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PROGRESS PASSING THROUGH THE SPIRIT:
THE MODERNIST VISION OF BERTRAM BROOKER AND
LIONEL LEMOINE FITZGERALD AS REDEMPTIVE ART

by

Carole Frances Luff, B.A.

**A thesis submitted to the Faculty of
Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
in Canadian Studies**

Carleton University

OTTAWA, Ontario

15 March 1991

1991, Carole Frances Luff

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"Progress Passing Through the Spirit:
The Modernist Vision of Bertram Brooker and
Lionel Lemoine Fitzgerald as Redemptive Art."

submitted by Carole Frances Luff, B.A.
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts

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April 1991

ABSTRACT

The aesthetic and literary sources for Bertram Brooker and Lionel LeMoine FitzGerald provided not only the impetus for each artist's singular vision of modernism as a redemptive art but also forged a unique bond between these two artists. This thesis establishes the direct influence of the Italian Futurists and Russian modern art. It examines their literary and philosophical sources including Brooker's Library and his unpublished manuscripts. This thesis presents a contextual reading of two modernist works, Brooker's Sounds Assembling, 1928, and FitzGerald's Abstract: Green and Gold, 1954, thereby establishing Brooker's modernist vision which informed his interpretation of FitzGerald and his work as a symbol for humankind's creative energy. Both artists drew from a predominantly urban Canadian experience, marrying the appropriated European modern form with a contemporary Canadian content, sounding a new voice in Canadian art.

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CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	iv
List of Illustrations.....	vi
Introduction	1
Chapter I: Brooker's and FitzGerald's Individual Responses to European Modernism within a Canadian and North American Context.....	21
Chapter II: Sources for Brooker's Modernist Vision: A Spiritual Quest.....	78
Chapter III: <u>Sounds Assembling and Abstract: Green and Gold:</u> A Contextual Reading.....	110
Conclusion: Towards a Redemptive Art.....	137
Footnotes.....	148
Chronology.....	182
Exhibitions.....	186
Appendix I: Brooker's Modernist Poetry.....	192
Selected Bibliography.....	195

ILLUSTRATIONS

- Fig. 1.** LeMoine FitzGerald and Bertram Brooker, 1936.
- Fig. 2.** LeMoine FitzGerald: Williamson's Garage (detail), 1927.
- Fig. 3.** LeMoine FitzGerald: Landscape, c. 1931.
- Fig. 4.** Bertram Brooker: Study of Trees, n.d.
- Fig. 5.** Josef Binder: Musik Theaterfest (poster), 1924.
- Fig. 6.** Rug-weaving. Woven by Bavarian Women, c. 1928.
- Fig. 7.** Vladimir Polunin: Drop-scene for the Diaghileff Ballet, c. 1925.
- Fig. 8.** Bertram Brooker: Within: A stage set, 1927.
- Fig. 9.** Bertram Brooker: Growth, c.1929.
- Fig. 10.** Raymond Duchamp-Villon: Baudelaire, 1911.
- Fig. 11.** Bertram Brooker: The Dawn of Man, c. 1927.
- Fig. 12.** Tsimshian mask, 19th C.
- Fig. 13.** Amedee Ozenfant: Still Life n.d.
- Fig. 14.** Bertram Brooker: Fantasy, 1940.
- Fig. 15.** A.S. Baylinson: Seated Nude, 1919.
- Fig. 16.** Kathleen Munn: Untitled I, 1926 - 28.
- Fig. 17.** Bertram Brooker: Oozles, c. 1924.
- Fig. 18.** Lazar El Lissitsky: Proun 23. No. 6, 1919.
- Fig. 19.** Bertram Brooker: Fugue, c. 1928.
- Fig. 20.** Bertram Brooker: Duet, 1931.
- Fig. 21.** Georgia O'Keeffe: Blue and Green Music, 1919.
- Fig. 22.** Bertram Brooker: Abstract - Music, c. 1927.
- Fig. 23.** Georgia O'Keeffe: Music - Pink and Blue II, 1919.
- Fig. 24.** Bertram Brooker: Striving, 1930.
- Fig. 25.** Umberto Boccioni: Unique Forms of Continuity in Space, 1913.
- Fig. 26.** Umberto Boccioni: Muscular Dynamism, 1913.

- Fig. 27. Umberto Boccioni: Speeding Muscles, 1913.
- Fig. 28. Umberto Boccioni: Spiral Expansion of Speeding Muscles, 1913.
- Fig. 29. Bertram Brooker: Interiors within Interiors, 1931.
- Fig. 30. Fernand Léger: L'homme a la pipe, 1920.
- Fig. 31. Wassily Kandinsky: Gaiety, 1924.
- Fig. 32. Bertram Brooker: Sounds Assembling, 1928.
- Fig. 33. Wassily Kandinsky: Blue Painting, 1924.
- Fig. 34. LeMoine FitzGerald: House on the River, 1929.
- Fig. 35. Lyonel Feininger: Stadt VI, 1926.
- Fig. 36. LeMoine FitzGerald: Pritchard's Fence, c. 1928.
- Fig. 37. LeMoine FitzGerald: Abstraction, 1952.
- Fig. 38. Giacomo Balla: Dynamic Depths, 1912.
- Fig. 39. LeMoine FitzGerald: Farmyard, 1931
- Fig. 40. Ivan Kliun: Untitled, 1914.
- Fig. 41. LeMoine FitzGerald: Still Life with Hat, 1955.
- Fig. 42. Ivan Kliun: Untitled, 1914.
- Fig. 43. LeMoine FitzGerald: Abstract, 1952.
- Fig. 44. Wassily Kandinsky: Composition 8, 1923.
- Fig. 45. LeMoine FitzGerald: Abstract: Green and Gold, 1954.
- Fig. 46. Wassily Kandinsky: Dreamy, 1932.
- Fig. 47. Ivan Kliun: Spherical Non-Objective Composition, 1922-25.
- Fig. 48. 0.10 Exhibition. Black Square hung high in the corner in the place reserved in Orthodox homes for the Icon of the Madonna.
- Fig. 49. Naum Gabo: Drawing for "Sculpture: Carving and Construction in Space", c. 1920.
- Fig. 50. Vladimir Tatlin: Corner Relief, 1915.
- Fig. 51. Vladimir Tatlin: Selection of Materials: Corner-Relief, 1916.
- Fig. 52. Naum Gabo: Head of a Woman, c. 1917-20.
- Fig. 53. Bertram Brooker: Blue Nude, 1937.

- Fig. 54. Antoine Pevsner: Torso, 1924-26.
- Fig. 55. Bertram Brooker: Pharaoh's Daughter, 1950.
- Fig. 56. Bertram Brooker: Entombment, 1937.
- Fig. 57. Bertram Brooker: Energy is Eternal Delight, 1927.
- Fig. 58. Augustus Saint-Gaudens: Adams Memorial, 1886-91.
- Fig. 59. Bertram Brooker: Torso, 1937.
- Fig. 60. Bertram Brooker: Four Dimensional Cube, n.d.
- Fig. 61. LeMoine FitzGerald: Still Life: Two Apples, c. 1940. (with detail).
- Fig. 62. P.D. Ouspensky: A Diagram of the Forth Dimension in Nature, n.d.
- Fig. 63. Umberto Boccioni: States of Mind: The Farewells, 1911.
- Fig. 64. Bertram Brooker: Symphonic Forms, 1947.
- Fig. 65. Umberto Boccioni: Fusion of Head and Window, 1912.
- Fig. 66. Umberto Boccioni: Counterlight, 1910.
- Fig. 67. Bertram Brooker: Realization (Crime and Punishment), 1930.
- Fig. 68. Kathleen Munn: Composition (Horses), 1927.
- Fig. 69. LeMoine FitzGerald: Night Breeze, 5.10.1953.
- Fig. 70. LeMoine FitzGerald: Abstract: Autumn Leaves, 6.10.1953.
- Fig. 71. LeMoine FitzGerald: Blake Abstract, n.d.
- Fig. 72. LeMoine FitzGerald: Study for Autumn Sonata, 18.11.1953.
- Fig. 73. LeMoine FitzGerald: Study for April Rhythm, n.d.
- Fig. 74. LeMoine FitzGerald: Abstract, 13.11.1953.
- Fig. 75. LeMoine FitzGerald: Abstract, 16.11.1953.
- Fig. 76. LeMoine FitzGerald: Abstract, 28.7.1955.
- Fig. 77. LeMoine FitzGerald: Autumn Sonata, 1954.
- Fig. 78. LeMoine FitzGerald: April Rhythm, c. 1954.
- Fig. 79. LeMoine FitzGerald: Study for Abstract: Green and Gold, 27.4.1954.
- Fig. 80. LeMoine FitzGerald: Abstract: Green and Gold, 1954 (in colour).
- Fig. 81. Bertram Brooker: Circles, c. 1935.

- Fig. 82. Kasimir Malevich: Black Square, Red Square, c. 1914.
- Fig. 83. Artist Unknown. In Thee Rejoiceth, early 16th C.
- Fig. 84. Natalie Gontcharova: Madonna and Child, 1905-07.
- Fig. 85. Alexander Rodchenko: Line Construction, 1920.
- Fig. 86. Reproduction of Russian Icon in LeMoine FitzGerald Collection.
- Fig. 87. Reproduction of Russian Icon in LeMoine FitzGerald Collection.
- Fig. 88. LeMoine FitzGerald: 1930 Sketchbook, page 3.
- Fig. 89. LeMoine FitzGerald: 1930 Sketchbook, page 9.
- Fig. 90. Bertram Brooker: Thumb-nail sketch, 14.10.1926.
- Fig. 91. Bertram Brooker: Endless Dawn, 1927.
- Fig. 92. Bertram Brooker: Green Movement, c. 1927.
- Fig. 93. Etoile du Nord, 1928. (travel poster).
- Fig. 94. Bertram Brooker: Alleluiah, 1929.

x

"...philosophy is not only the turning of the mind homeward, the coincidence of human consciousness with the living principle whence it emanates, a contact with creative effort: it is the study of becoming in general, it is true evolutionism..."

Henri Bergson

Creative Evolution, p. 402.

(sidelined and underlined by Brooker).

INTRODUCTION

In this thesis I will examine the individual responses of Bertram Brooker and LeMoine FitzGerald to European modernism and present each artist's reinterpretation of European aesthetic theory and modernist form within their Canadian experience and the larger context of North American modernism. Brooker's Library will be examined in order to establish his literary and philosophical sources which not only informed Brooker's interpretation of FitzGerald's work but, as I will argue, ultimately encouraged FitzGerald's move to abstraction. In particular, I will look at Brooker's unpublished manuscripts which reveal Brooker's idealized "literary" vision of FitzGerald and his work as an intuitive and dedicated artist, who becomes a symbol for humankind's creative energy.

This thesis will not be confined to one methodology; but rather be contextualist in approach. I will make use of documented literary and philosophical sources using the books in Brooker's Library which are marked in the text in his hand, with notations in the back fly-leaf. Other primary source documents such as manifestoes, contemporary exhibition catalogues and records, exhibition reviews, newspaper and magazine articles will be examined in order to contextualize further Brooker's and FitzGerald's response. The evaluation of the relationship between Brooker and FitzGerald will be supported by the use of diaries, letters, unpublished notes and manuscripts.

Quotations from the literary sources in Brooker's Library will be limited to passages which he himself has sidelined, underscored or check-marked (sometimes a combination of all three) with one exception. In 1920 Brooker read The Education of Henry Adams, possibly borrowed from the public library or a friend. Although this book is not in Brooker's Library he wrote: "I know of no book I have yet read that is calculated to change my whole mental life, as I feel sure this will do."¹ Subsequent diaries are full of

references to Adams and the book's content. He re-read the book and made copious notes from it.² In chapter II I will explore the ramifications of this text in the light of Brooker's concept of the Virgin Mary as a creative force in the universe.

In order to establish how Brooker and FitzGerald responded in their work to European modernism, I will include a formalist comparative analysis of artworks in Chapter I. In addition I will offer a contextual reading of Brooker's Sounds Assembling, 1928 and FitzGerald's Abstract: Green and Gold, 1954 which will acknowledge the predominant theological and literary basis for Brooker's vision of modernism. This thesis will postulate that Brooker's literary and theological vision contributed significantly to the content of FitzGerald's abstract painting Abstract: Green and Gold. An examination of Brooker family letters, notes, and correspondence with a family member will firmly establish that Abstract: Green and Gold was in essence a tribute to Brooker's spiritual and philosophical ideas. Furthermore, in Chapter III this thesis will posit that both Brooker and FitzGerald envisaged a redemptive role for their works Sounds Assembling and Abstract: Green and Gold through their beliefs in a hermetic spiritual content which is capable of evoking an enhanced consciousness in the viewer.

This introductory chapter will begin by establishing the close connections which existed between Brooker and FitzGerald and the early influence each artist had on the other's work. I will summarize the evidence of European modernism in both artists' work and introduce the external sources for that modernist vision as it matured. I will conclude this chapter by examining the state of research on Brooker and FitzGerald in order to establish the background of the relationship of the two artists as it is presently understood within the context of Canadian modernism

Bertram Brooker, 1888-1955, was an eclectic artist who experimented in his technique, style and subject matter. Living in the hub of Toronto society from 1921 until his death, he was an advertising executive, and he devoted just as much time to his writing and music. Lionel LeMoine FitzGerald, 1890-1956, was an artist who logically and methodically pursued his art until each question or problem he set himself was resolved. He was the principal of the Winnipeg Art School. (Fig. 1). Eventually finding a way to devote his whole time to drawing and painting, he worked in semi-isolation in Winnipeg, on the prairies. Despite their differences in temperament, outlook and lifestyle, when they met in the summer of 1929, a close bond developed between the two men.

This rapport is not only evident in their correspondence,³ but it is reflected almost immediately in their work, through the mutual respect they had for each other's drawing and painting. Dennis Reid states: "Brooker was profoundly influenced by FitzGerald's art...", noting that Williamson's Garage, 1927, is a typical example of the Winnipeg artist's work at about the time of their meeting.⁴ FitzGerald already had a strong sense of formal values which he had built upon at the Art Students League in New York in the winter of 1921-22. Brooker temporarily gave up the abstractions he had been painting since the mid 1920s, and turned to the visible world for his subject matter. But he was not happy with his first results. In 1929 he wrote to FitzGerald, "so far its effect has been that I have become perhaps too realistic...but I hope to grow out of that to a bigger appreciation of form - particularly".⁵ It is here that we see the first seeds of Brooker's influence on FitzGerald: the danger of being "too realistic", and not realizing the full potential use of form. And while Reid acknowledges Brooker's early impact on FitzGerald: "FitzGerald responded with warmth and respect, and in his last years even tried his hand at a few abstractions - more than twenty years after Brooker's first encouragement!",⁶ one must remember that paintings such as Abstraction: Green and Gold, 1954 are integral to FitzGerald's oeuvre and as such reflect aspects of FitzGerald's personal response to

Brooker and modernism. An examination of his drawings after the time of their meeting in July is significant, for they demonstrate that his response was more immediate. A comparison of FitzGerald's earlier work Williamson's Garage, 1927 and later drawings by FitzGerald and Brooker confirms that response, (figs. 2,3,4.). Detail is controlled; textures are treated with the same uniformity; line is simplified; tonal value becomes more coherent. A watershed can be seen in FitzGerald's drawings and paintings in 1929.⁷ In a letter of 13th June 1931, FitzGerald himself wrote to Brooker, referring to his painting Doc Snider's House:

The large winter picture is finished and I am almost tempted to say that it has some satisfying qualities....You will be interested in [it] at any rate because it is a little more unified than some of the more recent ones in the last two or three years....At the moment, I have decided to spend most of the holidays, painting, rather than working in pencil, hoping that a steady spell of work with color will assist me to a greater appreciation of form and the means to express it.⁸

FitzGerald's phrase "greater appreciation of form", almost identical to Brooker's written six months earlier, demonstrates how close their thinking had become by this time.

Ann Davis has noted the changes between preparatory sketches and finished works, including Composition for Doc Snider's House, 1928, and Doc Snider's House, 1931, and others which straddle the 1929 date. These changes which affirm those described above can, in my opinion, be attributed to Brooker's influence. Sandra Shaul, in her discussion of "one of the most fruitful periods of FitzGerald's career, 1929 to 1931,...the focus for understanding his initial development of abstract art"⁹, has drawn attention to FitzGerald's diary at this time which expresses his concern with the balance of reality with abstraction.¹⁰ She has not attempted, however, to draw connections with Brooker.

It is generally acknowledged that two important things happened to FitzGerald within the twelve months between 1929 and 1930. The sequence was important: first FitzGerald met Brooker and second he made his comprehensive trip to Chicago and New York in the summer of 1930. Here FitzGerald saw modern European art, and contemporary developments in American art for only the second time and with the added stimulus of Brooker's ideas.¹¹ Brooker had also been making business trips to major American cities since he joined the staff of Marketing Magazine in Toronto in 1921, including trips to New York which became more frequent after 1924, when he became its editor and publisher. Whenever possible he took time to see exhibitions of European and American modern art, often describing them to FitzGerald in his letters. Thus the sequence of meeting Brooker is critical in that it no doubt may have conditioned some of FitzGerald's responses.

Brooker and FitzGerald's relationship was one of mutual respect, of comprehension and admiration for each other's work. However, ideas are not discussed at great length in their correspondence, for FitzGerald was not comfortable writing and found more pleasure and a greater participation in their long talks.¹² Brooker nevertheless continued to keep him informed on the Toronto art scene, sending "photographs and clippings" in his letters.¹³ This mutual support was very welcome to both: to FitzGerald because of his artistic isolation in Winnipeg, to Brooker because of the growing sense of abandonment which he felt in his pursuit of abstraction, even from his friends Lawren Harris and Arthur Lismer who had initially encouraged him in his painting endeavors.

The fact that Brooker had been aware of European modern art movements from as early as 1913¹⁴ whereas FitzGerald's earliest contacts made in 1922 in New York were not firmly consolidated until his second trip in 1930 is significant. Although both were

looking for a vehicle to express their ideas in painting and drawing that would be relevant to the fast-changing times of the 1920s and shared an interest in formal concerns which led to their exploration of European modernism, they never abandoned their close link with their time and place, drawing from the direct experience of their Canadian environment. Brooker wrote in the Yearbook of the Arts in Canada, 1929:

The artist in Canada, as elsewhere, is a sensitive receiving-station on which these concerns with mechanization impinge. His scene and his neighbors - the subjects of his art - are affected by them. They must be assimilated into the unification of experience which he attempts.¹⁵

A few months later FitzGerald wrote in his diary of his feeling that

the move today is rather a swing towards an inspiration from nature and a greater sense of unity....The picture a living thing, one great thought made up of many details but all subordinated to the whole.¹⁶

Brooker and FitzGerald shared the conviction that it was possible to produce works of great unity and harmony whilst drawing on these disparate sources of European modernist form and the experience of their own environment.

Evidence of European modernism is apparent in both artists' work. In early works their use of modernist pictorial elements demonstrate an eclectic and superficial awareness of the European activity. However, in mature works this modernist vocabulary is incorporated within the Canadian experience indicating a re-interpretation of European ideas, possibly (in the case of Kandinsky, and of the Futurists) originating from their manifestoes. Brooker's and FitzGerald's appropriation of European modernism is, however, coupled with a strong commitment to a Canadian context and results in works of strength and originality.

An examination of the books and papers in the Bertram Brooker Collection, deposited at the University of Manitoba, reveals a third important factor amongst the external sources which informed Brooker's modernist work and, inevitably, the work of FitzGerald. Brooker had built a library of approximately three hundred and fifty books. He began collecting books before he left England in 1905, and, besides his collection of paintings and drawings, they were amongst his most cherished possessions.¹⁷ Besides compiling lists of "Books That Have Influenced Me", Brooker made copious markings in these books, and noted in the back fly-leaf relevant comments with page numbers for his further reference. Occasionally the notes carry several different dates, indicating a return to the same books over and over again. Some of the books that he returned to most frequently were those by Henri Bergson. He had studied at great length Bergson's Creative Evolution and The Two Sources of Morality and Religion (original pub. in English 1911). Brooker's editions are dated 1944, 1954 respectively.

Brooker's unpublished manuscripts reflect these literary influences and reveal Brooker's idealized literary vision of both FitzGerald and his work. For Brooker the artist is a receptive, intuitive, dedicated creator, and as such FitzGerald's drawing is interpreted by Brooker as a symbol of the creative energy of the universe. Thus, FitzGerald became an inspiration for Brooker,¹⁸ a step in his personal spiritual quest, which would help him resolve the "mystery of life" through his painting and writing. This situation is clarified by the fact that Brooker saw himself primarily as a writer¹⁹ and frequently viewed his painting as a step in the process of clarifying ideas in preparation for writing.²⁰

At this point, in order to contextualize the argumentation in my thesis, I will review the current state of research on Bertram Brooker and LeMoine FitzGerald. During the last two years there has been a strong revival of interest in both Brooker and FitzGerald. In 1988 a conference was held on Bertram Brooker, to mark his centenary. The papers

presented at the conference were published in Provincial Essays. As Dennis Reid points out in his introduction "none have ever come to grips with more than an aspect of his life" and the purpose of the conference was "to begin the synthesis of our fragmented interpretations and evaluations of his contribution to Canadian Culture."²¹ Papers were delivered on the topics of Brooker's modernism, his early paintings, his plays, his poetry, and his fiction. And still, as was perhaps expected, as many questions were raised, as were answered. Although Brooker's unpublished manuscripts were referred to frequently throughout the conference, especially by Joyce Zemans, a specific study of those works has not been published; nor has a study been made of the books Brooker owned and read. FitzGerald was only mentioned in the role of early mentor, which was defined by Reid in his monograph of 1973, or as the recipient of letters from Brooker.

In 1988, Michael Parke-Taylor curated an exhibition for the Winnipeg Art Gallery and produced an exhibition catalogue entitled, In Seclusion with Nature: The Later Work of L. LeMoine FitzGerald, 1942 to 1956. As part of the catalogue Parke-Taylor published two useful appendices: the unedited version of Lawren Harris's article FitzGerald's Recent Work, originally published in Canadian Art, (Vol. 3, November 1945); and a radio broadcast of FitzGerald's "Painters of the Prairie", Canadian Broadcasting Corporation Midwest Network, 1, December 1954. However, in the exhibition catalogue the relationship of FitzGerald and Brooker is played down. Parke-Taylor argues, in contrast, the importance of Lawren Harris's role in promoting FitzGerald's work during the early 1940s when he was spending the summers working at Bowen Island in British Columbia. This thesis will refute Parke-Taylor's position that Harris was influential in the development of FitzGerald's 1930 abstracted landscape sketches and establish the pre-eminence of Brooker's role. It will also address Parke-Taylor's and Elizabeth Wylie's²² implication that Brooker was a Theosophist and show evidence to demonstrate instead, Brooker's Christian belief.

As has already been noted, a great deal of significant work resulted from the Brooker conference, Bertram Brooker: A Critical Assessment. I want now to turn to Ramsey Cook's paper "Nothing Less Than a New Theory of Art and Religion': The Birth of a Modernist Culture in Canada." Of central importance are his four definitions or "descriptions" of Canadian Modernism, and affirmation of the Canadian origins of the history of spiritualism. Cook quotes cultural historian, Frederick Karl, "The common thread of anyone who yearns to be Modern, whatever the medium is the ability to refurbish the language of his art, whether through disruption and new formations, or through colours, tones, sound sequences, visual effects, neologisms."²³ Cook's four "descriptions" of Canadian modernism are as follows: a work of art is a reality in its own right; has an inner content which is an expression of the artist's soul; has a higher purpose; insists on the validity of intuition, dreams and mysticism.²⁴

Cook traces the Canadian origins of spiritualism including the role of Dr. Richard Maurice Bucke, superintendent of the London Insane Asylum, and author of Cosmic Consciousness, 1901, which he described as "a new theory of art and religion....It will supply a new theory of the universe and of man's relation to the external universe..."²⁵ Bucke became Walt Whitman's doctor and biographer. Bucke was not isolated in his effort to come to a spiritual understanding of man's place in the cosmos, using a mixture of science and mysticism. Cook lists Bucke's friend, Edward Carpenter, Madame Helena Blavatsky, Claude Bragdon, W.B. Yeats and P.D. Ouspensky. The latter, Cook notes, used Bucke's idea of 'cosmic consciousness' as part of his explanation of the fourth dimension, in his book Tertium Organum.²⁶ Cook continues, "...this new mysticism, Theosophy in a broad sense, contributed directly to the idea of art as a 'kind of religion',²⁷ an aspect of modernism that is particularly important in Canada."²⁸ We know that Brooker had read Whitman, Carpenter, Blavatsky, Yeats, and Ouspensky and was aware of

Bucke's work, including Cosmic Consciousness which he had read. Brooker was interested in these ideas as a result of his mystical experience, but as this thesis will establish, he did not espouse Theosophy as a belief system.

Joyce Zemans' paper, "First Fruits: The World and Spirit Paintings,"²⁹ discusses in depth the emergence of Brooker's first paintings, an envelope of very small tempera abstract works on paper, labelled, 'Earliest Experiments' by the artist's wife. Zemans has dated them 1923-25.³⁰ Zemans has carefully and thoroughly traced Brooker's personal philosophy that "integrated his continuing belief in man's spiritual nature with his belief in an ordered living cosmos...Brooker's solution was to posit spiritual leadership in the person of the artist. Inspired by Blake and Nietzsche he believed that it was the artist who would rescue the world from atheism and from materialism..."³¹ References in Brooker's unpublished autobiography, "Years," to "Thus Spoke Zarathustra" and Nietzsche's *Ultrahomo* occur as early as 1908. Zemans draws attention to Nietzsche's definition of leadership: "A seer, a purposer, a creator, a future itself, and a bridge to the future..."³² Zemans stresses that Brooker, like Blake, saw artistic endeavors in all the arts as a response to that leadership role to seek truth, channelling the creative energy that Blake recognized as divine. This thesis supports Zemans' position and will argue a redemptive role for both Brooker's and FitzGerald's art.

Zemans has suggested that Brooker's description of E.E. Cummings' modern 'metaphysical verse' might be applied to Brooker's own painting of 1925-1930. Brooker writes of a "queer fourth-dimensional quantity...poetry that expresses a very special kind of emotion resulting from the intellectual rearrangement of facts and concepts in new patterns....[such metaphysical verse] inevitably tends towards the mathematical and the musical."³³ This thesis will establish that Brooker's own poetry reflected Boccioni's manifesto, "Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto" 1910, both in style and content.

Zemans quotes from Brooker's essay, 'The Four Dimensions' : "The secret must be in perpetual movement in harmony which is the equivalent of rest....It must be sought in another dimension." Zemans points out that it would be the mid-1930s before Lawren Harris began to explore the "abstract consequences of this new dimensionality," even though it was an accepted Theosophical concept. "Brooker, however, had, by the early 1920's, begun to seek in poetry, prose and abstract painting the means of conveying the full power of his spiritual goals."³⁴ Zemans stresses that, because Brooker rejected the more easily-read symbolism of Theosophy, his "non-objective paintings of these years posed problems for both the knowledgeable and for the general public in Toronto in 1927. The paintings speak to the cosmic and the primal rather than to Harris' more easily read symbolic images derived from nature."³⁵ Zemans carries her argument a step further:

In non-objective works like Toccata and Alleluia Brooker created an abstract artistic expression that was unique in Canada. Echoing the first-generation American artists' interest in Whitman, in a spiritual or mystic statement, and in the fourth dimension, Brooker also sought to develop a formal vocabulary capable of expressing the universal life force. Though he too abstracted from natural forms his non-objective solution differed from the more direct landscape orientation and consistent respect for the picture plane apparent in the work of Marsden Hartley, Arthur Dove and Georgia O'Keeffe. Stylistically, especially in the search to conceive the experience of dimensionality, Brooker's work bears an affinity with the work of Kathleen Munn and with that of some of the Russian avant-garde painters...³⁶

Zemans reminds us that Frederick Housser, Lawren Harris and Brooker all thought that Canadian art should be different from the art of Europe or the art of the United States. For Harris the new art lay in the northern spirit and the Canadian soil. Brooker, however, found Harris' nationalism restrictive. He wrote:

Art in any country or time...should crystallize into harmonious and unified wholes the experience of people living at a certain time and in certain conditions...³⁷

Zemans concluded that Brooker's approach to modernism, to the interrelatedness of the arts, to nationalism in art, to Theosophy as a belief system, differed radically from that of his colleagues.³⁸ Although this thesis supports Zemans' conclusion in general, I will posit a redemptive role for Brooker's art, establishing his belief in Christianity and his desire to mediate a spiritual content in his work.

Anton Wagner's paper: "God Crucified upside Down": The Search for Dramatic Form and Meaning", found that Brooker's dramatic works clearly reflected and helped to develop his religious and philosophical ideas. They were orientated towards popular culture through his writing for popular theatre and the silent film.³⁹ However, Wagner finds that the greatest anomaly in Brooker's dramatic work lies between his call to cultural nationalism in "When We Awake" in the 1929 Yearbook, and the fact that "virtually none of his dramatic works depict Canadian characters, settings or subject matter". Wagner goes as far as saying that Brooker's other-worldly religious/philosophic quest made him, by his own admission, "a stranger - a pilgrim through a country which meant little or nothing".⁴⁰ This thesis will address this issue by examining his unpublished manuscripts in which he describes his philosophical method of stripping away the outer aspects of heredity, environment and culture to reveal the inner self. Brooker's determination to find the essence of himself and his Canadian environment, and his refusal to use traditional symbols or signs should therefore be seen as an aspect of Canadian modernism.

The strong Canadian characteristic of the need to identify with the terrain and the landscape in order to establish a Canadian identity is one that Brooker struggled against on many different levels. Charles Comfort was his only ally when he voiced his opposition to the "narrow nationalism" of the emerging Canadian Group of Painters as it assumed the

established Group of Seven philosophy. If Brooker, working from an urban ethos, had been able to accept the Canadian soil and the Northern spirit as part of the Canadian psyche, (as artists have done in the last three decades) he might have completed his spiritual quest. But his uncertainty and ambivalence were shared by Harris and other contemporaries, and has become part of the Canadian search for identity. His growing distrust of the Group of Seven as establishment contributed to an emerging Canadian awareness.⁴¹ This thesis will argue Brooker's significant contribution to the cultural discourse which has evolved since the 1960s in the work of Canadian theorists such as Northrop Frye and George Woodcock.

Birk Sproxton, in his paper, ' "The Subjective Underground": The Stream of Consciousness,' takes the position that Brooker's poetry is not only central to his work, but enlarges our understanding of his fiction, essays, paintings and drawings. Brooker's idea of the stream of consciousness informs his poems. In discussing his heightened awareness Sproxton quotes from Brooker's 1325 "Free Prose" entries:

We do not write for posterity in the same sense as the older poets - so-called finished works of art - not concerned with ending anything - only starting - not personal glory or a great name - but to contribute to a new movement.⁴²

This shows, Sproxton feels, that Brooker was aware that he was part of a paradigm shift. Movement and activity interested him. He was not concerned, "to present a picture of objective life, but to get at the subjective underground of it. It is a process of exploration rather than presentation....Must be fluid, because all is passing."⁴³ Brooker, Sproxton concludes, in his art and writing is clearly a modernist.⁴⁴ Sproxton's position affirms the findings of this thesis.

Sherrill Grace in her paper, "Figures in a Ground: The Craft of Fiction", rejects Brooker as a modernist fiction-writer. Brooker, Grace observes, writes within

a realist conception of language and form, believing that the word is the thing it signifies, that language provides a transparent window on the world, and that a novel can be read empathetically as a direct expression, in language, of reality and truth. The result is an awkward placing of figures, who are more than two-dimensional characters, on a ground that neither produces nor contains them.⁴⁵

Grace notes that modernism is often identified with abstraction, but in modernist literature it must entail two things: first, there must be "a critical awareness...of the nature of language as a signifying system", and second, "an equally stylised presentation of figure and ground"⁴⁶ -- a ground from which the figure cannot be separated. Grace's criticism can be levelled at Brooker's early cubist and futurist paintings, so it is worth quoting her at greater length.

What Brooker has done...is to employ the methods of romance, which involves a degree of overt abstraction, while at the same time attempting to create believable characters in credible (whether local or foreign) settings. As a result, in the novels his ideas are neither embodied in fully developed individuals nor argued out in the positions of allegorical character types or voices, and the settings are neither sufficiently detailed to ground realist characters nor sufficiently abstracted to provide convincing symbolic texture.⁴⁷

This thesis will demonstrate that Brooker's difficulty in integrating object and space was resolved through his pursuit of unity and form which he discussed at length with FitzGerald.

In his paper "Reluctant Modernist" David Arnason points out that much of Brooker's criticism - in the two Yearbooks, in his newspaper column, "The Seven Arts," and in several of his unpublished theoretical papers - is conservative and suspicious of the new modernist movement, by his own admission. He stresses that Brooker was not

alone in his response. Most early modernists amongst the intellectuals and artists of his time in Canada, and in America and Britain, expressed opinions which did not always reflect the aesthetic concerns of their art.⁴⁸

In "When We Awake," writes Arnason, Brooker argues for a strongly nationalistic approach to art, and deplores the critic who asserts that art must be judged by universal standards, feeling that they will not recognize Canadian art until "the country is presented to them, unified by the artists."⁴⁹ Most of Brooker's attack in this article is directed towards emerging modernist concerns. An attack, Arnason specifies, on the values of what Brooker calls, "the skepticism of a science-ridden age." However Brooker saw mechanization as precipitating a greater response to forms and rhythms. Resulting in, and Arnason quotes Brooker, "the modern revival of an overwhelming interest in "form" in painting (and a type of form based on cones, cylinders and circles)..." Arnason continues:

On the one hand he saw civilization on the edge of a new world and the artist, reacting intuitively, as civilization's guide. On the other, he saw another destruction of idealism, with art becoming increasingly individual, eccentric and fragmented. He felt that 'art consequently becomes devoid of "associational" values, lacks human interest, and in the end communicates nothing except to the few who happen to be "conditioned" ... as the artist himself.' He named the artists: Mondrian, Kandinsky, Man Ray, Epstein, Joyce, Gertrude Stein, T.S. Eliot, all the initiators of modernism. He called them the 'unintelligibles.'⁵⁰

Arnason's observations support this thesis that, for Brooker, FitzGerald represented that endangered idealism. His intuitive art retained those properties which Brooker . It were lacking in some modern art: "associational" values, human interest and the ability to communicate - all qualities which FitzGerald attempted to retain while exploring an abstract realism.

Arnason points out that Brooker was at the heart of Canadian intellectual life during the years 1925 to 1937. He concludes:

His critical positions represent the highest development of nineteenth-century mysticism, and because early modernism arrived not as that set of secure positions we postulate backwards but as a complex process of evolving attitudes and techniques, Brooker was able to participate in the movement while deploring many of its identifying features. His critical position was more theological than aesthetic, and while it informed the subject and the themes of his work, it cannot explain the radical formal properties of that work. Those must be derived from the work itself.

Brooker was one of our earliest practitioners of modern art, but the innate conservatism of his critical principles, which he maintained consistently until his death, meant that after his first fertile period, he did not develop as a modernist.⁵¹

It is with that first fertile period of Brooker's painting during the 1920s that this thesis is most concerned, in an attempt to explain "the radical formal properties of that work." Unlike Arnason's conclusion, I will show that although Brooker's theological critical position did inform the subject and themes of his work, it also contributed to those radical properties, for Brooker's affinity to Futurism came in part from reading Henri Bergson, a source he shared with Boccioni and the Futurists themselves.

Brooker's radical forms were derived from Futurism, from Kandinsky and from the Russian Suprematists. In the present studies on Brooker and FitzGerald the ties with Russian art, and Futurism in particular, have only been suggested briefly in general terms. There have been few references to specific artists or to European writing, and no reference to specific artworks. This will be a major focus of the thesis.

Prior to the Brooker conference, the most comprehensive study of Bertram Brooker was by Dennis Reid, in the National Gallery of Canada's Canadian Artists Monograph series: Bertram Brooker. Reid outlines Brooker's early life, his career in

advertising and his first ventures into creative writing. He documents Brooker's interest in Fred Housser's book A Canadian Art Movement, particularly for its comments on the nature of spiritual growth. Reid discusses The Arts and Letters Club, and Brooker's first exhibitions of abstract art. He suggests Kandinsky as a possible source for painting musical themes. He discusses the Societe Anonyme exhibition of 1927 which was brought to Toronto at the instigation of Harris who was a friend of Katherine Dreier, the society's president. But Reid does not discuss the content of the exhibition. This thesis will examine Brooker's response to Kandinsky and the Societe Anonyme exhibition at length, positing a significant Kandinsky influence.

The most important contribution Reid makes towards establishing Brooker's active interest in European modernism is his documentation of Brooker's appropriation of Raymond Duchamp-Villon's sculpture, Baudelaire, 1911. Reid notes that at least two of Brooker's 1927 works show its influence, including The Dawn of Man.⁵² This thesis will explore this connection at greater length looking at the writing of Baudelaire, and their mutual role as poet-priests

There are three published monographs on FitzGerald. All are catalogues of exhibitions originating from the Winnipeg Art Gallery. The first, from 1958, has an introduction by Ferdinand Eckhardt which includes an analytical discussion of FitzGerald's paintings and drawings: his brush and pen-strokes; his use of colour and light which infuses the still-life objects with an ethereal symbolic content. Of greatest use in this catalogue is a selection of writings from FitzGerald's previously unpublished notes on art.

The most comprehensive study on FitzGerald is the 1978 retrospective exhibition and catalogue by Ann Davis and Patricia Bovey: Lionel LeMoine FitzGerald, The Development of an Artist. In its opening chapter Bovey discusses in some

biographical detail, FitzGerald the man: his family, his life, his schooling and training, his marriage and the jobs he held. Patricia Bovey has also written a chapter on the European influences on FitzGerald's work. She discusses the effects of the English painters such as Turner, Constable and the Pre-Raphaelites, Holman Hunt and William Rossetti. She describes FitzGerald's exposure to the Barbizon School and Millet's prints which hung in his schoolroom. Using reproductions of their work, Bovey also compares FitzGerald's work to the Impressionists, to Monet and Sisley. She discusses at some length the work of Cezanne, Renoir, and the pointillist Georges Seurat.

Ann Davis examines FitzGerald the artist, situating his oeuvre in a North American context. She looks at his work from the 1921-22 period during which he spent five months in New York at the Art Students League. She discusses the influence of his teachers Kenneth Hayes Miller and Boardman Robinson. Davis deals with FitzGerald's contact with Charles Sheeler and the American Precisionists, and the period after 1924 when FitzGerald began teaching at the Winnipeg School of Art. There he worked and sketched with its American principal, C.K. Gebhardt, who worked in an anecdotal precisionist style. Davis documents FitzGerald's visit to the Chicago Art Institute in 1930.

Bovey's small section on "Abstraction and the Russians" makes only very general comparisons with their work: "Some of FitzGerald's abstracts, especially the coloured pencil ones executed in 1952-53, contain elements akin to aspects of Russian suprematism and non-objectivism."⁵³ Bovey mentions the course of twelve lectures which FitzGerald gave on the history of Russian art in 1927, at the Winnipeg School of Art. She quotes Malevich and FitzGerald in their mutual concern for the creation of form through the use of colour. Bovey also draws a comparison between Rodchenko and FitzGerald pointing out their interest in geometric shapes, achieved through the use of a compass and ruler. The comparisons, however, are general, and there are no visual

comparisons. The Russian influence is not mentioned in her conclusion. At no time are the Futurists mentioned, or the Cubo-Futurist Russian art. This thesis will posit a strong affinity with Russian artists Kandinsky and Kliun, making visual comparisons to establish FitzGerald's knowledge of Russian Cubo-Futurist art.

The third monograph is a catalogue raisonnée of the printed works of FitzGerald by Helen Coy: FitzGerald as Printmaker. FitzGerald's prints do not relate directly to this thesis. However, Coy publishes for the first time a short autobiography by FitzGerald which he attached to his application for a Guggenheim fellowship in 1941.

