaborated on "Nine Points on Monumentality," a paper in which they argued in favour of monumentality as a "true expression of the human

¹⁸ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 116.

¹⁹ Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 61.

spirit," that could and should be continued using modern forms and materials. They argued that despite its historical association with authoritarian regimes, monumentality was fully compatible with democracy.²⁰ On the other side of the debate, one articulate voice belonged to Mumford. In 1937 the American critic had contributed an essay to the British publication *Circle: International Survey of Constructive Art*, titled "The Death of the Monument." Comparing the building of monuments to organic reproduction, Mumford argues that monuments offer a more static, permanent form of immortality – one that appeals to the rich and powerful. This "human impulse springs perhaps out of the desire for the living to perpetuate themselves," but unlike procreation, it arises "not out of life, but out of death: to wall out life and to exclude the action of time by carving monuments in durable materials." Therefore, according to Mumford, "the very notion of a modern monument is a contradiction in terms."²¹

Giedion, Sert, and Léger's position paper of 1943 became the brief for CIAM VIII, held in 1952, which likely made it the focus of more than a little discussion among Tsutakawa's Basic Design teaching colleagues at that time. Giedion had kept up his campaign, arguing in "The Need for a New Monumentality" (1944) that the building of monumental architecture should begin in metropolitan centres, where it would best stimulate economic growth, as well as expressing cultural values. "Everybody one is susceptible to symbols," Giedion proclaimed.²² Writing on Vancouver architecture, Rhodri Windsor Liscombe has pointed out that in the first decade after 1945, "the quest for monumentality as a form of cultural relevance centred on major

²⁰ Ockman, *Architecture Culture, 1943-1968: A Documentary Anthology*, 15.

²¹ Lewis Mumford, "The Death of the Monument," in *Circle; International Survey of Constructive Art*, eds. Leslie Martin, Ben Nicholson, and Naum Gabo.

²² Sigfried Giedion, "The Need for a New Monumentality," in Paul Zucker, ed. *New Architecture and City Planning: a Symposium* (1944; repr., Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries Press, 1971), 568.

civic community facilities."²³ Seattle's priorities were similar, as reflected in the campaign to build a new Public Library. Though construction of the new central branch did not commence until 1958, three modern branch libraries were opened in 1954.²⁴

The Seattle Public Library Commission and Tsutakawa's Response

The circumstances under which Tsutakawa's first public fountain was commissioned and completed are important in understanding the work and his practice. Late in 1958 Tsutakawa was approached by the Seattle Public Library's Board of Trustees and Bindon & Wright, Architects, who offered him \$18,000 to design and build a fountain for the new Central Library. The artist later recalled that pressure to include public art had been placed on the Library Board by Allied Arts of Seattle, a group of arts advocates and cultural organizations dedicated to fostering awareness of the role of art in the spiritual and economic health of a community. Founded in 1954, Allied Arts pledged its commitment to ensuring Seattle would "increase in beauty as it increases in size."²⁵ According to Tsutakawa, Allied Arts possessed "a really beautiful political instrument. They drew membership from all people who were interested in the arts in any way; a garden club, an art museum board, an art school and art clubs."²⁶ As a result, when the group presented its plan for the arts in Seattle, it was able to claim that it represented 30,000 people. One of the principles supported by Allied Arts, Tsutakawa later recalled, was that "public buildings should have public art." A number of Seattle architects were members of the group, and Steinbruek was one of them. Another was John Detlie; thanks to him public fountains soon topped the Allied Arts agenda. Tsutakawa described Detlie as a "a very good promoter and a

²³ Liscombe, *The New Spirit: Modern Architecture in Vancouver, 1938-1963*, 94.

²⁴ Marshall, *Place of Learning, Place of Dreams: A History of the Seattle Public Library*, 93.

²⁵ Quoted in Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 13.

²⁶ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 18.

very flamboyant guy who really got his name in the paper and talked to people."²⁷ Largely as a result of the efforts made by members of Allied Arts, it was announced that four major pieces of public art would be commissioned for the new Seattle Public Library.

In April of 1958 Bindon & Wright had submitted a budget estimating a total of \$5 million for the project, including the building, landscaping, and furnishings. Of this, \$25,000 (0.5%) was earmarked for "Sculpture and Art Work."²⁸ By the end of the year, however, it was clear that well over \$25,000 would be spent on public art. A letter from Bindon & Wright, addressed to the Board of Trustees and dated December 4, 1958, recommended three artists for particular library commissions: Tsutakawa for the \$18,000 Fifth Avenue Fountain, Ray Jensen for a \$15,000 bronze sculpture to stand on the library's West Terrace, and James Fitzgerald for an abstract metal and glass screen for the Northwest Room, cost unspecified but under \$15,000. Only the Jensen sculpture – *Pursuit of Knowledge*, which depicts three leaping hurdlers, fused together – would be covered by the \$25,000 art budget. Separate "allowances," not listed in the April budget but perhaps included under landscaping or furnishings, would be used to compensate Tsutakawa and Fitzgerald.²⁹ The art budget's remaining \$10,000 presumably paid for a fourth major work of art, commissioned later. Crafted in sheet steel by Glen Alps and titled *Activity in Growth*, it was, like Fitzgerald's untitled piece, an abstract sculptural screen. Objections were raised in local newspapers when it was announced that public funds were to be spent on modern

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Bindon & Wright, Architects. Architect's Revised Budget Estimate for New Seattle Public Library, dated April 14, 1958. *Library Board of Seattle, Minutes and Proceedings*, Vol. 8, 1958-1961, 5.

²⁹ Letter from Mr. John L. Wright to the Board of Trustees, dated December 4, 1958: Attention Mr. Willard O. Youngs. *Library Board of Seattle, Minutes and Proceedings*, Vol. 8, 1958-1961, 58.

art.³⁰ In Seattle, as elsewhere, the press had a history of being hostile to modernism, but the reception that eventually greeted the finished library fountain and all the artworks created for the building was overwhelmingly positive.³¹

Discussing his first fountain commission in a video made in 1987, Tsutakawa remembered asking himself, "It rains all the time in Seattle. Why build a fountain?"³² By the 1980s, secure in his position as a leading designer of public fountains, he could afford to be candid. Interviewed for the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* in 1970, on the other hand, the artist had claimed: "I knew all the time that if I did this fountain right, it would be the beginning of a fountain revival in Seattle. If I failed, there might be no more fountains for another 25 years." This was not so much a boast as a reflection on the pressure he worked under on this first fountain project. In Tsutakawa's words, "It was a big gamble and I was it."³³ It is clear that by 1958 Tsutakawa was regarded as a significant figure within Seattle's professional arts community; he would not otherwise have been offered a major public commission alongside Fitzgerald and Alps. Nonetheless, Tsutakawa had never made a fountain before and was uncertain of his ability to complete such an assignment. Still, he was intrigued. Besides, Tsutakawa told an interviewer, "I had already studied public art, since that was the thinking of the 1930s."³⁴ Furthermore, the artist pointed out elsewhere, "I'd never seen that much money in my whole life, a big commission."³⁵ Tsutakawa's inexperience almost cost him dearly, however. Unaware of the costs and complexities involved in fabricating and installing a fountain, the artist

³⁰ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 88.

³¹ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.; Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 20.

³² *George Tsutakawa Interview*, 1987 June 26-27, Archives of American Art Videotapes.

³³ Quoted in Marshall, *Place of Learning, Place of Dreams: A History of the Seattle Public Library*, 108.

³⁴ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 18.

³⁵ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

naively assured his clients that the total expense would probably be less than they had budgeted because he planned to have the fountain cast at a foundry in Japan, rather than in Europe.³⁶ This soon proved to be impossible.

When he first met with the architects, Tsutakawa found they already had a specific site laid out in their plans for the Fifth Avenue plaza. The fountain was to stand next to a small auditorium, and would be mounted on a block of concrete six or eight feet across. This plinth was also included in the architects' drawing for the plaza, and to Tsutakawa it suggested that what they envisioned was a small fountain, possibly a figure, traditionally mounted on a pedestal with a small amount of water trickling down. Telling his patrons that he needed to give the matter some thought, Tsutakawa returned home to seriously consider the possibilities. Making quick charcoal studies, he began by drawing the pedestal into the middle of the plaza to allow the sculptural fountain to be viewed from all angles. Many hours were then spent in conference with the architects and the Library Board, and Tsutakawa later recalled how he gradually gained an understanding of "their overall design objective for the space, and the character of the building, and the scope of the project." Going through four or five years worth of his pre-existing sketches, drawings, and paintings made in *sumi* and oil – including many related to his *Obos* sculptures – Tsutakawa found numerous "wonderful forms" suitable for reworking as part of a fountain design.³⁷

After a month or so spent working through ideas, he finally eliminated the concrete block completely, replacing it with a central pool. Originally Tsutakawa hoped to mount a metal sculpture on a large boulder or rock in the centre of the pool, but this would have made the

³⁶ Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 144.

³⁷ Seattle Public Library, "Address Given by Mr. George Tsutakawa," 3.

fountain's weight too great, and the plan had to be abandoned.³⁸ Once he was quite sure about the final form the fountain would take, Tsutakawa began making small models in green wax. Scaled at one inch to one foot, these were useful for exploring different arrangements of stacked shapes. Large charcoal sketches showing a number of different versions and configurations were presented to the architects.³⁹ Agreeing that Tsutakawa's concept was superior, Bindon and Wright immediately halted construction of the Fifth Avenue plaza – a radical move since the concrete had already been poured. Around the same time the artist started to build a very simple large model of the patio and pool in his basement studio. Approximately eight feet long, it allowed him to work out the arrangement of rocks around the central sculpture.

A much smaller model accompanied Tsutakawa's final sketched design, which he formally presented to the library board and the architects.⁴⁰ Reworking the fountain plaza to include a pool was a significant adjustment to Bindon and Wright's original plans. It was also an expensive decision and thus a major show of support for Tsutakawa's abilities as an architectural designer. The alteration required engineers and contractors, adding \$5,000 to the cost of the new library.⁴¹ Happily, everyone seemed very satisfied with the result, and the *Fountain of Wisdom* became the first of many collaborations between Tsutakawa and architects on fountain projects. A large number came from his former students; as practicing architects they turned to Tsutakawa to create fountains for the buildings they designed.⁴² He also received frequent invitations from landscape architects asking him to participate in preliminary planning for fountain sites. This might include consulting on the design of a fountain's setting as well as determining the best

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 20; Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

⁴⁰ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

⁴¹ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 20.

⁴² Mayumi Tsutakawa, interview by the author, June 23, 2010.

location within a given site, which could be an urban space, a park or a university campus.⁴³

Discussing the *Fountain of Wisdom* with Reed in 1976, Tsutakawa recalled: "From that project I learned about the practical aspect of working with all kinds of people, including architects, engineers, the clients, the public. I learned their language; I learned how to get along with people.⁴⁴ To better understand the conditions under which Tsutakawa developed his fountain sculptures, it is important to consider, in general terms, his working relationships with architects and clients, and that will be my next topic of discussion.

It is evident from interviews that Tsutakawa was ambitious; he could not otherwise have achieved the degree of professional success that he did, as an artist nor as a university professor, especially not as a Japanese American. When one reads these interviews and other documents, however, Tsutakawa emerges as far less ego-driven than many modern artists. For example, he firmly believed that public art was answerable to the community and did not approve of artists who imposed their personal visions on a city's inhabitants. In Tsutakawa's words, "outdoor and public sculpture is for the public, is for the people. And I think it's very important that you design something which is appropriate to the scale, and to the environment, and to the wishes of the people, and also to the wishes of the owners.... I do feel a strong sense of responsibility to the community and to the area where it's going to be."⁴⁵ Tsutakawa's reference to "the owners" here is significant. In the context of mid-twentieth century modernism, the fact that they are commissioned works, as opposed to the creation of uncommissioned art objects for the private market, links public fountains to civic and commercial building projects. A brief article by Walter Segal in the April 1, 1970, issue of *The Architects' Journal* evaluated a claim recently

⁴³ *George Tsutakawa Interview*, 1987 June 26-27, Archives of American Art Videotapes.

⁴⁴ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 22.

⁴⁵ Quoted in Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 116.

made by Nikolaus Pevsner: "The painter can lock himself up in his studio and starve; if the architect has no client there is no architecture. Hence architecture attracts men readier for compromise with the world as they find it."⁴⁶ Acknowledging the need for an architect to develop "greater skill in diplomacy" than a painter might require, Segal argued that real innovators cannot afford the burden of compromise. One possible solution was to follow Mies – he had sought out and found numerous clients who "thought and felt as he did" (782). Segal concluded that "getting one's way is not to be despised for it has many would-be practitioners. Those who have reached attainment in it deserve studying chiefly when they achieve their aims so inconspicuously that their wishes seem to come from the mouths of clients and society."⁴⁷

Tsutakawa was generally hired by architects and other individuals who admired his work and shared his artistic values, so major compromises were not required. Minor ones were accepted with grace, as when he agreed to satisfy a patron by attaching a very small but highly realistic cast bronze frog to the base of his *Garth Fountain* at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. It is difficult to imagine the most celebrated American abstract sculptors, for example David Smith or Richard Serra, agreeing to such an addition. Interviewing Tsutakawa in 1983, Kingsbury asked about "the tradeoff in freedom" that often must be made by a sculptor who wants to create large scale works for public display, as opposed to smaller pieces for private sale. In addition to financial backing, such projects require the cooperative effort of numerous people; an artist may have to work with architects, building engineers, and a construction crew. Tsutakawa responded that much depends on a sculptor's psychological makeup and attitude; "some people simply cannot work with people," and prefer to be independent, even if offered

⁴⁶ Quoted in Walter Segal, "Readier for Compromise?" *The Architects' Journal* 151, (April 1, 1970): 782.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 784.

substantial remuneration for a public art commission. In his opinion, however, few sculptors fell into this category, and many more would "welcome the opportunity to do something large where he can really show his skill or ability or vision, and leave it for posterity."⁴⁸ Throughout his career as a fountain designer, Tsutakawa retained his humility and his commitment to serving the public. Reflecting on his body of work, he observed, "We hope to create something, and hope that it will be accepted."⁴⁹

Matthew Kangas notes in *Jet Dreams* that "collaboration among American artists at this time often involved cooperation with the new planners of American domestic life – architects." In Kangas's view, postwar craft artists in the Pacific Northwest – a category in which he includes ceramicists and sculptors like Tsutakawa who worked with welded metal – "shared a remarkable consistency of aesthetic taste with the architects," but this could have negative results when artists were too willing to subordinate individuality "to the greater, agreed-upon architectural scheme."⁵⁰ While Tsutakawa, as already mentioned, rarely encountered any interference from patrons when it came to design decisions, accepting architectural commissions could present a risk to an artist's personal vision. This was something David Smith, for one, consciously avoided. Noguchi recalled in an article published in 1968 that the two of them had many arguments because Smith "thought I was very foolish in considering architects at all."⁵¹

Not only was Tsutakawa's first architectural commission something unexpected, it was something of an accident that his fountain sculptures ended up being intimately linked through materials and process to modernist trends – and Seattle – rather than to Japanese and European

⁴⁸ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Kangas, "Pacific Northwest Crafts in the 1950s," 82.

⁵¹ Isamu Noguchi, "The Sculptor and the Architect," *Studio International* 176, no. 902 (July-August 1968): 18.

casting traditions, as Tsutakawa had originally intended. Both Tsutakawa's choice of material and the fabrication techniques were closely connected to his Seattle location, as well as to developments in avant-garde sculpture elsewhere.⁵² When he started planning the library fountain, Tsutakawa imagined it cast in bronze, like much traditional European sculpture but also like the great Buddhas of Nara and Kamakura.⁵³ In earlier periods, large foundries in Japan had produced western sculptures ranging from equestrian monuments through French Impressionist sculptures and large scale works by Rodin. Tsutakawa wrote to numerous museums and sculptors in Japan for advice on casting the *Fountain of Wisdom* but could find no foundries there willing to take on the job, or even respond to his inquiries. Mystified at first by their lack of interest, Tsutakawa came to realize that his abstract design was incomprehensible to the Japanese foundries. He explained that, never having encountered a fountain like this before, "they didn't even want to touch it."⁵⁴

There were no foundries in the Northwest with the technical expertise to cast such a fountain, and having the work done in New York or Europe would involve prohibitive costs.⁵⁵ Faced with this major obstacle, Tsutakawa began to think about using cut and welded metal sheets – a technology that he reasoned would be well known in the Seattle shipyards.⁵⁶ This, of course, required making some adjustments to the original design. At present, I am not certain that any of Tsutakawa's earliest drawings for the library project survive, and he made only passing reference to design changes when discussing the *Fountain of Wisdom* with Kingsbury in 1983. In

⁵² For examples see Read, *Modern Sculpture: A Concise History*, Chapters 5 and 6.

⁵³ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ In San Francisco, like Seattle, artists requiring casting in bronze prior to the early 1960s sent their work to New York, France, Italy, or sometimes Japan. On the Bay Area's post-1960 "renaissance of cast sculpture," see "Casting in the Bay Area," *Artforum* 11, no. 2 (August 1963).

⁵⁶ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

Reed's interview, however, Tsutakawa did elaborate on an important discovery that was a direct result of the necessary change in materials. Rebuffed by the Japanese foundries even when he asked friends in Japan to make indirect inquiries about fountains, Tsutakawa told Reed:

I decided to go an entirely different way and fabricate it out of bronze plates and sheets. Well, then I discovered the problem with the Roman fountain and the limitations of the Roman fountain, which are evident all over the world.... It's almost impossible to put plumbing in a cast bronze fountain that will control the sprays and the jets and the waterfalls. You can't do it, and even if you did, it would be very costly. By fabricating, you build the plumbing right into the sculpture as you build it and you can control it any way you want to. Well, when I realized that, the work went on beautifully. In the meantime, I found this very good engineer, Jack Uchida, who's been with me 17 years already, and he helped me engineer all the fountains I did. I'd turn out the design, I'd draw it up, show him where I wanted the water and how I wanted it to come out, and he figured out the internal plumbing system.⁵⁷

As it turned out, Jack Uchida, the expert welder who became Tsutakawa's teacher at this time, and later his close collaborator, had worked as a welder at the city's navy shipyard, and also at the Boeing Airplane Company for two decades before becoming an engineer.⁵⁸ Through him, a deep and lasting connection was formed between Tsutakawa's fountains and the recent industrial history of the Seattle area.

Prior to his involvement with the *Fountain of Wisdom*, Uchida had never worked with an artist before, and Tsutakawa had never built a fountain; but according to the sculptor, the engineer's sensitivity enabled him to understand exactly what was required to turn his artistic concept into a functional reality. In his Oral History interview, Tsutakawa recalled that he purchased a welding machine and "all the necessary tools," and the two men went to work, building the first of Tsutakawa's many fountains in the artist's garage. In addition to teaching him the sophisticated electric welding technique necessary for constructing the fountain, Uchida advised on plumbing, pumps and other functional necessities, as well as the mathematical

⁵⁷ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains, 20.

⁵⁸ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

calculations needed to determine water volume and flow rate requirements.⁵⁹ According to Gerard Tsutakawa, the *Fountain of Wisdom* was vastly "overbuilt" in terms of the complexity of its structural and water carrying systems.⁶⁰ Completing the whole project took almost two years; later large fountain commissions would generally take half as long.⁶¹ It was perhaps inevitable that mistakes would be made; within a week of its installation the fountain pool developed a leak, and water was found trickling into the library stacks below the plaza. The problem was soon rectified, but Ament reports that the same day the water had to be turned off, Tsutakawa was scheduled to speak to a group of museum docents about the project. The artist "delighted them by reporting: 'The fountain is a healthy baby, but the diaper is leaking.'"⁶²

In February 1966 Uchida published an article in *Welding Journal*, in which he examined the "substantial contributions" welding was making at that time in opening up new creative directions for artists. "Intricate shapes that rival castings can be created by welding," he wrote; moreover, "the over-all balance and design can be altered during fabrication," with the whole sculpture even being reworked, if necessary. Uchida's article, titled "Welding in Modern Metal Sculptures," provides information on techniques and materials used in *The Fountain of Wisdom* and three other bronze fountains he made with Tsutakawa, for sites in Seattle, Los Angeles, and Kansas City.⁶³ It also includes photographs of all four fountains and six smaller sculptures by

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Something Gerard discovered when he restored the *Fountain of Wisdom*, prior to its re-installation at the new Seattle Public library. Gerard Tsutakawa, in conversation with the author, June 24, 2010.

⁶¹ Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 144; Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

⁶² An amusing anecdote, but one that reflects the period's still-traditional attitudes regarding women's interests and roles. Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 146.

⁶³ For example, Uchida provides the following details for the *Fountain of Wisdom*: "The sculptured fountain was fabricated from flat bronze plate. The ball in the center was formed in two half sections and welded together. All the 'dishes' were formed by cold pressing in a large

Tsutakawa, examples of the freedom gained by artists who were learning to work with metals and do their own gas and arc welding.⁶⁴

Tsutakawa continued to test pumps and complete some stages of production at his home, but later fountains were cut, formed, and sometimes also welded by the Markey Machinery Company in South Seattle. The company, founded in 1907, still specializes in machinery for ships. Traditional industrial techniques were used by many modernist sculptors in the early 1960s, the most notable American example being David Smith. In addition to such associations as "power, structure, movement, progress," Smith said he chose to work in the medium because it "possesses little art history."⁶⁵ Although it came to be associated with industry, it is important to remember that the use of forged and welded metal was a sculptural innovation originally drawn from craft tradition. Rooted in the traditional Spanish craft of decorative metalwork, the technique was first employed exclusively by members of the Paris School who were of Spanish origin. The best-known was Julio Gonzales, who passed it on to Picasso. Though Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures were fabricated rather than cast, it is important to emphasise that they are still made of bronze. His works, unlike those of Smith or Calder, thus retain associations with traditional European fountains and cast sculpture, as well as Asian artworks and artefacts cast in bronze.

The durability of bronze was important to Tsutakawa, as was the medium's ancient connections to monumental tradition in many cultures. In his Oral History interview of 1983, he wondered aloud whether a taste he had observed "in recent years" for impermanent, "fleeting"

hydraulic press and even the gracefully tapered pipe was fabricated from flat plate. All welding was accomplished with the d-c gas tungsten arc process using a filler metal of matching composition." Uchida, "Welding in Modern Metal Sculpture," 113.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 111.

⁶⁵ Quoted in Barbara Haskell, *The American Century: Art & Culture, 1900-1950* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art / W.W. Norton, 1999), 368.

works, in design, sculpture, and craft was, perhaps, an expression of what he described as "the hopelessness and the desperation of the modern generation." While Tsutakawa emphasized that an art object's value should not depend on its age, he also mused that time could impart the "true essence of a work of art." Particularly if they were "large, monumental things," examples that "stood, or withstood" for many centuries, like the pyramids and the Great Wall of China, commanded "great respect."⁶⁶ Prior to visiting Vancouver in 1969 to make final adjustments to the flow of water in the *Fountain of the Pioneers*, and later to attend its unveiling, Tsutakawa spoke with art critics from local newspapers. He emphasized the permanence of his works, telling them, for example, that the silicon bronze used in his fountain sculptures "will outlive us all," and that new technologies meant it was "better than old Chinese urns made 3,000 years ago."⁶⁷ The artist was correct in praising the durability of silicon bronze; the material itself will last hundreds of years, and welds done correctly, using a welding rod of the same composition as any extruded shapes, will last almost as long. This was the case in Tsutakawa's fountains, and it was the use of a modern silicon bronze filler that allowed them to be welded without visible seams.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

⁶⁷ Quoted in Joan Lowndes, "Bentall's Fountain is an Urban Asset," *Vancouver Province*, 1969, Archives of American Art, *George Tsutakawa Papers, 1963-1991*. Lowndes reported that Tsutakawa would visit a week before the fountain was dedicated, during which time he would "balance out the water" and decide whether to pierce more holes in the various sections.

⁶⁸ Uchida, "Welding in Modern Metal Sculpture," 113. I would like to thank Dr. Jeffrey Ochsner for providing additional information on silicon bronze (bronze that is made with silicon, rather than tin, as the primary alloying element), which gained popularity among 20th century sculptors largely because of the availability of welding rod in the same composition as cast or extruded shapes. This meant that parts could be welded together without a change in patina being visible at the seam, something that had always been a problem for earlier artisans, whether producing classical figurative sculptures or decorative objects. Another advantage, in addition to its durability, is that silicon bronze responds well to finishes.

Reception of the finished fountain

As a permanently sited piece of monumental sculpture in a modernist style, it is somewhat surprising that the *Fountain of Wisdom* was completely uncontroversial when it was unveiled at the Seattle Public Library in 1960. It was, after all, Seattle's first fountain and first public sculpture in many years, Tsutakawa's first foray into fountain design, and a work of abstract art paid for with government funds. The likelihood of some public resistance to abstraction at this date might be taken as evidence of a lingering cultural provinciality in Seattle, but Harriet Senie has pointed out that even in New York City such attitudes prevented the installation of abstract sculpture in public parks until well into the 1960s.⁶⁹ Tsutakawa recalled that he was very nervous just prior to installing the Seattle Library fountain; he fully expected "a big outcry about waste of public tax dollars." But, "nobody said anything."⁷⁰ The overwhelmingly positive response was a clear indication of Tsutakawa's skill as a sculptor of metal and water. His sensitivity to organic growth and the geometries of nature was unusually acute – even more rare was his gift for creating sculptural forms with water. To their credit, the people of Seattle seem to have grasped this immediately. An additional factor was the widespread tendency among artists and designers of the postwar period to blend biomorphic and geometric abstraction.

⁶⁹ Senie writes that, in 1965, New York City Parks Commissioner Newbold Morris "appeared to make anti-abstraction a Parks Department policy" when he made the following statement: "Art is supposed to transmit thought, not be decorative. Unless it transmits thought to me, I don't get it. I'm in love with representational art. . . . Moses [Robert Moses, his predecessor as Parks Commissioner] was here for 26 years. It was hard to get anything abstract past him." Quoted in Senie, *Contemporary Public Sculpture: Tradition, Transformation, and Controversy*, 108-109.

⁷⁰ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 20. In 1984 Reed recalled that "from the day of its unveiling" the *Fountain of Wisdom* "has enjoyed the continuing love and friendship of the people." Gervais Reed, "Northwest Artist George Tsutakawa Chosen For 1984 KCAC Honors Award Commission," *The Arts* 13 (March 1984): 3.

Familiarity no doubt aided in acceptance, making Tsutakawa's fountain sculpture less threatening in 1960 than it would have been a few years earlier. By 1957 Robert B. Hawkins felt confident stating in the *College Art Journal* that, while members of the public continued to "question or be somewhat bewildered by its content," a more intelligent and receptive audience for contemporary art had recently emerged. Furthermore, Hawkins wrote, "much of the language of contemporary art has been assimilated (even if not understood) through the medium of commercial art, and the public has become, consciously or unconsciously, familiar with much of the language of those highly 'abstract' and personal aspects of contemporary art."⁷¹ As was briefly discussed in Chapter Three, a great number of Seattle residents would also have encountered "midcentury modern" design and art through department store displays of residential décor, and perhaps in the homes of friends and relatives. Such exposure would have prepared them for the public artworks developed for the new library by Jensen, Fitzgerald and Alps, as well as Tsutakawa.

In his Oral History interview Tsutakawa observed that, while his work had, in the past, received some negative reviews, none of his fountain sculptures had ever ignited a controversy or even provoked a negative reaction from the public. "Everyone likes fountains," he said, though he did recall one noteworthy exception. When Washington State Governor Dixy [*sic*] Lee Ray learned, upon her election in 1976, that Tsutakawa was in the midst of building a fountain sculpture for the Governor's Mansion, she objected forcefully.⁷² Tsutakawa's sculptural works were, however, generally accepted and appreciated by the public; this is demonstrated by a full-page newspaper advertisement from c. 1960, designed around the *Fountain of Wisdom* (fig.

⁷¹ Hawkins, "Contemporary Art and the Orient," 119.

⁷² The small garden fountain was not installed until 1983; by then Ray was no longer in office. Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.; Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 151.

35).⁷³ Paid for by the Seattle Trust and Savings Bank, the advertisement consists of an image of Tsutakawa's fountain, printed in clear, dark lines, which is superimposed over a much lighter image of the old Seattle library – a picture seemingly meant to evoke a faded memory. The headline beneath reads: “1901: Andrew Carnegie gave Seattle its ‘new’ library (and banking was a personal thing).” A small portrait of Andrew Carnegie lends authority to two columns of text that celebrate the library's growth, connect this to the Seattle Trust and Savings Bank, and twice invoke the phrase: “sound conservative banking”. The *Fountain of Wisdom* is not mentioned in the text, but the implication is clearly one of managed growth and progress towards future financial security. What is fascinating is that this juxtaposition of old and new is so closely reminiscent of the technique employed by Bindon and Wright when they chose to replace the original Carnegie Library fountain with Tsutakawa's. Earlier I argued that installing a modernist fountain allowed the architects to subtly indicate that the Seattle Public Library had entered a new and progressive era but still maintained ties to tradition and established practices. The juxtaposition used to advertise the bank is far more obvious, but similar in intent, and its emphasis on conservatism relies on the *Fountain of Wisdom* being a well-known and well-liked example of local public art.

Although its maker was a painter and sculptor, Tsutakawa's *Fountain of Wisdom* received a design award from the American Institute of Architects in 1960.⁷⁴ In contrast, the library itself received no such awards: architectural critics and professional organizations generally found this

⁷³ Archives of American Art, George Tsutakawa Papers, 1963-1991.

⁷⁴ The award most likely came from the Seattle Chapter, which presented Tsutakawa with an honorary lifelong membership award in 1984. Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 128.

early Seattle expression of International Style modernism “functional, yet undistinguished.”⁷⁵

Klotz has argued that, after 1945:

modern architecture shed its experimental exaggeration and its avant-garde madness by becoming average, by adjusting to the customary world of forms and by intermixing with them. The Modern Movement became a generally accepted style not through the buildings of the great masters Gropius, Mies, and Le Corbusier but through certain fashionable forms and petit-bourgeois derivatives. A pseudo-modern, trivial form of architecture supplied the rhetoric of the 1950s.⁷⁶

Still, the new library was only the fourth large modern building to be completed in downtown Seattle, and users were very impressed, especially after riding the first escalator ever installed in an American public library.⁷⁷ The entrance on Fifth Avenue featured a drive-in-service window, where patrons could return books and pick up requested material without even leaving their

⁷⁵ Marshall. *Place of Learning, Place of Dreams: A History of the Seattle Public Library*, 106. The lukewarm reception from critics in 1960 is perhaps not surprising, since Binden & Wright reworked their design from plans prepared in 1950 by the firm's predecessors, Jones & Binden. By 1956, when a \$5 million library bond was approved by Seattle voters, the original exterior sketches had been prominently displayed in two election campaigns. Expectations had thus been created, which, together with the merits of the preliminary plans, encouraged head librarian John S. Richards to support hiring Jones & Binden to complete the project. When his choice was not immediately seconded by the library board, Richards went on the offensive; Marshall describes the ensuing battle between the librarian and Frank McCaffrey, the board's new president, as "mano a mano, one bowtie-wearer versus another." *Ibid.*, 97. The feud between Richards and the library board was played out in the local newspapers, often under front page headlines, over the next nine months. Though Richards prevailed, he tendered his resignation before Bindon & Wright submitted their revised plans. According to Marshall, the changes resulted in a more stylish library building, with improved entrances and more windows. It was, however, missing three upper floors that appeared in the original design, often published and by now familiar to most Seattle residents. The plan was to add these floors when needed, but upon completion Seattle's new library appeared less impressive than it had in the original drawings, as if "some missing ingredient could have provided more graceful proportions." *Ibid.*, 102.

⁷⁶ Klotz, *The History of Postmodern Architecture*, 16.

⁷⁷ Ochsner, ed., *Shaping Seattle Architecture: A Historical Guide to the Architects*, xxxiv; Marshall, *Place of Learning, Place of Dreams: A History of the Seattle Public Library*, 4. The three earlier examples were: in 1945-50, Public Safety Building, Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, architects, with Young & Richardson and B. Marcus Priteca; in 1947-50, Federal Reserve Bank, Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, architects; in 1956-59, Norton Building, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill of San Francisco with Bindon & Wright. I would like to thank Dr. Ochsner for assisting me with a chronology of the earliest modernist buildings erected in Seattle.

cars.⁷⁸ The crowd of visitors who hurried to inspect the new library on opening day were also amazed by numerous elements that were quite standard for modernist buildings during the 1950s, but something of a revelation to Seattle residents. These included colourful mosaics, spacious open areas where patrons could read under recessed fluorescent lighting, and broad expanses of solar glass that offered views onto the exterior terraces and the fountain courtyard.

In a sense, Tsutakawa's library fountain took the place of a garden. It stood in a large pool at the centre of a broad, paved plaza, which was lined at its perimeter with potted plants, shrubs and a few small trees. Like a garden, it stood as a man-made reminder of the natural world, a function Tsutakawa would later ascribe to all his fountain sculptures.⁷⁹ Jellicoe has written that the Japanese concept of house and garden as a single unit was "made possible by the climate; through all, humans, stones, plants, water, and buildings, ran the spirit of nature."⁸⁰ The Pacific Northwest has a similar climate to much of Japan; it is also a region where the Japanese preference for building in wood added practicality to its aesthetic allure, so it is not surprising that the development of postwar architecture in the area reflected practitioners' interest in Japanese traditions. This was true of buildings designed by architects Tsutakawa knew, and in some cases worked with, including Kirk, Paul Thiry, and Lionel Pries. Two more architects prominent in the Pacific Northwest region whose designs drew on Japanese precedents were Arthur Erickson, who was based in Vancouver, B.C., and Pietro Belluschi in Portland, Oregon. As mentioned above, Belluschi was a patron of Tsutakawa's, having bought one of the *Obos* sculptures for his personal collection.

⁷⁸ Seattle Public Library Biennial Report, 1959-60, n.p.

⁷⁹ To some extent, the *Fountain of Wisdom* continues to perform this function at the new Koolhaas/OMA Central Library, where it is visible from inside the building on the lower floors.

⁸⁰ Jellicoe, *Studies in Landscape Design*, 87.

In May 1960, a substantial article titled "Seattle: Where Far East and Northwest Meet" appeared in the *New York Times*. The author, John S. Robinson, declared that though "no one has forgotten that this is the fifteenth anniversary of the end of the war with Japan," the Asian country's cultural influence "continues to spread through this city, which has become a Western Hemisphere outpost of the oriental mood." After pointing out to Eastern readers that Seattle was "the nearest major mainland port to the Orient," Robinson went on to assert that "the war caused a break in Seattle's close relationship with Japan, but this break was entirely healed by the early Fifties." Examples of renewed closeness could be found throughout the city, in Japanese-influenced gardens, art, architecture, and interior decor – even in food and locally composed music. The article noted the Seattle Art Gallery was preparing to open a comprehensive survey of historical Japanese art, while contemporary Japanese American art was represented by a photo of Tsutakawa, seated beside the *Fountain of Wisdom*. Cigarette in hand, the artist was shown turned toward the new library, contemplating his work; a caption beneath explained that his fountain was "designed after oriental cairns." Robinson mentioned the work of several local artists in his text but confined his discussion of architecture to the family home, describing Seattle's new houses as "often strikingly different from their counterparts in the Eastern United States, for here again the Japanese touch is everywhere. Unpainted cedar exteriors are torch-burned and brushed to enhance the contrast in the grain. Open planning is standard, and outdoors and indoors often seem to merge."⁸¹

As noted above, this merging of outdoors and indoors was also found in the new Seattle Public Library, an example of its use in institutional and commercial buildings, as well as houses. Because of the close relationship that fountains have with gardens in general – a

⁸¹ Robinson, "Seattle, Where Far East and Northwest Meet."

significant factor in many of Tsutakawa's fountain commissions – and the prominence of Japanese aesthetics in modern West Coast garden design, I will now turn to briefly explore that subject. One influential voice in twentieth century garden design belonged to Christopher Tunnard, whose *Gardens in the Modern Landscape* was first published in 1934 but reprinted in 1948, and again in 1950. In the book, Tunnard proposed that the basic principles of traditional Japanese garden design could perhaps provide the foundation for a modern Western technique. The goal was to design up-to-date gardens that would harmonize with modernist architecture and express an "affinity with nature."⁸² The Western United States also saw a dramatic increase in the number of Japanese-style gardens built from the mid-1960s through the 1980s, for private residences and for public enjoyment. Kendall H. Brown writes: "With the rise of modernism in the mid-twentieth century, the Japanese garden increasingly embodied simplicity, the rejection of materialism, and a kind of philosophical purity."⁸³ In North America, and especially along the West Coast, Japanese-style gardens were "built in such large numbers from 1890 on that they constitute an integral part of the region's landscape and its culture. Neutra, for instance found Southern Californians 'mentally footloose' and thus receptive to new things like modern architecture and Japanese design."⁸⁴

For enthusiasts who were not employed in the fields of art, architecture, or design, the modernist taste for Japanese design was translated through such popular magazines as *House Beautiful* and *Sunset*.⁸⁵ Articles in *Sunset* promoted Japanese design and sometimes went as far

⁸² Brown, "Territories of Play: A Short History of Japanese-Style Gardens in North America," 9.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 26.

⁸⁵ *Sunset Magazine* was important in promoting this kind of design as appropriate for the "low-maintenance, laid-back lifestyle of the West Coast." Established in 1898, the magazine often published site plans by landscape architects. Boult and Sullivan, *Illustrated History of Landscape Design*, 215.

as providing practical information on how to adapt elements of Japanese architecture to American homes. *House Beautiful* devoted its entire March 1960 issue to explaining a number of Japanese terms for aesthetic qualities not easily translated into English. Of particular interest was the term *shibui*, which refers to simple, unobtrusive aesthetic. Slawson notes that by 1960, this term had started to enter the speech and writing of U.S. designers and interior decorators, though most "were applying it with more ingenuity than accuracy."⁸⁶ Ochsner also refers to *House Beautiful's* promotion of *shibui*; he mentions that later that year the magazine devoted two consecutive monthly issues to the concept, as it applied to architecture, furnishings, and gardens.⁸⁷ These issues were so successful they were followed by museum exhibits on *shibui* that travelled around the U.S.

The traditional Japanese garden is often described as naturalistic and asymmetrical, in contrast to the artificial and highly symmetrical Persian garden, as well as European gardens and their North American descendents.⁸⁸ This simplistic assessment obscures features that are common to paradise gardens across Asia and in Europe.⁸⁹ In *Japanese Gardens: Right Angle and Natural Form*, Günter Nitschke argues that the juxtaposition of garden wall and nature, or

⁸⁶ David A. Slawson, "Secret Teachings in the Art of Japanese Gardens: Illustrations for Designing Mountain, Water, and Hillside Field Landscapes," (PhD dissertation, Indiana University, 1988), 146.

⁸⁷ Ochsner, *Lionel H. Pries, Architect, Artist, Educator: From Arts and Crafts to Modern Architecture*, 254.

⁸⁸ Brown, "Territories of Play: A Short History of Japanese-Style Gardens in North America," 9.

⁸⁹ Nitschke points out that "the ancient gardens of the Near and Far East represented no opposite extremes of 'unnatural' and 'natural'. They differed simply in the type and degree of their artificiality." Nitschke, *Japanese Gardens: Right Angle and Natural Form*, 10. Though the garden traditions of China and Persia were completely independent developments, in each of them, and in the Japanese garden, the natural world is strictly contained, "physically and visually framed within the rectangular bounds of the garden wall." Ibid. Chinese and Japanese gardens demonstrate a greater concern for naturalism than Persian examples, but all three are classified as paradise gardens, a type that is also very important in European garden history. The word "paradise" has a complex etymology, including Greek and Hebrew variations, but its origin is the ancient Persian *pairidaeza*, meaning an enclosure. Thacker, *The History of Gardens*, 15, 17.

architecture and curved garden contours, is key to Japanese aesthetics (fig. 36).⁹⁰ This customary union of the organic and the inorganic, the natural curve and the straight edge, was demonstrated in Chapter One in connection with Japanese family crests, or *mon*, and Tsutakawa carried on the tradition. It is not simply evident in the fountain sculptures themselves, with their combination of geometry and organicism, but in their relationship with their locations, particularly plazas, buildings, and urban neighbourhoods where the straight lines of International Modernism are dominant.

Landscape architect Thomas Church was well-known for conceiving of garden and house as a unified whole, with one functioning as a natural extension of the other. Based in San Francisco, from the 1940s on Church specialized in residential gardens in which spaces were organized functionally, with little regard for a site's central axis. Favouring asymmetrical compositions that emphasized the structure of spaces, rather than flowers and greenery, he often employed a patterned ground plane to unify the garden's varied spaces. Curvilinear and biomorphic forms were often placed against the orthogonal shapes of pavings and buildings, creating contrast and balance. The informality of mid-century West Coast living was well-served by this kind of modern design, which became known as "California garden style."⁹¹

Church's innovative and influential approach can be clearly seen in a site plan for the Donnell Garden in Sonoma, California (1947-49), designed with Lawrence Halprin and architect George Rockrise (fig. 37). The drawing reveals qualities associated with Church's designs that were echoed in the Seattle Library's Fountain Plaza and the settings of many of Tsutakawa's later fountain sculptures. In a similar way, Tsutakawa designed the curving forms of the *Fountain of Wisdom* to balance and highlight the clean, straight lines of the library's International Style

⁹⁰ Nitschke, *Japanese Gardens: Right Angle and Natural Form*.

⁹¹ Boultis and Sullivan, *Illustrated History of Landscape Design*, 215.

architecture. Over the years, he would produce many more fountain sculptures for buildings based, to varying extents, on the formal language of International Modernism. Examples include Vancouver, B.C.'s Bentall Centre (fig. 38), discussed in the following chapter, and Seattle's Safeco Plaza. In both locations the curved forms of large fountains by Tsutakawa complement and soften the rectilinear geometries of modernist towers. Art critics for both Vancouver's daily newspapers praised the *Fountain of the Pioneers* for being proportional to the buildings of the Bentall complex and, as one wrote, "holding its own against the strong and dominating lines of the building behind."⁹²

Photographs taken shortly after the installation of the *Fountain of Wisdom* show that the bottom of the fountain pool, which Tsutakawa also designed, was lined with small stones. Lying just beneath the shallow water, they were no doubt permanently set in the concrete floor. Their shapes were echoed by the pebble-sprayed exterior surfaces of the pool's walls.⁹³ Two larger rocks sit above the level of the water and there the effect is reminiscent of Zen gardens, especially those in which large rocks or boulders are surrounded by carefully raked gravel, on which only the raker is permitted to walk. Part of the function of rocks in Zen gardens is to introduce a wholly natural element into an artificial landscape, a purpose very similar to Tsutakawa's, although his fountain sculptures are clearly man-made. Tsutakawa incorporated rocks of varying sizes in the pools he designed for several fountains, including the *Waiola Fountain* (1966) and the *Fountain of the Pioneers* (1969). At Vancouver's Bentall Centre, as at the Seattle library, a fountain in the downtown core of a medium-sized city was designed to

⁹² Charlotte Townsend, "Water Makes the Fountain," *Vancouver Sun*, June 12, 1969. Also see Lowndes, "Bentall's Fountain is an Urban Asset."

⁹³ The rhyming effect of the stones and pebbles can be seen in a photograph of Tsutakawa seated beside the *Fountain of Wisdom*, reproduced in Marshall, *Place of Learning, Place of Dreams: A History of the Seattle Public Library*, 109.

bring an element of nature into the modern urban environment. In the *Marianwood Fountain* (1987), a larger pool in a quiet setting allows the rocks to be more widely dispersed, and a different mood is created.

Many of Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures exemplify a tendency among modernist artists and architects to appropriate and combine motifs from diverse cultures in a quest for universal meaning. This concept informs the artist's statement Tsutakawa produced c. 1967, which is reproduced in full in the Introduction. Reflecting on the importance of the "*obos* concept" in shaping his approach to sculpture, he wrote:

This primitive conception seems to be a timeless and universal one which is evident in the forms of cairns, stone henges and simple rock piling practices found in almost all cultures of the world in various stages of development. I believe that this very early concept eventually led to the construction of pyramids, temples, edifices and all sorts of stone structures, finally giving way to functionalism in architecture.⁹⁴

Writing on Japanese gardens in 1966, Jellicoe suggested that the rocks in a Zen garden seem to "act as an intermediary between our own short-lived selves and the infinite; and in this way their equivalent may perhaps be found in the menhirs and unfashioned standing stones found all over the world in primitive times."⁹⁵ This observation may shed light on the meaning behind the rocks Tsutakawa placed in some of his fountains' pools; more important is that it reinforces, by way of the *obos* concept, the coexistence of permanence and flux in all his fountain sculptures.

Tsutakawa's fountains have often been characterized as quiet and contemplative – inspiring appreciation of nature and its processes. Harmony and balance are certainly important; the artist once described how, in developing ideas for the *Fountain of Wisdom*, he was “very much aware” that most fountain designers lacked imagination and made little effort “to bring about a total unity” when combining sculpture with “the nature of water in its rhythms,

⁹⁴ "George Tsutakawa; Seattle, Washington; Artist's Comment," n.d.

⁹⁵ Jellicoe, *Studies in Landscape Design*, 95.

movement, and pattern, etc.” At the same time, however, Tsutakawa stated that one thing he wished to accomplish was to create “a real gushing fountain with lots of water,” something he felt had long been missing in urban fountain design.⁹⁶ His desire “to use so much water,” he said, arose from a feeling that his first fountain should express the “closeness to nature” that comes with living in the Pacific Northwest, “surrounded by our mountains, rivers, lakes, and the sound and ocean, where we have an abundant supply of water, and we have [the] opportunity to observe and enjoy the endless rhythm of the water, the tides, and the waterfalls and streams in large volume.”⁹⁷ Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures provided the people of Seattle and other cities with enjoyable works of art that mimicked many of water's natural movements and processes. In this way, his work contributed to making ecological concepts immediate and relevant, reminding residents that, even though the presence of nature's cycles was increasingly overshadowed by the built environment, those cycles continued to play a crucial part in modern urban life.

⁹⁶ Seattle Public Library, "Address Given by Mr. George Tsutakawa,"1.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

Chapter Five:
Public Art and Private Enterprise in Seattle and Vancouver, B.C.

The *Fountain of Wisdom* was not just Tsutakawa's first fountain; apart from war memorials, this was the first time the city government had spent any money on art since 1908, when a bust of Chief Seattle was commissioned for Pioneer Square.¹ The public library project thus initiated a new era in fountain design in Seattle and announced the city's commitment to public art. This was a field of artistic endeavour Seattle would enthusiastically develop over the next few decades, emerging as an internationally recognized leader in the field. This chapter begins by outlining the major steps in the development of government support for public art in Seattle up to about 1970, as well as the efforts of Allied Arts of Seattle, an important group that worked to establish a Municipal Arts Commission and to support the construction of more public fountains. I discuss Tsutakawa's attitudes regarding private commissions for fountain sculptures to be placed in publicly accessible sites, then move on to issues related to large-scale public sculpture, aesthetic concepts of empathy, and the body. Here I bring in an example of a privately owned public sculpture by Henry Moore to illustrate some points. The chapter concludes with a case study of Tsutakawa's only Canadian fountain sculpture, the *Fountain of the Pioneers* (1969) in Vancouver, B.C., a private commission and one that clearly illustrates the importance of the modernist ideal of universalism and its connections to primitivism within the context of Tsutakawa's fountain designs. Although the *Fountain of the Pioneers* was completed in 1969, the clarity with which it reveals these themes makes it worthwhile to temporarily set aside the

¹ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 88. One of six commemorative sculptures in bronze installed for the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exhibition, which took place the following year. According to Rupp, the two most significant historical events to encourage the development of public art in the city were the 1909 Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exhibition and the Seattle World's Fair of 1962. *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 11.

chronological order of Tsutakawa's commissions before returning in Chapter Six to the works that immediately followed the *Fountain of Wisdom*.

In *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, Rupp notes that, prior to the 1950s, "supporting the arts was simply not considered a proper government function."² Some scholars have argued the New Deal programs of the 1930s "demonstrated not so much public support for the arts, as public endorsement of economic relief,"³ but the WPA planted seeds for further growth at the federal level, and as noted earlier, its programs benefitted some important Seattle artists, including Tobey, Graves, and Anderson. The WPA was an historical anomaly, however, and until the postwar period support for the arts through local government and industry was also quite rare. In Seattle and other parts of the U.S., attitudes to public art underwent a gradual change, leading to important developments in the mid-1950s and early 1960s. Still, even then the concept of government actively supporting the arts was considered radical by most Americans, some of whom regarded the WPA projects of Roosevelt's New Deal as boondoggles.⁴ Cher Krause Knight points out in *Public Art: Theory, Practice and Populism* (2008), that not all New Deal art programs replicated the collectivism of the Federal Art Project (FAP, 1935-43). The FAP offered public art demonstrations, classes, and lectures. It was run under the WPA by Holger Cahill, who encouraged progressive experimentation and tended to avoid making judgements based on "quality." In contrast, the Section of Fine Arts, which commissioned individual artists to "embellish" newly constructed federal buildings, selected artists based on merit, not on financial need. Knight observes that many "continued in their private studio lives" while working on federal projects, such as post office murals. Furthermore, the Section of Fine Arts maintained

² Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 12.

³ Knight, *Public Art: Theory, Practice and Populism*, 5.

