

5-3-1995

From *Promised Lands* to *Promised Landfill*: The Iconography of Oregon's Twentieth-Century Utopian Myth

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THESIS APPROVAL

The abstract and thesis of Jeffrey Lloyd Uecker for the Master of Arts in History were presented May 3, 1995, and accepted by the thesis committee and the department.

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ABSTRACT

An abstract of the thesis of Jeffry Lloyd Uecker for the Master of Arts in History presented May 3, 1995.

Title: From Promised Land to Promised Landfill: The Iconography of Oregon's Twentieth-Century Utopian Myth

The state of Oregon often has been viewed as a utopia. Figures of speech borrowed from the romantic sublime, biblical pilgrimage, economic boosterism, and millennialist fatalism have been used to characterize it. The visual arts also have responded to Oregon's utopian myth. During the nineteenth century, the landscape was a primary focus for utopian art. In the twentieth century, past human achievements, recreation, agriculture, and industry have joined the environment as themes which inspire utopian imagery.

The objective of this study is to demonstrate that twentieth-century art that responds to Oregon's utopian myth has given rise to an iconography which both energizes and reflects the development of that myth and which informs an important component of the state's identity. Using as a criteria that which idealizes Oregon as a place, an inventory of utopian art was compiled. It includes over 300 works of visual art, plus a number of artists for whom utopian subjects

served as a consistent element. From this information, dominant themes were identified which demonstrate the existence of iconography, or visual symbolism, that expresses Oregon's utopian myth.

Through the themes of natural environment, heroic images of Oregon's human past, and interaction between humans and the environment—plus numerous sub-themes—the artistic evidence demonstrates that visual imagery and symbols play an important role in how Oregonians define themselves and their history. It also suggests what form the state's utopian myth, identity, and the decisions made by its people may take in the next century.

FROM PROMISED LAND TO PROMISED LANDFILL:
THE ICONOGRAPHY OF OREGON'S TWENTIETH-
CENTURY UTOPIAN MYTH

by

JEFFRY LLOYD UECKER

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS
in
HISTORY

Portland State University
1995

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INTRODUCTION:

ART, MYTH, AND UTOPIA

On a mild March afternoon in 1993, a statue called The Promised Land was placed in the courtyard, or Washington Ellipse, of the Oregon History Center in downtown Portland. Depicting a family at the end of their journey, the work was intended to memorialize the pioneers' "spirit and persistence." A small crowd watched as the crane, witnessed by the monumental painted images of Lewis and Clark on the History Center's wall in the background, lowered the idealized figures onto the cement and brick surface (see Figure 1). The statue appeared to have descended from heaven into the midst of the onlookers—a scene reminiscent of an illustration that could have been found in a Bible similar to one clutched by the young boy in the sculpture. Few in the crowd knew that the placement was temporary or that the Oregon Trail Coordinating Council, which commissioned the work by David Manuel, was having difficulty finding a permanent home for the piece. Instead, the gathering that day showed enthusiasm in anticipation of the upcoming kickoff celebration for the sesquicentennial of the first major wagon trains to cross the continent.

Later that year, an organization called ORLO, whose mission is to use the arts to "create new stories, heroes, and definitions to serve as models for sensitive



Fig. 1. David Manuel's The Promise Land being placed at the Oregon History Center, Portland, Oregon, March 16, 1993. (OHS neg. OrHi 91329)

caretaking of the natural world,” installed its premiere exhibition titled The Promised Landfill at its gallery in northwest Portland.¹ Using sculpture, photography, and video, the purpose of the show was to encourage responsible resource and waste management. The centerpiece of the exhibit was a sculpture made of refuse and modeled after the work by Manuel (see Figure 2). Its intention was to contrast the pioneers’ dream of a utopia of apparently unlimited natural resources with the consequences of rapid unchecked development.²

Both works of art are statements about events in Oregon history. One honors an epic journey, the other examines and criticizes a way of life. Each also represents key elements of one of the most enduring myths contributing to the state’s identity—that of it being a utopia. Dealing with themes as divergent as the materials from which they are made, each responds to that myth’s central qualities of Oregon possessing a precious natural environment and being a place of abundant resources.³ As works of art, they are appropriate and effective expressions of the myth.⁴

¹The ORLO Foundation (Portland, Oregon: ORLO), n.d.

²Kevin Francis, “WW Fresh Pick,” Portland (Ore.) Willamette Week, 14-20 October 1993, p. 53.

³William G. Robbins, Introduction, in Regionalism and the Pacific Northwest, ed. William G. Robbins, Robert J. Frank, and Richard E. Ross (Corvallis: Oregon State University, 1983), p.5.

⁴Joseph Campbell, Myths to Live By: How We Re-Create Ancient Legends in Our Daily Lives to Release Human Potential (New York: Arkana, 1972), p. 50; and Joseph Campbell with Bill Moyers, The Power of Myth, ed. Betty Sue Flowers (New York: Doubleday, 1988), p. 85.

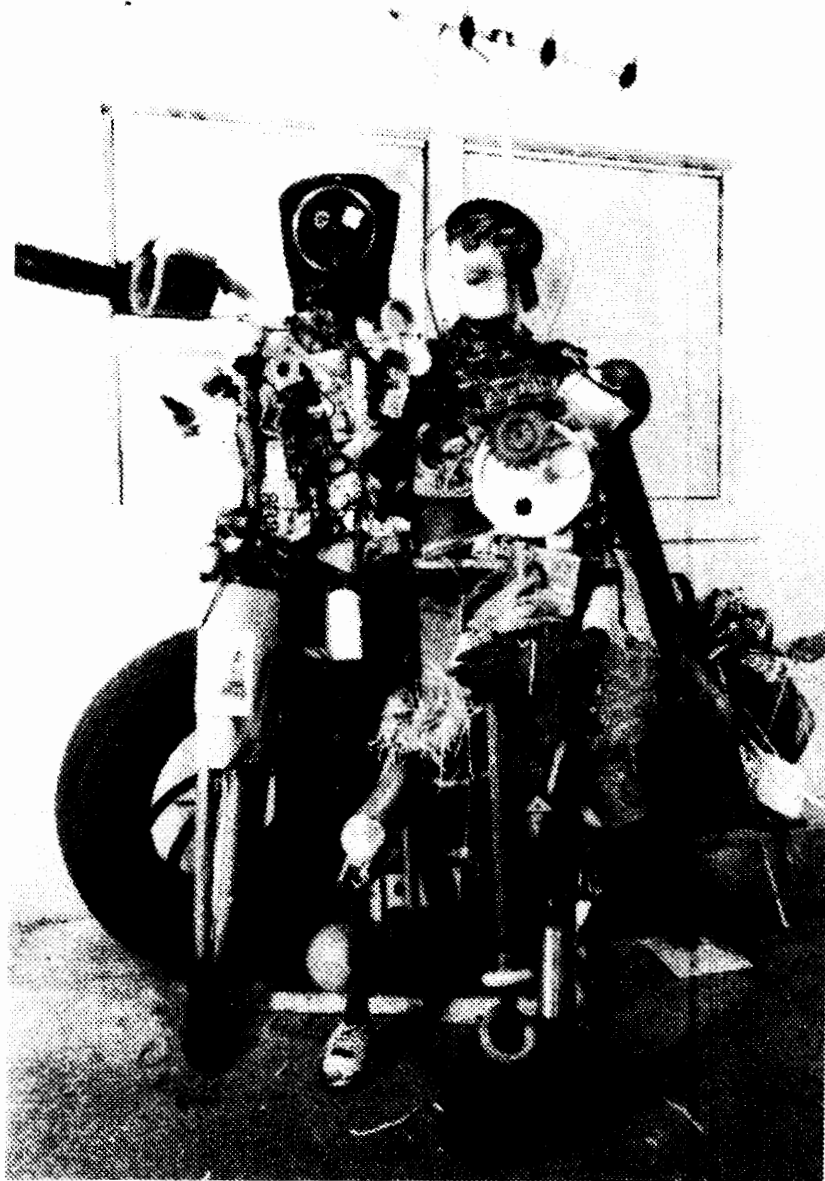


Fig. 2. ORLO. The Promised Landfill. 1993.
Mixed-media. Portland, Oregon (OHS neg.
OrHi 91408)

Myths are conveyors of information about basic assumptions that define a person, a family, or a culture.⁵ They shape social life by validating or creating customs, rites, institutions, and beliefs.⁶ Societies at all levels create myths in order to lend meaning to their existence. Myths can control history by simplifying it, polishing off its rough edges, and making it easy to digest no matter how implausible. Myths can also be examined as ideology, giving definition to the identity and beliefs of a group of people.⁷

Because of their ability to communicate and interpret metaphor, the arts are one of the most effective means of expressing as well as studying myth.⁸ During the course of the twentieth century, Oregon has experienced limits on its once seemingly endless natural resources, growth or demise of numerous industries, large population increases, and the introduction of numerous new cultural groups. By examining how the visual arts have responded to and expressed Oregon's utopian myth in the twentieth century, it is the objective of this thesis to demonstrate that an iconography has developed that both energizes

⁵David Adams Leeming, The World of Myth (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 4.

⁶Raphael Patai, Myth and Modern Man, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972), p. 2.

⁷William H. Treuttner, ed., "Ideology and Image: Justifying Westward Expansion," in The West As America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier, 1820-1920 (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), p. 40.

⁸Campbell, p. 50.

and reflects the development of that myth and that informs an important component of the state's identity.

Because this essay uses certain terms in a general way, it is important to provide some definitions. The myth of utopia has been given many names, depending on the historical and cultural context in which it is used. This is no less true for its application to Oregon. Oregon has been described as a Promised Land, Land of Opportunity, Eden, and, more recently, a part of Ecotopia and home of the ancient forests. Because of the many utopian labels given to Oregon, and the wide variety of dreams and aspirations that gave rise to them, utopia is defined here as any term that idealizes Oregon as a place or culture.

Just as there are many ways to define utopia, there are many ways to describe art. This thesis focuses on the visual arts, primarily painting, sculpture, photography, and illustration. At times architecture and landscape architecture are also examined. When viewed as symbol, art is defined here as a material product of human creativity which represents something sacred or immaterial.⁹ Little consideration is given to perceived artistic value of individual works. Finally, instead of taking a strictly chronological approach, works are studied thematically, although within each theme a chronological format is generally employed.

This study is based on trends evident in an inventory of works of art that reflect Oregon's utopian myth. A work's inclusion was decided upon by its

⁹Peter Murray and Linda Murray, The Penguin Dictionary of Art and Artists, 5th ed. (New York: Penguin Books, 1983), p. 403.

relative importance as an artistic expression, symbol, transmitter of, or response to Oregon's utopian myth. This, in turn, is determined by the work's influence on Oregon culture, its public reception, its endurance as a symbol of the Oregon experience, or by the artist's intentions. While the entire inventory is provided for reference in the appendix, only selected examples are examined in the body of the study to demonstrate artistic and historical connections.

Myth and Art

Robert Winks contends that four factors contribute to the formation of regions, and thus regional identity, in the United States: culture, geography, economy, and the unique set of external influences that exercise control over these three. In addition to understanding what form each of these factors may take, he maintains that to identify and study the character of a particular place it is also necessary to know what its people believe about what they think happened there—their ideas about the facts of their situation, how those ideas are communicated, and their understanding of their history.¹⁰

Because regional identity transcends official or academic definitions, it must be measured on the level of emotion, through art and symbol, story and myth.¹¹ It is through myth, and its transmitter, the arts, that people come to

¹⁰Robin W. Winks, "Regionalism in Comparative Perspective," in Regionalism and the Pacific Northwest, ed. William G. Robbins, Robert J. Frank, and Richard E. Ross (Corvallis: Oregon State University, 1983), pp. 16-17.

¹¹Ibid., p. 27.

know who they are as a culture and members of a region, and that the character of a culture and region can be communicated to others.¹² Joseph Campbell's words pertain to the many works of art that respond to Oregon's utopian myth when he states that "the function of the artist is the mythologization of the world"—"artists are the mythmakers of our day."¹³

Art and History

Art is an important tool for learning about a culture and its history. By examining the subject, style, visual details, media, and provenance or origin of a work of art, one can better understand the subject depicted or the historical and cultural context within which the work was created. When the portrait of Henry VIII by Hans Holbein the Younger (1540) is examined, one receives a general idea about what the sixteenth century English king looked like or what he wore. A great deal more can be learned, however, about the myth of Renaissance kingship as demonstrated through symbolism in the portrayal of Henry's clothes and jewelry, as well as his monumental pose. One may also receive a sense of the artist's experience of the king's personality, discerning such traits as his aloofness, his ruthlessness, his intelligence, or his commanding presence. When art is approached this way, a host of non-literary information can be gleaned,

¹²Leeming, p. 8; and Campbell, p. 50.

¹³Campbell with Moyers, p. 85.

including feelings and emotions, motives and biases, values and world views, and an array of other human experiences.

When art is studied as artifact, other information can be learned. Jules David Prown defines an artifact as “something that happened in the past but . . . continues to exist in our own time.” Consequently, artifacts are valuable historical resources.¹⁴ Close examination of an artifact may reveal from what material it was made, who made it and perhaps even where it was made. It can give clues about its use—whether it was utilitarian, decorative, or ritualistic. It can even contribute information about related objects and subjects.

Because art’s primary task is “to communicate—whether to instruct, record, moralize, influence, or please”¹⁵—its subjective quality is sometimes more elusive. Prown describes the fruits of this subjectivity as artistic fiction that communicates ideas through myth, from which can be learned universal truths. In this sense art is similar to artifacts and historical documents. Objects, be they art or artifact, provide evidence of their physical makeup, age, and perhaps even provenance, but they do not give ready information about the complex set of ideas, emotions, and feelings involved in their creation. Consequently, artifacts and works of art are limited in their capacity to tell the whole story. When

¹⁴Jules David Prown, “The Truth of Material Culture: History or Fiction?” in History From Things: Essays on Material Culture, ed. Steven Lubar and W. David Kingery (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993), pp. 2-3.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 5.

viewed not as facts but as metaphor—as subjective constructions with distinct intentions and points of view—art and artifacts offer insight into the ways of the humans by whom and for whom they were created and into the historical and cultural context from which they arose. Once the notions of history as fact and historical art as true representation of the past are shed, the job of approaching works of art as documents of the past can begin.¹⁶

Utopia

Utopia refers to “a state of impossible perfection which nevertheless is in some genuine sense not beyond the reach of humanity.”¹⁷ As indicated, the idea of utopia has taken many forms and has been given many names. As a Golden Age, it brings to mind images of an earlier time or state of harmony between human beings and the natural environment, where all needs were met. Its description as a Paradise not only includes characteristics of a Golden Age, but also of a future condition of happiness and peace. When referred to as Arcadia, it recalls a pastoral setting of peace and harmony. As the Millennium, utopia describes a life enjoyed only by a community of believers—whether their focus be God, science, or revolution. The term Ideal City has been used by philosophers to identify an earthly, microcosmic counterpart to the larger order of the cosmos.

¹⁶William H. Treuttner, ed., “Prelude to Expansion: Repainting the Past,” in The West As America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier, 1820-1920 (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), p. 57.

¹⁷Krishan Kumar, Utopianism (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1991), p. 3.

The mythic land called Cockayne is a utopia that appeals to human desire for a place of luxury and ease.¹⁸ Whereas not all of these terms have been used to describe Oregon, certain ones, including Golden Age, Paradise, Arcadia, and Ideal City, have connections with important chapters in its history.

The myth of utopia is found throughout the world. The notion of Paradise is central to many cultures, and millenarian traditions are included not only in Christian mythology, but also in the mythologies of native people of Brazil, Burma, and the Pacific Northwest.¹⁹ Utopian ideas are found in the ancient worlds of Europe and the Near East. The Eden of Genesis and the Israelites' Promised Land of Canaan are familiar and meaningful to many people even today. Be it Homer's Elysian Plain, the Roman Islands of the Blest, or the Celtic land of Bran, assimilated into the Christian tradition through the voyage of Ireland's St. Brendan, utopia has often been associated with some form of Western paradise.²⁰

The myth of utopia has a long tradition in America. Christopher Columbus thought he had reached Paradise, and although there is no evidence that he fully convinced his own sovereigns of the idea, many explorers and settlers that followed him—whether they were looking for Eden, El Dorado, or the Fountain of

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 3-18.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 11.

²⁰Loren Baritz, "The Idea of the West," The American Historical Review, 66 (April 1961):618-29.

Youth—used utopia as a rationale or even justification for their voyages.²¹ The Puritans of Massachusetts Bay believed that, standing on what must surely be the western edge of the world, they had reached the Promised Land. And it was utopianism, in part, that helped justify the westward expansion of the United States. Lines from Bishop George Berkeley's 1726 poem, "Verses on the Prospect of Planting Arts and Learning in America," composed with the idea of starting an Indian school in Bermuda, were repeated throughout the mid-nineteenth century to support the myth of American progress and Manifest Destiny:

Westward the course of Empire takes its way;
The four first Acts already past,
A fifth shall close the Drama with the day;
Time's noblest offspring is the last.²²

With the encouragement of people like Thomas Hart Benton who said "all obey the same impulse—that of going to the West; . . . the course of heavenly bodies, of the human race, and of science, civilization, and national power," Americans believed that the West was their destiny. With the new promise that awaited beyond the next river or mountain range, or in its "wide open spaces," the West was seen as a "land of opportunity."²³

²¹Ibid., pp. 626-627.

²²Quoted in Patricia Hills, "Picturing Progress in the Era of Westward Expansion," in The West as America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier, 1820-1920, ed. William H. Treuttner (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), p. 100.

²³Brian Dippie, "The West That Was and the West That Is," The Gilcrease Magazine of History and Art, 8 July 1986, p. 5.

In the twentieth century, the American West continued to be defined as a utopia. The first decades of the century saw increased population and industrialism, plus the outbreak of World War I. During these years, the generation born when much of the West was still being settled looked back with nostalgia upon a seemingly simpler time when conditions that influenced the mythology of the American frontier were still very much identifiable.²⁴ This was a time when the European majority honored their pioneers and other “heroes” who settled the region. It was also an era, since the last years of the nineteenth century, when a number of new Western states were created.

The passing of the frontier generation between 1920 and World War II brought a questioning of idyllic notions about the West. The harsh conditions of drought and economic depression during the 1930s strengthened this.²⁵ New Deal programs, such as the Federal Arts Program, which popularized images of a bygone era, and federal construction projects, which dramatically changed the face of the region, bringing development and new jobs, breathed new life into the West’s utopian image. After 1945 and into the 1950s, the mythic West relieved fears stemming from the Cold War and the threat of nuclear war. During this

²⁴Gerald D. Nash, Creating the West: Historical Interpretation, 1890-1990 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1991), p. 198.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 198-199.

time, mass culture, aided by Hollywood and television, elevated the cowboy, an American media hero throughout the century, to new levels.²⁶

The 1960s and 1970s saw a calling into question of all dimensions of American life, including traditional notions about the history of the West. Many people challenged and deemed shameful the way the United States had dealt with its indigenous and other non-European populations, including those in the West, as well as the way it had exploited its natural resources. The myth had darkened. Increased concern into the 1990s for protecting the environment brought a new focus on the West as the home of some of the nation's last untouched natural environments. At times, concerned citizens glorified these places. At other times the importance of preserving what little was left was driven home by creating negative, dystopian images. An attempt by many to identify a spiritual dimension with environmental issues idealized native American culture and religion, transporting it to the center of popular culture. It was also during this time that the role of art in studying the West received greater emphasis, including scrutiny of the myths in which the West has been wrapped.²⁷

The twentieth-century evolution of Oregon's utopian mythology follows closely to that of the American West. Oregon was greatly influenced by many of

²⁶William H. Goetzmann and William N. Goetzmann, The West of the Imagination (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1986), pp. 340-346; and Nash, p. 231.

²⁷Ron Tyler, "Discovered Lands, Invented Pasts," Montana 42 (Summer 1992):81, 85.

the same events that affected the entire region. The incorporation of the Oregon Historical Society in 1898 and the holding of the Lewis and Clark Fair in 1905 were consistent with a larger national trend to embrace a familiar past while moving forward into a new century. The Pacific Northwest drew thousands of people from other parts of the country as it was transformed by federal construction projects and the defense industries of the 1930s and 1940s. And, as the home of the ancient forests and depleting salmon runs, the region continues in the last decades of the century to be the focus of national and world attention as a place of fragile wonderment.

Oregon possesses its own unique utopian characteristics as well, for the Pacific Northwest is also different from what is traditionally termed the West. Carlos Schwantes, recalling the central feature of the state's utopian myth as abundant resources, cites the region's unique natural environment as one of its central characteristics.²⁸ Bernard Devoto included only the eastern fringe of the state in his definition of the American West.²⁹ And a recent survey posing the question "where is the West?" found that one in six historians and journalists and

²⁸Carlos Schwantes, The Pacific Northwest: An Interpretive History (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1989), p. 2.

²⁹Carey McWilliams, "Myths of the West," The North American Review 232 (1931):427.

40 percent of writers questioned excluded, along with Washington and California, all or parts of Oregon.³⁰

Geographical features of ocean, river, mountain, and desert; a tradition of being a destination for emigrants; historical occupations of fishing, mining, ranching, and logging; and a population pull toward the coast instead of the Rocky Mountains or the Midwest have acted to define the Northwest.³¹ They have also influenced the character of the region's—including Oregon's—utopian myth since the mid-nineteenth century. A sparse, but tightly clustered population and land forms like the Columbia River and the Cascade and Coast ranges, that serve to both divide and unite areas of the region as well as to function as strong agents of aesthetics and culture, are defining traits.³² The short distance of large cities from wilderness, major outdoor recreation areas, and vistas of seemingly endless forests—an important symbol for the timber industry and environmentalists alike—are testimonies to this.

While Oregon is not alone in possessing a potent utopian myth that informs its identity—California, Utah, and Hawaii all have strong and diverse utopian traditions—the development and form its myth has taken is distinct, even

³⁰Walter Nugent, "Where is the American West?: A Report on a Survey," Montana, Summer 1992, p. 8.

³¹Barre Tolken, "Northwest Regional Folklore," in Northwest Perspectives: Essays on the Culture of the Pacific Northwest, ed. Edwin R. Bingham and Glen A. Love (Eugene: University of Oregon, 1979), pp. 26-27.

³²Schwantes, The Pacific Northwest, pp. 6, 13.

when compared to its northern neighbor. The first great wave of immigrants of European ancestry came to Oregon in the mid-nineteenth century when Manifest Destiny was gaining significant momentum. The trek across the continent by covered wagon or by ship around the Horn became couched in the biblical language of pilgrimage—promised land, Canaan, land of milk and honey—not to mention Eden and a host of other images. These early settlers from the North, South, and Midwest, many of whom were merchants or farmers, brought with them a pride in private ownership, be it in shops or land.³³ Traces of this attitude continue into the late twentieth century. The survival of significant parochial attitudes and land use laws that demonstrate a broadening from pride in private ownership to pride in Oregon as a place are two examples.

The large groups of first- and second-generation northern European settlers who came to Washington a half-century later travelled west by the more comfortable means of the railroad. These later pioneers were less apt to identify a divine purpose in their journey, claiming instead the blessings of industrialism, wage labor, and an organized work force.³⁴ Perhaps as a result of this, though it has retained a reputation with its southern neighbor as a late twentieth-century outpost of natural beauty, Washington may have suffered greater environmental

³³Chet Orloff, "North and South of the Columbia River: The Other Sides of the Track," address at Washington Side of the Oregon Trail: Different Perspectives, Different Stories, Center for Columbia River History and Washington Historical Society, Stevenson, Washington, 31 October 1993.

³⁴Ibid.

consequences derived from large scale federal and private industry. Commenting less than a century after these two major population waves into the Pacific Northwest, Richard Neuberger wrote: "Oregon is more pastoral, more Arcadian; dairy herds dot its green meadows, barns and silos are its hallmarks. Washington has more smokestacks, more railroads and 700,000 more people in spite of its lesser area."³⁵

Antecedents of Twentieth-Century Oregon Utopian Art

Throughout its history, the characterization of Oregon in idealistic terms has been echoed in the visual arts. Stories and beliefs about places and qualities that are unique to Oregon and the Pacific Northwest have long been used by indigenous people to interpret many aspects of their lives. For centuries, art has been an important method of communicating these traditions.³⁶ Early European and American sea explorers looking for the Northwest Passage produced maps adorned with fantastic creatures, showing great bodies of water that provided access to the unknown western interior of the continent. Later, viewing the land

³⁵Richard L. Neuberger, "Columbia," in They Never Go Back to Pocatello: The Selected Essays of Richard Neuberger, ed. Steve Neal (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1988), p. 33.

³⁶For discussions on mythologies and art of native cultures in Western Oregon, see Handbook of North American Indians, ed. William Sturtevant, vol. 7: The Northwest Coast, ed. Wayne Suttles (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1990): "Chinookans of the Lower Columbia" by Michael Silverstein; "Kalapuyans" by Henry B. Zenk; "Tillamook" by Wm. R. Seabury and Jay Miller; "Mythology" by Dell Hymes; and "Art" by Bill Holm.

through the glasses of eighteenth-century European aesthetics, they described and depicted the region in reference to their own definitions of arcadian beauty or sublime majesty.³⁷

Mid-nineteenth century Christian missionaries created teaching tools called “ladders” that were artistic means for reaffirming the idea of a divine purpose for the Oregon Country and its people, and for justifying American expansionist ideals, redefining a wilderness into a promised land.³⁸ During that time also, Jesuits depicted the dream of establishing a Catholic “wilderness kingdom” and the common elements of the native religion and their own faith through richly detailed and embellished images.³⁹

The call of Manifest Destiny, as well as economic opportunity, brought thousands of new inhabitants to Oregon overland and by sea. Their experience and its symbolism resulted in artistic responses from a variety of viewpoints, ranging from the simple on-site drawings of the overland trail by James F. Wilkins to Albert Bierstadt’s light-engulfed Oregon Trail.

³⁷Douglas Cole and Maria Tippet, “Pleasing Diversity and Sublime Desolation: The 18th-Century British Perception of the Northwest Coast,” Pacific Northwest Quarterly 65 (January 1974):1.

³⁸Jacqueline Peterson with Laura Peers, Sacred Encounters: Father DeSmet and the Indians of the Rocky Mountain West (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993), p. 117; and Christopher L. Miller, Prophetic Worlds: Indians and Whites on the Columbia Plateau (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1985), p. 67.

³⁹Peterson, p. 97.

The latter part of the nineteenth century also witnessed a proliferation of art emphasizing the sublime qualities of the landscape. Romantic representations of Mt. Hood and the Columbia River Gorge celebrated the magnificence of the American West while serving as a source of pride for eastern patrons or a lure for prospective investors and immigrants.

Representations of natural wonders and expressions of community values are a few of the ways Oregon's utopian myth was embodied in art in the nineteenth century. These, plus others—such as portraits of early inhabitants and events; depictions of agricultural, industrial, and recreational opportunities; prospects of livability; and even anti-utopian metaphors—have been employed in the twentieth century to continue that tradition. Each subject relates to the myth's central focus of Oregon being a place that possesses an inviting natural environment and abundant resources.

David Nicandri, director of the Washington State Historical Society, maintains that “looking back is a more conventional thing to do in Oregon than in Washington.”⁴⁰ That “looking back” is one direction that Oregon's utopian myth, and the art that has helped to express and define it, has taken in the twentieth century. Another is a consistent but varied emphasis on the relationship of its people to the environment.

⁴⁰David L. Nicandri, address at Washington Side of the Oregon Trail: Different Perspectives, Different Stories, Center for Columbia River History and Washington Historical Society, Stevenson, Washington, 31 October 1993.

This study will begin with a description of how Oregon's natural environment has been ideally portrayed through art. This will be followed by an investigation of heroic interpretations of human history that reinforces the utopian myth. Finally, the convergence of these two earmarks of Oregon culture will be examined by considering depictions in art of Oregonians' interaction with the natural environment.

Like the verses of Oregon's state song, while some works laud a noble past and others a pristine land, all celebrate and idealize Oregon as a place:

Land of the Empire Builders,
Land of the Golden West;
Conquered and held by free men,
Fairest and the best.
Onward and upward ever,
Forward and on, and on;
Hail to thee, Land of Heroes,
My Oregon.

Land of the rose and sunshine,
Land of the summer's breeze;
Laden with health and vigor,
Fresh from the Western Seas.
Blest by the blood of martyrs,
Land of the setting sun;
Hail to thee, Land of Promise,
My Oregon.⁴¹

⁴¹Oregon, Secretary of State, Blue Book, pp. 2-5.

CHAPTER I

LAND OF THE ROSE AND SUNSHINE:

UTOPIAN IMAGES OF OREGON'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The Natural Sublime

“The opening stanza of ‘America the Beautiful’ might well have been written about one corner of the continent, the Pacific Northwest.” Thus begins Thomas Griffith in the introduction to his April 1976 cover article about the region in Atlantic Monthly. Lauding less the Northwest’s cultural amenities, this native son does not hesitate to validate the pride that residents have regarding its natural beauty.⁴²

This attitude toward the natural environment has long borne a strong impact on the arts in Oregon. The first Europeans to gaze upon the place we now know as Oregon did so from the perspective of a ship’s deck. By the eighteenth century, European and American seamen also viewed the region, and natural scenery in general, from the philosophical perspective of the aesthetic ideals of landscape painting and poetry. A common late eighteenth century description of

⁴²Thomas Griffith, “The Pacific Northwest,” Atlantic, April 1976, p. 47; Carlos Schwantes also suggests the region’s natural environment as an appropriate image for the opening lines of the cherished song in his 1989 study, The Pacific Northwest: An Interpretive History, p. 2.

what was soon to be called the Oregon Country was that of the beautiful, a quality of the aesthetic concept of the picturesque which is also characterized by irregularity, asymmetry, variety, wildness, and diversity.⁴³ The August 5, 1788 entry in the log of Robert Haswell, an officer aboard Robert Gray's Columbia Rediviva, describes the southern Oregon coast:

. . . the land was beautifully diversified with forests and green verdant launs which must give shelter and forage to vast numbers of wild beasts most probable most of the natives on this part of the Coast live on hunting for they most of them live in land⁴⁴

Another aesthetic quality associated with the region, particularly northward into Canada, was the sublime, linked with the concepts of terror and majesty and prompting associations with the eternal and the divine.⁴⁵ Responding to the sights of Howe Sound adjacent to present day Vancouver, British Columbia, George Vancouver and his crew used terms such as "sublime, though gloomy spectacle," "awful silence," and "romantic wildness" to describe the location's mountains and waterfalls.⁴⁶

⁴³Cole and Tippett, p. 3.

⁴⁴Robert Haswell, "Log of the First Voyage of the Columbia," in Voyages of the "Columbia" to the Northwest Coast, 1787-1790 and 1790-1793, ed. Frederic W. Howay (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1990), p. 30.

⁴⁵Barbara Novak, Nature and Culture: American Landscape and Painting, 1825-1875 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 34.

⁴⁶George Vancouver, Voyages of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean and Round the World . . . , 1790-95 (London 1798) 321 and C. F. Newcombe, ed. Menzie's Journal of Vancouver's Voyage, April to October, 1792, Archives of British Columbia, Memoir No. v (Victoria B.C., 1923) 63 and 71, quoted in Cole and Tippett, p. 5.

During the course of the nineteenth century, the qualities of the sublime that are associated with the infinite and the divine took on an increasingly religious character. With the ideas of Thomas Cole and members of the Hudson River School, the sublime and the beautiful, in contrast to late eighteenth century notions, were seen as mutually compatible, and nature was viewed as holy.⁴⁷ This lent an air of mysticism to the natural world. It also resulted in a nationalistic attitude toward nature, giving the landscape artist a role in the expansionist aims of the country.⁴⁸

In 1866, Julia Gillis, an officer's wife at Fort Dalles, wrote to her parents about Albert Bierstadt's prospects for successfully executing a painting of Mt. Hood. Her characterization of the mountain is filled with the language of the nineteenth-century sublime:

By his past success I know he can truthfully and beautifully depict the slender mountain in all the symmetry of its form, in all the changeableness of its moods; whether it is standing boldly defiant and purely white cutting its azure background, or as I often see it, like a dream, only the dim outline of its summit gleaming ethereal and heavenly through the opaline atmosphere surrounding it. It has a majesty of beauty amounting to sublimity which it only shares with St. Helens. Adams is too roly poly, Jefferson and Rainier rugged and frowning. Hood and St. Helens alone possess the exquisite delicacy, perhaps in the latter, which makes one look upon them with reverence and almost awe, as if they were the outpost of those pearly gates which open on the New Jerusalem.⁴⁹

⁴⁷Novak, Nature and Culture, pp. 38, 228.

⁴⁸Ibid., pp. 34, 37-38.

⁴⁹Julia Gillis, So Far From Home: An Army Bride on the Western Frontier, 1865-1969, ed. Priscilla Knuth (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1993), pp. 61-62.

Bierstadt's 1869 painting of Mt. Hood—one of two he did of the famous peak—is a composite view, depicting the mountain as seen from Portland to the west, but viewed from the north with the Columbia River Gorge, including its river and numerous waterfalls, below. Lone Rock, in actuality situated farther downstream from Multnomah Falls, has been relocated for inclusion in the composition. The mountain is kept company by a herd of deer grazing in the foreground.⁵⁰ The work, sketched in Oregon but finished in the East, is an example of the artistic license taken by Bierstadt and other nineteenth-century artists in representing the sublimity of large scale subjects—subjects that would succeed in turning many of the West's great natural landmarks into some of the republic's most hallowed places.⁵¹

An inherent element of the sublime is its evocation of a higher existence, be it God, the superhuman, or any number of other persona. When the sublime is expressed in times of cultural change or in a society that places less priority on traditional definitions of the divine, it is done so with what Thomas Weiskel calls the secondary or problematic sublime—"the nostalgia or uncertainty of minds involuntarily secular." The sublime and the pastoral—a quality of the picturesque⁵²—are appealing settings for the nostalgic. In The Machine in the Garden, Leo Marx describes this as sentimental pastoralism—when Americans

⁵⁰Mount Hood, exhibition label (Portland Art Museum, Portland).

⁵¹Goetzmann and Goetzmann, pp. 166-167.

⁵²Novak, Nature and Culture, p. 228.

reject the callousness of society and technology in favor of a simpler, “back-to-nature” lifestyle.⁵³

The transcendental quality of late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century interpretations of the sublime has continued through the twentieth century. In 1976, Weiskel described the sublime as that which enables one “in feeling and in speech, to transcend the human.”⁵⁴ The sublime has endured in depictions of the Oregon environment as well, although variations have been emphasized or added according to the priorities and attitudes of the time. Along with attributes associated with divinity, references to “mystery,” the “pristine,” “dreamlike” qualities, and other states beyond one’s immediate experience—including comparisons with Europe and other idealized parts of the world—are frequently employed to describe the region and the art created in response to it. The preface of Oregon: End of the Trail, published in 1940 as part of the Works Projects Administration American Guide series, proclaims that “‘that lovely dappled up-and-down land called Oregon’ has evergreen beauty as seductive as the lotus of ancient myth.”⁵⁵ The ensuing discussion begins with an examination of works

⁵³Leo Marx, The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 5-6.

⁵⁴Thomas Weiskel, The Romantic Sublime: Studies in the Structure and Psychology of Transcendence (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), p. 3.

⁵⁵Works Projects Administration, Oregon: End of the Trail (Portland, Oregon: Binford and Mort, 1940), p. vii.

that depict Oregon's environment in its primal, creative state. This is followed by an investigation of the sublime in Oregon landscape art.

During the early nineteenth century, as throughout much of its history, the United States was in the process of defining itself. Reluctant to acknowledge the ancient presence of indigenous people, European-Americans were at a loss to identify a desirable continental history of any considerable length. Current scientific discoveries and theories provided an alternative to the perceived dearth of human history by revealing the unfathomable age of the land itself. This is reflected in images of the West, as artists depicted both the pacific and chaotic qualities of the American landscape. As Barbara Novak puts it, "America's history, then, was nature's history."⁵⁶

An example of this is the work of Paul Kane. Best known for his ethnographic subjects, Kane was also captivated by the Northwest's natural wonders. In addition to dramatic views of raging rivers and giant trees, he executed at least three paintings of the 1847 eruption of Mount St. Helens, including a version with a daunting mushroom cloud and one with a nighttime pyroclastic display reminiscent of a Fourth of July celebration. These scenes

⁵⁶Barbara Novak, The Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection: Nineteenth Century American Painting (New York: The Vendome Press, 1986), pp. 18, 31; for related discussion, see Robert Rosenblum, "The Primal American Scene," in The Natural Paradise: Painting in America, 1830-1950, ed. Kynaston McShine (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1976), p. 35.

demonstrate not only an interest in recording the region's natural features, but also a romantic fascination with the forces of nature.⁵⁷

Henk Pander's view from his home in Portland of the 1980 eruption of Mount St. Helens is an example of the sublime powers of nature as depicted in late twentieth-century Oregon art (see Figure 3). While executed in an era with a different understanding of nature and history, Pander's work, like Kane's, goes beyond mere scientific documentation to portraying the formative, sometimes violent power of the land. The image of the volcano's claw-like cloud rising up over the geometric shapes of buildings, power lines, and even the artist's kitchen table and portable television effectively contrasts the predictability of modern society with the power and unpredictability of nature.

Portland State University instructor Richard E. Prasch approaches the 1980 eruption from a different angle, evoking a mythic symbol of awe and terror. His 1986 Medusa Mountain employs serpentine forms to depict gases and other material emanating from the mountain, portraying the peak as a living, breathing organism. Georgiale Coble chooses an equally terrifying phenomenon to portray the creative forces of nature in her The Dalles Mural. In this 1960s painting, which plants the roots of the city's modern society in the soil of prehistory, the artist employs images of glacial floods and extinct animals, including the elephant and camel, to indicate a transition between epochs.

⁵⁷William H. Goetzmann, Looking at the Land of Promise: Pioneer Images of the Pacific Northwest (Pullman: Washington State University, 1988), pp. 27-28.



Fig. 3. Henk Pander. Eruption of Mt. St. Helens. 1981. Oil on linen. City Hall, Portland, Oregon (Regional Arts and Culture Council photograph)

Portraying fossil subjects and motifs, like depicting cataclysmic occurrences, is a romantic response to the region's primal character. Tom Hardy includes fossil-like features in his bronze screen called Oregon Country, running the entire length of the west side of Neuberger Hall at Portland State University. The paleontologic forms at the far right of the work lend an element of perpetuity to the portrayal of the region's varied terrains. Writer, clergyman, and scientist Thomas Condon discovered the John Day fossil beds and was nineteenth-century Oregon's premier geologist and paleontologist. Condon is honored at the University of Oregon by a copper medallion made in his likeness, created by Wayne Chabre in 1989 and mounted on the school's physics building.

Charles Heaney, a printmaker and jewelry engraver who was proficient in a variety of media, was one of Oregon's most significant early twentieth-century artists. Like his mentor, Clayton S. Price, Heaney romantically expressed the mystery of Oregon's environment. Influenced by Shinto philosophies, his work focused on the landscape and humankind's place within it, expressing the spirituality of all of nature.⁵⁸ Shortly after his death in 1981, Rachael Griffin, curator emeritus at the Portland Art Museum, reflected upon his works, describing them as "landscapes of the 'soul,' . . . a country of dreams."⁵⁹

⁵⁸Wallace S. Baldinger, "Charles E. Heaney," uncited photocopy of published article, Charles Heaney file, Register of Oregon Art supplemental files (Oregon Historical Society Museum, Portland), p. 46.

⁵⁹Rachael Griffin, "Heaney's Landscape," Stepping Out, Winter 1992, p. 41.

Heaney held a long fascination with the dramatic terrain of Eastern Oregon, describing his own response as “emotion recollected in tranquility.”⁶⁰ Early in his career, he made regular treks to the John Day Valley to explore myriad geological formations. This interest led him to pursue fossils as one source of artistic inspiration. It began when, unable to afford a fossil of a fish, he tried to reproduce its intriguing characteristics on canvas. Unsatisfied with this attempt, he proceeded to explore other media, as well as aging his works with cracks and scrapes. Eventually freeing his subjects from the frame, Heaney endowed them with irregular shapes, textures, and motifs of shells, petroglyphs, and other primal forms. His works such as Bird (1941), Genesis I:20-21 (1945), and Fossil, #7 (1951), speak not only of the timelessness of the region, but also of an evolutionary quality, invoking the spiritual, life-renewing powers of the land.⁶¹

Like Charles Heaney, the evolutionary cycle of life and death is a central theme in Frank Boyden’s work, whose monolithic bronze sculpture stands in the center of the entry courtyard at the Oregon Coast Aquarium at Newport.⁶² The work—surrounded by smaller boulder-like sculptures arrayed with the figures of

⁶⁰Quoted in Patricia Blacklar, Oregon Country (Portland: Oregon Art Institute, 1986).

⁶¹Baldinger, pp. 41-47.

⁶²Terry Davies, “Drawing on Totemic Powers,” Craft Arts, n.d., uncited photocopy, Frank Boyden file, Register of Oregon Art supplemental files (Oregon Historical Society Museum, Portland), p. 28.

mollusks, arthropods, fossils, and fish—depicts an accumulation of large bones cast from the skeleton of a year-old humpback whale and embedded in rock or silt. Intending to represent the fossil history of the Oregon coast, he articulates the sublime quality of the pieces by stating: “Our earth is a huge cycle of stone, a material which is at once mundane and full of abstraction and magic. In these pieces I wanted to express that potential for magic”⁶³

The life and death cycle is also evident in Boyden’s smaller pieces, like his 1987 raku vase, Birth of Fossils, and his wood-fired porcelains, Skeleton Plates I and II, created the same year. The latter works are incised with the thread-like frame of a fish—recalling the artist’s fascination with the life cycle of the Pacific salmon.

