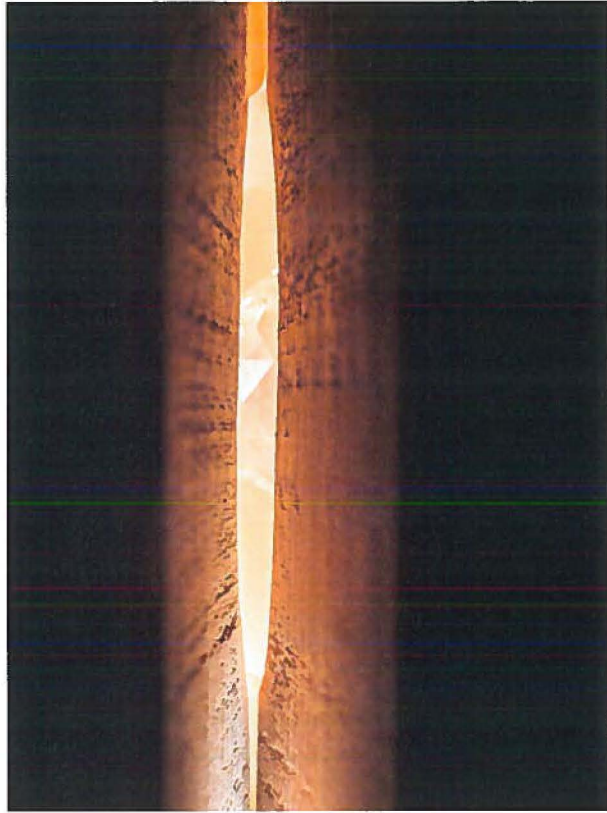


Ø



by Kristina Adams

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fulfillment of the requirements
of the degree of
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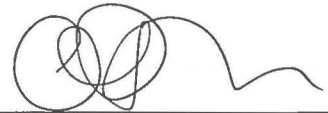
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Introduction

The non-representational sculptures in this body of work, “Ø”, are designed using transparency, light, space, and fluidity to inspire viewers to reflect upon their personal relationship with the Divine. The compositions use various media, principals of design, and architectural elements to encourage contemplation.

The intention behind the work is to invite the viewer to go beyond the intellect into a quiet inner space. The work strives to be a catalyst that affects any viewer willing to be still. This stillness of mind facilitates a shift. The non-representational sculptures seek to provide a sense of neutrality so all may feel invited regardless of religious orientation.

The philosophies of Joseph Campbell, Rudolph Otto, Mircea Elaide, Rabindranath Tagore, and Douglas Hoffman influence and guide the conceptual framework for this body of work.

Throughout history there are many examples of honoring the Divine with art. Japanese Zen gardens, architectural sacred spaces, and the golden ratio are concepts and forms of art that create an opportunity for inner reflection and contemplation.

At a young age, Kristina Adams became enamored with the process of creating three-dimensionally while observing her grandfather at work in his wood shop. Soon after, an intense attraction to drawing developed that later evolved into a fascination with sculpture. She longed to understand and be a part of the inspiring world of art and artist. She observed how art, though seamlessly silent, serves as the artist’s voice. The desire for creating fine art, particularly sculpture, continued to grow as the artist matured. During this period of intense research and development, five artists, Joseph Walsh, Fnnella Elms, Anish Kapoor, James Turrell, and Agnes Martin, profoundly impacted her work. Their visual influences appear in Kristina’s current sculptures.

Fine wood worker, Joseph Walsh, and ceramist, Fenella Elms sculpt different mediums to express themselves however they both create the illusion of fluidity that characterizes their work. Walsh forms wood veneers in such a way where structure, aesthetic, and function are in harmonious union. Whereas, Elms creates various ribbon like forms that resemble the inside of a sea shell. Anish Kapoor, in his interpretation of referencing the sublime, employs a tall stone into which he cuts a black rectangular void. James Turrell, constructs his sacred space using light as his medium. Taos painter, Agnes Martin, created her canvases alternating stripes of white on white. In doing so, she created a subtle rhythm that captivates the viewer, causing them to reflect on the perfection within.

The sculptural body of work that is the focus of this paper, “Ø”, was conceptualized in a meditative space. It required a quiet mind and a surrender of the will in order to be moved by the stillness into a place where images, or knowledge, presented themselves. As the visions and insights were revealed cogitation ensued. Later this information was intellectually digested and translated onto paper and into material choices.

Approaching the translated ideas, the artist sought to make decisions regarding techniques and other qualities in order to strengthen the composition of the sculptures. In this work the chosen techniques of lamination, coopering, and surface texture lend the work the visual weight needed in order to emphasize the concept. In conjunction with these techniques the four main qualities used are transparency, light, fluidity, and space, that unify the parts to the whole and attempt to draw the viewer in.