⁴ Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 13.

aesthetic and technical standards based on the example of “good” art, “neither academic nor avant-garde, but based on experience and accessible to the general public,” meaning that the styles promoted were more conventional than was the case with the FAP.⁵

Such differences were probably not apparent to most Americans, however. Many held to an updated, Cold War version of the view that all “state-supported art smacked of fascism,” an opinion levelled by critics shortly before the New Deal ended in 1943.⁶ Any idea that seemed to embrace collectivism was likely to meet with resistance, making local governments hesitant to take the lead when it came to introducing progressive legislation around public art. A significant shift occurred in 1954, when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that it was permissible for governments to spend public money on civic beautification projects, a practice that had been the subject of some previous debate. As noted above, the same year saw the formation of Allied Arts of Seattle, a group that was instrumental in arranging for a fountain to be included in the designs for the new public library. Allied Arts would play an important part in at least one more of Tsutakawa's fountain commissions; the *Naramore Fountain* of 1967, discussed in Chapter Six. One of the main objectives of Allied Arts was the creation of a Municipal Arts Commission. This goal was accomplished with remarkable speed; the Seattle City Council formed a Municipal Art Commission in 1955. Rupp points out that, in Washington D.C., President Eisenhower had already been working towards the creation of a federal advisory commission “to encourage artistic endeavour and appreciation,” making it an opportune moment for lobbying for such a commission at the local level.⁷

⁵ Knight, *Public Art: Theory, Practice and Populism*, 4.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 13. In his January 6, 1955 State of the Union address Eisenhower announced his intention to recommend a Federal Advisory Commission on the Arts be established within the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, “to advise the Federal

In contrast to today's government arts commissions, Seattle's Municipal Art Commission was, at that time, a purely advisory body, operating without budget. In addition to unsuccessfully recommending that a "reasonable percentage" of the overall project costs of major public buildings be set aside for "interior design, painting, sculpture, landscape, architecture and other arts,"⁸ the Commission worked in such areas as preserving what would soon be referred to as "heritage," improving facilities for the performing arts, planting trees, and burying power lines to improve the city's appearance. While local government was not yet prepared to offer substantial financial support, it had by this time become clear to civic leaders that an attractive city with a vibrant cultural life was something forward thinking businesses and investors found appealing. In "Public Sculpture: The Pursuit of the Pleasurable and Profitable Paradise," an important *Artforum* essay published in 1981, Kate Linker wrote: "Public art begins in democratic urges – the desire to bring art to a broad, unspecialized public; to this ethical vision of art's transforming social power – its capacity to alter the communal mind – has been added a corresponding vision of its transforming *economic* function." If, as stated in one civic plan, "the purpose of urban art is to 'unlock the latent potential within a prescribed context,' then this purpose can be applied similarly to the economic potential within any particular space."⁹ Though this tendency took off in the 1970s and early 1980s, it started a good deal earlier. In Seattle, Allied Arts was onsite, providing energetic support. As I will demonstrate shortly, such an approach was also quite compatible with Tsutakawa's attitudes regarding the business side of art.

Government on ways to encourage artistic endeavor and appreciation." See <http://www.infoplease.com/t/hist/state-of-the-union/167.html>

⁸ Quoted *ibid.*

⁹ Kate Linker, "Public Sculpture: The Pursuit of the Pleasurable and Profitable Paradise," *Artforum* 19, no. 7 (March 1981), 67.

By 1960 Allied Arts was actively promoting its vision of a "City of Fountains." A photograph published in the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* on March 13, its caption headed: "A Dream: Seattle, 'City of Fountains,'" showed members of Allied Arts admiring the *Fountain of Wisdom* along with Tsutakawa, though the water had not yet been turned on. The power of the city's newly formed newly formed Municipal Arts Council was, Rupp emphasizes, "limited to the persuasive talents of its members and supporters, principally those in Allied Arts."¹⁰ Still, the group's powers of persuasion were clearly considerable. According to Kingsbury, Allied Arts played a central role in ensuring that fountains featured prominently throughout the Seattle World's Fair grounds in 1962.¹¹ In his essay for *Jet Dreams*, critic and curator Matthew Kangas declares that the *Fountain of Wisdom* "ushered in the 'City of Fountains' syndrome."¹² It is not clear what led Kangas to choose a word with such negative connotations as "syndrome;" what is evident is the historical importance of Tsutakawa's first fountain sculpture with respect to further developments in public art in Seattle. "For a time," Kangas writes,

it seemed as if all major outdoor sculpture commissions had to somehow relate to water, either as fountains or, in [Glen] Alps case, by placement above a reflecting pool. The fountain craze peaked at the 1962 Seattle World's Fair; its many fountains included those by [James] Fitzgerald, Jacques Overhoff, Francois Stahly, and two Japanese architects, Kazuyuki Matsushita and Hideki Shimizu. But the passion for fountains continued for another twenty years.¹³

The Seattle World's Fair of 1962, Century 21, which I discuss in some detail in the following chapter, was a major turning point for Seattle in terms of public art, as well as art and

¹⁰ Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 13.

¹¹ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 112.

¹² Kangas, "Pacific Northwest Crafts in the 1950s," 86.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 86-87. Overhoff's fountain was actually installed at Seattle's Civic Center in 1963, the year after the World's Fair. The fountain was constructed out of 170 agricultural sprinklers, and Overhoff said he intended its spraying water to have "the quality of abstract expressionist painting." Quoted in "Seattle Sees a Splashy Sculpture," *Life* 55, no. 4 (July 26, 1963): 31.

culture in general. Findlay notes that the organizers of Century 21 “coordinated their efforts with ‘arts activists’,”¹⁴ specifically Allied Arts, which especially benefitted those local artists interested in fountain design. In 1962 Kennedy was president, and federal support for the arts was broadened under his administration. The following year the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA), the agency responsible for overseeing federal construction projects, implemented its Art-in-Architecture (A-i-A) program. Often referred to as “percent for art,” A-i-A made manifest an idea first broached in 1934, when Edward Bruce of the Section of Fine Arts suggested that one percent of the cost of new federal buildings be set aside and used to commission works of art. The 1963 legislation specified an amount of up to one half of one percent of total construction costs (later amended to include the costs of repairs and alterations), for the purchase of contemporary American art. Suspended in 1966, the A-i-A program was revived under the Nixon administration; a process of soliciting input from review panels, convened by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), was added in 1973. Knight states that A-i-A has since provided “consistent government arts patronage” and, because it maintains final authority over the selection and commission of artists, become “a major tastemaker for American public art.”¹⁵

The percent-for-art formula established by A-i-A was taken up as a model for numerous similar programs administered by cities and states. The first municipal percent-for-art ordinance was Philadelphia’s, passed in 1959; Seattle’s was fourth, in 1973.¹⁶ Other, less tangible

¹⁴ John M. Findlay, *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture After 1940* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), 226.

¹⁵ Knight, *Public Art: Theory, Practice and Populism*, 7. Knight adds that the review panels were established in 1973 because questions arose regarding the rigour of the A-i-A selection process, which “favored the wishes of project architects.”

¹⁶ Following Baltimore (1964), and San Francisco (1967). Hawaii (1967) was the first state to adopt a percent-for-art policy. *Ibid.*, 8.

contributions made by A-i-A are also relevant here. Knight argues that the program has “helped solidify several philosophical precepts about the nature and function of public art in the U.S. One is the recognition that public spaces and artworks have individual characters, and therefore are “not interchangeable.” The concept of *site-specific* art, “in which the interaction between site and art is a prime determinant in the work’s conception, design, and execution, with the art sometimes altering the site,” was “preceded in the A-i-A program by that of *site-sensitive* art, in which the particular location is taken into consideration.”¹⁷ I would argue that the less stringent requirements of site-sensitive art make it an appropriate public art category in which to place the majority of Tsutakawa’s fountain sculptures.

Another philosophical premise, one embedded in the structure of the A-i-A program, but not borne out by Tsutakawa's career trajectory, is “that truly ‘public’ art should be literally *owned* by the citizens.”¹⁸ According to Gerard Tsutakawa, who worked as his father’s assistant, the vast majority of the fountain sculptures they made were private commissions.¹⁹ Kingsbury writes that Tsutakawa built many fountains for “corporations and commercial firms” in the 1960s, but during the 1970s and 80s the percentage designed for civic buildings, “public service locations,” parks, and university campuses increased. It is apparent that Kingsbury views the latter sort of commission as superior, and her discussion conveys the impression that Tsutakawa's opinion was similar. Statements made by Tsutakawa in his Oral History interviews with Kingsbury, however, indicate a very different attitude toward public and private commissions. As Kingsbury says, when faced with limitations on how many projects he could

¹⁷ Ibid., 7.

¹⁸ Ibid. (Original italics)

¹⁹ Gerard Tsutakawa, interview by the author, June 25, 2010.

take on, Tsutakawa "generally preferred the larger and more public opportunities."²⁰ What she does not make clear is that such choices were governed by his interest in creating monumental art for a broad audience; the identity of the patron was far less important.²¹

Kingsbury goes on to state that by about 1940, "Tsutakawa had come to be adamantly opposed to any instrumental use of art, for any ideological purpose. Like the Group of Twelve, and like the reclusive Chinese and Japanese practitioners of art as an element of the contemplative life, Tsutakawa held it to be apart from commerce or politics."²² While his fountain sculptures and other works have often been described as contemplative, Tsutakawa was no recluse. He was committed to engaging with society through art, especially with his fountain sculptures. Reaching out to the public was, furthermore, not foreign to all members of the Group of Twelve. Kingsbury herself once described how, in his artist's statement for the Group's publication of 1937, Graves wrote of a tension that existed between his desire to paint for "personal uplift" and what he regarded as the need to reach an audience in order to fulfill "the spiritual responsibility to share with others."²³ As Chapters Two and Three demonstrated, an interest in community and collaborative projects that Tsutakawa developed during the war years and in the 1950s was, to a large extent, what led him to specialize in designing fountain sculptures for public sites. This change of direction toward public art, first fully realized²⁴ with the library commission and solidified by fountain commissions that immediately followed, was first suggested by his exposure to mural painting, both during the war and as an art student.

²⁰ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 116.

²¹ Tsutakawa made this clear in his Oral History interview. Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

²² Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 39.

²³ Quoted in Kingsbury, "Seattle and the Puget Sound," 52.

²⁴ In 1956 Tsutakawa created a set of two sculpted walnut door panels for Seattle's Canlis Restaurant. This work of architectural sculpture could be considered his first public art commission. Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 149.

As for Kingsbury's claim that Tsutakawa insisted on art being separate "from commerce or politics," she is half correct; Tsutakawa did tend to think of art as ideally existing in a realm untouched by politics, as we have seen. But, while his art was never overtly commercial, many of Tsutakawa's projects were arranged through a "sculpture agency" in Los Angeles,²⁵ and he welcomed corporate commissions. In fact, he preferred them, and when interviewed by Reed in 1976, the artist made this very clear. "The government jobs are the worst," Tsutakawa stated emphatically; "whether it's a city or state or federal – there's just too much red tape and usually there's no one in charge; no one really understands what's happening, and it's so difficult to get anything done. The best way is to deal with the head man of the corporation.... If he understands me, and I understand him, that's the best."²⁶ Tsutakawa's acceptance of public art's frequent ties to business interests was in tune with the general direction being taken by cultural development in Seattle and elsewhere in the U.S. by the early 1960s.²⁷ It also corresponded to the vision promoted by Allied Arts. In 1961 journalist and Allied Arts member Robert Schulman, the man in charge of both the city and state arts commissions, wrote an article praising Seattle for the degree of civic beautification achieved since 1955. Schulman noted that excellent results were achieved when cultural and economic forces coordinated their efforts, and argued "it should be noted with hosannahs that some of the motivation for such advances comes from businessmen and property owners who, through such agencies as the Central Association, have perceived that

²⁵ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p. This is how Tsutakawa refers to it.

²⁶ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 25.

²⁷ In February 1963 Seldis praised a fountain sculpture designed by Tsutakawa, newly installed at Robinson's Department Store in Anaheim. He wrote: "The completion of this fountain strengthens an important trend on the West Coast art scene – the commission of works by private industry. This intelligent sort of enhancement of large private buildings should set an example to public officials responsible for the erection and adornment of new public buildings." Seldis, "Tsutakawa Fountain to Enrich Area's Art."

dollar self-interest and a gracious environment go hand-in-hand."²⁸ As Louis Kahn wrote in 1944, "if this seems a crass frame for a roseate picture of Post-War America, it is nothing to be ashamed of. The profit motive is the very epitome of the American system at its functional best."²⁹

Tsutakawa probably would have agreed, but only on the condition that aesthetics was not sacrificed in the pursuit of profit. He took the same stance when it came to functional demands, and he was frustrated by the tendency for corporations, civic governments, and many private citizens to think differently. Comments Tsutakawa made on this subject in his interview with Reed deserve to be quoted in full:

They think of fountains like buying a Cadillac or some type of gadget. As long as it does its work, it's fine. They don't care what it looks like — like buying a Kitchen-Aid, a washing machine that squirts faster and washes faster. This kind of thinking is not esthetic. It's so damned practical. And that's why we don't have good fountains. It's not very encouraging to artists and designers.³⁰

In Tsutakawa's view, "this kind of thinking" was characteristic of American cultural values, in contrast to Japanese sensibilities. He noted the tendency in the U.S. to place utility and convenience far above art appreciation or any sense that aesthetics should play an important role in everyday life.³¹ Tsutakawa also criticized Japanese Americans, but blamed their general neglect of the arts on working-class origins and an all-consuming focus on business. Telling Reed that he was a bit puzzled by "the Seattle Asian community," Tsutakawa observed that

²⁸ Quoted in Janice Peck, "Arts Activists and Seattle's Cultural Expansion, 1954-65," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 76 (July 1985): 93.

²⁹ In the *American Institute of Architects Journal*, May, 1944. Quoted in Meredith L. Clausen, "Northgate Regional Shopping Center – Paradigm from the Provinces," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 43 (May 1984): 144.

³⁰ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 22.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 32.

Asian Americans "always politely tell me how great I am, [but]... no American Oriental Institution has even bought a fountain. No businesses, no restaurants."³² Organizations like the Japanese American Citizen's League were also far too political for Tsutakawa. He spoke disparagingly of "how they just love to have conventions, running around crazy with a crazy hat on and blowing whistles, like the National Republican Convention. Doing things like that really makes me mad.... There's so little concern for art, which is also sad because the Japanese people in Japan are much, much more concerned about art."³³

Tsutakawa did eventually receive two major commissions for public artworks (not fountains) from local Asian American groups. In 1978 he installed a large bronze sidewalk sculpture in Seattle's International District, and in 1983 a commemorative monument in bronze was unveiled at the Puyallup Fairgrounds in Puyallup, Washington. It now marks the former location of "Camp Harmony," where Japanese American internees were gathered for processing before being sent to inland camps in 1942. In 1993 Tsutakawa received awards from the Japanese American Citizen's League, Seattle, and the city's Wing Luke Asian Museum – for Lifetime Dedication and Lifetime Art Achievement, respectively. Over the course of his career, Japan itself offered a greater number of opportunities and honours; these included numerous exhibitions of his sculptures, paintings, and prints; six fountain commissions between 1981 and 1990; and the Order of the Rising Sun Award, Fourth Class, from the Emperor of Japan in 1981.

Empathy and Organic Structure: The Body

In a public presentation at the Seattle Library, given shortly after the *Fountain of Wisdom* was installed, Tsutakawa apparently felt it necessary to clarify for his audience that the fountain

³² Ibid., 31.

³³ Ibid., 32.

sculpture was "actually not a figure – it's just a very abstract form."³⁴ It is generally agreed that Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures are modernist works that combine elements of geometric and organic abstraction; Kingsbury has said those that most directly resemble petals or spreading leaves create "an architectonic abstraction of organic life."³⁵ Still, critics have sometimes suggested the vertically stacked fountains contain a degree of figuration or even described them as "anthropomorphic."³⁶ Mindful of connections between the Himalayan *obos* and Japanese *seki-to*, as well as the tendency in Canada's Arctic and some parts of Europe to think of cairns as representing people, Kingsbury has argued that in the Himalayan *obos*, too, the stone stacks "are equivocally a pagoda-tower and a human figure; and something of this equivocation, of the architectural and the organic image, occurs in much of Tsutakawa's later work."³⁷ It was important to Tsutakawa that his fountain designs be symmetrical, and Kingsbury suggests this connects them to architecture.³⁸ I would like to suggest that their horizontal symmetry also connects them to the human body, as does their characteristic verticality, combined with Tsutakawa's sensitivity to human scale. Twelve feet in height, the *Fountain of Wisdom* was large enough to convey some sense of monumentality, partly due to Tsutakawa's use of bronze and the fountain's siting on the library plaza, but chiefly through the vertical stacking of forms. On the other hand, it was not so imposing as to dwarf the library visitors and pedestrians who chose to sit on the fountain's perimeter wall, nor did the *Fountain of Wisdom* compete with the architecture of the library building.

³⁴ Seattle Public Library, "Address Given by Mr. George Tsutakawa," 1.

³⁵ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 95.

³⁶ Lowndes, "Bentall's Fountain is an Urban Asset".

³⁷ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 80.

³⁸ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 101.

In 1971 Tsutakawa's library fountain gained a very significant new neighbour when Henry Moore's *Three-Piece Sculpture: Vertebrae* (1968; fig. 39) was installed on the plaza in front of the new office tower across the street. In keeping with the scale of the Seafirst Bank Building, Moore's bronze sculpture is far more massive and monumental than Tsutakawa's fountain. It is, however, similar to most of Tsutakawa's fountains in that it consists of a series of forms in bronze. Unlike Tsutakawa's stacked forms, Moore's cast bronze shapes are placed close together but are not connected. *Vertebrae* was the first large public sculpture by Moore to grace any West Coast American city, and Henry Seldis wrote in the *Los Angeles Times* that the work "paraphrased anatomy's eloquent architecture with great emotional impact and absolute plastic mastery."³⁹ Half a million dollars was budgeted for art at the bank's new headquarters, with \$300,000 earmarked for public spaces and \$200,000 for artworks to decorate offices, boardrooms and the like. According to Rupp, the public artworks were selected by a group composed of bank officials, architects, and art collectors, and Moore's sculpture was specifically chosen over two others because its curvilinear forms would "offset the stark lines" of Seattle's "first modern skyscraper."⁴⁰

"Inseparable from our understanding of the body matrix is the different language spoken by verticals and horizontals," writes Karsten Harries in *The Ethical Function of Architecture* (1997).⁴¹ In addition to providing formal contrast, the bronze abstractions of Moore and

³⁹ Henry J. Seldis, "Seattle Plaza Humanized by Gigantic 'Vertebrae'," *Los Angeles Times*, February 7, 1971. Vancouver, B.C. acquired Moore's *Knife Edge (Two Piece)* in 1969.

⁴⁰ In 1986 *Three-Piece Sculpture: Vertebrae* was sold to a Japanese collector, but public outcry over the secret sale and planned removal of the only sculpture by Moore in Washington State led to its being repurchased and donated to the Seattle Art Museum. Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 60.

⁴¹ Karsten Harries, *The Ethical Function of Architecture* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1997). I am indebted to Chapter 12 of Harries's book for leading me to some of the ideas presented in this section.

Tsutakawa made reference to, respectively, the horizontal and vertical lines that structure the modern city. At the same time, each introduced natural, organic elements into the geometric structure of downtown Seattle's urban space. In *Vertebrae's* case these took the form of vastly oversized abstract forms that closely resembled the bones of the spinal column. Moore's sculpture is organic and clearly refers to the body, so it could be seen as standing in for the human presence. On the other hand, the axis is horizontal, suggesting an animal or perhaps a dinosaur, rather than a human being. As Rupp points out, much of Moore's earlier work featured "stretched and hollowed human forms," but "he was also attracted to other natural forms such as shells and bones. He did not believe sculptural subjects had to be limited to animate objects and chose to portray smooth, graceful and rhythmic inanimate forms."⁴²

Tsutakawa was more inclined to combine curves with more geometric forms, sometimes making his references to nature overt and sometimes more oblique. A deep connection to the human body can also be made metaphorically, and this occurs in all Tsutakawa's fountains. The artist often mentioned it when discussing the importance of the water cycle as a theme in his work. He told Reed: "I don't know exactly how much but about seventy-five percent of our body is water, and without it, the body can't exist."⁴³ In his Oral History interview, Tsutakawa described how "water is going through our body all the time, all the living things, the water is moving in and coming out, evaporating, drying," and so on, part of the "great cycle and movement of water, which has been going on ever since the earth was formed."⁴⁴

Tsutakawa insisted that, after he turned from sculpting in clay or wood to using metal, his sculptures and fountain sculptures "almost never made reference to human figures, human

⁴² Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 61.

⁴³ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 25.

⁴⁴ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.; Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 114.

bodies, or any part of human bodies."⁴⁵ I would argue, however, that the three-part structure of many of the fountain sculptures can be interpreted as alluding to the body. Since Moore frequently made use of three separate elements to represent the figure, it is hard to believe Tsutakawa never considered the human body as a possible reference. Moore was, after all, one of the modernist sculptors he most revered. Even if he chose to reject the connection, as a sculptor Tsutakawa could not entirely repress the connection to the human figure; the principle of empathy ensures its existence. One abstract sculptor who seems to have been particularly attuned to the viewer's response was Barbara Hepworth, who once said, "I love working on a large scale so that the whole body of the spectator becomes involved."⁴⁶ While Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures are large scale works, in general an overall lightness and preference for open forms makes their presence very quite different from Hepworth's monolithic standing stones or Moore's massive personages. If one accepts that Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures correspond to the human body at all, then surely they suggest its combination of strength and fragility.

Associations of this kind are illustrated well by a small work called *Quartet* (fig. 40), completed a few years before Tsutakawa's first fountains, or even the *Obos* sculptures. *Quartet* was produced in 1955 as the artist's response to a Seattle concert given by the Budapest String Quartet. Four abstract carvings in walnut, the tallest eighteen inches high, stand close together on a rectangular base of lighter coloured wood. That these "figures" represent the four musicians is evident from their vertical orientation as well as their number, and is further indicated in each case by three vertically arranged holes, suggesting a head, torso, and legs. Kingsbury observes that these openings – circular, ovoid, or half-ovoid in shape – are "a little like the Constructivism

⁴⁵ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

⁴⁶ Quoted in F. David Martin, *Sculpture and Enlivened Space: Aesthetics and History* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1981), 164.

of Moore or Hepworth."⁴⁷ The thin rods that span the openings in Tsutakawa's sculpture also bear a marked resemblance to the stringed voids and concavities favoured by Barbara Hepworth and, briefly, Moore.⁴⁸ In addition to the three holes, each "musician" is further pierced by numerous thin copper rods, which create horizontal lines recalling the rapid arm movements of the string quartet, and, perhaps, the bows they held in their hands. Kingsbury refers to *Quartet* as an example of how, in the 1950s, Tsutakawa's work in sculpture and painting was "coming to slide easily across the borders of abstract and figurative."⁴⁹

Unlike painting, sculpture is almost always significantly like the human body; whether figurative or abstract, sculpture engages spatial and haptic forms of perception.⁵⁰ This creates a sensation of empathy that has often been noted by writers on sculpture, and also architecture. As Moore explained it: "For me sculpture is based on and remains close to the human figure. That works both ways. We make the kind of sculpture we make because we are the shape we are, because we have the proportions we have. All those things make us respond to form and shape in certain ways. If we had the shape of cows, and went about on four legs, the whole basis of sculpture would be different."⁵¹ Anthony Caro claimed that "all sculpture in some way has to do with the body. For instance [abstract] sculptures ... are partly dependent upon the spectator's height from the floor when standing up: on his vertical stance, his consciousness of flat ground. Sculptors ... are necessarily conscious of the body."⁵²

⁴⁷ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 58.

⁴⁸ For example in Moore's *Bird Basket*, 1939, reproduced in Read, *Modern Sculpture: A Concise History*, Plate 170.

⁴⁹ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 58.

⁵⁰ Martin, *Sculpture and Enlivened Space: Aesthetics and History*, 164.

⁵¹ Quoted *ibid.*

⁵² Quoted *ibid.*, 247, n. 9.

The kind of empathy one experiences in encounters with free-standing sculpture or architectural spaces is important in nearly all Tsutakawa's fountains, but it seems to me that the design of one particular project, the *Fountain of the Pioneers* (1969; fig. 41), may have been partly inspired by empathy of a different sort. Apart from its Canadian location, the *Fountain of the Pioneers* is unique among Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures in that he associated elements of his design with specific motifs found in the art of indigenous North Americans. I would like to suggest that this was a marginalized ethnic group with whom it is possible Tsutakawa felt some kinship, resulting from the wartime displacement, imprisonment, and loss of property experienced by West Coast Japanese Americans, including members of his own family and that of his wife, Ayame.

Modern Primitivism: *Fountain of the Pioneers*

Unlike the *Fountain of Wisdom*, Tsutakawa's *Fountain of the Pioneers* (1969) was a product of private patronage, commissioned by a contracting, real estate development, and property management company based in Vancouver, where the fountain is located. Dominion Construction built the first tower for its Bentall Centre headquarters in 1967 and, two years later, added a second tower and a public plaza. The fountain sculpture was the plaza's focal point, its large pool surrounded by benches and planters, creating an urban oasis. The bronze dedication plaque reads:

"FOUNTAIN OF THE PIONEERS"
 This fountain was commissioned by
 THE DOMINION CONSTRUCTION COMPANY
 LIMITED

as a tribute to those people who pioneered this great province, and whose vision,
 courage and hard work harnessed the mighty rivers and husbanded the towering forests
 so that we who follow might enjoy a truly bountiful land.

Sculpture by artist George Tsutakawa
 Unveiled by His Worship Mayor T.J. Campbell
 June 11 – 1969

In 1976 Tsutakawa told Gervais Reed that much of the inspiration for this fountain had come from the images of Raven carved by indigenous peoples of the Northwest Coast. The upper elements in the *Fountain of the Pioneers* show the powerful impact of Raven's eye brought to bear on a form that recurs throughout Tsutakawa's career as a fountain designer, the open sphere or ovoid. In this case, there is a sphere within an ovoid; together, the two shapes resemble an eye, recalling not only the eye of Raven but the disembodied and sometimes weeping eyes of Surrealist art. The water that pours from this eye strongly suggests tears, an effect that is heightened considerably if one recognizes the formal reference to Raven and stops to read the dedication plaque. In addition to Raven, Tsutakawa seems to have borrowed a shape from the rays of the Kwakwaka' wakw sun motif when he designed the concrete tiles set into the fountain's pool, behind the lights (fig. 42).⁵³

Such appropriations of indigenous motifs are, of course, not atypical of postwar North American art. According to Daniel Belgrad, the disillusionment the American avant-garde experienced during the Second World War caused it to question the values it saw reflected in the dominant culture. Not for the first time, some American artists were led to search elsewhere for

⁵³ For images of a Haida Raven and the Kwakwaka' wakw sun, see Hilary Stewart, *Looking at Indian Art of the Northwest Coast* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1979), 105, 71, 83. Due to copyright restrictions, these images cannot be reproduced here.

"forms embodying different societal values. In this search, they relied on art from societies outside the scope of 'Western civilization' as a model and resource."⁵⁴ The tribal cultures embraced by American artists of the 1940s were sometimes referred to by these same admirers as "primitive:" but, Belgrad writes, "then, as now, there was uneasiness about the derogatory implications of that term." David Craven points out that in the mid-1940s, "precisely the period when Surrealism was most important for the Abstract Expressionists, André Breton was proclaiming the importance of Third World art over that of Europe."⁵⁵ Barnett Newman addressed the issue in 1944, when he wrote of an exhibition of pre-Columbian sculpture in New York: "A full appreciation of these works should force us to abandon our condescending attitude toward the 'primitive' label with all of its confusing implications of child-like perception." Although, prior to the late twentieth century, the term "primitive" was commonly used to refer to the art of tribal societies, Newman's comment regarding "child-like perception" is also relevant when one considers the early reception of Japanese art in the West.

Writing on twentieth-century sculpture, Edward Lucie-Smith observed that, in Europe, the impact of "primitive" and archaic art can be traced back to Gauguin and Picasso; but while painters led the way, tribal art also appealed to many avant-garde sculptors. In part, this was because it suggested ways to move beyond a "persistent neo-classical tendency." Also, a constant dialogue was underway from the end of WWI until the 1940s between modernist sculpture and the fields of archaeology and ethnography. According to Lucie-Smith,

Those with the greatest expertise in these scholarly fields were often keen enthusiasts for the products of the Modern Movement. The influence went in both directions. Primitive artefacts seemed to gain in legitimacy from the comparisons they provoked with the work

⁵⁴ Belgrad, *The Culture of Spontaneity: Improvisation and the Arts in Postwar America*, 44.

⁵⁵ David Craven, "Abstract Expressionism and Third World Art: A Post-Colonial Approach to 'American' Art," *Oxford Art Journal* 14, no. 1 (1991): 48.

of modern artists, at the same time as they themselves bestowed this quality of validity to the modern works.⁵⁶

In Britain, Henry Moore was among the modernist sculptors who most fully embraced this development; that he derived the massive forms of his early reclining figures from ancient Mexican stone figures is widely known. Like Moore, Tsutakawa admired Mexico's pre-Columbian sculpture; according to Reed the many artworks decorating the artist's home included votive figures of pre-Columbian Mexican origin, along with miniature versions of ancient Japanese Haniwa figures in clay.⁵⁷

Describing to Reed how the forms used in *Fountain of the Pioneers* related to images of Raven, Tsutakawa recalled that, "in the Vancouver fountain I was thinking about Northwest Indian art, the great wing, you know, of course, it's reversed here. But the raven and the big eye – a big impressive eye – and a big wing and the legs spread out, the wonderful feeling they carved [*sic*]."⁵⁸ Raven is a creator, transformer, and trickster; in addition to liberating the daylight and giving fire to the world, for some First Nations groups he is also closely related to water. In 1964 Kwakwaka'wakw Chief Henry Speck wrote: "It was Raven who ... invented fresh water and rivers, brought Salmon, controlled the tides."⁵⁹ Tsutakawa may not have been aware of the variety of legends associated with Raven – his comments to Reed about Native carving suggest he regarded "Northwest Indian art" as a single, undifferentiated category. It was probably a coincidence that the artist's interest in water, and also in light, made Raven a particularly apt choice as an inspiration for his fountain sculpture.

⁵⁶ Lucie-Smith, *Sculpture since 1945*, 14.

⁵⁷ Reed, "The Fountains of George Tsutakawa," 2.

⁵⁸ Reed, "George Tsutakawa, A Conversation on Life and Fountains, 34.

⁵⁹ Chief Henry Speck, *Kwakiutl Art*, (Vancouver: B.C. Indian Designs Ltd., 1964), n.p. In the 1960s the Kwakwaka'wakw people were still known as the Kwakiutl.

Thinking along similar lines, Raven's well-established identity as a trickster figure tempts speculation regarding Tsutakawa's possible political motivations. It is a well-known fact that some of the leading Surrealists were inspired by the indigenous art of the Northwest Coast. The impact of Surrealism on Pacific Northwest modernists, including Tsutakawa, has also been documented; the subject is briefly discussed in this study but remains in need of further focused research.⁶⁰ As noted in Chapters Two and Three, ideas borrowed from Surrealist painters were explored by both Tsutakawa and the "Northwest School" group before World War II. In 1944 both Tobey and Graves were included in Sidney Janis's short book, *Abstract and Surrealist Art in America*, and later the same year Tobey participated in a show of the same name at Mortimer Brandt Gallery in New York.⁶¹ Throughout Tsutakawa's life, Salvador Dali remained one his favourite artists.⁶²

Dali was just one of several Surrealists who produced works depicting the disembodied, weeping eye. If Raven is understood to be weeping, the symbolism of the *Fountain of the Pioneers* is altered dramatically. Hal Foster has isolated what he calls "the discourse on the cultural other" as one of the indicators that "the never-complete passage to the postmodern" was underway well before the 1960s. The Surrealists, Foster writes, were not free of racist attitudes in their embrace of primitivism. Still, "they not only appreciated tribal art for its formal and expressive values, as cubists and expressionists had done before them; they also attended to its

⁶⁰ The impact of First Nations art on the Surrealists was recently explored in a major exhibition at the Vancouver Art Gallery: "The Colour of My Dreams: The Surrealist Revolution in Art," May 28 – October 2, 2011. Pacific Northwest painters directly influenced by both Surrealism and the indigenous art of the region include Guy Anderson, Morris Graves, and Jack Shadbolt, a contemporary of Tsutakawa's working in Vancouver.

⁶¹ Conkelton and Landau, "Timeline," *Northwest Mythologies*, 154.

⁶² Gerard and Mayumi Tsutakawa, interview by the author, June 23, 2010.

political ramifications in the present."⁶³ Could Tsutakawa have seized upon the idea of the trickster to quietly subvert the official theme of the *Fountain of the Pioneers*? That is what the incorporation of First Nations imagery in an artwork purporting to celebrate the triumph of white pioneer settlers suggests. Admittedly, a political statement, even a very subtle one, was out of character for the artist, but by no means impossible, given his own background. According to Craven, an awareness of being marginalised within mainstream American society "accounted at least in part for the way some of the white Abstract Expressionists empathised with Afro-Americans (and also Native Americans)."⁶⁴ This must have been doubly true for Tsutakawa, who may have felt more freedom to attempt such a shift toward the political within a Canadian context.⁶⁵ In the absence of concrete evidence, this suggestion can only be speculative. After all, it is quite possible that Raven succeeded in tricking the unsuspecting Tsutakawa, as well as Charles Bentall, who seems to have kept the artist's model of the *Fountain of the Pioneers* on display in his office at the Bentall Centre.⁶⁶

It may be that my political interpretation of the Vancouver fountain is more wishful than it is tenable, but Tsutakawa's treatment of the pioneer theme was, nonetheless, innovative in comparison to earlier examples. In Salem, Oregon, for instance, the Capitol Building is topped with a heroic statue of a pioneer, installed in 1938, weighing well over eight tons. This robust

⁶³ Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press), 213.

⁶⁴ Craven, "Abstract Expressionism and Third World Art: A Post-Colonial Approach to 'American' Art," 58.

⁶⁵ This is a subject that I am unable to expand on here but plan to investigate in the future. I discussed the Surrealist connection and its possible political significance in a paper titled "George Tsutakawa's *Fountain of the Pioneers* (1969): How Raven Brought New Meaning to Charles Bentall's Story," presented at the annual UAAC conference, Ottawa, Ontario, October 28-29, 2011.

⁶⁶ On June 14, 1972 in the *Vancouver Sun*, an article by business writer Mike Gresby, titled "City Reflects Bentall's Life Work," was accompanied by a photograph of Bentall in his office, seated beside the fountain model.

standing male in gilded bronze seems to survey the land around him, his gleaming axe held at his side. Besides the use of abstraction, Tsutakawa's choice of a matte black patina was enough to make his *Fountain of the Pioneers* a radical departure from traditional American monuments dedicated to the same subject, though the artist recalled having seen many such figures when he visited San Francisco's Golden Gate International Exposition in 1940. Vancouver's fountain sculpture was described by one local journalist as "at once anthropomorphic and organic,"⁶⁷ but its forms are resolutely abstract. At fifteen feet, the *Fountain of the Pioneers* is not a great deal taller than the *Fountain of Wisdom* (twelve feet), but its upper elements and curved bowl are larger and more compact in their arrangement; as a result, the *Fountain of the Pioneers* seems much more imposing. The *Vancouver Sun's* art critic wrote: "Maybe it is the solid optimism of big business, but this fountain brings an odd note of permanence to a city scene where the only other permanent thing is change."⁶⁸ As with all Tsutakawa's works, the water in the *Fountain of the Pioneers* is integrated with the lines of the sculpture. Here, the narrow waterfalls that fall from the large basin reverse and reinforce its dark prongs of solid bronze with cascades of sparkling liquid.

In addition to alluding to the formal traditions of what he referred to as "Northwest Indian" artists, in the *Fountain of the Pioneers* Tsutakawa combined the *obos* reference with forms he remembered from his childhood in Japan. While the family crests mentioned above are important for their two-dimensional semi-abstract forms, he also drew on sculptural forms known as *matoi*. Often seen atop flagpoles, these three-dimensional heraldic shapes symbolized local community organizations.⁶⁹ It could be that Tsutakawa's admiration for Japanese emblem

⁶⁷ Lowndes, "Bentall's Fountain is an Urban Asset."

⁶⁸ Townsend, "Water Makes the Fountain."

⁶⁹ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 92.

designs was what initially attracted him to the stylized imagery found in First Nations carvings.⁷⁰ The frequent appearance of ovoid forms in totem poles and other Northwest indigenous art no doubt also caught Tsutakawa's attention. Much like the Japanese *matoi*, the tribal art of Northwest Coast indigenous peoples served, and continues to serve, in the construction of community identity. Tsutakawa certainly recognized that this was a general function both sorts of emblems shared with much Euro-American public sculpture. In Northwest Coast indigenous art there is a wide range of ovoid shapes; these vary by culture group as well as according to the style of individual artists within each culture group.⁷¹ Rather than the ovals or egg-shapes most often seen in Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures, the ovoids in Northwest Coast indigenous art are often rounded rectangles or kidney shapes, but both types can also be found in Tsutakawa's fountains. The "kidney" ovoid also has much in common with the kidney-shaped tables and swimming pools of modernist furniture and landscape design, a point of commonality trait that may have helped attract Tsutakawa to Northwest Coast indigenous art.⁷²

Allusions like those present in the *Fountain of the Pioneers* are examples of American modernist primitivism, later than but closely related to the steel totems of David Smith, totem carvings and constructions in wood by Louise Bourgeois and Louise Nevelson, and the painted totems of Jackson Pollock and Adolph Gottlieb, among others.⁷³ Rosalind Krauss has pointed out that David Smith's *Tanktotem I* (1952), like every object in the long series of works that Smith labelled "totem," "locates itself at a strange border halfway between the human figure and the

⁷⁰ I would like to thank Dr. Carolyn Butler-Palmer for pointing this out.

⁷¹ See Bill Holm, *Northwest Coast Indian Art: An Analysis of Form* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1965), esp. 37-38. I would like to thank Dr. Victoria Wyatt for clarifying and extending the information I originally had on Northwest Coast First Nations ovoids.

⁷² This formal correspondence has been explored by some contemporary First Nations artists. See, for example, Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun's series of abstract *Ovoid* paintings.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

abstract sign."⁷⁴ Krauss's observation supports my earlier statements regarding sculpture's relationship to embodied experience. Totems and totem poles also provided inspiration for numerous European sculptors, including Moore. Modern sculptural interpretations of totem poles could also be seen in and near Seattle during the 1960s. One that Tsutakawa would certainly have been familiar with was Dudley Carter's towering carving outside Northgate Shopping Center, where Tsutakawa also installed one of his earliest fountains. Carter's cedar pole combined his own designs with indigenous motifs from the South Pacific and the Pacific Northwest.⁷⁵

A more prominent local example, in central downtown Seattle, was Harold Balazs's *Totem* (1959), a vertically-oriented sculpture constructed from hammered-copper sheets (fig. 43). Combining hand-crafted and machine-made forms, the abstract *Totem* was meant to symbolize the region's progress and expanding economy.⁷⁶ Located just a few blocks from the central library, Balazs's sculpture may well have suggested a direction for Tsutakawa when he began to design the *Fountain of the Pioneers*. *Totem* stood outside the 16-storey Norton Building (1960), considered Seattle's first International Style office tower, and its first with a major off-street pedestrian plaza. Named for Matthew G. Norton, "a pioneer lumberman who had great faith in the future of Seattle," it was also the city's first commercial building to feature public spaces adorned with commissioned, non-architectural public art, and its owners promoted these additions as a modern innovation.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Rosalind Krauss, *Passages in Modern Sculpture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1981), 148.

⁷⁵ Northgate's Legend Room Restaurant was also decorated with Native North American motifs, drawn in its case from Haida culture. For further discussion of public art at Northgate Shopping Center, see Chapter Six of this dissertation.

⁷⁶ City of Seattle Landmark Nomination Form: Norton Building, p. 12. www.seattle.gov/Neighborhoods/.../lpbCurrentNom_NortonBldg.pdf.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

Fountain of the Pioneers was, like *Totem*, commissioned to augment a modernist office tower, and both Tsutakawa's and Balazs's sculptures were intended by their patrons to celebrate a pioneering spirit that remained alive in local business leaders.⁷⁸ The thematic link to modern economic progress – explicitly stated in the commission for the Norton Building – was present mainly by implication at the Bentall Centre. At the Norton Building's dedication ceremony, speeches described the overall idea of the building as “the aura of progress and aim for the future.”⁷⁹ The text that appeared on the dedication plaque of the *Fountain of the Pioneers* and in the programme for the fountain's unveiling was more focused on the past, but the use of upper-case lettering for the title and the name of the patron indicated the latter's priorities.⁸⁰ At the unveiling ceremony, Tsutakawa's Japanese heritage was highlighted by the appearance of the Consul General of Japan, while in the fountain's pool, forty gold and silver Japanese carp swam among large stones brought from a local river.⁸¹

According to Ochsner, by the mid-1930s the combination of modern art and architecture with ancient indigenous traditions, as well as contemporary art and craft by members of various folk cultures, was becoming widespread in some parts of America's art and architecture

⁷⁸ According to the "Historical Sites" section of Seattle's municipal government website, the owners "commissioned two artists from Washington State to create major pieces to illustrate the Norton Building's themes of progress and the future." Balazs's sculpture was placed in the pedestrian plaza. In the building's lobby was *Restless Bird*, a bronze sculpture by Philip McCracken, "symbolizing the restless awakening Pacific Northwest with all its natural and other resources." <http://web1.seattle.gov/dpd/historicalsites/QueryResult.aspx?ID=983486705>.

⁷⁹ The event also included "Prevue 21," a science and space exhibition with models of the Century 21 World's Fair. Ibid.

⁸⁰ Programme Commemorating the Unveiling of the Fountain, The Bentall Centre, June 11-1969. University of Washington Art Library, Vertical Files: George Tsutakawa.

⁸¹ Lowndes, "Bentall's fountain is an urban asset." This was not the only time Tsutakawa's ethnic origins were emphasized in events surrounding one of his fountains. On November 20, 1964 the artist supervised the installation of his *Obos Fountain* in Fresno, California, and that evening he accompanied city officials to a performance by the Japan Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra. "Tsutakawa Bronze Will Rise on Mall," *Fresno Bee*, November 19, 1964.

communities. It was based on the recognition of formal and visual correspondences “between indigenous and historical works and modern ‘taste’.” From these, aesthetic theorists could extrapolate similarities between modern art and “human traditions that had existed for centuries.”⁸² This occurred even earlier among members of the European avant-garde; in 1928 Ozenfant wrote in the Preface to the first edition of *Foundations of Modern Art*: “This book is in favour of ‘constants’ and against the conventions dictated by circumstance: in favour of an Art based on our categorical and eternal feelings.”⁸³ Numerous examples of primitive art were included in the book, one a photograph of a man and woman from an unidentified African tribe. Both had plate-like discs inserted in their lips, the man's very large and the woman's considerably smaller. Turning the page, the reader came upon a simple ceramic dish made by Bonifas.⁸⁴ The close juxtaposition of the two images was clearly meant to suggest a connection between the earthy simplicity of modern ceramics and primitive traditions of bodily adornment (fig. 44). The supposed “affinity of the primitive and the modern,” a phrase Ochsner borrows from art historian W. Jackson Rushing, was showcased in two important U.S. exhibitions. The first was held in San Francisco, an exhibition of Native American arts and crafts organized as part of the Golden Gate Exposition (1939-40). While attending the Exposition, Tsutakawa may have visited this show, which was successful enough to be followed up in a larger version at New York’s MOMA. The highly influential “Indian Art of the United States” exhibition opened in January 1941. Ochsner notes that it was promoted, and its primary thesis demonstrated, by a 30-foot-tall totem pole

⁸² Ochsner, *Lionel H. Pries, Architect, Artist, Educator: From Arts and Crafts to Modern Architecture*, 113.

⁸³ Amedée Ozenfant, *Foundations of Modern Art* (1931). Trans. John Rodker. Second ed. (New York: Dover, 1952), xv.

⁸⁴ See Ozenfant, *Foundations of Modern Art*, 225, 227.

erected beside the museum's front entrance, creating a striking formal juxtaposition with the building's International Style architecture.⁸⁵

The idea of a universal essence being shared by primitive and modernist forms was at the heart of the “*obos* concept,” out of which Tsutakawa developed his fountain designs. His fountain sculptures are informed by various movements in Euro-American modernism, as well as Asian traditions. In these highly syncretic works, Tsutakawa combined forms derived from Himalayan *obos*, Japanese design elements, and sometimes references to other cultures – non-Western and Western. That this practice exemplified the universal aspect of the perceived affinity between modernism, primitivism, and folk traditions in art, craft, and architecture will be demonstrated once again in the following chapter's discussion of Honolulu's *Waiola Fountain* (1966). The utopian side of modern primitivism is clear in a painting by Tobey from 1945, a call for racial harmony made near the end of the war titled *Red Man – White Man – Black Man*.⁸⁶ Tobey, Graves, and fellow “mystic painter” Guy Anderson all collected Native American objects prior to 1945, and during that period they also sought out Native ceremonies. Sheryl Conkelton notes that this was an impulse shared by some abstract expressionist painters, including Newman, who that year wrote of the modern artist's quest to “transcend time and place to participate in the spiritual life of a forgotten people.”⁸⁷ In December 1947 Graves's *Plover and Surf* appeared in the art magazine *The Tiger's Eye*, an important source of tribal imagery for mid-century American modernists. The magazine's editors chose to juxtapose the painting of a standing bird, in profile, on the seashore, with a photograph of a Nuu-chah-nulth house screen

⁸⁵ Ochsner, *Lionel H. Pries, Architect, Artist, Educator: From Arts and Crafts to Modern Architecture*, 111.

⁸⁶ Oil and gouache on paperboard, 25" x 28", Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York. For a reproduction, see Conkelton, “Pantheons of Dreams,” 73. Due to copyright restrictions, this image cannot be included here.

⁸⁷ Quoted in Conkelton, “Pantheons of Dreams,” 72.

painted with a thunderbird and whale, among other motifs (fig. 45).⁸⁸ Two decades later, the “modern primitives” idea or ideal was clearly still an active force when Tsutakawa designed his *Fountain of the Pioneers*.

That the West could have something to learn from "primitive" peoples was a novel idea compared to the long-standing practice of learning from "Oriental" cultures, but the underlying motivations were often similar. In Chapter Three's discussion of Zen in America I referred to Munroe's claim that Western Orientalist art and literature, even when taking a positive view of the East, has tended to essentialise and reify "East" and "West" and to replicate "many of the fundamental assumptions of Euro-American world-views, most notably the universalized discourse of world religions."⁸⁹ Among the many possible examples presented by Munroe and by J.J. Clarke is *An Essay on the Civilisation of India, Asia and Japan*, published in 1914, in which the author, G. Lowes Dickinson, attempted to challenge some prejudices about the East that were deeply ingrained in the Western worldview. Dickinson was motivated by his belief that "the East had developed qualities which the West had lost and now badly needed to recover." According to Clarke, Dickinson was convinced "that Asians live closer to nature and in harmony with its rhythms." Furthermore, their characteristic spirituality made their worldview very different from the materialistic mindset prevalent in Western cultures.⁹⁰ The second quality was apparently presumed to follow logically from the first, and Clarke observes that such a view "has since achieved almost the status of commonplace wisdom amongst certain orientalists."⁹¹

Tsutakawa was not the first to combine Native American and Japanese cultural forms in a

⁸⁸ The Nuu-chah-nulth were known as "Nootka" in the 1940s, so the image in *The Tiger's Eye* is identified there as a Nootka house screen.

⁸⁹ Munroe, *The Third Mind: American Artists Contemplate Asia, 1860-1989*, 43.

⁹⁰ Quoted in Clarke, *Oriental Enlightenment: The Encounter between Asian and Western Thought*, 109-110.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

sculpture with close ties to architecture; a much earlier example was constructed in Seattle sixty years before the completion of Vancouver's *Fountain of the Pioneers* (fig. 46). In 1909 Seattle had hosted the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, a small world's fair that celebrated the city's success as a waypoint between the goldfields of the Yukon and Alaska and ports in Asia. The fair's entrance combined motifs from three distinct and carefully chosen ancient cultures. Totem poles merged seamlessly with a Japanese Torii gate, most often seen at Shinto shrines, where they mark the transition from the profane to the sacred. At first the combination of these two forms seems absurd, but one might eventually recall that post and beam construction was the basis for many traditional Japanese buildings and was also used by the indigenous peoples of the Northwest coast, and both groups also used cedar extensively. Returning to the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition entrance, a Greek key pattern applied along the lintel of the gate not only suggested an association with ancient temples but, more important, with the classicism of early world's fair architecture.

In the case of the 1909 entrance gate, the combination of forms from three ancient cultures – Northwest Coast indigenous, Japanese, and classical Greco-Roman – made it possible for the organizers of the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition to create a hybrid structure that spoke to the universal aspirations of World's Fairs and to the specific Pacific Rim trade concerns of this particular Expo. In terms of formal inspiration, Tsutakawa did something similar with the *Fountain of the Pioneers*, but without any need for the classical references that world's fair architecture still called for in the early twentieth century. In a location like Vancouver, merging design elements from traditional Japanese art with others originally found in Northwest Coast indigenous art, and doing so within a framework of modernist abstraction, meant that Tsutakawa could produce a fountain sculpture that might manage, through the above-mentioned “affinity of

the primitive and the modern,” to simultaneously represent the universal and regional sides of modernism. As the following chapter will demonstrate, he had already experimented with this approach a few years earlier, when he designed the *Waiola Fountain* for Honolulu's Ala Moana Center. In fact, the success of the Hawaiian fountain was what led to Tsutakawa's being commissioned for the Bentall Centre project.