Sandra Shaul's exhibition and catalogue produced for the Edmonton Art Gallery in 1982, The Modern Image. Cubism and the Realist Tradition, devotes a chapter to FitzGerald confirming his interest in French and American modernism. Called "The Search for Structural Unity in Abstract Art" it examines the same sources that were the concern of Davis and Bovey: the North American Precisionists, including Sheeler and Gebhardt; and the Europeans, Cézanne and Seurat.

A short two-page catalogue was written by Patricia Bovey in 1975 for an interesting exhibition which also originated from the Winnipeg Art Gallery: Lionel LeMoine FitzGerald Bertram Brooker. Their Drawings. Nothing new emerged in the written material, but a new juxtaposition of their drawings throws light on their interest in abstraction in which they incorporate a cubist structure with a futurist dynamism.

Pat Bovey has written of FitzGerald: "By virtue of geography, temperament and his own stylistic tendencies, FitzGerald stood alone in Canadian art."⁵⁴ As a result of his independence and isolation FitzGerald has been treated in most Canadian art histories in conjunction with David Milne and Emily Carr, because of their similar isolated situation and

independent development. These similarities have been stressed, and the convenience of grouping them together has resulted in an abbreviated version of their development. This can be seen in both Dennis Reid's and Charles Hill's publications.

Ann Davis has acknowledged that FitzGerald's oeuvre has eluded extensive study:

Probably the reasons for this paucity...are the problems inherent in such a project. His work is such that it does not fall into neat packages of styles and periods...FitzGerald himself hated categories, preferring to change as soon as he created a system....his styles are cyclical, reappearing, in subtly modified forms, years or even decades after their initiation.⁵⁵

The study of Brooker's work raises similar problems. Russell Harper has said of Brooker:

He was an innovator and experimental painter, jumping so rapidly from one interest to another that he could not completely assimilate any particular phase, or advance very far in the development of any individual aspect; on the other hand he demonstrated the possibilities of new dimensions in painting...⁵⁶

The Brooker conference began the synthesis of those interests and our fragmented interpretations of them. This thesis will attempt to relate some of those fragments by clarifying the reasons which lay behind the stylistic changes. It will provide evidence of the links amongst European modernism, Brooker's literary vision, which influenced Brooker's "reading" of FitzGerald's work, and the shared Canadian context which directly resulted in "new dimensions in painting."

CHAPTER I

BROOKER'S AND FITZGERALD'S INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES TO EUROPEAN MODERNISM WITHIN A CANADIAN AND NORTH AMERICAN CONTEXT.

Brooker and FitzGerald received little or no formal art training, the latter spending only five months at The Art Students League in New York.¹ However, both men were aware of and sensitive to modern European and American art and its development. In this chapter, I will examine European modernism within the Canadian context of Toronto and Winnipeg in the period between the 1913 New York Armory Show, and the end of the 1920s. Broadening the field, I will look at Brooker's and FitzGerald's experience of modern European art, as far as it is known, when each visited New York in the 1920s and early 1930s. Through a chronological examination of exhibitions and installations which were immediately available to them, or which we know they saw, I will establish their individual responses to specific European artists and their work. Chapter I will be restricted to the assimilation of European modernism and the use of its form or vocabulary to express that Canadian experience.

As David Amason has pointed out, in Canada early modernism did not arrive "as a set of secure positions."² In Europe, Cubism was documented by artists Jean Metzinger and Albert Gleizes, in Du Cubisme, (pub. 1912); Futurism was widely publicized through the manifestoes and writings of artist Umberto Boccioni and writer and poet Fillippo Tommaso Marinetti. Futurist exhibitions and performances were notorious. In Canada, as Brooker noted, European modernism "percolated through" the artistic communities "indirectly and rather vaguely." In such a context Brooker's effort to understand the

modern European movements, and his belief that an appreciation of them was essential to Canadian art is significant.³

In Brooker's 1929 Yearbook editorial, "When We Awake!", he discusses the unique problems which confront the contemporary Canadian artist. He speaks of the lack of cultural, geographical and historical unity in Canada;⁴ the temptation to hurry off to Europe or the States; and the possibility of "turning sour and cynical in the shop or the counting-house where he is forced to work."⁵ He notes that European artists,

in their older-established countries, were quicker to react to mechanistic influences and motifs as constituting material or suggesting methods from which new art-forms might arise.⁶

The Canadian artist, on the other hand, Brooker writes, is slower to react and finds little support when he does. Brooker blames much on the lack of "the living sustenance" of an audience, on the ill-informed Canadian critics, who are unfamiliar with modern European art and so tend to judge the art of one time and place by the standards of another.⁷

SOURCES FOR MODERNISM: BOOKS AND PERIODICALS

In looking at the accessibility to modern European art in Canada during the early part of this century, I have found very little evidence of its existence in this country. European modernism seems to have been widely criticized, without having been widely available for examination. Thus Brooker's assessment appears to be accurate. However, many Canadians who wished to keep abreast of current British and European developments subscribed to The Studio. The similarity of the title "When We Awake" and The Studio's title "Is England Awakening?" for an introductory article in August 1926, suggests that Brooker read The Studio. It is certain that FitzGerald read The Studio, for articles from this magazine remain in the FitzGerald Collection.⁸ Three of these are on

Russian art. Their subjects are Icon Painting, the artist Iacovleff, and the Exhibition of Russian Art at the Salon d'Automne in Paris 1907, organized in part by Serge Diaghilev, which included the work of Igor Grabar and Nicholas Roerich. These were probably a help to FitzGerald in 1927 when he planned a series of twelve lectures on the history of Russian art at the Winnipeg School of Art.

An examination of The Studio between 1913, the year of the New York Armory Show, and 1927, when Brooker had his first exhibition of abstract paintings in Toronto, reveals no information on European abstract or non-objective painting. There are sporadic references to Post-Impressionist art, with reproductions, when works were purchased by British art galleries.⁹ British modernism is represented by occasional articles on the figurative work of Frank Brangwyn and, in 1926, of Laura Knight.¹⁰ The most modern images in The Studio during this time are to be found in other art-forms such as poster design, rug-weaving, in industrial art and in the design of stage sets and backdrops, (figs.5,6). The Studio also published articles on the work of Sergei Diaghilev, who invited prominent artists to design the backcloths for his ballets. Written by English, French and Russian authors, the articles are accompanied by reproductions, often in colour.¹¹ Diaghilev brought Russian artists such as Leon Bakst, Nathalie Gontcharova, Mikhail Larionov, Vladimir Polunin and Boris Anisfeld to the attention of European theatre-goers. After the Revolution in 1917, Diaghilev turned to artists in western Europe to "identify himself with the modern movement in painting."¹² Picasso, Braque, Derain and Picabia all painted backdrops for the Russian ballet.

One drop-scene by Polunin, reproduced in The Studio in 1925, may have been a source for Brooker. It bears a striking resemblance to one of Brooker's stage sets, with its overlapping partial circles in the foreground and series of concentric circles behind (figs.7,8). The organic concentric circles, each with its central plant or flower, have a

further affinity with Brooker's painting, Growth, c.1929 (fig.9). The central organic shape in Growth expands through concentric circles, depicting a movement through time in the fourth dimension, with a flower at its centre. Both of these works by Brooker will be discussed in greater detail in chapter two, in conjunction with the writing of Henri Bergson.

Leon Bakst's designs for scenery and costumes for the Russian Ballet, "Le Dieu Bleu," are reproduced in The Studio in 1913. The exotic costumes are decorated with bold, geometric designs in complementary colours in vivid combinations: red and green with purple; purple and yellow with blue. Bakst's painting and other Russian art may have become known to Canadian critics and Brooker through this route.¹³

Surprisingly there are very few art-books amongst the three hundred and fifty books in Brooker's library, and even fewer amongst FitzGerald's books. But it is nevertheless probable that much of Brooker and FitzGerald's understanding of European modernism was derived from books. For example, Christine Boyanoski has documented that both Brooker and Canadian artist Kathleen Munn were reading Sheldon Cheney's A Primer of Modern Art (pub. 1924) around 1925.¹⁴ Noteworthy amongst FitzGerald's papers is a review of British aesthete Roger Fry's Vision and Design (pub. 1920), indicating FitzGerald's knowledge of and interest in Fry's seminal work.¹⁵

An examination of Fry's "An Essay in Aesthetics" uncovers strong links between Fry's discussion and FitzGerald's work. FitzGerald, like Fry, included within the term "aesthetics" the spiritual, emotional content of his painting. He rejected Brooker's use of the word "mystical," even though FitzGerald conceded, in a discussion with Brooker, that they were speaking of the same thing.¹⁶ In the preparation of his notes for his series of lectures in 1927 on Russian art, FitzGerald examines Tolstoy's discussion of "What is Art,"

citing the same Tolstoy anecdote as Fry. For Tolstoy, Fry writes, art is the means of communicating emotions.¹⁷ FitzGerald concludes his excerpt from Tolstoy:

Art is a human activity, consisting in this, that one man consciously, by means of certain external signs, hands on to others feelings he has lived through, and that other people are infected by these feelings, and also experience them.¹⁸

Fry posits that art is an expression and a stimulus of the imaginative life, of which religion is a part:

...I think the artist might if he chose take a mystical attitude, and declare that the fullness and completeness of the imaginative life he leads may correspond to an existence more real and more important than any that we know of in mortal life.¹⁹

Despite FitzGerald's rejection of the word "mystical" around 1929 when he first met Brooker, it is the position of this thesis that FitzGerald's art became the expressive medium of a highly mystical content, falling well within the realm of Fry's prescribed European modernism in content and form.

In FitzGerald's correspondence with Irene Heywood Hemsworth and Brooker in the early 1940s, there is an increase in the expression of FitzGerald's feelings of a mystical or spiritual nature. Fry suggests that this development comes with experience and the growth of character, until it reflects the highest aspiration.²⁰ FitzGerald writes to Irene Heywood Hemsworth:

We can only develop an understanding of the great forces behind the organization of nature by endless searching the outer manifestations. And we can only know ourselves better and still better by this search....through the enlarged vision of the eternal wonders that surround us....I want to go on like the flower that contains the germ of a new life....I want to walk in the light that is never ending with open heart and open mind.²¹

FitzGerald's words reflect much of Fry's discussion. Fry discusses the artist's clearness of perception and pure vision which goes beyond the mental cataloguing of everyday life.

Fry writes:

...many things in nature, such as flowers, possess these two qualities in order and variety...and these objects do undoubtedly stimulate and satisfy that clear disinterested contemplation which is characteristic of the aesthetic attitude. But in our reaction to a work of art there is something more - there is the consciousness of purposeWe feel that he [the artist] has expressed something which was latent in us all the time, but which we never realized, that he has revealed us to ourselves in revealing himself.²²

Although Fry speaks through the experience of the viewer, the important elements of the discussion are the same: the deep contemplation which is so characteristic of FitzGerald and the aesthetic attitude; the overwhelming sense of purpose; the innate satisfaction afforded by the artist's expressive sense of order; a greater knowledge of oneself, stemming from the collective unconscious.

Within the described aesthetic responses of Fry and FitzGerald, one can find further affinities with Brooker's unpublished manuscript, Nine Words that Ruled the World, which will be discussed in Chapter III. FitzGerald's desire to continue working like the emerging germ of new life in a flower reiterates Brooker's view of FitzGerald as the epitome of the creative force of humankind and is reflected in Brooker's painting, Growth. In Brooker's new world order, man's cosmic consciousness will be awakened by the feeling man through the sensations he experiences. In Fry's words:

...those feelings [of a high intrinsic value] to which the name of the cosmic emotion has been...given find almost no place in life, but, since they seem to belong to certain very deep springs of our nature, do become of great importance in the arts.²³

Through painting both Brooker and FitzGerald strive to express their mystical or aesthetic feelings as will be seen in Brooker's Sounds Assembling, 1928, and FitzGerald's Abstract: Green and Gold, 1954.

One final point in Fry's writings which forms the basis of a linkage amongst FitzGerald's, Brooker's and Fry's concepts of modernism is the essential relationship between unity and form:

One chief aspect of order in a work of art is unity...if it lacks unity we cannot contemplate it in its entirety, but we shall pass outside it to other things necessary to complete its unity.

In a picture this unity is due to a balancing of the attractions of the eye about the central line of the picture. The result of this balance of attractions is that the eye rests willingly within the bounds of the picture.²⁴

When FitzGerald was in New York in 1930, studying the five Cézannes in the Metropolitan Museum, he wrote in his diary:

The outstanding quality in all these big things which is being more and more impressed on me, is the terrific sense of unity, everything being thought of to keep the eye within the picture and still it remains a thing of apparent ease.²⁵

Brooker too shared this view. In his syndicated column, "The Seven Arts" (3 December 1928), Brooker attempted to bridge the gap between the artist and the public caused by the public's rejection of modernism. Brooker explained the importance of the artist's sense of unity and clarity of vision:

What the artist must seek is an enlargement of experience - the discovery of new ways of seeing things...the artist's function - to take all the subtle impressions and relationships that present themselves before him and...unify them, giving them a life of their own even in separation from the objects which originally possessed them....In the briefest words - the artists sees in wholes what the laymen sees in parts.²⁶

In his discussion of the formal content of a picture, Fry divides the "geometrical texture" which satisfies our demand for sensuous order and variety from the emotional elements of design which arouse a response to those emotions. Fry lists five elements: the rhythm of line which is a record of the artist's gesture; mass, and the communication of inertia or movement; space and its relationship to the human body and the gravitation of the earth; light and shade, and their power to manipulate feeling; and colour and its ability to evoke mood. Fry suggests the possibility of another element which is relevant to the dimensional aspect of Brooker's work, and is of particular interest in the depth perception of FitzGerald's work. Fry suggests that this sixth element is perhaps a compound of mass and space: "it is that of the inclination of the eye of a plane, whether it is impending over or leaning away from us." ²⁷ The orientation of planes in space can be traced from Cezanne, through Braque to the Russian Constructivists and the work of Antoine Pevsner and Naum Gabo, and will be explored later in this chapter.

It has been established that Brooker was aware of the work of American modernist Sheldon Cheney and had read A Primer of Modern Art (pub. 1924.). In the chapter on "Abstraction and Mysticism," Cheney discusses the link between the abstract and the mystic which goes beyond the surface aspect of geometrical relationships. The majority, Cheney believes, consider abstraction to be an expression of both the mathematical and the spiritual or cosmic. But, Cheney writes:

Whether the painter feels that he is, in 'turning abstract', instinctively expressing what is only a mechanical-physical order, or is proceeding in accord with a mystical aesthetic philosophy - apperceiving a deeper meaning in objects and relations than those explainable mechanically through senses and intellect - in either case, he is furthering a main advance of modern art: the march towards abstraction.²⁸

In a 1929 "Seven Arts" column, Brooker attempts to explain these geometrical relationships and their link with spiritual or cosmic ideas:

Because my own drawings and paintings are largely geometrical I am frequently questioned by people who are thoroughly puzzled by the entire modern trend in this direction....

[The "modernistic" artist] like the scientist...is concerned with the geometry of the universe, and not with its physical appearance....[This] is a very definite modern trend which finds expression in a thousand different ways. It constitutes the present "direction" of consciousness. We may not like it, but we cannot ignore it....

Our science, our art and our literature are becoming stripped of human values and associations. At one extreme are those who simply play with relationships as with pawns on a chessboard; at the other are a few who attempt to build with geometric forms and equations a new conception of the universe and of life, denuded of superstition and transcending human frailty.²⁹

It is clear that Brooker's writing and his abstract art embody many of Cheney's ideas. Cheney writes of the mystic element in modern art:

...the abstract form fixed in the picture is a direct revelation of cosmic architecture, of the rhythmic order of the continuing universe....The order created by the artists is an echo -rather an implicit part - of first creation, a manifestation proceeding from the center of all that is, a pulsation in little of the rhythm self-perpetuated at life's source.

Formal expression, at its intensest and most significant, embraces, in this view, cosmic and spiritual revelation: the artist touches upon final unknowable truth about life, crystallizes a fragment of the beauty and order that lie beyond the field of sense knowing and intellectual explanation.³⁰

Cheney points out that in Realistic art the surface of nature is reproduced without the hidden universal value in the object or the cosmic emotion of the artist. In Expressionist art, Cheney writes, these two hidden values come together and the painting becomes a reality of the spirit rather than a reality of outward nature. The picture's vitality, Cheney continues, is determined physically by its material and means; "flat field, spatial sense, voluminous organization, dynamic colors." The picture exhibits the laws of original creation and the rhythm of celestial movement: "In its finite way, it echoes...the

harmonious order of the infinite."³¹ Cheney's essay affirms the ideas expressed by Fry and Brooker, and incorporates much of the content found in FitzGerald's late abstract work.

In Brooker's Library are The Masters of Modern Art by Walter Pach (pub. 1924, 3rd printing 1929), The Future of Futurism by John Rodker (pub. 1927), and Modern French Painters by Maurice Raynal (pub. 1928). There are very few of Brooker's markings in these books, so it is difficult to assess his reaction to their content. Walter Pach, an American expatriot artist and critic, had a close association with modern European art, for it was Pach who helped to organize the Armory Show from Paris in 1912. He was the European agent for the Association of American Painters and Sculptors, which had backed the Armory Show. Pach was a member of the avant-garde Leo and Gertrude Stein circle. He performed tasks which involved the selection and shipment of works.³² But surprisingly, Pach's book offered little theoretical information on European Modernism. His book is compiled from a series of articles which appeared in The Freeman, in New York during 1923.

As a resource, Pach's book offered little help to Canadian readers such as Brooker. Pach's chapter on Cubism is not as clear and succinct as Fry's essay. His writing is fragmented, a mixture of opinion and theoretical analysis. But what little theory is included, is not always understood. Pach acknowledges the relationship of perception and conception to Cubism but, in the same sentence, traces a classic lineage back to Renoir, instead of Cezanne. He writes:

Yesterday it was Renoir himself, a noble and joyous classic; and today (I am aware that this is mere assertion, but where is there proof in matters of art - unless we have time to await the verdict of posterity, and can accept that as proof?), the classic line has been carried on by these men who have found the Cubistic formula for expressing the relation of the thing as seen to the thing as known.³³

It is difficult to imagine how Pach came to see Renoir as a pivotal figure, when Pach was so closely involved in the modern movement. One further example will serve to illustrate how clouded the basic tenets of Cubism remained and why so few Canadian artists understood the validity of the two-dimensional picture plane. Perhaps misled by the term Cubism, Pach describes the picture as though it were a cube. He writes of the Cubist painter:

An object will serve him as the starting-point of the microcosm within the four walls of the picture-frame; now it is the curious outlines of a violin which release the current of images, now it is a human being, now bottles and newspapers on a table.³⁴

American art historian Barbara Rose believes that Cubism was treated superficially in the United States partly because the Arts and Craft movement was not part of a coordinated program of design reform as can be found in de Stijl or the Bauhaus in Europe. Modernism in the States was a novelty, a passing phase. Rose writes.

Thus, the real issues at stake in Cubism-the preservation of the integrity of the picture plane, the analysis of both the structure of objects and the means by which objects are perceived, the assertion of the independent, self-referential reality of the work of art-often passed over the heads of even the most dedicated. Those artists who, like Dove, O'Keeffe, Hartley, and Marin, embraced the modernist attitude, usually did so on an emotional, intuitive basis.³⁵

Thus, Brooker and FitzGerald too, embraced the modernist movement on an emotional, intuitive basis, inspired by the writing of Bergson, Adams and Tolstoy, and the affirmation of their ideas in the work of Fry and Cheney.

Significantly, for the discussion of Brooker's art, one of the European artists whom Pach discusses at length is Raymond Duchamp-Villon. Dennis Reid has noted that

Brooker has incorporated Duchamp-Villon's sculpted head of Baudelaire, 1911 (fig. 10) in his early painting The Dawn of Man, c.1927 (fig.11). Brooker's Toronto friends, Harold and Ruth Tovell, owned several pieces of Duchamp-Villon's work, including the terra-cotta version of Baudelaire. Baudelaire and Duchamp-Villon's Cubo-Futurist work, The Horse, 1914, are reproduced in Pach's text.

Pach places Duchamp-Villon's sculpture in a continuum of time.³⁶ Pach writes of The Horse that its motion suggests our present conception of life and its forces, finding precedents in the sphinx and the winged bull of the ancients. Of Baudelaire, Pach writes:

[Duchamp-Villon's] head of Baudelaire, which for grandeur - both in its conception and in the handling of the strong planes through which he built up the volumes - seems by no means unworthy to stand with the masterpieces of the old Gothic artists.³⁷

It is perhaps this timeless quality of Duchamp-Villon's Baudelaire which prompted Brooker to appropriate its form in The Dawn of Man. The sculpted head is both ancient and modern, with unseeing eyes which turn inward on itself, like a pair of Tsimshian transformation masks, one of which looks outward, the other inward, (fig.12). The contemplation apparent in the features of the sculpture Baudelaire has in it the element of listening. In the poem Correspondances, by Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867) he acknowledges affinities between the sense-perceptions of hearing, sight and smell:

Les parfums, les couleurs et les sons se repondent
Il est des parfums frais comme des chairs d'enfants,
Doux comme les hautbois, verts comme les prairies...

H.E. Berthon has noted that in Baudelaire's time the perception of affinities between colours and sounds was common knowledge and was called "audition colorée".³⁸ The study of the mind and the senses deeply interested Brooker, and was

related to his search for a means of expressing music through painting. But perhaps the most striking aspect of Baudelaire's poem Correspondances is the first verse, which conjures up a visual image of Brooker's painting, The Dawn of Man. Baudelaire's poem begins:

La Nature est un temple ou de vivants piliers
 Laissent parfois sortir de confuses paroles;
 L'homme y passe à travers des forêts de symboles
 Qui l'observent avec des regards familiers.³⁹

Brooker's appropriation of the sculpture Baudelaire places newly created man, the introspective artist-poet, into an abstracted virgin landscape, symbolic of the creative force in the world. The Dawn of Man embodies Brooker's philosophical ideas, in a particularly appropriate way, as he, writer and poet, embarked on his painting career.

Modern movements other than Cubism are mentioned in The Masters of Modern Art, but excluded from serious discussion by Pach's belief that Futurism, Vorticism, Synchronism, and Expressionism are "the multiplication of systems for producing art...among men who mistake a program for a performance [which] wearies the world until someone replies with "Dada"..."⁴⁰ Pach's assessment of Russian art is more inflammatory:

Doubtless many people...would consider that a special place should be made for the Russians, either as a whole school or for certain individuals. I believe a closer acquaintance with modern Russian work will show that, as a rule, it only coarsens the fiber of the art which Paris gave us a decade or two ago, either bawling its harmonies out of tune or sickening them with the perfumery of an ill-assimilated orientalism.⁴¹

In fact, Brooker had a greater appreciation of Russian modern art and a more perceptive understanding of its implications than did Pach. In Brooker's assessment of Canadian art critics mentioned earlier in this chapter, Brooker adds an aside: "...the little he [the art

critic] knows about an art as recent and as accessible as that of Russia is usually only sufficient to make him to detest it..."⁴² Doubtless Brooker had critics such as Pach in mind when he wrote this. Pach also chose to omit the art of Germany, Italy and England; his book would be more accurately titled French Masters of Modern Art. Reproductions include the work of Cezanne, Gauguin, Redon, Seurat, Braque, Picasso, Gleizes, Metzinger, the Duchamp brothers and Matisse. Pach wrote: "It will be time enough to speak of the hegemony of art passing from the French when masters begin to appear in other countries."⁴³

In comparison, John Rodker's book, The Future of Futurism is an astute and articulate account of modernism as it was perceived in the mid 1920s. A more accurate title would be The Future of Modernism.⁴⁴ The word "futurism" seems to have been interchangeable with the word "modernism" in North America during the 1920s. Rodker places the origin of Futurism with F.T. Marinetti and the Italians, mentioning the participation of poets, painters and musicians and the excitement provoked by Marinetti's manifestoes and exhibitions. But Rodker then proceeds to use the word Futurism as an umbrella term, encompassing all of the contemporary arts. He writes:

...Marinetti's first avatar left behind the generic term, and Futurism may now mean almost any unconventional activity in the contemporary arts, whether Vorticists, Cubist, Symbolist, Vers Librist, etc.⁴⁵

And, in a term which recalls Brooker's expression for his early abstract paintings, "my world and spirit paintings"⁴⁶, Rodker continues: "Cubism, too...is called Futurism...as is in some quarters a sort of spirit-drawing..."

Rodker includes a short chapter, The Russian Influence, centered on its literature. Brooker had read Russian literature widely, and many books by Fyodor Dostoevsky, Anton Tchekoff, Leo Tolstoy and Maxim Gorki remain in his library. This

chapter would have interested Brooker. Rodker's reference to the characteristic Russian introspection, born of the long cold Russian winter, seems particularly relevant to Brooker and the Canadian psyche. It is in this passage that we find Rodker's second unusual but perceptive reference to the spirit. Rodker discusses Dostoevsky, Tchekoff and Tolstoy briefly and continues:

Yet the Russians are a puzzle with their contribution to the sensitivity of the world, for their own introspection it is said is due to white nights and long winter months spent on the stove; things undreamt of elsewhere. And as it is one of the latest European countries to be economically developed we cannot guess what flying, the railway and the telegraph may do to the race. So that here it must be the very instincts we deprecate which speak between them and us, progress passing through the spirit....For conditions will grow every day more stable, man will begin to think more of his soul and its place in the world...⁴⁷

Brooker spiritually embraced the contemporary world. "Progress passing through the spirit" seems a fitting epigram for much of Brooker's work.

Brooker's third art-book, Modern French Painters by Maurice Raynal (pub. 1928), would have been most useful to Brooker for its reproductions and short biographies. Amongst the artists included are Fernand Léger, Jean Metzinger and Amedee Ozenfant. A comparison of Ozenfant's Still Life, n.d., reproduced in Raynal's book, and Brooker's Fantasy, 1940, (figs.13, 14) shows some formal similarities in the use of curved and straight lines and concentric circles. Both artists incorporate still-life objects within the composition. These are flattened by the interception of straight lines at right angles and by geometric planes. Ozenfant's composition is formed within a stable Cubist grid. Brooker has tipped the square and rectangular planes to create the diagonals of wheel-spoke forms which create a sense of energy and movement. Ozenfant's organic pear-shaped vase is echoed in Brooker's pears. But Brooker's sense of energy and the

rhythmic repetition of the pears' shape indicating growth and the passage of time, relates his work more closely to Futurism.

It has been shown that the published material on European modernism which we know was available to Brooker and FitzGerald varied considerably in its scope. The periodical The Studio offered little information on this subject either visually or theoretically, apart from the articles on Diaghilev's work with the Ballet Russe. The North American art books which Brooker purchased were not a good source of information, and often tended to cloud theoretical issues of modernism. The photographic reproductions in these books were helpful, but were limited as a representative selection. The best source of modernist criticism for Brooker and FitzGerald was to be found in the work of aestheticians and theorists such as Roger Fry and Sheldon Cheney.

SOURCES OF EUROPEAN MODERNISM: EXHIBITIONS AND REVIEWS

Some Canadians became aware of European developments in art through the large international exhibitions held in Paris, Berlin, London, Cologne and Munich, which were widely reported in the media of the time. There were the annual exhibitions in Paris such as the Salon d'Automne and the Salon des Independants. There were also touring exhibitions such as the Futurists' Bernheim-Jeune exhibition originating in Paris in February 1912, and subsequently travelling to London, Berlin, Brussels, The Hague, Amsterdam and Munich.⁴⁸ Caroline Tisdall and Angelo Bozzolla note that the accompanying catalogue for this exhibition for the Sackville Gallery in London, not only contained comments on each painting, but also published an updated version of the Manifesto of Futurist Painters. This was a translation (supervised by Marinetti) of two manifestoes: The Exhibitors to the Public (pub. for Bernheim-Jeune Exhibition Feb. 1912) and Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto (pub. April 1910).⁴⁹ Together these incorporated the Futurists' most recent theories.

Alfred H. Barr has written that the Futurists' Bernheim-Jeune exhibition went to "many American cities."⁵⁰ The Chicago Tribune may well be Brooker's source for prompt information on exhibitions of European modernism and manifesto extracts. Brooker was reading the Tribune at about this time (the Tribune published one of his poems in 1913).⁵¹ If the Chicago Tribune was readily available in Winnipeg at that time, it is possible that this was also a source of information for FitzGerald. Certainly he read American art journals.

Brooker may have seen exhibitions of European modern art in late 1910-1911, when he was in London, England. The exact dates of his movements are not known. Victor Brooker has written of this period:

Father may well have read about Kandinsky much earlier since he maintained contact with English bookstores and agents - he vacationed in England in 1909 [sic]... to catch up with drama and literature and art happenings and his interest and reading of Russian literature and philosophy was prodigious. ⁵²

Kandinsky's Composition 1 had been exhibited in London earlier that year, in July 1910, at the Third Allied Artists' Association Exhibition.⁵³ As a consequence, material on Kandinsky may have been available to Brooker while he was in London. In November 1910, English critic Roger Fry held the first of his two major European art exhibitions at the Grafton Galleries. The two exhibitions combined to make an historical survey of European modernism. The first exhibition featured Manet and the Post-Impressionists. Poet and critic Ezra Pound was in London at this time. Together with artist and writer Wyndham Lewis he was the centre of an avant-garde circle of poets, writers, and artists. F.T. Marinetti was in London in 1910 and 1912.⁵⁴ The artists working at the Rebel Art Centre in London would eventually, in 1913, become known as the Vorticists, although their

seminal Vorticist work was produced immediately after the Futurist exhibition in 1912.⁵⁵ It is not known what contacts Brooker had with the art world in the "Vortex" of London in the winter of 1910-11. But it was a time of excitement and change and one could presume Brooker's interest in these exhibitions and reviews.

Roger Fry's second exhibition at the Grafton Galleries in London, in October 1912 featured Matisse and Picasso, and contained a Russian section which had been organized by Boris Anrep for the Salon d'Automne in Paris, and included Mikhail Larionov and Natalie Gontcharova.⁵⁶ Brooker and FitzGerald could have read reviews of this exhibition in the North American press. This exhibition set an educational tone for the large International exhibitions which took place in Europe and North America during the following decade.

The Armory Show, officially titled the International Exhibition of Modern Art, opened in New York in February 1913, and travelled subsequently to Chicago. It was the first of these international exhibitions in North America. One third of the work exhibited was European, predominantly French. The Impressionists were well represented. The Post-Impressionists included Cézanne, Gauguin and Van Gogh. The Neo-Impressionists were represented by Seurat, Signac and their followers. Amongst the Fauves were Matisse, Derain, Friesz, Villon, and Dufy. The Cubists were well represented by Picasso, Braque, Léger, Gleizes, Picabia, and Duchamp.⁵⁷ Brooker (as Zemans has posited) was aware of the Armory Show, and responded with sketches and title designs related to the Armory Show. It is possible that Brooker saw the exhibition in Chicago, but the titles are taken from epithets which the critics used to describe the exhibition. The sketches, Zemans suggests, are drawn from magazine and newspaper reviews and photographs: Brancusi's Mlle. Pogany; Duchamp's Nude Descending a Staircase; Wilhelm Lehmbruck's Kneeling Woman; and a sketch of a Cubist painting.⁵⁸ It is apparent from

these sketches that Brooker read contemporary magazines or journals from American cities such as Chicago. Amongst the most avant-garde of the American artists who exhibited at the Armory Show were those of the Stieglitz group: Arthur B. Carles, Marsden Hartley, John Marin, Alfred Maurer, and Abraham Walkowitz.

It was not until three years later that Futurism made its first appearance in North America in San Francisco in 1915 at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition.⁵⁹ It was a comprehensive survey of Futurism containing 48 drawings and paintings and Boccioni's sculpture. It was accompanied by a deluxe catalogue of all the international exhibits. The Futurist section published Boccioni's essay The Exhibitors to the Public.⁶⁰ Brooker would have had ample opportunity to read reviews of this well covered exhibition.

As John Russell has written, the Armory Show had an enormous impact, but it was one which dissipated. The climate in New York was not right, Russell suggests, until the end of the 1920s.⁶¹ Contemporary art critic Christian Brinton believed that the American public's adverse reaction to the Armory Show was caused by their first experience of modern art which came as a series of shocks from the outside, rather than through a gradual assimilation of ideas through intensive effort, observation or participation.⁶² Even in the more advanced institutions of art education, modernism was dismissed impatiently with little desire to understand it.⁶³ Rose points out that universities did not alter curriculum to include contemporary art, nor did the art schools encourage progressive work. The large museums continued to scorn modernism.⁶⁴ Experimentation that had taken place earlier in the century, ended in a series of retreats to more conservative positions.⁶⁵

This pervasive rejection of modernism which has been documented by Russell and Rose, is supported by William Innes Homer. He writes that after the Armory Show

Stieglitz became depressed by his failure to win over adequate numbers to modernism. He retreated within his small circle to nurture the development of a small group of American artists, abandoning his early desire to educate the public.⁶⁶ But, as Rose points out, abstract art was also abandoned by many of the Stieglitz group. Abstractionists such as Weber, Hartley, and Maurer, as well as early American abstractionists Thomas Hart Benton, Joseph Stella and Andrew Dasburg returned to a more traditional portrayal of the American scene. Rose writes that of the dozens of American abstract artists, only Dove retained his commitment to abstraction in the twenties and thirties: "The effect of the war and the lack of public interest in modernism seemed to create a general loss of conviction in abstract art that caused artists to desert its practice in droves."⁶⁷ When Stieglitz' gallery, 291, closed in 1917, and Camera Work ceased publication in the same year, its circulation was thirty-six subscribers. Rose believes that this mood of disillusionment coincided with a European retreat from experimentation, when many progressive European artists returned to more realistic styles. Rose concludes: "But the collapse of American modernism in the twenties was more complete, tragic, and inevitable than the European detente."⁶⁸ In such a climate it is not surprising that FitzGerald did not assimilate European modernism during his stay in New York in 1921-22, and hardly surprising that Brooker, in Canada, did not begin his abstractions until 1924.

Although the assimilation of European modernism is not immediately apparent in FitzGerald's work, his interest in modernism began on that first visit to New York. It has not previously been known whether FitzGerald saw modern European art during the months from November through March in New York. But it is possible to deduce from his papers that FitzGerald saw not only an exhibition of European modern art, but one of the first exhibitions in North America to include modern Russian art. Amongst FitzGerald's printed papers is a small catalogue for an undated Exhibition of Modern American and European

Paintings held at the Wanamaker Gallery in New York. Ten of the paintings listed are by Mikhail Larionov and Natalie Gontcharova. In his short commentary on the exhibition, Louis Bouche writes:

From the Salon d'Automne in Paris we have received paintings by Larionov and Natalie Gontcharova, the young Russian couple whose art was recently introduced to New Yorkers.⁶⁹

Barron and Tuchman place the two Russians' first New York exhibition in 1922 at the Kingore Gallery.⁷⁰ Although the catalogue is undated it bears the day and month. The exhibition took place 9-31 March. Other European modernists exhibiting included Andre Derain, Gleizes, Metzinger, Picasso, Kees Van Dongen, and Maurice de Vlaminck. FitzGerald almost certainly collected this catalogue himself, for March was his last month in the city.

FitzGerald's enthusiasm for Russian art stayed with him. In 1927 he prepared some notes for a series of lectures on Russian art to be given at the Winnipeg School of Art where he was teaching. His short introduction to the lecture series includes a quotation from a catalogue for an exhibition of Russian Paintings written by Christian Brinton. FitzGerald writes that the exhibition was held at the Brooklyn Museum in 1923.⁷¹ He quotes:

A thousand years of shifting pageantry, the successive ascendancy of influences, now Byzantine, now Mongolian, now frankly European, have altered the outward semblance, but not the inner spirit of Russian Art.

FitzGerald has drawn a small arrow from the last line of the quotation to his comment in the margin, "Ikons reference". The fact that FitzGerald linked the Russian Ikon with "the inner spirit of Russian Art" is significant. Both Brinton and FitzGerald acknowledge, in this phrase, the importance of Kandinsky's "inner content" of art which he discusses in

conjunction with the outward appearance of art in his book Concerning the Spiritual in Art (excerpts published by Stieglitz in English in Camera Work, 1912. Kandinsky's importance to FitzGerald and Brooker will be examined at a later point in this chapter). The Russian Suprematist painter Kazimir Malevich equated the ikon of the Madonna with his art, by placing his painting, Black Square, 1915?, high in the corner of the exhibition room, where the central ikon of the Madonna would have traditionally hung in an orthodox home.⁷² The Madonna would become an important symbol for Brooker and, through Brooker, held some significance for FitzGerald too. The spiritual implications of the ikon of the Madonna will be discussed at greater length in chapters II and III.

On the second page of FitzGerald's Russian lecture series notes is a list of the topics for the twelve-lecture course. At the foot of the page is a short passage in quotation marks, the date 1923 and the name Harris. The passage reads as follows

I paid many visits to the Russian Exposition of pictures in the "Unter den Linden." There is more painting genius in this one exhibition than in the Grand Palais in Paris and the Academy in London put together. I wish I could find the reason for this or the strange phenomenon, but there the fact is indubitable. 1923 Harris.⁷³

If the name Harris refers to Lawren Harris, it could explain his early appreciation of Kandinsky, for the latter had returned to Germany from Russia in 1921 to teach at the Bauhaus. It is possible that Harris saw the exhibition in Berlin (there were large Russian exhibitions there in 1922 and 1923),⁷⁴ and then both saw and obtained the catalogue for the Brinton exhibition in New York in 1923. It seems most likely that Lawren Harris was FitzGerald's source for the information on Brinton and the Russian Exposition, either directly or indirectly from a published article.

FitzGerald's twelve lectures are organized around the three Russian articles in his collection on Iacovleff, Repin, Vereschagin and Troubetskoi and the Brinton catalogue. There are lectures on Russian Ikons and on Peasant Art. One lecture is titled, "Peasant Art as interpreted by Artists", and relates perhaps to the work of Larionov and Gontcharova whose work FitzGerald had most likely seen in the Exhibition of Modern American and European Paintings in New York in 1922. Some of the works listed in the catalogue appear by their titles to be early figurative works. The lecture series also includes a discussion of Tolstoy's "What is Art." FitzGerald concludes the notes with a quotation from Tolstoy:

Art is a human activity, consisting in this, that one man consciously by means of certain external signs, hand on to others feelings he has lived through and that other people are infected by these feelings and also experience them.⁷⁵

In the context of a reactionary mood in New York and the United States, FitzGerald's interest in European modernism and his attempt to bring Russian art to his students in Winnipeg is not the delayed Canadian response that it is usually perceived to be.

It was in 1924 that Brooker, as editor and publisher of Marketing Publishers Limited, began to travel more extensively, making regular trips to New York and other large American cities. In 1924 the Societe Anonyme held its first group exhibition of Russian modern art. This was the first American presentation of the work of Alexandra Exter, Kazimir Malevich, Konstantin Medunetsky, Vladimir (?) Stenberg, Vladimir Tatlin and others. Kandinsky had exhibited at the Société Anonyme in the previous year. In 1924, Christian Brinton co-curated a second Exhibition of Russian Art. It was held at the Grand Central Palace in New York. It was initially organised by Igor Grabar, with a catalogue by Brinton. In a letter to FitzGerald in 1931, Brooker writes that he had seen a number of Russian art shows over the past seven or eight years which may well have included any

one or more of these exhibitions.⁷⁶ Certainly Brooker was in New York in 1924, for it was in that year that he purchased A.S. Baylinson's Seated Nude, 1919 (fig.15), from his New York studio.⁷⁷ Baylinson was born in Russia, and taught in the Arts Students League in New York in the 1920s. His Seated Nude is a Cubist work, but the strong diagonal movement and the repeated concentric rhythms link it with the Russian Cubo-futurist movement.