After teaching and travelling for several years, Boyden now resides on the Salmon River Estuary. He cites ancient life forms and ancient cultures as primary influences on his art, which is dominated by zoomorphic images and informed by surroundings both familiar and immediate.⁶⁴ The spiritual attitude with which he approaches his work, coupled with the influence of his local surroundings, makes Frank Boyden an ideal example of an Oregon artist who attempts to depict the transcendental, sublime spirit of the Oregon environment.

⁶³Frank Boyden, About the Works of Art at the Oregon Coast Aquarium, interpretive flier distributed by the Oregon Coast Aquarium, Newport.

⁶⁴Davies, p. 26.

Unlike the occasional occurrence of art that reflects the ancient origins of the region, the tradition of landscape painting in Oregon has remained strong throughout the century. During the 1800s, while numerous itinerant artists visited the state to record its natural beauty, Oregon also became home to a community of local artists for whom the area's scenery became a dominant theme.⁶⁵ In the twentieth century, the Portland Art Museum's Museum Art School, under the guidance of such capable landscapists as Harry Wentz and later William Givler, helped catalyze the landscape tradition among regional artists.⁶⁶ As a result of this history, the number of twentieth-century Oregon landscape artists whose work reflects the sublime or has been perceived as a response to it, is large. For this reason, this discussion will focus on six artists and their treatment of a variety of Oregon locations.

The nationalistic language characteristic of the nineteenth-century American sublime was alive and well in 1905 when Portland held its Lewis and Clark Centennial and American Pacific Exposition and Oriental Fair. At the June 1 opening-day ceremonies, Mayor George Williams described the view of the fairgrounds and surrounding landscape as "a diamond set in a coronet of emeralds." That evening the Oregon Journal echoed the mayor's words,

⁶⁵William H. Gerds, Art Across America: Two Centuries of Regional Painting, 1710-1920, vol. 3 (New York: Abbeville Press, 1990), p. 186.

⁶⁶Rachael Griffin, "Portland and Its Environs," in Art of the Pacific Northwest from the 1930s to the Present (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1974), pp. 5-6, 18.

describing “the pines, the firs, the rolling hills and the distant peaks” that “hold their heads higher today,” the beholding of which “is to become a better American”—a scene that “inspires reverence.”⁶⁷ At two locations at the fair, a middle-aged woman was exhibiting and selling paintings and hand-painted postcards of Mt. Hood and other popular Pacific Northwest sights. A shrewd businessperson who would eventually pay for the erection of seven houses through the bartering of her works, Eliza Barchus considered the high point of the fair the receiving of the gold medal for the “finest collection of oil paintings of Northwest Scenery.”⁶⁸

Born in 1857, Eliza Barchus was known in her lifetime as the “artist of Oregon,” a title she was officially given posthumously by the state legislature in 1971. She was a pupil of nineteenth-century Oregon landscape artist William S. Parrot, whose views of Pacific Northwest landmarks, most notably Mount Hood, were in demand nationwide. Barchus followed in the footsteps of her mentor by popularizing the summit and other Oregon locations through hundreds of paintings (see Figure 4). In 1890 she was invited to show a 40- by 60-inch painting of Mt. Hood at New York’s National Academy of Design. Shortly thereafter her national

⁶⁷“Mayor Gets Ovation,” Portland Oregonian, 2 June 1905, sec. 2, p. 15; and “Portland Welcomes World to Her Great Exposition,” Portland Oregon Journal, 1 June 1905, sec. 1, p. 1.

⁶⁸Eliza Barchus, pamphlet, “Where Flows the Columbia,” 1925, Eliza Barchus file, Register of Oregon Art supplemental files (Oregon Historical Society Museum, Portland).



Fig. 4. Eliza Barchus. Mt. Hood, 1905. Printed post card. Oregon Historical Society, Portland, Oregon (OHS neg. OrHi 91513)

reputation was strengthened with the opening of her studio near the popular Portland Hotel and the arrival of its cosmopolitan clientele.

Like other aesthetic notions, the sublime quality of a work is subjective and may not always be evident to both the artist and patron. Sometimes an artist's attempt at objectivity and realism can be overlooked if he or she chooses a subject that is cherished by the larger public. Other times, the sublimity of a scene is sensed at its most personal level by the artist but may be less evident to the broader range of viewers. Eliza Barchus succeeded in balancing these two experiences by capably capturing the sublime characteristics of views and skillfully marketing them to a broad public.

In a brief pamphlet she wrote for distribution at the 1905 Lewis and Clark Exposition called Ideal Glimpses of Picturesque Oregon, Barchus included a short essay titled "Scenery that Appalls, Bewitches and Delights." Elaborating on the title, she writes:

Such are the sensations that alternately sway the mind of traveler or tourist who journeys through the magnificent empire discovered by Lewis and Clark a century ago Well may this vast and picturesque region be termed, from a scenic standpoint, the "land of contrasts."

Later she compares the region to such romantically regarded places as the Swiss Alps, Italy, and the highlands of Scotland, and refers to the "snow-capped monarchs of the Northwest, the wide flung valleys and mountain-circled lakes" as an "Oregon fairy land."⁶⁹ The popularity of her romantic vistas is attested to

⁶⁹Eliza Barchus, Ideal Glimpses of Picturesque Oregon as Portrayed on Canvas by an Artist (Portland: Eliza Barchus, 1905).

by the large volume of sales, the fame of their purchasers—one ended up in the White House—as well as the comments of viewers. As late as 1972, an admirer disclosed, “I look at a Barchus and I hear church organs playing Bach.”⁷⁰ The sentimental tone with which Eliza Barchus’s paintings were received recalls Weiskel’s secondary or problematic sublime.

A popular place where many people attempt to experience the majesty of the sublime in Oregon is the Columbia River Gorge. A section of this enormous ravine between Portland and The Dalles was named a national scenic area in 1986. Like many of America’s national parks, it has become a kind of sanctuary with “designated vistas and nostalgic settings.”⁷¹ Eliza Barchus wrote a poem about this great canyon in 1925 called “Where Flows the Columbia.” It includes the following words:

Where the scene is most entrancing,
Such majestic beauty never graced a scene before,
As you enter through the wondrous portals
Of Columbia Highway where it winds along the shore.

Take me up the dear Columbia,
With its waterfalls, its Douglas fir, its spruce and pine,
Up where the heart holds sweet communion
With all that’s noble, sweet, inspiring, and sublime.⁷²

⁷⁰Quoted in Joel T. Gunz, “Pioneer Artists of the Northwest,” Rose Arts Magazine, November 1989, p. 27.

⁷¹Interview with Henry Sayre, Oregon State University, 15 September 1994.

⁷²Barchus, “Where Flows the Columbia.”

Countless works of art have been made of the many and varied features of the Columbia River Gorge. It was a favorite subject of photographers Carleton Watkins and Benjamin Gifford and continues to be a popular photographic subject today for professional and amateur alike.

In 1915, the Columbia River Highway opened. Winding its way along the steep walls and cliffs of the Oregon side of the gorge, it has proudly been called Paradise Road.⁷³ A prime force behind the building of the highway was millionaire Samuel Hill. Among his many endeavors, Hill was an advocate of the Good Roads Movement. He believed, with the automobile progressing from an item of luxury to one of necessity, that society could be greatly aided by the construction of efficient roads.⁷⁴

Hill's dream to create a modern road through the Columbia Gorge led him to hire Samuel Lancaster, an engineer from Mississippi. Lancaster's vision involved more than access and transportation. His concern included experiencing and preserving the gorge's natural beauty. Reflecting on the start of the survey work for the project, he said, "Instinctively there came a prayer . . . that we might have the sense to do the thing in the right way . . . so as not to mar what

⁷³Oregon Public Broadcasting, "Paradise Road" (1992).

⁷⁴Ronald J. Fahl, "S. C. Lancaster and the Columbia River Highway: Engineer as Conservationist," Oregon Historical Quarterly 74 (June 1973):101-105.

God put there”⁷⁵ In a sense, Lancaster’s creation in the form of the highway is a work of sublime art by virtue of the fact that it was intended to blend in with the natural environment while serving as a theater for beholding the ever-changing view.

In the tradition of photographers who choose the Columbia River Gorge as their subject, Lancaster went one step further in artistically responding to the place. In 1914, while working on the highway project, this engineer/photographer developed a color reproduction process, anticipating the first attempts at color photography by almost five years.⁷⁶ He published his variegated views of the gorge and its new highway in a book called The Columbia: America’s Great Highway through the Cascade Mountains to the Sea.

Interspersed with images by other photographers, Lancaster’s pictures include a mix of shots either dominated by the highway or devoid of any human presence, the latter possessing a mystical quality resulting from the unique painterly character of the new medium. Even though the photographs speak for themselves, Lancaster adds descriptions, many of which serve to drive home the sublime aspects of the scene. A caption beneath a piece titled The Falls of Multnomah at the Close of a Mid-Summer’s Day, includes the phrase “before

⁷⁵“Columbia Highway, One of the World’s Greatest Roads,” Portland Oregon Journal, 3 January 1915, picture supplement, p. 2.

⁷⁶Goetzmann, p. 38.

'Night draws her sable curtain,' the sun paints a rainbow for enchantment."⁷⁷

Another photograph titled Table Mountain, the North Pier of the Fabled 'Bridge of the Gods' is underscored with the words:

. . . its vertical walls show that it was broken off by some tremendous force. God did it in His own way, no doubt before man came. The tiny efforts of human beings seem as nothing beside the forces that tore this mountain range asunder.⁷⁸

Focusing not only on the highway, but also on the natural and human history of the area, the book contains a number of allusions to a perceived transcendental quality of the gorge. Examples include comparisons of the place to the valley of the Rhine—a romantic and early inspiration for the highway project—and an illustration of an old growth fir tree, the “oldest living things in the Oregon Country,” who “lift their mossy boughs into the heavens” and “speak to us of by-gone centuries and the silent work of God.”⁷⁹ The wide appeal of these allusions is made evident by the favorable review the book received and the fact that in its day it was a popular publication.⁸⁰

An artist whose religious conviction informed his experience of Oregon and the art he created in response to it was Melville T. Wire, a minister in the Methodist Church. Born in Illinois in 1877, he came to Oregon with his family at

⁷⁷Samuel Christopher Lancaster, The Columbia: America's Great Highway through the Cascade Mountains to the Sea (Portland, Oregon: J. K. Gill, 1926), p. 77.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 97.

⁷⁹Ibid.

⁸⁰Fahl, p. 120.

an early age where he enrolled in art classes. As an itinerant clergyman, he lived in numerous communities around the state, thus providing him opportunities to express his experience of Oregon's varied terrains through his drawings, paintings, and etchings. Random identifications of Wire's personal photographs reveal a person who was at home in nature: "Tide flats—Yaquina Bay," "Log cabin with game hanging racks," "Rockhunting and picnic at agate desert," "Looking up the Columbia," "Painting at Blitzen Gorge," "Packed with horses to go hunting and painting."⁸¹

This outdoorsman, who loved to experience Oregon's natural environment firsthand, often packed his art supplies with him, enabling him at times to discover and document obscure, relatively inaccessible places. He once said, "There is something pleasant about a calm reach of water in a small stream which invites one to pause and rest."⁸² Wire's works do not so much communicate the terror of the eighteenth century sublime as the reverence of that of the nineteenth century, revealing a spiritual peace through the tranquility of nature.

A brochure advertising a number of his etchings is illustrated with a print called Columbia River from Crown Point. Depicting a near aerial view of the great river, the work shows a massive fir tree dominating the foreground and

⁸¹"M. T. Wire—Negatives and Photographs, 1898-1950," Melville T. Wire file, Register of Oregon Art supplemental files (Oregon Historical Society Museum, Portland).

⁸²Melville T. Wire, Abbott Hall Gallery biographical statement, Melville T. Wire file, Register of Oregon Art supplemental files (Oregon Historical Society Museum, Portland).

standing sentinel over the scene. A brief accompanying essay about the artist includes:

His etchings show an intimate knowledge of nature's forms and moods . . . but he is not a mere copyist of nature. His work reflects a strongly individual viewpoint and interpretation which has an interest above that of mere scenic attraction.⁸³

Wire's art and the words used to describe his subjects often hint at a higher awareness or experience. At times this is communicated through the transcendental language of the sublime, other times in more pastoral terms—both of which idealize the setting or moment. Like Eliza Barchus's paintings, Melville Wire's etchings are successful in communicating their paradisaal message. A respected authority on print making once shared her feelings with the artist about his work. Writing from a noisy New York office building, Aline Kistler penned:

. . . it brings a breath of fresh air that fairly makes me homesick for the West. How I have loved pine trees such as you depict so beautifully! I do not know when I have seen them put on copper with as much of the feeling that I get from the trees themselves.⁸⁴

A work called Cabin by the River that was exhibited nationally—including a 1945 show at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.—portrays a lone, shore-side cabin surrounded by tall poplar trees. A 1944 advertisement promoting this scene along Southern Oregon's Umpqua River contains the words, "This

⁸³Melville T. Wire, Etchings by Melville Wire (Salem, Oregon: Melville T. Wire, n.d.).

⁸⁴Aline Kistler, Personal letter to Melville T. Wire. n.d., Melville Wire file, Register of Oregon Art supplemental files (Oregon Historical Society Museum, Portland).

sleepy, little-known pastoral region is the essence of all peace Faint breezes stir through the over-hanging branches. It is with reluctance that one puts away his drawing materials in such a place.”⁸⁵ Many an artist finds his or her work to be therapeutic, enriching, or perhaps a spiritual experience. Here we have a person who shares the deeply personal aspects of this experience in an advertisement read by a relatively large audience. It is as if promotion of the work has become secondary to sharing the poignancy of the creative moment. He once said, perhaps a bit humorously, “Etching is like love and religion. When the bug bites, it bites for good.”⁸⁶ Wire’s zeal about Oregon’s natural environment and the art he produced in response to it is not unlike the zeal of a preacher with a gospel to share. His message was not one of hellfire and brimstone, but rather tranquility and peace.

Jeanne Moment approached her art with similar fervor and passion. Born in 1901, she trained in graphic art and art history at the University of California at Berkeley and studied with William Givler at the Portland Art Museum’s lithography and intaglio print workshop. She was a mother, a high school teacher, an environmentalist, and a political organizer. She was a deeply spiritual person whose sense of the sacred lay not in the Church, but in nature and in

⁸⁵“Cabin by the River,” Patron’s Supplement, n.d. 1944, p. 4.

⁸⁶Ila S. Grant, “Oregon Artist Shows Work, Lectures on Art of Etching,” The Bend (Ore.) Bulletin, 2 November 1954, Society sec., p. 2.

respect for her fellow human beings—subjects that are often portrayed as interdependent in her work.

Moment's enthusiasm about Oregon is seen in the titles of her works, including: Oregon Coast, Through the Gorge, The McKenzie, Tillamook Burn, and Columbia Gorge Palisades. Like Wire, she loved the Oregon outdoors, enjoying hiking, skiing, and camping. Her ability to portray the unique Oregon spirit that she experienced is evident in the words of one reviewer who, reflecting on the marvels, richness, and rhythms of nature, describes Moment's work as:

. . . revealing the flavor of the Northwest It is, in essence, the record of the coming together of the human spirit with the spirit of nature in its many moods [Her] attachment to nature with all its subtle nuances is deep—and that she commands ways of conveying it is clear.⁸⁷

Her dedication to capturing her feelings about Oregon in her art is made clear in a note she once wrote to Charles Heaney where she commends his “feel for Oregon” and states, “I remember your early encouragement. It is now almost forty years since we have been going on—trying to show what we feel of Oregon.”⁸⁸

If a primary focus for Jeanne Moment was Oregon, a primary aesthetic inspiration for her was the nineteenth-century sublime. Her friend, Patricia Blacklar, wrote:

⁸⁷“Reflections on the Northwest,” Portland Oregonian, 30 October 1966, Women/Entertainment sec., p. 2.

⁸⁸Quoted in Pamela Larsen, Jeanne Moment's Prints, Drawings, and Watercolors, 1948-1982 (Portland, Oregon: Reed College, 1990), p. 3.

Moment used nature in a transcendentalist sense, as did the poets of the Romantic Revival; Wordsworth's 'host of golden daffodils' becomes, for her, the supernatural. The nineteenth century also permeates her painting through the influence of the artist J. M. W. Turner.⁸⁹

Attempting to reveal nature's power and mystery through his art, Joseph Mallord William Turner was an important influence in the development of the early nineteenth-century European interpretation of the sublime.⁹⁰ Jeanne Moment shared many of the great British painter's interests, including a fascination with the power of nature, skies, and the nighttime. An early example of her interest in skies is a 1950 lithograph titled Northern Slopes. Inspired by a site in the foothills of the Coast Range near Forest Grove, Oregon, the sky fills over half the composition, revealing a curiosity with cloud formations. Moment, who worked in a variety of media, including oil, sumi, and graphic works, started to paint watercolor landscapes in the 1970s. At the same time she began referring to copies of Turner's work as she painted. Several works executed in the last two decades of her life—when she had adopted a more abstract, less representational style—reveal this influence.

Moment's frequent trips into the wilds gave her firsthand experiences with the pristine, but also with the destructive tendencies of humankind. Threats to the environment motivated her and her husband, Samuel Moment, to become politically active. Their efforts kindled the beginning of the 1952 "Keep America

⁸⁹Blacklar.

⁹⁰Robert Rosenblum and H. W. Janson, 19th Century Art (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1984), p. 87.

Beautiful” campaign, a phrase that was their brainchild. They also were instrumental in encouraging several states to require deposits on returnable beverage containers.⁹¹ A work that echoes her belief in the interdependence of nature and humankind, while reflecting their destructive tendencies, is a 1951 untitled lithograph of the Tillamook Burn (see Figure 5). Portraying the aftermath, almost twenty years later, of one of the state’s largest forest fires, Moment used a technique that involved scraping with a razor to depict a series of trees and stumps.⁹² Jeanne Moment’s conviction about caring for the environment was fueled by her love for depicting the Oregon landscape.

The representational styles of artists like Barchus, Wire, and Moment were popular in Oregon during the early part of the century. As the decades progressed, however, other expressions were embraced. In 1914, the Portland Art Museum exhibited Marcel Duchamp’s Nude Descending a Staircase. Thirteen years later, the museum staged an exhibition called The Blue Four, which included the work of Wassily Kandinsky and Paul Klee. With these events and the opening of the University of Oregon Museum of Art in Eugene in 1929, Oregonians were introduced to leading examples of modern, abstract art. The following decades, through the 1950s, would witness traditional, more representational artists were found to be at odds with those who embraced modern trends at community and institutional exhibitions. The tenor of the times is

⁹¹Larsen, pp. 10-11.

⁹²Ibid., p. 27.



Fig. 5. Jeanne Moment. Untitled (Tillamook Burn). 1951.
Lithograph. Oregon Historical Society, Portland, Oregon (OHS neg. OrHi
91409)

evident in the Works Project Administration American Guide series volume on the state:

It must be admitted that the native conservatism of Oregonians has, until recent years, materially hindered experimentation and free expression among its artists. Today this restraining influence seems, happily, on the wane. Many artists, their viewpoints broadened by a realization of the social significance and the functional usage of art, are creating with broader regional meaning and wider universality.⁹³

In a conciliatory gesture, the 1959 Oregon Centennial painting exhibition, The Oregon Scene, brought together 92 artists from both camps for a brief demonstration of guarded cooperation.⁹⁴ One abstract work depicting the upward thrust of seemingly illumined shapes suggests the life force of plants.⁹⁵ Painted by Carl Morris, it is called Winter Bloom.

Carl Morris, a major artist in the Abstract Expressionist movement, spent almost his entire artistic career in Oregon. He arrived in the state in the early 1940s with a W.P.A. project as a realist. Moving toward increased abstraction after the war, more and more of his art exhibited the influence of the natural surroundings within which he worked. Priscilla Colt, research assistant of the 1952 Portland Art Museum show Carl Morris: A Decade of Painting in Portland,

⁹³Works Projects Administration, p. 134.

⁹⁴Jack Cleaver, "Contributing Artist: The Oregon Art Community, 1889-1989," exhibition copy, 1990 (Oregon Historical Society, Portland).

⁹⁵The Oregon Scene: Oregon Centennial Painting Exhibition, 1959 (Portland, Oregon: Albert, Kerns and Bell, 1959), p. 16.

described this evolution as “some new-found delight in painting, perhaps growing out of a fresh accord with his environment.”⁹⁶

Like generations of artists before them, the Abstract Expressionists of the mid-twentieth century drew upon nature as an inspiration for their work. For them, however, the sublimity of nature was not a manifestation of a transcendent power or divinity, but of an inner presence. Barnett Newman pondered the abstractionist’s response to the sublime by asking, “if we are living in a time without a legend or mythos that can be called sublime, . . . how can we be creating sublime art?” He concluded that he and his fellow artists were:

. . . creating images whose reality is self-evident and which are devoid of props and crutches that evoke associations with outmoded images, both sublime and beautiful. We are freeing ourselves from the impediments of memory, association, nostalgia, legend, myth, or what have you, that have been the devices of Western European painting. Instead of making cathedrals out of Christ, man, or ‘life,’ we are making it out of ourselves, our own feelings.”⁹⁷

Carl Morris, a friend of Mark Rothko and other leaders in the abstract expressionist movement, did not so abandon or deny external influences. In contrast to Newman, Morris described his work as an emotional interpretation of his experiences with the world. “The more abstract I became,” he said, “the closer I felt I was getting to nature.” Underscoring the importance of original

⁹⁶Priscilla C. Colt, Carl Morris: A Decade of Painting in Portland (Portland: Portland Art Museum, 1952).

⁹⁷Quoted in Kynaston McShine, “Toward the Abstract Sublime: A Selection of Twentieth Century Artists’ Texts,” in The Natural Paradise: Painting in America, 1830-1950, ed. Kynaston McShine (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1976), p. 120.

form, Morris explained “you have an idea, a visual image, or whatever, and you literally abstract it. But you are still locked into that original form, and with me that form has to carry the basic statement of the original experience.”⁹⁸ In reference to the highly personal role of the viewer, he described a work of art as a “starting point,” explaining “it is not a point of reference backward to the original subject matter, but rather a beginning of a newly created living act.”⁹⁹ With this approach, Carl Morris profoundly communicated the spirit of the Oregon environment.

While his styles and emphases changed over the years, Morris considered the Oregon landscape to be a significant influence on his art. He once said “the landscape has been a strong part of my work. This is one of the reasons I’m so enthusiastic about going fishing—it’s because of all the experiences that I am exposed to in the country.”¹⁰⁰ Microcosmic elements, reminiscent of tree bark or lichen, for example, or the expansive influence of the ocean and shore, as portrayed in his Two Columns (1986), both attest to the importance of the landscape in his work.

In the tradition of artists who responded to the creative, primal spirit of the Oregon environment, Morris attempted in his later work to portray the

⁹⁸“Carl Morris Talks with Sue Ann Kendall,” Archives of American Art Journal 23:2 (1983):15.

⁹⁹Carl Morris, “Notes by the Artist,” in Carl Morris: A Decade of Painting in Portland, ed. Priscilla C. Colt (Portland: Portland Art Museum, 1952).

¹⁰⁰“Carl Morris Talks with Sue Ann Kendall,” p. 15.

edifying beauty and power of the region's geology—convinced that its sublime character holds some deeper truth.¹⁰¹ This is exemplified in his 1972 Bedrock, and Machu Picchu, part of his early 1980s Intersecting Light series. A year before he painted Archaic Script, another work influenced by archaeology and the consideration of causal elements, the catalogue for a 1960 New York retrospective of his work cited his home as a major inspiration for him, stating: “For those who know the area, his painting, increasingly abstract as it has become, . . . often recalls in some subtle way the quality and character of the light and the land of Oregon.”¹⁰²

The intensely private act of depicting one's home is a consistent motivation in the creation of much of Oregon utopian art. Whether it is in representing a canyon or the entire planet, it is often only through such an intimate approach that the personal relationship to a place can be identified and articulated. A late twentieth-century artist whose work is deeply inspired by the ancient Northeastern Oregon homeland of his family is James Lavadour. Lavadour, of mixed native and European-American heritage, grew up on the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation. Early on, he was inspired by the Blue Mountains and other land forms near his home. With a style that is reminiscent of nineteenth-century Romantic painters like Turner and Casper David

¹⁰¹Barry Johnson, Carl Morris: Paintings, 1939-1992 (Portland, Oregon: Portland Art Museum, 1993) p. 25.

¹⁰²Grace L. McCann Morley, Carl Morris (New York: American Federation of Artists, 1960), p. 5.

Friedrich, his pictures are not literal representations of identifiable locations, but reflections of the forms and spirit of his environment. An example is his 1992 Dreamer, a painting made up of four quadrants with abstract images that evoke canyons. The work was shown at a 1993 exhibition where it represented Lavadour's ability to render an Oregon landscape "full of spiritual elements."¹⁰³

In addition to landscapes, this self-taught artist's early work also consisted of often disturbing images that served as reflections about the human condition as experienced by native Americans. In the 1980s, concerned that his depictions of humanity were being interpreted as blatant political statements, Lavadour gradually merged people and the natural environment, until the land itself began to take on a human character. This led to increasingly abstract images that emphasized elemental qualities of both humanity and the natural environment.¹⁰⁴ Lavadour explains that "what ever is in the earth, the world, humanity, is represented within me. By the mysterious endowment of creation, the mass of the whole is represented within the object of the individual."¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³Maryhill Museum of Art 1993 exhibition, "West to the Oregon Territory," exhibit label for Dreamer by James Lavadour.

¹⁰⁴Randy Gragg, "James Lavadour: Merging Man and Nature," Portland Sunday Oregonian, 15 July 1990, sec. E, p. 5.

¹⁰⁵James Lavadour, Artist statement, James Lavadour file, Register of Oregon Art supplemental files (Oregon Historical Society Museum, Portland).

Mainstream American society at the end of the twentieth century is very receptive to the transcendent, sublime images of artists like Lavadour. His response to the land, coupled with his native American orientation, appeals to those searching for answers to questions relating to the environment and spirituality. He works within a situation where indigenous and other minority artists sometimes seek a balance between expressing their own heritage and gaining acceptance independent of that heritage. Lavadour succeeds in this by using his own environment and experience to teach about the broader human situation. Identifying his mission as helping people to experience a connection between the temporal and the spiritual, he states "Landscape painting, for me, is balanced between the material and mystical. It's the realm that connects the source to the substance of life." Reflecting on his own background, he writes, "I don't think that a person needs to understand me or my background to benefit from my painting."¹⁰⁶

Symbols of Nature's Utopia

The transcendentalist language of the sublime is also evident in descriptions of symbols associated with the utopian character of Oregon. Timothy Egan, Pacific Northwest correspondent for the New York Times, lists mountains, water, trees, and salmon as regional icons, the absence of which he maintains

¹⁰⁶Ibid.

severs residents from a “bond to a better world.”¹⁰⁷ Mountains and water—to which may be added desert, shore, and a variety of other geographic forms—are treated in Oregon utopian art through sublime depictions of the landscape. Trees, discussed in Chapter IV, are a dominant artistic symbol for interaction with and concern about the environment. It is the salmon, and to a lesser extent other animals, that is employed as a symbol of the spirit of the region. In their most rudimentary role, images of Oregon animals are employed to identify the state with nature. At a deeper level they stand for the creative forces of life itself.

Roland Perry’s Elk has stood on an island in the center of Portland’s Main Street, between Southwest Third and Fourth Avenues, since 1900. Commissioned by early Portland mayor David P. Thompson, the fountain that surrounds it was erected to quench the thirst of horse and human alike. Greeted as an eyesore in its early days—the stag was rejected by the local Elks Club for looking like a giraffe—it has since been embraced by the local citizenry as a symbol of the region’s environmental consciousness. Serving its patron’s original purpose, it recalls the local milieu in which elk grazed from time immemorial.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷Timothy Egan, The Good Rain: Across Time and Terrain in the Pacific Northwest (New York: Vintage Books, 1990) p. 118.

¹⁰⁸Terence O’Donnell and Thomas Vaughan, Portland: An Informal History and Guide (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1984), p. 98; and Henry Sayre, “The State of the Art” Oregon Humanities (Winter 1993):31.

Just six blocks from David Thompson's fountain is another arrangement of public art that celebrates the region's natural environment through its wildlife. In 1986, Georgia Gerber's twelve concrete and bronze fountains were placed on the north and south sidewalks adjacent to the historic Pioneer Courthouse. Installed as part of the city's light rail project, each fountain is inhabited by a different set of animal sculptures, including seals, bear, deer, and ducks. Amidst two products of civilization—public transit and government—the artist's intention was to remind passersby of the tempering power of nature, describing them as a “mense of the wild in the midst of a busy city.”¹⁰⁹

The Works Progress Administration-era Timberline Lodge on Mt. Hood possesses many works of art that depict animals. These include exterior carvings of ram and buffalo heads; coyote and mountain lion wood marquetry in the north lounge foyer; and a bas relief titled Forest Scene depicting bears, deer, birds, and beavers in a sylvan setting. Most memorable, perhaps, are twelve newel posts designed by Florence Thomas. Carved from old telephone poles, each is surmounted by animals ranging from a fawn to an owl to a lynx (see Figure 6). In reference to all the work at the lodge, a 1937 W.P.A. brochure, called The Builders of Timberline Lodge, credited the creative forces of the mountain with inspiring its creation. It summons the mystical language of the sublime to describe the motivation of a newel post carver: “He learned the relation of the

¹⁰⁹Portland's Municipal Fountains (Portland, Oregon: City of Portland Bureau of Water Works, n.d).



Fig. 6. Florence Thomas. Untitled (carved wooden newel posts). 1937. Timberline Lodge, Government Camp, Oregon (OHS neg. OrHi 66291)

wood to the mountain upon which it grew, discovered the adventure and romance of Mt. Hood's past, and found at last a technique suitable for expressing the spirit of the place."¹¹⁰

Tom Hardy is a sculptor who grew up in Oregon and who has been active in its art community throughout the entire second half of the century. His trademark is animals, both domestic and wild. His metal creations are found in colleges, parks, shopping malls, and private collections in Oregon and throughout the country. Choosing to pursue his career in the state of his birth, Hardy is greatly inspired by the animals that are nurtured by its varied natural environments. "Being able to visit these interesting and pacifying places," he reflected early in his career, "often leads, I think, to an attitude of calm intensity which I hope is reflected in my work. Always in the Northwest, the magnificent trees seem to establish man in a different scale than do the Midwest plains, or the skyscrapers of Eastern cities."¹¹¹ The catalogue of a 1976 retrospective of his work compared his appreciation for the common and the ordinary to Walt Whitman's similar sensitivity in Leaves of Grass, describing it as a "symbol both of the reproductive vitality of nature and of the essential unity of all life."¹¹²

¹¹⁰The Builders of Timberline Lodge (Portland, Oregon: Works Progress Administration, 1937).

¹¹¹"Metal Sculpture by Tom Hardy," American Artist, April 1955, p. 75.

¹¹²Stanley Johnson, Tom Hardy: A Retrospective Exhibition (Portland, Oregon: Contemporary Crafts Association, 1976).

One animal that Tom Hardy has reproduced is the beaver. A small bronze example sits in the shrubs at the Oregon History Center in Portland. Donated to the Oregon Historical Society as a memorial in 1970, the piece is intended to honor industry, perseverance, and the economic role the beaver played in Pacific Northwest history.¹¹³ References to the beaver in relation to the state frequently refer to its industriousness as a dam builder and recall character traits that are also associated with pioneers, justifying control of the land. Oregon's nickname, a state university's athletic team, a former Portland baseball team, and the state flag all pay homage to the beaver. It was named the state animal in 1969 and is described in the "Symbols of Oregon" section in the Oregon Blue Book as "nature's engineer."¹¹⁴

The beaver is included among the animal sculptures at both Timberline Lodge and the fountains adjacent to Portland's Pioneer Courthouse. Ulrich Ellerhusen placed a beaver at the upper right of the front entrance to the State Capitol in Salem, next to the American eagle. In the early twentieth century, Alexander Phimister Proctor, known for his works of native Americans, western heroes and wildlife, created a bronze sculpture called Big Beaver. And at Oregon State University in Corvallis, home of the "Beavers," a beaver motif graces the bronze door handles on the Memorial Union building.

¹¹³Mary Ann Amicker, "Tom Hardy Beaver Sculpture," Tom Hardy file, Register of Oregon Art supplemental files (Oregon Historical Society Museum, Portland).

¹¹⁴Blue Book, p. 3.

If the beaver serves as a metaphor for the economic drive of the state, the salmon has become the symbol for the spiritual, sustaining power of the land. Timothy Egan states "in the Northwest, a river without a salmon is a body without a soul."¹¹⁵ His words about the shrinking habitat of the Pacific salmon are a powerful reminder of the changes the Pacific Northwest has experienced throughout the century. Changes in industry, and increased cultural diversity and urbanization are some of the factors that have prompted residents of the region to either defend or reexamine their relationships with each other and the land. One symbol that has accompanied this reorientation in the latter part of the twentieth century is the salmon.

The salmon has been embraced by native people for centuries as one of a number of symbols for their relationship with the land. Important ceremonies were developed to honor the benefits of the salmon to their culture. Like any world view that is celebrated through ritual, native regard for the salmon was also expressed through art. Regrettably, by the turn of the twentieth century, due to population decrease, changing economy, and indoctrination by missionaries and the government, the art of native people in Oregon and throughout the Northwest waned.¹¹⁶ In the 1960s, due in great part to increased curiosity about and pride in their own culture, native Americans throughout the country began to re-

¹¹⁵Egan, p. 182.

¹¹⁶Bill Holm, "Art," in Handbook of North American Indians, 20 vol., ed. William Sturtevant (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1990), vol. 7: Northwest Coast, ed. by Wayne Suttles, p. 629.

embrace the traditional art of their people. This resulted in the creation of innovative fine art in a variety of media which represents a continuity with the past.¹¹⁷

Rick Bartow is a Yurok Indian who has lived all his life in the Newport area. Using spiritual and anthropomorphic themes from native American mythology, he attempts to engage viewers in an experience of Indian culture through his art. In 1990, Bartow created a sculpture called Salmon Mask which alludes to the spirit of the great fish. "The salmon suffers, we suffer" says Bartow when reflecting on the correlation between salmon, the purity of water, and the survival of people. Commenting on the reverence he holds for the salmon, Bartow likens it to that which one has for senior members of the community: "They're a wonderful metaphor for people. Their beauty lies in what they've done, not unlike elders whom we respect. So strong with wisdom and spirit and yet so fragile."¹¹⁸

Lillian Pitt, raised on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation and of Warm Springs and Yakima ancestry, creates raku masks to express her appreciation of her heritage, the land, and animals. Claiming that her works are not created for any specific religious purpose, she states "I have taken the legends and petroglyphs and given them a physical form to show my appreciation and respect

¹¹⁷Edwin S. Hall, Northwest Coast Indian Graphics: An Introduction to Silk Screen Prints (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981) p. 46.

¹¹⁸Janet Filips, "Go Fish," Portland Sunday Oregonian, 8 November 1992, sec. L, p. 19.

to people who lived hundreds of years ago.” She adds, “I love these spirits and am never alone.”¹¹⁹

Pitt’s art also includes pieces that deal with the symbolism of the salmon, which has contributed so much to the livelihood of the Warm Springs people. Among her works are Fishman (1984) and Sockeye Stick Indian (1984), the latter evoking a salmon manifestation of the mythical dweller of the forest who leads good people to safety and bad people to misfortune. Her 1992 21st Century Salmon is adorned with copper, mother of pearl, and glass and brass beads. Part of a series on threatened wildlife, it represents a fish that had to mutate to survive, due to human carelessness and disrespect for the environment.¹²⁰

For most of the twentieth century, salmon and fish themes in non-native, mainstream art were confined to subjects dealing with fishing as an industry or recreational pastime. It was not until the latter part of the century that the salmon was dealt with in any other significant way in non-native Oregon art. A number of reasons account for this, not the least of which is the renaissance in native American art. Other factors include the dominance of landscape art through much of the century, increased environmental consciousness, and perhaps the fact that the Chinook salmon was not adopted as the state fish until 1961.

As early as 1805, Lewis and Clark commented on the overwhelming abundance of salmon in the Columbia and its tributaries. A century later, in a

¹¹⁹Lillian Pitt (Portland, Oregon: Lillian Pitt, 1989).

¹²⁰“About the Cover,” Oregon State Bar Bulletin, November 1992, p. 9.

Sunday Oregonian article, John M. Crawford, General Superintendent of the Washington Fish Hatcheries, was already lamenting the demise of the great fish and urged that something be done soon.¹²¹ In 1934, the American Can Company published a booklet called The Story of the Salmon. Written to expound upon the importance of the salmon canning industry, it also gives a relatively in-depth account of the role of salmon in human history, linking it to both the spiritual and economic well-being of society. In it is a poem by Dr. Ray W. Clough about the life cycle of the Chinook salmon called "Tschawytscha, King of Fishes." It includes the following verses:

In the Northland, 'mid the islands,
'Mid the green, ten-thousand islands,
Lived the salmon, Oncorhynchus;
Lived Tschawytscha, King of Fishes.

Lived and played among the billows;
Played and cared not for the morrow;
Chased and caught the silly minnow;
Caught and ate the smaller fishes.

Came the call of cool fresh-water
Ever louder, ever clearer,
'Till he left the ocean meadows,
Slowly swam into the river.

Thousands more were there before him,
Other thousands followed after,
Pilgrims in a great migration,
Subject to a mystic summons.¹²²

¹²¹John M. Crawford, "Salmon Plentiful Before White Man Came," Portland Oregonian, 3 February 1907, p. 49.

¹²²Isabel N. Young, The Story of Salmon (New York: American Can Company, 1954) p. 13.

During the same decade Clough's verse was published, Ulrich Ellerhusen situated his marble relief of salmon over the west entrance of the Oregon State Capitol (see Figure 7). It is safe to assume that Ellerhusen never read the poem. Yet it appears more than coincidental that, with sheaves of Eastern Oregon wheat over the east entrance, the migratory cycle of *Oncorhynchus* is suggested in the placement of this early artistic portrayal of the fish. Ellerhusen's relief and occasional other works created over the next few decades—including a 1950s Eugene fountain with a large sculpture of a school of fish created by Tom Hardy—anticipate the adoption of salmon and fish as a major metaphor by a number of late twentieth-century artists.

On June 16, 1987, an eight-foot salmon "gargoyle" was mounted on the ridge beam of the University of Oregon's Museum of Anthropology and Natural History.¹²³ Created by Milton-Freewater artist Wayne Chabre, the image is constructed of hammered patina copper and is overlaid with appliques of Northwest Coast Indian designs. Its humped form is intended to depict a spawning salmon. In an attempt to connect the piece to native American spiritual traditions, its installation included a "cleansing ceremony," during which the smoke from a braided weed of dried sweetgrass was directed around not only the sculpture, but also the crane operator. The purpose of the ritual, explained George Wasson, a Coos Indian and Academic Advisor at the University, is to

¹²³Wayne Chabre, Registration for Works of Art, 1% for Art in State Buildings Collection (Oregon Arts Commission, Salem).



Fig. 7. Ulric Ellerhusen. Salmon. 1938. Marble. State Capitol, Salem, Oregon
(OHS neg. OrHi 83120)

offer “blessings to cleanse it of any evil contacts it may have had, to make it good and enduring.”¹²⁴ This piece, which combines native American art traditions with European-American notions of the transcendental sublime, was joined the following year by images of a bear and a raven.

At B. Molloch’s Heathman Bakery and Pub in downtown Portland, an assemblage of banners hangs like clouds from the ceiling. Created over a number of springs in the late 1980s, Roger Long’s Salmon Banner Series was monoprinted from first run Columbia River Chinook salmon. Their popularity at the restaurant has resulted in a limited edition of 400 signed and numbered prints. In an attempt to draw attention to the salmon’s fragile existence, Long’s goal is to place such images where people can encounter them on an everyday basis. Regarding his inspiration for this unique artistic venture, Long states “the Spring Salmon run reflects the true life quality and strength of America’s Pacific Northwest forest, of cool rivers, and spawning streams.”¹²⁵ The connection of the salmon to the life force of the natural environment is repeatedly made by artists who engage in this theme.

Animal forms—especially as they communicate the timeless experience of life and death—are dominant motifs in Frank Boyden’s ceramics. The life cycle of the Pacific salmon, which spawns only once in its lifetime and becomes

¹²⁴Quoted in Lotte Streisinger, “The Great Salmon Hoist,” Oregon Arts, September/October 1987, p. 1.