Each quality brings mental associative aspects to the art. The transparency of the glass paired with the framework of wood offers the viewer a lens into the work and perhaps into themselves. Light illuminates and directs the viewers' attention, creating atmospheric ambiguity. Thin slats of wood bend into undulating forms echo a fluid quality that mentally stimulates ideas of

movement with their associations to water and life cycles. The last and most important quality is space. Space maintains a visual and personal relationship with everyone. This element surrounds everything and each individual has a personal perspective of how they relate to themselves, others, and objects within it.

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

The artist is intensely drawn to a place of truth, a center of being. She translates this union into visual art. For her, the concentration poured into the conceptualization and creation of the work generates a sense of peace and marks her journey. Each non-representational sculpture manifests as a metaphor for inner truth and diverse materials are purposefully chosen to stimulate visual unity and intellectual contemplation.

Choosing the symbol “Ø” as the title for this body of work creates ambiguity. It sparks mysterious unknown ideas and conjures associations with the mathematical number zero and phi. Either way, in the mind no specific images influence the psyche into understanding what the exhibition will reveal. This, in turn, generates curiosity, contemplation, and open-mindedness. The anticipation ends once the viewer is in attendance and the chosen definition for the symbol indicates itself through the work, from ambiguity, an unclear understanding, to disambiguation, a perception of clarity.

It feels appropriate thus, that Mircea Eliade would be a theoretical influence. For the artwork encourages contemplation, an inward journey. The idea of a center superseding all centers within everyone is relevant because the sacred space that connects both physical and spiritual functions as a portal. Ultimately, the channels of communication and perception are opened, paving the way for communion with the Divine. “Every Microcosm, every inhabited region, has a center, that is to say, a place that is sacred above all” (Eliade 43). He names this center the cosmic axis or *Axis Mundi*.

The idea of the *Axis Mundi* is visually present throughout the current body of work and is seen in the vertical forms and openings. Eliade maintains that vertical images stir the unconscious mind and act as a catalyst that may move the observer into the center, the *Axis Mundi*.

Throughout this thesis, terms such as Divine, Numen/Numinous, Sublime, Formless and Universal will be used interchangeably to refer to the concept of God, all pervading, all knowing, ever present. These terms are meant to infer no particular denomination other than what is common in all. The art attempts to bring the viewer to a threshold within and not to define or convert anyone into believing any way, other than what they feel inherently drawn to, regarding the concept of God.

The artist's mental scaffolding of space "becoming" sacred arose more fully upon reading Douglas Hoffman's book, *Seeking the Sacred in Contemporary Religious Architecture*. This resource accounts for a significant part of her understanding of the components that have the ability to not only shift a persons' perspective but also bridge the senses into an inner reflective experience. In fact, Hoffman's observations, the markers of sacred space, made the current body of work possible. The markers are clear with three main categories and sub-categories. The category which Hoffman defines as "Atmospheric Ambiguities" is the one most relevant and influential on the current sculptures. *Atmospheric* refers to space while *ambiguities* suggest a hazy sense of understanding. The treatment of space stirs the sub-conscious mind leaving behind a memorable impression. Hoffman expounds on this idea;

Multiple interpretations of space are said to serve as a threshold to the sacred experience – the meaning lies not in the final state but in the transition zone between. The state of "becoming," the transitions of light becoming darkness or noise dimming to silence are the portal to the sacred experience. They speak to the mystery and ignite the awe; they move our minds, our consciousness, to other places (pg.17).

In "Ø" this is interpreted as setting the mood for contemplation by providing cues for the observer to become quiet, reflective, and still. The current work strives to produce this effect by using an array of lighting, thus controlling the ambiance in the space and subtly influencing the attention of the observers to move into exploration of the sculptures.

Meditation, a technique that fosters inward concentrated practice on the moment thus the perception of God can be realized in the self as well as throughout all creation, disciplines the mind. Artists concentrating for extended period of time may come to experience a type of informal meditative state. Some artists have named this state of mind the “zone”. This may not be formal meditation, sitting quietly with awareness of the breath without distraction, in the yogic sense, yet moderately coincides with the meditative definition. In “Ø” the artist utilized both formal and informal meditation to translate the union, perceiving God within herself, experienced into the visual. “The truth that is infinite dwells in the ideal of unity which we find in deeper relatedness. This truth of realization is not in space, it can only be realized in one’s own inner spirit” (Tagore 66). The concept for the work emerged from that realization and then became translated into a visual language. The current sculptures were then created to express a small aspect of that union yet never meant to be mistook as the union itself. Joseph Campbell eloquently communicates this view point, “The person who has had a mystical experience knows that all the symbolic expressions of it are faulty. The symbols don’t render the experience they suggest it” (73).