Chapter Six:

Designing Fountains for Retail Developments and the Seattle World's Fair

Architectural historian Meredith Clausen has described “the rise of the big regional shopping center” as “one of the most dramatic events in the post-World War II period, of profound urban as well as architectural significance.”¹ This chapter examines some of Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures for shopping malls in the Pacific Northwest, California, and Hawaii, focusing on their connection to American postwar consumerism through the increasing use of public art in the service of retail merchandising. In addition, rapid growth in private automobile ownership and the closely related phenomena of suburban expansion and urban renewal emerge as key factors in shopping mall design in the 1960s. After discussing Tsutakawa's untitled fountain sculptures for the Northgate Shopping Center near Seattle (1961; fig. 7) and Lloyd Center in Portland, Oregon (1962; fig. 47), this chapter takes a lengthy detour through a closely related subject and explores the Seattle World's Fair of 1962, better known as Century 21. World's fairs have historically been important as sites for innovative fountains; moreover, Seattle's 1962 fairgrounds had close ties to shopping centre design. In addition to marking an important point in Seattle's cultural development, the 1962 World's Fair was a showcase for modern public fountains.

None of Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures were on display for the masses, but he did submit two separate proposals to the Seattle Civic Center Fountain Competition, held in 1960-61 to select a design for a major fountain to be built in the centre of the World's Fair site. The

¹ Clausen, "Northgate Regional Shopping Center – Paradigm from the Provinces," 144. For a fuller treatment of the subject in a Southern Californian context, see Richard Longstreth, *City Center to Regional Mall: Architecture, the Automobile, and Retailing in Los Angeles, 1920-1950*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997.

competition was won by two Tokyo architects, Hideki Shimizu and Kazuyuki Matsushita; a comparison of their *International Fountain* and Tsutakawa's two unbuilt designs for Century 21 is followed by a short survey of other outdoor fountains commissioned for the Seattle World's Fair. Returning to Tsutakawa's early fountain sculptures for shopping malls, I examine the *Aquarius Ovoid* and *Obos Fountain*, located on Fresno, California's Fulton Mall (1964), and the *Waiola Fountain* at the Ala Moana Center in Honolulu, Hawaii (1966).

Even before the *Fountain of Wisdom* was completed, Tsutakawa received two more commissions for fountains at publicly accessible sites, one in nearby Renton, Washington (1960), and one in Portland, Oregon (1961). In keeping with the increasingly dominant consumerist ethos, both were for shopping malls: Renton Center and Lloyd Center, respectively. A commission for the Northgate Shopping Center, just north of Seattle, followed in 1962; the next was for Robinson's department store in Anaheim, California (1963); twenty-five feet in height, it turned out to be the tallest of his fountain sculptures.² It seems William H. Whyte was right on target when he wrote, in 1956: "As a normal part of life, thrift is now un-American."³ Over the course of his career, Tsutakawa designed more than sixty fountain sculptures for outdoor civic or commercial locations; of these, at least ten were commissioned to enhance retail spaces of some kind. The artist later recalled that, by the mid-1960s, he found himself "so busy making fountains, I had to cut down on my teaching."⁴

² Renton Center housed the first modern Sears store in the Seattle area. It was torn down in the early 1990s and the Tsutakawa fountain was purchased, along with the property, by the Fred Meyer Corporation. In 1995 Fred Meyer donated the fountain to the City of Renton and it was reinstalled at the Maplewood Golf Course. City of Renton, "Renton's Public Art," <http://rentonwa.gov/living/default.aspx?id=402>.

³ Quoted in Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era*. (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 162.

⁴ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 20.

Both Lloyd Center and Northgate were the work of Seattle architect John Graham. Lloyd Center, opened in 1960, was for a short time the largest shopping mall in the U.S., and Northgate, opened a decade earlier, had been the world's first successful regional shopping centre.⁵ As an architectural type, the postwar regional shopping centre clearly reflected contemporary trends in the design profession. Clausen writes that it “signifies the growing complexity of postwar architecture,” being a “highly intricate, large-scale, urban-dimensioned problem, involving land-use planning, economic analyses, traffic management, merchandising, financing, leasing, and promotion.”⁶ In addition to a growing need for teamwork, which might include working with artists, a project like the Northgate Shopping Center “reveals the increasing interdependence of the design profession and business, as architects lose their scorn for developers and join forces with them.”⁷ Graham’s firm often continued to be involved in its shopping centre projects, designing modifications long after they opened, so it is possible the architect had a hand in selecting Tsutakawa for Northgate’s fountain commission.

A key characteristic of the new regional shopping centre was the presence of a suburban branch of one or more downtown department stores. Graham developed the concept for Northgate with Rex Allison, president of the Bon Marché department store. Clausen describes the Northgate Shopping Center as “an immediate, overwhelming financial success.”⁸ The project

⁵ Carlos A. Schwantes, "Anxiety and Affluence: The 1950s in Oregon and Washington," in *Jet Dreams: Art of the Fifties in the Northwest*, ed. Barbara Johns (Seattle and London: Tacoma Art Museum/ University of Washington Press, 1995), 41.

⁶ Clausen, "Northgate Regional Shopping Center – Paradigm from the Provinces," 145.

⁷ Clausen, "Northgate Regional Shopping Center – Paradigm from the Provinces," 145.

⁸ Meredith Clausen, "John Graham, Jr." in *Shaping Seattle Architecture: A Historical Guide to the Architects*, ed. Jeffrey Karl Ochsner (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1994), 260. Clausen describes the early postwar years as “a highly experimental period, with architects and developers watching each other closely.” Northgate’s progress was closely watched by other shopping centre planners and developers across the U.S. They included Victor Gruen, an architect and planner who emerged in the 60s as a leader in shopping centre design. Clausen,

received limited attention from the architecture community, its architecture being plain, though pleasant and inexpensive to build.⁹ As Graham intended, the clean, spare, functional style conveyed a sense of “up-to-date modernity.”¹⁰ Northgate established Graham as a leading figure in shopping-centre design, but according to Clausen, this success was based less on his artistic skill than on his reputation as a shrewd businessman, with a background in retailing, large-scale planning and private development. Having graduated in 1931 with a fine arts degree from Yale, preceded by some training in architecture at the University of Washington, Graham responded to the hard realities of the Depression years by starting his career as a trainee in statistical merchandising. Architecture could wait until the economy improved, and it was booming in the Seattle area by the time Graham’s father, John Graham Sr., retired, and his son returned home to assume control of John Graham & Company.

Seattle experience astonishing growth in the 1940s, adding 100,000 to its population, which had numbered 460,589 at the start of the decade.¹¹ By the end of the 1950s approximately two thirds of all residents in Washington and Oregon were living in urban areas, with the majority of these in the suburbs. The new reality was reflected in the scale of Northgate; when it first opened in 1950 it occupied approximately 50 acres, housed eighty different retailers and boasted 4,000 paved parking spaces. *Business Week* reported that Northgate was deliberately

"Northgate Regional Shopping Center – Paradigm from the Provinces," 160. Gruen’s Fulton Mall project for Fresno, California (1964), which included two of Tsutakawa’s fountains, is discussed later in this chapter.

⁹ Northgate was discussed in three articles published in *Architectural Record* (August 1949, November 1949, and March 1960) and one in *Architectural Forum* (March 1949). I would like to thank Dr. Jeffrey Ochsner for providing this information.

¹⁰ Clausen, "Northgate Regional Shopping Center – Paradigm from the Provinces," 158.

¹¹ Marshall, *Place of Learning, Place of Dreams: A History of the Seattle Public Library*, 89.

suburban in tone, "a place where the whole family can shop by car, without dressing up."¹²

Between 1945 and 1965, the booming postwar economy made it possible for millions of middle-class Americans to indulge a newly awakened appetite for consumer goods, as well as giving them more leisure time. By the 1960s, regional shopping centres were offering all the goods and services necessary for "one-stop shopping," so there was little to be gained by driving downtown. Where many shopping centre developers regarded statistical data on the amount of car traffic passing a site as a good indicator of its retail potential, Graham recognized that it made more sense to adapt an important principle of department store planning; one needed to attract customers past as many display counters as possible to maximize impulse buying. This created the challenge of how to turn "car customers back into pedestrians," and keep them away from their automobiles throughout their shopping excursions.¹³

Built ten years after the Northgate Shopping Center, Lloyd Center was partially covered when first built. It was even larger than Northgate, which was not originally covered. Lloyd Center was only a six-minute drive from the original heart of Portland – what a feature on the project in *Architectural Record* called "the old 'downtown'." The article claimed Lloyd Center was "the first complete urban center," an "all-inclusive complex" on a 70-acre site, with one hundred stores, 8,000 parking spaces, a hotel, a hospital, an office building, and even a skating rink.¹⁴ Additional property had already been purchased by the Lloyd Corporation for the further

¹² Quoted in Laura Burns Carroll, "Building in the Name of Progress," in *Jet Dreams: Art of the Fifties in the Northwest*, ed. Barbara Johns (Seattle and London: Tacoma Art Museum/University of Washington Press, 1995), 54.

¹³ Clausen, "Northgate Regional Shopping Center – Paradigm from the Provinces," 147, 153.

¹⁴ An ice rink, as well as a bowling alley, was also planned for Northgate, but was never built. It is likely that Graham's interest in including ice rinks in such projects was sparked in the late 1930s, when he worked in New York City at the newly opened Rockefeller Center, having opened a branch of his father's architectural firm there. It was a short-lived venture, and Graham returned to Seattle in 1946. Clausen, "John Graham, Jr.," 259-60.

development of commercial and recreational spaces, as well as housing. Merchandising was at the top of the agenda in 1960, however, and Graham and Company's experience in that area was clearly in evidence, according to *Architectural Record*. For example, the high cost of urban land meant Lloyd Center had to include three levels, but "in keeping with established retail practices," nearly all shopping was confined to the intermediate or "mall" level, with parking and recreational facilities below and suites of offices above. The width of the malls was set at 50 feet – the same width as a downtown street – Graham having reasoned that a wider mall would discourage shoppers from making use of both sides.¹⁵ The concept of a narrow mall, a wide variety of shops and services tightly aligned on either side, with plentiful, free parking within easy walking distance “proved paradigmatic,” to borrow Clausen’s phrasing.¹⁶

Regional shopping centres were high-risk ventures. Completely financed by private investment, they were expensive to build, and the retail marketplace was competitive. As the very first such mall, Northgate was a particularly uncertain undertaking. When it was first built, there was little landscaping and no extra money was available for art; in any case, the project was required to prove itself before such extras would be considered. In short, “aesthetic niceties were justified only if they helped to generate sales.”¹⁷ Art was added only after other malls started to be built, at which time Northgate was forced to explore strategies for competing to attract customers. Portland’s Lloyd Center was therefore the first mall Graham was able to design from the outset with a view to filling its spaces with public art, including fountains. It was a new approach, using art to make shopping a more aesthetic and entertaining experience – shopping becoming increasingly valued as a form of entertainment by middle-class Americans. In 1989, an

¹⁵ "Design for Merchandising: The Lloyd Center, Portland, Oregon," *Architectural Record* 128 (December 1960), 124.

¹⁶ Clausen, "Northgate Regional Shopping Center – Paradigm from the Provinces," 144, 155.

¹⁷ Clausen, "Northgate Regional Shopping Center – Paradigm from the Provinces," 158.

article in *The Oregonian* praised its artistic features. “In 1960,” Rick Bella recalled, “it was unheard of for U.S. retailers to dedicate precious, leasable space to anything but shops and stores.... It also was unheard of at that time for U.S. retailers to invest heavily in public art. But Lloyd Center is dotted with sculpture and fountains, creating an uplifting feeling. The free-standing spiral stairway ... cost \$26,000 alone.”¹⁸

Tsutakawa’s unnamed Lloyd Center work, the third fountain sculpture the artist completed, was very different in some ways from the two that preceded it. Described as a “fountain group,” in Kingsbury’s monograph, this work consisted of two bronze sculptures; they stood in a long, rectangular pool with sloped, raised sides. Both sculptures consisted of vertical stacks, but their shapes were much less rounded than those in the *Fountain of Wisdom*, and each stack was topped with a form abstracted from the lotus flower. The most striking feature, to my knowledge one not found in any of Tsutakawa’s later fountains, was the low, table-like sculpture that supported the smaller fountain stack. An ovoid-shaped opening in upper surface allowed the water pouring down from above at one end to escape and form a curving sheet of liquid. Another unusual feature was the broad, low waterfall that resulted from the pool having two levels – one for each sculpture. It seems likely that Graham designed the pool, for the architect employed a similar technique to create additional movement and sound in the streams at the Ala Moana Center in Honolulu. Photographs from the 1960s show the fountain pool at Lloyd Center located in an open, ground-level courtyard, between two large stores but not far away from the curb of the street, with a parking lot beyond. As can be seen in fig. 47, a photograph reproduced in the catalogue for *Fountains in Contemporary Architecture*, the curved geometric forms of the Tsutakawa’s sculptures also harmonized with the surface treatment of one of Graham’s buildings.

¹⁸ Rick Bella, article for Portland’s *Oregonian* newspaper, May 22, 1989. Quoted in “Lloyd Center,” Midcentury Modern League, Portland Metro Area. http://mcmleague.org/?page_id=221.

Unlike the Lloyd Center fountain, with its two very different sculptures, Tsutakawa's fountain group at Northgate, also unnamed, was composed of three almost identical sculptures, clearly botanically-inspired, placed in their shared pool apparently at random, like wildflowers. Not surprisingly, the Northgate fountain sometimes appeared in newspaper photos promoting retailers' spring and summer fashion collections, with female models posed at the water's edge or shown playfully wetting their feet. The Northgate fountain was also featured in *Fountains in Contemporary Architecture*, and the catalogue image (fig. 7) provides a good example of Tsutakawa's manipulation of water to create sculptural forms. Each of the flower-like fountain sculptures was given "leaves" of two distinct shapes: long and pointed, like a daffodil, and rounded like a jade plant. Both types curved downward, toward the pool, but the broader, rounded leaves caught the water that rose from the base and forced it to fan out beneath them, creating flared planes of liquid that extended the shapes made from bronze. Tsutakawa would continue to use this dramatic effect in later fountains.¹⁹ Many years after he had completed Seattle's *Naramore Fountain* (1967; fig. 58), for example, he could still point out that "the water forced up against the sides and over the leaves is unique. Not many fountains have that."²⁰

Installed in 1962, Tsutakawa's fountain at Northgate Shopping Center was part of a \$10 million modernization and expansion program. In 1962 Seattle hosted its second world's fair, and it is likely that, to some extent, the fountain commission was part of an effort to divert tourists away from the downtown fairgrounds, as well as to attract a greater number of local residents. Northgate had reached its originally projected size in 1958, its success having been aided by the growth of the surrounding community, especially after it was annexed by the City of Seattle in

¹⁹ One example is his untitled fountain for the Pacific First Federal savings Bank, Tacoma, WA, 1970. See photo in Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 21.

²⁰ Quoted in Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 68.

1952. By the early 1960s the owners were anticipating even greater increases in sales, especially when Interstate Highway 5 was completed in 1965. During Northgate Center's first years, its only artworks were what Clausen describes as "Northwest Indian murals, designed to give the center some regional character."²¹ But the wall and ceiling murals in the Legend Room Restaurant, painted in 1950-51, were actually not created by an indigenous artist; they were the work of architect and UW professor Lionel Pries, a teaching colleague of Tsutakawa's. Northgate's restaurant had been known as the Haida Room in its earliest stages, and Pries was hired to work with the Haida theme.²² In 1952 a 59-foot sculpture resembling a totem pole was carved by Dudley Carter, one of Tsutakawa's former teachers, and raised at the north entrance to the shopping centre.²³ According to Clausen, Carter carved the pole on-site to generate publicity for Northgate, but, as she points out, at that time "it was parking, not art, that constituted Northgate's main appeal and gave it its competitive edge over downtown."²⁴ Even with the addition of Tsutakawa's fountain sculpture, this no doubt remained true during the 1960s and 1970s. In 1962, however, Northgate's owners had the chance to learn whether the shopping centre's expansion, enhanced by the Tsutakawa fountain, would aid in luring visitors away from a major international event taking place in downtown Seattle.

Century 21

The Seattle World's Fair or "Century 21 Exposition" ran from April 21 to October 21, 1962. It had originally been proposed in 1956 as a "Festival of the West," a modest celebration to

²¹ Clausen, "Northgate Regional Shopping Center – Paradigm from the Provinces," 158.

²² Ochsner, *Lionel H. Pries, Architect, Artist, Educator: From Arts and Crafts to Modern Architecture*, 250.

²³ On Carter see Chapter Two of this dissertation, on the Northgate pole see Chapter Five.

²⁴ Clausen, "Northgate Regional Shopping Center – Paradigm from the Provinces," 158.

mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition of 1909 and stimulate Seattle's economy. Early on, organizers recognized that a larger event could aid in securing outside recognition of Seattle's rise toward major metropolitan status, as well as drawing locals seduced by the suburbs back to the city centre. It was the residual effect of the Soviet satellite Sputnik – launched in October 1957 – that convinced the U.S. government to support the idea of a world's fair for the Space Age in Seattle. Another important factor was the popular appeal of science during the postwar period, and both topics were discussed during three days of congressional hearings on the proposed world's fair, held in July 1959 before the Committee on Science and Astronautics.²⁵

In *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture After 1940*, John M. Findlay devotes an entire chapter to Century 21. He argues that "local residents and promoters, as well as participants from across the country, shared beliefs embodied in the exposition: faith in American science and technology as sources of progress and harmony, confidence in an almost unlimited ability to master the environments of earth and outer space, and anticipation of a world of both heightened order and greater abundance."²⁶ At first, the Paris-based Bureau of International Expositions (BIE) had rebuffed attempts to secure its support, in part because the U.S. was not a BIE signatory. Seattle, moreover, was still viewed by most outside the region as a

²⁵ Century 21 Exposition. Hearings before the Committee on Science and Astronautics, U.S. House of Representatives, Eighty-sixth Congress, first session, on H.R. 7982, H.R. 8203, and H.R. 8374. July 8, 9, and 23, 1959. Seattle Public Library, Century 21 Digital Collection, <http://cdm15015.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/p15015coll3/id/1030/rec/2>.

²⁶ Findlay, *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture After 1940*, 215. For a detailed account see Findlay, Chapter Five, "The Seattle World's Fair of 1962: Downtown and Suburbs in the Space Age," 214-264. Also, two new books containing useful information have been published to mark the 50th anniversary of Century 21 in 2012. They are: Paula Becker and Alan J. Stein, *The Future Remembered: The 1962 World's Fair and its Legacy* (Seattle: History Link/HistoryInk and Seattle Center Foundation, 2011), and Knute Berger, *Space Needle: The Spirit of Seattle* (Seattle: Documentary Media, 2012).

provincial logging town. It took time for BIE members to realize that aircraft manufacturing had replaced the timber industry as Washington's largest employer during the 1950s.²⁷ At the time, New York and Moscow were also competing for the right to hold World Expositions. Still, the Seattle commission presented its proposal, and it gained full BIE support after Robert Moses, a key figure behind the New York bid, unwisely belittled the BIE in the press.²⁸

In 1956, however, when Seattle's fair was first proposed, the Pacific Northwest was facing a rather bleak economic situation. Extensive layoffs at Boeing had set the city on a downward course, leading civic leaders to consider possible strategies for reinvigorating relationships between Seattle and two significant trading partners, Alaska and Japan.²⁹ The original goal was to match or exceed the levels of trade enjoyed before World War II, so commemorating the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition seemed a viable strategy. It had, after all, been a world's fair at which only two foreign nations exhibited, Japan and Canada. According to Peck, during the early stages of planning for the 1962 event, Washington's state fair commission reported that by focusing on the nations of the Pacific Rim the expo would be able to increase trade, benefitting the Port of Seattle. This was crucial if "Seattle and Washington are to take their place as a prosperous commercial area built on a solid foundation of diversified industry."³⁰ Allied Arts of Seattle supported this vision of Century 21; Peck reports that a letter circulated among the members of the group's executive board stated that the city's world's fair was "designed to make money" for the region, in part by drawing companies to the area to "fill our

²⁷ By 1959, Boeing provided fifty percent of the manufacturing jobs in King County. Schwantes, "Anxiety and Affluence: The 1950s in Oregon and Washington," 39.

²⁸ Mattie, *World's Fairs*, 212.

²⁹ Robert W. Rydell, John E. Findling, and Kimberly D. Pelle. *Fair America: World's Fairs in the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2000), 100.

³⁰ Quoted in Peck, "Arts Activists and Seattle's Cultural Expansion, 1954-65," 90.

growing planned industrial parks."³¹ The designation "World Exposition" or "Expo" is reserved for the largest world's fairs, exhibitions that are general in scope and last between three and six months. Findlay observes that the Seattle Century 21 Exposition marked a transition "from great international exposition to a more limited event" but at the same time broke new ground by merging "the interests of world and nation with the needs of region and locality."³² Both size and location made Seattle's World's Fair different from its predecessors. The site was smaller, at 74 acres, and was adjacent to downtown, whereas earlier world expositions had always been held further out from the host city's core.

Writing on the history of international expositions, Benjamin Portis claims that "nothing distinguished the world's fair so much as its ability to respond directly to issues of urban life."³³ Indeed, one of the most important and visible functions of world's fairs has been to serve as laboratories for modern innovations in architecture, urban planning and landscape design. As far back as 1928, Giedion used the early international expositions as examples to legitimise and promote the new modernist approach in architecture and urban planning.³⁴ In Brussels the towering Atomium, a model of an iron molecule, symbolized the progressive ethos of Expo '58 (fig. 48), but many of that fair's buildings were left over from the 1935 World Exposition. At Century 21, Thyry was hired as principal architect for both the World's Fair and the new Civic Center its site would become, the plan being that ninety percent of the exposition's buildings would be preserved and repurposed. The private corporation formed to manage the transition

³¹ Ibid.

³² Findlay, *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture After 1940*, 215.

³³ Benjamin Portis, "Civic Visions, World's Fairs," in *Civic Visions, World's Fairs* (Montreal: Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1993), 13.

³⁴ In *Bauen in Frankreich* (1928) and *Space, Time and Architecture* (1941). Pieter van Wesemael, *Architecture of Instruction and Delight: A Socio-Historical Analysis of World Exhibitions as a Didactic Phenomenon (1798-1851-1970)*, (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2001), 31.

from world's fair to Civic Center was a failure, but things improved greatly when the city took over the operation of the site and its buildings. For many years the British Pavilion served as a branch of the Seattle Art Museum, providing space for visiting exhibitions. The Washington State Coliseum, designed by Thiry, has become KeyArena, and Minoru Yamasaki's U.S. Science Pavilion is now the Pacific Science Center. Eventually the city chose to build convention facilities elsewhere, leaving the former world's fair site as an entertainment hub for tourists, young families, and fans of sports, music, and theatre.

It was unusual for a city to be so deliberate in planning for a world's fair to serve as a stepping-stone in a pre-approved urban redevelopment scheme, but Seattle had a local precedent to encourage it to think ahead. The Alaska-Yukon-Pacific celebration of 1909 had been the impetus behind the landscaping of the University of Washington campus, in addition to turning a profit and giving a boost to the local economy.³⁵ Before the opening of Century 21, Seattle mayor Gordon S. Clinton penned a message for inclusion in the *Official Souvenir Program* announcing that "Seattle's Permanent Civic Center" would be the World's Fair's "legacy." Clinton praised the foresight of the Fair's planners, which now meant that many attractive buildings would remain and the city would soon "have one of America's major civic centers, with facilities to handle national political conventions, theater productions, operas, huge trade fairs and major sports events."³⁶ Thiry also composed a message, saying that while world's fairs "invariably indicate the trends of the time.... It is sad to read in the daily press 'Atomium last signs [*sic*] of Brussels Fair'." In contrast, the Seattle World's Fair would be, he declared, "a

³⁵ Findlay, *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture After 1940*, 215.

³⁶ *Official Souvenir Program, Seattle World's Fair 1962*. (Seattle: Acme Publishing, 1962), 66.

phoenix among fairs, for from it will emerge a new phenomenon of plazas and buildings destined to provide pleasure for present and future generations."³⁷

Seattle remained a relatively remote location, expensive to reach unless one came from Washington, Oregon, California, or British Columbia, as did the majority of Century 21 visitors.³⁸ Nonetheless, some had also been at the New York World's Fair of 1939 and 1940. With corporate pavilions given a prominence formerly reserved for governments, the New York Fair had been, above all, "a marketing venture, where American business would seek to reclaim its economic leadership at the end of the New Deal decade."³⁹ Century 21 was a marketing venture of a somewhat different kind, more closely "modeled on such suburban forms as theme parks and shopping malls."⁴⁰ Fittingly, Seattle's Fair also "attracted a crowd that was rather suburban in outlook and orientation. The cold war encouraged Century 21 to emphasize those economic and technological forces responsible for the prosperous and futuristic character of Seattle and other western metropolitan areas after World War II."⁴¹ Van Wesemael points out that with world's fairs, "the choice of a certain location, the subsequent spatial layout, and the architecture of the exhibition always played a crucial role." The planning and design of the grounds and pavilions was "invariably strongly interwoven with the method of presentation of the products and narratives, even to the degree that one can talk of 'didactic exhibition architecture'."⁴²

³⁷ Paul Thiry, "A message from the Primary Architect," in "Special Issue: An Architect's Guidebook to the Seattle World's Fair," *Architecture/West* 68, no. 4 (April 1962): 12.

³⁸ Findlay, *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture After 1940*, 241.

³⁹ Portis, "Civic Visions, World's Fairs," 25, 26.

⁴⁰ Findlay, *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture After 1940*, 5.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Van Wesemael, *Architecture of Instruction and Delight: A Socio-Historical Analysis of World Exhibitions as a Didactic Phenomenon (1798-1851-1970)*, 47.

Disneyland, the world's first Disney theme park, had opened in Anaheim, California, in July 1955.⁴³ Century 21 hired consultants from both the Disney Company and Northgate Shopping Center, it having become apparent by this time that "shopping malls provided not just retail outlets but also entertainment, culture, and services in a novel form of public space."⁴⁴ On the other hand, Paul Thiry, the lead architect for the Seattle World's Fair, designed its urban site to utilize an existing street grid pattern.⁴⁵ Seattle's World's Fair initiated the practice of installing permanent buildings and facilities, ensuring that construction for the event would further goals for urban redevelopment, rather than simply razing old buildings and replacing them with temporary pavilions. After Century 21 it became common practice in the United States to use fairs (and not only world's fairs) to generate funds for urban improvements and infrastructure.⁴⁶ A large number of former Disney employees were also brought in to assist in laying out the Century 21 fairgrounds; as Findlay points out, this brought the influence of Southern California landscape design and planning directly to the Northwest.⁴⁷ In Chapter Four I mentioned the influence of California landscape design; its immediate impact on Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures will be seen below, when I discuss the two works he contributed to a pedestrian mall in Fresno, California in 1964. This brought Tsutakawa into contact with the work of two influential California-based designers, Victor Gruen, an architect and planner, and Garrett Eckbo, a landscape architect who also worked with Thomas Church.

⁴³ Knott's Berry Farm in Buena Vista, California, currently claims to be America's first theme park, having established the first of its six themed areas in 1940. Knott's Berry Farm, "Park History," <http://www.knotts.com/public/news/history/index.cfm>.

⁴⁴ Findlay, *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture After 1940*, 244.

⁴⁵ "Special Issue: An Architect's Guidebook to the Seattle World's Fair," 34.

⁴⁶ Alfred Heller, *World's Fairs and the End of Progress: An Insider's View* (Corte Madera: World's Fair, Inc., 1999), 95.

⁴⁷ Findlay, *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture After 1940*, 11.

A world's fair is designed to be a spectacular, multi-sensory experience – one that delights and educates visitors by “interweaving various methods of display, illustration and communication into one coherent presentation,” according to Pieter van Wesemael.⁴⁸ Ever since the first International Exposition opened in Hyde Park, London, in 1851,⁴⁹ designers of world's fairs have turned to large fountains to entertain visitors with lavish displays of water, light, and sound. Century 21 perpetuated this tradition, and in doing so supported efforts to make Seattle a “City of Fountains,” while simultaneously responding to the calls for public art that were heard increasingly during the 1960s. As Johns points out, like every preceding international exposition, the Seattle World's Fair merged “artistic accomplishment with industrial production.”⁵⁰ In 1960 Seattle had established a General Donation and Gift Trust fund, which meant the city was able to accept privately donated works of art or money for the purchase of art. The timing was ideal, and Century 21 became a focal point for such gifts. In addition to works by artists with regional and international reputations, the city received monetary donations adding up to over \$750,000 from private citizens, businesses, the World's Fair Corporation, and local and federal government sources. This made it possible to commission fountains, paintings, murals and sculptures, and several further artworks were borrowed by the city for display at the Fair.⁵¹

Each of the twentieth century world's fairs was given an official theme; Seattle's was “Man's Life in the Space Age.” A souvenir picture book explained: “the Seattle World's Fair

⁴⁸ Van Wesemael, *Architecture of Instruction and Delight: A Socio-Historical Analysis of World Exhibitions as a Didactic Phenomenon (1798-1851-1970)*, 23.

⁴⁹ The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations, more often referred to simply as the Great Exhibition or as the Crystal Palace Exhibition for the glass, iron, and wood structure Joseph Paxton designed to house the event. One of the most popular attractions was the *Crystal Fountain*, made from four tons of pure crystal glass.

⁵⁰ Barbara Johns, “Fields of Vision in Pictures and Objects,” in *Jet Dreams: Art of the Fifties in the Northwest*, ed. Barbara Johns (Seattle and London: Tacoma Art Museum / University of Washington Press, 1995), 72.

⁵¹ Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 13.

shows life as expected in the year 2000, against a display of man's accomplishments today."⁵² A high-speed monorail that travelled 1.2 miles in 90 seconds linked the fairgrounds to downtown and offered a glimpse into the possible future of urban mass transit. In the end the monorail was never expanded, but it was designed to be one of Century 21's legacies. As Alfred Heller has observed, "the government was giving science a big, post-Sputnik push," so whether or not they arrived by monorail, when visitors reached the World's Fair site they found scientific progress in the foreground.⁵³ The *Official Souvenir Program* opened with "The World of Science," introducing the Century 21 theme, as embodied in the hugely popular United States Science Pavilion. The building was designed by Yamasaki, and the exhibitions inside were created by the top U.S. design firms of Walter Dorwin Teague and Charles Eames. The Science Pavilion included the Boeing-sponsored Spacearium, where fair-goers could experience a ten-minute simulated rocket ride to the stars. Elsewhere at the Fair, few opportunities were missed when it came to the Space Age theme.

World's fair organizers in the postwar era did find it necessary sometimes to temper themes of progress in recognition of contemporary realities. The Cold War and the Space Race provided powerful subtexts, especially in Brussels.⁵⁴ In 1962 a more light-hearted optimism could prevail, but political agendas still figured prominently, and were particularly important in shaping scientific exhibitions. In Seattle the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) was given its own pavilion, and the slogan "Space Is The New Ocean We Must Sail"

⁵² *A Souvenir Picture Book of Washington, Seattle and the Seattle World's Fair*. (Arlington, WA: Ellis Post Card Co., c. 1962), n.p.

⁵³ Heller, *World's Fairs and the End of Progress: An Insider's View*, 95.

⁵⁴ See Robert W. Rydell, *World of Fairs: The Century-of-Progress Expositions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), esp. Chapter 7, "The New Day Dawns: The American Pavilion at the 1958 Brussels World's Fair."

introduced the agency's goals for "the peaceful exploration of space."⁵⁵ Still, Expo '58 in Brussels had featured the satellite Sputnik at the Soviet Pavilion; in response, NASA exhibited astronaut John Glenn's *Friendship 7* space capsule in 1962.⁵⁶

When the Brussels Universal and International Exposition opened in the spring of 1958, the Atomium had proclaimed that Fair's dedication to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and building better international relations. The Space Needle was Seattle's soaring postwar symbol of renewed faith in science and technology, designed by John Graham and Company, with Victor Steinbruek.⁵⁷ It was Graham who secured the private funding for the project, expected quickly to pay for itself through entrance fees and revenues from its restaurant.⁵⁸ Like the Atomium in Brussels, the Space Needle was to remain in place as a landmark and permanent attraction. Rising six hundred feet in the air – "symbolizing the fair's thrust into the new frontier of the space age," according to the Souvenir Program – the iconic structure has since been described as "hint[ing] at potential avenues of escape into outer space if the pressing contradictions of modern life became too much to bear."⁵⁹ Because of its visibility, and the impressive views from its revolving restaurant, most people came to think of the Space Needle as the symbol of the Seattle

⁵⁵ Located some distance from the United States Science Pavilion, but still part of The World of Science.

⁵⁶ Mattie, *World's Fairs*, 201, 212.

⁵⁷ According to Clausen, "the idea of the revolving restaurant had previously been proposed by Graham and was most likely his idea. Steinbruek and others contributed to the resolution of the structural design and formal characteristics of this icon for the Seattle World's Fair." Clausen, "John Graham, Jr.," 260. Morgan tells the story of Space Needle in some detail; his account gives Graham credit for suggesting a revolving restaurant, with Steinbruek hired later as a consultant. Murray Morgan, *Century 21: The Story of the Seattle World's Fair, 1962* (Seattle: Acme Press, 1963), 136-37. The tower's origins are also recounted in Berger, *Space Needle: The Spirit of Seattle*.

⁵⁸ Mattie, *World's Fairs*, 214.

⁵⁹ Rydell, Findling, and Pelle, *Fair America: World's Fairs in the United States*, 137.

World's Fair. Organizers had taken steps, however, to ensure Century 21 would have a dramatic fountain as its centerpiece well before private plans for the Space Needle were finalized.⁶⁰

The Municipal Art Commission, chaired by Robert Schulman, had, by May 1960, secured approval for a large fountain: “a permanent, spectacular display of water, light and sculpture as part of the Civic Center development.”⁶¹ A major international design competition was announced, having been approved by the American Institute of Architects, American Society of Landscape Architects, National Sculpture Society, and Union Internationale des Architectes. In the summer of 1960 a booklet containing the official Program of Competition, information on Seattle, and a description and plans of the Civic Center site was issued to applicants.⁶² The first stage of the contest called for designers to indicate “limited landscape treatment of site;” finalists would be asked to elaborate further in the second stage. A written “description of materials, treatment and action of fountain” was also required. All proposals were to be in black and white, with drawings and text arranged on an illustration board, and each entry had to include a site plan, elevations, and section. Many of the submissions, Tsutakawa’s included, also featured one or two artist’s renderings of the proposed fountain.

The open competition attracted 261 entries from North and South America, Asia and Europe.⁶³ Two of them came from design teams that included George Tsutakawa (fig. 49). The Municipal Art Commission's official *Report of Seattle Civic Center Fountain Contest* lists him

⁶⁰ Morgan, *Century 21: The Story of the Seattle World's Fair, 1962*, 137.

⁶¹ John Voorhees, "Civic Center Fountain for Century 21 Authorized," *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, May 5, 1960.

⁶² The top five entrants would each receive \$2,000, with an additional \$20,000 going to the winner of the contest's second and final stage. *Seattle Civic Center Fountain Competition 1960-61*, 5. Seattle Municipal Archives, Century 21 File.

⁶³ Entrants are listed and submissions reproduced in Seattle Municipal Art Commission, *Report of Seattle Civic Center Fountain Contest* (Seattle: Dogwood Press, c. 1961). Rupp, however, states there were “over 800 entries,” perhaps referring to the number who wrote and requested the application program. *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 112.

and Jack Uchida as the designers for entry #167. Entry #168 came from a four-person Seattle team, listed alphabetically as R. Haag, Y. Hayashi, G. Tsutakawa, and J. Uchida. Richard Haag was a personal friend of Tsutakawa's a well-known Seattle landscape architect and University of Washington professor.⁶⁴ Yoshio Hayashi was an engineer who worked on some of Tsutakawa's early fountain designs, along with Uchida.⁶⁵ Neither of Tsutakawa's entries was a winner in the competition's first stage, which resulted in five designs being shortlisted and eight more receiving honourable mention.

What is striking about #167, Tsutakawa's entry with Uchida, is how, in the illustration, the overall form of the fountain sculpture is reinforced by that of the Space Needle, shown rising in the near distance. As in the Space Needle, a large, shallow dish tops the fountain sculpture's vertical stack of elements, shaped from textured sheet bronze. In the illustration, a night scene, the water flowing down from this dish mimics the shape and glow of several floodlights near the Space Needle. Evidently the artist has considered the importance of artificial lighting, though this is not one of the technical issues addressed in the three blocks of text on the right side of the proposal, which briefly outline a few specifics regarding the site plan, pool, fountain, and costs.

There is no way to establish precisely why George Tsutakawa did not receive a commission to design a fountain sculpture for the site of the Seattle World's Fair, but he had completed few fountains at that time, and his work did tend to be more concerned with contemplation than with spectacle. Twentieth-century world's fairs were expected to be

⁶⁴ Ochsner ed., *Shaping Seattle Architecture: A Historical Guide to the Architects*, xxxv. Haag joined the UW faculty in 1958 and established a Landscape Architecture Design Program; in 1964 it became the Landscape Architecture Department. When Century 21 ended, Haag worked with Lawrence Halprin to transform the site into a permanent civic and cultural centre. Now known as Seattle Center, it has been very successful in attracting tourists and Seattle residents to its sports arenas, amusement park, theatres, museums, and other attractions.

⁶⁵ Gerard Tsutakawa, email message to the author, Aug. 19, 2011.

spectacular, with each host city outshining the one before. Another, perhaps more important, factor was that Tsutakawa chose to eschew two suggestions made in the booklet containing the official Program of Competition. The first stated: “It would seem appropriate to use a changeable jet water display in the fountain to dramatize the City’s outstanding water supply.”⁶⁶ As already mentioned, Tsutakawa disliked jet fountains. They did not put the emphasis on sculptural form and were, in his opinion, too limited in their range of liquid effects. Also, competition entry #167 probably fell short of satisfying the second recommendation: “The use of lighting would also recognize the renowned hydroelectric power and light utility developed by the municipality.”

Both suggestions were aimed at celebrating the achievements of Washington State, specifically the region’s success in harnessing the power of nature, and Tsutakawa may well have taken issue with such an approach. By this time he had become “suspicious of the Western world view that seemed intent on separating humans from nature and destroying nature in order to build an artificial dream world.... In about 1960 I became aware once again of the Eastern philosophy and art of my youth – and Japanese art in particular.... I was able to reconfirm my belief in the Eastern attitude toward nature, which is that humans should be part of nature and live harmoniously with it,”⁶⁷ he wrote in an artist’s statement of 1983. As an emerging leader in ecologically-minded landscape design, Haag, too, would likely have had some reservations about accepting the recommendations offered with the competition program.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ *Seattle Civic Center Fountain Competition 1960-61*. Seattle Municipal Archives, International Fountain file.

⁶⁷ In Bruce Guenther, *50 Northwest Artists*, 113.

⁶⁸ A website devoted to showcasing outstanding contributions by University of Washington faculty, past and present, states that Haag's work is widely recognized for its "sensitivity to the natural environment, and adaptive use of existing structures and landforms." This site also includes a page on Tsutakawa. University of Washington, UW Showcase, <http://www.washington.edu/research/showcase/1958a.html>.

The competition brief went on to assure designers that: "These suggestive thoughts undoubtedly were in the minds of the City Fathers in promulgating the fountain idea but are not necessarily in the minds of the Jury nor are they mandatory."⁶⁹ Still, even if they were not mandatory, it is safe to say they were meant to be taken seriously. For Haag and Tsutakawa not to make a concerted effort to meet at least one of the two recommendations was probably unwise. The winning fountain design had to satisfy each of the three municipal departments providing funding for the project: the City Water Fund (\$50,000), City Light (\$100,000), and the city's cumulative reserve fund (\$100,000). A letter that promised the winning design would do just that, resulting in a "keynote showpiece" that would justify the high cost of the project, was sent by the Municipal Art Commission to Mayor Clinton and the Seattle City Council as soon as authorization for the competition was received.⁷⁰ The letter expressed hope that "the end result will be to Seattle's Civic Center what the major fountains of the Place de la Concorde, of the Lake Michigan Outer Drive and of Milles' Aloe Plaza are to Paris, Chicago and St. Louis."⁷¹ A promotional pamphlet distributed later by Seattle City Light acknowledged the other two sponsors and declared that the *International Fountain* "symbolizes three of this city's and this region's principle assets – its abundance of pure water, its abundance of low-cost hydroelectric power and the imagination of its people."⁷² This would not be the first time Seattle City Light used art to promote the belief that electricity was a limitless natural resource. A 32-foot-long mural in glass mosaic, designed by Jean Cory Beall and installed in the lobby of Seattle City

⁶⁹ *Seattle Civic Center Fountain Competition 1960-61*. Seattle Municipal Archives, International Fountain file.

⁷⁰ Voorhees, "Civic Center Fountain for Century 21 Authorized."

⁷¹ Quoted *ibid*.

⁷² "Seattle City Light.... and Century 21," 3. Seattle Public Library, Century 21 Digital Collection, <http://cdm15015.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/p15015coll3&CISOPTR=2203&REC=14>

Light's downtown headquarters in 1958, is emblazoned with words inspired by French novelist Emile Zola. The nineteenth-century quotation, only slightly altered in Beall's mural, reads: "The day will come when electricity will be for everyone as the waters of the rivers and the winds of Heaven. It should not merely be supplied, but lavished, that men may use it at their will as freely as the air they breathe."⁷³

In addition to meeting the needs of a key funding body, such symbolism would perpetuate a well-established world's fair tradition. Like the fairs themselves, the central fountains at international expos were often designed around themes of progress. Many early examples were combined with displays of electrical power, symbolizing the achievements of industry and man's ability to control the power of nature and harness its energy.⁷⁴ This was especially true of American world's fairs, where monumental fountains proclaimed the nation's international status as well as its hegemony over nature. For example, at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, grand fountains included the *Electric Fountain*. It stood in front of the Electricity Building, which was lit by 120,000 lamps and featured a monumental statue of Benjamin Franklin outside the entrance. At the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco, which celebrated the opening of the Panama Canal, buildings were ornamented in a Moorish-Spanish style, strongly coloured, and embellished with more than a dozen major fountains, including a *Fountain of Energy*.

For each successive world's fair, increasingly sensational displays of electricity and technological processes were created to convince an already sympathetic public that their hopes for positive changes in society and in their individual lives could not be realized without these

⁷³ Quoted in Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 45-46.

⁷⁴ See David E. Nye, "Electrifying Expositions, 1880-1939," in *Fair Representations: World's Fairs and the Modern World.*, ed. Robert W. Rydell and Nancy E. Gwinn (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1994).

energy sources. At the 1939 New York World's Fair, 175 American utility companies joined forces to sponsor an exhibit called "Water Falls." It was an early example of a waterfall fountain, but an unusually powerful one with a form that suggested the major dams being built elsewhere in the US during the 1930s. Visitors to the Electric Utilities Exhibit could enter through a glass-enclosed tube, which led them under the fountain's dramatic spillway (fig. 50). Although the fair was in Flushing Meadows, Queens, the fountain's noisy torrents reminded visitors that the most famous and powerful of all North American waterfalls, the great Niagara, was also part of New York State. More than two decades later, Tsutakawa would level criticism at Halprin for designing a fountain that the sculptor said resembled a dam.⁷⁵ One wonders what he would have thought of the precedent set at the 1939 World's Fair.

The booklet containing the Program of Competition makes no mention of "Man's Life in the Space Age," downplaying the World's Fair to focus on longer term goals for Seattle and the Civic Center Site. Nonetheless, how designers approached the theme was an issue that surely would have been raised by the jury. It is therefore surprising that Tsutakawa's competition entry #167 includes no statement explaining how the fountain's design relates to the theme of the Century 21, though he seems to have subtly acknowledged the question with his visual allusion to the Space Needle. Competition entry, #168, designed in collaboration with Haag, was far more direct in embracing the space age theme. It includes a title – *Celestial Cathedral* – that was topical and impressive enough for a world's fair centrepiece, but perhaps rather too grand for a Civic Center fountain. The descriptive text reads:

The true spirit of Century 21 is the adventure of man reaching out into the space unknown – away from his domicile of centuries past – this cosmic creation is a true expression of the Century 21 concept. The whole universe – the stars and the moons – is

⁷⁵ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 23.

viewed from within this fountain which is a fountain within a fountain surrounded by a galaxy of lights. Tinted glass, stainless steel & bronze for the structure. Monochromatic rays and colored lights will create an aurora-like halo around the cathedral. The landscape is composed of post-Pliocene material.⁷⁶

Here the lighting effects have been given very careful consideration; the designers have managed to articulate the Fair's theme of life in the space age, reconcile modern scientific advances with Christian religious traditions, and satisfy the suggestions made in the competition brief. As with competition entry #167, jet fountain technology is rejected in #168; but it is, again, impossible to know exactly why Haag and Tsutakawa's proposal was rejected. One reason may have been that, in contrast to its written component, which advocates reaching outwards to explore the universe, the drawings for *Celestial Cathedral* indicate that the fountain component is surrounded, to a large extent, by an architectural structure. Combined with the written description of a "fountain within a fountain," this suggests an inward focus, an inappropriate quality for what was supposed to be a dramatic, monumental world's fair showpiece.

Despite receiving no commissions for fountains at the Civic Center site, Tsutakawa was chosen to design the Century 21 World's Fair U.S. Commemorative Medal, struck by the U.S. Mint in Philadelphia. Some years later he created another commemorative medal, this time for Spokane's Expo '74, and Tsutakawa also completed a major fountain for that event. In the end, the "blue chip jury" appointed to judge the Seattle Civic Center Fountain Contest was unanimous in its choice of Matsushita and Shimizu's innovative design, a futuristic jet fountain centred in a sparsely decorated plaza.⁷⁷ One of the six jurors, H. Peter Oberlander, explained the decision to the press:

⁷⁶ Seattle Municipal Art Commission, *Report of Seattle Civic Center Fountain Contest*, 77.

⁷⁷ The jury members were Nathaniel A. Owings of Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill, Architects; Bernard Rosenthal, a sculptor based in Los Angeles and New York City; Pasadena-based

We chose this idea of water as sculpture, rather than water with a sculpture, because we thought it would wear well, as well as being radically different.... But we were also struck with the Japanese designers' concept of the plaza itself. They recommended it be made of granite blocks and it will vary from place to place – some of the blocks will be three to five feet high. This turns the whole plaza into a kind of sculpture. It will be a kind of living bas-relief, beautiful when empty and equally beautiful with people moving about it at different heights.⁷⁸

An historical overview indicates that, generally speaking, the styles chosen for major fountains at historical world's fairs and international expositions have been those that harmonized with the overall aesthetic of the architecture and grounds. Just as the *Crystal Fountain*, made from four tons of pure crystal glass, accentuated the revolutionary design of Joseph Paxton's Crystal Palace, the central fountain at the Seattle World's Fair was expected to reinforce the theme of fair – Man's Life in the Space Age – and perpetuate the forward-thinking approaches to architecture, engineering, and planning embodied in its main buildings, amenities, and overall layout.

In Matsushita and Shimizu's design, great plumes of water were made even more dramatic by synchronizing their movements to changing coloured lights, then setting the spectacle to music. Vast quantities of water sprang from a stainless steel dome, 6 feet high and 30 feet in diameter, and this hemisphere, covered in dark amber glass, stood in the centre of a huge concrete basin, 185 feet in diameter (fig. 51). A special edition of *Architecture/West*, dubbed "An Architect's Guidebook to the Seattle World's Fair," noted that it was "sleeved to

landscape architect Garrett Eckbo; H. Peter Oberlander, a professor of Architectural Design at the University of British Columbia; and (ex-officio) Paul Thiry, Primary Architect for Century 21 and the Civic Center; and Fred McCoy, Superintendent of Buildings, "representing the city of Seattle." Seattle Municipal Art Commission, *Report of Seattle Civic Center Fountain Contest*, 8.
⁷⁸ "Japanese Design Fountain for C-21", Undocumented newspaper clipping, Seattle Municipal Archives, International Fountain file.

accommodate 465 water jet nozzles, 117 of which are activated."⁷⁹ The liquid shapes produced ranged from stars to flowers; a popular favourite was the fountain's fleur-de-lis pattern.⁸⁰ Water and coloured lights could be controlled "by an electronic tape which can produce repeating patterns, or improvised on a manual keyboard" housed in an underground chamber.⁸¹ According to Century 21's *Official Souvenir Program*, the fountain's "sculptured geysers" could reach heights of one hundred feet, "symbolizing man's effort to ascend to the heavens and explore the reaches of outer space."⁸² The fountain had no pool; instead its bowl was lined with irregular chunks of white quartz "suggesting a rocky plain on some unexplored asteroid far beyond the reaches of the galaxy."⁸³ In fact, the dome itself resembled an asteroid or satellite, one that had fallen from space and lodged in a massive, circular crater with smooth, sloping sides.