Brooker's friend and close colleague, Kathleen Munn, was a student at the Art Students League in New York for several fall-winter sessions, probably beginning as early as 1912. She also attended the Art Students League Summer School in Woodstock, winning their first prize in 1914. She attended the fall-winter sessions in 1918-19, and was there regularly from 1923-26.⁷⁸ Munn was probably in New York in 1924 when Brooker purchased the Baylinson nude and she may have introduced him to Baylinson.⁷⁹ Zemans, Burrell and Hunter have pointed out that it was probably Brooker who encouraged Munn to experiment with complete abstraction in the late 1920s. These authors make a comparison between the bold primary colours of Munn's Untitled I, 1926-28 (fig. 16), and Untitled II, 1926-28, and Brooker's Sounds Assembling, 1928.⁸⁰ Certainly the vivid colours and the strong diagonals are reminiscent of Brooker's Sounds Assembling, but Munn's architectonic proun-like⁸¹ girders which push out into the viewer's space are more closely related in structure to Brooker's early Suprematist works, Noise of A Fish, and Oozles of 1924. Oozles may be compared to Lazar El Lissitsky's Proun 23, No.6 1919 (figs.17,18). Brooker, like Lissitsky and Munn, uses the dynamic force of the architectonic shapes to force an interaction with the viewer by invading his or her space.⁸² Brooker, Munn and FitzGerald were to cement the close affinity which Brooker felt was inherent in their work, with a joint exhibition which he organized in 1935. In discussing his Figures in Landscape, 1931, Brooker explains this feeling of kinship to FitzGerald. He writes:

these [figure paintings] are very definitely studies....with an attempt at getting what one might call plus quality over traditional realism.....I am hoping that what it is approximates, at least, to the quality of organization which I have felt in your work and in Kathleen Munn's.⁸³

Sensing the same commitment in the work of the two artists, Brooker writes to FitzGerald:

I would like you to meet Kathleen Munn and see her work. We have talked a lot about you and my feeling is that your ideas and your work are perhaps nearer than any other two people in Canada.⁸⁴

This "quality of organization" can be seen in both Munn's and FitzGerald's ability to integrate figure or object and ground in a strong Cubist structure. For all three artists, the assimilation of European modernism was a long, intense process.

So far we have seen that there were international exhibitions of European modernism in Europe and the United States which were widely reviewed in the press. We know that Brooker was aware of the Armory Show and reacted to the reviewed exhibits with a series of sketches. It has been shown that Brooker read the Chicago Tribune regularly and very likely read other reviews of modern art exhibitions. It is known that FitzGerald read American art journals and may have had access to the Chicago Tribune through sources such as Gebhardt. It has been shown that FitzGerald's first direct exposure to European modern art occurred in 1921-22, resulting in his preparation for a series of lectures on Russian art in 1927. Brooker began regular trips to New York and other major American cities in 1924. He saw Russian modern art exhibitions in New York at that time. In the context of the United States' rejection of European modernism in the 1920s, Brooker's and FitzGerald's interest in modernism was not the delayed Canadian response it was thought to be.

SOURCES FOR MODERNISM IN CANADA: EXHIBITIONS

During the 1920s the international contemporary art exhibitions continued. Boyanoski has noted that invitations for Canadians to participate were usually extended by the organisers. The Group of Seven was approached to exhibit at the Sesquicentennial Exposition of the Philadelphia Museum of Art in 1926.⁸⁵ It was at this exhibition that Katherine Dreier saw Lawren Harris's paintings in the Canadian section and invited him to participate in the Societe Anonyme Exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum. Harris and Dreier finally met in the fall of that year when Harris went to see the exhibition in Brooklyn. Their meeting and ensuing friendship resulted in a joint effort to bring the International Exhibition of Modern Art to the Art Gallery of Toronto in April 1927. In effect, Toronto's first exposure to European modernism was only a year or so behind some of the major cities in the United States. The Art Gallery of Toronto had also accepted the Russian section of contemporary art from the Philadelphia International Exhibition in 1925. Brooker makes a passing reference to having seen this Toronto exhibition of modern Russian art in his 1926 article on the Group of Seven called "Canada's Modern Art Movement."⁸⁶ In this article he also mentions that he has seen modern British and American painting in Canada, and modern Italian art in New York that spring. New York remained the greatest resource for European and American modernism. The Societe Anonyme had opened its galleries in 1919, and the Museum of Modern Art opened in 1929.⁸⁷

Brooker's list of exhibition activities in an untitled article on exhibitions across Canada, 1928-29, offers a fairly accurate reflection of the priorities of the major institutions. The two major sources of modernism for most Canadians were British and American modern art. At the National Gallery of Canada exhibitions were usually obtained through the Art Exhibitions Bureau in London and the American Federation of Arts. Modern prints and drawings and modern Canadian art exhibitions were usually drawn from

the permanent collection.⁸⁸ This meant that artwork put together by the Bureau or the Federation lacked the vitality of curated exhibitions, and art from the permanent collection had already been subjected to the taste of the Acquisition committees. Intermittently, good exhibitions of modern British and American art were held in Ottawa, organized by major institutions in those countries.⁸⁹

The Art Gallery of Toronto was more progressive. English modernist, Paul Nash's war work was exhibited in Toronto as early as 1919, and it had some impact on A.Y. Jackson and Lawren Harris.⁹⁰ The Art Gallery of Toronto accepted the Societe Anonyme show, The International Exhibition of Modern Art from New York in 1927. Brooker also mentions an exhibition of the work of the American Futurist painter, Joseph Stella, there in 1929. There were seven or eight exhibitions of modern British and American painting at the Art Gallery of Toronto in the 1920s. In his article, Brooker notes the Art Gallery of Toronto's new acquisitions which include works by English Vorticist Jacob Epstein and modernist Frank Brangwyn. Brooker wrote of the Toronto institution:

The Art Gallery of Toronto is fortunate in having a number of public spirited men who have undertaken the task of development. The list of exhibitions give [sic] creditable evidence of this. Each exhibition was augmented by lectures, musicales and gallery talks.⁹¹

However, both the National Gallery of Canada and the Art Gallery of Toronto showed a reluctance to go out on a limb to pursue an exhibition which might be considered too avant-garde by the Canadian public. Eric Brown, director of the National Gallery of Canada, saw his function as creating a collection of well-established art, and assumed a conservative role. In an exchange of letters with Brooker about the 1929 Yearbook of the Arts, Brown wrote:

It is unusual and to me regrettable.... to include nothing but current art productions which you are pleased to call creative. This will exclude a

large amount ... of the fine arts in Canada in which the public is quite as keenly interested as in current art ...⁹²

The Societe Anonyme's International Exhibition of Modern Art opened in April 1927 largely as a result of the drive of Lawren Harris. In a letter to Katherine Dreier, Harris expresses the difficulty he is having with the exhibition committee in pressing the importance of securing the exhibition. The committee feared that they might lose a number of members, and Harris describes them as "a very timid crew."⁹³

Another source for Canadians in Ontario to see modern European art was at the Canadian National Exhibition. Brooker describes an exhibition of Danish art in his untitled exhibition article on the 1928-29 season. But in the 1930s the Fine Arts Committee of the Canadian National Exhibition also withdrew into a more conservative mode. Its Art Commissioner F.S. Haines travelled to New York in 1932 to see an exhibition of modern art representing twenty-two countries. He felt the paintings were unacceptable at the CNE and did not recommend securing the exhibition. In 1934 the Commissioner recommended a return to the plan of a British exhibit because of Canada's established cultural ties with Britain.⁹⁴

The conservative selection of European and American modern art to be viewed in Canada was not the only problem in objective representation. The selection of Canadian artists to be exhibited abroad made lasting reverberations in the writing of Canadian art history. It determined not only how Canadian art was perceived outside Canada, but mirror-like, it reflected the response abroad, shaping Canada's recognition of a national art. Boyanoski states that Canadian painting became narrowly associated on both sides of the border with landscapes of the northern wilderness, epitomized by the Group of Seven.⁹⁵ After seeing the international art exhibition at the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh in 1931, Brooker wrote to FitzGerald describing the exhibition. His comparison

of an emerging American modernism and the outdated appearance of Rockwell Kent's Group of Seven style illustrates Brooker's perceptive criticism:

Two landscapes by Rockwell Kent, which were the only things approximating to the Group of Seven sort of thing here, looked very flat and old-fashioned compared with the majority of the American stuff.

In the same letter Brooker anticipates the eventual demise of the Group of Seven.

...my feeling at the last [Group of Seven] show was that it marked the death-nell [sic] of the Group of Seven.... This does not mean, of course, that painting is going to stop in Canada, but I do think it will definitely take a turn away from the too rigid stamp imposed upon it by the Group.⁹⁶

Eric Brown, director of the National Gallery, was instrumental in establishing the reputation of the Group of Seven in their early days. He wrote articles on their work which appeared in the Studio as early as 1914, at a time when their work was subjected to wide criticism from conservative members of the Royal Canadian Academy and from the general public. He organised a large Canadian section for the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley, England in 1924. However, progressive artists such as Kathleen Munn were not included. Munn did not participate in any of the major international exhibitions organised by the large institutions until the New York World's Fair in 1939, when she exhibited with the Canadian Society of Graphic Art.⁹⁷ In her book, Making Culture. English Canadian Institutions and the Arts before the Massey Commission (pub. 1990)

Maria Tippett writes:

The National Gallery remained centralist in outlook. Ideas, such as those offered by Winnipeg's Walter J. Philips for films, demonstrations, lectures, and the founding of a magazine devoted to Canadian art, were simply not taken up unless their author was close at hand to lobby for them. And not only was the Gallery centralist: it catered to one medium - paint - and one style - exemplified in the "conservative moderns" of the Group of Seven. Painters such as Bertram Brooker, Kathleen Munn and Lowrie Warrener were too advanced for it, while academicians such as Homer Watson were dismissed as too traditional.⁹⁸

FitzGerald in his exposure to contemporary European, American, and Canadian art, fared less well in Winnipeg than did Brooker in Toronto. Some exhibitions from the National Gallery of Canada and the Art Gallery of Toronto travelled to other Canadian cities, including Winnipeg. But these were limited. Maggie Callahan writes that early exhibitions held at the Winnipeg Art Gallery seem to have been limited almost entirely to Canadian and British art.⁹⁹ FitzGerald collected prints and reproductions of modern European art to assist him in his teaching. Eventually, as the principal of the Winnipeg Art School he purchased paintings for the school's collection, which became the basis for the present Winnipeg Art Gallery. In his exhibition article on the 1928-29 season, Brooker mentions that, "The Society of Manitoba artists now have a home, where exhibitions and social activities stimulate and give the artists an opportunity of expression",¹⁰⁰ providing them with a place to exhibit their own work.

RESPONSES TO KANDINSKY: BROOKER AND FITZGERALD

Dennis Reid suggests that Brooker's "idea" of abstract art originated with his reading of Kandinsky's Concerning the Spiritual in Art, (pub. 1912) with Lawren Harris as the source in 1926, after the publication of Harris' statement on the spiritual in art.¹⁰¹ But Brooker was making his own connections between music and painting much earlier. The description of music was a problem he had been grappling with since 1918 when, as music critic, he wrote :

We who write about music are eternally conscious of the barren impossibility which attends all our efforts to reduce the most liquid of the arts to the cumbersome and solid formulae of mere language....This silken and cadenced language - which alone of all earthy things seems fitting when associated with ...a spiritual state hereafter...bound up with themystery of the vast energies known to us as Nature... it eludes us the moment we endeavour to interpret it in any other language

Brooker then goes on to quote Arthur Symons, English critic, from his book, Plays, Acting and Music, in which Symons compares the difficulties of the criticism of music and of painting:

The reason why music is so much more difficult to write about than any other art, is because music is the one absolutely disembodied art, when it is heard, and no more than a proposition in Euclid, when it is written. It is wholly useless...to write about music in the style of the programmes which we buy.... In writing about painting you have the subject of the picture, and you have the color, handling, and the like, which can be expressed hardly less precisely in words.

Brooker himself makes a more direct comparison between music and colour:

The gradations of color are, in a sense, analogous to the gradations of music, but compare the ease with which one can describe a sunset as against the stark impossibility of writing a pen picture of a symphony! The difficulty arises...in the case of a sunset the colors can be figuratively reproduced...by linking them with some familiar object, poetical in itself...whereas...the beauties of a symphony are involved in symbols for which we have not even words....¹⁰²

Zemans suggests that Brooker may have read excerpts of Kandinsky's writings in Camera Work in 1912. I have intimated the slim possibility of Brooker having seen Kandinsky's work in London in 1910-11. But Brooker does not mention Kandinsky in his 1918 discussion of music and painting. A date between 1918 and 1924, when Brooker began the sketches for his paintings of musical themes, seems most likely. It is not until his The Seven Arts column of 19 October 1929 that Brooker writes about the specific links between painting and music and mentions the work of Kandinsky:

Because my own plunge into painting a few years ago came about through a consuming musical interest which sought to translate itself into color, I have been much interested in this phase of modern painting. Kandinsky, the Russian now living in Berlin, some of whose canvasses were seen in Toronto a couple of years ago, has published a book on the subject in which he laboriously traces the relationship between certain colors and certain tones.¹⁰³

Whether it was Lawren Harris who introduced Brooker to Kandinsky is still uncertain. Brooker has written: "I said to Lawren Harris one day, 'If I ever start painting I shall paint or attempt to paint the experiences I derive from music.'" ¹⁰⁴

Much of Kandinsky's early writing is reflected in Brooker's ideas. In 1910 Kandinsky wrote:

A work of art consists of two elements:
the inner and
the outer.

The inner element... is the emotion of the artist's soul, which...evokes a corresponding emotional vibration in the other person, the perceptor.As a means of expression, therefore, the artist's emotional vibration must find a material form capable of being perceived. This material form is the second element, i.e., the outer element of a work of art.

A work of art is, of necessity, an indissolubly and inevitably cohesive combination of inner and outer elements, i.e., content and form. ¹⁰⁵

Through his writing and painting, Kandinsky offered Brooker the solution to his aesthetic problems in Canada in the 1920s even, as shall be seen, those problems which arose from the appropriation of a European form. Kandinsky wrote in the same essay that the form is invariably determined by the content. And only the form which best expresses the content is the right one. Any subsequent consideration such as the correspondence of form to nature was "insubstantial and pernicious" because it distracted attention from the single task of art: "the embodiment of its content. Form is the material expression of abstract content."

Kandinsky's ideas on the spiritual in art are embodied in many of Brooker's unpublished manuscripts as will be seen in chapter II. Kandinsky sanctions the use of another artist's form if it is appropriate to the expression of the adoptive artist's content. He likens the form to the body and the content to the soul. Kandinsky writes that the whole question of "imitation" has not nearly the significance which critics attribute to it:

To criticism, to the public, and often to artists, the using of someone else's form means a crime or a fraud. But in reality that is only true if the "artist" uses someone else's form without inner necessity and thereby creates a lifeless, dead, sham work. If, however, the artist, for the expression of his inner impulses and experiences, makes use, according to inner truth, of one or another form which is "not his own", he is then using his right to make use of every form which is to him an inner necessity - whether it be a useful article...or a form which has already been artistically materialized by another artist.¹⁰⁶

Brooker justified the Canadian artist's need to adopt a modernist structure, in the Yearbook of the Arts, 1929:

These modern importations from Europe sometimes assist an artist here by suggesting a method of unifying mechanical with natural phenomenon which, due to other preoccupations, he might arrive at very late...No one can quarrel with an artist for learning from others how to see and seize upon reality provided his unification of that reality and his interpretation of the experience he gets from it is expressed in his own terms.¹⁰⁷

Clearly Brooker felt that the adoption of a European form would get him within reach of his goal a little faster and more directly than if he followed the more traditional route advocated by the Group of Seven. This is how he approached those early abstract works. It was Brooker's belief that art is inevitably tied to past and future, that art is a continuum.¹⁰⁸

Affinities with Kandinsky's writings are reflected in FitzGerald's idea of art as the expression of inner feeling and in his preoccupation with the inner aspect of objects he painted. Kandinsky wrote in Concerning the Spiritual in Art (pub. 1912):

The work of art consists of two elements, the inner and the outer.
The inner is the emotion in the soul of the artist; this emotion has the capacity to evoke a similar emotion in the observer.¹⁰⁹

In FitzGerald's undated notes on art he wrote: "It is necessary to get inside the object and push it out rather than merely building it up from the outer aspect....This requires endless search and contemplation; continuous effort and experiment...."¹¹⁰ it is the effect of

"pushing out" from within, which is apparent in his painting The Jar, 1938. The curves to the left of the jar, and the curves of the jar itself, give a dynamism to the object which appears to bulge forward into our space, to pulsate or move. It is not known when FitzGerald became aware of Kandinsky, but it is apparent from his early interest in Tolstoy and Fry that his interest in modernism, though more gradually established than Brooker's, began at an early stage in his career as artist and teacher.

MODERNISM IN CANADA: BROOKER'S FIRST EXHIBITION AT ARTS AND LETTERS CLUB

Brooker's first exhibition was held at the Arts and Letters Club in Toronto, in January, 1927. It not only presented the first abstract works by a Canadian artist but also was the first exhibition of abstract paintings in Canada. The infamous Société Anonyme Show, The International Exhibition of Modern Art, would not open until April 1927. Brooker has described some of his early abstract paintings as "expressions of musical feeling; one a direct interpretation of a mood suggested by the Largo of Dvorak's New World Symphony."¹¹¹ The paintings were not named in the exhibition, to retain their non-objectivity,¹¹² and no list exists of works exhibited, but they may well include Toccata, c.1927, and Abstraction-Music, c1927. These were his first large paintings. Brooker's burgeoning eclecticism is apparent in these early works. Brooker was capable not only of absorbing theoretical ideas, but also of assimilating intuitively the visual components of a picture.

A good example of Brooker's ability to absorb ideas intuitively, perhaps even subconsciously, is raised by Christine Boyanoski's suggestion that Brooker arrived at his modernist abstract works through his exposure to American modernists such as Georgia O'Keeffe. The affinity which lies between these artists is found not only in the visual aspect of the paintings themselves, but in their shared philosophical and aesthetic ideas.

Brooker read widely, always wishing to be well informed and in tune with the times. Boyanoski cites their shared knowledge of Kandinsky and the English aesthete Roger Fry.¹¹³ She makes some striking comparisons between Brooker's Fugue, c.1928, Duet, 1931, and O'Keeffe's Blue and Green Music, 1919 (figs.19,20,21).

Boyanoski points out that Brooker was reading Sheldon Cheney's Primer of Modern Art.¹¹⁴ Stieglitz is acknowledged for helping with the illustrations, and one of these is O'Keeffe's Blue and Green Music. An equally informative comparison can be made between Brooker's Abstraction - Music, c.1927 and O'Keeffe's Music - Pink and Blue, II, 1919 (figs. 22,23). Curiously, however, Brooker had noted the similarity himself, and was not happy about it. He wrote to FitzGerald, "I was in New York about a month ago and saw several shows...Georgia O'Keeffe (44 canvasses, some of which looked awfully like my early abstract things, and I didn't like them, perhaps for that very reason)..."¹¹⁵

Brooker's modernist source at the time of his first exhibition seems to have come more directly from Europe than the United States. Most indicative of this commitment is a newspaper review of the exhibition in the Toronto Star, 5 February, 1927. "...this young man...developed a sudden talent for a species of Futurism in painting."¹¹⁶ Brooker was interviewed for this article, so it is very likely that the origin of this word came from Brooker himself.

Sadly for Brooker, the exhibition was not the happy event that he had expected. Dennis Reid has questioned why Brooker abandoned abstraction for such a long time, pointing out that in March of 1931 he was already holding a small "retrospective" of his abstract work at Hart House. Reid documents the considerable criticism levelled at abstraction. There was a strong belief amongst those whom Brooker respected that it was "unnatural" in Canada.¹¹⁷ But the criticism began much earlier for Brooker, and it began

amongst his close friends, at his first show. Arthur Lismer had sponsored that Arts and Letters Club exhibition, but once the paintings were hung, his support went little further. Brooker's sense of hurt and despondency is apparent in his account of the events, written a few days later:

My pictures went up at the Arts and Letters Club on Saturday and there was a curious silence around the place, relieved only by the whispering of groups who would not come up and discuss them with me openly. I came away and walked up Yonge Street with Fred and Lawren feeling hardened...by the experience. They talked of everything else...

Two days later at the Club it was no better:

Lismer asked Lawren to say something at 1:30, but after a while he and Lawren went over to the fireplace, talked together for a while and then left the club. Gradually everybody left the table and I was there alone... I could not help feeling let down and rather deserted by Lismer and Lawren running away without any kind of announcement, or even an notice as to whose pictures they were or what they were intended to convey...

On coming home there was at first a slight feeling of resentment - very slight - which soon passed through a rather lonely stage to a feeling of complete confidence and poise in the Infinite. I rested for an hour or more and went through again one of those experiences where one takes a stride forward into apparent darkness, only to emerge into light....I know I must go on, and I know the supporting arms will always be there...The strength seems to be in one's self.¹¹⁸

It is apparent that in difficult times, Brooker was resorting to more than his intellectual and aesthetic prowess. He was drawing his strength and commitment from a spiritual source.

BROOKER'S RESPONSE TO FUTURISM

The Arts and Letters Club should have been an ideal birthplace for a Canadian-style Futurism. Futurism encompassed all the arts. Writers, poets, painters, sculptors were drawn to the movement by its essential energy and its identification with all that was modern. All of these things would have fascinated Bertram Brooker. Taylor has written

"Futurists were not only the first artists to take cognizance of the dynamism of a technological society, but they also produced works of art of extraordinary emotional impact."¹¹⁹ Boccioni's reflections on his painting The City Rises, 1910-11, could be applied to Brooker's Striving, 1930 (fig.24): "...specific time and place lose their importance and we are caught up in an all-consuming action that seems universal in its implication."¹²⁰ Brooker's painting recalls Marinetti's seventh axiom from his original Manifesto: "Except in struggle, there is no more beauty."¹²¹ And Brooker's use of the present participle as title affirms Marinetti's adjuration to the Futurist poets to "Use only the infinitive of the verb so that the action would not be limited to a single agent..."¹²² Brooker explained the significance of verbs in his painting in an address he gave at an exhibition of his work at Hart House in 1949:

I have changed approach and style more than once in a little over 20 years of painting. Perhaps the clearest clue to what I have been aiming at through all these changes of style is to say that whereas most artists paint nouns or objects, I have attempted to paint verbs...¹²³

This is an aspect of FitzGerald's drawing that first drew Brooker to FitzGerald's work. In 1929 he purchased a drawing when he was in the midst of his abstract work, already aware of the Futurists. Brooker bought the drawing at an exhibition of FitzGerald's work at Dent's Publishing House in Toronto.¹²⁴ It was a "fast drawing" of a gnarled, twisted tree. Brooker wrote of it:

Looking at it often, I came to think that the tree might just as well be a carrot or an elephant. In other words it was not so much an object as an attempt to search out the organisation of any living thing, it was a verb, a picture of living.¹²⁵

FitzGerald's drawing symbolized those qualities for which Brooker himself was striving.

Boccioni overcame accusations that the Futurists were being "cinematographic" by looking for a single form and a "new concept of continuity." It is the force lines, wrote Boccioni, which characterize the object, allowing us to see it as a whole image and giving us continuity in space:¹²⁶ "we do not have objects and spaces but only a greater or lesser intensity and solidity of space..."¹²⁷ It was this new way of perceiving positive and negative space that was to absorb the Constructivist sculptors, Antoine Pevsner and Naum Gabo¹²⁸, and it was one of the aspects of Futurism which captured Brooker's imagination. In the centre of Brooker's painting, Striving, 1930, is a figure which closely resembles Boccioni's Unique Forms of Continuity in Space, bronze sculpture, 1913 (fig.25).

It is not known whether Brooker saw the sculpture Unique Forms of Continuity in Space. The position and angle that he has used in his painting is the one which is used most commonly in photographing the sculpture, and which most interested Boccioni in his preparatory sketches, as in Muscular Dynamism, an early 1913 charcoal drawing (fig.26) The drawing was related to the sculpture, Spiral Expansion, which is now lost, and to Unique Forms of Continuity in Space. There were several works in this series including Speeding Muscles, 1913, Spiral Expansion of Speeding Muscles, 1913 (figs. 27, 28), and also Muscles in Quick Movement, which was in the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco in 1915,¹²⁹ and which as Alfred Barr has noted went to many other American cities. Brooker may have seen any one of these versions Caroline Tisdall notes that when Boccioni explained sculptural movement he described the body as "a living reality." In the catalogue to the Galerie Boetie exhibition Boccioni wrote,

The force form, with its centrifugal direction represents the potential of the real living form...The spectator ideally should construct the continuity (simultaneity) evoked by the force form, the equivalent of the expansive power of the body.¹³⁰

In this series of sculptures Boccioni gradually strips the form of extraneous detail. In Unique Forms, the most vital part of the human body in motion, the spine, is a hollow space, curled in on itself. The "spiral expansion" becomes an expression of the spine reversing its centripetal force like an uncoiled spring. In Brooker's conception of Futurism, it is the "continuity in space", with which he had difficulty, as an inexperienced artist. Striving has "object and space" which are not integrated. He lacked the "greater or lesser intensity and solidity" of space which Boccioni had advocated. Brooker would eventually discuss these problems of formal unity with FitzGerald. In discussing Futurism, Taylor says we are taken:

well beyond the limits of our normal movement, and we are thus released into a realm of ideal motion....This release is the Futurist's moment of ecstasy, his contact with the "universal rhythm" that grants him the freedom of Superman...¹³¹

It is the "striving" towards the expression of these ideals which identifies Brooker's art with the Futurist movement. The vital influence for both Brooker and Boccioni is to be found in Bergson's "universal dynamism" of Marientti's initial Manifesto. Tisdall and Bozzolla write that the concept of universal dynamism:

was perhaps the single most prevalent preoccupation of their time, bringing together the philosophical legacy of Nietzsche and Bergson...and contemporary scientific explorations of the relationship between mind and matter.¹³²

Not only did Brooker express these Futurist ideals in his painting but they may be found in the images and structure of his poetry too.¹³³

BROOKER'S RESPONSE TO THE SOCIETE ANONYME EXHIBITION

Brooker, whenever he could, continued to study modern European masters. The Societe Anonyme show, The International Exhibition of Modern Art, opened in Toronto in April, 1927. Charles Comfort, who was a docent to the exhibition, likened it, in its national impact in Canada, to the Armory Show in New York.¹³⁴ For most Canadians who attended the exhibition, this was their first experience of European modern art movements. Charles Comfort notes "I think the Canadian public was baffled by the exhibition....Such of my friends as Bertram Brooker....and Lawren Harris, were, of course, aware and interested in the directions in which the exhibition pointed."¹³⁵

In the Buffalo catalogue (the exhibition's previous location) Dreier had selected six works as illustrations, each one from a different group within the modern movement. The works reproduced were by Mondrian, Gabo, Leger, de Chirico, Malevich and Baumeister. The catalogue contained a paragraph on each of the six artists. The Toronto catalogue was not so well considered, but Toronto's Evening Telegram of 5 March reproduced all six of the Buffalo illustrations, accompanied by extracts from Dreier's article.¹³⁶ The Toronto catalogue had a short introduction by Dreier, in which she confirmed the aim of the Societe Anonyme as educational. She listed some of the main European groups and their leaders, including the Suprematists, the Constructivists, and the Constructivist sculptors, Gabo and Pevsner. But even with Dreier's wide experience of modern art and an expressed educational aim, there are many omissions and oversights. The words Cubism and Futurism do not occur in the catalogue although the work of Braque and Severini was exhibited. Nor are any of the major European movements explained.

A look at one or two of the reviews of the exhibition reflects the frustration which the Toronto general public must have felt. Even the most sympathetic articles expressed the difficulty most visitors experienced. Fred Jacob, in the Mail and Empire, wrote:

...It is worthy of respectful examination by any person who wants to know what Modern Art means, even though it is probable that the vast majority of honest seekers will leave the gallery with the admission that they can neither understand nor feel it.¹³⁷

Lawren Harris' article has already been mentioned, but a further examination will help to illustrate how much Canadian artists such as Harris and Brooker gained from the experience of seeing the exhibition. Harris' article shows him to be a sensitive, perceptive viewer, and his observations are expressed in a highly articulate manner:

Many of these abstractions appeared flat at the first seeing, but with contemplation or sometimes in an unguarded moment, they unfolded in space and became absolute within their frames; that is, by no power of sight or thinking could any plane, colour, or surface be shifted from its exact place in space, and though the boundary lines of the planes were as sharp and precise as a knife edge the space was soft and palpable. Some of the abstractions yielded the experience of infinite space between flat shapes only a few inches apart.¹³⁸

Sentences such as "Some of the planes, sought to give the experience of the unreality of appearances", although turned around, shows an understanding of Cubist ideas. (Braque's concern was with reality, but a reality of the mind, not one that was created by the senses.)¹³⁹ Although there is no written account extant of Brooker's reaction to the Societe Anonyme's International Exhibition of Modern Art, he must have felt bolstered by Dreier's last sentence in the Toronto catalogue:

If any young talent has been safeguarded through this Exhibition from misdirected efforts and has been helped to remain true to himself and not to feel the need to compromise with the public, that does not yet understand, we will feel that we have served our purpose.¹⁴⁰

Brooker's visual response to the exhibition is illuminating. The exact identity and the whereabouts of many of the paintings in the exhibition are not known. But an examination of the known works of the European artists in whom Brooker was interested, and a perusal of Brooker's painting and drawing during the following two or three years, provide some interesting comparisons (figs. 29, 30).¹⁴¹ The most striking of these can be found in Kandinsky's Gaiety, 1924, which was reproduced in the Toronto catalogue, and Brooker's Sounds Assembling, 1928, (figs. 31, 32). The exposure to this European master assisted Brooker in the manner which he described a year later in the Yearbook (and which has already been quoted more fully): "[They] sometimes assist an artist here by suggesting a method of unifying mechanical with natural phenomenon....how to see and seize upon reality...."¹⁴² The comparison explains how an inexperienced artist such as Brooker was able to produce such a mature and cohesive work in such a short time, particularly as his painting was not a full-time commitment.

The dimensionality of Brooker's painting is quite different from Kandinsky's. Sounds Assembling retains some of the architectonic elements which Zemans observed in the early tempera "world and spirit" paintings. The strong tubular diagonals zoom in and out of a deep space. Kandinsky's diagonals are linear and pass across the pictorial space. The four sets of diagonals in Gaiety are each composed of three lines, and their sense of movement into space is suggested by the widening or narrowing of the "parallel" lines. These lines pass by or across the circles in the composition, visually linking the circles in the passage through space. Brooker's circles, in contrast, are the targets or destinations of the diagonals, which terminate, rebound or pass through the circles.

There are many similarities amongst the formal elements of the two works, which in both cases create the strong formal unity of each painting. Brooker's vivid red zigzag which cuts across the picture plane at lower right echoes Kandinsky's zigzag which leads

in towards the centre of the painting. The strong diagonals which lead from lower right to upper centre in Gaiety cut the composition in the same proportions as do the diagonals in Sounds Assembling. But Brooker has reversed the thrust from upper centre left to lower right. Kandinsky has created an area of intensity in the shape of a star, caused by overlapping triangles in the upper left quadrant. Brooker's point of intensity occurs at the centre of a uniform star which is the converging attraction for most of the diagonal forms lower left. The size and proportion of the circles in each work are not the same, but in both paintings most of the eccentric circles are clustered on the left side of the picture with a large more solitary circle at upper right. In both paintings we see through the solitary circle to an overlapped circular edge which ambiguously denies the circle as solid. Both solitary circles have a single diagonal which draws each of them back to the centre of the composition. Both of those diagonals pass behind a sweep of "deep" space which pulls the eye back, creating an ambiguous surface tension.

Although the title and date of Kandinsky's painting are known and there is a black and white photograph extant, the whereabouts of Gaiety is unknown. As Kandinsky tended to work in a series of paintings which had some relationship, it is possible to look at his paintings of 1924 to find out a little more about the probable use of colour. Of the six Kandinsky paintings exhibited at the Brooklyn Museum (covering a period from 1924-26) only three were shown in Toronto. Vivian Endicott Barnett has noted that by 1925 Kandinsky often painted on board. These oils are relatively small in scale and produce a flat, uniform surface texture compared to those painted on canvas.¹⁴³ The dark, painterly, soft-edged, deeper space of the Gaiety canvas, 1924, would have appealed to Brooker. A work which relates closely to Gaiety is Blue Painting, of January 1924 (fig. 33). The opposing or converging diagonals are present. There is a partial circle upper right, with most of the other circles clustered on the left of the picture. In Blue Painting, there is a trace of the three parallel diagonal lines which in Gaiety turn abruptly along the lower left

edge of the painting. If Kandinsky has retained the same colours for the triangles in Gaiety as those that are similarly situated in the composition in Blue Painting, (and the tonal values of the black and white photograph of Gaiety support this possibility), then compositional similarities can be found between the formal use of colour in both Kandinsky's and Brooker's painting. Thus the large white triangle in the lower right quadrant of Blue Painting can be equated with the partial triangle lower right in Gaiety, and corresponds to the white zigzag, lower centre right, in Sounds Assembling. Similarly the acute-angled red triangle at lower right in Blue Painting can be compared to a similar dark-toned triangle in Gaiety, providing a comparable dynamic thrust to the red zigzags at lower right in Brooker's work. If the yellow triangle at upper left in Blue Painting, is the same colour as the light-toned triangle at the same orientation in Gaiety, a little lower in the composition, then this would correspond exactly with Brooker's yellow zigzag centre left. All three paintings have the deep painterly soft edged space which Harris described when he saw the Societe Anonyme show (already quoted in part):

Many of these abstractions...with contemplation...unfolded in space...and though the boundary lines of the planes were as sharp and precise as a knife edge the space was soft and palpable. Some of the abstractions yielded the experience of infinite space between flat shapes only a few inches apart.¹⁴⁴

FITZGERALD'S RESPONSE TO CUBISM AND FUTURISM

FitzGerald also studied modern European art. His great excitement at discovering the five Cézannes in the Metropolitan Museum in New York in 1930 is well documented by his diary. FitzGerald and Cezanne too were both less concerned with the technique of painting than the message, or the content. Cezanne had written to Emile Bernard (who had sought his advice): "technical questions are for us only the means of making the public feel what we feel ourselves and of making ourselves understood..."¹⁴⁵ FitzGerald told his students: "...consider techniques as a means by which you say what you have to

say and not as an end in itself. What you have to say is of first importance, how you say it is always secondary."¹⁴⁶

FitzGerald, like Cubists Braque, Picasso, Leger, Metzinger and Gleizes, all developed their ideas from a careful and thorough study of Cezanne.¹⁴⁷ Braque's "passage" allowed the surfaces, or "facets" of three-dimensional objects, to fuse together, so that the different directions of the three-dimensional space, became an ambiguous two-dimensional space, which reinforced the picture plane. FitzGerald uses "passage" in his painting, Still Life with Hat, 1955 (fig. 41) in which the table top and the front of the table are separate on one side of the picture, but are a continuous surface on the other side. Papers and book overlap, both creating an ambiguous space. "Passage" is used between the two directions of back wall and table top, reinforcing the picture plane. FitzGerald developed the use of Cubist facets and Cubist shading (light tones on two adjacent edges, and dark on two opposite ones, thus creating an appearance which is convex or concave) in drawings such as House on the River, 1929 (fig. 34). In this drawing we see FitzGerald's early efforts to eliminate detail and ambiguously square receding planes. This element of abstraction may be compared to Lyonel Feininger's abstracted cityscape Stadt VI, 1926. (fig. 35) ¹⁴⁸. Perhaps the strongest Cubist element of FitzGerald's work is the use of a Cubist grid. Edward Fry notes Cezanne's meeting of lines at right-angles and continues: "Within these smaller areas he also realigned and reshaped objects in the interest of an overall unifying two dimensional structure; as, finally, he did for the composition in its entirety..."¹⁴⁹ FitzGerald uses a method of realignment very effectively in Pritchard's Fence, c.1928 (fig. 36). Here the gently demarked receding planes are pulled back to the picture's surface by a carefully structured two-dimensional vertical and horizontal grid. The vertical of the house on the right is aligned with a gap in Pritchard's fence. The post of the washing-line is balanced by a reflected 'V' shape in the fence. The right-hand edge of the house on the left is

extended into the vertical support of the second fence. The bright patch of sunlight on the wall of the farthest house is pulled forward by its extension into the bright patch of snow in the right angle of the fence, its edge extended into a vertical of the fence below. Diagonals crisscross the grid. The slope of the far roof extends into the diagonal tree, two back yards away, which zigzags with the wooden strut which rests against the fence. It, in turn, visually supports the obtuse-angled drain-pipe, attached to the house behind. The roof lines and the tops of windows reinforce the five-line horizontal of the two fence-tops, compressed additionally by the parallel ridges of snow in the foreground. Textures are reduced to a uniform finish, the shapes become facets which fit into the Cubist grid.

Andre Salmon, in 1912, said: "To understand Cezanne is to foresee Cubism." Although FitzGerald may not have been familiar with each phase of Cubist art, he was able by developing ideas from his study of Cezanne to develop Cubist characteristics in his compositional structure nearly twenty years later in a Cubo-Realist style. The French Cubist painter Georges Braque had also learned from Cezanne, "to see or invent patterns in which objects in quite different planes in three dimensions could be balanced two dimensionally."¹⁵⁰ FitzGerald often used the structure of a complex radiating wheel spoke to achieve a similar end in paintings such as Doc Snider's House, 1931, Farmyard, 1931, and Still Life with Hat, 1955.

Farmyard (fig. 39) has a complex formal structure which is derived from a Cubist and Futurist foundation. The stable grid of verticals and horizontals is offset by the diagonals of an asymmetrically placed Futurist wheel-spoke structure. The sloping barn roof and the scaffolding become the spokes of the wheel in a surface pattern which pulls the barn forward to the picture plane. The horizontal lines in the sky ambiguously double as both grid and spokes. There is a complex interweaving and balancing of triangles and of four-, five- and six-sided figures, which is apparent in his early abstract work such as

Abstraction, 1952, (fig. 37). A comparison with Giacoma Balla's Dynamic Depths, 1912 (fig. 38) shows a marked affinity with Futurism. This can be seen in the use of the radiating wheel, in the use of open-sided triangles, and open-ended rectangles which afford dynamism and a directional thrust. Balla, too, retains a strong horizontal and vertical grid.

Still Life with Hat (fig. 41) also shows a complex Cubist and Futurist foundation. This is a late work, and by the 1950s FitzGerald was slipping comfortably from abstraction to objective work and back again month by month. The painting also makes use of the Futurist radiating wheel structure, adding a dynamism to an otherwise static composition. It occurs at the centre of the left-hand page of the open book. In the upper right-hand corner a stack of frames creates a series of interlocking triangles. The Futurist artist Boccioni's declaration in his technical manifesto in 1912 would almost seem to describe FitzGerald's painting:

Proclaim that in the intersection of the planes of a book with the angles of a table...in the frame of a window, there is more truth than in all the twisting of muscles, all the breasts and buttocks of the heroes and Venuses...¹⁵¹

BROOKER'S AND FITZGERALD'S RESPONSE TO RUSSIAN MODERN ART

For both FitzGerald and Brooker formal concerns with composition began with Cubism and Futurism, and led inevitably to an interest in Russian art. In Toronto Brooker had opportunities not only to see but also to discuss Russian art. Mary MacLachlan describes an evening in 1936 when Philip and Paraskeva Clark were entertaining a group of artists, writers and musicians including Brooker, Norman Bethune and Fritz Brandtner.¹⁵² Bethune had been in Leningrad the year before. He was an artist himself, and admired Paraskeva's work. She had spent three years studying in the Free Studios in Leningrad, including a year with Petrov-Vodkin, and lived for eight years in Paris before

emigrating to Canada. Paraskeva admired Brooker's Blue Nude, 1937, and may have appreciated its Constructivist implications. She borrowed it now and again from Brooker and kept it for a few months at a time.¹⁵³ Fritz Brandtner had arrived in Winnipeg from Danzig in 1928, "bringing news of the latest European art developments," including Kandinsky.¹⁵⁴ Brandtner and FitzGerald often talked and sketched together.

