Order Number 9315459

Theodore J. Roszak (1907–1981): Painting and sculpture

Dreishpoon, Douglas Scott, Ph.D.

City University of New York, 1993

U·M·I
300 N. Zeeb Rd.
Ann Arbor, MI 48106

THEODORE J. ROSZAK (1907-1981)
PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

by

Douglas S. Dreishpoon

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Art History in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York.

1993

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Art History in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Dec. 18 1992.
Date

Robert Pincus-Witten
Chair of Examining Committee

Dec 18, 1992
Date

Executive Officer
Ph.D. Program in Art History

Mona Hadler

Marlene Park

William Agee

Supervisory Committee

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

FOREWORD AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

One's choice of concentration during the course of an academic career depends, to a certain extent, on timing, circumstances, and sympathetic teachers. While completing a masters at Tufts University, I was fortunate to find a mentor in Margaret Henderson Floyd. Through her seminar on 19th-Century American mural painting, I chose the painter Will H. Low (1853-1932) as the topic of my thesis. Several years later, after I had moved to New York and accepted a position as curator of exhibitions and research with Hirschl & Adler Galleries, Margaret urged me to continue my studies. By that time my interest had shifted from the 19th to the 20th century, from turn-of-the-century American painting and sculpture to 20th-century modernism and contemporary criticism. Through my critical writing on contemporary sculpture and an exhibition organized, in 1986, at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, I discovered the work of Theodore Roszak and realized his potential as a dissertation topic. During that time I met the artist's daughter, Sara Jane Roszak, who fueled my enthusiasm by granting me complete access to her father's estate. Sara's encouragement and patience over the years have been unflagging. Without her continual support this dissertation would have been inconceivable.

Several teachers at the Graduate Center--Robert Pincus-Witten, Professor Emeritus, Mona Hadler, and Marlene Park--provided invaluable guidance, advice, and criticism of the dissertation. Initially, my fourth reader was to be Harry Gaugh, a friend and former teacher at Skidmore College. But life throws curve balls. Before Harry could read the manuscript, he passed away. Fortunately, William Agee agreed to fill in. I am grateful for his cooperation given the unexpected turn of events.

While pursuing my course work and dissertation, I worked at Hirschl & Adler Galleries. Looking back on the more than eight years spent at this institution, I realize how fortunate I was in having Stuart P. Feld, the gallery's president, as my employer. Stuart understood the nature of

research and scholarship and allowed me the time and flexibility to complete my studies. Few would have been so tolerant. For this I am thankful.

In the process of writing a dissertation one has the opportunity to meet with and interview fascinating individuals. Calvin Albert, Rudolf Arnheim, William Barrett, Dorothy Dehner, Jeanne Erdman, Herbert Ferber, David Hare, Max Landau, McNeil Lowry, Theodore Roszak (the artist's nephew), Claire Satin, Peter Selz, Ann Sperry, and Harold Taylor knew Roszak as a friend, fellow artist, family relation, colleague, or teacher. Each gave freely of their time and patiently answered my innumerable queries. Their recollections, many in the form of colorful anecdotes, were an insightful source of information.

Finally, several individuals deserve far more recognition than words are capable of expressing. Both my parents, Dr. Irving H. Dreishpoon and Geogene Simon Dreishpoon, and sisters, Lisa and Nancy, have been constant pillars of support--emotionally and spiritually. Their steadfast optimism, buffering many a life's transition, helped bring this project to fruition. Tobi A. Kahn, Paul H. Tucker, and Daniel B. Gold have been loyal and long-time friends whose honesty, empathy, and willingness to challenge my beliefs is a gift I will never take for granted.

Douglas Dreishpoon
Tampa, FL.
December 1992

CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

Unless otherwise noted, the work is by Theodore Roszak. Dimensions are in inches.

Fig. 38. Study for "Mechanical Man." 1932-33.
Ink and wash on paper, 5 7/8 x 9 1/8
Private collection

Fig. 39. Study for "Mechanical Man." 1932-33.
Pencil on paper, 5 x 9 3/8
Artist's estate

Fig. 40. Still from Fritz Lang's Metropolis. 1926.
Courtesy The Museum of Modern Art, N.Y. (Film Archives)

Fig. 41. American Industry. 1933-34 (destroyed).
Oil on canvas, about 28 x 38

Fig. 42. American Science and Industry. 1933-34 (destroyed).
Oil on canvas, about 28 x 38

Fig. 43. Theodore Roszak in his New York studio at 325 East 30th Street, about 1938.

Fig. 44. Installation of constructions at Zabriskie Gallery, New York, 1978.
Photo credit: John A. Ferrari

Fig. 45. Studies for Constructions. 1938.
Pencil on paper, 8 1/2 x 14
Private collection, Wisconsin

Fig. 46. Orthographic Rendering for "Yellow, Black with Steel." 1938.
Ink and pencil on graph paper, 7 1/4 x 9 1/2
Private collection, New Hampshire

Fig. 47. Crescent Throat. 1932.
Soldered sheet metal and wire, 10 high
Artist's estate

Fig. 48. Pierced Bipolar. 1932.
Soldered sheet metal, cooper, brass, and wire, 25 high
Artist's estate

Fig. 49. Ring Dial. As reproduced in the catalogue of the Adler Planetarium and Astronomical Museum in Chicago (1932)

Fig. 50. Airport Sentinel. 1932.
Cooper, aluminum, steel, and brass, 23 high
The Newark Museum, New Jersey

Fig. 51. Construction in White. 1938.
Painted wood and plastic, 49 1/2 x 49 1/2
Artist's estate

Fig. 63. Surge. 1946.
Steel brazed with bronze, 12 x 18
Collection of S. Maizer, N.Y.

Fig. 64. Forms in Transition II (Emergence). 1945.
Steel brazed with brass, 15 1/2 high
Artist's estate

Fig. 65. Spectre of Kitty Hawk. 1946-47.
Steel brazed with bronze and brass, 40 1/4 high
The Museum of Modern Art, N.Y.

Fig. 66. Study for "Spectre of Kitty Hawk." About 1946-47.
Pencil on graph paper, 8 1/2 x 11
Artist's estate

Fig. 67. Study for "Spectre of Kitty Hawk." About 1946-47.
Pencil on graph paper, 8 1/2 x 11
Artist's estate

Fig. 68. Study for "Spectre of Kitty Hawk." About 1946-47.
Pencil on graph paper, 8 1/2 x 11
Private collection

Fig. 69. Study for "Spectre of Kitty Hawk." About 1946-47.
Pencil on graph paper, 8 1/2 x 11
Artist's estate

Fig. 70. Study for "Spectre of Kitty Hawk." About 1946-47.
Pencil on graph paper, 8 1/2 x 11
Artist's estate

Fig. 71. Study for "Spectre of Kitty Hawk." 1946.
Ink and wash on paper, 53 3/4 x 41
Collection of Terese and Alvin Lane
Photo credit: Andre Grossmann

Fig. 72. David Smith
Spectre of War. 1944.
Steel painted black, 11 1/4 x 22
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Jan de Graff, Portland, Oregon
As reproduced in Rosalind E. Krauss, Terminal Iron Works: The Sculpture of David Smith (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 1971), p. 126.

Fig. 73. Whaler of Nantucket. 1952-53.
Steel, 34 1/2 high
Art Institute of Chicago, Illinios

INTRODUCTION

Theodore Roszak died in 1981 at age 74. He was "best remembered by the public," wrote Bernard Holland in his obituary for The New York Times, "for the controversial 37-foot aluminum eagle he created for the exterior of the United States Embassy in London's Grosvenor Square in 1960."[1] Even before it assumed its perch high above the embassy's entranceway, Roszak's golden eagle was ridiculed by the British as an eye sore, a larger-than-life emblem of American imperialism, in "poor taste." All cultural antagonism aside, the London commission brought the sculptor a good deal of press and publicity. Roszak began accepting public commissions in the early 1950s not only because they challenged his sense of scale, permitted him to earn a living and to collaborate with architects and technicians, but because they offered him greater visibility. Late in life, the London project brought Roszak recognition, but at the expense of simplifying a far more varied contribution.

Roszak's ideas transcend any single medium; drawing (the generative pulse of his vision) was the backbone of a creative process whose extensions included paintings, constructions, welded-steel sculpture, prints, and photograms. Roszak's art functions on many levels, as a complex amalgam, hybrid in its conflation of formal structure, philosophy and mythology, literature and poetry, astrology and cosmology. His work can be seen as a personal statement, an emotional and psychological barometer for his own state of mind, as well as a cultural expression. Given the stylistic breadth of his production, a complex personality emerges: Roszak the romantic, constructivist, surrealist, and expressionist.

Several themes unite what appears, at first glance, to be a diverse, fragmented development. The figure above all stands out as the dominant motif in Roszak's work. The product of a traditional and academic education, the figure, in one form or another, became the

springboard for many of his sculptural ideas. He never questioned its validity; to have purged it from his formal lexicon because of some passing ideological polemic, would have seemed ludicrous to him. Rather, the challenge was to reconstitute its representation. For Roszak, the figure was an essential element, in spite of the "retardataire" connotations it may have had by the early 1950s. As a poignant symbol of continuity and regeneration, the figure embodied the fundamental core of his sculptural sensibility.

Early on, Roszak conceived of the sculptural object as a site of struggle and tension, a forum for the reconciliation and marriage of antithetical principles, an analogue for transformation and technological investigations. During the 1930s he aligned himself with a progressive movement that considered radical politics and abstract art viable models for change. But a strong skepticism also distinguishes Roszak's earliest work. This skepticism, which finds its earliest incarnation in his paintings and drawings in the form of a heart, later explodes with a furious power in his postwar sculpture. Philosophical doubt balanced a vision that could also be utopian and positivistic.

Robust vitality also finds its way into the work. Roszak, a physical and sensual person, found ways to express libidinal energy through provocative forms and images without resorting to crassness or vulgarity. During the 1930s, biomorphic abstraction, coupled with a pristine constructivism, seemed to mask a covert eroticism but, as time went on, as he aged and cultural mores changed, Roszak's images became more and more explicit. Roszak's sexuality was part of a greater life force that animated, as it humanized, his work.

My own involvement with Roszak's work began in 1986, through an exhibition I organized for the List Visual Center for the Arts at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Situated amid work by Robert Smithson, Eva Hesse, Ruth Vollmer, and Michael Lekakis, Roszak's welded-steel sculpture seemed relevant and prescient;[2] its "process-oriented" imagery and anthropomorphic character dealt with a kind of abstraction pertinent to contemporary sculptors

looking for ways beyond Mimimalism's "primary forms." At that time, Roszak's "organic abstraction" provided an historical precedent for a contemporary sculptural abstraction.[3] Still, Roszak was not a forgotten artist when I began my research on him. His career may have gone through periods of eclipse, revaluation and resuscitation, but as an artist who lived and worked through five remarkable decades, the fruits of his labor have not gone unnoticed. H.H. Arneson's catalogue for his traveling retrospective in 1956-57, Joan Seeman Robinson's Ph.D. dissertation for Stanford University, Joan Marter's articles on the constructions, drawings, and photograms, Joan Pachner's comparative analysis with David Smith, and Howard E. Wooden's exhibition catalogue for early work, are a few of the substantive reconsiderations of Roszak's development and iconography within the larger issue of 20th century sculpture.[4]

My own work on Roszak has benefited greatly from what has already been done. H.H. Arneson's catalogue introduction, although it avoided critical assessments and contemporary influences, presented a general overview of the work, as it developed from constructivism and surrealism in the 1930s to expressionism in the 1940s and '50s. In her doctoral dissertation, Joan Seeman Robinson established the central themes that animate Roszak's work between 1932 and 1952, their formal sources, ideological content, and contextual analogues. Seeman's analysis of Roszak's sculpture, from his earliest experiments in carved plaster and subsequent constructions to his postwar welded-steel pieces, though primarily iconographic, also took into consideration the cultural milieu within which many of Roszak's ideas--especially those informed by constructivism, surrealism, mythology, and existentialism--were conceived. Seeman's dissertation, which also includes many quotes by the artist, was an indispensible source and stepping stone for many of my own ideas about Roszak's work. Joan Marter has discussed Roszak's constructions, drawings, and photograms. Her analyses, which survey this work within contemporaneous developments of American and European Bauhaus and Constructivist art, establish the central art historical and stylistic parameters of Roszak's production. Joan Pachner addressed the stylistic and iconographic

differences, as well as some of the similarities, between Roszak and David Smith. Pachner's comparative approach, which highlights important themes in American vanguard sculpture during the 1930s and '40s, provided a better understanding of each sculptor's individual contribution. Howard Wooden's exhibition and catalogue essay focused on a group of paintings, sculptures, and drawings executed between 1929 and 1943. Wooden offered an introduction to some of Roszak's earlier paintings and works on paper, which I subsequently expanded upon.[5] Having access through the artist's estate to preliminary sketches and notebooks he kept for his earliest paintings enabled me to track in greater detail the germination and transformation of his central images. The drawings Roszak made for paintings not only reveal some of his earliest influences--visionary architecture he saw during his year in Europe from 1929 to 1931, scientific manuals, art catalogues, and books by Laszlo Moholy-Nagy and Franz Roh and Jan Tschichold--but his working process as well. For Roszak, painting was a prelude to making sculpture; until he began welding steel after 1945, color remained an essential part of his sculptural conception.

Up until now, most of the Roszak literature has focused on specific aspects of his work. No one has dealt with the entire range of his production. With an artist such as Roszak, who tended to work in various media simultaneously and develop ideas over an extended period of time, a monograph allows for a more comprehensive assessment of his achievements. Also, apart from Seeman, whose dissertation mentions Joseph Campbell, William Barrett, Existentialism, and the literary journal Partisan Review, no one has considered Roszak's work within a broader cultural milieu. For Roszak, such a perspective is illuminating; many of his attitudes--toward abstraction during the 1930s, Existentialism and mythology in the 1940s, and popular culture in the 1950s--reflect an ongoing discourse between other New York intellectuals, his literary counterparts. During the last five years, various studies and books have reconsidered the careers of individual artists and the period before and after World War II according to contemporary developments literature, poetry, philosophy, anthropology, criticism, and politics. These sources,

which constitute an impressive revisionist perspective, provide a contextual background for Roszak's own career.[6]

Roszak tended to invent his own history--not uncommon among artists--and in the process left out people who, in retrospect, now seem integral to his development. He saw himself as an island. But in spite of attempts to isolate himself, to fabricate his own myth, he had a great deal more in common, for example, with those artists who later became Abstract Expressionists than he ever admitted, or perhaps even realized.[7]

He may have preferred to work outside the mainstream, to consciously court an image of himself as detached, but the crux of his ideas share many of the same artistic, cultural, and intellectual sources. Like many artists who became part of the New York School of abstract expressionists, he eventually rejected the utopian gloss and technological orientation of a machine-age sensibility; he embraced European Surrealism for its subversive, sexual, and poetic dynamism, its techniques of automatism and free-association, and its psychological and symbolic overlays; he read and was influenced by many of the same sources, from James Frazer, Carl Jung, and Joseph Campbell to Herman Melville, James Joyce, and T.S. Eliot; he dealt with similar themes--birth and death, resurrection and transcendence, microbiology and cosmology, invocation, totemism, ritualistic violence and rites of passage--in his art and drew on mythical and archetypal imagery to reaffirm what was essential and human; he shared related attitudes toward nature, metamorphosis, and the artist as a vitalistic and mediumistic being. Indeed, within a broader intellectual history, Roszak appears not as an anomaly or outsider, but as someone who, through a different set of circumstances, developed a compatible ideological stance.

Roszak's affinity to the Abstract Expressionists was intensified by an image of himself as erudite and aloof, as a vanguard artist whose concerns were not those of the general populous, particularly when it came to the content and execution of his work. Roszak staunchly maintained his own aesthetic criteria during the postwar period even when it meant being criticized by his

peers and misunderstood by his public. A condescending attitude toward popular culture was shared by a like-minded group of intellectuals--writers, poets, critics--some of whom were associated with Partisan Review. A dedicated subscriber to Partisan Review, Roszak redesigned the journal's cover, in 1937, when William Phillips and Philip Rahv reestablished it as an entity independent of the Communist party. Functioning primarily as a critical journal, Partisan Review provided a liberal forum for cultural debates concerning the role of art, literature, and politics. Roszak not only participated in many of these debates, but had a personal stake in their outcome, especially those involving contemporary painting and sculpture. For instance, Clement Greenberg's criteria for "The New Sculpture," published by Partisan Review in 1949, were questioned by Roszak, whose persistent embrace of Surrealism and figuration made him a pariah within a vanguard group of American artists who came to reject such influences during the late 1940s and '50s. Indeed, Roszak's sculptural aesthetic was antithetical to Greenberg's dicta for "The New Sculpture;" he was unwilling to make the transition from an art that was mythic and humanistic to one more formal and non-representational. In rewriting Roszak's history, I have set out to restore a context for its development and, at the same time, to offer some fresh readings of the work.

In reassessing Roszak's work, I have carefully examined the contents of his estate: hundreds of finished drawings and preliminary sketches, notebooks and correspondence, the various books and journals in his library. Roszak's drawings, many of which remained uncatalogued in his studio after his death, and unavailable to scholars during the artist's lifetime, were an essential part of my research. Roszak drew prolifically throughout his life; drawing was a way for him to conceive and conceptualize ideas. Through his drawings, one is able to track the metamorphosis of an idea from its initial inception to its final resolution. This process clarified aspects of his earliest paintings and provided new insights to more well-known sculptures, such as Spectre of Kitty Hawk and Whaler of Nantucket. Roszak's drawings candidly revealed the

essential pulse of his vision as it transformed from adolescence to old age.

The chapters within this dissertation develop chronologically. Chapter one begins in the late 1920s, with Roszak's adolescence in Chicago and early training in painting and printmaking at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. It also deals with the eye-opening year he spent traveling through Europe on a Anna Louise Raymond Fellowship, his return to New York, in 1931, to an economy racked by the Depression, his fortuitous landing of a Tiffany Foundation Fellowship, and his initial investigations of painting, sculpture, and photography. Before making sculpture, Roszak painted. For him, painting signified a confessional and autobiographical act. An analysis of the work he did between 1932 and 1937 tells us a great deal about the artist as a young man.

Chapter two, as an extension of chapter one, continues with Roszak's employment on the Works Progress Administration's Federal Art Projects and his short-term involvement with the Laboratory School of Industrial Design, from 1938 until it closed about a year later. The 1930s was a critical decade for many artists experimenting with abstraction. Like a coat of many colors, abstraction came to mean different things to different people, and its right to exist, at a time when social realism and American scene painting were dominant sensibilities, was defended by several individuals--Alfred H. Barr, Jr., John Graham, Meyer Schapiro, Stuart Davis--who became spokesmen for its historical basis and contemporary extensions. Roszak had his own opinions about what constituted abstraction. The work he did during this period, particularly his constructions, is better understood when seen in the context of contemporary socio-political developments.

In chapter three I focus on Roszak's life and work during the war years: his arrival, as an art teacher, at Sarah Lawrence College and introduction to Joseph Campbell and the work of Jacques Lipchitz; his war-time efforts as an aircraft mechanic and engineering technician; his eventual rejection of industrial design and Bauhaus-Constructivist principles for a more

expressionistic and mythic orientation; and his inclusion, in 1946, in Dorothy C. Miller's Fourteen Americans show. Roszak's sculpture underwent a radical metamorphosis during the war years. Through drawings in the artist's estate, I discovered a number of things about Spectre of Kitty Hawk and Whaler of Nantucket that not only enhance our understanding of these seminal works, but help to clarify Roszak's postwar aesthetic and persistent involvement with figurative sculpture.

Chapter four reconstructs a critical context for Roszak's postwar work through Clement Greenberg's writings. Perhaps more than any other critic writing about American art after World War II, Greenberg went out of his way to track American sculpture and to establish criteria by which it could be effectively judged. To see Greenberg's notions for "The New Sculpture" as a background against which American sculpture developed from the late 1940s through the 1950s, is to better understand the progression of Roszak's career from a sculptor of great promise to a neglected Surrealist. Greenberg's prescription for abstraction tended to denigrate figurative sculptors. But the monolithic canon he tried to establish was eventually undermined by the very forces he dismissed. As part of an international development brought together, in 1959, by Peter Selz's New Images of Man show, Roszak's figurative work became a central factor in the dissipation of Abstract Expressionism's hegemony.

Chapter five is both a coda and a conclusion. In it, I discuss Roszak's late career during the 1960s and '70s: his monumental public sculpture, and his more intimate and reflective drawings and prints. For more than fifteen years, Roszak pursued public commissions. Beginning with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's bell tower and spire, in 1953-55, these projects propelled his career toward greater visibility. But they were also problematic in terms of their deleterious effect on his health. Late in life, when he was unable to execute large sculpture, drawing and printmaking filled the gap. Roszak's late works on paper are some of the most disturbing and revelatory things he left behind. Their provocative images of dissolution and death culminate the life experiences of an aging artists.

NOTES

1. Bernard Holland, "Theodore Roszak, Sculptor of Eagle at London Embassy," The New York Times, September 4, 1981, p. A12.

2. See my essay, "Natural Inflections of the Abstract Sculptural Object," in Natural Forms and Forces, exh. cat. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: List Visual Arts Center, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1986), pp. 5-17.

3. See my essay, "Organic Inflections," Sculpture Inside Outside, exh. cat. (Minneapolis, Mn.: Walker Art Center, 1988), pp. 49-59.

4. H.H. Arneson, Theodore Roszak, exh. cat. (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1956); Joan Seeman Robinson, "The Sculpture of Theodore Roszak: 1932-1952," Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1979, 2 vols.; Joan M. Marter, "Theodore Roszak's Early Constructions: The Machine as Creator of Fantastic and Ideal Forms," Arts Magazine, 54 (November 1979), pp. 110-13; Marter and Michael Zakian, "Photograms by Theodore Roszak: In Light of the Bauhaus," Arts Magazine, 59 (November 1984), pp. 120-25; Joan Pachner, "Theodore Roszak and David Smith: A Question of Balance," Arts Magazine, 58 (February 1984), pp. 102-14; Howard E. Wooden, Theodore Roszak: The Early Work, 1929-1943, exh. cat. (Kansas: Wichita Art Museum, 1986).

5. See Douglas Dreishpoon, Theodore Roszak: Painting and Drawing from the Thirties, exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 1989).

6. A partial list of these sources includes: Robert Carleton Hobbs and Gail Levin, Abstract Expressionism/The Formative Years, exh. cat. (Ithaca: Cornell University, Herbert F. Johnson Museum, 1978); Serge Guilbaut, How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art: Abstract Expressionism, Freedom, and the Cold War (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983); Paul Shimmel et al., The Interpretive Link: Abstract Surrealism into Abstract Expressionism, exh. cat. (Newport Beach: Newport Harbor Art Museum, 1986); Terry A. Conney, The Rise of the New York Intellectuals: Partisan Review and its Circle (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1986); Michael Auping et al., Abstract Expressionism: The Critical Developments, exh. cat. (New York: Albright-Knox Art Gallery, 1987); Stephen Polcari and Ann Gibson, eds., "New Myths for Old: Redefining Abstract Expressionism," Art Journal, 47 (Fall 1988); Cecile Whiting, Antifascism in American Art (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); Stephen Polcari, Abstract Expressionism and the Modern Experience (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991). Neil Jumonville, Critical Crossings: The New York Intellectuals in Postwar America (California: University of California Press, 1991); Stephen and Robin Larsen, A Fire in the Mind: The Life of Joseph Campbell (New York: Doubleday, 1991); April Kingsley, The Turning Point: The Abstract Expressionists and the Transformation of American Art (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992).

7. I am thinking here of the core group of painters and sculptors: William Baziotes, Herbert Ferber, Adolf Gottlieb, Franz Kline, Willem de Kooning, Robert Motherwell, Barnett Newman, Jackson Pollock, David Smith, and Clyfford Still.

CHAPTER 1: PAINTING INTO SCULPTURE: THE LATE 1920S AND 1930S

Roszak as Painter

Theodore Roszak was introduced to painting as a student at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago during the late 1920s. Painting has always been the standard fare of art schools and academies in Europe as well as America. Consider the varied careers of Julio Gonzalez, Alberto Giacometti, David Smith, Louise Bourgeois, and Eva Hesse: each eventually altered the history of sculpture, but each began as, or aspired to be, a painter.

David Smith, for one, refused to distinguish the significance between his painting and his sculpture. During "The New Sculpture," a symposium sponsored by The Museum of Modern Art in 1952, he proposed: "Since the turn of the century painters have led the aesthetic front both in number and concept. Outside of Brancusi, the greatest sculptures were mostly made by painters."[1] Smith felt strongly about the role of painting in the sculptural enterprise, and a recollection he offered about his own development directly parallels Roszak's:

> My student period was only involved with painting. The painting developed into raised levels from the canvas. Gradually the canvas was the base and the painting was a sculpture. I have never recognized any separation in the concept of painting and sculpture except one element of dimension. The first painting of cave men was both carved line and color, a natural reaction and a total statement.[2]

Roszak described his own evolution in similar terms. During an extended interview conducted by James H. Elliott in 1956 he said:

> Painting, of course, was something that one was introduced to as a young student and developed....Painting became the basis upon which projections were possible and once painting reached the relative purity of a two-dimensional plane, then it was perfectly simple to assume the projection of this two-dimensional plane into the realm of a bas-relief, and from there into the practically unlimited sphere of free space....[3]

Even at this late date, when a major traveling retrospective organized by the Walker Art Center assured his reputation as a sculptor, Roszak still thought about painting:

> I am still in love with painting and I regret that I do not have the time to do a great deal of it. I am looking forward to being able to arrange a program of work whereby I can give more time to painting and thinking about more ambitious things in painting, rather than doing the supplementary kind of probing for forms that serves only as a means for sculpture (drawings and watercolors). I would like to look forward to a time when I can think of sculpture and painting as major activities of equal importance.[4]

Obviously, painting offered Roszak certain things that sculpture could not. Freed from constructive constraints, the canvas functioned as an arena for dialogue and confrontation, where multiple images could enter and be tested. But Roszak's intended return to painting never really materialized the way he envisioned it. Apart from a series of abstractions executed during the late 1960s and early 1970s, his involvement with painting after 1940 was sporadic. And yet, to truly understand the artist's sculptural production, an assessment of his painting is essential.

Seen as a painterly prelude to a sculptural career, Roszak's earliest canvases reveal a great deal about their author. They provide us with a picture of the artist as a young man. Multiple themes emerge; some are rejected early on, while others undergo continuous transformation and metamorphosis. Roszak would rework a subject for years (something he also did with sculpture) if its composition and content intrigued him. By examining his notebooks, sheets of sketches, and studies in oil, along with the final works, the basic tenor of his sensibility crystallizes. Some of these paintings are distinctly autobiographical; nostalgic recollections of Poland, self-portraits, and exuberant proclamations of a man dedicated to his art and music, newly married and in love. Others are more referential and art historical, alluding to works, ideas, and places encountered during his sojourn in Europe between 1929 and 1931. These paintings allow us to track the formal evolutions of some of the first sculptural objects Roszak executed between 1932 and 1936. They also intimate the artist's double-edged attitude toward machines and technology.

Most of the literature on Roszak highlights his "machine aesthetic," his involvement with technology and tools, and his fascination with science, cosmology, and space travel. Roszak may have accepted without reservation the formal implications of machines, but early on he had doubts

about whether technology could be humanized. His ambivalence found its analogue in a disturbing image--the "mechanical man." What began as a seed of doubt grew as time went on. And Roszak's eventual disillusionment with progressive technology following the devastation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and his rejection of a Constructivist sensibility for mythic and archetypal imagery, was not just the result of an ideological about-face, but, as we shall see, a reassessment of questions that had preoccupied him since the early 1930s.

Mastering the Basics

Roszak was a gifted student. His aptitude for drawing (the persistent backbone of his life's work), coupled with his ability to digest and visually assimilate almost everything he came into contact with, gave him an edge early on. But when discussing his development, he always drew a fine distinction between his "student" period and that which followed. It was important, he felt, to separate his earliest efforts from his "mature" work. For him, the separation occurred in 1929, when, at age twenty-two, he received the Anna Louise Raymond Fellowship for European Study from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and subsequently traveled to France, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Austria, and Italy. Comparing what he did as a student, from about 1927 to 1929, with the work he executed during and after his stay in Europe, transitions become clearly noticeable--from nature to technology, literal transcription to experimental interpretation, and overt figuration to suggestive abstraction. But these remain transitions rather than the sharp distinctions Roszak perceived. The initial results of his exposure to vanguard art in Europe were hybrid. His "student" years--no less than other biographical facts--had a strong residual effect. For this reason, it is worth recalling the details of his studies and family background.

Roszak's mother had been a dress designer at the Hohenzollern court in Berlin, and she had a natural inclination for all things artistic. (Her father had been an accomplished organist and

composer, as well as a professor of mathematics, and her brother was an artist who specialized in historical illustrations.) She brought this aptitude for art with her to Chicago in 1909, where she instilled a strong sense of beauty in her son. The way she organized her home, her lay interest in science and biology, discussions about spiritual matters, birth, and growing up, all these things made an indelible impression on young Roszak. Years later, he continued to speak of her in glowing terms:

> My mother was the so-called spiritual guide of the family. She really understood relationships that went beyond ordinary living, and I would say that if any one single import had bearing upon my early development, it was the presence of my mother--her dreams, her aspirations. She was a great craftsman, a designer in her own right.... She knew what it meant to appease a creative need, or the requirements of a creative mind.[5]

If Roszak's mother was the spiritual guide of the family, his father was, at a more basic level, the provider, "a man who offered shelter and food, and that's about it."[6] Roszak's interaction with his father during adolescence was fraught with tension and conflict:

> My father was terribly disappointed because I didn't continue in business administration so that I could study law....he was a disciplinarian...a powerful man...a simple, uneducated, skillful worker with...a limited imagination and a tremendous sense of dedication, a tremendous sense of husbandry and responsibility....my father was a kind of silent partner in this whole growing up process.[7]

At times, though, Roszak's father was not so silent and disagreements between father and son frequently erupted into full-scale confrontations. That young Roszak would even consider becoming an artist was an anathema to his father, whose pragmatic, meat-and-potatoes sensibility probably rejected such a notion as ephemeral, a youthful indulgence given the family's lower middle-class background. In spite of his father's objections, however, art and music became a central part of Roszak's life. Early on he mastered the violin, and he recalled drawing by the time he was about five or six:

> Drawing was one of my earliest responses; it was automatic. It was simple to do. It was available. There was always paper and something to scratch with, and I began drawing very, very early in life. Drawing was so important because the hardships of a child in this alien atmosphere with the conflicting mores of the

> European country, European customs and this new world were beckoning and expecting other things. All this was not simple, and drawing was a tremendous relief, a sympathetic response, something that appeased one's misunderstood repressions...so that it started early.[8]

Roszak was only two when his family emigrated from Poznan, Poland, to the United States and settled in Chicago. The decision to make Chicago their home was a practical one. Friends and relatives were already living there, and the midwestern city had a large, close-knit Polish community. But Roszak's earliest years in Chicago were difficult. One of seven children, he was third in line. His oldest brother had died shortly after the family arrived in Chicago. His sister, Aniel, was a year older than he; his brother, Ant, was three years younger.[9] Roszak later recalled his childhood as being "constantly surrounded by opposing forces, constantly being surrounded by the antagonism of one thing and another, national, ideological, economic, and so on."[10]

By the 1920s, Chicago was a melting pot of immigrant cultures (German, Italian, Jewish, and Scandinavian), each struggling to survive and, in the process, demeaning each other as foreigners. As an adolescent of ten, Roszak was caught in the refugee's double-bind: he was expected to maintain and respect his Polish roots, but also, out of necessity, forced to assimilate his new, American environment. What sustained him throughout this difficult period was dreaming "about art...about getting alone to make a drawing...about going to art school." "Later on," he remarked to Phillips, "when I was in the 5th or 6th grade, I was already aware of the Art Institute of Chicago [through friends of the family whose children were enrolled], and I set my sights there.... It was the sustaining element in my life. Without that it would be difficult to know what would have happened because it was just too much for any child to assimilate that steady turmoil. Conflict never ceased. It always existed."[11] Ironically, Roszak's entry into art school, initially as a part-time student taking night classes, precipitated an intense conflict. At the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, drawing from female models was a standard academic practice. It seems, however, that such a practice, when confessed to his parish priest, was condemned as impure. Told

by the priest that he had to choose between "ordinary art" and Christian art, Roszak ultimately decided to "drop the institution of the church" in order "to continue with some degree of freedom in the arts."[12] His decision, given his family's strong Catholic background and his own ambivalence, though painful, explains in part his early interest in philosophy, cosmology, and non-western religions during the late 1920s and early 1930s, and his subsequent study of world mythology and psychology--the writings of Carl Jung and Joseph Campbell. This early incident probably propelled Roszak to art as an intellectual discipline, a means of investigating personal iconography gleaned from diverse sources and pursuing alternative, non-traditional pathways to religion. Also, this confrontation may have liberated Roszak to marry outside his faith.

By 1923, at age fifteen, Roszak had registered for evening classes with Charles Schroeder and Wellington Reynolds at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. The first people he met through the school, and the ideas he encountered, reinforced his commitment to art as a way beyond ecclesiastical dogma. After finishing high school he enrolled at the school as a full-time day student. Except for a brief period during 1925 and 1926, when he studied in New York with Charles W. Hawthorne and George Luks and attended classes in philosophy and logic at Columbia University, Roszak was a favored student at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.[13] When he returned to Chicago in 1927, he was asked to join the faculty as a part-time instructor of drawing and lithography. In 1928 he was awarded an American Traveling Fellowship of $250 to visit museums on the East Coast and to pursue his study of lithography in Woodstock, New York.[14] Upon his return, he was made a full-time member of the faculty, a position he held until his departure for Europe the following year.

As a student and instructor, some of Roszak's most ambitious achievements were in drawing and lithography. Many of his earliest impressions, pulled between 1927 and 1929, show a facile draftsmanship and compositional sophistication (Fig. 1). With the exception of a few landscapes and still lifes, most of his student work is figurative. While some of his prints and

drawings seem somewhat academic in subject matter and execution, others are conceptually more daring. As a group they reveal a precocious artist learning his metier and forging his own vision. The nature of Roszak's vision at this particular point is already a curious amalgam, colored, on the one hand, by his Polish background, and, on the other, by his growing technical facility and imagination. That he chose, for example, to use peasants as one of his earliest subjects reflects his own Polish tradition and emulation of the older European artists then working and teaching in Chicago. Not only was it acceptable for artists to explore their ethnic roots, it was au courant. As one writer, discussing attitudes toward art in Chicago during the 1920s, remarked,

> Throughout the twenties the art scene in Chicago was a kind of grab-bag in which one could find a little bit of everything. Amid the plethora of choices the non-critical attitude made its contribution. Instead of one style or one concept of "genius," artists were moved by a state of mind applicable to multiple styles and modes of procedure. The modest claim of 'sincerity' came forward; and it, sincerity, determined whether a mode was to be embraced or not. Peasant roots were implicitly regarded as good indicators that sincerity was present, and artists who could boast 'roots in the soil' were popular in the twenties.[15]

Several prominent teachers, themselves emigres, encouraged students to take up Old World subjects from their past. In a new land of opportunity, where American subjects were certainly plentiful, these artists preferred instead to probe their own ethnic roots. One of Roszak's teachers at the School of the Art Institute, Boris Anisfeldt, was unabashedly Russian in manner and sensibility. Having done extraordinary set and costume designs for Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, in 1906-08, Anisfeldt came to Chicago in 1921, where he headed up the department of painting from 1928 until his retirement in 1958.[16] He was joined at the school by Albin Polasek, a Czech, who ran the department of sculpture from 1916 to 1936. Both Anisfeldt and Polasek instilled in their students the desire to perpetuate ethnic heritage. They even organized evenings in their studios, where they entertained their young audiences with colorful stories and native folk songs.

Given Roszak's Polish-agrarian background, it is not surprising that such a grass-roots philosophy fell on receptive ears. Even Woodstock (Fig. 2), executed while he was living in

Woodstock, New York, is transformed by Old World nostalgia. This is not the Woodstock one would have encountered back in 1928 or 1929. Far from being a faithful rendering of this small rustic town in the Catskills, Roszak's interpretation is colored by fantasy. With its rolling hills punctuated with small shacks, the scene looks more like a town somewhere in eastern Europe. It is a re-creation rather than a transcription, a perception transformed by memory and imagination.

What later developed into a full-blown "machine aesthetic" was initially symbolic, figurative, and highly romantic, as seen in the composition that won Roszak the Anna Louise Raymond Fellowship. Illustrated in The Chicago Evening Post in 1929 (present location unknown),[17] it shows an extended and emaciated procession of female figures, like angels at the Ascension, hovering above an industrial scene. Their ethereal weightlessness and spiritual aura recall the tableaux of Puvis de Chavannes. With its religious overtones, industrial motifs, and allegorical content, this work is a curious combination of realism and fin-de-siecle symbolism.[18] A highly romantic and symbolic figuration persists in Roszak's work even after he takes up the materials and techniques of a Constructivist-Bauhaus orientation. In one form or another, figural imagery remains an essential motif during the 1930s, and abstraction a way of masking the figure's representational complexion without undermining its philosophical, erotic, and humanistic implications.

By the time Roszak left Chicago in 1929, he had become something of a celebrity. In addition to the honors he received at the School of the Art Institute, he was also admitted to the Graduate Atelier during his last year (Fig. 3). Set up for the purpose of giving a select group of advanced students intensive professional training, the Graduate Atelier functioned under the direct supervision of the dean. Visiting instructors were hired to discuss students' work and to propose specific problems for them to work on. During 1927-28, instructors included Daniel Garber, Henry G. Keller, Hermann Dudley Murphy, Robert de la Montagne St. Hubert, Charles H. Woodbury, and Charles W. Hawthorne. Mural painting, considered a highly marketable skill, was added to

the graduate agenda, and Roszak studied it with St. Hubert.

Following his graduation, Roszak was given the opportunity to exhibit some of his lithographs at Allerton House (a Chicago Hotel that also functioned as a commercial art gallery). He shared the billing with his friend and fellow graduate Jaroslav Brozik, and the show received favorable reviews. But by far the most prestigious crowning of his student career was receiving the Anna Louise Raymond Fellowship. Being one of the first recipients from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago to be awarded the $1500 stipend, Roszak made good press. "He goes to Europe," one reporter wrote, "not to study with any artist, but to see the old masters in the museums, to follow up his experiments in lithography in some printing studio in Paris, and possibly at Fontainebleau, to carry further his first lesson in fresco painting with Robert St. Hubert when he sat at the Art Institute."[19]

About this time, Roszak also met Robert Harshe, Director of the Art Institute of Chicago, who later introduced him to Juliana Force, Director of the Whitney Museum of American Art, after his return from Europe. Roszak left Chicago with accolades and never returned to the city to live. In Europe, what he discovered was more than "the old masters in the museums"; he found an avant-garde whose vision of art issued from the very fabric of contemporary culture.

Wanderjahre in Europe

Roszak was deeply affected by the vanguard art he saw and experienced in Europe, so much so that the difference between his student work and what followed is dramatic. Chicago certainly had seen a goodly amount of vanguard European art during the 1920s.[20] Why had Roszak not responded to it? H.H. Arnason noted that as a student Roszak spent most of his time working with instructors or in the environment of the school. According to Arnason, Roszak's total dedication to school and his teachers "involved first that passion for learning and learning thoroughly which

characterized Roszak's entire career; then there was the simple economic factor. As a prize student and a valued instructor, the artist could be assured of a steady income at the school, something of considerable importance since he always had to earn his own way."[21] So if Roszak had opportunities to study modern European art during his student years, he chose not to. Instead, his mentors remained the more conservative faculty at the Art Institute and the standard-bearers of American realism, George Luks, Leon Kroll, Eugene Speicher, and George Bellows. But in Europe he took off in an entirely new direction. No longer the "prize student" who pleased his teachers, he was free to experiment with new ideas. Inspired by vanguard periodicals, catalogues, books, exhibitions, and architectural monuments, he began to forge a new formal vocabulary. During his fifteen months abroad, Roszak looked at everything, from Italian Quattrocento painting and the work of Giorgio de Chirico to astronomical instruments, experimental photography and film, and futuristic architecture.

Given the eclectic nature of his investigations during this time, it is no wonder Roszak had difficulty remembering specific influences:

> It was Europe that first introduced me to the great modern movement, so that going to Europe and seeing these things was a kind of strange and wonderful experience, one that did not quite allow for any strong convictions at the moment. In other words, there was an overall absorption of many, many things, an infinite variety of surprises. So I did not have any crystallized idea other than discovering this wonderful world of geometric relations, formal innovations. Anything that had the quality of a problem in formal relations and a problem of invention intrigued me. And I recall, of course, very definitely that the cubists', and the abstracts', and the surrealists' visions were part of my central excitement.[22]

Though he mentions the Cubists and Surrealists in general, the one artist he does acknowledge specifically as having had a profound impact on him was de Chirico. "I loved de Chirico," he said, "for example, those metaphysical paintings. Because they had a kind of, one might say, nostalgia for romanticism in the best sense coupled with a firm formalistic control, and I responded to those very, very positively."[23] The Italian painter, immersed in the art of his ancestors, infused classicism with contemporary melancholy, skepticism, and the unconscious world of dreams. He

had impeccable technique. He understood classical drawing. His compositions were provocative. He had poetic imagination. Exactly where Roszak first encountered de Chirico's work, and in what form, is uncertain.[24] What we do know is that when Roszak arrived in Paris in 1929 he purchased a small paperback that reproduced examples of de Chirico's work.[25]

In Europe, Roszak followed an ambitious itinerary rather than stay in one place. Shortly after landing sometime in September or October, he and his traveling companion, Jaroslav Brozik, went to Paris, where they stayed for about two months. They then toured around Europe before settling in Prague, Czechoslovakia, where Roszak established a studio for nine months and made frequent excursions to Austria, Germany, and Italy. "It was really great," he remembered, "because one could just shoot out for one or two weeks, or a month, and come back and get to work....living in this city [Praque], one had a tremendous radius of operation...it was a kind of clearing house for cultural events in that part of Europe.... One could go to Germany...Vienna...or any part of Italy...it was all very convenient."[26] The decision to make Prague, rather than Paris, his base of operations was a practical one. Roszak spoke Polish and Brozik spoke Czech; neither spoke French. They opted to stay in Prague, where at least one of them knew the language. During his sojourn in Europe, Roszak executed about five paintings, a small number of finished drawings and preliminary sketches, and acquired a number of books and catalogues.[27] His work reflects diverse influences and ideas, and its experimental content marks an obvious turning point in his development.

Perhaps one of the first pictures that Roszak painted in Prague in 1930 is a Self-Portrait (Fig. 4). Compositionally, the painting recalls Renaissance portraiture, where a single figure, posed in a three-quarter view, dominates the foreground and a window appears in the background, introducing another level of reality, usually a pastoral landscape. Such Renaissance devices are given a contemporary inflection in Roszak's picture. One senses de Chirico's influence, as well as Piero della Francesca, but the associations that Roszak set up between himself and his projected

environment ultimately reflect personal choices. The basic design is worked out in a preliminary sketch (Fig. 5): the three-quarter profile, the position of the left arm holding a book, and the inclusion of a landscape seen through a window. From the sketch to the final painting, however, several significant changes have been made. What initially began as a realistic landscape punctuated by clouds, rolling hills, vegetation, and a medieval church, becomes more and more visionary, as color is keyed in and Roszak replaces the church with an astronomical observatory. Substituting a book and drafting tools (triangle, protractor, and caliper) for the traditional painter's palette and brushes, he renders himself as a visionary artist and architect. His preoccupation with drafting instruments and text not only signals a burgeoning Constructivist mentality (one is reminded of El Lissitzky's own self-portrait, The Constructor (1924), reproduced on the front cover of Foto-Auge), but introduces a new iconography inspired by a progressive worldview.

Tools and technology functioned on two very different but related levels. On the one hand, they served as a means of generating new forms and probing, investigating, and measuring one's physical environment. On the other, they functioned metaphysically as a way of siting oneself within the universe. While traveling through Europe, Roszak saw Erich Mendelsohn's Einstein Tower (1920-24) in Potsdam, Germany.[28] Designed as an experimental research facility, a laboratory and telescope combined into one edifice, the tower's observatory dome linked the heavens to the earth, the celestial to the terrestrial. As a child living in Chicago, Roszak had built his own telescope and had seen astronomical instruments on exhibition at the Field Museum. Many years later his interest in such things was revived by his visits to scientific museums and exhibitions of industrial design in Munich and Berlin as well as Brno, and his purchase, in Praque, of Garrett P. Serviss's Curiosities of the Sky: A Popular Presentation of the Great Riddles and Mysteries of Astronomy.[29] He even made a special trip to see Kepler's astronomical apparatuses in the Museum Augustinum Ferdinanum at Kremunster Abbey outside Prague. If stargazing offered Roszak a metaphor for intellectual exploration, then his inclusion of an astronomical

observatory in this Self-Portrait and his rendering of the chessmen as "rockets" reveal a romantic sensibility that searched for cosmic equivalents.[30]

Early on Roszak tended to see his life in a cosmological and philosophical context. His study of works by Francis Bacon and William James at Columbia University[31] reinforced this inclination, which became more pronounced as time went on. During the late 1920s and throughout the 1930s, Bauhaus and Constructivist principles, coupled with a positivistic belief in progressive technology, superseded an earlier affinity with landscape and nature. When nature reemerged as a prominent aspect of Roszak's work during the mid-1940s, its brutal expression, through archetypal images, signified a strong humanistic skepticism that had existed all along. Within this ideological progression, history--both his own and humankind's--played a vital role.

In Seated Woman (Fig. 6), a possible pendent to Self-Portrait, sketched in Siena in 1929 and painted in Paris in 1930[32], the balancing of past, present, and future is made even more explicit. A female figure seated in the foreground holds an architectural model in her lap, and a treelike form sprouts from her left hand. Windows to either side look out over a landscape, and a vine entwined around a pole grows skyward in the lower left-hand passage. The picture's general format recalls a 1926 de Chirico painting, in which a mannequin seated on a wooden platform overlooking the sea supports various architectural forms in her lap (Fig. 7). What particularly interested Roszak, besides the work's allegorical overtones, was de Chirico's compositional scheme: a frontal figure seated within a quasi-portico flanked by windows. In Seated Woman, a separate reality is projected out each window: on one side a medieval town, on the other something more futuristic and surreal. What do these landscapes tell us about the strange woman in the foreground? Does she represent a harbinger of things to come, a prophetic entity personifying an agrarian past--Roszak's past--a technological future? Is her presence intended as a reconciliation? Or is she a cipher, a sign of transition and change?

Stranger things happen in Early Leave (Fig. 8). The title itself is enigmatic. Does it imply

Roszak's departure from Europe in 1931, the year the picture was painted? Like other paintings from this period, Early Leave is a bizarre composite of empirical observations and imaginative associations that suggest an encounter between nature and technology. Roszak later remarked: "The towers in Bologna, seen from a distance, reminded me of American 'skyscrapers.' At close range they were enchanting masonry [sic] of silent sentinels."[33] What are they watching over? Strange lights and shadows warp and distort architectural forms into ballistic projections. Landscape, anthropomorphized, seems to breathe and to heave, as though some internal transformation toward architecture were beginning to take place. Streamlined clouds recede into infinity (a motif favored by de Chirico) and a dirigible appears out of nowhere in the upper left-hand passage. Enter technology and with it new possibilities for sculptural form. Early Leave is a dream fantasy of leave-taking. Viewed from above, the scene appears distant and removed; it is a point of departure, departing from the past and entering into the future.

Before embarking for America, Roszak spent six months in Paris. This time he saw the city in an entirely different light. Having spent the last ten months working intensely and programmatically, and with the prospect of returning to America, he was more relaxed and receptive to the city's joie de vivre. What had been a methodical and disciplined approach up until now became more spontaneous:

> I just wanted to grasp the spirit of the place, the meaning of the place, the real ground of its being and so on. Fortunately this had a terrific effect on loosening up the tight and fixed ends and joints so that the work I did in Paris had, for the first time that I'm able to account, the meaning of expressing an idea, a sensibility rather than a problem. Everything [previously] had been a problem. Everything had to be streamlined formally. In Paris, all this changed.[34]

Roszak spent a good deal of time in the Louvre, studying the old masters. He also investigated the work of Picasso, Braque, Gris, and Leger. Synthetic Cubism appealed to him as a way of conceiving and structuring pictorial form (Fig. 9). It also gave him carte blanche to assemble still-life arrangements with cards, musical instruments, and other domestic objects that had personal significance for him, and eventually it became a stepping-stone toward more

sculptural investigations. When he arrived back in America and set up a studio in Staten Island, New York, he pursued these and other possibilities with unbounded energy and freedom.

Return to New York: Paintings and Painted Relief Sculpture, 1931-1937

Roszak was blessed with golden opportunities at important junctures in his career. Such was the case in 1931, when, upon returning from Paris to New York, he received a Tiffany Foundation Fellowship, which enabled him to live and work in Oyster Bay, Long Island for the summer, and ultimately to marry Florence Sapir. "It's [the Tiffany Foundation] a little bit like the MacDowell Colony thing," he recalled, "a large place where artists, students, sculptors, and painters are given the opportunity to work under conditions of privacy and with the understanding that this a mature group able to sustain a creative effort, and more or less self-sufficient....We had all our daily necessities taken care of, so there was nothing to do but think of one's work."[35] The Tiffany Fellowship subsequently enabled the young couple to settle in Staten Island for two years (Fig. 10). Though money was a big concern during the depression years, Roszak was able to work without interruptions or distractions. He not only continued to paint and to push his work in sculptural directions, but he also took up photography. It was a time of gestation and exploration of new techniques and materials, new ideas and images, and a mature view of himself as married, settled, and worldly. Working in the peaceful environs of Staten Island gave him the chance to further extend ideas that had been only passing impressions in Europe. With a home and studio, and a wife completely dedicated to his artistic aspirations, he worked through a series of images with intense concentration.[36]

Sheets of sketches and several notebooks from this period reveal that Roszak initiated and developed certain themes simultaneously. For instance, at the same time he is making compositional adjustments to Man Sewing (Fig. 36), an image conceived in 1932-36, he is also

brainstorming and refining 42nd Street, Recording Sound, and Sight and Sound. The synchronism with which various images emerge during this time is fascinating, and his ability to complete one while simultaneously conceiving another characterizes his particular way of working. He drew the way he thought. His sketches are facile exercises in imagistic free association and serial development. A way of loosening up and stretching out, they also stockpiled ideas whose extensions were concomitantly painterly, sculptural, and photographic. Given this working method, it makes sense to see Roszak's painting, sculpture, lithography, and photography as manifestations of a single vision. For him, a mutuality among media was inevitable because ideas naturally evolved through formal relations, formal transformations, and formal permutations.

Whenever discussing his work before 1945, Roszak usually stressed its formal, rather than its personal or autobiographical, character. His response to a question James Elliott asked about his transition from painting to sculpture in 1931-32 is typical:

> I think the important thing here is to again recall the early European experience which opened the whole world of formal values and formal possibilities to me, and then shifting that formal emphasis back into an American environment, particularly New York, or let us say in its large metropolitan aspects. I felt at that time a very close relationship between these formal studies and the whole world of design as it affected the American mentality. In other words, New York, or Chicago for that matter, or any other large city, was not only a place in which to paint or do sculpture, but also to live and reconcile oneself to a kind of milieu of forms.[37]

Perhaps it was easier, and certainly less revealing, for him to emphasize formal issues; after all, they were an integral part of his work, and by 1956, de rigeur in vanguard circles. But by doing so he threw shadows across the personal iconography and symbolism that distinguish his images. However, Roszak did acknowledge, in a general way, the symbolic significance of form when he recalled his response to the theoretical writings of Henri Focillon:

> I understood his interpretation of form [in Vie des Formes, 1934] as one that gave me a clarification in relationship to the larger motives of man....It was not merely a question of recognizing the formal virtues, but he almost posited the kind of thing that [Andre] Malraux now talks about [in The Psychology of Art: The Creative Act, 1949], the existential role of the artist, the way in which the artist is able to carry on the great spiritual continuity of the past without sacrificing the

> meaning of his art or without clouding it with metaphysics, but rather that the work itself is a way of life, and points up to a creative process in such a way, with such intensity and meaning, that it actually becomes not only the morality but the spiritual concomitant of the whole human psychology....In other words, we are getting beyond the limits of formal relationships and actually seeing the counterpart of conceptual ideas and content within those forms.[38]

In the majority of painted images Roszak produced between 1931 and 1937, it seems impossible to dissociate his formal explorations from his autobiographical confessions. Consider Opus #5 (Etude) (Fig. 11), for example, painted in 1931. In one sense the picture is a formal exercise, functioning, like its musical counterpart, as an arrangement executed for the practice of technique. But it is the nature of the forms themselves that is most interesting. Frets, tuning pegs, an exotic soundboard, and the neck of a violin dovetail with Roszak's own love of and preoccupation with music as well as the work's title. Such an assortment of musical paraphernalia offered him a host of symbols for what he considered to be an essential part of his sensibility.

Roszak had studied the violin as an adolescent in Chicago. When he left for Europe, he brought the instrument with him. Music was still an important part of his life, and he continued with it even after he returned to New York. Eventually, however, he gave up music, probably for lack of time, and his ambivalence is played out in many of his early paintings and drawings from this period.

Indeed, music permeates many of Roszak's early works, whether it is implied through instrumentation, musical notation, or recording and sound equipment. Composition Alastor (Fig. 12), painted the same year as Opus #5, celebrates Roszak's love of music; at the same time, it is a wedding portrait that celebrates his marriage to Florence. An alastor, in Greek antiquity, was an avenging deity or demon. Roszak described the picture as "a union celebrated by the gods" and dedicated to "friends who lived, loved and died together;"[39] perhaps he saw the institution of marriage as a way of avenging time's divisiveness.