¹²⁵Roger A. Long, label for Salmon Banner Series at B. Molloch’s Heathman Bakery and Pub, Portland, Oregon.

sustenance for the continuation of other life forms, has become Boyden's primary image. Also, often included in his works is the image of the raven, a dominant character in Northwest native American mythology. This is evident in his 1985 stoneware Dead Salmon and Raven Plate. Raven, the eater, consumes the salmon, the propagator of life, thus enabling the latter to further life on multiple levels.¹²⁶

A poignant context for Frank Boyden's salmon images is the garden of Eola Hall, the Forensic Psychiatric Treatment building in Salem, created in 1992. Upon winning the commission for the project, Boyden and landscape architect Mike Riley were challenged to transform a dismal space into an environment "which would 'offer a change of place . . . create an atmosphere of peace and tranquility and a sense of hope.'"¹²⁷ To accomplish this they sought materials that were "challenging and demanding to the senses," including old growth beams with myriad growth rings, large basalt stones with unique fracture lines and textural patterns, flowing water, and huge granite pieces that would dwarf the human scale.

Because Eola Hall is a secure facility, the garden is not a place through which people pass, but is a destination, necessitating an environment with inherent change. This is accomplished through a variety of seasonal plants, and the placing

¹²⁶Davies, p. 28.

¹²⁷"Garden Environment—A Caged Space," Oregon Art in Public Places description of garden at Eola Hall, designed by Frank Boyden and Mike Riley, Public art files (Oregon Arts Commission, Salem).

of stones at various angles. The large granite stones are transformed by the shadows that the changing daylight casts on carefully sandblasted petroglyph-like drawings of salmon and other life forms—drawings that reduce the massive stones to the human scale. The life-renewing symbolism of Boyden’s salmon drawings is thus a vehicle for furthering the objective of instilling hope in those who use the space.

The energy of life is expressed another way in the lobby of the Oregon Convention Center in Portland, where resides a massive canvas called River Song. On view since the opening of the center in 1990, Lucinda Parker’s 44- by 14-foot painting—titled after the book of the same name by Craig Lesley—consists of contrasting light and dark colored spirals, circles, and fish-like shapes that appear to make their way upstream. Around the edge, undulating forms are inscribed with the names of Oregon rivers. In Parker’s River Song, the fish is a mytho-religious symbol of transcendence that stands for the recreational, environmental, and political concerns of the Pacific Northwest.¹²⁸

Parker’s fascination with the fish symbol started with its natural oval or almond shape—an ancient form signifying birth or the convergence of two spheres, two realities. “The fish is a formidable visual symbol,” says Parker, “encompassing both the male and female, penetration and fecundity . . . Jung

¹²⁸Lois Allen, “Review Shorts,” uncited photocopy of newspaper article, Lucinda Parker file, Artist files (Laura Russo Gallery, Portland, Oregon).

called the fish the symbol of the human soul, up from the depths.”¹²⁹ In her 1991 Gnos Song, Parker uses the familiar fish shape as a sexual/spiritual symbol to suggest infinity. Its presence in Chaconne, painted the same year, was described by one reviewer as “a podlike form that could be the hull of a ship, the gap of a womb or a chrysalis: all symbols of journey and birth.”¹³⁰

Describing his images of fish and fishing as “logos for the region” and “regional hieroglyphics,” Randy Gragg of The Oregonian classifies Dennis Cunningham as the closest thing in Oregon to a regionalist artist.¹³¹ Combining his love of fishing and love of art to create works that go beyond being commentaries on sport to becoming statements about the spiritual relationship between people and the natural environment, Cunningham states “I am hoping to make images which are evocations of the relationship between human nature and the nature of our world.”¹³²

His linocut prints, and more recently his pastel chalk drawings on paper, have evolved from whimsical personal records about a favorite hobby to mystical

¹²⁹“Perceptions of Reality: Parker’s Broad Sweeps of Abstraction,” Seattle Times, n.d. June 1989, uncited photocopy, Lucinda Parker file, Artist files (Laura Russo Gallery, Portland, Oregon).

¹³⁰Steve Tyler, “Lucinda Parker’s Torrid Torrent of Paint,” Portland Oregonian, 23 April 1993, Arts and Entertainment sec., p. 28.

¹³¹Randy Gragg, “Hooking the Viewer,” Portland Oregonian, 13 September 1991, Arts and Entertainment sec., p. 22; and Randy Gragg, “Artist Takes Bold New Steps to Test New Waters,” Portland Oregonian, 5 November 1993, Arts and Entertainment sec., p. 28.

¹³²Dennis Cunningham, “Comments on New Works,” 7 August 1991 (Jamison/Thomas Gallery, Portland, Oregon).

images about his view of the world as a sacred place in which to pursue life's meaning. Cunningham's early Fishhead I and Trout Mask, both linocuts created in 1981, are visual puns about a fisherman's tendency to become obsessed with his or her pastime. At a deeper level, they are also timeless statements about the ancient tradition of hunters taking on the identity of the hunted¹³³—an experience at once of power and deep respect.

His 1991 Big Fish Eats Little Fish is typical of later, more sober transmissions of his message about humankind's treatment of and relationship with nature. A circular image of an armor-clad human being wielding a huge knife in the midst of numerous fish and other sea creatures is surrounded by boxes that include a weeping eye, a skeleton of a fish, and an upright, light-engulfed hand. All of this is set over a background of a map of the Pacific Ocean near the coast of North America and a net-like configuration that transforms into bat-like wings surmounted by a skull. In the tradition of David Hockney, Cunningham's use of compartmentalized figures departs from the European notion of single-point perspective that implies a God or life source that is separate from the individual.¹³⁴ Instead, his portrayals of his homeland acknowledge multiple experiences of reality, evoking the sublimity of Oregon art that seeks to portray an idealized, transcendent image of the region.

¹³³John S. Weber, "Dennis Cunningham: Fish Tales," Northwest Viewpoints: Dennis Cunningham (Portland, Oregon: Portland Art Museum, 1989).

¹³⁴Gragg, "Hooking the Viewer," p. 22.

In 1991, the Northwest Power Planning Council's Angus Duncan stated "Salmon are part of the way we define ourselves in the Northwest."¹³⁵ The same may be said of the beaver and other animals, as well as the Columbia River Gorge, the Oregon Coast, Eastern Oregon deserts, numerous snow-capped peaks, and even surviving evidence of ancient and more recent cataclysmic events. Through folklore, literature, and perhaps most blatantly, the visual arts, these things have been magnified to mythic proportions. So much so that, for some people, the word "Oregon" need merely be mentioned for any or a combination of them to come to mind.

¹³⁵Quoted in Courtland Smith, "Salmon: Struggle for Survival," address at a Oregon Council for the Humanities Chautauqua program, Corvallis, Oregon, 23 April 1992.

CHAPTER II

LAND OF THE EMPIRE BUILDERS:

UTOPIAN IMAGES OF OREGON'S HUMAN PAST

On April 25, 1935, the Oregon State Capitol was destroyed by fire. Consumed by the flames was a “life-sized” portrait of Dr. John McLoughlin, deemed the “Father of Oregon” in 1957 by the state legislature. This monumental image—a description merited by the very size of the man—was painted by William Cogswell in 1887 and presented to the legislature by the Oregon Pioneer Association in 1889. It anticipated the numerous works of art created throughout the following century that not only portray, but ennoble persons and events associated with the history of the state.

History painting and the tradition of rendering in a heroic manner individuals and events associated with the beginnings of the United States were well established by the late eighteenth century, but it was not until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that these subjects became popular in Oregon.¹³⁶ Nationally, a movement coined the “American Renaissance,” which embraced European styles while frequently celebrating American subjects,

¹³⁶Gerdt's and Cleaver's histories of Oregon art both indicate that the most popular nineteenth-century subject was landscape painting followed by portraiture. Other than illustrations that may have appeared in books and periodicals, relatively little work of an historical nature was produced.

provided energy during the late nineteenth century for the creation of heroic art.¹³⁷ Locally, government-supported art programs and a monied class that was able to sustain an art community, plus such motivators of popular history as nostalgic reminiscing and the desire to seek inspiration from those who came before, were catalysts that helped bring this about. Even as scholarship sought to distinguish fact from fantasy regarding historical events, the tendency to turn a blind eye to reality and to embrace the nobler aspects of an idealized past endured through the century.¹³⁸ As George Venn states, “maybe Oregon history is Oregon’s most compelling fiction.”¹³⁹

Native Americans

Because of their ancient presence in the region, indigenous people in Oregon utopian art are commonly associated with the land. They are seen, as William Goetzmann suggests, as representations of “nature’s nation.”¹⁴⁰ Works that glorify native American individuals and events or focus on Indians as symbols of a bygone era, often in reference to European-American accomplishments, fall under the category of utopian art that looks to a mythic past

¹³⁷For a good discussion on the American Renaissance, see Wayne Craven, American Art: History and Culture (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1994), pp. 280-390.

¹³⁸Treuttner, “Ideology and Image,” p. 39.

¹³⁹George Venn, “Oregon Trail Fiction: A Dialogue at the Golden Pioneer Bookstore,” Oregon Humanities (Winter 1992):47.

¹⁴⁰Goetzmann, p. 231.

to inform the region's identity. These images serve the objectives of the mainstream European-American society. Rarely are they created to support an Indian agenda.¹⁴¹ Such portrayals are rich in their diversity, falling into two categories: allegorical representations that support European-American values and American progress, and representations of a time before European and European-American contact.

Sacagawea is the Indian who is most frequently depicted in Oregon utopian art. Her participation in Lewis and Clark's historic journey has made her a symbol of United States expansion and European-American values. Idealized by Eva Emery Dye in her 1902 novel, The Conquest: The True Story of Lewis and Clark, Sacagawea was first popularized as a role model for the women's suffrage movement.¹⁴² She is often portrayed in the role of guide, but there is no evidence that she played a major part in leading the Corps of Discovery to the Pacific.¹⁴³ Depictions of her pointing the way suggest a native American sanctioning of the expansionist goals of the young United States, as if the land itself had acquiesced to the white American domination of the continent.

¹⁴¹Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978), p. 98.

¹⁴²Kimberly Swanson, "Eva Emery Dye and the Romance of Oregon History," The Pacific Historian 29 (Winter 1985):67-68; Gail H. Landsman, "The 'Other' as Political Symbol: Images of Indians in the Woman Suffrage Movement," Ethnohistory 39 (Summer 1992):271-273.

¹⁴³Ronald W. Taber, "Sacajawea and the Suffragettes: An Interpretation of a Myth," Pacific Northwest Quarterly 58 (January 1967):7-8.

Like much twentieth-century Oregon utopian art that falls into the category of idealizing a mythic past, works depicting Sacagawea often employ motifs that have their inception in the nineteenth century. The young Shoshone woman, also called Bird Woman, is most commonly seen carrying her baby, Baptiste, who was fathered by French trapper Toussaint Charbonneau. While this portrayal may not seem so unusual—she would have had primary responsibility for the infant—the pairing recalls the ancient image of mother and child, so frequently used in the Christian tradition in depictions of Mary and the infant Jesus. Marie Dorion, reputed mother of the first white child born in Oregon, is also lauded for her maternal role, being identified as the “Madonna of the Old Oregon Trail.”¹⁴⁴ Both examples draw parallels with that most virtuous of heroines, the pioneer mother.

Alice Cooper’s 1904 Sacajawea is probably the best known representation of the subject in Oregon art (see Figure 8). Early reactions to the work repeatedly referred to Sacagawea’s roles of guide and mother. At its unveiling at the 1905 Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition, Dye proclaimed:

¹⁴⁴See Vera Joyce Nelson, “Marie Dorion—Mother of the West,” in Webs From an Old Loom, ed. Vera Joyce Nelson (Mid Valley, California: The Wings Press, 1952).



Fig. 8. Alice Cooper. Sacajawea. 1905. Bronze.
Washington Park, Portland, Oregon (OHS neg. OrHi 27715)

Trappers had been here, traders and shipmasters had skirted these wilds, but not until mothers came was the true seed of a nation planted. And Sacajawea led them all, the dark eyed princess of the native race, the child of Asia, beckoned the white man on, toward her ancient home in the Orient.¹⁴⁵

Anna Shaw, of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, cited Sacagawea as an inspiration for women “to lead men through the pass of justice, which goes over the mountains of prejudice and conservatism to the broad land of the perfect freedom of a true republic.”¹⁴⁶

In comparing Sacagawea’s pose to a pioneer or explorer, the October 1904 Lewis and Clark Journal claimed, “the ‘Bird Woman’ is lifted by the hands of art from the degrading characteristics which mark the features of her descendants among the Shoshone or Snake Indians of her tribe today.”¹⁴⁷ Remarks such as these are accordant with attitudes that identify European characteristics in order to admit Indians into the pantheon of white heroes. Throughout nineteenth-century American art, the individual who is most often used to portray the virtues of submitting to Christianity was the female Indian—the male being reserved for personification of the noble savage.¹⁴⁸ Erastus Dow Palmer’s ca. 1853-56 Indian Girl: The Dawn of Christianity portrays a young

¹⁴⁵Eva Emery Dye, speech delivered at unveiling of Sacajawea statue, Portland, Oregon, 1905, Eva Emery Dye Collection (Oregon Historical Society Library, Portland).

¹⁴⁶Quoted in Landsman, p. 273.

¹⁴⁷“Concerning Sacajawea,” Lewis and Clark Journal, October 1904, p. 22.

¹⁴⁸William H. Gerds, “The Marble Savage,” Art in America, July/August 1974, pp. 64, 69.

female native who has come upon a cross. Her countenance, a mixture of curiosity and peace, indicates her instantaneous conversion to the new faith. Like Palmer's work, as well as numerous representations of the well-known Pocahontas story, which echo this subject of the Indian female as the vanguard of salvation for her people, images of Sacagawea as mother or leader to a promised land are merely two more examples of the perceived necessity of native people to yield not only to the European religion, but to the entire spectrum of what was deemed good about European civilization. These images served to justify European control not only of native American people, but of the American continent as a whole, including its natural resources.¹⁴⁹

By 1909, when Cooper's Sacajawea was moved to Portland's City Park, the myth labeling the heroine as leader was so established that the Spectator felt secure in proclaiming that the monument had been erected to one "who led Lewis and Clark safely through the Oregon Country."¹⁵⁰ In 1931 Avarad Fairbanks felt confident enough in the story to include in one of his eight panels adorning Portland's U.S. Bank doors—modeled after Ghiberti's fifteenth-century Gates of Paradise in Florence—a rendering of Bird Woman not pointing, but walking in front of the two famous explorers as she escorts them to the Pacific. The role received an official stamp seven years later when Leo Friedlander's 13-foot-high marble relief of Sacagawea pointing westward for a mounted Lewis and Clark was

¹⁴⁹Ibid., p. 69.

¹⁵⁰Spectator, vol. 5, no. 1, (13 March 1909), p. 1.

installed in front of the new State Capitol. At the end of the century, in an era when the history of the West was being reexamined, a monumental image of Bird Woman was painted on the west wall of the Oregon History Center in Portland showing her outstretched arm not pointing, but supported by a walking stick (see Figure 9). Convinced by the Historical Society that this was more historically accurate, world renowned muralist Richard Haas nevertheless managed to keep the young Baptiste securely cradled in his mother's arm.¹⁵¹

In the nineteenth century, one category of works representing native Americans reinforced the idea that indigenous people must be controlled and taught the ways of civilization.¹⁵² An early twentieth-century example of this in Oregon art is Solon Borglum's The First Step to Civilization, exhibited at the 1905 Lewis and Clark Exposition. This sculpture of an Indian chief clutching a Bible, with his son at his side, is described as "depicting the Indian after contact with the white race," the youth "seeming to catch the spirit of the new day."¹⁵³

A counterpart to this representation of native people, which also originated in the nineteenth century and continued into the twentieth, was a genre of works showing Indians passively standing by as European-Americans encroach upon their homeland. An early example of this in Oregon art is John Mix

¹⁵¹Thomas Vaughan, letter to Richard Haas, 3 November 1988, Haas Mural Correspondence (Oregon Historical Society, Portland).

¹⁵²Treuttner, "Prelude to Expansion," p. 79.

¹⁵³Anabel Park McCann, "Decorative Sculpture at the Lewis and Clark Exposition," Pacific Monthly, July 1905, p. 84.



Fig. 9. Richard Haas. Oregon History Murals (west mural). 1989. Oregon History Center, Portland, Oregon (Oregon Historical Society photograph)

Stanley's ca. 1852 Oregon City on the Willamette (see Figure 10). Anticipating the distinction between civilization and nature found in Henk Pander's record of the 1981 eruption of Mt. St. Helens, the scene shows the young town as a wilderness outpost of European-American society. In contrast to the structured community, two Indians situated in the lower left of the picture symbolize the untamed, nomadic nature of a people whose culture, and the natural environment by which it was shaped, is destined to be eclipsed by the orderliness of civilization.¹⁵⁴

By the beginning of the twentieth century, at a time when the end of the frontier had been proclaimed and nostalgia for native Americans was on an increase, these images were created with less comparative intentions and symbolized instead the last breaths of a noble race, suggesting the fate of nature itself. Across the green from Cooper's Sacajawea, in what today is known as Washington Park, Herman Atkins MacNeil's 1904 sculpture, The Coming of the White Man, peers out through the foliage in eternal wonderment at surrounding activities (see Figure 11). Created by an artist who was described as "a master on the subject of Indians," the figure was hailed by Portland's Mayor George Williams as "not the Indians of poetry or romance, but real Indians as they were

¹⁵⁴Johns, Elizabeth, "Settlement and Development: Claiming the West," in The West as America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier, 1820-1920, ed. William H. Treuttner (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), p. 209.

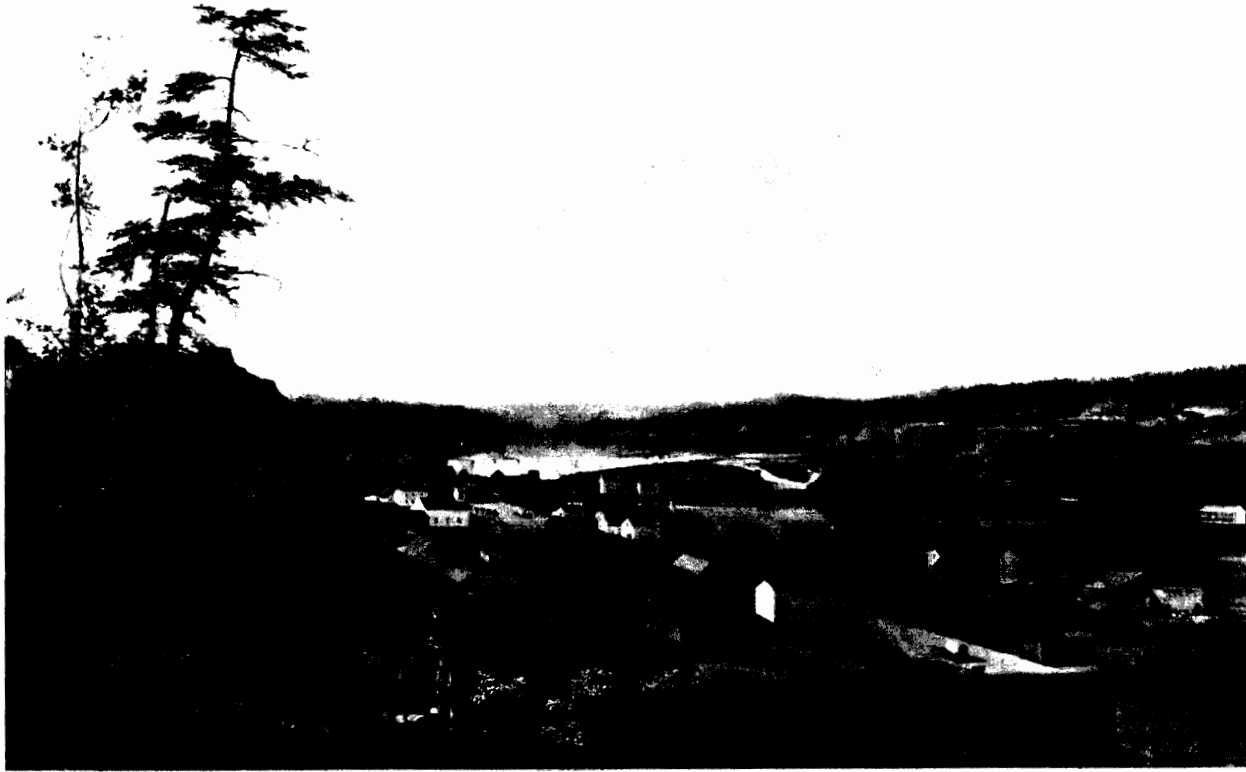


Fig. 10. John Mix Stanley. Oregon City on the Willamette. ca. 1850-1852. Oil on canvas. Amon Carter Museum (#1979.17), Fort Worth, Texas (OHS neg. OrHi 23926)



Fig. 11. Herman MacNeil. 1904. The Coming of the White Man. Bronze. Washington Park, Portland, Oregon (OHS neg. OrHi 25745-a)

when the star of empire on its western course first burst upon their startled vision.”¹⁵⁵

By the time The Coming of the White Man was unveiled, the Boston-born and educated MacNeil had already gained a national reputation for his dramatic 36-foot-high Fountain of Liberty. This landmark of the 1904 St. Louis Exposition depicted allegorical figures of Liberty, Truth, and Justice and touted the virtues of patriotism, family, and freedom.¹⁵⁶ One wonders how MacNeil, who was described as possessing “a poetic temperament,” could do justice to an unromantic rendering of a “real Indian.”¹⁵⁷ In truth, The Coming of the White Man follows a tradition that is well-grounded in nineteenth-century American expansionist iconography. Facing east, high above Portland, this speculative representation of Chief Multnomah and his unnamed companion portrays the two Indians watching the pass through which the first explorers floated down the Columbia. The Chief is depicted upright and proud with his arms crossed, while his partner is curious, waving to the newcomers with what early descriptions identify as an oak branch. As in Stanley’s 1852 work, the land and its original

¹⁵⁵Eleanor Pillsbury, untitled article, Portland Oregon Journal, 23 August 1931, Sunday Morning ed., p. 3.

¹⁵⁶“Sculpture MacNeil’s Beautiful Work at St. Louis,” Portland Sunday Oregonian, 9 October 1904, p. 23.

¹⁵⁷Harriett Warner Chapin, “Herman Atkins MacNeil,” Pacific Monthly, 15 March 1906, p. 417.

occupiers are depicted as no match against the onslaught of European-American settlement.

This passive portrayal of native inhabitants remained popular through the early decades of the twentieth century. The logo for Portland's Pacific Monthly Magazine pictured a lone Indian peering from a promontory over a thriving city. His era over, the image invokes the kind of empathy one acquires for a person who is no longer at home in his own land. On the Astoria Column, constructed in 1926, Attilo Pusterla's sgraffito frieze incorporates the image in a depiction of Robert Gray's sighting—commonly described as discovery—of the Columbia River. In this instance the Indians appear to flee in terror at the strange sight. Avarad Fairbanks, that prolific creator of heroic art, includes it on his Portland U.S. Bank door panel dedicated to Robert Gray's Columbia Rediviva. Here, three native men, dressed in Plains Indian garb and gazing at the ship from a cliff high above the sea, dominate three quarters of the frame, the boat being relegated to the upper left corner. Rockwell Carey's 1936 proposal for the St. Johns post office alters the iconography by arming the overwhelmed Indians with guns as they witness railroads, wagon trains, and paddleboats invade their territory.

All these examples hark back to mid-nineteenth century national prototypes that proclaim European domination of the continent. Joshua Shaw's 1850 work, also called The Coming of the White Man, shows the Indians in the foreground shielding their eyes from an approaching ship that is engulfed in seemingly divine sunlight, and Thomas Moran's Columbus Approaching San

Salvador, painted in 1860, depicts the natives patiently awaiting the explorer's inevitable arrival at their tropical paradise. Whereas twentieth century European-Americans no longer needed to assert their right to control the region, such visual reminders, while less dramatic, served to reinforce the dominant culture's interpretation of history. While they do not overtly advocate dispossession of the Indians, the aesthetic and allegorical elements of these works reinforce long established cultural myths about proprietorship of the land.¹⁵⁸

One example that takes an alternate approach is the Oregon Trail commemorative half dollar, authorized by Congress in 1926. Laura Gardin Fraser's relief of a muscular Indian is bracketed by the words "United States of America." Facing left with his left arm extended, like a police officer attempting to halt traffic, and resting his bow in his right arm, the futility of his act is sealed by the presence, on the reverse side of the coin, of a wagon beckoned by the wide corona of the sun.¹⁵⁹

The motif of Indians passively watching the approach of Europeans was seldom used after the 1930s. When a photograph of MacNeil's 86-year-old The Coming of the White Man appeared in Oregon's 1990 voter's pamphlet, it was described, as in 1904, in terms that were acceptable to the non-Indian mainstream society. This time the politically correct "Native Americans offering Oregon

¹⁵⁸Treuttner, "Prelude to Expansion," pp. 73-74.

¹⁵⁹Bert Webber, The Oregon Trail Memorial Half Dollar (1926-1939) (n.p.: Webb Research Group), n.d., p. 9.

grapes” was used. Whereas the description of the work gives no indication of the subject intended by its creator, the undeniably curious look on the face of Multnomah’s attendant appears to depict a person who remains baffled by the strange culture that surrounds him.¹⁶⁰

The sense of nostalgia that accompanied the perceived end of the frontier also influenced representations of native Americans in pre-European-contact, or indigenous, settings.¹⁶¹ Here, emphasis was not on American progress, but on the notion that native people were a vanishing race. A champion of this attempt to preserve the visual memory of an entire people was Seattle photographer Edward S. Curtis, who, although he produced images of Indians throughout the West, made a sizeable number of photographs of natives associated with Oregon. Unlike photographers who attempted to create unbiased images of America’s first people, Curtis acknowledged that pure objectivity was not possible.¹⁶² With the freedom that accompanied this attitude, he hoped to create photographic images—products of what he called “art-science”—that portrayed the spirit of a people whose sun was about to set.

Curtis’s attempts to show the true Indian involved a number of clever techniques, including cropping and posing. The elimination of any indication of

¹⁶⁰Oregon, Secretary of State, Official 1990 General Voter’s Pamphlet.

¹⁶¹Brian Dippie, “Photographic Allegories,” Montana 42 (Summer 1992):42.

¹⁶²Goetzmann, p. 229.

European cultural influences, a careful choosing of subject matter, and the inclusion of props are other ways he attempted to strengthen the convincing tone of his images.¹⁶³ His portrayals of native Oregonians and Indians associated with Oregon history include examples in which he incorporates such devices.

A portrait of Chief Joseph, which was part of Curtis's popular collection *The North American Indian*, is actually a cropping of a photograph that included the Nez Perce chief, an Indian companion, and Edmund Meany, Professor of History at the University of Washington and a friend of the photographer. Curtis often had several different croppings printed from the same negative.¹⁶⁴ A picture called Innocence, portraying a Umatilla child in what appears to be a typical pose, is embellished, in this case, by its title and the photographer's description: "Few aspects of Indian life are more interesting . . . than the demeanor of the children, with their coy bashfulness, their mischievous, sparkling eyes, their doubtful hesitation just the other side of friendliness."¹⁶⁵

Like the myths that soon surrounded heroic depictions of Sacagawea, Curtis's images, which manipulate reality rather than depict it, were quickly taken for documentary portrayals of the true Indian. In reaction to a 1904 showing of

¹⁶³Christopher Lyman, The Vanishing Race and Other Illusions: Photographs of Indians by Edward S. Curtis (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1982), p. 63-70.

¹⁶⁴Lyman, p. 63.

¹⁶⁵ Florence Curtis Graybill and Victor Boesen, Edward Sherrif Curtis: Visions of a Vanishing Race (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1976) p. 42.

150 slides of Curtis's works to the Mazamas in Portland, The Oregonian reported: "It is surely an educational work of unique and remarkable value which should be enjoyed by all public school pupils, teachers, students of American history and the public generally."¹⁶⁶

Two Oregon photographers whose work included embellished images of Indians were Benjamin Gifford and Leander Moorhouse. Like Curtis, Benjamin Gifford, who is best known for his views of Oregon scenery, periodically exercised artistic license to convey more than just a literal image of native Americans. His 1908 portrait of Peu-Peu-Mox-Mox, a Nez Perce who took part in the Walla Walla Council of 1855, as well as his 1901 Indian Madonna are examples in which the individuals are carefully posed. Gifford's Sunset on the Columbia, or Tepees on the Columbia, as indicated by its titles, falls under the category of images of vestiges of native American culture that are posed against the backdrop of a dimly lit sky or setting sun, suggesting the last hours of a people.¹⁶⁷ In reference to this picture Gifford said:

I had gone up near Maryhill to photograph a band of sheep. After getting my picture I went down to the Columbia and it seemed illuminated with subterranean light. The sun was setting, the shadows were gathering over the hills; beside the river were 2 tepees; a dugout was drawn upon the river bank. No Indians were in sight. As I turned my back on the tepees, to take the cap off my camera, a rock whizzed by my head I have

¹⁶⁶Quoted in Graybill, p. 17.

¹⁶⁷Dippie, "Photographic Allegories" p. 53.

photographed untold numbers of Indians and this was the first time I had ever had any trouble with them.¹⁶⁸

Leander Moorhouse, a prolific photographer of northeastern Oregon, is famous for his images of Indians. Known for drawing upon his large collection of native artifacts—many of which he may have acquired while agent of the Umatilla Indian Reservation—to adorn the subjects of his portraits, Moorhouse, like Curtis, created portraits that fit with popular notions about indigenous people. The Cayuse Twins, photographed in 1892, was one of his best known pictures.¹⁶⁹ Reproduced in the thousands, this frontal view of two tightly wrapped infants propped against a support appears to be more a study of the cradleboards than of their occupants. A twentieth-century example is his ca. 1905 portrait of Tathomi, or “Good Man,” a Warm Springs scout. As in Curtis’s Innocence, the pose and facial expression are unremarkable. Sold as a postcard at the Lewis and Clark Exposition—a form in which many of Moorhouse’s images became popular—the elaborate costume in which the individual is dressed was likely the picture’s greatest selling point.

Faced with the uncertainties of a new era, including prospects of technologies that possessed ominous potential and their companion forces of

¹⁶⁸Fred Lockley, “Portland Oregon Journal, 28 August 1929,” in Oregon Photographers: Biographical History and Directory, 1852-1917, ed. Thomas Robinson (Portland: Thomas Robinson, 1993) p. 299.

¹⁶⁹Robert Grant, unidentified article, Northwest Magazine, 13 November 1977, uncited photocopy, Leander Moorhouse file, Photographer files (Oregon Historical Society Library, Portland).

industrialization, increased population, and urbanization, early twentieth century America found comfort in claiming its indigenous past—a mythic past created by artists like Curtis, Gifford, and Moorhouse. This sentiment, and its accompanying artistic responses, would resurface throughout the century when times were less secure or when they simply required historical grounding.¹⁷⁰

Attilo Pusterla precedes his scene of native Americans fleeing from Robert Gray's approaching ship on the spiral frieze of the Astoria Column with a panel called Before the White Man—The Forest Primeval. Showing a forest rich in wildlife but devoid of people, the panel is acknowledged as honoring the area's first humans in an unidentified interpretive program-script that describes each section of the frieze:

It was a perfect Paradise for the Indians who lived in this green land, the climate mild, food in plenty, deer close to the trail, trout leaping in the streams, great salmon in the big river, wild berries in abundance in their season.¹⁷¹

In the 1930s, one of the most popular subjects for murals executed for post offices by the Federal Arts Project was native American history. The most common topics of that history pertained to pre-contact life and traditional Indian culture. Like other post office murals, many of these scenes depict their characters as able, hard-working, and productive members of their society—attributes deemed crucial for the survival of the nation, especially in time

¹⁷⁰Dippie, "Photographic Allegories," p. 57; and Goetzmann, p. 234.

¹⁷¹Astoria Column file, unidentified interpretive program, vertical file (Oregon Historical Society Library, Portland).

of economic depression.¹⁷² An Oregon example is Louis Bunce's Rogue River Indians, painted in tempera in 1938 for the Grants Pass post office. The scene shows members of this southwest Oregon people working in their camp by preparing food and accomplishing other tasks.

The popularity of native American subjects in government-funded art is not restricted to post office murals. Other projects in Oregon also used Indian themes as an avenue for creativity. Arthur Runquist, like his brother Albert, is known for the regional quality of his painting, emphasizing not only nature, but people at work.¹⁷³ He executed a federally-funded mural for Pendleton High School in 1941 depicting Indian life and including such traditional activities as dancing.

At Portland's Alameda School, Aimee Gorham included two handsome wood marquetry murals of Indians and Indians with Corn to flank a central piece called Pioneers. The arrangement of her 1936 Federal Arts Project panels recalls the role that native American subjects have traditionally played in supporting European-American ideals. Timberline Lodge at Mt. Hood, while possessing relatively few works containing Indian subjects, displays a painted wood carving of an Indian face, complete with head dress and braids, on the door of the ski

¹⁷²Marlene Park and Gerald E. Markowitz, Democratic Vistas: Post Offices and Public Art in the New Deal (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984), pp. 34-35.

¹⁷³Randy Gragg, "Sense and Place Fills Runquists' Work," Portland Oregonian, 10 December 1993, Arts and Entertainment sec., p. 30.

lounge. Most of the Indian-related subjects at the lodge are not intended to convey authentic styles or depictions, but serve only as decoration—one being adapted from a Camp Fire Girl handbook!¹⁷⁴

During the last half of the century, despite wide ranging attempts to acknowledge contemporary contributions of native American culture, many artists still portrayed the Indian of history as a symbol of a mythic past, be it nostalgic or exemplary. In 1959, Chief Don Smith Lelooska carved a totem pole to honor the State's centennial. Erected adjacent to Portland's Terwilliger Boulevard, the sculpture was made from a 50-foot, 750-year-old cedar tree that was hailed as being a "fully-grown queen of the forest when the state of Oregon was born." Describing the symbolism of the piece, which is patterned after a totem pole not from Oregon but from Canada's Queen Charlotte Islands, Lelooska likened the figures to heroic qualities.¹⁷⁵ He stated that the images "start with the beaver which is 'appropriate to Oregon,' surmounted by a grizzly bear 'which was tough enough to survive plenty of hard times,' and topped by an eagle, 'appropriate to our Centennial.'"¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁴Rachael Griffin and Sarah Munro, ed, Timberline Lodge (Portland, Oregon: Friends of Timberline, 1978), p. 37.

¹⁷⁵According to Holm, the region's indigenous art traditions did not include this style of sculpture. See Holm, p. 623.

¹⁷⁶"Hubbard Indian Artist Starts to Work Carving World's Biggest Totem Pole," Portland Sunday Oregonian, 25 March 1959, uncited photocopy, vertical file (Oregon Historical Society Library, Portland).

Thirty-five years later, The Oregonian ran an article stating that the Washington Park Zoo was contemplating situating “a forest of totem poles straight into the zoo’s . . . Oregon exhibit.” Even though the zoo’s director explained that the “Oregon Territory—the Northwest—would be more accurate” in describing the exhibit, the idea met with a slightly different reaction.¹⁷⁷ Protest was heard not only over including culturally inaccurate totem poles, but over associating native Americans with wild animals.¹⁷⁸

Less symbolic depictions of native American culture also survive into the late twentieth century. Georgiale Coble’s The Dalles Mural presents a number of aspects of precontact Indian life, including art and trade. While some of the historical accuracy is questionable, it is plain that the purpose of the work is to establish a secure historical grounding for the area. An interpretive brochure on the piece explains: “When one considers that this scene depicts life in Oregon some 11,000 years ago, it is obvious that this area’s heritage is as ancient as that of Europe.”¹⁷⁹

As Wayne Chabre’s salmon suggests, native American culture was also viewed during the last decades of the twentieth century as an alternative approach

¹⁷⁷John Painter, Jr., “Zoo of the Future,” Portland Oregonian, 4 January 1994, sec. A, p. 1.

¹⁷⁸Muriel Ann Wyatt and Victoria Wyatt, letter, Portland Oregonian, 10 January 1994.

¹⁷⁹The Historical Heritage of the Dalles Region: The Dalles Mural (The Dalles, Oregon: The Dalles Branch of The United States Bank, n.d.)

to dealing with the world. This counterculture Indian, though tailored to the time, is reminiscent of the Noble Savage of the enlightenment.¹⁸⁰ Like images which support European accomplishments, it also serves a European-American agenda. Artistic evidence of this trend focuses on humans' interaction with the environment, which is discussed in Chapter IV.

Discovery and Exploration

Whereas idealized portrayals of native Americans were often created for purposes of moral instruction, commemorating individuals or events, or asserting proprietorship over the land, works representing persons and events associated with the establishment of the region's non-indigenous population served the added purpose of designating heroes and role models. Exploration, immigration, and settlement are the subjects which are most often called upon to reinforce heroic virtues. Beginning with European-American themes and broadening to other cultures and experiences, the larger than life characters that dominate popular notions about Oregon history are key players in the state's "creation myth."¹⁸¹ In the nineteenth century, historical art was an important method by which a nationalist agenda was promoted.¹⁸² During the twentieth century, with the

¹⁸⁰Berkhofer, p. 108.

¹⁸¹Term used by Elizabeth Broun, Director of the National Museum of American Art Washington, D.C., in Elizabeth Broun, "The Story Behind the West as America," Museum News, September/October 1991, p. 78.

¹⁸²Treuttner, "Prelude to Expansion," p. 57.

belief that that agenda, including United States domination of the continent and the spreading of democratic ideals, had been accomplished, such art served to reinforce society's interpretation of history, both nationally and locally.

One year prior to its construction in 1926, the Astoria Column, built by the Great Northern Railway on the city's Coxcomb Hill, with the aid of the Astor family, was announced as: "a monument to Captain Robert Gray, discoverer of the Columbia River, the explorers Lewis and Clark, and John Jacob Astor, founder of Astoria" and identified by its commissioner as "one of a series of monuments . . . [commemorating] outstanding events in the progress of pioneers in conquering the western wilderness."¹⁸³ In addition to picturing the native American scenes cited above, the 125-foot shaft's 535-foot-long spiral frieze shows Gray's ship, Columbia, entering the "Great River of the West;" the naming of Mt. Hood by Lt. William Broughton; Lewis and Clark crossing the Rocky Mountains, boiling sea water, building Fort Clatsop, and returning east; the Wilson Price Hunt Party, destruction of the Tonquin, and the transfer of Astoria to the North West Company; and the raising of the United States flag in 1818. It concludes with small images of covered wagons and, of course, the arrival of the Great Northern Railroad in 1893.

¹⁸³"Monument to Honor Oregon Explorers," unidentified newspaper clipping, ca. 1925, vertical file (Oregon Historical Society Library, Portland), p. 54.; and Leonard B. Kimbrell, "Some New Light on the Astoria Column," n.p., n.d., uncited photocopy of published article, vertical file (Oregon Historical Society Library, Portland).

After its construction, the Astoria Column was hailed as “a monument to courage . . . [depicting] the heroic character of the deeds which won the Pacific Northwest for the United States.”¹⁸⁴ As late as 1981, the application for placing it on the National Register of Historic Places described it as commemorating “the winning of the West” and “the westward sweep of discovery and migration which brought settlement and civilization to the Sunset Empire.”¹⁸⁵ The Astoria Column, erected in a decade that saw the adoption of the state song and the naming of the “father of Oregon,” includes a number of subjects pertaining to early Oregon pathfinders that are ideally represented in art in the twentieth century.

For nineteenth-century Americans, exploration, and its often idealized counterpart, discovery, was equated with the introduction of civilization to the continent and as an historical precedent for current expansionist activity.¹⁸⁶ In the twentieth century, it remained a symbol of the beginnings of European culture, but also evolved as a metaphor reflecting changing values and priorities. On a regional level, it was not Christopher Columbus, but Robert Gray, Lewis and Clark, and other early Pacific Northwest explorers whom artists represented as filling this role.

¹⁸⁴Astoria Column file.

¹⁸⁵The Astoria Column, National Register of Historic Places Application, 1981, vertical file (Oregon Historical Society Library, Portland).

¹⁸⁶Treuttner, “Ideology and Image,” p. 30.

Whereas salmon dinners, historical pageants, lectures, and exhibitions were held to mark the centennial, sesquicentennial, and bicentennial of Robert Gray's 1792 sighting of the Columbia River, few works of art appear to have been created in Oregon to honor those anniversaries.¹⁸⁷ One piece that was done for the 1992 celebration is a 91- by 54-inch needlepoint wall hanging, designed by Barbara Allen Wagner and worked on, in part, by descendants of Astoria pioneers. Amidst a setting of historic buildings and forested hills, canoe-riding Indians, John Jacob Astor, Sacagawea, Lewis and Clark, and the latter's faithful dog, Seaman, are shown gathered on Astoria's waterfront welcoming Captain Robert Gray and the Columbia. Described as "reflecting the region's history," the work is reminiscent of earlier portrayals in which a small group of native Americans was Gray's only welcoming party.¹⁸⁸ While it may not be considered high art or accurate history, the wall hanging is an example of the tendency to interpret history in reference to one of its most cherished qualities—the myths that it has fostered.

In addition to his inclusion in the wall hanging and on the Astoria Column, Robert Gray has been honored in art since early in the century. Theodore Gegoux, who executed a series of paintings of Portland's mayors from

¹⁸⁷Vera Gault, "Honoring Captain Gray," Cumtux 12 (Spring 1992):16-19; and Roger T. Tetlow, "The Great Capt. Robert Gray Memorial Celebration of 1933," Cumtux 13 (Spring 1992):33-36.

¹⁸⁸"Astoria Enters Public Art Arena," Oregon Arts Commission News, Spring 1993, p. 12.