While Modern Russian painting had roots in Cubism and Futurism, it also drew upon traditional Russian art. Beginning in 1908, Gontcharova and Larionov organized exhibitions of the Neo-Primitivist movements. These brightly coloured portraits and still-lives were inspired by Russian Icon painting and by Russian folk art such as lubok painting.¹⁵⁵ Just before the outbreak of World War 1, Russian Cubo-Futurism emerged. Gontcharova, Larionov, Kasimir Malevich and Ivan Kliun strongly identified with this movement.¹⁵⁶

In 1915 the historic exhibition The Last Futurist Exhibition of Pictures: 0-10 took place. At this exhibition Malevich introduced Suprematism - the first theory of pure painting. From this exhibition emerged both the Suprematist and Constructivist factions, the latter centered around Vladimir Tatlin. Artist Michail Grobman has discussed the spiritual content of Malevich's work. Whereas Constructivism supplied the needs of the new industrial culture, providing material forms for the emerging consumer population, Malevich and Suprematism looked to "the inner spirituality of mankind." Grobman writes:

The Black Square of Malevich is a symbol of spiritual not physical construction. Malevich is a body with the spiritual flesh and blood of a biblical prophet. The quest for Malevich is a search for God...[Malevich] yearns, above all, for the reconstruction of the inner world of humanity.

....Malevich...had insisted that art is not thing-making but, in its primal action, a speculative thinking....

Malevich ...whose spiritual gaze reveals the supra-temporal perspective of human existence....Suprematism is the way to God.¹⁵⁷

Grobman compares Malevich's path to that of the painter-monk Rublev: "As Constructivism turned the face of art toward life; Suprematism is art turned toward eternity." Thus Grobman writes, "Malevich recalls geometry...to the region of pure and absolute mystical experience."¹⁵⁸

In Malevich's manifesto, "From Cubism and Futurism to Suprematism: The New Painterly Realism, 1915," Malevich expressed a very real concern that people were confronted with great technological change in every aspect of their physical lives, but were not equipped to cope with those changes emotionally or spiritually, and were constantly looking back to the past to resolve their difficulties. He wrote:

This idea is false.

It diverts young forces from the contemporary current of life and thereby deforms them.

Their bodies fly in airplanes, but they cover art and life with the old robes of Neros and Titians....

We cannot use the ships in which the Saracens sailed, and so in art we should seek forms that correspond to modern life.¹⁵⁹

Kliun also signed this statement. It was issued in conjunction with the exhibition "0.10." It will be seen in chapters II and III that Brooker's spiritual quest expressed in his writing and painting shares many affinities with the Suprematist statement.

FitzGerald's work shows a strong affinity to the work of the Russian Suprematist, Ivan Kliun. Barron and Tuchman have written that Kliun's paintings give a sense of constant formal investigation....revealing a fascination with compositional complexity.¹⁶⁰

But the vocabulary of his form was simple: "After accepting the straight line as a point of departure, we have arrived at an ideally simple form: straight and circular planes ... 161 Like FitzGerald, Kliun's art developed from a thorough study and appreciation of Cezanne.¹⁶² Kliun wrote,

...An object, one of its sides or a part of it depicted on one plane can, with part of its form, enter another plane: this presents the eye with a greater intensity and joins up the disparate forms into a single, organic whole.¹⁶³

and also:

An indispensable condition of a well-constructed Cubist work is its dynamism, i.e. the sensation of acute tension which should be felt in every part of the work, in its every line and form.¹⁶⁴

These characteristics are apparent in a comparison of Kliun's Untitled, 1914 (fig. 40), and FitzGerald's Farmyard (fig. 39). Kliun employs the Cubist grid, open-ended triangles, and the dynamic wheel-spoke structures already discussed in FitzGerald's painting. It is interesting to note that both artists portray construction methods to reinforce the structure of their composition. FitzGerald uses scaffolding as a Cubist grid. Kliun builds his composition using synthetic details such as wood grain and wire mesh, and methods of interlocking joints or forming bonds: knotted wood, wooden pegs, cross-beams, bolt and rivet, and a stepped base. Machinery is indicated by the turning wheels or spokes and the word "FAN" integrated within the composition.

A comparison of FitzGerald's Still Life with Hat and a second Untitled, 1914, work of Kliun (figs. 41, 42) shows similar formal concerns. Both use straight and circular planes, which overlap and intersect adjacent forms, and add dynamism to the composition. Both artists repeat or reiterate a form by increasing its size: Kliun in the tilted squares, FitzGerald in the pages of books and sheets of paper. In each picture there is an overlapping of the dominant circular and straight planes. The form of Kliun's wheel-

spokes spins outwards in radiating curves. FitzGerald's wheel spokes reverberate outwards through the triangular typography of the open book and overlapping papers.

The relevance of Kandinsky's art to the painting and drawing of FitzGerald has been discussed by the writer elsewhere.¹⁶⁵ FitzGerald's abstracts of the early 1950s, such as Abstract, 1952, show evidence of Kandinsky's pictorial vocabulary. FitzGerald uses point and line, concentric and partial circles, circles with an aura, open-sided triangles and fragments of checkerboard which recall paintings such as Kandinsky's Composition 8, 1923 (figs. 43, 44).

A relationship can be seen between FitzGerald's Abstract: Green and Gold, 1954 (fig. 45) and the work of Kandinsky and Kliun. Kandinsky's Dreamy, 1932 (fig. 46) has the same soft, transparent use of colour as FitzGerald's Abstract: Green and Gold. In both paintings any reference to brushwork is eliminated. The composition in both works is built up with intersecting and overlapping circles, with some use of a vertical and horizontal grid. Both artists retain some feeling of depth. Kandinsky achieves a temporal sense of the fourth dimension through a complex layering and shifting of stencils which are used with spray paint. But his circles and rectangles are flat, Suprematist shapes affirming the picture plane. FitzGerald's circles are elliptical, and although a reference has been made to their stellar form,¹⁶⁶ FitzGerald retains a Constructivist awareness of the picture plane and its frontal presentation. In this way both artists restrict the depth to a shallow space. Kandinsky's temporal reference is made through the stationary positions of his stencils, in a staccato measurement. FitzGerald's elliptical curves move through an ambiguous space in a continuous movement which has suggested a Bergsonian stellar flow.

Kliun's Spherical Non-Objective Composition, 1922-25 (fig. 47) is also built up with overlapping circles and rectangles. Although Kliun has used some opaque colour,

much of his composition is created with overlapping transparent paint. Like Kandinsky most of the shapes he has used are closed. In contrast, almost all of FitzGerald's shapes are open-ended. The circles swing in and out of the shallow space, sometimes reinforcing the picture plane, sometimes curving away into a shallow orbit. Unlike Kandinsky's composition which is focused in the upper left quadrant, the composition of both Kliun and FitzGerald has a strong central image. Perhaps the most striking contrast is that whereas Kandinsky and Kliun have used strong diagonals to create an asymmetrical balance, FitzGerald has avoided this. There is nothing in Abstract: Green and Gold to disturb the strong frontal stability of the composition. Like the modern Russian icons of the Suprematist and Constructivist artists, FitzGerald creates an enigmatic Madonna-like form.

It has already been established that FitzGerald probably saw Russian modern art in New York in 1924. There are no specific references to Suprematism, but in 1954 (the year FitzGerald painted Abstract: Green and Gold) he described the comprehensive study he undertook during that winter in New York in 1924. He writes:

Part of the day I spent at the Art Students League in intensive work, drawing and painting and the balance in the same concentrated study in the art galleries....

I saw everything I could, from the oldest to the most modern paintings... The more I looked at the newer things the more I became aware of what the modern artist was searching for and how he was accomplishing his results.... The whole experience was very stimulating, revealing many unforeseen possibilities for extending my work...¹⁶⁷

Brooker's interest in the Madonna will be explored fully in chapter II through the books he read and through his writing. But the use of the Madonna and Child as a symbol of spiritual and aesthetic unity was already well established in Russian modernism by the Suprematists and the Constructivists. Malevich's Suprematist statements on the Russian

icon and the image of the Madonna are sometimes ambiguous: "Only when the conscious habit of seeing...Madonnas...in pictures disappears will we witness a purely painterly work of art." But his stipulation that painting should be creation as an end in itself is clear. Jean-Claude Marcade writes,

....absolute non-figuration does not represent but very simply is....the iconoclasm that had been a purifying gesture during the pre-suprematist period transforms into the triumphs of the icon as picture...it is not by chance that Malevich himself called his Black Quadrilateral "the face of the new art....a living, royal infant", "the icon of my time."¹⁶⁸

Marcade reminds us that the Black Square was hung at the 0.10 exhibition high in the corner like the central icon of the "beautiful corner", a place set aside in Orthodox homes in the main room for the icon of Christ Blessing or the Mother of God (fig. 48). Marcade points out that Malevich equated Suprematist painting with the universe, and quotes him: "...the miracle of nature is that it all is contained in a small seed..." and "man's skull...is equal to the universe, for in it is contained all that it sees in it." So, Marcadé suggests, Suprematist painting is equal to the universe, it is nature; the cosmic stimulus passes through it, and he quotes Malevich: "[the cosmic flame] wavers in the inner man without purpose, sense, or logic."¹⁶⁹ This reflects the eastern perception of an intuitive and mystical fourth dimension instead of a Western temporal one. It is in this, John Bowlit has suggested, that Suprematism made an original contribution to international abstract movements.¹⁷⁰ Einstein's hypothesis of the space-time continuum in 1905 had stimulated the exploration of these ideas. But Malevich's additional conceptual dimension was drawn from the contemporary theories of the Russian mystic and philosopher, P.D. Ouspensky, in his book Tertium Organum,¹⁷¹ which Brooker had read. Malevich's equation of man's skull and the universe is paralleled in Brooker's play Within. This will be discussed at greater length in chapter II.

The influence of the Russian icon was not isolated to Suprematism. A Russian art critic has said that "the influence of the Russian icon on Tatlin is undoubtedly greater than the influence upon him of Cezanne or Picasso."¹⁷² Christina Lodder has noted that in Tatlin's early painting the central figure is analyzed in large curved planes and is pressed close to the picture plane, which is characteristic of the icon.¹⁷³ It was this traditional image that also lead him to create his painterly reliefs. Inspired by the icons he began to drill and mount his boards with rings, screws and bells. He attached beads, mirrors and tinsel with glue (figs. 50, 51). Constructivists Naum Gabo and Antoine Pevsner also make overt references to the Russian Icon in their sculpture, which Brooker saw at the Societe Anonyme exhibition in Toronto in 1927.

Although the work of Naum Gabo and Antoine Pevsner is usually discussed in terms of Constructivism, neither of the brothers were happy with that description. Their work was not utilitarian. Pevsner taught at the Moscow Academy of Fine Arts, with Kandinsky and Malevich. The brothers preferred to call their art "constructive ideas" or "ideas of spacial construction".¹⁷⁴ In their "Realistic Manifesto" of 1920, there are two statements that can serve to link their ideas with those of Bertram Brooker on motion and spatial depth as an integral part of his spiritual expression.

We renounce...mass...
 we bring back to sculpture the line as a direction and in it we affirm depth
 as the one form of space.
 We renounce...static rhythms as the only elements of the plastic and
 pictorial arts.
 We affirm in these arts a new element the kinetic rhythms as the basic forms
 of our perception of real time."¹⁷⁵
 "...The problem of Time in sculpture is synonymous with the problem of
 motion."¹⁷⁶

Naum Gabo illustrates the primary kinetic elements for use in a completed kinetic composition (fig. 49). These kinetic elements have much in common with FitzGerald's

Farmyard and Brooker's Sounds Assembling as they explore the tensions of frontal and deep space. The planes push and pull away from the plane of the vertical and horizontal. Circles and ellipse and diagonals move through the composition's depth, from frontal plane to deep space. Constructivist sculpture is often conceived in a frontal presentation. Early painterly reliefs and counter-reliefs were seen in relationship to a planar surface such as a wall. This may have stimulated Brooker's choice of Pevsner's sculpture as a vehicle for the transference of three-dimensional form to a two-dimensional surface.

Brooker's interest in Constructivism appears to have lasted only a short period of time around 1937, and is part of his eclectic style. He had already experimented in his painting with incorporating a three-dimensional sculpture into a two-dimensional space, using Raymond Duchamp-Villon's Baudelaire, 1911, and Boccioni's Unique Forms of Continuity in Space. This follows the reverse process of Tatlin and Gabo's reinterpretation of the two-dimensional icon in a sculptural relief, as in Selection of Materials: Counter-Relief, 1916, and Head of A Woman, c. 1917-20 (figs. 51, 52). Brooker's Blue Nude, 1937, makes direct sculptural references which can be related to Pevsner's Torso, 1924-6 (figs. 53, 54), which Brooker saw at the Societe Anonyme's International Exhibition of Modern Art held at the Art Gallery of Toronto in 1927. Pevsner exhibited Head, c. 1920, and Torso, 1924-26. The brothers aimed to destroy the illusory perception of space and to "bring it closer to our consciousness; so that the sensation of space will become...a more everyday emotion, the same as the sensation of light or the sensation of sound....The shapes we are creating...are absolute."¹⁷⁷

In Blue Nude Brooker explores the validity of solid and void. The head of his nude closely resembles the concave oval head of Pevsner's Torso, with its abstracted 'T' shape for nose and brow, which is derived from academic life-drawing sketches. But whereas Pevsner retains a frontal symmetrical balance, expressing the volume of the

torso in negative space, Brooker balances his composition asymmetrically, playing off the model's classical pose against the superimposed cubist grid, and balancing convex with concave. Pevsner's personal challenge to bring the perception of space "closer to our consciousness so that the sensation of the space will be a more everyday emotion" is perhaps met more fully by Brooker's work. To establish the equal significance of both concave and convex, Brooker curves one breast outwards, and one inwards. The cubist grid changes the abdomen abruptly from convex to concave.¹⁷⁸ The juxtaposition of positive and negative space, solid and void, full and empty, draws attention to the function of the torso, and to its fecundity. The suggestion of movement and function affirms Boccioni's insistence on action and continuity in space, rather than the more static constructivist "absolute."

In Blue Nude, the head of the torso, the concave breast, the upper abdomen and one oval thigh are defined by a thick edge, an approximation of a sculptural medium like copper or bronze. Brooker creates the same effect in Entombment, 1937 and Pharaoh's Daughter, 1950 (figs. 55, 56). In this work the composition is more lyrical, for Brooker has used Pevsner's curving elliptical bands which describe the form of Torso. Brooker's elliptical shapes swing from side to side, enfolding the woman and child in a large mandorla, and creating halos for their heads- a reference, perhaps, to the Madonna of the Russian icons.

Through Brooker and FitzGerald's receptive view of the international modern movement, and their sensitive appreciation of its enormous scope, they helped to revitalize art in Canada. They moved away from the limitations and exactitudes of seeing the northern landscape as the only expression of Canadian art, and discovered that an ultimate expression could be found in subjects as simple as two apples, or as complex as a piece of music. This chapter has shown that the assimilation of European modernism

was a long, intense process for the North American artist. For Bertram Brooker and LeMoine FitzGerald this response was not firmly consolidated with the creation of mature modernist work until they had studied European Modernist paintings in depth at first hand. This occurred for Brooker at the Societe Anonyme International Art Exhibition in Toronto in 1927, and for FitzGerald on his trip to major galleries in the United States in 1930.

Although the external vocabulary of these European modernists varied in style, the significance of the inner content was closely allied, and held in greater esteem. The writings of Kandinsky, Fry, Cheney, Rodker, Boccioni and Malevich have stressed the vitality of the inner element of art as a spiritual content, the expression of the artist's soul. Art is seen as a thoroughfare, a mediation between humankind and God; a communication of feeling to be passed between artist and viewer. Finding confirmation in earlier writers such as Blake, Tolstoy and Bergson, modernist Fry has described art as an expression of the imaginative life of which religion and the mystical experience are a part. For Malevich the icon of the Madonna was a symbol of the purity and supremacy of art. Cheney has described abstraction as a cosmic ordering of the universe. All lean towards an expression of the fourth dimension, an intuitive desire to encompass the universe and embrace the eternal.

Brooker and FitzGerald both stressed the importance of the inner content of their art. They strove for a sense of unity and worked steadily towards the resolution of formal concerns. Through FitzGerald's intuitive contemplation, and Brooker's speculative thinking, their ideas on unity, content and form have been shown to place them well within the scope of modernist thought. Chapter II will show how Brooker's spiritual quest lead him to the writings of Henri Bergson and P.D. Ouspensky, writers who had informed the work of the Futurists and the Suprematists at the turn of the century.

CHAPTER II

SOURCES FOR BROOKER'S MODERNIST VISION: A SPIRITUAL QUEST

"My job is to try to extricate from the piles and piles of manuscript those parts where he came closest to his own truth. He has made so many attacks, approaches. poems, plays, novels, treatises, even humour. It would take volumes, even to suggest the steps in his thinking. Drawers and filing cabinets full of mss., and all higgledy-piggledy-scrap of diary, plans for books - hundreds of books planned. I shall try to deal only with the more significant."

Bertram Brooker,

Connor.

"Throughout all this [sic] mss. one comes on whole files of scores or hundreds of pages of notes of reading only..."

Bertram Brooker,

Ibid.

This chapter will establish the sources for Brooker's modernist vision. Through an examination of his diaries, autobiographies, unpublished manuscripts, novels and the marked books from his Library, I will trace Brooker's motivation in what became a consuming spiritual quest. It will begin with the questions he raised as a boy and how he attempted to resolve them and then examine his early formative reading of English artist and poet William Blake and American poet Walt Whitman. I will argue that Brooker identified with Blake's search for the source of humankind's happiness. I will examine Brooker's influential reading of Henry Adams and argue the importance to Brooker of Adams' seminal writing on the importance of the intuition and the "Education" of the senses, on Adams' parallel spiritual journey to discover what motivates humanity's creative energy. This chapter will establish Brooker's belief as a Christian, refuting earlier claims that Brooker was a Theosophist. I will establish the redemptive role of Brooker's novels and posit the redemptive nature of his paintings. A full examination of their content will follow in Chapter III. This chapter will also establish how all these threads in Brooker's quest came together in his reading of Henri Bergson and Bergson's ideas on the importance of intuition and the living being as a channel through whom the generative force of life is transmitted in the eternal flux of the universe. Examination of Brooker's reading of P.D. Ouspensky and his philosophy of the fourth dimension will be linked to Bergson and Ouspensky as sources for the Italian Futurists and the Russian Suprematists respectively. At appropriate stages throughout this chapter I will explore the affinities which FitzGerald also shared with Adams, Bergson and Ouspensky by a comparison with FitzGerald's art and writing and, where possible, with Brooker's writing. This chapter will establish Brooker's and FitzGerald's spiritual kinship and compare the relatedness of their mystical/aesthetic experience. A more in-depth examination of their relationship will take place in Chapter III in which I will interpret two of their major abstract works, Sounds Assembling and Abstract: Green and Gold, within the context of that relationship.

There are things that intelligence alone is able to seek, but which, by itself, it will never find. These things instinct alone could find; but it will never seek them.¹

This Bergsonian quotation aptly describes the very different approach to life of Bertram Brooker from LeMoine FitzGerald and expresses the essential corresponding energy each afforded the other. It was taken from Brooker's copy of Henri Bergson's Creative Evolution and is underscored by Brooker. Like many of the Futurists and the Suprematists, Brooker read Bergson at length, carefully marking passage after passage. Sometimes the marked passages are startlingly close to things that Brooker and FitzGerald have written. In Brooker's case we may assume that he has arrived at those conclusions because he has read Bergson, but there is no evidence that FitzGerald read these books. FitzGerald's philosophy may have evolved from the long discussions he had with Brooker, or it may have been part of a natural affinity he had with Bergson's ideas. Brooker's early approach to life was intellectual, whereas FitzGerald's approach to his life and work was intuitive. In a letter to FitzGerald, Brooker confides that FitzGerald has contributed to Brooker's change from an intellectual approach to his philosophy to "a matter of feeling...instead of mere thinking or theorizing about it."²

Brooker's penetrating philosophical questions about life and death began as a young child: "Why in a world so wonderful is man so miserable?" When he was rejected by unsympathetic, uncomprehending adults, he turned for his answers to books. He grew up in Croydon, on the outskirts of London. The misery and poverty of his childhood "magnified the wretchedness of a few streets and alleys into a universal condition."³ His love of music had been discovered at an early age and Brooker sang as a choirboy in the church choir; but in the strict Anglican upbringing he felt the condemnation of a worthless humanity. Writing half a century later he could still recall the puzzlement and shame at the words of the hymn:

Though every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile.

As a boy he reported everything he read to his younger brother, Cecil, who was too sick to go to school. Lying under the covers at night he would listen to his brother's laboured breathing which sounded like: "suffer....suff....er...." Watching his brother's suffering as Cecil hung between life and death raised more questions about justice and the existence of God.⁴ Brooker touches upon the fear and guilt of thinking about his brother's death, as the family restrained its youthful exuberance around the house. The questions Brooker posed in his youth were the start of a life-long spiritual quest: "the search for reality, truth, God, Christ, proof of the existence of an immortal soul." All his writing was influenced by this life.⁵ He called it his "soul-search." He wrote with youthful arrogance, "By 21 I will know everything..."⁶

In his diary and in his "Self Portrait: An Experiment in Autobiography" (1937), Brooker brings together the disparate ideas which have formed his thinking, and contributed to the content of his painting. Brooker wrote in his diary in 1928:

It occurred to me recently...that these two years of art effort were designed for the purpose of settling my metaphysical ideas, so that I could go ahead with my writing without being subject to constant changes in the form of my thought.⁷

Brooker explains in his "Self Portrait" that in his twenties he went through a "scientific stage". At nineteen he had developed a theory of the cause of gravitation⁸, which, at the time, seemed to have nothing to do with his "soul-search." But by the time of writing in 1937, Brooker realized that this had affected his thinking ever since, and that this had been an attempt to "square religion with science."⁹ He postulated that the universe was

originally made up of sparks - electrons - all of equal power and vitality. Their primal energy was derived from the desire to reach a farthestmost point or goal, on the other side of space. This "First Desire" produced a converging rotation, seeming, at times, in opposition to the primal movement. This primal energy could explain, Brooker thought, the whole history of the universe. From the sparks came the creation of all rhythmic swings in orbits, spheres, suns, seasons, atoms and molecules. "Their circling was in a sense only seeming...the sparks continued...toward the goal." Brooker remarks:

years later Ouspensky talks of [the] chart of [the] circle, and Tolstoy a triangle. While theirs appears to be symbolic, and to do with the relation of men to God, mine was more cosmic and primal...It was really this spark that I was trying to feel....a taste of the primal energy of the universe.¹⁰

Brooker writes that he was impressed by a stanza of Whitman's:

To me the converging objects of the universe
perpetually flow
All are written to me, and I must get what
the writing means.

He adds that he was never curious about the writing - his concern was with the "ME" toward which it flowed.¹¹

In a short section of his "Self Portrait" called "Pilgrim Passage" Brooker expounds upon the search for his inner self. His philosophy may offer an explanation for much of the pertinent literary criticism of his writing. For instead of building his identity (and those of the characters he created) from all the impressions and experience which made him Canadian, he deliberately employed a method of stripping away, layer by layer, all that had molded him through hereditary or environmental means. His curiosity in identifying the influences which had formed his character "became a consuming passion."¹²

Brooker writes that the introspective turn which his curiosity took was in itself an example of the influence of his environment. In England he left school when he was thirteen. He read, he admits, "enormously and chaotically," and there was no one to direct his reading, or to share and discuss its content. Arriving in Canada in 1905, in the small western town of Portage-la-Prairie, he found there was no library. The one bookstore carried only current popular novels. The few books that he could afford were ordered from London bookstores directly or from their book lists. Brooker stresses again that there was no one with whom he could discuss his ideas. The rector of the local church had no answers for his questions, except the dogma of a strict Anglican doctrine: "I turned inward because I could not turn outward."¹³ The aim of his introverted search was, "to strip myself of everything which had entered my consciousness from the physical world, through the senses, since the day I was born."¹⁴ In "Self-Portrait" Brooker describes the process more fully:

....I felt sure something would be left - that there was a ME somehow apart from the world - a soul ...the term *elan vital* came...much later....I wanted to find the spark itself....

I sought it in many ways...and it is because my curiosity was all about it, rather than about the world, that I have always felt strange - a stranger - a pilgrim through a country which meant little or nothing...¹⁵

It is worth noting that Brooker's early reading prepared him for the assimilation of ideas which came to him later through Henri Bergson and Henry Adams. In discussing Adams, Brooker wrote (through his autobiographical character, Connor):

....such a quick and complete acceptance could not have come unless mind prepared for it. Like the person who reads in a poet what he seems always to have known.¹⁶

Brooker was reading William Blake as early as 1906, and his copy of Walt Whitman's Leaves of Grass is dated February 1912 in the front fly-leaf.

For Brooker, the immediate appeal of Blake can be found in Blake's identical search for happiness. In a review by Foster Damon of Joseph Wickstead's Blake's Innocence and Experience: A Study of the Songs and Manuscripts, which is in the Brooker Collection, Damon writes that the "Songs" are a series of lyrics about the first problem that troubles man: his unhappiness.

...Blake set himself to study the loss of that happiness ...Obviously, as one cannot blame the outer world, which continues as it always has, one must seek the cause in the mind. Therefore, Blake described Innocence and Experience on his title page as "The Two Contrary States of the Human Soul."¹⁷

The transition from innocence to experience comes after the first serious disillusionment. Sometimes the songs extend past childhood to encapsule first love, marriage, and motherhood. "It is symbolism still in the stage of metaphor..."¹⁸

Brooker has marked a passage from "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell," Blake's code of Contraries:

1. Man has no Body distinct from his Soul; for that call'd Body is a portion of soul discern'd by the five senses. the chief inlets of soul in this age.
2. Energy is the only life, and is from the Body; and Reason is the bound or outward circumference of Energy.
3. Energy is Eternal Delight.¹⁹

Brooker writes (again through Connor):

At one time he became very mystical, and studied Blake, feeling that Blake's idea of the five senses being narrow holes through which only a gleam of experience could come in, was responsible for the sad condition of man.²⁰

2

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These passages affirm Brooker's notion that it was possible to "peel back" the layers of his experience to expose the inner being or soul.

In his copy of Leaves of Grass, Brooker has marked a poem which describes Whitman's similitude of the universe, conjuring up images of Brooker's early abstract paintings:

....As I watch the bright stars shining, I think a thought of the clef of the universe and of the future.

A vast similitude interlocks all,
 All spheres, grown, ungrown, small, large, suns, moons, planets,
 All distances of place however wide,
 All distances of time, all inanimate forms,
 All souls, all living bodies...
 All gaseous, watery, vegetable, mineral processes....
 All lives and deaths, all of the past, present, future,
 This vast similitude spans them, and always has spann'd
 And shall forever span them and compactly hold and enclose them.²¹

Whitman's image of interlocked planets forever held and enclosed in space is more static than Brooker's Theory of Gravitation drawn by desire. Brooker's concept is closer to Blake's expression of creative energy, his eternal delight - the Divine Imagination, which Brooker illustrated, Energy is Eternal Delight (fig. 57). Blake equated the imagination with Christ in humanity.²²

Another aspect of Blake's conception of the imagination can be found in a review Brooker had of Max Plowman's book. It brings to mind FitzGerald's intuitive approach to painting. Plowman writes that:

Blake would have said that he could only be understood by means of the Imagination, which we translate as spiritual perception or intuition. Blake's philosophy was: "Out of Innocence, through Experience to Imagination."²³

Brooker sent FitzGerald a replica of Blake's original edition of The Songs of Innocence and Experience. It was a gift of appreciation after his visit to FitzGerald in Winnipeg in 1945.

Through the character of Connor, Brooker wrote in his notes that as a Christian battling skepticism he felt the restrictive intellectual "netlike quality of words, labels, and theories." He felt they did not go to the core of the problem:

When entirely skeptical...turns to art instead, devoting his life to feeling, rather than pressing investigation further. The idea that life could be explained....sickened him of science and of the world-as-cosmology. He wanted to feel the world-as-experience. Not yet formulated or really conscious, that he had turned from the world-as-thought to the world-as-feeling.

Then came Henry Adams and the belief that the intellect has made us insensitive to impulse - enfeebled the will.....

Mystical experience - Harris, Houssers - Ouspensky, Blake, etc. As mystic again impatient with both labels and superstitions.²⁴

Brooker (through Connor) recognized the difficulty of formulating his ideas into a cohesive work. He knew his philosophy was unorthodox and that he was "an erratic amateur". He had

Always hated categories, lacked formalized knowledge and schooling. When he talked and friends pinned labels on his ideas - that's Plato, that's Plotinus, that's Madame Blavatsky - very impatient, wouldn't be channelled - preferred Blake and Whitman who followed own bent.²⁵

These notes hint at Brooker's rejection of Theosophy. However, Brooker's affinity with Blake and Whitman created a receptive mind for contemporary ideas. It was Brooker's pursuit of happiness which lead him to "research into what has stirred and contented men most. (Henry Adams and The Virgin...)"²⁶ This is one of many references to Adams and the Virgin in Brooker's unpublished manuscripts.

As Brooker wrote in his diary in 1920, Adams' autobiography, The Education of Henry Adams changed his "whole mental life." In order to understand how this affected Brooker, it is necessary to look at the origin of Adams' interest in the Virgin Mary. Adams does not dwell upon the grief caused by the death of his wife which drove him to the Far East and to Europe. His niece, Mabel La Farge, who corresponded with him throughout these travels wrote that Adams "hides himself" in the "education" of his senses. She explains:

The Uncle and Aunt had built the new home in Washington together, but he was alone to move into it. He could hardly bear to stay there. Japan and the East beckoned him, and whispered their secrets of abstraction and of calm to his suffering soul. It was his first glimpse of peace, since his "life had been cut in halves" - "infinite and eternal peace - the peace of limitless consciousness unified with limitless will," the peace of Nirvana....[He] resolved to have the idea embodied in a Western form of expression, that the Western world might understand and be consoled by it as he had been. He gave the idea to Saint-Gaudens, and ordered the monument to be begun that was to go over his wife's grave.²⁷

The monument was erected in Rock Creek Cemetery, Washington, D.C. (fig. 58). La Farge writes that the new sights and sounds Adams experienced on his journey awakened "dormant instincts that for generations had lain atrophied in the purely intellectual atmosphere of his former surroundings....the education of the senses began..."²⁸ Here Brooker was to find one of his earliest pointers towards the world-as-feeling, and the power of instinct over intellect.

Despite his extensive travels, Adams felt the pull of two separate existences. He wrote,

But we, who cannot fly the world, must seek
To live two separate lives; one, in the world
Which we must ever seem to treat as real;
The other in ourselves, behind a veil
Not to be raised without disturbing both.²⁹

La Farge points out that The Education of Henry Adams gives an account of Adams' life "in the world". The "life behind a veil", she suggests, reveals itself in the monument in Rock Creek Cemetery, and in Adams' book Mont Saint Michel and Chartres.³⁰ Of Saint-Gaudens' monument, La Farge writes,

Translated into Western thought, Henry Adams called it "The Peace of God". Sometimes he would call it "Kwannon", the compassionate Virgin of the East, merciful guardian of the human race. After the glory of the "Virgin of Chartres" had been revealed to him, however, the Divine Mother of the West blended in his mind, in the monument, with the Virgin of the East.³¹

La Farge describes how in France, Adams would go down to Chartres alone:

He would seek his Virgin shrine, to spend the November day in the cathedral, "deadly cold and famished", but exhilarated by the beauty and consolation he found there. If his thoughts wandered back to the monument and his eternal solitary Kwannon outside of Washington, at Chartres the Virgin with her Divine Child lifted him up with a radiant tenderness that he had not known before....

But not only was the Virgin of Chartres the embodiment of mercy and purity to Henry Adams - as Kwannon was also - but in her he found in its most perfect form, the mysterious underlying principle of the universe that so fascinated him, and that had been denied him in his own human existence, namely, the transmission of life.³²

It is this aspect of life centred in the power or the force of the Virgin which Adams explores in his autobiography in the chapter "The Dynamo and the Virgin". Adams traces the creative energy beyond the Virgin back to ancient goddesses: to Diana, to Venus. "She was goddess because of her force; she was the animated dynamo; she was reproduction - the greatest and most mysterious of all energies; all she needed was to be fecund."³³ For Adams, the Virgin Mary is a symbol of the creative energy of the universe; she is fecundity, and through Jesus, her Son, she is eternal life. Adams sums up his perception of the Virgin:

The symbol was force, as a compass-needle or a triangle was force...Symbol or energy, the Virgin had acted as the greatest force the Western world ever felt, and had drawn man's activities to herself more strongly than any other power, natural or supernatural, had ever done; the historian's business was to follow the track of the energy; to find where it came from and where it went to; its complex source and shifting channels; its values, equivalents, conversions.³⁴

Adams feels that his forty-five years of study have been futile, and the secret of education was still elusive. In the following passage Adam's analogy of the difficulties of discovering and writing the truth call to mind Brooker's early tempera abstracts and his own spiritual quest. Adams writes:

In such labyrinths, the staff is a force almost more necessary than the legs; the pen becomes a sort of blind-man's dog....The pen works for itself...modelling the plastic material over and over again to the form that suits it best. The form is never arbitrary, but is a sort of growth like crystallization, as any artist knows too well; for often the pencil or the pen runs into side-paths and shapelessness, loses its relations, stops or is bogged. Then it has to return on its trail, and recover, if it can, its line of force.³⁵

It is apparent that Brooker too, had experienced these writing difficulties, as we have seen in Connor: "He has made so many attacks, approaches....It would take volumes, even to suggest the steps in his thinking." (From the quotation at the beginning of this chapter).

In Brooker's tempera abstract, Qozles c.1924 (fig. 17) many-sided columnar pencils zoom proun-like out of the picture plane. They converge in lines of force which create angles in opposition to the flat open-ended triangles which converge with other diagonals at the upper right edge. Like FitzGerald's Still Life with Hat, which Elizabeth Wylie has suggested assumes the character of a self-portrait, this small sketch of Brooker's could refer to Brooker's writing. The "pencils", lower right, are multi-faceted like a crystal growth. This could be seen as an abstract reference to ideas which grow out of

each other, reproducing and expanding in the manner of Adam's "growth like crystallization." The flat triangles which reinforce the picture plane are like overlapping sheets of paper lying on a desk or writing surface, next to a pot of pencils, seen from above. Another of the early tempera sketches was triggered by objects seen from an unusual angle. Zemans has noted that Victor Brooker recalled that Noise of a Fish was "inspired by the pattern created by the light in a night hallway seen around the angle of a bedroom door."³⁶ Brooker called his early abstract paintings his "world and spirit paintings." This comes very close to Adams:

To live two separate lives; one, in the world
Which we must ever seem to treat as real;
The other in ourselves, behind a veil...

Brooker's open receptivity to Adams is apparent from the equivalent direction of his own spiritual journey. Adams, like Henri Bergson, suggested that instinct was superior to intellect. Adams wrote: "Education may be shown to consist in following the intuitions of instinct."³⁷ His "Education" of the senses affirmed accidental education through passive receptivity rather than planned education, advocating instinct rather than reason as a working energy.³⁸ In Henri Bergson's book, Creative Evolution, there is a passage marked by Brooker which is evocative of Brooker's philosophical ideals. Bergson writes:

At times...in a fleeting vision, the invisible breath that bears [life's manifest forms] is materialized before our eyes. We have this sudden illumination before certain forms of maternal love, so striking, and in most animals so touching, observable even in the solicitude of the plant for its seed. This love, in which some have seen the great mystery of life, may possibly deliver us life's secret. It shows us each generation leaning over the generation that shall follow. It allows us a glimpse of the fact that the living being is above all a thoroughfare, and that the essence of life is in the movement by which life is transmitted.³⁹

In Bergson's passage there is an image of all those things which became important to Brooker: God as unceasing life - the invisible breath; Adams' Madonna, the creative force of the universe as ideal maternal love; instinct as a process which is always in transition - the living being as a thoroughfare; the transition as perpetual movement through time and space, apparent in the vitality of the Futurist verb. This is, in sum, Bergson's creative evolution. This is also Adams' interpretation of the Virgin as "the eternal woman." Melvin Lyon has written that in Adams' view:

...woman, as the embodiment of the force of reproduction, is the source of the only unbroken sequence in human history and the physiological source and centre of the innate human sense of reality as unity.⁴⁰

Its significance was noted by Brooker in the back fly-leaf: "maternal love living a thoroughfare." If one looks at Brooker's painting, Torso 1937 (fig. 59), in the light of this interpretation, the fact that the pubic area and the womb are at the centre of the composition, around which the limbs and body radiate in a circular motion, suggests that this image could be interpreted as a visual equivalent to Brooker's notation.

Brooker's interest in the motivation of the creative process, in history, in evolution, was fuelled by his early reading of Adams and was consolidated firmly by his study of Bergson. He was searching for "the primal energy of the universe."⁴¹ Brooker's literary sources and his philosophical conclusions informed his interpretation of FitzGerald's work. In Chapter III, I will posit these images as hermetic symbols in FitzGerald's Abstract: Green and Gold: Virgin mother and Child; an egg/a seed as the beginning of new life; a universe in flux. In Bergson's discussion of the differences between instinct and intellect we can begin to see how Brooker distinguished FitzGerald's intuitive approach to his work from that of the scientific, intellectual mind. Bergson writes:

[There is a] natural obstinacy with which we treat the living like the lifeless and think all reality, however fluid, under the form of the sharply defined solid.

And Brooker has sidelined and underlined the passage following:

We are at ease only in the discontinuous, in the immobile, in the dead. The intellect is characterized by a natural inability to comprehend life.

Instinct on the contrary, is molded on the very form of life. While intelligence treats everything mechanically, instinct proceeds, so to speak, organically. If the consciousness that slumbers in it would awake, if it were wound up into knowledge instead of being wound off into action...it would give up to us the most intimate secrets of life....The most essential of the primary instincts are really, therefore, vital processes....It would only have to expand more widely, and then dive into its own depth completely, to be one with the generative force of life.⁴²

But it is in the following Bergson passage (also marked and noted in the back fly leaf by Brooker: "drawing in instead of entering") that we will see affinities with FitzGerald's later writings. Brooker has marked the passage:

Instinct is sympathy....intelligence and instinct are turned in opposite directions, the former toward inert matter, the latter toward life. Intelligence, by means of science...will deliver up to us... the secret of physical operations; of life it brings us....a translation in terms of inertia. It goes all round life, taking from outside the greatest possible number of views of it, drawing it into itself instead of entering into it. But it is to the very inwardness of life that intuition leads us...

The following Bergson reference to the artist's aesthetic faculty would have been important to FitzGerald's understanding of his induced spiritual state. Bergson continues:

.....by intuition I mean instinct that has become disinterested, self-conscious, capable of reflecting upon its object and enlarging it indefinitely. That an effort of this kind is not impossible, is proved by the existence in man of an aesthetic faculty along with normal perception. Our eye perceives the features of the living being, merely as assembled, not as mutually organized. The intention of life, the simple movement that runs through the lines, that binds them together and gives them significance, escapes it. The intention is just what the artist tries to regain, in placing himself back within the object by a kind of sympathy, in breaking down, by an effort of intuition, the barrier that space puts up

between him and his model....we can conceive an inquiry turned in the same direction as art, which would take life in general for its object.... intuition may enable us to grasp what it is that intelligence fails to give us....by the sympathetic communication which it establishes between us and the rest of the living, by the expansion of our consciousness which it brings about, it introduces us into life's own domain, which is reciprocal inter-penetration, endlessly continued creation.⁴³

FitzGerald's notes on art, published in Fernand Eckhardt's catalogue, reflect Bergson's ideas: on quiet sympathetic contemplation; on a reciprocal interpenetration which affords a consciousness of the endlessness of creation, and a deeper understanding of self; and the intention of the artist to regain the living force or movement through the lines by placing himself within the object. FitzGerald writes:

It is necessary to get inside the object and push it out rather than merely building it up from the outer aspect....This requires endless search and contemplation; continuous effort and experiment; an appreciation for the endlessness of the living force which seems to pervade and flow through all natural forms, even though these seem on the surface to be so ephemeral.