Composition Alastor was shown in the First Whitney Biennial in 1932-33. Given this context, in which Roszak's picture shared a gallery with other works by Konrad Cramer, Charles

Sheeler, Francis Criss, Niles Spencer, Georgia O'Keeffe, and Arthur Dove, Composition Alastor must have stood out as a strange hybrid creation, a curious amalgam of geometric abstraction, mechanized figuration, and personal innuendo. Many sketches were made for the picture. In one (Fig. 13), the notion of union is synonymous with embracing, coupling, and giving birth. Here, as in the final painting, the figure is a central motif, streamlined, pierced, and abstracted. During the 1930s Roszak's conception of abstraction never totally abandoned the figure, even when, as in the "bipolar" constructions and Chrysalis (Fig. 54), its traditional presentation was obfuscated.

In another series of ink drawings executed about the same time as Composition Alastor, Roszak probed the erotic possibilities of biomorphic form (Figs. 14, 15). Male and female are implied by abstract anatomical shapes. These highly suggestive drawings remained clandestine in the artist's studio, but the sexual implications of biomorphic configurations were further explored in Torso Manique, 1931-32 (Fig. 16), the sculptural equivalent to Composition Alastor. This kind of criss-cross, figure-eight configuration converging at the center, becomes the prototype for a series of bipolar constructions, which Roszak made between about 1932 and 1943 (Fig. 48, 52). As a means of uniting antithetical principles--male-female, geometric-biomorphic, abstraction-representation--a bipolar orientation gained prominence in Roszak's formal lexicon and philosophical worldview.

In his search for ways to extend and modernize traditional figuration, Roszak never relinquished his humanity and humor, his romanticism and skepticism--aspects that assumed a symbolic incarnation in the form of a heart. In Composition Alastor, Roszak wears the heart on his arm, where it coexists with himself, his new wife, and his music (inferred by his violin). For Roszak, the heart becomes the humanistic ghost in the technological machine. That it appears here, in the context of a wedding portrait, makes perfect sense, and it continues to reappear in various contexts.

As a traditional symbol of love and emotion, the heart has an extended poetic history.

Roszak's first encounter with it was scientific and anatomical. During his days as an art student in Chicago he studied human anatomy and observed dissections at the University of Illinois School of Medicine.[40] Some of his earliest sketches of the heart, which appear in the first pages of an old brown notebook (Fig. 17), were copied directly from Gray's Anatomy, the fundamental art studio guide to anatomy. What was initially grounded in anatomical exactitude developed into more fantastic interpretations, as in Metaphysical Structure (Fig. 18) and Still Life with Heart (Fig. 19). While some artists of Roszak's generation--Louis Lozowick and Ralston Crawford--embraced the clarity and pristine character of machine-generated forms, others had their doubts and uncertainties. After all, where was humanity in all this talk about machines? In his One Thousand Horse Power Heart of about 1938 (Fig. 20), Isamu Noguchi transformed a biological pump into a veritable engine. Abstracted from its physiological body, the heart functioned metaphorically on many levels as a potent sign of isolation and dehumanization--and of life and hope.

One also finds a pierced heart in Roszak's En Masque (Fig. 21) of 1932. Suspended by a string just above the neck of a violin, it seems directed toward the playing card at lower right. It thus sets up a tension, as though Roszak were once again trying to balance and integrate all things dear to him: his wife, his art, his music. Playing cards appear in his work as early as 1928 (Fig. 1), and they reappear in many of his still lifes of 1930-32. Cards signified chance or fate, a way of admitting doubt.[41] The club card in En Masque could be Roszak's trump, but it is also marks his ambivalence. If he is still trying to balance his devotion to music with his life's ambition to become an artist, one thing is certain: he had Florence as his spiritual support and inspiration. She not only modeled for En Masque, but also for a host of portraits he painted during the 1930s (Fig. 22). Many of these are stylish and suggestive: Florence as the machine-age Garbo, veiled and mysterious. Though her features change, and in some cases are dramatically distorted, one can usually locate her within the image. She becomes a constant presence in Roszak's work, and many of his canvases are inscribed as gifts to her.

If Roszak had doubts about his future in 1932, by 1934, the year he painted Fisherman's Bride (Fig. 23), he had reason to be more confident and self-assured. The picture was not only exhibited in the second Whitney Annual but was purchased by Juliana Force for the museum's permanent collection.[42] His work began to appear in various group exhibitions across the country--The Art Institute of Chicago, Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, and The Oakland Museum, California--and in 1935 he was given a retrospective at the off beat International Art Center of the Roerich Museum in New York. Organized around an extended group of paintings, drawings, watercolors, and lithographs--a total of 132 items--the Roerich show presented a summery of his accomplishments to date. For the most part, reviews of the show were favorable, though some were critical. One reviewer, for instance, praised Roszak's "versatility," but questioned his ability to create a "new reality" by combining aspects of nature with "principles of abstract design."[43] Whatever their critical tone, these reviews helped to place Roszak and his work into a more mainstream discourse.

In Fisherman's Bride, self-assurance and optimism are key. In contract to the tension in En Masque, Fisherman's Bride exudes prosperity and well-being and, like Composition Alastor, it is a declaration of marital union. (One could also see the painting as Roszak's own interpretation of the biblical miracle of the loaves and fishes.) The bond between the fisherman and his wife is based on love and commitment. Roszak saw himself as the fisherman, the provider, and his marriage as the ship that must be cared for and maintained. By 1934 the couple had moved from Staten Island into Manhattan, where they rented an apartment on East 33rd Street. In Fisherman's Bride, Staten Island, lit up like some natural wonder, is relegated to the background, like a fading memory. Roszak also included what appears to be a scale between himself and his wife, with a small fish suspended from it. On one level, the symbolic implications of a scale suggests Roszak's preoccupation with balance; but the scale here also resembles early navigational octants and sextants used by sailors to chart their position on the high seas. The artist

drew sketches of such instruments (Fig. 24) and they were also reproduced in a technical catalogue he owned from the Adler Planetarium and Astronomical Museum in Chicago (Fig. 25).[44] His inclusion of an octant, as well as the moon, in the upper right-hand corner of the painting, suggests an extraterrestrial dimension. Roszak's marriage does indeed become "a union celebrated by the gods," particularly when it is contemplated within a celestial context.[45]

Roszak always remained an incurable romantic. His earliest paintings--Composition Alastor, En Masque, and Fisherman's Bride--are more like personal confessions. The artist no doubt considered these to be serious works, painted from the heart, so to speak, even if today their saturated color, fantasy overtones and melodrama, which suggest a cross between De Chirico and Walt Disney, have an illustrative, kitsch-like quality.

While living in Staten Island, Roszak executed some of his first sculpture, which began as painted reliefs. Recording Sound (Fig. 26), constructed around the same time as Opus #5, Composition Alastor, and En Masque, is a transitional piece in which certain passages are painted and others built up in relief with plaster. Recording Sound is a playful fantasy inspired by the ability of music to suggest visual impressions to the listener. The image that appears at the end of the gramophone horn is a strange surreal set, the final details of which--spheres, ovoids, and stairs leading nowhere--are worked out in a series of small colored studies (Fig. 27). That Roszak undertook a theme based on music's associative powers makes sense given his own involvement with the discipline; his interest in sound technology was a logical extension. Modern technologies, gramophones and recording devices, as well as skyscrapers and factories, had radical implications for contemporary artists--Stuart Davis, Jan Matulka, Ralston Crawford, and Charles Sheeler--who, like Roszak, saw them as new subjects signifying a progressive age.

Recording Sound also had its pure sculptural counterparts. Fortunately, many of these were photographed by the artist shortly after they were made (Figs. 28, 29, 30) because only three, Musical Still Life (Fig. 31), Torso Manique (Fig. 16), and White Construction (Fig. 32) survive

today.[46] Some of these sculptures, such as Female Relief Head and Musical Still Life, were direct extensions of paintings and drawings, and their smooth, white plaster surfaces were intended to receive bright color and patterning. Roszak polychromed sculpture at a time when casting in bronze was for him financially impossible; polychroming was an inexpensive and practical way of enlivening the work. Other plasters developed into more fantastic configurations whose architectonic shapes suggest a cross between the medieval towers and futuristic architecture Roszak might have seen in Europe and the contemporary streamlined skyscrapers of Manhattan. Given Roszak's receptive attitude toward machines and tools, it was inevitable that he should want to translate his experiments with plaster into more permanent materials. He later recalled: "while living in Staten Island and working at the plaster things...I felt the need for knowing more about tools....There was a kind of hunch, a sense of the technological implication and supplementation of forms that otherwise would have been simply the modeled form, or the cast form."[47] At this time Roszak took machine-shop training course, learned to make and use tools, and filled notebooks with technical information, such as the chemical composition of aluminum and the process of annealing, anodizing, and riveting metals. He also brought a lathe from the South Bend Lathe Works in Indiana, which was shipped to his apartment at 241 East 33rd Street. The results of this effort eventually lead to a series of free-standing and relief constructions.

Roszak may have accepted the progressive implications of the Machine Age, but he had his doubts about whether technology could ever be humanized. The literature on Roszak tends to discuss him as a machine-age artist, a reputation that a painting such as Man Sewing (Fig. 33), with its productive message, reinforces. But he also had another, more skeptical side to his nature, as seen in Mechanical Man (Fig. 34). Conceived about the same time, Man Sewing and Mechanical Man evolved simultaneously over the course of several years, and both went through various compositional changes. Man Sewing was finished in 1937 and shown the same year at the Whitney Museum. Mechanical Man was developed in numerous preliminary sketches, a small

study in oil, and a larger painting that was subsequently destroyed by the artist. Mechanical Man was moribund and controversial. Here was a symbolic enactment of man's technological undoing: man destroyed by the machine rather than in control at the machine. That Roszak pursued such a disturbing image at the same time he idealized the productivity of machines deserves mention because it discounts some of our former notions about his mechanical positivism.

Roszak was fascinated with mechanical things, their forms and shapes, their applications as well as their implications. In an early series of drawings he investigated the image of a man seated at a table surrounded by an assortment of watch parts (Fig. 35). Titled The Jeweler, the idea never advanced beyond these initial sketches. Roszak needed a subject he could transform into something imposing and monumental. He found this in the concept of a man with a machine. At one point during the conception of Man Sewing, Roszak considered using a microscope instead of a sewing machine, and in several studies he drew a man hovering and peering through a magnifying instrument (Fig. 36).[48] Roszak saw the microscope, along with the telescope, as a means of enhancing and extending ordinary perception. In fact, his own conception of abstraction, which he later published in an essay in 1949, was based in part on a microscopic observation of nature.[49]

In the final painting, Roszak decided against the microscope, probably because its form was too compact to be visually effective. He did, however, retain the window that appears in studies for The Jeweler; it is a carry-over from such earlier European works as Self-Portrait and Seated Woman (Figs. 4, 6). But now it no longer implies external space; its purpose here is non-spatial, rendered as a series of flat horizontal stripes.

In Man Sewing, Roszak reshaped the nuts and bolts of technology into an iconic image that glorified the symbiotic relationship between man and machine. Such an image was not without political implications during the 1930s, and is a curious anomaly when compared to Roszak's earlier, more personalized paintings, already mentioned. In a culture racked by

depression, Marxism (with its glorification of the proletariat), science, and industry were seen as progressive ways of dealing with the chaos and uncertainty. Roszak's intense sewer is not only a worker but an artist, engineer, and designer, whose sewing machine patches together a cubist still life.

In Man Sewing, Roszak created a humane, propagandistic image in which a formal innovation of modernism (Cubism) is combined with a politicized entity (the artist-worker). That Roszak undertook such a monumental image of an artist-worker, at a time when many artists were aligning themselves with the proletariat work force in an effort to combat fascism and totalitarianism, is not surprising. Up until now, Roszak's work from the 1930s has never been considered from the point of view of contemporary politics. And yet, a picture such as Man Sewing and, as we shall see, many of his bipolar constructions from this period, when seen in the context of the Popular Front and his membership in the American Artists' Congress, suggest that radical politics influenced the way he thought about his work, particularly his attitude toward abstraction.

Compared to Man Sewing, Mechanical Man is without optimism. With this ominous image, Roszak questioned the darker side of science, where the artist-worker, no longer in control, is helplessly controlled. The picture initially evolved from anatomical studies of the heart (Fig. 17), which then developed into an artificial heart and lung machine designed to fit over a man's thorasic cavity. What is interesting about these first studies (Figs. 37, 38) is the inclusion of an audience around the prostrate figure, as though Roszak were recalling dissections he had observed in Chicago during the late 1920s. As the image developed, though, all humanitarian signs disappear.[50] We are leaving the arena of traditional medicine, as portrayed in Thomas Eakins' The Gross Clinic (1875), and entering the netherworld of science fiction. Eventually all familiar references, including human witnesses, were eliminated, in order to isolate the figure sprawled out on the operating table. At one point Roszak experimented with a more theatrical setting, which

included an electrical generator and cinematic viewing screen (Fig. 39). But in the final image the central focus remained the mechanical man. Here is a robotic counterpart to the man sewing, a mechanistic incarnation of de Chirico's mannequin, an image of Frankenstein-like transformation and subjugation rather than man's harmonious rapport with machines.

Artificial intelligence has a long and controversial history, extending back to Rene Descartes' vision of the world, Julien La Mettrie's L'Homme Machine (1748), and Mary Shelley's gothic Frankenstein.[51] If machines were considered to be extensions of humanity, then a person's physiological functions could be compared to mechanistic systems, or so the analogy went. Such a proposition is problematic, because it denies the existence of God and soul. And yet the idea of artificially creating life from non-living matter continued to intrigue artists, writers, and filmmakers. Paul Wegener's Der Golem (1920) and Fritz Lang's Metropolis (1926), both German films, extended this tradition with their unsettling scenarios. Lang's apocalyptic vision of the future especially would have appealed to Roszak. Anticipating Aldous Huxley's Brave New World and George Orwell's 1984 by more than ten years, Lang projected a dark vision of humanity: human-kind subjugated by machines in a world dominated by power and efficiency, without love and compassion. The mechanical woman created by the film's mad scientist, Rotwang, was the perfect symbol for a debased and dehumanized society (Fig. 40). The film's parting moral, "the mediator between brain and hands must be the heart," is relevant to Roszak. In Metropolis, the heart symbolizes human compassion and empathy; in Mechanical Man it is elevated above the robot as a sign of life. As much as Roszak embraced technology, and his Constructivist work from 1932 to 1945 certainly issues from such an optimistic worldview, he still had doubts about whether its material benefits would outweigh its fateful consequences.

Roszak's painting from the 1930s is abstract and figurative, visionary and romantic. With the possible exception of Man Sewing, painting signified an act of confession. After 1932, he began to move away from traditional painting toward constructions in which painting was

combined with three-dimensional relief or free-standing objects, and from about 1936 to 1945 he worked extensively with sculpture of pristine design.[52] Constructivism appealed to Roszak because it offered him a means of getting beyond the autobiographical inflections of his earlier work. As far as he was concerned, "The constructions were precisely a concern with form itself...the love of form for its sheer beauty, for its sheer involvement, for the sheer commitment to form."[53] But in spite of their formal abstraction and apparent reserve, Roszak's constructions are referential and idiosyncratic. Far from being an hermetic enterprise, Roszak's experimentation with abstraction was informed by a cultural and political discourse.

NOTES

1. David Smith, in "The New Sculpture: A Symposium," February 12, 1952, transcript, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, p. 4. Besides Smith, other sculptors on this panel included Roszak, Herbert Ferber, and Richard Lippold.

2. Ibid.

3. James H. Elliott, "Interview with Theodore Roszak," February 13, 1956, transcript, Theodore Roszak Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. (AAA), roll N69-81, pp. 29-30. This interview was conducted for the Theodore Roszak exhibition organized by H. H. Arnason for the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis.

4. Ibid., p. 33.

5. "Theodore Roszak Reminisces: As Recorded in Talks with Dr. Harlan B. Phillips," 1964, transcript, Archives of American Art, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts, p. 2. Theodore Roszak Estate.

These reminiscences, comprising more than 500 double-spaced pages, were the result of a series of tape-recorded talks between Roszak and Phillips during 1963. Carried out under the auspices of the Archives of American Art, these sessions were subsidized by a grant from the AAA to Brandeis University.

6. Ibid., p. 102.

7. Idid., pp. 65, 101-02.

8. Phillips, "Interview with Theodore Roszak," pp. 14-15.

9. Ant died young, at age 46. His only son, also named
Theodore Roszak, became a university professor and the author and editor of numerous books and anthologies, some of which include The Making of a Counter Culture: Reflections on the Technocratic Society and Its Youthful Opposition (1969), Where the Wasteland Ends (1972), The Cult of Information: The Folklore of Computers and the True Art of Thinking (1986), The Dissenting Academy (1967), and Sources: An Anthology of Contemporary Materials Useful for Preserving Personal Sanity while Braving the Great Technological Wilderness (1972). I want to thank Theodore Roszak, in Berkeley, California, for granting me an interview and for sending xerox copies letters his uncle wrote to him between 1951 and 1981.

10. "Theodore Roszak Reminisces," p. 26.

11. Ibid., p. 26.

12. Ibid., p. 39.

13. By the end of his second year at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Roszak was beginning to feel stifled, as if no one really understood what he was trying to do. The year he spent in New York studying with Hawthorne and Luks (who he came to know quite well) and following courses at Columbia opened up a whole new world to him and eventually lead to his full-time residence there after 1931. He later told Harlam Phillips that the year he spent in the New York was the happiest year of his entire academic career, "a wonderful kind of culmination for the kind of rebellious attitudes and iconography I was seeking in the visual arts" ("Theodore Roszak Reminisces," p. 155).

14. Roszak's main reason for going to Woodstock, in addition to studying lithography, was to meet and talk with men whom he regarded highly: Eugene Speicher, Leon Kroll, and Emil Ganzo ("Theodore Roszak Reminisces," p. 177).

15. Ethel Joyce Hammer, "Attitudes Toward Art in the Nineteen Twenties in Chicago," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1975, p. 182.

During the 1920s, "roots in the American soil" also became a rallying cry for a group of vanguard artists and writers gathered around the photographer/dealer Alfred Stieglitz; see Wanda M. Corn, "Apostles of the New American Art: Waldo Frank and Paul Rosenfeld," Arts Magazine, 54 (February 1980), pp. 159-63; Sarah E. Greenough, "From the American Earth: Alfred Stieglitz's Photographs of Apples," Art Journal, 41 (Spring 1981), pp. 46-54.

16. For a discussion of Anisfeldt's set and costume designs for theater, see Janet A. Flint, Boris Anisfeldt: Twenty Years of Designs for the Theater, exh. cat. (Washington, D.C.: National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1971).

17. Theodore Roszak Papers, AAA, roll N69-54, frame 11.

18. Roszak's respect for the work of Ashcan artists Luks, Bellows, Robert Henri, et al. inspired a similar kind of social realism during his graduate years at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Along with another student, he rented a dilapidated studio on Chicago's south side, where the fair grounds of the World's Columbian Exposition had been. From this location he carefully observed and documented the down and out areas of the city, the slums and foundries of south Chicago, and the steel mills across the state line in Gary, Indiana. He camped out, sometimes for several days, in order to immerse himself in a way of life that was totally

antithetical to the status quo curriculum and genteel aesthetic of the academy; see "Theodore Roszak Reminisces," pp. 191-92.

19. Marguerite B. Williams, "Now Theodore Roszak Sets a New Pace for New Artists," The Chicago Daily News, June 26, 1929.

20. Under the progressive curatorial guidance of Robert B. Harshe and Daniel Catton Rich, the Art Institute organized important exhibitions of modern European art during the 1920s. These included Arthur Jerome Eddy's collection of works by Wassily Kandinsky, Franz Marc, Constantin Brancusi, Pablo Picasso, Marcel Duchamp, and Francis Picabia (1926); Arthur B. Davies' personal collection, also exhibited in 1926; and, in 1929, a one-man show of works by Odilon Redon. In addition to the Art Institute's impressive program, The Chicago Arts Club had exhibited works by George Braque, Marie Laurencin, Auguste Rodin, Picasso, and Antoine Bourdelle in 1923, and, between 1926 and 1929, gave one-man shows to Brancusi and Henri Matisse.

21. H.H. Arnason, Theodore Roszak, exh. cat. (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1956), pp. 12-13.

22. Elliot, "Interview with Theodore Roszak," pp. 9-10.

23. Ibid., p.10.

24. De Chirico had two one-man shows at the Curt Valentin Galleries in New York in 1928 and 1929. Lloyd Goodrich wrote on his work for The Arts in January 1929; see Susan Noyes Platt, Modernism in the 1920s: Interpretations of Modern Art in New York from Expressionism to Constructivism (Michigan: UMI Press, 1985), pp. 103-05.

25. Giorgio de Chirico: Les Peintres Francais Nouveaux, No. 29 (Paris: Librairie Gallimard, 1927), Theodore Roszak Estate.

26. "Theodore Roszak Reminisces," p. 249.

27. Certain images significantly affected Roszak's art, and some of these came directly out of the books and catalogues he bought in Europe. Today, one can single these out of the artist's library; they are inscribed with his name and the date and place of purchase. Among them are: Odilon Redon: Les Peintres Francais Nouveaux, No. 21 (Paris: Librairie Gallimard, 1924); Les Chefs-d'Oeuvre de Fra Filippo Lippi (Paris: A. Perche, 1927); Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Malerei, Fotografie, Film (Munich: Albert Langen Verlag, 1927); Franz Roh and Jan Tschichold, Foto-Auge: 76 Fotos der Zeit (Stuttgart: Wedekind Verlag, 1929).

28. Joan Seeman Robinson, "The Sculpture of Theodore Roszak: 1932-1952," Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1979, vol. I, pp. 16 no. 20, 21-22 nn. 38-40.

29. There is some disagreement as to whether or not Roszak saw the "Exhibition of Contemporary Culture" at Brno during his stay in Czechoslovakia; see Wayne Anderson, American Sculpture in Process: 1930/1970 (Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1975), p. 26; Robinson, "The Sculpture of Theodore Roszak," vol. 1, p. 175 n. 40; Joan Marter, "Theodore Roszak's Early Constructions: The Machine as Creator of Fantastic and Ideal Forms," Arts Magazine, 54 (November 1979), p. 113 n. 5. Serviss's book is inscribed: T.J. Roszak/Prague/'29.

30. Roszak's interest in astronomy and cosmology during the 1930s was shared by sculptors Alexander Calder and Ibram Lassaw, whose work reflects similar concerns. For Calder, see Joan Marter, "Alexander Calder: Cosmic Imagery and the Use of Scientific Instruments," Arts Magazine, 53 (October 1978), pp. 108-13.

31. Francis Bacon, Novum Organum, trans. by R. Ellis and James Spedding (London: George Routledge & Sons, n.d.); The Philosophy of William James (New York: The Modern Library, 1925). Roszak signed and inscribed both books: Columbia U., N.Y.C. 1926

32. Robinson, "The Sculpture of Theodore Roszak," vol. I, p. 18 n. 27.

33. Ibid., p. 17 n. 25.

34. "Theodore Roszak Reminisces," pp. 257-58.

35. Elliott, "Interview with Theodore Roszak," pp. 11-12.

36. Until Roszak's death in 1981, his wife Florence was his confidant and spiritual counterpart. She supported him during the early years, working five days a week as an English teacher in a local high school. She also looked after the house, which included their daughter, Sara Jane, after 1946, and his career as well. Her devotion and support were unflagging. Given her propensity for organization and administration, she was a natural archivist. Everything pertinent to Roszak's life, including personal correspondence, as well as letters between friends and associates, was saved. Intellectual and perceptive, Florence was respected and loved by her husband and friends. She died nine years after Roszak, in 1990.

37. Elliott, "Interview with Theodore Roszak," pp. 15-16.

38. Ibid., pp. 23-24.

39. Robinson, "The Sculpture of Theodore Roszak," vol. I, p. 25 n. 48.

40. Ibid., p. 35; "Theodore Roszak Reminisces," p. 167.

41. Card games have long been a metaphor for life's capricious ways. The curiously silly games in the 1920s-'30s, from dance marathons and roller derbies to flagpole sitting contests and goldfish-swallowing competitions, provided communal diversion and fun for a culture in desperate need of it; see Warren I. Susman, Culture as History: The Transformation of American Society in the Twentieth Century (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), pp. 161-64.

42. Through the patronage of Juliana Force, Director of the Whitney Museum, Roszak became a consistent exhibitor at the Annuals. Force became interested in Chicago-area artists through Robert Harshe, Director of the Art Institute of Chicago, who introduced her to Roszak shortly after he returned from Europe to New York in 1931; see Avis Berman, Rebels on Eighth Street: Juliana Force and the Whitney Museum of American Art (New York: Atheneum, 1990), pp. 327-28.

43. Carlyle Burrows, "A Varied Display by Theodore Roszak," New York Herald Tribune, June 20, 1935.

44. Adler Planetarium and Astronomical Museum of Chicago, catalogue, 1932. Theodore Roszak Estate.

45. From the very beginning of their courtship, Roszak saw his relationship with Florence unfolding within a greater cosmological order. During his stay at the Tiffany Foundation, from early August through September 1931, he wrote numerous love letters, many of which he illustrated. One in particular is fascinating. It depicts the young couple embracing in the foreground (a pose later used in Fisherman's Bride) and above them is a rainbow of planets and stars. As a group, these letters, cherished and guarded by Florence during her lifetime, reveal an intensely romantic and poetic sensibility.

46. As seen his own photographs, Roszak modeled about eight plaster pieces during this period: Musical Still Life, Torso Manique (Surveyor), and White Construction (all extant); two architectural towers, one smaller than the other; a female relief head; another head atop a still life; and a metaphysical structure with a heart, a drawing of which is in the collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (Fig. 15).

47. Elliott, "Interview with Theodore Roszak," p. 22.

48. At this time, particularly in Paris, the microscope, microphotography, and microcinematography were revealing new formal possibilities to vanguard artists working in abstraction. Both Arp and Kandinsky were greatly affected by the microscopic world of biological form, and the proliferation of biomorphic imagery in their work is directly related to their spiritual inclinations and fascination with the natural sciences; see Jennifer Mundy, "Form and Creation: The Impact of the Biological Sciences on Modern Art," in Creation: Modern Art and Nature, exh. cat. (Edinburgh: Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, 1984), pp. 16-23; Vivian Endicott Barnett, "Kandinsky and Science: The Introduction of Biological Images in the Paris Period," in Kandinsky in Paris, 1934-1944, exh. cat. (New York: The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1985), pp. 61-87; and Harriet Watts, "Arp, Kandinsky, and the Legacy of Jakob Bohme," in The Spiritual in Art: Abstract Painting, 1890-1985, exh. cat. (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1986), pp. 239-55.

49. Theodore J. Roszak, "Some Problems of Modern Sculpture," Magazine of Art, 42 (February 1949), pp. 55-56.

50. The discussion of Roszak's "mechanical man" is taken from my catalogue essay, "Theodore Roszak: Painting and Drawings from the Thirties," cited above.

51. For an introduction to the myth and history of artificial intelligence, see Stephen Bayley and James Woudhuysen, "Myth and History," in Robots, exh. cat. (London: Victoria & Albert Museum, 1984), pp. 7-11.

52. While Roszak primarily pursued sculpture after 1937, he still continued to paint. Many of his paintings, geometric abstractions in oil on masonite from the 1930s and 1940s, relate to constructions he fabricated during these years.

53. Elliott, "Interview with Theodore Roszak," p. 25.

CHAPTER 2: DREAMS AND REALITIES: THE POLITICS OF ABSTRACTION

> I remember being in Europe between 1929 and 1930--this was a field day for me. I had money. Everything was paid for. I was studying and bubbling over with enthusiasm--new things, new ideas, new people, new sights. I didn't know there was a depression. Then coming back to America--nothing could have been harder than getting off the boat and discovering that my brother, who was waiting for me, couldn't get a job for love of money.[1]

Projects and Laboratories

Whatever notions Roszak brought back with him from Europe concerning the identity of a vanguard artist committed to formal experimentation and abstraction were tested in ways he never could have anticipated. Upon his return to America, he was confronted by circumstances requiring artists to think and act in socio-political terms greater than themselves. Roszak's dilemma--how to reconcile modernism's formal innovations with the political imperatives of a new age--was shared by other New York intellectuals, artists as well as writers.

Artists working with abstraction, as opposed to more representational imagery, were frequently accused of elitism, ostracized from a socio-political arena that demanded from art a clarity of content and purpose. The general populous, and many of Roszak's peers, saw abstraction as an hermetic language divorced from the realities at hand. Abstraction's right to exist, therefore, required justification, a theoretical defence. Even within the art community, the exact nature of abstraction was fervently debated. One has only to read the impassioned views of John Graham, Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Meyer Schapiro, and Stuart Davis (four of the most articulate spokesmen for abstraction during the Depression years) to gauge the polarity of opinion. Barr, whose diagrammatic flow chart for abstraction was reproduced as the frontispiece to his 1936 catalogue Cubism and Abstract Art, argued for abstraction's formal aloofness, while Graham, in his Systems and Dialectics of Art (1936), proposed a mythic and psychodynamic dimension that rooted abstraction in more primitive and atavistic origins. At the other extreme, Schapiro and Davis gave

abstraction a stronger foothold in life through a Marxist overlay, and encouraged abstract artists to see their work as an effective political weapon. In fact, during the 1930s, abstract art, as it conflated with radical politics and technology, was inflected by an intense utopianism. Roszak was one of a number of vanguard artists who embraced abstraction, progressive science, and radical politics as models that offered answers, and, perhaps, even a better way of life. Although this way of thinking was eventually undermined by political circumstances and World War II, it is important to see the work he did up until then within this context.

By the end of 1933, Roszak and his wife had moved from Staten Island to Manhattan, where they rented an apartment at 241 East 33rd Street. These were lean times, and most artists, unable to earn a living selling their work, found employment through the government-sponsored projects instituted under President Roosevelt. Roszak was no exception. For many artist, and that included actors, writers, and musicians as well as painters and sculptors, the projects were the only life-support systems available.

In January 1934, Roszak put in an application to the recently instituted Public Works of Art Project (PWAP).[2] Set up during the early years of the Depression, the PWAP was the first federal, non-relief project for artists. Funded by the Civil Works Administration (CWA), the PWAP was directed by Edward Bruce as part of the United States Treasury Department.[3] Juliana Force, the director of the Whitney Museum and, by 1934, an ally of Roszak's, became the regional director in New York. The PWAP lasted less than a year, from December 1933 to June 1934, but during the three and a half months he was employed, Roszak received $38.25 a week and painted two canvases: American Industry and American Science and Industry (Figs. 41, 42). Though not important works (both were subsequently destroyed by the artist), their content shows Roszak dealing with industry and workers.

When the PWAP terminated, Roszak applied for assistance, in the Spring of 1934, to the Emergency Home Relief Bureau, then located at 1458 York Avenue. That Fall, he even put in an

application to the Special Skills Division of the Resettlement Administration (RA). Through the RA he was offered a job as an art instructor in the Westmoreland Homestead Project, about 35 miles outside of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania but declined the position; it was too far to commute to. Eventually, he enlisted with the Treasury Relief Art Project, better known as TRAP, and worked under its auspices from January 1936 to February 1937.

During the early years of the Depression through various projects Roszak was able to survive. But he must have been frustrated to a great extent by the kind of work he was expected to do. (Most of this work was destroyed and the artist's own records lack documentation of it.) Roszak's experience at the Laboratory School of Design, however, must have been different. As an educational institution whose basic curriculum and philosophy reflected his own techno-scientific orientation at this time, the Laboratory School gave him an opportunity to teach some of the things preoccupying him since Europe.

Until now, there has been some confusion as to the exact identity of the Design Laboratory (which became the Laboratory School of Design in 1938) and Roszak's involvement with it. The original Design Laboratory, a tuition-free school of design in New York sponsored by the Works Progress Administration's Federal Art Project (WPA/FAP), was opened in September 1935 under the directorship of architect-designer Gilbert Rohde.[4] Modeled after the German Bauhaus and, closer to home, the Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburgh, the Design Laboratory offered courses in aesthetics, materials, industrial products, machine fabrication, and merchandising. Its advisory board eventually not only included designers Walter Dorwin Teague and Raymond Loewy, but the chief figure of industrial design, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, who had recently established the New Bauhaus in Chicago, Illinois. In 1937, in the midst of the Depression, Moholy-Nagy launched the New Bauhaus, which eventually became the Institute of Design. Why he chose Chicago, instead of New York, as his base of operations had a lot to do with available financing and patronage. Exactly what Moholy-Nagy thought of the New York-

Bauhaus extension is not exactly known, but he seems to have supported its existence. He even made trips into Manhattan to advise, criticize, and encourage his New York confreres.[5]

Through Moholy-Nagy's, and other Bauhaus artists', personal example and theoretical writings, industrial design had a miraculous second life in American during the late 1930s. His "New Vision," as it initially evolved out of the experimental Bauhaus workshops in the 1920s, possessed a collective and humanitarian dimension whose utilitarian extensions gave it a strong allure.[6] Indeed, Moholy-Nagy theorized an art that seemingly fused John Dewey's egalitarian empiricism with Henri Bergson's Vitalism and Carl Jung's notion of a collective unconscious:

> Every action and expression of man is the sum of components founded mainly on biological structure. Everything man does represents a self-analysis and a world-analysis, and throws light where he stands at the moment. The expression is fruitful only when it carries with it--outside of mere personal satisfaction--an objective and collectival validity for the collective body of the human race.[7]

Moholy-Nagy set out to humanize an ever-expanding technological order by integrating its systems within a broader socio-economic milieu. For many American artists--Roszak, Rothko, Crawford, and Lozowick, to name only a few--looking for a way to balance their own aesthetic needs with socio-political pressures, Moholy-Nagy's new vision appeared to be a viable direction.

The New York Design Laboratory was initially promoted as a progressive step in education. "Housed in a narrow building just off Fifth Avenue, at 10 East Thirty-ninth Street," wrote one journalist, "the first formal school in the country devoted exclusively to industrial design is running night and day classes for a capacity enrollment of 300 students. Started tentatively last January [1935] as part of the WPA Federal Art Project, the school has now opened its second term and has issued a challenge to the future by instituting a new three-year course."[8] The industrial designer was not a specialist but someone who, given a general knowledge of industrial materials and techniques, had the ability to design what people needed. "The basic theory," wrote another writer, "is that articles of modern uses, from lighting fixtures to houses, should be the logical outgrowth of the new materials and methods of the machine age."[9] In the

first years of its existence the Design Laboratory seemed like an institution with promise. In 1937, after being abandoned by the WPA, it was absorbed into the Technical School of the Federation of Architects, Engineers, Chemists and Technicians (FAECT) and for about a year continued to operate under their auspices.

By the time Roszak joined its faculty in July 1938, the Design Laboratory of the Federation Technical School had become the Laboratory School of Industrial Design, housed at 116 East 16th Street.[10] As a respectable means of support, teaching probably appealed to Roszak more than the WPA projects. Since his earliest days in Chicago, he had an aptitude for teaching. At the Laboratory School he was able to develop courses germane to his Bauhaus-Constructivist orientation. Teaching was compatible with his propensity for theory and ideas. Ultimately, his experience at the Laboratory School became a springboard for a subsequent position at Sarah Lawrence College.

Roszak taught two courses at the Laboratory School. One in materials (wood and paper) and science (an analysis of the chemical composition of these materials), and another in design synthesis, involving concepts in spatial relationships and composition. The materials laboratory and science course met twice a week, days as well as evenings, for two hours each session; the design synthesis course met twice a week during the day. "Learning by doing" was the fundamental credo of this Bauhaus-inspired program, and Roszak's materials course balanced his more theoretical, design synthesis course.

One of Roszak's former students at the Laboratory School, Max Landau, recalled that Roszak's lectures usually extended beyond material concerns into philosophy, literature, and aesthetics.[11] Roszak's approach to teaching art was humanistic and interdisciplinary, which made him a model for what Moholy-Nagy considered the task of education to be: "an integration of intellectual achievements in politics, science, art, in all realms of human activity."[12] In fact, during the late 1930s, a friendship developed between the two men that eventually lead to an offer

in 1945 for Roszak to teach at the Institute of Design in 1945.[13] (By this time, however, in the aftermath of a catastrophic world war, Roszak had already rejected a Bauhaus-Constructivist position.)

While employed on the projects and teaching at the Laboratory School, Roszak also worked in his own studio at 325 East 30th Street. "I had every conceivable tool and material that modern industry had," he later told Harlan Phillips, "at my disposal in my shop, and I experimented with these and worked with them."[14] Judging from contemporary photographs--a series of self-portraits taken in situ--Roszak's studio looked like a cross between a traditional painter's atelier and a state-of-the-art machine shop with lathes; drill presses; dies; built-in-shelves with glass jars full of spare parts, screws, nuts and bolts; and a stock of materials, including various metals, solders, and plastics (Fig. 43).

That an artist's studio could function as a kind of laboratory had significant implications during the Depression. The idea of an artist being a designer, architect, engineer, and technician initially evolved out of the experimental studios of the Bauhaus during the 1920s. No longer an outsider, the artist-as-industrial-designer could now be considered part of a greater social order. As a cultural engineer, the artist had the expertise to restore a sense of order and make life easier. Historian Warren Susman described the situation this way: "By the 1930s the trained professional, expert designer had in a sense replaced the eighteenth-century vision of God as a god of design. In a world increasingly out of order, increasingly on the verge or in the midst of apocalyptic disruptions, man as designer was called upon to find some new order in the world."[15]

Roszak's interest in things mechanical dated back to his childhood. As an adolescent in Chicago, he had built his own telescope and had seen astronomical instruments on exhibition at the Field Museum. He had always been fascinated by industrial machines and scientific equipment, and his trip to Europe, where he visited scientific museums and contemporary expositions of industrial design in Munich, Berlin, and Brno, rekindled this curiosity. He had taken

a machine-shop course in making and using tools while living on Staten Island. In New York, with larger studio quarters, he began buying his own equipment and devoting more time to sculpture.

Over the course of about eleven years, from 1932 to 1945, Roszak fabricated about forty-five constructions, including Crescent Throat, Airport Sentinel, and two Pierced Bipolars (all 1932), the first metal, copper, bronze, and aluminum objects he executed while living on Staten Island. As a group, the constructions display structural and formal variance--small-scale reliefs and monumental free-standing sculpture--from the most severe geometric formulations to the most amorphic ruminations. As Roszak moved his studio from Staten Island to 241 East Thirty-third Street, from there to 325 East Thirtieth Street, and ultimately to 1 St. Lukes Place, the constructions moved with him. Many are sculptural counterparts to painting; color is an essential skin. They also become a transition to welded-steel sculpture.

About thirty constructions were exhibited simultaneously at Julien Levy Gallery and Hugh Stix's Artists' Gallery in 1940.[16] Coming when it did, this occasion signaled a turning point not only in Roszak's career, but in his aesthetic disposition as well. Both exhibitions received mixed reviews and few pieces were sold.[17] Afterwards, most of the work was disassembled, boxed up, and put into storage. (When he took up the oxyacetylene torch and began welding steel, after 1945, the constructions remained in the closet, so to speak, as discarded ideas that no longer had a place in his art.) Except for a few pieces, which were included in a 1956-57 retrospective at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, they remained obscure until 1978, when Zabriskie Gallery mounted a show in New York that took the art world by surprise (Fig. 44).

Most of the constructions began as pencil drawings--doodles and free associations. These studies, many executed freehand on eight-by-ten-inch sheets of graph paper, are fascinating for the way in which numerous ideas, developed simultaneously, fluctuate between biomorphic and geometric abstraction (Fig. 45). A gridded ground for the spontaneous conception of form, each

sheet introduces innumerable possibilities. Roszak considered certain configurations more interesting than others. These he worked up as orthographic projections, carefully notated for their material constitution, color, and constructional techniques. This kind of schematic rendering (Fig. 46) functioned as a shop drawing from which the final piece was fabricated.

Roszak made his first constructions while living on Staten Island. Crescent Throat (Fig. 47), one of the most well known of his early constructions, is also one of the most unassuming, as are the "Pierced Bipolars" (Fig. 48). All three works have the intimate scale of maquettes. Thin-gauged sheet metal, easy to cut and shape, was used for the main body of these pieces, on to which wires and pieces of brass and copper were soldered. These empirical experiments represent Roszak's first constructed sculpture.

Up until now, Crescent Throat was thought to have been fabricated in 1936, and its crescent-shaped configuration has been compared with Julio Gonzalez's Head (about 1935; Museum of Modern Art, New York).[18] But Roszak, consistent with all of his constructions, photographed Crescent Throat, and one print is signed and dated on the back: Construction 1932/Staten Is./NY/Theodore J. Roszak. A date of 1932 is consistent with the object's unpretentious scale, demeanor, and execution. It is a study for the later Rectilinear Space Construction (1941-43) and a model for numerous constructions and welded-steel pieces that followed.

The crescent became one of the most ubiquitous forms in Roszak's work, reappearing in various sculptures, drawings, and prints from 1932 on. Depending on its context and the way in which Roszak handled it, the implications of the crescent shape change dramatically; it meant different things to him at different times. Roszak saw the crescent embodying the kind of significance animating all form. Its origin was twofold, relating on the one hand to the crescent moon that bears the Virgin in ecclesiastical art, and reflecting on the other hand the essential shape of a microscope or an astronomical instrument, such as the ring dial (Fig. 49).[19] The half-

moon, C-shaped configuration functions symbolically on many levels. In Crescent Throat it is quintessentially Constructivist, technological and geometric, and it serves as a supportive base, or armature, for a series of planar and rectilinear elements that crisscross within its arch. In later postwar pieces, such as Thorn Blossom (1947), Invocation II and IV (1950-51, 1957), Thistle in the Dream (1955-56), and Sea Sentinel (1956), it is more anthropomorphic, a female principle, a concave pocket, a passive receptor, a yielding shield that receives rather than deflects. In Spectre of Kitty Hawk (1946-47) its significance is both male and female, projective and recessive, aggressive and passive. When Roszak made Crescent Throat, his perception encompassed a vast terrain, from the microscopic world of cellular biology to the extraterrestrial world of stars and planets. Given its formal sources (in the microscope and ring dial) and metaphorical implications, Crescent Throat set the precedent for a series of polysemous works.

Airport Sentinel (Fig. 50), made about the same time as Crescent Throat, developed directly out of Roszak's plaster towers (Fig. 29), his fascination with industrial tools, and the skyscrapers of New York. Airport Sentinel is Roszak's first fully realized construction and his first interpretation of flight, a theme which preoccupies him for the next fifty years. Roszak's formal development is distinguished by thematic continuity. Airport Sentinel has its constructivist variations in Monument to Lost Dirigibles (1938) and Ascension (1939), and its expressionist extensions in postwar works, such as Scavenger, Raven and Spectre of Kitty Hawk (all 1946-47), Skylark (1951-52); and Night Flight (1958).

During the 1930s, flight assumed a positivistic incarnation: objects whose chromium finish and streamlined torsos capped by mechanomorphs (mechanistic counterparts to Brancusi's polished-bronze Bird in Space), signified the aspirations of a machine-age culture going places, discovering new planets and galaxies--a culture that equated good design and efficiency with progress. (But flight also had a darker, more menacing side; Spectre of Kitty Hawk was Roszak's brutal response to war, countless deaths, and the destruction of two Japanese cities.)[20] The

figurative ramifications of Airport Sentinel--its anthropomorphic posture and pierced torso (recalling passages of Composition Alastor; Fig. 12) culminating in a half-spherical, cap-like head crowned by a mechanomorph--were further explored in a series of bipolar forms, while its utopian implications were developed in a series of abstract geometric reliefs.

Some of Roszak's constructions are models for perfectly ordered systems. Circles, cones, squares, rectangles, ellipses, cubes, and spheres are the essential motifs that comprise these austere compositions, whose euclidean orientation recall El Lissitzky's Prouns, Naum Gabo's Column (1923), Piet Mondrian's neoplastic images, as well as more contemporary constructions by Vaclav Vytlacil, Charles Biederman, and Gertrude Greene. As a pure product of Constructivism, Roszak saw this work as a "utopian symbol for perfection, a ... diagram of the unification of architecture, engineering, an idealized conception of man's creative potential"[21]--referring specifically to Construction in White of 1938 (Fig. 51), a piece fabricated in two other versions. Construction in White epitomizes the clarity and control of the geometric reliefs: a square plywood box with a huge circle cut out its center becomes the recessive ground as well as the frame for two intersecting, rectilinear sheets of plastic, along whose axes wooden cubes of varying dimensions and another sheet of striated plastic align and interact. The diagrammatic nature of this arrangement signifies a hermetic realm far removed from the chaotic world outside Roszak's studio. Construction in White, like other reliefs in this series, is a sculptural projection for a more perfect work unencumbered by politics and social strife.

If the geometric reliefs reflect a transcendent world, the bipolar constructions are humanistic counterparts, mechanomorphs whose torsos are streamlined and abstracted (Fig. 44).[22] These elegant personages evolved out of painting (through Composition Alastor), the figure-eight configuration of Torso Manique, and several biomorphic drawings already mentioned. The bipolar forms are above all figurative sculpture. Roszak always accepted the figure as part of sculptural continuum, something he could modernize, warp, and extend through abstraction.

Within Roszak's sculptural conception, figuration and abstraction were coexistent variables. This is true even of his postwar sculpture, where the figure becomes a hybrid entity, a conflation of human, plant, and animal forms. Other sculptors, including Roszak's contemporaries David Smith and Herbert Ferber, if they did not purge the figure from their work (as Ferber eventually did), tended to deny or downplay its presence.[23] As a sculptural motif, Roszak saw the figure as the crux of a human condition, a cipher for history's failings, and a site of struggle. The bipolar forms, of which there are about eight, not only perpetuate a traditional figurative sculpture, but their configuration can be seen as an analogue for oppositional forces.

As an abstractionist, Roszak faced difficult questions. Was it possible for abstraction to be anything but aloof? Could abstract art, with its emphasis on formal dynamics, be responsive to life's crises? One might ask now, can Roszak's constructivist work be seen as something other than apolitical and visionary, as models for a utopian world order?

Roszak was not inherently political; his rapport with politics was above all intellectual. Ideas, not dictums, appealed to him. Although he signed on with the First American Artists' Congress, he was never an ideologue, politician, or revolutionary. His approach to political ideologies was always critical. As an intellectual, the ideas he encountered through books were not simply accepted on faith; they were debated and, sometimes, later deflated. Marxism, for example, would have appealed to Roszak first and foremost as a philosophical model, whose precepts offered a means of interpreting contemporary circumstances, a method by which conflicting tendencies might be conceptualized, even synthesized through dialectical discourse.[24] Initially, Roszak probably saw Marxism as a political theory with great promise, as did many other New York intellectuals. Within an extended group, many of whom were associated at various times with Partisan Review, Marxism was embraced for its radical nature, its presumed scientific integrity, international membership, flexibility and applicability.[25] Within the nascent Partisan Review crowd, as well as artistic circles, Marxism seemed to offer an ideological

springboard toward greater political effectiveness. Its subversive character made it all the more appealing. For someone like Roszak, Marxism, as it found expression through the liberal policies of the Popular Front and, by extension, the First American Artists' Congress, could have provided a philosophical basis for his more abstract work.[26]

Instituted at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International in 1935, the United or Popular Front was organized by the Communist party as a direct response to the impending threat of fascism. What earlier had been an exclusive organization whose sectarian policy had sought the simultaneous overthrow of fascism and capitalism, after 1935, developed into a broad alliance of democratic countries, whose membership included bourgeois and socialist alike, united against fascism. Although recognized within the Communist party as a compromised position, the Popular Front opened it doors to all intellectuals, many of whom might otherwise have remained unaffiliated. The result was an eclectic community of artists and writers committed to democracy and freedom in whatever form it took.

The First American Artists' Congress against War and Fascism, organized in 1935 by leftist artists, was an extension of the Popular Front and held in New York City at Town Hall and the New School for Social Research on February 14-16, 1936. (Writers held their own Congress, in New York, a year before on April 26, 1935.) From the start, antisectarianism (an open-door policy) characterized the tenor of the American Artists' Congress, whose membership included a diverse group of established artists.

Roszak was one of about 400 artists listed as "signers of the call" in the Artists' Congress published catalogue. Within the Congress a common political objective was supposed to supercede aesthetic differences, at least in theory. The central goal of the Artists' Congress, according to the painter Stuart Davis, its national Executive Secretary, was " to achieve unity of action among artists of recognized standing in their profession on all issue which concern their economic and cultural security and freedom, and to fight War, Fascism and Reaction, destroyers of art and

culture."[27] Roszak, a modernist, was joined by hundreds of other artists--modernists, academics, and social realists alike.

In spite of its political solidarity, however, the American Artists' Congress remained divided on aesthetic issues. Social realists, for example, accused modernists of being more interested in formal experimentation than social change. Modernists denigrated the representational work of social realists as conservative, parochial, and, in its extreme nationalism, propagandistic. The general perception of abstract art was an enterprise divorced from life, but some artists saw it differently and defended it on political grounds.

Stuart Davis, one of most articulate spokesman for abstraction, wrote about its reciprocity with life and its political significance. In her book Antifascism in American Art, Cecil Whiting wrote that "Popular Front permissiveness nurtured Davis's theoretical writings in which he argued that abstract painters could play a political part--more effective than social-realist art--in the fight against fascism."[28] According to Whiting, Davis advocated an art that was social in content and yet individual in form. He saw the modern artist as an experimenter and innovator as well as a socially-conscious and political being. Davis equated abstraction with aesthetic freedom, and, by extension, with democracy. If fascism was reactionary, repressive, anti-creative, and unscientific, abstraction signified the freedom and individuality heralded by democracy. (In light of what we now know about politics and postwar abstraction, Davis's minority view was prescient.[29]) For Davis, as well as other members of the Artists' Congress, radical politics and art were seen as synonymous developments; both heralded humanistic progress through an individual's inalienable rights.

As an abstractionist and member of the American Artists' Congress, Roszak would have been sympathetic to Davis's equating the practice of abstraction with democracy. In the iconic and representational Man Sewing, Roszak's politics are more in line with social-realist propaganda. In his more abstract bipolar constructions, the reciprocity between radical politics and

Constructivist-Bauhaus aesthetics signifies the same values.

As analogues for progressive technology, many of Roszak's constructions embody a scientific positivism. Roszak accepted the possibility of a utopian order, a world in which progress was equated with the unification of architecture and engineering, product production, and good design. (The roots of such a philosophy extended back to the Russian Constructivists, who also considered abstraction and politics part of a utopian world order.) As a theoretical designer, he felt more effective than a social-realist or an American Scene painter. Industry and technology were also implicit aspects of Soviet Marxist policy. Production, it was argued, placed power in the hands of the proletariat worker at the same time it lead the way toward a more egalitarian and efficient society.

As models for a perfected technology, Roszak saw his bipolar constructions as a site for the reconciliation of opposites. He said, "The idea of polarites is congruent to the human psychic structure that allows for expansion or growth."[30] In a statement written for the Whitney Museum of American Art, in 1979 (after the museum acquired Bipolar Form in Red (Fig. 52)), he made the following comment:

> Bipolar in Red as content [Roszak's italics] relates to the same natural phenomenon as north vs. south pole, heat vs. cold, male vs. female, as well as any polar opposite constituting a basic and fundamental force of opposite. Without the bipolarity of magnetic fields in space, the solar system could not exist. In short, the entire physical and emotional apparatus is dependent on the unique quality of opposing forces.[31]

Opposition and reconciliation were also the crux of a dialectical model. As early as 1932, in Torso Manique and the Pierced Bipolars, Roszak began to investigate a bipolar configuration, which he subsequently developed in a series of eight sculptures, the largest of which stands about eight feet high. That he continued to experiment with this arrangement until about 1945 suggests that, like the crescent form, a bipolar form had significance for him. For Roszak, like Stuart Davis, the Marxist "dialectic" was a way of conceptualizing the dynamic relationship between abstraction and representation. As a central component of Marxist thought, dialectical materialism provided artists

and intellectuals with a model for change and transformation, continuity and synthesis. For liberal-minded members of the Popular Front and the American Artists' Congress, the "dialectic" signified a system in flux, the antithesis of something static, repressive, and totalitarian. Seen from this point of view, Roszak's bipolar constructions are sculptural analogues for the reconciliation of opposing principles, a way of maintaining figuration through abstraction, and a symbolic affirmation of individual creativity.

On a more personal level, Roszak's bipolar constructions are metaphors for a state of precarious balance, tension, and sexuality--aspects played out in the upper sectors of certain constructions. What unfolds in this elevated area, usually separated from the lower torso by one or more metal or plastic discs, is a kind of sculptural drama: an interpenetration and balancing of form (Fig. 53). Dorothy Dehner told Karen Wilkin, "that abstraction appealed to Smith as a way of making use of his deepest feelings without revealing himself completely."[32] Abstraction would have appealed to Roszak for exactly the same reason. Wooden spheres poised on sharp stainless-steel points and skeins of metal that couple and release in space imply a preoccupation with psychosexual innuendo.