All of this was in tune with the theme of the Seattle World's Fair, so it is surprising to find that contemporary critics and reporters frequently compared the form of the *International Fountain* to a sunflower, its seeds represented by the scores of nozzles that studded its curved amber centre. This occurred even in accounts that also acknowledged references to the new era of space travel.⁸⁴ Although, at this time, I have not yet determined its original source, the sunflower metaphor suits the fountain well, and therefore provides an excellent example of how complex machinery and "space age" technologies do not have to be understood as existing in opposition to purely organic forms of life.

⁷⁹ "Special Issue: An Architect's Guidebook to the Seattle World's Fair," 30.

⁸⁰ Symmes, *Fountains: Splash and Spectacle*, 118.

⁸¹ *Official Press Book*, Seattle World's Fair (July 1962), 58.

⁸² *Official Souvenir Program*, *Seattle World's Fair 1962*, 55.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ For example, "Special Issue: An Architect's Guidebook to the Seattle World's Fair," 30, and a number of local newspapers. The original source may have been the paragraph of text on Matsushita and Shimizu's proposal (I have located one of the original illustration boards, but not the second, and the text is illegible in the only image, a newspaper photograph). It may, on the other hand, have been something one of the designers said in a press conference.

The designers of the *International Fountain*, Matsushita and Shimizu, emphasized that they put “sole stress upon water itself – its shape and movement – without recourse to any sculpture of accessories,”⁸⁵ and according to architect Nathaniel Owings, one of the judges, their fountain was chosen in part because it was the “most successful solution... utilizing water primarily.”⁸⁶ The official dedication ceremony for the *International Fountain* was held May 31, 1962, designated American Water Works Association Day at the Seattle World’s Fair.⁸⁷ Although undeniably impressive, funding limitations meant the finished fountain included only 237 nozzles, significantly less than specified in the original design. This was disappointing for many Seattle residents, especially since the cost of the fountain had increased to \$350,000, far exceeding the city’s original budget of \$250,000.⁸⁸

Progress has been at the heart of the international exposition since its emergence in the mid-19th century, an outgrowth of industrial and colonial expansion. According to van Wesemael, an architectural historian and world’s fair specialist, exhibition organizers in all periods recognized that they were in a position to influence collective norms and values, which would nurture a sense of community or national identity. However, the ideology of the world’s fair went through what van Wesemael regards as three distinct phases. The earliest fairs were primarily concerned with promoting a free exchange of technical knowledge, professional skills, and goods, but this became less important with the rise of specialized trade fairs. From 1900 to

⁸⁵ Seattle Municipal Art Commission, *Report of Seattle Civic Center Fountain Contest*, 10.

⁸⁶ Quoted in "High Water: Tokyo Fountain Design Wins," *The Seattle Times* (March 14, 1961).

⁸⁷ Program for the dedication ceremony: Seattle Municipal Archives. Record Series: 1652-02. Box 2, Folder 7; 1960 -1962; File: Civic Center International Fountain Design and Competition.

⁸⁸ Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 112; Louis R. Guzzo, "Seattle Earns 'City of Fountains' Label," *Seattle Times*, January 1, 1962. In 1991 the City Center site was renovated and the International Fountain underwent a \$6.5 million upgrade, carried out by California’s WET (Water Entertainment Technologies) Design and Nakano-Dennis, landscape architects. For more on the International Fountain renovation see Symmes, *Fountains: Splash and Spectacle*, 119.

1939 world's fairs helped to satisfy the ever-growing middle-class demand for up-to-date consumer goods. They catered to the consumer, providing information on product options, quality and fashion.⁸⁹ Writing on the nineteenth century exhibitions, Walter Benjamin called them “the sites of pilgrimages to the commodity fetish.” Leo Tolstoy, assessing the 1893 Chicago World's Columbian Exhibition in a diary, remarked that it, “like all exhibitions, is a striking example of imprudence and hypocrisy: everything is done for profit and amusement – from boredom – but noble aims of the people are ascribed to it. Orgies are better.”⁹⁰

In the years after World War II, world's fairs were increasingly seen as promotional vehicles or public relations tools for certain countries, multinational corporations and commercial sectors, and in some cases for the host cities. Certainly in Seattle's case the host city and region were frequently emphasized. The American Institute of Interior Designers held a national conference in Seattle in 1962, timed to coincide with the opening of the World's Fair. The Institute saw the potential for industrial growth in the Pacific Northwest as greatly enhanced by its natural beauty; conference materials referred to “the model frontier for the space age.”⁹¹ The Puget Sound Power and Light Company used the fair's *Official Souvenir Program* to reach out to visitors who might be “considering a branch or main plant location in our Puget Sound-Cascade region.”⁹² And on the first page of the *Official Guide*, an ad from Boeing cordially invited “engineers and scientists” to stop in at the Boeing Professional Employment Information Center and learn about “the career potential of Boeing's advanced aircraft, missile and space booster programs.”

⁸⁹ Van Wesemael, *Architecture of Instruction and Delight: A Socio-Historical Analysis of World Exhibitions as a Didactic Phenomenon (1798-1851-1970)*, 21.

⁹⁰ Quoted in Rydell, *World of Fairs: The Century-of-Progress Expositions*, 15.

⁹¹ Quoted in Johns, *Jet Dreams: Art of the Fifties in the Northwest*, 32.

⁹² *Official Souvenir Program, Seattle World's Fair 1962*, 35.

The extensive use of technology in the *International Fountain* was, in large part, what led *L.A. Times* art editor Henry Seldis to later write that he much preferred Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures to Matsushita and Shimizu's "aesthetic failure." In an article published in 1963, Seldis praised Tsutakawa's fountains as "among the best sculpture created anywhere in this country today," describing them as "devoid of gadgetry," and growing from "deep convictions on the meaning of life."⁹³ Many fountain makers in the 1960s and 70s delighted in using electronic devices to time the movements of nozzles, creating changing water patterns that might be accompanied by lights or music. Tsutakawa did not consider fountains like this to be art. Although he provided no clear rationale for this statement, he mused that his opinion was probably rooted in the importance he placed on materials and fabrication.⁹⁴

World's fair fountains throughout the twentieth century incorporated this kind of liquid spectacle; post-war technological advances made them accessible to fountain enthusiasts of more moderate means. Tsutakawa bemoaned their popularity in 1973, complaining to Gervais Reed that prefabricated fountains with electronically controlled water effects, lights, and music were by then available from several large U.S. companies, "who make up the packaged fountains and have all the drawings like a Sears and Roebuck catalog which tells exactly what you get for \$10,000."⁹⁵ For Tsutakawa such displays were too simple, too regular, and too mechanical. They all looked the same, and he did not consider them art, but he confided to Reed that even the best architects and landscape designers can be lazy. What troubled Tsutakawa was his sense that most "really don't understand how a modern fountain can work, even on a small scale. They don't

⁹³ Seldis, "Tsutakawa Fountain to Enrich Area's Art."

⁹⁴ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 27.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 22.

bother to understand it."⁹⁶ This was the sort of problem Seattle's Allied Arts was working hard to overcome in the early 1960s, and local art critic Louis Guzzo following the progress of their "City of Fountains" campaign with great interest. On New Year's Day, 1962, under the headline "Seattle Earns 'City of Fountains Label'," he shared some good news with his readers. "One year ago," Guzzo wrote, the city could point to only one fountain worth mentioning, the George Tsutakawa sculptural water display at the new Public Library. But today so many are in the process of design or construction that the tourist needs a program to identify or find them."⁹⁷

Guzzo then went on to provide the beginnings of just such a list; it included two new fountains at the University of Washington and City Hall, but otherwise consisted entirely of projects at the World's Fair site, Seattle's future Civic Center. Starting with the winner of the international fountain competition, Guzzo briefly described four fountains then under construction for Century 21, followed by two more still in the planning stages. For most projects the projected costs were included, as well as the names of patrons and fountain designers.

The largest commission had gone to Seattle artist Everett DuPen, like Tsutakawa an art professor at the University of Washington. DuPen was to create a major fountain for the Washington State Coliseum, designed by Paul Thiry. Home to Century 21's main theme exhibit, the "World of Tomorrow", the Coliseum was one of the World's Fair's signature buildings and was slated to later serve as a stadium for sporting events, trade shows, and the like. The Coliseum fountain was planned before the Civic Center Fountain Competition was even approved, and those involved agreed that a prominent Pacific Northwest sculptor was needed.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 27, 22.

⁹⁷ Guzzo, "Seattle Earns 'City of Fountains' Label."

DuPen was the state-run Century 21 Commission's unanimous choice for the \$25,000 project.⁹⁸ Although Yamasaki's United States Science Pavilion – named "the building of the decade" by publisher Henry Luce – was the Fair's most popular attraction in terms of attendance, architectural historian Erik Mattie has described Thiry's Coliseum as "the most striking of the pavilions."⁹⁹ The dramatic concrete structure was eleven stories high with a 4-acre footprint, and its vast square roof was suspended from "expressionistic concrete buttresses."¹⁰⁰ Originally intended for the Coliseum entrance, DuPen's *Fountain of Creation* (1962; fig. 52) was eventually built in a large basin behind the building and cast concrete fountains designed by Thiry's office were added to the southwest and northwest sides.¹⁰¹

In December 1961, *The Seattle Times* ran a short article on DuPen's project, explaining the artist's concept. In keeping with the state-sponsored pavilion's "World of Tomorrow" theme and the whole Fair's focus on science, DuPen based his design on the evolution of life. His plans for the *Fountain of Creation* consisted of three abstract sculptures in cast bronze, which were to stand on "a protozoan cellular-shaped island, partly submerged in a trapezoidal-shaped pool 118 feet long."¹⁰² Jets of water would rise from ten to fifteen feet in height, giving "just enough water to complement, but not obliterate, the sculpture," according to the artist.¹⁰³ *The Seattle Times* quoted DuPen as saying that he intended the central and most complex sculptural component, the "Tree of Life," to "depict the beginning of life, up through the fish, the mammal and finally man,

⁹⁸ News release dated July 21, 1960; Century 21 Exposition. Seattle Municipal Archives, Century 21 File.

⁹⁹ Findlay, *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture After 1940*, 237; Mattie, *World's Fairs*, 215.

¹⁰⁰ Mattie, *World's Fairs*, 215.

¹⁰¹ Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 113.

¹⁰² Robert A. Barr, "Fountain Sculptures at Fair to show Evolution of Man," *Seattle Times*, December 6, 1961.

¹⁰³ Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 113.

to show our ascendancy to the space age.”¹⁰⁴ The reporter described the second sculpture as “an abstracted representation of gulls in flight, and the third as suggesting flowing seaweed, a reference to plant life originating in the sea.

The walls of the concrete fountains that Thiry's office designed were embellished with designs in low relief, “inspired by Northwest Coast Indian motifs of clouds, mountains, the sea, and various animals.” The use of these motifs, I would argue, served to extend DuPen’s theme. Not content with images of plants, animals, and humans, he added regionally specific cultural forms that could be understood as evolving from “primitive” indigenous origins to become elements of modernist design. Du Pen's chosen theme also reinforced a crucial aspect of postwar world’s fairs in general, which van Wesemael argues relied on the concept of gradual and natural evolution to promote their progressive agendas. World's fair organisers, van Wesemael explains,

saw the exhibitions as a means to make the individual conscious of his or her altering and globalising experiential world, and thus to reconcile him or her with these changes by depicting them as evolutionary improvements of the old, trusted habitat.... The public could become familiar with an organic division of features across the civilisations, each of which could evolve and progress but not disappear, so there was absolutely no reason to fear change.¹⁰⁵

The *Fountain of Creation* is followed in Guzzo's article by two private commissions, accepted by the city of Seattle as gifts for the World's Fair and Civic Center site. The first (\$20,000) is a work in welded bronze by Seattle native James Fitzgerald , another artist who taught in UW's School of Art, albeit briefly.¹⁰⁶ Donated by Catherine Gold Chism for the Civic

¹⁰⁴ Quoted in Barr, "Fountain Sculptures at Fair to show Evolution of Man."

¹⁰⁵ Van Wesemael, *Architecture of Instruction and Delight: A Socio-Historical Analysis of World Exhibitions as a Didactic Phenomenon (1798-1851-1970)*, 21-22.

¹⁰⁶ In 1940 only, according to Laura Landau, "Selected Biographies," in *What it Meant to be Modern: Seattle Art at Mid-Century*, ed. Sheryl Conkelton (Seattle, Washington: Henry Art Gallery, 2000), 39.

Center's Intiman Playhouse, it was named *Fountain of the Northwest* (1961). Rupp comments that "its welded bronze forms seem to have eroded through time."¹⁰⁷ Next is the *Julius C Lang Memorial Fountain* (1962), which Lang's wife commissioned from French sculptor Francois Stahly, then a visiting professor at UW (\$25,000). A carved stone column that stands atop tiers of shallow concrete pools, Stahly's fountain was described as a "study in rectangles" by one critic.¹⁰⁸ Two more projects described by Guzzo were not yet under construction: a fountain for the courtyard of Exhibition Hall by Portland sculptor Thomas Hardy, and a group of fountains by Yamasaki for the United States Science Pavilion. Hardy had accepted a \$10,000 commission from the Variety Club of Seattle for a seascape pool with life-sized figures of children beachcombing.¹⁰⁹ For the six-acre Science Pavilion, Yamasaki designed a series of white concrete fountains shaped like simplified water lilies, which enlivened the pools in the complex's "lagoon court" (fig. 53). The fountains remain today, as do the broad reflecting pools, bridged by raised platforms that lead to the Pavilion's six linked buildings. Tsutakawa also loaned one of three versions of the small *Fountain of Reflection* (1962) to be used in a private garden attached to the Science Pavilion; a photograph of it installed there was included in the catalogue for the Fountains in Contemporary Architecture exhibition (1965-67), discussed in Chapter One.¹¹⁰

Guzzo closed his *Seattle Times* article with a reminder that work still had to be done if Seattle wished to become a "City of Fountains" of the calibre envisioned by himself, Allied Arts and others. "Although the record is exceptionally bright," he urged, "action remains to be taken

¹⁰⁷ Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 117.

¹⁰⁸ Don Duncan, "Christmas Spirit: Art Commission Approves Four Center Art Gifts," *Seattle Times*, December 15, 1961.

¹⁰⁹ Kathy Strong, ed. *The Seattle Guidebook*. 12th ed. (Guilford, CT: The Globe Pequot Press, 2001), 54.

¹¹⁰ Bishop, *Fountains in Contemporary Architecture*, n.p. The gardens at the Science Pavilion were designed by Halprin, but it is not known whether either he or Yamasaki selected Tsutakawa's fountain for this location.

on the projected fountain that predated them all – and has never moved toward the drawing board. That’s the proposed international fountain envisaged for the reservoir at Volunteer Park.”¹¹¹ As it turned out, the title *International Fountain*, so appropriate in the context of a world’s fair, went to Matsushita and Shimitsu’s design for the World's Fair site. Volunteer Park never got its fountain; instead the eastern edge of the reservoir was eventually chosen as the site for Noguchi’s *Black Sun* (1969, the second public artwork commissioned by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) through its Art in Public Places (A-i-P-P) program (no longer operative). The first work to be purchased for Seattle through A-i-P-P, *Black Sun* was also a gift from Richard Fuller, A-i-P-P having been a program that provided matching federal funds in support of community-sponsored projects.¹¹²

To return to Yamasaki's federal pavilion, a short discussion of some elements of its design will shed more light on the issue of binary logic, specifically, in this case, the opposition of scientific reason to religious intuition and faith. Five towering open-ribbed vaults made of white precast concrete rise above the lagoon court and its fountains, creating a Seattle landmark as unique as the nearby Space Needle, and like it, visible from both the freeway and the harbour. These towers were referred to as "space gothic" in most contemporary publications, including the *Official Guide to the Fair*,¹¹³ but "An Architect's Guidebook" described them as "neo-gothic in style, symbolic of man's quest for knowledge." It went on to explain that the towers established a "Gothic architectural motif," maintained throughout the Pavilion as is the use of white precast concrete: "large areas of external wall space are given dramatic treatment through a repetitive

¹¹¹ Guzzo, "Seattle Earns 'City of Fountains' Label."

¹¹² Knight, *Public Art: Theory, Practice and Populism*, 16-17; Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 147. The first A-I-P-P grant went to Grand Rapids, Michigan, for Alexander Calder’s *La Grande Vitesse*, commissioned in 1967 and installed in 1969.

¹¹³ *Official Guidebook: Seattle World's Fair, 1962* (Seattle: Acme Publications, 1962), 9.

scheme of vertical ribs and narrow arches. This rhythmic pattern was brought to a climax in the delicate soaring arches at the entrance."¹¹⁴ Findlay has claimed that Yamasaki conceived the "low profile" Federal Science Pavilion "partly in reaction against the recent [world's] fair practice of erecting monumental structures that competed against one another,"¹¹⁵ but those towering white arches were not likely to be overlooked by Century 21's visitors. Furthermore, civic rivalries were an important element in the design and construction of Europe's Gothic cathedrals, and Yamasaki surely knew this. In an essay published in 1955 he described the Gothic cathedral as having structural qualities that were "marvelous almost beyond belief" but also described it as "a monument to God with no relationship to a daily environment for people."¹¹⁶ In a world's fair pavilion, of course, no such relationship was required.

The possible religious connotations of the Science Pavilion's Gothic design were easily grasped by critics in 1962, and according to Rydell, Findling, and Pelle, "fair planners were conscious of an ongoing national debate between science and religion."¹¹⁷ The *Official Souvenir Program* for the Seattle World's Fair includes a nine-page section on Science Pavilion's main exhibitions; it opens with a high-contrast close-up photo of Yamasaki's arches. This dramatic image has been inserted between two texts: a short message of welcome from President Kennedy and an introduction to "The World of Science." The introduction starts out by paraphrasing the first line of the Book of Genesis, which would have been familiar to most World's Fair visitors in 1962: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."¹¹⁸ The World of Science essay reads: "In the beginning was man's curiosity. He wondered about the marvelous things in

¹¹⁴ "Special Issue: An Architect's Guidebook to the Seattle World's Fair," 21.

¹¹⁵ Findlay, *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture After 1940*, 236.

¹¹⁶ Quoted in Winther-Tamaki, "Minoru Yamasaki: Contradictions of Scale in the Career of the Nisei Architect of the World's Largest Building," 173.

¹¹⁷ Rydell, Findling, and Pelle, *Fair America: World's Fairs in the United States*, 106.

¹¹⁸ *World English Bible*, <http://ebible.org/web/GEN01.htm>

nature – changing seasons, falling rain, unfolding leaves. He asked why and sought explanation." The essay goes on to speculate on the birth of “the World of Science” then moves on to reflect on humanity’s place within “the natural order,” noting that “man is the only one of earth’s creatures with the power to shape his own environment.” Acknowledging that such power can certainly be abused, the unnamed author concludes that “scientific marvels can be a boon or bane. Society must decide!”¹¹⁹

In relation to Tsutakawa’s interest in unity and balance, which inform his artistic interpretation of nature and its cycles in his fountain sculptures, what is fascinating about this brief essay is that it foregrounds holism in nature and science in a very similar way to Gropius in some of his writings of the 1950s and 1960s.¹²⁰ The essay reads: “The closer science comes to the secrets of life and matter, the more evident becomes the unity of the natural order. The law that applies to the structure and behaviour of the atom is the law that governs the cosmos. Reduced to their essence, many of the elements and forces of nature, apparently dissimilar, have common qualities.” The fact that a statement supporting what might be thought of as a kind of cosmic holism was published in Century 21’s *Official Souvenir Program* supports my assertion that a linked concern with nature and spirituality had already started to emerge in Seattle by the early 1960s.

According to Findlay, "Christian concern about the tension between science and religion did not make much of an impact" on visitors to the Seattle World's fair. He reasons that this was largely because "the religious exhibits preached to the converted." While this seems likely, Findlay goes on to report the results of a poll taken at the United States Science Exhibit, where visitors were asked about their religious faith. Just over half (52 percent) "agreed 'God's word is

¹¹⁹ All references to essay: *Official Souvenir Program, Seattle World's Fair 1962*, 6.

¹²⁰ See Chapter Three of this dissertation.

more important' than the findings of science and that the ability of scientists to understand or modify human nature remained quite limited." Findlay overlooks an obvious flaw – these queries should have been presented as two or three separate questions – when he writes, "the other half of the visitors ... did not concur in ranking religious truth above scientific truth – in part, perhaps, because they did not accept the simplistic distinction between the two."¹²¹ This could be have been one reason, perhaps even the main one, but other possibilities come to mind, including atheism and agnosticism. Still, Findlay's interpretation is intriguing, not least because it might suggest that a tendency to value spirituality over religion was already taking root in the Pacific Northwest.

In any case, Century 21 fairgoers were clearly encouraged to consider the issue of how to reconcile scientific discoveries with religious belief. Even if they avoided speaking to pollsters they could hardly ignore the decision to locate the Science Pavilion directly opposite the Christian Witness Pavilion, adorned on the outside with arches and a monumental wooden cross. A committee comprised of local Protestant churches, Christian Witness was there to voice its concern that too much faith was being placed in scientific progress.¹²² There were also two other church-sponsored exhibits, and evangelist Billy Graham made a personal appearance at Century 21. Also at the fair was the Moody Bible Institute, which created the well-attended Sermons from Science Pavilion in an effort to convince fair-goers that religion and science should be understood as compatible approaches to understanding the universe.¹²³ This, too, fits a pattern established at earlier world's fairs, according to van Wesemael:

[E]ach culture could make its own contribution, large or small, to the prosperity of the world community, so that the public could come to understand that world-wide

¹²¹ Findlay, *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture After 1940*, 234.

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ Rydell, Findling, and Pelle, *Fair America: World's Fairs in the United States*, 107.

cooperation, fraternisation and peace were self-evident, based on a healthy version of well-founded self-interest. Not only in a historical or global perspective did the exhibitions function as the great reconciliator, they also invariably played a similar role in the organising country itself.¹²⁴

Century 21 also heralded significant local developments in business and the arts. Findlay argues that the organizers of the 1962 World's Fair made a conscious effort to change the prevailing national image of Seattle as unsophisticated and provincial. Their success was demonstrated in the firms and employees that relocated to Washington shortly after the World's Fair ended. One of the goals of Century 21's organizers had been to attract new employers, reducing the regional tendency to depend on Boeing for jobs, and for five years after the fair closed, the area's economy rose steadily.¹²⁵ Not only did the World's Fair ignite a business boom, it also revealed the potential for growth in the tourist industry and helped build a sense of self-assurance that contributed to further development. Moreover, though it took some time for investments made in Civic Center facilities to begin showing residents dividends, "Century 21 put Seattle on the cultural map of the United States."¹²⁶ For local artists, in the words of painter Leo Kenney, "everything changed for Seattle after the World's Fair... That's the year art got off

¹²⁴ Van Wesemael, *Architecture of Instruction and Delight: A Socio-Historical Analysis of World Exhibitions as a Didactic Phenomenon (1798-1851-1970)*, 22.

¹²⁵ Findlay, *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture After 1940*, 219, 261. Unfortunately, such gains did not produce enough diversification to avoid hard times early in the next decade. Findlay writes: "When Boeing's total state employment dropped from about 101,000 in 1967 to 38,000 in 1971, it dragged down the Puget Sound economy. As the unemployment rate skyrocketed and thousands of people left town to find work elsewhere, billboards and bumper stickers asked, "Will the last person leaving Seattle – Turn out the lights." Ibid., 257. For a photo of one such billboard, see Jeffrey Craig Sanders, "Inventing Ecotopia: Nature, Culture, and Urbanism in Seattle, 1960-2000" (PhD dissertation, University of New Mexico, 2005), 27.

¹²⁶ Findlay, *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture After 1940*, 262.

the society page. We were all humiliated before that, because you'd never find it in such a place in New York. And galleries began to open."¹²⁷

The general director of the fair's Fine Arts exhibition, a volunteer, was Norman Davis, a Seattle businessman and art collector. The Fine Arts Pavilion was divided into five main sections. "Masterpieces of Art" consisted of seventy-two works borrowed from international museums, primarily historical European and North American pieces but with a few from Japan (two), China (one), and India (one) representing Asian sculptural traditions. The show of masterworks remained on view until Labour Day, when it was replaced by a national craft exhibition and a survey of contemporary art from the Northwest. This included a small show devoted to Mark Tobey. After viewing these, visitors moved on to a gallery of "Art from the Ancient Near East," followed by "Art Since 1950, International." Next was "Art Since 1950, American," where promotional literature claimed the eighty paintings and thirty sculptures on view "show[ed] the full range of leading American artists of today." The selection of paintings failed to please sympathetic art critics or the less sympathetic general public, however. The majority of works on display were large canvases, described as "in the area of 'Abstract Expressionism,' a field of art in which the United States has taken leadership from the 'School of Paris'."¹²⁸ The Pavilion's final gallery was devoted to the region's first major exhibition of "Northwest Coast Indian Art."¹²⁹ In *Art of the Pacific Northwest* (1974) Kingsbury devotes a full chapter to the art shown at the Seattle World's Fair in 1962, but she focuses almost entirely on painting and does not mention the fountain sculptures that were so much a part of Century 21.

¹²⁷ Quoted in Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 255.

¹²⁸ James D'Orma Braman, *Official Press Book, Seattle World's Fair, 1962* (Seattle: Century 21 Exposition, 1962), 56. Seattle Public Library, Century 21 Digital Collection, <http://cdm15015.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/p15015coll3/id/2199/rec/1>.

¹²⁹ Johns, "Fields of Vision in Pictures and Objects," 72.

The Heart of the City: Fresno, California

When, in 1958-60, Tsutakawa embarked on a new career as a designer of urban fountains, he entered a professional milieu that was sorely in need of change. It was also one marked by contention and criticism – internal and external. Lewis Mumford, in his numerous books and his column, "The Sky Line," which appeared in the *New Yorker* from 1931 to 1963, celebrated the city as mankind's "most precious collective invention."¹³⁰ But like many of his contemporaries in the fields of architecture and urban planning, in the early 1960s Mumford became quite pessimistic regarding the future of cities, a shift that can be observed in his highly successful study, *The City in History* (1961). In 1963 the National Film Board of Canada (NFB) released a documentary series composed of six short films based on *The City in History*, collectively titled "Lewis Mumford on the City." Fourth in the series is *The Heart of the City*, described in the NFB's online catalogue as: "A study of the growing sterility, dullness and congestion that is destroying the vitality, variety and breadth that once made cities physically attractive and humanly creative."¹³¹

Shot in black and white, *The Heart of the City* opens with a stately public fountain, its waters sparkling in the sunlight. As children play, couples share moments of conversation, and groups of friends meet, then depart together. People bring the plaza to life, and their relaxed vitality is enhanced by the movement of water and reflected light. Because the point of this

¹³⁰ National Film Board of Canada, "Our Collection," Lewis Mumford on the City, Part 1: The City: Heaven and Hell. <http://www.onf-nfb.gc.ca/eng/collection/film/?id=11133>

¹³¹ National Film Board of Canada, "Our Collection," Lewis Mumford on the City, Part 4: The Heart of the City. <http://www.onf-nfb.gc.ca/eng/collection/film/?id=11100>. The series was produced by David MacNeill, and Mumford, sixty-eight years old at the time, appeared in the films as the series' host. Much of the illustrative material, which included photographs of urban and rural scenes, works of art and architecture, and archaeological finds, was prepared by Mumford himself.

opening scene is to present the film's audience with a vision of an urban ideal, the precise location is not important; viewers are encouraged to associate the unidentified fountain with those they have experienced directly in cities throughout North America. The fountain at the start of the film is emblematic; it stands for the positive elements of city life — those Mumford regarded as threatened. In Seattle and elsewhere, Tsutakawa's modernist fountain sculptures perform a similar function.

In 1964, in addition to creating fountains for the sunken plaza of Kansas City, Missouri's Commerce Tower, the Pacific First Federal Savings Bank in Tacoma, Washington, and a private home in Medina, Washington, Tsutakawa contributed two fountain sculptures in bronze, *Aquarius Ovoid* and the *Obos Fountain*, to a newly built pedestrian mall in Fresno, California (figs. 54 and 55). Designed by Victor Gruen Associates in association with landscape architect Garrett Eckbo, Fulton Mall was conceived as an "outdoor art gallery/museum." In addition to works of public art, the new streetscape was intended to showcase downtown Fresno's "almost unique assemblage of Beaux Arts classical office buildings."¹³² Many of the Mall's sculptures are completely abstract, but a few are more traditional figurative pieces, and these include Renoir's *La Grand Laveuse*, or *Washer Woman* (n.d.). While it looks somewhat out of place in relation to other sculptural works, *La Grand Laveuse* is well suited to the historic architecture. Though the art collection belongs to the City, the twenty-two works were chosen or commissioned by a volunteer committee and paid "through an art fund privately subscribed by Fresno businessmen" — a fact the city and its main newspaper, *The Fresno Bee*, were careful to mention in press

¹³² Dickenson Weber, *Early Tall Office Buildings* (1988). Quoted in "Fulton Mall Walking Tour" pamphlet.

releases and articles touting the project.¹³³ The Mall project was an attempt to revitalize Fresno's downtown core by attracting middle-class shoppers back to the centre of the city. An article in *Western City Magazine* on "Fresno's Mall in the Making" reported that merchants and property owners had realized in 1958 that "the central shopping area of the city, which served a six-county area, was rapidly losing its percentage grip on total sales."¹³⁴ Since most regional shopping centres were, in effect, indoor pedestrian malls, planners theorized that removing car traffic from a specific urban shopping area would help to create a similar retail experience.

The Fulton Mall, however, offered much more aesthetically than the average regional mall. Its main thoroughfare and side streets, also reserved for foot traffic, were dotted with moderately scaled sculptures. Shaded spaces and upwards of twenty "water elements" – not just fountains, but multiple pools and two "streams," each over 250 feet in length, provided welcome relief from the hot sun of the San Joaquin Valley.¹³⁵ Plantings on the Mall included grapes, figs, and olives – all major crops in the region, with sidewalks and asphalt replaced by concrete, dyed a light brown to imitate local soil. Curving blue ribbons of cast concrete, set with river stones imported from Mexico, gave pavements a flowing rhythm. Eckbo's organic concept of landscape architecture was further evident in the many pools, flower beds, and areas for seating and

¹³³ The final number of artworks is taken from a map in a newspaper article from 1999, which reported that "the Fresno County grand jury is scolding city and county officials for allowing the sculptures to become dilapidated." Matlosz, Felicia Cousart, "Time, Neglect Take Toll on Mall's Art," *Fresno Bee* (July 17, 1999). As a result, some of the sculptures, including Tsutakawa's *Aquarius Ovoid*, have since been thoroughly restored – an ongoing process that began in April 2000. Jim Wasserman, "Fresno Treasures Restored." *Fresno Bee*, April 24, 2000. The Fulton Mall's original landscaping has also been refurbished. There are, however, many vacant buildings and boarded up store fronts on the Mall, as has been the case since the early 1970s. See fig. 70 for a recent photograph of Tsutakawa's not yet restored *Obos Fountain* and surrounding stores. For further information, see Kenneth R. Schneider, *On Planning in Fresno*, (Fresno CA, Planning and Inspection Department, City of Fresno, 1972).

¹³⁴ "Fresno's Mall in the Making," *Western City Magazine* (August 1964), 30.

¹³⁵ "Let's Grow Fresno – Now!," *Valley Illustrated Press*, August 12, 1964.

children's play. Shapes often appeared to be freely formed, and in fact a number of the mall's water features were designed to represent the path from the high Sierra taken by the Kings and San Joaquin Rivers, "the Valley's lifeblood."¹³⁶ Today, water still cascades from the fountains into narrow troughs that connect some of the pools.

Eckbo was the well-known author of *Landscape for Living* (1950), a book that appears on reading lists distributed in the 1960s to students in introductory design courses at the University of Washington's School of Architecture.¹³⁷ Eckbo was also a former member of the jury for the Seattle Civic Center Fountain Competition, so he may have promoted Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures to the committee selecting works of art for Fulton Mall. In any case, *Aquarius Ovoid*, a small bronze fountain approximately four feet in height, was the first purchase made by the committee. Though given a new name in Fresno, *Aquarius Ovoid* is one of three versions of Tsutakawa's *Fountain of Reflection* – part of a numbered edition already mentioned in Chapter One. Two separate articles published in *The Fresno Bee* in 1964 state that Fresno's fountain formerly graced the federal Science Pavilion at Seattle's 1962 World's Fair.¹³⁸ Kingsbury, on the other hand, states that the version of the *Fountain of Reflection* that was loaned to Century 21 now stands outside the University of Washington's School of Business in Seattle.¹³⁹ The UW fountain, renamed the *Phi Mu Fountain* after the sorority that funded its purchase in 1967, is numbered 1/3; *Aquarius Ovoid* is numbered 2/3. It was not necessarily the first fountain in the edition that was loaned to the Science Pavilion, but it seems likely Fresno hoped that some of the

¹³⁶ PBID Partners of Downtown Fresno, "Public Art on the Fulton Mall," <http://downtownfresno.org/publicart.html>.

¹³⁷ Thiel, "Grade I Design Bibliographies."

¹³⁸ "Three Win Mall Art Program Contracts," *Fresno Bee*, June 19, 1964; "World Fair Fountain is Installed on Mall," *Fresno Bee*, August 22, 1964.

¹³⁹ Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 112.

glamour of Century 21 would attach itself to what was, in fact, a later version of the *Fountain of Reflection*.¹⁴⁰

As the title *Aquarius Ovoid* suggests, the water in Tsutakawa's small fountain is carried through three openings, ovoids that have pinched ends rather than being egg-shaped. The upper elements are mounted on a curved tripod, and the water spouts up through an small open sphere, creating a shimmering ball in the centre of the fountain before it cascades over the edges of the sculpture and into the pool. As discussed in Chapter Four, ovoids and spheres are recurring elements seen in many of Tsutakawa's fountains; in *Aquarius Ovoid* and the other versions of the Fountain of Reflection, the combination of the two makes the upper part of the fountain sculpture resemble a human eye. As in Vancouver's *Fountain of the Pioneers*, the water that gushes from the eye could be interpreted as representing tears, perhaps inspired by the disembodied, often weeping eyes of Surrealism.

Unlike *Aquarius Ovoid*, the *Obos Fountain* has a strong vertical emphasis. Twelve feet tall, it stands in a broad concrete pool, the raised sides of which are inlaid with small, round stones and joined to one of Eckbo's narrow concrete channels. Water falls from the trefoil-shaped top dish and also streams from inside the lower forms: three stacked ovoids pierced with circular openings. The ovoids are arranged on a central stem with less than a foot between them. The water obscures this stem or pipe, so the ovoids almost seem to hover between the large dish at the bottom and the much smaller upper dish. Speaking with the press a day or two before the

¹⁴⁰ Kingsbury's monograph of 1990 includes a list of "Fountains and Public Sculpture Commissions" compiled with George Tsutakawa's help (pp.149-152). Fresno's *Aquarius Ovoid* is referred to there only as the *Fountain of Reflection*, while the *Phi Mu Fountain* is listed with both of its names. The third version of the *Fountain of Reflection*, numbered 3/3, is in the garden behind George and Ayame Tsutakawa's house. I would like to thank Gerry Tsutakawa for his help with this question, and for providing information on the placement of the fountain at the Science Pavilion in 1962. Gerard Tsutakawa, email message to the author, Oct. 17, 2011.

water was turned on in the *Obos Fountain*, Tsutakawa emphasized that the sculpture remained incomplete without this final liquid element. Even with no knowledge of this fountain's title, it is evident Tsutakawa was continuing to develop the "obos concept." The artist described the *Obos Fountain*, still unnamed at the time, as "a celestial thing," and explained how the various forms represented what he called "'the happy relationship' between the earth, the heavens, the moon, and the sun."¹⁴¹

Along with many of Mumford's professional colleagues, a growing segment of the general public shared his concern regarding the future of American architecture and urban development. In the U.S. during the postwar years, the "rebuilding" of cities was high on the agenda for those in government, business, real estate, architecture and related professions; even though there had been no actual destruction of American cities during WWII, many downtowns were in a state of decay by the 1950s. This decline was tied in with the middle-class flight to the suburbs, a clearly racialized exodus from city centres often labelled "white flight." Indeed, Findlay has noted an element of racism in one of the key urban development goals of Seattle World's Fair officials, who, by redeveloping the Century 21 site, planned "to eliminate blight from the periphery of the central business district," a run-down area that was home to many non-white families.¹⁴² In the early 1960s a number of widely read books sought solutions to such problems as urban blight, traffic congestion, lack of public amenities, and perceived decline in positive "street life."

The most influential was probably Jane Jacobs's *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, first published in 1961. Rejecting both Corbusian modernism and garden-city planning,

¹⁴¹ "A Celestial Thing," *Fresno Bee*, November 20, 1964. The *Obos Fountain* consists of three spheres/ovoids and two dishes, so the four celestial bodies referred to by Tsutakawa may not be represented directly, unless perhaps the two dishes were meant to depict the heavens.

¹⁴² Findlay, *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture After 1940*, 40.

Jacobs advocated “a return to the density and mixed land uses of the traditional unplanned city.”¹⁴³ Other important titles that appeared between 1960 and 1970 include *The Image of the City* (1960) by Kevin Lynch,¹⁴⁴ Gruen's *The Heart of Our Cities – The Urban Crisis: Diagnosis and Cure* (1964), and Richard Sennett's *The Uses of Disorder* (1970). To some extent, this surge of professional and popular interest in urban planning, a relatively new discipline, arose in response to the perceived failures of International Modernism.¹⁴⁵ As Senie has pointed out, this was also the case with the growing support for public sculpture architects and other professionals were expressing at that time. It was one thing for Hitchcock to argue, for instance, that art should serve the function of introducing a human scale to architecture, but this could easily be taken to imply "that art could in some way make up for what was apparently lacking in a building style increasingly viewed as barren and sterile."¹⁴⁶

It was no coincidence that Gruen, an architect and planner known as the "father" of the modern American shopping mall, published *The Heart of Our Cities* the same year that Fresno's Fulton Mall opened; preliminary plans and early photographs of the Fresno Revitalization Project were included in the book, and Gruen devoted a full chapter to “The Taming of the

¹⁴³ Peter Geoffrey Hall, *Cities of Tomorrow: An Intellectual History of Urban Planning and Design in the Twentieth Century*. 3rd ed. (Oxford and Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), 281.

¹⁴⁴ The work of artist and visual theorist Gyorgy Kepes was mentioned in Chapter Three of this dissertation, and Lynch worked closely with Kepes at MIT's Center for Urban and Regional Studies throughout the 1950s. Lynch's *The Image of the City* resulted from a joint research project the two worked on from 1954 to 1959. Martin, *The Organizational Complex: Architecture, Media, and Corporate Space*, 138.

¹⁴⁵ Under the influence of the City Beautiful Movement, urban planning evolved during the 1920s as a separate discipline from landscape architecture. Harvard University established the first professional city planning curriculum in 1929. Boult and Sullivan, *Illustrated History of Landscape Design*, 210. For a thorough analysis of U.S. urban redevelopment in the early postwar period, see Coleman Woodbury and Catherine Bauer, *The Future of Cities and Urban Redevelopment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953).

¹⁴⁶ Senie, *Contemporary Public Sculpture: Tradition, Transformation, and Controversy*, 65.

Motorcar.”¹⁴⁷ Refuting the common accusation that he was "an enemy of the automobile," Gruen wrote that he "had nothing but admiration for the automobile itself as an ingeniously conceived means of human transportation." A point had been reached in the U.S., however, when "the automobile population [had] a higher birth rate than the human one." Instead of developing strategies for "coexistence," people were being "cowed into submission" and fleeing the city for the suburbs.¹⁴⁸

In the 1960s, the number of privately owned cars on America's streets and highways was vastly exceeding all pre-WWII expectations. At the New York World's Fair of 1939 and 1940, General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler had each attracted large numbers of visitors, but the big crowd-pleaser had been GM's pavilion, "Highways and Horizons." Inside was Futurama, the New York Fair's undisputed highlight, a quarter hour-long multi-media tour of a scaled-down model city of 1960. The work of famed industrial and theatrical designer Norman Bel Geddes, Futurama was based on dynamic road design and intended to promote increased public financing of highways, as well as to sell more GM cars. Visitors soon discovered it offered much more; Futurama has been described as "a vision of a planned future where technology and science, wedded to corporate capitalism, made social and economic problems seem to disappear."¹⁴⁹ Futurama promised "abundant sunshine, fresh air, fine green parkways, recreational and civic

¹⁴⁷ See Victor Gruen, *The Heart of our Cities, The Urban Crisis: Diagnosis and Cure* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1964). For more information on Gruen's designs for shopping centres see M. Jeffrey Hardwick, *Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).

¹⁴⁸ Gruen, *The Heart of our Cities, The Urban Crisis: Diagnosis and Cure*, 209-211.

¹⁴⁹ Rydell, Findling, and Pelle, *Fair America: World's Fairs in the United States*, 136. This kind of utopian, modernist point of view had also been characteristic of earlier twentieth century world's fairs, and was retained by organizers in the 1950s and 60s. To some extent, Century 21's Spacearium was an updated version of Futurama, with the gaze reversed to look out, to possibilities beyond our planet, instead of viewing a futuristic urban transportation network from above. Thanks to a lens capable of projecting one hundred sixty degrees, visitors could "travel" two billion light years in ten minutes. *Official Souvenir Program, Seattle World's Fair 1962*, 8.

centers – all the result of thoughtful planning and design." The recorded narration also predicted that by 1960, Americans would own approximately 38 million automobiles – nearly one third more than in 1940.¹⁵⁰

The real number turned out to be far higher, a staggering 61 million, but by 1960 American cities had entered a period of crisis. The reality of the situation is summed up admirably by Morris Dickstein, who writes: "General Motors' homage to the highway and the automobile, which appealed so strongly to American individualism and love of mobility, foreshadowed not the antiseptic, utopian city portrayed in the 'Futurama,' but the flight from the city, the city in decay within a suburbanized nation."¹⁵¹ The Fulton Mall, which transformed Fresno's main commercial street, known as Fulton Way, was only a small part of Gruen's much larger plan (never fully realized) for the renewal of the city's central business district. The heart of Gruen's "Fresno Plan" was an eighteen-block area free of automobiles, similar to the unbuilt "superblock" he designed for Fort Worth, Texas.¹⁵² Jacobs, another advocate for the pedestrian, had praised Gruen's Fort Worth plan in 1958 in an essay she wrote for William H. Whyte's *The Exploding Metropolis*. Jacobs argued that the Fort Worth plan's "street treatment," would create "variety and detail." "The whole point," she wrote, "is to make the streets more surprising, more compact, more variegated, and busier than before – not less so."¹⁵³ Fort Worth, however, rejected the plan as "overly 'dramatic'," leaving Gruen eager to implement a similar plan elsewhere, given

¹⁵⁰ General Motors, *Futurama* (General Motors Corp., 1940).

¹⁵¹ Dickstein, Morris. "From the Thirties to the Sixties: *the New York World's Fair in its Own Time*." in Helen A. Harrison, ed. *Remembering the Future: The New York World's Fair from 1939 to 1964*, (New York: Rizzoli, 1989), 24.

¹⁵² According to a lengthy article published in *Engineering News-Record* on January 12, 1967, Fulton Mall was "merely part of one element in a complex plan" that actually extended beyond the planned "superblock" to cover "a 2,000 acre surrounding area of downtown Fresno." See "Fitting Cities to the Future: Fresno Mall Gives a Small City New Heart", 36-37.

¹⁵³ Quoted in Gruen, *The Heart of our Cities, The Urban Crisis: Diagnosis and Cure*, 220.

the proper conditions. Ultimately, Gruen and others found that such concepts were not usually successful; William H. Whyte later argued in *City: Rediscovering the Centre* that overly-long pedestrian malls had contributed to the decline of America's downtowns.¹⁵⁴

Edgardo Contini, the Gruen partner in charge of the Fresno project, observed that the firm "had been made wise by the failure of Ft. Worth." The architects were able to negotiate extraordinary assurances from the City of Fresno – "that the money and commitment were there for the long haul, and that they would be empowered with almost complete control."¹⁵⁵ As *The Fresno Bee* of August 30, 1964, reported in a special supplement, over eighty pages long, devoted to "Fresno... city of tomorrow," the long-term goal was for Fresno to gain recognition as "The City in interior California between Los Angeles and San Francisco."¹⁵⁶ When completed in September 1964, Fulton Mall was widely celebrated as a bold, innovative example of America's efforts at postwar urban renewal. It received a number of national design awards and garnered international attention.¹⁵⁷ Gruen later said he had relied on "tricks" from his shopping centre designs to provide downtown Fresno "with excitement, with surprise, with all those elements that draw people," and not only during shopping hours but evenings, Sundays, and holidays.¹⁵⁸ His proven approach was to design "environments to promote retailing by bringing people together."¹⁵⁹ Gruen may have exaggerated somewhat when he claimed to have "awakened

¹⁵⁴ William H. Whyte, *City: Rediscovering the Centre*, 311-312.

¹⁵⁵ Peter H. King "Dream Unravels Fresno: Rise and Fall of Urban Mall" *Los Angeles Times*, April 28, 1988, http://articles.latimes.com/1988-04-28/news/mn-3089_1_pedestrian-mall.

¹⁵⁶ Edwin E. Clough, et al., "Fresno... City of Tomorrow" *Fresno Bee*, August 30, 1964, Special Section.

¹⁵⁷ These included an award for "Excellence in Community Architecture" (1965) from the American Institute of Architects (1965) and the "National Design Excellence" award from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (1968) (*Mall Maker*, 212).

¹⁵⁸ Quoted in Hardwick, *Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream*, 212.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

community spirit in the people of Fresno,"¹⁶⁰ but Fulton Mall's merchants experienced improved sales, and the area remained popular with shoppers for the rest of the 60s. A new convention centre, arena, and theatre contributed to the Fulton Mall's initial success.

Pedestrian malls had been discussed in the Western U.S. since about 1940, provoking a few experiments in the late 1950s but almost no permanent results.¹⁶¹ By the mid-60s, however, they were attracting a lot of attention; an article on Fresno, "The City That Puts People First," appeared in the popular women's magazine *McCall's* in April 1966.¹⁶² In September 1967 *Sunset Magazine*, a widely-read lifestyle and travel journal devoted to "the Far West," featured four recently constructed pedestrian malls. All were in California, at that time home to almost half of America's examples. The tone of the *Sunset* piece was pragmatic, advising, "if your city is arguing a mall proposal, a visit to one or more of the malls already established will help you make up your mind."¹⁶³ Writers for both *McCall's* and *Sunset* recognized that if pedestrian malls were to succeed in the U.S., adequate parking would have to be provided close by. *McCall's* assured its readers that in Fresno, "nobody is *forced* to walk," since Gruen had planned for garages to be placed around the Mall.¹⁶⁴ When these were complete, every building would be within forty yards of the nearest parking area. Also, small electric trams were already running the length of the Mall "for the infirm, the weary or the lazy."¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁰ Quoted *ibid.*

¹⁶¹ "The Mall Idea," *Sunset Magazine* 139 (September 1967): 70.

¹⁶² Bernard Taper, "The City that Puts People First," *McCall's* (April 1966): n.p.

¹⁶³ "The Mall Idea," 70.

¹⁶⁴ Taper, "The City that Puts People First," n.p. (original italics.)

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

Hall notes that both Jacobs and Sennett gave voice to “a general disillusionment with the results of planning-from-above in American cities.”¹⁶⁶ In light of challenges by these writers and others to examples of overly structured and controlled modernist planning, it should be noted that, at an early stage in the Fulton Mall project, some people involved suggested that its numerous fountains be fenced to prevent children wading in them. City officials associated with Gruen’s plan fought back and prevented restrictions being imposed “on children or on tramps who might sleep on benches or wash clothes in the fountains.”¹⁶⁷ Tsutakawa, too, was generally supportive of those who sought to use his fountains in such ways, as long as they inflicted no damage on the sculptures or plumbing.¹⁶⁸ Postwar ideas about the democratic potential of public art and art-in-architecture might even have suggested that if *La Grand Laveuse* was welcome, then Fresno's local poor should be as well.

Fresno quickly became a model for those promoting the construction of pedestrian malls across the United States. Gruen's firm commissioned “A City Reborn,” a short documentary about the Fresno Revitalization project; in 1968 he screened the film at the White House for an audience that included Lady Bird Johnson.¹⁶⁹ Although the pedestrian mall trend continued into the 1970s, for Fresno's residents the lack of parking around the Mall was an ongoing source of frustration. More important, Gruen's plan for Fulton Mall did not generate the projected levels of economic development. One Fresno businessman later complained that Gruen, who was originally from Vienna, Austria, was simply not “in tune with the automobile and the California

¹⁶⁶ Hall, *Cities of Tomorrow: An Intellectual History of Urban Planning and Design in the Twentieth Century*, 281.

¹⁶⁷ Taper, “The City that Puts People First,” n.p.