It is evident that no one object can be segregated in space without the feeling of something around it, and usually it is associated with other objects....

It naturally requires more thought and concentration to discover the beauty in a common thing, but the very search reveals the artist to himself in a more intense way.⁴⁴

Brooker's description of the ultimate knowledge or awareness which is characteristic of a mystical experience is simply expressed, and not unlike FitzGerald's. It occurs in his account of his mystical experience in his unpublished autobiographical novel "Connor." He writes through his protagonist Connor: "It's when you look at something and know just the way it is feeling, and you feel the same."⁴⁵ Brooker continues:

Years later, when he [Connor] was talking, in his mystical phase, to a friend, another artist, this man said that he understood almost everything he was saying about the mystical experience, but that he called it aesthetic experience. Connor has since retreated both from the mystical and aesthetic terminology, and believes that the core of both experiences is possible for the ordinary man.⁴⁶

Brooker quite often wrote about FitzGerald in his unpublished manuscripts and in his "7 Arts" column without naming him specifically. The most significant discussion, which shall be examined in Chapter III, occurs in The Nine Words that Ruled the World. There is little doubt that the friend and artist in the Connor passage is FitzGerald. The only other artist friend who would have understood his mystical experience was Harris, and he would have accepted Brooker's term, "mystical experience." Other artists such as Lismer and J.E.H. MacDonald were not receptive to such ideas. The latter had written to Brooker at the time of Brooker's first exhibition:

...I do feel that art in general, nowadays is being made too complex a matter....So I would like anything of the occult or secret doctrine avoided in it if possible, - a simple lead in titles for any honest soul to follow as far as he liked in interpretation...⁴⁷

Elizabeth Wylie has pointed out the spiritual implication of some of FitzGerald's correspondence.⁴⁸ In a letter to Irene Heywood Hemsworth, FitzGerald expounds more fully on his deep contemplative state which accompanies his communion with nature. With his quiet investigation and deep concentration he can penetrate the living natural forms about him. Unlike MacDonald he does not feel threatened by the unknown, and through an open and receptive mind he is able to know himself more deeply. In the following chapter the letter will be used as an important testimony as to how FitzGerald would have responded to Brooker's perception of FitzGerald as a generative force, the creative energy of the universe. Much of the vocabulary is close to Brooker's force of gravitation and "my first desire." The letter is worth quoting at length:

We can only develop an understanding of the great forces behind the organization of nature by endless [sic] searching the outer manifestations. And we can only know ourselves better and still better by this search. There is an undefinable solidity that penetrates the work and a fine humility comes through the enlarged vision of the eternal wonders that surround us. I pray that never shall I feel no longer the inspiration that

comes from the constant communication with the living forms. That I shall feel always in her presence a new message awaiting me. That I shall always remain young in thought and be receptive and inquisitive. I want to leave regretting that I was not allowed just a little more time to reach the ultimate which I know is an impossibility. I want to go on like the flower that contains the germ of the new life within the tangled, withered fragments left behind. I want to walk in the light that is never ending with open heart and open mind. When slipping into the great unknown I want to move always upward, ever seeking. I want to join those who always attempted and may still desire.⁴⁹

FitzGerald's use of expressions such as the "great force" of nature, "the germ of the new life within," "move always upward," "reach the ultimate," and "join those who...still desire" are not only reminiscent of Brooker's ideas, but reflect Bergsonian central ideas: instinct as a generative force of life; communication with the living forms; expansion of consciousness.

Brooker used his "aesthetic terminology" in a letter to FitzGerald in 1942, written about the same time as FitzGerald's letter, thus linking FitzGerald to the artist friend in "Connor" who understood Connor's mystical experience, but preferred to call the experience "aesthetic." Brooker writes:

...until now man has not developed the power of feeling, but has relied on the power of thought. I imagine you will grasp at once the emphasis this will throw on what might be called the aesthetic approach to life...⁵⁰

FitzGerald disliked the terms "mystical" and "metaphysical." After meeting him for the first time, Brooker wrote, "He seems to have little, if any, interest in metaphysics, but draws his sustenance from the ground and from his recognition of...the structure and rhythms in men and trees."⁵¹ Robert Ayre denied that there was any spiritual content in FitzGerald's work.⁵² This wariness concerning the use of these words may have come from the reluctance, which Wylie has documented, to participate in any fanatically religious practice. Nevertheless, if metaphysics is the philosophy which deals with first principles: of being and knowing; and mysticism is the experience of a reality surpassing normal

human understanding, especially a reality perceived as essential to the nature of life, an intuitive experience, then FitzGerald held the interest of things metaphysical and mystical close to his heart, and it was not long before Brooker understood this fully. Aesthetics, as a study of the rules and principles of art, such as the concepts of beauty and taste,⁵³ did not interest FitzGerald. Whether the experience is described as mystical or aesthetic, it is apparent that both Brooker and FitzGerald had a deep spiritual experience which affected their work as artists.

Brooker was a Christian. His belief in God and in Jesus Christ is stated clearly in his diaries. As Henry Adams had done before him, Brooker made an act of faith by committing himself to God's will, in his diary. Mabel La Farge wrote of her uncle's act of faith:

Prayer to the Virgin of Chartres [was] found after his death in a little wallet of special papers....He did not wish to have them published during his lifetime, for he never wished to lift the veil. In this "Prayer" Henry Adams makes an act of faith in the Son's divinity.⁵⁴

In a diary entry headed, "A Plan of Life," 29 February 1924, Brooker writes:

I was suddenly impelled to order my life, so that what I am, not less than what I hope to do, may be to the glory of God. And though I know not yet who God is, nor his attributes, nor parts, nor the place of his sojourning, I am determined from this time hence to call Him by that name which I have hesitated these many years to mouth or inscribe...

Brooker feels that the compulsion to order his life, will be a valuable addition to

....what I have lately learned from the Rev. Stewart in the little church at Dwight, from Ouspensky....and Middleton Murray...⁵⁵

Referring to his "conversion" at Dwight, Brooker commits his daily life and work to God.

He writes:

Its effect at first was to suggest more orderly rising and working, a limit to smoking and sleeping.... And mixed with this was the idea of setting aside so many minutes a day or hours a week for a work of great beauty, chiefly of proportion, and connected in some way with the Madonna. And this is to be somehow worked out mathematically and rhythmically.... At last the ideas that have been coming in to me for the last two years have concentrated into this practical impulse that will have some fruit in action....I must leave...imperishable work to his glory.⁵⁶

This is followed by his written act of faith:

Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness: according to the multitude of thy mercies do away mine offences.

But lo, thou requirest truth in the inward parts: and shalt make me to understand wisdom secretly....

Thou shalt open my lips, O Lord: and my mouth shall shew thy praise.

Glory be to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. Amen. Amen.

It should be stressed here that Brooker was an Anglican. In his written act of faith he does not make an intercession through the Virgin Mary as Adams, a Roman Catholic does. But Brooker, finding an affirmation of these ideas in the writing of Bergson, accepts all the complexity of Adams' vision of the Madonna as a creative force, as the eternal woman, the creative energy of the universe. Brooker's religious beliefs were central to his work as a writer, as a poet, and as a painter.

Two days later, in his diary of Sunday, 2 March 1924, Brooker notes that he went to Holy Trinity Church to Communion service. The lesson that was read that day was to have an important effect on his thinking and writing. The lesson was the famous passage on charity from Corinthians I, chapter 13. Brooker wrote that he was particularly struck with the passage:

"And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I have nothing."

In other words what I have always striven for, truth - to the point of omniscience, almost - is nothing, unless I love.

But, more especially I was struck with these words:

and Brooker quotes:

Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.,

For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away....

For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

Brooker writes:

This hint at a higher dimension, or whatever one cares to call it, in which "the perfect shall come," is particularly striking. And it has its roots, this perfection, in love. Ouspensky, of course, quotes Ephesians 3-18- "That ye, being rooted and grounded in love may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height"Today I learned these two things, to be humble, and to love.⁵⁷

Hearing this passage read in church so soon after writing his testimony of faith, in which he had prayed for wisdom and understanding, must have been a powerful experience for Brooker. Having devoted so much of his life to the accumulation of knowledge, the message must have seemed very personal. It made a deep impression on Brooker as is apparent from the last verse of that chapter: "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." These are three of Brooker's Nine Words that Ruled the World, the unpublished manuscript that he wrote in 1942, in which he incorporated his metaphysical ideas, including FitzGerald as the unnamed creative artist, and his "picture of living." This manuscript will be discussed at greater length in the following chapter.

Elizabeth Wylie has pressed Brooker's interest in Theosophy, suggesting that Brooker went to see FitzGerald in 1929 to broach the topic of Theosophy.⁵⁸ Wylie stipulates that FitzGerald does not mention Theosophy and therefore,

it would seem likely that he and Brooker were not in agreement about their metaphysics and exactly how art should convey spirituality. . . FitzGerald never chose Theosophy as a belief system and likely did not want to produce didactic art promoting it.⁵⁹

Michael Parke-Taylor also quotes this passage from Wylie's thesis. Both writers suggest in this way that Brooker was a Theosophist and that his abstract art was overtly Theosophical in content. FitzGerald's empathy for Brooker's spiritual feeling and identification with Brooker's mystical experience have already been discussed. Wylie's and Parke-Taylor's insistence that FitzGerald "never chose Theosophy as a belief system" should also be applied to Brooker. Although the achievement of unity and harmony in a spiritual and creative universe is central to Theosophy, Brooker did not espouse its system. In the Brooker papers which I examined, Brooker mentions Theosophy twice. In one of these instances (discussed in Chapter III), Brooker includes Theosophy in a list of religions to which a person might turn after a mystical experience. Brooker chose Christianity. The second instance occurs in his handwritten notes on Blake. Brooker writes: "as philosopher how he anticipated Theosophy."⁶⁰ Zemans writes that Brooker felt no need for Theosophy. His children remembered Harris, Housser and Brooker constantly debating Theosophy. Brooker refused to join the movement.⁶¹

Many of Brooker's early novels are based on the redemptive role of the main character, modelled on Jesus Christ, including Think of the Earth. They are also frequently autobiographical. Brooker experienced the roles of these characters. He wrote in his diary of 24 August 1925, whilst working on the Jevon story:

Today, downtown, I have several times experienced a most ecstatic feeling, bursting out into singing or uttering aloud sentences that Jevon will say, in a low voice, when the street - at least on my side - has been empty....

Stronger today than anytime has come the feeling of all being One....although I have felt as full of divine energy before...I have never before felt kinship with every dead and living thing. The sense. of the whole being God working out his destiny, and I a part....

Today, too, I felt the quietness and simplicity of Jesus, and knew that Jevon must be like that, rather than as I had him before.⁶²

A year later, in a diary of 27 June 1926, headed "Jevon," we find a strong suggestion of a religious, metaphysical content in Brooker's abstract art. He is debating the location for the final action of his story. He wishes it to end in Dwight (where, in the little church, Brooker experienced his conversion). He feels a need "to ponder deeply the whole thing." He writes:

Perhaps the painting will have some effect on it, too....There will be, I am certain, a new sense of form in it that the painting has developed....

Possibly, somewhere, too, the whole book will move out into the Infinite, into something like my world and spirit painting....Perhaps the "moving out" will be more impersonal, will be suggested by cyclings of lives rather than of individual thoughts. I should like to suggest the opposition of streams and circular circumferences.⁶³

The interweaving of Brooker's written and visual images is complex. The "opposition of streams" is related to Brooker's theory of gravitation. The "cycling of lives," symbolized by the use of circular circumferences to suggest social communities - environmental, national and universal, has an affinity to Bergson. The significance of these Bergson passages in the context of Brooker's and FitzGerald's abstract paintings, Sounds Assembling and Abstract: Green and Gold, will be discussed further in Chapter III.

In his copy of Bergson's The Two Sources of Morality and Religion, Brooker has underlined the passage:

Society occupies the circumference, the individual is at the the centre: from the centre to the circumference are arranged, like so many every widening concentric circles, the various groups to which the individual belongs.⁶⁴

In a section which relates the individual's community groups to national and universal relationships on a larger scale, Brooker has marked a passage, and noted in the back fly-leaf: "nation and humanity." Bergson writes:

Social cohesion is largely due to the necessity for a community to protect itself against others, and that it is primarily as against all other men that we love the men with whom we live?...it is only through God, in God, that religion bids man love mankind...⁶⁵

In 1935, Brooker exhibited a drawing, Circles, c.1935 (fig. 81). It is an image of the Madonna and Child. In his book Creative Evolution, the vitality of Bergson's description of God and the universe recalls Brooker's early abstract paintings such as Alleluiah, 1929, (fig. 94) and Sounds Assembling (fig. 32). Bergson describes the universe in a constant state of unmaking or of remaking itself, and continues:

...I speak of a centre from which worlds shoot out like rockets in a fire-works display - provided, however, that I do not present this centre as a thing, but as a continuity of shooting out. [And Brooker has underlined and check-marked:] God thus defined, has nothing of the already made; He is unceasing life, action, freedom. Creation, so conceived, is not a mystery; we experience it in ourselves when we act freely.⁶⁶

Many of Brooker's redemptive novels and manuscripts are unfinished, and he was rarely satisfied with the results. He wrote: "I am the...scourge whom God has sent down to chasten the earth."⁶⁷ Brooker envisioned this work in the shape of a book:

I have said to my soul - this book that you are to write must roar like the sea....Every word must sting. Every sentence must crack like a whip.⁶⁸

Brooker's painting and writing were so tightly bound together that it was inevitable that they share the same content and the same redemptive quality. However, the two art forms were powered by different motives. His writing was driven by the force of his dutiful religious convictions; his painting was often his refuge.⁶⁹ It was a final resource of help when he had come to a standstill in his writing. As refuge and resource, Brooker's painting afforded him more satisfaction than his writing. He discovered it was a natural vehicle for the expression of his feeling.

After his "illumination" or "conversion," Brooker became interested in other people who had had the same mystical experience. He owned a copy of Maurice Bucke's Cosmic Consciousness, which describes the "illumination" of writers, poets and mystics, such as William Blake and Walt Whitman. The subtitle of this book, A Study in the Evolution of the Human Mind, explains its further attraction to Brooker. In his manuscript Biography of a Mind, 1930, Brooker wrote:

My mind has been for me what Nature was to Goethe and to many poets.
I must extol it as they do the earth.⁷⁰

Brooker's interest is reflected in such works as Within a play, written in 1927. The play is set inside a head. The characters are ego, instinct, reason and the five senses. But it is the set design for the play (fig. 8) which gives further insight into Brooker's abstract art. In Brooker's "Outline" of the play, he describes the set as having a diagram of circles in the background and concentric circles in the foreground. During the action, he writes, the discs in the background "begin to revolve slowly." In describing two opposing characters, Instinct and Reason, Brooker writes, "There must be the two forces in the nature, the feminine or intuitive, open to the inner pattern of life, and the masculine or reasoning open to the outer pattern."⁷¹ It is possible that these sketchy details refer to an early

conception of Brooker's painting Symphonic Forms, 1947, (fig. 64). After his father's death, Victor Brooker wrote to his family members:

A painting was donated by the Estate to the McMichael Collection here in Ontario to complete a record of the Group's [Canadian Group of Painters] activities. It is the sketch of the canvas Symphonic Forms - an unusual black and white painting done in connection with a modern drama produced at the Arts and Letters Club of Toronto.⁷²

In Biography of a Mind Brooker again refers to circular movement, adding a further dimension to his perception of the circle as symbol. He writes:

Consciousness is circularity - it is the encircling movement of form in its attempt to embrace the completeness of unity.

...it doesn't matter whether we go outwards into what seems like a physical universe, or whether the actual process is really an inward one into the subconsciousness of previous races...⁷³

Thus Brooker's "completeness of unity" moves into the intuitive world of the fourth dimension, embracing all time, in a brave attempt to see everything at once.⁷⁴

P.D. Ouspensky's Tertium Organum is on Brooker's list of "Books That Have Influenced Me". But it is not in the Brooker Library. Ouspensky's later book, A New Model of the Universe, is part of his Library, and has been well read and marked by Brooker. Although Ouspensky explores metaphysical ideas and the fourth dimension, his illustrated geometric figures are flat and appear more static than the visual images evoked by Bergson, relating Ouspensky to the Russian Suprematists. Brooker explored some of these ideas in his drawing Four Dimensional Cube, n.d. (fig. 60). Ouspensky describes the expansion and contraction of molecules, and their frequent collision and change of direction as an "entangled zigzag." Of the cube's molecular motion, Ouspensky writes:

The figure resulting from the movement of a cube in space when the cube expands or contracts will have the form of a cube....

Is it right to suppose that the assemblage of lines drawn from every point of a cube, interior as well as exterior, the lines along which the points approach one each other or retreat from each other, constitutes the projection of a four dimensional body?...

These lines connect all the points of the given body with its centre. Consequently the direction of the movement indicated will be from the centre along the radii.⁷⁵

Brooker's drawing appears to have been reversed, as though the cube had been turned inside out. The lines from the six planes converge outside the cube. But it is an ambiguous cube which expands and contracts before the viewer's eyes, being, at the same time, both one and many cubes.

Ouspensky's discussion of the continuous movement of organic objects in time recalls FitzGerald's work. Brooker has marked a short passage which describes the growth of an apple:

The apple is separated from the ovary by time. From this point of view the apple represents three or four months' motion of molecules along the fourth dimension. If we imagine the whole of the way from the ovary to the apple, we shall see the direction of the fourth dimension...⁷⁶

The apples in FitzGerald's Still Life: Two Apples, c.1940 (fig. 61) appear to push out from the picture plane into the viewer's space, recalling FitzGerald's need "to get inside the object and push it out." This effect is achieved in part by the agitated brush strokes which follow the form of the apple creating an oscillating energy, as the strokes move away from the apples' surface. This energy is channelled by the point of tension created by the narrow gap between the two apples, and the asymmetrical bulge of the large apple along its upper left curve.

Brooker has also marked the passage in which Ouspensky discusses the diagrams of the fourth dimension which occur in nature.⁷⁷ One of these is a drawing of a tree, A diagram of the Fourth Dimension in Nature, (fig. 62) Ouspensky writes:

Leafless trees in winter or early spring often present very complicated and extraordinarily interesting diagrams of the fourth dimension.⁷⁸

FitzGerald's favourite time of the year to draw and paint was late autumn, when the leaves and the intense colours of early fall had gone.⁷⁹ It was the sense of growth that Brooker valued in FitzGerald's drawing, and which he called "a picture of living."

In some notes, "Escape from Time," Brooker wrote:

Time part of the mystery of growth....Idea of growth, not only in nature, but in conduct - as a blossom.

Time - as rejection of static present. We are not what we are but what we are trying to be. ..Gives us the sense and power of the flow. Use our past, racial past, written past, as fuel for the Future.⁸⁰

In the centre of Brooker's painting Growth, c. 1936 (fig. 9), are two blossoms. The fourth dimension is suggested by the expansion and movement of the organic shapes along radii from the centre. In Brooker's comments we see again his desire to achieve unity by embracing all time and space in a continuum.⁸¹

There are no comparable works amongst the Russian and Futurist painters because they abandoned nature and the idyllic landscape as appropriate subject material.⁸² Magdalena Dabrowski has written of Russian modern art that:

The Russian...conception of dynamic space was influenced appreciably by the current theories of the fourth dimension, postulating the interaction between time and space. The analysis of the nature of space and time using certain methods of hyperspace philosophy provided a premise for effective exploration of the ambiguity resulting from the negation of illusionistic space and the affirmation of the flatness of the

picture plane....to Malevich [this meant] an additional conceptual dimension conforming to, and stimulated by, such contemporary theories of the fourth dimension as those expressed by ... the Russian philosopher and mystic P.D. Ouspensky in his Tertium Organum.⁸³

Charlotte Douglas is more specific. Citing the work of Linda Henderson, she writes:

...it now seems probable that Malevich's Suprematist elements, while emerging from previous work, were triggered by his acquaintance with the hyperspace of...P.D. Ouspensky and its pictorial analogies. Not only would these examples have solved Malevich's problem of the form of paint by allowing large areas of undifferentiated color, but such painted elements had already been shown to be related to natural cosmic processes and might therefore be expected to produce the universal sensations the artist sought.⁸⁴

Brooker, as we have seen in Chapter I, was more interested in the ambiguity and tension of Kandinsky's early painterly space of the fourth dimension. Atypical of the Russian avant-garde, these early Kandinsky paintings had their origin in idyllic landscape.

Brooker's adoption of Bergson's and Ouspensky's philosophy places him well within the range of modernist thought. Bergson's ideas were central in the development of Futurist theory. Tisdall and Bozzolla have written:

Underlying the Futurist emphasis on the will to change was the philosophy of Henri Bergson (1859-1941). Bergsonian ideas of *elan vital*, universal flux, dynamism, and the importance of intuition, coloured the general theoretical tone of Futurism, while his theories of perception were to find something approaching visual interpretation in Futurist paintings....Added to this was Bergson's belief in the universality of art, and the sheer vitality of creativity...⁸⁵

The concept of "universal dynamism," Tisdall points out, was a key factor in Boccioni's The Technical Manifesto of Painting, pub. 1910, bringing together "the philosophical legacy of Nietzsche and Bergson...and contemporary scientific explorations of the relationship between mind and matter."⁸⁶ All of these were prime concerns for Brooker. Tisdall writes that: "The notion of 'states of mind'...reached Boccioni by way of Bergson's

Matter and Memory and was another shared theme among the Futurist painters and many others of their generation."⁸⁷

Boccioni's States of Mind, 1911 (fig. 63), may be compared with Brooker's Symphonic Forms, 1947 (fig. 64). Brooker's abstract composition is more universal in content and orientation. Boccioni's States of Mind: The Farewells, is more narrative in content and specific in location. But the shared source of Bergson is apparent in both paintings. Although Canadian artists such as Brooker and FitzGerald are addressing European Modernism between fifteen and forty years later, the emergence of the old ideas in a new time and place refocuses the modernist viewpoint, to capture the artist's Canadian experience.

There is a parallel between Boccioni and Brooker's approach to their work. Tisdall has pointed out that Boccioni (like Brooker) set about his work armed with theory. "Yet it was a theory which emphasized intuition above all, Bergson's concept of intuition as an essential part of creativity."⁸⁸ Tisdall points out that, according to Bergson, life itself is only fully grasped by intuition; that "life for both Bergson and the Futurists was an indivisible whole, in the last analysis, mind = matter."⁸⁹ It was this indivisible whole, this complete unity, which Brooker also sought. Both Boccioni and Brooker attempted to express the equation "mind = matter." Boccioni's Fusion of Head and Window, 1912 (fig. 65), is a very literal expression, in which the sculpted head with its braid of real hair is fused together with a real window frame and metal catch and real shards of glass. Boccioni had explored the effects of light pouring through a window onto a face in Counterlight, 1910 (fig. 66), two years before. The cross-shaped window-frame and diagonal light are apparent in both the sculpture and the drawing, resulting in an almost cruciform composition. Boccioni wrote: "I want to render the fusion of a head with its environment."⁹⁰ Brooker's fusion of mind and matter is a tormented spiritual one:

Realization (Crime and Punishment), 1930 (fig. 67). The mind is suggested by an anguished, remorseful face, and the "matter" is the reality of the crime he has committed. The location of the crime, symbolized by the large wooden beam and the enigmatic door, is the reality of the mind, as suggested by Brooker's title. Using different means, both artists achieved an inseparable fusion.

This chapter has established that Brooker's childhood question, concerning the happiness of humankind, was the basis for his philosophical and spiritual search. Brooker found this theme running through the work of the writers who most influenced him: Blake, Whitman, Adams and Bergson. The pursuit of happiness is expanded by these poets and writers to encompass humankind's motivation or driving force. All are unanimous that this can only be fully achieved through intuitive means. All use the image of maternal love as a means of expressing the creative energy of the universe. Bergson's perception of the fourth dimension becomes a blend of the western view as the ultimate combination of time and space, and the eastern view of an intuitive understanding of all things at once, a complete and unified vision of the universe. This chapter has also shown that Brooker's friendship with FitzGerald was fundamental to his gradual change from an intellectual to an intuitive understanding of life. Brooker found in FitzGerald a living example of the artist as a symbol of intuitive, creative energy. FitzGerald's process of deep contemplation became Adams' education of the senses through passive receptivity. This chapter has established Brooker's Christian belief and refuted his adoption of Theosophy as a belief system. It has shown that Brooker found confirmation of God in humanity, as creation itself, from his reading of Blake, Adams and Bergson. Brooker's adoption of Bergson's and Ouspensky's philosophy and FitzGerald's affinity with these authors place them well within the range of modernist thought. In this chapter I have discussed the redemptive role of Brooker's main characters in his early novels such as Think of the Earth and have posited the same religious, metaphysical content in his

abstract art, such as his "world and spirit" painting. Brooker's philosophical and metaphysical beliefs, as they have been established in this chapter, will inform my reading of the spiritual content expressed in Brooker's Sounds Assembling and FitzGerald's Abstract: Green and Gold in Chapter III. I shall argue a redemptive role for both of these paintings.

CHAPTER III

"SOUNDS ASSEMBLING" AND "ABSTRACT: GREEN AND GOLD:"

A CONTEXTUAL READING

"We have this sudden illumination before certain forms of maternal love, so striking...observable even in the solitude of the plant for its seed. This love, in which some have seen the great mystery of life, may possibly deliver us life's secret. It shows us each generation leaning over the generation that shall follow. It allows us a glimpse of the fact that the living being is above all a thoroughfare, and that the essence of life is in the movement by which life is transmitted."

Henri Bergson,

Creative Evolution

This chapter will examine the interrelationship of Brooker and FitzGerald and the significance within that relationship of Brooker's Sounds Assembling, 1928 (fig. 32), and FitzGerald's Abstract: Green and Gold, 1954 (fig. 80). Chapter I has dealt with the influences of European modernism on Brooker's Sounds Assembling and FitzGerald's Abstract: Green and Gold through an examination of modernist theory and through formal analysis. In Chapter II the philosophy and thinking of Brooker and FitzGerald have been examined, with an emphasis on their spiritual and metaphysical ideas. In this chapter I will define the inner content of these two paintings, as far as it is possible, through documentation and visual analysis, and through a comparison of related works by presenting Sounds Assembling and Abstract: Green and Gold as expressions of universal harmony, pictures which embody the spiritual and metaphysical ideas of Brooker and FitzGerald. Discussion of Brooker's William Blake lecture of 1927 will serve to bring together some aspects of the first two chapters of this thesis. In his appreciation of Blake, Brooker discusses the expression of religious and spiritual experience in art. In particular Brooker examines art and religion in the light of modernist writers Clive Bell, Vernon Blake, and R.H. Wilenski. This is an important document, for it gives us a detailed account of Brooker's thought at a crucial time between seeing the European modernists including Kandinsky at Katherine Dreier's Societe Anonyme Exhibition in March 1927, and completing Sounds Assembling sometime in 1928. This chapter will also examine Brooker's unpublished work, Nine Words That Rule the World, and the circumstances which surrounded the origin of the work. I shall argue that this manuscript is crucial not only to the understanding of Brooker's vision of FitzGerald as the embodiment of humankind's creative energy, but also as a clarification of Brooker's own role as poet-priest. I shall posit a redemptive role for Brooker's Sounds Assembling and FitzGerald's Abstract: Green and Gold.

I shall begin with a detailed analysis of the typescript of his lecture on William Blake at Hart House given on 1 November 1927. It is significant that Brooker called a later version of this lecture "The Artist as Mystic".¹ Brooker begins by attempting to define contemporary art: "It contains the whole gamut of human emotion as well as the whole range of the accessible universe."² Brooker goes on to discuss the aesthetic enjoyment of a painting. He reviews the terms "significant form" by Clive Bell; "architectural form" by R.H. Wilenski; and "relatedness" by Vernon Blake.³ Clearly, Brooker's interest in the metaphysical theory of these modernist art historians and writers stems from his desire to express his spiritual and religious feelings within the realms of modernism.

Brooker takes time to describe Vernon Blake's belief that an artist is capable both of perceiving the nature of interrelations of the universe and constructing a series of analogous relations from the media of his choice. Vernon Blake's description of art as a symbol of the essential nature of the universe⁴ shares an affinity with the sense of equilibrium which Brooker himself strives for as an artist, and which he recognizes as a central feature of FitzGerald's intuitive working methods.

Brooker uses Vernon Blake's ideas of interrelationship to suggest that William Blake's artistic perception transcended that of the artist who perceives the interrelations of the universe:

I believe that [William] Blake, in a condition of religious ecstasy, was able to perceive the "constant" or "sum" of these relations which compose the universe, to create symbols for a unity he had experienced, and not, as most artists do, attempt to symbolize the relations which compose that unity.⁵

Brooker finds sympathy for William Blake's source of inspiration in Clive Bell's writing.

Brooker suggests that art and religion are means to similar states of mind. Brooker quotes Bell:

Ages of spiritual turmoil...in which men set the spirit above the flesh and the emotions above the intellect, are the ages in which is felt the emotional significance of the universe. Then it is men live on the frontiers of reality....⁶

In Bell's statement we find a reiteration of Brooker's concerns: the superiority of emotion and feeling over the intellect; the reality of things spiritual. It should be remembered too that FitzGerald's highest spiritual experience in art was an escape to the world of ecstasy, which he considered "the real world." Brooker, by including Bell's suggestion that contemplation of a work of art allows viewers to share part of the artist's experience, and inhabit a world with an intense and particular significance of its own, emphasizes his own conceptions of the artist as a thoroughfare and of modern art as a unitive spiritual experience of life.

In quoting from Blake's Jerusalem, Brooker further identifies the role of the artist as the poet-priest. An image of Brooker's painting of Baudelaire, The Dawn of Man (fig. 11), contemplating a virgin landscape painted about the same time, c.1927, is clearly intended.

I rest not from my great task! To open the eternal worlds, to open the immortal eyes of man inwards into the worlds of thought, into eternity. Ever expanding in the bosom of God, the human imagination.⁷

Brooker believed that Blake translated the world of imagination into forms that we can understand in verse and pictures, and used the Songs of Innocence as an example. It should be remembered that in 1945 Brooker gave FitzGerald a copy of the Songs of Innocence.

In Brooker's attempt to explain how an artist translates the mystical experience or the world of the imagination into forms that may be understood, he uses the written format

he had been using for his modernist poetry. It will be shown in this chapter that Brooker's painting, Sounds Assembling 1928, is an expression of his mystical experience and is an expression of the following passage. The typescript assumes a free verse form, without punctuation, sentences, or capital letters. Brooker writes:

[...] there is [a] kind of man
 who sees all around him evidences of disorder
 [...] he wants [...] to understand the purposes and the laws
 of the universe here and now

[an artist, poet or musician] anyone who attempts to capture something of the
 underlying rhythm of the world
 and put it down for people to see and hear [...]

[they] stand at the circumference of life [...]
 moving inward as they go [...]
 to new harmonies
 pattern within pattern
 until they arrive at some conception of a unified universe

their direction is from the diffused and far-flung circumference of a circle
 toward its centre

[some artists] suddenly arrive at the center
 which is [...]
 a state of mind

[...] the whole of the work of Blake
 [...] is an attempt to describe it

[...] he had achieved and experienced unity
 within himself
 and he called it the bosom of god
 the world of imagination
 paradise

having experienced unity the direction of all
 his work is the reverse of the artist
 who is trying to achieve unity [...]

and because the directions are reversed
 those going in one direction
 think the artist going the other way is mad⁸

Brooker believed that there would be a religious revival in his time, but that it was coming as an intensely individual thing.⁹ Brooker notes that in attempting to describe this spiritual or mystical state people try to talk about it using the terminology of Christianity, of Theosophy, or in the terms of Christian or modern science. But it was not from an

organized religion or a written philosophy that these people first glimpsed the ideal world, the world of imagination. It was usually after such an experience, Brooker states, that they turned to Whitman, or Blake, or religion, and discovered that they could understand what was before obscure, and derive confirmation and comfort from the shared experience.¹⁰ Thus, the artist's vision of an ideal world, a mystical unity, is attained as an intuitive experience. Both the artist and the mystic exist as a channel to others imparting that experience of ideal unity.

Brooker concludes that art will gradually move away from the mere description of nature and will seek instead "to portray the underlying and interpenetrating rhythms of the ideal life."¹¹ This search for unity or universality, Brooker feels, is already apparent in the work of Canadian artists, notably Kathleen Munn Composition (Horses) 1927 (fig. 68), whose work, he suggests, is unfortunately rarely shown. The search for unity was unmistakable, Brooker says, in the work of the artists who exhibited in the Societe Anonyme International Art Exhibition organized by Katherine Dreier earlier in the spring. Brooker closes his lecture:

...the modern artist has definitely thrown off the shackles of tradition, cares little for faithfulness to physical forms or for methods of technique, but sets himself the task of enlargening [sic] his own experience and the experience of those who approach his work sympathetically.¹²

In Brooker's search for unity or universality he has garnered a balance of expressions for the mystical experience from many sources which seem to be interchangeable: the ideal life; a visionary world; the world of imagination; the bosom of God; paradise. All of these ideal states, Brooker believed, interpenetrated life, and were a central part of Blake's art and writing which stressed the infinite flux of being, of activity, of thought. In Blake, Brooker found the perfect unity of art and religion. Blake lived an ideal spiritual existence producing art which was a faithful expression of that ideal unity.

Brooker's mystical experience, and the difficulty he had in expressing it in words, have been discussed in chapter II. Perhaps the most moving account of his experience, and certainly the most detailed, is by Phyllis Brooker Smith in her letter to Birk Sproxton. This is Phyllis Brooker's recollection of an important and valued conversation she had with her father. As a young woman of about 22 she was forming her ideas about life, raising questions, and becoming aware of her own identity. They had been discussing a book she was reading which led Brooker to share his experience with his daughter. Phyllis remembers that in general he was reluctant to discuss the experience at all. She believes that this was because it was so personal and difficult to describe.¹³ Phyllis Brooker Smith writes:

...my father's mystical experience happened in August 1923¹⁴....He was sitting in a little church one beautiful Sunday morning with my mother and friends, while visiting in Northern Ontario, and he suddenly felt a welling up of emotion within him, to the point of uncontrollable crying. He ran out of the church and near there was a small stream where he lay or sat crying, looking into the water. While hearing the sound of the running water and seeing the brilliance of the sun's reflection on it - it happened. He said he doesn't know how to explain what happened or how long it lasted, he just said, 'Everything in the universe is one, united, it was like knowing the answer to everything all at once'. My own opinion has always been that Sounds Assembling was one of his expressions of the experience, which also had a deep musical meaning that he continued as a theme in his painting and his writing for years.¹⁵

It is Phyllis Brooker Smith's feeling that her father's experience opened his mind to a new awareness of everything. It was soon after this that he started painting in earnest.¹⁶

The words Brooker used in describing his mystical state tell us not only that, like Blake's, it was a deep, unitive experience, but that it existed in the intuitive, mystical fourth dimension which John Bowlit defined in his discussion of the Russian avant-garde.¹⁷ Within this experience there occurs a synthesis of sound and sight: the running water

and the brilliance of the sun's reflection upon its surface become one, reminiscent of Baudelaire's experience, discussed in chapter II. Phyllis Brooker Smith's suggestion that Sounds Assembling was an expression of Brooker's mystical experience is supported by the images evoked in the Blake Lecture of the artist as mystic. Her suggestion that the painting had a deep musical meaning is confirmed both by the title and the importance Brooker attributed to religious music:

All through his life art has been his refuge, the life of feeling. This was mixed up, too, with his reaction to religious music and his acceptance of God as a father.¹⁸

It is possible that the music in the little church triggered the welling up of emotion, precipitating Brooker's spiritual experience and his subsequent written commitment to God in his diary a few months later.

SOUNDS ASSEMBLING: THE INNER CONTENT

Brooker's painting, Sounds Assembling (fig. 32), may be read as the spiritual quest and the mystical experience of the two artists described in the Blake Lecture. The first, the artist, musician, or poet in search of unity, stands at the circumference of life moving inward towards the centre. The second, like Brooker, is the artist who has experienced unity and for whom the direction is reversed, for he is continually coming out from the centre of his mystical state.¹⁹ These two life experiences can be represented by the rods or rays in Brooker's painting. It should be recalled that Brooker appropriated the modernist form of Kandinsky's Gaiety as a means of achieving formal unity in Sounds Assembling. It will be shown that the rods in Sounds Assembling have a parallel in Kandinsky's writing on the spiritual content of colour and form.

The activity of the first artist described in the Blake Lecture is depicted by the brightly coloured rods of red, blue, yellow and green, colours of the material world. As Brooker wrote, this artist has witnessed the disorder and the unrelated causes and effects in this world and wishes to understand the purpose and law of the universe. This artist accumulates impressions, new harmonies and rationalizations: "pattern within pattern until [he] arrives at some conception of a unified universe," and sets them down for people to see and hear. Brooker wrote that: "[the artist's] direction is from the diffused and far-flung circumference of a circle toward its centre."²⁰ All of the coloured rods originate from the outside edge of the picture. They swoop in towards the activity within the circles, but their arrival is always slightly offset from the centre or focus of intensity, which lies within the four white crystal-like stars. Some of these coloured rods make several sorties, creating their own zig-zag rhythms. Their egress is sometimes with a sense of order or harmony: the three rods at the centre left edge are the three primary colours of blue, yellow and red; the red and green rods on the lower centre edge comprise the harmonious order of complementary colours. The coloured rods express the activity of the first artist in his spiritual quest for purpose and harmony.

The significance of Brooker's coloured and white rods may be found in Kandinsky's discussion of colour in The Effect of Color (pub. 1911) and On the Problem of Form (pub. 1912). Kandinsky writes that the highly developed use of colour expands the circle of experience, acquiring an internal meaning and an inner resonance. The effect of colour on a sensitive soul produces a correspondent spiritual vibration.²¹ The creative spirit finds an avenue to other souls and causes a yearning, an inner urge, which is able to create in the human spirit, a new value.²² This was Brooker's goal, to communicate his spiritual experience so that others could see and understand. Kandinsky states that the artist seeks to find a material form for this new value which lives in him in spiritual form. He describes the process of selection, just as Blake wrote of his

selection, "according to a certain order suited to my imaginative eye."²³ Kandinsky writes that the spirit chooses what is necessary to its expression:

That is the positive, the creative. That is the good. The white, fertilizing ray.

This white ray leads to evolution, to elevation. Thus behind matter the creative spirit is concealed within matter. The veiling of the spirit in the material is often so dense that there are generally few people who can see through to the spirit.²⁴

One could, in light of Kandinsky's definition of the white ray, interpret the white rays in Sounds Assembling as the activity of Brooker's second artist who has found and experienced unity within himself and is continually moving outwards from the centre. It is important to note that all but one of the white modulated rods spring directly from the centres of the white stars²⁵ and virtually all of the rods terminate within the picture's space. Thus the rods reach out towards the viewer, with some of the rays reaching the viewer's space as complete circles on the picture plane. The image recalls Bergson's words, "I speak of a centre from which worlds shoot out like rockets...a continuity of shooting out...God thus defined...is unceasing life..."²⁶ The four white stars pin-point the apex of the mystical experience. Like William Blake, Brooker has moved from unity outward into multiplicity.²⁷ Curiously one of Blake's expressions for the "place" of his spiritual experience of unity, was "the bosom of God." Brooker's choice of the star as a symbol of spiritual unity with God could relate to the star which led the three wise men to Bethlehem and the birth of Christ. The double image of the star, splintered by the radiating rods, creates a crystal-like effect which also brings to mind Brooker's description of the mystical experience as a revelation through a crystallization of thought or emotion.²⁸ Finally, Brooker has called this experience of unity "the supreme experience", and in attempting to find forms in varying relationships to express it, he looked for a harmony that is constant.²⁹ The star is an appropriate symbol of constancy.