1851 to 1913 and is best known for his romantic portrayal of the 1843 decision to form a provisional government at Champoeg, created a chalk drawing of the eighteenth-century sea captain in 1916. In 1925, Joe Knowles included a portrait of Gray and a picture of the Columbia Rediviva in his series of 46 paintings called Conquering the Trail, about the early Pacific Northwest, commissioned by R. A. Long, founder of Longview, Washington.¹⁸⁹ Not until the 1930s, however, did heroic representations of Gray—including Fairbanks’s previously noted Portland U.S. Bank door panel—begin to appear in significant numbers.

Government-funded Robert Gray subjects that were painted during and shortly after the Depression not only reinforced the idea that early European-Americans brought civilization to the region, they also offered hope as symbols of the search for a better way of life.¹⁹⁰ As in murals created in post offices and public buildings across the country, regional themes were used to encourage a sense of pride in local projects and lend an air of credibility to underlying messages conveyed in the murals.¹⁹¹ Oregon Robert Gray subjects of the time almost consistently depict the explorer participating in and acknowledging native culture through trade. These images of subduing native culture with the trappings

¹⁸⁹Conquerors of the Trail: A Grouping of 46 Portraits and Paintings Depicting Scenes in the Winning of the West, by Joe Knowles, Noted Artist, n.p., n.d., vertical file (Oregon Historical Society Library, Portland).

¹⁹⁰Park and Markowitz, p. 31.

¹⁹¹Ibid, p. 68.

of civilization recall the nineteenth-century practice of depicting the subjugation and civilizing of indigenous people.¹⁹²

In 1938, Barry Faulkner represented Gray and his party greeting and trading with Indians in his State Capitol mural called Robert Gray at the Mouth of the Columbia River (see Figure 12).¹⁹³ The central figure in the piece is a crew member planting an American flag on the sandy shore. To the left of the flag, the scene is dominated by other crew members, their launch, and the geometric lines of their oars and the rigging of the Columbia Rediviva. Robert Gray, the only European-American shown to the right of the flag, steps forward to encounter a small group of natives in elaborate costume offering him a pelt. In contrast to the geometric setting framing the sailors, the gnarled, finger-like root of an upturned tree serves as a backdrop for the Indians. Like Stanley's Oregon City on the Willamette, the orderliness of civilization is contraposed with the randomness of nature and the apparent unstructured character of native culture.

The imperialistic message conveyed in Faulkner's piece is more direct in Lucia Wiley's 1943 Federal Arts Projects mural at the Tillamook Post Office building. Called Captain Robert Gray's First Visit to the Oregon Coast, or Captain Robert Gray Discovers Tillamook Bay, Oregon, 14 August 1788, it shows

¹⁹²Treuttner, "Prelude to Expansion," p. 79.

¹⁹³For artists' accounts on the historical accuracy of the six historical murals in the 1938 Capitol, see Barry Faulkner, "Three Capitol Murals," Oregon Historical Quarterly 41 (1940):132-34; and Frank Schwarz, "Three Capitol Murals," Oregon Historical Quarterly 41 (June 1940):134-36.



Fig. 12. Barry Faulkner. Robert Gray at the Mouth of the Columbia River.
1938. Painted mural. State Capitol, Salem, Oregon (OHS neg. OrHi 65335)

an Indian kneeling—a traditional posture of submission—and writing in the sand at the feet of a towering Gray. The captain's companion stands next to him trading with other Indians. Whereas Faulkner's rendition of the subject uses composition to communicate its agenda of cultural dominance, Wiley employs blatant symbolism.

At the close of the century, Richard Haas included a representation of Robert Gray in his 1989 Oregon History Murals on the south wall of the Oregon History Center. Like Faulkner, as well as Wiley, Haas depicts Gray in the act of practicing his profession—trading with native inhabitants. Whereas trading with Indians is a natural portrayal of Robert Gray and his fellow explorers, it serves here as a subtle reminder of the deeper significance of Indian/European-American encounters—the establishment of European-American society and the radical alteration of native American culture.

The establishment of European-American culture is emphasized more strongly in works of art associated with Lewis and Clark. At the end of the nineteenth century, with their attention drawn to new technologies and foreign markets, few Americans could recall the deeds of the two explorers almost one hundred years before. Civic leaders along the Mississippi and the Columbia rivers, however, had not forgotten. Fairs and expositions had become a primary medium for educating the masses about the wonders of the age. The story surrounding the Corps of Discovery provided the theme of the 1904 St. Louis Louisiana Purchase Exposition but was overshadowed by the excitement and

flamboyance of that extravaganza. The organizers of Portland's 1905 Lewis and Clark Exposition ensured exploitation of the story for the overall goals of the fair by keeping the image of the explorers at the forefront of memory.¹⁹⁴ In his Official History of the Lewis and Clark Exposition, Henry E. Reed, Secretary of the Exposition, describes the official emblem of the fair as symbolizing the arrival of the explorers at the Pacific Ocean. Escorted not by Sacagawea, but by the Goddess of Liberty, Lewis and Clark are pictured marching toward an ocean shore and a setting sun.¹⁹⁵ At times, the introduction of civilization was emphasized by identifying the Goddess of Liberty as Progress. "The whole," remarked one weekly, "symbolizes confidence, energy, trust, and solemn wonder, and well illustrates the well-known and appropriate sentiment . . . 'Westward the course of empire takes its way.'"¹⁹⁶

John Gast, whose 1872 American Progress served as a model for the emblem,¹⁹⁷ describes the Goddess of Liberty in his work as: . . . floating westward through the air, bearing on her forehead the 'Star of Empire.' She has left the cities of the East far behind, crossed the Alleghenies and the 'Father of Waters,' and still her course is westward." Just as she escorts those vanguards of

¹⁹⁴James Ronda, "Lewis and Clark at 200," address to Oregon Historical Society Annual Meeting, Portland, 1 November 1993, pp. 6-78.

¹⁹⁵Henry E. Reed, "Official History of the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition," OHS Mss 383-B (Oregon Historical Society Library, Portland), p. 237.

¹⁹⁶"The Development of Empire," The Music Trade Review, 1905:7.

¹⁹⁷Ronda, p. 8.

civilization, Lewis and Clark, toward the Pacific and the setting sun in the fair's emblem, so, with the accoutrements of civilization in her hands, including a school book and telegraph wire, Liberty introduces "intelligence throughout the land."¹⁹⁸ The official name of the Portland fair was The Lewis and Clark and American Pacific Exposition and Oriental Fair. With the emphasis on international trade, the fair's emblem drew fair goers' attention not only to the establishment of civilization in the Northwest, but to the region's place in world commerce.¹⁹⁹ The editor of Pacific Monthly may have stated it best when he said, "the centennial we celebrate means not so much a retrospect, but a forecast of greater things to come."²⁰⁰

The successors of the early European sea explorers in nineteenth-century American art were scouts and pioneers—one of the most popular of the former being Daniel Boone. In many of these works, Boone is shown leading people or pointing the way—a depiction borrowed from well-known images of Columbus. Such portrayals are reminiscent of Moses gesturing toward the Promised Land.²⁰¹ In Oregon art, the duty of leading civilization to a new land is left to

¹⁹⁸George A. Crofutt, Crofutt's New Overland Tourist and Pacific Coast Guide (Chicago: Overland), pp. 1878-79.

¹⁹⁹Robert Rydell, "Visions of Empire: International Expositions in Portland and Seattle, 1905-1909," Pacific Historical Review 52 (February 1983):39.

²⁰⁰Harvey W. Scott, "The Momentous Struggle for the Mastery of the Pacific," Pacific Monthly, July 1905, p. 1.

²⁰¹Treuttner, "Prelude to Expansion," pp. 79, 110.

the Corps of Discovery—Robert Gray being more occupied with first sightings and interacting with the Indians. Sacagawea's part in pointing the way for Lewis and Clark has already been discussed. Portrayals of her as leader are numerous, but her role is limited to that of guide for the explorers and model for mothers and suffragists. When Lewis and Clark are shown in the lead, the implication is that they are escorting America to the new Promised Land.

The 1905 fair again provides an early example. At the top of the fair's Grand Stairway, near Alice Cooper's Sacajawea, stood statues of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. The rendering of Lewis, by Charles Lopez, shows his left hand extended, palm downward, "as if some new cause for wonderment or admiration had been discovered." Reminiscent of Moses, Frederick Wellington Ruckstuhl's Clark is described as possessing the "equable temper of a lawgiver."²⁰² Observers who had seen the opening-day newspaper may have anticipated the persona of leadership intended in the statues. The June 1, 1905, Oregon Journal displayed a full page illustration of the two pathfinders overlooking the fairgrounds from Portland's West Hills. As they survey the scene, they point eastward, toward the activity and, this time, the rising sun.

The image of the explorers pointing the way is found on an Astoria Column illustration in which either Lewis or Clark is standing in a canoe pointing west toward natives. On the memorial to Samuel Hill, at the Portland Women's Forum Park near Corbett, Alonzo Victor Lewis's panel, called Lewis and Clark

²⁰²McCann, p. 86.

Arrive Columbia River, shows the explorers pointing down the Columbia River Gorge toward the setting sun. Sacagawea stands behind them with her head raised and her baby on her back. Frank Schwarz's Capitol mural, called Lewis and Clark on Their Way to the Pacific in 1805, shows the Corps of Discovery portaging their canoes at Celilo Falls on the Columbia. While most of the members of the expedition are either resting or busy with the canoes, Lewis and Clark are shown at the center of the mural, apparently conversing, one of them gesturing westward.

After the 1930s, few Lewis and Clark subjects appear until the 1980s, at which time there is a virtual renaissance. This may be due, in part, to the 1962 publication of Donald Jackson's The Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, a collection of 428 documents that was revised and expanded in 1978.²⁰³ Jackson's work resulted in the publishing of a flood of expedition scholarship.²⁰⁴ Any new artistic enthusiasm that resulted from excitement generated by the scholarship, however, does not seem to have resulted in any noticeably new depictions of the Expedition's traditionally portrayed characters. Often, either Sacagawea, Lewis, or Clark can still be found pointing the way to the Pacific. An example is found in Seaside at the popular ocean viewpoint called the Turnaround. Here, on the base of Stanley Wanlass's 1989 bronze sculpture of

²⁰³Donald Jackson, ed., Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1962).

²⁰⁴Ronda, pp. 9-10.

Lewis and Clark looking out to sea, called End of the Trail, are found a number of panels with scenes from the expedition. Reminiscent of the image on the Astoria Column, one panel shows the Corps of Discovery rowing down a swift-flowing Columbia River. Sacagawea protectively cradles her baby in her arms while a daring Lewis or Clark stands at the bow of the canoe to point the way.

Among the numerous representations of the explorers that have appeared at the end of the twentieth century, a new iconographical subject has developed. Michael Florin Dente cites August Rodin's St. John the Baptist Preaching as the inspiration for his 1988 The Naming of Mt. Jefferson at the University of Portland. Located near the spot where Clark is believed to have stood, the piece portrays him pointing, this time toward the mountain, "symbolically taking a step into the future."²⁰⁵ Dente's work does not include the usual combination of characters found in Oregon examples of Lewis and Clark subjects—namely Lewis and Clark alone, with Sacagawea, or accompanied by a combination of two or more white and Indian members of their party. Instead, the trio shown includes, specifically, William Clark; York, Clark's African-American slave; and "an unnamed American Indian who was a member of the Cushook tribe that inhabited the river valley." Regarding his cast of players, Dente explains that the work stands as "a visual reminder that three races contributed to the success of the

²⁰⁵The Captain William Clark Monument (Portland, Oregon: University of Portland, n.d.).

Lewis and Clark expedition—symbolic of the first integrated society in the Oregon country.”²⁰⁶

A similar gesture toward inclusiveness is evident in Richard Haas’s west wall mural at the Oregon History Center, which displays images of Lewis, Clark, Sacagawea, and, standing tall and proud, York. Not included in Haas’s original plan of the mural, the African American was added almost two years after the Historical Society requested a change.²⁰⁷ In the meantime, protests were heard from the Oregon Commission on Black Affairs that the mural was “not more inviting to all Oregonians.”²⁰⁸ Both Dente’s and Haas’s treatments of the Lewis and Clark story are departures from traditional representations of the Corps of Discovery throughout the century. Just as early twentieth-century images of the subject served to reinforce popular notions of how civilization reached the Oregon country, so these later representations communicate contemporary ideals of multiculturalism.

In contrast to the Dente and Haas works, Isaac Shamsud-Din’s Bilalian Odyssey, completed and installed at the Portland Justice Center in 1983,

²⁰⁶Recent Works by Michael Florin Dente, (Portland: Michael Florin Dente, 1988).

²⁰⁷Thomas Vaughan, letter to Richard Haas, 26 May 1989, Haas Mural Correspondence (Oregon Historical Society, Portland).

²⁰⁸Carolyn Leonard, letter to Thomas Vaughan, 5 December 1988, Haas Mural Correspondence (Oregon Historical Society, Portland); and Thomas Vaughan, letter to Carolyn Leonard, Oregon Commission on Black Affairs, 12 December 1988, Haas Mural Correspondence (Oregon Historical Society, Portland).

approaches the subject from an African-American perspective. The title of the work is associated with Islam and the concepts of courage and faith. Crowded with individuals from throughout African-American history, the canvas pictures numerous Northwest characters. Redefining the region's "creation myth," the artist portrays the central figure, York, upstaging his more famous companions. Again employing the Expedition to advance community values, Shamsud-Din transfers him from the periphery to the center of the dramatic story of which he is a part.

Lewis and Clark scholar, James Ronda, alluded to this late twentieth-century view of the Corps of Discovery in his address to the 1993 annual meeting of the Oregon Historical Society at Portland's Governor Hotel, whose lobby walls are graced by massive murals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition at Celilo Falls. Elucidating that the Lewis and Clark story is a statement about the shape of the American community, he declared "Like the Corps of Discovery and the world through which it moved, we are an ethnic and racial stew."²⁰⁹

Pioneers

During the 1992 bicentennial of Robert Gray's sighting of the Columbia, little comment was heard about a European invasion of the region or dispossession of land from native people, even though discussion about these issues dominated the international Columbus quincentenary taking place at the same time. The

²⁰⁹Ronda, p. 12.

following year, as with Columbus events, observances of the sesquicentennial of the Oregon Trail included serious discussion about the impact of the mid-nineteenth-century migration on native Americans and also the environment.²¹⁰ Again, the observance served to foster more dialogue than division. Not until 1994 did a work of art become the catalyst for some of the most heated interchange about the Oregon Trail.

When the model for David Manuel's bronze The Promised Land was unveiled at Wallowa Lake Lodge in October of 1992, it was hailed as capturing the "spirit and strength of the pioneers' long journey."²¹¹ Reaction to the finished statue throughout the following sesquicentennial year was mixed, but tame, with tourists at the Oregon History Center enjoying it as a backdrop for family photos and artists cringing at its stereotypical triteness.²¹²

When the Metropolitan Arts Commission's Public Art Advisory Committee rejected the gift of the Oregon Trail Coordinating Council, people started taking sides. At the heart of the discussion was its aesthetic and artistic merit and whether it represented the true Oregon Trail experience. The Arts Commission gave it a failing grade in both categories. Of particular concern was

²¹⁰The Oregon Historical Society's summer 1993 Trails to Oregon lecture series and the Center for Columbia River History's Washington Side of the Oregon Trail conference series are two examples.

²¹¹"The Promised Land," The Trail Marker, Fall 1992, p. 7.

²¹²Randy Gragg, "Art and Propaganda On the Oregon Trail," Portland Oregonian, 29 August 1993, sec. B, pp. 4-5.

the blatant display of the Bible, adorned with a large cross, and the idea that such a prominent memorial would neglect to represent the multi-ethnic character of the Oregon Trail. The Historical Society's director, Chet Orloff, boiled it down to an issue of political correctness, stating that the idea "that it doesn't represent the trail is rubbish."²¹³ A concerned citizen described it as a "mediocre hunk of bronze."²¹⁴ The Oregonian, maintaining that the work's purpose was to represent a movement that was 90 percent white Protestant, warned that if protests similar to that being heard about the sculpture had prevailed in 1886, "we'd have sent the Statue of Liberty back to France."²¹⁵ Side issues ranged from other Northwest towns vying for the piece to suggestions to disband the Arts Commission.²¹⁶ After continued debate, it was decided that the statue should reside in downtown Portland's Chapman Square within steps from another sculpture that witnessed controversy at its inauguration, Roland Perry's Elk.

Each generation of Americans reinterprets for itself the meaning of democracy and liberty. Rapid social change, societal distrust, or simple apathy can effect a break with and skepticism about the past, regardless of how much Americans desire the truth. Admitting that some of her stories lacked historical

²¹³Randy Gragg, "Bronze Brouhaha," Portland Oregonian, 6 March 1994, sec. D, pp. 1, 5.

²¹⁴Lisa Chiba, letter, Portland Oregonian, n.d., March 1994.

²¹⁵"Judge Sculpture on Merit," editorial, Portland Oregonian, 16 March 1994, sec. B, p. 6.

²¹⁶R. L. Russell, letter, Portland Oregonian, n.d. March 1994.

accuracy, Eva Emery Dye once confessed: “Living history is a romance, the people in action is what we want to see. Most histories make me tired.”²¹⁷

Like Dye’s literature, works such as Haas’s murals, Manuel’s sculpture, or Fairbanks’s door panels vividly reflect social change, as well as the subjectivity of history.²¹⁸ Again, the myth is reborn.

The immigrant, or pioneer, is one of the most cherished subjects in Oregon’s utopian myth. Like those of Indians and explorers, its meaning has changed and adapted according to the values of the time. The discussions surrounding Haas’s York and Manuel’s Promised Land reflect issues that are important in a time when attitudes about ethnicity and the environment are being reexamined. Other symbolic associations with the pioneer were established decades earlier and have endured throughout the century. The most common pioneer experience expressed in art is that of the Oregon Trail.

Many of the themes found in twentieth-century Oregon Trail art have correlations in literature. The Oregon Trail has become an example of literary romance—“a story about history rather than a story of history.” Such stories convey the values of the ruling class, and represent “psychological archetypes” instead of complex, realistic subjects.²¹⁹ From the last decades of the

²¹⁷“How Mrs. Dye Wrote The Conquest,” unidentified clipping, Biographical file (Oregon Historical Society Library, Portland).

²¹⁸Park and Markowitz, p. 43.

²¹⁹Venn, p. 49.

nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth, when the myth of the end of the frontier inspired people to look to earlier times for a sense of meaning and security, the pioneer has been hailed as the embodiment of noble virtues. Many enthusiasts and Oregon Trail pioneer descendants have portrayed early white settlers as farsighted, pious individuals, who planted the fruits of civilization—education, religion, and democracy—in the Oregon Country.²²⁰

The literary category under which traditional Oregon Trail fiction falls is the quest romance, which is made up of four parts: a perilous journey, overcoming adversity, struggle, and discovery or revelation. A classic example of a quest romance is Moses leading the chosen people of Israel out of bondage, through the wilderness, and into the Land of Canaan.²²¹ Heroic images of pioneers in Oregon art have their roots in mid-nineteenth-century national prototypes, like Robert Weir's 1843 U.S. Capitol mural, Embarkation of the Pilgrims, and Peter Rothermel's Landing of the Pilgrims, painted in 1854.²²² Demonstrating courage in the face of seemingly insurmountable danger and meeting challenges head on, the characters in these works convey the message that the early European immigrants were a chosen people and that America was their promised land.²²³ In Oregon, such subjects are important tools for ensuring a

²²⁰Tolken, p. 23.

²²¹Venn, p. 49.

²²²Treuttner, "Prelude to Expansion," p. 87.

²²³Ibid., pp. 67, 87.

central place for mid-nineteenth-century overland immigrants in the state's "creation myth."

A common theme in Oregon Trail art is the family. One popular variation deals with the subject of children, particularly adolescent males—a character that also occurs throughout Oregon literature.²²⁴ Atop the Capitol in Salem stands the 24-foot tall, 8½-ton statue popularly known as The Pioneer. It is described by its creator, Ulrich Ellerhusen, as representing "upstanding youth . . . feet firmly planted on the ground—his ground. The rough chin hints at the first silky beard of youth."²²⁵

David Manuel's controversial work portrays an adolescent boy positioned in front of his parents, as if ready to be the first to step into the new land. This grouping is similar to a sculpture created for the state's centennial by Avarð Fairbanks called Guidance of Youth (see Figure 13). The piece, located in Salem's Bush Park, also depicts a family of three—father, mother, and son—with the boy standing in front of his parents. Unlike the trail-weary pilgrims in The Promised Land, Fairbanks's trio strides forward in confidence, as if the boy's "guidance" is instilled in his being given the responsibility of leader. In Leo Friedlander's marble The Covered Wagon, to the right of the entrance of the Capitol, the parents demonstrate caution and patience, while their young son is

²²⁴Venn, p. 50.

²²⁵Quoted in Joseph R. Sand, Joseph R., "Oregon's Most Famous Pioneer is on Capitol," Medford (Ore.) Mail Tribune, 4 June 1978, sec. E, p. 2.



Fig. 13. Avard Fairbanks. Guidance of Youth. 1959. Stone. Bush Park, Salem, Oregon (OHS neg. OrHi 91410)

free of all hesitancy. Father gazes ahead with his hand shading his eyes, mother, in an almost prayer-like position, kneels next to the boy who, with one foot forward, appears ready to march on to his new home. The piece has a counterpart in the U.S. Capitol. Paul Manship's 1965 Pioneers of the West depicts a family of four, in which father and son escort mother and a small child on horseback. All three Oregon works are reminiscent of a Moses who steps aside so that the next generation may enter and enjoy the fruits of the Promised Land.

Another of Fairbanks's centennial pieces, the Oregon Centennial Medallion, shows a family of four: father, son, mother, and baby. This time, the family is clearly in the midst of the journey. Father, on horseback, is still the leader. Son, separated from father on the picture plane by mother, yet equal to him in his position in front of the wagon, leads the oxen. Mother is in the wagon with the baby. The message indicated here is that, in father's absence, son, not mother, will take over as leader.

An Oregon Trail painting that deals with children, but strays from the tradition of emphasizing young boys, is Martina Gangle's 1940 Pioneers Sailing by Raft Down the Columbia River. This ominous scene, which is located in the auditorium of Portland's Rose City Park School, pictures a large family, or two smaller families, and their wagon on a precarious-looking raft floating down a swift-flowing Columbia River. Of the five males depicted in the picture, three men help navigate, an adolescent boy rescues a female from the water, and

another small boy clings to an older female, possibly his mother or sister. In addition to the mother, who stays in the wheelless wagon protecting her baby, and a small girl who clings to the same woman as does the small boy, the remaining three females undertake responsibilities that are important to the survival of the group. One adjusts the canvas on the wagon, another watches for dangerous rocks, and a third assists in the arduous task of steering the craft. The image is powerful, both in its subject matter and its confident portrayal of women. While little documentation can be found for the piece, it is evident that the artist approached the subject from the perspective of a woman.

Men in Oregon Trail art are often represented as leaders. Perched atop Ashland's 1910 Carter Memorial Fountain, Iron Mike peers into the distance with gun in hand. Balancing Laura Gardin Fraser's noble Indian, on the opposite side of the Oregon Trail Commemorative half dollar is her husband's, James Earle Fraser, relief of a single wagon heading toward an enormous sun. Below the words "In God We Trust," a man with his gun over his shoulder is shown ahead of the vehicle, which carries his wife and child.²²⁶ A medallion created by Avarad Fairbanks in 1929 for Standard Insurance Company displays a male figure pointing the way for the lead wagon, while his wife and baby also ride securely inside. Inscribed with the words "The Will to Achieve," the medallion is

²²⁶Bert Webber, p. 9.

intended to convey the “responsibility to overcome obstacles and dangers for family and community.”²²⁷

The most common role in which women are portrayed is that of the pioneer mother. In 1987, the state legislature chose Tabitha Brown as “Mother of Oregon,” proclaiming that she represents “the distinctive pioneer heritage and charitable and compassionate nature of Oregon’s people.”²²⁸ After financing her own wagon at age 66, Tabitha Brown traveled overland to Oregon where she established a boarding school for orphans at Forest Grove, which became known as Tualatin Academy and exists today as Pacific University. Named for the honor in an era that continues to struggle with the issue of equal opportunities for women, Tabitha Brown is identified as a positive role model for women.

National prototypes for artistic renditions of the pioneer mother are found in heroic nineteenth-century pieces like Peter Rothermel’s 1854 The Landing of the Pilgrims, in which a woman confidently disembarks from her small craft to meet the challenges of a new land, and William Ranney’s 1851 Advice on the Prairie, which shows a madonna-like figure flanked by two white horses, reminiscent of Renaissance angel sentries.²²⁹ The motif is introduced in twentieth-century Oregon art with Alice Cooper’s Sacajawea.

²²⁷“Standard Insurance,” The Trail Marker, Winter 1992, p. 4.

²²⁸Oregon, “State Symbols,” Blue Book, pp. 2-5.

²²⁹Treuttner, “Prelude to Expansion,” p. 87.

Alexander Phimister Proctor's Pioneer Mother, located at the University of Oregon, is one of a number of examples of the genre that depicts a solitary woman (see Figure 14). Dedicated in 1932, it was commissioned by Burt Brown Barker, vice-president of the university, in memory of his mother and "as a memorial to the pioneer mothers of Oregon." Intended not to focus on the challenges of the Trail, its purpose is to "emphasize the peace which came to the Pioneers after their struggles and hardships of pioneering were past and they sat on the western slope of their lives reflecting on the results of their labors." President Herbert Hoover's reflections, read at the dedication ceremony, included the words, "the greatest fruits of pioneering are the rugged character attained through hardships overcome and the tranquil peace that follows victory nobly achieved."²³⁰ Later in the century, Proctor's work, which symbolizes an Eden not only of geography but also of the spirit, became the focus of latter-day folklore. The recent quip, that the Pioneer Mother will stand up whenever a virgin walks by, is an example of the sometimes unintended evolution of symbolism associated with works created for heroic reasons.²³¹

Avard Fairbanks's Pioneer Mothers' Memorial, created in 1929 for Vancouver, Washington's Esther Short Park, is another sculpture that shows a mother without the company of a husband. The piece is typical of numerous such

²³⁰"Pioneer Statue Dedicated Here," Eugene (Ore.) Register Guard, 8 May, 1932, pp. 1, 3.

²³¹Suzi Jones, Oregon Folklore (Eugene: University of Oregon, 1977), p. 11.



Fig. 14. Alexander Phimister Proctor. Pioneer Mother. 1932. Bronze. University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon (OHS neg. OrHi 78955)

works that appeared throughout the country in the 1920s, an era that witnessed increasing freedom for woman. It shows a young woman gazing forward in confidence, with a rifle in her right arm, under which she protects her small son. Her left arm clutches an older daughter who, in turn, attempts to comfort a smaller sister. Fairbanks's intention for the sculpture was to "show beauty in character and beauty in strength, rather than beauty in form alone." The strong portrayal is tempered, nevertheless, by a medallion on the reverse of the memorial showing a woman in a wagon carrying a baby, while the father leads the team.²³²

So strong is the tradition of the pioneer mother in Oregon that an example exists that enters the category not because of the artist's intentions, but by virtue of popular endearment. Frederick Littman's dance-like figure of a mother and child, called Joy, was created in 1956 and placed at Portland's Council Crest Park. Whether in anticipation of the state's upcoming centennial or because of simple nostalgic affection, over the years the work acquired the nickname Pioneer Mother indicating an enduring attachment to the character.²³³

The creation of a work of art that involved issues of equal representation for women is the pioneer section of Richard Haas's Oregon History Center murals. Less than a year before work was to begin on the murals, the decision

²³²Frank Barton, "American Art to Surprise World," Portland Sunday Oregonian, 22 December 1929, p. 2.

²³³"Sculptor Leaves Rich Bronze Legacy," Portland Sunday Oregonian, 9 September 1979, sec. B, p. 7.

regarding the appropriate representation of women was still being discussed. Perhaps because of concerns by citizens that the new murals would depict only “white men and Indians”—the inclusion of York had not yet been decided upon—Thomas Vaughan asked Haas if he could “project a more active rather than passive picture of women sitting in wagons going somewhere their males decided upon.”²³⁴ This resulted in placing a woman at the headboard of a wagon taking the lead in directing the oxen. Opposite her are three native American women, one of which is engaged in making a basket and another creating a rock drawing. While they are not strong statements, their presence represents the continuing evolution of the myth in reference to the priorities of the day.

During the Depression, images of family were commissioned by the government as part of an effort to counter fear and insecurity. Often depicting the traditional three figures of father, mother, and child—an arrangement that is conducive to oddly shaped post office interiors—these images were intended as sources of empowerment.²³⁵ A team of oxen dominates the foreground of C. S. Price’s 1934 W.P.A. work, The Covered Wagon (see Figure 15). Awarded to Senator Charles McNary, it includes the halo-like arc of a wagon bow that seems to suggest divine protection over a journey into the unknown.²³⁶ The piece

²³⁴Vaughan to Leonard, November 8, 1988; and Leonard to Vaughan, December 5, 1988.

²³⁵Park and Markowitz, p. 47.

²³⁶The Covered Wagon, photograph catalogue card, Library (Oregon Historical Society, Portland); and Gunz, p. 29.



Fig. 15. C. S. Price. The Covered Wagon. 1934. Oil on canvas.
(OHS neg. 006675)

anticipates by one year Price's The Flight into Egypt. The nimbus in this work echoes the bow of the earlier covered wagon—both of which accentuate the universal theme of pilgrimage and hope. The evolution of Price's struggle to appropriately depict the idea of mother and child evolved into a half-length non-historical, non-religious Mother and Child and culminated in his tender Cow with Calf (1949).²³⁷

Despite the broader trend, family themes, so popular in twentieth-century Oregon Trail art, are relatively rare in works created during the 1930s. More numerous are images of wagons or wagon trains, emphasizing the journey—another metaphor that can provide inspiration during difficult times. Melvin Aurelius Keegan's three wood Pioneer Panels, created in 1936 for Timberline Lodge, depict various challenges of the overland journey. Avarad Fairbanks's U.S. Bank door panel dedicated to the Oregon Trail depicts five pairs of oxen descending a steep hill, pulling a wagon, and directed by a distant mounted figure. A 1933 U.S. Bank advertisement used Fairbanks's image to draw a comparison between pioneer courage that conquered "danger, hardship, and privation," and similar fortitude needed for current hardships. Biblical imagery is recalled as the ever-moving wagon serves as a metaphor for persevering through the current wilderness of economic depression to reach a

²³⁷Priscilla C. Colt, C. S. Price, 1874-1950: A Memorial Exhibition (Portland: Portland Art Museum, 1950); and Catherine Jones, "C. S. Price: Artist With a Heart," Portland Sunday Oregonian, 11 March 1951, magazine sec., pp. 12-13.

promised land of better times. This is indicated by the accompanying words, “from the strength born of adversity will come the power to motivate another period of progress.”²³⁸

Not all Oregon residents of European ancestry came to the state in the mid-nineteenth century. The last 150 years has witnessed the arrival and contributions of individuals representing numerous European cultures. Henk Pander is celebrated as one of Oregon’s most accomplished artists.²³⁹ From bold landscapes to surreal portraits, his work, which has ranged from local to national subjects, has both shocked and enchanted Northwest viewers. Born in The Netherlands, he survived World War II as a child and later studied art in Amsterdam, settling in Portland in 1965. His own experience as an immigrant is expressed in his 1992 The Deer and the Antelope. Exhibited at the Seattle Art Museum’s alternative Columbus quincentenary exhibition, 1492/1992, it includes an immigrant ship laden with garbage, a felled tree, a dead antelope, and a ledger awaiting new accounting. Reflected in a mirror is an image of the artist as a child—“a transitional figure, longing for what has gone.” Another mirror shows his sons. About it, Pander explains, “The light that bounces off their mirror shines across a land which has become theirs.” Created as a metaphor for a

²³⁸“Out of Adversity Comes Power: The United States National Bank,” Portland Oregonian, 17 March 1933, n.p., unidentified clipping, Avarad Fairbanks file, vertical file (Oregon Historical Society Library, Portland).

²³⁹Renardo Barden, “A Gift of Vision,” Oregon Focus, December 1987, p. 23.

society in a changing world, the work is a statement about pioneers at many levels—personal, social, and historical.²⁴⁰ With the artist's inclusion of his sons and a youthful self-portrait, the adolescent male again becomes an avenue for providing insight into Oregon's identity and the direction in which it may be moving.

While European-American subjects have been the most popular immigrant themes in Oregon's utopian myth and the art that has responded to it, other experiences are expressed as well. Every new generation and cultural group influences the myth's evolution and character. Whereas triumph and hardship are parts of every pioneer story, the challenges met by those outside the European Protestant tradition sometimes includes the additional components of tragedy, bigotry, and racism. In Oregon epic literature, the topics of colonization and expansion are seldom dealt with in tragic terms.²⁴¹ This also holds true for Oregon Trail pioneer art. It is not until viewing works dealing with immigration subjects beyond the Oregon Trail that one can see tragedy dealt with more directly through poignant symbols and graphic images, emphasizing not only human suffering, but social injustice.

African-Americans have played a part in Oregon history for over 200 years. Though relatively small in number for many decades, the defense industry of the 1940s brought the state's first sizeable population, many of whom settled in

²⁴⁰1492/1992 (Seattle: Seattle Art Museum, 1992).

²⁴¹Venn, p. 48.

the Portland area, including Vanport, which was destroyed by floodwaters in 1948. Isaac Shamsud-Din's Vanport the Promise—Vanport the Flood is located at the Albina Human Resources Building in Portland. In the bittersweet tradition of the pioneer epic, it expresses the history of hope and despair of his first Oregon home. About his art, Shamsud-Din says:

I look upon my society as putting me in the position of a warrior. I use my pencil, pen and brush to alter the Afro-Americans' view of themselves. I aim to show the genius, the love, the humor, the resourcefulness and creative accomplishment of the Afro-American people.²⁴²

The first Japanese settlers arrived in Oregon in the 1880s. Early immigrants were mostly employed by the railroad. Around the turn of the century, agriculture became one of the largest sources of livelihood, as people of Japanese ancestry branched out into many forms of horticulture and agriculture. Not unlike others who have come to this country, many Japanese brought with them fantastic ideas about their new home. Promotional literature, or simple rumor, led some to believe that money and jewels were scattered on the ground.²⁴³ Even after arriving, while not encountering streets of gold, the

²⁴²Katherine Hall Bogle, Portland (Ore.) Observer, 30 May 1984, n.p., uncited photocopy, Isaac Shamsud-Din file, Register of Oregon Art supplemental files (Oregon Historical Society Museum, Portland).

²⁴³Linda Tamura, The Hood River Issei: An Oral History of Japanese Settlers in Oregon's Hood River Valley (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1993), p. 19; and Lauren Kessler, Stubborn Twig: Three Generations of A Japanese American Family (New York: Random House, 1993), p. 8.

snow-covered mountains of the Pacific Northwest, including Mt. Hood, reminded many Japanese of their sacred Mt. Fuji.²⁴⁴

Around 1915, Sadao Mizuno, a popular Japanese-American photographer and artist, painted a portrait of Captain William Hardy. Hardy was best known among his contemporaries as a Civil War veteran and a member of Commodore Perry's crew during his famous entry into Japan. Among the Northwest's Japanese community, Hardy gained the added distinction of captaining a ship that transported a number of young Japanese men, including Mizuno, to their homeland to look for brides.²⁴⁵ Though unheroic in composition and little remembered, the painting is a tribute to a person who was esteemed, like the trail bosses of the mid-nineteenth century, for his part in bringing new immigrants to the region.

The challenges encountered by the Japanese during their first 75 years in Oregon were severe. They include restrictions on citizenship, bans on immigration, and incarceration into internment camps during World War II. Portland's Japanese-American Memorial-Bill of Rights Park honors the immigration experience, as well as a painful chapter in Japanese-American history. Designed by Robert Murase, it is located at the north end of Tom

²⁴⁴Kazuo Ito, *Issei: A History of Japanese Immigrants in North America*, trans. Shinichiro Nakamura and Jean S. Gerard (Seattle: Executive Committee for the Publication of Issei, 1973), p. 487.

²⁴⁵Interview with George Katagiri, Japanese American National Museum, 24 April 1994.

McCall Waterfront Park in Portland. Memorializing the lives of early Japanese immigrants, native-born Japanese Americans, and those who were relocated during World War II—many becoming returning pioneers—the park uses landscape, poetry, and sculpture to express affection for a place, coupled with the pain of betrayal.²⁴⁶ Two bronze cylinders bearing figures in relief from Northwest Japanese American history were created by Jim Gion. Lawson Inada collected, edited, and in some cases wrote haiku that adorn carefully crafted stones on a wall of remembrance. The verses express a range of emotions, from the fervor of first-generation pioneers to the bewilderment of rebuilding wounded lives. The following examples, laced with the language of the nostalgic sublime mixed with the pathos characteristic of the pioneer myth, underscore the memorial's characterization of Oregon as an exceptional place in the history of its Japanese-American community.

References to the experiences of the Issei, or first-generation Japanese Americans, includes:

Mighty Willamette!
 Beautiful friend,
 I am learning,
 I am practicing
 To say your name.

This is followed by words that reflect upon the experiences of returning from the internment camp:

²⁴⁶Ann Sullivan, "Memorial Will Honor Japanese in Northwest," Portland Oregonian, 10 May 1990, pp. 1, 3.

Going home,
 Feeling cheated,
 Gripping my daughter's hand.
 I tell her we're leaving
 Without emotion.

Through the car window
 A glimpse of pines,
 Oregon mountains.
 My heart beats faster,
 Returning home.

Settlement

In the nineteenth century, images of settlement were created to establish a heritage based on specific political and religious ideals. Many drew upon colonial subjects. As Americans began to dominate the West, the context of that heritage moved with them. One Oregon example is Stanley's Oregon City on the Willamette, which pictures a wilderness outpost of civilization. These scenes portray European-American settlement as a righteous endeavor.²⁴⁷ Similarly, immigrant and settlement themes are frequently used in the twentieth century to reinforce interpretations of how the trappings of civilization, including religion, education, government, and commerce, were introduced to the Oregon Country.

Like a Moses who led the Children of Israel out of bondage, but was not permitted to settle in the Promised Land, so the image of the settler replaces Lewis and Clark when depicting the planting and cultivation of the seeds of civilization. At the end of the century, promotional material for Manuel's The

²⁴⁷Treuttner, "Prelude to Expansion," p. 86-87.

Promised Land described the presence of the Bible as a necessary element to “complete the story.”²⁴⁸ The arrival of religion—specifically Christianity—is most commonly portrayed in subjects about missionaries. At the time of its creation, Alexander Phimister Proctor’s The Circuit Rider was seen as honoring the “fearless, patient, and righteous men who rode forth into the wilderness.” In the spirit of Manifest Destiny, the verse of a poem adjacent to a newspaper article covering the statue’s 1924 dedication reads:

Unheard the Indian chant of Lick-i-Ho;
The medicine man’s drum no longer drones,
But through the nave is peal of organ tones
And choir’s “Praise God from whom all blessings flow.”²⁴⁹

Early itinerant ministers were also deemed responsible for ushering in other accoutrements of civilization. At the dedication of Proctor’s sculpture, the Reverend William O. Shepard, bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, lauded the circuit rider as the region’s “first policeman, first librarian, first teacher, and at once the first board of health, board of hygiene, . . . commissioner of child welfare,” and “first highway commissioner, marking out by the feet of his patient, hardridden palfry the thoroughfares of a coming empire.”²⁵⁰

²⁴⁸“The Promised Land,” p. 7.

²⁴⁹R. C. Johnson, “The Circuit Rider,” Portland (Ore.) Sunday Journal, 20 April 1924, n.p., uncited photocopy, A. P. Proctor file, Register of Oregon Art supplemental files (Oregon Historical Society Museum, Portland).

²⁵⁰“Circuit Rider Statue Unveiled Before Throng,” Portland (Ore.) Sunday Journal, 20 April 1924, n.p., uncited photocopy, A. P. Proctor file, Register of Oregon Art supplemental files (Oregon Historical Society Museum, Portland).

While Proctor's equestrian work stands sentinel on the grounds of the state Capitol, duplicate works by his son grace both the lawn of the state Capitol and the halls of Congress in Washington, D.C. Gifford Proctor's 1938 bronze statue of Jason Lee was installed in Statuary Hall at the U.S. Capitol in 1952. Lee, who was the first missionary to the Oregon Country and founder of Willamette University, is honored by the work as "educator, missionary," and petitioner of "Congress in 1838 to 'take formal and speedy possession' of the Oregon Country."²⁵¹

A subject devoted solely to education is Gabriel Lavare's wooden plaque, Pioneer Mother Reading to Her Son, which decorates the Oregon State Library in Salem. Described at the time as "symbolic of knowledge and learning, handed down from one generation to the next; from the culture of the past to that of the present," its message is reinforced by Lavare's large marble image of a printing press over the library's main entrance and borders of a printer's rule framing state symbols in the reference room.²⁵²

Another component of civilization, the establishment of government, is vividly portrayed in Theodore Gegoux's dramatic The Inception of the Birth of Oregon (see Figure 16). The massive 7- by 11-foot canvas, which depicts the 1843 decision at Champoege to form a provisional government, includes portraits

²⁵¹Architect of the Capitol, Art in the United States Capitol (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1976), p. 251.