¹⁶⁸ Mayumi Tsutakawa, interview by the author, June 23, 2010. Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

¹⁶⁹ Hardwick, *Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream*, 212.

lifestyle;" he valued urban sidewalk cafés, whereas they preferred backyard barbecues.¹⁷⁰ There were also the numerous challenges faced by cities nationwide. A report published in 1972 by Fresno's Planning and Inspection Department opened with the observation that a complex set of problems had resulted in "a serious urban crisis in America." This crisis, "at once functional, environmental, economic, civic and social," made it imperative that not only urban planning, but "the nature of the modern city itself" be reevaluated.¹⁷¹ Generally, Americans had "failed to cherish their urban environment." They had not "been creative about cities. Nor have they even given legitimacy to environmental innovations, other than to accelerate an urban consumptiveness." The report's author, Kenneth R. Schneider, praised the impulse behind the Fulton Mall, calling it "the one great exception in Fresno." Nonetheless, he continued, "for all its charm, the Mall is now very weak, very isolated, and very nearly a symbol of too little, too late."¹⁷²

During the 1980s *The Fresno Bee* published numerous articles complaining of decay in the central downtown area, seeking solutions and documenting attempts at revitalization. Other California newspapers also weighed in; on April 28, 1988, an article by Peter H. King in the *Los Angeles Times* documented "the rise and fall" of Fresno's downtown pedestrian mall. King observed that many crucial components of the Mall project had either been left incomplete or abandoned altogether: a key example was "central city housing." He proved his point by opening the article with a quote from Fresno's chief planner, who cited Gruen as having declared in the 60's: "people have got to live here to make this thing work. [Gruen] said the key to central area revitalization is not converting Fulton Street into a mall.... It is bringing back people who will

¹⁷⁰ King, "Dream Unravels Fresno: Rise and Fall of Urban Mall."

¹⁷¹ Schneider, *On Planning in Fresno*, 1.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 2.

live here and enjoy this thing. The community did not heed his advice."¹⁷³ Just three days later, *The Bee* devoted a full page and a half to another article by King, an *L.A. Times* staff writer. Bluntly titled, "The Fulton Mall: A bold urban experiment turns into a moribund white elephant," the second article used bold-face type to highlight a quote from former menswear retailer, Richard Hodge. Hodge observed, "this is what towns were doing, putting in malls, sprucing up their downtowns.... They were doing it to combat what they knew was inevitable – the sprawl of suburbia."¹⁷⁴ Today, a recent posted article on the website of the PBID Partners of Downtown Fresno provides an update: on October 4, 2011, property owners voted to support two possible plans to reopen the Fulton Mall to car traffic, a change that will no doubt require the removal or relocation of numerous sculptures and other public artworks.¹⁷⁵

The Living Waters: Honolulu, Hawaii

As noted above, John Graham and Company was a Seattle architecture firm that prospered with the growth of the large regional shopping centre, a type most often located in the suburbs. Following the opening of the Northgate Shopping Center in 1950, the regional shopping centre established itself as the new North American norm. In 1966 Tsutakawa installed his *Waiola Fountain* (fig. 56) in another shopping centre designed by Graham and Company, the Ala Moana Center in Honolulu, Hawaii.¹⁷⁶ When it opened in 1960, Ala Moana was a partially covered shopping centre, and only a short drive from downtown. Both features made the Ala

¹⁷³ King, "Dream Unravels Fresno: Rise and Fall of Urban Mall."

¹⁷⁴ Quoted in Peter H. King, "The Fulton Mall: A Bold Urban Experiment Turns into a Moribund White Elephant," *Fresno Bee*, May 1, 1988.

¹⁷⁵ PBID Partners of Downtown Fresno, "Property Owners Vote to Return Traffic to Fulton Mall," (October 2011), <http://downtownfresno.org/fulton-mall-overview.html>.

¹⁷⁶ John Graham and Company are also named as the engineers on this project. See Dillingham Corporation, *Art at Ala Moana: Shopping Center of the Pacific*, (Honolulu, Dillingham Corp., 1970), 18.

Moana Center similar to Graham's Lloyd Center in Portland, which opened the same year. In Ala Moana's case, however, its 51-acre site was also well placed in relation to Oahu's tourist mecca, Waikiki.¹⁷⁷ Like Lloyd Center, but unlike the earlier Northgate Shopping Center, Ala Moana was designed to incorporate works of art, including numerous fountains. Conceived by its owner-managers as "Honolulu's regional shopping center," it took less than three years to replace the city's central business district as the dominant shopping destination on the island of Oahu. A study conducted by the U.S. Department of Commerce showed that downtown retailers brought in \$10.5 million less in 1963 than was earned by the Ala Moana Center and adjacent shops. While a few downtown merchants saw an increase in sales, a greater number suffered, some "disastrously."¹⁷⁸ Both these findings contradicted Graham's assurances that Ala Moana's presence would benefit downtown businesses by drawing more customers into Honolulu from outlying areas.¹⁷⁹

The artistic emphasis was on Hawaii's multicultural identity, with a view to attracting shoppers of varying ethnicities and supporting Ala Moana's claim to be "the shopping center of the Pacific."¹⁸⁰ Sculptures and fountains throughout the complex drew on examples from Polynesia and Japan, in particular, in order to highlight Hawaii's past, present, and future. Tsutakawa's fountain was enhanced by the addition of a metal plaque that reads: "Waiola. The living waters. Symbolic of the new life found in the islands of Hawaii by all peoples and of the

¹⁷⁷ Hawaiian Land Company, *Ala Moana, Honolulu's Regional Shopping Center* (Honolulu: Dillingham Corporation, 1961), 7.

¹⁷⁸ The same thing happened in downtown Fresno after 1971, when a shopping centre called Fashion Fair opened near the Fulton Mall. King, "Dream Unravels Fresno: Rise and Fall of Urban Mall."

¹⁷⁹ "Ala Moana Shopping Center Planner Says It Will Help Downtown Business," *Honolulu Star Bulletin*, December 26, 1957, 8; George West, "Key Downtown Stores Note Sales Gains," *Honolulu Star Bulletin*, October 27, 1965.

¹⁸⁰ See Dillingham Corporation, *Art at Ala Moana: Shopping Center of the Pacific*.

harmony of aloha achieved here through the mingling of cultures." The *Bamboo Fountain*, designed by Graham and Company and built by Claude Horan, used ceramic figures and ornamental tile to "symbolize the various cultures of the Pacific Basin."¹⁸¹ Sears Roebuck was one of Ala Moana's two original department stores; the other belonged to Japan's Shirokiya chain.¹⁸²

In the words of Graham and Company's "resident architect" Ted Jacobsen, "everyone longs to live with nature," so trees, flowers, and other greenery were planted throughout the project – so much that the shopping centre had its own nursery dedicated to their care.¹⁸³ Ala Moana even had a very small traditional Japanese garden, designed with "bonsai plants."¹⁸⁴ In addition to being visually pleasing in their own right, John Graham often used artworks and plantings "to minimize, where possible, the intrusion of essential services or utility elements."¹⁸⁵ An unusual example at Ala Moana was the "dry pools" placed at intervals throughout the mall. These contained sculpted lily pads, herons, and fish by Seattle artist Ray Jensen, positioned so that they appeared to float, stand, or swim above the air vents for the parking garage below. At the same time, real flowing water moved through narrow rectangular pools that ran the length of the Ala Moana Center's upper mall – a welcome feature in a tropical climate.

The *Waiola Fountain* originally stood outdoors, next to an escalator that carried visitors to the upper mall, where the majority of shops were located. The large rectangular pool was home to brightly coloured Japanese carp, which swam between the four supporting legs of the

¹⁸¹ Dillingham Corporation, *Art at Ala Moana: Shopping Center of the Pacific*, 12.

¹⁸² "Japan's Shirokiya Chain Plans Ala Moana Store," *Honolulu Star Bulletin and Advertiser*, March 9, 1959.

¹⁸³ Quoted in Barbara Czurlies, "Art at Ala Moana" *Honolulu Sunday Star-Bulletin*, March 27, 1960. Also see Dillingham Corporation, *Art at Ala Moana: Shopping Center of the Pacific*, 10.

¹⁸⁴ "Lovely and Planned that Way," *Honolulu Advertiser*, Thursday, June 2, 1966.

¹⁸⁵ "Design for Merchandising: The Lloyd Center, Portland, Oregon," 128.

Waiola Fountain's rectangular base.¹⁸⁶ Today, sunlight from above still penetrates to the fountain, but most of the area is roofed, and the Ala Moana Center as a whole has been greatly expanded. A book by Georgia and Warren Radford on Hawaii's outdoor public sculpture states that "shoppers suddenly become aware of the roar of water" as they near the fountain.

"Tsutakawa's impressive fifteen-foot sculpture-fountain cascades over one thousand gallons of water per minute in nine separate waterfalls from delicately balanced lanternlike [*sic*] forms."

The Radfords also described the Honolulu fountain as "reminiscent of rock cairns, ... a theme used by Tsutakawa in other works," as was the bronze sculpture's dark patina, here finished with wax.¹⁸⁷

Honolulu's fountain sculpture has a different character from most made by Tsutakawa; usually the individual elements are hollowed out, and often they are spaced apart from each other along a central axis. As a result, even large forms made from bronze tend to seem quite light and airy. In the *Waiola Fountain*, by contrast, the stacked and roughly squared off shapes create a new set of visual associations, recalling the wood carvings made by indigenous Hawaiians as well as those of Polynesian settlers.¹⁸⁸ Tsutakawa's formal allusions in the *Waiola Fountain* were described by a local art critic as "a marriage of the Oriental-Pacific and the Hawaiian ethnic happily combined ... a tour de force in itself."¹⁸⁹ The multicultural aspects of Tsutakawa's fountains are very significant, and not just in relation to the artist's ethnic background. His

¹⁸⁶ Web Anderson, "Isle Fountains Gush with Character," *Honolulu Star Bulletin and Advertiser*, September 13, 1970.

¹⁸⁷ Georgia Radford and Warren Radford, *Sculpture in the Sun: Hawaii's Art for Open Spaces* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1978), 43.

¹⁸⁸ It should be noted, however, that Tsutakawa used very similar forms in later fountain sculptures he made for other sites – locations where these particular cultural allusions would seem out of place. They include the *Obos '69 Fountain* (1969), part of the Franklin D. Murphy Sculpture Garden at the University of California, Los Angeles, and the *Jefferson Plaza Fountain* (1971) in Indianapolis, Indiana.

¹⁸⁹ Anderson, "Isle Fountains Gush with Character" (ellipse in original).

fountain sculptures reflect a tendency among modernist artists to appropriate and combine motifs from diverse cultures in a quest for universal meaning. The belief that many modernist forms shared a universal essence with forms found in primitive art was discussed in Chapter Five, and it surely played a part in the design of the *Waiola Fountain*. In fact, the *Waiola Fountain* led directly to Tsutakawa's being offered the job of designing Vancouver's *Fountain of the Pioneers*, with its combination of Northwest First Nation motifs and Japanese references. Vacationing in Hawaii, Dominion Construction president H.C. Bentall and his brother Robert admired the fountain at the Ala Moana Shopping Center, and set out to track down its maker.¹⁹⁰ At Ala Moana, unlike the Bentall Centre, the overall decorative scheme was designed around the modern primitives concept, in conjunction with the "shopping center of the Pacific" theme (fig. 57).¹⁹¹ For example, in the "Lanai Area" an interior wall was decorated with "ancient Hawaiian figures or petroglyphs engraved in stone," as well as three miniature waterfalls.¹⁹²

In September 1970 the art critic for the *Honolulu Star Bulletin and Advertiser*, Web Anderson, devoted most of his regular column to assessing a fountain by prominent Hawaiian sculptor Bumpei Akaji. Akaji had designed two of the fountains at the Ala Moana Center; his *Fountain of the Gods* (designed to hide a chimney) was a large rectangular column in mosaic and bronze, adorned with four abstract sculptures representing the principal Hawaiian deities. Anderson, however, was only concerned with a fountain Akaji had recently installed in Honolulu's downtown business district, and he based his critique on a comparison between Akaji's new work and Tsutakawa's *Waiola Fountain*. Both were large fountain sculptures crafted from sheet bronze; but in Anderson's view, Akaji's *Na Manu Nu Oli* (Birds of Glad Tidings) was

¹⁹⁰ Lowndes, "The fountain of Tsutakawa."

¹⁹¹ Dillingham Corporation, *Art at Ala Moana: Shopping Center of the Pacific*.

¹⁹² Ibid.

much less successful. Its bird-inspired forms were too repetitious and its use of water overly complex, spouting from within the sculpture while numerous jets direct their spray towards it from all four sides. Overall, *Na Manu Nu Oli* lacked the force and ease of Tsutakawa's work.

Describing how the stacked rectangles of the *Waiola Fountain* united verticality and massiveness, Anderson described the effect as:

like a stele, except that it is very simply and boldly perforated by channeled air passages set in torsion variances. These maintain boldness. Cohesive water masses pour out centrally from sources above. Their flow is such that, when looked down upon, the shape of the 'Waiola' base is repeated, thus intensifying the sculpture's unity. When viewed from a low eye level, the water volumes show transition from solid cascades to the loose, diffused droplets which fall to a lyrical serenity at its base."¹⁹³

He concluded that Tsutakawa's "fountain-sculpture is far and away the best thing of its kind now to be found in Hawaii."

As well as appreciating Tsutakawa's emphasis on unity, Web Anderson conveyed an understanding of the holistic aspect of the artist's work: "Waiola," he wrote, "realizes strength in its simplicity, unfolding a multiplicity of awareness-sensations." He went on to acknowledge the importance of empathy, noting that the "human-implication" of the *Waiola Fountain* assists in "inviting visual participation."¹⁹⁴ Anderson recognized, furthermore, that Tsutakawa's *Waiola Fountain* "benefits from its combination of massive strength fused with great delicacy." The varied viewpoints, including those from the escalator, allow one to "approach with intimacy" and experience the "considerable sense of awe in Tsutakawa's bronze."¹⁹⁵ That he could appreciate this quality, but also find the *Waiola Fountain* encouraged contemplation, is yet another demonstration of Tsutakawa's skill in transcending the logic of binary oppositions. In many of his fountains Tsutakawa managed to balance these two apparently contrasting moods; in doing

¹⁹³ Anderson, "Isle Fountains Gush with Character," 30-31.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 30.

so he acknowledged what Jellicoe once described as the great dual attraction of water, still or moving.¹⁹⁶ "Waiola" means "living waters" in Hawaiian, so the title of Tsutakawa's fountain is very appropriate. This is especially true when one considers the underlying message in all of his fountain sculptures, their reminder that much of nature is cyclical and the water cycle is one of the most crucial of its cycles when it comes to sustaining life on this planet.

¹⁹⁶ Jellicoe and Jellicoe, *Water: The use of Water in Landscape Architecture*, 12.

Chapter Seven/Conclusion:
Tsutakawa and Halprin: Fountains by the Freeway

Students in art history courses are often asked to "compare and contrast" works by two different artists, and with good reason. Much can be learned from such a comparison, which often helps to bring out salient characteristics that might otherwise be overlooked or taken for granted. This concluding chapter centres on discussions of two Seattle projects in urban landscape design, both built around fountains created by West Coast artists or designers. The first is Naramore Park (1966-67), the site of George Tsutakawa's *Naramore Fountain* (fig. 58); the second is Freeway Park (1972-76; figs. 59 and 60), designed and executed by Lawrence Halprin & Associates. Their closeness in dates of construction and physical proximity – the two parks having merged with the construction of Freeway Park – makes these projects ideal as a basis for comparing the work of Tsutakawa and Halprin. My comparison is greatly enriched by Gervais Reed's conversation with Tsutakawa; in that interview the artist was more forthcoming than elsewhere with his opinions on Halprin's fountains and the work of some important contemporaries in the changing field of sculptural art. Major differences clearly exist between Tsutakawa's and Halprin's approaches to working with water, the most obvious being that Tsutakawa created fountain sculptures, whereas Halprin's landscape-oriented "fountains" are often referred to as waterfalls or water features. The two artists nonetheless shared a fundamental interest in and respect for natural processes. Both lived and worked on the West Coast, experiencing the behaviour of water in the mountains and beside the ocean, then translating the deep connection they felt into works of public art.

Before turning to the *Naramore Fountain* and Freeway Park, it is important that I introduce the "unique urban ethos" that emerged in Seattle in the early 1970s, an "urban-based

environmental consciousness" for which historian Jeffrey Craig Sanders has borrowed the term "Ecotopia."¹ A futuristic cult novel published in 1975, Ernest Callenbach's *Ecotopia* was purportedly based on diary entries and reports filed by an American journalist who set out in a mythical 1999 to investigate Ecotopia, a country supposedly formed in 1980 when Washington, Oregon, and Northern California seceded from the United States.² Rejecting the postwar culture of consumption and the pollution it had caused, the citizens of Ecotopia were searching for the kind of balance between nature and human development that has since come to be called "sustainability." Sanders argues that a search that was in some ways similar – but was an actual precursor to today's environmentalism – was taking place in Seattle in the 1970s. It was the changes that had occurred in the previous decade that made this possible, and here I will discuss these developments briefly, along with the major ideas behind Halprin's work. After that, I will examine the original *Naramore Fountain* project, completed in 1967, taking note of the major changes occurring in the art world in the late 1960s and early 70s, leading up to Reed's interview with Tsutakawa in 1976. Reed's interview drew some strongly stated opinions from the artist, not only with regard to Halprin's work but concerning the direction sculpture was taking at that time, as artists sought ways to move their work out of the gallery and to engage with audiences in new ways. I will then bring Tsutakawa and Halprin together by exploring Freeway Park, a project that included the existing Naramore Plaza and Tsutakawa's fountain. In comparing the two artists, my focus will be the concepts and the values behind Halprin's work, rather than detailed analysis of his designs. This is because my primary goal is to further illuminate Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures and review some important points in preparation for my conclusion.

¹ Sanders, "Inventing Ecotopia: Nature, Culture, and Urbanism in Seattle, 1960-2000."

² Ernest Callenbach, *Ecotopia: The Notebooks and Reports of William Weston* (Berkeley: Banyan Tree Books, 1975).

By the latter part of the 1960s many Americans sensed that their society was in disarray, an atmosphere that proved advantageous for Republican candidate Richard Nixon, elected President in November 1968. The number of U.S. troops in Vietnam had risen sharply during 1967; this, followed by the My Lai Massacre of March 1968 and, in 1970, the killing of four student protesters at Kent State University, Ohio, spurred further action against the war from a wider segment of the population. Though a modernist faith in progress – artistic, scientific, and economic – would continue to dominate North American culture until the 1970s at least, by the late 1960s the countercultural critique had taken hold in many places, and it was growing stronger. Malcolm Miles, in a recent essay, declares that "public art began in the United States in 1967, the year of the Summer of Love in San Francisco, when the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) instituted a fund for the commissioning of art in public places."³ The NEA's stated goal in establishing its new public art policy was "to give the public access to the best art of our time outside of museum walls."⁴ Some aspects of the countercultural climate, notably an interest in Zen Buddhism and other holistic philosophies on the part of avant-garde artists and Beat writers, had been important in the 1950s or even earlier and have been discussed in previous chapters. Others, such as the civil rights movement, environmentalism, and protests over the U.S. military's presence in Vietnam – which Tsutakawa was very much against – were less prominent or had yet to emerge in the 1950s.⁵

Of these varied causes, environmentalism was the one with the clearest links to Tsutakawa's body of work as a fountain designer; it was also closely aligned with the spirituality

³ Malcolm Miles, "Critical Spaces: Monuments and Changes," in *The Practice of Public Art*, ed. Cameron Cartiere and Shelly Willis (New York: Routledge, 2008), 66.

⁴ Cameron Cartiere, Rosemary Shirley, and Shelly Willis, "A Timeline for the History of Public Art: The United Kingdom and the United States of America, 1900-2005," in *The Practice of Public Art*, ed. Cameron Cartiere and Shelly Willis (New York: Routledge, 2008), 235.

⁵ Mayumi Tsutakawa, interview by the author, June 23, 2010.

that was so important to him as an artist. In the 1960s the environmental movement, as an organized entity, was still brand-new. A book that proved particularly important to setting it in motion, Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, was published in 1962, while the *Whole Earth Catalog* debuted in 1968.⁶ Ecological consciousness had made great strides by 1970; that year the Environmental Protection Agency was formed, and the first Earth Day celebrated. In 1971 Greenpeace Foundation was born in Vancouver, B.C.; the following year it became a registered society. In 1972 the United Nations held its first international conference on the environment, an event intended to bring public and governmental attention to the issue of human impact on the planet we share. The realities of American dependence on unsustainable sources of fuel hit home with the 1973-74 Oil Crisis.

Unlike the environmental movement, ecological consciousness had a long history; as Roger S. Gottlieb notes in the introduction to the *Oxford Handbook of Religion and Ecology* (2006), celebrating the spiritual value of the natural world was of central importance to Thoreau and many other early conservationists. To quote Gottlieb:

In the contemporary environmental movement even those groups totally unconnected to religiously identified organizations are often inspired by a political ideology, or at least by a moral sensibility, with powerful religious overtones. This sensibility has been present in much environmentalism since its origins in the mid-nineteenth century and has evolved into a comprehensive worldview which in many respects is often undeniably spiritual in nature.⁷

Like Tsutakawa, Lawrence Halprin recognized and valued a spiritual connection with nature and sought to convey this to others through his designs for urban landscapes. Halprin believed the

⁶ Carson was particularly concerned with the effects of pesticides on the environment and on the people who consume affected food products. Her book increased awareness of the need for healthy, sustainable, and well-regulated farming practices, but Findlay notes it was published after Century 21, so the fair's organizers were not able to respond to Carson's assertions. Findlay, *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture After 1940*, 254.

⁷ Roger S. Gottlieb, *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Ecology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 14.

tendency to "universalize the idea of nature by abstracting it" was common to all cultures and people. He explained that this process was "like making a container for an idea," much as religion makes a container for the concept of god.⁸

Lawrence Halprin: A Short Introduction

Raised in Brooklyn, New York, and educated at Cornell and the University of Wisconsin, Madison, where he earned a master's degree in horticulture, Halprin decided in 1940 to pursue a career as a landscape architect. From 1942 to 1944 he attended Harvard's Graduate School of Design, where he studied under Gropius, Marcel Breuer, and Tunnard, whose book *Gardens in the Modern Landscape* had been important in determining his future vocation.⁹ László Moholy-Nagy was, at that time, a lecturer at Harvard; he also had a major impact on Halprin.¹⁰ After serving as a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy, Halprin began work in Thomas Church's San Francisco office in 1945. With his wife, Anna, he purchased a small tract house in Mill Valley, California, which he remodelled to include a backyard garden. Later that year, *Sunset Magazine* published the garden, making it "Halprin's first demonstration of how design can enhance people's lives – in this case for families after the war."¹¹ Promoted to associate in Church's firm in 1947, Halprin also began to collaborate on relatively modest projects with other modernist architects in the Bay Area. In 1949 he opened his own landscape architecture firm in San Francisco, and in 1960 incorporated as Lawrence Halprin and Associates, "an interdisciplinary firm" that also included

⁸ Halprin, *The Ecology of Form*, n.p.

⁹ Halprin read Tunnard's book, which he credited with making him decided to become a landscape architect, in 1940. This was shortly after a visit to Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin Community in Spring Green, Wisconsin, another turning-point in Halprin's life. See Halprin, *Lawrence Halprin: Changing Places*, 115.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid., 116.

planners, architects, ecologists, designers, and photographers.¹² For the generation of landscape architects he inspired, two particularly significant aspects of Halprin's work were his collaborative approach to design and his emphasis on the experiences of those who would actually use the resulting spaces. He wrote that he was "committed to the idea that there is an inevitable feedback between an environment & its inhabitants - - - that one affects the other & in that sense ecological and social principles are the same." For Halprin, this interconnection was "the basic notion of ecosystem" and for that reason he had "worked at planning large urban regions but also, with equal interest & intensity", designed "micro-urban" sites such as plazas and streets.¹³

Beginning in the mid-1950s, Halprin spent the summer months hiking and sketching in California's High Sierra, becoming increasingly interested in studying "how form arises in nature" and finding ways to use design to interpret ecological dynamics.¹⁴ He later explained that, unlike many designers, he was not copying nature, but "copying nature's processes."¹⁵ Some of his designs, including those for waterfalls and plazas, were based on "utilizing hard geometric forms and surfaces, [and] planting in a way that creates an architectonic division of spaces" and completely excludes the natural environment. Sounds, smells and textures might be based on those found in nature, but shapes and colours were not.¹⁶ Beginning in 1962, Halprin came to national attention through major projects in San Francisco, Minneapolis, and Sonoma County, California, and as design commissioner for the 1962 World's Fair in Seattle. In addition to overseeing the design of the Century 21 fairgrounds, he worked with Thiry after the event to convert the 75-acre

¹² Ibid., 123.

¹³ Lawrence Halprin, *Notebooks, 1959-1971* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1972), 13-14.

¹⁴ Halprin, *Lawrence Halprin: Changing Places*, 120.

¹⁵ Lawrence Halprin, *The Ecology of Form* (London: Pidgeon Audiovisual, 1982), n.p.

¹⁶ Halprin, *Lawrence Halprin: Changing Places*, 123.

site into a permanent park and cultural centre, a major civic space now known as Seattle Center.¹⁷ In many ways Halprin's goals were in harmony with Tsutakawa's; but when one first encounters the *Naramore Fountain* and the Freeway Park waterfalls, important differences are apparent.

Tsutakawa's *Naramore Fountain* and late-1960s Modernism

The impetus for the Naramore Park project can be traced back to 1956, when Congress passed, and President Eisenhower signed, legislation to create the 41,000 mile Interstate Highway system. This legislation went a long way toward fulfilling the vision of progress presented a few years before the war at GM's Futurama, where the narration had speculated on the highways that Americans would travel in the year 1960. In 1967 Tsutakawa's newly installed *Naramore Fountain* was instrumental in securing a national highway prize for "excellence in highway beautification" for its patron, Seattle architect Floyd A. Naramore, and the project coordinators, the Central Association. Naramore had donated the funds to commission the fountain sculpture and establish a "pedestrian sanctuary," on a tiny triangle of land "cut off by the Freeway" where Sixth Avenue meets Seneca Street.¹⁸ The resulting plaza, still there today, was designed by landscape architect William G. Teuffel and architect Perry B. Johanson, another of the architects Tsutakawa first met as a student at UW.¹⁹ The land was owned by the Washington State Highway Department, who worked with the city to place a major public

¹⁷ Some accounts also credit Richard Haag in the development of Seattle Center's landscape plan.

¹⁸ "Central Association Wins U.S. Award for Fountain," *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, Tsutakawa, George, Accession Number 2447-4, Box #1, Folder #10; "Seattle's 'Mr. Fountain' And His New One," *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, June 10, 1967.

¹⁹ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

fountain on the site. The *Naramore Fountain* was removed in December 1975 and placed in storage until major construction on the Freeway Park project was complete, but now stands again in its original location.²⁰

Eighteen feet high and further raised on a large circular platform, the *Naramore Fountain* is one of Tsutakawa's tallest; however, its scale seems very human, even when one stands nearby. This effect is partly due to the organicism and lack of massiveness found in the sculpture itself, but is heightened by the fountain's rather oppressive surroundings, situated so close to Interstate-5. The fountain plaza's proximity to traffic is particularly noticeable during the winter months, when the surrounding trees are leafless, and photographs from 1967 suggest there was little or no vegetation around the fountain at that time. The *Naramore Fountain* is a slender, elegant column of stacked bronze shapes, made taller by an elongated crown. The repeated shapes that make up the column are abstract – even somewhat geometric – in appearance, yet at the same time they resemble flowers growing along a vertical stalk, with a round dish near its base and, below that, four broad, curved leaves. There is no pool; instead the water that cascades from above flows over a very large, slightly curved disc. Designed by Johanson, this platform is made of rock aggregate; small, colourful stones quarried from the nearby Cascade Range are embedded in its surface. According to Rupp, the effect was meant to be that of a clear, flowing mountain stream.²¹

Naramore Park and its fountain were officially opened June 13, 1967.²² That same month, *Artforum* published Michael Fried's now-classic essay "Art and Objecthood," part of a special issue devoted to American sculpture. It was an issue in which David Smith, who had died two

²⁰ Letter from David L. Towne, Superintendent, to Mr. Perry Johanson, Naramore Foundation Trustee, dated December 19, 1974. Seattle Municipal Archives.

²¹ Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 68.

²² "Central Association Wins U.S. Award for Fountain."

years before, was the only modernist sculptor featured, a fact that says a great deal about the directions then being taken, or avoided, by forward-thinking sculptors. In addition to Fried's article criticizing Minimal art, there were pieces written by Morris and Robert Smithson, which ensured that opposing views were well represented. The *Artforum* issue of June 1967 also included articles on Mark di Suvero, Claes Oldenberg, George Segal, and others. As Harrison notes in *Modernism*, in the late 1960s and 1970s "artistic modernity became widely associated with forms of art that, if they were 'visual' were most certainly not painting, and if they were 'three-dimensional,' were not easily recognized as sculpture."²³ Also, by this time, sculptors were becoming increasingly concerned with moving their work out of the confined spaces of art galleries and museums, into the urban or non-urban landscape in the form of public art, performance, environmental or land art and earthworks, to name a few.

Whatever directions were being taken by avant-garde artists in the United States in the closing years of the 1960s, it would be wrong to suggest that the country as a whole was undergoing a sudden, dramatic shift away from modernist ideals of progress or from so-called traditional middle-class American values. With the arms race and the Space Race in full swing, technological progress was not about to go out of fashion. The impact of postwar consumerism, including the growth in automobile ownership, has been discussed in preceding chapters. In an essay on the 1950s, as experienced in the Pacific Northwest, Carlos A. Schwantes has written, "with the flight to the suburbs came a renewed emphasis on religion in American life, though the connection between the two was by no means clear."²⁴

²³ Charles Harrison, "Modernism," in *Critical Terms for Art History*, ed. Robert S. Nelson and Richard Shiff (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 74-75.

²⁴ Schwantes, "Anxiety and Affluence: The 1950s in Oregon and Washington," 41.

The connection between religion and Cold War ideologies was much more obvious; Marx had identified Communism with atheism, so Americans were encouraged to embrace God. Though McCarthyism as such ended in 1954, anti-Communism continued to be a powerful force in American society.²⁵ Schwantes quotes Representative W. Sterling Cole of New York, Chairman of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, as stating in 1953: "We need more civil defense, more continental defense, and since we are a God-fearing people, I hope, more prayer."²⁶ It was an era in which the nation's affluence helped ease anxiety, and I have demonstrated how Tsutakawa's success as a fountain designer was facilitated by American affluence, with many of his early commissions coming from retail developments, for example. I would also argue that when he developed his first fountains at the end of the 1950s and in the early 1960s, the positive responses Tsutakawa received were not unrelated to the anxieties Americans were facing as a result of uncertain times and, to a lesser degree, the changes occurring in the cultural realm. Weighed against such developments as Minimalism, earthworks, conceptual or performance art – any one of which would have challenged the sensibilities of the average Seattle resident – Tsutakawa's abstract fountain sculptures were accessible, non-threatening, and aesthetically pleasing. To see this, one need only compare them to a work produced by Bruce Nauman in 1966, *Self-Portrait as a Fountain* (fig. 61). Tsutakawa found that as his work matured, he consciously distanced himself from the influence of other artists, especially, as he put it, "the so-called great masters' work – east or west." Eventually, he explained, the issue of artistic influence became largely a matter of "looking around for

²⁵ Belgrad, *The Culture of Spontaneity: Improvisation and the Arts in Postwar America*, 224.

²⁶ Quoted in Schwantes, "Anxiety and Affluence: The 1950s in Oregon and Washington," 35.

something not to do... I try to do something that the other people have not done, or don't do, or don't think about. And that is a very, very difficult thing, I think, for anyone."²⁷

Writing on conceptual art, Charles Green argues that its emergence in the late 1960s and early 1970s occurred in the context of "two related cultural crises." The first was the overwhelming loss of confidence in modernism and its institutions that arose after the failed student riots of 1968. Many artists, confused and disillusioned by their recognition that utopian aspirations would not be realized, felt torn between the period's dominant archetypes, described by Green as "the artist as a pseudo-bohemian professional" seeking a top New York gallery, and "the artist as a social critic and committed conscience." Whether or not they were prepared to wholly embrace "the counterculture" and work "outside the system," they often shared a profound desire to move away from conventional forms of art and explore the possibilities for different relationships between artists and audiences. The optimism suggested by this desire was, however, in danger of being overshadowed by what Green describes as "a crisis of confidence in the transformative power of the new art itself."²⁸

According to Green, the second crisis was felt acutely by conceptual artists in the early 1970s, but it also touched those who were working in other fields. One of the effects Green mentions is the intriguing coincidence with which, around 1969-71, anti-modernist sentiment emerged internationally and "almost simultaneously at both center and the periphery." Here Seattle becomes important; Green chooses as his North American example an early exhibition of conceptual art, which opened at the Seattle Art Museum in 1969.²⁹ Organized by Lucy Lippard,

²⁷ Quoted in Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 80.

²⁸ Charles Green, *The Third Hand: Collaboration in Art from Conceptualism to Postmodernism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 25-26.

²⁹ A review in the November, 1969 issue of *Artforum* described the show as "a bellwether" and predicted that "555,087" would be remembered "generically as the first sizable (*i.e.* public

the show 555,087 took its name from the population of Seattle in 1960.³⁰ With the earliest major shows of Conceptual Art taking place in New York and London in 1969-70, the fact that 555,087 opened in Seattle, followed by Vancouver, B.C., suggests that art institutions in the Pacific Northwest could, by this time, occasionally take leading roles despite their distance from East Coast art centres.³¹ Regardless of where the "new art" was produced or exhibited, much of it questioned modernism by rejecting aestheticism.

Discussing contemporary fountains with Reed not long before Freeway Park opened, once again making the *Naramore Fountain* available for public enjoyment, Tsutakawa mentioned several of Halprin's fountains as examples of what he found lacking in aesthetic appeal.³² As we have seen, while Tsutakawa regarded water as an integral part of their form, his fountains are certainly understandable as autonomous abstract sculptures. Halprin's work, on the other hand, has been described as "a bridge between the modernist and environmental design movements."³³ Not surprisingly, Tsutakawa's views on Halprin's work also reveal much about his own. He had harsh words for the *Ira Keller Fountain* (1970), one of two large fountains designed by Halprin in Portland, Oregon.³⁴ Tsutakawa told Reed, "to me that's a waterscape; it's

institution) exhibition of 'concept art'", though in fact it was "an amalgam of non-chromatic work running a gamut from late, funky Minimal to a point at which art is replaced, literally, by literature." Peter Plaget, "557,087," *Artforum* 8 (November 1969), 64.

³⁰ Green, *The Third Hand: Collaboration in Art from Conceptualism to Postmodernism*, 25-26.

³¹ The title used in Vancouver was 955,000, the then-current population of the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD), incorporated in 1967. For the Vancouver show three artists were added, 29 of the original projects (by about 69 artists) were reworked, and several contributing artists had projects installed in various urban locations. Plaget, "557,087," 64; "Chronology," *Vancouver Art and Artists*, 332. According to census data, the population of the GVRD passed the one million mark in 1970, while Seattle's population in 1970 was 5% lower than in 1960.

³² Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 23.

³³ Boultis and Sullivan, *Illustrated History of Landscape Design*, 217.

³⁴ *The Ira Keller Civic Theater Forecourt Fountain*, originally called the *Forecourt Fountain*, was designed by Halprin and his associate, Angela Danadjieva, and completed in 1970.

not a water sculpture. It's like a landscape or the Bonneville Dam. It's an expression of great power and affluence." On the other hand, Tsutakawa praised the same fountain for providing a place for children to swim, saying, "that part is for the people, really for the people. I think it's good. But I don't think it's a work of art."³⁵ After further considering the issue of art "for the people," Tsutakawa pointed out that while it was very good to hold art festivals and have "all the housewives making pottery once a week," in reality these democratic gestures did nothing to make art accessible to poor people. The fact that leading art magazines failed to include articles on public art only reinforced an overall aura of elitism.³⁶

Tsutakawa also found fault with Halprin's *Drumheller Fountain* (1961), a far more traditional fountain that occupies a scenic spot on the University of Washington campus. Halprin's jet fountain was a late addition, the vast circular pool having been built as a centrepiece of the Olmsted Brothers' landscape plan for the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition in 1909. At that time the pool had a small fountain and was called "Geyser Basin," but by the time Regent Joseph Drumheller donated Halprin's fountain to the university to commemorate its centennial, it had become known as "Frosh Pond."³⁷ Though Tsutakawa directed his criticism at Halprin's excessive use of energy and water – and large fountains do consume considerable amounts of both – he was certainly aware that the water, at least, was recirculated. Tsutakawa's comments were primarily based on aesthetic preferences, rather than environmental concerns. In his view, the *Drumheller Fountain* and a number of others designed by Halprin confused spectacle – which, according to Tsutakawa, simply produces "excitement" – with a deeper aesthetic

³⁵ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 23.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 25.

³⁷ Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 187; University of Washington, Waymarking Website, http://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WM1633_Drumheller_Fountain_University_of_Washington_Seattle_WA

experience.³⁸ It could be argued that a jet fountain with the Cascade Range behind it would have to be quite spectacular to avoid being overlooked entirely. Almost certainly this was a commission Tsutakawa wished he could have completed himself – a major fountain at the university where he had studied and was by then teaching. Perhaps more important, a site backed by Mount Rainier's snowy peak would have been ideal for a fountain sculpture inspired by the natural beauty of the Pacific Northwest, not to mention the ceaseless world-wide rhythms of the Earth's water cycle.

In his interview with Reed, Tsutakawa singled out Halprin as the focus of his complaints about the current state of fountain design. But, when the conversation shifted briefly to sculpture, several well-known contemporary artists came under fire. Halprin, a landscape architect, is considered a leading representative of modernism; however, the visual artists that Tsutakawa named fall into the transitional period when modernism overlapped with early postmodernism – the era of Pop Art, Neo-Dada, and Minimalism, among others. "Environmental art," installation art, and earthworks are some of the terms used for new approaches to sculpture, and Tsutakawa found some of the works they refer to troubling. He stated flatly, for instance, that he refused to accept the curtains hung by Christo as art. In Tsutakawa's view, Christo's work was, like Claes Oldenberg's Pop-based urban sculpture, the kind of large-scale public art that succeeded only because the artists' dreams and concepts were "very much in line with the super corporation concepts, and the millionaires support them."³⁹ Tsutakawa had his own bottom line; while it might be "funky," "shocking," or "erotic," in his view much contemporary art could not be of lasting value because, in his words, "it's materialistic; it's not truly spiritual."⁴⁰

³⁸ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 23.

³⁹ Ibid., 23.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 25.

In his conversation with Reed, Tsutakawa expressed fascination with the same sorts of environmental processes Halprin studied and drew inspiration from – land erosion, the action of waves upon rocks, and the growth of trees. For Tsutakawa, however, such natural forces were "expressed much more eloquently" in Asian art than in the art of the West. This, he said, was one of the reasons he found himself turning increasingly toward "Oriental sources."⁴¹ He was very dismissive of modern earthworks; though he admired such ancient predecessors as Stonehenge, Tsutakawa had no time for a "guy digging holes on the beach, canals."⁴² Reed's interview was published in the spring of 1976, so Tsutakawa's rather impatient comments regarding earthworks may have been inspired by Michael Heizer. After gaining widespread recognition for his earthworks, Heizer caused an uproar in Seattle with a public sculpture he built in 1976. A composition of large, heavy stone slabs, it was titled *Adjacent, Against, Upon*, and its structure was reminiscent of some of Serra's works in sheet metal. Seattle had endured a public art controversy in 1975 over Noguchi's *Landscape in Time*, a work consisting of several large uncut stones, imported from Japan after minimal carving and placed on a plaza in the city's central business district. Unsympathetic Seattle art critics had been quick to blame Noguchi's sculpture on the recently launched "Pet Rock" fad in mass culture marketing, and they did the same with Heizer's the following year.⁴³ A few years later, however, Halprin's installation at Freeway Park of a deep canyon constructed from concrete blocks did not provoke an outcry, perhaps in part because it was designed around a waterfall.

⁴¹ Ibid., 31.

⁴² Ibid., 23.

⁴³ "Pet Rocks" were invented by a California advertising executive in the mid-1970s. They were marketed as ideal house pets, requiring minimal care and no feeding, and were packaged in cardboard cartons equipped with air holes and beds of straw. Harriet F. Senie, "Baboons, Pet Rocks, and Bomb Threats: Public Art and Public Perception" in *Critical Issues in Public Art: Content, Context, and Controversy*, ed. Harriet F. Senie and Sally Webster (New York: HarperCollins, 1992), 240.

Seattle's Freeway Park

The *Naramore Fountain* and Naramore Park were originally created in 1967 with the goal of softening a small part of the environment in the immediate vicinity of the Interstate-5 Freeway. This vision was greatly enlarged in the early 1970s when Seattle's Freeway Park was built above Interstate-5, stretching north from the Naramore Plaza and incorporating Tsutakawa's *Naramore Fountain*. Begun in 1972 as a bicentennial project and completed in 1976, the 5.5-acre Freeway Park was the first to be built over a highway. Peck has described it as being like a "lid" of greenery and pedestrian space.⁴⁴ Freeway Park came about because Seattle residents were unhappy that the new freeway corridor had "carved a deep chasm through prime urban space," effectively slicing their city in half.⁴⁵ Many homes were demolished, including the one that housed the Dusanne Gallery.⁴⁶ Having published the book *Freeways* in 1966, Halprin was asked to contribute his ideas. According to Peck, as far back as the early 1960s Allied Arts had joined individual planners and architects to begin the process of fighting downtown business interests that opposed the construction of a park, originally planned for a site adjoining the freeway.⁴⁷ The project was realized only because Halprin, seeking a means of reconnecting the community of First Hill to the central business district, submitted a highly innovative proposal and convinced the Seattle Park Commission to take advantage of the air rights over the Interstate.

⁴⁴ Peck, "Arts Activists and Seattle's Cultural Expansion, 1954-65," 93.

⁴⁵ Halprin, *Lawrence Halprin: Changing Places*, 137.

⁴⁶ According to Johns, Dusanne continued to show new American and European art, including work by Pacific Northwest artists, even after the demolition of her home/gallery in 1959. Johns, "Fields of Vision in Pictures and Objects," 70.

⁴⁷ Peck, "Arts Activists and Seattle's Cultural Expansion, 1954-65," 93; Halprin, *Lawrence Halprin: Changing Places*, 137.

When completed, Freeway Park mended a portion of the physical rupture between two distinct urban neighbourhoods with dramatically different elevations, Seattle's downtown being built on a steep incline that rises from Elliott Bay to Sixth Street. Halprin worked with the lead designer, Angela Danadjieva, to design the three irregular, linked plazas as an abstract representation of Seattle's undulating topography.⁴⁸ In some areas of the park visitors descended stairs in order to move through "gorges." Halprin explained that these were not copied from the native landscape of the Olympic Peninsula but were meant to capture its essence, including the sound of waterfalls and the smell of plants, soil, and trees.⁴⁹

Art critic Douglas Davis has written that "Freeway Park, piled high with massive concrete blocks, resembles a Parthenon of classical forms, each one smoothed and domesticated, finished off as a square or rectangle. Halprin's celebrated asymmetry is encircled by symmetry, or by memory" (fig. 59).⁵⁰ The angularity Davis mentions, combined with Halprin's extensive use of grey concrete, gives some parts of Freeway Park a look best described as Brutalist, creating a very different atmosphere from what is found at Naramore Plaza. Freeway Park's three main fountains are also entirely unlike Tsutakawa's *Naramore Fountain*. Halprin's trio of waterfalls was designed to mask the sound of passing traffic; together they recirculate a total of 27,000 gallons of water per minute (fig. 60).⁵¹ The website of the Cultural Landscape Foundation states that the *Naramore Fountain* and its plaza were "integrated" into the larger design of Freeway Park, but while this may be true from the point of view of city officials, due to location

⁴⁸ The two had previously collaborated on Portland, Oregon's Auditorium Forecourt; the design of its *Ira Keller Fountain* was abstracted from a mountain waterfall.

⁴⁹ Halprin, *The Ecology of Form*, n.p.

⁵⁰ Douglas Davis, "The Golden Voyage," in *Lawrence Halprin: Changing Places* (San Francisco: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1986), 66.

⁵¹ Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 68.

and the *Naramore Fountain's* very different aesthetic, the two remain quite separate when experienced on foot or viewed from a passing car.

Important similarities do exist in the fountain designs of Tsutakawa and Halprin's water features, however. While their works have little in common stylistically, the two artists are closely connected by their attitudes towards nature and the importance each placed on community and collaboration. Both Halprin and Tsutakawa felt a spiritual connection to nature, though their works made no overt references to religion, except perhaps through their location in cases where a commission was for a religious building or site. According to Mayumi Tsutakawa, her father was "pretty atheist,"⁵² but a deep spirituality can, as we know, exist apart from religion. In "The Spiritual Dimension of Nature Writing" David Landis Barnhill quotes Edward Abbey, author of *Desert Solitaire* (1968), who asked in that book: "Why confuse the issue by dragging in a superfluous entity?" Abbey coined his own term for nature-centred spirituality, saying, "I am not an atheist, but an earthiest. Be true to the earth."⁵³ As Morris Graves once said: "Works of art can strive to clarify the spirit."⁵⁴ This should not be restricted to the spirit of the artist; both Tsutakawa and Halprin believed (as, I would argue, did the more inwardly focused Graves), that the spirit of the viewer or participant should also benefit. Tsutakawa based all his fountain sculptures on nature's cycles, especially the earth's water cycle, and Halprin based such works as the *Lovejoy Fountain* and *Ira C. Keller Fountain* on ecological processes, which of course included natural cycles.

⁵² Mayumi Tsutakawa, interview by the author, June 23, 2010.

⁵³ Quoted in Barnhill, "The Spiritual Dimension of Nature Writing," 420.

⁵⁴ Quoted in Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 3.

Halprin believed, however, that the role of the landscape designer was to "interpret nature's mode of operations, *not* her results."⁵⁵ Tsutakawa did both; in producing abstractions of natural cycles, he often incorporated forms derived from flowers, leaves, and trees. Tsutakawa also found much of his inspiration in art and architecture: works by favourite European sculptors, Japanese emblems, pagodas, and totem poles, among other things. According to Symmes, Halprin depended on his knowledge of nature and, more than that, on "an abstracting of natural conditions," rather than being based on "any ideas borrowed, for example, from art and architecture."⁵⁶ While Halprin was oriented toward making places, Tsutakawa, while concerned with place-making, was much more focused on the art object. He would, nonetheless, have found much to agree with in Halprin's view of modernism, stated in 1988:

To be properly understood, Modernism is not just a matter of cubist space but of a whole appreciation of environmental design as a holistic approach to the matter of making spaces for people to live.... Modernism, as I define it and practice it, *includes* and is based on the vital archetypal needs of human beings as individuals as well as social groups."⁵⁷

Both artists saw nature and the human body as interconnected, Tsutakawa through the water cycle and its relation to the composition of our bodies, and more generally in accordance with the holistic philosophies of Japan and China. For Halprin, the connection lay in the knowledge that, as he explained it, the beautiful natural places and humans come from the same place, share "the same origins, same cell structure." The biology or morphology of these places is joined to

⁵⁵ Quoted in Symmes, *Fountains: Splash and Spectacle*, 173.

⁵⁶ Symmes, *Fountains: Splash and Spectacle*, 169.

⁵⁷ Original italics. Quoted in Peter Walker and Melanie Simo, *Invisible Gardens: The Search for Modernism in the American Landscape*, (Cambridge, MA., MIT Press, 1994), 9.

our own. That is why "we feel at home" in such places. For the same reason, Halprin wanted to transfer people's sense of being connected with their native landscapes into their daily lives.⁵⁸

Halprin placed great importance on observations made directly from nature and made countless sketches of moving water, in rivers, mountain streams, and along coastal shores. His drawing process was "both reactive and analytical," with some drawings expressing his aesthetic appreciation of the locale and others carefully analyzing the movement of the water, as well as its sound in some cases.⁵⁹ The latter type is exemplified by Halprin's *Study of a California Mountain Stream*, particularly when placed next to *Sketch for Lovejoy Fountain, Portland, Oregon* (fig. 62). Halprin's annotated study from nature, done in pen ink with wash used in some areas, is very different from the kinds of sketches Tsutakawa made, whether in *sumi*, pastel, pen, or watercolour (fig. 63). Like Halprin, Tsutakawa produced a great many sketches of landscapes, made when he was out hiking, fishing, camping with his family, or taking a break in the course of a scenic drive. As stated in Chapter One, Tsutakawa worked out the water effects in his fountains primarily by "playing around" with a faucet or garden hose. Still as he once told an interviewer, his concern was with "the natural flow of water," not "tricky tricks."⁶⁰ I would argue that Tsutakawa's approach was, in this sense, not so far removed from that of Halprin.

⁵⁸ Halprin, *The Ecology of Form*, n.p. Not everyone agreed with this approach; for example, Symmes includes a quote from landscape architect Dan Kiley, a well-known contemporary of Halprin. Kiley said: "Larry's always great for waterfalls. I disagree with his thinking about nature, though, about the way he wants to take nature and recreate a man's scene out of it. I think that's wrong. As I told you, we are nature." *Fountains: Splash and Spectacle*, 198, n. 51. It is possible Kiley was unaware of Halprin's belief regarding the shared cell structure of humans and nature.

⁵⁹ Halprin, *Lawrence Halprin: Changing Places*, 12.

⁶⁰ KCTS Seattle, *1st Annual Bumbershoot Golden Umbrella Award, George Tsutakawa*.