By far the most sexual and provocative of all Roszak's constructions is Chrysalis (1937; Fig. 54), a piece carved from laminated wood, painted bright red, and animated by radiating spheres and discs of steel and brass. In addition to several other relief constructions--Elliptical Arrangement and Amorphic Form (both 1937), Harlequinade and Trajectories (both 1938)--Chrysalis is Roszak's most fully realized biomorphic construction, an extension of earlier biomorphic drawings (Figs. 14, 15), and a sculptural equivalent for a burgeoning cellular cluster. "It [Chrysalis] is an embryo in the uterus," Roszak admitted, "the uterus in the glass case."[33] This bulbous, space-age configuration, a mechanistic counterpart to Arp's concretions and Miro's biomorphic fantasies,[34] like many of Roszak's constructions, appears functional. Like Moholy-Nagy's Light-Space Modulator (1923-30), Chrysalis looks as though it could spin and gyrate. But

Chrysalis is a non-functioning biomorhpic machine, whose formal constitution is an analogue for conception and insemination. From under its glass belljar, Chrysalis looks like a strange biological specimen from outer space, and its interlaced forms, poised on the tip of a stainless-steel cone, embody the same tension implicit in other bipolar constructions. Tension through precarious balance is one thing, puncture and disfiguration another. With its prominent cycloptic eye reamed by a steel rod, Chrysalis evokes an anguish not unlike the eye slashed by a razor in Louis Bunuel and Salvador Dali's Un Chien andalou (1927). Both are surrealist violations of vision through cruel and sadistic disfiguration. The anxious overtones of Chyrsalis make it a sculptural counterpart to Roszak's Mechanical Man (Fig. 34). Both images reflect the shadow side of a utopian dream.

By 1940, Roszak had begun to question the effectiveness of industrial design and Bauhaus-Constructivist utopianism. With the Laboratory School of Industrial Design about to close because of financial difficulties, less than two years after he joined its faculty,[35] Roszak came to realize that in order to be successful as an industrial designer, he would have to cater to popular tastes and profit incentives.[36] "The first thing you know," he later recalled, "you're not designing at all. You're merely listening to Mrs. Murphy who is telling you how the vacuum cleaner should work....The first thing you know, you're way out somewhere in the hinterland of a jungle of values and people and ideas whose sole motive is the profit motive."[37] Ultimately, personal vision and abstraction had no place in what Roszak saw as a highly commercial enterprise.

Roszak also began to reassess his political views. During the earlier part of the decade, Marxism, coupled with the liberal ideals of the Popular Front and the American Artists' Congress, appealed to artists looking for ways to bring their aesthetic ideals more in line with mainstream politics. It seemed possible to believe in Marxism without being a committed Communist, just as one could be an abstractionist and still be politically engaged, function as a creative individual and

still make art that affirmed basic principles of democracy. With the marriage of radical politics and art, anything, it seemed, was possible. But by the end of the 1930s, in the wake of contemporary political events and personal circumstances, Roszak found himself at a crossroads, where many of his former beliefs no longer seemed relevant.

NOTES

1. "Theodore Roszak Reminisces," p. 347.

2. Roszak's correspondence with the Treasury Department begins January 22, 1934 and ends April 9, 1934. For the artist's correspondence with various government agencies during the 1930s, see Theodore Roszak Papers, AAA, roll DC-114, frames 533-38.

3. For a description and chronology of the various government projects, see Marlene Park and Gerald E. Markowitz, New Deal for Art: Government Art Projects of the 1930s with Examples from New York City and State, exh. cat. (Hamilton, New York: Gallery Association of New York State, 1977), pp. xii-xiii.

4. For imformation on Rhode as a designer, see Derek Ostergard and David A. Hanks, "Gilbert Rohde and the Evolution of Modern Design, 1927-1941," Arts Magazine, 56 (October 1981), pp. 98-107.

5. Others who visited the Design Laboratory during its short existence included Walter Gropius, Marcel Breuer, R. Buckminster Fuller, and Josef Albers.

6. For an essay that deals with some of the problems Moholy-Nagy encountered in Chicago, see John Grimes, "The New Vision in the New World," Aperture, no. 87, pp. 12-20.

7. Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, The New Vision: from Material to Architecture (New York: Brewer, Warren & Putnam, 1930), p. 8.

8. Jacquelene A. Keyes, "WPA Educators Blazing Trail With School in Industry Design," New York Times, October 25, 1936, II, p. 5.

9. Eunice Barnard, "Trends and Tides of Modern Education: Students Venture Into the Field of Design," New York Times, August 2, 1936, XI, p. 11.

10. Besides Roszak, some of the faculty for the Laboratory School of Industrial Design included Burgoyne Diller, I. Rice Pereira, Elizabeth McCausland, and William Friedman. Applicants for admission were required to have a high school diploma or its equivalent and to have taken courses in elementary and intermediate algebra, plane and solid geometry, plane trigonometry, physics and chemistry. Every applicant had to interview with the chairman of the faculty (who was then

William Friedman) to determine their basic aptitude and qualifications for work in the field of design. A certified high school transcript and two letters of recommendation from instructors or former employers were also required. Once admitted, each first-year student was expected to take a core curriculum that included a basic introduction to materials, the use of hand and power tools, and the study of abstract composition and drawing (both free hand and mechanical). After the first year, a student could major in one of three departments: product-interior design, textile design, or advertising-display design. Consistent with the original program set up by the Design Laboratory, both daytime and evening courses were offered at the Laboratory School. Tuition for the day session was $120., and $60. for the night. The year was divided into two sixteen-week semesters in the Fall and Spring. In addition to the tuition, fees were also charged for laboratory materials ($5.), registration ($3.), and drawing class ($2.).

11. Max Landau, interviewed by the author, New York, January 27, 1991.

12. Moholy-Nagy, The New Vision, p. 16.

13. Moholy-Nagy's letters to Roszak were written between May 15, 1945 and September 10, 1945; see AAA, Roll N69-81, frame 11. Moholy-Nagy reproduced two of Roszak's constructions--White, Steel, and Gold and Spatial Construction--in Vision in Motion, accompanied by the following caption: "The New Sculptor will become a splendid craftsman, with the added knowledge of a fine mechanic and modelmaker. He must know how to handle materials on the lathe, soldering, welding, and other industrial processes;" see Moholy-Nagy, Vision in Motion (Chicago: Paul Teobald, 1947), Figs. 317, 319.

14. "Theodore Roszak Reminisces," p. 275.

15. Warren I. Susman, Culture as History: The Transformations of American Society in the Twentieth Century (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), p. 199.

16. Although Julien Levy is primarily known for his support and patronage of European artists (particularly the Surrealists), between 1939 and 1940 he not only showed American artists, including Roszak, Walter Murch, and David Hare, but also Walt Disney Studio's watercolors for Snow White and the paintings of Gracie Allen, wife and partner of the comedian George Burns; see Julien Levy, Memoirs of an Art Gallery (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1977), p. 254.
. The Artists' Gallery, originally set up in 1936 at 33 West 8th Street and sustained at various locations until 1964, was directed by Hugo Stix and run by individual donations. Artists whose work sold through the gallery received the full amount of a sale. Besides Roszak, Joseph Albers, Byron Browne, Willem de Kooning, Stuart Davis, John Graham, Adolph Gottlieb, Werner Drewes, and Louise Nevelson also showed there. Hugh Stix died on July 21, 1992, at the age of 85.

17. Described as "mysteriously and engagingly expressive" by Robert Coates in the New Yorker (November 23, 1940), Roszak's constructions were less favorably reviewed by others. Milton Brown saw them as all technique and no content, as "non-functional machines" that merely revived "the barren and long dead 'Purism' of Ozenfant, Mondrian, and Arp." George L.K. Morris declared that Roszak, who "has not yet penetrated through the limitations of expressive means....has reached the stage in which Gabo and Pevsner found themselves in the early nineteen-twenties; they had mastered the technical difficulties of construction and their work resembled well-made optical or hydraulic accessories." See Milton Brown, "Three American Sculptors," Parnassus, 12 (December 1940), p. 36 and George L.K. Morris, "Art Chronicle: Sculpture by Theodore Roszak," Partisan Review, no. 8 (January-February 1940), pp. 57-58.

18. See Robinson, "The Sculpture of Theodore Roszak," pp. 47-49, 276 (fig. 67); and Joan Pachner, "Theodore Roszak and David Smith: A Question of Balance," Arts Magazine 58 (February 1984), pp. 105, 106 (fig. 21).

19. Roszak told Joan Seeman Robinson that the meaning and origin of the crescent in his work is feminine and ecclesiastical; see Robinson, "The Sculpture of Theodore Roszak," pp. 111-12.

Roszak was fascinated by the microscope as a means of exploring subcellular, crystalline, and biomorphic imagery, and also by astronomical instruments, such as octants, sextants, and ring dials, which were reproduced in a catalogue he owned of the Adler Planetarium and Astronomical Museum in Chicago (1932).

20. Robinson discussed Spectre of Kitty Hawk's iconographical derivation as it related to flight, airplanes, and war; see Robinson, "The Sculpture of Theodore Roszak," pp. 96-101.

21. Quoted in Robinson, "The Sculpture of Theodore Roszak," p. 66.

22. In an earlier essay on Roszak's constructions, Joan Marter notes their affinity to Oskar Schlemmer's mechanomorphs and the biomorphic conceptions of Hans Arp and Joan Miro; see Joan Marter, "Theodore Roszak's Early Constructions: The Machine as Creator of Fantastic and Ideal Forms," Arts Magazine 54 (November 1979), pp. 110-13.

23. David Smith continued to explore the figure in his paintings and drawings until the end of his life; see Paul Cummings, "The Figure and David Smith," David Smith: Nudes, Drawings and Paintings from 1927-1964, exh. cat. (New York: Knoedler & Co., 1990).

24. Roszak owned copies of Karl Marx's The Civil War in France (1933) and Capital: A Critique of Political Economy (1936), and Nikolai Lenin's Imperialism: The State and Revolution (1929).

25. Terry Conney discussed the strong allure Marxism had for writers and cultural critics associated with Partisan Review; see Conney, The Rise of the New York Intellectuals: Partisan Review and Its Circle, pp. 38-66.

26. Cecil Whiting's chapter on Stuart Davis, particularly her discuss of Davis's attitude toward abstraction and politics during the 1930, was an invaluable source for my ideas about Roszak's constructions; see Cecil Whiting, Antifascism in American Art (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), pp. 65-97.

27. Stuart Davis, "Introduction," The First American Artists' Congress (New York City: 1936).

28. Whiting, Antifascism in American Art, p. 68.

29. Serge Guilbaut's discussion of politics and postwar abstraction, specifically a rhetoric that equated artistic individuality and freedom with democracy, is apropos in an analysis of the development of abstraction during the 1930s; see Serge Guilbaut, How the New York Art World Stole the Idea of Modern Art (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986), pp. 165-194.

30. Quoted in Robinson, "The Sculpture of Theodore Roszak," pp. 44-45.

31. Theodore Roszak, "Statement on Bi-Polar in Red for the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York," 1979. Estate of Theodore Roszak.

32. Karen Wilkin, "The Drawings of David Smith," The New Criterion 8 (March 1990), p. 16.

33. Roszak, as quoted by Robinson, in "The Sculpture of Theodore Roszak," v. I, p. 57.

34. See Joan Marter, "Theodore Roszak's Early Construction: The Machine as Creator of Fantastic and Ideal Forms," Arts Magazine 54 (November 1979), p. 112.

35. In a memorandum to its creditors, dated November 30, 1939, the board of trustees for the Laboratory School made the following statement: "The School, which was originally a public works project, and was incorporated under the Education Law in 1938, has continued for two years on tuitions and small gifts, but its resources are now completely exhausted." The School owed about $7,000, approximately $5,000 of which covered faculty salaries (and administration) and $2,000 covering loans to the school. In January 1940 Roszak received a letter from the secretary of the student organizational committee asking if he would consider teaching a materials laboratory in temporarily rented quarters on the top floor of a walkup at 128 East 16th Street. As an instructor, he would get 50 cents from each student for each session, 20% of which would go back to the workshop for maintanence costs. At this point Roszak knew the school was a dying proposition. Rather than join it, he took a few private students and did what he could to support himself until Sarah Lawrence College offered him a teaching position. Roszak's correspondence with the Laboratory School in the artist's estate.

36. In between the closing of the Laboratory School and an offer to teach at Sarah Lawrence College, Roszak worked as an assistant to Norman Bel Geddes at the 1939/40 Worlds Fair, Flushing Meadows, New York. Apparently, the job came about because deadlines were not being met and a notice,"Designers Wanted," appeared at the Laboratory School. Without a job, Roszak took the opportunity and worked long hours at the fair grounds, designing plastic automobiles, doing heat tests, and making engineering drawings. I want to thank Joan Seeman Robinson for this information--from an interview, Robinson/Roszak, on April 12, 1976.

The 1939/40 New York World's Fair was a consumerist fantasy world created by industrial designer to promote commerce and private industry. Whatever doubts Roszak had about industrial design as a commercial and consumer-directed profession would have been confirmed by his experience with Bel Geddes. For a series of insightful essays on the 1939/40 New York World's Fair, see Dawn of a New Day: The New York World's Fair, 1939/40, exh. cat. (New York: The Queens Museum, 1980).

37. Phillips, "Theodore Roszak Reminisces," pp. 276-77.

CHAPTER 3: WAR AND DISILLUSIONMENT: A NEW AESTHETIC

Roszak's disillusionment with technology and politics, coupled with his transition from Constructivism to Expressionism, should be considered within a broader cultural arena. He was not alone when it came to questioning his role as an artist and intellectual within a socio-political landscape whose terrain had changed significantly by 1940. Whatever beliefs he still maintained about the union of radical art and politics became untenable as America moved toward war.

Many authors have addressed the crisis of a political consciousness, which affected American intellectuals between the years 1935 and 1941.[1] In the wake of political events, beginning with skepticism of the Popular Front and ending with the Hitler-Stalin pact and Russia's invasion of Poland--American artists such as Roszak and intellectuals began to reject Communism, and by extension Marxism. Troskyism offered vanguard artists a temporary alternative to Marxism's reactionary backslide. But eventually artists jettisoned politics as a belief system incompatible with the production of radical art.

According to Serge Guilbaut's analysis of the development of an American postwar avant-garde, the writings of Clement Greenberg, particularly his earliest essays "Avant-Garde and Kitsch" (1939) and "Toward a Newer Laocoon" (1940), played a catalytic role in the critical assessment of vanguard art as an activity divorced from politics. "The delicate balance between art and politics," Guilbaut wrote, "that Trosky, Breton, and Schapiro had tried to maintain was generally missing from Greenberg's articles."[2] By the end of World War II, New York School painters may have disavowed any overt political connections, but, according to Guilbaut, the international success of their work was directly related to its association with and appropriation by a postwar American liberal ideology and Cold war cultural imperialism. Such a view, although it counters Greenberg and, later, Irving Sandler's apolitical modernist "aesthetic" bias, ultimately simplifies what was, in reality, a far more complex phenomenon.

A more balanced account is offered by Michael Leja in his essay "The Formation of an Avant-Garde in New York."[3] Rather than portraying, in Leja's words, "the New York avant-garde as a group of artists who responded in unison, by developing their art along common lines, to the political, social, and economic forces shaping their historical situation" .... as "a grouping of artists whose adaptation of these forces best matched, by coincidence or design, the needs of the liberal bourgeois elite claiming American cultural supremacy in Europe," he concentrates on the process by which the New York School took form.[4] The dynamics of this process, as Leja sees them, were far more heterogenous and idiosyncratic than either Greenberg's modernist or Guilbaut's marxist account admits.

Leja believes that the New York School evolved out of a loosely defined association of artists who took certain cues from a European avant-garde (through exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art and accessible vanguard periodicals) at the same time they struggled to assert their own identity and independence through stylistic innovations. Within this burgeoning group, individuality tended to supercede any uniform aesthetic program, in spite of attempts by a dealer such as Howard Putzel or a programmatic and formalistic critic like Greenberg to forge a hegemonic entity.[5] The New York School developed through a process that was empirical, synthetic, and individualistic. Indeed, if one compares the American avant-garde to its European prototypes, it seems traditional and tame. "Beyond an often expressed antagonism to prevailing realistic modes," Leja writes, "their programs lacked the destructive, nihilistic component characteristic of prior avant-gardes....The aesthetic direction most of the New York School artists favored was a synthetic one, uniting aspects of the abstract and surrealist, and, for some, even the expressionistic developments (although what they took these terms to designate, or took their significant aspects to be, varied widely)." Ultimately, Leja argues, "the manifestos of the New York modernists constituted a kind of domesticated avant-garde, one that had been largely purged of the radical and the rebarbative, and which came to cherish such shibboleths as tradition, the

notion of individual freedom, bourgeois aesthetic mysticism and universal humanism."[6]

The universal implications of this ideological orientation, as opposed to the more restricted historic or aesthetic reading offered by Guilbaut or Greenberg, are what unites the production various individuals--Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Willem de Kooning, David Smith and Roszak. Leja explains the situation this way: "...another crucial ingredient in the explanation involves a different kind of ideological force... This force, to sketch it crudely, resides in the artist's engagement with bourgeois paradigms of human nature, mind, and society, which were in flux and under pressure in the 1940s. In the wake of the Depression, war, Holocaust, and the atomic bomb, traditional notions of human nature were untenable...the reconstruction and replacement of these notions acquired considerable urgency. Powerful new images from the realms of psychology, anthropology, and philosophy were being mobilized at all cultural levels to help rebuild them and to make comprehensible the sequence of global cataclysms."[7]

Seen from this perspective, Roszak's crisis--his rejection of Constructivism and conversion to Expressionism, adaptation of mythical themes, continuation of figuration and Surrealism--shares common ground with many of his contemporaries. What varies considerably, however, are the circumstances that affected each artist and lead to their transformation. In Roszak's case, several events had a decisive impact. These included his introduction to Joseph Campbell at Sarah Lawrence College; his sympathetic response to Jacques Lipchitz's sculpture; and his war-time job as an aircraft mechanic and technician. Any attempt to explain his postwar works, the intense frustration and dissatisfaction that culminated in such key pieces as Spectre of Kitty Hawk (1946-47; Fig. 65), Whaler of Nantucket (1952-53; Fig. 73), and Skylark (1950-51; Fig. 79) must consider each episode in detail.

Roszak arrived at Sarah Lawrence College in the Fall of 1941. Given his previous experience at the Laboratory School of Design, his professorial position was not only a logical transition, but an auspicious new beginning:

> It [the college or university] was a place of shelter, a sanctuary where the artist could somehow hide, live, survive, think, breath, and maybe even do some work, and some did. But this was important--this kind of place where the artist could hibernate for a while....I put twenty years into teaching which is a long time. I gave twenty years of my life to teaching at the college level, and I discovered many, many things.[8]

An all-women's college just north of Manhattan, Sarah Lawrence was a convenient commute for someone who maintained a two or three-day-a-week schedule for the duration of his twenty-year tenure.[9]

The college was originally incorporated during the 1930s as a liberal arts institution and offered a broad range of courses in the humanities, arts, and sciences. During the 1940s it became a haven for a small community of European and American intellectuals committed to a mutual exchange of ideas; its faculty included Rudolf Arnheim, Joseph Campbell, Horace Gregory, David Smith, Ezio Martinelli, and Kurt Roesch. Harold Taylor, who succeeded Constance Warren as president in 1943, was instrumental in initiating a progressive curriculum and decentralized administration. "Everyone had a chance to run the school," he said. "[This philosophy] stemmed from the basis of a free and easy attitude as to what you could do and be considered intellectually valid."[10] When it came to recruiting faculty, Taylor's motto was "Come as you are and do what you can." Partial to Thomas Dewey's pragmatic principles of progressive education, Taylor encouraged teachers to experiment with the organization and presentation of their courses. There was no hierarchy within departments. "You were a member of the faculty," recalled Arnheim, "and within each department a member of a collective unit."[11]

As a member of the art department, Roszak taught courses in two and three-dimensional design. When he arrived, the studios were set up mainly for painting and figure drawing. He convinced his colleagues (painters Roesch and Martinelli) and trustees that more modern equipment than chisels and mallets (drill presses, lathes, and power sanders) was essential. Eventually he instituted a sculpture department and installed welding facilities. Taylor recalled that when Roszak hired David Smith to teach sculpture between 1948 and 1950, the two became

known on campus as the "blow-torch twins." Apparently, the sight of young women in jump suits and welding masks upset certain faculty members. However, in spite of this situation, Roszak established a respectable program. From 1941 until 1958, when he left teaching to concentrate on his own work, his courses, which included art history until William Rubin arrived at the school in 1952, were well attended. In fact, several of his students went on to become professional sculptors.[12]

In a letter he later wrote to his nephew, the cultural historian Theodore Roszak, then graduating from the University of California, Los Angeles, and considering an academic career, Roszak made the following comment: "Speaking from my own experience, I have found teaching at the [Sarah Lawrence] college an amiable one. There is always a chance to meet someone really interesting and even a fair chance to benefit and grow at the fortunate influence of some colleague."[13] Though he rarely admitted contemporary influences, one such colleague might have been Joseph Campbell. By the time Roszak got to Sarah Lawrence, Campbell had been teaching in the literature department for seven years. He had read extensively in philosophy, mythology, anthropology, folk and modern literature, and poetry; studied with Indologist Heinrich Zimmer and Swami Nikhilananda; and married Jean Erdman, a former student and member of Martha Graham's dance company. During the late 1930s and early 1940s, Campbell was one of a small group of intellectuals studying the inter-relationships between mythology, literature, and anthropology.[14] Campbell's investigations of myth, especially the monomyth and the psycho-dynamics of creativity, would have offered Roszak a new perspective on his work.

It is not as though the relevance of myth for 20th-century vanguard art was a something new. As early as the 1920s, the Surrealists' obsession with l'amour fou had also included mythic themes dealing with creation and degradation, death and regeneration. But Campbell's orientation was more comprehensive. His research encompassed the entire history of world myth, which he analyzed for thematic motifs--archetypes--shared by diverse cultures. Campbell's approach to myth

was comparative. L'amour fou, labyrinths and minotaurs, personal demons and phantasmagoria would have seemed too solipsistic given the kind of ethnographic project he envisioned--the common basis for a collective human consciousness.[15]

In his interpretive work on comparative mythology, Campbell drew from Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, as two differing but complementary points of view. In this respect, he played an important role as someone who expanded the creative applications of myth. By combining Freud's systematic and psychoanalytic approach to the subconscious with Jung's more heuristic and intuitive understanding, Campbell developed a synthetic model for the interpretation of myth which would have appealed to artists.

Campbell's earliest work on the hero monomyth, A Skeleton Key to Finnegans Wake, co-written with Henry Morton Robinson and published in 1944, five years before Hero with a Thousand Faces, is a good case in point.[16] Layered with images issuing from the recesses of the writer's mind and traversing backward and forward through time, Joyce's text is the substratum from which the monomyth is extracted. "Finnegans Wake," wrote Campbell, "is a prodigious, multifaceted monomyth, not only the cauchemar of a Dublin citizen but the dreamlike saga of a guilt-stained evolving humanity."[17] In spite of their local inflections, the various themes played out in Finnegans Wake have archetypal significance: "Stripping away its accidental features the book may be said to be all compact of mutually supplementary antagonisms [Cambpell's italics]: male-and-female, age-and-youth, life-and-death, love-and-hate; these, by their attractions, conflicts, and repulsions, supply polar energies that spin the universe."[18] Joyce's text, with its psychological underpinnings, historical and mythological allusions developed the character of a modern hero. Finnegan's life unfolds dramatically, like a dream, through a series of initiations, transformations, and, ultimately, a resurrection or rebirth.[19] His story recapitulates the "great round," or "eternal return."[20] As a monomyth, Finnegans Wake not only transcended time, but gave a sense of continuity to an otherwise fragmented and moribund human condition.

The hero monomyth would have had poignant relevance for American artists grappling with their own internal anxieties during the war years.[21] The hero's trials were ultimately played out in the battlefields of the psyche. This psychological dimension made the hero a symbolic role model, an alter ego for painters and sculptors. The heroic act involved risk; it was an aggressive, rather than passive, encounter with reality, with one's own irrational impulses; and it required a journey beyond what was familiar and comfortable into foreign, even hostile terrain. This would have been a fertile notion for American abstract artists, whose reconnaissance of the subconscious and its projection and materialization on canvas, or through sculpture, took on heroic overtones. In fact, during a time of global war and devastation, such a realization could have had the impact of a revelation, the effect of a panacea.[22]

The hero provided a visualization for an individual's confrontation with, and eventual triumph over, adversity and self-doubt. As a symbolic pillar of humanism, it also signified a personage, a timeless being, a potent metaphor for the invincible human spirit. Given its mythic, psychic, and figurative implications, the hero had great potential as a sculptural motif. Indeed, the heroic image offered American, as well as European, sculptors a new line on the figure. Roszak's Skylark, Rite of Passage, Hound of Heaven, and Curtain Call can be seen as incarnations of this heroic theme, with Skylark and Hound of Heaven being the most monumental realizations. David Smith's The Hero (1951-52) and Isamu Noguchi's Monument to Heros (1943) are also extensions of this impulse. All three sculptors would have found in Campbell's work an inspiration for their own ideas. In fact, both Roszak and Smith had direct access to Campbell through their affiliation with Sarah Lawrence, and Noguchi through his collaborations with Martha Graham. Ultimately, the preoccupation with heroic figurative sculpture during the 1940s and '50s, as humanistic monuments to death and war, was a pan-international phenomenon, whose various expression were brought together, in 1959, in Peter Selz's New Images of Man show at the Museum of Modern Art.[23]

If Campbell writings served as a theoretical impetus for some of Roszak's postwar sculpture, the work of Jacques Lipchitz opened the doors to expressionistic imagery and empirical process. Lipchitz arrived in the United States in 1941, the same year Roszak began teaching at Sarah Lawrence. By this time he was already an acknowledged master who had synthesized tenets of Cubism, Brancusi, and African art.[24] Lipchitz's decision to emigrate was based on world politics and survival. Europe was already at war. To have stayed in France, given the precarious state of things under the Vichy government, would have meant incarceration in a concentration camp, if not sure death. Wars have a way of heightening sensitive minds. In Lipchitz's case, World War II significantly altered his sculptural consciousness. The work he did in New York between 1941 and 1945 was unprecedented. Mother and Child II (1941-45; Fig. 55), Myrah (1942; Fig. 56), Blossoming (1941-42), and Yara I and II (1942), all shown in New York at Curt Valentin's Buchholz Gallery in 1942 and 1943, reject the controlled carving and analytic conception of his earlier, European work. Gone is the pristine clarity, the monolithic integrity, and overt eclecticism that characterized Detachable Figure: Seated Musician (1915) and Seated Figure (1917). Instead, there is an unsettling anguish created by forms whose surfaces are gnarled and thorny, pitted and projective, layered and encrusted.

Lipchitz perceived the work he did in America within an extended tradition. He told James Johnson Sweeney during an interview for Partisan Review:

> To begin with, I would like to make it clear that I, too, am a partisan, a very violent partisan for the liberty of art, the liberty of personality, the liberty of creative expression--for the broad highway of art through the ages, the royal road of tradition in the true sense, the Great Stream: the right of every artist to express himself and his duty to pour his own small stream into the great river. The river is never the same; it is constantly expanding and constantly in motion.[25]

By situating the sculptural object within a timeless continuum, Lipchitz grounded it within a sculptural tradition at the same he probed its primordial character through religion and myth.

After the war some vanguard artists courted their independence from European tradition at the same time they borrowed from it. Even after a critic like Greenberg began to proselytize

a new canon of abstraction, in which aspects of European surrealism and figuration were seen as retardataire, an artist like Roszak continued to work with both possibilities. Given his European background, this is not surprising. Indeed, most of his models, beginning in the 1930s with Moholy-Nagy and De Chirico and continuing into the 1940s with Lipchitz, Andre Masson, Kurt Seligmann, and Alberto Giacometti, were European.

Roszak was profoundly affected by Lipchitz's shows at Buchholz Gallery.[26] Here was a European he could emulate, a figurative sculptor whose earlier involvement with Cubism and later expressionistic extensions paralleled his own transition at this juncture. A piece such as Lipchitz's Myrah, shown at Buchholz Gallery in 1943, provided a precedent for sculpture that was vulnerable and threatening, transparent and linear, erotic and difficult.

During the war years, Roszak worked as an aircraft mechanic at Brewster Aeronautical Corporation, Newark, New Jersey designing aircraft (including an experimental bomber) and taught war workers in the Navy and the Army. Later on, he was also employed as a navigational and engineering draftsman at the Stevens Institute of Technology, Hoboken, New Jersey, where he designed hulls for war ships. In preparation for his job at Brewster, he took a course in aviation sheet metal and riveting at the Delehanty Institute in New York.[27]

Roszak could have romanticized his war-time experience; others employed in a similar capacity did. Milton Hebald, for example, a sculptor who worked as a mechanic in the Republic Aviation Corporation plant at Farmingdale, Long Island, rhapsodized about the organic beauty of aerodynamic forms, "I recall an airplane water tank so lovely I'm certain that it would send shivers down Brancusi's spine;" the unlimited possibilities of a creative artist working the same "ten hour schedule" as a factory worker; and the necessity of retooling the sculptor's studio to function more like a factory (something David Smith put into practice early on).[28] Hebald's firsthand account, published as an illustrated article in the Magazine of Art, gives the impression that the airplane factory was a sculptor's playground, another kind of design laboratory.

Roszak may have supported the war effort as a collective worker, but his negative experience at Brewster eventually undermined his faith in industry, technology, and Marxism. As far as he was concerned, the factory was purgatory, an abusive environment whose products wasted good materials, and whose assembly-line made automatons out of individuals employed to build its war machines. Working at Brewster and Stevens depressed Roszak. He became exhausted, disillusioned, frustrated:

> I tried to do a little work on my own during that period because this was a difficult four and a half years--every day building, talking, teaching, talking myself hoarse and teaching all kinds of hours, seven days a week because we needed technicians....Well, I couldn't even buy a piece of plastic without getting a priority number. You couldn't get a piece of metal to save your soul unless you were making an airplane, or something else, a rocket out of the damn thing....If I had only a chance to do two or three hours of my own work, this would have saved me--you see, because all of my energy was being cancelled out in a negative direction. There was no compensation for the whole thing, and the war was a long ways off.....In the meanwhile, I'm using all these things during the day, and I'm seeing the way this stuff is being used--it's all being devastated...this marvelous plastic, this great aluminum and stainless steel, the most beautiful alloys you've ever seen, this nonferrous material we used in submarines--it was going down the drain, all of it. And all I wanted to do was just create a little thing....And I saw more guys getting their guts drilled out making airplanes....The human element entered upon this whole scene of using these materials for these ends, and after you see this thing for a while, it takes on a kind of macabre madness. You wonder just what in hell you're doing there....[29]

Roszak's experience at Brewster was a turning point in his rejection of progressive science and technology:

> Well, this of course required--I think on the basis of my own peculiar feelings for the denied experience--a complete dismissal of whatever happened in the past. This is violent, I'll admit, and maybe it's extreme, but when you're working with such subtle psychological forces, this is inevitable and particularly if you are your own captain. You can make such a decision. Well, I did, and this was part of the reason why I denounced technology as a social state, as a discipline, as a material, as a way of formulating ideas, and why I destroyed it all to get back to something essential.[30]

Not everything, though, was destroyed or rejected. Roszak's war-time experience found a creative application. Introduced to welding techniques on a large scale, he realized the potential of steel as a purely sculptural material:

> I was fascinated by the free play of the welding thing, the idea of taking prefabricated materials that ordinarily would be used to continue the same kind of farce that was going on and transforming them, melting them down, cutting them up, reshaping them, giving them another kind of identity.[31]

At this point, even if Roszak had wanted to make steel sculpture, the war made it virtually impossible. For many American sculptors these were fallow years. In Roszak's case, except for a few scattered constructions, and one small welded-steel figure, he did very little three-dimensional work during the war.[32] He did, however, between about 1943 and 1946, execute more than 65 gouaches. Most of these works on paper, measuring about 10 by 15 inches, were never exhibited during the artist's life time; like other aspects of his work, including the photograms, certain drawings and paintings, they remained in his studio.[33]

The gouaches, Roszak's transition from constructivist to welded-steel sculpture, are distinguished by their combination of drawing and painting. Just as painting combined with plaster relief had been a transition toward free-standing sculptural objects, as for example in Recording Sound (Fig. 26), now, combined with drawing, it functioned similarly, as a means of generating expressionistic images whose extensions were also sculptural. Roszak had used gouache in some of his earlier drawings and pochoirs. That he took it up again, at this juncture, was both an act of necessity and emulation. Unlike steel and other industrial materials, gouache and paper were accessible. Also, drawing was something he could do in his spare time without expending a great deal of physical energy. These disturbing works immediately remind one of Lipchitz's war-time gouaches (Fig. 57), a selection of which usually supplemented each of his Buchholz shows. "These works of the period around 1940," Lipchitz later remarked, "take on a new kind of violence with broken contours and dramatic gestures, perhaps the result of emotions I felt in relation to the war and the disruption of my entire life."[34] Lipchitz's dynamic gouaches were probably an impetus for Roszak's own investigations of a new sculptural sensibility.

Stylistically, Roszak's gouaches are the complete antithesis of his earlier constructivist drawings. Whereas the constructivist drawings (Fig. 58), particularly in their final orthographic

presentation, are precise and linear, the gouaches (Fig. 59) are painterly and improvisational; whereas the constructivist drawings are meticulously rendered on graph paper, proportioned and delineated according to the axial dimensions of a grided ground, the gouaches explode across a neutral ground without boundaries; whereas some of the constructivist drawings imply an erotic anthropomorphism through biomorphic configurations, the gouaches project a sexuality and violence that is hard to miss.

The gouaches introduce many themes--invocation, fertility, hybrid figuration--that characterize Roszak's work from the late 1940s through the 1960s. Strutting vagina-like shapes with extended arms, variations on Lipchitz's Blossoming, Yara, and Myrah, evolve into Invocation I and II. A pair of squat legs, which later appear in Anguish (1946), Surge (1946), Forms in Transition II (1945), Golden Bough (1950), Hound of Heaven (1953-54), Prometheus I (1955-56), and Ariadne (1959), or as a tripod base in Raven (1947) and Thorn Blossom, is the first sign of a more overt figuration. In several images, studies for Thorn Blossom (Fig. 60), the crescent shape is transformed within a more expressionistic context. Some sheets develop a single image, such as a large prehistoric bird or plant form; others are more situational and amphoric (prototypes for a later series of abstract reliefs), a forum for serial variations on a particular motif, or an arena for the collision of pictorial elements and brilliant colors.

The gouaches also signify Roszak's return to nature, natural forms and organic configurations (Fig. 61). Most summers were spent with his family outside New York City, in Rockport, Massachusetts. During the 1930s his rapport with the natural environment had been subordinate to his infatuation with the metropolis. But the gouaches, with their proliferation of fossil and bone-like forms (some of the largest sheets are inscribed "Bone Forms; Study for Sculpture Forms (Bone Structure)," revert back to nature at a primordial level. "You come up with these references back to nature," Roszak recalled, "because this is what you sort of feel hasn't been making any kind of inroads or developing within the self, and it's a sure way of starting all

over again."[35] (Lipchitz, in his interview with Sweeney, described his war-time transition as a similar process.) For Roszak, starting all over meant finding new ways to express ongoing conflicts: birth-death, survival-destruction, good-evil. It also meant purging everything that was no longer relevant. By the end of 1945, he had gotten rid of his lathes and drill presses, bought an oxyacetylene torch, obtained a fire permit from the city, and begun welding and brazing steel in the second floor studio of his brownstone at St. Lukes Place.[36]

Between 1940 and 1946 Roszak continued to submit work (constructions that had been exhibited at Julien Levy and Artists' Gallery) to annual exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Art Institute of Chicago. But his efforts seem perfunctory, a way of maintaining public presence rather than show-casing new work. Then Dorothy C. Miller selected his work for a show she was organizing at The Museum of Modern Art. Fourteen Americans included painting, as well as sculpture, by Ashile Gorky, David Hare, Isamu Noguchi, I. Rice Pereira, Robert Motherwell, Mark Toby, Loren MacIver, and others, and initiated a tight curatorial format for presenting contemporary work by American artists.[37] Each artist wrote a brief statement for the catalogue. Roszak's text is revealing; it signals a change of heart:

> The work shown marks, in effect, a period of transition from deliberate and precisely executed relationships to gradual evolvement into freer forms. It is within the realm of these forms that one feels a greater range of accumulated ideas at work.... Transition, among other things, implies a degree of change which for me is a sufficient shift to constitute an end and a beginning. Every beginning requires of me a new orientation, since at this point little is actually known and less is formally categorized--yet within this amorphous area of emotional experience, one's perceptions and sensibilities stir anew and make unknown alliances, revealing their visual counterpart in varying forms of concealment and disguise.[38]

That Roszak was indeed at some kind of threshold is evident given the following "note" he appended to his text:

> The constructivist's position, historically, with its influence upon architecture and engineering design has been and is an important one, continuing to have its effect upon artists and designers alike. At the same time that these "constructive" purposes and intentions exist, the world is fundamentally and seriously disquieted and it is difficult to remain unmoved and complacent in its midst.[39]

Doubt and disquiet characterize the four welded, hammered, and brazed metal pieces that Roszak included in Fourteen Americans. With their pocked surfaces and gnarled limbs, these works signify a rebellion against the refined elegance of the constructions and acknowledge the dark underside of a dysfunctional world. In Anguish (1945-46; Fig. 62), a variation on Lipchitz's monumental Mother and Child II, and Surge (1946; Fig. 63) the figure is deformed almost beyond recognition. Everything is in flux; tumult and chaos replace the symmetrical predictability of earlier constructions. Violated and extended, the body becomes a vehicle for catharsis and metamorphosis. Forms in Transition I and II (1945; Fig. 64) are surrealist hybrids: a thing, half-man-half-beast-half-bird, dredged up from the darker recesses of Roszak's imagination. These atavistic creatures, some of Roszak's first experiments in welding and brazing, filing and rasping, initiate a progression toward works such as Thorn Blossom, Scavenger, Raven, Invocation II, Sea Quarry, and Thistle in the Dream. Their intimate scale in no way compromises their emotional impact and formal significance. That Roszak considered these nasty objects his sculptural rebirth is underscored by their inclusion in his first one-man show, in 1951, at Pierre Matisse Gallery. In this context, in the company of Spectre of Kitty Hawk, Recollections of the Southwest, Skylark, and Night Bloom, they stand out as prototypes for sculpture that issues from the subconscious and aspires to the mythical.

War and the devastation of two Japanese cities gave rise to a chorus of concerned individuals, artists-intellectuals, scientists, and humanists, who clearly saw the other, darker side of technological progress. Many, including Albert Einstein, publicly expressed their concern:

> By painful experience we have learnt that rational thinking does not suffice to solve the problems of our social life. Penetrating research and keen scientific work have often had tragic implications for mankind, producing, on the one hand, inventions which liberated man from exhausting physical labor, making his life easier and richer; but on the other hand, introducing a grave restlessness into his life, making him a slave to his technological environment, and--most catastrophic of all--creating the means of his own mass destruction. This, indeed, is a tragedy of over-whelming poignancy.[40]

Delivered at a time when scientific advances appeared to offer a state of technocratic grace,

Einstein's message presented a disturbing paradox. Molecular forces harnessed into deadly weapons whose awesome potential defied explanation cast a grave shadow over the presumed omniscience and "enlightenment" of scientific research. Although the polemic so poignantly expressed by Einstein in 1948 had preoccupied humanists since the advent of the Industrial Revolution, by the end of World War II it had reached a critical threshold.[41]

The horrific images that dominate Roszak's work after 1946 were not the capricious fantasies of a solitary man, but part of a greater stream of images reflecting a collective crisis. When Roszak wrote that, "The forms that I find necessary to assert are meant to be blunt reminders of primordial strife and struggle, reminiscent of those brute forces that not only produced life, but in turn threatened to destroy it,"[42] his primal terminology echoed other contemporary painters and sculptors who also saw their creative process as a way of reconnecting with a fundamental life force, and their art as analogues for struggle, conflict, and discord. In his search for "proto-images that cut across time and reaffirm man's essential personality," Roszak shared with other sculptors and Abstract Expressionist painters some of the same intellectual sources--their "Primal Heritage."[43]

A tendency to primitivize signified a search for creative acts that were atavistic rather than political, without the propagandistic ballyhoo of a 1930s New Deal nationalism. Barnett Newman's "first man," for example, was an artist as opposed to a worker or politician and a way of questioning the primacy of scientific investigation and political engagement by reestablishing a continuity with paleolithic man's sense of awe and terror before the unknown and the unknowable: "Man's first expression, like his first dream, was an aesthetic one. Speech was a poetic outcry rather than a demand for communication. Original man, shouting his consonants, did so in yells of awe and anger at his tragic state, at his own self-awareness and at his own helplessness before the void."[44] In the postwar period vanguard artists looked for ways to bridge the gap between the "unconscious" and the "masses." What had been a political and nationalistic

agenda during the 1930s, gave way in the 1940s to a more spiritualized perception of creativity, which took its cues from Surrealist art and literature, research in the natural sciences of anthropology, archeology, biology, and ethnology, and Jung's notion of a collective unconscious. Kirk Varnedoe described the situation in this way: "...the premises of a Marxist approach to art in the 1920s and 1930s laid the bases for the more antimaterialist approaches of the 1940s: in this case, a prior insistence on understanding all human productions in terms of their specific social contexts was transmuted into a "spiritual contextualism" centered on systems of belief rather than on economics."[45]

Roszak's postwar work not only shares an intellectual and contextual basis with Abstract Expressionism, but develops out of the same dialectical orientation that characterized his work in the 1930s. However, the sculptural terms of this dialectic--male-female; figuration-abstraction; order-chaos; life-death--change dramatically, the result of an ideological and philosophical reassessment, new techniques and material considerations. When Roszak began welding steel, it opened up a whole range of formal possibilities and allowed him to tap recollections and stir up associations:

> When one works with a highly suggestive medium like molten metal that is subject to all kinds of changes and mutations, it begins to work on the human imagination very fast and the first intimations of that suggestibility strike very private, psychic factors, and you begin to think, feel and dream--and I'm a good dreamer--about the way in which all these vague suggestions begin to shape concrete recollections. It was on the basis of this capacity for re-dreaming recollections that gave me the whole sense of continuity. In other words, I had to think about my experience in depth to a point completely unfamiliar to me, and this had to be reconstructed in a way that would read back concretely and meaningfully. This was the situation--so complex in terms of social, private, personal, ideological, artistic, and plastic values--after the war.[46]

From 1946 until his death in 1981, Roszak worked through a series of iconographical themes with intense concentration and formal invention.[47] Flight, a central theme, undergoes a dramatic metamorphosis in the late 1940s. What had been a positivistic projection in earlier constructions--Ascension, Monument to Lost Dirigibles--becomes predatory and fatalistic in

Scavenger (1946-47), Raven, Spectre of Kitty Hawk, Migrant (1950), Firebird (1950-51), and Night Flight (1958-62). With welding torch and brazing rods, Roszak returned to this theme in a way that completely transformed its meaning.

In the 1930s flight embodied the possibility of planetary discovery and space travel, the utopian belief in progressive science. With the detonation of the atomic bomb and the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, flight took on more sinister connotations. Spectre of Kitty Hawk (1946-47; Fig. 65) (and it contemporaneous cousin, Scavenger) is not only a manifestation of Roszak's rage, but his response to the spirit of flight as a death-dealing instrument.[48] Spectre was also, according to Roszak, an archetypal incarnation of the prehistoric pterodactyl, who prowled the primordial skies terrorizing all life below, and a phoenix that rose from the ashes of atomic fallout. These were some of the ways in which Roszak described Spectre, which drew considerable attention when it was shown in the Art Institute of Chicago's "Fifty-eighth Annual Exhibition of American Painting and Sculpture".[49] But Spectre's implications are far more complex, especially when considered in light of five previously unknown preliminary sketches.

With its flailing extremities and undulating surfaces, Spectre of Kitty Hawk is belligerent and threatening. Asymmetrical and unpredictable, radiating in all directions, it demands circumambulation. It is animated; it seems to quiver, like a living thing that could strike out at any moment. What unites Spectre with Roszak's earlier work is its crescent torso. In Crescent Throat (Fig. 47), the crescent shape signified cosmologic and microscopic levels of perception. It also symbolized a lunar and feminine entity. In Spectre, the crescent embodies both male and female principles. Its upper half leans back passively, while its lower half projects menacingly. Its upper extremity is layered with plaques from tip to mid-torso, while its lower extension is filed down, not entirely smooth, but without the same degree of surface articulation. The entire piece is heavily brazed, and small nodes forming the skin on certain limbs recall the stippled surfaces of Lipchitz's Myrah and The Prayer. But whereas Lipchitz modeled dabs of clay cast in bronze,

Roszak achieved a similar texture by building up puddles of solder around points of steel. Layered and encrusted, full of secondary and tertiary details, Spectre's hermaphroditic demeanor belies its formal evolution.

In a suite of five pencil drawings executed on 8-by-10-inch sheets of graph paper (Figs. 66, 67, 68, 69, 70), Roszak recorded his first ideas for Spectre of Kitty Hawk. These explicit renderings, never seen during his lifetime, make one thing clear: Spectre evolved from the image of a man-thing (a typical surrealist motif, half-bird-half-beast) on its knees leaning backward, with a large phallic projection. In some of the drawings, the animal's head is conceived as an elongated beak and in one instance as a cranial orifice, redrawn, as a detail, at the bottom of the same sheet. That Roszak was dealing from the beginning with a figurative entity is reinforced in two sketches by a series of marginal images--totemic and skeletal personages (prototypes for Skylark, Rite of Passage, and Hound of Heaven). In each of these sketches, the recurring motif of a projecting phallus supporting smaller crescent shapes intimates the synthesis of masculine and feminine elements in the finished sculpture.

If these five sketches represent Spectre of Kitty Hawk's more masculine and militaristic side, another series of drawings made about the same time (Fig. 71) embody its feminine counterpart. In these drawings, some of which were shown at Pierre Matisse Gallery in 1953,[50] the spectre, no longer on its knees, stands upright and defiant, completely exposed. The crescent has uncoiled into a labial slit running the full length of the body and terminating in a barbed tail. The spectre's wings, splayed and scorched as they extend to either side, emphasize the vertical axis that dominates this ferociously feminine image.

That Roszak executed Spectre of Kitty Hawk is not strange given his formal preoccupation with flight and subsequent disillusionment. That he deliberately chose to fabricate a spectral image in which male and female principles are reconciled is revealing when seen in the context of a series of war spectres David Smith made between 1944 and 1946 (Fig. 72).[51] For both artists,

the spectre was a phantom, an anguished spirit that issued from personal frustration and anxiety. Its origins were prehistoric, and its presence, like some dark and insidious dream, haunted each individual. Spectral manifestations became an obsession with Smith, who wrote, "Some works are the celebration of wonders. After several of these a specter. In my life, joy, peace are always menaced. Survival not only from commercial destruction but the threat of daily existence, the battle of money for materials--and welfare during."[52] Like Roszak's spectre, Smith's had a collective dimension; they symbolized the greed, corruption, and materialism that caused wars and killed people. They were also hybrid surreal beings, mutated figures or birds, animalistic incarnations of contemporary war planes, those deadly instruments of mass destruction. What ultimately differentiates Smith's conception of the spectre from Roszak's is its emphatically masculine and militaristic demeanor and its association with a winged cannon-phallus.[53]

Roszak and Smith were diametrically opposed in several respects, an obvious point of observation if one compares Smith's cannon-phallus to Roszak's pictorial heart (Figs. 18, 19).[54] The heart was to Roszak what the cannon was to Smith: a personal metaphor signifying each one's disposition and world view. Roszak was a sensitive and caring man who loved his wife and sought balance and security in his life. The heart, with its poetic overtones, was a befitting analogue for Roszak's romantic tendencies. Smith may have been a romantic in some respects, particularly in his glorification of the working man and industrial modes of production, but he was also aggressive and pugnacious, not one to easily show affection or wear his heart on his sleeve. For him, the winged cannon-phallus was not only a war symbol, a brutal sign of military imperialism, but, perhaps, a reflection of his own sexual frustrations and ambivalence toward women. Objects he modeled and cast during this period in which the cannon-phallus plays the central protagonist in a rape scene, when seen against his deteriorating relationship with his first wife, the sculptor Dorothy Dehner, would seem to reinforce such a reading. It's hard to separate the socio-political implications of the cannon-phallus from its psycho-sexual innuendos; in Smith's

art it seems to function on both levels.[55]

Some of Smith's spectres--War Spectre (1944), False Peace Spectre, Spectre Riding Golden Ass, along with Jurassic Bird and The Rape (all 1945)--were shown at Buchholz/Willard Gallery in 1946. Roszak probably saw this work, just as he probably saw Smith's Medals for Dishonor when they were first exhibited, in 1940, at Willard Gallery. That Roszak respected Smith's work, there is no doubt; it was something he reacted to as well as against. His earliest graph-paper sketches for Spectre of Kitty Hawk are an indication of this. In them the spectral motif is first presented as a distinctly phallic entity. That he sought a reconciliation of forces in the final sculpture was as much a response to Smith's phallio-centric spectres as it was an affirmation of his own psychological and emotional difference.

Roszak often described his formal development in psychological and oppositional terms. Discussing the period in which Spectre of Kitty Hawk was made, he said,

> You reach a certain point only to start all over again, and that means you have the capacity to regenerate, to rebuild and reconstruct. Usually, the very thing that you ended with is probably the opposite of what you're going to begin with. You're constantly working in polarities of completing and fulfilling the requirements of whatever it is that you need.... The reconciliation of opposites. That's what it really amounts to. We're always working with reason and impulses, emotional and intellectual factors. We're working with the romantic and the classic, with the straight line and the curve, with hot and cold, male and female, good and evil. It's always a question of polarity and how we can really make these things go together and reconcile ourselves to it.[56]

Balancing opposing tendencies through sculptural form was Roszak's way of working. "The individual is actually seeking this ideal state of the father and the mother," he later remarked to James Elliot, "and the degree to which this unity of opposing characteristics is to be found in the individual, to that degree will that individual discover integration within himself."[57] By the early 1940s the psychological dynamics of Roszak's sculpture had a strong Jungian inflection. Although he may have encountered Jung's ideas about the anima and animus through Joseph Campbell at Sarah Lawrence, already by the late 1930s he had formulated intuitively a point of view that reflected similar principles.

Roszak tended to see his formal evolution within the larger cycles of art history, as a way of clarifying his transition from Constructivism to Expressionism.[58] If the constructions represented his austere classical phase, a piece like Spectre of Kitty Hawk was his baroque transformation. By describing his postwar work through art-historical schema, he gave it credibility (what Meyer Schapiro did for abstraction in the 1930s). Thus, these were not anomalous, seemingly incomprehensible abstractions, but works that took their place within what Lipchitz referred to as the "Great Stream." Roszak's references to Classic, Gothic, and Baroque tendencies were a deliberate strategy to historize his art:

> My interest and feeling for the Baroque is for that of its inception, when it is closest to the Gothic thrust. In contemporary visual terms, it expresses itself at once as--sharp and undulating--assertive and pulsating--defiant and hopeful. The rhythm between the discipline of the Classic and the emotional stirring of the Baroque may well establish a new synthesis toward the completeness of man and his hopes for the fullness of life.[59]

Spectre of Kitty Hawk can be seen as part of a sculptural triad that also includes Whaler of Nantucket (1952-53; Fig. 73) and Monument to an Unknown Political Prisoner (1952; Fig. 74). Since his earliest days in Staten Island, Roszak continued to work through ideas in series, which permitted an extended involvement with a particular motif. Although six years separate the execution of Spectre from Whaler, both are sympathetic in their formal constitution, associations, and phallic allusions.

"The American vanguard painter took to the white expanse of the canvas as Melville's Ishmael took to the sea," wrote Harold Rosenberg in 1952.[60] Herman Melville's Moby Dick became a favorite subject among Abstract Expressionists, who saw it as a means of exploring a host of provocative and psychological themes.[61] As an early American writer whose work inspired vanguard artists, Melville was to the 1940s and '50s what Walt Whitman had been to the 1920s and 1930s: an indigenous American phenomenon, heroic, mythical, and enigmatic. Melville's text was a rich source of material for Roszak, who later told Phillips, "Melville became interesting as a metaphysical speculation, as a kind of spiritual brother, but he didn't solve my

visual problems."[62] If Melville's tale unfolded across a painter's canvas as an oceanic ground, diaphanous, fluid and ever-changing, for a sculptor like Roszak, it had to assume a three-dimensional image--something tangible and yet highly suggestive.

Roszak later confessed to Elliott that the visual impetus for Whaler of Nantucket was an anvil: "Whaler of Nantucket I saw in the studio one night by just contemplating the anvil...Yes, the anvil gave me the first idea for the Whaler. I was immersed in the work of Melville at the time and it was almost inevitable that I would come across some thing that would connect itself with the whole saga of Melville's life..."[63] An indispensible tool used to forge and bend heated steel, the anvil was an apt metaphor for the metamorphosis of an idea. What initially began as a studio prop, though, underwent a dramatic series of transformations.

Melville's drama--the confrontation between Captain Ahab and the Great White Whale--was played out in an expansive sea. What the ocean had been for Melville--a medium for the projection of his imagination--space became for Roszak. Ahab's relentless pursuit to confront and subdue the primordial beast, set against dark and unfathomable waters, had a mythical and psychological dimension that intrigued Roszak. So did Ahab's tragic character, his heroic journey into the unknown that ends in death rather than rebirth.

Inspired by Ahab's moribund character, Roszak made a drawing in which the image of an anvil is combined with a skull (Fig. 75). In Study for "Head," executed about 1949-50, the central passages of Whaler of Nantucket develop around a cranial curve and a projecting jaw, criss-crossing struts connected to a head, and a spinal column formed by a series of circular plates. In the finished sculpture, Roszak eliminated the spinal element by cantilevering the jaw to the inside of the cranium. (Its removal enhanced the clarity of the final image.) The struts, however, remained, giving the piece a strong anthropomorphic support. Similar struts reappear throughout the late 1940s and '50s in works such as Spectre of Kitty Hawk, Thorn Blossom, and Night Blossom. They not only function as a base but as spindly feet that introduce a figurative reference.