The concept of aesthetics should be examined as it casts such a wide net over all forms of art. Beauty holds the power to attract and is assigned an intrinsic value by the viewer. “The power to appreciate beauty appears to be a human endowment and this suggests that we should seek its origin and its purpose in human nature” (Huntley 20). The argument for why this happens is long and diverse. However, one theory in particular seems noteworthy; divine proportion also known as the golden ratio, Phi. If the mathematical proportion of nature is recognized as beautiful by most of society then artists would benefit from incorporating this into their art. During the Renaissance the divine proportion was seen far and wide in all art forms. The Greeks were known for using phi, in their architecture as well as their art. According to Huntley, Gustav

Fechner, a German psychologist tested, observed, and found empirical evidence in his experiments that supports this concept. He found that the golden rectangle was preferred over any other form of rectangle or square. The golden rectangle is a rectangle with adjacent sides in a ratio close to 1:1.618. For example, the number 61.8 divided into 38.2 equals 1.618 then 100 divided into 61.8 equals 1.618. When each side divided by the other equals the same number, 1.618, then those dimension create a golden rectangle. The artist experimented with this mathematical beauty theory on her own work in *Centered for Eternity*. The true assessment occurs from the comments of the audience viewing it. "There is no dispute that aesthetics may open the door to an experience of transcendence, but in such a state it functions as a vehicle, not as the goal itself" (Ott XIV).

Historical Background

Japanese Zen gardens have been a source of mystery because of the peaceful effect they have on the viewer. According to Joseph Campbell, Japan's religious foundation is based on the philosophy that nature is created perfect and a human, being a part of nature, has that perfection within which only needs to be cultivated for this truth to be revealed.

Dry Zen garden designs are based on the philosophy that nature has inherent perfection. Though comprised of many parts, the garden creation is viewed as a whole. Their simple aesthetic of rocks and small stones invites the viewer into a dry landscape. The ripples are carefully raked into the sand, undulating patterns reminiscent of a pebble being dropped into still water. The viewer witnesses its' effect. This aesthetic, while subtle, is powerful to the human mind. "As signs of the solitude. . . the starkness of raw, troubled matter and lack of superfluous decorativeness are considered signs of heightened spirituality" (Weiss 51). When life is viewed through a steady gaze of centeredness then such allures of decorativeness or yearnings no longer holds any power over the mind. The Zen garden allows the mind to come into alignment with the present and be centered in itself so the inherent perfection within may be felt and experienced.

In Japanese architecture, great importance is placed on the idea of inside and outside, and its multitude of complex metaphors. The saying "as within so without" comes to mind. It speaks to the heart of the Zen garden's mystery. Weiss expounds on this:

The gathering takes place in a tranquil abode a sort of microcosm isolated from the world of everyday cares, where a sense of absolute equality and propriety reigns, established according to the basic precepts of harmony, respect, purity, tranquility - qualities otherwise expressed as reserve, reverence, restraint - which guide all considerations of beauty (pg.17).

In the current body of work, all the sculptures have been created with a peaceful microcosm intention that supports a transition between the outer and the inner world.

Sacred space is a place that aids the viewer in connecting to something larger than themselves. Mosques, synagogues, churches, temples, and ancient megaliths assist in understanding architectural sacred spaces. These places set a stage for gatherings, rituals, and contemplation. The question arises, what is common to them all? Hoffman clearly organizes these commonalities into three categories: Architectural, Archetypal, and Atmospheric Ambiguities.

The Architectural markers are defined as the three physical and philosophical aspects of sacred space: gate, path, and place. These three aspects refer to both the interior and exterior of the space. According to Hoffman, the gate expresses the first entry point of the journey. The person embarking on the journey follows a pathway which guides and prepares them to enter into the sacred space. When the person comes upon this space it is easily recognized with defined borders. The space serves as a place of refuge and worship. The journey continues and leads to an inner gate, threshold, or portal. Upon entering the portal, an aisle presents itself and leads the guest to the center where communion, exchange and sharing, takes place.

Archetypal refers to the “unconscious link to the realm of the sacred” (Hoffman 20) The sub-categories are: universal, myth, and geometric. The universal represents the elements earth, air, water, and fire. It also includes the religious rites and ceremonial images these elements evoke in the mind. To name a few examples: Water is used to cleanse, baptize, and wash away sin; Air manifests as a physical symbol of the Formless through the breath; Fire is offered for answering prayers and tempering the mind; and Earth serves as a connection to the mother through nature.