²⁵²Paul Donald, "Oregon's New State Library," Portland The Oregon Sunday Journal, April 2, 1939, p. 4.



Fig. 16. Theodore Gegoux. The Inception of the Birth of Oregon. 1924. (Oil on canvas. Champoeg State Park, St. Paul, Oregon (OHS neg. OrHi 394)

of many of the participants who took part in the vote. In the background, light shines through the trees and mist and on the river, suggesting the “dawn of Oregon.”²⁵³ While the work was greeted with much enthusiasm after its completion in 1924, Gegoux had a difficult time finding a home for it. After touring it around the region and receiving at once praise and declines for purchase from both the state legislature and the Oregon Pioneer Association, it returned to Champoeg Park for a short time, where the artist, while working as caretaker, charged a slight fee for viewing it. In later years the work was purchased by the State Highway Commission, which returned it to its frame adorned with state flowers from each of the states that make up the old Oregon Country, and placed the painting on permanent display in the park.

The state Capitol houses two murals dealing with the establishment of government in Oregon. Frank Schwarz’s mural in the senate chamber, Salem Street Scene When News of Statehood was Received, represents the intersection of Salem’s State and High streets, when Stephen Senter delivered the news from Oregon City that Oregon had become a state. Pictured in the March 17, 1859, view are Governor John Whitaker, Joseph Lane, Matthew Deady, and other prominent officials. Barry Faulkner’s Champoeg, in the house chamber, is another representation of the famous 1843 vote. Joe Meek is seen calling for the

²⁵³Jay C. Allen, “Aged Artist-Caretaker of Champoeg Memorial House Dreams of State Ownership of Historical Canvas,” Portland Sunday Oregonian, 13 May 1923: n.p., uncited photocopy, Theodore Gegoux file, Register of Oregon Art supplemental files (Oregon Historical Society Museum, Portland).

men to divide, urging those in favor of a provisional government to side with him. Both works are reminiscent of national scenes created to honor the beginnings of the United States, like William Walcutt's 1854 Pulling Down the Statue of George III, and John Trumbull's c.1786-96 The Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776, on view at the U.S. Capitol. Trumbull's painting met with some protest because of its failure to represent certain participants in the event. Theodore Gegoux had a simple explanation for not including various individuals: "Those for whom I had pictures I could paint 'outside'; those whose pictures were lost and unobtainable had not yet left the building."²⁵⁴

Gutzon Borglum's 1929 statue of Harvey Scott, situated atop Portland's Mt. Tabor, depicts the pioneer newspaper editor pointing west over the city. The pose and orientation of this statue reinforce a particular interpretation of how civilization was established in the region. About his subject, Borglum, also the sculptor of Mt. Rushmore, stated:

This country is littered with statues of angels and blindfolded women holding balances aloft, but what of the glorious history of this great nation, the greatest nation on earth? Our statues should be of the men who made our history. Scott, out here in Oregon, is one of them."²⁵⁵

The artist's conviction about the moral responsibility of his work is demonstrated in comments he made on a visit to the city to select a site for the sculpture: "Our

²⁵⁴Ibid.

²⁵⁵"Gutzon Borglum Arrives to Plan Scott Memorial," Portland Morning Oregonian, 25 August 1928, n.p., uncited photocopy, Gutzon Borglum file, Register of Oregon Art supplementary files (Oregon History Society Museum, Portland).

monuments are the only things we build honestly—and we build them honestly because God is watching.”²⁵⁶ A year after its 1933 dedication, a local newspaper described the figure of Scott as overlooking the confluence of the Columbia and Willamette rivers, “where the white man first settled,” and noted the scene as “one of brilliant coruscant beauty, and loveliness, an inspiration to the pride of the people who are fortunate to live in Oregon.”²⁵⁷

During the Depression, government-sponsored works of art often portrayed nineteenth-century settlements as pictures of stability where everyone worked together for the good of the community. These scenes conveyed a message that elevated the values of industry and cooperation over material gain.²⁵⁸ One Oregon example is John Ballator’s 1936 The History of St. John’s, formerly located in the St. Johns post office. Created with the assistance of Louis Bunce and Eric Lamade, the double mural emphasized cooperative efforts over individual accomplishments. Depicting early settlers of the community, the work includes a banker, business leaders, surveyors, and even the

²⁵⁶David W. Hazen, David W., “G. Borglum Loves Sacajawea,” Portland (Ore.) Telegram, 29 August 1928, n.p., uncited photocopy, Gutzon Borglum file, Register of Oregon Art supplemental files (Oregon Historical Society Museum, Portland).

²⁵⁷“Eminence,” Portland (Ore.) The Spectator, 8 September 1934, p. 1.

²⁵⁸Park and Markowitz, p. 32.

person who drove the steam train. Also pictured are the woolen mill, sawmill, and other industries.²⁵⁹

Lucia Wiley's mid-1940s The Morning Star was painted in the wake of another era that called upon community spirit. The subject is the building in 1855 of the small vessel that broke Tillamook's isolation from the rest of the state, sparing its people from possible demise. Dedicated to "the indomitable spirit of those early residents," Wiley characterized it as expressing "both the historical aspect and the great fighting spirit of the county's people."²⁶⁰ As with Ballator's work, Wiley's The Morning Star elevates the strength of the common people to a new level of heroism.

Whereas the introduction of European-American civilization is well celebrated in Oregon art, the arrival and influence of other cultural influences is also honored. In the mid-nineteenth century, America was known to the Chinese as Gum San, or "Land of the Golden Mountain." The discovery of gold, first in California and then in surrounding areas, including Oregon, brought the first significant numbers of Chinese. Immigrants soon found employment in other industries, too, including logging camps, canneries, and the railroad. The Exclusion Act of 1882, severely restricting Chinese immigration, was the first of

²⁵⁹Pat Jeffries, "Preservation of Post Office Murals Ensured," Portland Oregonian, 21 June 1983, n.p., uncited photocopy, Louis Bunce file, Register of Oregon Art supplemental files (Oregon Historical Society Museum, Portland).

²⁶⁰Catherine Jones, "Tillamook Honors its Home-Grown Artist," unidentified newspaper clipping, artist files (Sovereign Gallery, Portland).

numerous discriminatory laws enacted against the Chinese until all were repealed in the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965.²⁶¹ The hardships of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries swelled Portland's already thriving Chinatown. By the mid-twentieth century, increasing prosperity enabled many of Portland's Chinese families to move to other parts of the city, bringing decline to the historic community.

Spanning Portland's Northwest Fourth Avenue at Burnside, the 1986 Chinatown Gateway is a tribute to Portland's Chinese community and a symbol of the renewed interest in the historic neighborhood that was witnessed during the 1970s and 1980s. Commemorating "135 years of Chinese accomplishment and involvement in the development of Oregon and Portland," the arch is not a monument to the difficulties of the past, but a tribute to early settlers. Emblazoned on its north side with Chinese characters reading "Four Oceans, One Family," it is decorated with 78 dragons, symbolizing good luck. Two lions flank the gateway. A female and cub symbolize protection of the family, while a male, whose paw rests on a ball, stands for protection of the nation.²⁶²

The evolution of twentieth-century Oregon utopian art that glorifies the human past is the story of how history is used to influence or justify behavior and ideas. Whether the objective is to reinforce an ethnocentric world view or to

²⁶¹Jeffrey Barlow and Christine Richardson, Gum San: Land of the Golden Mountain (Bend, Oregon: The High Desert Museum, 1991), pp. 18-21.

²⁶²Chinatown Historic District: A Walking Tour of Historic Buildings (Portland, Oregon: Portland Development Commission, n.d.).

promote pluralistic awareness, to advance a political agenda or to encourage social unity, Oregon utopian art shows that the same story can differ in interpretation among social groups and across eras. Despite varying objectives, what remains consistent is a conviction in the power of history, be it as a source of truth or a tool for manipulation.

CHAPTER III

HAIL TO THEE, LAND OF PROMISE:

UTOPIAN IMAGES OF OREGONIANS'

INTERACTION WITH THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

In the summer of 1990, the Board of Commissioners of the City of Bend placed five carved brick panels in front of the city hall. The panels, created by Mara Smith and Kris King, of Seattle, depict the spirit of Deschutes County and cover the themes of timber, recreation, culture, farming, and water, represented by the Deschutes River. Celebrating the region's natural and human history, these handsome pieces of public art represent the synthesis of the traditions of Oregon utopian art that express the natural sublime and portray human achievements in a heroic manner. These two traditions, with their firm eighteenth- and nineteenth-century roots and their strong survival through the twentieth century, did not evolve into, but instead fostered, a third tradition of utopian art that represents Oregonians' interaction with the natural environment.

Utopian portrayals of Oregonians' interaction with the environment set the stage for the development of images that convey what Richard Maxwell Brown

calls the counter-classic identity of the state.²⁶³ Oregon's classic identity focuses on customary interpretations of Oregon's utopian myth—namely heroic personalities and events, such as first inhabitants, discoverers, pioneers, and community founders. Sublime, pristine images of nature also fall under this heading. The counter-classic image of Oregon is that of a place that is defined by human intervention: outdoor pastimes, industry and modern agriculture, urbanization, and technological modernization. It also includes concerns about human impact on the environment.

Much of the art that documents Oregonians' interaction with the natural environment deals with the notion that Oregon is a mecca of livability. David Sarasohn calls livability "Oregon's peculiar institution," one that has "achieved totem-like proportions."²⁶⁴ Livability is a regional value that can be traced back to the mid-nineteenth century migrations. Twentieth-century art that emphasizes interaction with the environment treats livability as a celebration of current events as opposed to heroic images that celebrate past achievements.

²⁶³Richard Maxwell Brown, "The New Regionalism in America, 1970-1981," in Regionalism and the Pacific Northwest, ed. William G. Robbins, Robert J. Frank, and Richard E. Ross (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1983), p. 71.

²⁶⁴David Sarasohn, "Regionalism Tending Toward Sectionalism," in Regionalism and the Pacific Northwest, ed. William G. Robbins, Robert J. Frank, and Richard E. Ross (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1983), p. 230.

Sarasohn identifies the pursuit of livability as accompanying the attitude of “off-limits” that swept the state during the last third of the twentieth century.²⁶⁵ Another criticism is that it is a concern of the white middle class.²⁶⁶ The artistic evidence certainly demonstrates this. However, by broadening the concept of livability to include those activities that inspired people to come to or remain in the state, including recreational and economic opportunities, that evidence also shows that the desire for a better life has infected people across society throughout the century. Over time, perhaps it is these images that will fall under the state’s classic identity.

The following discussion will begin with a brief overview of works that cover the subject of outdoor pastimes. A wider examination of art that portrays the economic attractiveness of the state, primarily industry, will follow. The discussion will conclude with a examination of how artists deal with the human impact on the Oregon environment.

Oregonians’ Outdoor Pastimes

Artists who create works of art that deal with Oregonians’ outdoor pastimes, including recreational and spiritual pursuits, frequently do so through the kind of sublime, transcendental images treated in Chapter I, or through images that pertain to environmental concerns. The Bend City Hall panel covering

²⁶⁵Ibid. p. 231.

²⁶⁶Ibid., p. 233.

recreation includes scenes of skiing, fly fishing, and camping. Samuel Lancaster's color reproductions that depict the Columbia River Highway winding through a pristine landscape beckon viewers to enjoy nature without the hardships and discomfort associated with the wilderness. And, while Dennis Cunningham's work has taken on an increasingly mystical character, it is apparent that a point of departure for much of his art is a passion for fishing in Oregon waters—what he calls “re-creation.”²⁶⁷ The following examples demonstrate the range of subjects represented in art that directly approach the theme of outdoor pastimes.

At Timberline Lodge is a set of twelve compositions of painted linoleum by Douglas Lynch called Calendar of Sports. Created in 1937, they were originally hung in a sequence to show the outdoor activities of the seasons of the year. Subjects include: “Tobogganers,” “Skiers and Snow Shoe Hiker with Camera,” “Girl Pulling Pack Horse,” “Campers,” “People Eating at Picnic Table,” “Square Dancers,” “Fisherman Choosing Flies for his Pole,” and “Girl Walking Dog.”²⁶⁸

The Library at the University of Oregon houses a set of six cedar wood panels titled The Release of Youth from Depression Conditions. Executed between 1934 and 1937 by Art Clough under the federal Public Works of Art Project, they pertain to the activities of young people who were involved in the

²⁶⁷Quoted in Lois Allen, “The Joys of Fishing,” Artweek, 20 May 1989, p. 4.

²⁶⁸Rachael Griffin and Sarah Munro, ed., Timberline Lodge (Portland, Oregon: Friends of Timberline, 1978), p. 61.

Civilian Conservation Corps. Underscored with the words “Under her cathedral arches, where the legends of our pioneers still linger, these CCC youths labored,” the panels include titles like Halcyon Days at the Foot of Mount Jefferson, Road Building Crew Below Mount Washington, and Trails in the Shadow of Mount Hood.²⁶⁹ Unifying the entire work is a band depicting the squalor from which the young people in the C.C.C. camps came. In a review of the Public Works of Art Project, the Spectator described the piece as “symbols of the spiritual rejuvenation which work in Oregon’s out-of-doors is giving the youth from the big cities.”²⁷⁰

A more energetic tone is evident in the work of Ray Atkeson, an iconographer of the Oregon landscape. Born in 1907 in Illinois and raised in Kansas, he came to Oregon after high school to pick apples. At 21, he began working in a photography studio and engaging in mountain climbing—a fortuitous combination. Soon he was selling photographs of mountaineering and skiing to a number of major magazines. During the Depression, such romantic, carefree images of the West were appealing to the many Americans who did not have the means to partake in such activities. Among the numerous commissions Atkeson received was a 1962 promotional booklet on the state, published by Sperry and Hutchinson, to market travel opportunities afforded by their “S&H Green Stamps”

²⁶⁹Exhibition of Work Done in Oregon Under the Public Works of Art Project (Portland, Oregon: Portland Art Association, 1934).

²⁷⁰“Art and Humanity,” Portland (Ore.) The Spectator, 10 February 1934, p. 5.

program. Titled Oregon: Land of Beautiful Contrasts, the brochure opens with a brief essay called “Oregon: Playground of the Northwest,” which is surrounded by Atkeson photographs of myriad outdoor recreational activities.²⁷¹ The remainder of the booklet divides the state into regions, featuring the artist’s photographs accompanied by lighthearted, carefree drawings of people at play. The publication is a forerunner of the large photo essays, produced in the following quarter century, that secured Atkeson’s fame.

A great deal of the art that deals with outdoor pastimes falls under the classification of commercial art, which, with the exception of occasional iconographic images, is beyond the scope of this paper. Works that deal directly with outdoor pastimes reinforce the notion that the state is a destination for those seeking rejuvenation—be it physical, moral, or spiritual.

A Land of Plenty and Opportunity:
Oregon’s Agricultural and Industrial Utopia

Raymond Kaskey’s monumental copper, bronze, and steel sculpture, Portlandia, arrived in Portland in October 1984, amid the cheers of hundreds of onlookers. Created in the same technique as the Statue of Liberty almost a century before, the six-and-a-quarter ton, 34-foot portrayal of “Lady Commerce” is a subject borrowed from a standing figure found on Portland’s city seal. Kaskey’s interpretation, mounted on the west side of the city’s Portland Building,

²⁷¹Ray Atkeson, Oregon: Land of Beautiful Contrasts (Sperry and Hutchinson, 1962).

shows her crouching, with right hand extended at once toward admiring onlookers and the vast Pacific trade market. The revelry prompted by Portlandia's arrival paired with the merrymaking undertaken at the 1905 Lewis and Clark exhibition bracket a century of events replete with utopian images that elevate Oregon commerce and industry.

Unrivaled in presentation by any other single state marketing campaign in the century, the Lewis and Clark Exposition was one of Oregon's most ambitious promotional efforts. The Oregon Historical Society first suggested the idea of a world-class fair to honor the centennial of the Corps of Discovery's 1805 entry into the Oregon Country. As described, the exposition's seal and selected artworks eventually underscored this theme. It became apparent, however, that federal dollars did not readily respond to the mere exultation of heroes. Wider regional and governmental interest in a world exposition piqued only when the Historical Society and the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition Commission articulated the theme in such a way as to encompass the historic incentive of Pacific trade.²⁷²

In 1901, F. G. Young, editor of the Historical Society's Quarterly, offered "suggestions for a congress of industry and commerce," implying that such an event could usher in a "new epoch" prompted by "magnificence of exhibits in architectural, aesthetic, and industrial arts," enabling the area to

²⁷²Carl Abbott, The Great Extravaganza: Portland and the Lewis and Clark Exposition (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1981), p. 16.

“command the best advantages possible to it in the world’s commerce.”²⁷³

This was followed by a 1904 speech given by congressman Binger Hermann to the United States House of Representatives, in which he requested support for an exposition recognizing the centennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Prior to boosting Portland’s Pacific Coast location as “fronting . . . America’s future market,” he describes the importance and purpose of such a fair as equaling fairs honoring the three other “greatest” events in American history—“the discovery of the continent (Chicago, 1893), our birth as a nation (Philadelphia, 1876), [and] the cession of the vast empire between the Mississippi and the Rocky Mountains (St. Louis, 1904).”²⁷⁴ Both Hermann and Young had aspirations for the 1905 Oregon celebration that would seek to wed a historical celebration with political and economic as well as cultural interests.

This sentiment was echoed in the popular media as well. In 1905, William Bittle Wells, founder of the popular Pacific Monthly magazine, devoted a series of articles to the Lewis and Clark Exposition. Wells prefaced Harvey Scott’s July 1905 Pacific Monthly article, titled “The Momentous Struggle for the Mastery of the Pacific,” with the phrase “the centennial we celebrate means not so

²⁷³F. G. Young, “Suggestions for a Congress of Industry and Commerce, as a Means to Realize the Central Idea of the Lewis and Clark Centennial,” The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society 2 (1901):204, 205.

²⁷⁴Binger Hermann, address to The United States House of Representatives, Washington, D.C., 4 March 1903.

much a retrospect as a forecast of greater things to come.”²⁷⁵ Wells’s words and the tone of Scott’s article—which implied that the time had arrived to take advantage of a vast potential trade market—are typical of scores of statements tied to the fair that promoted Oregon settlement and regional business opportunities based on the economic promise that awaited across the ocean.

Despite this outpouring of boosterism, coupled with the rhetoric of imperialism, surprisingly few parallels existed among the public art exhibited at the fair. The most blatant examples are those that dealt with the expansionist theme of the Lewis and Clark Expedition—Borglum’s The First Step to Civilization, Cooper’s Sacajawea, Lopez’s Meriwether Lewis, and Ruckstuhl’s William Clark. Borglum’s three other sculptures—Cowboy at Rest, The Blizzard, and Indian Buffalo Dance—deal with themes that are more typical of the American Southwest or Plains than with the Pacific Northwest. Another Western subject was Frederick Remington’s Shooting Up the Town, which stood at the entrance of the fairgrounds. Characterized as striking “the festive note of the fair,” it was described as catching “the spirit of the plains” and recalling “the days when the Saturday night frolic of the cowboys who came to town was the chief social institution of the week in border towns.”²⁷⁶ E. C. Potter’s Cow Attacked by Mountain Lions was the most vehement work to adorn the grounds. Interpreted by Anabel Parker McCann, in her Pacific Monthly review of the fair’s public

²⁷⁵Scott, p. 3.

²⁷⁶Quoted in McCann, p. 84.

works of art, simply as telling “its own story,” this representation of two large cats finishing off their dying prey is the outdoor sculpture that perhaps best captures the expansionist tone of the event.

Despite its eclectic blend of styles, the fair’s architecture communicated slightly better the economic utopia espoused by its backers. The Oregon Journal described what lessons were hoped to be passed on by the event when it said on the fair’s closing day, “Beauty in our structures mean beauty in our civic life. Love of country; this is the great lesson of the fair, and build your cities and your lives to show your love.”²⁷⁷ The concept of the 1893 Chicago fair as the “White City,” and the current “City Beautiful” movement, were motivators of this kind of attitude on a national scale. Alan Trachtenberg describes well the former when he states that “just as the unifying ground plan of the Chicago fair stood in stark contrast with the impersonal grid of the city’s streets, so the exposition as a whole was intended to symbolize the subordination of mere competition and commercial domination by beauty and order.”²⁷⁸ In an era when the social stress that accompanies rapidly rising capitalism seemed acute, the White City offered hope.

A look at its architecture will show how these national trends were reflected in the Portland fair. One aspect of the Lewis and Clark Exposition that

²⁷⁷“Makers of Exposition at Banquet for Goode,” Portland Oregon Journal 15 October 1905, sec. 1, p. 6.

²⁷⁸Alan Trachtenberg, The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), p. 211.

has eluded historians is the curious choice of architectural style—that of Spanish Renaissance. Reflecting upon his own philosophy in approaching Chicago's World's Fair of 1933, its manager, Lenox R. Lohr, once stated that "the architecture of a fair should key the theme of the exposition."²⁷⁹ While even a temporarily suggested Russian style seemed an appropriate consideration for Seattle's 1909 Alaska-Yukon Exposition, the rationale of Ion Lewis, Director of Architecture for the Portland fair, to associate Spanish Renaissance with the first European explorers to reach the coast of Oregon seems hardly to carry enough merit to link it to the theme of the Portland event.²⁸⁰ Considering the relatively recent Spanish-American War, and traditional animosities that follow most wars, the choice appears even more peculiar. One suggestion has been that there remained an attempt to emulate the classicism of the Chicago fair without imitating its Roman style.²⁸¹ Also, at least one structure at Chicago, the Machinery Building, directly incorporated Spanish Renaissance elements.

One edifice that was quite distinct from the rest was the Forestry Building. Nicknamed the "Palace of Forestry" and touted as the "most unique

²⁷⁹Quoted in Gideon Bosker and Lena Lancek, Frozen Music: A History of Portland Architecture (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1985), p. 31.

²⁸⁰"Our Exposition in Seattle." The Architectural Record 26 (1909):29; and Ione Lewis, "Architecture of the Exposition," Pacific Monthly, July 1905, pp. 13-17.

²⁸¹George McMath, "Lewis and Clark Exposition," in Space, Style, and Structure: Buildings in Northwest America, vol. I, ed. Thomas Vaughan and Virginia Guest Ferriday (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1974), p. 313.

building in the history of all expositions . . . in itself the greatest exhibit of the natural resource of any country ever made," it was indeed exceptional in both construction and appearance.²⁸² The massive structure was made up of two miles of logs from five to six feet in diameter and another eight miles of poles. Upon entering, it was described as a "forest of giant firs." While it was not without precedent—Idaho erected a log building in Chicago and again in Portland—it served as one of the prime marketing strategies of the fair. This is suggested by Edmund Sheldon, who heralded it as "not a log cabin, but an exposition palace, . . . American in design . . . there is no region of the world outside the Oregon country where such a log palace would be possible."²⁸³ Even though it was attributed to the firm of Whidden and Lewis, the name most associated with this unique building is company associate Albert Doyle. Noted particularly for its combining of regional materials and classical architectural forms, it served as an early symbol of his potential as he emerged as one of the premier architects of early twentieth-century Portland.²⁸⁴

While the Forestry Building was not designed as the official Oregon building at the Lewis and Clark Exposition, it appears to have been recognized as the unofficial one. In light of this, it is relevant to examine the stylistic

²⁸²Portland Art Association, Portland Architecture Club Yearbook, Second Annual Exhibition (Portland Art Association, n.p., 1909).

²⁸³Edmund P. Sheldon, "Oregon's Log Palace," Pacific Monthly, January–June 1905, p. 225.

²⁸⁴Bosker and Lancek, p. 31.

development of buildings that represented Oregon at various other world expositions of the time. Even though the Northwest was well represented by the Idaho building at Chicago, Oregon was one of the few states that did not participate architecturally at this event. At the St. Louis fair of 1904, a great deal of consideration was given to the form and location of the building that would represent Oregon—primarily for purposes of promoting its own exposition the following year. In keeping with its theme, a replica of Lewis and Clark’s Fort Clatsop near Astoria was erected.²⁸⁵ In 1905, the Forestry Building, with its massive basilical plan, was a radical leap from the rusticity of the previous year. Then, in 1915, at San Francisco’s Panama Pacific Exposition, Oregon represented itself in the form of an immense “Log Parthenon” (see Figure 17).²⁸⁶ The stylistic evolution of the three buildings came to fruition at this point. The assuredness that was reflected in each consecutive building demonstrates that Oregon was ready to promote itself not only to a national, but also a world market. Contemporary descriptions of earlier days as analogous to the city being

²⁸⁵Report of the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition Commission of the State of Oregon (Salem: Oregon State Printer, 1906), p. 7.

²⁸⁶Eugene, Neuhaus, The Art of the Exposition (San Francisco: Paul Elder and Company, 1915), pp. 18-19.



Fig. 17. Foukes and Hogue. Log Parthenon (Oregon Building, demolished). 1915. Panama-Pacific Exposition, San Francisco, California (OHS neg. OrHi 52518)

in its infancy substantiate the impression that the state was continuing on a steady course of increasing self-confidence.²⁸⁷

In her review, Anabel Parker McCann attempted to compensate for the apparent incongruity between the fair's overall objective and the tone of most of its architecture and outdoor sculpture by contrasting the hardships experienced by the early explorers and pioneers with the "beauty" of the festival. From the rationale that "increasing prosperity was their reward," she explained that the most obvious indicator of the change that had taken place over the previous century was the art that graced the exposition grounds. By proclaiming that the fair's gardens, architecture, sculpture, fountains, and bridges honor "these days of the past," she was able not only to justify the plethora of seemingly unrelated art, but also to ground the celebration's imperialistic aims in the untainted soil of history.²⁸⁸

During the planning stages of the Lewis and Clark Exposition, elected officials assured their constituents that the fair would "benefit the people of the state of Oregon by way of the advertisement and development of the agricultural, horticultural, mineral, lumber, manufacturing, shipping, educational, and other

²⁸⁷Pioneer railroad man and journalist, Joseph Gaston refers to the city's "infancy" when recalling the first Mechanics' Fairs of just thirty years before. See Joseph Gaston, Portland, Oregon: Its History and Builders, 3 vol. (Chicago: S. J. Clarke), vol. 1: Great City of the Pacific, pp. 1911.

²⁸⁸McCann, p. 82.

resources”²⁸⁹ In the century that was ahead, other impressive campaigns to promote the state would occur, each reflecting the values of the time and each promoting one or a variety of industries ballyhooed at the Lewis and Clark Exposition.

The early twentieth century witnessed the height of the region’s first economic boom. Energized by the arrival of the railroad in the 1880s, the era was marked by optimism, which in turn was fueled by the hyperbole of boosterism. Interrupted briefly by the crash of 1893 and nudged by the 1905 fair, Oregon and the rest of the Pacific Northwest experienced huge increases in population and economic output, resulting in the creation and growth of numerous cities and towns.²⁹⁰ By the end of the nineteenth century, communities and businesses, such as railroads and land companies, were producing volumes of literature that promoted the benefits of settling and setting up business in the state.

These tracts, many of which contained views of farmland and natural scenery, possessed alluring titles that were meant to draw potential investors to Oregon. A Pendleton brochure, dubbed Oregon: State of Destiny, carried an address given by Judge Stephen Lowell before the Oregon Development League, espousing the state’s scenic, agricultural, industrial, and municipal advantages. A 1929 flyer promoted the state’s appeal of livability with an introduction of

²⁸⁹Quoted in Abbott, pp. 15-16.

²⁹⁰Dorothy O. Johanson and Charles M. Gates, Empire of the Columbia: A History of the Pacific Northwest, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1967), pp. 302-303.

“Oregon Beckons with Opportunities” and the words: “We who live here want to acquaint you with the highlights of Oregon as a place to live, to make a comfortable living and to build a solid foundation for the progress of present and future generations.”²⁹¹

An influential personality behind many of these endeavors was William Bittle Wells. After Pacific Monthly folded in 1907, Wells was hired by Sunset Magazine, a subsidiary of the Harriman Rail Lines’s Southern Pacific Railroad and a major promoter of western settlement. In response to Sunset’s desire to strengthen its efforts in the Pacific Northwest, Wells set up the Community Publicity Plan, which contracted with cities and towns to promote municipal and regional economic opportunities.²⁹²

A brochure commissioned by Baker City, bearing the title Land of Plenty, is typical of pieces Wells produced for several communities throughout the Northwest under the auspices of Sunset. Filled with illustrations of industry, farmland, and natural beauty, its cover demonstrates his characteristic style of incorporating images that suggest optimism, prosperity, and success—in this case wildflowers and the American bald eagle. Oregon: Land of Opportunity was the title of similar brochures published by the Portland Chamber of Commerce. Early

²⁹¹Oregon Beckons with Opportunities (Portland: Oregon State Chamber of Commerce).

²⁹²William Bittle Wells, “The Community Publicity Plan of the Harriman Lines in the Pacific Northwest,” William Bittle Wells collection, Mss 894 (Oregon Historical Society Library, Portland).

issues featured likenesses reminiscent of the city's Lady Commerce, arrayed in Grecian drapery and surrounded by the fruits of the land against a backdrop of evergreen forests and Portland's distinctive view of Mt. Hood (see Figure 18). Such pastoral scenes and allegorical figures were well known Wells trademarks.²⁹³ Reflecting on the influence that tracts like these had on his own decision to live in "God's own country," Stewart Holbrook wrote that they ". . . left the impression that one could have a decent living in Oregon and Washington simply by eating the gorgeous scenery."²⁹⁴

After World War I, human and technological means combined with an economic boom to take full advantage of the state's abundant natural resources.²⁹⁵ Despite occasional economic setbacks, the century witnessed a flourishing of utopian art associated with industry. With the primary focus being on agriculture and extractive industries, the most frequently portrayed subjects are farming, ranching, timber, and fishing. A related category, which encompasses these subjects, covers manufacturing and other commerce and is characterized by images of technology.

²⁹³Carlos Schwantes, "Selling the Pacific Northwest," Oregon Heritage (Spring 1994):6.

²⁹⁴Stewart H. Holbrook, Far Corner: A Personal View of the Pacific Northwest (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1952), p. 4.

²⁹⁵John M. McClelland, "Our Pleasant Condition," in Regionalism and the Pacific Northwest, ed. William G. Robbins, Robert J. Frank, and Richard E. Ross (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1983), p. 211.



Fig. 18. Front cover of Oregon: Land of Opportunity, published by the Portland Chamber of Commerce, 1909. (OHS neg. OrHi 91407)

Farming and ranching are popular topics of works that celebrate Oregon's agricultural heritage. This is played out in Wells's brochures that promote communities, like Hood River, with a strong agricultural base. Colorful illustrations publicizing this town on the south bank of the Columbia River show luscious apples that look as if they can be picked from the page.²⁹⁶ Gabriel Lavare included a panel devoted to agriculture in his 1941 series of carved pine panels, placed in the United Airlines building at the Portland airport. Peeking over large heads of wheat, which dominate the lower half of the work, is the massive cube of a grain elevator and rolling farmland dotted by bundles of wheat. The presence of the building in this scene of pastoral abundance underscores its emphasis on industry and commerce.

Lavare's panel is one of a number of works pertaining to farming that were created during or in the wake of the Great Depression. Despite draught conditions in the Midwest, and a nationwide decline in the family farm, federally funded muralists in Oregon and throughout the country at this time frequently employed agricultural subjects. The intention of many artists was to establish a historical grounding for the values of cooperation, family, and individual efforts to support the common good.²⁹⁷

Martina Gangle's and Vesta Wells's paintings of farm scenes, and Dora Erickson's wood carving, Apple Picking, were created during this period under

²⁹⁶Hood River (Hood River, Oregon: Commercial Club, 1910).

²⁹⁷Park and Markowitz, p. 48.

the Public Works of Art Project. In addition to their history murals, Barry Faulkner and Frank Schwarz created four Oregon industries murals for the new Capitol. Echoing Ellerhusen's wheat sheaves over the west entrance, one whole panel, painted by Faulkner, is devoted to the harvest (see Figure 19). Before a backdrop of cultivated fields and Mt. Hood is pictured a muscular young man, supporting a bundle of wheat on his bare back. Next to him stands a confident young woman in overalls displaying in her hand a juicy apple, as if, in this Eden-like setting, she is tempting the viewer to take a bite. Adjacent to each are suspended wreaths of wheat and apples, respectively, in a garland of pine boughs. A related industry, dairying, is represented in a mural by Frank Schwarz. It shows a young woman wearing a long dress, clutching a milk stool under one arm and holding a bucket in her opposite hand. In the pine boughs above her head hangs a butter churn.

An industry-oriented Federal Arts Project commission brought Carl Morris to Oregon in 1941. Betraying the inspiration of the great Mexican muralist, Clemente Orozco, and the influence that Social Realism had on Morris at the time, the project consists of two pieces, titled Lumbering and Agriculture. The latter work depicts a number of brawny men engaged in a variety of farm tasks such as raking hay, digging potatoes, and milking cows. With like resemblances, as if cloned from a single prototype, the majority of the eight characters are faceless, either turned away from the viewer or hidden beneath the brim of their hats. The terrain is reminiscent of the rolling foothills around



Fig. 19. Barry Faulkner. Oregon Industries Mural (Wheat and apples). 1938. Painted mural. State Capitol, Salem (Capitol Dome Restoration Office photograph)

Eugene and is dominated in the background by a large box-like barn. Morris completed the project for the Eugene Post Office in June of 1942. Though his art had already begun to change, the piece demonstrates the skills he acquired as a young draftsman, and may be an indication of the direction his art would have taken had he not embraced more avant garde expressions.

The diligence with which the subjects in this painting approach their work, combined with their anonymity, may be a statement about the importance of cooperation over independent action that was advocated so at the time. It may also be a reflection of the artist's own experience of and attitude toward work, acquired while growing up on a farm that his parents carved out of the sagebrush country near Yorba Linda, California. After finishing the piece, Morris took a brief hiatus from painting, due to reasons related to the war and personal concerns. After he resumed his work, Morris's art demonstrated a more complete embracing of the abstract.²⁹⁸

Western themes were C. S. Price's main topic. Born in Iowa in 1874, he spent the second two decades of his life in Wyoming, enjoying the life of a cowboy. The West of his mature art, however, is not the wild romantic West of dime store novels or the movies. Instead it is the agrarian West, with farming, animals, and stock-raising as his subjects. His first-hand experience and integrity did not allow him to pursue the more flamboyant tone of his friend, Charles Russell.

²⁹⁸Morley, p. 6.

Art funding under the Works Projects Administration gave Price the opportunity to create large-scale works and to secure his reputation. Two of his paintings that pertain to agriculture were created for Timberline Lodge. The Team and Huckleberry Pickers, both painted in 1937, reflect the artist's belief in the importance of work. The former, depicting a half-hidden plowman led by a group of six large horses, is a favorite subject, which includes Price's beloved animals and, similar to Morris's farmers, his characteristic faceless laborers. Huckleberry Pickers perhaps better portrays the spirit of its subject. The scene shows Indian women harvesting in a sea of shrubbery. Unlike Price's other figures, his depictions of native Americans are shown in full view. The catalogue for an exhibition staged shortly after his death in 1950 described this as the product of a "kindred spirit," evoking the dignity with which one must face life—also an important value during hardship and economic depression.²⁹⁹

A less dominant theme during the Depression, ranching and cowboy subjects are more strongly represented throughout the century as expressions of cultural and regional pride than for purposes of edification. Oregon's popular image is one associated with the wetter climate west of the Cascade Range, yet two thirds of the state consists of more arid regions that frequently inspire such subjects. A classic example is a sculpture of a giant spur created by Crook County High School students in 1982. Designed under the supervision of their

²⁹⁹C. S. Price, 1874-1950: A Memorial Exhibition (Portland: Portland Art Museum, n.d.), p. 17.

industrial arts instructor, Ray Clivinger, and then La Grande artist, Tom Morandi—now a professor at Oregon State University—its subject is the students' choice of that which best represents their community. Located at the divide—locally known as the “Y”—of the main highway passing through Prineville, the sheet metal sculpture has “become a fixture,” and has since been joined by a flagpole and landscaping by the local garden club.³⁰⁰ Prineville's spur is an ideal representation of the pairing of lifestyle with pride of place.

Frank Schwarz includes ranching in two of his Oregon industries murals in the Capitol. His image of a sheep rancher, opposite a miner, depicts a downward-looking middle-aged man dressed in work clothes, holding a lamb by its front hooves with one hand. The pastoral scene behind this “good shepherd,” of a large flock of sheep grazing in a forest-edged meadow, is reminiscent of an illustration for the Bible. The insignia nestled in the foliage above him is a frontal view of a ram's head that is suspended by two cords of rope tied to his spiraling horns. Fine clothing, including chaps, shined shoes, a shirt with studded cuffs, and a broad-rimmed cowboy hat, lends an air of confidence in Schwarz's cattle rancher. Standing opposite the dairy woman, this cowpuncher's insignia is a side view of a saddle.

C. S. Price is considered by many to be Oregon's greatest painter. Because he did most of his travelling before he came to the state, Price was content in Oregon to paint from models he created that brought to mind past

³⁰⁰Interview of Ellen Waterston, *Artists in Education*, 15 December 1994.

experiences. As a result, much of his work depicts not utopian images of the region, but profound internal experiences.³⁰¹ Classic cowboy scenes are more evident in his early paintings. Later pieces, like Cow and Calf, retain images related to ranching, but frequently point to a larger reality.

More typical of works that celebrate the state's classic western image and its ranching industry are Alexander Phimister Proctor's Buckaroo, created in 1915 as a gift from the City of Pendleton to pioneer journalist Sam Jackson, and Jack Wilkinson's 1941 Cattle Roundup, found in the Burns post office. The paintings and sculptures of Ed Quigley fall under this classification as well. Born in 1895, in North Dakota, Quigley grew up in Idaho and eastern Washington, all the time surrounded by horses. When asked why he chose in 1930 to make Portland his home, he replied "there's not a better place to live . . . it's ideal for me." A 1949 exhibition catalogue described his artistic objective in simple terms: "to be able to interpret a healthy life that may seem commonplace to those who practice it."³⁰² Claiming he doesn't go in for "blood and thunder" and only paints "the everyday jobs of some of these cowboys," Quigley's is a career in which the edenic quality of his work has been defined by the public.³⁰³ Collections of his

³⁰¹Charles Heaney, Oral history interview by Charles Digregorio, 15 May 1978, Oral history library (Oregon Historical Society), p. 5.

³⁰²Loren F. Boulier, Forward, in Exhibition of Western Paintings and Wood Carvings by E. B. Quigley, June 15 to July 15, 1949 (Maryhill, Washington: Maryhill Museum of Fine Arts, 1949).

³⁰³Quotes from Jalaine Madura, "Cowboys, Indians and Artist Ed Quigley," Northwest Magazine, 5 June 1977, p. 10.

art are found in homes, businesses, and museums throughout the West, including the National Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City, from which he received an award in 1984.

With titles like Cattle Trail Drive, Corral Scene, and Handy Rope, Quigley's art reflects his upbringing and his experiences as an artist and enthusiast who made frequent trips to eastern Oregon and Washington to work with cowboys. Testimony to the larger-than-life experiences he translated in wood and onto canvas is his description of a cattle drive:

I used to go on these wild horse drives. Every year, fall and spring, the Indians would call up, "Hey, come on up and help run these horses!" They'd start a big drive. You go out from the trap—often a canyon with easy access. Start out early, before daylight, drop off a rider three-quarters of the way. A few other riders would start out ahead, get away off several miles, while we took up stations. They'd start the horses running; we sat there on our horses and nothing happened at all. Then about noon, at the top of this sagebrush hill, all of a sudden it looked like a picket fence, there were so many horses . . . maybe 150 head.³⁰⁴

Just as the theme of Sacagawea overlaps the subjects of both native Americans and Lewis and Clark in heroic portrayals of a mythic past, so subjects under the category of extractive industries also cross over into other areas. Images of fishing are found in works dealing with iconographic symbols from nature, outdoor pastimes, and industry. Forest scenes are common in industrial as well as environmental topics. The treatment of a subject in more than one area demonstrates its significance in Oregon's culture, while also pointing out its irony.

³⁰⁴Quoted in Madura.

Fishing is one of the two extractive industries most often represented in Oregon utopian art. Gabriel Lavare devoted an entire panel to it in his 1941 series created for the United Airlines building. In 1932, in partial fulfillment of her masters degree in art, Lucia Wiley created a series of four frescoes at the University of Oregon titled The Fishing Industry in Oregon. Barry Faulkner's tribute to the fishing industry, in his Capitol mural, shows a young man, in frontal pose, dressed in a full length apron. With both hands, he grasps a fish club, from which hangs a large salmon. The foliage above his head frames a fish net drapery suspended from a large rod. In the background flows a wide, meandering river.

A sentimental tribute to the fishing industry is Mark Sponenburgh's Fisherman Memorial, situated at Yaquina Head lighthouse, in Newport. This artist, who has works in museums in London, Paris, and Egypt, honors laborers at sea with a simple round sculpture with Baroque waves below and a small star above. A cooperative effort of the Bureau of Land Management and local fishermen's wives, the white obelisk is to be accompanied by a "sanctuary, or place of contemplation."³⁰⁵

A 1994 image that is in the tradition of Wells's promotional pieces pictures a father and daughter at the seashore, holding a sand dollar and a sand bucket high over their heads. With rays of sunlight streaming down upon them, this powerful illustration is framed by words that virtually shout out at the reader:

³⁰⁵Interview of Steve Gobat, Bureau of Land Management, December 1994.