As noted above, Halprin encouraged collaboration; he was "one of the first to advocate the participation of citizens in the urban design process."⁶¹ In addition to his colleagues at Lawrence Halprin and Associates, clients, and many others, Halprin collaborated frequently with his wife, Anna Halprin, a dancer and choreographer who staged avant-garde performances that made her a leading figure in dance during the 1960s. Beginning in 1949 they co-published *Impulse* dance magazine, and they also worked together on public performances, some of which took place around Halprin's fountains. Notes for one such performance can be seen on Halprin's sketch for the *Lovejoy Fountain*. In his landscape designs, Halprin was increasingly concerned with "choreographing" the movement of pedestrians through urban space, and to some extent Tsutakawa shared this interest. He was certainly conscious of how his fountains would be used and designed some elements of the surrounding spaces himself. According to son Gerard, his former assistant, Tsutakawa was always responsible for determining the size, shape, and general appearance of pools, and sometimes the materials of construction.⁶² As far as I know, Tsutakawa never involved himself in anything like the Halprins' outdoor dance performances, though his own wife was skilled in traditional Japanese music and dance, while he had devoted some time to studying classical music and opera during his years as a UW undergraduate.⁶³

For more than a quarter century Jack Uchida collaborated with Tsutakawa on his fountain projects, doing all the hydraulics and structural engineering. Such technical expertise is always integral to the design of fountains, but usually the engineer's contribution goes unacknowledged; he remains behind the scenes. Tsutakawa was highly unusual in including Uchida's name along

⁶¹ Boult and Sullivan, *Illustrated History of Landscape Design*, 217.

⁶² Gerard Tsutakawa, interview by the author, June 23, 2010.

⁶³ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 5.

with his own on many of his major fountain projects.⁶⁴ A far more common arrangement was one in which a modern artist collaborated over a long period with a single highly skilled technician or craftsperson, without whom the resulting works of art could not have been produced, and yet maintained sole credit.⁶⁵ As for public input, Tsutakawa did not consult with his potential audiences during the design process, but he did give a great deal of thought to their needs and preferences. Even as he approached his 80th birthday, Tsutakawa remained adamant about his primary role as an artist: "I still say, if you're making a sculpture for the public places, you are making it for all the people to look at. If you don't want people to look at it, if they don't like it, you have no business putting a piece of sculpture out in the public."⁶⁶ By then Tsutakawa had no doubt observed with interest such well-publicized American public art controversies as those that greeted Eero Saarinen's *Gateway Arch* (1966) in St. Louis, Missouri, Richard Serra's *Tilted Arc* (1981) in New York City, and Maya Lin's Vietnam Veterans Memorial (1982) in Washington, D.C., as well as the local storms over Noguchi and Heizer, mentioned above.

Symmes writes that Halprin was "gripped with the importance of movement in space, and the revelation of form and space solely through movement, that is to say, over time."⁶⁷ His work with Anna Halprin led him to develop "motation," means of "designating and designing for movement."⁶⁸ These later suggested the idea of "scoring," a technique for mapping

⁶⁴ Uchida's name is sometimes included with Tsutakawa's on a fountain's dedication plaque, for example at the Ala Moana Center in Honolulu, Hawaii. In other cases, the initials of both Tsutakawa and Uchida appear on the base of the fountain itself. The initials of Tsutakawa's assistant, Paul Billingsley, are also included on one or more of the early fountains. A second engineer, probably Yoshio Hayashi, assisted Tsutakawa and Uchida on the *Fountain of Wisdom* project. Mayumi Tsutakawa, email message to the author, August 12, 2010.

⁶⁵ For examples see Green, *The Third Hand: Collaboration in Art from Conceptualism to Postmodernism*, xiv.

⁶⁶ Quoted in Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 128.

⁶⁷ Symmes, *Fountains: Splash and Spectacle*, 170.

⁶⁸ Halprin, *Notebooks*, 10.

environmental patterns: natural, social, and cultural. Halprin came to believe a successful design could not be developed without first making a "holistic site analysis." The goal was to bring into the city the kind of "experience and pleasure he gained by fully engaging with water in the mountains." Halprin explained in an interview of 1961 that his interest was in events, as opposed to objects, the kind of events that "have no necessary or recognizable form but which generate qualities of experience."⁶⁹ Tsutakawa also valued experience, particularly aesthetic experience, but while he appreciated music and dance, when it came to visual art he remained attached to the aesthetic object. The importance of moving water in Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures makes it possible to see in them a tenuous link to the postwar shift toward event-based art, but the sculptural object remained essential. Tsutakawa told Reed he saw little point in Happenings and other ephemeral art forms. The artist remarked: "I like good times too; I like to drink *sake* and talk. But how far do we go?"⁷⁰ When it came to art, Tsutakawa prioritized aesthetic values over politics, and to some extent above social concerns, though it could be argued that he regarded aesthetic experience as a social need. It is true he was deeply committed to making his fountain sculptures serve the needs of society, but he never worked exclusively in the public art field.

As noted above, Tsutakawa's use of water makes it possible to connect his fountain sculptures to the event- or performance-based art that came to prominence during the postwar period. Tobey was, by 1960 describing the act of painting as a kind of performance, one that "had to be achieved all at once or not at all – the very opposite of building up as I had previously done."⁷¹ This sense of capturing a fleeting moment was, to a great extent, what attracted Tobey, Tsutakawa, and others to *sumi* painting, a medium that demanded speed and spontaneity. The

⁶⁹ Quoted in Symmes, *Fountains: Splash and Spectacle*, 169.

⁷⁰ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 23.

⁷¹ Quoted in Ament, *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art*, 41.

calligraphic lines created by the *sumi* brush were echoed in the sculpted forms Tsutakawa created with water, but spontaneity was, in both cases, a quality based in flowing movement. There was little or no trace of the "plastic automatism" then being explored by the Abstract Expressionist painters, among others. This distances Tsutakawa and Tobey from the "culture of spontaneity" analyzed by Daniel Belgrad in his book of the same name.⁷² The development and construction of a fountain sculpture was anything but spontaneous. Months of planning, drawing, model-making, testing, and consultation with clients was followed by a lengthy fabrication process. Tsutakawa told Reed: "I think of the pounding, the meticulous shaping, the time it takes to do a fountain – five days to do a section. And trying at the same time to capture something of the essence of the tree, or land, or sky, or mountains, or water."⁷³

An unusual claim made by Jellicoe in 1966 is relevant here, a claim that might seem nonsensical if it came from anyone other than a landscape architect: "as a substance, water is clearly more suited than paint to create a work of art, but its weakness lies in the very quality of movement which we so much enjoy.... that extra dimension for which the modern artist is in continuous search."⁷⁴ Despite the sense of movement a sculptor's skill can impart, in reality the metal components of Tsutakawa's fountains are fixed, static, and permanent. Much of the attraction found in his fountains arises from the contrast created as these forms are brought to life by the flowing liquid and by its sculpted forms, which almost appear constant though their existence depends on the rapid movement.

⁷² Automatism was not entirely compatible with *sumi*, and not at all connected to fountain sculpture. According to Belgrad, Tobey's earlier paintings in oil or tempera also "cannot be counted within the cultural phenomenon of 'plastic automatism'.... As Tobey's term "white writing" suggests, the skeins of lines that compose his paintings were primarily symbolic rather than indexical." Belgrad, *The Culture of Spontaneity: Improvisation and the Arts in Postwar America*, 287, n. 47.

⁷³ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 36.

⁷⁴ Jellicoe, *Studies in Landscape Design*, Vol II, 17.

Though he told Reed in their interview that he did not see his fountain sculptures as directly related to works by the Chinese and Japanese masters, Tsutakawa was well aware of an indirect influence. He acknowledged a debt to the Haiku poets and painters, in particular. Tsutakawa explained that he always asked himself how he might emulate the simplicity and directness of the "piercing, touching statement about life and the universe" he so admired in Haiku poetry: "If you could only make a painting or sculpture with a minimum or economy of means and still say so much!"⁷⁵ The fountain Tsutakawa designed for Expo '74 in Spokane Washington, like his earlier work for the Somerset Inn (fig. 11) and a few fountains developed for Japanese sites in the 1980s, shows him striving to capture this kind of simple poetry in sculptural form. In these works, Tsutakawa abandoned the stacks of varied elements found in the majority of his fountains, in favour of a reiterative structure that emphasized the flat, unified surfaces of sheet metal cut-outs (fig. 8). An untitled sculpture completed in 1978 for Seattle's International District (fig. 64) has forms very similar to those found in the *Expo '74 Fountain*. When the sculpture was installed, Tsutakawa was quoted as saying that its shape had no symbolism, although he thought it "very Oriental." He had, however, incorporated some ancient Chinese characters, including "heaven" and "man," though Tsutakawa stated that only scholars would be able to read them. The artist said he had intended to celebrate all of the different ethnicities living together in the area, where his own family's import business had been located, and where he spent much time as a youngster. Such a theme would also have been very appropriate for a world's fair fountain, as would the title Tsutakawa considered for the International District sculpture: "Unity and Harmony."⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Reed, "George Tsutakawa: A Conversation on Life and Fountains," 36.

⁷⁶ Deloris Tarzan, "Sculpture Has Special Meaning For Its Creator," *Seattle Times*, November 5, 1978. In the end, the International District sculpture was not given a formal title.

According to Rupp, when Interstate-5 was constructed in the 1960s, "the environmental planning we know today was not a predominant influence. Thus, suggestions that the freeway be covered over to create usable space were quickly dismissed."⁷⁷ By the end of the decade, Seattle's Forward Thrust bond issue had been passed; as mentioned above, it included plans for a narrow park alongside the freeway. The change in social values is noticeable when one examines the file on the Freeway Park project in Seattle's Municipal Archives; the term "environmental planning" begins to appear frequently around 1970. Still, it was Halprin's ingenuity and commitment to environmentally conscious design that made Freeway Park a reality, and highly influential in raising awareness of the possibilities that exist within seemingly unusable urban spaces. With his fountain sculptures, Tsutakawa was, like Halprin, concerned with bringing an aspect of nature – the transformative power of the water cycle – into the city for people's spiritual nourishment and general enjoyment. The two artists shared a similar respect for both nature and city, something Halprin referred to directly in *Ecology and Form*. He stated there that one of his primary goals was to promote understanding of what the natural landscape brings to people and transfer some of this understanding "into settlements," but to do so without demeaning either the natural or the urban.⁷⁸

Conclusion

Much of this dissertation has been concerned with the balancing or integration of perceived opposites, particularly traditional binary pairs, such as nature/culture, intuition/reason, spiritual/material, that have long served to support the construction of East and West as opposed conceptual categories. Fluidity, like balance, has been a recurrent theme, and not simply because

⁷⁷ Rupp, *Art in Seattle's Public Places*, 68.

⁷⁸ Halprin, *The Ecology of Form*, n.p.

my study is devoted to fountains. In an essay written for a 1982 Tokyo exhibition, Sumio Kuwabara explained:

The key idea lying behind Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures is as follows. Water, he observes, makes up a large part of our bodies, and like the tides and currents it is in perpetual flow. Just as the wind moves the clouds and rustles the leaves, so too is the water cycle a part of the rhythmic cycle of nature as a whole. Vapor rises from the oceans and land masses to return again as mist and rain. Like water, he says, human life appears only finally to disappear again, so in water's perpetual motion and change we have the drama of human mutability.⁷⁹

Japanese artists are taught to be concerned with transmitting "in symbols or shapes something which contains a spark of that eternal stream of life or consciousness."⁸⁰ In *sumi* painting, a fluid brushstroke is highly desirable – what Tobey referred to as "the living line," containing *ch'i* or spirit.⁸¹ Fluidity, in the sense of continual change, is also a fundamental part of ecologically-based spirituality. The basis for adopting a holistic perspective and connecting spirituality with nature's transformative cycles – as Japanese artists often do – is clearly articulated in an essay written by Mike Carr for *Cascadia: The Elusive Utopia, Discovering the Spirit of the Pacific Northwest*. According to Carr, a bioregional ecologist:

In an Earth-centered paradigm, separateness is an illusion. Our entire existence in nature is a process of metabolic exchanges – we literally live in our places and bioregions, not on them. Bioregionalists recognize that we are thoroughly interdependent with the other species and life systems of our planetary biosphere. Moreover, as human animals we have the capacity and the power to perceive, to experience directly something of this fluid interdependent dimension of ecological relations. It is a profoundly sacred

⁷⁹ Sumio Kuwabara, "George Tsutakawa's Fountain Sculpture," in *Fountain Sculptures by George Tsutakawa*, Setagaya Sports Park, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo, April 3, 1982.

⁸⁰ Quoted in Wechsler, "From Asian Traditions to Modern Expressions: Abstract Art by Asian Americans, 1945-1970," 105.

⁸¹ Quoted in Hawkins, "Contemporary Art and the Orient," 124.

ecological experience... to experience directly this 'metapattern which connects,' as Gregory Bateson has described it.⁸²

One of the challenges of writing a dissertation based on what is, to a large extent, interdisciplinary research is the weaving together of numerous thematic threads. In this conclusion, it seems wise to focus on ensuring that the reasoning behind the combination of certain major elements has been made clear, ideally while reinforcing their significance. For the first of these tasks, I have found two works from outside the fields of art history, art, and architecture especially helpful; one is Todd's anthology *Cascadia*. I will now turn to the second, which informs some of the preceding chapters but has been particularly important in the process of thinking through and writing this conclusion.

In "Inventing Ecotopia: Nature, Culture, and Urbanism in Seattle, 1960-2000," Jeffrey Craig Sanders explores the urban origins of Seattle's environmental consciousness in the actions of groups and individuals who "sought to break down the dichotomy between the city and nature and who sought, instead, to integrate them, to make urbanity include an ecological component."⁸³ The central claim of "Inventing Ecotopia" is that "on multiple scales, in their homes and yards, in their neighborhoods, and in their parks... Seattleites began to explore notions of ecology in ways that made the idea legible."⁸⁴ According to Sanders, in 1970 a "popular ecological turn" took place, but attitudes toward nature and its place in Seattle's plans for urban development and redevelopment had been changing gradually over the course of the previous decade, particularly

⁸² Carr, Mike. "Geography, Spirituality and Social Change in Cascadia: A Bioregional Perspective," in *Cascadia, The Elusive Utopia: Exploring the Spirit of the Pacific Northwest*, ed. Douglas Todd, 132-33.

⁸³ Sanders, "Inventing Ecotopia: Nature, Culture, and Urbanism in Seattle, 1960-2000," x.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 10-11. Schwantes mentions an earlier example of emerging concern with environmental degradation in King County, where in 1958 voters chose to spend \$80 million to fund a metropolitan sewer project that would reduce pollution caused by population growth along Lake Washington. Schwantes, "Anxiety and Affluence: The 1950s in Oregon and Washington," 45.

in the mid- to late 1960s.⁸⁵ Sanders does not discuss public sculpture, but clearly the fountains Tsutakawa constructed and installed throughout Seattle were part of the built environment. I have argued that, as such, they were part of the process of rendering ecological concepts "legible." Utopian efforts were deeply rooted in the Pacific Northwest region, which Sanders, Findlay, and Todd all point out attracted "reformers and radicals of various stripes" during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They had moved to the area to establish ideal communities based on socialist, free love, or communalist visions, and these remained symbolic of "alternative possibilities."⁸⁶ While some countercultural groups rejected city living and development outright, the new urban idealists engaged in experiments – decentralized and often seemingly unrelated – that would eventually coalesce into what is now referred to as urban "sustainability."⁸⁷ Between 1970 and the start of the present millennium, Seattle became "one of the most important centres of this dispersed urban environmental movement."⁸⁸

I have argued that Tsutakawa's approach to fountain design was guided by a spirituality that was closely linked to his regard for nature, but he was not in any sense an artist-activist. Sanders summarizes the sort of politics that have come to be associated with Seattle's identity as "the capital of Ecotopia" in terms that also capture the environmentalist spirit that supported Tsutakawa's career as a leading American designer of large public fountains:

Many of these activists believed that urban life should be built on an explicit balance between city and nature. They imagined a city – *though not always intentionally* – in which buttoned-down engineers and blue-collar workers would give way to new visions of leisure and consumption, goretex® and hiking boots. And their perception and

⁸⁵ Ibid., 48.

⁸⁶ Findlay, quoted in *ibid.*, 3; Todd, *Cascadia, The Elusive Utopia: Exploring the Spirit of the Pacific Northwest*, 16-17.

⁸⁷ Sanders, "Inventing Ecotopia: Nature, Culture, and Urbanism in Seattle, 1960-2000," 7.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 2.

prescription for the city drove them to find links between their social lives, their built environment, and the natural world.⁸⁹ (*Italics added.*)

Tsutakawa maintained a politically moderate approach to environmentalism, one capable of accommodating the economic and cultural ideals of, among others, Allied Arts of Seattle and his civic and corporate patrons. This particular variety of environmentalism is not without its contradictions; Carlos Schwantes observes that "even before the new highways were built, Northwesterners used their automobiles to maintain the region's long standing love affair with the outdoors." In the 1950s, newfound affluence encouraged record numbers to travel to Mount Rainier, Mount Hood, and Olympic National Park.⁹⁰

Tsutakawa may well have been among them; his watercolours show that he certainly visited these places in later decades. An avid outdoorsman, he spent time fishing and hiking, including trekking in Nepal in 1977, where he saw Himalayan *obos* at first hand. He also donated to the Sierra Club and the Washington Environmental Council.⁹¹ According to Wechsler, in Eastern philosophies such as Taoism and Zen, "the underlying wholeness of things is a virtually universal assumption." The "inextricable interconnectedness of things," is also among the main reasons they are often linked with ecological thinking, which holds that humankind's relationship with nature is symbiotic.⁹² As previously stated, Tsutakawa held to the Japanese belief that human beings are part of nature, rather than being its masters. As a sculptor, he also remained attached to such values as permanence and monumentality, which may seem incompatible with a nature-centred viewpoint, but this could also be understood as another example of Tsutakawa's

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Schwantes, "Anxiety and Affluence: The 1950s in Oregon and Washington," 44.

⁹¹ Sierra Club donation receipts; letter to George Tsutakawa from the Washington Environmental Council, August 13, 1982. Archives of American Art, George Tsutakawa Papers, 1963-1991.

⁹² Wechsler, "From Asian Traditions to Modern Expressions: Abstract Art by Asian Americans, 1945-1970," 172-173.

bicultural outlook. Such incongruities are also part of the Euro-American cultural heritage. In 1937's "The Death of the Monument" Lewis Mumford wrote that the "the classic civilizations of the world, up to our own" have been oriented toward "permanence and fixity," even though "a Heraclitus might observe that all things flow, a Lucretius might see that man is part of the eternal changing cycle of nature."⁹³ Perhaps Tsutakawa struggled with this issue, but it could be that he managed to achieve a harmonious balance in his thinking – as he did in his fountains, where moving water creates ephemeral sculptural forms that interact with complementary shapes in static bronze.

By the early 1980s artists all over North America were seeking alternatives to traditional public art. In 1983, the same year Tsutakawa gave his Oral History interview, an important exhibition titled *Beyond the Monument* opened at MIT.⁹⁴ Tsutakawa's attachment to the monumental tradition made his fountain sculptures more conservative than Halprin's designs, which were guided by an interest in process and event. As previously discussed, Tsutakawa's views on permanence and monumentality were partly rooted in his own values and tastes, but they also stemmed from a clear understanding of the needs of his clients. In his Oral History interview, Tsutakawa remarked: "There's a lot of incongruity or inconsistency in our world today. And one of the things I remember when I'm commissioned to do a fountain sculpture by some company or bank or somebody, ...always someone comes up during the meeting and says, 'You know, George, we want you to design something permanent here'."⁹⁵

Still, contradictions are apparent when one looks closely at some aspects of Tsutakawa's practice, particularly certain private commissions for fountain sculptures. I should stress that it is

⁹³ Mumford, "The Death of the Monument," 263.

⁹⁴ Stacy Paleologos Harris, *Insights/On Sites: Perspectives on Art in Public Places* (Washington, D.C.: Partners for Livable Places, 1984), 11.

⁹⁵ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.

not my intention to criticize Tsutakawa's working methods; in addition to recognizing there are benefits to hindsight, I am aware that attitudes about personal environmental responsibility have changed dramatically in recent years. But, I cannot in good conscience praise Tsutakawa's environmental sensitivity – or argue that his spiritual approach to art was fundamentally linked to his appreciation of nature, as I have done throughout this study – without also acknowledging the existence of some problematic realities. One important example is the Markey Machinery Company, where Tsutakawa's later fountains were fabricated. Its work yards are located in the Duwamish River valley, a highly industrialized area in South Seattle. In 2001, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) listed the Duwamish as one of "the most toxic hazardous waste sites in the nation."⁹⁶

My second point concerns artistic patronage; as discussed in earlier chapters, a large percentage of Tsutakawa's fountain commissions came from private corporations, banks, and retail developments. In Chapter Five my case study of Tsutakawa's *Fountain of the Pioneers* raised questions about the motivations behind its commission, which came from Charles Bentall's Dominion Construction Company. A number of Tsutakawa's projects for shopping malls were discussed in Chapter Six. In her article on Northgate, Meredith Clausen observes that, in addition to causing economic setbacks for downtown businesses, the new regional shopping centres of the postwar period often had negative effects on their immediate surroundings: “Farmlands on the edge of towns were replaced by acres of sprawling, low but bulky, highway-scaled buildings set in vast seas of asphalt. Spurring suburban growth as well as following it, these new gargantuan retail centers created unforeseen environmental problems, from traffic

⁹⁶ The Seattle Foundation, Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition Technical Advisory Group. Site updated March 10, 2011, <http://www.seattlefoundation.org/npos/Pages/DuwamishRiverCleanupCoalition-TechnicalAdvisoryGroup.aspx>.

snarls on the outskirts of town to water runoffs flooding nearby pastures.”⁹⁷ I have also mentioned shopping centres as a major factor in the trend toward replacing traditional "public space" with spaces that are publicly accessible but privately owned. In 1989 Herbert I. Schiller devoted a chapter of *Culture Inc.: the Corporate Takeover of Public Expression* to discussing “the corporate capture” of what formerly were, or ideally could be, the sites of public expression; these included museums, urban public spaces and downtowns. Schiller argued that the sites of public expression are much like renewable natural resources, and it is just as damaging to human health and consciousness if they are taken over and wholly rededicated to private interests.⁹⁸

For Sanders, Seattle exemplifies "how the contested social atmosphere of American cities helped to shape the popular ecology movement."⁹⁹ He argues that, for Seattleites, the emergence of environmental consciousness coincided with a growing concern "about the future of the urban form and its consequences for democracy and liberation."¹⁰⁰ Encouraged by the open space and beautification policies of the Johnson administration, concern about the rapidly changing urban and suburban landscape first developed in the 1960s.¹⁰¹ A new sensitivity to place was expressed by architect and UW professor Victor Steinbrueck in *Seattle Cityscape* (1962), a book of sketches and prose that lovingly documented the city's built and natural environments.¹⁰² The book was highly influential; Steinbrueck, a friend of Tsutakawa's, referred to himself as a "graphic propagandist." One of the founders of Allied Arts, Steinbrueck promoted what Sanders

⁹⁷ Clausen, "Northgate Regional Shopping Center – Paradigm from the Provinces," 145.

⁹⁸ Herbert I. Schiller, *Culture Inc.: the Corporate Takeover of Public Expression*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989, chapter 5.

⁹⁹ Sanders, "Inventing Ecotopia: Nature, Culture, and Urbanism in Seattle, 1960-2000," x.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹⁰² Victor Steinbrueck, *Seattle Cityscape* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1962). Also see Jeffrey K. Ochsner, "Victor Steinbrueck Finds His Voice: From the *Argus* to *Seattle Cityscape*," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 99, no. 3 (Summer 2008): 122-133.

refers to as "a kind of urban environmental holism," an approach to design similar to those of Tsutakawa and Halprin. In *Seattle Cityscape*, as well as in his Sunday magazine features for local newspapers, Steinbrueck praised those places in which the "cultural landscapes of work and leisure" were blended with natural settings, creating a balanced whole.¹⁰³ It would be incorrect, however, to regard Steinbrueck's vision as exclusive or elitist; he was dedicated to ensuring that Seattle continued to serve the needs of working class labourers. A basic premise of *Seattle Cityscape*, Steinbrueck wrote, was "that esthetic experience is part of everyday life, an essential human value."¹⁰⁴

Sanders points out that *Seattle Cityscape* appeared in 1962, "amidst the city's attempts to remake itself for the automobile."¹⁰⁵ Collective reactions to the local consequences of urban growth were further strengthened as Seattle residents watched the construction of the Interstate highway cutting right through the city. As discussed above, both Tsutakawa's *Naramore Fountain* and Halprin's Freeway Park were attempts to compensate for the negative effects of traffic, noise, and also, in the park's case, geographic dislocation. According to Sanders, the 1962 World's Fair also proved to be an impetus for change, just as its organizers had hoped but not always in the directions they envisioned. In contrast to Findlay's assessment of the Fair's legacy, discussed in Chapter Six of this dissertation, Sanders contends that Seattle residents eventually realized the "high modern utopianism" of Century 21 was not how they wanted their city to evolve. Though the Fair's "visions for the urban form" were inspiring and persuasive, Sanders's view is that ultimately "postwar urbanism in Seattle emerged as a reaction against the Expo's

¹⁰³ Sanders, "Inventing Ecotopia: Nature, Culture, and Urbanism in Seattle, 1960-2000," 52.

¹⁰⁴ Steinbrueck, *Seattle Cityscape*, 28.

¹⁰⁵ Sanders, "Inventing Ecotopia: Nature, Culture, and Urbanism in Seattle, 1960-2000," 51.

shape and values."¹⁰⁶ It does seem that Century 21 visitors encountered few examples of environmental sensitivity; in addition to the utopian modernism of its urban vision – which included, in the Washington State exhibition, such "products of the year 2000's every day living" as a disposable house, disposable clothing, and plastic shoes – the Fair's focus on science and space age technology promoted human mastery of both natural and built environments.¹⁰⁷ By the late 1960s, disillusioned by postwar renewal schemes and "city-deadening plazas," Seattle residents were starting to recognize the need for what would later be dubbed "sustainable development" or "smart growth." By the time Tsutakawa designed the *Expo '74 Fountain* for the Spokane World's Fair, also called the International Exposition on the Environment, a dramatic shift in societal attitudes would be apparent.¹⁰⁸

In my earlier discussion of Century 21, I devoted a few pages to Minoru Yamasaki's design for the pavilion that housed the United States Science Exhibit – five modern buildings grouped around pools with numerous petal-shaped fountains and tall, white "space gothic" arches. Findlay writes that Yamasaki's "inspiring design... set the stage for the carefully sequenced exhibits inside, which urged viewers to put their faith in science." Exhibits were presented in such a way that "they likened science to art as a framework for human creativity and

¹⁰⁶ Sanders, "Inventing Ecotopia: Nature, Culture, and Urbanism in Seattle, 1960-2000," 9, n.11.

¹⁰⁷ *A Souvenir Picture Book of Washington, Seattle, and the Seattle World's Fair* (Arlington: WA, circa 1962), 3; Findlay, *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture After 1940*, 237.

¹⁰⁸ The first international exposition with an environmental theme, Expo '74 "gave visible expression to growing concerns about environmental degradation." Rydell, et al., *Fair America: World's Fairs in the United States*, 137. As with future world's fairs, these concerns were, however, presented within a progressive context, one in which technology offered the promise of solutions; Tsutakawa's *Expo '74 fountain* was, for example, commissioned by a group of four aluminum companies. "Tsutakawa to Create Expo '74 Fountain," unlabeled newspaper clipping, September 2, 1973, Archives of American Art, George Tsutakawa Papers, 1963-1991.

a force capable of producing an enriched life and a harmonious world."¹⁰⁹ There was a conscious emphasis on balance: exhibition designers were careful to ensure that science did not appear to challenge any traditional American cultural values, including Christian beliefs. One writer for the *New York Times Magazine* praised the federal pavilion as "an unblushingly intellectual exercise and one, as well, with an unexpectedly religious aura about it. By accident or design," he went on to say, "the Science Pavilion dominated the fair much as a medieval cathedral did its city." The integration of science, religion, and art in the medieval period was mentioned in my discussion of the Bauhaus, and in Chapter Four I noted that Tsutakawa liked to compare the monumental symmetry of his fountain sculptures to that found in European cathedrals or Greek temples.¹¹⁰ Originally, the medieval cathedral was an urban centre where many varied activities took place, religious and secular. This, I believe, was the kind of role Tsutakawa desired for his major fountains; whether they were public or private commissions, he thought they should serve as gathering places and symbols of community. This idea may not have been fully articulated in the *Fountain of Wisdom*, but it was definitely clear in the title of *Celestial Cathedral*, the fountain he and Richard Haag proposed as part of the Seattle Civic Center Fountain Competition.

Tsutakawa developed the *obos* concept, on which he claimed to have based all his fountains, out of a deep response to the elemental nature of the Himalayan *obos* and a sense that their purpose was to "honor the earth and point to heaven."¹¹¹ These are qualities shared by his vertically-oriented fountain sculptures, beginning with the *Fountain of Wisdom* and continuing into the 1990s. Tsutakawa's large, publicly sited fountain sculptures were linked formally and

¹⁰⁹ Findlay, *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture After 1940*, 237.

¹¹⁰ Kingsbury, *Oral History Interview with George Tsutakawa*, n.p.; "Essential Art, Spiritual Art: Jacob Lawrence/George Tsutakawa."

¹¹¹ Quoted in Marshall. *Place of Learning, Place of Dreams: A History of the Seattle Public Library*, 108.

functionally to the *obos* and such closely related vernacular forms as Japanese *seki-to*, as well as more sophisticated stacked structures, like the pagoda. In his preface to Martha Kingsbury's monograph on Tsutakawa, Sumio Kuwabara explains:

It is well-known that Japanese pagodas, which tower above the other buildings on Buddhist temple grounds, are derived from Indian stupas. Like stupas, pagodas connote a passageway to the world of the transcendental. A pagoda is a path that leads to the heavens; by pointing the way to the world of the sublime, it serves as a medium for the salvation of human beings. Both *obos* and pagodas are embodiments of the *axis mundi* and provide the dynamics for the ascent from a lower to a higher realm. Mr. Tsutakawa's fountain sculpture is, in a way, the result of standing that axis mundi on the earth's surface as an eternal expression of will and making it visible through the finite forms of flowers and trees."¹¹²

The Gothic cathedral and the Egyptian pyramid can also be understood as paths to transcendence and eternal expressions of will; while not literally eternal, they convey a sense of permanence or, perhaps, a timeless monumentality, qualities Tsutakawa idealized and sought to emulate in his fountain sculptures. They were, however, balanced by the presence of moving water, which brought with it such ephemeral effects as spray and constantly changing light. At the same time, his fountains made manifest the mysteries of the water cycle; Tsutakawa once spoke of sense of "eternity, time immemorial in water. It will continue until earth is destroyed, if it's destroyed."¹¹³ Some of Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures also employ reiterated forms, which allude to the water cycle and other cyclical processes; examples include the *Spirit of Spring* in Troy, Michigan, the *Naramore Fountain*, and the *Expo '74 Fountain* in Spokane.

In an essay published in 1984, Stacy Paleologos Harris reminded readers that "two traditions can be discerned in the history of public art in the United States: object-making and

¹¹² Kuwabara, "The Fountain Sculpture of George Tsutakawa," 14.

¹¹³ "Essential Art, Spiritual Art: Jacob Lawrence/George Tsutakawa."

site-related art."¹¹⁴ In her opinion, a broad enough range of environments and audiences existed for both types to be accommodated, and I would argue that is still the case today. Harris also noted that not every artist fit easily into just one of the two categories, an observation that could be applied to Tsutakawa. He was definitely an object-maker, but Tsutakawa's work – though not site-specific – can also be thought of as site-related or "site-sensitive." This can be clearly demonstrated by comparing his approach to public art with that of some other well-known modernist sculptors. For example, discussing Calder's *La Grande Vitesse* of 1969, the first project of the NEA's Art in Public Places Program, Miwon Kwon has stated:

It is important that Calder never saw, nor did he feel it necessary to visit, the plaza before the sculpture's installation. Like a good modernist, he operated under the assumptions of an artwork's autonomy. The site, in the case of this project, then, was conceived as a kind of abstract blankness awaiting some marker (i.e. art, sculpture) to give it what could be claimed an authentic identity.¹¹⁵

Harris argues that what is really important, whether a public artwork is object-based, site-related, or combines these two approaches, is that "the most successful works achieve a genuine marriage between art and its environmental context, whether natural or man-made."¹¹⁶ Many of Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures satisfied this demand; this was, in part, what made his work so popular with critics and the public.

Judging from newspaper articles and other contemporary accounts, the *Fountain of Wisdom* at the Seattle Public Library, the Ala Moana Center's *Waiola Fountain*, and Fresno's *Obos Fountain* were originally good examples of Tsutakawa's success in this area, though today their effectiveness is somewhat reduced by their changed surroundings. On the other hand, a

¹¹⁴ Harris, *Insights/On Sites: Perspectives on Art in Public Places*, 11.

¹¹⁵ In *Kunst auf Schritt und Tritt* (1997). Quoted in Finkelppearl, *Dialogues in Public Art*, 23.

¹¹⁶ Harris, *Insights/On Sites: Perspectives on Art in Public Places*, 11.

number of fountains with relatively unchanged settings are still very appealing; my own favourites in Seattle are the *Safeco Fountain*, the *Song of the Flower*, and the *Centennial Fountain* at Seattle University. Two others that remain aesthetically pleasing – and surprisingly well-scaled in relation to their immediate environments, much-altered by urban growth since the 1960s – are the *Fountain of the Pioneers* at Vancouver's Bentall Centre and the *Naramore Fountain*. In 1997, reflecting on the fondness of Seattle residents for Tsutakawa's fountain sculptures, Mimi Gates, then-director of the Seattle Art Museum at director of the time, singled out the *Naramore Fountain* at Sixth and Seneca. Gates told the *Seattle Times*, "I actually like waiting for the light there because you get to look at it. It is just so beautiful."¹¹⁷

Referring to Tsutakawa's entire body of postwar work, in comparison to that of other Pacific Northwest artists, Barbara Johns has written: "Perhaps more than any other artist, George Tsutakawa's work exemplifies the 1950s transformation of design principles to new expressive means."¹¹⁸ Tsutakawa's interest in design and his years teaching in the School of Architecture at UW reinforced his conviction that art should be part of everyday life, a Bauhaus tenet that Tsutakawa had already absorbed due to his Japanese upbringing. Though earlier art historical treatments of his fountain sculptures, notably those of Reed and Kingsbury, have tended to highlight their ambiguous relationship to the traditional East/West dichotomy, my study has shown that, from the late 1950s onward, finding a harmonious balance between such binary pairs as nature/culture and biomorphic/geometric was equally important to the artist. A number of Asian philosophies, including Buddhism, Taoism, and Hinduism, teach that such seemingly separate and polarised terms can be understood holistically, recognising that, in J.J. Clarke's

¹¹⁷ Quoted in Robin Updike, "Northwest Artist George Tsutakawa Dies," *Seattle Times*, December 19, 1997.

¹¹⁸ Johns, "Fields of Vision in Pictures and Objects," 69.

words, "there are differences and contrasts within the all-embracing unity," and these are "complementary sides of the same reality."¹¹⁹ When one takes this approach, a resolution is not called for, nor is a one half of a binary pair regarded as superior. Wechsler reports that art critic Dore Ashton, a great admirer of Noguchi's sculpture, has referred to Noguchi and his work as part of a 'tradition of unresolved dualities'.¹²⁰

In the introduction to this dissertation I quoted Tsutakawa's response to a question posed by an interviewer in 1987. Asked whether he preferred to think of himself as a Japanese or American artist, Tsutakawa answered, "I am neither; I am both."¹²¹ This could be understood as a universalist position, but I would argue that, rather than the erasure of difference that postmodernists found so problematic with regard to modernist universalism, Tsutakawa's words suggest a stance more akin to Gilles Deleuze's poststructuralist holism, specifically the substitution of "both/and" for "either/or."¹²² The same can be said of a passage in an essay Gropius published in 1956, after living in the United States for just under two decades. Titled "Reorientation," it promoted holism in a climate of Cold War politics:

Arts and sciences are seemingly as much of an antithesis as are the creeds of the various political governments in the present world. The gigantic political fight in which we are participants today, centers on the human rights, the dignity of the individual who is unique by nature, who is not a standard product of complete equality. Between "rugged individualism" on the one side and regimented collectivism by force on the other, a superior form of democracy is being developed; a system of voluntary compromises,

¹¹⁹ Clarke, *Oriental Enlightenment: The Encounter Between Asian and Western Thought*, 170.

¹²⁰ Wechsler, "From Asian Traditions to Modern Expressions: Abstract Art by Asian Americans, 1945-1970," 71.

¹²¹ George Tsutakawa Interview (June 26-27, 1987) Archives of American Art Videotapes, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

¹²² An idea present throughout most of Deleuze's writing, beginning with *Difference and Repetition* (1968) and *Logic of Sense* (1969), and continuing in Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1980) Transl. and foreword by Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987). See, in particular, Chapter 1, "Introduction: Rhizome."

checks and balances, which broadens the concept of the individual and teaches him to say "and" instead of "either-or".¹²³

Mark Wexler, a business ethicist, has theorized that Seattle, along with other parts of Cascadia, is "a visionary hotbed of grassroots movements that embrace the sanctity of nature – doing battle with an equally visionary group of design-based innovators embracing the sanctity of a leading-edge built environment rooted in a celebration of the knowledge-based economy."¹²⁴ Today, Seattle is home to two of the giants of the information age: Microsoft Corporation and Amazon.com, the world's largest online retailer. Boeing, as we know, originated nearby, and of course, Seattle is the birthplace of Starbucks. Wexler considers the description of Cascadia as an "elusive utopia" and adds that "it is a region both real and imagined, of contradictions and alluring possibilities."¹²⁵ Oppositional points of view may not be reconciled, but they coexist, even within the minds of individual Seattle residents. This sometimes fragile equilibrium could be compared to the balance of complementary opposites Asian discussed above; Wexler refers to a "postmodern fusion of East and West – the right- and left-brained. The quest is to place the machine in the garden and see to it that each, in harmony, thrives."¹²⁶

Emerging in the postwar period, urban ecology became a much more attractive cause during the early 1970s, when the peak of the "Boeing bust" saw the economic good times of the 1960s replaced by an atmosphere of gloom and an exodus of laid-off workers. At the same time, Sanders argues, those that remained were joined by newly arrived "urban pioneers," students, and "refugees" from the Bay Area and eastern American cities, all of whom participated in

¹²³ Gropius, "Reorientation," 96.

¹²⁴ Mark Wexler, "Conjectures on Workplace Spirituality in Cascadia," in Todd, ed. *Cascadia, The Elusive Utopia: Exploring the Spirit of the Pacific Northwest*, 221.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 215

¹²⁶ Wexler, "Conjectures on Workplace Spirituality in Cascadia," 218.

defining Seattle's post-industrial future.¹²⁷ George Tsutakawa should also be recognized as an important contributor to this process, particularly with his fountain sculptures, and those he designed for locations outside the Pacific Northwest also have stories to tell about urban and suburban development in other places. Some have been analyzed here, but Tsutakawa continued to produce fountain sculptures throughout the three decades that followed the 1960s. Also, my study provides an entry point for future investigations into how other Pacific Northwest artists may have contributed, directly or indirectly, to either balancing or replacing high modernist utopianism with an outlook closer to what Sanders associates with Ecotopia. Similarly, further study of the role of modern art in the development of the Pacific Northwest's nature-oriented spirituality is warranted.¹²⁸ One possible approach would be to bring works by American artists together with examples by Canadian contemporaries. Doing so would mean taking a cue from the bi-national regional designation "Cascadia," and from the syncretic art of Tsutakawa, examples that encourage us to disregard artificially-imposed boundaries.

¹²⁷ Sanders, "Inventing Ecotopia: Nature, Culture, and Urbanism in Seattle, 1960-2000," 1.

¹²⁸ Because Tsutakawa did not consider himself religious, my study has focused on what Mark A. Shibley has termed "secular spirituality," but, as Todd points out, "although institutional religion is less dominant in Cascadia than elsewhere in North America, Christians and others have been at the forefront of efforts to protect the region's forest's, rivers and wildlife, which they consider God's creation." Mark A. Shibley, "The Promise and Limits of Secular Spirituality in Cascadia," in Todd, ed. *Cascadia, The Elusive Utopia: Exploring the Spirit of the Pacific Northwest*, 33; Todd, *ibid.*, n.p. (See photographic preface to Part Two.)

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Appendix A: Completed Fountains*

- 1960 *Fountain of Wisdom*, bronze, 12' x 6' x 6'; Seattle Public Library
- 1960 Fountain, bronze, 7' x 6' x 6'; Renton Center, Renton, Washington (Removed. Reinstalled 1995 at Maplewood Golf Course, Renton)
- 1961 Fountain group, bronze, 7'5" and 5' x 8' x 3'; Lloyd Center, Portland , Oregon (Removed)
- 1962 Fountain group, bronze, 7' x6' x 5'; Northgate Shopping Center, Seattle (Removed. Reinstalled c. 2008 at Northwest Medical Center)
- 1962 *Fountain of Reflection*, bronze, 4'. Edition of four planned, of which three were made. Versions were installed temporarily at the Federal Science Pavilion, Seattle World's Fair, 1962, and at Tsutakawa's home (n.d. to present), and permanently in Fresno, California (see 1964), and at the University of Washington (see 1967).
- 1963 Fountain, bronze, 25' x 12'; Robinson's Department Store, Anaheim, California (Site redesigned by owner, water eliminated)
- 1964 *Fountain of Good Life*, bronze, 12' x 7'; Commerce Tower, Kansas City, Missouri
- 1964 Fountain, bronze, 9' x 7'; Pacific First Federal Bank, Tacoma, Washington (Relocated)
- 1964 *Obos Fountain*, bronze, 12' and *Aquarius Ovoid (Fountain of Reflection)*, bronze, 4'; Fulton Mall, Fresno, California
- 1964 Fountain, bronze, 5'; Mr. and Mrs. Langdon Simon, Medina, Washington (Donated to the Seattle Art Museum, 1988)
- 1965 Fountain, bronze, head office of Charles Luckman and Associates, Architects, Los Angeles (Indoors)
- 1966 Fountain, bronze, 6' x 3' x 4'; University YWCA, Seattle (Removed)
- 1966 *Waiola Fountain*, bronze, 15'; Ala Moana Center, Honolulu, Hawaii

* Information from lists of Tsutakawa's fountains and other public commissions found in Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa*, 149-52; Ament, *Iridescent Light*, 369-70; or provided by Gerard Tsutakawa. A few titles were found in other print sources or on plaques attached to pools. According to Gerard Tsutakawa, there were a few small residential fountains made over the years that the family has lost track of. (Gerard Tsutakawa, email message to the author, January 31, 2012.)

- 1966 *Joshua Green Fountain*, bronze, 6' x 9' x 7'; Washington State Ferry Terminal, Seattle (New pool installed)
- 1966 Fountain, bronze, 3'; Northwestern Auto Bank, Sioux Falls, South Dakota
- 1967 *Phi Mu Fountain (Fountain of Reflection)*, bronze, 3'; Mackenzie Hall, School of Business, University of Washington, Seattle
- 1967 *Hobart Fountain*, bronze, 20'; Hobart Research Center, Troy, Ohio
- 1967 *Naramore Fountain*, bronze, 18'; Naramore Park, Seattle (Now part of Freeway Park)
- 1967 Fountain, bronze, 6'; School of Public Health, University of California, Los Angeles
- 1968 *East Cloister Garth Fountain*, bronze, 10'; National Cathedral, Washington, D.C.
- 1968 Fountain, bronze, 3'; Minor Clinic, Everett, Washington
- 1968 Fountain, bronze, Installed at Uwajimaya Store, Southcenter Mall, Tukwila, Washington (Date of fabrication unknown. Removed in 1991. Reinstalled 2008 at Uwajimaya Store, Seattle. Removed c. 2011)
- 1969 *Fountain of the Pioneers*, bronze, 15' x 8'; Bentall Centre, Vancouver, B.C., Canada
- 1969 *Obos 69 Fountain*, bronze, 9' x 6'; Franklin D. Murphy Sculpture Garden, University of California, Los Angeles
- 1969 Two fountains, bronze, 3.5'; Seattle First National Bank Building, Seattle (Relocated)
- 1970 Fountain pair, bronze, 9'; Pompano Fashion Square, Pompano Beach, Florida (Removed)
- 1970 *Pacific First Federal Fountain*, bronze, 10' x 7' x 4'; Pacific First Federal Savings Bank, Bellevue, Washington
- 1970 Fountain, bronze, 6'; Group Health Hospital, Seattle
- 1971 *Moon Song Fountain*, bronze, 6'; Seattle Post-Intelligencer Building, Seattle (Redesigned for new building)
- 1971 *Jefferson Plaza Fountain*, bronze, 15' x 8' x 8'; Indianapolis, Indiana (Removed. Currently stored in Seattle.)
- 1972 *Rain Fountain No. 2*, stainless steel, 6'; Burien Library, Seattle
- 1973 Fountain, bronze, 8' x 5' x 5'; Seattle Central Community College, Seattle (Indoors).

- 1973 *Safeco Fountain*, bronze, 13' x 9' x 9'; Safeco Plaza, Seattle
- 1973 *Rain Fountain No. 3*, stainless steel, 6.5'; Design Centre Northwest, Seattle
- 1974 *Fine Arts Court Fountain*, bronze, 8' x 5' x 5'; Pennsylvania State University, University Park
- 1974 *Spirit of the Spring*, bronze, 26' x 7'; Somerset Inn, Troy, Michigan (Site redesigned by owner, water eliminated)
- 1974 *Expo '74 Fountain*, aluminum, 17' x 7' x 7'; Spokane, Washington
- 1975 Fountain, bronze, 4' x 3' x 3'; Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Edmondson, Seattle
- 1976 *Fount Zen*, bronze, 3'; Mr. and Mrs. Doug Fox, Camano Island, Washington
- 1976 Fountain, bronze, 8'; Northwest Medical Center, Bellingham, Washington
- 1977 *Heaven, Man and Earth*, bronze, 10'; City Hall Plaza, Aberdeen, Washington
- 1981 *Song of the Forest*, bronze, 20'; Tsutsujigaoka Park, City of Sendai, Japan
- 1981 *Hanging Fountain*, stainless steel, 20'; KING Broadcasting Corporation, Seattle (Indoors)
- 1982 *Fountain of Vibrant Spring*, bronze, 15'; Okura Park, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo, Japan
- 1982 Fountain group, bronze, 7' x 3' x 4'; Sheraton Hotel, Seattle (Removed. To be reinstalled in the hotel's lobby lounge, 2012)
- 1983 *Chalice Fountain*, bronze, 15'; Government Center, Toledo, Ohio
- 1983 *Fountain of Joy*, bronze, 15'; Setagaya Park, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo, Japan
- 1983 Fountain for private garden, bronze, 5' x 18" x 16"; Governor's Mansion, Olympia, Washington
- 1983 Fountain, 5' x 3' x 3'; Thomas McCarthy residence, Bellevue, Washington
- 1986 Fountain, bronze, 4' x 4' x 4'; Mr. and Mrs. James Pigott residence, Seattle
- 1987 *Song of the Flower*, bronze, 5', Keiro Nursing Home, Seattle
- 1987 *Marianwood Fountain*, bronze, 20'; Marianwood, Issaquah, Washington
- 1987 *Fountain of Hope*, bronze, 8'; Water Department Building #2, Sapporo, Japan

- 1988 *Lotus Fountain*, bronze, 6' x 9' x 7'; Fukuyama Fine Art Museum, Fukuyama, Japan
- 1989 *Centennial Fountain*, bronze, 16'; Central Plaza, Seattle University, Seattle
- 1990 Fountain, Okayama Prefectural Government, Japan
- 1991 Fountain, bronze, 10', Whitman College, Walla Walla, Washington

Appendix B: Figures

Fig. 1) George Tsutakawa, *Fountain of Wisdom*, 1958-60, bronze, Seattle Public Library



Fig. 2) Front page of Seattle Post-Intelligencer, August 16, 1968

Saigon Beleaguered Bastion

Giant Reference Map; See Page B

Today's P-I

Bridge	33	Horoscope	42
Classified	32-44	Lenders	19
Comics	46, 47	Marine	26
Deaths	206-243	Obituary	45
Dr. Mohler	34	Radio-TV	51
Editorial	6, 7	Sports	21-25
Finance	26-29	Sweepstakes	48
Graham	35	Women	17-20

Six Sections

SEATTLE Post-Intelligencer

THE VOICE OF THE NORTHWEST

Friday, August 16, 1968

THE WEATHER—Shows and partial clearing today. Periods of rain tomorrow. High, near 85; low, near 55. Chance of rain, 20 per cent. YESTERDAY'S WEATHER: High, 67; low, 58; precip., .01. Record high '68, Aug. 15, 1962, Table, Page 26.

5***

MA 2-3000

10c

SUNRISE

QUICKLY

ALLIED TROOPS trapped hundreds of communists invading South Vietnam from the north and killed 215 of them in four battles. Page A.

AN AMERICAN river convoy fighting back enemy ambushes last week killed nearly five times more civilians than military reports indicated. Page A.

SECRETARY OF Defense Clark M. Clifford said a full halt in the bombing of North Vietnam required assurance that Hanoi would reciprocate by stopping fire on allied troops along the line dividing the two Vietnams. Page A.

THE FIRST PRESIDENT of the Evergreen State College will be Dr. Charles J. McCann, dean of faculty at Central Washington State College. Evergreen, the state's first new four-year school of higher learning in more than 75 years, will open on a campus near Olympia in 1971. Page 11.