Myth represents symbolic stories or images that characterized the center through the pillar, the tree, the stone, and the sacred mountain all of which suggest the *Axis Mundi*.

The term geometric indicates shape. Hoffman points toward the sacred in geometry and the meanings these shapes carry through different cultures and religions. Examples include: The

Trinity, represented by the triangle and the circle, used to convey wholeness and healing.

According to Carl Jung the accessibility of archetypal symbolism in this highly visual computerized world makes a deep impression on the psyche.

The last marker for sacred space is atmospheric ambiguities, an interpretation for setting a contemplative mood. This marker is most important to the artist and has been discussed in the conceptual and theoretical section of this thesis and will be further elaborated on in the analysis section. There are four named atmospheric ambiguities: silence and noise, darkness and light, emptiness and profusion, humility and monumentality. Hoffman states that while each of the four are comprised with two diametrically opposed terms the transitions between the two stir the sub-conscious and opens a portal to a sacred experience.

Artistic Influences

Frank Hernandez was a kind and traditional Mexican man who loved to create in his wood shop. He provided for his granddaughter, Kristina Adams, hours of entertainment that sparked a deep curiosity in creating art with wood. He made multiple attempts at discouraging her from pursuing carpentry. His gender bias was so strong; he could not concede to teaching her his craft. Frank felt the wood shop was no place for a woman. Nevertheless, Kristina remained open to and intrigued by wood and sculpture. As a young woman, she saw an exhibition of large wood sculptures that had been bent into wave-like forms. Extraordinarily inspired by the exhibit, she knew she would one day learn to bend wood.

Fourteen years later, while searching for inspiration on the internet, Adams discovered the furniture designs of Joseph Walsh. Their striking beauty and inherent function stirred her soul. Walsh manipulates wood into undulating and interlacing forms whose calligraphic beauty doubles as sophisticated chairs and tables (see fig. 's 1 & 2). Viewing Walsh's work awakened her past desire to bend wood and motivated Adams to learn and incorporate bent wood forms into her sculptures.



Fig. 1 *Enignam V*, Joseph Walsh.



Fig. 2 *Enignam II*, Joseph Walsh

Ceramist Fenella Elms possesses a masterful command of her medium. Her work defies the high temperatures of the kiln. She designs large porcelain Mobius sculptures with many attached clay strips (see figure 3). Her work is compelling and may remind the viewer of a chambered nautilus. Elms' influence may be challenging to perceive in Kristina's current body of work since none of her sculptures contained porcelain.



Fig. 3 *Untitled*, Fenella Elms



Fig. 4 *Adam*, Anish Kapoor

Anish Kapoor's sculptures are monumental and engaging. For instance, the monolith, *Adam* (see fig. 4), presents a rectangular form to address the concept of the *Void*, employing vertically to reference the Sublime. In its myriad of inferences to process, this work is mentally stimulating. Here, Kapoor uses negative space as an aesthetic element to draw the observer into the work and contemplate its meaning. Like a painter, Kapoor modulates his pigments to create an illusion of depth and captivate the observer. His sculpture conjures up an encounter with a window to eternity and all its associated sensations. In "Ø", Kristina, employed the same technique in her use of negative space.

James Turrell paints with light. Fusing light and shadow, emptiness and profusion, some of his sculptures stand like temples (see fig. 5). Their elevated roofs punctuated by rectangular

windows, reminiscent of an oculus, to the sky dwarf those standing beneath them. Turrell is well known for the spiritual qualities evoked by his work, which fuses color and form, light and space, proportion and scale. The way Turrell creates with light inspired Kristina to contemplate how she would incorporate this quality into her work to evoke a similar response.



Fig. 5 *Twilight Epiphany*, James Turrell



Fig. 6 *Untitled*, Agnes Martin

The final influence on the work stems from Agnes Martin. She considered herself an Abstract Expressionist even though her paintings resembled those of the Minimalists. In Martin's paintings, she used repetition to create a subtle rhythm conducive to meditation and quiet reflection (see fig. 6). Her message of manifesting inner peace is understated yet undeniably present. Martin's paintings are a vehicle of transportation and not the source of it.

The subtle expression and conceptual framework of Martin's paintings inspired Kristina to study her work and life. Agnes is a source of encouragement to any artist embarking on a journey of creating art steeped in truth.

Technical Processes

The body of work known as Ø comprises three primary media: wood, glass, and mirrored film. Additionally, paint, wood oil, angle iron, hardware (screws, L-brackets), aluminum angled braces, UV glue, flex epoxy, wood glue, and a led light were utilized.