“Beachcomb for a better tomorrow! Do your part! Go to the Oregon Coast!”

Seemingly irrelevant to the fishing industry, the caption beneath the picture proves that it belongs to a group of images that speak to the cultural and economic changes that descended upon the state at late century: “Every time you build a sandcastle or eat a crab at the Oregon Coast, you’re helping communities cope with Coho salmon-fishing restrictions.”

Because of its pre-European American significance as a subsistence activity, fishing as an economic concern is also a consistent native American subject. Unlike images of native Americans that point to an edenic past, scenes that focus on the ancient fishing grounds and trade center of the now submerged Celilo Falls near The Dalles go beyond nostalgia to suggesting a historical as well as spiritual basis for fishing as an industry.

William Givler’s 1940 etching, Indians Fishing, Celilo Falls, painted 17 years before the site was inundated, shows the shadow-like figures of three people fishing. Engrossed physically and mentally in their strenuous work, the faceless forms echo the shapes of the cascading waters, uniting them with the falls in both body and spirit.

Jeanne Moment’s untitled print, described as Workers at Celilo Falls, is one of several she created of the activities near The Dalles. With two large figures dominating the foreground, fishermen are seen in the distance fishing from their familiar wooden platforms. Conceived on one of a number of visits she

made to the site, the 1948 scene is representative of the artist's interest in the livelihoods and concerns of other cultures.³⁰⁶

Ed Quigley painted a panoramic view of the falls in 1970. With the arid rolling hills of the river's Washington side in the background, people dot the perimeter of the falls, fishing from the shore or on precarious scaffolding. The work, which hangs in the state Capitol, is a memory of this ancient meeting ground.

One need only to walk through downtown Portland on a warm summer's day to encounter one of Oregon's most visible examples of art representing another major extractive industry. Legend has it that timber baron Simon Benson commissioned Albert Doyle in 1912 to design twenty drinking fountains in order that loggers might have something other than alcohol to quench their hard earned thirsts. Benson later bragged that saloon sales decreased 40%.³⁰⁷

The extractive industry to which the largest number of artists have responded is timber. From the 1905 Forestry Building on, art has served to document the evolving attitudes surrounding this business. Logging started in Oregon with the establishment of a lumber mill in Oregon City in 1838. By the mid-nineteenth century, demand sparked by the California gold rush elevated lumber to the state's major export. After years of steady decline, a renewal in Oregon's timber industry occurred at the turn of the century as forests in the East

³⁰⁶Larsen, 10.

³⁰⁷Portland's Municipal Fountains

became depleted. Continued increase in the business eventually saw Oregon become the nation's top timber state by the late 1930s. In the latter part of the century, interests of environmentalists and timber professionals clashed, again changing the course of the industry.

In the midst of the early twentieth-century logging boom, renowned poet Joaquin Miller included the following in his poem about workers in the forest, "The Heroes of America":

What strong, uncommon men were these,
 These settlers hewing to the seas!
 Great horny-handed men and tan;
 Men blown from many a barren land
 Beyond the sea, men red of hand,
 And men in love, and men in debt,
 Who only sought these woods to hide
 Their wretchedness, held in the van;
 Yet every man among them stood
 Alone, along that sounding wood,
 They pushed the mailed wood aside,
 They tossed the forest like a toy,
 That grand, forgotten race of men—
 The boldest band that yet has been
 Together since the siege of Troy.³⁰⁸

The grandiloquence of these words is mirrored in the grandeur of the 1905 Forestry Building and the accessible ornateness of Benson's fountains. As these works of art herald the early twentieth-century boom in the timber industry, Avard Fairbanks's 24" diameter plaster bas relief of Simon Benson, created in 1924, honors one of its motivators. At the same time, Clyde Leon Keller's 1916

³⁰⁸Joaquin Miller, "The Heroes of America," Portland Lewis and Clark Journal, March 1904, p. 18.

Log Booms in the Willamette River is an example of the kind of art that chronicled the productivity of the era.

As with many subjects covered in this study, it was during the W.P.A. era that a plethora of artists responded to the activities of the timber industry. Woodchoppers is the title of one of five paintings executed by Darrel Austin for Timberline Lodge, two of which, Dishwashers and Musicians, remain in its collections. Timber also holds a place among Gabriel Lavare's United Airlines panels.

A man grasping a towering cross cut saw is paired with Barry Faulkner's fisherman at the Capitol. Counterbalancing the tent-like net over these workers are two stumps that bracket them at their feet. Of the eight industries represented in Capitol murals, only this one has a tool—the saw—that bridges the world of the laborer with the symbols over his head. Recalling the church steeple and larger soaring tree in Van Gogh's Starry Night, both of which connect the terrestrial world with the celestial, there is a suggestion here of the primacy of the timber industry.

Adrien Voisin believed that the growth of the West is one of the greatest chapters in American history.³⁰⁹ His 17-inch high plaster model, Logger, concurs with this sentiment. Posed for by Gus Weist, a 39-year veteran logger

³⁰⁹Doris McConnell, "Adrien Voisin, Sculpture," Portland (Ore.) The Spectator, 4 September 1937, n.p., uncited photocopy, Adrien Voisin file, Register of Oregon Art supplemental files (Oregon Historical Society Museum, Portland).

with Oregon's Willamette Lumber Company, it was unveiled before 700 industry personnel at the October 1934 Pacific Logging Congress in Seattle. Lack of funding, due to the Depression, prevented this sculpture from being cast in bronze.³¹⁰

Lumbering, the other half of Carl Morris's twin murals commissioned for the Eugene post office, repeats his convention, seen in Agriculture, of eight identical men devoid of expression and engaged in arduous work. It is typical of federally funded murals of the time that depict laborers consumed by their tasks, surrounded by industrial equipment, and removed from any association with family. Testifying to the industrial might of the nation, such scenes also communicate the importance of the labor movement.³¹¹

A related topic that received attention by Depression-era artists is forestry—the development, care, and cultivation of trees and the management of the woods for growing timber.³¹² A superb example that combines this profession with the language of utopia are Aimee Gorham's 1937 wood marquetry murals in the entrance of Oregon State University's Moreland Hall. Inlaid with pieces of wood from around the world, each mural is capped with a band listing various species of Oregon trees. Her west mural, titled Only God Can Make a

³¹⁰Logger, Photograph identification (Oregon Historical Society Library, Portland).

³¹¹Park and Markowitz, p. 53.

³¹²Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, 1974 ed., s.v. "Forestry."

Tree, shows a forest scene with massive trunks and lush undergrowth. In the distance are towering mountains and a pair of simple, wood-framed buildings. A label mentions the part played by humans in a well-managed forest, reading: “Descriptive of the general effect of an Oregon forest, with its rich and varied vegetation, its wide variety of different trees with different foliage, its sawmills, and its towering canyon walls rising to the snow-capped peaks of the mountains.” The east mural, called The Forests: Nature’s Great Gift to Mankind, plays down the emphasis on a benevolent deity, placing greater emphasis on the role of humans (see Figure 20). It shows an assemblage of deer in a thick sylvan setting watching two men fell a tree. Its label identifies the piece as “Descriptive of logging operations and the fauna and flora of the timber lands, . . . the whole giving an effect of the depth and quiet dignity of Oregon’s vast heritage of indigenous trees.”

A sculpture that demonstrates the evolution of attitudes toward the forest, and how the modifying significance of a work of art documents that change, is Count Alexander Von Svoboda’s 1970 Perpetuity. The circular piece, originally located in downtown Portland, consists of a hollowed-out section of a 14-foot diameter redwood log, inside of which is situated a bronze “seedling.” A sunburst effect is provided by bronze shafts that emanate from the small tree through the sides of the wood. Reminiscent of Frank Boyden’s articulation of the lifestyle of the salmon, Von Svoboda states:



Fig. 20. Aimee Gorham. The Forests: Nature's Great Gift to Mankind. ca. 1930. Wood marquetry. Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon (OHS neg. OrHi 84903)

I see this as representing the seed and pulsating heart of a redwood tree. As the seed breaks open, new roots of life come out. The bronze rays piercing the log point towards the new life in the center. This is perpetual, the beginning and end of life, or to say it another way, there is no end and no beginning I feel very strongly about it.³¹³

The similarity with Boyden's work, however, may have ended here. A promotional brochure, published by Georgia Pacific, who commissioned the piece, contains Svoboda's words and additional information about Perpetuity. Beneath the company logo on the back of the tract is Georgia Pacific's motto, "Growing Forests Forever."³¹⁴ Giving an indication of the corporate interpretation of the work, this phrase is an example of transforming the rhetoric of the sublime into the rhetoric of capitalism.³¹⁵

After Georgia Pacific vacated their building on Southwest Fifth Avenue in the 1980s, Perpetuity was acquired by the World Forestry Center and transferred to its facility in Washington Park. Erected seven years after a devastating 1964 fire that destroyed the original Lewis and Clark Exposition Forestry Building, the Washington Park Center was established with strong backing from the timber industry. In recent years, the organization has gained non-profit status and has included in its mission statement that it is "dedicated to the conservation of trees,

³¹³On the Plaza (Portland: Georgia Pacific, n.d.).

³¹⁴On the Plaza (Portland: Georgia Pacific, n.d.).

³¹⁵William Robbins and Henry Sayre, "The Oregon Trail: Myth, Vision, and Representation," address at The Washington Side of the Oregon Trail: Different Perspectives, Different Stories conference, Center for Columbia River History, 30 October 1993.

soil, water, wildlife, and other natural resources.”³¹⁶ Housed in a museum that in recent years has staged such well-received exhibits as “Old Growth Forests: Treasures in Transition,” which asserts “remember—there is no simple answer but a need for everyone to work together and resolve the future of these old growth forests!” Von Svoboda’s work may now reside in a context more in tune with his intention.

Another work at Oregon State University, which also interprets the subject of forestry and the timber industry, is Marvin Mayfield’s 1986 Oregon Forestry. Displayed in an outdoor case at the LeSells Stewart Center, this large low relief is carved from a solid slab of laminated sugar pine lumber. Dedicated to forestry professionals LeSells and Jessie Stewart, it portrays the history of logging technology and the Bohemia Mountain logging operations. Framing a narrative about the Stewarts is Bohemia Mountain, oxen dragging logs on a skid road, a steam donkey, logs suspended from a helium balloon, and a modern tractor assembling logs on a landing. Reminiscent of the Georgia Pacific motto, the final sentence in an accompanying description associates the scene, as well as the entire industry, with the utopian concept of unlimited sources of supply, explaining: “The vast stands of timber in the landscape reminds us of the renewable nature of this magnificent resource.”

³¹⁶World Forestry Center (Portland, Oregon: World Forestry Center, n.d.).

Some of the best images to portray the tension that exists at the end of the century in regard to the handling of Northwest forests are works created by Jim Denny. With paintings that often depict unsettling scenes that lead one to conclude his objective is firmly anti-industry and solidly conservationist, Denny pleads that he is not engaged in a match of "us-versus-them" but is merely a chronicler documenting what he knows and sees. Using the analogy of a light switch, Denny admits that he stands at once in awe and disgust at the changes industry has wreaked upon the forests.³¹⁷

As a Forest Service worker, Jim Denny is very much aware of the complex issues at hand today, including: "rapid automation coupled with a profound misunderstanding of the underlying processes of the forests; economic and political pressures; [and] the very energy and rapacity of the immigrants to the Northwest."³¹⁸ His Downsizing shows a Forest Service fire rig. Parked in an area replete with high fire conditions, it is rendered ineffective by four flat tires. Another painting pictures a mass of logs tossed by white water. Titled Collapse, it is interpreted as a statement about Northwest timber exports.³¹⁹ In a gallery statement for a 1994 show in Eugene, Jim Denny indicates his personal prophecy about the fate of his subject: "These pictures are an incomplete record

³¹⁷"Paintings on Display at the Jacobs Gallery," Hult Center Press Release for 1 May through 13 June 1994 (Jacobs Gallery, Eugene, Oregon).

³¹⁸Ibid.

³¹⁹Randy Gragg, "Someone Needs to Paint It: A Landscape in Ruin," Portland Sunday Oregonian, 29 May 1994, sec. E, p. 2.

of an unfinished story which will likely result in the end of the great old growth forests of the Northwest.”³²⁰

A more whimsical subject used to communicate attitudes about the timber industry is Paul Bunyan. His larger than life persona was apparently deemed an apt comparison for major industrial projects in 1934, when the Corps of Engineers was undertaking massive hydroelectric projects. In the February 10 issue of the Spectator that year, an article on current Public Works of Art Project commissions divulges that one artist was working on a “mighty Paul Bunyan and Babe his Great Ox, which the sculptor sees in colossal scale at Bonneville Dam.”³²¹

The transplanted hero from the Midwest is bestowed official Oregon citizenship in Ida Virginia Tourney’s second children’s book on the benevolent giant, Paul Bunyan Marches On.³²² In addition to the feats attributed to heroes of tall tales, the character in Tourney’s book initiates reforestation, starts competition in the farming industry, provides leadership for the C.C.C., and institutes the state’s forestry colleges and the Oregon Agricultural College—today’s Oregon State University. The work, published by a Portland company in 1942 and still in print, contains illustrations by Norma Lyons that are unremarkable, to say the least. Tourney’s first volume, Paul Bunyan, the Work

³²⁰Quoted in Gragg, “Someone Needs to Paint It . . .,” sec. E, p. 2.

³²¹“Art and Humanity,” Portland (Ore.) The Spectator, 10 February 1934, p. 5.

³²²Ida Virginia Turney, Paul Bunyan Marches On (Portland, Oregon: Binford and Mort, 1942).

Giant, was published in 1941, nearer to when artistic representations of the giant first seem to appear in significant numbers around the state. This volume capitalizes on the rising tide of the legend's popularity and is illustrated by the more talented Harold Price.

An attractive rendition of the Paul Bunyan legends is Virginia Darce's stained glass mosaic found at Timberline Lodge (see Figure 21). Gracing the walls of the Blue Ox Bar, subjects include: Paul Bunyan Carrying Babe the Blue Ox in the Winter of the Blue Snow, Paul Bunyan Folding His Arms, Paul traversing the forest with Babe, wielding his double-bladed ax "with which he . . . cut a swath of twenty huge trees in a single swing;" and a back-lit sign. In their recreational setting, the pieces are less a statement about the timber industry than a reflection of the current attitude toward the forest—and perhaps a favorite timber worker pastime. Just before the lodge was finished, Marjory Hoffman Smith, the project's interior designer, realized the facility had no bar.³²³

In 1959, the image of Paul Bunyan was powerful enough to warrant a significant representation at the entrance to the Centennial Exposition grounds in Portland. The 35-foot-tall figure of the famous lumberjack still peers over rooftops at the Kenton-area site. In the following decades, as indicated by the concerns of artists like Jim Denny, the prevailing attitude of forest management that perpetuated the Paul Bunyan legend was increasingly questioned.

³²³Griffin and Munro, pp. 43, 61.

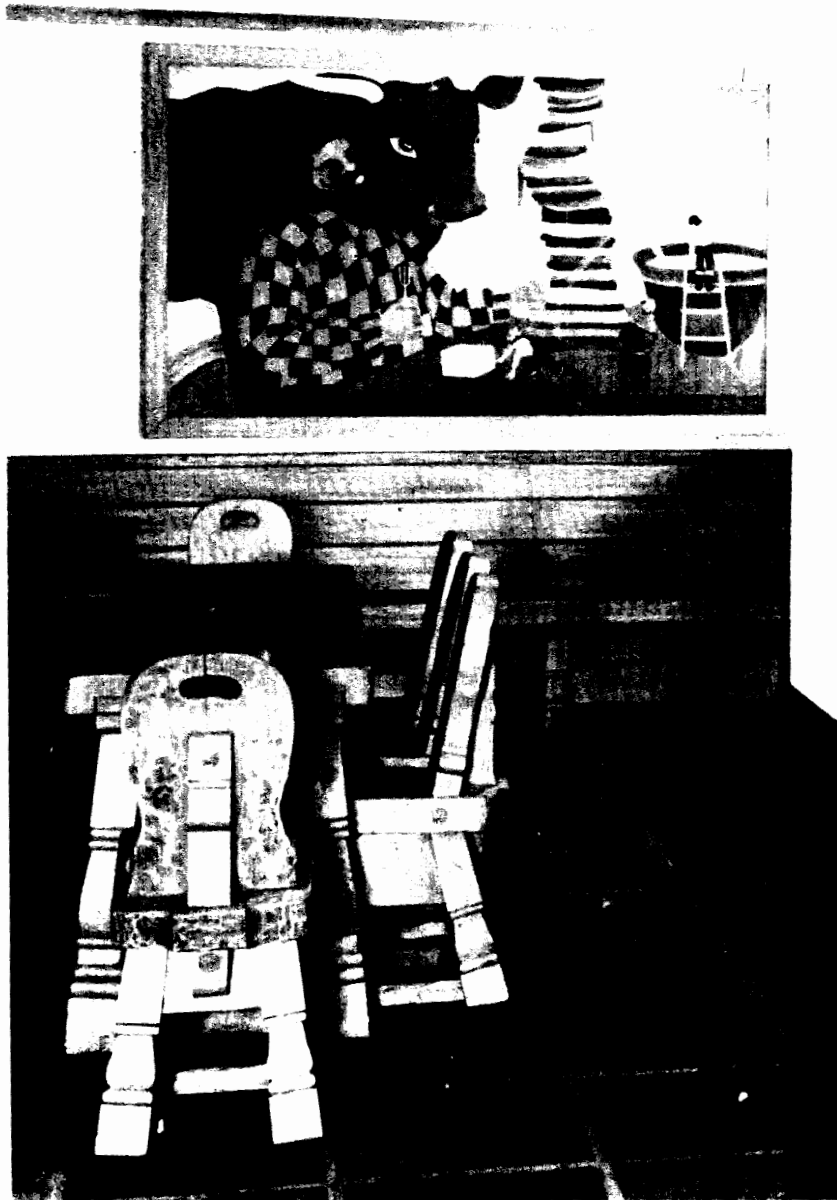


Fig. 21. Timberline Lodge barroom showing Paul Bunyan murals, August 18, 1939. (OHS neg. OrHi 54375)

By the time Nancy Travers, art instructor at Clackamas Community College in Oregon City, created her 16 paintings of Paul Bunyan in the early 1990s, vast changes had taken place in the timber industry. New technology, a changing economy, foreign markets, and heightened environmental concerns all threatened a century-old way of life. In explaining her A Requiem for Paul Bunyan series, which follows the legend from the giant's arrival in America to his activities in Oregon, Travers describes the timber industry as "almost an indicator species too."³²⁴

A passionate environmentalist, who is proud of her family's logging heritage, Travers approaches her subject with the attitude that the era of the timber industry is over. "Like it or not," she declares, "we're at the Pacific Ocean. The loggers' cry was always, 'Over the next hill.' If they go over the next hill now, they'll be in the ocean with their chain saws."³²⁵ Tracing the story to the advent of sophisticated late twentieth-century technology—what she sees as the turning point in the industry—the series concludes with a poignant portrayal of Paul Bunyan at rest. Like Beachcomb for a Better Tomorrow!, Travers's series acknowledges changes taking place in a traditional industry and approaches them with an openness to seek creative alternatives.

³²⁴Interview of Nancy Travers, Clackamas Community College, 8 April 1993.

³²⁵Dan McCue, "Myth Goes to Bed—G'night Bunyan, Night, Babe," Portland Oregonian, 8 April 1993, Neighbors sec., p. 1.

A significant amount of art demonstrates that industrial themes play no little part in Oregon's utopian myth. A classification of utopian subjects that encompasses a variety of industries includes the promise of technology, often through sublime images. Though not a direct interaction of humans with the natural environment, this subject deals with Oregon as a context, replete with natural resources, in which such activity occurs.

In an era in which the space shuttle has been elevated to the level of a national symbol, it is not difficult to grasp the seductive power that technology has acquired since Charles Caldwell penned these words in 1832:

Alpine scenery and an embattled ocean deepen contemplation, and give their own sublimity to the conceptions of beholders. The same will be true of our system of Rail-roads. Its vastness and magnificence will prove communicable, and add to the standard of intellect of our community.³²⁶

By the dawn of the twentieth century, industrialization so pervaded the lives of Oregonians, and Americans as a whole, that the awe and respect that were reserved for God and nature and that are evident in art responding to the natural sublime, gave birth to a reverence of equal depth for the utopian notion of human progress embodied in technology.

In addition to other trades, the technological sublime is evident in some of the industries previously surveyed. At the 1959 Oregon Centennial Painting Exhibition, the fishing industry is represented by a work by Margaret Ann Karl titled Old Cannery in the Bay. The scene depicts a foliage-laden, shore-front

³²⁶Quoted in Marx, p. 195.

setting punctuated by the remains of an abandoned cannery. Its suggestion of industry as an integral part of the natural landscape is equal to any intention the artist may have had to portray the death of a local business. Similarly, Catherine Arling Hatfield's timber-related Mill—Carleton, also exhibited at the centennial show, blends the angles of a paper mill with the terrain of the local environment, indicating the central place of this important Oregon industry. A late-century example of the same subject is Karl's watercolor—on display until recently at the Multnomah County Central Library—in which a sawdust burner, or “wigwam,” dominates a third of the painting.

An eclectic array of industries born out of technology has given rise to a number of works throughout the century. At the Salem Employment Office, Lori Unis's Monument to Man contrasts the massive intersecting forms of freeway ramps with the arch of Portland's Fremont Bridge to picture a sublimely beautiful image from modern life, totally devoid of nature. Enamel and steel forms, reminiscent of wood shavings, comprise Christiane Martens's graceful tribute to printing in Paperwave, at the State Printing Plant in Salem.

An industry that has provoked numerous artistic responses is shipping and ship building. In Shipping, Gabriel Lavare's fourth 1941 Oregon industry panel, the massive hull of a loaded cargo ship waits in port ready to embark with its load of lumber. Some of the earliest twentieth-century works in this category were created by Carl Walters. Arriving in Oregon around 1912 where “the most beautiful scenery in the world is at hand,” Walters was well known for his marine

and wharf scenes.³²⁷ In 1918 he was appointed official artist for the Portland shipyards by the United States Shipping Board. In the tradition of the technological sublime, his task was to express the “Western spirit” by depicting “the spirit of the shipbuilding industry rather than a correct view of the commercial detail.”³²⁸ Typical of Walters’s work is Building the Ship, which shows workers scrambling over the lancet arch-shaped frame of an unfinished hull that points across a river to bustling port activity. This lithograph, printed in a 1918 issue of the Oregon Journal, was dubbed “inspiring” by the paper.³²⁹ After World War I, Walters went on to do industrial scenes for Willamette Iron and Steel.

Charlotte Mish was known for her ability to represent a variety of subjects, including a mural map of Oregon flowers for the state library, and another illustrated map—in the tradition of booster idealism—of Wasco County industries for the City of Portland. Her most popular work, however, was in the realm of marine and industrial scenes. One year, The Oregonian featured a semi-weekly series of her prints depicting ships from throughout the world that docked

³²⁷“Walters Will Depict Spirit of Shipyards,” Portland (Ore.) Telegram, 3 September 1918, n.p., uncited photocopy, Carl Walters file, Register of Oregon Art supplemental files (Oregon Historical Society Museum, Portland)

³²⁸“Carl Walters Chosen Artist of Shipyards,” Portland (Ore.) Evening Telegram, 16 August 1918, n.p., uncited photocopy, Carl Walters file, Register of Oregon Art supplemental files (Oregon Historical Society Museum, Portland).

³²⁹“Building the Ship—Lithograph by Carl Walters,” Portland (Ore.) Sunday Journal, 15 September 1918, n.p., uncited photocopy, Carl Walters file, Register of Oregon Art supplemental files (Oregon Historical Society Museum, Portland).

at Portland.³³⁰ A 1936 exhibition sponsored by the Portland Chamber of Commerce featured paintings pertaining to the Port of Portland, including: Swan Island Airport, The Steamer Portland, Municipal Drydocks, and The Dredge Clackamas. Another work in this show depicted activities at St. Helens's McCormick Lumber Company, showing five ships being loaded with lumber.³³¹

One of Charlotte Mish's most prolific periods was during World War II. Similar to Carl Walters, she was an avid recorder of the shipyards. Painted during the two years she was staff-artist for Kaiser, her And Now She Sails depicts the kind of tankers made by the company's Swan Island yard. A panoramic view she painted of the Albina Navy Yard shows a busy compound full of vessels, buildings, machinery, and people. A caption in an unidentified publication showing the work identifies the place as "the yard that turned out the Hellships renowned throughout the world" and concludes with the prophecy "Albina will go on to greater achievements."³³²

A decade after her work with Kaiser, the Oregon Journal carried an editorial written in response to a Meier and Frank show of Charlotte Mish's art.

³³⁰Charlotte Mish file, Register of Oregon Art supplemental files (Oregon Historical Society Museum, Portland).

³³¹"2-Week Display of Artist's Work Begins Tomorrow," Portland Oregonian, 13 July 1936, uncited photocopy, Charlotte Mish file, Register of Oregon Art supplemental files (Oregon Historical Society Museum, Portland).

³³²Charlotte Mish file.

Reflecting the rhetoric of the technological sublime, it underscores the utopian aura that surrounded much of her work:

Charlotte Mish is well known wherever there is shipping, for her faithful portrayal of hull and mast This exhibition has a distinct message in that it brings to the beholder the fact that in American art we have a precious record of colorful achievement of business. The marine and industrial artist puts on canvas for our contemplation and enjoyment the beauty that is to be found in steel, wood, and the majesty and dignity of labor.³³³

Perhaps no industry in the Northwest is couched more in the language of utopia than the hydroelectric industry. The first hydroelectric dam in the region began generating power in 1885 for Spokane, Washington. Just four years later a direct current line from Oregon City illuminated Portland streetlights, becoming the first long distance transmission of electricity in the world. The idea of putting electricity into the hands of the people existed from early on as McMinnville set up the Northwest's first municipally-owned electric system. By the 1930s, the debate over public versus private ownership had greatly intensified, when legislators in both Oregon and Washington permitted the establishment of public utility districts, allowing communities to acquire and operate their own electric systems. By the 1940s the federal government had succeeded in breaking up large—for the most part Midwestern and Eastern—holding companies that had gained control of most of the region's investor-owned companies.

Though not the earliest to harness the immense power potential of the Columbia—the river holds 40 percent of the nation's potential for hydroelectric

³³³Charlotte Mish file.

generation—the first large-scale projects built were Bonneville, bridging Oregon and Washington east of Portland, and Grand Coulee, in Central Washington. Bonneville was constructed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers and began operation in 1938. Increased demand saw the erection by the federal government of four other dams on the Columbia by 1968 and others on the Willamette and its tributaries. The federal Rural Electrification Administration prompted the spread of electricity in the countryside in the late 1930s. After significant debate over the marketing of Columbia River power, the Bonneville Power Administration was established in 1937. In 1983, Congress passed the Pacific Northwest Power Planning and Conservation Act, which encouraged conservation and guaranteed power to private utilities.³³⁴ Since the turn of the century, private utilities engaged in building dams on Oregon streams and sold power to each other and the B.P.A. through power exchange agreements and programs like the Northwest Power Pool.

Throughout the century, phrases used to characterize the hydroelectric industry frequently call upon utopian imagery, including biblical images of hope. The idea of illuminating Eden is a central component of Portland General Electric, which early on identified itself with the notion to gain association with the history,

³³⁴Information about history of hydroelectric industry from Schwantes, The Pacific Northwest, pp. 308-09; Gordon B. Dodds, The American Northwest: A History of Oregon and Washington (Arlington Heights, IL: The Forum Press, 1986), pp. 347-349; and Craig Wollner, Electrifying Eden: Portland General Electric, 1889-1965 (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1990).

development, and prosperity of Portland and the Northwest.³³⁵ The glimmering nighttime view of the Lewis and Clark Exposition—as an early example of twentieth-century technological sublime—demonstrates this (see Figure 22). A popular souvenir brochure describes the view of illuminated buildings: “Artistic spires, magnificent domes, terraced entrances, classic porticos, and triumphal arches scintillating with myriads of electric lights, a city of treasures, a Fairyland of palaces, representing History, Science and Art. A marvelous example of western push and enterprise.”³³⁶ The pioneering private utility took ready credit for the sight when it reported to its constituents that the effect was “a marvelous twentieth-century picture,” and explained that it was “a striking object lesson of the tremendous resources of Portland General Electric Company . . . [and] a demonstration of the absolute reliability of the service.”³³⁷

Our Promised Land is the title of Richard Neuberger’s book about the Pacific Northwest. In addition to describing influential personalities and alluding to the need for conservation, Neuberger uses it as a forum to advocate the benefits that the New Deal could bestow on the region and for his vision for the future. This included the establishment of massive hydroelectric dams and irrigation

³³⁵Wollner, p. xvii.

³³⁶“Main Terrace at Night,” 180 Glimpses of the Lewis and Clark Exposition, Portland, Oregon, and the Golden West (Portland: Woodard Clark, 1905).

³³⁷Quoted in Wollner, p. 52.



Fig. 22. Lewis and Clark Exposition at night with lights reflecting on lake.
(OHS neg. OrHi 56808)

projects that would draw impoverished Midwestern farmers to a new land of milk and honey.³³⁸

Throughout the book, Neuberger repeatedly refers to President Franklin D. Roosevelt's characterization of the Northwest as a "promised land."³³⁹ Wesley Arden Dick explains in his 1973 dissertation, "Visions of Abundance," that "Questions relating to ownership and control of the electrical industry were central to the 1932 presidential election. A part of Roosevelt's appeal stemmed from his stand on power." He goes on to say, "In certain areas, notably the Pacific Northwest, it was clear that after 1930 the power issue would remain in the eye of the political hurricane."³⁴⁰ For F.D.R., electricity was a force behind democracy. Through the improvements in education, opportunities, and lifestyle that it could provide, a better balance among the citizenry—urban and rural, rich and poor—could be achieved.³⁴¹

A person who influenced F.D.R.'s ideas about public power and who is credited with inspiring his adoption of the term "new deal," was Stuart Chase, a powerful social critic of the 1930s. In his April 1933 Fortune magazine article, "A Vision in Kilowatts," Chase foretells a future with electricity. Prefacing his

³³⁸Richard L. Neuberger, Our Promised Land (New York: Macmillan, 1938; reprint ed. Moscow: University of Idaho, 1989), pp. 34-60, 86-122.

³³⁹Neuberger, Our Promised Land, 32.

³⁴⁰Wesley Arden Dick, "Visions of Abundance: The Public Power Crusade in the Pacific Northwest in the Era of J. D. Ross and the New Deal" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 1973), p. 4.

³⁴¹*Ibid.*, pp. 21, 25.

comments with the words “it promises a world replete with more freedom and happiness than mankind has ever known,” he goes on to list eighteen benefits of electric power, including decreased polarization between urban and rural occupations; the replacement of the “human robot” with the more desirable dial watcher, inspector, and switch thrower; and a new regionalism based on power stations. In conclusion, he states: “Electricity can give us universally high standards of living, new and amusing kinds of jobs, leisure, freedom, an end to drudgery, congestion, noise, smoke and filth.” The sole accompanying illustration in the text is a multi-armed, Vishnu-like housewife called Handy Annie. Standing before a technologically sublime landscape of waterfalls, mountains, and powerlines, her pose and an accompanying text imply that more tasks mean less work.³⁴²

In contrast to Handy Annie is an Oregon work of art that lies not in the tradition of the technological sublime, but which speaks to the advent of its regional development. Presented to F.D.R. as a gift, Clyde Leon Keller’s Site of Bonneville Dam depicts its subject on the eve of the great structure’s construction. Its whereabouts currently unknown, the work brings to mind the biblical imagery of powers that transform a wilderness into a “paradise.” “My best by a dam(n) site,” joked Keller.³⁴³

³⁴²Stuart Chase, “A Vision in Kilowatts,” Fortune, April 1933, pp. 35-36, 102-10.

³⁴³Louise Aaron, “Painting Works Like Tonic for Tired Women and Men,” Portland Oregonian, 1 October 1951, p. 1.

Architect Pietro Belluschi created a tribute to the power industry in 1928. Responsible for designing the lobby of Albert Doyle's new Public Service Building in Portland, Belluschi included artful renditions associated with the building's original two occupants, Pacific Gas and Coke Company and Northwest Light and Power Company. Distributed in a grid pattern on the brass faces of the three elevator doors are images of a hydroelectric plant, a gas plant, and the sun.³⁴⁴

In 1934, Fred Lockley, fabled recorder of pioneer anecdotes, with his fellow Journal editor, Marshall Dana, wrote a book in which they included the following articulation of the inheritance of Oregon's industrial utopia from its heroic past: "The hegira of the Covered Wagon poured over the continental divide and down into the western valleys with a human power to match that of the Columbia's own."³⁴⁵ "The dreams of the pioneers," continued Lockley and Dana, "are the realizations of today and the realizations of today belong to the dreams of tomorrow. The new Oregon Trail leads to new frontiers of developed resources and explored capacity. It is a great and a thrilling invitation to move on, and on."³⁴⁶

³⁴⁴Felicity Musick, "The Development of the Pacific Building and the Public Service Building," Final Intern Project, 1976, Rare Books (Oregon Historical Society Library, Portland), pp. 7-8.

³⁴⁵Fred Lockley, and Marshall Dana, More Power to You (Portland: Oregon Journal, 1934), p. 65.

³⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 111-112.

Perhaps the best artistic response to the building of Bonneville Dam was not visual, but musical. Woody Guthrie's 1941 "Bonneville Dam" describes the drawing power of the great weir:

Back in nineteen thirty-three
Old dust storms was a killin' me.

Nineteen hundred thirty four
Dust had rose and blow'd some more.

Nineteen hundred thirty five
Figgered I was lucky just to be alive.

Nineteen hundred thirty six
Me and my wife in a hell'va fix.

Nineteen hundred thirty nine
Fanned our tails to the Oregon line.

Now there ain't no country extra fine
If you're just a mile from the end of the line.
You're just a mile from the end of the line,
You're just a mile from the end of the line.

My eyes is crossed, my back is cramped,
Tryin' to read the Bible by coal oil lamp.

I'll turn my stone and till my land,
Waitin' for the big Bonneville Dam.

That Bonneville Dam is a sight to see,
Makes that e-lec-a-tri-ci-ty,
E-lec-a, e-lec-a, e-lec-a-tri-ci-ty,
Makes that e-lec-a-tri-ci-ty.³⁴⁷

Since the 1930s, a variety of artists have responded to the awesome power of hydroelectric dams, each providing a glimpse of their era's perspective

³⁴⁷Quoted in Dick, pp. 159-160.

on the industry. Hal Bishop, a commercial artist who retired in Medford in the early 1940s, became active in the area as a muralist. He depicted a wide variety of subjects in local businesses and founded the Southern Oregon Society of Artists.³⁴⁸ A series of massive paintings by Bishop, depicting subjects related to the hydroelectric industry, grace the walls of the Pacific Power and Light Service Center buildings in Medford. With scenes of dams, power houses, transmission lines in the forest, and other related technology, none of the pieces show equipment developed after the 1940s. Found in former California and Oregon Power Company facilities throughout Southern Oregon and Northern California, Bishop's power subjects are a reminder of the energetic growth that occurred in the industry at mid-century.

The story of the Metropolitan Arts Commission's first work commissioned under its Art in Public Places program is an account of contrasting attitudes, not only toward the power industry, but also toward art. Jon Masterson's 13-foot-wide painting, Columbia, was created for the Portland Water Building in the early 1970s. Its three panels, which include a view of the landscape reflected on a porcelain insulator and another, shown late in the day, of the Columbia River reflected on the Goodyear Blimp, were not what the City had in mind to express the idea of water. To the dismay of the arts commission, City

³⁴⁸Interview of Dolores Schwalb, former apprentice to Hal Bishop, 9 December 1994.

Commissioner Francis Ivancie had the work placed in storage after just two years.³⁴⁹ In 1993, it was hung on the fourth floor of the Public Service Building, home of Pacific Power and Light's Pacificorp, only to be removed again a year later to Portland's City Hall.

A sizeable amount of art created in the late 1980s coincides with the fiftieth anniversary of the hydroelectric projects of the 1930s and 1940s. BPA and the Struggle for Power at Cost is the title of a 7.3 meter by 1.5 meter cotton, wool, and linen tapestry woven by Swedish-born Cecilia Blomberg in 1987 for the Bonneville Power Administration headquarters in Portland. Created for the anniversary, its name was taken from a published history of the same title. Divided by the triangular shapes of a steel transmission tower, it depicts images selected from hundreds of photographs. Subjects include the introduction of electricity to the Pacific Northwest in 1880; a campaigning F. D. R. in 1932 Portland; the creation of the B.P.A.; Woody Guthrie; the inundation of the ancient fishing grounds at Celilo Falls; rural electrification; Trojan nuclear power plant; and the shift to greater reliance on conservation.

George Johanson takes a similar approach to recognizing the anniversary in his 1988 Northwest Power. Not restricted by the desires of a private commission, Johanson portrays a wider range of subjects in his three-panel work, consistent with his philosophy that "painting should speak of something broader

³⁴⁹Sayre, "The State of the Art," pp. 33-34.

than itself.”³⁵⁰ Images include: Thor (Norse God of thunder); Lewis & Clark Exposition; Fishing at Celilo Falls; Woody Guthrie and F.D.R.; the flags of Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, and British Columbia; and a lighthouse.

About the relationship between his art and history, Johanson explains:

I’m just so aware of living in time and having a past and being able to remember things. Those memories are often with me What I’ve tried to do is formalize this awareness somewhat by giving that ‘time quality’ some kind of visual experience.³⁵¹

By the time the 50th anniversary of the massive hydroelectric projects of the 1930s and 1940s had taken place, the business of power, like other Pacific Northwest industries, including fishing and timber, had experienced its share of challenges. The financial failure of the Washington Public Power Supply System, the closures of the Trojan and Hanford nuclear plants, a prolonged drought, and increasing public concern over the survival of the Pacific salmon have contributed to a periodic tarnishing of the industry’s image. Whether it is intended for self-assurance or public enlightenment, a painting in Portland’s Public Service Building indicates that the utopian dream is still alive. Mounted on the wall of a small second-floor conference area is a sentimental 1990 work by Charlie Blank. The untitled canvas depicts a large hydroelectric project on the left, serving as a backdrop for the figures of laborers. To the right sits a mother cradling her

³⁵⁰Jane Van Cleve, “A Conversation with George Johanson,” Stepping Out, Fall 1981, p. 51.

³⁵¹Ibid., p. 52.

young child in her arms, their lives illumined by the light of a lamp charged by powerlines connected to an immense dam.

The Environmental Utopia:
Ecotopia and Dystopia

On February 14, 1983, a special event highlighted the traditional Statehood Day ceremony held at the Oregon Capitol. In attendance were governors, politicians, journalists, and average citizens. The occasion was the unveiling of an 84" by 70½" portrait of Tom McCall by Henk Pander (see Figure 23). The painting, executed in Pander's characteristic surrealism, is dominated by the towering figure of the ex-governor standing on the beach at Cape Meares, framed by surveying equipment and a wave-worn tree stump. A helicopter in the distance symbolizes the intrusion of civilization on the natural world.³⁵² Pander called the governor's measuring of the shoreline in 1967 an act of triumphal grandeur. For the artist, the painting represents McCall's "standing up for the environment and preserving the landscape."³⁵³

Tom McCall breathed new life into the term "livability." His many legislative and personal efforts to curb pollution and population growth made him the symbol of late twentieth-century environmentalism for many Oregonians.

³⁵²Interview of Henk Pander, Oregon artist, 2 March 1995.

³⁵³Henry Willis, "The McCall Painting," Eugene (Ore.) Register-Guard, 10 February 1983, sec. D, p. 3; Ann Sullivan, "Portrait Conveys Warmth," Portland Oregonian, n.d., Henk Pander file, vertical files (Oregon Historical Society Library, Portland); and Tom McCall portrait dedication brochure, Henk Pander file, vertical files (Oregon Historical Society Library, Portland).