White is an ancient symbol of purity. There are further complexities in the representation of this vision. One white rod is ambivalent, for it originates from the outer edge of the picture with the coloured rods and changes direction in a zig-zag before making contact with the largest star. Since we know that Brooker wrote about some artists "who reverse that direction [from the circumference to its centre] at some period of their lives and frequently without volition of their own they suddenly arrive at the centre."³⁰ The zig-zagging white rod might symbolize an artist who, in search of the outer aspects of unity and harmony, came suddenly upon the shared spiritual experience of another. The widening concentric circles can be related to Bergson's circles of the individual's society: those of community, nation and the universe, which Brooker called the "cyclings of lives."³¹

Even Brooker's choice of title offers a multiplicity of readings. Sounds Assembling does not refer simply to music, or to the sounds of an orchestra. The meaning is more complex if one draws the association with Kandinsky. Vivian Endicott Barnett has noted Kandinsky's preoccupation with Klang or "sounds" which appear both in his titles and in his theoretical writings. For Kandinsky sounds meant the "inner resonance" or "spiritual vibration" which emanates from the pictorial elements.³² Thus Sounds Assembling connotes the bringing together of pictorial elements such as colour and form to produce a correspondent spiritual vibration in the "sensitive soul" of the viewer. The title, then, evokes the double meaning of both sight and sound: Brooker's Sounds Assembling is his "conception of a unified universe...set down for people to see and hear."³³

However, in order to understand the full significance of Sounds Assembling a review of Brooker's notes on the modern art theory of Vernon Blake is necessary. Brooker makes specific note of Vernon Blake's statement that art is both a symbol of the

universe and the artist's perception of the essential nature of the universe. It is the artist who perceives the inter-relations of the universe and creates a work of art analogous to his perception. Therefore, Brooker believed, an artist such as Blake in his religious ecstasy was able to perceive both the "constant" in the relations which compose the universe and to create symbols for a unity he had specifically experienced. Blake looked "through" the universe to the ideal unity within it. In Sounds Assembling Brooker used a white star as a hermetic symbol to express the ideal unity he had experienced outside the little church at Dwight.

Confirmation of such an interpretation of Brooker's abstract work can be found in Fred Housser's article, "The Amateur Movement in Canadian Painting," which appeared in the Yearbook of the Arts in Canada, 1929. Housser writes:

Brooker started to paint...as a result of a transcendental philosophy adopting painting as a medium for its concrete expression, and creating abstract conceptions in paint of musical fugues, cosmic forces and abstract mental states.³⁴

It must be remembered that not only was the expression of these ideas important to Brooker as a means of communication to other people, but also as a development of his own philosophical thought process. He wrote in 1928:

It occurred to me recently...that these two years of art effort were designed for the purpose of settling my metaphysical ideas, so that I could go ahead with my writing without being subject to constant changes in the form of my thought.³⁵

Brooker's abstract art was an expression of his metaphysical ideas of attaining ideal unity with the universe.

In 1945, Brooker sent Sounds Assembling to FitzGerald. Discussion concerning the purchase of the painting must have taken place during Brooker's visit to Winnipeg in the summer of that year. In July (after his visit) Brooker writes FitzGerald that he will look out Sounds Assembling and see what condition it is in.³⁶ There is no suggestion of providing a choice for FitzGerald by sending an alternative. In September, Brooker indicates that he intends to polish up the brass frame (built on to the picture by sculptor Emmanuel Hahn) and, if FitzGerald is willing, he will crate and ship the painting so that FitzGerald can decide if the Winnipeg School of Art should buy it.³⁷ As principal of the Winnipeg Art School, FitzGerald was engaged in purchasing contemporary Canadian art to enrich his students' visual experience. By December the painting had been purchased by the school.³⁸ FitzGerald undoubtedly instigated the purchase. Phyllis Brooker Smith confirms this, "As far as I know my father chose to send this painting to Winnipeg himself."³⁹

The transaction took place when Brooker was working on his unpublished manuscript, Nine Words that Ruled the World. Brooker's growing concern for humanity's spiritual well-being is expressed in this tentative unfinished manuscript. He worked on it intermittently throughout the forties. Significantly, one of the earliest references to the manuscript is in Brooker's response in 1942 to FitzGerald's special letter (already discussed in Chapter II) in which FitzGerald had expressed his innermost thoughts and feelings. In his response Brooker writes:

there is an emanation in this letter that I have never before received from a human being....I have probably never been lower spiritually in my life. So that when your letter came, so charged with beauty, I was able to renew my faith in beauty and my worship of it....And I found wholeness again.⁴⁰

Brooker goes on to tell FitzGerald that he has changed greatly in the last year or year and a half:

...the philosophy I have been struggling toward so long but mistakenly through the intellect, [has become] a matter of feeling --- an apprehension of simplicity and beauty, instead of mere thinking or theorizing about it. This being so, I am led to wonder if a number of experiences, [your letter] among them, are occurring to me now because I am ready to receive them, attuned to them, and in some way, perhaps, even attract them.⁴¹

Clearly FitzGerald's letter had contributed significantly to Brooker's philosophical approach and to his apprehension and renewed faith in beauty. Brooker continues:

During the long hours [of my illness] on my back all through March I seemed to come to [a] ferment, and your letter helped to stir it. I began as soon as I was able to start a new book....The mystical core is...there....I think I am going to call it: "Nine Words That Rule the World". From a discussion of these nine words I hope to show that Mankindness [Brooker's invented word] is almost a missing quantity in the world because until now man has not developed the power of feeling, but has relied on the power of thought....

The nine words that I discuss fall into three trilogies that have ruled thinking for centuries: "Goodness, Truth and Beauty...Faith, Hope and Charity...Liberty, Equality and Fraternity." One of the points I make is that the last word in each trilogy leads directly toward feeling and thus to Mankindness, whereas the first two lead to thought.⁴²

Brooker adds that his wife Rill thinks of the book in terms of a new Bible, because of its simple language and its simple philosophy.⁴³ Amongst the manuscript papers, on a short page of rough notes subtitled "The Poet," Brooker calls on writers and artists to serve morals, instead of betraying values.⁴⁴ In Brooker's acceptance of Rill's term and his call to artists to serve morals, he advocates a redemptive role for art and literature.

A more detailed analysis of individual chapters reveals how significant the interchange with FitzGerald had been. Brooker begins the chapter on "Beauty" with a lengthy description of a drawing in his collection. Although not identified as a FitzGerald, the description is similar to the FitzGerald drawing described and named as such in

Painting Verbs, an address Brooker delivered at Hart House in 1949.⁴⁵ The description in the chapter on "Beauty," reads as follows:

It is a quick sketch of a tree, bare of foliage. The ascending, writhing, jointed lines of the trunk and branches seem at first glance uncouth and coarse, almost clumsy. It looks unfinished...but as you study it you are led to realize that this was the artist's intention -- to depict an unfinished thing, a growing thing in the very act of growth. It is an attempt to portray the Ascension which goes on endlessly and noiselessly within a tree, the expanding forces...[from] the miraculous closed little seed....It contains a glimpse of how all life's forms cohere together...for a purpose, and are shaped...by the fashioning force of Beauty.⁴⁶

Clearly this unity depicts the structure of growth which Brooker then proceeds to connect further with the fashioning force of the creative artist, the growth of nature, and the forces found in creative energy. He writes:

The eternal urge of energy drives everlasting in one direction....The scientist calls it Gravitation. But a better name for it is Love....[the movement is] inward, to the heart, the center, the seed, of everything alive....

History provides many examples of human emotion reaching a peak of creative intensity that almost paralleled the energies of Nature itself.

...the most creative of all such outbursts of consecrated energy was the adoration inspired by the Virgin Mary in twelfth century France, resulting in the erection of hundreds of cathedrals and churches.

Henry Adams, who made a study of the extraordinary art output of the period, insisted that the Virgin imparted to her worshippers the highest energy ever known to man - "inspiring more activity," he wrote, "than any other force, natural or supernatural, had ever done."⁴⁷

Brooker himself describes the sum of such creative energy as "world-energy" or "world-feeling." Most significantly in the context of this thesis, Brooker makes the comparison between the consecrated energy which produced the cathedral at Chartres and the creative energy of FitzGerald as an artist:

In a description of the cathedral at Chartres, Henry Adams comes close to duplicating our analysis of the drawing of a tree a few pages back.

"Every inch of material, from crypt to vault, " he wrote, "had its task, giving support where support was needed...one idea controlled every line...and the result was an art marked by singular unity."

....These correspondences of energy or structure or symmetry are to be found everywhere, whether we seek them in the chemistry of our bodies or in the vast cycling of the stars, in the architecture that springs from man's worshipping mind or Nature's arching in an unspoiled forest.⁴⁸

The fact that Brooker places FitzGerald's drawing within the category of "world-energy or "world-feeling," as a depiction of life and growth, in fact "a picture of living" speaks to the importance he placed upon FitzGerald as a symbol of humankind's creative energy.

In the chapter titled "Faith," Brooker points out the limitations of the intellect and in praising feeling he implies once again the intuitive energy of FitzGerald. He writes:

...the intellect cannot do anything but provide some sort of architect's drawing of an uncapturable universe, ...eternally escaping the forms and shapes it creates as a "by product" of its energy....these forms are the traces left in the world or in [the] consciousness or both, after energy has passed by!....The intellect .. can function only in the past tense --- recording, totalling up, and remembering sensory and emotional experiences after they have passed....events...momentarily present in the ever-dissolving flux of the universe.⁴⁹

Thus, in Brooker's view, FitzGerald remains an artist capable of capturing that elusive moment of world-energy or world-feeling within the "ever-dissolving flux of the universe." Although we have no clear documentation, it is difficult to imagine that Brooker would not have shared these ideas with FitzGerald, or, as Brooker suggested, sent him a few pages of the manuscript for his comments. As Brooker's and FitzGerald's correspondence shows, and as Elizabeth Wylie has posited,⁵⁰ this was a time of spiritual growth for FitzGerald. It is the position of this thesis that when Brooker commissioned a major abstract painting from FitzGerald some years later, that FitzGerald returned to these ideas

of universal harmony and creative evolution for his subject matter. They are most evident in his painting, Abstract: Green and Gold, 1954.

In the chapter on "Fraternity," subtitled "Metaphor (seeing everything as brothers)," Brooker has entered two quotations which also serve to link Brooker's vision of FitzGerald with the production of a picture of universal harmony. The first is from Middleton Murray:

...the apprehension of the quality of life as a whole, the power to discern the universal in the particular, and to make the particular a symbol of the universal...is derived not from sensuous perceptions but from emotional contemplation.⁵¹

FitzGerald's deep contemplation of his subject has already been discussed, and it is significant to note that in the same year that he painted Abstract: Green and Gold, he wrote of a need to express an emotional content in his abstract work:

...this concentrated effort did result in the accumulation of a greater knowledge of natural forms and more sureness in drawing, making it easier to express ideas and emotional reactions.⁵²

WORKING RESPONSES: "ABSTRACT: GREEN AND GOLD"

Although FitzGerald did not have a specific mystical experience as did Brooker, FitzGerald's experience was one of deep contemplation, with a constant belief in a universal harmony which pervades all life. A quotation of Quiller Couch which Brooker cites in "Fraternity" may help to explain how FitzGerald was able to identify his feelings so closely with Brooker's mystical experience. Quiller Couch writes that universal harmony means nothing to man only in as far as he can apprehend it, and that he can apprehend it only through reference to some corresponding harmony within himself. A sense of that

quiet strength and harmony and FitzGerald's ability to communicate that strength without words is present in Phyllis Brooker Smith's description of their relationship.

The friendship between the two men was very special indeed. Their personalities were so opposite. LeMoine so quiet, soft spoken and reserved and my father the opposite. Whenever I saw LeMoine he gave me the feeling of being in the presence of someone special. After his visits my father seemed inspired to create.⁵³

In 1953, probably when FitzGerald was in Toronto, Brooker commissioned him to create a major abstract painting. FitzGerald produced a series of abstract drawings, watercolours and paintings from which two pictures were offered to Brooker. Brooker selected Autumn Sonata, 1954 (fig. 77). The identity of the other painting is not known. Phyllis Brooker Smith recalls that they were similar.⁵⁴

After FitzGerald's trip to Toronto and visit with Brooker, at least three themes appeared in his work that fall: leaf forms, the movement of air currents, and Blake imagery. In October, he completed a series of semi-abstract and abstract coloured chalk and coloured pencil drawings on paper. One example of this series, Night Breeze, dated 5.10.53 (fig. 69), incorporates some recognizable objects, perhaps an apple and chairs, within a swirl of elliptical air and space. Abstract: Autumn Leaves, dated the following day (fig. 70), is a lyrical pattern of leaf forms which swirl around in a central gust of wind. A third drawing, Blake Abstract, undated by the artist (fig. 71), coloured chalk on paper, would also appear to be part of this fall activity.⁵⁵ Its title would suggest that FitzGerald had Brooker in mind, for they shared an interest in Blake. FitzGerald's drawing is an abstract composed of curving, elliptical and eccentric circular shapes which move horizontally and diagonally across the sheet, overlapping and interlocking in their rhythmical progress. The drawing recalls Brooker's description of the forms which Blake employs in his art:

they are not concerned with the architecture of the material universe... and hence they select the most fluid forms and rhythms in the attempt to suggest that forms are not solid or real but that the universe is an infinite flux of being, of activity, of thought...

the spiritual artist usually works with lines, curves, whirls and flame-like rhythms.⁵⁶

In November FitzGerald produced four pen and ink drawings which are related to the October chalk and pencil drawings, and which were completed over a period of days. The ink drawings are greatly reduced, retaining only the essential forms of the earlier drawings. In Study for Autumn Sonata, 18.11.53 (fig. 72), Night Breeze has been abstracted to a few elliptical shapes and lines which swing diagonally across the picture plane. The curved remnant of the apple remains centre right. In Study for April Rhythm n.d. (fig. 73), Autumn Leaves has been reduced to a few interlocking and overlapping leaf shapes. There are two pen and ink drawings which relate to the curving, circular movement of Blake Abstract, and which were completed within three days. The earlier drawing, Abstract, 13.11.53 (fig. 74), retains partial circles upper centre, centre left and centre right, and maintains the centre and lower horizontals, and the diagonal movement from lower left to upper right. The second drawing, Abstract, 16.11.53 (fig. 75), accentuates the circular movement, maintaining the curving diagonal from left to right. It establishes a strong vertical with a series of overlapping circles and comma-like shapes. All four (one is undated) November drawings employ a single bounding line and short diagonal strokes, used singly and in the form of cross-hatching.

These two drawings titled Abstract, with one other, Abstract, 28.7.55, are related to Abstract: Green and Gold. It was FitzGerald's habit to examine a subject from many different aspects, often producing a series of related works. Two drawings are of enigmatic figures: Abstract, 16.11.53 (fig. 75), and Abstract, 28.7.55 (fig. 76). Although the latter was executed over a year later, FitzGerald has returned to the same medium and

the same cross-hatched strokes and bounding line. These two drawings each titled Abstract, and the painting, Abstract: Green and Gold (note the same simple title, apart from the addition of the colours for the painting), are composed of curving circular movements which form ethereal figures in a shallow space. The repetition of circular shapes and the creation of less-dense spaces of circular light create halos for these celestial figures. Amongst Brooker's papers on the Blake Lecture is a sheet of paper with some of his handwritten notes on Blake. Brooker has written a quotation from Blake which recalls FitzGerald's cosmic female figures: "She also took an atom of space and opened its centre into Infinitude."⁵⁷

In all there are only three major paintings which relate to this fall series of drawings and could have been completed by early summer 1954, the date suggested by Phyllis Brooker Smith for the arrival of the two paintings in Toronto. One is Autumn Sonata, 1954 (fig. 77), the painting which was chosen by Brooker. The second is April Rhythm, c. 1954 (fig. 78), which, although the exact date of the work is not known, is closely related to Autumn Sonata at each stage of its development. The third painting is Abstract: Green and Gold, 1954 (fig. 80), of which the preparatory watercolour sketch, Study for Abstract in Green and Gold (fig. 79), is dated 27-4-54.⁵⁸ The close relationship of the studies and preparatory sketches for Autumn Sonata and April Rhythm is typical of FitzGerald's careful, methodical working habits. These abstract paintings evolved from objects seen and experiences felt in nature, familiar subject matter for FitzGerald. FitzGerald wrote in 1954 of this process:

...all this concentrated effort did result in the accumulation of a greater knowledge of natural forms and more sureness in drawing, making it easier to express ideas and emotional reactions.⁵⁹

The close relationship of the studies, the preparatory sketches, the paintings, the size of the works, and the media (both oil paintings are on board) suggest that Autumn Sonata

and April Rhythm are the two paintings which FitzGerald sent to Toronto. The musical titles are almost certainly a reference to Brooker's early abstract works such as Toccata, c.1927. The drawing Blake Abstract and the more tenuous links amongst this drawing, the curving circular Abstract studies, and Abstract: Green and Gold are more unusual and more complex, although the link to Brooker through Blake is clear. It is generally assumed that FitzGerald's abstract art always evolved from things seen. But it is significant that FitzGerald wrote of his abstract painting in 1954:

...I can give more reign to the imagination freed from the insistence of objects seen, using colours and shapes without reference to natural forms....

Although I have a definite preference for landscape and still-life, I have not limited myself to these and believe it a good idea, occasionally, to use subjects of an entirely different nature.⁶⁰

When Brooker sent FitzGerald the facsimile of Blake's Songs of Innocence in 1945, he wrote to FitzGerald:

One of the most beautiful of the poems - "The Divine Image" - has been set to an old chorale of Bach's, and we have it in a small collection which our family sings together.⁶¹

Through its subtle relationship to Blake Abstract and its visual and spiritual links with Brooker's painting and drawing, this thesis will show that Abstract: Green and Gold must also be viewed as a tribute to Brooker's spiritual ideas. At Brooker's death FitzGerald wrote:

[Brooker's] admiration for the work of William Blake was an ever present influence throughout his painting career and is indicative of his artistic outlook. It was never a copying of technique nor of subject matter, but a kinship of spirituality.⁶²

It is a "kinship of spirituality" which Brooker and FitzGerald shared, and which FitzGerald expresses in Abstract: Green and Gold. It is no accident that in his written homage to Brooker in 1956, and in the description of his own work only months after completing Abstract: Green and Gold, FitzGerald uses the same words to describe the "inner compulsion" which drove them both to express their innermost thoughts.⁶³

Abstract: Green and Gold has been described by one curator, Pat Bovey, as: "a stellar flow of shapes, planes and colours, moving through mystical space."⁶⁴ It can also be seen to embody an enigmatic Madonna-like form (a Divine Image). The Madonna image links the painting to Adams' concept of the Virgin as the creative force of the universe. It should be remembered that Brooker had made the connection between the Virgin's creative force and FitzGerald's creative energy through his comparison of the architecture of Chartres Cathedral and FitzGerald's drawing of a tree. The intersecting gold circles assume the form of a swaddled child. The pink oval swings in and out of a multiple reality: an egg; the face of a child; the focal point of an abstract universe. Perhaps this is the "healthy softness" and something "a little bit more universal" that FitzGerald was looking for.⁶⁵ These are perhaps, images of eternal life, as promised by the Christ child, with the egg as a symbol of Easter and new life. The comparison becomes more poignant when placed besides Brooker's Pharaoh's Daughter, 1950 (fig. 55). As a pair, they become the Old Covenant and the New Covenant; that of Moses and the Old Testament, and of Christ and the New Testament.

In Pharaoh's Daughter Brooker defines the woman's face with a wide edge, an approximation of a sculpted metal edge (a further reference to Antoine Pevsner's work, is also apparent in Brooker's Blue Nude (fig. 53) and Entombment, 1937 (fig. 56)). In Abstract: Green and Gold FitzGerald leaves two remnants of Brooker's sculpted edge, as though in reference to Brooker's work. One occurs across the brow of the Madonna's

inclined head, the other defines the edge of the left breast, just as Brooker had defined the breast in Blue Nude. The composition of Pharaoh's Daughter is lyrical for Brooker employs the curved lines, whirls and flame-like rhythms which he identified in Blake's spiritual forms and which have already been noted in FitzGerald's abstracts. Brooker's elliptical shapes swing from side to side, enveloping the woman and child in a large mandorla, and creating halos for their heads, a reference, perhaps, to the Madonna. In both Pharaoh's Daughter and Abstract: Green and Gold the arms of the maternal figure are suggested by curving ovals which enfold the child in a secure space.

A pen and ink drawing titled Circles, c.1935 (fig. 81), which Brooker exhibited in a joint Exhibition of Drawings with FitzGerald and Munn in 1935 serves to link further FitzGerald's Abstract: Green and Gold with the Madonna image. Formed from circles and partial circles, the drawing is a silhouette of a Madonna and Child.⁶⁶ It is a simple illustrative work, far less complex than FitzGerald's multiple image. That FitzGerald would have known of Brooker's work is clear for Brooker sent him the exhibition catalogue and they discussed the drawings in the exhibition. Both Brooker's Circles and FitzGerald's Abstract: Green and Gold recall Brooker's perception of the circle as a symbol which encompasses the fourth dimension:

consciousness is circularity - it is the encircling movement of form in its attempt to embrace the completeness of unity.

...it doesn't matter whether we go outwards into what seems like a physical universe, or whether the actual process is really an inward one into the subconsciousness of previous races...⁶⁷

Michael Parke-Taylor believes that Abstract: Green and Gold is derived from the prairie landscape and that green and gold were the colours FitzGerald observed in the combination of green trees and gold harvest fields. But the composition bears little resemblance to abstract landscape forms. However, the green may well be symbolic of

fertile nature. If I interpret the figure as a symbol of creation or creative energy, it is significant that the nurturing part of the mother's body is green. Blake himself makes that comparison:

Thy hills and valleys felt her feet
Gently upon their bosoms move...⁶⁸

In icon painting gold halos indicate divinity, and a gold background represents heaven or paradise. It is significant that the child form in Abstract: Green and Gold is encircled in gold. Thus the colours green and gold may be read as a symbolic reference to nature and God, to the material and the spiritual, signifying the reconciliation of God and humankind within the universe.

There is a strong affinity between the Bergson passage which was a key to Brooker's philosophy, and FitzGerald's response to Brooker in his painting Abstract: Green and Gold. The Bergson passage which Brooker had sidelined and underscored from Creative Evolution, and which was discussed in Chapter II, is worth examining again in the context of FitzGerald's Abstract: Green and Gold. The images which Bergson conjures up are detectable in FitzGerald's hermetic forms.⁶⁹ Bergson writes:

We have this sudden illumination before certain forms of maternal love, so striking...observable even in the solicitude of the plant for its seed. This love, in which some have seen the great mystery of life, may possibly deliver us life's secret. It shows us each generation leaning over the generation that shall follow. It allows us a glimpse of the fact that the living being is above all a thoroughfare, and that the essence of life is in the movement by which life is transmitted.⁷⁰

In this passage, as in Abstract: Green and Gold, there may be found two symbolic images: the Madonna as a symbol of fecundity, ideal maternal love, and humankind's creative energy; the universe in perpetual flux. In the word "essence" Bergson suggests being, a continuous state of becoming, and also a perfect or complete form. Thus living a

thoroughfare demands the unity of existence and the created analogous form, just as Blake, Kandinsky, Malevich, Brooker and FitzGerald insisted on that unity. All of these artists created hermetic symbols for the unity they experienced within themselves. Their painting became a thoroughfare, a passage from that inner experience to the sympathetic viewer: colour and form brought together to produce a correspondent spiritual vibration within the spirit of the viewer. Mediation is sought as a progression through the spirit. Brooker has written of this role of the artist as thoroughfare,

The creative energy...recognized as divine, cannot be stifled once it has fully descended into a man's soul....He can only serve it, well or ill....[some] act as a channel for the influx of this energy into this world. In old time they were known as prophets. Today they are artists and poets....They are so linked with the energy that pours through them that they become isolated from men, and live almost constantly in a realm of which they can impart only an occasional glimpse.⁷¹

Elizabeth Wylie describes FitzGerald's Abstract: Green and Gold as sublime, a meditative painting which reveals FitzGerald's spirituality at its full development.⁷² Dennis Reid describes Sounds Assembling as "stunning."⁷³ These two paintings have aroused a strong emotional response in the viewer. Widely reproduced, they are the most well-known and perhaps the most well-loved of Brooker's and FitzGerald's paintings.

Their friendship was vitally important to both artists. FitzGerald was a source of inspiration and renewal for Brooker. Brooker strove for unity in his work and an apprehension of harmony within himself, finding both in FitzGerald's calm and constant example. Brooker was FitzGerald's dynamic contact with the outside world, bringing news, clippings, exhibition catalogues and his own written reviews of the art world in Toronto, New York and Philadelphia. One could say that Brooker was FitzGerald's catalyst. Parke-Taylor notes FitzGerald's early inclination to make abstractions from the

landscape, reproducing three thumbnail sketches from his 1930 sketchbook (figs. 88,89), and he suggests Harris as a possible source.⁷⁴ But these sketches are closely related to Brooker's experimental work of the twenties. On the back of Brooker's 14 October 1926 diary note is a closely related thumb-nail sketch (fig. 90) which is related to Brooker's painting Endless Dawn, 1927, or Green Movement, c. 1927 (figs. 91, 92). FitzGerald's "page 9 sketch" is like the landscape in Brooker's The Dawn of Man, c.1927, with its diagonally-spread abstract trees and small global hills.

Both Wylie and Parke-Taylor downplay the importance of Brooker's role in his relationship with FitzGerald, affirming only FitzGerald's influence on Brooker in the latter's decision to abandon abstraction.⁷⁵ In affirming Harris' role in the development of FitzGerald's work, Parke-Taylor writes:

In 1928 (before FitzGerald had even met Brooker), Harris wrote to FitzGerald complimenting him on his exhibition at the Arts and Letters Club in Toronto.

Neither, of course, had Harris met FitzGerald. In August, 1929, only days after he had met FitzGerald, Brooker wrote to Harris:

I have been intending writing you...principally to urge you, if at all possible, to drop off at Winnipeg on your way back to spend an hour or so with FitzGerald. I saw him both at the beginning and end of our month in the West, and spent about three days with him...talking and sketching. He is...most anxious to meet you, just thirsty for what I could tell him about you and others of the crowd in Toronto. He is greatly neglected in Winnipeg, but seems not to mind it - is very quiet, self-contained....It would do him good if you could see him.⁷⁶

Harris did not visit FitzGerald in Winnipeg, nor did he see him on the two visits which FitzGerald made to Toronto in 1930 or 1938. They met when FitzGerald visited Vancouver in late August, 1942, thirteen years later.

The interrelationship of Brooker and FitzGerald together with the experience they gained from their experimental studies in abstraction, resulted in some of their best work. Despite their influence on each other, both retained their vital integrity and originality. James Purdie has remarked that the body of their work provides evidence "that two artists of more or less equal dedication can dip freely into each other's strengths without one having to resort to imitation."⁷⁷

CONCLUSION
TOWARDS A REDEEMPTIVE ART

"The picture...determined physically by the nature of its materials and means - flat field, spatial sense, voluminous organization, dynamic colors - is in itself a universe in little, yet exhibiting the laws of original creation, and the rhythm and poise of celestial movement. In its finite way, it echoes...the harmonious order of the infinite. A bit of the equilibrium, of utter clearness, of intuitively divined perfect order, is fixed, beyond any incidental copying of disordered outward nature."

Sheldon Cheney

"Abstraction and Mysticism."

This thesis has established that Brooker and FitzGerald assimilated European modern art and theory which influenced the structure and form of their work. Whereas Bovey, Davis, Reid, Shaul and Zemans have suggested that European modern art had some effect on the work of Brooker and FitzGerald, this thesis has made specific comparisons amongst theorists, artists and their work, establishing connections between specifically related works and suggesting opportunities for more tentative links. This study has found that in the context of a reactionary mood in the United States, Brooker's and FitzGerald's interest in European modernism was not the delayed Canadian response that is usually assumed. It was, instead, an integral part of the long and arduous process of assimilation which all North American artists underwent. In Europe modernism evolved as a gradual development, supported by the cultural fabric of interdisciplinary exchange within avant-garde groups. In North America, Canadian artists faced even greater problems than American artists in attempting an abrupt epistemological change without steady access to the product of European modernism. Arthur Lismer expressed the frustration of the Canadian artist at the lack of good exhibitions brought to this country:

In Canada we see disconnected examples in galleries, and reproductions in magazines and, having lost the thread, we rage against the detached units of our modern day.¹

Brooker and FitzGerald both stressed the significance of the inner spiritual content of their art, finding affirmation in the modernist theories of Kandinsky, Boccioni, Malevich, Fry, Bell, and Cheney. This thesis has established direct links between Brooker and the writing of Kandinsky, Boccioni, Fry, Bell and Cheney, strong links between FitzGerald and the writing of Fry, and tentative links between FitzGerald and the writing of Kandinsky and Boccioni. This study has consolidated Brooker's modernist position

through reference to his reading of Bergson and Ouspensky, who were sources for the Futurists and the Suprematists respectively. All of these artists and writers expressed an intuitive compulsion to encompass the universe within the cosmic forces of the fourth dimension. Zemans has suggested that Brooker's work bears an affinity with some of the Russian avant-garde painters. This thesis supports Zemans' findings and establishes the direct influence of Kandinsky, El Lissitzky, Gabo and Pevsner on Brooker's painting. It has also explored the effects of Cubism and Russian Cubo-futurism on FitzGerald's work.

This thesis reinforces and expands existing knowledge of the close relationship between Brooker and FitzGerald. It has established that Brooker experienced an early rejection of his abstract work through the ultra-conservative views of his Toronto friends, artist colleagues and the general public. He subsequently turned to FitzGerald as an alternative route to an achievement of the "significant form" or the "plus quality" he needed to express his spiritual ideas.² In Brooker's eyes FitzGerald, the dedicated artist working in isolation, became inseparable from his work. FitzGerald's life and work, his existence and the harmonious form he created were one experience. Kandinsky and Brooker have expressed this unity in similar terms. Kandinsky writes that, "the spirit of the individual artist is mirrored in the form. The form bears the stamp of the personality."³ Brooker wrote to FitzGerald on seeing a painting of his at the 1931 Group of Seven Exhibition:

I stopped in front of it many times and...felt that no other canvas in the show expressed so perfectly the personality of the artist. It was almost like seeing your face and talking to you again to see it.⁴

This thesis has established that FitzGerald embodied the answer to Brooker's spiritual quest or "soul-search" for the creative energy which stirs and contents humankind most,⁵ the answer to his childhood question, "What makes man happy?" In 1936 Brooker wrote,

"...this inexpressible sense of wholeness is the basic joy of living. Call it what you like - a sense of health, of well-being, of inner harmony..."⁶

Previous studies have limited the content of Brooker's art to visual equivalents of the sound of music, often derived from the forms of nature (Reid, Boyanoski). Zemans, as discussed in the Introduction to this thesis, has carefully traced Brooker's metaphysical ideas and personal philosophy through a study of his unpublished papers. She found that Brooker integrated his belief in humankind's spirituality with his belief in an ordered living cosmos in which Brooker advocated spiritual leadership for the artist. This thesis addresses the problem of examining Brooker's Library in light of his spiritual and metaphysical ideas, establishing firm links amongst: known influential readings; feelings expressed in his diaries and in his letters to FitzGerald; ideas worked through in his unpublished papers; and, as creative artist, coordination of this spiritual content in his painting with his belief in the redemptive quality of art.

This thesis has affirmed Zemans' findings that Brooker rejected Theosophy. It has established that the parameters of Brooker's belief system were built firmly on a Christian framework. This thesis concludes that Brooker's spiritual beliefs and mystical experience of oneness with the universe are compatible with Christianity. Christian theology affirms God as an integral part of the universe and the human being as one with God. Bishop John Baycroft, Suffragan Bishop of Ottawa and well-respected Canadian theologian, wrote recently:

From the perspective of a theologian, God is our environment. As St. Paul tells us, we live and move and have our being in God. Of course, our life is part of a seamless fabric and being rightly and harmoniously related to God requires that we seek to be rightly related to the cosmos, to our natural environment...⁷

The close relationship between Brooker and FitzGerald centred around a spiritual kinship. This thesis has established that Brooker recognized the innate harmony in FitzGerald's life and work as a symbol of universal creative energy, and identified it with the unity he experienced in his mystical experience. Brooker's role in encouraging FitzGerald to attempt abstract painting is usually acknowledged but the date is always set after 1950 when FitzGerald began his abstract work. However, this thesis has established that Brooker's influence began as early as 1929 and is evident in FitzGerald's gradual elimination of superfluous detail from his work. It is significant that FitzGerald does not turn to full abstraction until he has experienced a spiritual maturity, evidenced by his letters to Brooker and Heywood Hemsworth in the 1940s. Encouraged by Brooker, FitzGerald found abstract art a satisfying vehicle for the spiritual content of his work.

In his approach to a spiritual equilibrium, Brooker felt the need to discard intellectual ideas. Both men felt a need to abandon physical realities.⁸ In some notes headed "A Plan of Life," Brooker wrote in 1924:

The secret must lie...in perpetual movement in harmony, which is the equivalent of rest. This harmony cannot be found in the body, nor in the mind, but the soul has glimpses of it in moments of wonder, adoration and contemplation. It must be sought in another dimension.⁹

Each of the paintings, Sounds Assembling and Abstract: Green and Gold, is, as Cheney described modern abstract painting, "a universe in little."¹⁰ Cheney's description, quoted at the beginning of this chapter, is very close to Brooker's and encompasses all the crucial elements of these paintings discussed in Chapter III: the picture a small universe, existing in the fourth dimension, symbolizing the rhythm of celestial movement and the laws of original creation. Both writers suggest that the universe, in a perpetual state of becoming, attains a perfect equilibrium.¹¹

Brooker's perception of art in an endless state of becoming, an effort to achieve a spiritual equilibrium, affirms a redemptive role for his early abstract art. In his editorial in the Yearbook of the Arts 1929, "When we awake," Brooker describes the highest faculty of the artist as a religious sense of the mystery of life and his art as "manifestations of a great unified realm of being whose every part depends upon or gives birth to every other part, in an endless and subtly interrelated 'becomingness' ".¹² In his copy of Fausset's The Proving of Psyche, Brooker has underlined the passage:

Great art is redemptive because it transcends the opposition of good and evil; in it we experience the world of 'becoming' as a creative activity, and realize that ethics and aesthetics are one.¹³

Interestingly, Lawren Harris also claims this power of redemption in FitzGerald's work. In 1945 he wrote that it is the inner life in a work of art which affords a lasting experience which is both intangible and compelling: "...the spirit within us quickens and our consciousness is enhanced to the point where we participate in a life that we feel endures beyond all vicissitudes." Harris quotes Raymond Chandler who writes that "every work of art has in it the quality of redemption."¹⁴ Harris sees in FitzGerald's Bowen Island series of watercolours the consummation of a long period of contemplation. He describes them as moving and sensitive works, full of life rhythms and made into an elevated, living harmony.¹⁵ Amongst FitzGerald's papers is an article, "A Mysterious Quality in Art," 1906, which affirms Harris' opinion. The presence of the article indicates FitzGerald's commitment to a spiritual content in his art and suggests his interest in its redemptive role. It reads:

[the landscape painting] imports something more of life than it encloses. It is strangely spiritual in the sense that it reaches through those ordinary perceptions and sympathies...to the inner spirit which, once it is moved, is uncontrollable in its motion and prodigal in its response.¹⁶

This thesis posits the redemptive role of art for both Brooker's Sounds Assembling and FitzGerald's Abstract: Green and Gold. Brooker himself wrote soon after he first met FitzGerald:

At one extreme are those who simply play with relationships as with pawns on a chessboard; at the other are a few who attempt to build with geometric forms and equations a new conception of the universe and life, denuded of superstition and transcending human frailty.¹⁷

Brooker and FitzGerald both enhanced the Canadian consciousness: individually, nationally and universally. Their own self-consciousness has already been discussed. Both artists understood the crucial nature of self-awareness in approaching their work. Brooker discusses many aspects of consciousness in his essay "Biography of a Mind," placing the stages of consciousness in a continuum from molecular to cosmic consciousness. On a national level of consciousness, Brooker attempts to build a composite picture in "When We Awake!" of the background in which Canadian artists work. His findings are well known. Brooker found disunity and disruption in almost all aspects of the country geographically, racially and politically, with "a general conception of art that lacks any hint of national consciousness..." He concludes:

Is there, in Canada, any of this consciousness of unity to counteract the distracting influences from without and the many divisions within?...We are not sensible of national unity...¹⁸

Although Brooker's early abstract art had been seen in Toronto in 1927 as an unnatural form of expression in Canada, his strong national voice in the 1929 Yearbook earned him a new reputation. It is typified by H.A. Kennedy's invitation to Brooker to contribute to the new publication "The Canadian Mercury" as a writer "preoccupied with the Canadian consciousness rather than the Canadian background."¹⁹ It is Brooker's vision of national

unity and his ability to express a Canadian consciousness which captured the imagination of the reviewers:

Brooker discusses the relation of art to nationalism...in this sprawling country...with its soul new born and just becoming articulate....throws light into the dark corners of our National thinking.²⁰

He was seen as "one who has symbolized religion in art."²¹ In his writing and in his painting, Brooker became a voice for the Canadian mind and the Canadian soul.²²

This thesis has examined Brooker's philosophy of stripping away all extraneous detail in his soul-search, to expose the inner being. He stripped away from himself all hereditary and environmental elements. As a result he eliminated from his writing and his abstract painting all the easily identified Canadian content such as appearance, habit and the current obsession with the northern landscape. Brooker worked, not only to know himself, but to find the essence of his Canadian existence. Brooker was in part responsible for awakening that deep introspection which is part of the Canadian psyche, and which Northrop Frye has identified as a sort of riddle: "Where is here?"²³

The dynamic that was different in Brooker's and in FitzGerald's painting from much of Canadian modernism was that they did not draw exclusively from an uninhabited, idyllic northern landscape.²⁴ FitzGerald's mediation of place in a Winnipeg suburb was new outside of Quebec. For nearly twenty years the Group of Seven dominated the Canadian scene, travelling to the far reaches of the country to capture images of uninhabited landscape which were adopted as Canadian icons by a people who had never seen them. Brooker and FitzGerald drew from a predominantly urban Canadian experience. Their art evolved directly from their time and place, marrying the appropriated European modern form within a contemporary Canadian context. A successful synthesis should not

be seen as derivative of the original form, but, integrated with the Canadian content and experience, as examples of new Canadian expression.

Bertram Brooker's editorial "When We Awake!" and Lawren Harris' article "Creative Art and Canada," both from the Yearbook of the Arts in Canada 1929, are seminal works, for much of our cultural discourse which has occurred since the 1960s is ordained here. The ideas are expounded more eruditely by theorists such as Northrop Frye and George Woodcock, but Brooker was instrumental in creating an emerging Canadian consciousness. George Woodcock has written:

For to be self-aware begins on the level of individual consciousness and proceeds outward to embrace the continuum that is the nation, which includes land and people, past and present, reality and ideal, but includes them as passionately felt elements of existence and not as the abstractions of nationalist politics.²⁵

The research for this thesis has opened up three areas of study which need further investigation. The first is a comparative study of Brooker and William Blake. Brooker had collected numerous articles on Blake by well-known authors, including Arthur Ransome (dating back to 1906), and J.B. Priestley. Much of the material, such as exhibition notices, literature and reviews, centres around the centennial of Blake's death in 1927.