The artist created four out of the five compositions with wood. Three species were used, Mahogany, Ash, and Cherry. Each type of wood was chosen because of the unique quality it possessed. Mahogany was chosen because of its capacity to hold a crisp, carved edge, and its rich, red color and lighter density. Cherry was chosen for its color, specific 16/4 thickness, and the way paint contrasts with its surface qualities. Ash has been an enduring favorite, primarily for its flexibility and mutability. Moreover, its blonde color serves as a striking contrasts to other woods.

Two variations Starphire glass were used for two different types of applications – ½ inch Starphire tempered glass and ¼ inch regular Starphire glass. Starphire glass is a low iron glass whose transparency and reflective properties significantly surpass those of regular glass. In *Formed by Light* (see fig. 7), tempered glass was chosen to transition the piece from an open form wood base to the multi-piece sliced cherry wood block that sits on top of it. Since the dimension of the tempered glass matched the bottom of the base and not the top the artist thought it best as a safety precaution to temper the glass. The regular Starphire glass in *Core* (see fig. 8) was cut into several long pieces and worked then ground, shaped, and bead blasted.

When mirrors were settled upon for the large installation *Where Less Becomes More*, much research ensued (see fig. 9). Weight and cost also manifested as noteworthy considerations. The product Mirrorlite was selected to address both weight and financial concerns. Its fragility, however, meant that the composition would risk being more easily compromised from scratches

or other damage. As a result, extreme caution needs to be exercised at all times when transporting and assembling the panels.

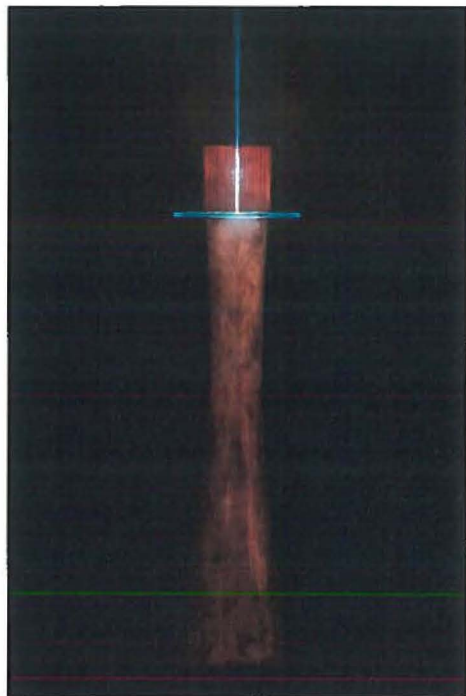


Fig.7 Formed by Light



Fig. 8 Core



Fig. 9 Where Less Becomes More

The Hatfield Gallery provided the best place for the current body of work due to its odd L-shape size, lower ceilings, and windowless space. The lighting could be controlled throughout the space which allowed a mood to be set. Both light and sound worked together to create a welcoming atmosphere that encouraged calmness and contemplation. The music composed by Arvo Part, *Fur Alina*, played continuously in the background. The composer wrote the piece with longer dispersed pauses between notes and a meditative rhythm that soothe the senses.

Each sculpture required a minimal amount of lighting except for one, *Core*, which required two spot lights. That piece transferred the light through itself and created wavy shadows onto the top of the pedestal where the piece rested. There were only five sculptures displayed in the gallery which allowed space for each piece to be viewed and experienced. Fortunately, the sculpture, *Formed by Light*, had a darker space all its own to be fully appreciated. The led light within it caused the glass to glow and casted horizontal lines of shadow and dispersed light onto all three walls (see fig. 10).