By rendering what eventually became the whale as two horizontal extensions emerging from a cranial cavity, Roszak created a formal metaphor for the cerebral, psycho-mythical origins of Ahab's nemesis. The White Whale--a literary trope--was Ahab's bete noire, a spectre that propelled him to irrational violence and, ultimately, death.

Whaler of Nantucket, like all of Roszak's best work, is a distillation of signs and symbols.[64] That he conceived of a beak protruding from a cranial envelope as an idea that functioned on many levels can be seen from another ink and wash drawing dated 1949 (Fig. 76), where the whole motif becomes an elongated head on an armless figure. Given the earlier date of this bizarre image (a study for a mythological Fury), about three years before Whaler was executed, there is no doubt that Roszak associated the psychological nature of Melville's protagonist and his nemesis with a head. "In Melville's life," he wrote, "I believe that a crucial moment occurred when he could no longer clearly separate the area of his own pursuit from the enveloping wrath of his protagonist...[And] I tried through forms to project symbolically the pursuer and the pursued..."[65] By Disassociating the head from the torso and introducing a series of leg-like struts, Roszak shifted emphasis to the psychological and figurative implications of these forms.

In another set of graph-paper drawings (Figs. 77, 78), a hybrid figure, not unlike the man-thing in preliminary sketches for Spectre of Kitty Hawk (Figs. 66-70), is suggested. In these three images, the cranial curve becomes a strange bird-like figure with hands drawn to its sides that arches up and over and launches a phallic projection. Roszak titled one image, Ahab, and, as a triad, they served as shop drawings from which the final piece was fabricated. Generating ideas on paper is one thing but translating them into sculpture another. One process is imaginative and germinative; the other, constructive and problem-solving, and involves working with actual materials in space. In the Ahab drawing, Roszak determined the exact proportions of his piece diagrammatically through a series of protractive degrees. Using a standard ratio of proportion, he

adjusted each part to the whole in order to achieve a dynamic equilibrium between the "kinetic" and "static" portions of his design. This kind of shop drawing represents the nuts and bolts of Roszak's sculptural process, the formal articulation and mapping out of an image from his mind.

These drawings also make it clear that Roszak saw the White Whale as a phallic incarnation, not an uncommon reading for the period. As an archetypal entity, Melville's whale was described by contemporary critics variously as "the symbol of evil, the Energies of Existence, Phallic Being, the Freudian Super-Ego, the Parent, Life itself, and God (as Good, Evil, and Indifferent)..."[66] In an article on Melville that appeared in Partisan Review, Richard Chase described Ahab as a "Maimed Man...castrated by his whalebone leg..."[67] In Chase's critique, Ahab was presented as a tragic hero unable to integrate his terrible anguish, insecurity, and drive for power within a more balanced personality:

> All of Melville's wounded heroes have affinities with the saint and the savior--with Christ; with Adonis; with the magician; with the shaman [Chase's italics], whom primitive peoples worship because of the mana he has acquired through his neurotic behavior. But in Melville the fate of these heroes, as we see from Ahab and Pierre [the novel that followed Moby Dick, in 1852], is that they rush headlong into violent action, betraying whatever is creative within them and submitting themselves to everything that is mechanical, corrupting, repressive, and death-wishing. In doing so they kill themselves and all whose fate is in their hands. They are the Tragic Suicides. But they are only a part of a larger personality.[68]

In Whaler of Nantucket, which was shown in New York, in 1953, and Chicago the following year,[69] Roszak developed a leviathan image as a phallic being to symbolize Ahab's castration and unbounded aggression, his spiritual destitution and psychological suicide.

In Spectre of Kitty Hawk and Whaler of Nantucket, images with phallic overtones signify aggressive, death-dealing forces, and a psychological state struggling for balance and integration. Monument to an Unknown Political Prisoner (Fig. 74), the third piece in this triad, while having some of the same phallic and psychological connotations, as a war memorial, also embodies a vengeful defiance and rebelliousness.

Monument to an Unknown Political Prisoner, which was purchased by The Tate Gallery,

London, for their permanent collection, never made it past the preliminary stage of a maquette. Entered as one of 199 models (all 22 inches high) in the American section of an international competition sponsored by The Institute of Contemporary Arts in London, it was selected as one of nine finalists to represent the United States, and exhibited, along with other maquettes by Calvin Albert, Alexander Calder, Rhys Caparn, Wharton Escherick, Herbert Ferber, Naum Gabo, J. Wallace Kelly, Gabriel Kohn, Richard Lippold, and Keith Monroe, at The Museum of Modern Art in 1953. According to the prospectus announcing the competition, "...The subject has been selected without any intention of limiting in any way the type or style of work which may be submitted. All forms of expression in sculpture, whether for example realistic, symbolic, expressionistic or abstract, will be judged on their own merits."[70] Selected by an international committee comprised of museum directors, art critics, and magazine editors, the American finalists represented a diverse stylistic lot.

Roszak's entry was by far one of the most expressionistic of the lot compared to maquettes by Calder, Esherick, Gabo, Lippold, and Monroe--all clean-edged constructivist models. Rather than design an abstract memorial to an unknown political entity (in the spirit of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington Cemetery, Virginia), Roszak made monument and prisoner synonymous. As seen in his earliest studies, the initial conception had an ancient prototype: the Nike of Samothrace, whose massive wing span and air-born posture provided an appropriate symbol for liberation. In the final version, though, one wing, reversed, became the figure's head, a protective and projective shield, and a flaming barrage of metal jetsam. In many preliminary sketches, there is no sign of any phallic extension. But eventually it appears--barbed at its base, polished and glistening at its tip--as a projectile, a missile, a weapon that strikes out.

Writing about the competition for Artnews, Henry McBride signaled out Roszak's maquette, describing it as something that "symbolizes freedom with a bird."[71] A number of entries dealt with the theme's negative connotations--captivity and repression, the prisoner as hostage.

Wanting to avoid an image that was passive and resigned, incarcerated, and therefore incapable of affirmative action, Roszak made his prisoner "heroic, defiant and triumphant," instead of "dejected and confined."[72] By giving the figure a phallic spike, he armed it; its defense became its liberation.

Throughout Roszak's development, the figure stands out as a leitmotif. It was his fundamental connection to a sculptural tradition, which he saw revitalized through a conflation with surrealist anatomies, mythical themes, and literary sources. Roszak's persistent involvement with the figure constitutes one of the strongest aspects of his postwar work. The origins of a more monumental figuration can be found in his late constructions, the eight-foot high bipolar forms he fabricated after the war, and in the margins of his earliest sketches for Spectre of Kitty Hawk (Figs. 66, 67), where the preoccupation with a more totemic and primitivistic personage is already evident. After the war Roszak investigated these possibilities in a series that begins with Skylark and Rite of Passage and culminates in Hound of Heaven and Curtain Call. As with his earlier constructions and first experiments in welded-steel, Roszak's conception of a postwar personage was influenced by contemporary developments.

After World War II, Existentialism emerged as an enormously popular phenomenon. William Barrett, then associate editor at Partisan Review and a philosopher in his own right, described the situation:

> A few years ago, after the liberating armies swept into Paris and the veil separating France from us was lifted, so that we could find out at last what the French had been doing culturally during the dark years of war, a curious phenomenon took place in New York--so closely bound together is the modern world. People began speaking of philosophical matters in the most unexpected places. One might almost have believed--for a moment--that in America people think. It was a triumph for French culture to make 57th Street talk philosophy. Existential philosophy had acquired the voice of French eloquence, and it was something to be assimilated along with French painting, millinery, and literature, endowed with the charms of Gallic taste and finesse [Barrett's italics].[73]

Barrett not only translated Jean-Paul Sartre's work for Partisan Review, but he was one of the first persons in America to introduce Existentialism to an English-speaking audience. Barrett's text,

published as a small booklet by Partisan Review (the same year the Philosophical Library published Jean-Paul Sartre's L'Existentialisme est un humanisme), was part of a more ambitious effort to explain Existential philosophy to the magazine's readership. The tenor of Barrett's discourse, which became the basis for his book Irrational Man (1958), was didactic and historic, a genealogical study tracing Existentialism's spiritual and philosophical evolution from Soren Kierkegaard, Karl Jaspers, and Martin Heideggar to Sartre.

In 1948 Barrett was invited by Elaine de Kooning to speak about Existentialism at The Club on East 8th Street. He recalled an interested audience that included many New York School painters and sculptors, and his recollection, though somewhat condescending, is fascinating in the way it describes how many artists, including Roszak, approach intellectual ideas:

> I don't think I've ever spoken to a more attentive audience, yet I wasn't sure they heard what I said. That is, they listened to my words, but I'm not sure they heard their meaning. Ideas, abstract ideas, have a way of bouncing off the minds of artists at curious angles and ricochets that are a marvel to behold and a puzzle to try and follow.[74]

Artists often respond to heady concepts intuitively, taking whatever stimulates their imagination. This was certainly the case with Roszak.

When it came to The Club, Roszak's attendance was even scarcer than Barrett's one night performance. But when it came to Existentialism, he followed its developments, and Barrett's work, closely. Roszak's rapport with Existentialism was neither academic nor pedantic; what intrigued him about it was the possibility of using it principles to generate a sculptural image. Existentialism appealed to Roszak in the late 1940s for some of the same reasons Surrealism and Marxism had earlier: it was au courant, had multifarious extensions, and artists he respected were associated with it.

In Alberto Giacometti, Roszak found a kindred spirit whose work seemed to embody Existentialism's essential precepts and whose formal orientation reaffirmed his dedication to figuration. Giacometti's exhibition at Pierre Matisse Gallery, in 1948, confirmed his importance

as one of the foremost figurative sculptors of the 20th century. Roszak saw the show and acquired its catalogue, which he signed and dated.

Sartre wrote the introduction to Giacometti's catalogue. In it he described Giacometti's quest to represent a new kind of human figure as a "search for the absolute," a struggle with space (the void) in an attempt to seize and render its elusive spirit. Sartre saw Giacometti's concept of space as "lived," as a tangible and dynamic reality, not some transcendent or subjective ideal. Each attempt to model the figure, therefore, was like starting from ground zero. "Giacometti knows," Sartre wrote, "that there is nothing redundant in a living man, because everything there is functional; he knows that space is a cancer on being, and eats everything; to sculpt, for him, is to take the fat off space; he compresses space, so as to drain off its exteriority....He has chosen to sculpt the situated appearance, and he has shown that in this way the absolute may be attained."[75]

Giacometti conceived of the figure--whole and partial--as a battleground of perceptual forces. Although such an approach was not entirely new to Roszak, Giacometti's conception offered him a sculptural analogue for a phenomenological condition: the vulnerable figure stripped to its essential being; the figure as a spiritual and psychological casualty; a victim of political circumstances (Sartre compared Giacometti's effigies to the "fleshless martyrs of Buchenwald"); a personage existing somewhere between being and becoming, physicality and dissolution.

It was in response to Giacometti's work that Roszak probably undertook his own series of personages, beginning with Skylark and followed by Rites of Passage, Hound of Heaven, and Curtain Call. Skylark (1950-51; Fig. 79), the first and, along with Hound of Heaven (1953-54; Fig. 80), the most ambitious in scale and execution, was shown at Pierre Matisse Gallery shortly after its completion, in two museum annuals, the Walker retrospective, and MOMA's The New Images of Man show.[76] This larger-than-life-sized statue, based on a poem by Gerald Manley Hopkins, was described by Roszak as an archetypal entity:

> When we relate [the idea for Skylark] to man...we get something like Icarus in flight and his downfall when he begins to overreach himself in space....then you get these burned, charred bones of man. You get the duality between his desire to rise and his constant fall, very much like Sisyphus in the process of doing it all over again. Skylark could be both a Christ figure and a devil...the ambiguity of its image is the force of the thing.[77]

In another interview, Roszak described Skylark as "Mephistophelian" and "Promethean"....as "man descended from his Promethean heights, captivated within the bonds of civilization, and reduced to the ashes of his own bones, a very powerful allusion to the spiritual plight of man."[78] What united Icarus, Sisyphus, Mephistopheles, Prometheus, and Christ, in Roszak's mind, was their heroic and tragic nature and their contemporary relevance. "Well, man was at that point...burning people," Roszak recalled. "They were being destroyed in the air. Man was overreaching his bounds of having to master the physical world around him--all of these contradictions existed, and we were torn morally between good and evil on an unprecedented plane..."[79] Entrapped between heaven and earth, the spiritual and the corporeal, Skylark is a mythic counterpart to Giacometti's Man Pointing (Fig. 81).

Sartre acknowledged the heroic as a call to action and involvement (Harold Rosenberg did also, but for very different ends).[80] Sartre's hero was a political being, a freedom fighter whose existential identity was directly linked to the efforts of the French resistance. Sartre's hero was self-made; his acts were a deliberate response to actual circumstances and a desire for change:

> What the existentialist says is that the coward makes himself cowardly, that the hero makes himself heroic. There's always a possibility for the coward not to be cowardly any more and for the hero to stop being heroic. What counts is total involvement; some one particular action or set of circumstances is not total involvement....[Existentialism] can not be taken for a philosophy of quietism, since it defines man in terms of action; nor for a pessimistic description of man--there is no doctrine more optimistic, since man's destiny is within himself; nor for an attempt to discourage man from acting, since it tells him that the only hope is in his acting and that action is the only thing that enables a man to live. Consequently, we are dealing with here an ethics of action and involvement.[81]

Sartre's conception of Giacometti's sculptural process, as a search for the absolute, was a way of elevating it above the mundane, giving it a transcendent dimension without compromising its

struggle with the real. It's not surprising that Giacometti avoided mythical titles for most of his postwar work, when other sculptors made a point of it; ultimately, they are analogues for a flesh-and-bones condition--a new image of man.

Roszak acknowledged and expanded Sartre's existential interpretation of Giacometti's work by giving it a more mythical spin. In Skylark, Rites of Passage, Hound of Heaven, and Curtain Call there is the same sense of fragility and vulnerability, ambivalence and tension, morbidity and destitution. Like Giacometti's lean specimens, Roszak's are skeletal and emaciated, stripped to their essential being, which exists in a precarious state of equilibrium--between the physical and the metaphysical, the temporal and the sublime.

The personages Roszak executed during the 1950s epitomize his postwar sensibility. They are an amalgam of personal and collective experiences; they reflect a cross-fertilization of ideas--from mythology and literature to poetry and anthropology--and a comprehensive view of art, as a continuum extending backward and forward; and they reaffirm the psyche--the subconscious--as the ultimate source of visual ideas.

Roszak was not the only sculptor, who, after the war, set out to revitalize the figure's constitution.[82] The 1950s may have been a glorious decade for abstraction, but it was also a watershed for a new kind of figuration. Roszak was one of many sculptors and painters (in Europe and America) who pushed the figure in new directions. But the new figuration asked a lot of questions. It was brutally honest, perhaps too tough for a lot of people to tolerate. On the one hand, it perpetuated a traditional and time-honored motif; on the other, its postwar persona had a disquieting edge. Roszak's dilemma--caught in the middle between avant-garde abstraction and popular culture--was shared by others whose work was criticized as retardataire or rejected as too pessimistic by a public wanting to forget about the war.

The war years completely altered Roszak's world view and the direction of his art. Death,

destruction, and the devastation of two Japanese cities had revealed the other, darker side of technological progress. Roszak's shattered faith in science and technology were replaced by a renewed faith in nature, in change and transformation, and in atavistic motifs that reaffirmed basic values. In his postwar work, he jettisoned the slick chromium sheen and machine-tooled precision of his earlier constructions for spiky, brazed-steel forms. He wanted his work to ask questions (rather than posit answers), to provoke, disturb, even rankle. He also wanted it to evoke archetypal themes--life and death, rebirth and regeneration--and to embody a life force that was destructive as well as constructive. These may seem to be significant differences when compared to his earlier Constructivist work, and in stylistic terms they are. But a closer look reveals a sensibility that remained remarkably consistent in spite of stylistic and ideological transitions.

Throughout his life, Roszak sustained a philosophic perspective that elevated human values--intuition, sensuality, emotion--above technocratic ones. His rapport with culture was intellectual and highbrow, rather than popular and lowbrow. He saw art and art history as a grand continuum. Tradition and continuity meant a great deal to him. So did figuration, dream imagery, mythic and literary associations. But the art world changed dramatically after World War II, and new critical alliances were established. Roszak's persistent involvement with figuration was one of the main reasons (his involvement with Surrealism was another) why his work began to fall out of favor during the late 1940s and 1950s, when the critic Clement Greenberg declared such influences European and retardataire. When it came to vanguard sculpture, Greenberg had his own notions about constituted a viable direction. Roszak, however, was unwilling to make the transition from an art that was figurative and humanistic to one more formal and nonrepresentational. For him, humanism and formalism had always been two sides of the same sensibility, and he saw no reason to change because of popular tastes or critical polemics.

NOTES

1. What Serge Guilbaut described as "the De-Marxization of the American Intelligentia," Neil Jumonville, in a more focused assessment of the Partisan Review group, called "the depoliticalization of Partisan Review;" see Guilbaut, How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art, pp. 17-47, Jumonville, Critical Crossings, p. 55, and Annette Cox, Art as Politics, UMI Research Press, 1982.

2. Guilbaut, How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art, p. 36.

3. Michael Leja, "The Formation of an Avant-Garde in New York," Abstract Expression: The Critical Developments, pp. 13-33.

4. Ibid., p. 15.

5. Through A Problem for Critics show he organized in 1945, Putzel set out to establish a formal connection between members of a nascent New York School and European modernists such as Picasso, Miro, and Arp, rather than acknowledge more archaic and primitive sources proposed by Gottlieb, Newman, and Rothko; see Leja, "The Formation of an Avant-Garde in New York," p. 18.

6. Ibid., p. 17; also see Stephen Polcari, Abstract Expressionism and the Modern Experience, pp. 31-56.

7. Ibid., p. 23. See also, Polcari, Abstract Expressionism and the Modern Experience, pp. 31-56.

8. Phillips, "Theodore Roszak Reminisces," pp. 363, 364.

9. Roszak's contractual agreement with Sarah Lawrence College begins in 1941 and ends in 1958. These documents are in the artist's estate; A.A.A. roll 2135 frames 1058ff.

10. Harold Taylor, interview with author, New York, March 15, 1991.

11. Rudolf Arnheim, phone interview with author, Ann Arbor, Michigan, June 12, 1990.

12. Ann Sperry, in New York City, and Claire Jeanine Satin, in Dania, Florida, both students of Roszak's at Sarah Lawrence, were invaluable sources for this period.

13. Letter, Theodore J. Roszak, New York, N.Y. to Theodore Roszak, June 21, 1951.

14. Campbell was not the only one immersed in the study of myth; other anthropologists, philosophers, and writers, including Ernst Cassirer, Erich Kahler, Mircea Eliade, Susanne K. Langer, and Lucien-Levy Bruhl, dealt with the persistance of myth, its ontological extensions, and contemporary relevance. Many American artists during the 1940s, particularly Abstract Expressionist, gravitated to mythical themes, which, in one form or another, were incorporated into their art. The question of influence--who read what when--though not without value, is less important than the reasons for myth's sudden cultural resurgence. For many artists, myth was a powerful tonic; it restored a perspective with the past that offered hope for the future by reaffirming regenerative cycles that were perpetual and timeless; see Polcari, Abstract Expressionism and the Modern Experience, pp. 33-42; Andrea Caffi, "On Myth," Possibilities I (Winter 1947-48), pp. 87-95; Erich Kahler, "The Persistence of Myth," Chimera, 4 (Spring 1946), pp. 2-11; and Richard Chase, "What is Myth?," Partisan Review, no. 3 (Summer 1946), pp. 338-46.

15. For more biographical information on Cambpell's life and work, see Stephen and Robin Larsen, A Fire in the Mind: The Life of Joseph Campbell and A Hero's Journey: Joseph Campbell on His Life and Work, Phil Consineau, ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1990).

16. Campbell's Hero with a Thousand Faces was eagerly awaited, and shortly after its publication he was invited to speak at The Club; see Irving Sandler, "The Club," Artforum, 4 (September 1965), p. 30.

17. Joseph Campbell and Henry Morton Robinson, A Skeleton Key to Finnegans Wake (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1944), p. 3.

18. Ibid., p. 14.

19. Campbell's synthetic analysis of the hero myth extends Otto Rank's Myth of the Birth of the Hero (1909), which emphasizes the Freudian and Oedipal nature of the hero's acts and deeds; see Robert A. Segal, Joseph Campbell: An Introduction (New York: Penguin Books, 1987), pp. 42-53.

20. For a philosophical and anthropological discussion of the eternal return, see Mircea Eliade, The Myth of the Eternal Return (New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1954).

21. The war brought grave uncertainty into peoples lives. Artists experimenting with abstraction were particularly vulnerable; the question of content--what to paint or sculpt--was fraught with implications of loneliness and alienation. If the government projects had given artists a sense of purpose, the war destroyed whatever security there had been; see Dore Ashton, The New York School: A Cultural Reckoning, pp. 117-18, and Polcari, Abstract Expressionism and the Modern Experience, pp. 3-29.

22. Harold Rosenberg's existential model for American action painting, particularly his adaptation and modification of Jean-Paul Sartre's original ideas, had a great deal in common with the hero's triumphal quest; see note 74. For Rosenberg original text, see "The American Action Painters," Artnews 51 (December, 1952), pp. 22-23, 48-50.

23. The modern paradigm for a monumental war effigy was Auguste Rodin's Walking Man (1877). Possibly conceived in response to the Franco-Prussian War, with its arms seemingly pulled from its sockets and imperfections of casting evident, Walking Man stands out as a defiant symbol of humanity.

24. For a recent study on Lipchitz, see Alan G. Wilkinson, Jacques Lipchitz: A Life in Sculpture (Toronto, Canada: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1989). Joan Seeman Robinson mentioned the influence of Lipchitz's war-time work on Roszak; see Robinson, "The Sculpture of Theodore Roszak," pp. 89-90, 110-111.

25. James Johnson Sweeney, "An Interview with Jacques Lipchitz," Partisan Review, no. 1 (Winter 1945), p. 83.

26. Roszak saw every one of Lipchitz's shows in New York, beginning with his first exhibition at the Brummer Gallery in 1935. He also saved the catalogue checklist for each of Lipchitz's shows at Buchholz Gallery in 1942, 1943, 1946, 1948, and 1951.

27. Roszak received a certificate from the Delehanty Institute, Vocational Division, New York, dated September 20, 1991; see A.A.A. roll 2136 frame 435.

28. Milton Hebald, "Sculptor in an Airplane Factory," Magazine of Art, 37 (October 1944), pp. 213-15.

29. Phillips, "Theodore Roszak Reminisces," pp. 382, 383, 384, 403.

30. Ibid., p. 402-03.

31. Ibid., p. 405.

32. The constructions Roszak made between 1940 and 1945, particularly the Spatial Constructions, are transitional works, open and linear drawings in space.

33. Roszak included some of his first gouaches in Fourteen Americans (1946), listed in the catalogue on page 79 no. 124, as Studies for Sculpture, 1945-46; and later in his Walker retrospective (1956-57), listed in the catalogue on page 50 nos. 54-56, as Carcass, Frost-Covered Rocks, and High Altitude, all 1947.

34. Jacques Lipchitz with H.H. Arnason, My Life in Sculpture (New York: Viking Press, 1972), p. 151; quoted in Art of the Forties, ed., Riva Castleman, exh. cat. (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1991), p. 136.

35. Phillips, "Theodore Roszak Reminisces," pp. 388-89.

36. Roszak was issued his first "Combustible Permit" by the New York City Fire Department on March 27, 1946, and he renewed it annually thereafter; see artist's estate papers.

37. Fourteen Americans followed on the footsteps of Americans 1942: 18 Artists from 9 States, Romantic Painting in America (1943) and American Realists and Magic Realists (1943). Unlike its predecessors, though, Fourteen Americans was more concise and focused. Based on its success, Miller went on to organize Fifteen Americans (1952), Twelve Americans (1956), Sixteen Americans (1959-60), and Americans 1963.

38. Theodore Roszak, as quoted in Fourteen Americans, ed., Dorothy C. Miller (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1946), p. 58.

39. Ibid., p. 59.

40. Albert Einstein, "A Message to Intellectuals (1948)," Essays in Humanism (New York: Philosophical Library, 1950), pp. 24-25. This paragraph, taken from a longer address that Einstein delivered at the Intellectual's Conference for Peace, was initially objected to by the Organizing Committee and subsequently released to the press on August 29, 1948.

41. For an article that deals with the aesthetic and philosophical implications of this dilemma and its impact on artists of the New York School, see Jeffrey Weiss, "Science and Primitivism: Fearful Symmetry in the Early New York School," Arts Magazine, 62 (March 1983), pp. 81-87.

42. Roszak, "The New Sculpture: A Symposium," p. 18; reprinted "In Pursuit of an Image," Quadrum, no. 2 (November 1956), p. 54.

43. Some of the first artists to publicly declare their art's affinity to mythical themes, archaic symbols, and subject matter that was "tragic and timeless" were Adolf Gottlieb and Mark Rothko in their now famous letter published in The New York Times on June 7, 1943 [reprinted in Ashton, The New York School: A Cultural Reckoning, pp. 127, 128]. Another sculptor, Seymour Lipton, expressed similar sentiments [Seymour Lipton, "Some Notes on My Work," Magazine of Art, 40 (November 1947), p. 264]: "My work grows morphologically from the web of my experience....Meeting the challenge of contemporary art and life, it [sculpture] must in the main be provocative, searching, harsh, and tragic...." David Hare's notion of "the spaces of the mind" was an attempt to describe the common ground, the timeless matrix, that connects all creative beings [David Hare, "The Spaces of the Mind," Magazine of Art (February 1950), p. 52]: "The very belief of the primitive artist that it [art] was of primary importance to the life of his society gave it not only his strength but also allowed it to absorb strength from the whole structure of his society. He was not dealing with an abstract conception of esthetics but with the life force itself. The true artists today believes himself to be dealing with the same problems."

For a discussion of the primal heritage of Abstract Expressionism, see Polcari, Abstract Expressionism and the Modern Experience, pp. 35-42.

44. Barnett Newman, "The First Man Was an Artist," The Tiger's Eye, 1 (October 1947), p. 59.

45. Kirk Varnedoe, "Abstract Expression," "Primitivism in 20th Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern, William Rubin, ed., exh. cat. (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1984), p. 624.

46. Phillips, "Theodore Roszak Reminisces," p. 463.

47. The iconographic parameters of Roszak's sculpture, which were fairly well established by the mid-1950s, are discussed in detail in Joan Seeman Robinson's dissertation.

48. Robinson discusses the affinity of Roszak's Spectre of Kitty Hawk with contemporary war planes and primordial beasts; see Robinson, "The Sculpture of Theodore Roszak," pp. 102-08.

49. The annual was organized, in 1948, around the theme of "Abstraction and Surrealist American Art." Spectre of Kitty Hawk won a $500. Frank G. Logan Art Institute medal. William Baziotes won a $1,000 prize for his Cyclops painting; Rico Lebrun won a silver medal and $500 for Vertical Composition; and Alexander Calder was awarded $300.

For Roszak's descriptions of Spectre, see Phillips, "Theodore Roszak Reminisces," pp. 473-74; Elliott, "An Interview with Theodore Roszak," pp. 68-69.

Spectre of Kitty Hawk was bought by Alfred H. Barr, Jr., for the Museum of Modern Art, in January 1950, for $2,770.

50. Listed in the catalogue checklist, Roszak Drawings, as nos. 10, 24, 25, and 26, these works ranged from preliminary sketches, 10 1/4 by 16 1/2 inches, to monumental, finished drawings, measuring 27 1/2 by 30 inches. A Spectre drawing was illustrated as the checklist cover.

51. These are listed and reproduced in Rosalind E. Krauss, The Sculpture of David Smith: A Catalogue Raisonne (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1977), as nos. 162, 176, 182, 189, and 209.

52. David Smith, "The Language is Image," Arts and Architecture (February 1952); reprinted in David Smith, ed., Garnett McCoy (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973), p. 80.

53. The winged cannon-phallus first appears in Smith's early sketchbooks and the Medals for Dishonor (1939-40).

54. For an article that addresses the similarities and differences between Roszak and Smith's work, see Joan Pachner, "Theodore Roszak and David Smith: A Question of Balance," Arts Magazine, 58 (February 1984), pp. 102-14.

55. For a discussion of the cannon and cannon-phallus in Smith's work, see Rosalind E. Krauss, Terminal Iron Works: The Sculpture of David Smith (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 1971), chapter 2; and Robert S. Lubar, "Metaphor and Meaning in David Smith's Jurassic Bird," Arts Magazine, 59 (September 1984), pp. 78-86. Smith's difficult personality and stormy relationship with Dorothy Dehner has been only recently revealed; see April Kingsley, The Turning Point, pp. 179-95.

56. Phillips, "Theodore Roszak Reminisces," pp. 389-90.

57. Elliott, "An Interview with Theodore Roszak," p. 49.

58. Roszak's reading of Elie Fauve and Andre Malraux would have given him this broad, art-historical perspective. During the 1940s other artists drew on similar associations to help explain their work. Such historizing sometimes assumed a reference to the Gothic, or the Baroque; other times it developed around a particular concept, such as the Sublime, which was seen to embody the fear and terror, the brutality and degradation, and the preoccupation with non-ideal conceptions of the body that some artists sought in their work. Although an individual's interpretation of these terms, particularly the notion of Sublime, could be historically inaccurate, the bottom line was to establish an historical pedigree for new and unfamiliar art. For various artist's remarks on the Sublime, for example, see The Tiger's Eye, no. 6 (December 1948), pp. 46-56. For a postmodern interpretation of the "sublime," see Jean-Francois Lyotard, "Presenting the Unpresentable: The Sublime," Artform, 20 (April 1984).

59. Roszak, "In Pursuit of an Image," Time to Time Publications, no. 2 (Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago, 1955), p. 7.

60. Harold Rosenberg, "The American Action Painters," in The Tradition of the New (New York: Horizon Press, 1959), p. 31.

61. For a discussion of Melville's Moby Dick in the context of Abstract Expressionism, see Evan R. Firestone, "Herman Melville's 'Moby Dick' and the Abstract Expressionists," Arts Magazine, 54 (March 1980), pp. 120-24.

62. Phillips, "Theodore Roszak Reminisces," p. 470.

63. Elliott, "An Interview with Theodore Roszak," p. 62.

64. For a discussion of form and content and its basis in a rhetorical terminology, see Ann Gibson, "The Rhetoric of Abstract Expressionism," Abstract Expressionism: The Critical Developments, pp. 64-93.

65. Roszak, "Pursuit of an Image," pp. 12, 13.

66. Martin Leonard Pops, The Melville Archetype (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1970), p. 65; quoted in Firestone, "Herman Melville's 'Moby Dick' and Abstract Expressionists," p. 121.

67. Richard Chase, "An Approach to Melville," Partisan Review, no. 3 (May-June 1947), p. 286. At the time Chase wrote this piece, he was teaching at Connecticut College, and recently had been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship to do a critical study of Melville. For a critical retort to Chase's article on Melville, see Alfred Kazin, "On Melville as Scripture," Partisan Review, no. 1 (January 1950), pp. 67-75.

68. Ibid., pp. 286-87.

69. Whaler of Nantucket was exhibited in the Whitney's Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Sculpture, Watercolors, and Drawings, as no. 56; and at the Art Institute of Chicago's Sixty-first Annual Exhibition of American Painting and Sculpture, as 125.

70. As quoted in International Sculpture Competition: The Unknown Political Prisoner, exh. brochure (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1953), n.p. The winner of the competition, Reg Butler, was English. Second prizes were awarded to Mirko Basaldella of Italy, Naum Gabo

of the United States, and Antoine Pevsner of France; see "To the Political Prisoner," New York Times Magazine, Section 6, March 22, 1953, pp. 66-67.

71. Henry McBride, "Unknown Political Monument," Artnews, 51 (February 1953), p. 64.

72. Elliott, "An Interview with Theodore Roszak," pp. 76-77.

73. William Barrett, What is Existentialism? (New York: Partisan Review Series, no. 2, 1947), p. 7.

74. William Barrett, The Truants: Adventures Among the Intellectuals (New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1982), p. 133.

75. Jean Paul-Sartre, "The Search for the Absolute," Alberto Giacometti, exh. cat. (New York: Pierre Matisse Gallery, 1948), pp. 6, 14. Robinson mentioned Giacometti's personages in relation to Roszak's Skylark; see Robinson, "The Sculpture of Theodore Roszak," p. 146. For a discussion of Sartre in the context of David Hare's work, see Mona Hadler, "David Hare: A Magician's Game in Context," Art Journal, 47 (Fall 1988), pp. 196-201.

76. Following the Matisse show in 1951, Skylark was shown at the Whitney Annual in 1952, as no. 53, and the Art Institute of Chicago Annual in 1954, as no. 126.

77. Phillips, "Theodore Roszak Reminisces," pp. 472-73.

78. Elliott, "An Interview with Theodore Roszak," p. 74.

79. Phillips, "Theodore Roszak Reminisces," p. 473.

80. "Action" was Rosenberg's artistic call to arms, a way of jettisoning genteel tastes and retardataire styles. Anything having to do with psychology, philosophy, history, mythology, and hero worship was relevant to it. Action signified experimental abandon, Dionysian rather than Apollonian, because intuitive acts held the greatest promise for artistic change. In Rosenberg's lexicon, action had the political ballyhoo of a 1930s ideology, but lacked the pragmatic, do-or-die ordeal Sartre brought to it. Rosenberg's heroic action painter struggled with situations involving confrontation, risk, and transformation, but compared with Sartre's hero, his quest became something more formal and aloof. As Peter Selz later put it, "...the freedom of Abstract Expressionism or Action Painting is the freedom of escape rather than the freedom of deliberate action," see Peter Selz, "A New Imagery in American Painting," College Art Journal, 15 (Summer 1956), p. 290.

81. Jean-Paul Sartre, Existentialism, translated by Bernard Frechtman (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1947), pp. 39, 41-42. This text, the first exposition of Sartre's philosophy to appear in English, was originally a lecture he delivered in Paris in 1945.

82. The human form was conceived as a fragile entity by a number of sculptors in the late 1940s and early '50s. Isamu Noguchi's notched slate, marble, and bone pieces (i.e., Kouros, Figure, and Hero) signified a precarious condition that could easily become unhinged. Their thin, biomorphic configurations (what Noguchi traced back to traditional Japanese calligraphy, but what looks more like Yves Tanguy's landscape markers) embody a delicate and fragile constitution. Louise Bourgeois's totemic personages seem no less vulnerable. Skewered and fragmented, lean and attenuated, their compacted proportions intimate a troubled soul, alone and yet comforted by intimate groups and clusters.

CHAPTER 4: ROSZAK AND GREENBERG: THE FIGURE ON THE FRINGE

Harold Rosenberg described the 1930s as a time when, "In both its realistic and its abstract genres, American art...revealed an absence of freedom, a lack of assurance, and the hesitations of aesthetic apprenticeship."[1] During the 1940s, and especially the war years, American abstract artists continued to emulate European modernism, because some of its progenitors were right in their backyard. If, after the war, certain aesthetic tenets--Constructivist, Bauhaus, and Cubist--seemed too stylistically constrained or ideologically problematic, others, such as Surrealism and Expressionism, were embraced as viable alternatives more in tune with the times. Eventually, however, with a growing critical support system, American vanguard artists began to close ranks and form their own community, with its own internal character.

One notices the transition on several fronts, beginning with Peggy Guggenheim's Art of This Century Gallery (1942-47), a barometer for changing forces within the New York art world. What initially began as an exhibition forum and meeting place for exiled Europeans--Ernst, Miro, Lipchitz, Duchamp, Leger--became a showcase for younger American painters--Jackson Pollock, William Baziotes, David Hare, Robert Motherwell, and Clyfford Still--each of whom were given their first one-man shows between 1943 and 1947. Even the Museum of Modern Art, for years a bastion of European modernism, joined the cause.

Dorothy C. Miller's "Americans" program, which tended to mix realists with abstractionists, was devoted exclusively to American art. When Miller organized Fourteen Americans in 1946, the constitution of an American vanguard art was still nebulous. By the 1950s, though, the situation had begun to change. The dynamics of an American abstraction, which assimilated aspects of surrealism, expressionism, and primitivism, were articulated and clarified by curators Miller, Peter Seitz, James Thrall Soby, and Alfred H. Barr, Jr.; critics Clement Greenberg, Harold Rosenberg, James Johnson Sweeney, and Thomas Hess; dealers Samual Kootz,

Betty Parsons, and Charles Egan; and the artist-critic Barnett Newman.

When it came to associations that lead to the perception of a "New York School," Roszak remained aloof. There were several reasons for this. His role models continued to be European, even after a critic like Greenberg contended that such influences were problematic. Roszak always felt a kinship to Europeans, and his decision to sign on with Julien Levy in 1940, and, after 1951, with Pierre Matisse, rather than with Parsons, Kootz, or Egan, probably seemed natural given his own cultural background. Not only was Matisse European, but his staple included many of artists Roszak respected. Indeed, between the Matisse, Levy, Kurt Valetine, and Buchholz galleries, Roszak would have seen important shows by Giorgio de Chirico, Alberto Giacometti, Andre Masson, Roberto Matta, Miro, Yves Tanguy, Jean Arp, Jacques Lipchitz, Graham Sutherland, and Henry Moore. Also, Roszak never felt the need to denounce his affinity to surrealist imagery, what Phillip Pavia, in a disparaging quip, later termed the "Surrealist jungle,"[2] even after others had consciously disassociated themselves from it. When American abstractionists began to move beyond surrealism, to investigate more non-objective configurations, Roszak offered no apology for the surreal and literary overtones of his work. From his earliest encounter with de Chirico's canvases in the late 1920s, he embraced a representational art enriched by imagination and free association. Throughout the 1950s, while many vanguard artists--Newman, Pollock, Rothko, Kline, Motherwell, and others--eschewed biomorphism, hybrid figuration, mythical themes, and pyscho-sexual images for more non-objective, all-over configurations, Roszak persistently mined a repertoire of forms that combined aspects of abstraction and figuration.

In spite of its European inflections, Roszak's work was not suddenly relegated to the shadows when abstract expressionism became a dominant sensibility. He supported what was then considered "advanced art," and signed on with a group of American artists (painters and sculptors) who protested what they saw as the exclusion of more abstract art from the Metropolitan Museum of Art's " American Painting Today--1950" exhibition.[3] For him, the 1950s was a period of high

visibility and critical recognition, in some ways the culmination of his career. His work continued to appear in various museum annuals. He had two one-person shows at Pierre Matisse Gallery, in 1951 and 1953, received a commission to design a monumental bell tower for Eero Sarrinen's non-sectarian chapel at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in 1953-55, and was given a major retrospective at the Walker Art Center, in 1956, that traveled to four other American museums. He not only sold work to important public collections, and counted a number of museum directors and critics among his friends, but he also was spoken of as a sculptor with great promise.[4]

The trajectory of Roszak's career during the 1950s must be considered within a cultural context to understand its dynamics. In addition of being inherently a loner, it seem likely that Greenberg's program for abstraction eventually alienated Roszak from the very group of American vanguard artists Greenberg virtually defined. But Greenberg's exclusionary call to abstraction revolved around a broader conceptualization of avant-garde that included artists as well as intellectuals and writers. Roszak may have questioned Greenberg's dicta, particularly when it came to his own sculptural aesthetic, but he never relinquished his identity as an avant-garde artist. It's important to remember this, because the essential character of an American postwar avant-garde, as described by Michael Leja and others, was as much a socio-cultural phenomenon as it was a deliberate critical strategy.[5] In this sense, a sculptor like Roszak could still consider himself part of an intellectual avant-garde without accepting Greenberg's formal canon.

The relationship between mass culture and the intellectual was a sensitive issue during the 1950s. The nature of this relationship, which polarized a New York intelligentsia, can best be described as adversarial. In a postwar cultural climate, where any kind of political agenda was considered suspect, the concept of "mass" was problematic. According to Neil Jumonville,

> The concept of "mass" had never been congenial to the group; after all, mass democracy had unnerved them. At best, in their early years in the 1930s, they had been willing to tolerate gingerly other socialists' enthusiasm for mass organizations, mass movements, mass meetings, mass protests, and mass

> uprisings. They had never, however, embraced the "massification" that impinged on their own intellectual roles: mass culture, mass taste, mass media, or mass opinion. The idea of "popular" was hardly better to them. From the beginning they couched their opposition in that strain of leftist thought that denounced as demagogic those who encouraged popular prejudices, or who allowed popular or populist outlooks to prevail over correct socialist values.[6]

Within the New York intellectual community during the 1950s, a debate concerning popular culture ensued, which underwent noticeable changes as the decade wore on. Greenberg's early essay, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," set the tenor of this cultural polemic, and his denunciation of popular culture as "Kitsch," "mechanical," a formulaic and mass produced phenomenon that created a "vicarious experience," became a credo for a concerned group of cultural critics, including Dwight Macdonald, Harold Rosenberg, Bernard Rosenberg, and William Phillips, to name only a few. Others, however, were more tolerant; they accepted the consequences of a post-industrial program without romanticizing its effects or demeaning its recipients. What could be characterized in the early 1950s as an obvious ideological dichotomy became more diffuse, as distinctions between highbrow and middlebrow entities grew blurred.

In a decade described as complacent, conformist and congenial,[7] vanguard artist of Roszak's generation had several options: they could forge their own formalistic monolith above the compromising realities of mass culture; they could take inspiration, images, and materials directly from popular culture; or they could function on a more philosophical level as a voice of conscience, a rebellion against what they saw as rampant materialism, an expression of discontent, a reminder of discordant forces. Roszak pursued the latter course while maintaining a decidedly highbrow stance. From a postmodern perspective, his condescending attitude toward mass culture and his sustained attempt to maintain modernism's hegemonic purity as a representational sculptor seems naive.[8] Ultimately, his representational art played both sides of the ideological fence: it was optimistic as well as pessimistic; it tread a fine line between abstraction and representation; it made concessions to a humanism that sought common ground between all people, but it sustained a perspective that was erudite and elitist. In retrospect, Roszak's middleground aesthetic stance

was a precarious position to maintain during a period of cultural readjustment, when most vanguard artists opted for one side or the other.

Vanguard sculpture was an underdog during the 1950s, when painting dominated the public's perception of American art. No one defended sculpture's right to exist more than Clement Greenberg, and he went out of his way to give it a more focused discourse. Greenberg felt that sculptors had been neglected, and their obscurity had given them a creative freedom unhindered by shifts of public taste and the commercial market. At a time when most people neglected American sculpture, Greenberg had high hopes for its rebirth. In the early 1940s, Greenberg began tracking sculptural developments in New York (through Whitney Annuals, other museum and gallery exhibitions) and reviewing the work of a small group of sculptors for The Nation, Horizon, and Partisan Review. His opinions about what constituted innovative sculpture evolved gradually, with a deliberate sense of purpose. The crux of Greenberg's sculptural aesthetic, as an extension of principles earlier set forth in "Avant-Garde and Kitsch" and "Toward a Newer Laocoon," developed around a set of inviolable criteria. Given his dogmatic and uncompromising nature, there were few exceptions or compromises.

Initially, Greenberg considered Roszak part of promising group of American sculptors. He is first mentioned, along with David Smith, in Greenberg's review of the 1942-43 Whitney Annual. At this early date, he is still showing constructions (Construction in White was his entry), and his contribution, according to Greenberg, stood out against "the horrors of the sculpture section."[9] Over the next few years, Greenberg's coverage of Roszak's career was sporadic (he never reviewed any of his solo shows at Pierre Matisse Gallery, or his Walker retrospective), and he entirely neglected Roszak's entries (again constructions) in the 1944 and 1945 Whitney Annuals.

The next time Greenberg wrote about Roszak's work was in 1946, the same year Roszak

debuted in Fourteen Americans, and presented, seven month earlier in the Whitney Annual, the first of his welded-steel pieces. In his review of the Whitney Annual, Greenberg criticized the general state of American painting, as diluted and commercial, as pandering to popular taste and surrendering to market pressures. Far more optimistic about the sculpture he saw, he devoted most of his review to it. He lauded Roszak's Transition as "the best thing in the entire museum. It expresses," he wrote, "almost dramatically the composite character of its material--the tensile strength of steel and the fluidity of bronze--and at the same time conveys speed, directness, draftsmanship."[10] Never one to withhold accolades when it came to something he liked, Greenberg saw in Roszak's Transition qualities that distinguished the new American sculpture: an awareness and exploitation of "modern painting and draftsmanship," and a knowledge of "new industrial methods and materials."[11] Transition probably appealed to Greenberg because it had the requisite degree of drawing, reductive abstraction, and material integrity. In this capacity, it assumed a privileged place, among works by Smith, David Hare, and Alexander Calder, as the first intimation of a "flowering of a new sculpture in America."[12]

When it came to the Dorothy Miller's Fourteen Americans show, Greenberg was less enthusiastic. In fact, aside from mentioning Roszak, along with Hare and Noguchi, as one of three sculptors in the show, there is no further discussion of his work. Apparently, Greenberg was opposed to the Museum of Modern Art's focusing so much attention on so few (particularly when Jackson Pollock, his personal choice, had not been among those chosen by Miller). "The net impression left by the Fourteen Americans show," he wrote, "is of a kind of shabbiness, half-bakedness, a lack of seriousness and independence and energy, the fault of which lies more with the person who selected and arranged the show than with the artists shown."[13]

Five months later, in a review of the 1947 Whitney Annual, Greenberg singled out Roszak's Raven (1947; Fig. 82), as "one of the strongest works of art...turned out in this country."[14] Strong words of praise considering that Greenberg had a problem with Raven's tripod

base. Such criticism might seem banal, but it signals an ideological parting of ways between critic and sculptor. Indeed, beginning with Raven, the base, conceived as a tripod or dipodic support, assumes a prominent place in Roszak's sculptural aesthetic, as a means of elevating figurative or quasi-figurative forms above shallow, steel platforms. Extending Brancusi's precedent, Roszak made the base an integral part of his sculpture. But anthropomorphism, as Roszak perceived it, had no place in Greenberg's burgeoning canon of abstraction, and, by extension, his vision for "The New Sculpture."

In 1944, Greenberg wrote, "abstract art today is the only stream that flows toward an ocean...the only mode by which painters and sculptors can still master new experience...the only profoundly original contemporary art..."[15] Greenberg's stream was not the "Great Stream" envisioned by Lipchitz, but, rather, an independent branch sustained by its own historical imperatives. When defining the new abstraction, Greenberg kept his terms simple. Subtlety had no place in his rhetorical critique. (By comparison, Rosenberg's early writings seem far more poetic; in a certain light, what Jung's writings are to Freud's.[16]) In his critical methods, Greenberg avoided poetic concessions and rarely meandered from a didactic course.

Greenberg's proclamations for "The New Sculpture" drew on contemporary literary developments. An abstract art aspiring "to the literal essence of [its medium]...by avoiding as much as possible explicit reference to any form of experience not given immediately through [its medium]," evoked an analogy with "pure" poetry, the "pure" novel, and writers such as Mallarme, Valery, Joyce, Gertrude Stein, E.E. Cummings, Dylan Thomas, Stephan George, and Hart Crane.[17] Such literary associations, calling "attention to their medium, which does not disguise or render itself transparent in order to grant us the quickest possible access to their content or subject, but becomes itself a large part of the subject," acted as ballast for Greenberg's hermetic formalism.

Greenberg also acknowledged the importance of historical continuity, particularly when

it came to tracing roots for the new sculpture. He realized that Brancusi, Picasso, Gonzalez, Tatlin, Gabo, Pevsner, Giacometti, and Lipchitz had each contributed to the development of modern sculpture, and he incorporated their innovations within his canon. The kind of sculpture Greenberg lauded as "pictorial" (objects distinguished by their open, linear, and transparent design), stemmed from Brancusi's reductive transformations of Cubism and primitivism, Gonzalez's welded-steel transparencies (his drawings in space), Tatlin, Gabo, and Pevsner's Constructivist experiments and industrial assemblages, and Picasso's collage. Contemporary extensions could be found in work by Roszak, Smith, Hare, Noguchi, Lipton, Ferber, Ibram Lassaw, Peter Grippe, Adaline Kent, Burgoyne Diller, and Richard Lippold, each of whom, Greenberg wrote in 1949, had "a chance, as things look, to contribute something ambitious, serious and original."[18] In actuality, the way in which each of these sculptors gleaned ideas from European sources was far more empirical than Greenberg would or could admit.

Greenberg's criteria for the new abstraction--unity, purity, flatness, linearity--signaled a formal retreat at the same time it aggressively propagated a nationalistic point of view. He proselytized American art, as something that held its own against European precedents, through doctrinaire precepts and ballyhoo. Greenberg's condescension toward aspects of European art (he ridiculed Surrealism and Neo-Romanticism as kitsch, and declared the decline of Cubism) was a deliberate tactic, a way of forging his own monolithic tradition by discrediting the competition.[19]

Greenberg redefined the terms of a dialectic between abstraction and representation by effectively eliminating one side of the equation. What had always been a modulating dialogue between these bipolar terms was collapsed. Donald Kuspit described the situation this way: "The shift from representation to abstraction [in Greenberg's critical canon] does not solve the problem of representation but destroys it and creates the problem of abstraction. Abstraction does not simply dismiss representation as irrelevant or insignificant, but abolishes it, without worrying about whether or not it can be solved, or ever was."[20] No one was less inclined to compromise

than Greenberg, and the psychodynamics motivating his quest are worth further investigation. Did he feel compelled to kill the father (the School of Paris) in order to establish American art--the son--as a distinct and original entity?

Greenberg's agenda for postwar sculpture reads like a list of taboos. He came to abhor the monolithic, as a vestige of the "somatic Greco-Roman tradition of carving and modelling."[21] For sculpture to be contemporary, it had to be "literal;" it had to deal with modern materials (steel, glass, plastic, etc.) and tools (the oxyacetylene torch); it had to avoid illusion, overt allegorical and literary overtones; it had to emphasize the intrinsic qualities of its media, and balance classical restraint and baroque exuberance. In spite of his formal restrictions and historical concessions, Greenberg saw the new American sculpture as an enterprise full of possibilities: "The new sculpture has almost no historical associations whatsoever--at least with our civilization's own past--which endows it with a virginality that compels the artist's boldness and invites him to tell everything without fear of censorship by tradition. All he need remember of the past is Cubist painting, all he need avoid is naturalism."[22]

In his crusade to prevent what he feared might become imitative hero worship, Greenberg set out to deflate the established careers of European masters. In a review of Jacques Lipchitz's second solo show at Buchholz Gallery in 1946, he wrote, "Having cast cubism off, Lipchitz now gives free vent to a bombast and a badness of taste that have always been latent in his art."[23] The sculptor was accused of "steadily shifting away from his former premises [Cubism] toward a newfangled kind of baroque....a declamatory, overinflated effect, a kind of academicism that tries to conceal itself by exaggerated gestures."[24] While admitting that "Lipchitz remained a genius," and that certain works, such as The Prayer, had "something of greatness about it," Greenberg criticized his work for the same reasons Roszak found it so appealing. Lipchitz had revitalized figurative sculpture by transforming its external constitution. In the process, he rejected Cubism because, stylistically, it probably seemed too analytically restrained to embody the anxiety of

contemporary life. Greenberg's derogatory remarks about Lipchitz's war-time work were a way of denigrating an expressionistic impulse he saw becoming increasingly more prevalent.

Giacometti's landmark show at Pierre Matisse Gallery in 1948 provided another opportunity for Greenberg to launch an offensive. He castigated Giacometti, just as he had Lipchitz, for jettisoning Cubism--"the conception of sculpture as something linear, free from mass, transparent"--along with his Surrealist-inspired work of the 1930s, for a full-fledged return to the monolithic figure. Greenberg took Giacometti to task for reviving what he considered a dead issue:

> The tall, elongated withered figures in bronze and plaster that are his latest productions...mark a drastic change of direction and style and at the same time, alas, a sad falling off from his previous standard. They constitute nothing more or less than a retreat to the statue, to the monolith. These unwrapped mummies are the same kind of expressionist archeology that other contemporary Italian artists--including [de] Chirico--have resorted to in the effort to stay "modern." Gone is the bold, rough geometry that gave Giacometti's former flights of imagination their motive power; gone the audacious inventiveness that shocked the spectator's vision only to stabilize it on a higher and securer level. True, these later things are striking in a way...but their effect verges on the sentimental, however grimly disguised that sentimentality is, and their conception remains in the end perfunctory.[25]

Giacometti's withered effigies (Fig. 81) became a whipping boy for Greenberg's aversion to figurative sculpture that projected uncertainty, vulnerability, and alienation. Their humanism and naturalism made Greenberg uneasy. This was not the direction he envisioned for the new American sculpture.

Greenberg's sculptural canon became so restrictive that, as time went on, few artists remained contenders. By 1949, Roszak's work was still considered part of a broad trend in painting and sculpture that combined Cubism with aspects of Expressionism and Surrealism and embraced artists as divergent as Ashile Gorky, Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, David Smith, Aldolf Gottlieb, Robert Motherwell, Robert de Niro, and Seymour Lipton.[26] But by 1956, Greenberg had denounced an expressionistic and figurative sculpture that borrowed from Surrealism and made no attempt to mask its biomorphic orientation. "It is symptomatic of more than a local situation," he wrote, "that modernist sculpture in America should have succumbed so

epidemically to 'biomorphism,' and that then, after all the decorative improvising of plant, bone, muscle and other organic forms, there should have come such a spinning of wires and such a general fashioning of cages--so that the most conspicuous result of the diffusion of the use of the welding torch among American sculptors has turned out to be garden statuary, oversized objets d'art and monstrous costume jewelry."[27] Obviously, Greenberg's remarks refer not only to Roszak, but to David Hare, Ibram Lassaw, and Seymour Lipton as well.