The second area covers Brooker's advertising career and the numerous articles and books he wrote on the subject and how they relate to modernism in art. An interesting comparison can be made, for example, between a modern travel poster for the pullman cars of Etoile du Nord, 1928 (fig. 93) reproduced in Paul Frankl's book New Dimensions which Brooker owned, and his two paintings Alleluiah, 1929 (fig. 94), and Sounds Assembling, 1928. Amongst Brooker's papers are such articles as "Shape as an

Attention Compeller" by Brooker and "Memo: Pattern is Everything" in which he describes his fourth-dimensional cube. In "A Reply to Two Critics of Advertising" (one of whom is Walter Pach) Brooker addresses the reciprocal influence on advertising which swings one way and then the other, across the Atlantic. Brooker suggests that the international struggle between realism and modernism keeps advertising alive. Quoting Edwin Avery Park on French advertising from his book New Backgrounds for a New Age, (pub. 1929), Brooker writes: "Much of their advertising has high artistic merit and suggests the future of art while it employs the most advanced terms."²⁶

A third area for further study lies in FitzGerald's art and his interest in Oriental art. In his collection are many reproductions of paintings and watercolour drawings by Japanese and Chinese artists. There are reproductions of Wang-Chen's decorative landscape and still-life painting on silk fans. FitzGerald's use of soft grey-blue, clear greens, and warm sandy browns with dark blue-black drawing are reminiscent of these oriental paintings. In "Mowing" by Hyakusui Hinafuku and "Aokigahara near the Mount Fuji" by Tossai Tanaka, the muted, understated colour closely resembles FitzGerald's subtle, restricted colour palette. The texture of the drawing in its use of small pointillist brush strokes is similar to FitzGerald's ink drawings. An investigation of the books and papers in the Winnipeg School of Art Collection, held at the University of Manitoba, might throw further light on this subject.

This thesis concludes that the art of Brooker and FitzGerald fulfilled the aspects of Canadian modernism which were outlined by Ramsay Cook. Each artist affirmed the validity of intuition and stressed the importance of the inner spiritual content in their work which served a redemptive purpose. Brooker's existence, as an artist, writer and poet, centered on his role as poet-priest, supported by his reading of Blake and Kandinsky, and driven by his commitment to God. After his mystical experience in 1923 he devoted his

life to the search for a means of expressing the unity and harmony of an ideal state which, he believed, interpenetrated this life in a constant flux of being. Less able to articulate his feelings, FitzGerald, nevertheless, was equally devoted to the expression of an ideal state through a deep, intuitive contemplation. Both men lived life as a thoroughfare, striving for a unity of existence with the creation of a perfect, complete form which symbolized that existence. For both men art became a symbol of the universe in which occurs the reconciliation of God and humankind with the universe and all creation. Bertram Brooker's Sounds Assembling and LeMoine FitzGerald's Abstract: Green and Gold can be read as symbols of that universal reconciliation and as such offer redemption for both artist and viewer: progress passing through the spirit.

INTRODUCTION FOOTNOTES

* All footnote entries with a bracketed box and folder number are sources held in the Bertram Brooker Collection, University of Manitoba.

1. Brooker's diary, 10 March 1920. Brooker Collection , University of Manitoba. (Box 1, Folder 16).
 2. Brooker's diary, 25 March 1920.
 3. "I got so attached to you while you were here that I'd hate to go for a long stretch of months or a year without some contact with you..... I hope we'll manage to write."
- Brooker to FitzGerald, 17 October 1930. (Box 1, Folder 11).
- "We are still hoping that you will arrive at any time.... please type off a few words to me, as to your possible activities...and any other news..."
- FitzGerald to Brooker, 13 June 1931. (Box 1, Folder 1).
4. Dennis Reid, Bertram Brooker, Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1973. p.18.
 5. Brooker to FitzGerald, 28 December 1929. Quoted by Reid, Brooker, p.17.
 6. Reid, *ibid.*, p.18
 7. An argument for a watershed in FitzGerald's work has been made by the author elsewhere: Roger J. Mesley ed., Art Carleton, Carleton University Press, 1989, p.75.
 8. FitzGerald to Brooker, 13 June 1931. The date has been more closely pinpointed in this thesis. The two met in July. Brooker to Harris, 19 August 1929. (Box 1, Folder 11).
 9. Sandra Shaul, The Modern Image. Cubism and the Realist Tradition, Edmonton: Edmonton Art Gallery, 1981. p.19.
 10. Shaul, *ibid.*, p. 20.
 11. The trip was organized to study modern methods of American art education. It is well documented by a comprehensive diary he kept during those weeks.
 12. "...I thought I had better send you a short note. When I get away from the routine it is very difficult to settle to writing and it may be that this will be the last written word that I will convey to you before the fall. We are still hoping that you will arrive at any time on your business trip and it will be much easier to discuss the varied problems of mutual interest... to be able to devote a considerable time to the solving of some of the

more weighty problems, at least to attempt the solution of them.

FitzGerald to Brooker, 13 June 1931.

And Brooker too writes:

I have been writing this letter... just as though I were talking to you. I wish we could have a seven-hour session again. It would do me a lot of good, especially now that I am more committed than ever to go more deeply into drawing. Somehow I feel that after this apprenticeship to naturalistic painting has been served a little more fully I shall perhaps go back to more abstract things with a greater command of mediums and do something quite different.

Brooker to FitzGerald, 26 March 1931.

13. FitzGerald to Brooker, 17 June 1935.
14. Joyce Zemans has described a series of title designs and illustrations which Brooker did on epithets the critics used to describe the 1913 Armory exhibition in New York. "The Cult of Ugliness" is illustrated by a careful sketch of Brancusi's Mlle. Pogany and a "quick but perceptive drawing" of Duchamp's Nude Descending a Staircase. Names of European modernists are included, amongst them: Picasso, Matisse, Redon, Cezanne, Brancusi and Marinetti. Also writers who interested Brooker: Dostoevsky, Gorky, Zola and Nietzsche, and those associated with the dance world: Nijinsky and Bakst. Joyce Zemans, "First Fruit. The World and Spirit Paintings", Provincial Essays, Vol.7, Toronto: Phacops Publishing Society at The Coach House Press, 1989. p.18.
15. Bertram Brooker, Yearbook of the Arts in Canada, Toronto: Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1929, p.12.
16. FitzGerald's diary, 21 June 1930. Cited by Ann Davis, Ann Davis and Patricia Bovey, Lionel LeMoine FitzGerald, Winnipeg: Winnipeg Art Gallery, 1978. p.48.
17. In his syndicated newspaper column "The Seven Arts," 17 August 1929, Brooker writes on the Joy of Ownership.

"The joy of ownership... is neither proud nor possessive....I have....a little pencil drawing that I paid \$12 for, done by an artist in the West who is practically unknown....The drawing is simply a quick sketch of two or three trees....I take pains to point it out to more people, because it is not a thing that would be immediately noticed, in this case, there can be no pride of ownership, but only the joy of ownership, the delight of living with a beautiful thing, of having it as a companion to which one can constantly turn."

In the same article, Brooker describes how, aged fifteen, he saved his lunch money so that he could buy a book at the end of the week.

"Borrowed books are like chance acquaintances....But books owned are like friends sought out, for whom one is prepared to make some sacrifice, and whose companionship one looks forward to for the rest of life."
18. "Your attitude toward your work and your companionship....have had a very considerable effect on me. It has changed not only my own appreciation of other people's work...it has made me more honest

and studious, and less impatient for quick results....I should like to have more talks with you... I hope somewhere under the words you will feel that my contact with you this summer was a big event for me"

Brooker to FitzGerald, 28 December 1929.

In a letter Brooker describes the evidence of "long contemplation" in FitzGerald's painting: "...no other canvas in the show expressed so perfectly the personality of the artist. It was almost like seeing your face and talking to you again to see it."

Brooker to FitzGerald, 10 January 1932.

In a letter to FitzGerald, Brooker relates a conversation he had with Herman Voaden:

"We talked much of you. He feels you are big and quiet and close to the earth - a real product of the prairies."

17 October 1930.

19. Victor Brooker to Birk Sproxtton, 1973. (Box 10, Folder 11). 1

Victor Brooker wrote that his father had a compulsion to write which was recognized before his teens - a great drive to be an author. And in his occasional despair as an adult when writing was going badly: "a book...must roar like the sea...I am the scourge whom God has sent down to chasten the earth." To all the Nations, (Box 8, Folder 3).

20. Brooker wrote in his notes on Jevon, 27 June 1926:

"I am not sure, though, that I like the new draft....Perhaps the painting will have some effect on it....There will be, I am certain, a new sense of form in it that the painting has developed...the whole book will move out into the Infinite, into something like my world and spirit painting."

(Box 3, Folder 1). Joyce Zemans has noted the links between Brooker's art and his description of E.E. Cummings' poetry. Provincial Essays, Vol. 7, p.26.

21. Dennis Reid, "Introduction", Provincial Essays, p.3.
22. Parke-Taylor's source: Elizabeth Wylie, "The Development of Spirituality in the Work of Lionel LeMoine FitzGerald 1890-1956" M.A. Thesis, Montreal: Concordia University, 1981.
23. Frederick R. Karl, Modern Art and Modernism, Boston, 1985. Quoted by Ramsay Cook, Provincial Essays, Vol. 7, "' Nothing Less Than a New Theory of Art and Religion': The Birth of a Modernist Culture in Canada," p.6.
24. Cook, *ibid.*, p.6.
25. Ramsay Cook, The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian English Canada, Toronto, 1985.
26. P. D. Ouspensky, Tertium Organum, London, 1911. Brooker read this book. A friend discusses its impact on them in a letter, August Beiden to Brooker, 19 February 1924. (Box 1, Folder 1).

27. Tom Gibbons, Rooms in the Darwin Hotel: Studies in English Literary Criticism and Ideas 1880-1920, Nedlands, Australia, 1973.
28. Cook, "Modernist Culture in Canada", p. 10.
29. "my world and spirit paintings" is a quote from Brooker's diary, 27 June 1926.
30. These remain in the Estate of the Brooker family.
31. Zemans, "The World and Spirit Paintings", p.19.
32. Nietzsche, Thus Spoke Zarathustra, quoted by Zemans, "The World and Spirit Paintings", p.19.
33. Brooker, "The Poetry of E.E. Cummings", reprinted from the Canadian Forum in Sounds Assembling: The Poetry of Bertram Brooker, ed. Birk Sproxton, Winnipeg: The Turnstone Press, 1980.
34. Zemans, "The World and Spirit Paintings", p.29.
35. Zemans, *ibid.*, p.30.
36. Zemans, *ibid.*, p.31
37. Brooker, "When We Awake", Yearbook of the Arts, 1929.
38. Zemans, "The World and Spirit Paintings", p.17.
39. Anton Wagner, " 'God Crucified Upside Down': The Search for Dramatic Form and Meaning", Provincial Essays, Vol. 7. p.49.
40. Wagner, *ibid.*, p.49, quoting Brooker's 'Self-Portrait', 1937.
41. John Lyman and the Contemporary Art Society in Montreal, and art communities in the east and west espoused an aesthetic which evolved from their own experience, within their own environment.
42. Brooker, "Free Prose", 22 July entry. (Box 7, Folder 1)
43. Brooker, *ibid.*, 6 August entry.
44. Sproxton, " 'The Subjective Underground': The Stream of Consciousness", Provincial Essays, Vol.7. p. 54.
45. Sherrill Grace, "Figures in a Ground: The Craft of Fiction", Provincial Essays, Vol.7, p.73.
46. Grace, *ibid.*, p.73.
47. Grace, *ibid.*, p.73.
48. David Arnason, "Reluctant Modernist", Provincial Essays, Vol.7, p.77.
49. Arnason, *ibid.*, p.81.
50. Arnason, *ibid.*, p.82.

51. Arnason, *ibid.*, p.84.
52. Reid, Bertram Brooker, p.13.
53. Patricia Bovey and Ann Davis, Lionel LeMoine FitzGerald, Winnipeg: Winnipeg Art Gallery, 1978, p.94.
54. Bovey, Lionel LeMoine FitzGerald, p.73.
55. Davis, *ibid.*, p.27.
56. J. Russell Harper, Painting in Canada: a history, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966, p.326.

CHAPTER 1 FOOTNOTES

1. Charles Hill, Painting in the Thirties, Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1975, p.71.
2. David Arnason, "Reluctant Modernist", p.84.
3. Brooker.

"...the philosophy and the art... of European manufacture... percolate into Canada indirectly and rather vaguely....We become tinged with them even though we may not be aware of their origin. And if we are to have genuine creative effort here it is necessary that this antithesis should be examined and understood."

The Seven Arts, 24 August 1929.

4. Brooker, Yearbook of the Arts, 1929. "When We Awake!", page 5. The article may originally have been inspired by an article in the The Studio of August 1927 entitled: "Is England Awakening?"
5. Brooker, *ibid.*, p.6.
6. Brooker, *ibid.*, p.12.
7. Brooker, *ibid.*, pp. 6,8.
8. There are articles on Cezanne, Seurat (with a reproduction of The Parade) Gauguin, and Derain. There are reproductions of these artists' work, and of Blake's and John Marin's. There are numerous articles and reproductions of Japanese and Chinese painting. Some of the articles are from the Bulletin of the Art Institute of Chicago, and some from the Bulletin of Minneapolis Institute of Arts. Brooker sent FitzGerald a year's subscription of the Canadian Forum in 1933. (FitzGerald to Brooker, 12 January 1933.) FitzGerald Collection, FitzGerald Study Centre, afterwards referred to as F.S.C. University of Manitoba
9. Paul Gauguin's Jacob Wrestling with the Angel, purchased by the National Gallery of Scotland, is reproduced in the Studio, 15 September 1925. Cezanne's Self-Portrait, n.d., is reproduced, with Impressionist works by Degas, Manet, and Renoir, all works from the Tate Gallery, in the Studio, 15 March 1926.
10. Reproductions of Frank Brangwyn's figurative murals appear regularly. Laura Knight's pen and ink drawing Dancing for the Ballet appears 15 May 1926.
11. Diaghilev Ballet: Dropscene by Vladimir Polunin, colour reproduction. The Studio Volume 90, No. 390, (15 September 1925), page 179. Laver, James. "The Russian Ballet," including Diaghilev ballets: Contes Russes designed by Larionov; La Boutique Fantasque designed by Andre Derain; Parade and Le Tricorne designed by Picasso; Relache by Picabia; Les Facheux by Braque. The Studio, Volume 94, No. 413 (August 1927), p.100.

Diaghilev's opera by Rimsky-Korsakov Le Coq D'or, designed by Nathalie Gontcharova. John Russell. The Meanings of Modern Art. New York: Harper and Row, 1974, p.144.

Vovtaive M., "Mural Paintings by Alexander Iacovlev." The Studio, Volume 94, No. 412 (July 1927).

Brailovsky R., "Procession in Old Russia". The Studio, Volume 94, No. 412, p.383.

12. James Laver, The Studio, Volume 94, No. 413, p.105. Diaghilev had organized the Russian section of the Salon d'Automne in 1906, from medieval icons to the Moscow avant-garde.
13. In 1916 Kathleen Munn was publicly berated for her "freak paintings" in a review of the 38th Annual Exhibition of the Royal Canadian Academy of Art in the Montreal Daily Telegraph, in which the critic deplores her use of Bakst-derived colour. She described Munn's "venture in paint" as "crude and meaningless". Munn, a close friend and associate of Brooker's, was probably the most advanced modernist working in Canada at this time. Her knowledge and understanding of European modernism was gained in New York. Experimenting with the vivid colour of European Expressionists such as the Blue Rider, and working within a Cubist structure, Munn's work of this period recalls that of August Macke, such as Landscape with Cows and Camel, 1914. The woman reviewer's initials are E.B. "Over Three Hundred Pictures Displayed at the Art Gallery", The Montreal Daily Telegraph, Friday, 17 November 1916. National Archives of Canada. Royal Canadian Academy records, Vol. 15, p.61.
14. Christine Boyanoski, Permeable Border. Art of Canada and the United States 1920-1940, Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1989, p.31
15. Louis Kantor, "A Critic Who is Willing to Be Clear". Henri Matisse's Landscape is reproduced. FitzGerald's Magazine Clippings and Reproductions, FitzGerald Coll. FitzGerald Study Centre, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg. Roger Fry's "An Essay in Aesthetics" extracted from Visions and Design, New York: Chatto and Windus, 1920; and Sheldon Cheney's "Abstraction and Mysticism" from his book Expressionism in Art, New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 1934, are both published in the 1982 publication: Modern Art and Modernism. A Critical Anthology for the Open University, New York: Harper and Row, underlining the key factor of both writers for this period.
16. Brooker does not name the artist with whom he had this conversation, but from the context and a process of elimination (Harris would not object to the term mystical) one might assume that it was FitzGerald. Connor, Chap.1, p.3. Brooker Coll. (Box 6.) This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter III.
17. The anecdote tells of a boy who, chased by a bear in a forest, describes his experience to his friends. The description of the experience and the transfer of emotion, writes Tolstoy, is art. Roger Fry "An Essay in Aesthetics", Modern Art and Modernism. A Critical Anthology, editors: Francis Francina and Charles Harrison, New York: Harper & Row, 1982, p.83.
18. Leo Tolstoy, cited by FitzGerald, "Excerpt from Tolstoy's What is Art, Chapter 5" March 3, 1927, p.3. Notes on Russian Art, FitzGerald Papers, F.S.C.
19. Fry, "Aesthetics" p.81
20. Fry, *Ibid.*, p.82.
21. FitzGerald to Irene Heywood Hemsworth, 23 May 1942, cited by Elizabeth Wylie,

"The Development of Spirituality in the Work of Lionel LeMoine FitzGerald 1890-1956", M.A. Thesis, Montreal: Concordia University, 1981, p.64. Letter in Hemsworth's private collection.

22. Fry, "Aesthetics", p.84.
23. Fry, *ibid.*, p.83.
24. Fry, *ibid.*, p.85.
25. FitzGerald's diary. 21 June 1930. F.S.C.
26. Brooker, The Seven Arts column, 8 December 1928. Brooker Collection (Box 8 Folder 6).
27. Fry, "Aesthetics", p.85.
28. Sheldon Cheney, "Abstraction and Mysticism" from Expressionism in Art, New York, 1934. Published in Modern Art and Modernism, p.171.
29. Brooker, The Seven Arts, 27 July 1929.
30. Cheney, "Abstraction and Mysticism," p.173.
31. Cheney, *ibid.*, p.173.
32. Pach introduced Arthur B. Davies and Walt Kuhn, organizers of the Armory Show, to the Duchamp brothers: the painters Marcel Duchamp and Jacques Villon, and the sculptor Raymond Duchamp-Villon. Barbara Rose, American Art Since 1900. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975. p.51. Pach's acquaintance with the Duchamp brothers is reflected in the selection of artists represented in his book.
33. Walter Pach, The Masters of Modern Art, New York. The Viking Press, 1924. (3rd Printing, 1929, p.78).
34. Pach, *ibid.*, p.79. I could not find a reference by Pach to the self-sufficiency of the two-dimensional flat space within the picture-frame.
35. Rose, American Art Since 1900, p.67.
36. In his critique of Elizabeth Wyn Wood's sculpture, Brooker places her work in a continuum of time: "Her work has qualities that relate it at once to the most ancient and the most modern sculpture, so that she becomes a grand-daughter of the Sumerians and a sister of Brancusi." Yearbook of the Arts, 1929, p.104.
37. Pach, The Masters of Modern Art, p.86.
38. H.E. Berthon, Nine French Poets 1820-1880, London: Macmillan & Co Ltd 1957, p.267. Brooker may well have read Baudelaire's poetry in English. His French was not fluent. Certainly Brooker had read Baudelaire's prose. In a manuscript on "patterns" Brooker quotes Baudelaire on the contemporary pattern of civilization which triggers Brooker's unpublished manuscript, Nine Words that Ruled the World. (Box 6, Folder 10).
39. Charles Baudelaire, Correspondances, *ibid.*, p.149.

40. Pach, The Masters of Modern Art, p.88
41. Pach, *ibid.*, p.95
42. Brooker, Yearbook of the Arts, 1929, p.8.
43. Pach, The Masters of Modern Art, p.95
Brooker knew Pach and in 1929 Brooker mentions in passing that Pach had lectured twice in Toronto on modern French art. Brooker, "A Reply to Two Critics of Advertising", Marketing, 16 March 1929, p.165. Brooker Coll. (Box 9, Folder 14). In this article Brooker is critical of Pach's knowledge of advertising which he describes as "out of date".
44. Rodker discusses and quotes modernist writers, poets, artists such as F.T. Marinetti, Stephane Mallarmé, Guillaume Apollinaire, Gertrude Stein, Wyndham Lewis, e.e. cummings.
45. John Rodker, The Future of Futurism. Today and Tomorrow Series. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1927, p.3.
46. Brooker's diary, 27 June 1926. These would have included paintings such as Creation, c. 1927, The Dawn of Man, c. 1927, Green Movement, c. 1927, Endless Dawn, 1927.
Some of these dates are uncertain, for they were probably exhibited at his exhibition at the Arts and Letters Club in Jan. 1927.
47. Rodker, The Future of Futurism, pp. 40-41.
48. Caroline Tisdall and Angelo Bozzolla cite Marinetti's count of 350 articles as proof of the impact of the exhibition. Tisdall and Bozzolla, Futurism, New York: Oxford University Press, 1978, p.59.
49. Herchel B. Chipp, ed. Theories of Modern Art. A Source Book by Artists and Critics, Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968. pp. 289, 294.
50. Alfred H. Barr, Jr. states that this exhibition went to: "London, Berlin, Amsterdam, Vienna, and a dozen other European and many American cities." Barr, Cubism and Abstract Art, New York: Museum of Modern Art, originally published 1936. Reprinted 1986, p.54.
51. Zemans, "The World and Spirit Paintings" p.33, footnote 9.
Zemans documents: "Brooker's daughter notes that he regularly read the Chicago papers when he lived in Winnipeg." FitzGerald also obtained American art journals in Winnipeg. Some articles from these journals remain in the FitzGerald Collection, F.S.C. Gebhardt was from Chicago (principal of the Winnipeg School of Art during the 1920s.) FitzGerald may have obtained art news from him.
52. Victor Brooker to Dennis Reid, 11 October 1972, (Box 10, Folder 8) p.2.
Correct date from Brooker's diary: "I'll - arrange holiday in fall.... 1910-11 - Trip to England" (Box 8, Folder 6).
53. Stephanie Barron, and Maurice Tuchman, The Avant-garde in Russia, 1910-1930. New Perspectives. Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1980, p.277.

54. Richard Humphreys. Pound's Artists. Ezra Pound and the Visual Arts in London, Paris and Italy. London: The Tate Gallery, 1985, pp.42-43. Pound coined the term "the Vortex of London".
55. Brooker expresses awareness of the "blasts and manifestoes" of modern art schools and groups (a reference to the Blast magazine of the Vorticists) and the widely varying theory and philosophy of the aesthetics propounded by professional critics. Blake Lecture, (1 November 1927) p.1. (Box 10, F.13).
56. Barron and Tuchman, The Avant-garde in Russia, pp.277, 156, 178.
57. Rose, American Art Since 1900, p.53.
58. Zemans, "The World and Spirit Paintings", p.18.
59. Chipp, Theories of Modern Art, p.294.
60. Joshua Taylor, Futurism, New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1961, pp.7,123.
61. John Russell, The Meanings of Modern Art, New York: Harper and Row, 1974, p.297. Russell points to American expatriot Ezra Pound who "knew what it was to be modern, and how difficult it was to be modern in America " Pound said an artist needed to eat, sleep and talk modern continuously before it could be assimilated.
62. Rose, American Art Since 1900, p.57.
63. Students at the Art Institute of Chicago hanged effigies of Matisse, Brancusi, and Walter Pach, who was lecturing there at the time. They burned imitations of Matisse's paintings.
Rose, *ibid.*, p.59.
64. Rose, *ibid.*, p.61.
65. Rose, *ibid.*, p.65.
66. William Innes Homer. Alfred Stieglitz and the American Avant-Garde. Boston. New York Graphic Society, 1977, p.173.
67. Barbara Rose, American Painting. The Twentieth Century. New York: Rizzoli, 1969, (New ed. 1986), p.37.
68. Rose, *ibid.*, p.92.
69. Louis Bouche, catalogue for Exhibition of Modern American and European Paintings, FitzGerald Collection (Reproductions and printed material), FitzGerald Study Centre, University of Manitoba. Bouche expresses some anxiety that the canvasses by Metzinger, Rivera and Gleizes, although "exhilarating in their youthful fervor" may "appear hopelessly elemental" to his clients.
70. Barron and Tuchman, The Avant-garde in Russia, p.279. This entry heads the list of Western Events for 1922, suggesting that this exhibition occurred early in the year, and is the exhibition which Bouche says "recently introduced" the Russian couple.
71. FitzGerald, "Notes on Russian Art," FitzGerald Study Centre (11-0184), p.1.

72. The exhibition at which Malevich introduced Suprematism, Exhibition of Pictures: 0-10, 1915. Barron and Tuchman, The Avant-garde in Russia, pp. 22,35.
73. FitzGerald may have found this in an early published article. But it is possible that Lawren Harris wrote to FitzGerald when the latter was preparing his Russian course of lectures and the date refers to the exhibition, not the time of writing. Parke-Taylor quotes a letter from Harris to FitzGerald of December 1929 in which he writes,

Sometime later I will try and write down what little I know about abstract painting. You seem to suggest a feeling in that direction. I would like to know what you feel.

This could be the continuation of a discussion begun on Russian art two years earlier. Parke-Taylor, In Seclusion with Nature, p.22. FitzGerald's source for the catalogue was possibly the principal, C. Keith Gebhardt, an American who had come to Canada from the Art Institute of Chicago. Edward FitzGerald was not living in New York until 1935.

It should be noted that a Joseph Harris purchased Abstract: Green and Gold, from the artist.

74. In 1922 there was a major exhibition of Russian and Soviet art at Gallery Van Dieman in Berlin (Dreier was there to purchase work). In 1923 there was an exhibition of Russian art, including El Lissitzky's Proun Space. Barron and Tuchman The Avant-garde in Russia, p.279.
75. FitzGerald, "Notes on Russian Art", p.8.
76. Brooker to FitzGerald, 27 November 1931. (Box 1, Folder 11)
77. Christine Boyanoski, Permeable Border: Art of Canada and the United States 1920-1940, Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1989. p. 22.
78. Joyce Zemans, Elizabeth Burnell, Elizabeth Hunter, New Perspectives on Modernism in Canada: Kathleen Munn Edna Taçon, Toronto: The Art Gallery of York University. 1988. pp. 16, 20.
79. Munn wrote in her notebook, "Look at the abstract forms of Picasso and Baylinson"⁹⁴. Both Munn and Baylinson achieve a sense of unity through the integration of figure and ground. Brooker also purchased one of Munn's paintings, Composition (Horses), 1927. *ibid.*, p.46, footnote 25.
80. *Ibid.*, p.22.
81. 'Proun' described as a half way station between architecture and painting. El Lissitzky, its innovator taught architectural graphics at Vitebsk Art School. Proun is an abbreviation of the Russian for "project for the establishment of the new."
82. Lissitzky exhibited at both the 1922 and 1923 Russian exhibitions in Berlin. The Avant-garde in Russia, p.184.
83. Brooker to FitzGerald, 26 March 1931, p.2.

84. Brooker to FitzGerald, 29 December 1929, p.2.
85. Boyanoski, Permeable Border, p.6.
86. Brooker, "Canada's Modern Art Movement", (Box 9, Folder 3).
87. One of the most positive aspects of the Armory Show was that it marked the beginning of American collecting of modernist art (but of Steins earlier). Through the collections of Henry Clay Frick, Andrew Mellon, J.P. Morgan, Arthur Jerome Eddy, Walter Arensberg, Lillie P. Bliss and Katherine Dreier, as Rose states, modern art became a permanent fixture of American culture. In the twenties, sixty new museums were founded.
Rose, American Art Since 1900 , pp. 61,91.
Despite the retreat from abstraction and the lack of appreciation for extreme modernism, many new galleries sprang up.
Homer, Alfred Stieglitz , p.172.
88. Gary Mainprize, "The National Gallery of Canada: A Hundred Years of Exhibitions - List, Index and Appendix, RACAR X1, 1-2, 1984, p.6.; Exhibition List, pp.12-16
89. Exhibition of Contemporary British Painting, 2 Jan - 14 Feb. 1925, National Gallery of Canada; Art Gallery of Toronto, and subsequently circulating Canada (Composed mostly of works shown at the British Empire Exhibition, Wembley Park, 1924.)

Contemporary American Painting, March 1927, N.G.C. (From the American section of the International Exhibition at Pittsburgh, 1926.) Contemporary American Painting, 7-30 March 1928. Organized by the Art Institute of Chicago

(Contemporary) British Paintings, 25 April - 25 May 1928, N.G.C. (Arranged in Great Britain for the National Gallery of Art, Washington)
90. Paul Nash's war work was exhibited in Toronto in 1919, and his effect on A Y Jackson and Lawren Harris is documented by Jacqueline Adell, "British First World War Art and The Group of Seven", M.A. research essay, Institute of Canadian Studies, Carleton University, 1984.
91. Brooker, untitled article on Canadian exhibitions 1928-29, p.2. (Box 9, Folder 8)
92. In an exchange of letters with Brooker about the 1929 Yearbook, Brown writes that he hopes, "the only serious and important art collection in the country is being adequately dealt with...", 9 September 1929.

And also:

only a minute proportion of [current art]...
as you must know, has ever any claim to the title of creative or will outlive its own age and fashion....The National Gallery deals very largely with building up a comprehensive collection of the art of all countries and ages upon which modern art is based and which is truly creative in that it has lived through the ages and is the survival of the fittest.

Brown goes so far as to say that Brooker's use of the word "creative" is an insult.
17 September 1929, (Box 9, Folder 8.)

93. Lawren Harris to Katherine Dreier, undated but late November or early December,

1926. Quoted by L.R. Pfaff, "Lawren Harris and the International Exhibition of Modern Art" RACAR, X1, 1-2, (1984), p.79.

Harris writes:

I talked with the chairman of the exhibition committee of the gallery today. He fears that just following a campaign for new members and trouble last spring because of our own show they might lose a number of members - dear me - then he talked expense - I told him I would pay half - but they are a very timid crew, his committee, so they may side step the opportunity.

Brooker himself suffered at the hands of the Art Gallery of Toronto Committee when his painting, Figures in Landscape, 1931, was removed from the Ontario Society of Artists exhibition of that year. His article Nudes and Prudes is reprinted in Documents in Canadian Art, ed. Douglas Fetherling, Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1987, p.66.

94. Boyanoski, Permeable Border, pp. 18,19. Boyanoski cites the minutes of the Fine Arts Committee, Canadian National Exhibition, 5 December 1932; 7 February, 1934. CNE Archives, Toronto.
95. Boyanoski, *ibid.*, pp. 6,7.
96. Brooker to FitzGerald, 27 November 1931.
97. Natalie Luckyj, Visions and Victories: 10 Canadian Women Artists 1914-1945, London: London Regional Art Gallery, Appendix II, pp. 103-105.
98. Maria Tippet, Making Culture, English Canadian Institutions and the Arts before the Massey Commission, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990, pp. 89-90.
99. Maggie Callahan, Lionel LeMoine FitzGerald His Drawings and Watercolours, Edmonton: The Edmonton Art Gallery, 1982, p.6. List of exhibitions (1912 - 1921), The Winnipeg Art Gallery Papers.
100. Brooker, untitled exhibition article, p.1.
101. Reid, Brooker, p.12

Victor Brooker states that his father may have read about Kandinsky much earlier because he maintained contact with English bookstores and agents.
Victor Brooker to Reid, 11th October 1972. (Box 10, Folder 18).

Brooker had a copy of The Canadian Theosophist amongst his papers, which contained Harris' article Revelation of Art in Canada. He also possessed three pages of notes extracted from Fred Housser's A Canadian Art Movement. These contain references to the nature of spiritual growth, and illustrate Brooker's interest in this aspect of Theosophy. Both Housser and Harris were prominent members of the Toronto Theosophical Society.
Reid, Brooker, p.10. Brooker refused to join.

Like Kandinsky, Brooker was not a Theosophist. Both had read Madame Blavatsky, but did not espouse Theosophy as a religious belief system. Just as

Kandinsky was interested in the Russian church and in Christianity, Brooker was a Christian and attended church regularly. (This subject will be treated at greater length in Chapter II.)

Rose-Carol Washton Long, "Kandinsky and Abstraction: The Role of the Hidden Image", Major European Art Movements, 1900-1945, eds. Kaplan, Patricia E. , Manso, Susan, Toronto, 1977, p.278.

Long writes:

....Kandinsky, who often compared himself and his friends to the early Christians for trying to raise "the weakest spiritual battle" [Concerning the Spiritual in Art] and who frequently referred to his love for the Russian church, must have been attracted by Steiner's interpretation that Christianity incorporated the wisdom of all previous religions and cults and consequently offered the richest source for advancing the destiny of mankind.

English and American sources of Kandinsky in translation were to be found in the Vorticists' first publication of Blast in June 1914 and earlier in Camera Work by Stieglitz in July 1912.

102. Brooker, headline missing. Subtitle: "Symons, Shaw and Hunekar Demonstrate Impossibility of Keeping to the Point When Writing of Music". Winnipeg Free Press, Music Section, 4 December 1918, pp.1,6.
103. Brooker, The Seven Arts, 19 October 1929, pp.1,2. (Box 8, Folder 6)
104. Brooker, Painting Verbs, reproduced in Sounds Assembling: The Poetry of Bertram Brooker, p.35
105. Wassily Kandinsky, Content and Form, 1910. (Given as a lecture, December 1911. This constituted a preview of Concerning the Spiritual in Art. In Russian Art of the Avant Garde Theory and Criticism, ed. John E. Bowlt, New York: Thames and Hudson, 1988, pp. 19, 20.
106. Kandinsky "On the Problem of Form", 1912. From Der Blaue Reiter . In Theories of Modern Art, p.166.
107. Brooker, "When We Awake!", p.12.
108. Brooker, "Sculpture's New Mood", Year Book, 1929, p.104. Of Elizabeth Wyn Wood Brooker writes, "Her work has qualities that relate it at once to the most ancient and the most modern sculpture, so that she becomes a grand-daughter of the Sumarians and a sister of Brancusi."
109. Wassily Kandinsky, Concerning the Spiritual in Art , in Modern Culture and the Arts , eds. James B. Hall; Barry Ulanov. McGraw - Hill Co., 1967, p. 135.
110. FitzGerald. Quoted by Ferdinand Eckhardt. L.L. FitzGerald. A Memorial Exhibition. Winnipeg: Winnipeg Art Gallery, 1958, p.5.
111. Brooker, Toronto Star, 5 February, 1927. "New Young Toronto Artist Paints Subjective Group." Quoted by Dennis Reid, Brooker. p.12.

112. Toronto Star, 5 February 1927, Brooker File, Artists Documentation Files, National Gallery of Canada Library.
113. Boyanoski, Permeable Border, pp.26-28.
114. Sheldon Cheney, A Primer of Modern Art, New York, 1924.
115. Brooker to FitzGerald, 15 March 1934, (Box 1, Fold.11)
116. Toronto Star, 5 February 1927. A review of Brooker's exhibition held at the Arts and Letters Club, the preceding week. Brooker File, National Gallery Library.
117. Reid quotes Canadian Forum critic Jehanne Biertry Salinger, "Behind Canadian Art," Canadian Forum, Vol.X, no. 116, May 1930, p.288: "Abstraction is not a natural form of art expression in Canada."

Reid, Brooker, p.14.

Boyanoski makes a similar statement, citing F.B. Housser in A Canadian Art Movement, who considered it a "blind alley". Boyanoski, Permeable Border, p.22.

Joyce Zemans has made the same case of Kathleen Munn's lack of support. She describes

the power of public opinion to discourage Canadian artists who chose at this time to work in a style influenced by European Modernism instead of the, by then, acceptable landscape tradition established by the Group of Seven.

Zemans, "World and Spirit Paintings," p.32, n.2.

118. Brooker's diary. 24 January 1927. (Box 1, Fold.16)
J.E.H. MacDonald had been so harshly critical of the exhibition that he felt he should write to Brooker and apologize:

I am sorry to have disturbed you in any way. I suppose I had a grouch that day due partly to something I had seen of Miss Dreier's....not being able to solve your riddles....I do feel that art in general, nowadays is being made too complex a matter. Intellect is squeezing the life out of it....I would like anything of the occult or secret doctrine avoided in it...a simple lead in titles for any honest soul to follow as far as he liked...

J.E.H. Macdonald to Brooker. Friday, 28 January 1927. (Box 10, Folder 17).

It should not be assumed, however, that Harris no longer supported and encouraged Brooker or that they were not friends. Rather, it means, that Harris was able to withdraw his support at whim. Dennis Reid has suggested to Victor Brooker that Harris and Lismer were detractors, but Victor Brooker denied this emphatically: "There were no more loyal friends, encourages and supporters than these two. With others, their discussions of artistic aims, objectives and values kept us awake as children at 707 Greenwood [before February 1926]." V. Brooker to Reid 11 October 1972. (Box 10, Fold. 18)

Another instance can be found in a letter from Harris, c. 1936, in which he admits his lack of enthusiasm for a second yearbook (1926), offers several platitudes, and suggests Brooker continue regardless of the lack of support. Harris writes:

I have thought a good deal about what you felt about the immediate reception of the yearbook, and about my own inadvertence and apparent lack of enthusiasm.

If I can I would like right here to correct any misunderstanding firstly because of my regard for you and secondly because I feel it is very important that you go ahead and plan the next year book - and as whole heartedly as you did the first one whatever any one thinks or says or doesn't say....I would like to do whatever I can (despite all hell or a little part of it) (in me or anybody else) to encourage you to feel toward the next yearbook what you did toward the first.

This helps to explain why the 1936 yearbook was composed of previously published articles. There was little or no money to pay contributors, and they were not sufficiently motivated to write for nothing. It would also account for the deserved contemporary criticism that the book lacked the coherence and immediate relevance to the times of the first yearbook.

It is possible that Harris, considering all his usual enthusiasm and generosity, preferred to be, if not in charge, then at least the instigator of innovative ventures.

The rejection of Brooker's abstract painting at the Arts and Letters Club was recalled in a review of the Yearbook of the Arts 1929 two years later. J.H.H. writes:

Bertram Brooker dares to be an experimentalist once again. Some two years ago he startled - and to say startled is to put it mildly - the traditionalists at the Arts and Letters Club, in Toronto, with an exhibition of his paintings. They were called "utter rot" and all that sort of thing, and I have to confess that I for one did not know what they were about.

Canadian Homes and Gardens, December 1929, p.62 (Box 9, Folder 2)

119. Taylor, Futurism, p.7.
120. Umberto Boccioni. Letter to Nino Barbantini, director of the Gallery of Modern Art, Venice, 1919. Quoted by Taylor, Futurism, p.35.
121. Marinetti. Futurist Manifestoes, ed. Umbro Apollonio. London: Thames and Hudson, 1973, p.21.
122. Taylor, Futurism, p.30.
123. Brooker, "Painting Verbs," Sounds Assembling, p.35.
124. Brooker to FitzGerald, 28 December 1929. (Box 1, Folder 11)
125. Cited by Thomas R. Lee in Canadian Art, (Spring 1956), p. 289.
126. Boccioni, The Exhibitors to the Public, 1912. In Futurist Manifestoes, 1973, p.45. Also occurs in Boccioni's: The Plastic Foundations of Futurist Sculpture and Painting, 1913, in Futurist Manifestoes, p.89. Boccioni quotes Henri Bergson: "Any movement viewed as a transition from one state of rest to another, is absolutely indivisible". p.89.
127. Boccioni, The Plastic Foundations, 1913. In Futurist Manifestoes, p.89.

128. Three of Gabo's five renunciations and affirmations from the brothers' Realist Manifesto, 1920, apply to Brooker's concept of space, (affirming Ze'mans' view that his depiction of space links Brooker with Russian modern art):

- "3. We renounce volume as a pictorial and plastic form of space; one cannot measure space in volumes as one cannot measure liquid in yards: look at our space...what is it if not one continuous depth?
4. We renounce...the mass as a sculptural element...we take four planes and we construct with them the same volume as four tons of mass. Thus we bring back to sculpture the line as a direction and in it we affirm depth as the one form of space.
5. We renounce...static rhythms as the only elements of the plastic and pictorial arts. We affirm in these arts a new element the kinetic rhythms as the basic forms of our perception of real time."

This conception of space is also apparent in Brooker's work of the late thirties and of the forties. Gabo, Realist Manifesto, 1920. In Theories of Modern Art, p.329.