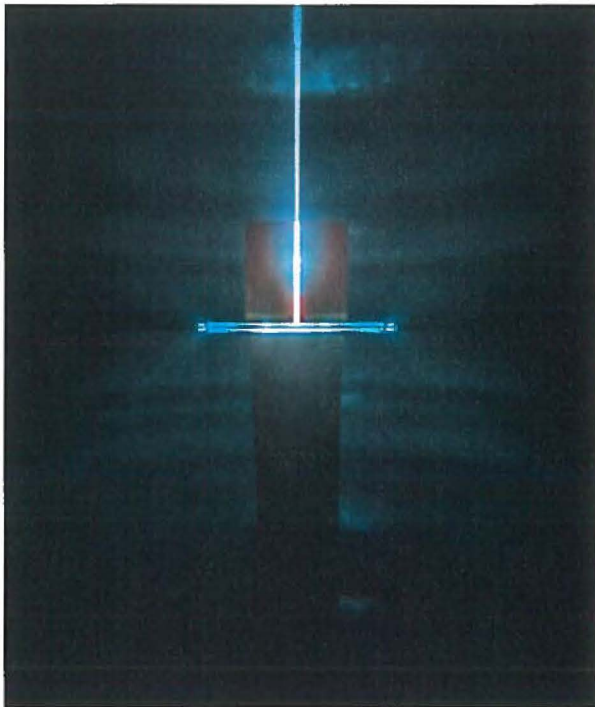


Fig. 10 *Formed by Light*

Description and Analysis of the Creative Work

Two Sides of the Void

The underlying premise of Kristina's wood sculpture is to capture the fluid motion of water and wind. In *Two Sides of the Void*, cherry and ash wood are paired together for visual contrast (see fig. 11). Whereas, ash reflects light due to its blonde color, cherry absorbs it. Layering and laminating strips of ash wood, she formed an arc. This way of forming and bending wood transpired from the study of Joseph Walsh's work (see fig. 's 1 & 2).

The ash flows through the large cherry wood monolith and it appears as if it has caused the monolith to slant and split open from the encounter. Both the slant and the asymmetrical arc indicate a shift has occurred from the union. As the title suggests and is visually apparent, there are two sides the viewer is able to see however the void remains hidden in the center of the monolith. Fusing the brilliance of the ash with the arcing form, the artist presents the Formless flowing through the void.

The simplicity of the piece evolved from the thought of inner peace. From concept to creation, it manifested relatively seamlessly. The top and bottom of the block shape intentionally appears raked which infers the influence of a dry Zen garden. Red in color and 4 inches thick this vibrant wood called to the artist and she strove to create a balance between organic and geometric shapes to better emphasize the concept of deeper relatedness, union with the Numen.



Fig. 11 *Two Sides of the Void*

Core

Glass and Brazilian cherry wood were combined in *Core* (see fig. 8). However, the sculpture offered much more of an opportunity for healing as it confronted the artist's perseverance, resolve, and trust. *Core* came into being following a friend's accident in the studio where the artist had been working. The emotionally charged time left a lasting impression. This event made her question everything, seek understanding, and ultimately to discover a way to progress past it. *Core* lives up to its name alluding to the process of contemplation and the central substance of life.

The artist created this piece to imply the universal element of water with wave-like patterns sculpted onto wood as well as etched into glass. Various levels of diagonal lines were cut and shaped atop each panel of glass to signify how individuals reach for the sacred. This work had to be cleaned continually, following each encounter with the human hand or gluing process. For the artist, the cleaning became a metaphor for cleansing the mind, body, and spirit and part of the journey to the center of the Self.

The wood was coopered so that each section fit together in a barrel-like fashion. Using this technique, a cylinder was formed with it, a core that could be bisected by glass. Light passes through the glass casting undulating shadow. *Core* is about the sacred space that resides within.

Formed by Light

The artist assembled various media, including: cherry wood, ½ inch thick glass, a led light, a veneer sculpted base, and fog spray, together with the primary intention of radiating light from within and connecting with the Universal.

The tempered glass glows and casts horizontal shadows on all three sides of the wall. A concentrated beam of light emerges from the depths of *Formed by Light* and forms a star like

pattern on the ceiling (see fig. 12). Cloaking the dimly lit room where the sculpture is housed with fog spray reveals a light beam, as the particles of the spray are reflected in the light (see fig. 10). James Turrell's work guided the artist's understanding of how to design a light focused composition that captivates the viewer's attention and invites contemplation.

Formed by Light stands six feet tall with a sweeping vertical base. This upward motion is further enhanced by the precisely spaced vertical-lined detail on the cherry (influenced by Agnes Martin's meditative grid paintings), the wedged slice sections, and the beam of light that filters through them making its way to the ceiling. Mircea Elaide maintains that vertical images stir the unconscious mind and act as a catalyst that may move the observer into the center. This piece is symbolic of the *axis mundi*. The artist also followed Hoffman's marker of space becoming sacred. She incorporated the atmospheric ambiguity that transitions darkness to light in order to shift the viewer's perspective and bridge the senses into an inner reflective experience with the Universal.