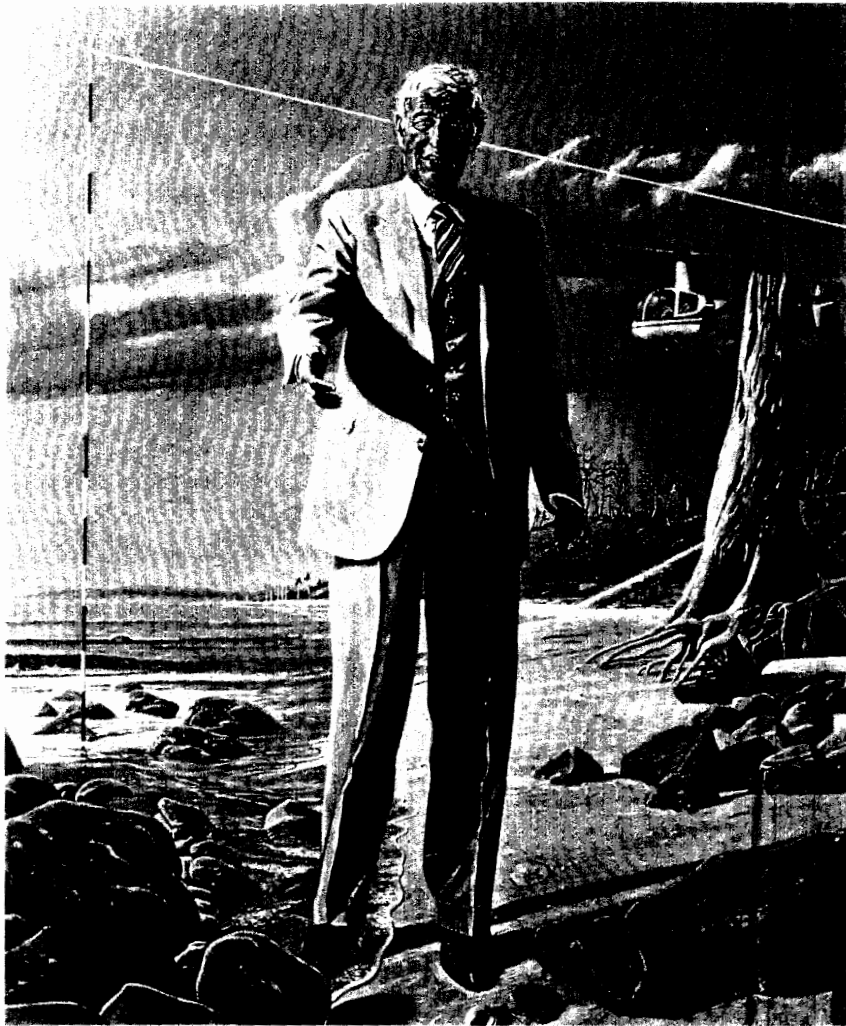


Fig. 23. Henk Pander. Tom McCall. 1982. Oil on canvas. State Capitol, Salem, Oregon (OHS neg. OrHi 91185)

Tom McCall caught the wave of a change in attitude about how Oregonians viewed natural resources and the environment that began after World War II.

A rise in the tide of regional pride set the stage for this reorientation. In the 1960s, the time-honored, open-door policy of boosterism was challenged by those who wanted to check population growth and the environmental stress that accompanies it. By the 1990s, political debate over threatened species thrust regional environmental issues into the center of national debate. The artistic evidence demonstrates the evolution in sentiment toward these issues—from heightened awareness of Oregon's irreplaceable resources, to disturbing forecasts of what the state could become.

A contemporary of Tom McCall's who played a part in raising public awareness about environmental issues by capturing images of pristine Oregon spaces was Ray Atkeson. In 1968, Atkeson published a ground-breaking collection of photographs in a book called Oregon. Setting a standard for single-photographer, "coffee table"-type essays, the work touted the state's beauty and livability. He confided in later years that restricting immigration was an opinion "Governor McCall and I didn't see eye to eye on, . . . because that's the way I came."³⁵⁴

Oregon was followed by other popular books, including: Oregon II, Oregon III, Oregon Coast, and Cascade Range. Filled with iconographic

³⁵⁴Quoted in Nancy Woods, "An Eye for Beauty," Oregon Magazine, October–November 1987, p. 36.

images—like Mt. Hood reflected in Lost Lake, a wave-swept Cape Kiwanda, and the rainbow-colored Painted Hills—that have come to define Oregon to the world, the works served to further the state’s reputation as a preserve of sublime beauty and a mecca of outdoor recreation. Most of all, they heightened regional and national awareness of Oregon as a place of fragile wonderment.

The text in Oregon touted the state’s livability and scenic grandeur, prefaced by a reminder of its pioneer heritage. His 1972 Oregon Coast, however, contained references to the changes wreaked on the local environment by development and irresponsible land use. Characteristic is his estimation of tree-lined transportation corridors: “The illusion is lessened by the ‘see-through’ character of some corridors which permit screened views of the destruction that lies beyond.”³⁵⁵ Towards the end of the collection’s preface, Atkeson expresses the hope that residents and visitors “will strive to improve the environment which some have so thoughtlessly helped to destroy.” He then concludes with: “Perhaps this book and its photos . . . will cause more people to take a second look at the treasure we have. It is ours to improve and protect for the future.”³⁵⁶

In his article, “Ansel Adams: The Role of the Artist in the Environmental Movement,” Robert Turnage describes the impact of Adams—a friend of

³⁵⁵Ray Atkeson, Preface, Oregon Coast (Portland: Charles G. Belding, 1972).

³⁵⁶Ibid.

Atkeson—in raising environmental awareness: “Through his photographs he has touched countless people with a sense of . . . mystique and a realization of the importance of preserving the last remaining wilderness lands.”³⁵⁷ Shortly before Atkeson’s death in May of 1990, a local reporter articulated his similar significance for Oregon: “His photographs of Oregon helped define us to the rest of the nation.”³⁵⁸ Tom McCall and Ray Atkeson ensured that that definition included the state being a bastion of environmental concern.

In the late 1970s, a name was given to Oregon and the Pacific Northwest that defined it as an environmental paradise. Originating with the title of Ernest Callenbach’s 1975 novel about the secession of the region for ecological reasons, and fixed into the popular mind by Joel Garreau’s 1981 study, The Nine Nations of North America, “Ecotopia” has served to inform the region’s identity into the 1990s. In his discussion on how “it’s working,” Garreau points to Oregon as a model, citing the cleanup of the Willamette River, the first Department of Energy, the first U.S. bottle bill, stringent standards on siting thermal power plants, tax credits for alternative energy installations, legal incentives for conserving energy, and a ban on the storage of nuclear waste—elements also cited by the general

³⁵⁷Robert Turnage, “Ansel Adams: The Role of the Artist in the Environmental Movement,” The Living Wilderness 43 (March 1980):4.

³⁵⁸Gail Dana, “Exposing the Image of Atkeson and His Art,” Portland (Ore.) This Week, 2 May 1990, p. 4.

public as evidence of Ecotopia.³⁵⁹ He points to the region's tradition of education, lack of diverse industry, and relatively long—for the West—history of European settlement and isolation as factors leading to the creation of such a society. Garreau maintains that when a “quality-of-life revolution” took hold in the 1960s—“the decade of rethinking”—Ecotopia was able to assimilate “environmental thinking when it became popular.”³⁶⁰ Almost fifteen years after Garreau's study, regardless of some of his assertions, it is easy to see how the artistic evidence confirms this aspect of the state's identity.

Since the publication of Oregon in the late 1960s, a number of photographers, including his stepson and protege, Rick Shafer, have emulated Ray Atkeson, each placing greater emphasis on the relationship of their art to environmental concerns. One such photographer is Steve Terrill, whom Atkeson held in great admiration, and who was once suggested as possible heir apparent as premier image-maker of Oregon's wilderness.³⁶¹ In the forward to his own published photo essay, Oregon, Terrill states, “Perhaps these images will awaken in you a deeper appreciation of wilderness, which you will pass on to others. For

³⁵⁹Joel Garreau, The Nine Nations of North America (New York: Avon Books, 1981), p. 252.

³⁶⁰*Ibid.*, p. 261.

³⁶¹Woods, p. 38.

if we do not take steps now to protect our wilderness heritage, these pages may someday comprise a book of memories of what once was.”³⁶²

The book’s introductory remarks also include statements by leading regional environmentalists. John Daniels’ forward echoes Roderick Nash’s recollection of the early European definition of “wilderness” as related to “wildness.” In the rhetoric of the sublime, Daniels also invites readers to “dance” to the “ancient rhythms” of the wilderness, “in which, in our small way, we belong.”³⁶³ Terrill follows with his reactions to wilderness experiences as depicted in the photographs. Under the heading of “Trees,” he includes:

As I look around this living cathedral, I see death and rebirth: fallen trees whose rotting trunks and branches give life to young seedlings. . . . I am at peace here in this enchanted wood, wondering how many more secrets man can unlock from these mystic giants.³⁶⁴

Like Atkeson and his successors, Terrill’s photographs, as well as his environmentalist sentiments, gain wider public exposure through widely-sold calendars each year.

By the late 1980s the utopian definition of Oregon as a place possessing a pristine yet threatened environment evolved beyond appealing to the public’s sense of responsibility or nostalgia to moralizing and near-religious ritual. Lt. Col. Bill Miller, a pilot with the Idaho National Guard, had a direct encounter with this

³⁶²Steve Terrill, Oregon (Englewood, Colorado: Westcliffe Publishers, 1991), p. 17.

³⁶³Ibid, p. 10.

³⁶⁴Ibid., p. 95.

trend on August 10, 1991, while making a routine flight over southeastern Oregon's Alvord Desert. Sighting a strange formation etched on the desert floor, he returned four days later and captured a photograph. Identified as a Hindu meditation device, known as a Shri Yantra, its strange location and the geometric perfection of its execution soon sparked rumors associating it with Easter Island and Stonehenge.

Not long after, Bill Witherspoon, an artist from Iowa, divulged that the creation was his own. The Shri Yantra symbolizes the intersection of the spiritual world with that of the material.³⁶⁵ In the tradition of other earth art, like Robert Smithson's 1970 Spiral Jetty, in Utah, and ancient precedents, like the Indian "Medicine Wheel" in northern Wyoming or Egypt's pyramids, such works are meant to "give the impression of transcendence through nature."³⁶⁶

Witherspoon's approach to his artwork in the Oregon desert is an example of the combining of environmental and spiritual theories: "It is my experience that when we honor or give attention to deep laws of nature, we enliven those laws of nature in ourselves and in our environment. This I believe suggests a role for art as a transformative technology which can assist in restoring an integrated and

³⁶⁵Michael O'Reilly, "The Meaning and Artistic Merit of the Shriyantra Symbol in the Southeastern Oregon Desert," Oregon Humanities (Winter 1991):32.

³⁶⁶*Ibid.*, p. 31.

harmonious relationship between humankind and nature.”³⁶⁷ By 1992, Bill Witherspoon had created four works of earth art in southeast Oregon.

On May 16, 1993, an event took place near Goldendale, Washington, that was billed as “a day-long celebration of reverence for the Earth.” At an open area overlooking the Columbia River Gorge, 500 to 1,000 people stood with mirrors at assigned locations to create a giant sun-reflecting Earth Goddess. Designed by artist Laura Merrell and organized by the Portland-based organization Earth Goddess I, the objective was to bring together “environmental activism and spirituality, Native American wisdom, the New Physics, and the immediacy of personal and collective participation.” After the event, participants put away their mirrors, shed their “earth-friendly” shoes, and attended presentations by “multi-cultural speakers and performing artists.”³⁶⁸

On the grounds of Breitenbush Hot Springs, in the Cascades east of Salem, stands the Endangered Species Totem Pole. Breitenbush is the home of the Breitenbush Retreat Center and Breitenbush Community, which advocates, “We are alive to our relationship with the land and waters—how nature nurtures us as we work consciously to care for her.”³⁶⁹ Carved by native American artist Paul Red Crow in 1986, the totem pole’s Northwest Coast motifs depict an

³⁶⁷Bill Witherspoon, Chetwynd Stapylton Gallery artist’s statement, October 1993 (Portland, Oregon).

³⁶⁸Earth Goddess I, pamphlet (Portland, Oregon: Earth Goddess I, 1993).

³⁶⁹“For Openers,” Breitenbush Newsletter and Catalogue, Summer 1993, p. 2.

eagle above a wolverine above a grizzly bear holding a salmon. Erected in response to logging, it is described as a “prayer for the return of the salmon and other displaced species.”³⁷⁰ This interesting work of art is an example of the embracing of native American spiritual traditions by elements of the environmentalist community.

Creating from a perspective within the native American community, Susan Santos takes another approach. Santos, of Yakima, Tygh Nation, and Filipina heritage, hails from a matrilineal fishing society whose home is on the Deschutes River. As an artist who works in a variety of media, her work reflects her spiritual and political concerns relating to indigenous fishing rights and environmental issues. She helped found the Sacred Earth Coalition in 1987—an organization dedicated to protecting native American sacred lands.³⁷¹ In “Changing Plateaus,” a March 1994 exhibition at Portland Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center, could be found her Life After Death. Depicted in reds and blues, an embryo-like form recalls similar themes of regeneration repeated in the art and words of artists like Frank Boyden and Steve Terrill. In the center of the gallery was placed an asymmetrical pottery vessel containing a candle. Reflecting on its symbolism of hope, Santos states, “Coming from indigenous people, we’re

³⁷⁰“The Visitation,” Breitenbush Newsletter and Catalog, Summer 1993, p. 24.

³⁷¹Susan Santos, biographical statement, Susan Santos file, Register of Oregon Art supplemental files, Oregon Historical Society Museum, Portland.

supposed to look ahead seven generations If we can protect our ecosystem and our water, we'll be here."³⁷²

Examples such as Earth Goddess I, the Endangered Species Totem Pole, and works by Witherspoon and Santos indicate a trend in Oregon utopian art that is similar to issues identified by Barbara Matilsky in her study Fragile Ecology: Contemporary Artists' Interpretations and Solutions. By overlaying environmental history with art history, Matilsky identifies a correlation between changes in the physical environment and new art forms and images. Examples she cites include: hunter-gatherer emphasis on animals; the introduction of landscape painting during the evolution of agriculture; and the flourishing of landscape painting in the wake of the Industrial Revolution. Until recently, she claims, the connection between art and ritual was central to responding to cultures' need to affirm their connection to the natural world. She goes on to maintain that the environmental awareness of the late twentieth century is prompting a return to this tradition.³⁷³

In The Reenchantment of Art, Suzi Gablik elaborates on the steps that many late twentieth-century artists are taking toward focusing on issues relating to society, spirituality, and the environment. Gablik speaks of the need to develop a framework for a socially and ecologically grounded art—a task, she maintains, that cannot be accomplished until profit-making motives and the “myth of art-for-

³⁷²Quoted in Mary McDonald-Lewis, “Balancing Act,” Portland Oregonian, 25 March 1994, sec. D, p. 2.

³⁷³Barbara C. Matilsky, Fragile Ecology: Contemporary Artists' Interpretations and Solutions, (New York: Rizzoli, 1992), pp. 3, 6.

art's sake" is overcome.³⁷⁴ "The effectiveness of art," asserts Gablik, "needs to be judged by how well it overturns the perception of the world that we have been taught, which has set our whole society on a course of biospheric destruction."³⁷⁵ Bringing to mind a number of Oregon artists whose primary concern is to express the importance of preserving the environment, Gablik articulates the idea that the earth should be viewed not as a commodity, but as a source of spiritual renewal.³⁷⁶

When it comes to focusing on caring for the environment, the distinction between images that draw attention to nature and those that respond to the human impact on the environment can become blurred. Whereas views of untouched nature are intended to renew the spirit and the salmon is often used as a spiritual metaphor for life, the tree is frequently employed to raise awareness about the environment. One subject is a vehicle for inspiring hope and the other is a tool for preserving hope. Works that incorporate trees in order to direct attention to ecological issues fall under the category of interaction with the Oregon environment since they are statements about humanity's role in the survival of that environment. The tree, like the salmon, has become an iconographic symbol.

³⁷⁴Suzi Gablik, The Reenchantment of Art (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1991), p. 139.

³⁷⁵*Ibid.*, p. 27.

³⁷⁶*Ibid.*, p. 77.

The popular utopian term, “ancient forests,” was a deliberate invention that emerged out of this cultural climate. The answer of the Oregon Natural Resources Council (O.N.R.C.) as to how to get people excited about the issue of saving old-growth forests was to begin by coming up with a name for the ecosystem. “Old-growth” was a jargon term developed by forestry scientists, which is not totally precise and which lacked any sense of mystique. “Primeval” was vague and connotated negativity by sounding similar to “evil.” James Montieth, executive director of O.N.R.C., suggested “ancient forest.” The name stuck because of its ability to associate the trees with an era that was older than the timber industry and even the country itself, recalling “the columns of an ancient ruin.” What finally secured the term was the ease with which the two-word phrase could be uttered.³⁷⁷

A synthesis of the environmental and recreational utopias is found in the recent popularity of eco-tourism in the state. Responding to a growing international awareness of the region’s old-growth forests, and concern over environmental issues in general, eco-tourism ranges from traditional outings in the wild to contracted guides who point out the complexity of various eco-

³⁷⁷William Dietrich, The Final Forest: The Battle for the Last Great Trees of the Pacific Northwest (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992), pp. 210-211.

systems.³⁷⁸ An attempt to provide new, environment-friendly options for tourists, this new business capitalizes on the region's reputation as Ecotopia.

When the subject of trees is taken up in Oregon utopian art that focuses on the environment, it is often done so by concentrating on one or a small number of trees, as if to provide a personal experience with the plant. Such occurrences are frequently associated with what Robert Rosenblum identifies as the notion of the "pathetic fallacy," a term coined by nineteenth-century aesthete, John Ruskin, to denote the attribution of human feelings to non-human objects.³⁷⁹ Numerous Oregon artists have produced works of art that mix arboreal and human characteristics, testifying to the intimate association Oregonians have with trees. The catalogue of the Oregon Centennial Painting Exhibition, which included an entire category called "trees," recalls this idea: ". . . man and tree alike are bent and shaped by the world in which they live."³⁸⁰

Titan-like qualities characterize trees that dominate the five panels that make up Robert Dozono's 1991 Trees in My Backyard. Beheld from below, the towering plants bring to mind an arboreal Gulliver as they dwarf the viewer by

³⁷⁸For examples of entrepreneurs in this field, see: Jeff Kuechle, "Eco Tours: A Greener Way to Go," Portland (Ore.) This Week Magazine, 20 April 1994, pp. 6-7; Bill Monroe, "Into the Big Trees," Portland Oregonian, 2 September 1993, Outdoors sec., p. 6; and Bill Monroe, "Old-growth Forests Enjoy World Renown," Portland Oregonian, 2 September 1993, Outdoors sec., p. 7.

³⁷⁹Robert Rosenblum, Modern Painting and the Northern Romantic Tradition: Friedrich to Rothko (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), p. 36.

³⁸⁰The Oregon Scene, p. 23.

their immensity and serve as a reminder of humankind's place in the natural world. Dozono, an art instructor at Portland Community College, created the work as an attempt to deal with current forest issues and to express his concern about the environment.³⁸¹

Michael Brophy's paintings, many of which include portrait-like representations of trees, are inspired by the peculiar state of affairs that is fostered by wide-ranging public attitudes toward old-growth forests and the environment in general. Describing his art as concerning "the interaction of social reality and nature," Brophy creates works that evidence a synthesis of humor and poignancy not unlike the image of a lighthearted ecotourist encountering an expanse of clearcut.³⁸²

Like Robert Denny, Brophy claims to approach his work from a standpoint of neutrality—"All I'm saying is, 'Look around. These things are here.'"³⁸³ Denouncing any political agenda, he states "I don't want to say these are good guys, these are bad guys. It's too complex for that."³⁸⁴ His words are substantiated by the fact that his paintings are admired by ardent environmentalists, as well as people with strong ties to the timber industry.

³⁸¹Interview of Robert Dozono, Blackfish Gallery, 27 September 1993.

³⁸²"WESTAF Regional Fellowships in Painting," OAC News (Fall 1990):4.

³⁸³Randy Gragg, "Tree Toppler," Portland Oregonian, 21 June 1992, sec. P, p. 3.

³⁸⁴Kassandra Kelly Stirling, "Artist at Work," Portland (Ore.) Downtowner, 18 May 1992, p. 16.

Where Brophy and Denny differ is the background from which each approaches his subjects—Brophy receives his inspiration, in part, from his childhood upbringing near Portland's Forest Park, whereas Denny's includes his involvement in the Forest Service. Frequently venturing into the realm of the surreal, Brophy's paintings include such varied subjects as perplexed loggers and flying chain saws that are reminiscent of mosquitos.

An example of Brophy's ability to combine whimsy with social commentary is his 1993 Spring, in which he uses a utopian setting to address the sobriety of humankind's current environmental quandary (see Figure 24). On a grassy hilltop sits a man showered by a rain of yellow blossoms. The surrounding terrain is a mix of greens denoting meadows and forests. This edenic scene is disturbed by the dismal purple and browns which mark the man's entire form and tint a lightly overcast sky. Not entirely alone, the man is kept company by a single slender stump which is colored by the same hues—the base of which extends below the picture frame, as likely to be planted in the viewer's space as in the man's. As he stares at the stump, the man appears to contemplate his own existence.

On the grounds of the Oregon Convention Center in Portland sets a conspicuous-looking sculpture. Meant to introduce an urban audience to the intricacies and implications of a nurse log—the very term associated with human attributes—Buster Simpson's 1991 Host Analog is reminiscent of the broken sections of a fallen Greek column (see Figure 25). Planted by Simpson and kept



Fig. 24. Michael Brophy. Spring. 1993. Oil on canvas. Microsoft Corporation, Seattle, Washington (Laura Russo Gallery photograph)

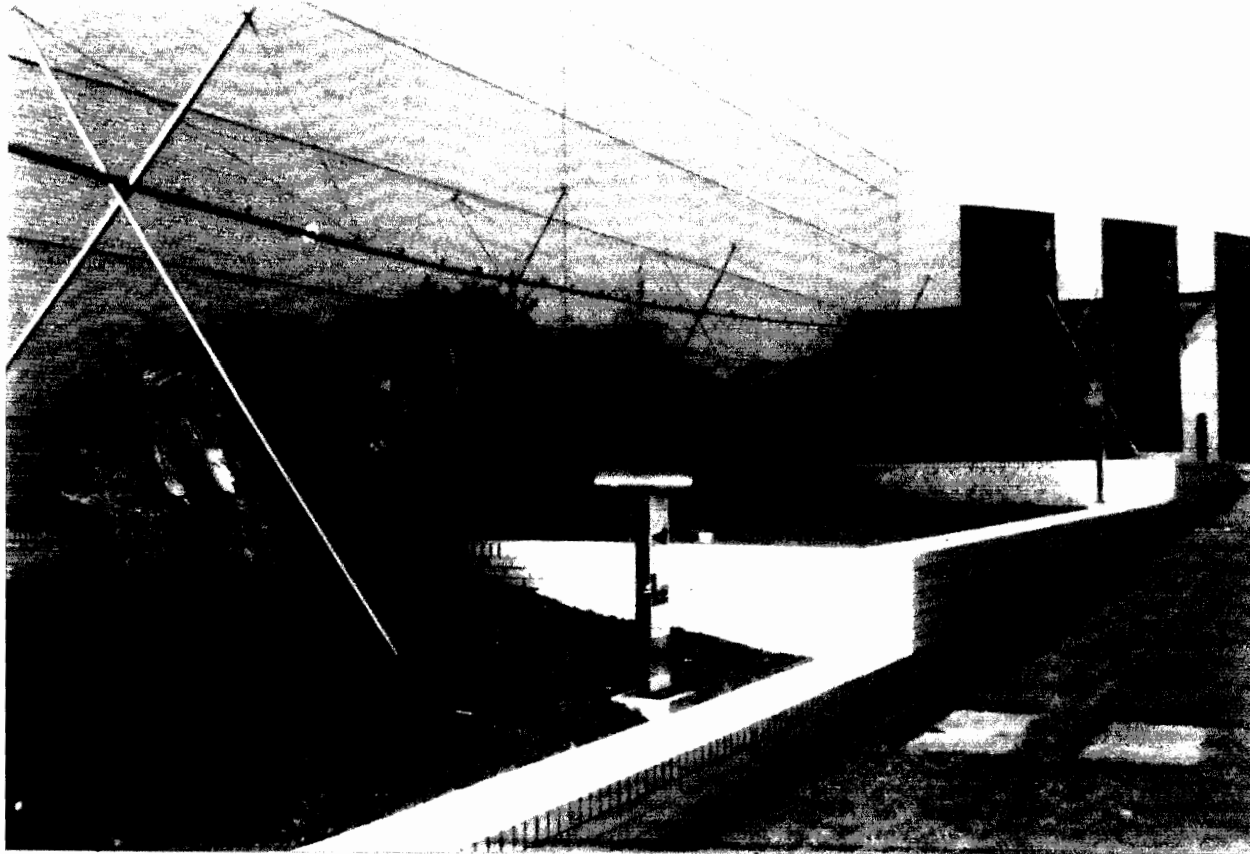


Fig. 25. Buster Simpson. Host Analog. 1991. Douglas fir and watering system. Oregon Convention Center, Portland, Oregon (Photograph by Jeffrey Uecker)

moist by a misting system, the intention is for the large pieces of wood to begin sprouting new trees in two decades and become an ancient forest in 500 years. On an adjacent label, Simpson explains, “this piece is about real time, accommodating landscape which hosts the notion of metaphorical history and the measurement of time with concurrent events which affect the host log’s regeneration.”³⁸⁵

As with other late century utopian pieces, regeneration, in the context of human transience, is the core idea in Simpson’s work. Describing Host Analog as an example of art that is intentionally set within an urban context in order to “revitalize the city by introducing nature into its infrastructure,” Barbara Matilsky views Simpson’s piece as a message of hope about responsible stewardship of the environment.³⁸⁶

Just as stewardship is a key component in Simpson’s work, so it is the central message in David Strong’s 1992 sculpture. Strong’s Stewardship, located at the Western Forestry Center’s Merlo Hall, depicts a five-foot diameter glass globe resting on the fingers of an outstretched three-foot bronze hand, mounted on a marble base. The message of the piece, “that we must steward carefully our

³⁸⁵Buster Simpson, label for Host Analog (Oregon Convention Center, Portland).

³⁸⁶Matilsky, pp. 57, 96.

planet and its forests,” is made even more poignant by the impression of a nearly impossible achievement as indicated by the strained fingers.³⁸⁷

A work that focuses less on instruction and more on warning was situated at the entrance of a December 1993 show in Portland’s Blackfish Gallery. Forming a corridor, log-like sticks were suspended from the ceiling in a manner to suggest that they were hanging from a noose. At the end of this gauntlet sat a massive wood table made of 325-year-old cedar. The sticks are actually forest-choking ivy from Portland’s First Congregational Church, and the table, an altar, designed by famed Portland architect Pietro Belluschi and first used in the nearby St. Thomas More Church. The piece, titled Dominion Altar, is the creation of Gerhard Pagenstecher. Replete with symbolism, it is meant to suggest the destructive power of a Western world view on the environment.

The show, *A Celebration of the Forest Behind My House*, was a cooperative effort coordinated by artist Julia Stoel, and included the work of eight other artists. The name of the installation referred to the threatened Yale Valley woods to the rear of Stoel’s home in Clark County, Washington, and each artist expressed his or her reaction to regional forest and logging issues. With the objective of going from expressing “the spiritual quality of that [Yale Valley] forest to the spiritual quality of forests in general,” Stoel began the project by

³⁸⁷World Forestry Center, press release on David Strong’s Stewardship, 28 January 1992 (World Forestry Center, Portland, Oregon).

asking herself, "Should one make art so viable about a forest, consensus would emerge to save the forest?"³⁸⁸

Since the late 1980s, art has taken the lead in expressing a curious turn in the debate over environmental issues. As discussion has intensified, negative, often apocalyptic subjects have been summoned to influence public sentiment. Like Oregon utopian art in general, such dystopian art may be classified differently by its creator, even though, as Valerie Fletcher puts it, "their images speak louder."³⁸⁹ In contrast to idealistic utopian art, dystopian images tend to be more confrontational, often attacking traditional utopian themes and frequently focusing on future states in which conditions are worse than the present situation.³⁹⁰ Unlike artists such as Travers, Denny, and the creators of the Japanese American Memorial-Bill of Rights Park, who embrace disturbing subjects as a means of conveying their messages, creators of dystopian art incorporate unsettling images of hopelessness and destruction in order to stimulate thought or action. During the Depression, Farm Security Administration photographs of famine and devastation were created to promote the need for

³⁸⁸Interview of Julia Stoel, Blackfish Gallery, 2 December 1993; and Kevin Francis, "Art," Portland (Ore.) Willamette Week, 23-29 December 1993, p. 41.

³⁸⁹Valerie J. Fletcher, Dreams and Nightmares: Utopian Visions in Modern Art (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1983), p. 138.

³⁹⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 10, 130.

federal programs.³⁹¹ In contrast, late-century dystopian artists often work as individuals or in grass roots efforts and seek no less than cultural transformation.

Despite this apparently millennialist reversal from Eden to Armageddon, however, utopian and dystopian art are two sides of the same coin. Oregon dystopian art often portrays disturbing scenes in order to remind viewers of the precious utopian environment the state could stand to lose. Also, the desire to improve current conditions testifies to a utopian focus in many dystopian works of art.³⁹² When dystopian art is balanced with more optimistic views, one is allowed to “investigate both the darker and lighter paths to the future without accepting the inevitability of each.”³⁹³

A recurring theme in Oregon dystopian art is that of waste management. ORLO's 1993 Promised Landfill exhibition falls within this emerging tradition. In addition to the curious sculpture of a family group featured there, other works were shown that portrayed sobering images of uncontrolled waste accumulation. P.E.T. Cloud, by Susan Adams and Sarah Grimm, consists of a bundle of unrecyclable plastics which hangs from the ceiling like a cloud. Intended to draw attention to inconsistencies in current recycling programs, the piece is accompanied by a letter to manufacturers which the viewer can use to protest production of unrecyclable products.

³⁹¹Park and Markowitz, p. 50.

³⁹²Fletcher, pp. 12, 138.

³⁹³Gablik, p. 27.

Linda Wysong's Gorge Project was exhibited at Promised Landfill in the form of mixed media drawings of seven proposed sites along I-84 in the Columbia Gorge (see Figure 26). Each site consists of large "piers" of garbage, which "memorialize society's refuse carried daily by sleek white trucks marked only 'recycle'."³⁹⁴ Speaking of the power of art to elicit a response, the exhibit's catalogue states "sometimes a better understanding comes from our gut response to physical reality." It continues with a reference to the threatened utopia to which this work seeks to draw attention: ". . . garbage travels every day through the beautiful Columbia Gorge to the golden hills surrounding the Arlington landfill."³⁹⁵

At a distant first glance, Robert Dozono's painting, Dream of a Final Theory: Save Our Home, is a sublime landscape of green and purple hills behind a thicket of rich foliage. Upon closer inspection, the mountains and plants disappear and the forms of fast food trays, plastic jugs, and even a hand-held blow dryer become apparent. The work is a statement about various layers of reality in the landscape and how that serves as a metaphor for human existence.³⁹⁶ Elements such as stickers from environmental organizations add to the irony of the piece and suggest a pairing of the sentiment of landscape painting with that of

³⁹⁴The Promised Landfill.

³⁹⁵Ibid.

³⁹⁶Robert Dozono, "Paintings: Multilayers of Us in Time," 1993 Exhibition gallery statement (Blackfish Gallery, Portland, Oregon).



Fig. 26. Linda Wysong. Gorge Project (Mitchell Point). 1993. Mixed-media drawing. ORLO, Portland, Oregon (Photograph by Jeffry Uecker)

pop-environmentalism.³⁹⁷ Dozono, an avid hiker and fisherman, detests the presence of garbage on his trips into the wild. When confronted with the frustration of not being able to recycle #1 plastic, he decided to incorporate the material into a work about his dilemma. Dream of a Final Theory is Dozono's attempt to deal with what he sees as a more realistic landscape.³⁹⁸

Just as trees dominate much of Oregon's utopian art that focuses on the environment, so they are also a major theme in dystopian art. A popular subject under this heading is stumps. While works like Michael Brophy's Spring point to this from a more neutral perspective, the presence of stumps in dystopian images are frequently in the context of apocalyptic subjects. During the mid-nineteenth century—a time when the clearing of forests for settlement coincided with the rise of a national landscape art—the tree stump was often used as a symbol of the conquest of nature and the advancement of civilization.³⁹⁹ This attitude did not evolve without question. A dilemma was how to reconcile the destruction of a God-given landscape with the march of progress. Barbara Novak points out that the idea of establishing a Garden or rural Paradise became a rationalization for the

³⁹⁷Joel Weinstein, "Landscapes of Litter," Portland Oregonian, 17 September 1993, Arts and Entertainment sec., p. 28.

³⁹⁸Dozono, Interview.

³⁹⁹Nikolai Cikovsky, Jr., "'The Revenge of the Axe': The Meaning of the Tree Stump in 19th Century American Art," The Art Bulletin 61 (December 1979):613-14.

transformation of the wild into the pastoral.⁴⁰⁰ It easily follows that the axe became a symbol of the “American attitude toward nature.”⁴⁰¹

In late twentieth-century Oregon dystopian art, stumps and the means to create them also serve as symbols for the American attitude toward nature. But this time their presence is not celebratory or documentary, but accusatory and premonitory. Periodically the focus is on a single remnant of a tree, as in Gerhard Pagenstecher’s Stumpage: Redefining the Term, a lone old-growth stump situated in Portland’s Pioneer Courthouse Square during the 1990 Festival of Flowers. Its simple presence was described as confronting the public with “beauty, ghastliness, poignancy, and . . . directness.”⁴⁰²

More often stumps are shown distributed across broad expanses. Leslie Enge’s proposed logo for the “Trail Tomorrow” section of the Oregon Historical Society’s 1993 exhibit Trails to Oregon depicts the silhouette of a family standing on a road, as if to embark on a journey. To their right is a lush forest. To their left is a landscape of stumps, above which flies a single bird. The image’s implied symbolism includes a dystopian emphasis on the future and the idea that the choices to be made regarding the environment also affect us as individuals.

⁴⁰⁰Novak, Nature and Culture, p. 158.

⁴⁰¹Hans Huth, Nature and the American: Three Generations of Changing Attitudes (Berkeley: University of California, 1957), p. 2.

⁴⁰²Randy Gragg, “Public Passions,” Portland Oregonian, 21 February 1993, sec. K, p. 5.

A more poignant image is Dennis Cunningham's 1993 Valentine. Created for the Oregon Historical Society's annual Statehood Day—Valentine's Day, February 14th—time capsule project, this linocut shows a map of Oregon surrounded by oil spills, factories, and a fish skeleton. Within the map's borders are found the symbol for the atom, mining equipment, more fish skeletons, and five large stumps dominating the western portion of the state. In the middle of the map is a flaming broken heart that shows a cross on its left side and a question mark on its right. One purpose of the time capsule is to encourage citizens to consider what the world will be like when it is opened twenty years later. With its dystopian focus on the future, which includes a prominent display of the dates 1993/2013, the impact of Cunningham's piece on the people who viewed it before it was put away could only have been strengthened.

An artist who hails not from Oregon, but whose work was featured at a 1992 exhibit at the Oregon School of Arts and Crafts' Hoffman Gallery and who handles a subject integral to Oregon culture, is Jean Lowe. Similar to Dozono's Dream of a Final Theory, the first impression one receives of Lowe's A Dilettante's Conversation on the Topics of Anthropocentrism and Western Consumerism is one of a pleasing environment. In this case it is a living room setting, complete with couch, throw rugs, and picture window. Upon closer inspection, it becomes apparent that Lowe is making a blatant statement about

societal excesses and environmental exploitation. The living room setting is merely a metaphor for larger living spaces and lifestyles.⁴⁰³

The centerpiece of the show is a large mural, called American Jobs/Wooden Nickel, which shows a pristine forest setting surrounded by saw blades, helicopters, loggers, smokestacks, and felled trees. Presented in a baroque arrangement, with trees and machinery serving as borders, the work is at once both pleasing and disturbing. In the spirit of an artist whose dystopian message contains what Valerie Fletcher calls an “inner core of utopian hope,” Lowe explains: “Hopefully I can provoke a consideration of issues people aren’t thinking about, while being both entertaining and amusing. I’m called both pessimistic and idealistic because the message is pessimistic, but I hope the painting can be inspiring.”⁴⁰⁴

Works like Cunningham’s Valentine and Lowe’s American Jobs/Wooden Nickel fall under the heading of what Peter Goin calls “landscapes of fear.” Goin, a photographer who has documented nuclear installations and test sites in Washington, Nevada, and the Marshall Islands, has published his pictures in a photo essay called Nuclear Landscapes. He describes a nuclear landscape as a place that evokes a sense of mystery, foreboding, and exclusion; possesses the traits of restricted access and physical threat; and informs an alternate definition of

⁴⁰³Cheryl Hartrup, “Art and Violence in the Modern World,” Portland (Ore.) 1st Thursday, 1 October 1992.

⁴⁰⁴Ibid.

beauty. In each of these ways, Oregon dystopian art, particularly in the form of landscapes of stumps, portrays a nuclear landscape. For each artist, the result is the same, the elevation of objects to “iconographic significance” and the communication of irony and “subliminal fear.”⁴⁰⁵

The spectrum of Oregon art that expresses human interaction with the natural environment is wide. It demonstrates the extremes of how philosophies are portrayed. It also illustrates the range of attitudes toward the environment that exists in the state. Like The Promised Land and The Promised Landfill, what Barry Faulkner’s heroic figure of a logger and Bernard Pagenstecher’s Dominion Altar have in common is a keen awareness of the enormous potential of Oregon’s natural environment, an awareness that may one day, through art, be informed by a common vision.

⁴⁰⁵Peter Goin, Nuclear Landscapes (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), pp. xvii-xxii.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

The broad topical and chronological range of the inventory of twentieth-century Oregon utopian art proves that utopia, both as an artistic theme and as an expression of the state's identity, has remained strong throughout the century. It indicates that works of art fall into three major categories: images of Oregon's natural environment, images of Oregon's human past, and images of Oregonians' interaction with the natural environment. It also shows that most of the topics under these categories made their debut early in the twentieth century and continued to be represented throughout the entire period.

Some topics gained strength or popularity over the decades. For example, early in the century, a number of new industrial technologies became available, including improvements in automation and mass production. During this time, when such advancements were featured at events like the Lewis and Clark Exposition, a handful of artists were ready to document these wonders through their art. In contrast, when large-scale federally-funded industries were introduced to Oregon at mid-century, many artists were poised to record the seemingly miraculous advances of these projects, in turn promoting the apparent benefits they would provide for the region.

Other topics evolved during the century to be expressed in radically different ways . When Samuel Lancaster built his Columbia River Highway, care was taken to ensure that visitors viewed the area within its natural setting without interrupting the pristine beauty of the gorge. Yet the provision of a sublime experience for the viewer was still a higher priority than preservation of the environment. Likewise, Jeanne Moment's mid-century work was informed by a concern for environmental protection, but her art still was primarily an aesthetic response to the region. By the end of the century, however, a wide-ranging concern for preserving the environment resulted in art that was not only an aesthetic response to the current situation, but that served as an instrument to facilitate change, resulting in both utopian and dystopian subjects.

Despite the varied emphases of the major categories of Oregon utopian art, common trends are frequently evident in any two and often in all three, testifying to their status as barometers of Oregon culture. An early twentieth-century dominance of nineteenth-century values is demonstrated in the sublime images of Eliza Barchus, the imperialistic motives of Lewis and Clark Expedition subjects at the 1905 Exposition, and the utopian images that grace Henry Bittle Wells's promotional literature. Depression- and World War II-era emphases on hard work, cooperation, and perseverance are evident in Avard Fairbanks's U.S. Bank Oregon Trail panel, as well as in Carl Morris's Agriculture and Lumbering murals. The work of Bill Witherspoon, James Lavadour, and, to a degree, David Manuel—as evidenced in his Promised Land—all point to a late century revival

and redefining, or rearticulation, of spiritual themes. Also, a late-century leaning toward a more sober, less hopeful view of the future is indicated in works like Lillian Pitt's 21st Century Salmon, Henk Pander's The Deer and the Antelope, and pieces by numerous artists who deal with dystopian subjects about the environment.

These patterns, combined with the fact that each of the subjects identified in the inventory of Oregon utopian art is expressed through numerous works, prove that an iconography exists that both reflects and energizes the state's utopian myth. The integral relationship of these subjects with the history of Oregon also demonstrates that the utopian myth, and the art that illustrates it, does indeed inform part of the state's identity. Finally, the artistic evidence reveals that visual imagery and symbols play an important role in how Oregonians define themselves and their history.

A word should be said about the future evolution of Oregon's utopian myth. Just as many of the trends evident in Oregon utopian art are parts of larger national or global movements, so their occurrence may indicate the direction the state's utopian myth might take. As the year 2000 approaches, one can detect a pervading sense of apprehension manifested in world-wide cultural and political movements.⁴⁰⁶ This anxiety, while heightened by current concerns over

⁴⁰⁶Ted Daniels, Millennialism: An International Bibliography (New York: Garland, 1992), p. xxxiii.

environmental threats,⁴⁰⁷ is coupled with a largely subliminal sense of foreboding over the symbolic passage of the millennium—the roots of which are found in philosophical traditions throughout the world.⁴⁰⁸ Despite the persistence of critical problems, the passing of this arbitrary milepost may produce a renewed spirit of optimism.⁴⁰⁹ At the same time, Oregon may shed the sense of youthful idealism that up until recently has characterized its utopian myth.⁴¹⁰ There is little reason to believe, however, that a utopian hope, largely based on the state's natural environment and resources, won't continue to serve as a catalyst in defining an identity for Oregon's increasingly diverse population. For it is hope that inspires a community to move forward and it is myth that molds general perceptions of history and self.

⁴⁰⁷Hanz Schwarz, "The Eschatological Dimensions of Ecology," *Zygon* 9 (December 1974):323.

⁴⁰⁸Daniels, p. xv.

⁴⁰⁹*Ibid.*, p. xxiv.

⁴¹⁰John McClelland, who asserts that Oregon has already "entered into the inevitable period of maturity and left its youth behind," questions whether the state will retain its utopian reputation. While not writing off that possibility altogether, he challenges Oregonians to rekindle the vitality that resulted in past "accomplishments of epic proportions." See John M. McClelland, "Our Pleasant Condition," in *Regionalism and the Pacific Northwest*, ed. William G. Robbins, Robert J. Frank, and Richard E. Ross (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1983), p. 220.