EAST GERMAN Party Chief Walter Ulbricht has trusted famously in line with his Soviet masters in their unsuccessful attempt to browbeat Czechoslovakia into ideological line, the editor reports. Page 6.

THE REV. Ralph Abernathy said blacks may boycott the presidential election unless different candidates are offered. Page 6.

PRESIDENT Johnson's health is substantially the same as it was in 1966, said his doctors. Page 14.

JAPAN commemorated the 23rd anniversary of its surrender to the U.S. in 1945. Page A.

LADYBIRD Johnson already is packing in preparation for the family's departure from the White House. Page 14.

SEN. Eugene McCarthy listed persons he'd like to see on his cabinet if he's elected president. Seattle's Jim Whittaker among them. Page 2.

AN ADVISORY group suggested hard-core failures be helped with the same treatment given the physically and mentally handicapped. Page 14.

A NEW book described in detail the relationship between President Franklin D. Roosevelt and a lady friend. Page 16.

JAMES S. SYMBOL, 50, has been nominated by President Johnson to succeed the late George Murray as Seattle's postmaster. Page 11.

RESPONSE TO THE P-I's poll on the Republican convention indicates strong sentiment for a national presidential primary. Page 4.

WORTH R. FOWLER, president of the Seattle-based American Mail Line, has been elected president of American President Lines, largest steamship line on the West Coast. Page 10. Details on Fowler's background, Don Page's column, Page 26.

JOHN KENNEDY JR. Why the switch?

John-John's New School

NEW YORK — (UPI) — St. David's School, an exclusive Roman Catholic private school, has lost its most famous pupil, John F. Kennedy Jr.

John's mother, the former First Lady, withdrew him from the East Side Manhattan boy's school and has enrolled him at the Collegiate School, a Protestant-founded private school on the West Side, it was learned yesterday.

ALTHOUGH neither school would comment on the reason for the switch a month before John enters the third grade, informed sources said Mrs. Kennedy would not accept the recommendation of St. David's officials that John repeat the second grade.

The 33-year-old Collegiate School, the nation's oldest independent school, was recommended by Mrs. Kennedy by composer-conductor Leonard Bernstein and actress Lauren Bacall, both of whom have sons enrolled there.

The school is affiliated with the Reformed Dutch Church although it relies on the community at large for the bulk of its financial support.

IN RECOMMENDING the school, Bernstein stressed its democratic character. It has many boys from underprivileged areas on scholarships, a number of sons of United Nations diplomats, and representatives of various races and religions.

The school is in a racially mixed neighborhood.

John's sister, Carolyn, will continue to attend the Convent of the Sacred Heart School where she is a sixth grade student.

2 Monster Missiles On U.S. Test Pads

New Police Inspection Unit Named

Police Chief Frank Ramon yesterday announced formation of a four-man inspection unit to investigate complaints of police behavior in the Central Area and to recommend internal reforms in department administration.

Police Inspector Dave Jessup, 45, second in command of the detective division for eight years, will head the division.

Sgt. Harry Schneider, 41, also of the detective division; Patrolman Russell Proctor, 28, a 12-year Police Department veteran, and a fourth man to be chosen by Jessup will make up the unit.

GEORGE TSUTAKAWA, Seattle sculptor, displayed model of one of two boosters which he will design for the plans of the new Seattle-First National Bank Bldg. Details, more pictures, Page 31.

Each Scatters 10 Warheads

BY JOHN NOBLE WILFORD
The New York Times

CAPE KENNEDY, Fla. — Two new long-range missiles, each presumably bearing multiple warhead systems, stood ready last night for test launchings today that could thrust the world into a new era of weapons for mass destruction.

The missiles, the Navy's Poseidon and the Air Force's Minuteman 3, are described by the Defense Department as being more powerful, more accurate and more likely to penetrate enemy defenses than present missiles.

But their most telling advantage lies in their revolutionary new warhead — the MIRV, for Multiple Independently Targeted Reentry Vehicle. Each MIRV is capable of carrying from three to 10 hydrogen bombs and allowing them to widely scattered targets, a possibility that is said to render current and contemplated anti-missile defense systems largely inadequate.

With the test today, the United States is expected to move ahead of the Soviet Union in the development of multiple warheads. A few dozen more tests are being planned before the systems could be deployed in the early 1970s.

THE POSITION launching is scheduled for 6:30 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time, and the Minuteman 3 is set for 4:30 p.m. No nuclear payloads will be aboard the vehicles.

A tight lid of secrecy has been clamped on both launches. The Pentagon will not even confirm reports that the missiles will indeed carry the MIRV, although it is common knowledge among engineers and laymen here.

For diplomatic as well as military reasons, Pentagon officials would like for the tests to pass relatively unremarked. The tests come at a delicate time in international relations when both the U.S. and the Soviet Union are exploring ways to reach an agreement on curbing the development of new strategic weapons.

A group of scientists, including former White House science adviser Jerome Wiesner of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, petitioned the Pentagon to postpone the tests until talks with the Russians reveal whether a missile freeze is possible. Some officials within the Johnson administration are also known to have argued for a delay.

THEY ARE worried that, in a missile moratorium, the MIRV would not lend itself to inspection by satellite (Page A, Column 3)

Mayor Tells Council City Jail Has Good Food

BY BILL SEVERLING

Mayor Derm Braman yesterday described the food served in the city's jail as "comparable to that served in any ordinary restaurant of the better quality."

Braman made the comment in a letter to city councilmen in response to a survey of 101 Skid Road alcoholics published earlier this week.

The survey by Dr. James P. Spradley, assistant professor of psychiatry and anthropology at the University of Washington, showed that most of the alcoholics interviewed believed they did not get enough to eat while they were in the jail.

MORE THAN half of those surveyed also rated medical care in the jail as "very poor."

In his letter to councilmen, Braman said, in part:

"I am sure the professor went overboard in relying on the testimony of the party who are revolving-door inmates, certainly would not indicate their great measure of having been picked up and placed in the jail under any circumstances."

"If there is any question in your mind relative to the validity of the statements made in this report, I would suggest you just stop across the street anytime—per-

(Page 16, Column 1)

Coaches Play Waiting Game

BY JOHN DE YONGE

Seattle high school football and cross country track coaches have decided to play the waiting game in a salary dispute with the Seattle School District.

They huddled last night and opted not to take a strike vote recommended to them by negotiators for the Seattle Alliance of Educators.

Instead, they voted strong backing for the alliance's proposal on coaches' stipends and delayed the possibility of a strike vote until Aug. 29, five days before school begins.

STIPENDS are extra pay for extra duties such as coaching.

If a strike occurs, it would mean

(Page 12, Column 1)

2,500 Fans Whoop It Up For McCarthy

BY DARRELL GLOVER

Sen. Eugene McCarthy was the big name at the Opera House last night in one of the biggest political bashes this city has ever seen.

The crowd of 2,500 laughed and sang and joked. But it was for the most serious cause in the world today — the presidency of the United States.

The whole thing was part of the nationwide, closed-circuit rally for Sen. McCarthy for president — an attempt to convince the delegates to the Democratic convention that only Sen. McCarthy can win for them in November.

Some leading jazz artists and television stars — including that fun candidate comedian, Pat Paulsen — were there.

"I THINK WE can count on Mr. Nixon (Richard Nixon) to face the problems squarely because that's the kind of man he is," Paulsen said.

Paulsen, a star of the Smothers Brothers TV show, broke up the house when he quipped:

"I just want to be a common ordinary savior of the American destiny."

Episcopal Bishop James Pike received

(Page 5, Column 5)

which is the proper wine to serve on Saturdays?

Washington's leading family of wines Created purely for your pleasure THE WASHINGTON CO. - SEATTLE

Fig. 3) George Tsutakawa, *Song of the Flower*, 1987, bronze, Keiro Nursing Home, Seattle



Fig. 4) Tsutakawa in his studio with fountain models, 1960s and 1989

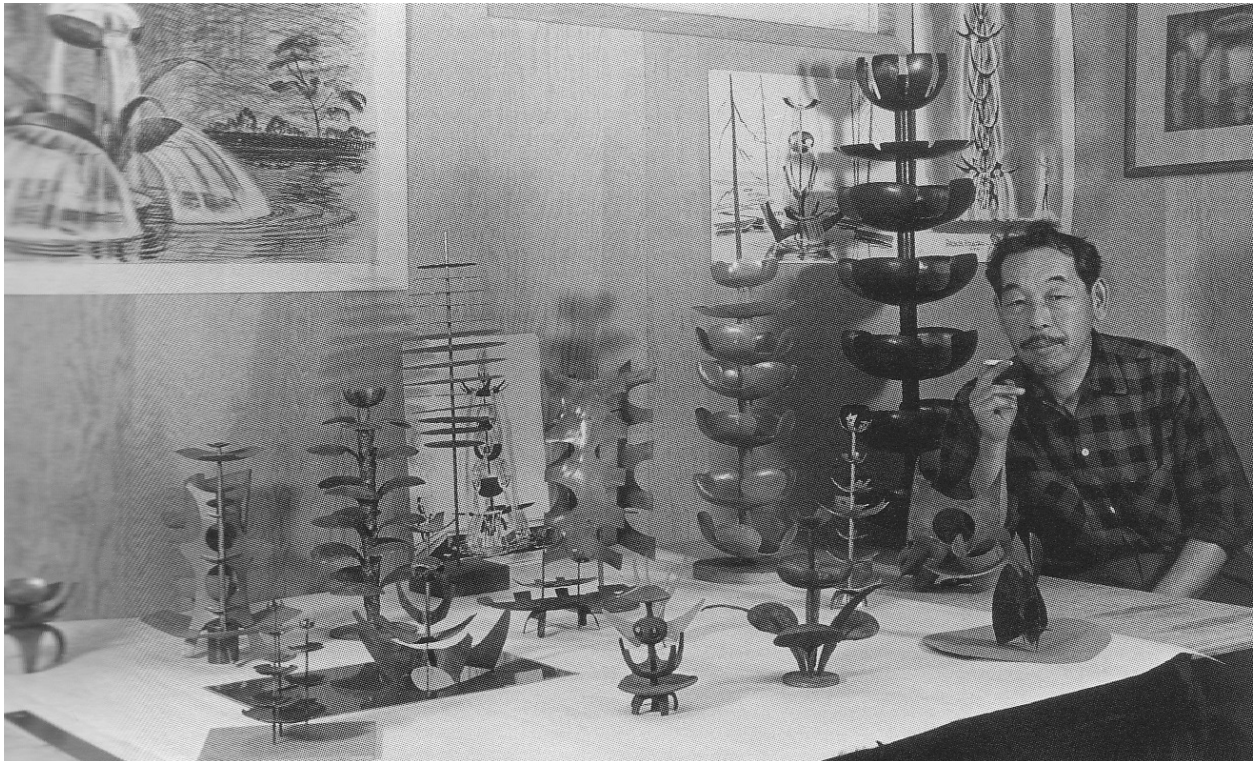


Fig. 5) George Tsutakawa, *Study for Ala Moana Fountain*, 1965



Fig. 6) George Tsutakawa, Sketch for fountain in Aberdeen, Washington, n.d.



Fig. 7. George Tsutakawa, Fountain for Northgate Shopping Center, Seattle, 1962, bronze

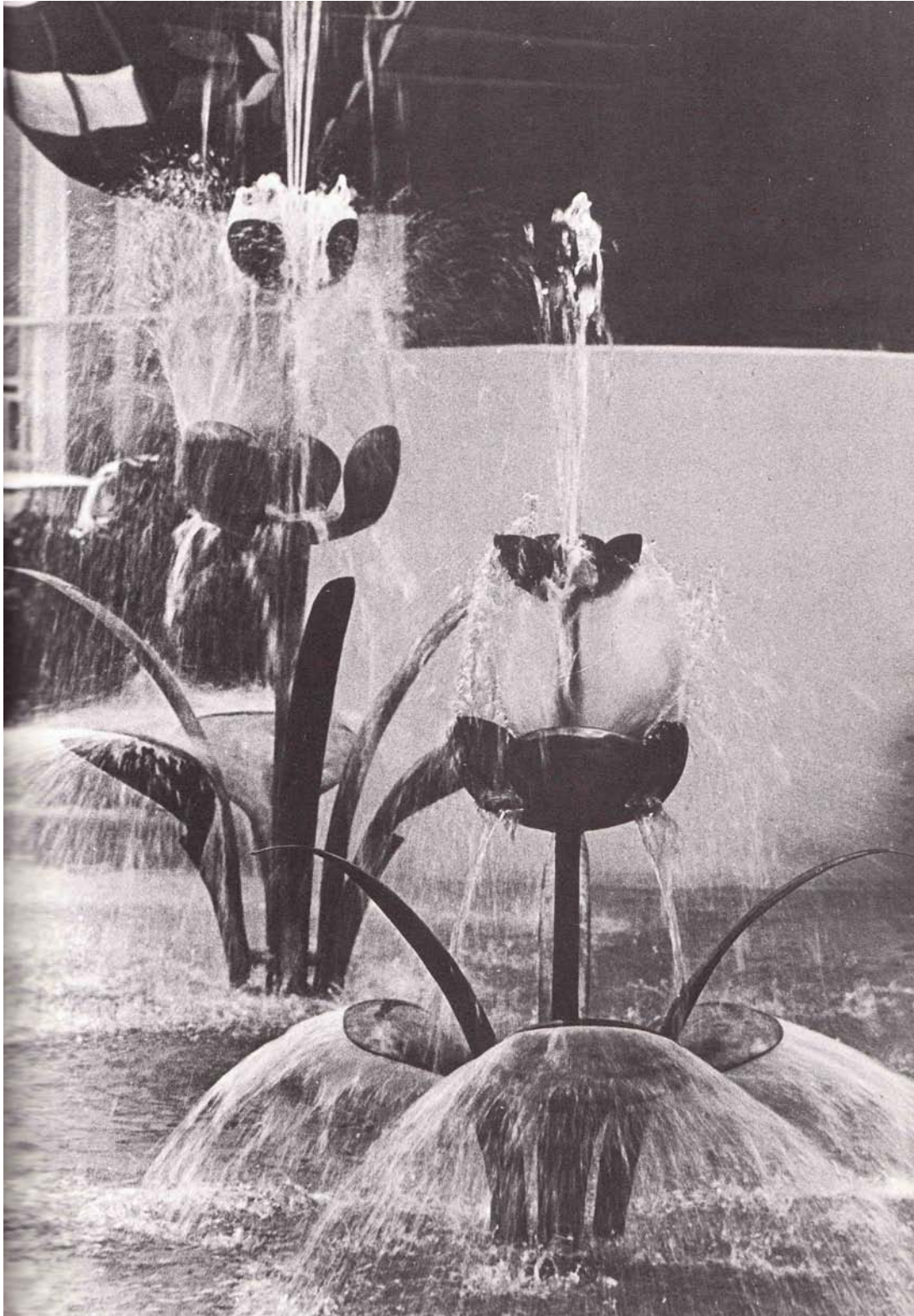


Fig. 8) George Tsutakawa, *Expo '74 Fountain*, aluminum, Spokane



Fig. 9) George Tsutakawa, *Fountain of Reflection*, 1962, bronze



Fig. 10) *Jefferson National Annual Report: 1972* showing fountain by George Tsutakawa



Fig. 11) George Tsutakawa, *Spirit of the Spring*, 1974, bronze, Somerset Inn, Troy, Michigan



Fig. 12) George Tsutakawa, *Chalice Fountain*, 1983, bronze, Government Center, Toledo, Ohio



Fig. 13) Minoru Yamasaki, World Trade Center, New York, detail



Fig. 14) George Tsutakawa, "Symbolic trophy," for Seguin School, made before 1966



Fig. 15) Japanese Family Crests

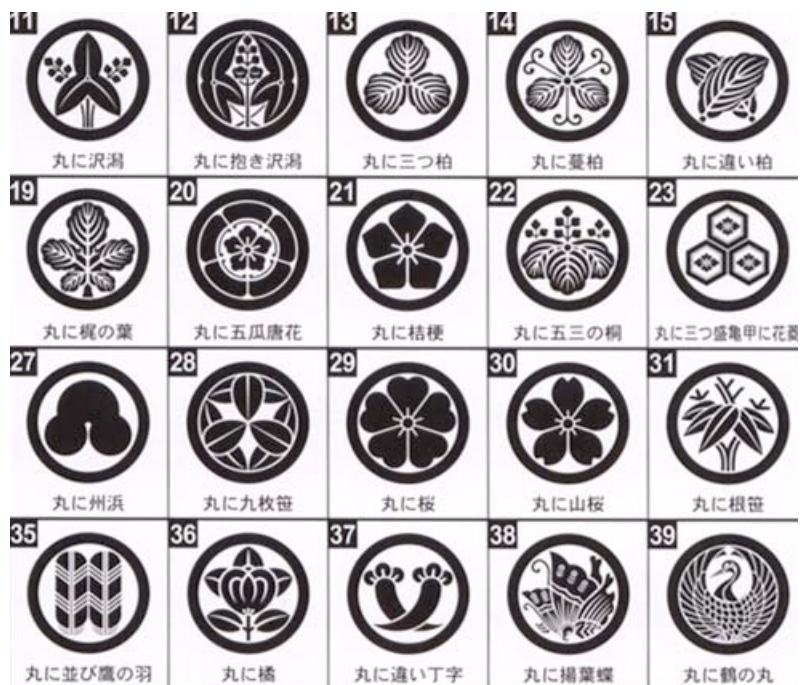


Fig. 16) George Tsutakawa, *Centennial Fountain*, 1989, bronze, Seattle University

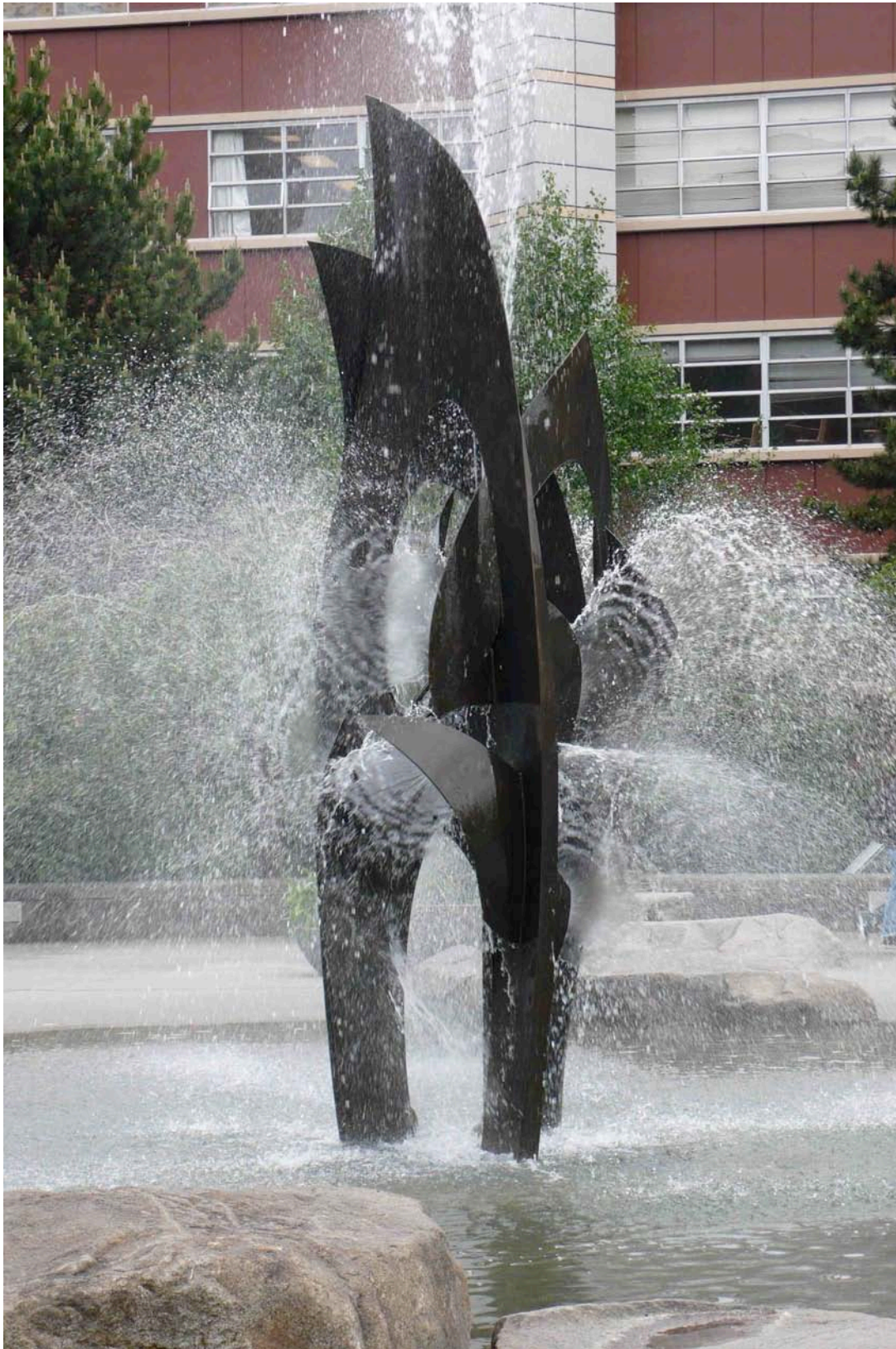


Fig. 17) George Tsutakawa, *East Cloister Garth Fountain*, 1968,
National Cathedral, Washington, D.C.



Fig. 18) George Tsutakawa, *Lotus Fountain*, 1988, bronze, Fukuyama Fine Arts Museum



Fig. 19) George Tsutakawa and two younger siblings with governess, Mt. Baker Park, 1915



Fig. 20) Alexander Archipenko, *Standing Woman*, 1917, bronze



Fig. 21) George Tsutakawa, *Self Portrait*, 1943, oil

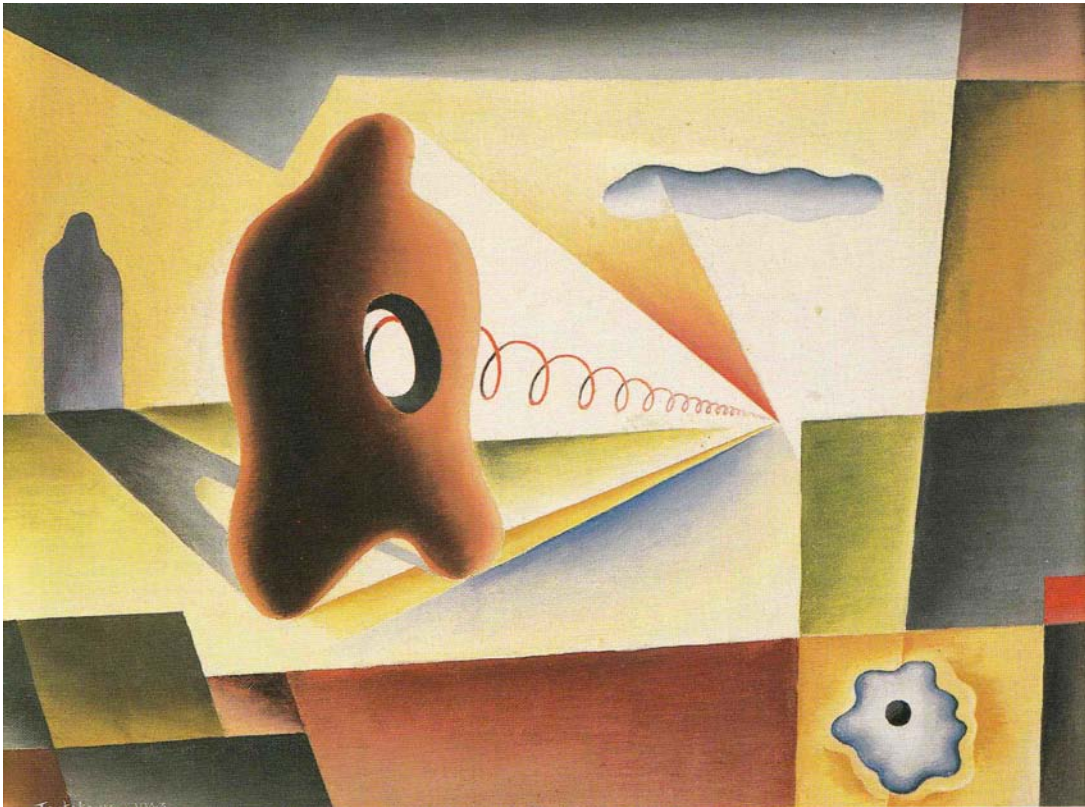


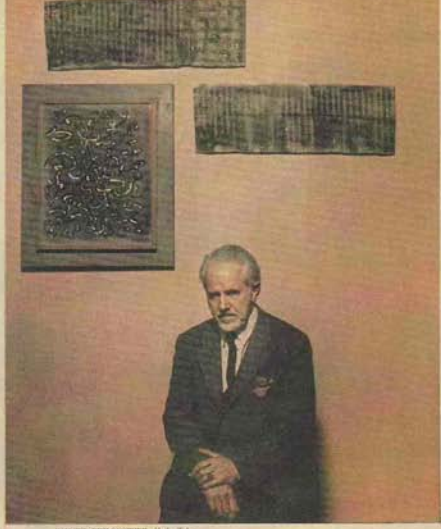
Fig. 22) Mark Tobey, *Broadway Norm*, 1935-36, tempera on paper



Fig. 23) Zoë Dusanne in her gallery with
(l-r) Horiuchi, Tsutakawa, John Matsudaira, and Nomura



Fig. 24) Tobey and Graves in "Mystic Painters of the Northwest," *Life*, September 28, 1953



PLASTER-PHILosopher Mark Tobey sits contemplatively. Inset: his art (right) and member of Chinese writing, which influenced his style.


ART

Mystic Painters of the Northwest

THEY TRANSLATE REALITY INTO SYMBOLIC AND DISTINCTIVE ART

For more than a decade a remarkable art of shimmering light and symbolic forms has been coming out of the north-west corner of the U.S., catching up waves of irritation and enthusiasm in the galleries of New York, London and the Continent. Produced by a variety of artists living around Seattle, the paintings range in style from realistic to nonobjective. Yet they have one characteristic in common: they manifest a mystical feeling toward life and the universe. This mystical approach stems partly from the artists' admiration of the extraordinary forces of nature which surround them, partly from the influence of the Orient, whose cultures have seeped into the communities that line the U.S. Pacific Coast. The painters of Seattle have merged these influences, resulting in an art that strikes being a limited "mystical art" or "distillation" of the Northwest.

Pioneer and star of Seattle artists is 62-year-old Mark Tobey (above), a native of Wisconsin who got his start as an illustrator for mail-order catalogs. For a while Tobey lived in New York, finding it frustrating toiling against society's materialism. Then abruptly in 1922 he struck out for the West, raised up by Seattle where he settled down to paint and teach. But before long he was on the move again, first to England, then Paris and the Near East, finally China. There, while studying the subtle linear art of such related calligraphers of the Chinese, he began to translate nature to a new way. "When I looked at a tree, it became a flame of brilliant lines dancing out of the ground," he says in Seattle. Tobey developed his own concepts, "distilling" paintings, impressions (opposite page), visions of nature and symbolic images (below), inspired by the soft, graphic tones of the Seattle landscape and conveyed by flowing networks of lines "to express the rhythm of life." These paintings had a double effect on Seattle's leading younger artists, ages 20-30 who, inspired by Tobey, have moved out into their own mystical realm.



ELECTRIC NIGHT is Tobey's conception of Seattle at various times (below) streets and children's signs intended to create dreamlike memory of time and light.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Mystic Painters



FRIENDS OF NATURE (above) inspired the poetical and symbolic motifs above in Tobey's art.



JAN BRONKHORST in Graves's view of a "distillation" of Chinese art, drawing from the mystic East.

MORRIS GRAVES

He creates images of inner eye

But he has not been one of all the Seattle painters to visit Graves, a 58-year-old artist of mystic who lives alone in a cedar-block house in the wooded mountains of the city. He has been in the Northwest of Northwest since 1923 when, at the age of 23, he was a top prize at the Seattle Art Museum. Several years later he was introduced to New York in an exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art being held in it his paintings were sold. Such reactions, which have continued ever since, have been generally glowing but reflective according to Graves, who meeting Graves and once qualified an interview with the comment, "He has given me the meaning of abstraction." Graves' vision, which is often abstract, has opened the Mark Tobey's from the Orient. In a young man, he made about visit to China where he studied in art and in perspective with the more spiritual meanings of the world. Each time in the Northwest world, he tries to recover the things of nature which can be reached later—birds, fish, rocks, mountains in the business lines and colors of their spiritual life. These paintings, along with an other sense to be seen in several Chinese traditional motifs, are what Graves calls "visions of the inner eye." When he is not painting, he is in the mountains of the Northwest, where he is often painting, sketching, or writing, but he is not of the kind of artist who is usually called, contemplating the scene of the scene.



Fig. 25) Basic Design student projects, 1948-49, from *Architecture 1949* (UW annual)

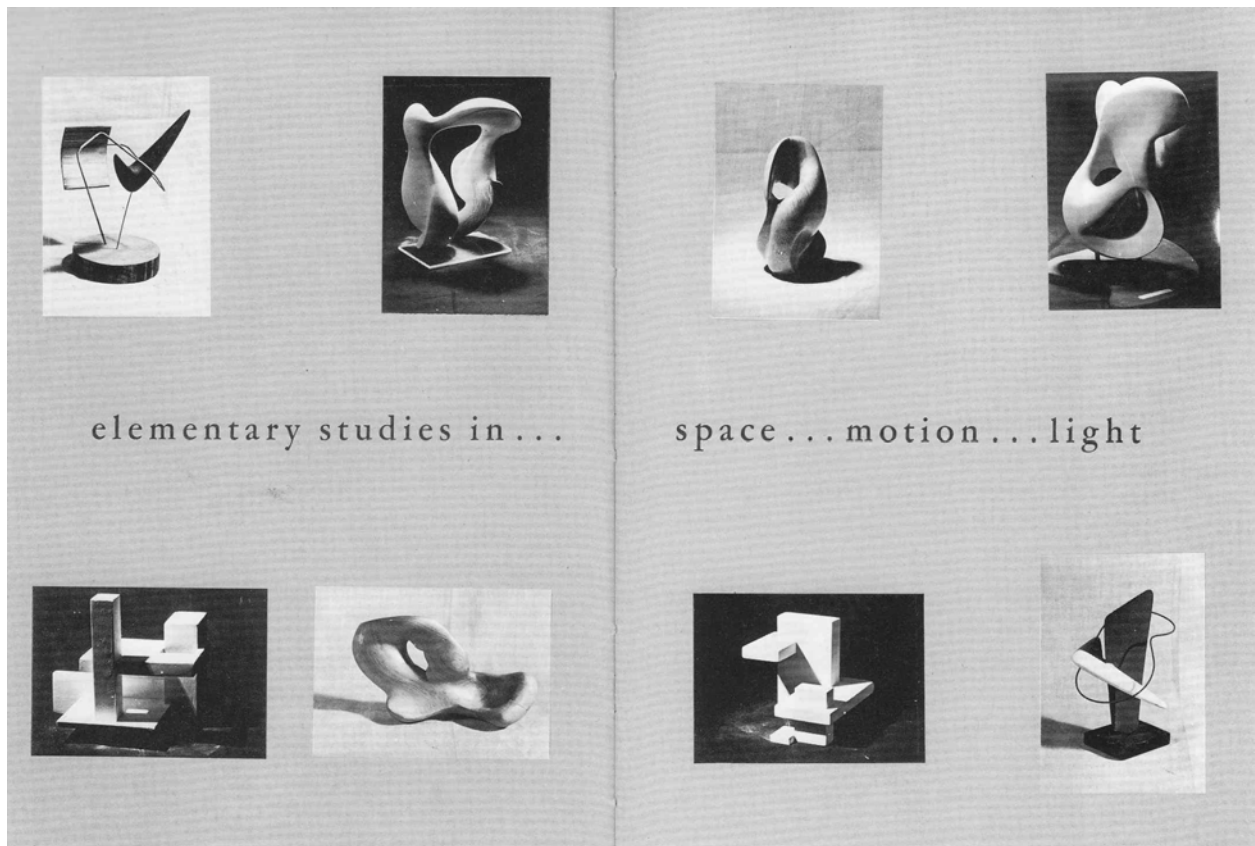


Fig. 26) George Tsutakawa Tsutakawa & *Leaning Column*, 1968, stainless steel



Fig. 27) Herbert Matter, Cover of *Arts and Architecture*, December 1946



Fig. 28) George Tsutakawa, *Heaven, Man and Earth*, 1977, bronze, Aberdeen, Washington



Fig. 29) George Tsutakawa, *Obos #1*, 1956, teak

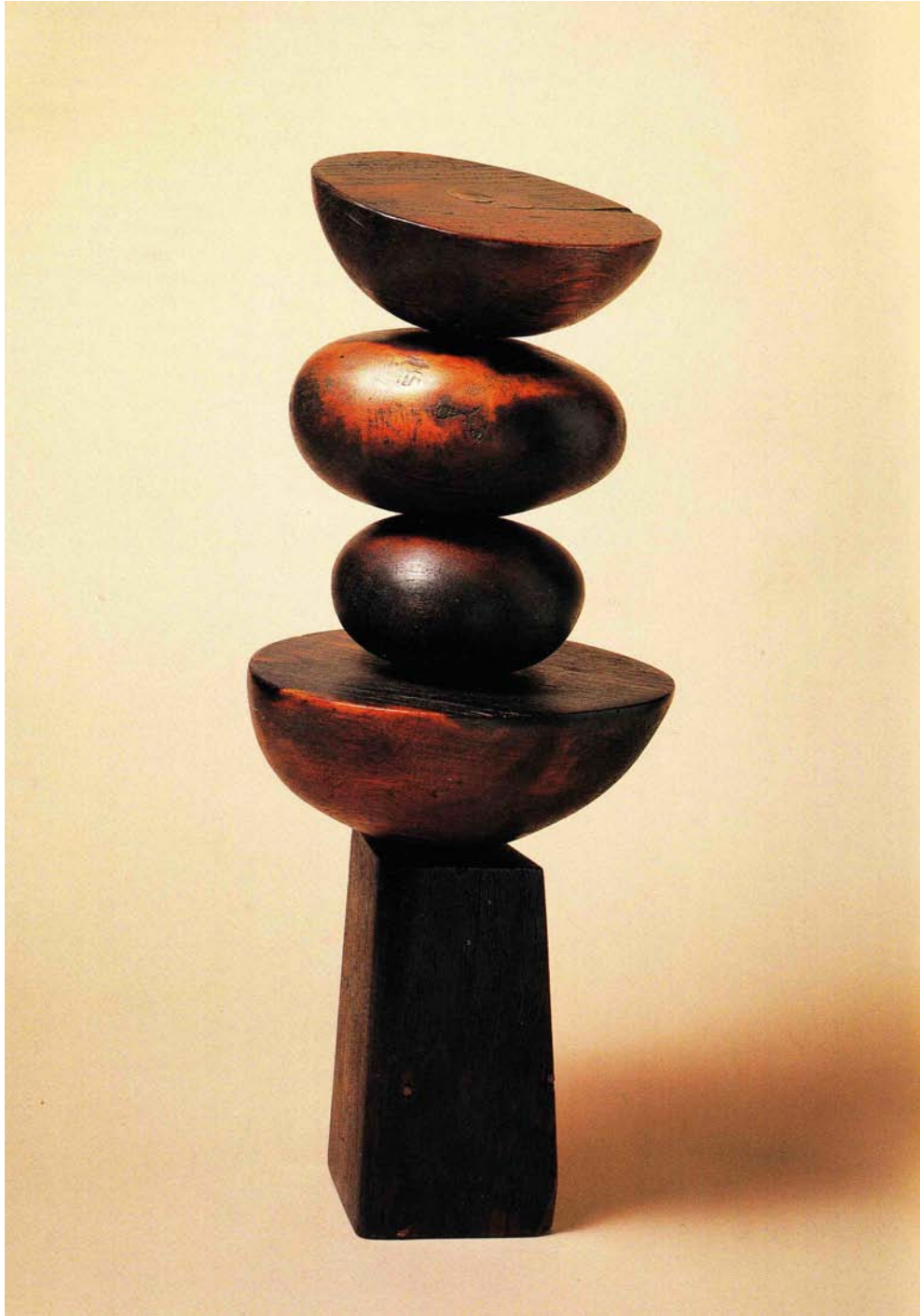


Fig. 30) George Tsutakawa, *Obos No. 10*, 1957, tempera

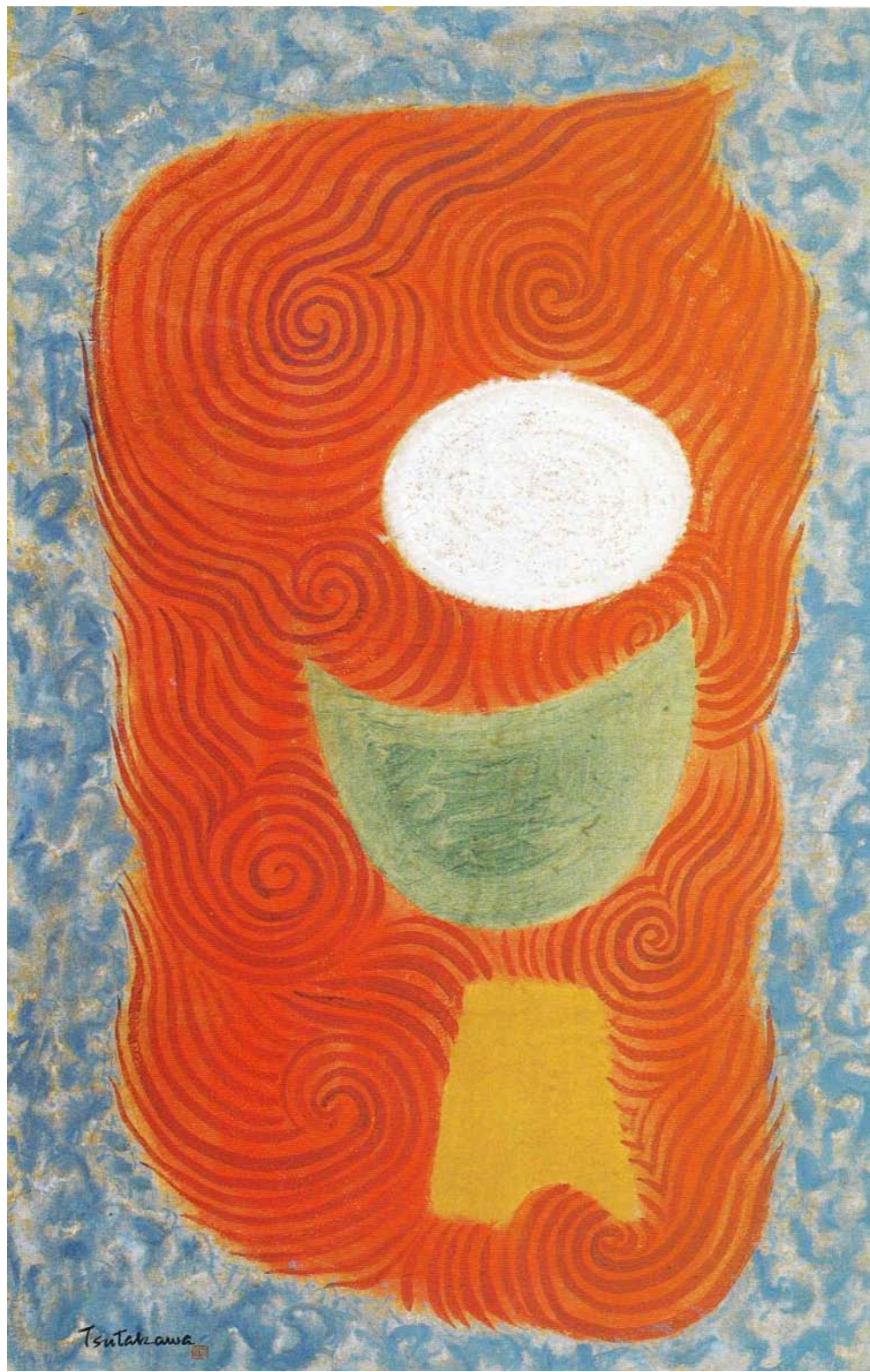


Fig. 31) Postcard promoting new Seattle Library, 1960



Fig. 32) Seattle's Carnegie library and *Lion's Head Fountain*, n.d.

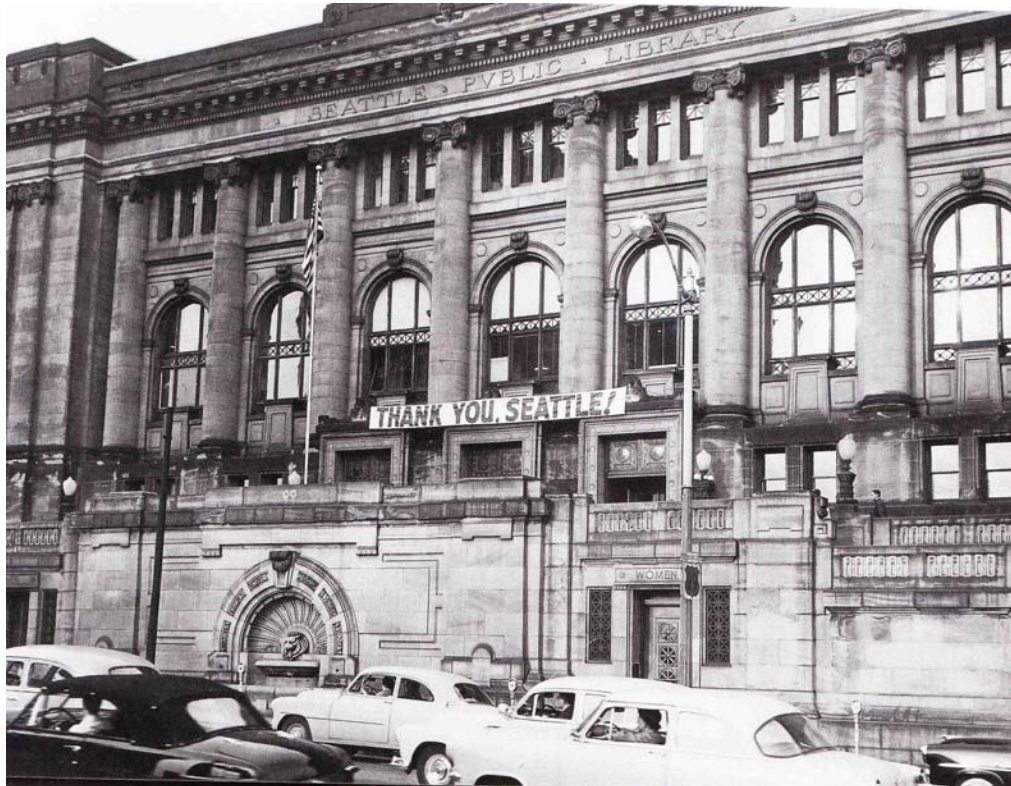
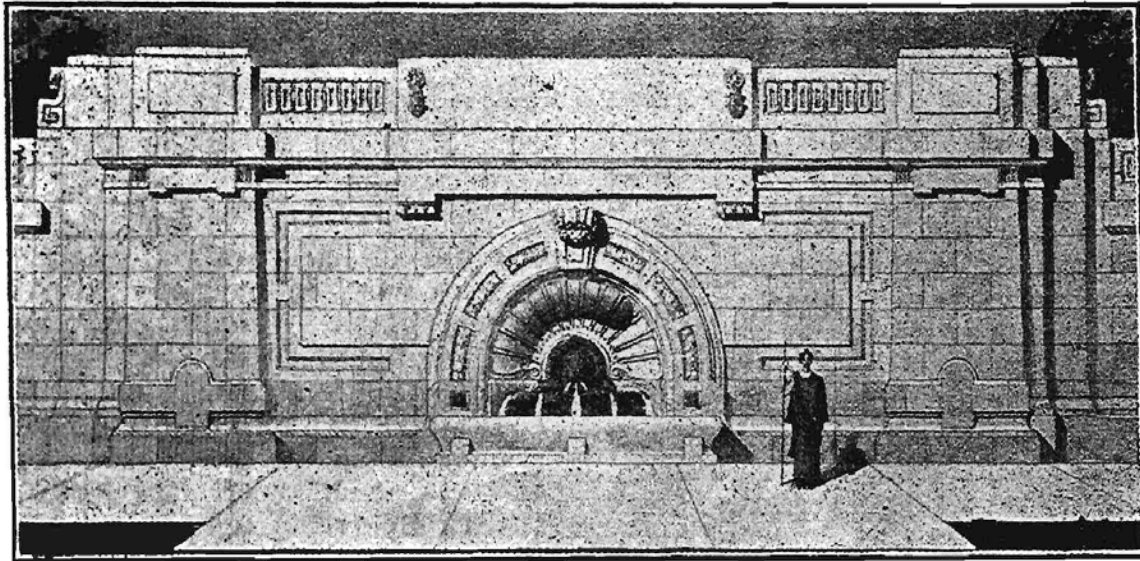


Fig. 33) Seattle Library by Rem Koolhaas and OMA, 2004, rendering showing *Fountain of Wisdom* at ground floor entrance

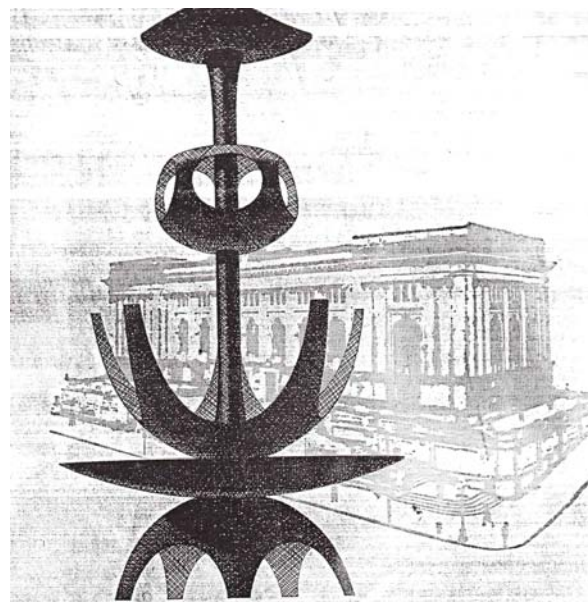


Fig. 34) Drawing of *Lion's Head Fountain* from *Pacific Builder and Engineer*, 1908



THE BRONZE WALL FOUNTAIN FOR THE SEATTLE PUBLIC LIBRARY
Somervell & Cote, Architects, Seattle

Fig. 35) *Fountain of Wisdom* in ad for Seattle Trust and Savings Bank, n.d.



1901: Andrew Carnegie gave Seattle its "new" library
(and banking was a personal thing)



Seattle's library had grown to about 25,000 volumes by 1901 when fire destroyed the building and most of the books. A newspaper editor wired Andrew Carnegie saying, "Can you give Seattle a library building?" Carnegie gave Seattle \$200,000. The city purchased a site at Fourth & Madison. Five years later the "new" building was dedicated. Today Seattle has another "new" library, completed in 1960 on the same site. And, today the Seattle Public Library operates 15 branches with a collection of 1,139,004 books. Many things have changed since the new library

opened. But, in this bank's view, one thing has changed—the need in Seattle for sound, conservative banking on a personal basis. Because of our moderate size, our customers consult regularly and informally with our senior officers, knowing that they will receive warm, counsel and prompt commitments. Our ability to meet their business and personal borrowing needs is always assured by our strong liquid reserve position. That's what we mean by sound, conservative banking. If it appeals to you, we would welcome chance to discuss all of our services with you.