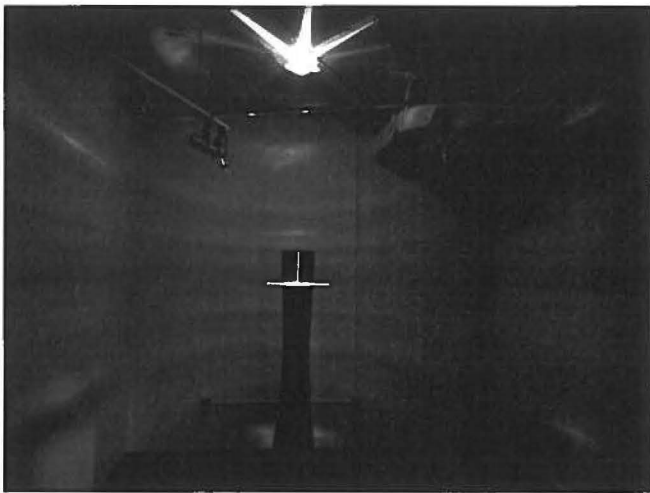


Fig. 12 *Formed by Light*

Centered by Eternity

For the work *Centered by Eternity*, solid mahogany wood was assembled in proportion to the Golden Mean. Precisely routed circular slots, 1/8 inch thinly sliced slats, and ebony and ochre paints were combined to capture the meditative and fluid motion of a pebble being dropped into still water. The subtle aesthetic invites the viewer to be drawn into contemplation.

The artist incorporated many artistic and historical influences into *Centered by Eternity* (see fig. 13). Each influence contributed to the mental formulation of cohesion that culminated in this piece. Anish Kapoor's work inspired the artist to use the color black in the circle to represent the void. Agnes Martin's oeuvre and the Zen garden aesthetic encouraged her use of clean even spaced lines to support a more meditative rhythm that invites the viewer to become centered within. Douglas Hoffman's sacred space marker of monumentality and humility motivated Kristina to create on a large scale. This scale is meant to foster a comparison of size between the viewer and the work.

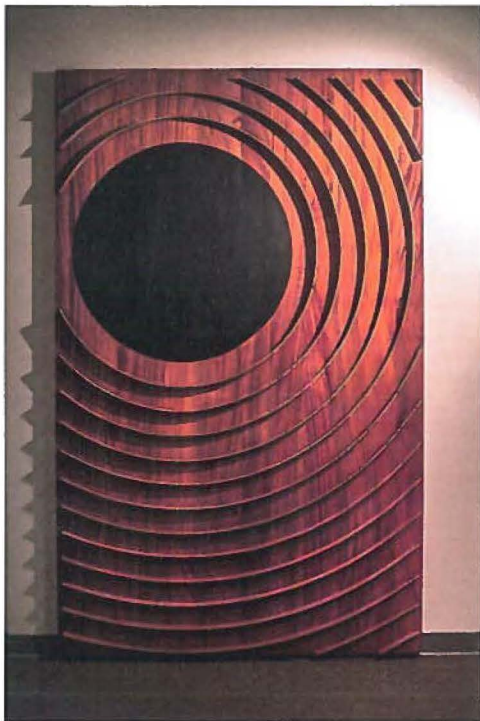


Fig. 13 *Centered by Eternity*

Where Less Becomes More

Where Less Becomes More comprises an aluminum framework connected, secured, and attached to three outer panels of mirrored fabric measuring 5x7 feet and three inner panels of scrims, a two way mirrored film, measuring 2x7 feet, creating a structure within a structure. The geometric installation is six sided with three doorways into the outer hexagon and three doorways into the inner hexagon (see fig.9). The doorways signify thresholds into an inner sanctuary while the mirrors suggest self-analysis. The type of self-evaluation that ensues when an individual embarks on a journey to the center of being. This reflection assists and supports the individual to become transparent, self-evident. The scrims are both a physical and metaphorical mirror that reflect the inner transformation that occurs when an individual becomes aware of their inherent union with the Divine. When the will bows in humility the ego notices only contentment and harmony. The title, *Where Less Becomes More*, is meant to insinuate that less mind debris gives rise to more focus on what is important.

Analysis

The name, *Two Sides of the Void*, conveys the meaning more successfully than the actual sculpture, itself. The inner contemplation the artist sought to communicate within this work fell short. The viewer's interest stemmed more from a physical and technical perspective than a contemplative one. "How was this wood bent? and "does it go all the way through and if so, what was done to achieve this?" were typical of the questions raised by this work. Though the work failed to induce the desired contemplative nature, it did not disappoint in craftsmanship. Although the artist aspired to integrate four design qualities into this sculpture, ultimately she chose only one, fluidity. Perhaps only one was necessary, for this sculpture possesses innate harmony and integrity of design. The atmospheric ambiguity, on the other hand, was only

inferred rather than executed. These are among the factors that contribute to this work's weakness in not clearly conveying the concept.

The combination of wood and glass in *Core* (see fig. 8) provided a more contemplative reaction than *Two Sides of the Void*. The presentation of the wood, seemingly suspended amidst the wave-like patterns, together with the etched glass undulations invite reflection. Fabricated using all four design qualities mentioned: transparency, light, space, and fluidity, this sculpture is complete. In conjunction, the composition of *Core* allows the viewer the advantage of being able to have a glimpsing into its center which plays into Hoffman's markers of the inner journey and crossing the threshold into sacred space. Because of these aspects the artist concludes that the piece better conveys and encourages inner reflection.