APPENDIX A

INVENTORY OF
TWENTIETH-CENTURY OREGON UTOPIAN ART

APPENDIX A

INVENTORY OF TWENTIETH-CENTURY OREGON UTOPIAN ART

The following list was compiled by the author for purposes of identifying and researching the iconography of Oregon's twentieth-century utopian myth. The selection is not exhaustive. Works named are gathered from a variety of sources, including inventories of exhibitions and collections, and miscellaneous primary sources, such as letters and published reviews. Listings that are repeated in parentheses indicate a secondary category in which they may be placed. Artists for whom a subject is a consistent theme are listed at the end of each category. All locations given are in Oregon unless otherwise noted. When the location of a work is not known, a significant past location, an event associated with its creation, or a collection of which it is presently a part may be noted in parentheses.

I. UTOPIAN IMAGES OF OREGON'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

A. THE NATURAL SUBLIME

- Barchus, Eliza. n.d. (ca. 1900). Mt. Hood. Oil on canvas. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.
- Bond, Hal, and Ruth Brockman. 1992. Bridge of the Gods. Cast glass, fused glass, and colored cement. State Office Building, Portland.
- . 1992. Legend of Multnomah Falls. Cast glass, fused glass, and colored cement. State Office Building, Portland.
- Boussard, Dana. 1981. Totem of the Willamette. Tapestry. Portland State University, Portland.
- Boyden, Frank. 1985. Birth of Fossils. Raku.
- . 1987. Skeleton Plate. Wood-fired porcelain.
- . 1992. Untitled (Fossil forms). Bronze and concrete. Oregon Coast Aquarium, Newport.
- Chabre, Wayne. 1989. Thomas Condon Medallion (Pioneer Oregon paleontologist). Hammered copper sheet. University of Oregon, Eugene.

- (Coble, Georgiale. n.d. [1960s]. The Dalles Mural. Painted mural. U.S. Bank, The Dalles.)
- Hardy, Tom. 1962. Oregon Country. Bronze. Portland State University, Portland.
- Heaney, Charles. 1942. Before Adam. Tempera on gesso.
- . 1944. Bird. Encaustic on gesso in relief.
- . 1945. Bird Petroglyph. Oil on canvas.
- . 1945. Genesis I:20-21. Tempera on plaster relief.
- Keller, Clyde Leon. n.d. The Site of Bonneville Dam. Oil on canvas.
- Lawrence Halprin and Associates. 1966. Lovejoy Fountain. Concrete. Portland.
- . 1971. Ira C. Keller Fountain. Concrete. Portland.
- Martin, Will. 1959. Untitled (Fossil plants and creatures). Mosaic and concrete. Washington Park Zoo, Portland.
- Moment, Jeanne. 1951. Tillamook Burn. Lithograph. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.
- . 1958. Columbia Gorge Palisades. Drypoint and roulette. Reed College, Portland.
- Morris, Carl. 1961. Archaic Script. Oil on canvas. Whitney Museum of Art, New York, New York.
- . 1972. Bedrock. Acrylic on canvas. (Collection of Marty and Beverly Zell, Portland.)
- . 1982. Machu Picchu. Acrylic on canvas. (Estate of the artist.)
- . 1990. Glacial Path. Acrylic on canvas. (Estate of the artist.)
- Morris, Hilda. 1967. The Ring of Time. Bronze. Standard Plaza, Portland.
- . 1988. Ancient Sign. Bronze. Laura Russo Gallery, Portland.

- Pander, Henk. 1980. Eruption of Mount St. Helens. Oil on linen. City Hall, Portland.
- Parker, Lucinda. 1986. Living Water. Acrylic on paper.
- Prasch, Richard E. 1980. Medusa Mountain. Pen on colored paper. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.
- Riley, Frank Branch. 1918. The Lure of the Great Northwest. Hand-colored black and white transparencies used for promoting Oregon. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.
- Rossetti, Miga. ca. 1995. Northwest Collage. Acrylics and pastels on paper. (Oregon Focus magazine cover illustration, April 1995)
- Zents, Steve. 1993. Snake River System. Mixed media. Snake River Correction Institution, Ontario.

Oregon artists for whom the natural sublime is a consistent theme in their art include:

Atkeson, Ray	Moment, Jeanne
Barchus, Eliza	Morris, Carl
Euwer, Anthony	Morris, Hilda
Givler, William	Schiebold, Hans
Samuel Lancaster	Terrill, Steve
Lavadour, James	Wire, Melvin

B. OREGON SYMBOLS FROM NATURE

1. ANIMALS AND FISH

- Anderson, Bob. 1991. Shrine to the Last Salmon. Mixed media. (O.I.A. 1991 Biennial, Portland.)
- Bannard, Ann. 1980. Otter. Bronze. Juniper Park, Bend.
- Bartow, Rick. 1986. Salmon Mask. Mixed media, wood, and acrylic paint. (Jamison Gallery, Portland, 1991.)

- Boyden, Frank. 1992. Untitled (Salmon petroglyphs). Basalt. Eola Hall Forensic Psychiatric Treatment Building, Salem.
- . n.d. (1980s). Salmon and Raven Vase. Wood-fired ceramic.
- . 1985. Dead Salmon and Raven Plate. Stoneware.
- Chabre, Wayne. 1987. Bear Gargoyle. Hammered copper and stainless steel. University of Oregon, Eugene.
- . 1987. Raven Gargoyle. Hammered copper and stainless steel. University of Oregon, Eugene.
- . 1987. Salmon Gargoyle. Hammered copper and stainless steel. University of Oregon, Eugene.
- Cunningham, Dennis. 1989. Spring Chinook. Linocut. (Jamison/Thomas Gallery, Portland, 1991.)
- Ellerhusen, Ulric H. 1938. Salmon. Marble. Capitol, Salem.
- Gerber, Georgia. 1986. Animals in Pools. Bronze. Portland.
- Ghiglieri, Lorenzo. 1991. Untitled (Grizzley bear). Bronze.
- (----- . n.d. [1980s]. No More Beaver. Bronze.)
- Goldsby, Al. 1989. Flowing. Bronze. Welcome Center, Bend.
- Gorham, Aimee, Ambrose Seliger, and Walter Seliger. 1937. Coyotes. Wood marquetry. Timberline Lodge, Mount Hood.
- . 1937. Mountain Lions. Wood Marquetry. Timberline Lodge, Mount Hood.
- Hardy, Tom. n.d. (1950s). Untitled (Fish in fountain). Bronze. County Park Blocks, Eugene.
- . 1970. Beaver. Bronze. Oregon History Center, Portland.
- . 1981. Pronghorns. Bronze. Oregon High Desert Museum, Bend.
- . 1986. Oregon Symbols. Bronze medallions. Oregon Historical Society, Portland. (Unexecuted proposal.)

- Krohn, Phillip. 1993. Trophy. Mixed media. (Portland Art Museum Crosscut exhibition, Portland, 1993.)
- Lamade, Eric. 1936-38. Forest Scene. Wood. Timberline Lodge, Mount Hood.
- Laman, Thomas. 1938-40. Spring on the Mountain. Glass mosaic. Timberline Lodge, Mount Hood.
- Lelooska, Don. 1959. Untitled (totem poles). Wood. Portland.
- . 1969. Owl. Concrete. Lewis and Clark College, Portland.
- . 1969. Four Evangelists. Concrete. Lewis and Clark College, Portland.
- Long, Roger. n.d. (late 1980s). Salmon Banner Series. Mixed media.
B. Molloch's Heathman Baker & Pub, Portland.
- Parker, Lucinda. 1990. River Song. Acrylic on canvas. Oregon Convention Center, Portland.
- Perry, Roland. 1900. Elk. Bronze. Portland.
- Pitt, Lillian. n.d. (ca. 1990). 21st Century Salmon. Mixed media.
- Pritchard, Louise Utter. ca. 1935-37. Untitled (Cougar and cub, deer and fawn). Stone. University of Oregon Library, Eugene.
- Proctor, Alexander Phimister. n.d. (early twentieth century). Big Beaver. Bronze. (Trail's End Gallery, Portland.)
- Schneider, Paul. n.d. Three Salmon. Ceramic.
- Scott, Kenneth. n.d. Sea Lion Family. Bronze. Florence.
- Thomas, Florence. 1936. Cougar Resting in Forest. Wood. Timberline Lodge, Mount Hood.
- . 1937. Untitled. Twelve wood newel posts. Timberline Lodge, Mount Hood.
- Wykoff, Christy. n.d. Floating Fish. Mixed media. Employment Office, Salem.

Oregon artists for whom animals and fish are a consistent theme in their art include:

Boyden, Frank	Hardy, Tom
Cunningham, Dennis	Parker, Lucinda
Ghiglieri, Lorenzo	Pitt, Lillian

2. TREES

Brophy, Michael. 1991. Perch. Oil on canvas. (Laura Russo Gallery, Portland, 1991.)

----- . 1993. Climb. Oil on canvas. (Laura Russo Gallery, Portland, 1993)

----- . 1993. Spring. Oil on canvas. (Collection of Microsoft Corporation.)

(Doyle, Albert E. 1905. Log Palace [Forestry Building]. [Lewis and Clark Exposition, Portland, 1905.]

Dozono, Robert. 1991. Trees in My Backyard. Oil on canvas.

Evangelista, Jim. 1994. Old Growth Forest Mural. Lane County Public Service Building, Eugene.

Foukes and Hogue. 1915. Log Parthenon (Oregon Building). (Panama-Pacific Exposition, San Francisco, California, 1915.)

(Gorham, Aimee. 1937. The Forests: Nature's Great Gift to Mankind. Wood marquetry. Oregon State University, Corvallis.)

(----- . 1937. Only God Can Make a Tree. Wood marquetry. Oregon State University, Corvallis.)

Lavare, Gabriel. n.d. Northwest Forests. Mural. (Pilot Butte Hotel, Bend.)

(Pagenstecher, Gerhard. 1993. Dominion Altar. Cedar and ivy. [Blackfish Gallery, Portland, 1993.]

Parker, Lucinda. 1989. Trunk and Tendrils. Oil on canvas.

(Rossetti, Miga. ca. 1995. Northwest Collage. Acrylics and pastels on paper. [Oregon Focus magazine cover illustration, April 1995.]

Setziol, Leroy. 1977. Ode to a Tree. Carved Wood. Oregon State University, Corvallis.

Simpson, Buster. 1991. Host Analog. Douglas fir and watering system. Oregon Convention Center, Portland.

Von Svoboda, Alexander. 1970. Perpetuity. Wood and bronze. World Forestry Center, Portland.

Oregon artists for whom trees are a consistent theme in their art include:

Brophy, Michael

II. UTOPIAN SYMBOLS OF OREGON'S HUMAN PAST

A. GENERAL SUBJECTS

Bishop, Hal. 1949. Untitled (Pioneer, mining, and settlement subjects). Painted Murals. (Jackson Hotel, Medford.)

Cunningham, Dennis, Terance O'Donnell, and John Laursen. 1990. Oregon Plaques. Metal and enamel. Oregon Convention Center, Portland.

Ghiglieri, Lorenzo. n.d. (1980s). No More Beaver. Bronze.

Griffin, Rachael Smith. n.d. (1930s). George H. Himes (First director of the Oregon Historical Society). Oil on canvas. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.

Haas, Richard. 1989. Oregon History Murals (Native Americans, Robert Gray, Lewis and Clark Expedition, and Oregon Trail) Tromp l'oeil murals. Oregon History Center, Portland.

Keller, Clyde. 1988. Untitled (Indian, pioneer, and ranching themes). 22-foot cedar log. Madras

Knowles, Joe. 1925. Conquerors of the Trail. Series of 46 oil paintings on canvas. (Longview, Washington.)

Lamade, Eric. n.d. (ca. 1940). Oregon History. Painted mural. Abernathy School, Portland.

Merkt, Don. 1992. She Flies with Her Own Wings. Mixed media. State Office Building, Portland.

B. NATIVE AMERICANS

Borglum, Solon. 1905. The First Step to Civilization. (Lewis and Clark Exposition, Portland.)

Bunce, Louis. 1936. Untitled. Mural. Federal Building, Grants Pass.

----- . 1938. Rogue River Indians. Mural. US Post Office, Grants Pass.

Caswell, Rip. 1995. Martha Jane Sands. Bronze. Spirit Mountain Resort, Grand Ronde.

Catlett, Kenneth. n.d. (ca. 1990). Until Tomorrow. Oil on canvas.

Coble, Georgiale. n.d. (1960s). The Dalles Mural. Painted mural. U.S. Bank, The Dalles.

Cooper, Alice. 1905. Sacajawea. Bronze. Washington Park, Portland.

(Fairbanks, Avar. 1931. Columbia Rediviva. Bronze door panel. U.S. Bank, Portland.)

(----- . 1931. Lewis and Clark. Bronze door panel. U.S. Bank, Portland.)

(Friedlander, Leo. 1938. Westward the Star of Empire Takes its Way. Marble. Capitol, Salem.)

Ghiglieri, Lorenzo. 1978. Leader of Leaders (Chief Joseph). Bronze. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.

----- . n.d. (ca. 1980). Chief Joseph. Bronze.

----- . 1982. The Strongest Bond (Sacagawea). Bronze.

Gilbert, Carrie M. 1902. Multnomah, Chief of the Willamettes. Oil on cowhide. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.

Gorham, Aimee. 1936. Native Americans. Wood marquetry. Alameda School, Portland.

Jackson, Harry. n.d. Sacajawea. Bronze. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.

Lelooska, Don. 1959. Untitled (Totem poles). Wood. Portland.

MacNeil, Herman. 1904. The Coming of the White Man. Bronze. Washington Park, Portland.

(Patten, Eleanor. 1934. Indian and Wagon Train. Oil on Canvas.)

Police, Patricia Egan. 1980. Sacajawea. Steel wire. Cannon Beach.

(Pusterla, Attilo. 1926. Astoria Column. Sgraffito frieze. Astoria.)

Runquist, Arthur. 1941. Scenes of Indian Life and Dancing. Mural. Pendleton High School, Pendleton.

(Wanlass, Stanley. 1990. Lewis and Clark. Bronze. Seaside.)

(Wiley, Lucia. 1943. Captain Gray's First Visit to the Oregon Coast. Egg tempera on plaster. U.S. Post Office, Tillamook.)

Unknown artist. ca. 1500 (Placed 1910). Petroglyph. City Hall, Portland.

Unknown artist. n.d. (1930s). Indian Legends. Brownsville stone. Crater Lake.

Unknown artist. n.d. Untitled. Chainsaw-carved wooden sculpture. Astoria.

Unknown artist. n.d. Untitled. Chainsaw-carved wooden sculpture. Hillsboro.

Artists for whom native Americans are a consistent theme in their art include:

Curtis, Edward	Leander Moorhouse
Ghiglieri, Lorenzo	Voisin, Adrien

C. DISCOVERY AND EXPLORATION

1. ROBERT GRAY

Fairbanks, Avar. 1931. Columbia Rediviva. Bronze door panel. U.S. Bank, Portland.

- Faulkner, Barry. 1938. Robert Gray at the Mouth of the Columbia River. Painted mural. Capitol, Salem.
- Gegoux, Theodore. 1916. Captain Robert Gray. Chalk on paper.
- Pusterla, Attilo. 1926. Astoria Column. Sgraffito frieze. Astoria.
- Wagner, Barbara Allen. 1993. Captain Robert Gray Discovers Astoria. Needlepoint tapestry. Heritage Museum, Astoria.
- Wiley, Lucia. 1943. Captain Robert Gray's First Visit to the Oregon Coast. Egg tempera on plaster. US Post Office, Tillamook.
- Unknown artist. n.d. Captain Robert Gray. Chainsaw-carved wooden sculpture. Ilwaco, Washington.

2. LEWIS AND CLARK

- Beck, Raphael. 1905. Official Seal of the Lewis and Clark Exposition.
- Bitter, Carl. 1915. Thomas Jefferson. Bronze. Jefferson High School, Portland.
- (Catlett, Kenneth. n.d. [ca. 1990]. Until Tomorrow. Oil on canvas.)
- Dente, Michael Florin. 1988. The Naming of Mount Jefferson. Bronze. University of Portland, Portland.
- . 1988. The Trail's End. Bronze. Sovereign Gallery, Portland.
- Dowling, Colista. n.d. (early twentieth century). Lewis and Clark. Pen and Ink. (Michael Powell collection, Portland, 1994.)
- Fairbanks, Avar. 1931. Lewis and Clark. Bronze door panel. U.S. Bank, Portland.
- Friedlander, Leo. 1938. Westward the Star of Empire Takes its Way. Marble. Capitol, Salem.
- Lewis, Alonzo Victor. n.d. Lewis and Clark Arrive Columbia River. Bronze. Samuel Hill Memorial, Corbett.

- Lopez, Charles. 1905. Captain Meriwether Lewis. Bronze. (Lewis and Clark Exposition, Portland.)
- (Police, Patricia Egan. 1980. Sacajawea. Steel wire. Cannon Beach.)
- (Pusterla, Attilo. 1926. Astoria Column. Sgraffito frieze. Astoria.)
- Quigley, Edward. n.d. Captain Clark at Lumhi Pass. Oil on canvas.
- Ruckstuhl, Frederick Wellington. 1905. Captain William Clark. Bronze. (Lewis and Clark Exposition, Portland.)
- Schumann, Otto. 1908. Lewis and Clark Memorial Column. Washington Park, Portland.
- Schwarz, Frank. 1938. Lewis and Clark on Their Way to the Pacific. Mural. Capitol, Salem.
- (Shamsud-Din, Isaac. 1983. Bilalian Odyssey. Oil and enamel on panel. Portland.)
- Voisin, Adrien. 1935. Lewis and Clark Memorial Plaque. Bronze. Jefferson High School, Portland.
- (Wagner, Barbara Allen. 1993. Captain Robert Gray Discovers Astoria. Needlepoint tapestry. Heritage Museum, Astoria.)
- Wanlass, Stanley. 1990. End of the Trail. Bronze. Seaside.
- . n.d. Lewis and Clark. Bronze. Long Beach, Washington.
- Unknown artist. n.d. (1980s). Lewis and Clark Expedition, 1805. Chainsaw-carved wooden sculpture. Pacific County, Washington.

D. MIGRATION.

1. OREGON TRAIL

- Dowling, Colista. n.d. (early twentieth century). John McLoughlin. Mural. Milton High School, Milton.
- Ellerhusen, Ulric. 1938. Oregon Pioneer. Bronze and gold leaf. Capitol, Salem.

- Fairbanks, Avarad. 1929. Pioneer Mothers Memorial. Bronze and granite. Vancouver, Washington.
- . 1931. Pioneers Coming to Oregon in 1838. Bronze door panel. U.S. Bank, Portland.
- . 1950. Marcus Whitman. Bronze. Sovereign Gallery, Portland.
- . 1959. Guidance of Youth. Stone. Bush Park, Salem.
- . 1959. Oregon Centennial Medallion.
- . n.d. Ezra Meeker. Bronze. University of Oregon, Eugene.
- . n.d. Old Oregon Trail Medallion. Bronze. Baker City.
- . n.d. Old Oregon Trail Medallion. Bronze. Seaside.
- Faulkner, Barry. 1938. First White Women to Cross the Continent. Mural. Capitol, Salem.
- Feurer, Karl. 1934. Covered Wagon Train. Oil on canvas.
- Fitzgerald, Edmond J. 1938. Trail to Oregon. Oil on canvas. U.S. Post Office, Ontario.
- Forester, Charles. 1959. Oregon Statehood Memorial. Stone. Springfield.
- Fraser, J. E., and L. G. Fraser. n.d. Oregon Trail Memorial. Bronze. Vale.
- Friedlander, Leo. 1938. The Covered Wagon. Marble. Capitol, Salem.
- Gangle, Martina. 1940. Pioneers Sailing by Raft Down the Columbia River. Painted mural. Rose City Park School, Portland.
- Gorham, Aimee. 1936. Scenes of Pioneers. Wood marquetry. Alameda School, Portland.
- . 1937. Pioneer Panels. Wood marquetry. Oregon State University, Corvallis.
- Keegan, Melvin Aurelius. 1937. Pioneer Panels. Wood. Timberline Lodge, Mount Hood.

- Lavare, Gabriel. 1939. Pioneer Mother Reading to Her Son. Wood. Oregon State Library, Salem.
- Lazarus, Edgar M. 1918. Vista House. Crown Point State Park.
- Littman, Frederic. 1956. Joy ("Pioneer Mother"). Bronze. Council Crest Park, Portland.
- Logan, Thayne. 1943. Wagon Train. Watercolor. Collection of Michael Powell, Portland.
- Manuel, David. 1993. The Promised Land. Bronze. Portland.
- Patten, Eleanor. 1934. Indian and Wagon Train. Oil on canvas.
- Price, Charles S. 1934. The Covered Wagon. Oil on canvas.
- . 1936. Pioneers. Mural. Beach School, Portland.
- Proctor, Alexander Phimister. 1918. The Pioneer. Bronze. University of Oregon, Eugene.
- . 1932. Pioneer Mother. Bronze. University of Oregon, Eugene.
- (Pusterla, Attilo. 1926. Astoria Column. Sgraffito frieze. Astoria.)
- Quigley, Edward. 1936. Pioneer Murals. Oil on canvas. Irvington School, Portland.
- . 1973. Trail to Oregon. Oil on canvas. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.
- Schwarz, Frank. 1938. Immigrants of 1843 at The Dalles. Mural. Capitol, Salem.
- Unknown artist. 1910. Memorial Fountain ("Iron Mike"). Bronze. Ashland.

2. OTHER IMMIGRANTS

- ALANA. 1992. We Speak. Painted mural.
- Mizuno, Sadao. n.d. (ca. 1915). Captain William Hardy. Oil on canvas. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.

Pander, Henk. 1992. The Deer and the Antelope. Oil on canvas. (Seattle Art Museum 1492/1992 exhibition, Seattle, 1992)

Murase, Robert, Jim Goin, and Lawson Inada. 1991. Japanese American Memorial-Bill of Rights Park. Tom McCall Waterfront Park, Portland.

Shamsud-Din, Isaac. 1983. Bilalian Odyssey. Oil on canvas.

E. SETTLEMENT

Ballator, John, Louis Bunce, and Eric Lamade. 1936. Development of St. Johns. Oil on canvas. (U.S. Post Office, St. Johns station, Portland.)

Betts, E. D. 1911. Harvey Scott. Oil on canvas. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.

----- . 1911. Harvey Scott. Oil on canvas. Pacific University, Forest Grove.

Borglum, Gutzon. 1929. Harvey Scott. Bronze. Mount Tabor Park, Portland.

Carey, Rockwell. 1936. History of St. Johns. Oil on canvas. Sovereign Gallery, Portland.

Faulkner, Barry. 1938. Champoeg. Painted mural. Capitol, Salem.

Fowler, Constance. n.d. (ca. 1938). Historic Landmarks of Salem. Woodcut series.

Gangle, Martina. 1940. Settlement on the Columbia. Oil on canvas. Rose City Park School, Portland.

Gegoux, Theodore. 1924. The Inception of the Birth of Oregon. Oil on canvas. Champoeg State Park.

Schwarz, Frank. 1938. Salem Street Scene when News of Statehood was Received. Painted mural. Capitol, Salem.

Shamsud-Din, Isaac. n.d. (ca. 1980). Vanport the Promise, Vanport the Flood. Oil on canvas. Albina Human Resources Building, Portland.

Vincent, Andrew. 1942. Builders of Salem. Oil on canvas. U.S. Post Office, Salem.

Wiley, Lucia M. n.d. (ca. 1945-48). The Morning Star. Fresco. Tillamook County Courthouse, Tillamook.

Unknown artist. 1986. Chinatown Gateway. Mixed media. Portland.

III. UTOPIAN IMAGES OF OREGONIANS' INTERACTION WITH THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

A. GENERAL SUBJECTS

Smith, Mara, and Kris King. 1990. Untitled (History of Deschutes County). Carved brick panels. City Hall, Bend.

B. OUTDOOR PASTIMES

Clough, Art. 1937. The Release of Youth from Depression Conditions. Cedar wood panels. University of Oregon, Eugene.

Cunningham, Dennis. 1987. Sauvie Island. Linoleum block print.

----- . 1987. The Visitation. Linoleum block print.

----- . 1989. Fishing for Halibut. Linoleum block print.

Lynch, Douglas. 1937. Calendar of Sports. Painted linoleum. Timberline Lodge, Mount Hood.

Moment, Jeanne. 1950. Summit Ski Area. Lithograph. Willamette University, Salem.

Shepard, Olivia. 1934. Skiing on Mount Hood. Oil on canvas.

Artists for whom outdoor pastimes is a consistent theme in their art include:

Atkeson, Ray
Cunningham, Dennis
Lancaster, Samuel

C. AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRY

1. GENERAL SUBJECTS

- Ellerhusen, Eric. 1938. Wheat Sheaves. Marble. Capitol. Salem.
- Faulkner, Barry. 1938. Oregon Industries (Timber and fishing). Painted mural. Capitol, Salem.
- Kaskey, Raymond. 1984. Portlandia. Copper, bronze, and steel. Portland Building, Portland.
- Lamade, Eric. 1938. Early and Contemporary Industries. Tempera. U.S. Post Office, Grants Pass.
- Lavare, Gabriel. 1941. Oregon Industries (Agriculture, fishing, lumbering, shipping). Four pine relief panels. (United Airlines Building, Portland, 1941.)
- Schwarz, Frank. 1938. Oregon Industries (Dairying and cattle ranching). Painted mural. Capitol, Salem.
- , 1938. Oregon Industries (Sheep ranching and mining). Painted mural. Capitol, Salem.

Oregon artists for whom agriculture and industry are consistent themes in their art include:

Henry Bittle Wells

2. FARMING

- Erickson, Dora. 1934. Apple Picking. Carved wood.
- Faulkner, Barry. 1938. Oregon Industries (Wheat and apples). Painted mural. Capitol, Salem.
- Gangle, Martina. 1934. Farm Scene: Woman Feeding Chickens. Oil on canvas.
- Morris, Carl. 1941. Agriculture. Oil on canvas. U.S. Post Office, Eugene.

Price, Charles S. 1940. Plowing. Oil on canvas. Timberline Lodge, Mount Hood.

Quigley, Edward. 1974. Wheat Harvest. Oil on canvas. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.

(Schwarz, Frank. 1938. Oregon Industries (Dairying and cattle ranching). Painted mural. Capitol, Salem.)

Wells, Vesta. 1934. Farm Scene. Oil on canvas.

3. RANCHING

Morandi, Tom, Ray Clivinger, and Crook County High School students. 1982. Spur. Sheet metal. Prineville.

Price, Charles S. 1949. Cow with Calf. Oil on paperboard.

Proctor, Alexander Phimister. 1915. The Buckaroo. Bronze. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.

Quigley, Edward. n.d. (1940s). Corral Scene. Oil on canvas.

----- . n.d. (1940s). Handy Rope. Oil on canvas.

----- . 1946. Yellow Slicker. Oil on canvas. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.

----- . 1973. Cattle Trail Drive. Oil on canvas. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.

(Schwarz, Frank. 1938. Oregon Industries (Dairying and cattle ranching). Painted mural. Capitol, Salem.)

(----- . 1938. Oregon Industries (Sheep ranching and mining). Painted mural. Capitol, Salem.)

Wilkinson, Jack. 1941. Cattle Roundup. Oil on canvas. U.S. Post Office, Burns.

Oregon artists for whom ranching is a consistent theme in their art include:

Price, Charles S.
Quigley, Edward

4. Fishing

a. General Subjects

(Faulkner, Barry. 1938. Oregon Industries (Timber and fishing). Painted mural. Capitol, Salem.)

Moment, Jeanne. 1951. Untitled (Men fishing). Lithograph. Reed College, Portland.

Quigley, Edward. 1973. Purse Seine Fishing. Oil on canvas. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.

Raymond, Louis C. 1977. Fishermen 'Lifting the Trap,' Mouth of Columbia River. Acrylic on canvas. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.

Sponenburgh, Mark. n.d. (1980s). Fishermen's Memorial. Mixed media. Yaquina Head Lighthouse, Newport.

Wiley, Lucia M. 1932. Fishing Industry in Oregon. Four frescoes. University of Oregon, Eugene.

Unknown artist. 1994. Beachcomb for a Better Tomorrow! Oregon Department of Tourism, Salem.

b. CELILO FALLS

Atherton, John. n.d. Indians Fishing at Celilo Falls. Oil on canvas. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.

(Blomberg, Cecilia. 1987. BPA and the Struggle for Power at Cost. Wool and linen tapestry. Federal Building, Portland.)

Givler, William. 1940. Indians Fishing, Celilo Falls. Etching. Portland Art Museum, Portland.

(Johanson, George. 1989. Northwest Power. Oil on canvas.)

- Moment, Jeanne. 1948. Untitled (Workers at Celilo Falls). Drypoint with roulette. Reed College, Portland.
- Patecky, Albert. n.d. (1950s). Indians at Celilo Falls. Oil on masonite. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.
- (Quigley, Edward. 1959. Construction of The Dalles Dam. Oil on canvas.)
- . n.d. (1970s). Celilo Falls. Oil on canvas. Capitol, Salem.
- Sheets, Millard. n.d. Celilo Falls. Oil on canvas. United Airlines.
- Tower, James Lynn. 1956. Indians Fishing at Celilo Falls. Watercolor on upson board. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.

5. TIMBER AND FORESTRY.

- Austin, Darrel. 1937. Woodchoppers. Oil on canvas. Timberline Lodge, Mount Hood.
- Brophy, Michael. 1992. Pause. Oil on canvas. Laura Russo Gallery, Portland.
- . 1992. Saw. Oil on canvas. Laura Russo Gallery, Portland.
- Carey, Rockwell. 1934. Oregon Logs for Japan. Oil on canvas.
- Darce, Virginia, Charles Haller. and Pete Ferrarin. 1938. Paul Bunyan subjects. Four stained glass mosaics. Timberline Lodge, Mount Hood.
- Denny, Jim. 1994. Collapse. Oil on canvas.
- . 1994. Downsizing. Oil on canvas.
- Doyle, Albert E. 1905. Log Palace (Forestry Building). (Lewis and Clark Exposition, Portland--demolished.)
- . ca. 1912-17. Untitled ("Benson Bubblers"). Forty bronze drinking fountains. Portland.
- Edmondson, Bill. n.d. (mid-twentieth century). That's too Much a Stump for Me. Inlaid wood relief.

- Fairbanks, Avar. 1924. Memorial to Simon Benson. Plaster bas relief. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.
- (Faulkner, Barry. 1938. Oregon Industries (Timber and fishing). Painted mural. Capitol, Salem.)
- (Foukes and Hogue. 1915. Log Parthenon [Oregon Building]. [Panama-Pacific Exposition, San Francisco, California--demolished.]
- Gorham, Aimee. n.d. (1930s). The Forests: Nature's Great Gift to Mankind. Wood marquetry. Oregon State University, Corvallis.
- . n.d. (1930s). Only God Can Make a Tree. Wood marquetry. Oregon State University, Corvallis.
- Karl, Margaret Ann. n.d. (late twentieth century). Untitled (Sawdust burner). Watercolor. Multnomah County Library, Portland.
- Keller, Clyde Leon. 1916. Log Booms on the Willamette. Oil on canvas. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.
- Mayfield, Marvin. 1986. Oregon Forestry. Sugar pine bas relief. Oregon State University, Corvallis.
- (Moment, Jeanne. 1951. Untitled [Tillamook Burn]. Lithograph. Reed College, Portland.)
- Morris, Carl. 1941. Lumbering. Oil on canvas. U.S. Post Office, Eugene.
- Quigley, Edward. 1973. Early Logging. Oil on canvas. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.
- (Setziol, Leroy. 1977. Ode to a Tree. Carved wood. Oregon State University, Corvallis.)
- Stoddard, Emmett K. 1961. Crossett Western Logging Company. Oil on canvas. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.
- Travers, Nancy. 1993. Requiem for Paul Bunyan. 16 oil paintings on canvas. Clackamas Community College, Oregon City.
- Voisin, Adrien. 1934. The Logger. Plaster cast.

(Von Svoboda, Alexander. 1970. Perpetuity. Wood and bronze. World Forestry Center [originally at Georgia Pacific Building], Portland.)

Unknown artist. n.d. (ca. 1934). Paul Bunyan and his Great Ox. Sculpture. (Originally intended for Bonneville Dam.)

Unknown artist. 1959. Paul Bunyan. Mixed media. Oregon Centennial Exposition, Portland.

Oregon artists for whom timber and forestry is a consistent theme in their art include:

Brophy, Michael	Edmondson, Bill
Denny, Jim	Mish, Charlotte

6. THE TECHNOLOGICAL SUBLIME

Bishop, Hal. n.d. (1940s and 1950s). Untitled (Electric power subjects). Oil paintings on canvas. Pacific Power and Light Service Center, Medford.

Blank, Charlie. 1990. Untitled (Hydroelectricity). Oil on canvas. Public Service Building, Portland.

Blomberg, Cecilia. 1987. BPA and the Struggle for Power at Cost. Wool and linen tapestry. Federal Building, Portland.

Bunce, Louise. n.d. (mid-twentieth century). Untitled (Airport subjects). Oil on canvas. Portland International Airport, Portland.

Denny, Jim. 1994. Heart of Darkness. Oil on canvas.

Hatfield, Catherine Arling. 1959. Mill—Carleton. Painting.

Johanson, George. 1989. Northwest Power. Oil on canvas.

Karl, Margaret Ann. 1959. Old Cannery in the Bay. Watercolor.

----- . n.d. (late twentieth century). Untitled (Sawdust burner). Watercolor. Multnomah County Library, Portland.

(Keller, Clyde Leon. n.d. [1930s]. The Site of Bonneville Dam. Oil on canvas.)

Kennedy Richard. n.d. (mid-twentieth century). Early Morning Light. Oil on canvas.

-----, n.d. (mid-twentieth century). Melting Pot. Oil on canvas.

Martens, Christiane. n.d. (ca. 1980). Paper Wave. Enamel on steel. State Printing Plant. Salem.

Masterson, John. 1973. Columbia. Oil on canvas. City Hall, Portland.

Mish, Charlotte. n.d. (1940s). Albina Ship Yards. Painted mural.

-----, n.d. (1940s). McCormick Steamship Company. Oil on canvas.

Morris, Carl. 1952. Machine No. 3. Oil on canvas. Portland Art Museum, Portland.

Quigley, Edward. 1959. The Construction of The Dalles Dam. Oil on canvas.

Runquist, Arthur. 1944. Untitled (Heavy machinery). Gouache. (Thyrza Anderson collection.)

Ryland, Lori Unis. n.d. (ca. 1980). Monument to Man. Painting. Employment Building, Salem.

Walters, Carl. n.d. (early twentieth century). Building the Ship. Lithograph.

-----, n.d. (early twentieth century). Ship Building. Drawing. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.

Unknown artist. 1928. Untitled (Hydroelectric and natural gas industry themes). Brass elevator door panels. Public Service Building, Portland.

Oregon artists for whom the technological sublime is a consistent theme in their art include:

Denny, Jim

Mish, Charlotte

Walters, Carl

Wysong, Linda

E. ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

1. GENERAL SUBJECTS

- (Brophy, Michael. 1993. Spring. Oil on canvas. [Collection of Microsoft Corporation.]
- (Dozono, Robert. 1991. Trees in My Backyard. Oil on canvas.)
- Enge, Leslie. 1993. Trail Tomorrow. Exhibit logo. Oregon Historical Society, Portland.
- Merril, Laura. 1993. Earth Goddess I. Human sculpture. (Goldendale, Washington, 16 May 1993.)
- Olson, Larry. 1989. Opal Creek. Photograph series. (Maveety Gallery, Portland.)
- Pagenstecher, Gerhard. 1993. Dominion Altar. Cedar and ivy. (Blackfish Gallery, Portland, 1993.)
- Pander, Henk. 1982. Tom McCall. Oil on canvas. Capitol, Salem.
- (Pitt, Lillian. n.d. [ca. 1990]. 21st-Century Salmon. Mixed media.)
- Red Crow, Paul. 1986. Endangered Species Totem Pole. Wood. Breitenbush Hot Springs, Breitenbush.
- Santos, Susan. 1994. Life After Death. Oil on canvas.
- Siegel, Steven. 1993. Hood. Mixed media. (North Park Blocks, Portland--demolished.)
- (Simpson, Buster. 1991. Host Analog. Douglas fir and watering system. Oregon Convention Center, Portland.)
- Strong, David. 1992. Stewardship. Bronze and glass. World Forestry Center. Portland.
- (Von Svoboda, Alexander. 1970. Perpetuity. Wood and bronze. World Forestry Center, Portland.)
- Witherspoon, Bill. 1991. Shri Yantra. Land sculpture. Alvord Desert.

Oregon artists for whom the environment is a consistent theme in their art include:

Atkeson, Ray	Pitt, Lillian
Brophy, Michael	Santos, Susan
Boyden, Frank	Simpson, Buster
Denny, Jim	Stoel, Julia
Dozono, Robert	Terrill, Steve
Krohn, Phillip	Witherspoon, Bill
Olson, Larry	Wysong, Linda
Pagenstecher, Gerhard	

2. DYSTOPIAN SUBJECTS

Adams, Susan, and Sarah Grimm. 1993. P.E.T. Cloud. Unrecyclable plastic. (ORLO Promised Landfill exhibition, Portland, 1993.)

Brown, Roger. 1979. Lewis and Clark Trail. Oil on canvas. Kenneth M. Goode Collection, Englewood, Colorado.

Conkle, Bruce. 1994. Quasi Camp. Mixed media. (ORLO exhibition, Portland, 1993.)

Cunningham, Dennis. 1993. Valentine. Linocut print on paper. Oregon Historical Society Statehood Day Time Capsule, Portland.

(Denny, Jim. 1994. Collapse. Oil on canvas.)

(-----). 1994. Downsizing. Oil on canvas.)

Dozono, Robert. 1993. Dream of a Final Theory—Save Our Home. Mixed media.

-----). 1993. Futures and Securities. Mixed media.

Garten, Cliff. 1993. There's No There There. Mixed media. City Hall, Beaverton.

Geary, Barb. 1993. Settle/Adapt. Mixed media and video. (ORLO Promised Landfill exhibition, Portland, 1993.)

King, Carolyn. 1991. Charm Bracelet Construct. Steel.

- Krohn, Phillip. 1993. E-Z Bake. Wood. (Portland Art Museum Crosscut exhibition, Portland, 1993.)
- . 1993. Trophy. Mixed media. (Portland Art Museum Crosscut exhibition, 1993)
- Lowe, Jean. 1992. American Jobs/Wooden Nickel. Oil and enamel on canvas. (Hoffman Gallery, Portland, 1992.)
- ORLO. 1993. The Promised Landfill. Mixed media. (ORLO Promised Landfill exhibition, Portland, 1993.)
- Pagenstecher, Gerhard. 1990. Stumpage: Redefining the Term. Wood. (Pioneer Courthouse Square Festival of Flowers, Portland, 1990.)
- (Travers, Nancy. 1993. Requiem for Paul Bunyan. 16 oil paintings on canvas. Clackamas Community College, Oregon City.)
- Wysong, Linda. 1993. Gorge Project. Mixed media drawing. (ORLO Promised Landfill exhibition, Portland, 1993.)

APPENDIX B

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 Author/Producer Jeffrey Uecker City/State/Zip Hillsboro, Oregon 97124
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| OrHi91409 | Jeanne Moment. <u>Untitled (Tillamook Burn)</u> . 1951 |
| OrHi66291 | Carved Newel-posts, <u>Timberline Lodge</u> . |
| OrHi83120 | Ulric Ellerhusen. <u>Salmon</u> . 1938. State Capitol, Salem. |
| OrHi27751 | Alice Cooper. <u>Sacajawea</u> . 1905. Washington Park, Portland. |
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| OrHi23926 | John Mix Stanley. <u>Oregon City on the Willamette</u> . ca. 1850-52. |
| OrHi25745-a | Herman MacNeil. <u>The Coming of the White Man</u> . 1904. Washington Park, Portland. |
| OrHi65335 | Barry Faulkner. <u>Robert Gray at the Mouth of the Columbia River</u> . 1938. State Capitol, Salem. |
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OrHi52518	Foukes and Hogue. <u>Log Parthenon (Oregon Building)</u> . 1915. San Francisco Panama-Pacific Exposition.
OrHi91407	Front cover of <u>Oregon: Land of Opportunity</u> , published by the Portland Chamber of Commerce, 1909.
OrHi84903	Aimee Gorham. <u>The Forests: Nature's Great Gift to Mankind</u> . ca. 1930. Oregon State University, Corvallis.
OrHi54375	Timberline Lodge barroom showing Paul Bunyan murals.
OrHi56808	Lewis and Clark Exposition at night.
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AUTHOR/EDITOR: Jeffrey Uecker

PUBLISHER/PRODUCER:

PROJECTED DATE OF PUBLICATION/YEAR OF BROADCAST: May 3, 1995

PRESS RUN/COPIES DISTRIBUTED/NUMBER OF BROADCASTS: 5 copies

FORMAT:

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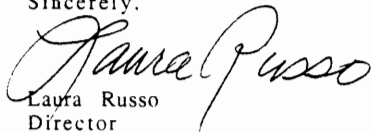
March 15, 1995

Jeffry Uecker
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Sincerely,


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