Greenberg's predictions for a new American sculpture failed to materialize in the way he hoped they would. In 1958, he wrote, "...the hopes I placed in the new sculpture ten years ago...have not yet been borne out--indeed they seem to have been refuted. Painting continues as the leading and most adventurous as well as most expressive of the visual arts; in point of recent achievement architecture alone seems comparable with it."[28] Perhaps many sculptors saw their work compromised by criteria that limited, rather than expanded, its potential growth. Perhaps they felt that Greenberg's dicta isolated sculpture from the very principles that might resuscitate it. Perhaps they saw the new sculpture as something more receptive to external sources.

Roszak, for one, refused to limit his options when it came to possible sources for sculptural ideas. Although he acknowledged Greenberg's "pictorial" mode when he constructed linear, welded-steel armatures that, in some pieces--Fledgling, Golden Bough, Thistle in the Dream, Invocation III, and Cradle Song (Fig. 83) (all from the 1950s)--are only partially covered with sheets of brazed steel, he also fabricated pieces--Whaler of Nantucket, Iron-Throat, and Night Flight (Fig. 84)--whose configurations are more closed and compact. Roszak's sculptural conception was inseparable from drawing--the means by which he generated most of his ideas. "Instead of working the medium for ideas," he said during "The New Sculpture" symposium, "I prefer to have an idea before working."[29] A piece might undergo dramatic changes during its construction, but the basic character of its image, derived from a drawing, usually remained intact. The insistent linearity of Roszak's postwar work, and the fact that he embraced industrial modes

of production, is probably what kept him in Greenberg's graces until the mid-1950s. But this is a curious situation, perhaps only coincidental, because, on almost all other fronts, he rejected Greenberg's precepts. For instance, he persistently brazed his works, with bronze, brass, copper, and nickel-silver alloys, give them textured skins. Roszak's vitalistic sculpture became more complicated, rather than simplistic, as time went on. His rapport with the object was belabored, not improvisational (in the way Smith used spot welding and assemblage techniques). After determining a central image, he looked for ways to heighten its symbolic character. Roszak rejected Greenberg's call for material "purity" and "sheer visibility" at the expense of "the tactile and its associations,"[30] for an approach that built-in secondary and tertiary levels of meaning, and, in some cases, a literary subtext. Beginning with Raven, and continuing through Skylark, Whaler of Nantucket, and Hound of Heaven, the work of writers and poets, from Poe and Hopkins to Melville and Francis Thompson, became a wellspring for his sculptural ideas, a means of enhancing the collective dimensions of his work.

Ultimately, few sculptors of Roszak's generation found a place in Greenberg's canon. For instance, David Hare, who, Greenberg wrote, had "already shown enough promise to place him in the forefront of what now begins to seem, not a renaissance, but a nascence of sculpture in America," was "too prone to the self-indulgence and whimsy of Surrealism to channel his powers into a style."[31] His work, suffering "from its diversity, its lack of a unifying formal principle," derived too closely from painting and failed "to distinguish between the different orders of feeling proper to it and to sculpture."[32] Noguchi and Calder were also considered too derivative (each took cues from Miro, Arp, and Brancusi). Noguchi's work tended to be figurative, and "his taste and obsessive concern with finish...prevent him from realizing powers that should deserve a term of praise more conclusive than 'important'."[33] Calder, whose early success Greenberg found irksome, was too "felicitous, gay, and exuberant," and "his creatures...all have the same personalities."[34] Lipton, Lassaw, and Ferber are hardly mentioned by Greenberg during the more

than fifteen years he critiqued sculpture. In the end, only David Smith achieved an elevated status in Greenberg's sculptural canon.

"The greatest sculptor this country has produced,"[35] was one of Greenberg's earliest pronouncements on Smith, whose career, along with Jackson Pollock's, became the model for a seemingly heroic (and tragic) American artist. That Greenberg chose Smith to be Pollock's sculptural counterpart rather than, say, Roszak, is hardly surprising. Smith was an artistic powerhouse. Like Pollock, he had a pugnacious streak, a rough-around-the-edges quality that made him seem essentially American. Smith also had a breadth of vision and formal invention that matched the scale of his production, which was protean. If Roszak produced one Spectre, for example, Smith produced twelve; if Roszak fabricated only one Raven, Smith fabricated seven.[36] "It is most often by way of errors, false starts, overrun objectives, and much groping and fumbling in general that great and original art arrives," Greenberg wrote of Smith's work in 1956.[37] If individual pieces by Smith did not always hit the mark, that was alright because he was "...ready to chance anything he felt out of confidence in his ability to redeem in another piece whatever went wrong in the given one."[38] Smith could respect Greenberg as an advocate who believed great American sculpture was possible. But Smith refused to make concessions that might compromise his integrity. He may have denied, later in his career, an interest in subject matter (if you see a figure in the work, he might say, that's your own business), avoided illusionism by flattening out his designs, and maintained a respectable balance between abstraction and representation, but he never limited the possible extensions his sculpture might have. If Smith became the primary exemplar of Greenberg's sculptural abstraction, today his work is more interesting for the ways in which it tested, rather than reinforced, Greenberg's canon.[39]

When the New Images of Man show opened at the Museum of Modern Art in the Fall of 1959, no one was very happy with it, certainly not those artists and critics devoted to abstraction. By

the early 1950s, at least within the immediate environment of New York City, abstraction appeared to be a hegemonic phenomenon. By presenting an international group of figurative artists at the temple of modernism, here was a show that threatened Abstract Expressionism's hegemony from the inside, so to speak.

Peter Selz, who organized the show, recalled that, "Nobody in New York was interested in this kind of difficult [figurative] work; Abstract Expressionism was it...and there was little else that mattered."[40] Selz knew that figuration was alive and well because he had been tracking it in Europe and America. In an earlier article he wrote, "The search for an adequate expression which may come to grips with the experiences of the post World War II generation has brought forth a new imagery which...retains the agitated surface of the Abstract Expressionists and which has also evolved forms which lead the spectator toward more specific responses."[41] For the New Images of Man show, Selz assembled a group of figurative artists whose provocative work was neither ideal nor classical in any traditional sense. "The revelations and complexities of mid-twentieth-century life," he wrote in the catalogue's introduction, "have called forth a profound feeling of solitude and anxiety. The imagery of man which has evolved from this reveals sometimes a new dignity, sometimes despair, but always the uniqueness of man as he confronts his fate. Like Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Camus, these artists are aware of anguish and dread, of life in which man--precarious and vulnerable--confronts the precipice, is aware of dying as well as living."[42] New Images of Man reflected, in part, the psychological fallout of a war that took more than a decade to purge from the collective consciousness. Sensing this zeitgeist, Selz brought together figurative painters and sculptors from Great Britain, France, Italy, Austria, and America. Roszak was one of twenty-three artists selected for the show, which included works by Giacometti (whose Tall Figure, 1947, was reproduced as the catalogue's cover), De Kooning, Pollock, Reg Butler, Francis Bacon, Jean Dubuffet, Leon Golub, Rico LeBrun, Richard Diebenkorn, H.C. Westermann, Jan Muller, Karel Appel, Eduardo Paolozzi, Fritz Wotruba, and others. Stylistic

differences aside, there was no way of avoiding the show's disturbing implications; reactions ranged from indifference to outrage.

New Images of Man provoked a lot of negative criticism. Hilton Kramer, then writing for The Reporter, dismissed it as an attempt to bring intellectual credibility to an art of dubious quality. "In the end," he wrote, "one finally sees the point of it all, which is less an attempt to fathom the significance of this art as imagery [Kramer's italics] than to legitimize certain dubious examples of figurative art with the imprimatur of existentialism, crisis theology, and certain schools of psychoanalysis....In the name of the agony and despair of the age, we have been treated to a quantity of bad painting and sculpture."[43] Another writer, previewing the show for the The New York Times Magazine, suggested that, "If the exhibition had a sound track, it would be a cacophonous medley of anguished cries and screeches and the quiet sighs and sobs of loneliness and longing."[44] A week later, writing for the same paper, John Canaday remarked, "...the sculpted figures are three-dimensional intruders into the relative placidity of our lives, nightmares or visions that turn out to be facts existing in the full daylight of our world."[45] Even Fairfield Porter, whose own involvement with figurative painting might have predisposed him toward a more sympathetic view, thought New Images was forced and overdone: "The new show at the Museum of Modern Art is held together by a tenuous theme. It is called "New Images of Man," and like most themes, it is forced, and therefore interesting. The common superficial look of the exhibition is that it collects monsters of mutilation, death and decay. It is less an exhibition for people interested in painting and sculpture than an entertainment for moralists."[46] William Rubin was less accommodating than Porter: "Unhappily, something went awry between the idea and its realization, with the result that the works on view constitute as disparate and uninteresting a group as has ever been assembled for a major museum show, while the catalogue monograph, which might have said something substantial about figurative art since the war, is unfocussed and replete with cliches."[47] Of all the critics that reviewed the show (and there were more than eight), Dore

Ashton was the most perceptive. "A comment on 'la condition humaine' in terms of an exhibition would not be considered exceptional in France," she wrote. "But in the United States, a philosophically speculative show immediately rouses uneasy reflections. The fear of the 'literary' in plastic art is still deeply rooted, and it will take more than Dr. Peter Selz's exhibition...to allay it....But the literary aspect does exist and Selz, who is far from dogmatic, has performed a necessary critical task in examining that which exists. His choice of artists to illustrate the general theme is irrelevant. What is relevant is that there are artists here and in Europe whose expression of their view of the human condition requires the use of the human figure. How they use it is the subject of the exhibition."[48]

New Images of Man was polemical. Its figurative, literary, and philosophical orientation undermined abstraction's hegemony, and the inclusion of figurative works by Pollock and De Kooning was particularly problematic. Here was a show whose figurative emphasis, presented as an international manifestation, threw shadows across the monolithic status of the New York School.[49] In postwar America, perhaps it was easier for some artists and critics to see European art as a dead issue. In this sense, one might tolerate Camus' or Sartre's philosophical existentialism, but not their sculptural analogues. New Images of Man threw a wedge in the prevailing order of abstraction by showcasing an art whose content was engaged--politically and socially--and whose images shattered notions of congeniality. Roszak's Iron Throat (made specifically for the show; Fig. 85), Giacometti's Man Pointing (1947; Fig. 81), Dubuffet's Knight of Darkness (1944), De Kooning's "Women" (1950-54), Golub's Damaged Man (1955), Bacon's Man in a Blue Box (1949), Paolozzi's Icarus, II (1957), and Pollock's No. 6, 1951, signified cathartic acts. That most people, including critics, found this work hard to take, is hardly surprising given its grueling imagery. As a collective voice, the show had an overwhelming impact.

About a month before New Images of Man opened, Clement Greenberg wrote an article

in defense of abstract art for The Saturday Evening Post. That the piece ran about the same time New Images opened was probably coincidental. Its place of publication, however, was not. For the readership of The Saturday Evening Post, Greenberg gave his formalist aesthetic a new twist. He argued that abstraction was a compensation for American culture's "obsession with material production and purposeful activity;"[50] abstract images, with their insistent emphasis on formal values, achieve a "singleness," "unity," and "at-onceness," that countered "a society that exaggerates...the intrinsic value of purposeful and interested activity."[51] As an internalized system, abstraction provided refuge--a means of "disinterested contemplation"--for those willing to enter its rarified visual realm. Greenberg's "Case for Abstract Art," given its ingratiating tone, was an attempt to popularize abstraction without compromising its avant-garde status. This was curious development at a time when the very existence of an avant-garde was in question.

In 1954 Irving Howe made the following pronouncement:

> All of the tendencies toward cultural conformism come to a head in the assumption that the avant garde, as both concept and intellectual grouping, has become obsolete or irrelevant. Yet the future quality of American culture, I would maintain, largely depends on the survival, and the terms of survival, of precisely the kind of dedicated group that the avant garde has been.[52]

Howe's article, which appeared in Partisan Review, was a purposeful call to arms. He saw the decline of radicalism; intellectuals pandering to corporate businesses, on the one hand, and settling, on the other, for a quiet university life; highbrow writers lowering standards for middlebrow magazines; criticism becoming ineffectual; and materialism undermining any sense of critical objectivity. Howe's text was intended as a warning against conformity and corruption.

Greenberg's willingness to promote abstract art through The Saturday Evening Post, the same publication he denounced as kitsch twenty years earlier, corroborated Howe's point of view. During the 1950s, with the separation between vanguard art and popular culture becoming increasingly more difficult to maintain, even Greenberg was willing to make concessions in order

to popularize his ideas.

Roszak was far less accommodating. He knew that most people found works like Iron Throat, Hound of Heaven, and Skylark a bitter pill, and yet, he refused to alter his technique or amend the his image's gruesome character. He may have desired greater recognition (and his decision to undertake public commissions in the latter half of his career seems to bear this out), but he was unwilling to compromise his integrity. He saw his work not as some visual tonic, but as an externalization of life's painful truths, an expression that questioned middle class values. Given such an uncompromising stance, it is not surprising that Roszak quoted Carl Jung--"At first we cannot see beyond the path that leads downward to 'dark and hateful things,' but no light or beauty will ever come from the man who cannot bear this sight"--as a prelude to his own statement in the catalogue for New Images of Man. Like Jung, he saw life as a battleground, abounding in inconsistencies and falsehoods:

> In the large sense, here in America, particularly, we have the idea that life is one endless, beautiful romance. Once we get to the point where we can actually incorporate and assimilate the tragic and the difficult aspects of living as an inevitable part of the process of life, then we will have a chance of maturing somehow and accepting life at its own terms....When we can face these difficult problems, resolve them and project them and let it become part of our experience, we will be able to face life on a much more concrete and realistic basis. We will have to forget about forever being engaged in an endless kind of trivial honeymoon, because life just doesn't function that way. Sweetness, pleasantness, comfort, charm, all of these things are wonderful, but that is not the essential core of life. It doesn't forge the human personality, nor does it begin to answer the problems one must face when they are alone.[53]

For about twenty years, teaching had offered Roszak financial security. Although he sustained a deep respect for the discipline, he also recognized its compromises, especially for the professional artist.[54] While his Walker retrospective was traveling during 1956-57, he took an extended leave of absence. Two years later he retired from Sarah Lawrence, so he could devote full-time to his work. Several circumstances facilitated this transition. His retrospective, which greatly enhanced his "market" credibility, was followed, in 1959, by a $10,000 "creative fund" grant from the Ford Foundation. Between this prestigious grant, public commissions, and the sale

of work through Pierre Matisse Gallery, he was able to spend more time in his studio.

The latter half of Roszak's career reflects, on the one hand, a coming to terms with his own mortality, and, on the other, a desire to make himself more visible. One undertaking, which unfolds through drawing, small-scale sculpture, and a series of lithographs pulled in the early 1970s, is confessional and intimate; the other, achieved through a series of sculptural commissions and numerous appointments to arts commissions and advisory committees, is collaborative and public. Eventually, when deteriorating health made monumental commissions impossible, drawing and printmaking continued to provide a means of expression for an artist still full of ideas.

NOTES

1. Harold Rosenberg, "The Thirties," in The De-definition of Art (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1972), p. 181.

2.Phillip Pavia, "The Spontaneous and Design: Waldorf Panel One," It is, no. 6 (Autumn 1965), p. 10. On February 17, 1965 a group of sculptors--Herbert Ferber, Reuben Kadish, Ibram Lassaw, James Rosati, Bernard Rosenthal, and David Slivka--met at the Fifth Avenue Hotel, New York, to discuss the state of contemporary sculpture. Surrealism's affect on American sculpture was one of the first issues raised at the panel.

3. Roszak's name appeared along with nine other sculptors' and eighteen painters', in a letter to Roland L. Redmont, President of the Metropolitan Museum, dated May 20, 1950; see Kingsley, The Turning Point, pp. 160-61.

4. Throughout the 1950s, Roszak's work was consistently reviewed by Stuart Preston for The New York Times (April 15, 1951, II, p. 10; February 15, 1953, II, p. 11); Dore Ashton wrote positively about his drawings show at Pierre Matisse Gallery (Art Digest, 27 (February 15, 1953), p. 16; Henry McBride reviewed his first one-man show at Matisse in 1951 (Artnews, 50 (May 1951), p. 46; and Robert Coates wrote a glowing review of his retrospective after it opened at the Whitney Museum of American Art (The New Yorker, no. 32 (October 6, 1956), pp. 142-46.

Roszak's friendships with museum directors and curators included Lloyd Goodrich and John I.H. Baur at the Whitney; Rene d'Harnoncourt, Alfred H. Barr, Jr., and Peter Selz at the Museum of Modern Art, Daniel Catton Rich at the Art Institute of Chicago, and James Johnson Sweeney when he was at the Guggenheim.

5. See Leja, "The Formation of an Avant-Garde in New York," Abstract Expressionism: The Critical Developments, Stephen Polcari, Abstract Expressionism and the Modern Experience, and Polcari and Gibson, eds.,"New Myths for Old: Redefining Abstract Expressionism," Art Journal, 47 (Fall 1988).

6. Jumonville, Critical Crossings, pp. 151-52; see also Raymond Williams, Keywords (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 195-97, 238.

7. Greenberg's formulations for an American postwar abstraction during the 1950s should be seen within a socio-political context, literary developments--the New Criticism--and a general feeling on the part of New York intellectuals that material well being and conformity compromised critical objectivity; see Ann Gibson, "Abstract Expressionism's Evasion of Language," Art Journal, 47 (Fall 1988), pp. 208-14, and Irving Howe, "This Age of Conformity," Partisan Review, no. 1 (January-February, 1954), pp. 7-33; and Neil Jumonville, Critical Crossings, pp. 151-85. For a socio-cultural study that reevaluates American culture in the 1950s, see W. T. Lhamon, Jr.,

Deliberate Speed: The Origins of a Cultural Style in the American 1950s (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Press, 1990).

8. For an essay that addresses the heterogeneous character of postmodern culture, see Fredric Jameson, "Postmodernism and Consumer Society," The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture, Hal Foster, ed. (Port Townsend, Washington: Bay Press, 1983), pp. 111-25.

9. Clement Greenberg, "Review of the Whitney Annual and the Exhibition Artists for Victory," The Nation (January 2, 1943); reprinted in Clement Greenberg: The Collected Essays and Criticism, v. 1, ed. John O'Brian (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986), p. 134; hereafter referred to as The Collected Essays and Criticism.

10. Greenberg, "Review of the Water-Color, Drawing, and Sculpture Sections of the Whitney Annual," The Nation (February 23, 1946); reprinted in The Collected Essays and Criticism, v. 2, p. 59.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid.

13. Greenberg, "Review of the Pepsi-Cola Annual; the Exhibition Fourteen Americans; and the Exhibition Advancing American Art, The Nation (November 23, 1946); reprinted The Collected Essays and Criticism, v. 2, pp. 113-14.

14. Greenberg, "Review of the Whitney Annual and Exhibitions of Picasso and Henri Cartier-Bresson," The Nation (April 5, 1947); reprinted in Collected Essays and Criticism, v. 2, p. 138.

15. Greenberg, "Review of the Whitney Annual and the Exhibition Romantic Painting in American," The Nation (January 1, 1944); reprinted in The Collected Essays and Criticism, v. 1, p. 171.

16. Whereas Greenberg's critical method tended to be formalistic, Rosenberg's sought a balance between art's formal constitution, and its biographical and contextual extensions. For an evaluation of the writings of Rosenberg and Thomas Hess, see Donald B. Kuspit, "Two Critics: Thomas B. Hess and Harold Rosenberg," Artforum, 17 (September 1978), pp. 32-33.

17. Greenberg, "The New Sculpture," Partisan Review (June 1949), p. 637, 638.

18. Greenberg, "The New Sculpture," p. 319.

19. For Greenberg's critique of cubism, see Clement Greenberg, "The Decline of Cubism," Partisan Review (March 1948), pp. 366-69.

20. Donald B. Kuspit, Clement Greenberg: Art Critic (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1979), pp. 27-28.

21. Greenberg, "The New Sculpture," p. 639.

22. Ibid., p. 641.

23. Greenberg, "Review of Exhibitions of the American Abstract Artists, Jacques Lipchitz, and Jackson Pollock," The Nation (April 13, 1946); reprinted Collected Essays and Criticism, v.2, p. 73.

24. Ibid.

25. Greenberg, "Review of Exhibitions of Alberto Giacometti and Kurt Schwitters," The Nation (February 7, 1948); reprinted The Collected Essays and Criticism, v. 2, p. 207.

26. For Greenberg's opinion on the state of American art in 1949, see "A Symposium: The State of American Art," Magazine of Art, 42 (March 1949), p. 92.

27. Clement Greenberg, "David Smith," in Art and Culture (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), pp. 203-04.

28. Clement Greenberg, "Sculpture in Our Time," Arts, 32 (June 1958), p. 25; reprinted as "The New Sculpture," in Art and Culture, p. 143.

29. Theodore Roszak, "The New Sculpture," p. 16.

30. Clement Greenberg, "Sculpture in Our Time," Arts, 32 (June 1958), p. 25.

31. Greenberg, "Reviews of Exhibitions of David Smith, David Hare, and Mirko," The Nation (April 19, 1947); reprinted in The Collected Essays and Criticism, v. 2, p. 142.

32. Greenberg, "Review of an Exhibition of David Hare," The Nation (February 9, 1946); reprinted in The Collected Essays and Criticism, v. 2, p. 56.

33. Greenberg, "Review of Exhibitions of Isamu Noguchi and American Paintings from the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art," The Nation (March 19, 1949); reprinted in The Collected Essays and Criticism, v. 2, p. 296.

34. Greenberg, "Review of Exhibitions of Alexander Calder and Giorgio de Chirico," The Nation (October 23, 1943); reprinted in The Collected Essays and Criticism, v. 1, p. 159.

35. Greenberg, "Review of the Whitney Annual and Exhibitions of Picasso and Henri Cartier-Bresson," The Nation (April 5, 1947); reprinted in The Collected Essay and Criticism, v. 2, p. 138.

36. See Rosalind Krauss, The Sculpture of David Smith: A Catalogue Raisonne (New York: Garland Publishing, 1977), nos. 346, 380, 429, 468, 469, 483, and 485.

37. Clement Greenberg, "David Smith," Art in America, 44 (Winter 1956-57), p. 30. Greenberg's article, later amended and reprinted in Art and Culture, was one of a series of articles for a special issue on contemporary sculptors--Calder, Lipton, Hare, Roszak, Noguchi, Hugh Townley, and Katherine Nash.

38. Ibid.

39. Smith's work of the 1950s, particularly the "Tanktotems" and "Sentinel" series, is highly figurative, and, in the case of House of a Welder and The Cathedral, narrative as well. For Smith, abstraction was never a thing in and of itself, a vision aloof from life. "...how can a man live off his planet?," he told David Sylvester in 1964. "How on earth can he know anything that he hasn't seen or doesn't exist in his own world? Even his visions have to be made up of what he knows, of the forms and the world that he knows....There is no such thing as truly [Smith's italics] abstract. Man has to work from his life" [David Smith, quoted in David Smith, ed. Garnett McCoy (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973), p. 171].

On one level, abstraction was a means of warping representation and masking feelings for Smith. He may have considered himself an abstractionist, but this perception in no way restricted an ongoing investigation of the figure through a series of drawings and paintings. "Did I tell you," he said to Thomas B. Hess in June 1964, that "I just made 130 or 140 paintings this year from models, all nude models" [quoted in David Smith, p. 180]. Also, Smith never saw painting and sculpture as antithetical practices. "...I've been painting sculpture all my life," he told Hess. "As a matter of fact, the reason I became a sculptor is that I was first a painter" [quoted in David Smith, p. 181-82].

40. Peter Selz, interview with author, New York, May 13, 1991. I want to thank Dr. Selz, Professor Emeritus, University of California, Berkeley, for sharing his recollections of the New Images of Man show with me.

41. Peter Selz, "A New Imagery in American Painting," College Art Journal, 15 (Summer 1956), p. 293.

42. Peter Selz, "Introduction," New Images of Man (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1959), p. 11.

43. Hilton Kramer, "In the Name of Agony," The Reporter, 21 (November 26, 1959), p. 36.

44. Aline B. Saarinen, "'New Images of Man'--Are They?," The New York Times Magazine, September 27, 1959, p. 18.

45. John Canaday, "Feeling Better, Recent Sculpture May Justify at Least Temporary Optimism," The New York Times, October 4, 1959, p. 13.

46. Fairfield Porter, "Art," The Nation (October 17, 1959), p. 240.

47. William Rubin, "New Images of Man," Art International, 3 no. 9 (1959), p. 1.

48. Dore Ashton, "Art: New Images of Man," Arts & Architecture, 76 (November 1959), p. 14.

49. Paul Schimmel and Judith Stein's show, The Figurative Fifties, reassessed the impact of figuration on the art of this decade. But their show neglected sculpture--the kind of anxious objects that made The New Images of Man so compelling. For a thoughtful series of essays on figurative painting during this period, see Schimmel et al., The Figurative Fifties, exh. cat. (Newport Harbor: The Newport Harbor Museum, 1989); see also Greta Berman and Jeffrey Wechsler, Realism and Realities: The Other Side of American Painting 1940-1960, exh. cat. (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Art Gallery, 1981).

50. Clement Greenberg, "Adventures of the Mind, 32: The Case for Abstract Art," The Saturday Evening Post, 232 (August 1, 1959), p. 69.

51. Ibid., p. 70.

52. Irving Howe, "This Age of Conformity," Partisan Review, no. 1 (January-February, 1954), p. 29.

53. Elliott, "An Interview with Theodore Roszak," p. 77.

54. As a speaker on a panel organized by the Council on Higher Education in the American Republics, in 1964, Roszak expressed some of his concerns about the complacent life of a university art professor; see Theodore Roszak, "Statement," The Arts and the University (New York: Council on Higher Education in the American Republics, Institute of International Education, 1964), p. 16.

CHAPTER 5: ROSZAK'S LATE CAREER: PUBLIC AND PRIVATE

W. McNeil Lowry, the former Vice President of the Humanities and the Arts for the Ford Foundation, and a good friend of Roszak's, thought that Roszak favored public commissions later in life because they were a way for him "to do something, as an artist, for the country that had taken him in."[1] Roszak probably felt, on some level, beholden to America for creative freedom and opportunities that he might not have had elsewhere, and his sense of nationalism found expression in the monumental eagle he designed, in 1960, for the American Embassy in London. But he also realized that public commissions were a way to aggrandize himself and his work.

Early on, Roszak entertained the idea of designing sculpture for public spaces, when he envisioned a construction, Ascension (1938), as a potential monument. Besides challenging his sense of scale, public commissions permitted a collaboration with architects and engineers. They also provided a more controlled environment for his sculpture. At a time when patronage for vanguard sculpture was the exception rather than the rule, and the sculptural object, even amongst artists, was seen as "the thing you back into when you look at a painting,"[2] public commissions offered an alternative extension.

Roszak was not the only sculptor of his generation to pursue public commissions. During the 1950s, painters as well as sculptors, including Herbert Ferber, Ibram Lassaw, Adolf Gottlieb, Isamu Noguchi, and Seymour Lipton, collaborated with architects on various projects.[3] The desire to forge a more effective unification of the arts recalls earlier collaborations between architects, mural painters, and sculptors during the 1880s and 1890s. An earlier generation of American, Beaux-Arts-educated artists realized, just as Roszak would 100 years later, that commissions were a way of avoiding the vicissitudes of a commercial market through monumental and highly visible statements.

That Roszak took public sculpture seriously is underscored by the number of projects he completed between about 1955 and 1968, and the degree to which he envisioned other

possibilities. Many of these, though never realized in situ, were worked up as detailed architectural renderings--two or three images generated around a specific motif--for presentation to architects and prospective clients. Looking through these meticulously drawn and matted boards, one recognizes variations on earlier pieces. For instance, Skylark (1951-52) is transformed into a larger-than-life personage with flailing arms and lean torso. Its cubistic appearance suggests something carved or cast, which, in numerous sketches, includes struts supporting the upper and lower portions of a heraldic figure. In several other felt-tip and ballpoint-pen studies executed about 1965, aspects of the statue recall Hound of Heaven and Sea Sentinel. Did Roszak consider this his ultimate personage, his most monumental new image of man? That he had ambitious goals for its realization is certain; in one rendering, its measurement, including the base, is projected at 32 feet high.

Other studies, variations on Scavenger and Night Flight, develop around the theme of flight. A totemic image with a large set of horns, conceived about the same time as Monument to an Unknown Political Prisoner (1952) and recalling aspects of Invocation I, was completed, in 1957, as a 25-inch aluminum maquette for the R. S. Reynolds Company's Visitors' Center in Barcelona, Spain. Some sketches were proposals for specific projects; these are inscribed--"Chalice Fountain--For Blds. Court of Claims & F.O.B. Washington, D.C." and "Competition For the Steel Piece Marking the Beginning of the Second Century of Steel: 1964-2064"--signed and dated. In others, Roszak took liberties with an idea, several of which are abstract, conceived in strange and surreal settings. Their conception eschews structural and technical constraints. They are dream projections, sculptural fantasies, as much as they are studies for potential public monuments.

The M.I.T. Bell-Tower Project

When Roszak was approached by Eero Saarinen in 1952 to design the bell tower and spire for a

non-denominational chapel on the campus of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he responded enthusiastically. Since his earliest days in Chicago, as a boy of eleven captivated by Louis Sullivan's C. Ready Scott Department Store,[4] Roszak sustained an appreciation for architecture. The opportunity to collaborate with Saarinen came at an auspicious time. The 1930s had been a turning point in Roszak's attitude toward art's political mission. Although he had been disillusioned by the crassness of industrial design and had jettisoned a Constructivist-Bauhaus model, he still believed that art could, given the right conditions, serve a greater public. By accepting Saarinen's proposal, Roszak reentered an arena that tested his notions of what art should be. This time, however, he had a new sense of purpose, with the support of a team that included an architect, engineers, and an enlightened college president.

According to Robert Randolf, Associate Dean of Students at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, prior to Saarinen's commission "there had never been any effort to establish a formal religious presence on campus."[5] The disciplines of science and engineering, it seems, were unsympathetic to any kind of religious orientation. But in the aftermath of World War II, there was an explosion of campus ministries at several educational institutions in the Boston area, as a new relationship developed between religion and education. In a post-atomic age, religion acquired more universal significance. During this period, Brandeis University built three chapels, Harvard University rededicated the Memorial Church to serve all religious groups, and M.I.T. constructed one chapel for everyone.

The central force behind the M.I.T. chapel was James Ryan Killian, a Unitarian who served as college president from 1949 until 1957, when he left to become Eisenhower's science advisor. Killian's attitude toward religion was non-sectarian, and his vision for a non-denominational chapel was part of a broader program designed to make religion more accessible to students. The selection of Saarinen as architect for the project was a curious choice. He was an architectural prodigy, whose father, Eliel Saarinen, collaborated with his son during the 1930s

and '40s. Although Eero himself had initiated several important commissions, including the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, St. Louis, Missouri (1948-1964) and Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa (1947-1955), by the time of the M.I.T. project, in 1950, his architectural career was just beginning. Killian saw Saarinen as an architect with potential, and he commissioned him to design a chapel that would function as a place of worship and a forum for small gatherings, such as weddings and funerals. The chapel's counterpart was a larger auditorium--a kind of "religious meeting house" in the old New England tradition. Both buildings were underwritten by the Kresge Foundation, which, as it turned out, had some misgivings once the program was finished. Indeed, Saarinen's austere chapel, dubbed the "gas tank chapel" by some local Boston residents, sparked a lot of controversy. Apparently, Killian was highly criticized for Saarinen's unorthodox design. But this did not prevent him from seeing the project through to completion and supporting Saarinen's choice of Roszak as the sculptor for the chapel's bell tower and spire.

For Roszak, the M.I.T. project was an opportunity to combine monumental public sculpture with his interest in myth and religion. Indeed, the offer to deign a sculpture for a non-sectarian chapel serving the major denominations--Jewish, Protestant, and Catholic--was germane to his work's universal orientation. Interestingly enough, Saarinen had his own ideas for a spire that functioned both as a religious symbol and a bell tower. In a series of sketches (Fig. 86), which he later presented to Roszak, Saarinen outlined the basic format and character of the architectural sculpture. "We made many designs searching for the right form and the right proportions for the bell-tower," Saarinen later wrote. "I believe that the architect has to determine the basic form and mass and scale of such elements. But since such a spire was really something halfway between architecture and sculpture, we felt that a sculptor who would be sympathetic to the architectural problem as we saw it could bring to the spire a special sensitivity."[6]

Using Saarinen's sketches as a guide, Roszak generated his own possibilities (Fig. 87). (Roszak later gave many of these drawings to M.I.T.) What emerges from these preliminary

sketches is a hybrid motif that incorporates elements of earlier constructions, a streamlined verticality reminiscent of missiles and rocket ships. It also introduces totemic references that recall Invocation I and II; and its central core, culminating in a half-moon, crescent-shaped jaw, has an affinity to the Whaler of Nantucket, whose association with biblical Jonah made it a logical prototype for a religious and polymorphous image:

> My idea was to incorporate such a sign or form that would have its own kind of ambiguity suggested by the multiple ways in which it could be read....The principal idea was to engage in something that would tell us a little about the historic nature of the denominations that were present, and at the same time keep them architecturally simple and feasible in terms of engineering requirements.[7]

Roszak's forty-five-foot sculpture was a technical tour de force requiring the assistance of engineers and other technicians. He decided to use aluminum as the principle material because it was lighter, more malleable than steel and resistant to oxidation. "I made hundreds of experiments [using aluminum] in both tactile variants and in fabrication," Roszak told James Elliott. "When the one-inch scale model was made, it was given to engineers who made structural calculations and structural drawings of it, and finally a full 45-foot drawing was made of the entire spire which served for purposes of contour correction. It was tested [for tensile strength and durability] and then it was made by expert craftsmen, under my supervision, who had been working many years in aluminum and sheet metal. They fabricated these various forms."[8] When it came to a patination for the tower, Killian, according to Roszak, "was interested in getting a surface effect that would in no way indicate a brand-new, streamlined, chromium-plated gadget."[9] So Roszak investigated ways to give the tower's aluminum skin a "barnacled" surface. Throughout the project, Roszak maintained a constant dialogue with Saarinen to resolve aesthetic and technical issues as they arose. The decision regarding the tower's surface articulation was one of the last, and in a letter written to Saarinen from Pigeon Cove, Massachusetts, during the summer of 1955, Roszak described his progress. At that time he was running a series of experiments with aluminum from a small metal workshop rented for that purpose. The results of his investigation were

photographed and sent to Saarinen with commentary. Brazing had become an essential aspect of Roszak's sculptural process, but given aluminum's inability to accept brazing, and the tower's scale and distance from the ground, modifications were necessary. Based on his own research and Saarinen's recommendations, Roszak developed a means of simulating the effects of brazing by casting similar patterns in relief, which were then welded to the surface of the canopy and spire leg and treated with acid for the proper coloration. The simulated brazed surface was compatible with what Roszak considered the "medieval quality" of Saarinen's chapel--a mausoleum-like form encased in antique brick and surrounded by a 15-foot-wide moat--and achieved his desired neo-Baroque conception.

The tower's bell presented another challenge. Originally, the school thought about purchasing a Korean bell because of its superior quality. The administration even sent a representative to Korea to locate such a bell, but none was found. In the end, working in-house with M.I.T engineers, Roszak designed and fabricated his own bell, which functioned efficiently within the tower's gothic arch without compromising its tensile strength.

In its finished state, the M.I.T bell tower stood out as a curious sculpture with a complex iconography, and by the time it was installed atop Saarinen's chapel, in mid-November 1955, the whole program already had generated a good deal of attention (Fig. 88). Most people who saw it (and there were hundreds), were not sure what to make of it. The tower was abstract, and Saarinen's non-sectarian program troubled some people. What Roszak later described as "a kind of mild controversy raging in Boston," was, in actuality, a vehement protest against the bell tower by members of the local community.

One irate citizen, for example, wrote the following letter to the editor of the Boston Herald: "One of your readers complaining about the new steeple on the M.I.T. chapel referred to it as a dinosaur bone. Time magazine recently called it a cross between an attenuated lobster claw and a fragile bottle opener. Both of these views are absolutely right. To me it looks like something

you'd come up with if you twisted a few hairpins around each other. What M.I.T. wants to do with architecture is its own business, but when it puts this monstrosity on a house of worship to God, it is crass bad taste. It is ridiculous, I know, to say that this is communist-inspired. But if there were ever a more ungodly mess, I don't know what it could be."[10] This kind of adverse press provoked Roszak to write his own letter. It's worth citing at length, because it offers one of the most comprehensive explanations of a particular work:

> In reading the letter in The Herald of December 19, it was disappointing to discover that the point of view expressed about the M.I.T. spire was so strictly a private reaction, that it makes it impossible to answer objectively. However, in the interest of clarification and perhaps for the benefit of some of your more sympathetic readers, I would like to state briefly some of the ideas that were brought to bear to the designing of the Spire for the M.I.T. Chapel.
>
> The approach to this problem had to be regarded primarily from two points of view: 1, Having a sympathetic understanding for Eero Saarinen's architectural design and relating a sculptural structure to it, and 2, creating a visual "symbol" that, out of deference, would in no way encroach upon the time-honored religious designations of the denominations involved.
>
> Because of the non-denominational character of the Chapel, it was necessary and important to clearly separate sectarian differences from the commonly shared meaning of religious experience itself. Now, verticality is the essential and universal force line that expresses spiritual aspiration present in all religious experience. Hence, the structure as I conceived it, is one that assimilates the major elements of the spire, thrusting them upwards in space. And, the three principal vertical of the tower correspond to the three denominations that share the edifice.
>
> One of the most salient and persuasive qualities of sculpture is that within a single shape, allusions to many ideas can be recreated. For example, the recurrence of a triangular pattern both in its apparent and real manifestation, relates no less to the spiritual force of the "Trinity" than it does to the superimposed triangles in the "Star of David." So, the arch that contains the bell is also a canopy, important in most religious ceremonies.
>
> In the mind's eye of one of your readers, he, too, saw a "Lobster Claw" and described it as repellent; but to St. Francis of Xavier who once found his lost crucifix nestling safely in the claw of a crab, that lowly crustacean was looked upon as blessed.
>
> The alleged "Lobster Claw" with its menacing stab at the sky is a form that in essence is "Gothic" and purposely intended here to simulate the role of the "gargoyle" whose chief traditional function was to ward off "evil spirits" and protect the sanctity of the edifice. Simultaneously, the same form metaphorically recalls the legendary "Whale" of the Old Testament.
>
> I realize that this is hardly the time or place to further pursue other details of the multiple ideas that were engaged in the planning of the Spire for M.I.T. For me, it was an exciting and challenging experience, necessitating the involvement of one's total creative energy. From my point of view, this alone would automatically rule out any intent or possibility of an ungodly act on my part, quite

contrary to the allegation made by one of your irate readers.[11]

Roszak felt impelled to clarify his objectives, because he wanted his work to be understood on its own terms. He probably felt responsible not only to himself, but to the people who experienced the work. He must have realized, however, that some kind of balance between these two extremes was difficult to achieve.

The London Eagle and Other Commissions

Beginning with the M.I.T. project, Roszak's public sculpture provoked controversy. This did not seem to bother him, though, or dampen his desire for other commissions. If anything, he may have enjoyed the notoriety, even if it meant being taken to task, which was certainly the case with the larger-than-life-size eagle he fabricated, in 1960, for Eero Saarinen's American Embassy in London.

Saarinen received the commission for the U.S. Chancellery Building in London just as he was completing the M.I.T. chapel and auditorium and about the same time he accepted another commission for the U.S. Chancellery Building in Oslo, Norway (1955-60). For the American Embassy in London, he set out to design a simple, symmetrical building compatible with the symmetrical character of Grosvenor Square. "It was important," he later wrote, "that the embassy building be harmonious with the square, but it also had to be a proud building in its own right, for an embassy building is an important building both for the host country and the guest country and, therefore, I believe it should be a landmark. We sought harmony in various ways. The mass and general cornice height...conform to those of the buildings in the future square. There is continuity of material: the Portland stone which is trim and ornament on the red brick pseudo-Georgian buildings becomes the [Saarinen's italics] material for the embassy.... There is a general scale set up by the size of windows and decorations on the pseudo-Georgian facades. The same

scale, only slightly bolder, has been sought in the embassy facade by the structural system that forms it."[12] The embassy building also housed the Consulate and the U.S. Information Service, who had their entrances on side streets. The embassy had its main entrance on Grosvenor Square, set off by three free-standing columns. It was here that Saarinen decided to install an eagle, not as "in the form of the Great Seal (which appears inside the entrance doors), but freely and symbolically as it has so often been used in the past."[13]

Roszak accepted the London commission under severe time constraints and technical hardships. The heraldic eagle was a late addition; the original plan had called for something less obtrusive--a Great Seal--to decorate the entranceway. Roszak decided to fabricate the 37-foot, 2,000-pound eagle out of aluminum, based on his previous success with the M.I.T. bell tower. With four assistants working a 12-hour-a-day schedule for ten months, he completed the sculpture, which was then shipped from a warehouse studio in Brooklyn to a foundry in Beacon, New York, where it was anodized gold. Even before the eagle arrived in London, it was denounced as "a blatant monstrosity" by English citizens who saw its imposing size (Saarinen wished its wing span had been a couple of feet wider) as a overt sign of cultural insensitivity and poor taste. Another bone of contention was the position of the eagle's head to the left, which, according to heraldic tradition, signified cowardice. (On the President's Seal, by contrast, the orientation of the eagle's head to the right signifies honor.) In spite of bad press, the difficulties of transporting and installing the sculpture, Roszak's golden eagle eventually assumed its rightful place high above Grosvenor Square (Fig. 89).

The London eagle brought Roszak a good deal of publicity; at the time of his death he was headlined as the "Sculptor of Eagle at London Embassy." But, in retrospect, it is not a significant work. Whereas the M.I.T. project permitted creative license, the embassy commission was hampered by the necessity of a traditional subject.

Roszak realized the difficulties of designing sculpture for an audience that was not always

receptive to abstraction. This situation challenged him to consider motifs that could communicate more efficiently. In two subsequent commissions, for example, both completed during the 1960s, he reverted to earlier themes. Forms in Space (Fig. 90), executed in 1964-65 and installed in front of the Hall of Science at the New York Worlds' Fair in Flushing Meadow, Queens, where it stands today, is an updated version of Scavenger and Night Flight. (A maquette for the piece, titled Flying Fish (1959), was shown, in 1962, at Pierre Matisse Gallery.) The completed sculpture, elevated on a truncated base resembling a launching pad, is a hybrid entity--half-bird-half-fish-half-plane-half-rocket. Forms in Space is atavistic and futuristic, mechanistic and vitalistic. Its composite character signifies a reversion to a more positivistic image.

The last public sculpture Roszak executed was Sentinel (Fig. 91). Completed in 1968 for the City of New York and installed in the forecourt of the Public Health Laboratory Building at the southwest corner of First Avenue and 27th Street, the work still exists today. For his final commission, Roszak revitalized and monumentalized one of his earliest constructions, Crescent Throat, in the form of a nine ton, 27 foot-high, fabricated brazed-bronze sculpture reinforced by an inner stainless steel armature, and supplemented by transverse tension cables. Sentinel is a grandiose statement of analytic clarity and order. As we have seen, the crescent shape was perhaps the most ubiquitous motif in Roszak's work, and its transformations during the 1930s, '40s, and '50s, from something pristine and controlled to something menacing and expressionistic, reflected the artist's own ideological transitions. That it reappeared in the late 1960s, as a space-age entity with the same cosmologic implications it had in the 1930s, suggests that its form had acquired new meaning for the artist.

Together with the M.I.T. bell tower, the London eagle, and Forms in Space, Sentinel represents the public extension of Roszak's late work. His desire to function as an artist in the public sector also took the form of numerous appointments to advisory committees and art boards,

beginning in 1956-58, with his election to the Advisory Board of the National Committee of Arts and Governments.[14] Such affiliations enhanced Roszak's visibility within and balanced his continuing need to make art.

The Late Drawings and Prints

By the time Roszak installed Sentinel, the demands of monumental sculpture were becoming too hazardous. Physically exhausted by diabetes and internal injuries sustained over the years, he eventually gave up public commissions. With advancing age, Roszak had to find, out of necessity, more accessible, less strenuous ways to make art. During the last thirteen years of his life, he concentrated on drawing and printmaking as an outlet for his ideas.

The drawings Roszak generated between about 1968 and his death in 1981 are revealing and disturbing. Many begin as unpremeditated and spontaneous marks on paper. These are as much about extending the possibilities of media--inks, watercolors, and washes--as they are deliberate attempts to bring an image into focus. In some instances, he poured ink onto paper and worked the resulting blotch into an image. Accident and chance play a central role in the germination of these drawings, many of which are colorful and abstract. In others, the same spontaneity is evident, but the results, executed in black and white, are more calligraphic and linear, suggesting an affinity to Japanese brush painting. Through this kind of empirical process--where the focus is not on a single motif, but on an extended field of lines and colors--Roszak coaxed out subconscious memories, forgotten dreams and erotic impulses. He resorted once again to automatic drawing, just as the Surrealists had done forty years earlier, as a means of probing his intuition through representational images that were collective and archetypal, grotesque and fantastic.

Many of Roszak's late drawings have an extraterrestrial dimension (Fig. 92). As early as

the 1930s, space travel and astronomy had inspired his art, and a persistent fascination with science-fiction and space exploration through popular books and magazines, such as Scientific American, Analog, and Sky and Telescope continued to fuel his imagination. For him, outer space signified the last frontier and a metaphor for the origins of new myths. "If we are seriously concerned about the collective nature of society," he told Harlan Phillips, "in the way in which it has been used in the past as material for the artists, coming to a close, and if one doesn't choose to get on the cortege of burial, you can get off into the structural thing pointing to the horizons of tomorrow by throwing your lot in with the problems of space and the manner in which it suggests an extension of ideas quite outside the end of the great archetypal images. Now, this is one of the possibilities."[15] In a series of exquisitely shaded graphite drawings executed between 1977 and his death (Fig. 93), intergalactic space becomes an arena for the projection of nocturnal lights, planetary bodies satellites, a realm synonymous with the psychological space of Roszak's mind.

The exploration of metaphorical space is also implicit in a series of prints pulled between 1972 and 1974. As a student at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago during the late 1920s, Roszak learned printmaking. But apart from a few brief experiments with color lithography, in 1934, he essentially had given it up for painting and sculpture. Thirty-eight years later, at the age of 65, he resumed printmaking and over the course of about three years completed more than 27 lithographs, most of which were exhibited, in 1974, along with related drawings, at Pierre Matisse Gallery.

Roszak returned to printmaking at a point in his life when making large-scale sculpture was physically impossible. Through lithography he combined aspects of drawing and painting. These prints, some of which recall drawings done about the same time, are some of the most difficult things he did (Fig. 94). In many, the figure appears as a central motif within a narrative context. What had been masked earlier in his postwar sculpture through hybrid morphologies,

assumes a more explicit character in the prints. In some, the figure is young and virile, in others, old and decrepit. They function as actors in a life cycle that evolves from youth and adolescence to maturity, old age, and, finally, death. Certain images recapitulate older themes and motifs--man under the machine, playing cards, and futuristic cityscapes--in new situations. Some deal with political intrigue, extraterrestrial projection, and the dissolution and disintegration of the body; others revert to autobiographical confession in the same way the early paintings did.

Many of Roszak's late prints are poignantly confessional (Fig. 95), and surreal in the tradition of Miro, Matta, Seligmann, Ernst, and Picasso's late erotic drawings. Their images, emerging from nocturnal shadows, reveal the darker side of a troubled psyche, and reflect the internal quandaries and desires of an aging artist. When Hilton Kramer reviewed Roszak's show at Pierre Matisse, in 1974, he praised his lithographs and drawings for their "extraordinary technical power." "Roszak's elaborately developed sense of social violence and grotesque caricature," he wrote, "with their memories of Bosch and Goya (and Dali, too, perhaps?), are the kind of thing that only a draftsman of exceptional gifts could produce...." But, "in the end [these works] tell us more about the artist's personal fantasies and vanities than about the state of the world today."[16] Indeed they do!

Prints such as The Dream and Pandora's Box (both 1972; Fig. 96)) are nightmarish and highly sexual. Large phalluses with squat legs--symbols of libidinal energy--appear. In his earlier work, Roszak masked overt sexuality through abstraction. By the 1970s, however, his sexual impulses had found an unequivocally candid and macabre expression. One could say that advanced age liberated Roszak to explore his erotic proclivities and sexual fantasies. But such unabashed eroticism was also a sign of the times.[17] The cultural historian, Theodore Roszak, author of The Making of a Counterculture (1969), recalled that his uncle tended to dismiss anything having to do with popular culture as "meaningless." Roszak may have feigned disdain for popular culture, but he certainly read his nephew's books, copies of which were inscribed and given to him. The

explicit eroticism and psychedelic overtones of Roszak's late prints were not only the projection of old-age sexuality through a revived surrealist imagery, but were also, in part, a response to a new generation of visionary thinkers--Timothy Leary, Allen Ginsberg, Alan Watts--and a transformation of cultural mores.

A print such as Hedonists (Fig. 97), with its distorted and grotesque figures in the foreground, reinforces the degree to which caricature and satire continued to animate Roszak's art. Roszak realized that the human condition was vulnerable to all sorts of maladies and vices, and caricature was his way of exaggerating its idiosyncratic frailties. No one was immune, including his wife, Florence, whose depiction as a large-beaked bird became an endearing image for the artist. Several other prints, Rendezvous at Chappaquiddick (1972), Council at Chappaquiddick (1973), Recollection at Chappaquiddick, Washington Confidential, The Candidate, and Flood Tide at Watergate (all 1974; Fig. 98), deal with political scandal. Their censorial overtones and intrigue reflect contemporary events (Edward Kennedy's mysterious accident, Watergate, and the shady dynamics of political decision making), and perhaps Roszak's own experience on one of the many government-sponsored committees he served during the 1960s. Political content had never been a strong part of the work, and its appearance here, in the form of quasi-allegorical scenes of struggle, confrontation, judgment, and retribution is a curious development.

By far some of the most perplexing prints--Job, Last Round, No Exit, Susanna, Dream of Fair Women, Tryst (Fig. 99), and The Brood--were pulled in 1973. Haunting scenes of dissolution and destitution, ascension and transcendence are populated by a cast of characters, including phantom spirits, young girls, old men and women, who inhabit telluric, cosmologic and oceanic zones. Apocalyptic visions, ranging from the beatific to the horrific, these disturbing images signify a man struggling with his own mortality and reassessing a life transfigured by time and memory.

The dramatic transformations that characterize Roszak's late career can also be tracked

through a series of self portraits he executed from the late 1960s until his death. Beginning as early as the 1920s, as an art student living in Chicago, Roszak drew himself, and he continued to draw and to paint self portraits at various times in his life. As psychodynamic documents, these pictures tell us a great deal about the artist. In an early portrait executed shortly after his return from Europe (Fig. 100), Roszak drew a frontal self-portrait of himself wearing a hat and sitting in the interior of his Staten Island studio. In spite of the fact that the portrait was conceived during the Depression, the image projects the kind of total control one would expect from some one who embraced a Bauhaus-Constructivist model and fancied himself an artist-architect-engineer. But more importantly this frontal self-portrait marks a transition in the artist's life, coinciding with his return to America and acceptance of a Tiffany Foundation Fellowship, a perception of himself as cosmopolitan, professional, and married (notice the suggested image of Florence in the drawing's background).[18]

The confidence and optimism of this early portrait contrasts with Roszak's later portraits (Fig. 101), where a meticulous and pristine handling gives way to a more impulsive and expressionistic gesture. The color that dominates many of these images is black, which comes to have several connotations for Roszak: extraterrestrial space, the unknown, void, and, in these later drawings, death. The face becomes a vehicle for a cathartic self-analysis in the late self-portraits; in one untitled drawing (Fig. 102), it is almost completely obscured by shadows. As confessional statements, Roszak's late portraits reflect his struggle with poor health and physical decline, a slow and inevitable deterioration.

At the end of his life, Roszak found solace in the company of family and close friends. As time went on, he probably felt anachronistic, as he watched, from a distance, dramatic changes taking place within the art world. One senses his frustration in the latter part of the Harlan Phillips's interview, when the state of contemporary art is addressed. Roszak's comments seem uninformed.

He sounds out of touch, like an observer calling shots from the sidelines.

In some ways, though, Roszak was fortunate. He lived long enough to see parts of his life-work revived and re-examined. A selection of his early paintings were shown at Harold Ernst Gallery in Boston, in 1973, and, in 1978, Zabriskie Gallery organized an impressive exhibition of his constructions.[19] The Zabriskie exhibition probably gave him a lot of satisfaction. Many of these objects, which had been in storage for more than forty-six years, were bought by major museums and private collectors, and their positive critical reception assured his reputation as a first-rate abstract sculptor. But Roszak probably realized at that time how capricious peoples' perception of art was. Perhaps he even saw his late-in-life resurrection as some fortuitous twist of fate.

Until the end of his life, Roszak saw himself as a standard bearer for vanguard modern art. In April 1981, five months before he died, he addressed an attentive audience at the Museum of Art in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, which had organized an exhibition of his late drawings. During the course of his dialogue with the museum's director George S. Bolge, he described modern art as a "thorn," and then went on to say, "In a broader historical sense, one could look upon modern art as a challenge to awakening a whole range of sensibilities that we ordinarily wouldn't have the opportunity to experience had we not lived in this time and in this environment."[20] Roszak saw modern art in an avant-garde tradition, in which the artist, as a kind of visionary, functioned as an outsider. That he persistently maintained such an adversarial stance is hardly surprising given his faith in art.