SEATTLE Trust & Savings **BANK**

Fig. 36) Traditional Japanese scroll with painting of a garden and pavilion

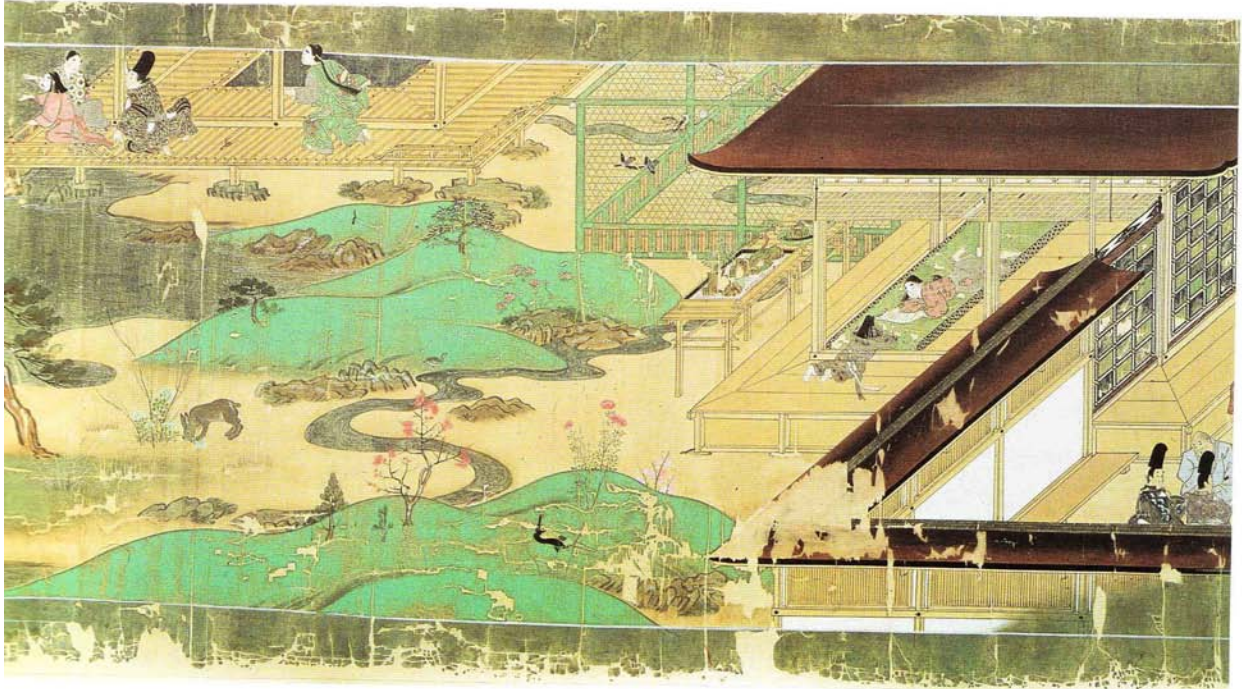


Fig. 37) Thomas Church, Donnell Garden, Sonoma, California, 1947-49, site plan

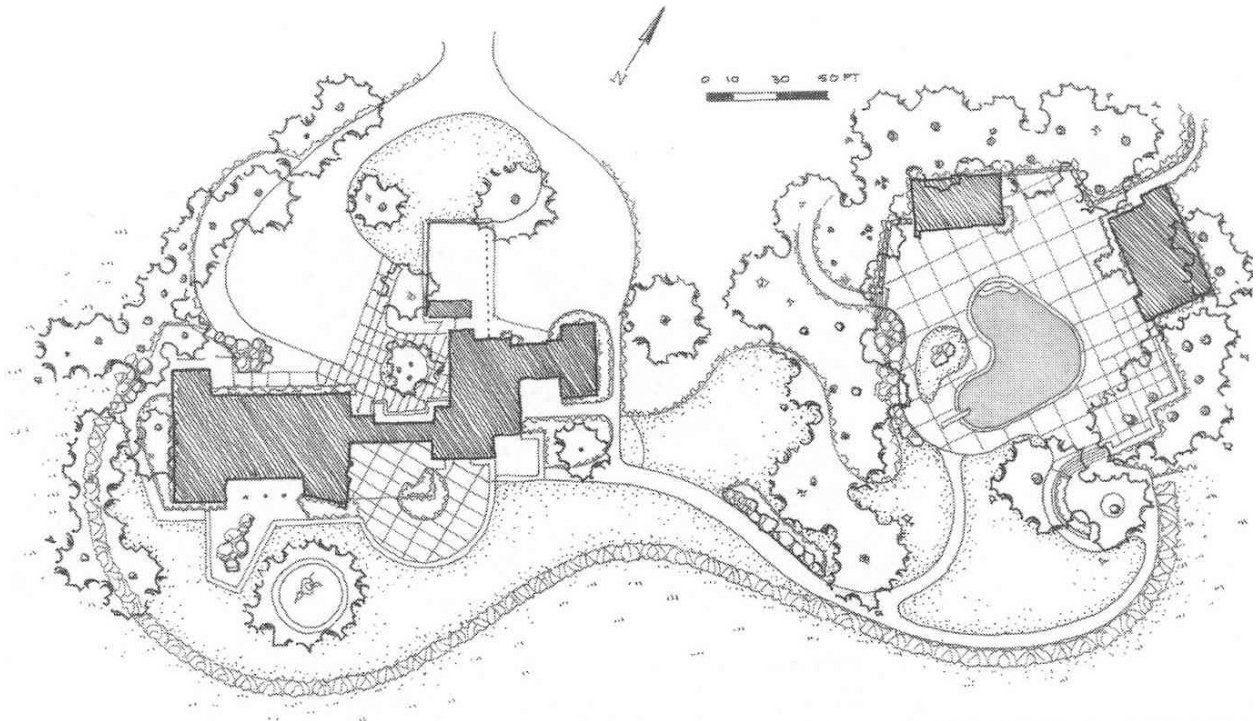


Fig. 38) Aerial view of the Bentall Centre showing *Fountain of the Pioneers* c. 1969



Fig. 39) Henry Moore, *Three-Piece Sculpture: Vertebrae*, 1968, bronze, First National Bank Building (Seattle Public Library of 1960 shown across the street)

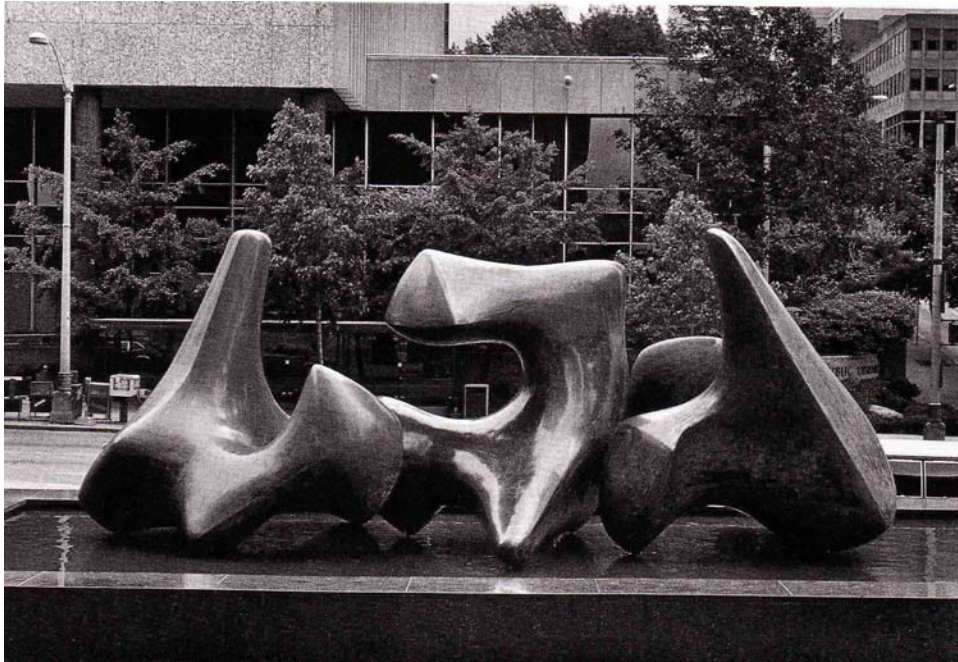


Fig. 40) George Tsutakawa, *Quartet*, 1955, walnut and copper

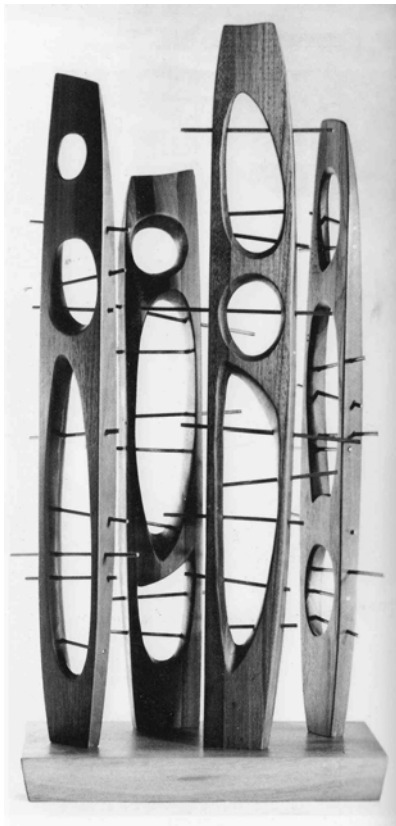


Fig. 41) George Tsutakawa, *Fountain of the Pioneers*, 1969, bronze, Bentall Centre, Vancouver, B.C.



Fig. 42) George Tsutakawa, *Fountain of the Pioneers*, 1969, showing pool with concrete tiles



Fig. 43) Harold Balazs, *Totem*, 1959, copper, Norton Building, Seattle



Fig. 44) Images from Ozenfant's *Foundations of Modern Art* showing an African tribal couple and a ceramic bowl by Paul Bonifas

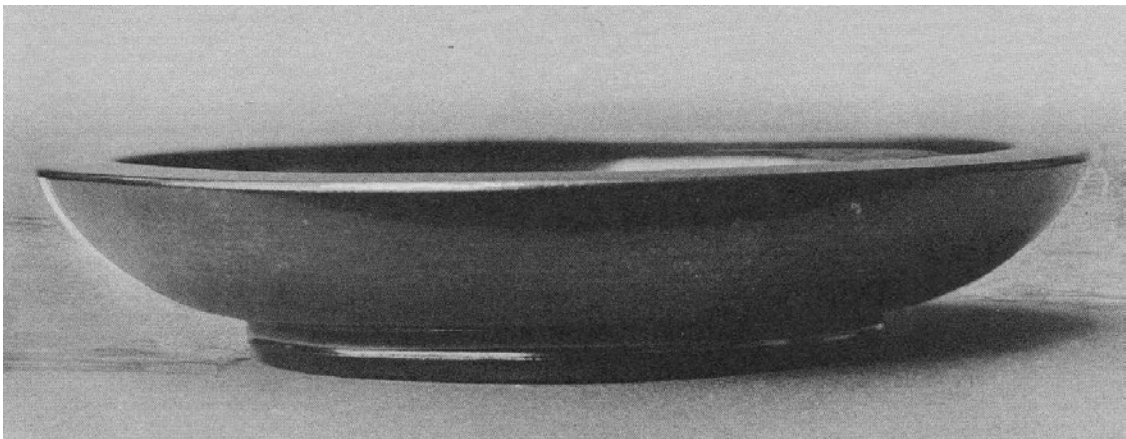
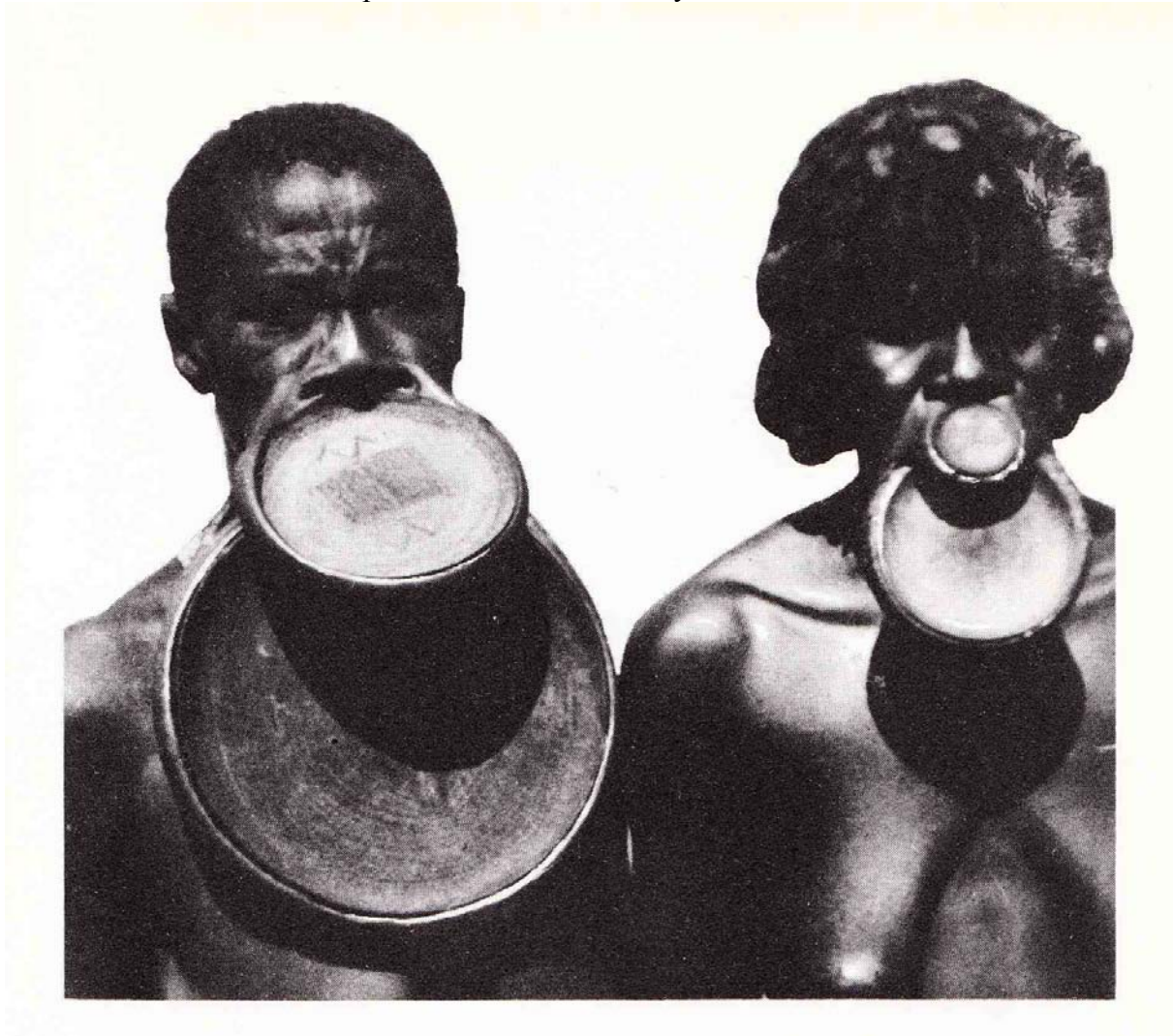


Fig. 45) Page from *The Tiger's Eye*, 1947, showing Morris Graves, *Plover and Surf* above a Nuu-chah-nulth housescreen with thunderbird and killer whale

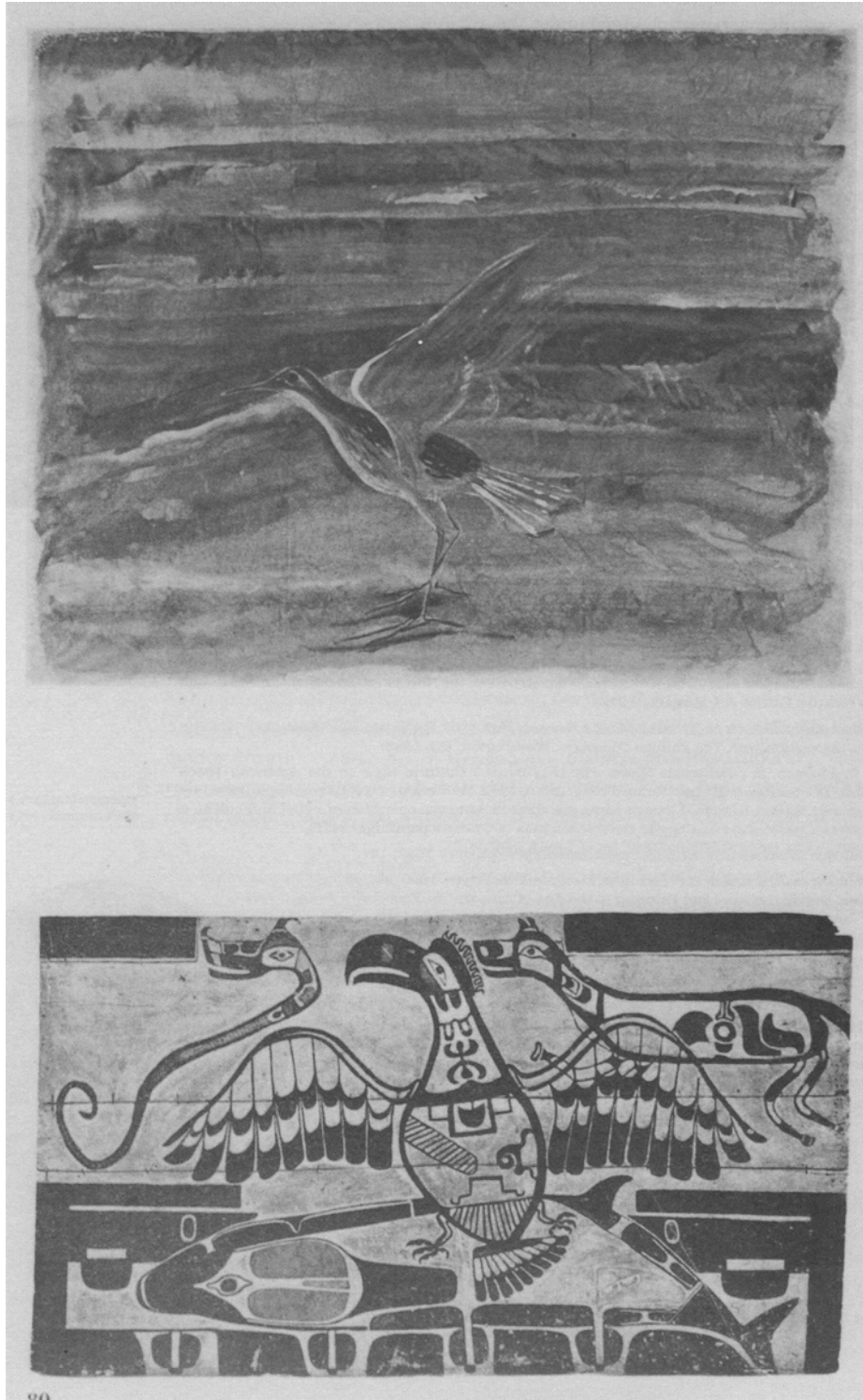


Fig. 46) Entrance, Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, Seattle 1909

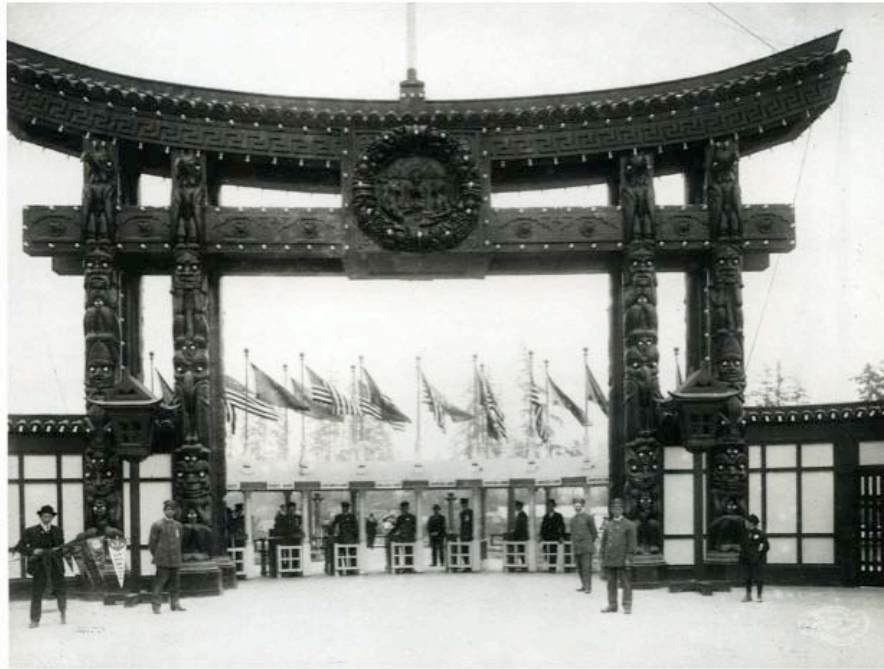


Fig. 47) George Tsutakawa, fountain group for Lloyd Center, Portland, Oregon, 1961, bronze

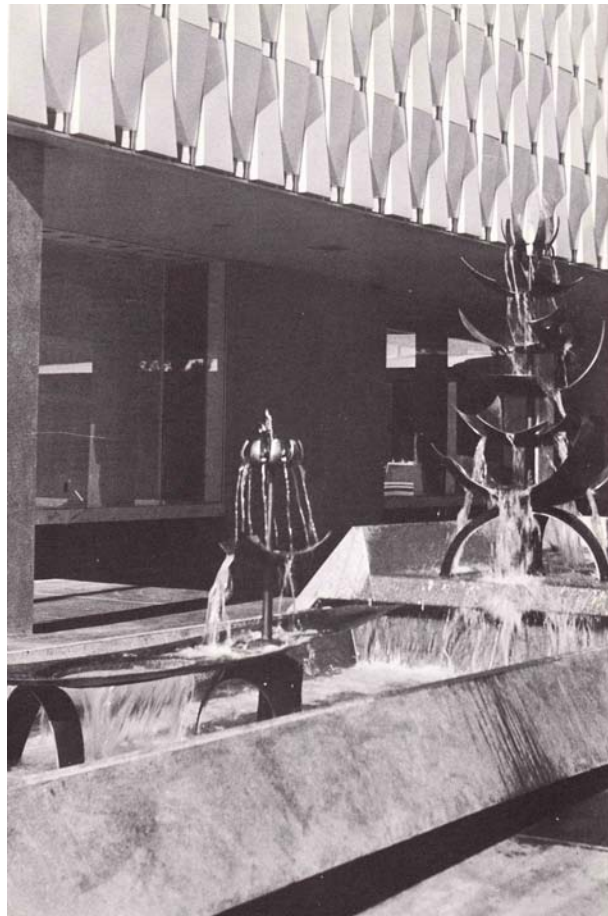


Fig. 48) Poster showing the Brussels Atomium, 1958

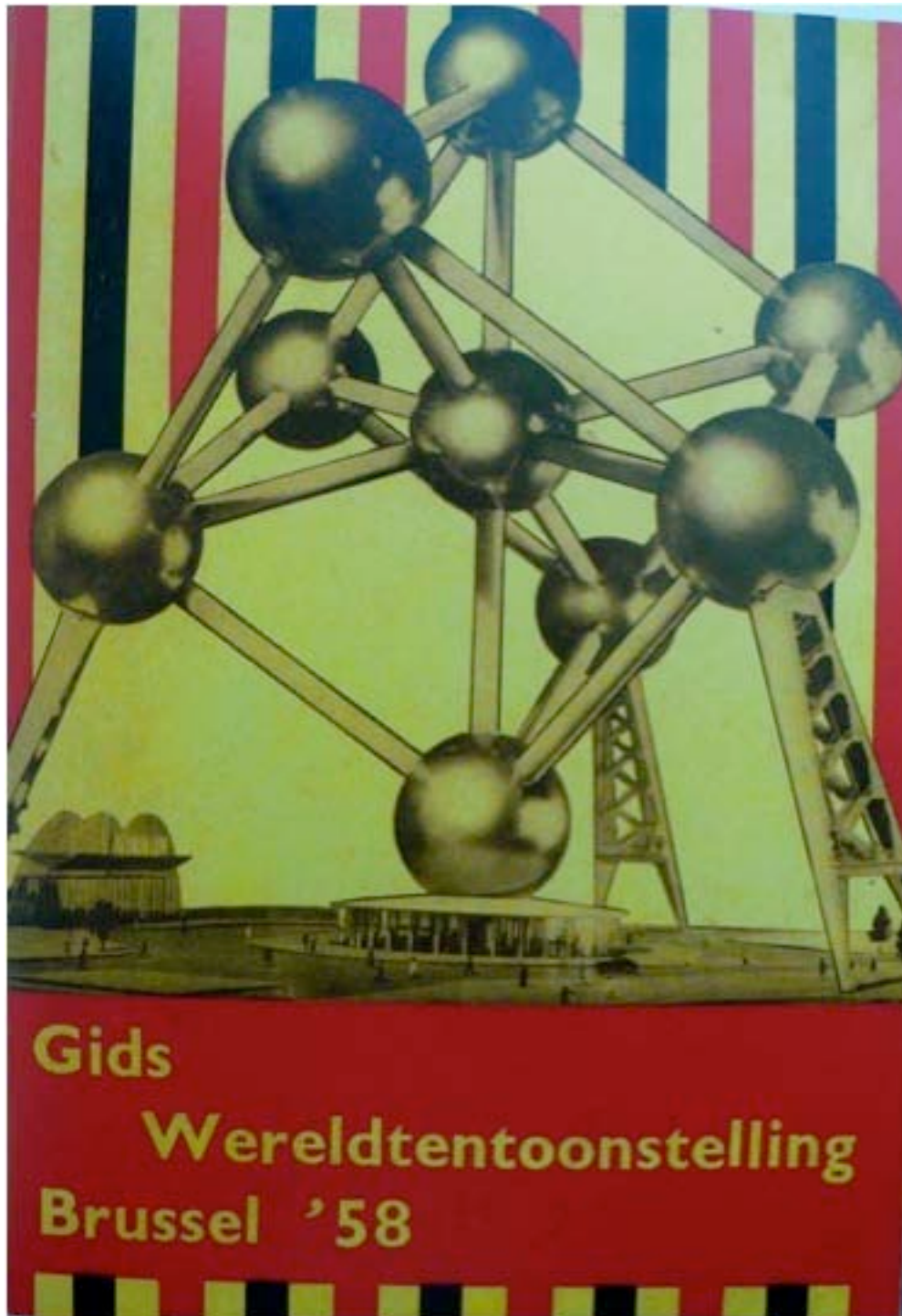


Fig. 49) Tsutakawa's entries for the Seattle Civic Center Fountain Competition, 1960-61

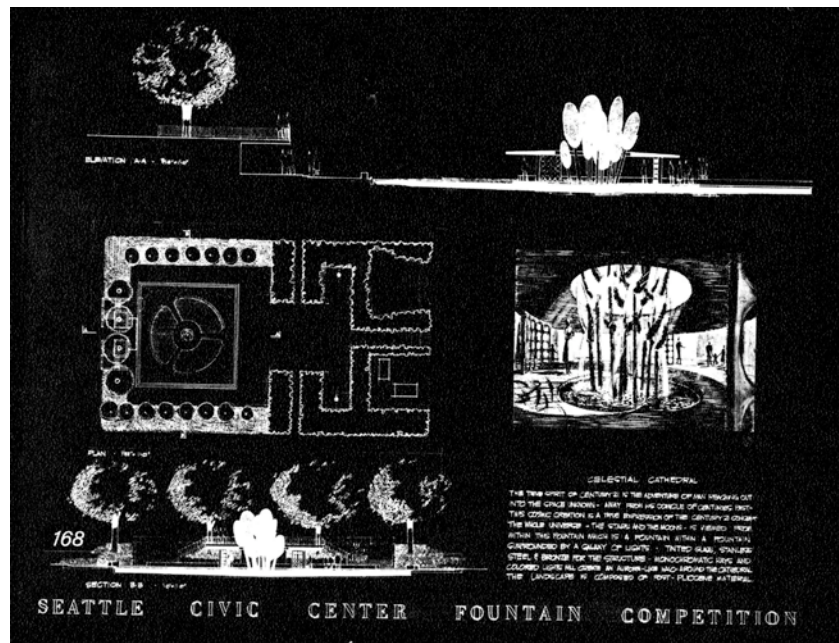
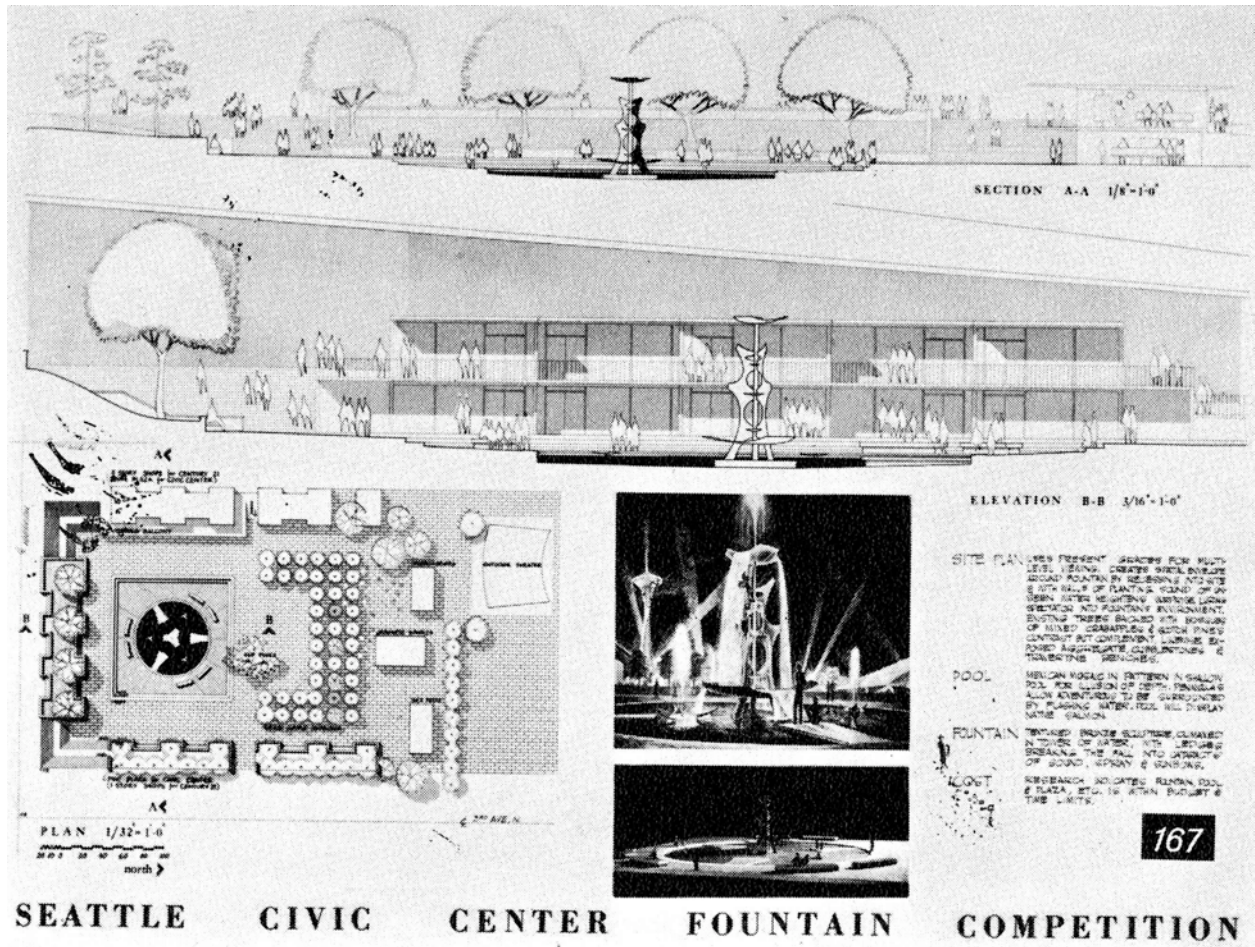


Fig. 50) Fountain at "Water Falls" Exhibit, New York World's Fair, 1939

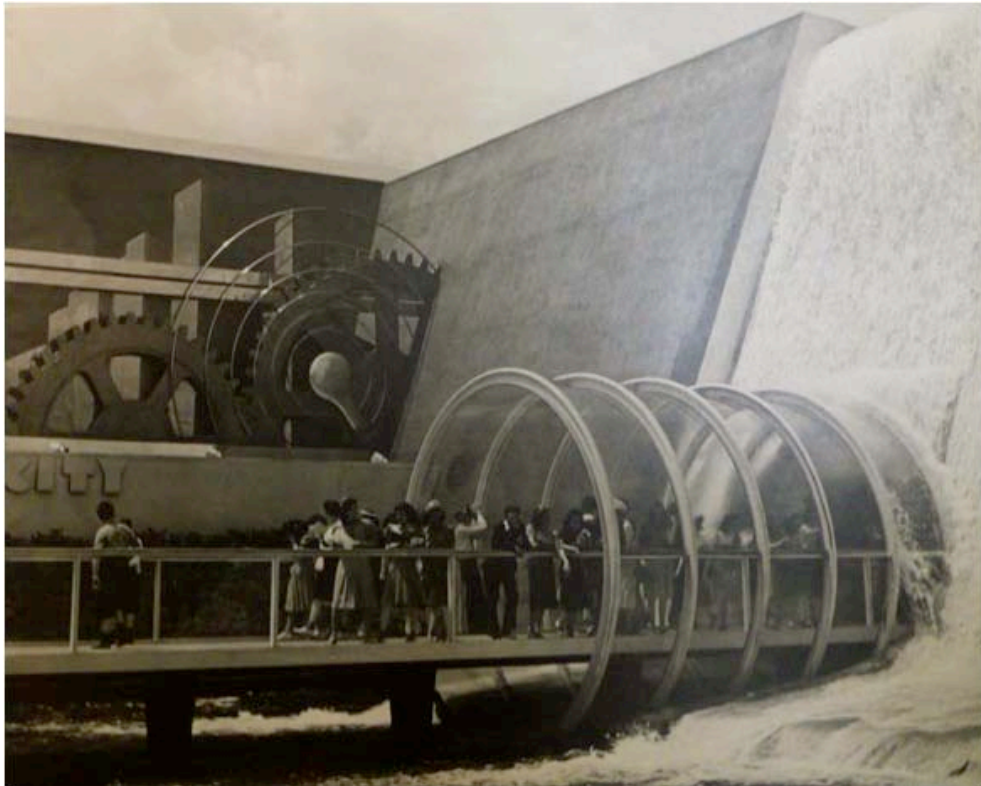


Fig. 51) Kazuyuki Matsushita and Hideki Shimizu,
International Fountain and Plaza, Seattle World's Fair, 1962

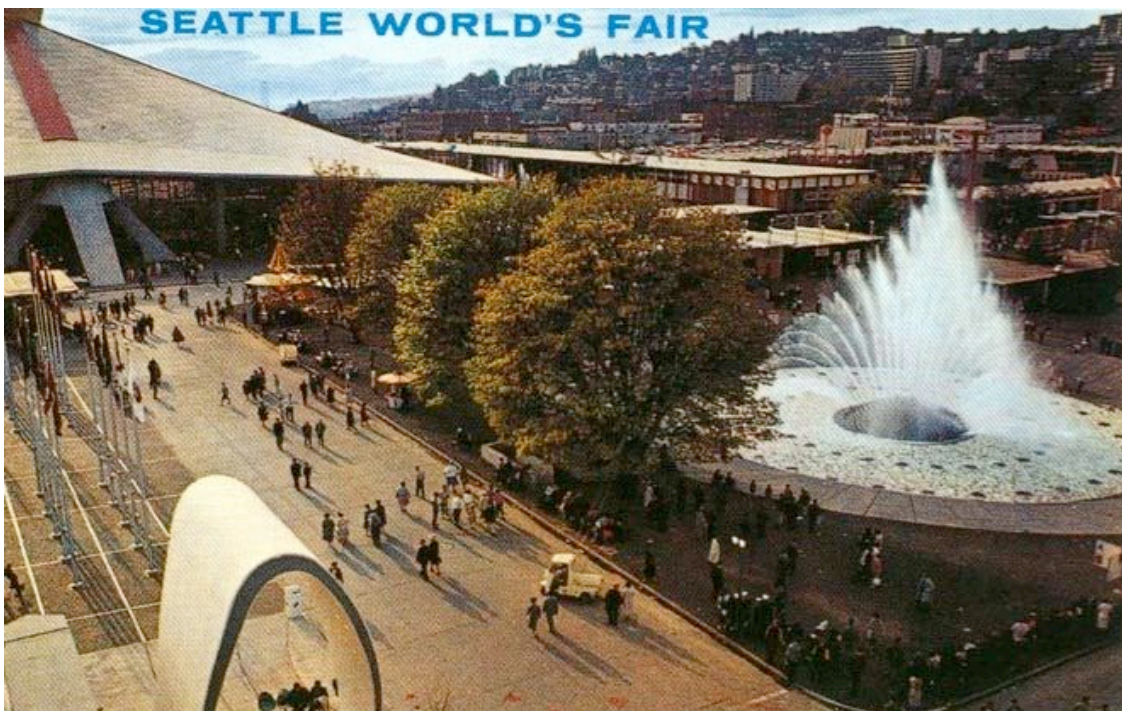


Fig. 52) Everett DuPen, *Fountain of Creation*, 1962, Seattle Center



Fig. 53) Minoru Yamasaki, United States Science Pavilion, with Space Needle behind

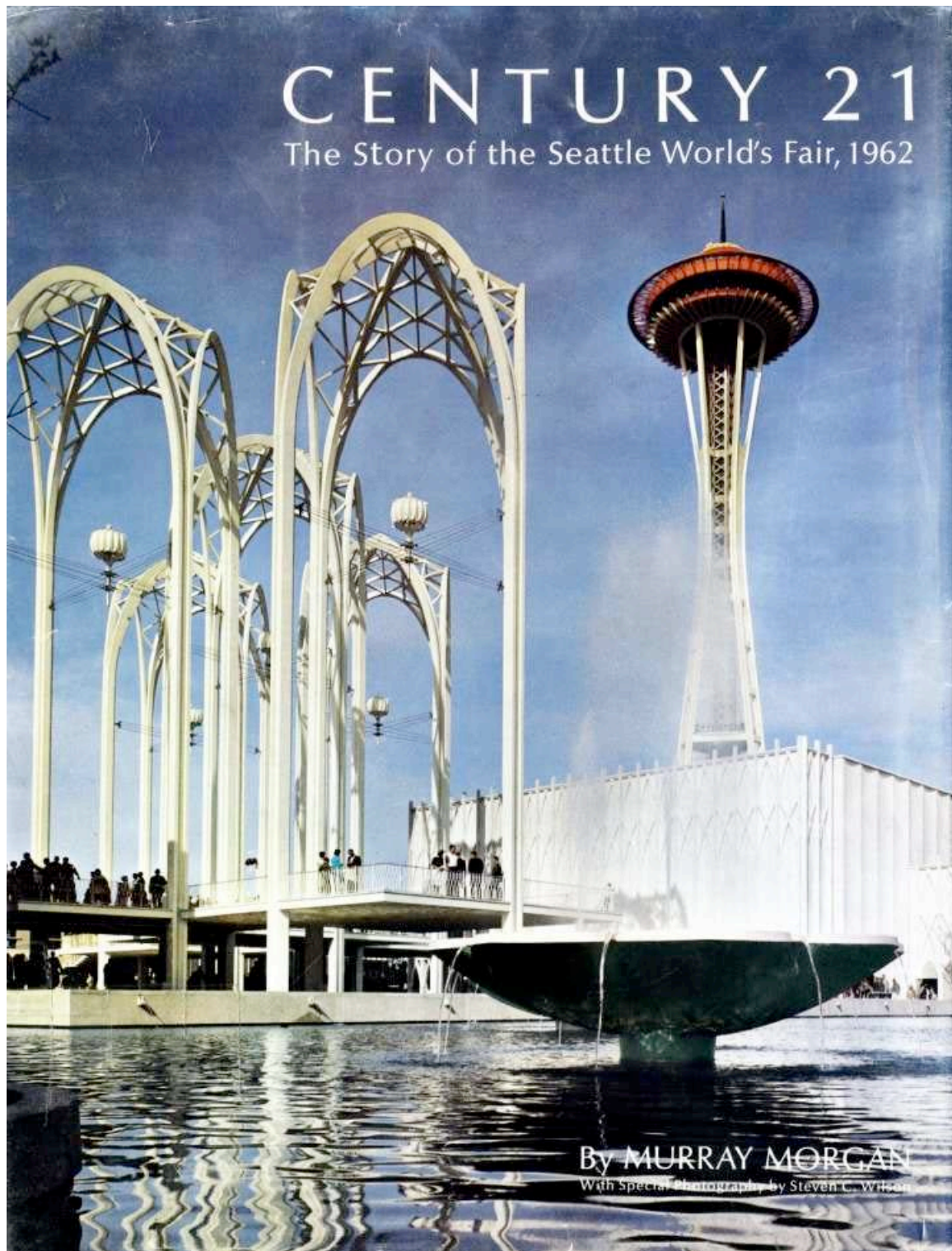


Fig. 54) George Tsutakawa, *Aquarius Ovoid*, 1962-64, Fulton Mall, Fresno, California



Fig. 55) George Tsutakawa, *Obos Fountain*, 1964, bronze, Fulton Mall, Fresno, California

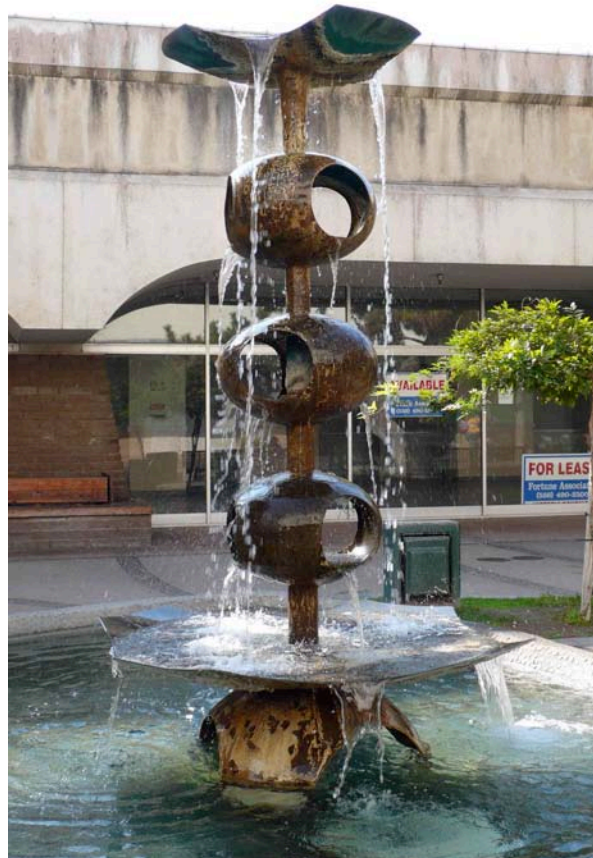


Fig. 56) George Tsutakawa, *Waiola Fountain*, 1966, Ala Moana Center, Honolulu, Hawaii



Fig. 57) Cover of *Art at Ala Moana* publication

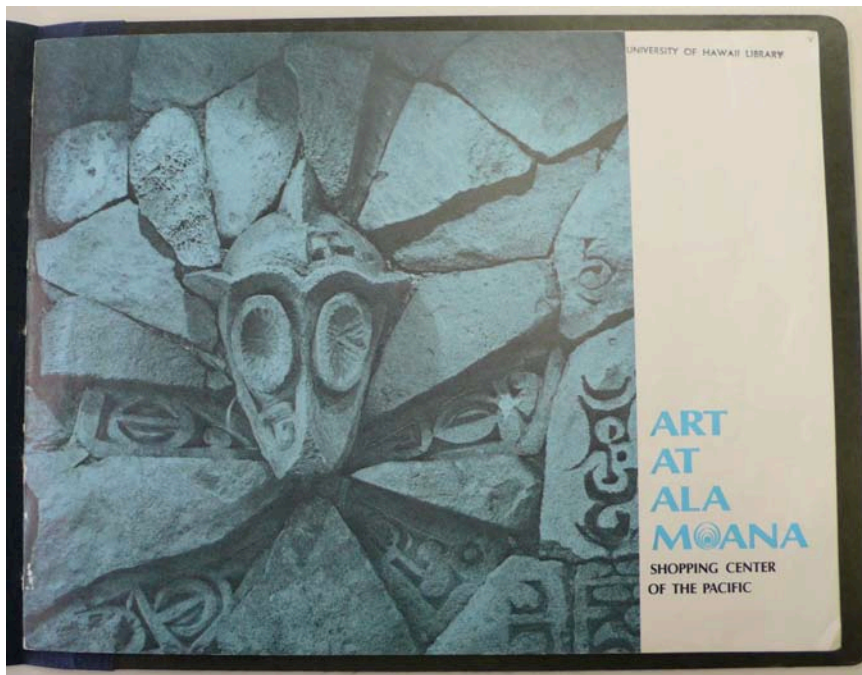


Fig. 58) George Tsutakawa, *Naramore Fountain*, 1967, bronze, Seattle



Fig. 59) Bruce Nauman, *Self-Portrait as a Fountain*, 1966, colour photograph

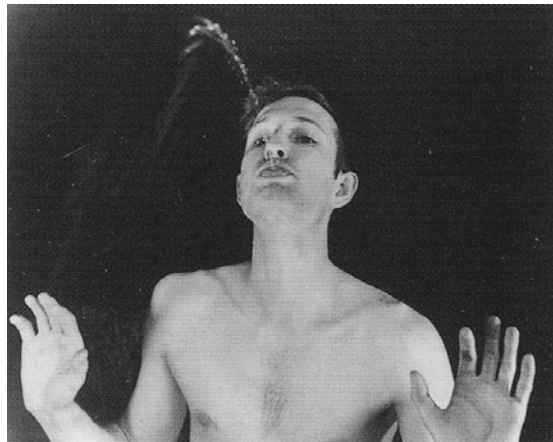


Fig. 60) Freeway Park, Seattle, Lawrence Halprin & Associates, 1972-1976



Fig. 61) Freeway Park fountain, Lawrence Halprin & Associates, 1972-1976

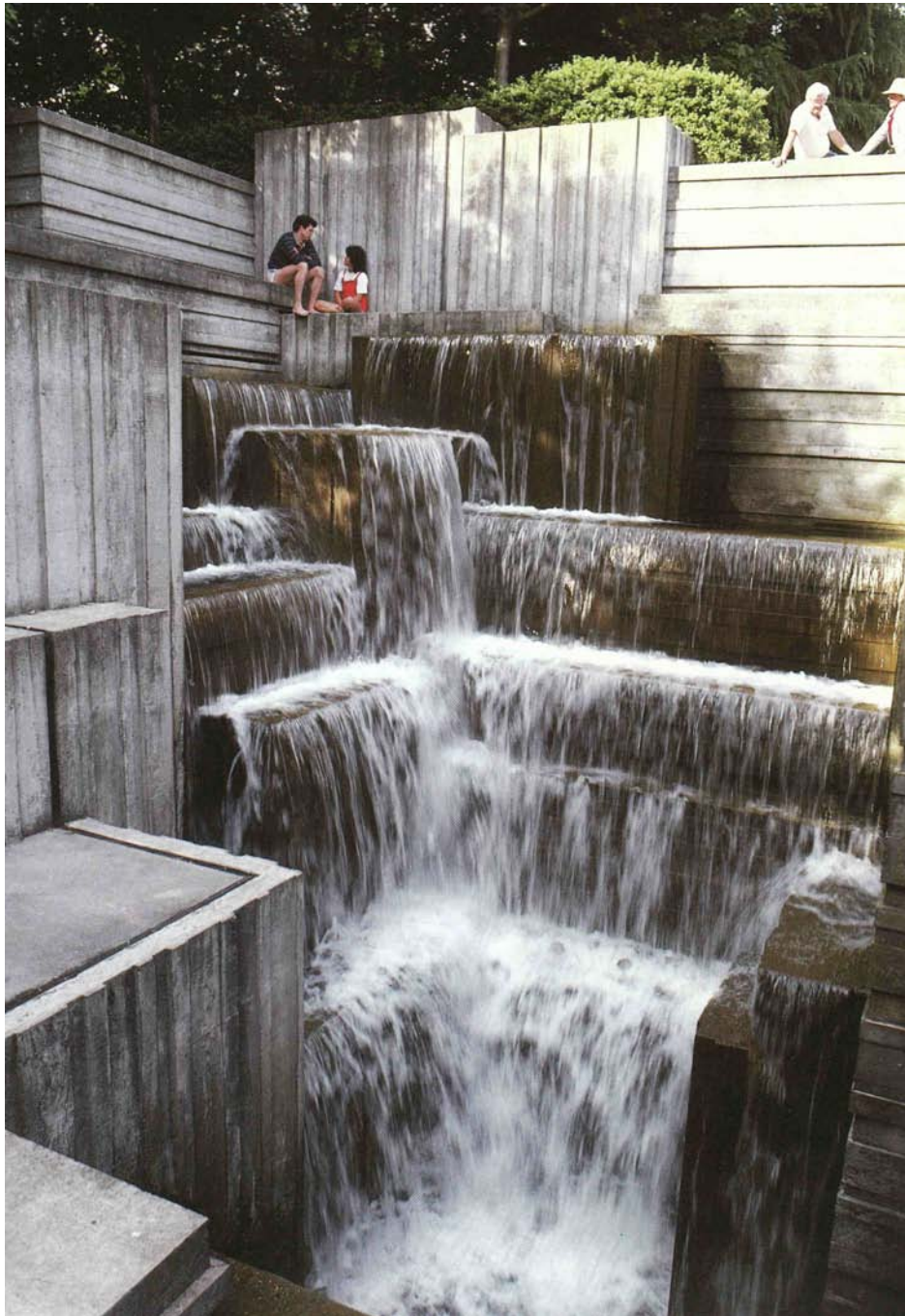


Fig. 62) Lawrence Halprin, *Study of a California Mountain Stream and Sketch for Lovejoy Fountain, Portland, Oregon*



Lovejoy - Portland - sculpture
 In the plaza there should be events - shows - concerts - dance events with dancers all over AND arriving to center space from above down stairs around fountain -
 Pots of geraniums or - locate these - check design & send to Bureau.

Fig. 63) George Tsutakawa, *Point of Arches*, 1959, *sumi* with *gansai*



Fig. 64) George Tsutakawa, *Sculpture*, 1978, bronze, International District, Seattle



Appendix C: Image Credits and Permissions

Figures 1, 8, 9, 12, 18, 19, 21, 29, 30, 40, 41, 56, 63, 64. Martha Kingsbury, *George Tsutakawa* (Seattle and Bellevue, WA: University of Washington Press / Bellevue Art Museum, 1990). Bellevue Arts Museum, used with permission.

Figures 3, 16, 17, 42, 54, 55. Photos by author.

Figure 5. Courtesy of the Tsutakawa family.

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