Formed by Light attracted viewers with its six-foot-tall presence that extended well beyond its physical boundaries. The darker area, where this work is housed, enabled the light within the piece to radiate horizontal shadows onto the walls. This aspect occurred more serendipitous than intentional. For, the artist envisioned only the glow of the rectangular glass and the strong light beam streaming from the heart of the work. Ultimately, this work succeeded in creating a contemplative environment for the viewer. The music supported the atmospheric tone. Less successful was the placement of the title in this atmosphere. While the title served to ground the viewer's understanding of the work, the dimly lit room made it difficult to ascertain.

In conclusion, many components culminated in *Formed by Light*. While all design qualities were used, light and space figured most prominently. The atmospheric ambiguity of light profusion and darkness made this work a success. The work's luminosity and spatiality, facilitates the mental leap inward and outward.

Centered by Eternity was designed to capture the viewer's attention with the vibrancy of the wood against the dynamic sweeping lines. Most viewers tended to step back taking the piece in

all at once and contemplating it from there. This piece received the most favorable comments from those who attended the show. The artist struggles to understand if the viewers were attracted because of the use of the Golden Mean, the scale, or if the piece actually did move the viewer into contemplation and stillness because of its simple configuration of design.

The piece was constructed with two out of the four design qualities, fluidity and space. And uses the marker of sacred space, monumentality and humility found in the work of Douglas Hoffman. Though the piece stood to be the largest in the collection the artist felt that the size was still too small to elicit a feeling of humility from the viewer and thus the result fell short of her expectations. However, the gallery would not have been able to house a larger piece and the work stayed within the confines provided.

The use of fluidity in the wall sculpture presented more successfully as the sweeping raised lines of the slats created motion against a sense of stillness. Perhaps the color contrast and the size of the piece allowed the viewers to appreciate the fluidity in this piece more than in *Two Sides of the Void*. This is something to consider in future work.

Where Less Becomes More felt like it needed more room in the gallery in order for it to be fully appreciated. The mirrors were large and though the viewer was able to get around them, there was no space to step back and take it in from more than one angle. This installation did spark interest as to its actual meaning. The title gave the viewer clues and implied contemplation.

This piece's design transpired using three of the four qualities: transparency, light, and space. The artist observed that this installation though large was not as inviting to the viewer. The mirrored panels had a cold and industrial feel in contrast to the other sculptures displayed. Because of this feel and the fact that the space for installation was restricted, this piece was not as successful in achieving its intended purpose of inviting contemplation.

Conclusion

The thesis focused on incorporating the four design qualities: transparency, light, space, and fluidity into the sculpture with the purpose of inviting the viewer into contemplation. This proved difficult to achieve and some pieces were more successful than others. The artist learned several things about designing work to encourage contemplation as a result of the research.

The use of fluidity as a quality of inspiring contemplation was tricky and when used alone as in *Two Side of the Void*, the element was not effective. However, when it is used in a more dramatic way, larger, and paired with other qualities as in *Centered by Eternity*, it appears to enhance the viewer's contemplative response.

Light emerged as a quality due to its metaphor to inspiration. It became especially effective in *Formed by Light*. This quality worked well with glass and the profusion of light and darkness marker of sacred space. The artist struggled with translating the quality of light in other pieces. In *Core*, the vision of a light beam illuminating the glass was the aim however when that type of lighting appeared the piece fell into the category of a mood lamp. Needless to say the artist chose to light it from above. In the installation, *Where Less Becomes More*, the artist questioned if warmer lighting should have been used and if that would have made a difference in the viewer's mind as a more inviting place to visit and reflect within.

The quality of transparency to inspire contemplation came together when used in conjunction with other qualities and materials. This quality turned out to be the easiest to manipulate and get correct. There were no new insights while working with this quality.

Space held and possesses many lessons. This body of work enabled a deeper understanding and enquiry into space. This question arises, how much space around and through a sculpture is enough to invite the viewer into the work? The perspective changes depending on lighting and

placement in the gallery which is most challenging to gauge. The lesson for this artist is that space requires regular consideration the whole way through the creation of sculpture.

She also learned that a name can be very important in leading or misleading viewers to a desired response. Kristina wonders how the responses to the sculptures would have been different if no names or different names had been provided. In the future, the artist will approach the naming of her work with heightened consideration.

In conclusion, this body of work provided insight into the use of specific elements to enhance viewers' contemplation. Valuable new skills and techniques were acquired. The lessons learned from this thesis will not be forgotten. They will be carried forward and developed in future work.

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