NOTES

1. W. McNeil Lowry, interview with author, April 8, 1991.

2. This remark, commonly attributed to the abstract painter Ad Reinhardt, was a clear indication of sculpture's second-class status during the 1950s--the halcyon days of Abstract Expressionism.

3. During the 1950s a number of sculptors and painters undertook religious commissions for temples and churches. Herbert Ferber, for example, received one of his first public commissions (shared with Aldolf Gottlieb and Robert Motherwell), in 1950, through the efforts of his dealer Samuel Kootz, for a facade sculpture (...and the bush was not consumed) for the B'nai Israel synagogue, Millburn, New Jersey. In 1955, Ferber received two other commissions: an eternal light and candelabrum for the Jewish Chapel at Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts, and two interior wall sculptures (The Covenant and The Flood) for the Temple Anshe Chesed, Cleveland, Ohio (installed in 1957). In 1956, he designed and executed a facade sculpture (Running Water), eternal light and candelabrum for the Temple of Aaron, St. Paul Minnesota (also installed in 1957). Samual Kootz, always the businessman, saw public commissions as a potentially lucrative endeavor, and he pursued commissions for some of his other sculptors, including Ibram Lassaw and David Hare. Isamu Noguchi, who conceived numerous ideas for environmental sculpture during the 1930s, designed and created gardens for the Reader's Digest headquarters in Tokyo and Keio University, in 1950-52, and, between 1956 and 1959, for UNESCO in Paris and the Connecticut General Life Insurance Company, in Bloomfield Hills.

4. Roszak discussed his early appreciation for Louis Sullivan's architecture with Harlan Phillips; see Phillips, "Theodore Roszak Reminisces," p. 73.

5. Robert M. Randolf, interview with author, September 19, 1991. I want to thank Dean Randolf for discussing the history of the M.I.T. bell-tower commission with me.

6. Eero Saarinen on His Work: A Selection of Buildings Dating from 1947 to 1964 with Statements by the Architect, Aline B. Saarinen, ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 42.

7. Elliott, "An Interview with Theodore Roszak," p. 46.

8. Ibid., pp. 56-57.

9. Ibid., p. 58.

10. R. M. Mestover, "Letter to the Editor," Boston Herald, December 19, 1955.

11. Theodore Roszak, "Letter to the Editor," Boston Herald, January 8, 1956, II, p. 2

12. Eero Saarinen on His Own Works, p. 56.

13. Ibid.

14. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Roszak's administrative associations included the Advisory Council on Art and Architecture, Yale University; the Advisory Committee on Cultural Presentations Program, State Department, Washington, D.C.; the Board of Trustees for the Tiffany Foundation, and the American Academy in Rome; the Board of Governors for the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture; and the Fine Arts Commission, Washington, D.C., appointed, 1962-66, by President John F. Kennedy, and re-appointed, 1966-68, by President Lyndon B. Johnson.

15. Phillips, "Theodore Roszak Reminisces," p. 452.

16. Hilton Kramer, "Art: Two Against the Current," The New York Times, December 7, 1974, p. 20.

17. Roszak was familiar with Herbert Marcuse's Eros and Civilization, a copy of which he kept in his library. Marcuse's work, published in 1955, became a kind of sexual and political manifesto in the 1960s for artists, poets, theologians, and writers. For a discussion of Marcuse's influence on the sculptor Robert Morris, see Maurice Berger, Labyrinths: Robert Morris, Minimalism, and the 1960s (New York: Harper & Row, 1989), pp. 60-70.

18. For an analysis of the frontal self-portrait and its relationship to an individual's seven-year life cycles, see Francis V. O'Connor, "The Psychodynamics of the Frontal Self-Portrait," Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Art, Mary Mathews Gedo, ed. (Hillsdale, N.J.: The Analytic Press, 1985), pp. 169-221.

19. In the last decade of his life, Roszak also had one-person shows at the Century Association, New York; Fairweather Hardin Gallery and the Chicago Arts Club, both in Chicago; Hayden Gallery at M.I.T; and the Museum of Art, Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

20. Theodore Roszak, in "A Talk with George S. Bolge," Museum of Art, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, April 1981. I want to thank Claire Jeanine Satin for making a copy of this recorded discussion available to me.

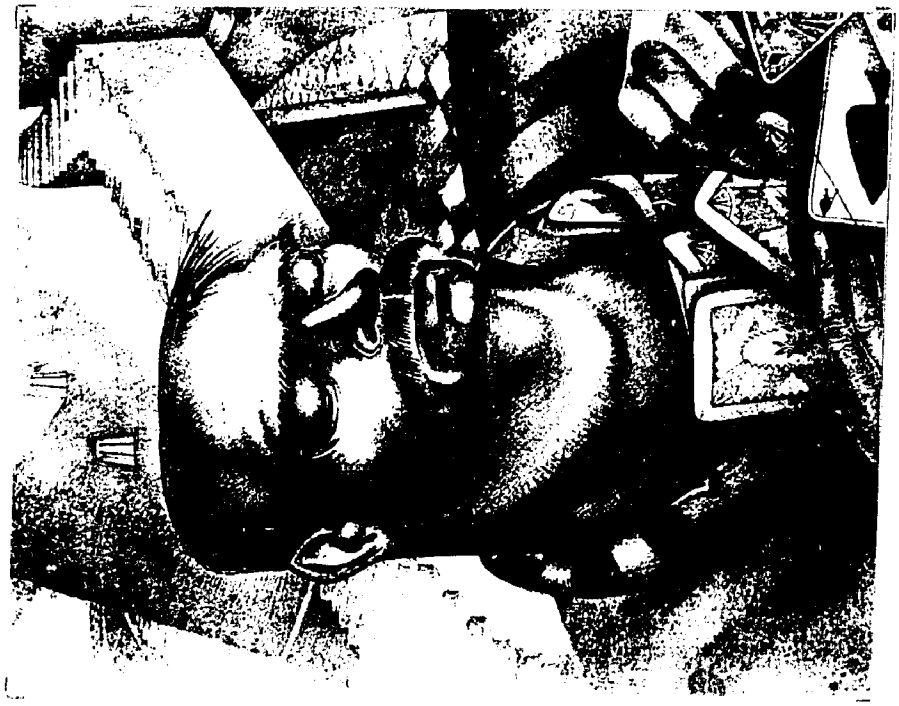

Fig. 1. The Jailor (Prisoner), 1928.

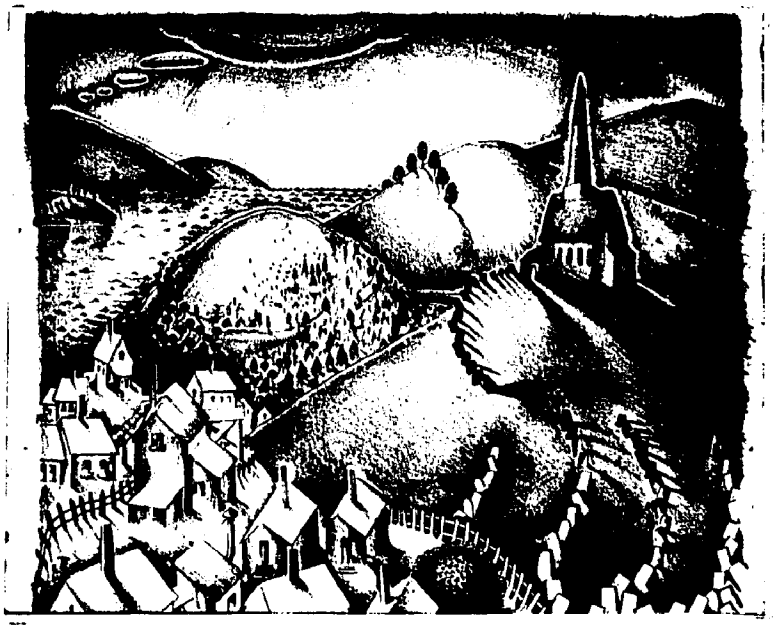

Fig. 2. Woodstock, New York, 1929.

Fig. 3. Theodore Roszak (on the platform, painting) in the mural class of the Graduate Atelier, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, 1928.

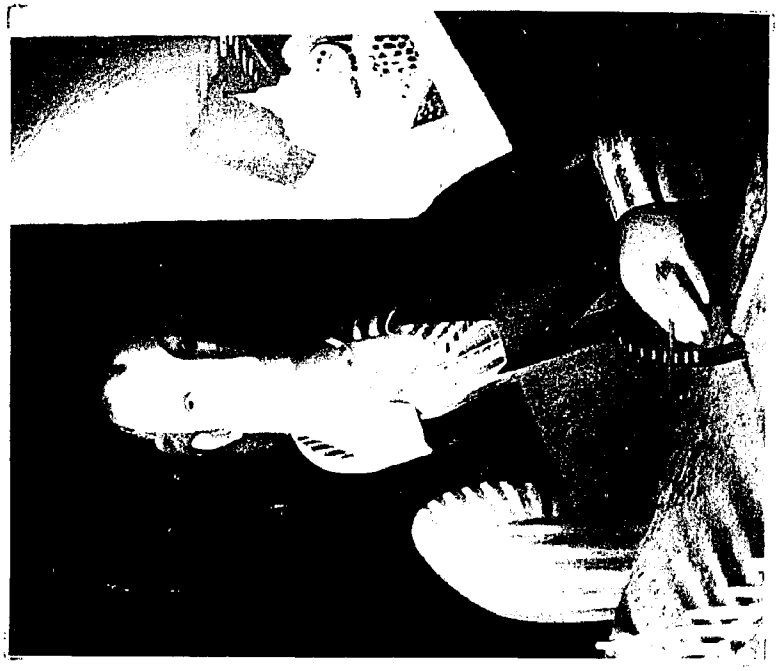

Fig. 4. Self-Portrait, 1930.

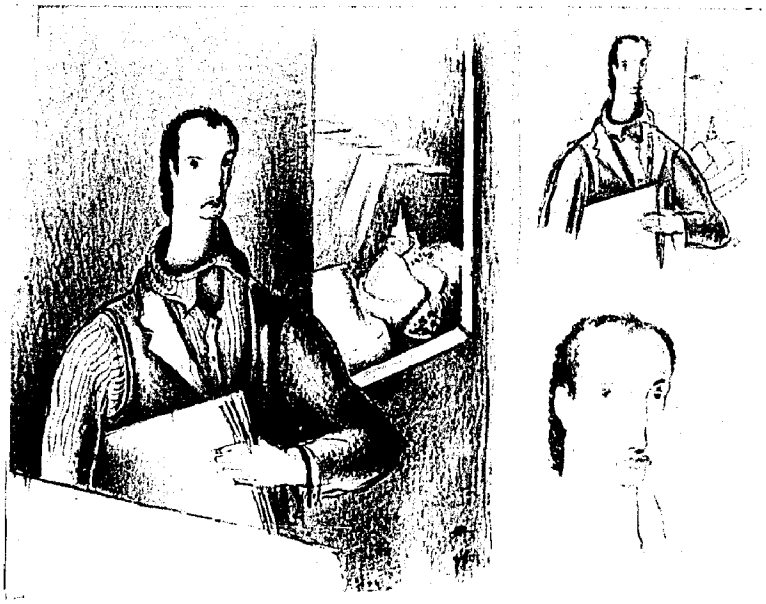

Fig. 5. Study for "Self-Portrait," 1929-30

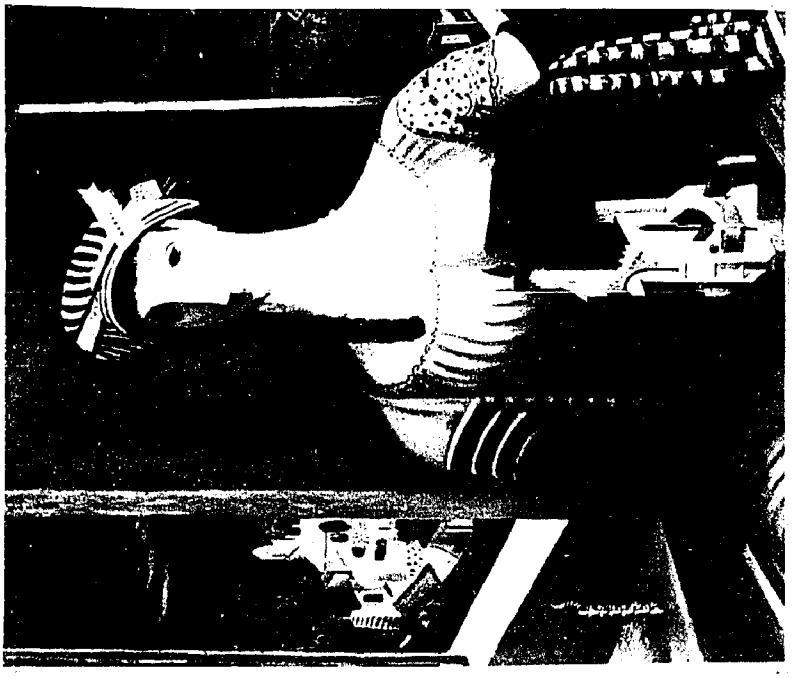

Fig. 6. Seated Woman, 1930.

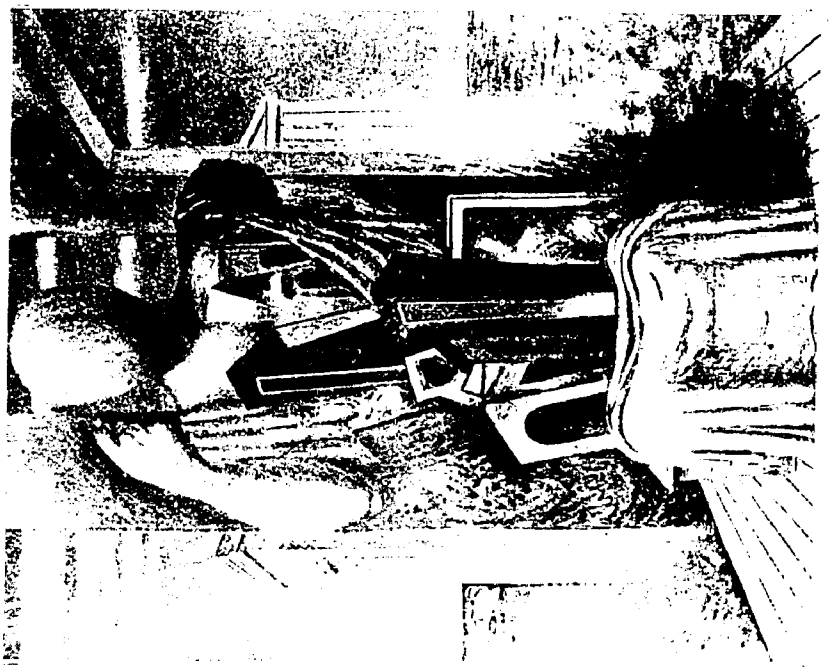

Fig. 7. Giorgio de Chirico. Mannequin, 1926.
As reproduced in Giorgio de Chirico: Les
Peintres Francais Nouveaux, No. 29 (1927), p. 59.

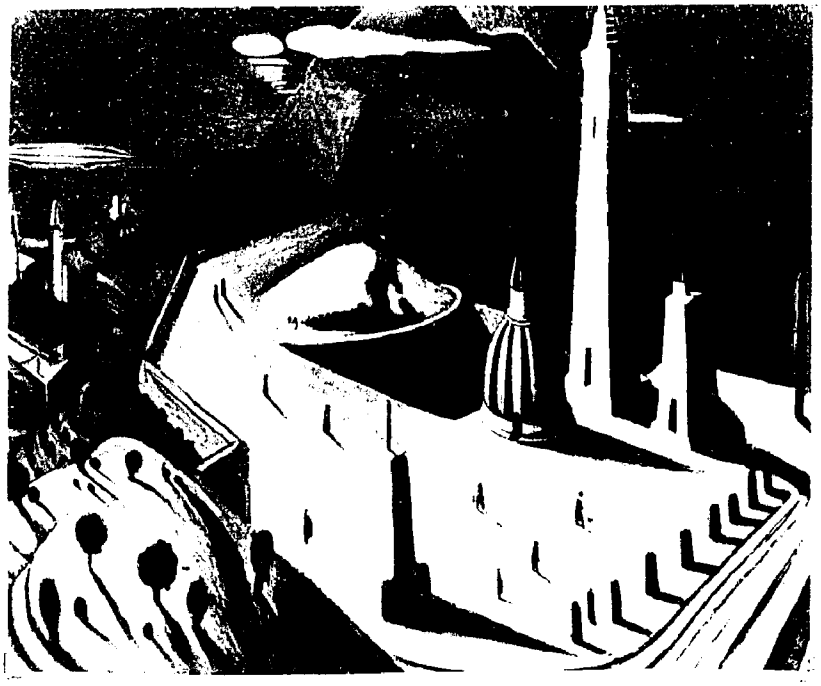

Fig. 8. Early Leave, 1931.

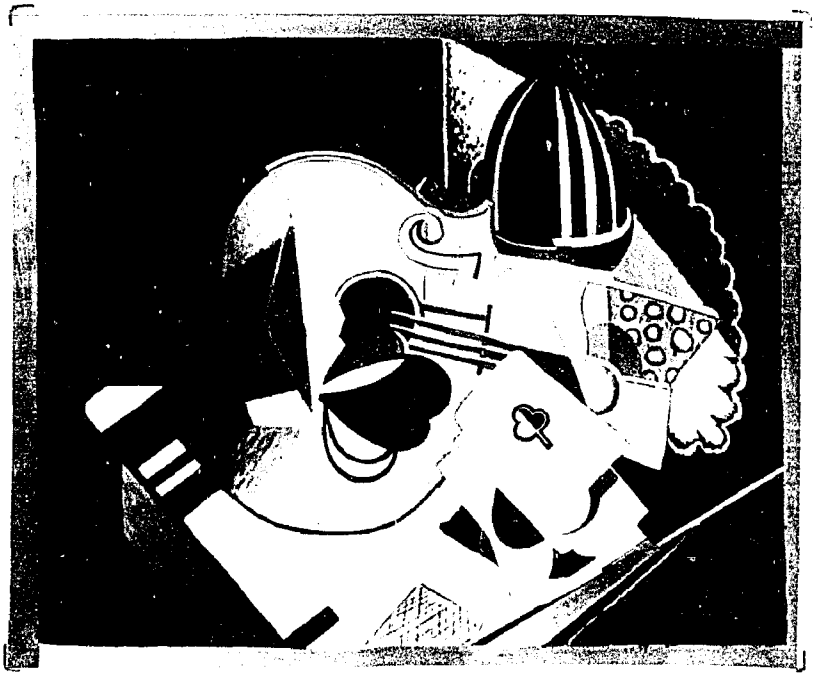

Fig. 9. Cubist Still Life with Guitar and Playing Cards, 1930.

Fig. 10. Theodore and Florence Roszak in the Staten Island Studio, 1932.

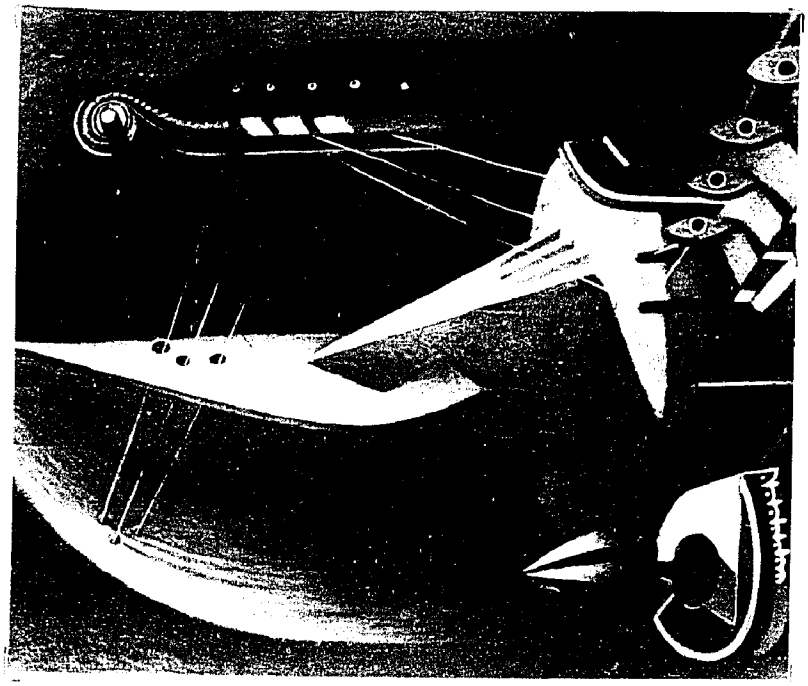

Fig. 11. Opus #5 (Etude), 1931.

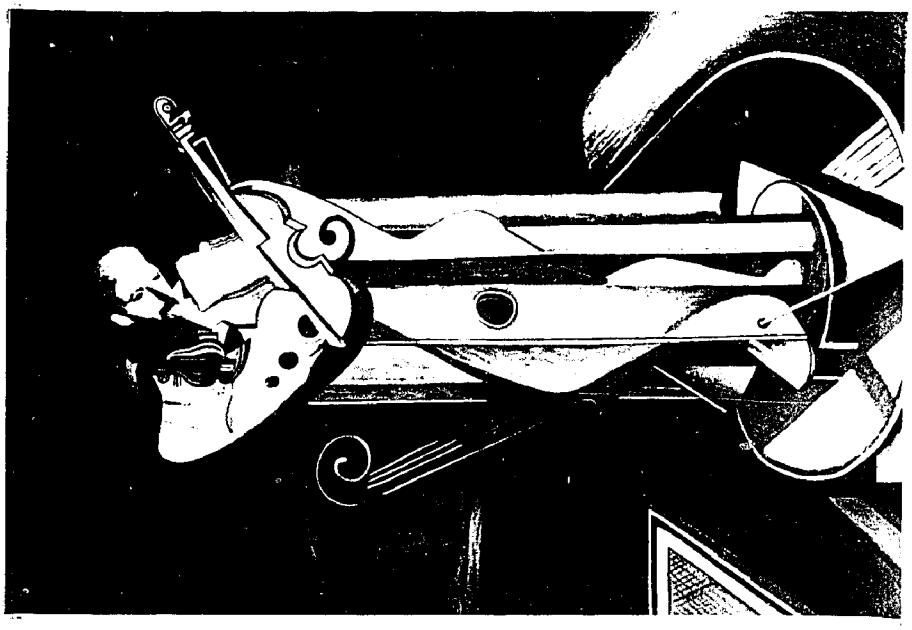

Fig. 12. Composition Alastor, 1931.

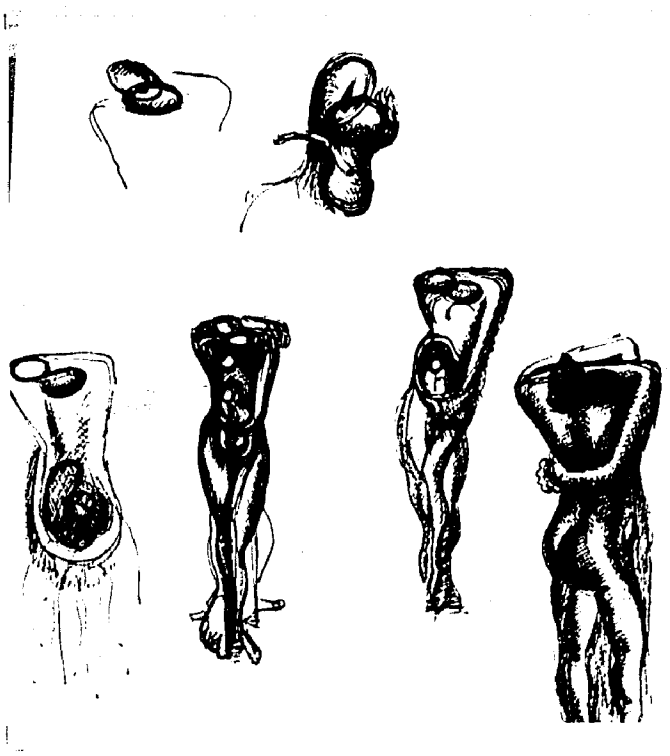

Fig. 13. Studies for "Composition Alastor," 1931.

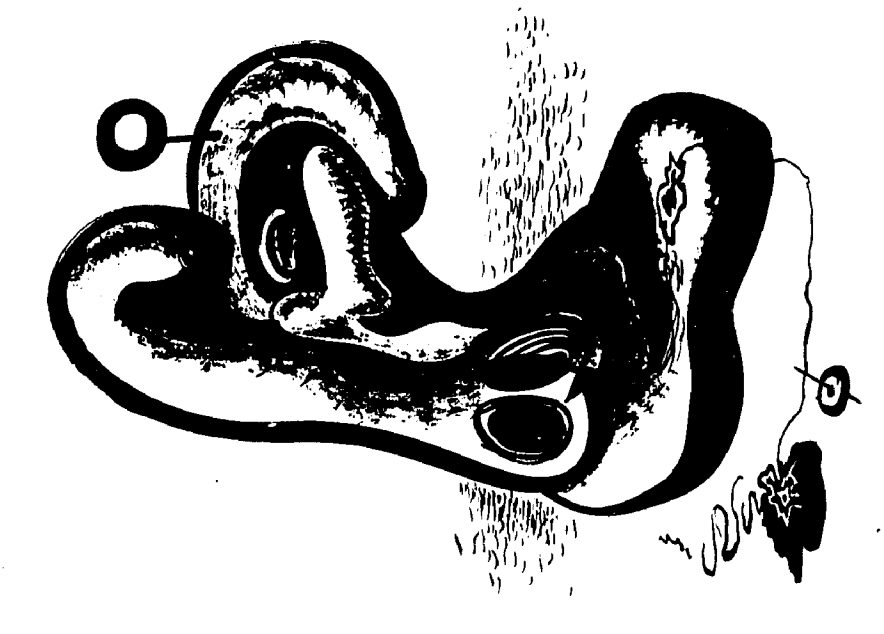

Fig. 14. Biomorphic Study for "Composition Alastor," 1931.

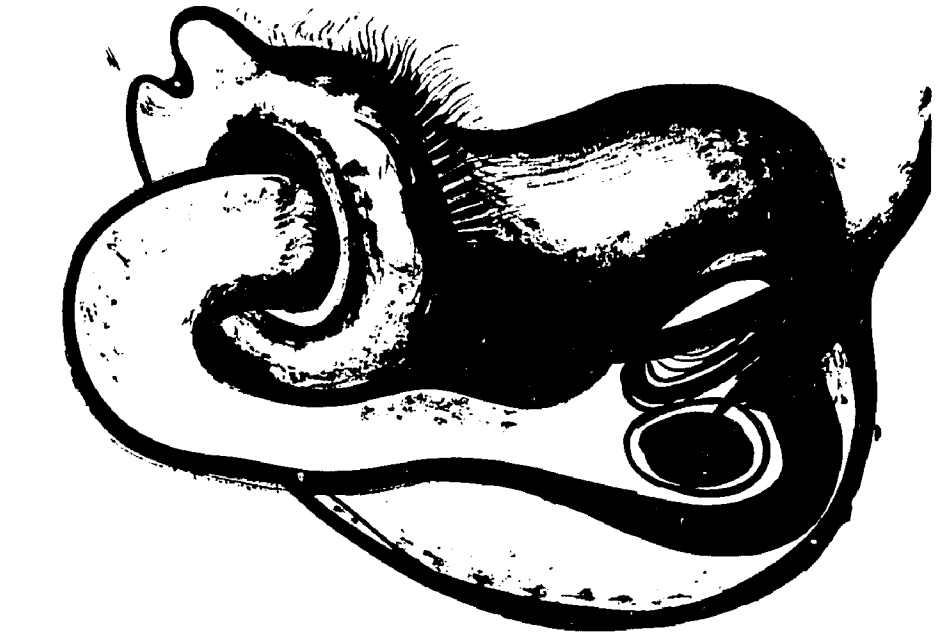

Fig. 15. Biomorphic Study for "Composition Alastor," 1931.

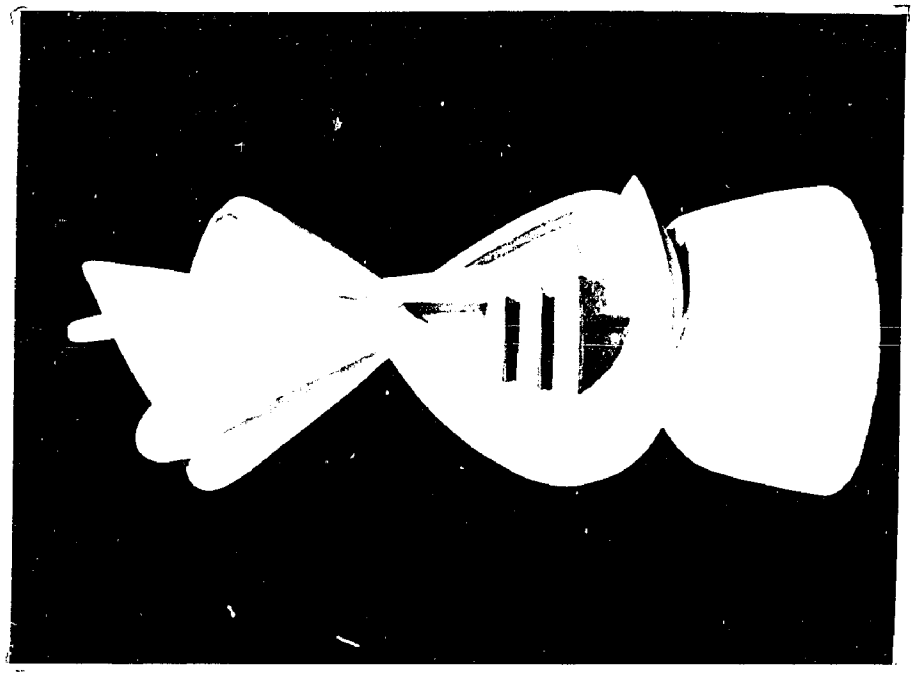

Fig. 16. Torso Manique (Surveyor), 1931-32.

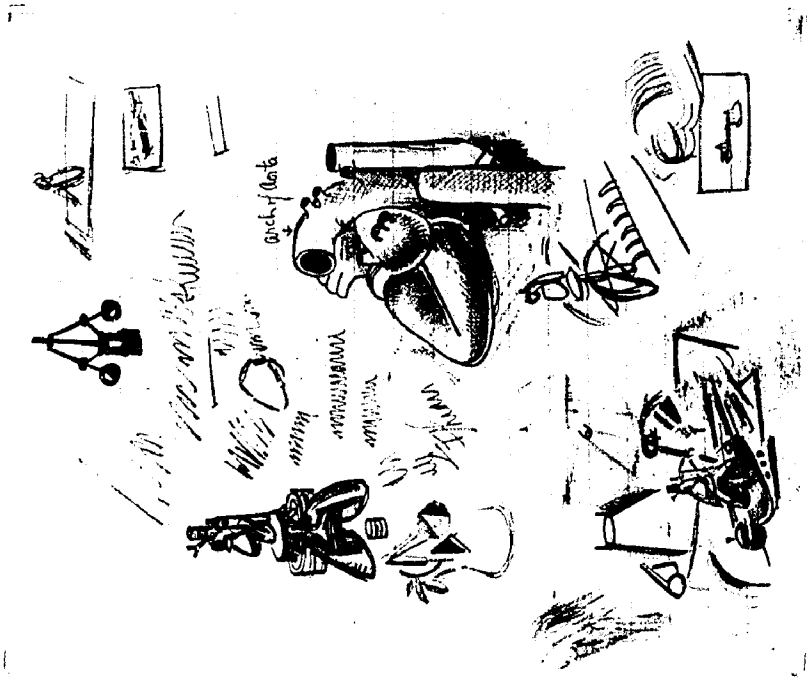

Fig. 17. Study of Heart, 1932-33.

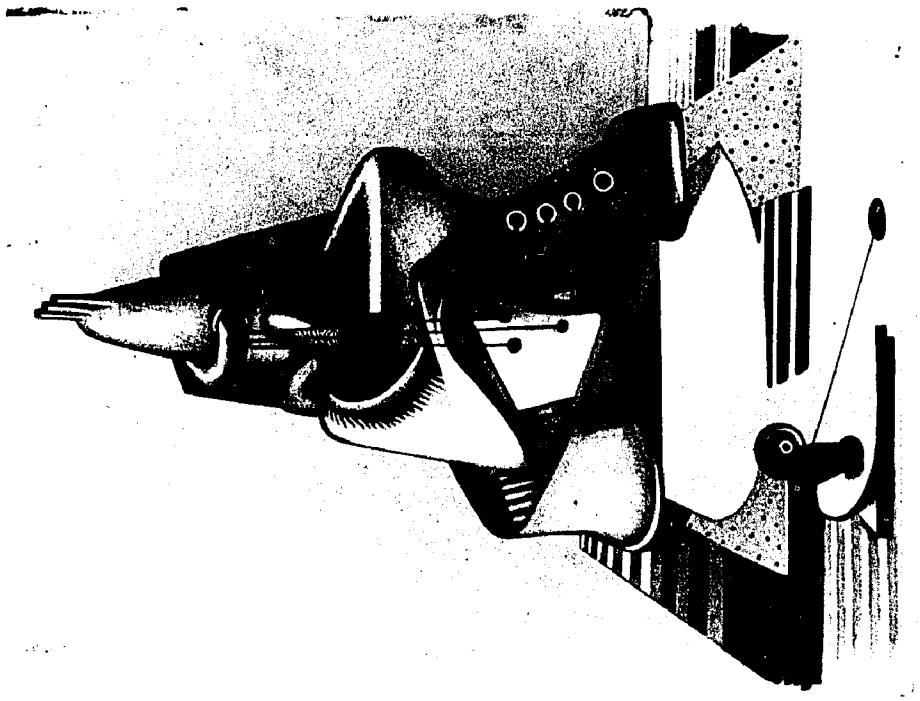

Fig. 18. Metaphysical Structure, 1933.

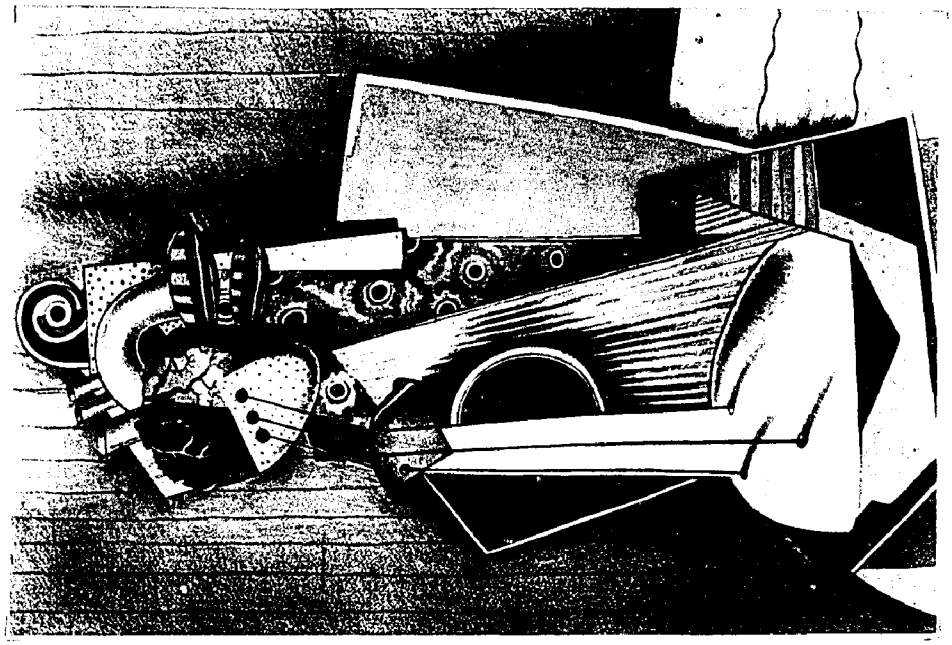

Fig. 19. Musical Still Life with Heart, 1932.

Fig. 20. Isamu Noguchi. One Thousand Horse Power Heart, about 1938 (lost). As reproduced in The Machine Age in America, 1918-1941, exh. cat. (New York: The Brooklyn Museum, 1986), p. 264.

Fig. 21. En Masque, 1932.

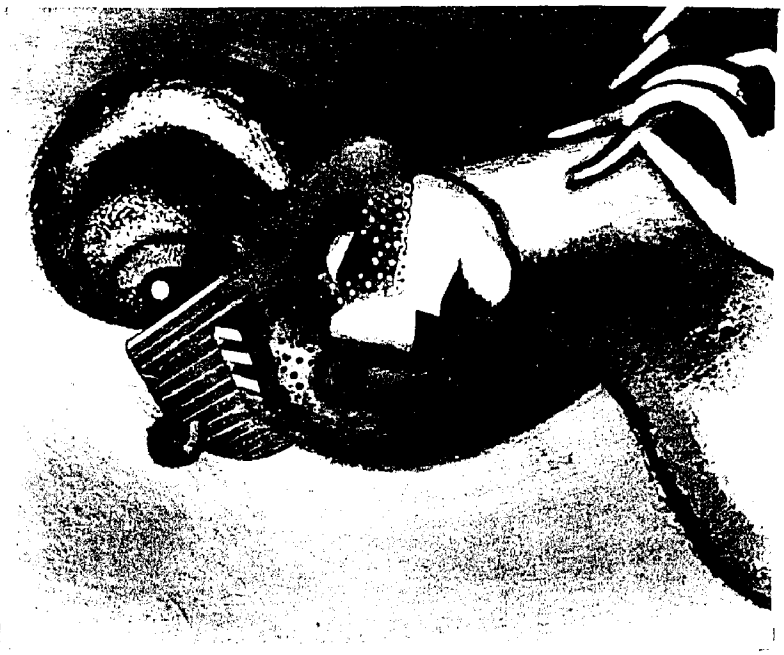

Fig. 22. Portrait of Florence, 1937.

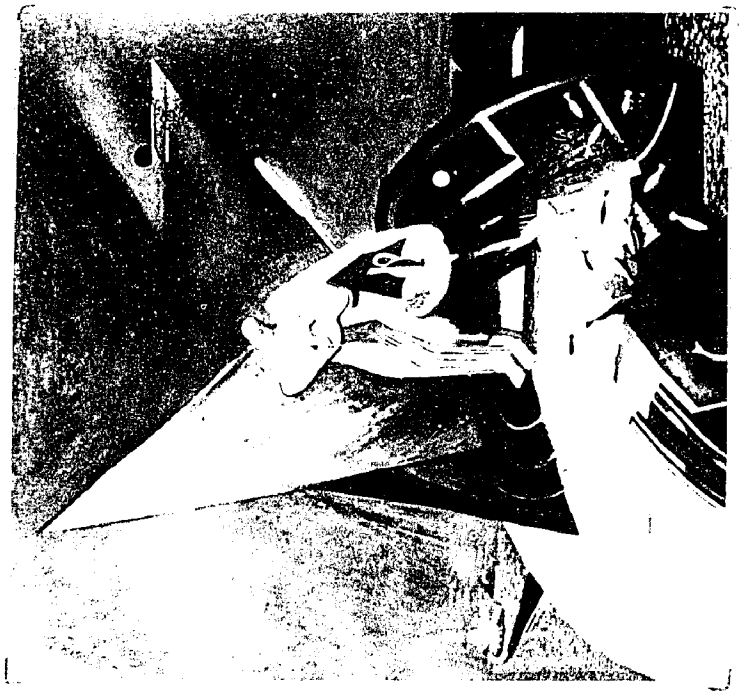

Fig. 23. Fisherman's Bride, 1934.

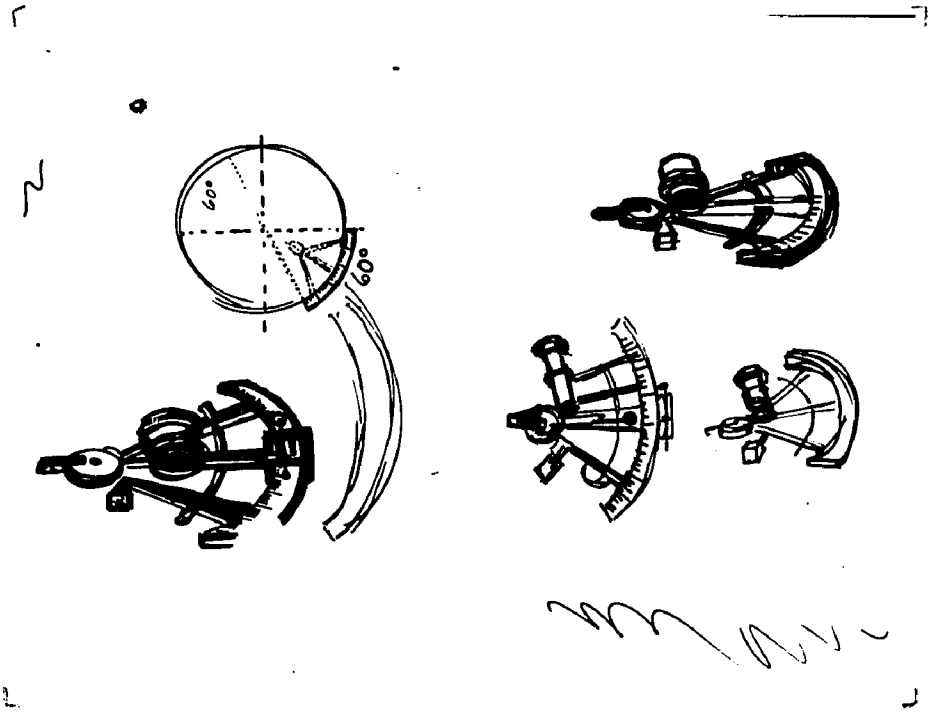

Fig. 24. Studies of Navigational Instruments for "Fisherman's Bride," 1932-34.

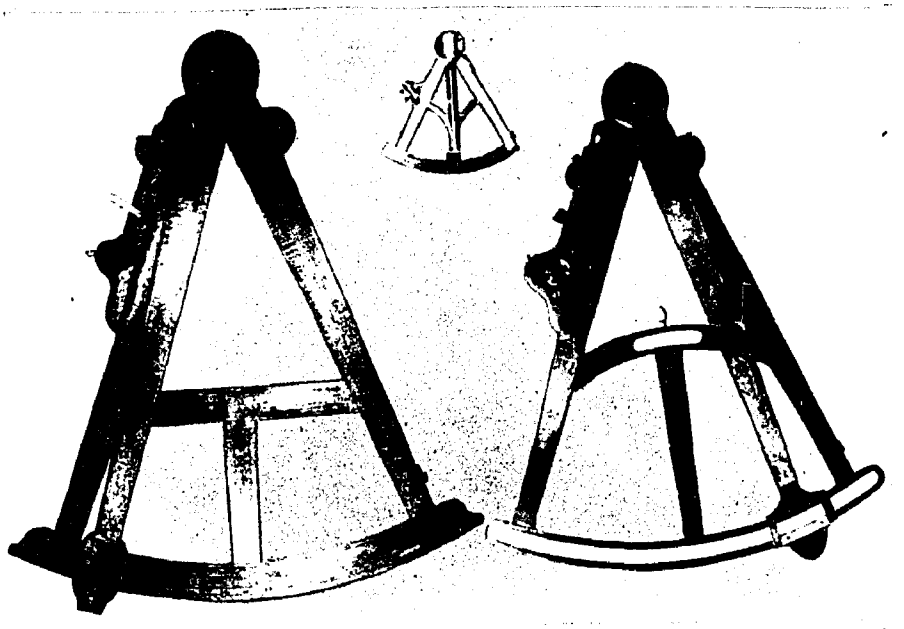

Fig. 25. Early Octants and Reflecting Sextants. As reproduced in the catalogue of the Adler Planetarium and Astronomical Museum in Chicago (1932).

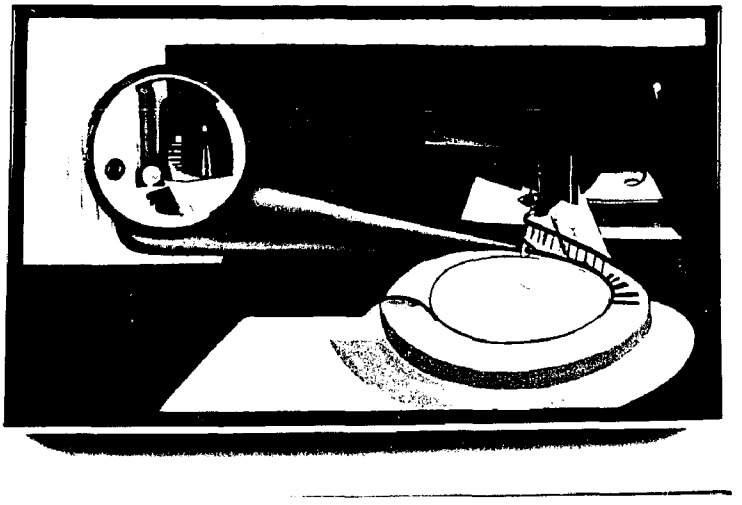

Fig. 26. Recording Sound, 1932.

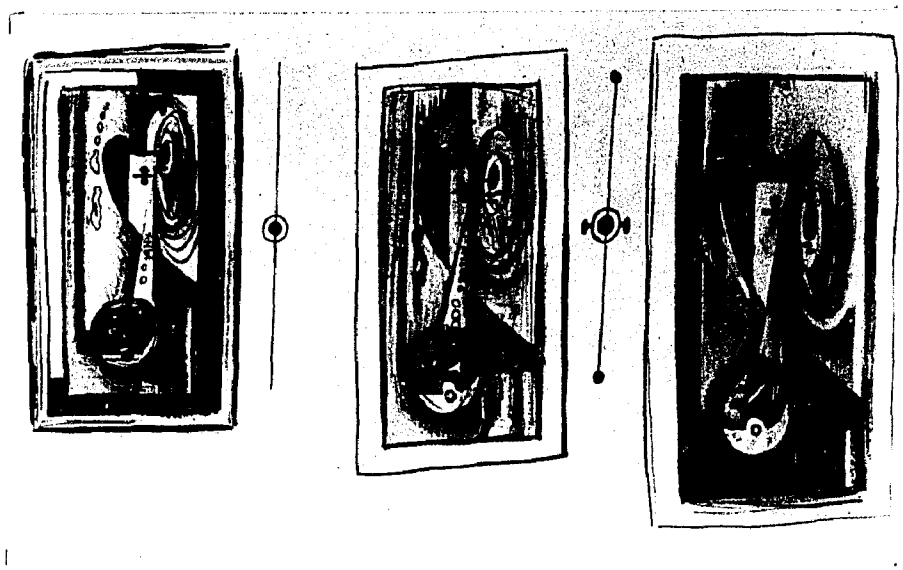

Fig. 27. Three Studies for "Recording Sound," about 1932.

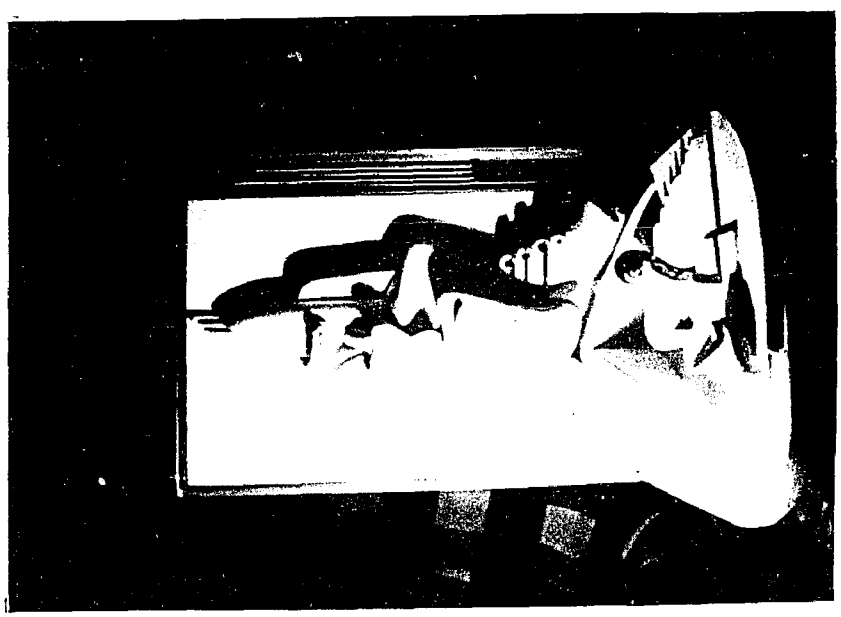

Fig. 28. Metaphysical Structure, 1932-33 (destroyed).

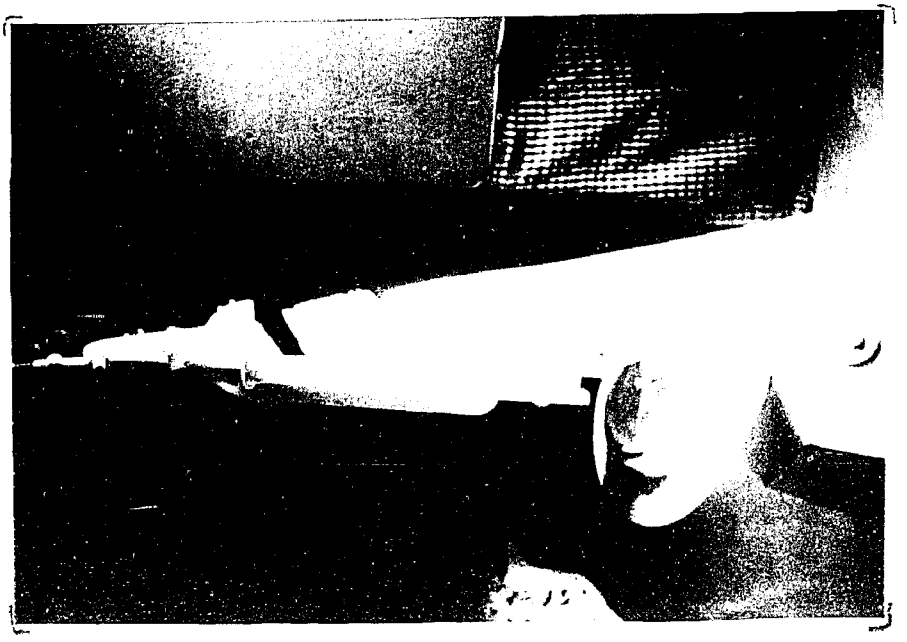

Fig. 29. Architectural Tower, 1931-32 (destroyed).

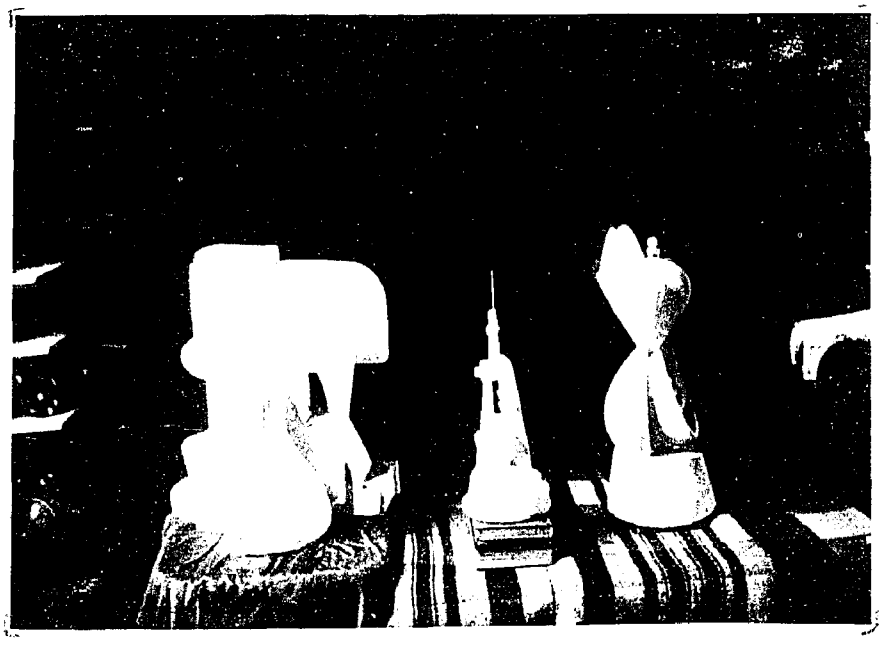

Fig. 30. Female Relief Head, Small Tower, and Torso Manique, 1931-32.

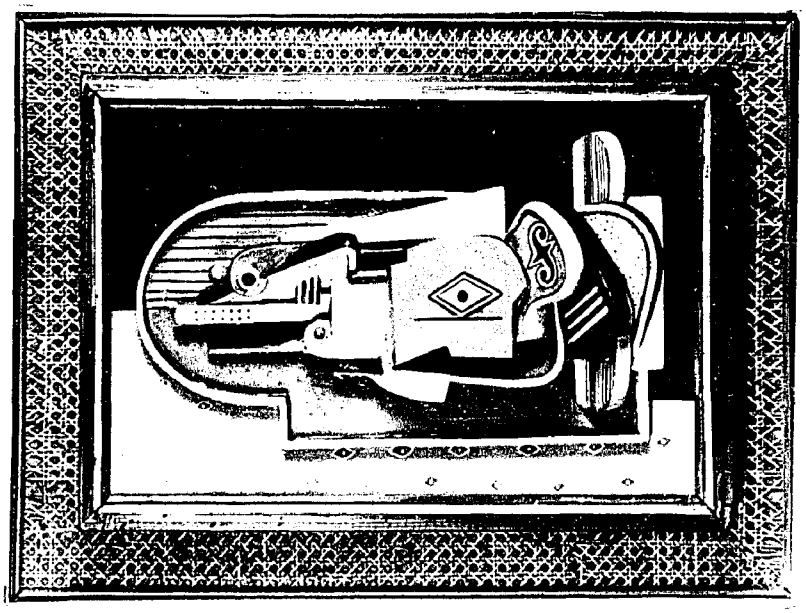

Fig. 31. Musical Still Life, 1932.

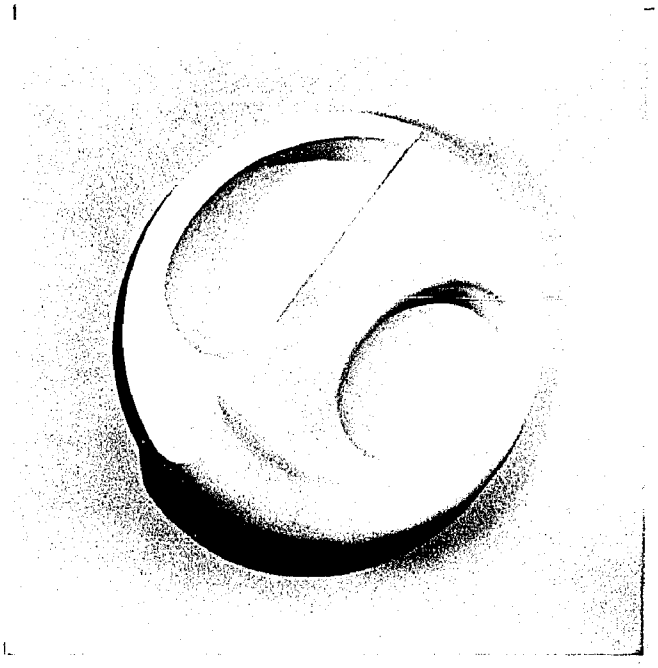

Fig. 32. White Construction, 1932-33.

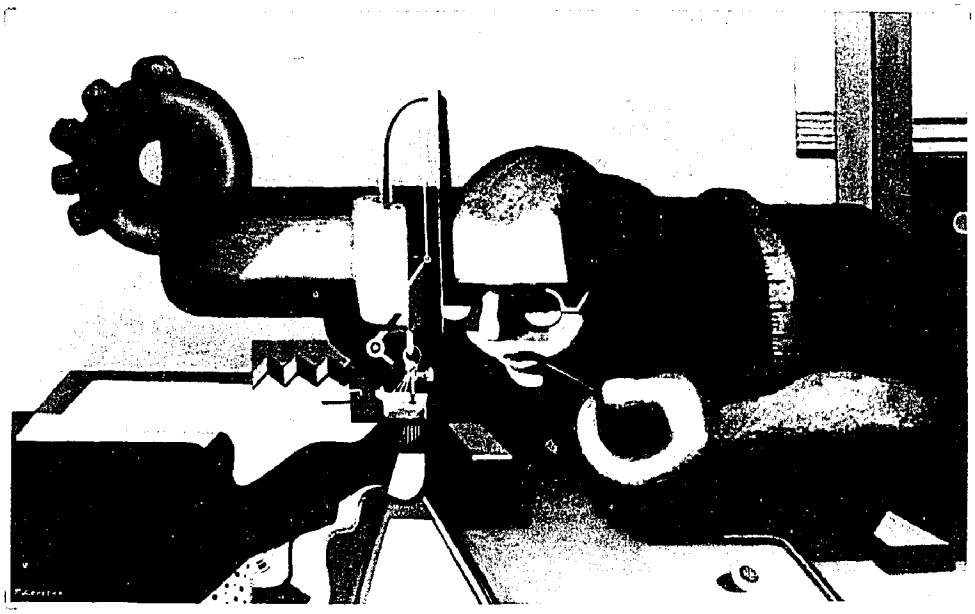

Fig. 33. Man Sewing, 1937.

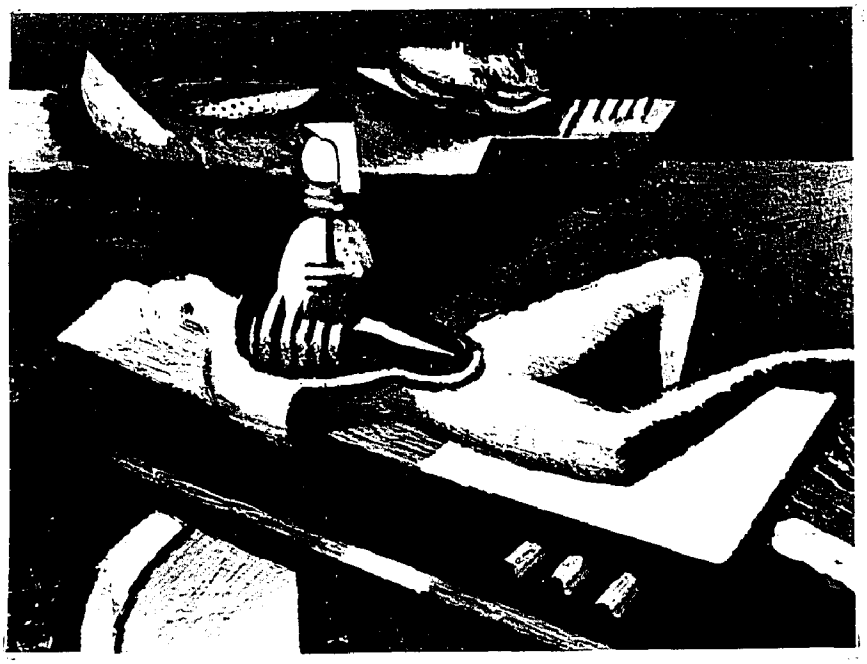

Fig. 34. Study for "Mechanical Man," 1932-33.

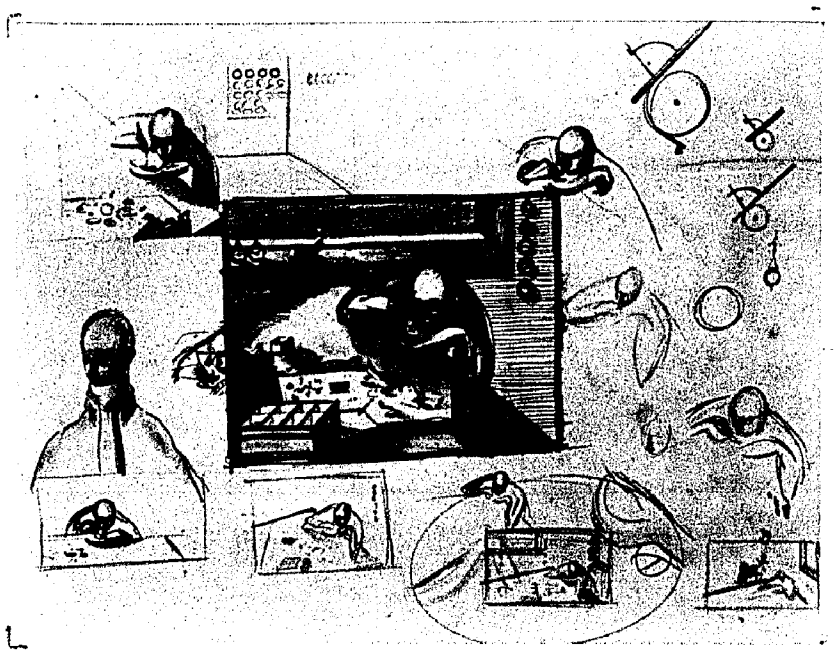

Fig. 35. The Jeweler, 1932-33.

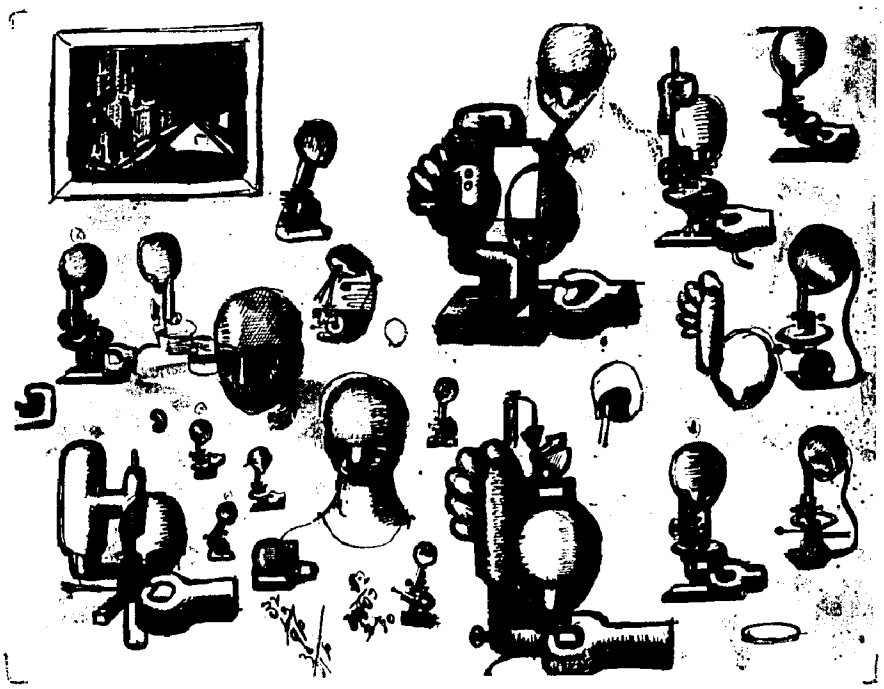

Fig. 36. Studies for "Man Sewing" and "42nd Street," 1932-36.

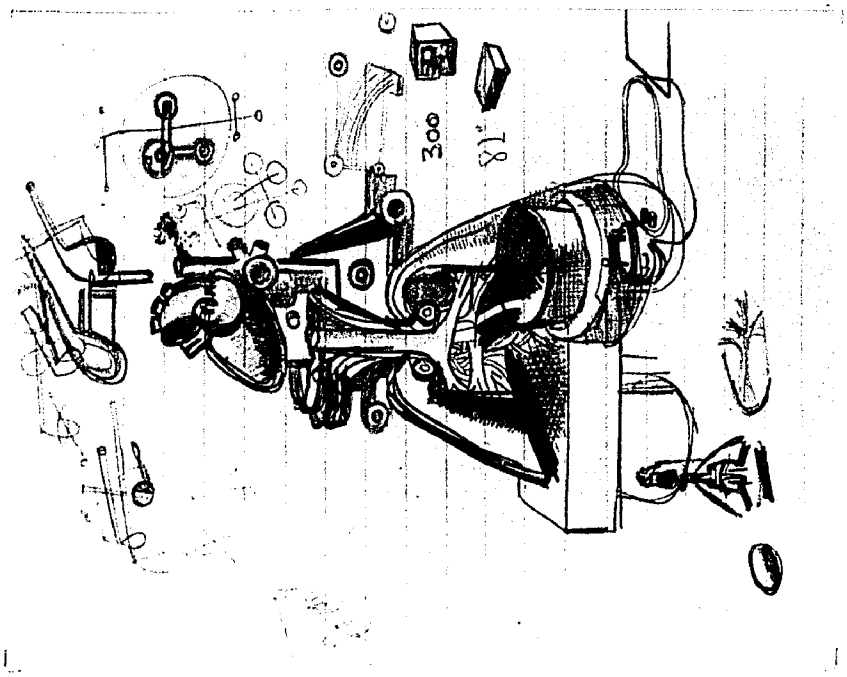

Fig. 37. Studies for "Mechanical Man," 1932-33.

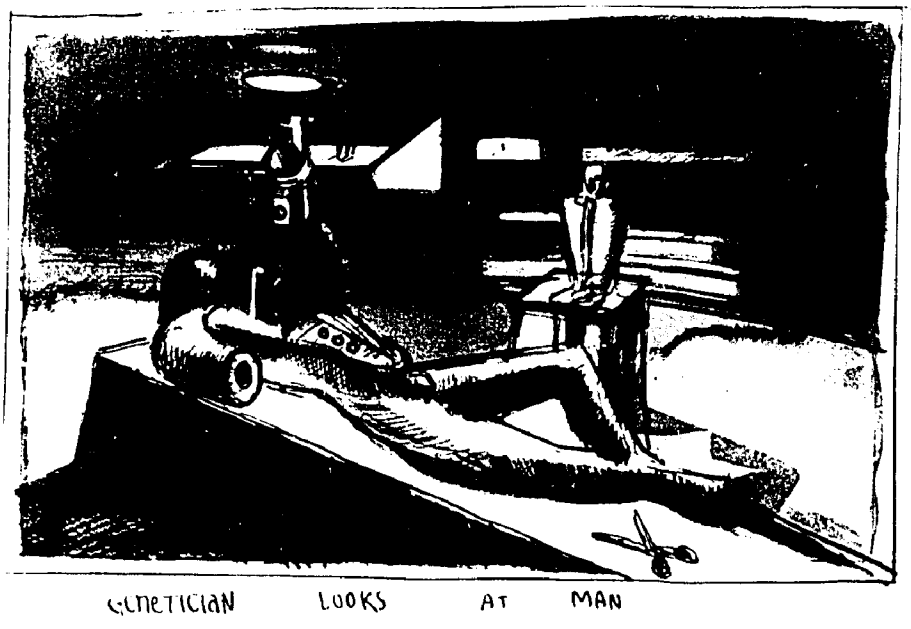

Fig. 38. Study for "Mechanical Man," 1932-33.

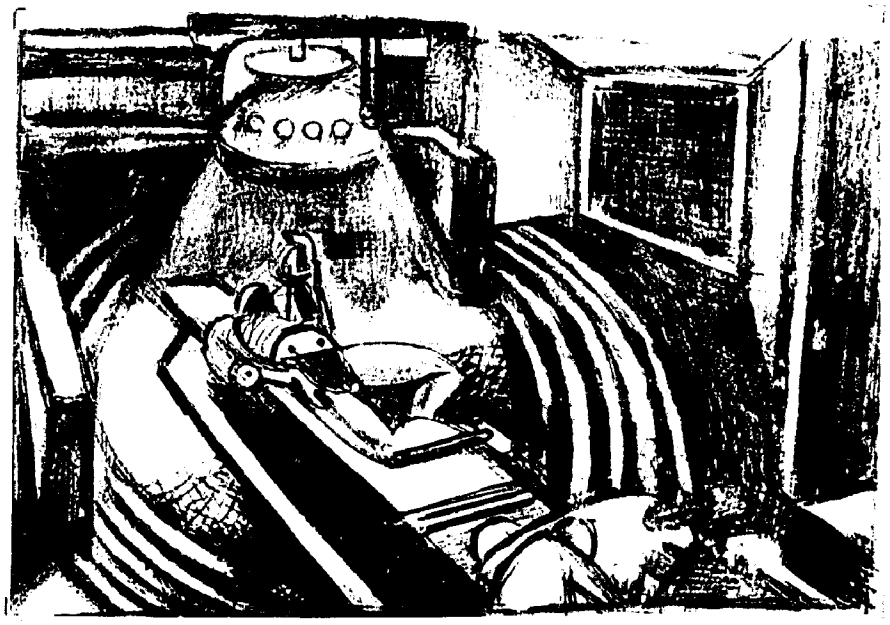

Fig. 39. Study for "Mechanical Man," 1932-33.

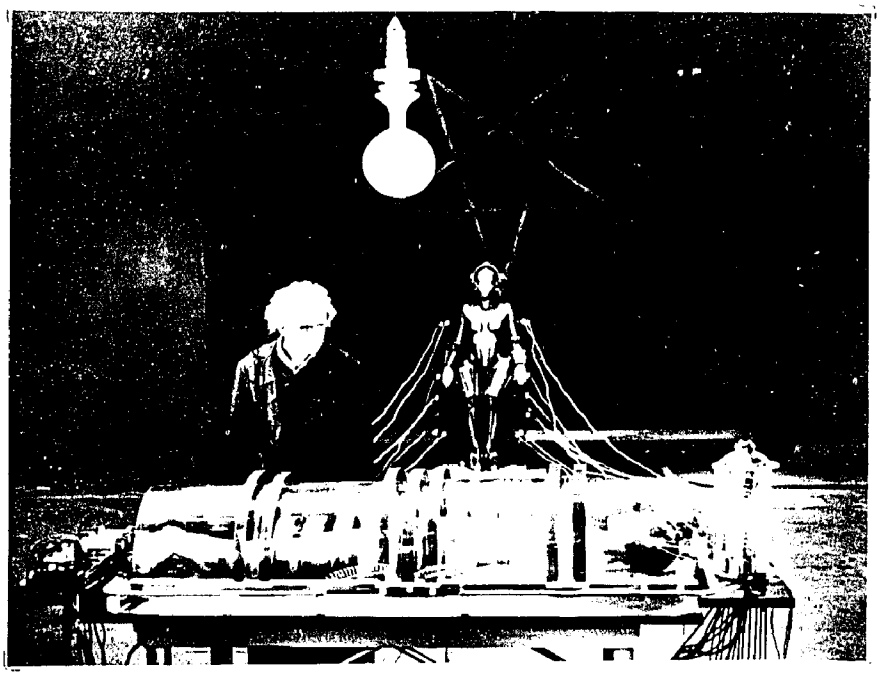

Fig. 40. Still from Fritz Lang's Metropolis, 1926.

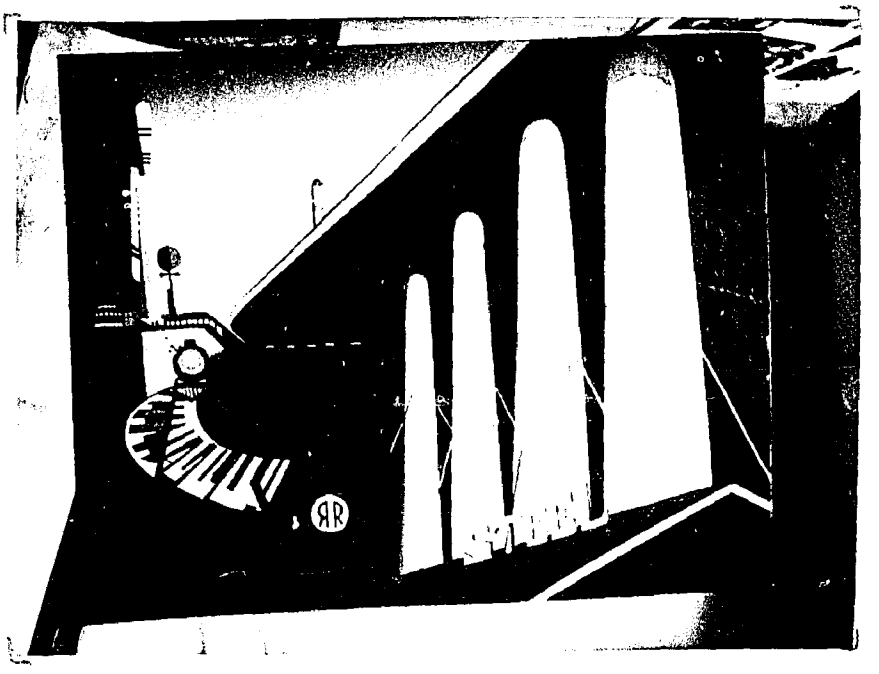

Fig. 41. American Industry, 1933-34 (destroyed).

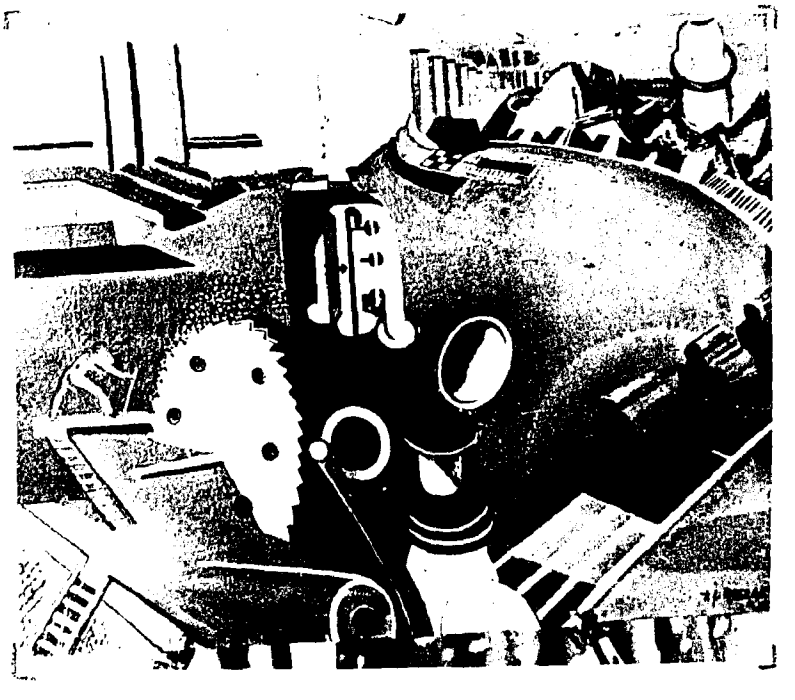

Fig. 42. American Science and Industry, 1933-34 (destroyed).

Fig. 43. Theodore Roszak in his New York studio at 325 East 30th Street, about 1938.

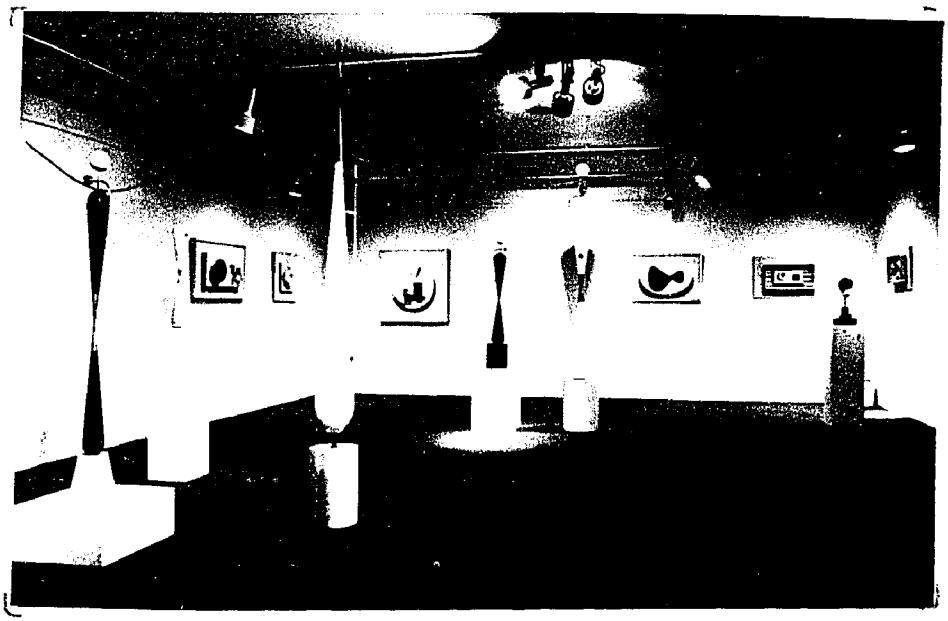

Fig. 44. Installation of constructions at Zabriskie Gallery, New York, 1978.

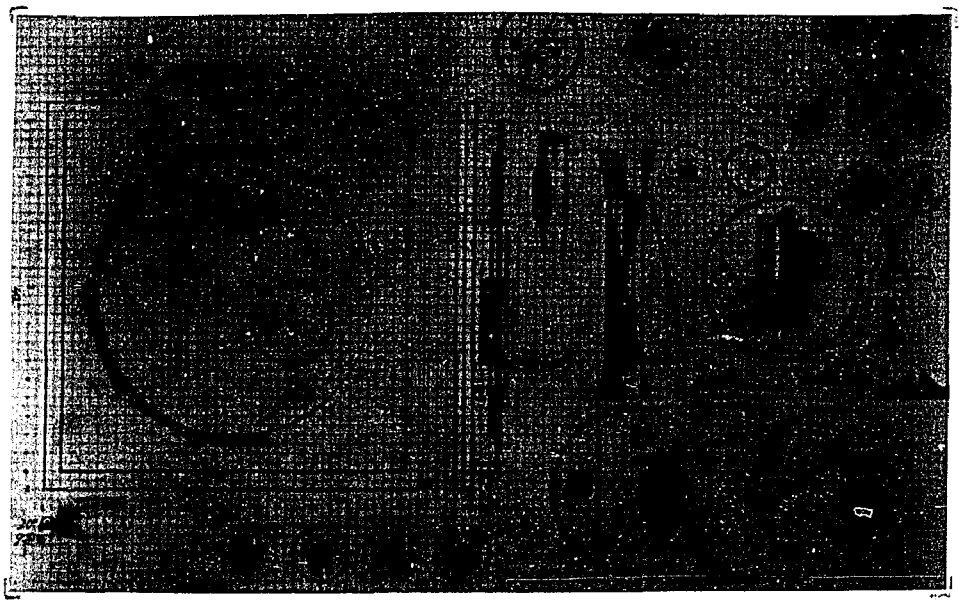

Fig. 45. Studies for Construction, 1938.

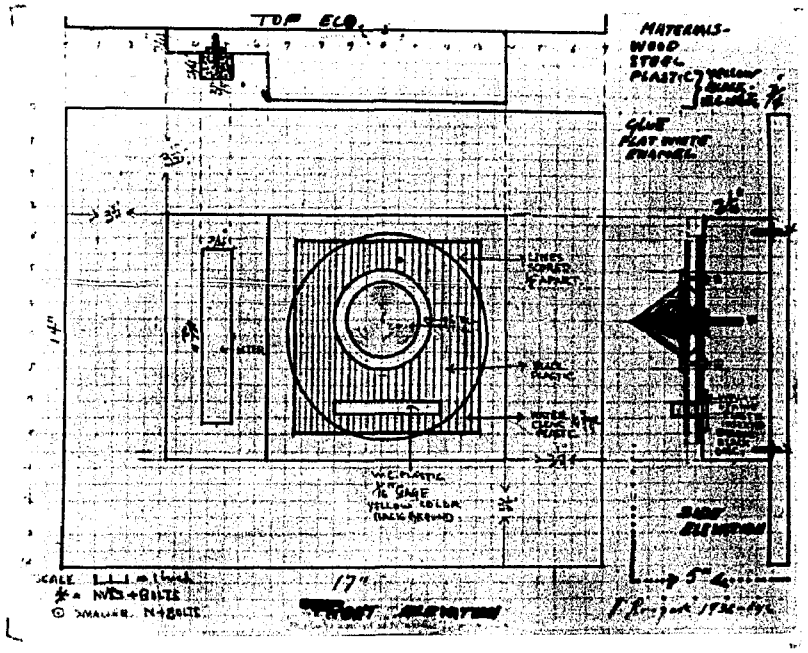

Fig. 46. Orthographic Rendering for "Yellow, Black with Steel, 1938.

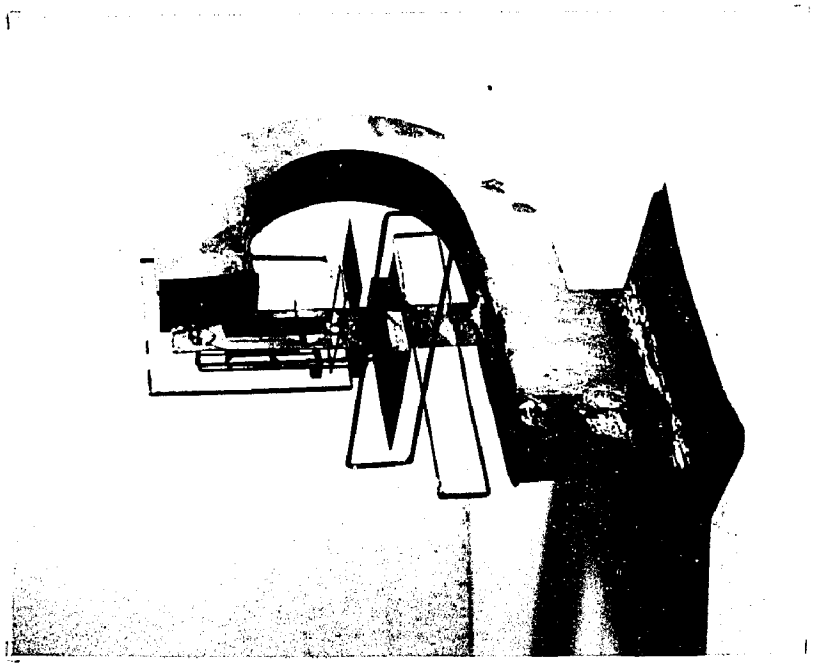

Fig. 47. Crescent Throat, 1932.

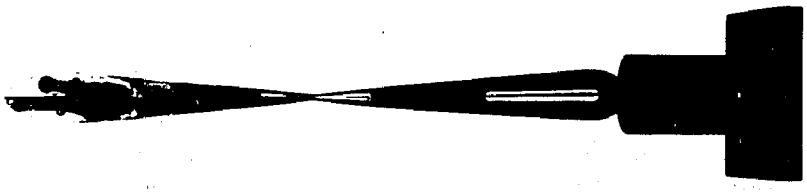

Fig. 48. Pierced Bipolar, 1932.

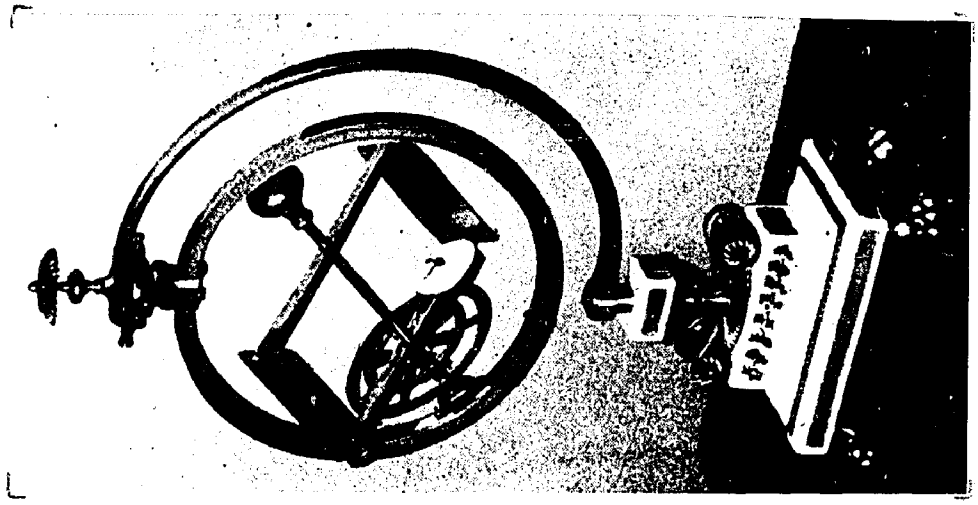

Fig. 49. Ring Dial. As reproduced in the catalogue of the Adler Planetarium and Astronomical Museum in Chicago (1932).

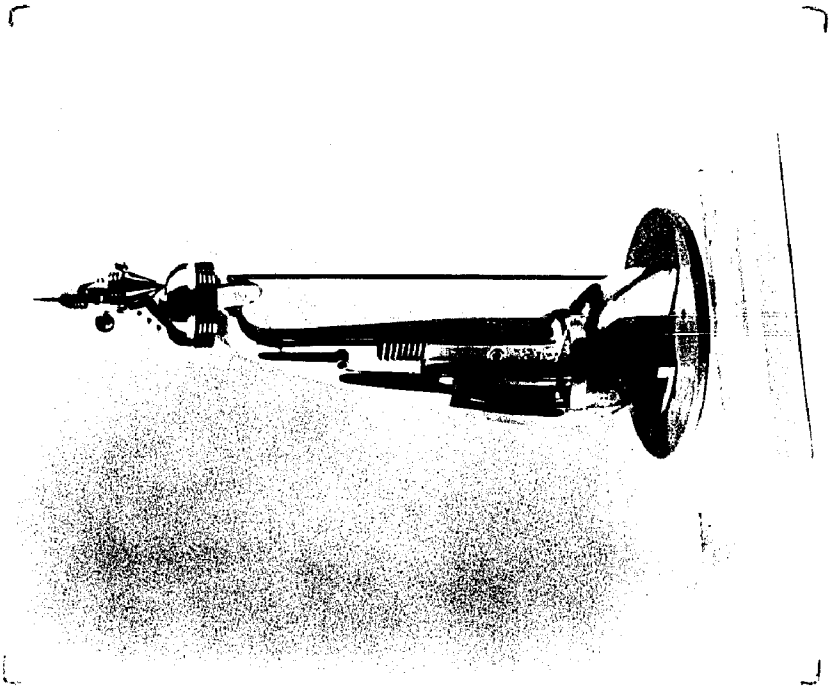

Fig. 50. Airport Sentinel, 1932.

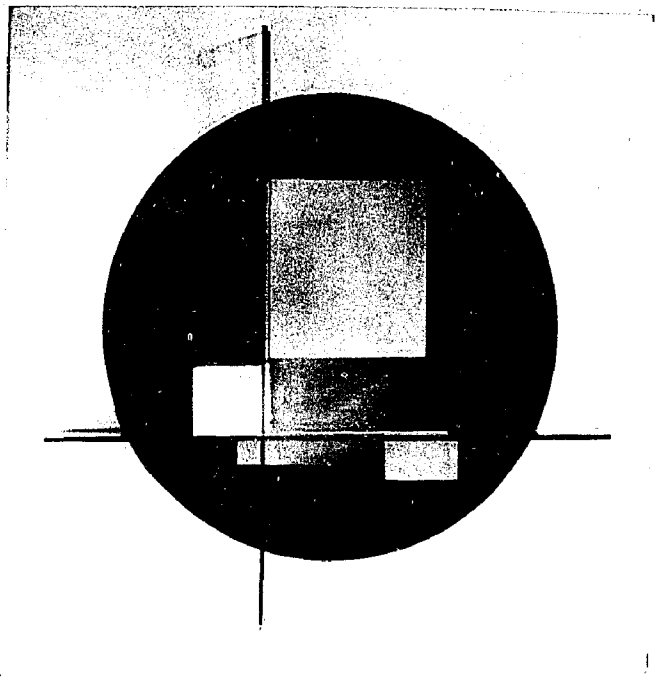

Fig. 51. Construction in White, 1938.

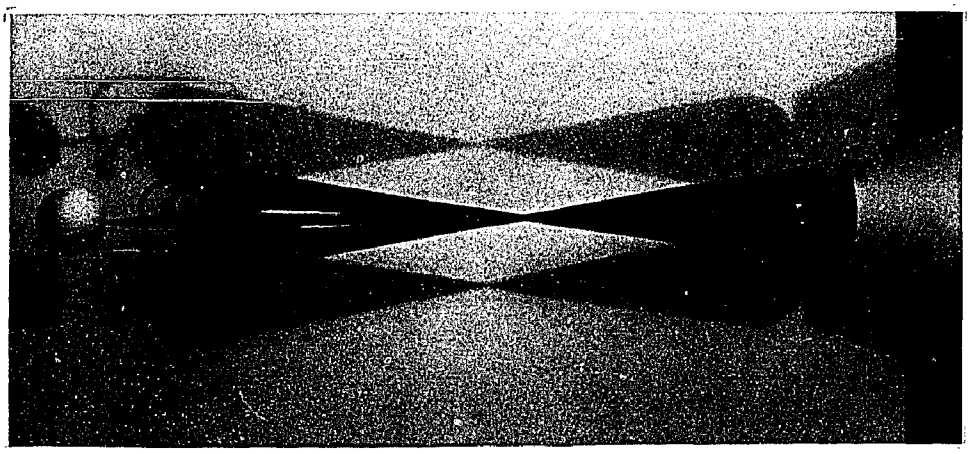

Fig. 52. Bipolar Form in Red, 1938.

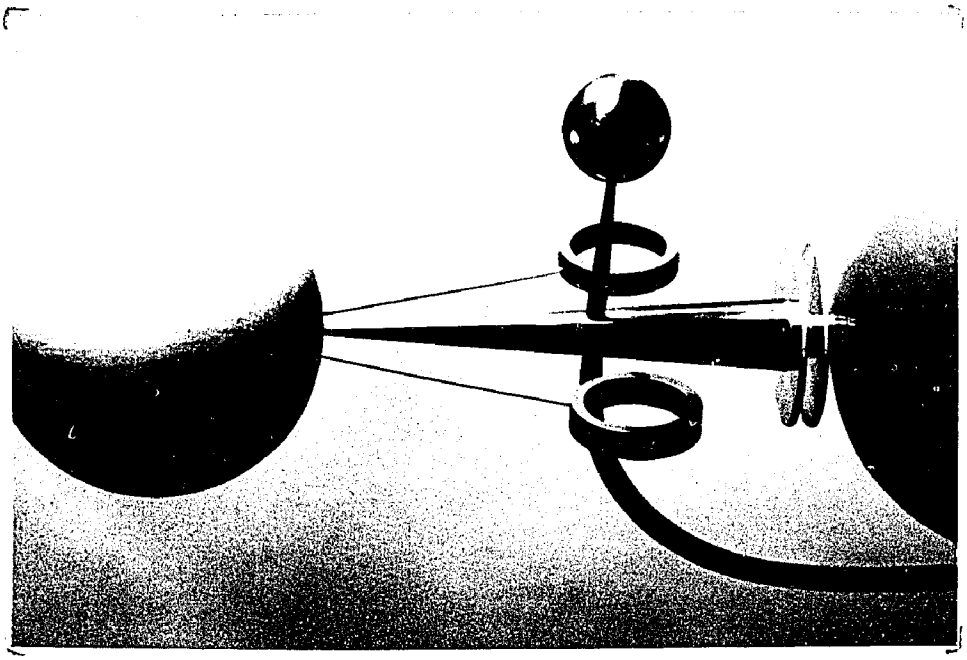

Fig. 53. Bipolar Form in Red (thin version), 1940 (detail).

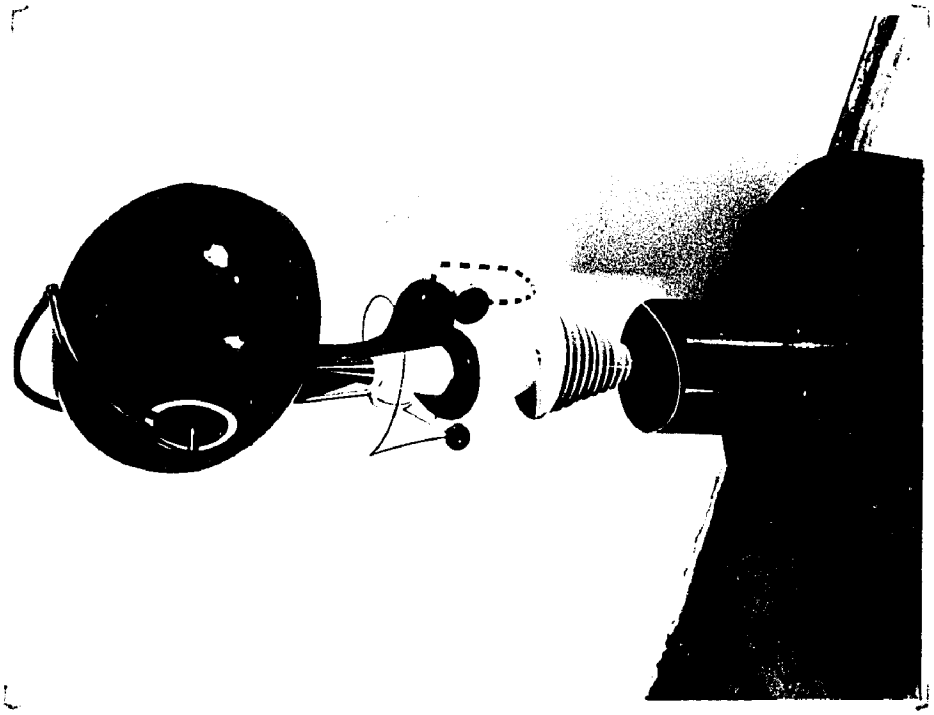

Fig. 54. Chrysalis, 1937.

Fig. 55. Jacques Lipchitz. Mother and Child II, 1941-45.

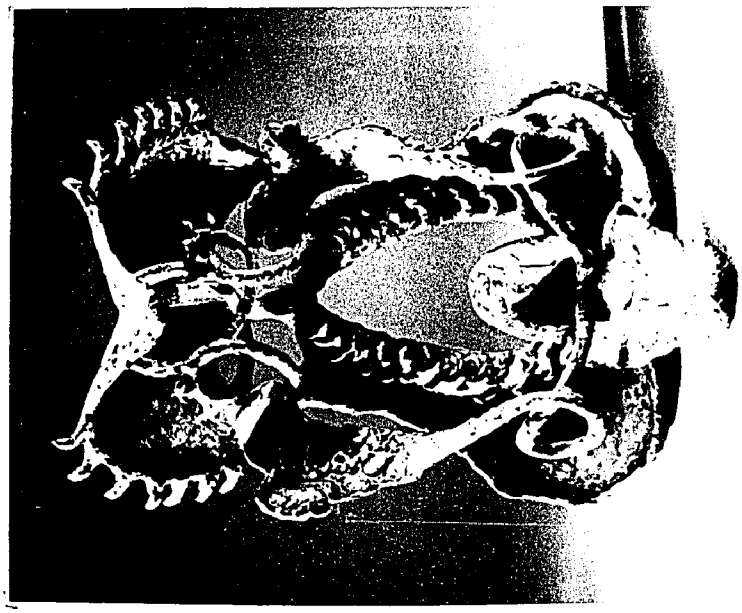

Fig. 56. Jacques Lipchitz. Myrah, 1942.

Fig. 57. Jacques Lipchitz. Rape of Europa IV, 1941.

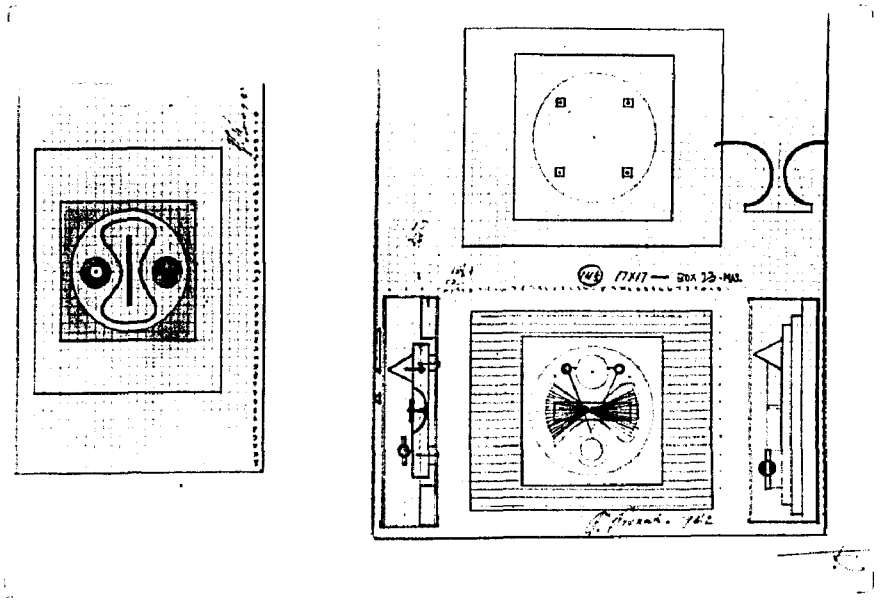

Fig. 58. Study for "Line, Circle and Cone," 1942.

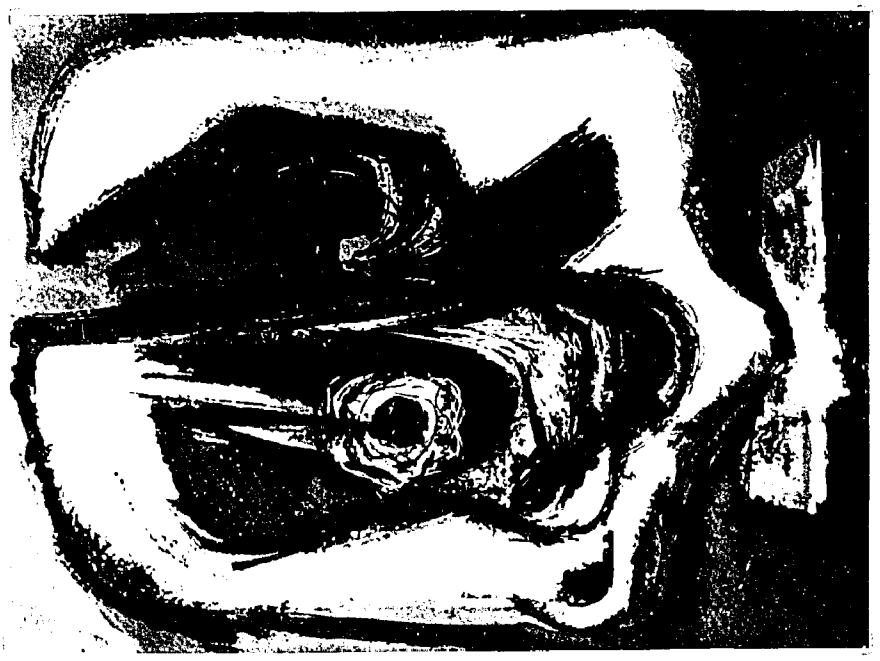

Fig. 59. Gouache: Study for Sculpture, 1944-45.

Fig. 60. Study for "Thorn Blossom," 1944-45.

Fig. 61. Gouache: Frost-Covered Rocks, 1944-45.

Fig. 62. Anguish, 1945-46.

Fig. 63. Surge, 1946.

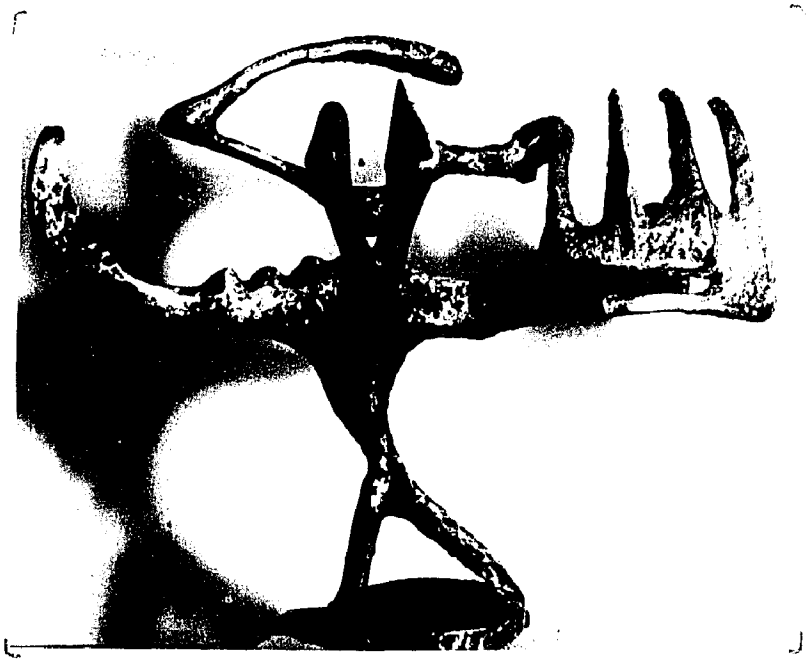

Fig. 64. Forms in Transition II (Emergence), 1945.

Fig. 65. Spectre of Kitty Hawk, 1946-47.

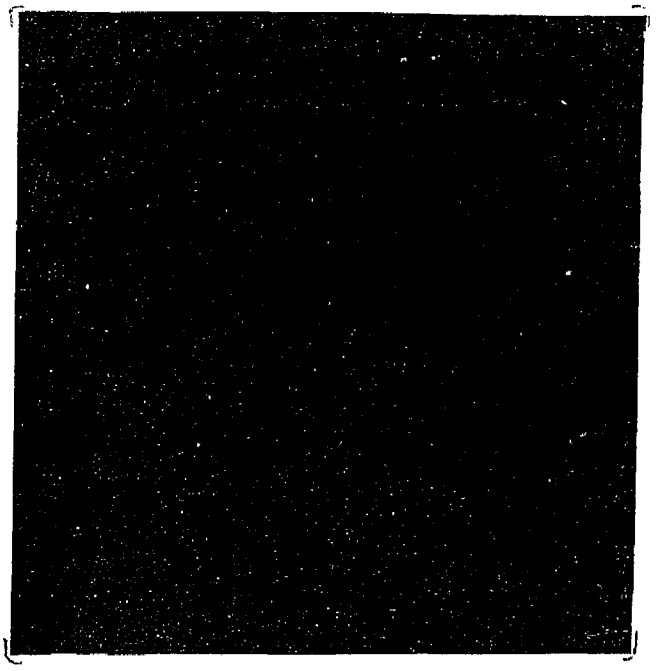

Fig. 66. Study for "Spectre of Kitty Hawk," about 1946-47.

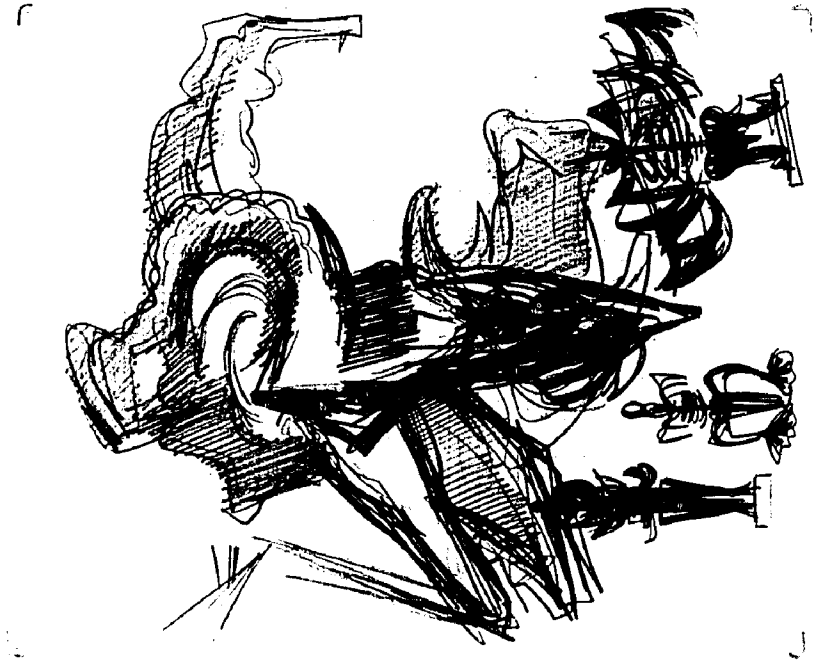

Fig. 67. Study for "Spectre of Kitty Hawk," about 1946-47.

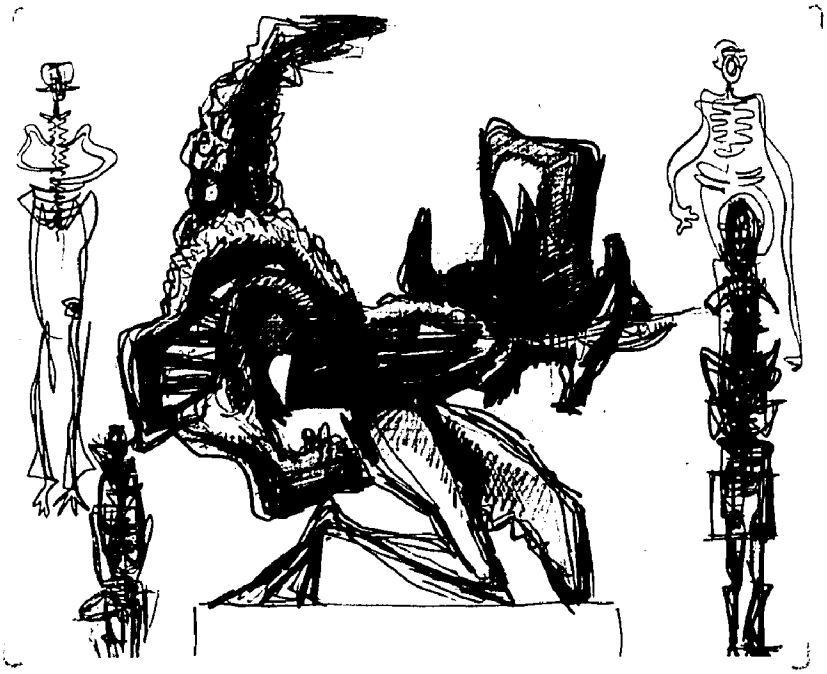

Fig. 68. Study for "Spectre of Kitty Hawk," about 1946-47.

Fig. 69. Study for "Spectre of Kitty Hawk," about 1946-47.

Fig. 70. Study for "Spectre of Kitty Hawk," about 1946-47

Fig. 71. Study for "Spectre of Kitty Hawk," 1946.

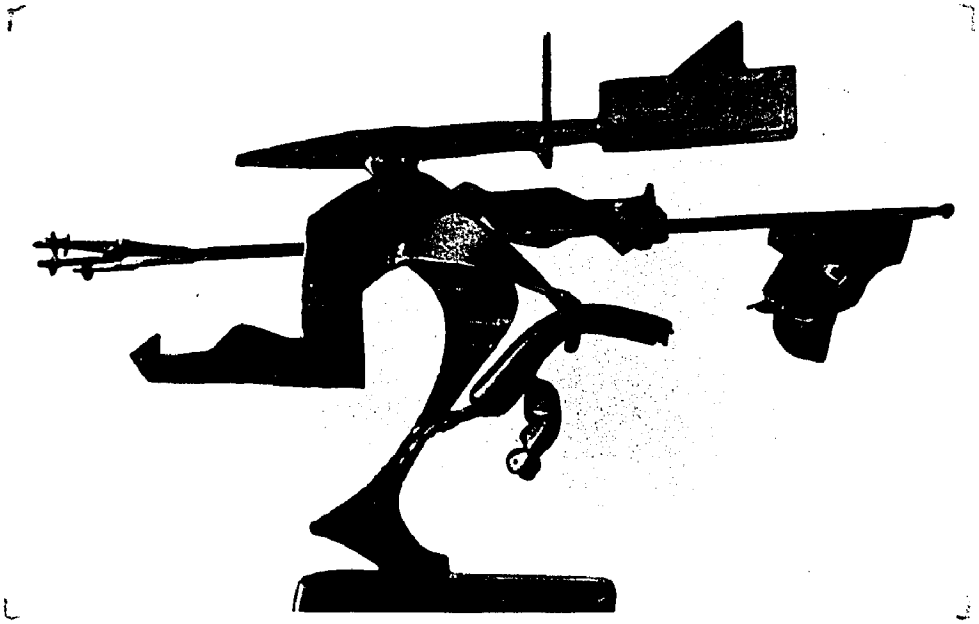

Fig. 72. David Smith. Spectre of War, 1944.
As reproduced in Rosalind E. Krauss,
Terminal Iron Works: The Sculpture of
David Smith (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press,
1971), p. 126.

Fig. 73. Whaler of Nantucket, 1952-53.

Fig. 74. Monument to an Unknown Political Prisoner, 1952.

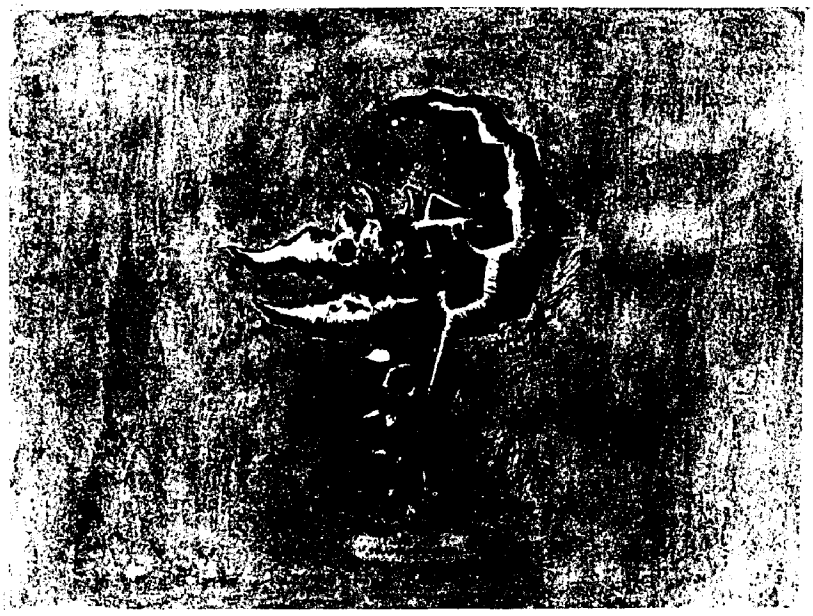

Fig. 75. Study for "Head," 1949-50.

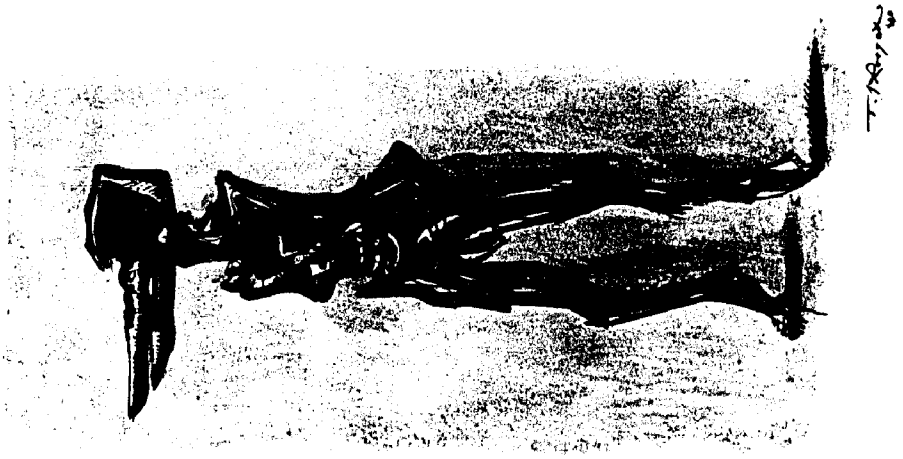

Fig. 76. Study for "Fury," 1949.

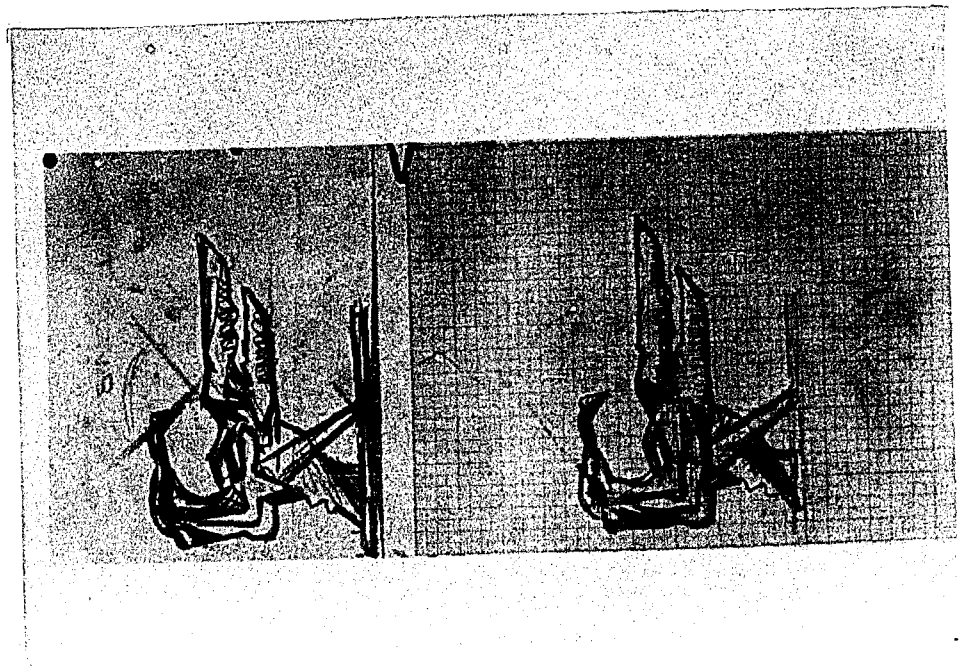

Fig. 77. Studies for "Whaler of Nantucket," about 1952-53.

Fig. 78. Study for "Whaler of Nantucket," about 1952-53.

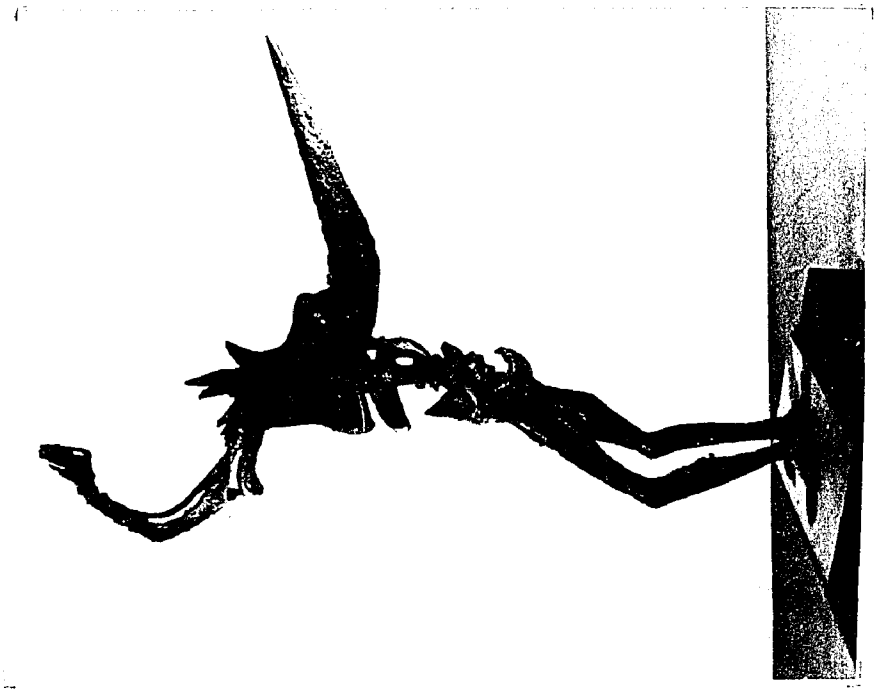

Fig. 79. Skylark, 1951-52.

Fig. 80. Hound of Heaven, 1953-54.

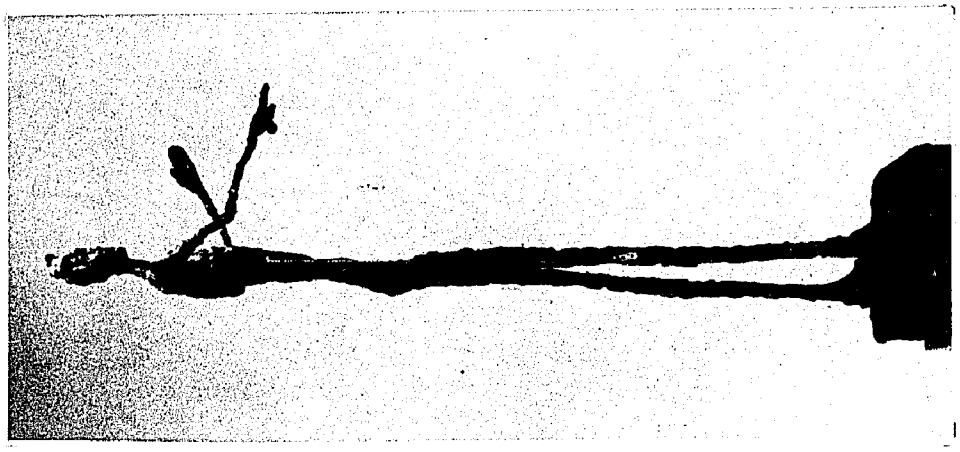

Fig. 81. Alberto Giacometti. Man Pointing, 1947.

Fig. 82. Raven, 1947.

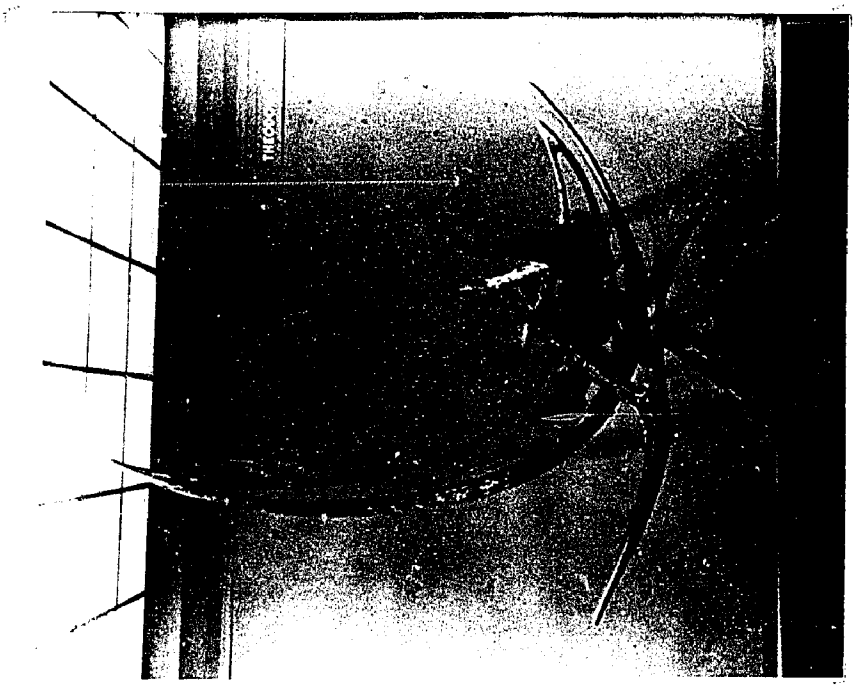

Fig. 83. Cradle Song, 1956.

Fig. 84. Night Flight, 1958-62.

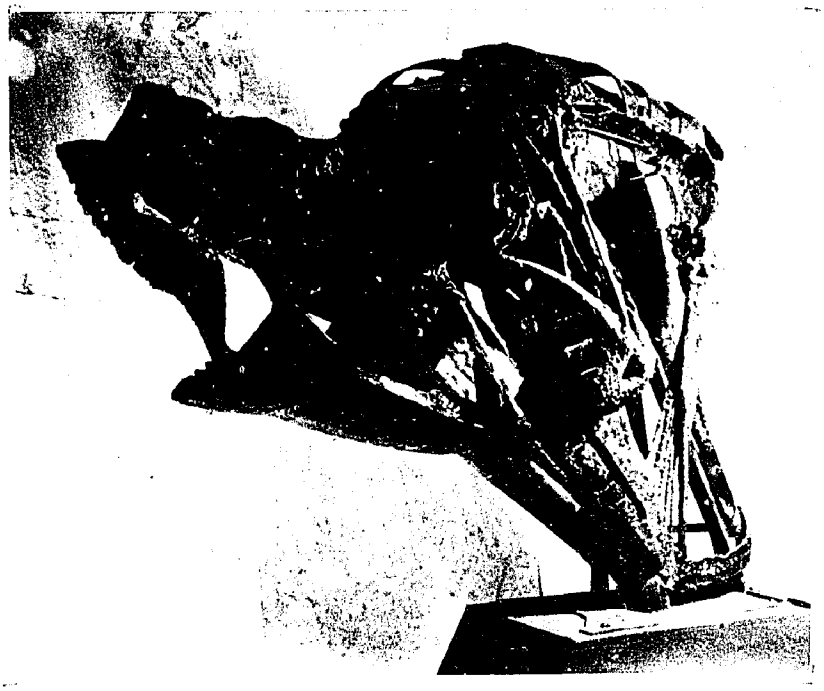

Fig. 85. Iron Throat, 1959.

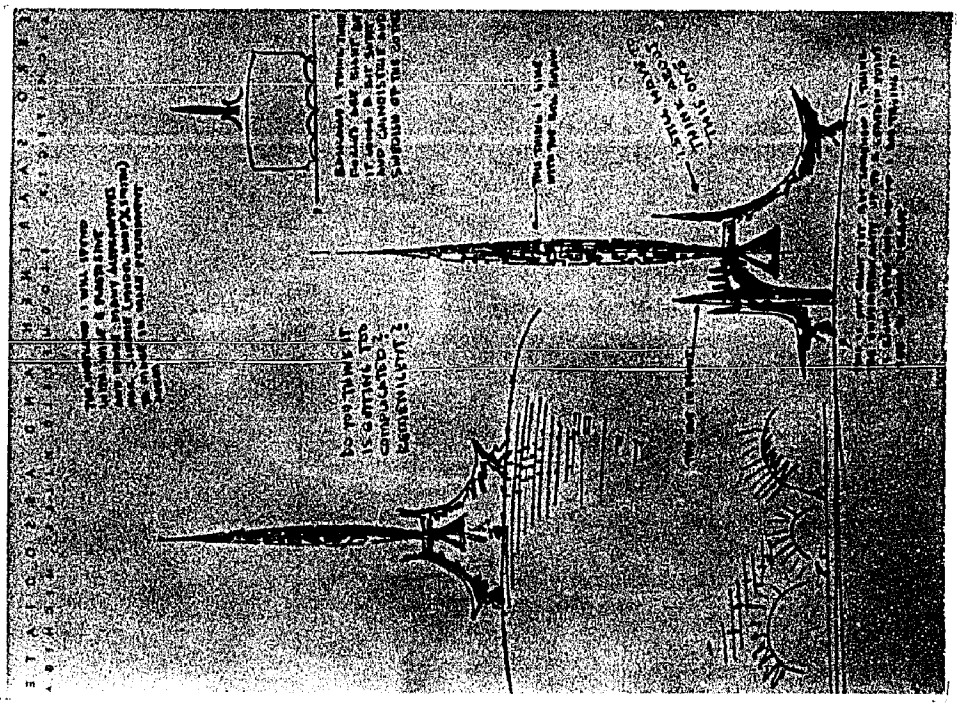

Fig. 86. Eero Saarenin. Studies for "M.I.T. Bell Tower," about 1953-54. As reproduced in Eero Saarenin on His Work, Aline B. Saarinen, ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), p. 38.

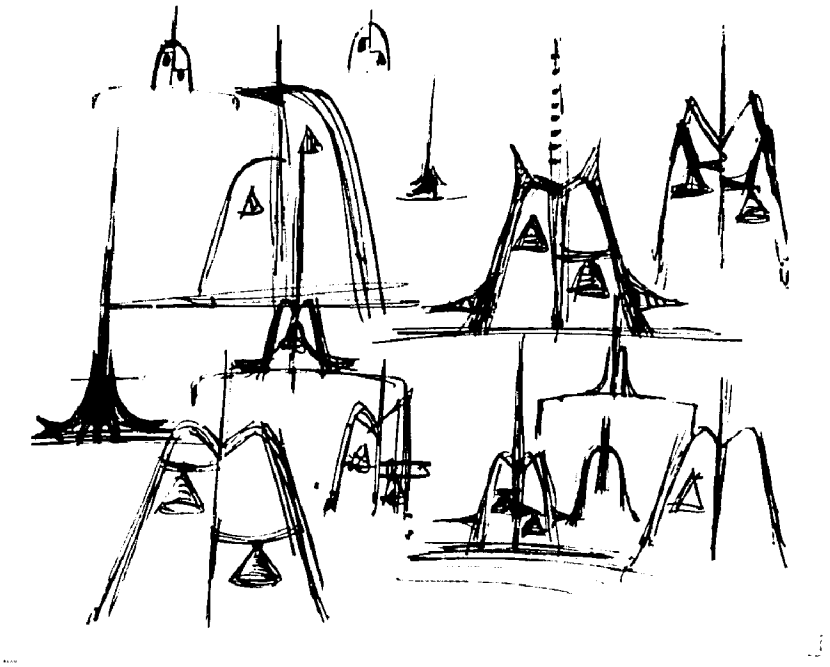

Fig. 87. Studies for "M.I.T. Bell Tower," about 1953-54.

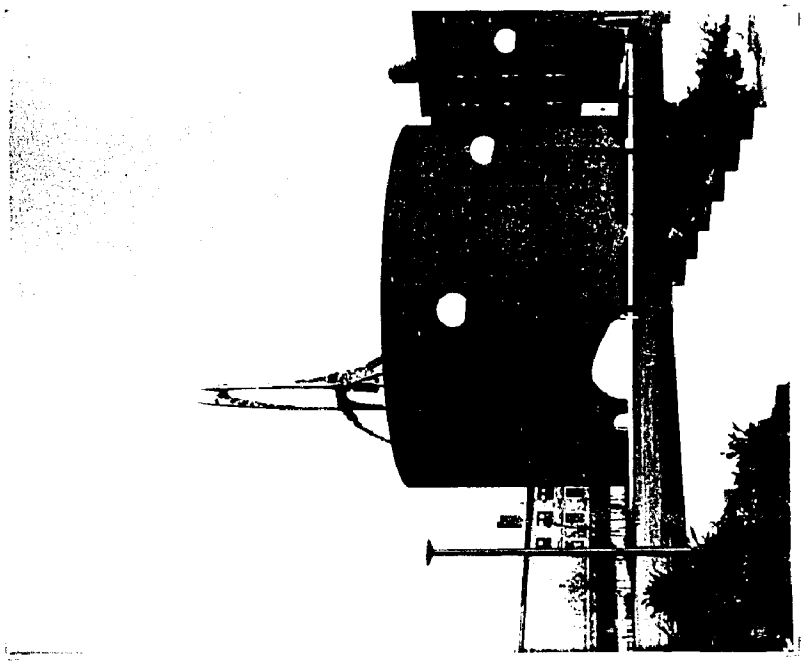

Fig. 88. M.I.T. Bell Tower in situ, Cambridge, MA.

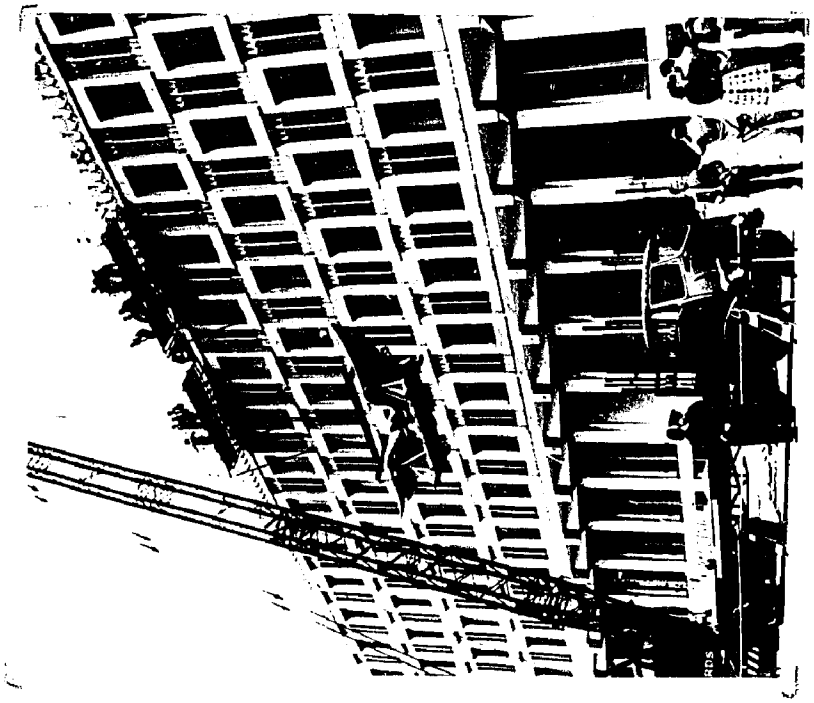

Fig. 89. Roszak's eagle being installed above the entranceway to the American Embassy, Grosvenor Square, London, England, 1960.

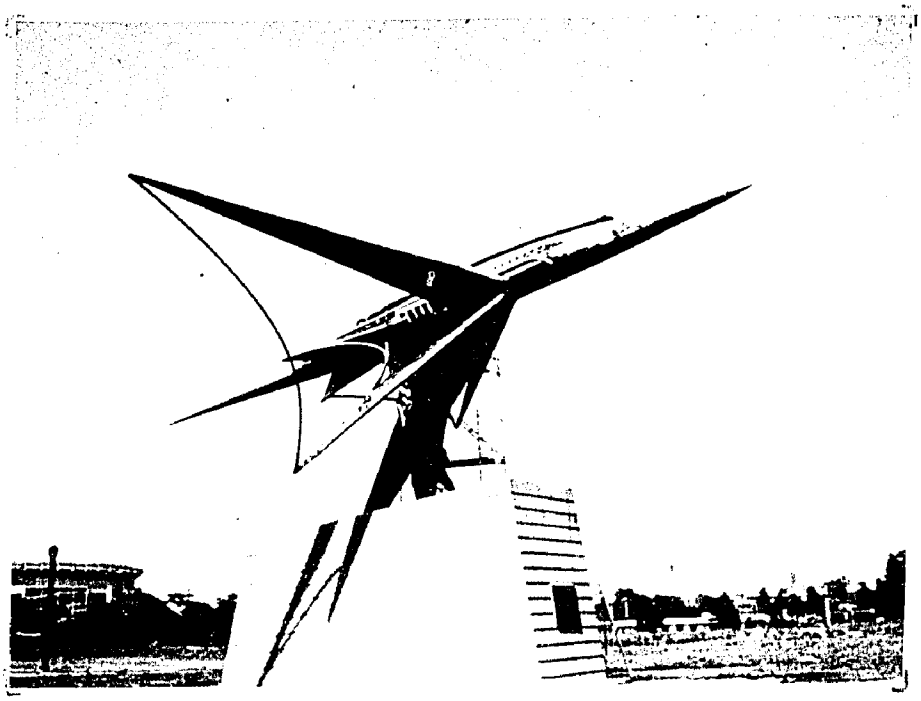

Fig. 90. Forms in Space, 1964. As seen in situ, Flushing Meadow, Queens, New York.

Fig. 91. Sentinel, 1968. As seen in situ, 1st Avenue and 27th Street, New York, N.Y.

Fig. 92. Wave, 1979.

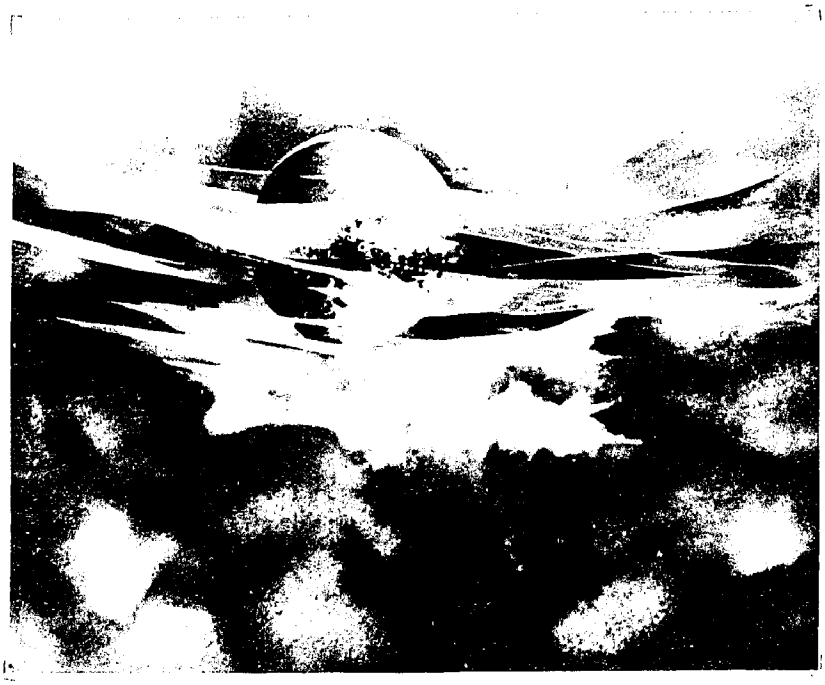

Fig. 93. Nocturnal Lights, 1978.

Fig. 94. Last Tycoon, 1973.

Fig. 95. Clairvoyant, 1973.

Fig. 96. Pandora's Box, 1972.

Fig. 97. Hedonists, 1973.

Fig. 98. Floodtide at Watergate, 1974.

Fig. 99. Tryst, 1973.

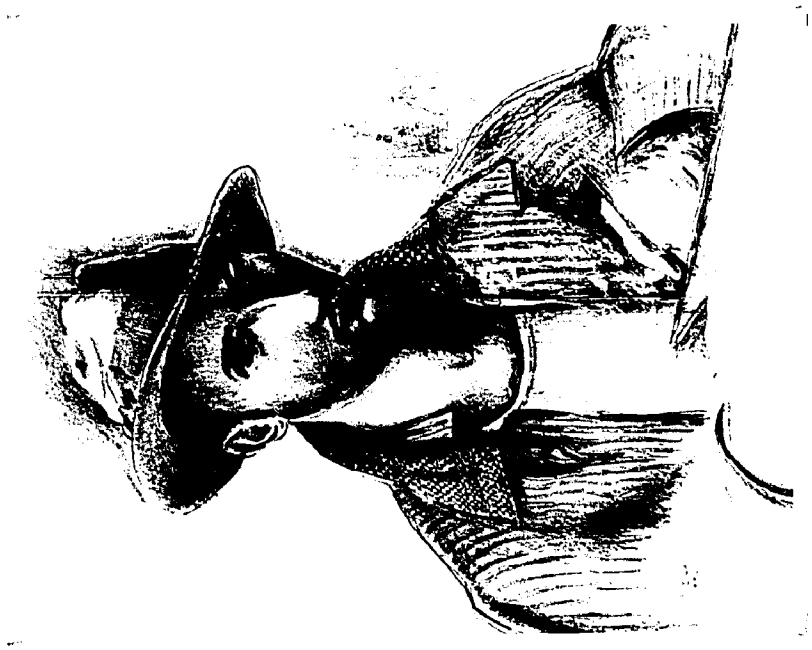

Fig. 100. Self-Portrait, 1932.

Fig. 101. Young Poet, 1981.

Fig. 102. Untitled, about 1966.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books, Catalogues, and Monographs

Adams, Henry. Thomas Hart Benton: An American Original. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989.

Anderson, Wayne V. American Sculpture in Process: 1930/1970. Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1975.

_____. The Sculpture of Herbert Ferber. Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1962.

Auping, Michael, et al. Abstract Expressionism: The Critical Developments. New York: Albright-Knox Art Gallery, 1987.

Arnason, H.H. Theodore Roszak. Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1956.

Ashton, Dore. The New York School: A Cultural Reckoning. New York: The Viking Press, 1973.

Barr, Alfred H. Jr. Cubism and Abstract Art. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1936.

_____. Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1936.

Barrett, William. What is Existentialism?. New York: Partisan Review Series, no. 2, 1947.

_____. The Truants: Adventures Among the Intellectuals. New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1982.

Bayley, Stephen, James Woudhuysen. Robots. London: Victoria & Albert Museum, 1984.

Benedict, Ruth. Patterns of Culture. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1934.

Berman, Avis. Rebels on Eighth Street: Juliana Force and the Whitney Museum of American Art. New York: Atheneum, 1990.

Berman, Greta, Jeffrey Wechsler. Realism and Realities: The Other Side of American Painting, 1940-1960. New Jersey: Rutgers University, 1981.

Black, MacKnight. Machinery. New York: Horce Liveright, 1929.

Burnham, Jack. Beyond Modern Sculpture: The Effects of Science and Technology on the Sculpture of This Century. New York: George Braziller, 1968.

Cassier, Ernst, An Essay on Man: An Introduction to a Philosophy of Human Culture. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944.

Campbell, Joseph, Henry Morton Robinson. A Skeleton Key to Finnegans Wake. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1944.

_____. The Hero with a Thousand Faces. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1949.

Castleman, Riva, ed. Art of the Forties. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1991.

Chave, Anna C. Mark Rothko: Subjects in Abstraction. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.

Conney, Terry. The Rise of the New York Intellectuals: Partisan Review and Its Circle. Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1986.

Cousineau, Phil, ed. The Hero's Journey: Joseph Campbell on His Life and Work. San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1990.

Eliade, Mircea. The Eternal Return, translated by Willard R. Trask. New York: The Bollingen Foundation, 1954.

Fauve, Eli. The Spirit of the Forms, translated by Walter Pach. New York: Garden City Publishing Co., 1937.

Fichner-Rathus, Lois. Theodore Roszak: Drawings for Constructions, 1931-1945 and Preparatory Sketches, Models, and Castings for the MIT Bell Tower, 1955. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Hayden Art Gallery, MIT, 1979.

Flint, Janet A. Boris Anisfeldt: Twenty Years of Designs for the Theater. Washington, D.C.: National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1971.

Focillon, Henri. The Life of Forms in Art. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1942.

Frazer, Sir James George. The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1922.

Garnett, McCoy, ed. David Smith. (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973.

Geddes, Norman Bel. Horizons. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1932.

Goosen, Eugene C., Robert Goldwater, Irving Sandler. Ferber, Hare, Lassaw: Three American Sculptors. New York: Grove Press, Inc, 1959.

Graham, John D. System and Dialectics of Art. Paris: Delphic Studios, New York, 1937.

Green, Eleanor. John Graham: Artist and Avator. Washington, D.C.: The Phillips Collection, 1987.

Greenberg, Clement. Art and Culture. Boston: Beacon Press, 1961.

_____. Clement Greenberg: The Collected Essays and Criticism, John O'Brian, ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986. 2 vols.

Guilbaut, Serge. How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art: Abstract Expressionism, Freedom, and the Cold War. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983.

Guggenheim, Peggy, ed. Art of This Century: Objects, Drawings, Photographs, Paintings, Sculpture, Collage, 1910 to 1942. New York: Art of This Century, 1942.

Hobbs, Robert Carleton, Gail Levin. Abstract Expressionism/The Formative Years. Ithaca: Cornell University, Herbert F. Johnson Museum, 1978.

Hook, Sidney. Reason, Social Myth and Democracy. New York: The John Day Company, 1940; reprinted by Harper & Row Publishers, 1966.

Jumonville, Neil. Critical Crossings: The New York Intellectuals in Postwar American. California: University of California Press, 1991.

Jung, Carl G. Modern Man in Search of a Soul. Translated by W.S. Dell and Cary F. Baynes. New York: Harcourt Brace and World Harvest, 1933.

_____., ed. Man and His Symbols. New York: Dell Publishing, 1964.

Kahler, Erich. Out of the Labyrinth: Essays in Clarification. New York: George Braziller, 1967.

Kelder, Diane, ed. Stuart Davis. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971.

Kingsley, April. The Turning Point: The Abstract Expressionists and the Transformation of American Art. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992.

Krauss, Rosalind E. Terminal Iron Works:The Sculpture of David Smith. Cambridge Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1971.

_____. The Sculpture of David Smith: A Catalogue Raisonne. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1977.

_____. Passages in Modern Sculpture. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1981.

_____. The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Muths. Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 1986.

Kuspit, Donald. Clement Greenberg: Art Critic. Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1979.

Larsen, Stephen and Robin. A Fire in the Mind: The Life of Joseph Campbell. New York: Doubleday, 1991.

Levy, Julien. Memoires of an Art Gallery. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1977.

Lipchitz, Jacques, with H.H. Arnason. My Life in Sculpture. New York: Viking Press, 1972.

Lhamon, W. T., Jr. Deliberate Speed: The Origins of a Cultural Style in the American 1950s. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Press, 1990.

Lorenz, Melinda A. George L.K. Morris: Artist and Critic. Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Press, 1982.

Miller, Dorothy C. Americans 1942: 18 Artists from 9 States. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1942.

_____. Romantic Painting in America. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1943.

_____. American Realists and Magic Realists. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1943.

_____. Fourteen Americans. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1946.

_____. Fifteen Americans. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1952.

_____. Twelve Americans. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1956.

_____. Sixteen Americans. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1959-60.

_____. Americans 1963. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1963.

Moholy-Nagy, Laszlo. Malerei, Fotographie, Film. Munich: Albert Langen Verlag, 1927.

_____. The New Vision: from Material to Architecture. New York: Brewer, Warren & Putnam, 1930.

_____. Vision in Motion. Chicago: Paul Theobald, 1947.

New Jersey: Rutgers University Art Gallery, 1979. Vanguard American Sculpture, 1913-1939. Essays by Joan M. Marter, Roberta K. Tarbell, and Jeffrey Wechsler.

New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1953. International Sculpture Competition: The Unknown Political Prisoner.

New York: The Queens Museum, 1980. Dawn of a New Day: The New York World's Fair, 1939/40. Essays by Helen A. Harrison, Joseph P. Cusker, Warren I. Susman, Eugene A. Santomasso, and Francis V. O'Connor.

New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1987. Abstract Expressionism: The Critical Developments. Essays by Michael Auping, Ann Gibson, Donald Kuspit, Michael Leja, Marcelin Pleynet, Richard Shiff, and David Sylvester.

New York: Knoedler & Company, 1990. David Smith, Nudes: Drawings and Paintings from 1927-1964. Essay by Paul Cummings.

Newport Beach: Newport Harbor Art Museum, 1978. William Baziotes: A Retrospective Exhibition. Essays by Barbara Cavaliere and Mona Hadler.

O'Connor, Francis V., ed. The New Deal Art Projects: An Anthology of Memoirs. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1972.

Phillips, Lisa. The Third Dimension: Sculpture of the New York School. New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1984.

Phillips, William. A Partisan View: Five Decades of the Literary Life. New York: Stein and Day, 1983.

Platt, Susan Noyes. Modernism in the 1920s: Interpretations of Modern Art in New York from Expressionism to Constructivism. Michigan: UMI Press, 1985.

Polcari, Stephen. Abstract Expressionism and the Modern Experience. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Rand, Harry. Seymour Lipton: Aspects of Sculpture. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1979.

_____. Ashile Gorky: The Implications of Symbols. New Jersey: Allanheld, Osmun & Co., 1981.

Read, Herbert. A Concise History of Modern Sculpture. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1964.

Ritchie, Andrew Camduff. Abstract Painting and Sculpture in America. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1951.

_____. Sculpture of the Twentieth Century. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1952.

Roh, Franz, Jan Tschichold. Foto-Auge: 76 Fotos der Zeit. Stuttgart: Wedekind Verlag, 1929.

Rosenberg, Harold. The Tradition of the New. New York: Horizon Press, 1959.

_____. The De-definition of Art. New York: MacMillan Company, 1972.

Roszak, Theodore. The Making of a Counter Culture: Reflections on the Technocratic Society and Its Youthful Opposition. New York: Anchor Books, Doubleday & Company, 1969.

Rowell, Margit. Julio Gonzalez. New York: The Soloman R. Guggenheim Museum, 1983.

Rubin, William. Dada, Surrealism, and Their Heritage. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1968.

Saarinen, Eero. Eero Saarinen on His Work: A Selection of Buildings Dating from 1947 to 1964 with Statements by the Architect, Aline B. Saarinen, ed. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968.

Sandler, Irving. The Triumph of American Painting: A History of Abstract Expressionism. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970.

_____. The New York School: Painters and Sculptors of the Fifties. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1978.

Sartre, Jean-Paul, Existentialism, translated by Bernard Frechtman. New York: The Philosophical Library, 1947.

Segal, Robert, A. Joseph Campbell: An Introduction. New York: Penguin Books, 1987.

Selz, Peter. New Images of Man. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1959.

_____. Alberto Giacometti. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1965.

Shimmel, Paul, et al. The Interpretive Link: Abstract Surrealism into Abstract Expressionism. Newport Beach: The Newport Harbor Art Museum, 1986.

Shimmel and Judith Stein, et al. The Figurative Fifties. Newport Beach: The Newport Harbor Art Museum, 1989.

Susman, Warren I. Culture as History: The Transformation of American Society in the Twentieth Century. New York: Pantheon Books, 1984.

Thompson, D'Arcy Wentworth. On Growth and Form. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1961.

Wechsler, Jeffrey. Surrealism and American Painting, 1931-1947. New Jersey: Rutgers University, 1977.

Whiting, Cecile. Antifascism in American Art. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.

Wilkinson, Alan G. Jacques Lipchitz: A Life in Sculpture. Toronto, Canada: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1989.

Wooden, Howard, E. Theodore Roszak: The Early Work, 1929-1943. Kansas: Wichita Art Museum, 1986.

Articles, Essays, and Reviews

Alloway, Lawrence. "The Biomorphic Forties." Artforum, 4 (September 1965), 18-22.

Anderson, Wayne V. "American Sculpture: The Situation in the Fifties." Artforum, 5 (June 1967), 60-67.

Arnason, H.H. "Growth of a Sculptor, Theodore Roszak." Art in America, 44 (Winter 1956-57), 21-23, 61-64.

Ashton, Dore, "Roszak: Draftsman." Art Digest, 27 (February 15, 1953), 16.

_____. "Art: New Images of Man." Art & Architecture, 76 (November 1959), 14-15, 40.

Barnard, Eunice. "Trends and Tides of Modern Education: Students Venture Into the Field of Design." The New York Times, August 2, 1936, XI, 11.

Barnett, Vivian Endicott. "Kandinsky and Science: The Introduction of Biological Images in the Paris Period." In Kandinsky in Paris, 1934-1944, exh. cat., New York: The Soloman R. Guggenheim Museum, 1985, 61-87.

Barr, Alfred H. Jr. "Will This Art Endure." The New York Times Magazine (December 1, 1959), 48.

"Biennale Closed, Whitney Rescues a Forgotten Artist." Art Digest, 9 (February 1, 1935), 8.

Brown, Milton. "Three American Sculptors." Parnassus, 12 (December 1940), 36.

Brummé, Ludwig C. "Contemporary Sculpture: A Renaissance." Magazine of Art, 42 (October 1949), 212-17.

Burrows, Carlyle. "A Varied Display by Theodore Roszak." New York Herald Tribine, June 20, 1935.

Caffi, Andrea. "On Myth." Possibilities I (Winter 1947-48), 87-95.

Canaday, John. "Feeling Better, Recent Sculpture May Justify at Least Temporary Optimism." The New York Times, October 4, 1959, 13.

Chase, Richard. "What is Myth?." Partisan Review, no. 3 (Summer 1946), 338-46.

_____. "An Approach to Melville." Partisan Review, no. 3 (May-June 1947), 285-94.

Corn, Wanda M. "Apostles of the New American Art: Waldo Frank and Paul Rosenfeld." Arts Magazine, 54 (February 1980), 159-63.

Coates, Robert M. "The Art Galleries: Opening Guns." The New Yorker, 32 (October 6, 1956), 142-46.

_____. "The First Showing." The New Yorker (November 23, 1940).

Cunliffe, Mitzi Soloman. "Earth and Tools Rediscovered." Magazine of Art, 44 (January 1951), 22-24.

Dalcq, Albert M. "Form and Modern Embryology." In Aspects of Form: A Symposium on Form in Nature and Art, Lancelot Law White, ed. London: Percy Lund Humphries & Co., 1951, 91-113.

Dreishpoon, Douglas. "Natural Inflections of the Abstract Sculptural Object." In Natural Forms and Forces, exh. cat. Cambridge, Massachusetts: List Visual Arts Center, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1986, 5-17.

Devree, Howard. "About Art and Artists: Theodore Roszak at the Whitney Museum." The New York Times, September 19, 1956.

_____. "Modern Sculpture: The Roszak Exhibition at the Whitney Shows Trend to Metal Forms." The New York Times, September 23, 1956.

Einstein, Albert. "A Message to Intellectuals (1948)." Essays in Humanism. New York: The Philosphical Library, 1950.

Elderfield, John. "American Geometric Abstraction in the Late Thirties." Artforum, 11 (December 1972), 35-42.

"Exhibition of Drawings at Matisse." Artnews, 51 (February 1953), 56.

"Exhibition of Metal Sculpture at Matisse Gallery." Art Digest, 25 (October 15, 1960).

"Exhibition at Matisse." Artnews, 61 (Summer 1962), 17, 46.

Firestone, Evan R. "Herman Melville's 'Moby Dick' and the Abstract Expressionists." Arts Magazine, 54 (March 1980), 120-24.

Greenberg, Clement. "A Symposium: The State of American Art." Magazine of Art, 42 (March 1949), 92.

_____. "Sculpture in Our Time." Arts, 32 (June 1958), 22-25.

_____. "Adventures of the Mind, 32: The Case for Abstract Art." The Saturday Evening Post, 232 (August 1, 1959), 18, 69-70, 72.

Greenough, Sarah E. "From the American Earth: Alfred Stieglitz's Photographs of Apples." Art Journal, 41 (Spring 1981), 46-54.

Griffin, Howard. "Totems in Steel: Interview." Artnews, 55 (October 1956), 34-35, 64.

Grimes, John. "The New Vision in the New World." Aperture, no. 87, 12-20.

Gottlieb, Adolph. "Artist and Society: A Brief Case History." College Art Journal, 14 (Winter 1955), 96-101.

Hare, David. "The Spaces of the Mind." Magazine of Art (February 1950), 48-53.

Hebald, Milton. "Sculptor in an Airplane Factory." Magazine of Art, 37 (October 1944), 213-15.

Hohl, Reinhold. "Form and Vision: The Work of Alberto Giacometti." Alberto Giacometti: A Retrospective Exhibition, exh. cat., New York: The Soloman R. Guggenheim Museum, 1974, 13-46.

Howe, Irving. "This Age of Conformity." Partisan Review, no. 1 (January-February 1954), 7-33.

Kahler, Erich. "The Persistence of Myth." Chimera, 4 (Spring 1946), 2-11.

Kazin, Alfred. "On Melville as Scripture." Partisan Review, no. 1 (January 1950), 67-75.

Keyes, Jacquelene A. "WPA Educators Blazing Trail With School in Industrial Design." New York Times, October 25, 1936, II, 5.

Kramer, Hilton. "In the Name of Agony." The Reporter, 21 (November 26, 1959), 35-36.

_____. "Art: Two Against the Current," New York Times, December 7, 1974, 20.

_____. "Art: Roszak Evokes Spirit of the Bauhaus." New York Times, December 1, 1978, C23.

Krasne, Belle. "Three Who Carry the Acetylene Torch of Modernism." Art Digest, 25 (April 15, 1951), 15.

_____. "A Theodore Roszak Profile." Art Digest, 27 (October, 15, 1952), 9, 18.

Kuspit, Donald B. "Two Critics: Thomas B. Hess and Harold Rosenberg." Artforum, 17 (September 1978), 32-33.

Lipton, Seymour. "Some Notes on My Work." Magazine of Art, 40 (November 1947), 264.

Louchheim, Aline B. "The Favored Few." Artnews, 45 (September 1946), 15-17, 51-52.

Lubar, Robert S. "Metaphor and Meaning in David Smith's Jurassic Bird." Arts Magazine, 59 (September 1984), 78-86.

Malraux, Andre. "The Psychology of Creation." Magazine of Art, 42 (April 1949), 123-27, 148-49.

Marter, Joan. "Alexander Calder: Cosmic Imagery and the Use of Scientific Instruments." Arts Magazine, 53 (October 1978),
108-13.

_____. "Theodore Roszak's Early Constructions: The Machine as Creator of Fantastic and Ideal Forms." Arts Magazine, 54 (November 1979), 110-13.

_____. "Constructivism in America: The 1930s." Arts Magazine, 56 (June 1982), 73-80.

_____, Michael Zakian. "Photograms by Theodore Roszak: In Light of the Bauhaus." Arts Magazine, 59 (November 1984), 120-25.

McBride, Henry. "Roszak's Moral Lesson." Artnews, 50 (May
1951), 46.

_____. "Unknown Political Monument." Artnews, 51 (February 1953), 20-21, 64-65.

Morris, George L.K. "The Quest for an Abstract Tradition." American Abstract Artists, exh. cat., New York City, 1938, section III.

_____. "Art Chronicle: Sculpture by Theodore Roszak." Partisan Review, no. 1 (January-February 1940), 57-58.

Mundy, Jennifer. "Form and Creation: The Impact of the Biological Sciences on Modern Art." Creation: Modern Art and Nature, exh. cat., Edinburgh: Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, 1984, 16-23.

Newhall, Beaumont. "Photo Eye of the 1920s: The Deutsche Werkbund Exhibition of 1929." Reprinted in David Mellor, ed. Germany: The New Photography, 1927-1933. London: London Arts Council of Great Britian, 1978, 77-87.

Newman, Barnett. "The First Artist Was an Artist." Tiger's Eye, 1 (October 1947),57-60.

Ostergard, Derek, David Hanks. "Gilbert Rohde and the Evolution of Modern Design, 1927-1941." Arts Magazine, 56 (Octobert 1981), 98-107.

Pachner, Joan. "Theodore Roszak and David Smith: A Question of Balance." Arts Magazine, 58(February 1984), 102-14.

Polcari, Stephen, Ann Gibson, eds. "New Myths for Old: Redefining Abstract Expressionism." Art Journal, 47 (Fall 1988). Special issue on Abstract Expressionism. Essays by Polcari, Gibson, Francis V. O'Connor, Mona Hadler, Donald Kuspit, Deirdre Robinson, W. Jackson Rushing, and Martica Sawin.

Porter, Fairfield. "Art." The Nation (October 17, 1959), 240.

Preston, Stuart. "Sculpture in Metal: Recent Work by Roszak." New York Times, April 15, 1951, II, 10.

_____. "Works by Picasso, Ensor, and Five Americans." New York Times, February 15, 1953, II, 11.

Randell, Terree Grabenhorst. "Jung and Abstract Expressionism." C.G. Jung and the Humanities: Toward a Hermeneutics of Culture, Karin Barnaby and Pellegrino d'Acierno, eds. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, 185-205.

Reise, Barbara. "Greenberg and the Group: A Retrospective View." Studio International, 175 (May-June 1968), 254-57, 314-16.

Rosenberg, Harold. "The American Action Painters." Artnews, 51 (December 1952), 22-23, 48-50.

Roszak, Theodore. "Some Problems of Modern Sculpture." Magazine of Art, 42 (February 1949), 53-56. Reprinted in 7 Arts, no. 3, Fernando Puma, ed. Colorado: The Falcon's Wing Press, 1955, 58-68.

_____. "In Pursuit of an Image." Time to Time Publications, no. 2. Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago, 1955. Reprinted in Quadrum, 2 (November 1956), 54ff.

Rubin, William. "New Images of Man." Art International, 3 no. 9 (1959), 1-5.

Saarinen, Aline B. "'New Images of Man'--Are They?." New York Times Magazine, September 27, 1959, 18-20.

Sander, Irving. "American Construction Sculpture." Evergreen Review, 2 (Spring 1959), 136-46.

_____. "The Club." Artforum, 4 (September 1965), 27-31.

Saunders, Wade. "Touch and Eye: 50's Sculpture." Art in America, 70 (December 1982), 90-105.

Sawin, Martica. "Theodore Roszak: Craftsman and Visionary." Arts Magazine, 31 (November 1956), 18-19.

Sartre, Jean-Paul, "The Search for the Absolute." Alberto Giacometti, exh. cat. (New York: Pierre Matisse Gallery, 1948), 2-22.

Schapiro, Meyer. "The Social Bases of Art." The First American Artist's Congress. New York City, 1936, 31-37.

_____. "Nature of Abstract Art." Marxist Quarterly (January-February, 1937), 77-98.

Schwartz, Stanford. "Clement Greenberg--The Critic and His Artists." The American Scholar (Autumn 1987), 535-45.

Selz, Peter. "A New Imagery in American Painting." College Art Journal, 15 (Summer 1956), 290-301.

Simon, Sidney. "Concerning the Beginnings of the New York School: 1939-1943." Art International, 11 (Summer 1967), 17-23.

Sweeney, James Johnson. "An Interview with Jacques Lipchitz." Partisan Review, no. 1 (Winter 1945), 83-89.

Taylor, Harold. "Individualism and the Liberal Tradition." The Goals of Higher Education, Willis D. Weatherford, Jr. ed. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1960, p. 10.

Varnedoe, Kirk. "Abstract Expressionism." "'Primitivism' in 20th Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1984, 615-59.

Watts, Harriet. "Arp, Kandinsky, and the Legacy of Jakob Bohme." The Spiritual in Art: Abstract Painting, 1890-1985, exh. cat., Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1986, 239-55.

Weiss, Jeffrey. "Science and Primitivism: Fearful Symmetry in the Early New York School." Arts Magazine, 62 (March 1983), 81-87.

Wilkin, Karen. "The Drawings of David Smith." The New Criterion, 8 (March 1990), 13-17.

Williams, Marguerite B. "Now Theodore Roszak Sets a New Pace for New Artists." The Chicago Daily News, June 26, 1929.

Unpublished Sources

Elliott, James. "Interview with Theodore Roszak." February 13, 1956, transcript. Theodore Roszak Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Hammer, Joyce Ethel. "Attitudes Toward Art in the Nineteen Twenties in Chicago." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1975.

Phillips, Dr. Harlan B. "Theodore Roszak Reminisces: As Recorded in Talks with Dr. Harlan B. Phillips," 1964, transcript. Archives of American Art, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts. Theodore Roszak Estate.

Robinson, Joan Seeman. "The Sculpture of Theodore Roszak: 1932-1952." Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1979. 2 vols.

Theodore Roszak. "The New Sculpture: A Symposium." Paper read at The Museum of Modern Art symposium on "The New Sculpture," A.C. Ritchie, moderator, February 12, 1952. Transcript, The Museum of Modern Art Library, New York.

_____. "Modern Sculpture and the American Legend." Sponsored by the Whitney Museum of American Art for the American Arts Festival on Radio Station WNYC, October 1953. Transcript, Theodore Roszak Estate; A.A.A. roll N69-81, Frames 321-25.

_____. "On Aspects of Contemporary Art." Paper Read at The Museum of Modern Art, August 1957. Transcript, Theodore Roszak Estate; A.A.A. roll N69-81, Frames 312-14.

_____. "Mass Culture and the Artist." Paper Read at The Museum of Modern Art, October 8, 1963. Transcript, Theodore Roszak Estate; A.A.A. roll 2136, Frames 287-89.

Published Statements by Theodore Roszak

"Forward." Theodore J. Roszak: Constructions. New York: Artists' Gallery, 1940

[Statement in] Fourteen Americans. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1946, 58-59.

[Statement in] The New Images of Man. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1959, 134.

[Statement in] Roszak: 1956-1962. New York: Pierre Matisse Gallery, 1962. "The New Content."

[Statement in] The Arts and the University. New York: Council on Higher Education in the American Republics, Institute of International Education, 1964. "Presentation by Theodore Roszak," 15-21. "Questions and Discussion," 22-47 passim.

Personal Interviews

Albert, Calvin. Surfside, Florida, March 7, 1991.

Arnheim, Rudolf. Phone interview, Ann Arbor, Michigan, June 12, 1990.

Barrett, William. Tarrytown, New York, March 29, 1991.

Dehner, Dorothy. New York, May 16, 1991.

Erdman, Jeanne. New Paltz, New York, May 16, 1990.

Ferber, Herbert. New York, April 4, 1991.

Hare, David. Phone interview, Idaho, April 25, 1991.

Landau, Max. New York, January 27, 1991.

Lowry, McNeil. Phone interview, San Francisco, California, April 8, 1991.

Randolph, Robert M. Phone interview, Cambridge, Massachusetts, September 19, 1991.

Satin, Claire Jeanine. Dania, Florida, March 7, 1991.

Selz, Peter. New York, May 13, 1991.

Sperry, Ann. New York, February 6, 1991.

Taylor, Harold. New York, March 15, 1991.