129. Taylor, Futurism, p.123.
130. Tisdall and Bozzolla, Futurism, p.80.
131. Taylor, Futurism, p.15.
132. Tisdall and Bozzolla, Futurism, p. 32
133. See Appendix I. A comparison of Brooker's Futurist poetry and Boccioni's Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto. Brooker refers to "blasts and manifestos" in his Blake Lecture, p.1. (Box 10, Folder 13).
134. L. R. Pfaff. "Lawren Harris and the International Exhibition of Modern Art: Rectifications to the Toronto Catalogue (1927) and Some Critical Comments." RACAR, X1, 1-2, (1984), p.79.
135. Pfaff, RACAR, X1, p.84.
136. Pfaff, RACAR, X1, p. 81
137. Fred Jacob. The Mail and Empire, 2 April 1927, p.5. Found in full in Pfaff's article. RACAR X1, p.92. Pfaff also reproduces Lawren Harris's "appreciation", and Franz Johnson's "objection", both of which appeared in the Canadian Forum in May 1927.
138. Harris. The Canadian Forum, VII, (May 1927), p.94.
139. Georges Braque: "There is no certainty except in what the mind conceives", and "One does not imitate appearances: the appearance is the result." "Thoughts and Reflections on Art", 1917. In Theories of Modern Art, p.260.
140. Toronto catalogue for the Societe Anonyme: International Exhibition of Modern Art.1926-27. National Gallery of Canada Library.

141. Brooker's drawing, Interiors Within Interiors, shows the influence of Fernand Leger. Russian sculptors Naum Gabo and Antoine Pevsner were exhibitors and their influence on Brooker's work of the late 1930s will be discussed later. El Lissitzky exhibited "proun" paintings such as Proun 99, and Brooker's continuing interest in these Suprematist works is apparent in the architectonic rods of Oozles, c. 1924, Sounds Assembling, 1928, and Alleluiah, 1929 (figs. 17, 18, 32, 94.)
142. Brooker, "When We Awake!" p.12.
143. Vivian Endicott Barnett, Kandinsky at the Guggenheim, New York: Abbeville Press, 1983, p.178.
144. Harris. The Canadian Forum, V11, p.94
145. Cezanne to Bernard. 21 September 1906. Elizabeth Gilmore Holt, From the Classicists to the Impressionists: Art and Architecture in the Nineteenth Century. A Documentary History of Art. Vol. III, New York: Anchor Books, 1966, p.529.
146. Davis. L.L. FitzGerald, 1978, p.45. Also Eckhardt, FitzGerald, 1958.
147. Braque learned from Cezanne. J.M. Nash. Cubism, Futurism and Constructivism. New York: Barron's, 1978, pp.18, 19.
Picasso: "a renewed and careful study of Cezanne." Edward Fry. Major European Art Movements, Caplan and Manso, New York: E.P. Dutton, 1977, p. 110.
"Leger...developed theory, based on study of Cézanne." Gleizes and Metzinger, and Cezanne's profundity. Daniel Robbins. Cubist Drawings 1907-1929, co-author, Margit Rowell. Houston: Janie C. Lee Gallery Pub., 1982, p.6.
148. Feininger, like Kandinsky, was a member of the Bauhaus. Marilyn Baker has documented FitzGerald's interest in the Bauhaus which he shared with his students. Baker. The Winnipeg School of Art. The Early Years. Winnipeg. University of Manitoba Press, 1984, p.98.
149. Fry, in Major European Art Movements, p.141.
150. Nash, Cubism, Futurism and Constructivism. New York: Barron's, 1978, p.18.
151. Umberto Boccioni, "Technical Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture," 1912. In Theories of Modern Art, p.304.
152. Mary MacLachlan, Paraskeva Clark. Paintings and Drawings. Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1982, p.22.
153. Brooker to FitzGerald, 20 September (1945?):
an abstract blue nude I did some years ago which Paraskeva Clark and others are always raving about. Paraskeva borrows it now and then and keeps it for a few months. She has it now.
Brooker bought a still life of Clark's in 1934.
Brooker to FitzGerald, 15 March 1934.
Murray Adaskin was an important part of this group. He was very interested in art and Brooker valued his opinion considerably. Brooker to FitzGerald, 17 October 1930.

154. J. Russell Harper, Painting in Canada: a History, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966, pp. 324-25.
155. The last Neo-Primitivist exhibition, The Donkey's Tail, was held in 1912. But it brought together in an exhibition for the first time Larionov, Gontcharova, Tatlin and Malevich. It was the first wholly Russian avant-garde art exhibition. Stephanie Barron, The Avant-garde in Russia, p.14.
156. Ibid., pp.14
Cubo-Futurism retained the links with primitive works and in addition used more architectonic, tubular shapes and fixtures with backgrounds of cylindrical, geometrical shapes. Like the Futurists, the Russian avant-garde believed this was a new art for the people, anticipating and welcoming the coming political revolution.
157. Michail Grobman. "About Malevich" in The Avant-garde in Russia, pp. 25, 26.
158. Ibid.
159. Kazimir Malevich, "From Cubism and Futurism: The New Painterly Realism", 1915. In Russian Art of the Avant Garde. Theory and Criticism, ed. John E. Bowlit, pp.119-20.
160. Barron and Tuchman, The Avant-garde in Russia, p.168.
161. Ivan Kliun, "Cubism as a Painterly Method: A Few Words on the Art of P. Cezanne", 1928, *ibid.*, p.170.
162. Ivan Kliun, "Primitives of the Twentieth Century", 1915. Russian Art of the Avant Garde, p.137.
163. Kliun, *ibid.*, p.171.
164. Kliun, *ibid.*, p.171.
165. Carole Luff, in Roger J. Mesley, ed., Art Carleton. Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1989, p.82:
Some of FitzGerald's work from the early 1950s shows an interest in Kandinsky's pictorial vocabulary. It can be seen in the coloured crayon drawing, Abstract, 1952, wherein the use of point and line, concentric and partial circles, circles with an aura, open-sided triangles and fragments of checkerboard recalls such Kandinsky paintings as Composition 8, 1923.
166. Pat Bovey: "a stellar flow of shapes planes and colours, moving through mystical space." L.L.FitzGerald, 1978. p. 63.
167. FitzGerald. "Painters of the Prairie", Canada Broadcasting Corporation, Midwest Network, 1 December 1954 (Transcript in FitzGerald Study Centre).
168. Jean-Claude Marcadé, "K.S. Malevich: From Black Quadrilateral (1913) to 'White on White' (1917); from the Eclipse of Objects to the Liberation of Space." In The Avant-garde in Russia, pp. 21,22. Quotes of Malevich are from "The New Painterly Realism," in Russian Art of the Avant Garde, p.133.
169. Marcadé, *ibid.*, p.23. The Malevich quotations are from "God is not Cast Down" in Essays on Art, Troels Anderson, ed., New York, 1971, p.193.

170. John Bowlt. Introduction, Russian Art of the Avant Garde, p. xxix.
171. Magdalena Dabrowski, "The Plastic Revolution: New Concepts of Form, Content, Space, and Materials in the Russian Avant-Garde", in The Avant-Garde in Russia, p.32.
172. Nikolai Punin, Quoted by Christina Lodder, Russian Constructivism, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1983, p.11.
173. Lodder, *ibid.*, p.11.
174. Lodder, *ibid.*, p.39.
175. Lodder, *ibid.*, p.40.
176. Naum Gabo, "The Realistic Manifesto", 1920; in Theories of Modern Art, pp. 32-35.
177. Nash. Cubism Futurism and Constructivism, p.54.
178. Brooker's experimentation with positive and negative body spaces anticipates Colette Whiten's "mummy-case" figures of the mid 1970's.

CHAPTER II FOOTNOTES

1. Henri Bergson, Creative Evolution. Trans. Arthur Mitchell. New York: Random House, 1944, p.167. Brooker notes and underscores the expansion of the statement on p.182.
2. Brooker to FitzGerald, 25 June 1942, p.2. (Box 1, Foluer II).
3. Brooker. "The World and I: A Voyage of Self Exploration", November 1953, p.1. (Box 6, Folder 2).
4. Brooker, *ibid.*, p.6.
5. Brooker, *ibid.*, p.1.
6. Brooker, "Years" Autobiography Notes. Jan.1906, n.p. (Box 8, Folder 3)
7. Brooker, Diary, 17 April 1928. (Box 1, Folder 16)
8. Brooker sent his Theory of Gravitation to the Royal Society. "Self Portrait: An Experiment in Autobiography", September 1937, pp. 3-5. (Box 8, Folder 3).
9. Brooker, *ibid.*, pp. 3,6.
10. Brooker, *ibid.*, p.5.
11. Brooker, *ibid.*, p.3.
12. Brooker, "Pilgrim Passage", September 1937, p.1. (Box 8, Folder 4).
13. Brooker, *ibid.*, p.1.
14. Brooker, *ibid.*, p.3.
15. Brooker, "Self-Portrait", pp. 1,2.
16. Brooker, in autobiographical character of Connor, n.d., Chapter 1, p.1. (Box 6, Folder 2)
17. S. Foster Damon, a review of Blake's Innocence and Experience: A Study of the Songs and Manuscripts by Joseph H. Wickstead, New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1928. Newspaper unknown.
18. Damon, *ibid.*
19. William Blake, The Poetical Works of William Blake, John Sampson, ed. London: Oxford University Press, 1914. "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell", p.248.
20. Brooker. Connor, "Opening", p.6. (Box 6, Folder 2)
21. Walt Whitman, "On the Beach at Night Alone", from anthology, Leaves of Grass, London: Cassell, 1909, p.252. Brooker has side-lined and checkmarked this poem. Whitman's statement at the front of his book, "Who touches this book touches a man", would have appealed to Brooker as he "turned from the world-as-thought to the world-as-feeling".

22. Wickstead's review of D.G. Sloss and G.P.R. Wallis' book William Blake, from Brooker's copy of Times Literary Supplement, August 11, 1927 (Box 10, Folder 3) Quotes Blake: "the world of the imagination is the world of eternity." Wickstead writes:

Jesus in Blake's restatement of Christianity, is the Divine Imagination....He redeemed imagination from its purely secular use and maintained that the power by which all art came into being was the very power which mediated God to man....What he sought to express was of universal import; but he chose to express it through a private and peculiar myth of his own invention.
23. Max Plowman, An Introduction to the Study of Blake. Toronto: Dent, 1927. Quoted in a review in Saturday Night, "The Bookshelf", p.8. (Box 10, Folder 3).
24. Brooker, Connor (Outline), p.1. (Box 6, Folder 2)
25. Brooker, Connor, "Opening", p.9. (Box 6, Folder 2)
26. Brooker, *ibid.*, p.5.
27. Mabel La Farge, Letters to a Niece and Prayer to the Virgin of Chartres by Henry Adams with A Niece's Memories by Mabel La Farge, Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1920, pp. 4, 8-9.
28. La Farge, *ibid.*, pp. 9-10.
29. Adams, *ibid.*, p.13. From "Buddha and Brahma", 1891. Published in the Yale Review, October 1915.
30. La Farge, *ibid.*, p.13.
31. La Farge, *ibid.*, p.14.
32. La Farge, *ibid.*, pp. 20,22.
33. Henry Adams, "The Dynamo and the Virgin" The Education of Henry Adams .An Autobiography. Boston: Houghton,1918, p 384.

Adams describes how in Paris for the Exposition in 1900, he spends time with Saint-Gaudens. They go to Amiens Cathedral. Adams realizes that Saint-Gaudens on that spot was of more interest to Adams than the Cathedral itself "Great men before great monuments express great truths"... " But Adams is disappointed. "One sees what one brings", he writes. Saint-Gaudens was unconscious of the force that had created the whcic Cathedral - "the Virgin, the Woman....The art remained, but the energy was lost even upon the artist....to Saint-Gaudens she remained as before a channel of taste." *Ibid.*, p.387.
34. Adams, *ibid.*, p.388
35. Adams, *ibid.*, p.389.
36. Zemans, "The World and Spirit Paintings", p.26.
37. Henry Adams to Margaret Chanler, 9 September 1909. Quoted by Melvin Lyon,

- Symbol and Idea in Henry Adams, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1970, p.242.
38. Lyon, *ibid.*, pp.241, 242.
 39. Henri Bergson, Creative Evolution. Trans. Arthur Mitchell, Modern Library ed. New York: Random House, 1944, p.142
Brooker has sidelined and underlined the passage and, on the back flyleaf next to the page number, he has written: "maternal love living a thoroughfare".
 40. Lyon, Symbol and Idea, pp. 236-37.
 41. Brooker, "Self-Portrait: An Experiment in Autobiography", p.6.
 42. Bergson, Creative Evolution, p.182.
 43. Bergson, *ibid.*, pp. 194-95.
 44. Lionel LeMoine FitzGerald, "FitzGerald on Art," FitzGerald's notes on art published in Eckhardt's catalogue FitzGerald, 1958, n.p.
 45. Brooker, Connor, Chap. 1, pp. 2-3. Zemans quotes the almost identical account of his mystical experience in the The Unlit Candle, subtitled Bernard, his earliest unpublished autobiographical novel. Zemans quotes this onset of "cosmic consciousness." Bernard describes it as the "great feeling of knowing...as though the leaf could make you feel the way it does itself...It's when you look at something and know just how it feels and you feel the same."
Brooker, quoted by Zemans, "The World and Spirit Paintings," p.20.
 46. Brooker, *ibid.*, p.2.
 47. J.E.H. MacDonald to Brooker, 28 January 1927. (Box 10, Folder 16.)
 48. Parke-Taylor also cites two letters of the 1940s which indicate spiritual content in FitzGerald's art as he matured spiritually: "I have learned the value of...physical [and] mental energy in bringing alive a spiritual value." Typescript dated March 1941, Eckhardt Papers, Winnipeg Art Gallery. In Seclusion with Nature, p.16.
Also: "Have been working on a small...canvas having moments of ecstasy .."
FitzGerald to A.O. Brigden, 11 April 1949. (F.S.C. 6-0055). *Ibid.*, p.27.
 49. FitzGerald to Irene Heywood Hemsworth, 23 May 1942, in her private collection. Quoted by Elizabeth Wylie, The Development of Spirituality in the Work of Lionel LeMoine FitzGerald, 1890-1956, p.64
 50. Brooker to FitzGerald, 25 June 1942. (Box 1, Folder 11).
In this letter Brooker is describing the new book he has begun, Nine Words that Rule the World, which makes references to FitzGerald, and will be discussed in the next chapter.
 51. Brooker to Harris, 19 August 1929. (Box 1, Folder 11).
 52. Robert Ayre, "Lionel LeMoine FitzGerald 1890 - 1956," Canadian Art 14 (Autumn 1956), p.16.
 53. The Collins English Dictionary consulted. Second edition, 1986. London and Glasgow: Collins, 1979.

54. La Farge, Letters to a Niece and Prayer to the Virgin of Chartres, p.26.
55. Brooker, diary of 29 February 1924, "A Plan of Life," p.1. When the decision to order his life had come to Brooker, he had been reading Sturge Moore's book on Albrecht Durer. He refers to the compulsion to order his life as "this mysterious seed from Durer." Brooker does not define the "mysterious seed." He writes "I do not think that his attempted canon of proportion had anything to do with it, for so far in the book it has only been hinted." The reference to Middleton Murray probably refers to Murray's statement from Life of Jesus: "I and my father are one." Quoted by Brooker in Blake Lecture, p.11. (Box 10, Folder 13).

J. Middleton Murray was a biographer of William Blake who believed it was man's duty to fulfill his potentiality. P.D. Ouspensky was a Russian writer, author of Tertium Organum and A New Model of the Universe.
56. Brooker, *ibid.*, pp. 1-2. Brooker adds: "as Durer did."
57. Brooker, diary of Sunday, 2 March 1924.
58. Wylie, *ibid.*, p.41. The correspondence cited is from FitzGerald to J.E.H. MacDonald and makes no direct reference to Theosophy. It is significant to note that at the time Wylie and Parke-Taylor posit Brooker's urge to discuss Theosophy, he wrote to Harris: "Looking forward to many more large gulps of tennis, tea, talk and theology..."
Brooker to Harris, August 1929.
59. Wylie, *ibid.*, p.42.
60. Brooker. Notes on Blake (Box 10, Folder 13).
61. Zemans, "The World and Spirit Paintings," p.21.
62. Brooker, diary of 24 August 1925, "Diary (while writing the Jevon story)," p.1.
63. Brooker, diary of 27 June 1926, "Jevon." The similarity should be noted between the names of Brooker's characters, Jevon and Miriam, and Jesus and Mary. Miriam is Hebrew for Mary.
64. Henri Bergson, The Two Sources of Morality and Religion, Garden City Doubleday Anchor Books, 1954, p.18. The late publication date should be noted. However, Brooker used the library regularly and constantly re-read books.
65. Bergson, Morality and Religion, pp.32-33.
66. Bergson, Creative Evolution, New York: Random House, 1944, p.271. Brooker did not own this book until after 1944. He may have read it earlier as a library book.
67. Brooker, "To All the Nations," p.2. (Box 8, Folder 3).
68. Brooker, *ibid.*, p.2.
69. Brooker, Connor, chapter 1, p.2. Brooker writes: "At 12 he had grown religious and took refuge in the church and in art....All through his life art had been his refuge, the life of feeling."
70. Brooker, "Biography of a Mind," p.1. Box 7, Folder 1.

71. Brooker, "Outline of 'a play'" October 1, 1927; Within a Play, 7 November 1927. (Box 2, Folder 2).
72. Victor Brooker to Family, (Box 10, Folder 18).
73. Brooker, "Biography of a Mind," pp.6-7.
74. In discussing how Bergson permeated European modernism, Robert Goldwater has quoted Will Grohmann:

Reason was discovered to be incapable of grasping true reality, which one tried to penetrate with the aid of intuition....Intuition permits one to see everything at once, instead of by a summation of parts...Thus, in a manner analogous to that of philosophy, art hopes....to give absolute views, to seize the eternal.

Grohmann, Kandinsky, Paris: Cahiers d'art, 1930, p.xvi. Quoted in Major European Art Movements, p.87.
75. P.D. Ouspensky, "The Fourth Dimension," A New Model of the Universe, London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1931, p.97. Against a further description of the molecular movement of the cube on p.101, Brooker has written, "This is like my gravitation theory."
76. Ouspensky, A New Model of the Universe, p.99.
77. Ouspensky, *ibid.*, p.100.
78. Ouspensky, *ibid.*
79. FitzGerald, "FitzGerald on Art," Eckhardt catalogue, 1958.
80. Brooker, "Escape from Time," 5 July 1953, (Box 6, Folder 9).
81. In Ouspensky's short passage on "New Physics" he notes briefly, "Curvature of space - time continuum....Spherical or elliptical space. "Elastic" space." Ouspensky, A New Model of the Universe, p.421. An effective use of spherical and elliptical space can be seen in Brooker's Pharaoh's Daughter, 1950 and FitzGerald's Abstract Green and Gold, 1954.
82. Brooker's futurist painting Growth may, instead, be compared to American artist Arthur Dove's painting. Dove shared the same sources as Brooker, such as Ouspensky, and did not abandon nature as subject matter.
83. Magdalena Dabrowski, "The Plastic Revolution: New Concepts of Form, Content, Space, and Materials in the Russian Avant-Garde." The Avant-Garde in Russia, p.32.
84. Charlotte Douglas, "0-10 Exhibition", *ibid.*, p.40.
85. Tisdall and Bozzolla, Futurism, pp.21-22.
86. Tisdall and Bozzolla, *ibid.*, p.32.
87. Tisdall and Bozzolla, *ibid.*, p.43.
88. Tisdall and Bozzolla, *ibid.*, p.70.

89. Tisdall and Bozzolla, *ibid.*, p.72.
90. Boccioni, Short statements of intent displayed with exhibits at show at Galerie Boetie in Paris June-July 1913. Tisdall, *ibid.*, pp.77-78.

CHAPTER III FOOTNOTES

1. Brooker to FitzGerald, 17 October 1930. This lecture was given in the University Extension series at the Art Gallery of Toronto.
2. Brooker, The Blake Lecture, "Address given at Hart House Sketch Club, Nov. 1, 1927." p.1. (Box 10, Folder 13).
3. Brooker, Blake Lecture, p.2. Brooker does not identify the source of his Clive Bell quotations, but they were probably from Bell's articles originally published in 1914, such as "The Aesthetic Hypothesis," an edited version of which is reproduced in Modern Art and Modernism. A Critical Anthology, pp. 67 - 74.

Brooker identifies Vernon Blake's book: Relation in Art (pub c. 1902) and R.H. Wilenski's book, The Modern Movement of Art, n.d.
4. Vernon Blake, The Blake Lecture, p.3.
5. Brooker, *ibid.*
6. Clive Bell, *ibid.*, pp. 5,6.
7. William Blake, Jerusalem, quoted by Brooker, *ibid.*, p.11.
8. Brooker, *ibid.*, pp. 12-14.
9. Brooker, *ibid.*, pp. 21-22.
10. Brooker, *ibid.*, pp. 22-23.
11. Brooker, *ibid.*, p.24.
12. Brooker, *ibid.*, p.24.
13. Phyllis Brooker Smith. Letter to the author, 30 October 1990.
The book she had been reading was Quest of the Overself by Paul Brunton, Ph.D.
14. Phyllis Brooker Smith remembers the date because she was born in March 1924, and somehow she thought it was significant to remember. Letter to the author, 30 October 1990.
15. Phyllis Brooker Smith to Birk Sproxton, 28 February 1981.
16. Phyllis Brooker Smith to the author, 30 October 1990.
17. John Bowlit, Russian Art of the Avant Garde, p.xxix, discussed in chapter II.
It will be remembered that Will Grohmann uses almost the same words in his discussion of Kandinsky: "Intuition permits one to see everything at once, instead of by a summation of parts....Thus...art hopes...to give absolute views. to seize the eternal."
Quoted by Robert Goldwater, Major European Art Movements, p.87.
18. Brooker, through his autobiographical character, Connor, chapter I, p.2.

It is significant that Brooker includes "the life of feeling" in the same idea of refuge. In the previous paragraph he has written: "The man of feeling belongs to the universe, the man of thought is separated from it."

19. Jehanne Bietry Salinger reviews the 1930 Ontario Society of Artists Exhibition and interviews Brooker. Salinger writes: "He wants to compose a symbolism of his own ideas or aesthetic reactions, and he uses for that purpose simple geometrical forms, as in 'Sounds Assembling'..." "The Work of Bertram Brooker," The Canadian Forum, June 1930, p.331.
20. Brooker, The Blake Lecture, p.13.
21. Kandinsky, "The Effect of Color," 1911, Theories of Modern Art, p.153.
22. Kandinsky, "On the Problem of Form," 1912, Theories of Modern Art, p.155.
23. Blake, Vision of the Last Judgement, quoted by Brooker, The Blake Lecture, p.11.
24. Kandinsky, "On the Problem of Form," p.155.
25. The last lines of Brookers Poem hilltop read:

himself he is offering
 his own worth as a being
 ...as an aspirer
 to
 the
 whiteness
 and
 height
 of stars

Sounds Assembling, p.25.
26. Bergson, Creative Evolution, p.271
27. Brooker, The Blake Lecture, p.19.
28. Brooker, ibid., p.23.
29. Brooker, ibid., p. 18.
30. Brooker, ibid., p.13.
31. Bergson, The Two Sources of Moraility and Religion, p.18.
 Brooker, Jevon diary, 27 June 1926. (Box 1, Folder 16).
32. Vivian Endicott Barnett, Kandinsky at the Guggenheim, p 42.
 Barnett gives as an example Kandinsky's painting, Three Sounds, 1926.
33. Brooker, The Blake Lecture, p.13.
34. Frederick B. Housser, "The Amateur Movement in Canadian Painting," Yearbook of the Arts in Canada, 1929, p.88.
35. Brooker's Diary, 17 April 1928.
36. Brooker to FitzGerald, 27 July 1945. F.S.C. (11-0253 (1)).

37. Brooker to FitzGerald, 20 September (1945?), F.S.C. (11-0252(1)).
 38. Brooker to FitzGerald, 29 December 1945, F.S.C. (11-0251).
 39. Phyllis Brooker Smith to the author, 30 October 1990.
 40. Brooker to FitzGerald, 25 June, 1942, F.S.C. (11-0254(1)).
 41. Brooker, *ibid.*, (11-0254(2)).
 42. Brooker, *ibid.*, (11-0254(3)). Brooker writes that he may send FitzGerald a few pages of the book for his opinion.
 43. Brooker himself refers to the book as a "gospel" in a section of the manuscript titled "The Bloodless Revolution." (Box 6, Folder 6)
 44. Brooker, "Art and Authority" (crossed through), sub-titled "The Poet" (Box 6).
 45. Brooker, "Painting Verbs," Sounds Assembling, p.36.
"A drawing I purchased at this time gave me something to look for. It was by LeMoine FitzGerald..."
 46. Brooker, Nine Words that Rule the World, Chapter 1, "Beauty" p.1 (Box 6, Folders 7,8).
 47. Brooker, *ibid.*, pp. 4,5.
 48. Brooker, *ibid.*, pp. 5,6.
 49. Brooker, *ibid.*, chapter: "Faith", p.7.
 50. Wylie, The Development of Spirituality, p.64.
 51. Middleton Murray, Style, p.93. Quoted by Brooker in "Fraternity," Nine Words that Rule the World, (Box 6, Folders 7,8).
 52. FitzGerald, "Painters of the Prairie," 1 December 1954, In Seclusion with Nature, p.51.
 53. Phyllis Brooker Smith, letter to the author, 30 October 1990, p.2.
 54. *Ibid.*, Brooker Smith: "I do know that LeMoine came to Toronto in the early summer of 1954. He probably brought them then. I saw them at that time. I don't know what the other abstract painting was that was not chosen. They were similar as I recall."
- I could find no confirmation of FitzGerald's visit to Toronto in 1954. It is possible that Brooker Smith is recalling FitzGerald's 1953 visit, and that the paintings were shipped unaccompanied to Toronto.
- Details of Brooker's commission are in notes sent to Dennis Reid by Brooker family. (Box 10, Folder 16).
55. Blake Abstract is dated c.1954 by the Winnipeg Art Gallery, In Seclusion with Nature, p.188, but the provenance states that it was purchased by Dr. and Mrs. E.J. Thomas from the artist in 1953. Gary Essar, curator at the Winnipeg Art

Gallery, has agreed that fall, 1953 is a more likely date. Telephone conversation with the author, December 1990.

56. Brooker, *The Blake Lecture*, p.19.
57. Brooker's handwritten notes on Blake: "Artist, Poet & Philosopher - unity" (Box 10, Folder 13).
58. Parke-Taylor footnotes letter from Ferdinand Eckhardt to R.H. Hubbard, 3 February 1958, which notes remark by artist discovered whilst unframing Abstract: Green and Gold: "painting Tues. May 18, 54 L.L.F. to June 15, 54", in Seclusion with Nature, p.45, fn.94.
59. FitzGerald, "Painters of the Prairie," C.B.C., 1 December 1954.
60. FitzGerald, *ibid*.
61. Brooker to FitzGerald, 27 July 1945. F.S.C. (11-0253(1)).
62. FitzGerald, Bertram Brooker, O.S.A. (1885-1955), n.p., 17 Feb. 1956. FitzGerald wrote the introduction for this retrospective exhibition held at the Art Gallery of Ontario.
63. FitzGerald, *ibid*;
FitzGerald, "Painters of the Prairies," C.B.C., 1 December 1954.
64. Bovey, Lionel LeMoine FitzGerald, 1978, p.63.
65. FitzGerald to Robert Ayre, 25 July 1949. Cited by Davis, FitzGerald, 1978, p.58.
66. In this context, an interesting comparison can be made between Abstract: Green and Gold and Malevich's Black Square. Red Square, c.1914 (fig. 82). Just as Black Square was hung as the icon of the Madonna, Black Square. Red Square may be seen as the traditional Russian icon of the Madonna and child in which the child's cheek, the red square, is tilted towards the Mother's face and either his cheek or his hand is placed against her face. This originated with the Virgin of Vladimir, c.1125, sometimes known as Our Lady of Tenderness. The association of the two figures as mother and child rather than Mary, the Mother of God, and Christ, the Saviour of the world became an important influence in Russian art (figs. 83, 84, 85). Rodchenko's Line Construction, 1920, makes an interesting comparison with Brooker's Circles. Bovey's vision of Abstract: Green and Gold as stellar flow is paralleled in Malevich's view of Suprematist painting as equal to the universe, through which the cosmic stimulus passes. (Discussed in Chapter I). FitzGerald had reproductions of Russian icons in his collection (figs. 86, 87) in which the design element of circles and encircling is very strong.
67. Brooker, "Biography of a Mind," pp.6-7.
68. William Blake, To The Christians. Shakespeare to Hardy, London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1922, p.67.
69. Fitzgerald used other hermetic symbols in his work. Parke-Taylor notes that FitzGerald painted Still Life with Hat, 1955, for Dr. E.J. Thomas. Parke-Taylor writes that FitzGerald made a clever reference to Thomas' name, for the hourglass shape on the open book represents the poem Vision and Prayer by the Welsh poet Dylan Thomas. The stanzas were composed to conform to the geometrical

pattern in emulation of the seventeenth-century pattern-poems of the English poets of the metaphysical school.

Parke-Taylor in conversation with Dr. Thomas, 21 February 1987. In Seclusion with Nature, p.36.

70. Bergson, Creative Evolution, p.142.
71. Brooker, "The Seven Arts" column, 15 June 1929(?), p.4 (Box 8, Folder 6).
72. Wylie, The Development of Spirituality, p. 87.
73. Reid, Bertram Brooker, p.14.
74. Parke-Taylor, In Seclusion with Nature, p.31.
75. Parke-Taylor, In Seclusion with Nature, p.22. Wylie goes so far as to suggest that Brooker and FitzGerald argued: "Despite their arguments, Brooker and FitzGerald remained fast friends." Wylie cites Brooker's letter to FitzGerald of 27 July 1945. However, the argument mentioned here is not with FitzGerald, but with FitzGerald's wife Vally. Brooker writes: "I hope Vally has forgiven me. She defended her cause very ably..." The subject of the argument is not mentioned, Wylie, The Development of Spirituality, p.42.
76. Brooker to Harris, 19 August 1929. (Box 1, Folder 11).
77. James Purdie, "Opposites Attract in Unlikely Alliance," Toronto Globe and Mail, 21 August 1976.

CONCLUSION FOOTNOTES

1. Arthur Lismer, "Art at the World's Fair." Canadian Comment on Current Events 2 (October 1933). Quoted by Boyanoski, Permeable Border, p.16.
2. Brooker to FitzGerald, 26 March 1931.

All of these [paintings] are...not stylized in any way, but with an attempt at getting what one might call a plus quality over traditional realism....I am hoping that what it is approximates, at least, to the quality of organization which I have felt in your work...

"Significant form," Clive Bell, discussed in chapters I and III.
3. Kandinsky, "On the Problem of Form" (1912). Theories of Modern Art, p. 157.
4. Brooker to FitzGerald, 10 January 1932.
5. Brooker writes:

...in one of his [Connor's] unpublished works [Nine Words that Rule the World], there is an idea of taking the highest feelings of the race, not its thoughts, in all ages, and using these as a basis for society. Research into what has stirred and contented men most. Connor, "Opening," p.5.
6. Brooker, "Art and Society," Yearbook of the Arts, 1926, p.xxvi.
7. John Baycroft, "A Message from Bishop Baycroft," Crosstalk, October 1990, p.7.
8. FitzGerald to Robert Ayre, quoted in "Painter of the Prairies," Weekend Magazine, Vol.8 No. 12 (1958), p.27, Winnipeg Art Gallery, artists' files.

I get so damned mad...this business of food and shelter and what-have-you enters the picture to interrupt it once again. Sometimes I.. have a terrible temptation to just suddenly walk away from all responsibility--or should I say, more reasonably, walk into the real responsibility?
9. Brooker, "A Plan of Life," 20 April 1924 (Box 1, Folder 16).
10. Sheldon Cheney, "Abstraction and Mysticism," Expressionism in Art, New York, 1934. Reprinted in Modern Art and Modernism.
11. Cheney's essay, written ten years after Brooker's notes, affirms Brooker's modernist thought. A common source for Brooker and Cheney may have been Kandinsky who used expressions such as "sought to achieve the acme of the ideal in absolute equilibrium."
Kandinsky, "On the Problem of Form," 1912.
12. Brooker, "When We Awake," p.16.

13. Hugh L'Anson Fausset, The Proving of Psyche, London: Jonathan Cape, 1929, p.41.
14. Raymond Chandler cited by Lawren Harris, "The Recent Work of LeMoine FitzGerald," 1945. Reproduced as Appendix A, In Seclusion with Nature, p.47.
15. Harris, *ibid*.
16. John O'London, "A Mysterious Quality in Art," T.P.'s Weekly 14 December 1906), p.778. FitzGerald Collection of Articles and Reproductions, F.S.C.
17. Brooker, 7 Arts, 27 July 1929. (Box 8, Folder 6).
18. Brooker, "When We Awake!" Yearbook 1929, pp.5, 17.
19. Related by Brooker in "7 Arts," Calgary Herald, 15 December 1928. (Box 8, Folder 6).
20. W.A. Deacon, The Citizen, Dec. (?) 1929 (Box 9, Folder 2).
21. "Yearbook of Arts," Toronto Daily Star, 28 November 1936.
22. The Canadian arts were so imbued with the vision and identity of Canada as landscape that often it is retained as a metaphor to describe the spiritual or intellectual content in Brooker's book:

"Think of the Earth is...one of the few novels we have had which have dealt honestly with the steep and lonely places of the mind..."
 W.S. Milne, "Adult Novel", a newspaper review.

 The word "land" is used synonymously with the name "Canada," often replacing the word "people":

 "Brooker's Yearbook for 1928-9...ought to be seen by everybody...by those...who think of Canada as a land of the spirit, a land in which the inner life of man can reach out to new findings."
 "Preferences," The Canadian Forum, Dec? 1929.

 and on occasion by Brooker himself:

 "...the thoughts of great men...have taken their place in my mind like great trees in the forest of thought which I have discovered."
 Brooker, "Biography of a Mind," p.1. (Box 7, Folder 1).
23. Northrop Frye, The Bush Garden. Essays on the Canadian Imagination. Toronto: Anansi, 1971, p.220.
24. Sandra Shaul posits Harris' modernism based in landscape references.
A Modern Image, pp. 16,10.
 Zemans suggests Brooker's non-objective paintings are not as easily read as Harris' symbolic images derived from nature.
 "World and Spirit Paintings," p.30.
25. George Woodcock, "Nationalism and the Canadian Genius," Artscanada, Dec/Jan 1979-80, p.5.

26. Edwin Avery Park, quoted by Brooker under his pseudonym Richard Surrey, "A Reply to Two Critics of Advertising," Marketing, 16 March 1929, p. 166.

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MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS
STANDARD REFERENCE MATERIAL 1010a
(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)

CHRONOLOGY

- 1888 Bertram Richard Brooker born 31 March in Croydon, Surrey, England.
- 1890 Lionel LeMoine FitzGerald born 17 March in Winnipeg.
- 1904 FitzGerald left school and was employed variously, including three months with an engraver. He worked as a window-dresser for Eaton's, and as an interior decorator.
- 1905 Brooker immigrated to Canada with his family and settled in Portage-la-Prairie, Manitoba. Brooker's early jobs included working as a labourer on the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, operation of a small movie theatre in Neepawa, writing scripts for Vitagraph, an American film production company, and working for a local newspaper in Portage-la-Prairie.
- 1909 FitzGerald attended evening classes at A.S. Keszthelyi's art school in Winnipeg.
- 1910 - 11 Brooker's trip to England via New York.
- 1912 FitzGerald married Felicia (Vally) Wright of Ottawa.
- 1913 Brooker married Mary Aurilla (Rill) Porter of Portage, Manitoba.
- 1921 Brooker joined staff of Marketing Magazine in Toronto.
- 1921-22 FitzGerald spent the winter session at the Art Students League in New York.
- 1924 FitzGerald began teaching at the Winnipeg School of Art.
Brooker became Editor and Publisher of Marketing Magazine.
- 1929 FitzGerald became Director of Winnipeg School of Art.
Brooker joined staff of J.J. Gibbons Advertising Agency.
- July Brooker saw FitzGerald at beginning and end of his trip west to Manitoba. They spent three days together sketching and talking.
- 27 December Both Brooker and Harris buy a FitzGerald drawing, from an exhibition

FitzGerald had at Dent's in Toronto.

1930 In the summer FitzGerald travelled to the United States to study modern methods of American art education, travelling also to Eastern Canada. He saw modern European art at every opportunity, visiting major museums and collections in Chicago, Pittsburgh, Washington, Philadelphia and New York City. He also visited Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto.

1931

c.20-27 Nov. Brooker saw the Pittsburgh International Art Exhibition at the Carnegie Institute, including French, Russian, Polish, Scandinavian, Italian, British and American Art.

1933

c.10 March Brooker in New York. Saw an international art exhibition from twenty countries in which Group of Seven exhibited.

After 20 March Brooker to New York.

Brooker to Winnipeg.

1934

April Brooker to New York. Saw a Matisse Exhibition, and exhibitions by Georgia O'Keeffe, Charles Burchfield, watercolours of modern poet, E.E. Cummings.
Saw Ballet Russe.

1935

February Brooker to New York

25 February Brooker on an art jury at the Buffalo Gallery.

1936

Brooker to Winnipeg.

Brooker wins the Governor General's Award for best fiction for his novel Think of the Earth.

1938

Before March Brooker and his wife Rill in New York.
Saw large exhibitions of American abstract painting. They saw French painting in several small exhibitions, and a Mexican exhibition.

FitzGerald to Toronto. Visits Brooker. Also to Ottawa.

1940

Brooker joined staff of MacLaren Advertising Co.

1942 Brooker receives a letter, no longer extant, from FitzGerald which contains an expression of his spiritual feeling.

January to February

FitzGerald and Arnold Brigden organize an exhibition at the Winnipeg Art Gallery of works by William Blake from Brigden's Collection.

July to August FitzGerald makes trip to west coast to Bowen Island near Vancouver to visit daughter Patricia. Spends summer sketching and drawing.

August FitzGerald meets Lawren Harris for the first time.

1943

July to August FitzGerald goes to Bowen Island, drawing and watercolour painting.

Late August FitzGerald spends four days in Vancouver visiting Lawren Harris and J.W.G. Macdonald.

1944

July to August FitzGerald to Bowen Island. Watercolour painting.

August FitzGerald visits J.W.G. Macdonald and Lawren Harris in Vancouver.

2 December Harris visits FitzGerald in Winnipeg. FitzGerald ill during the winter. Little painting accomplished.

1945

11 June FitzGerald ill for past three months. Little painting accomplished.

July Brooker visits FitzGerald in Winnipeg.

22 November Acquisition of Bertram Brooker's Sounds Assembling, 1928, for the Winnipeg School of Art.

December Brooker purchases a FitzGerald watercolour.

1947

1 September FitzGerald is granted one year's leave of absence from the Winnipeg School of Art. He receives financial support from Mr. J.W. McConnell, president of the Montreal Star Publishing Company.

5 November - 26 April 1948

FitzGerald spends winter on Vancouver Island at Saseenos.

1948

FitzGerald requests extension of his leave of absence for a further year.

26 April

FitzGerald has ten-day stay in Vancouver, visits Lawren and Bess Harris, B.C. Binning and Harry Adaskin.

May

FitzGerald returns to Winnipeg.

18 November

FitzGerald leaves for west coast to spend winter in West Vancouver.

1949

January

FitzGerald resigns from Winnipeg School of Art.

May

FitzGerald returns to Winnipeg.

1951

28 January to middle of May

The FitzGeralds visit their son Edward in Mexico City.

1953

July

FitzGerald to Toronto, to jury the art section of 1953 Canadian National Exhibition. Visits Bertram Brooker.

2 August

FitzGerald visits Ottawa, to see Harry McCurry, Director of the National Gallery of Canada.

August

FitzGerald visits Montebello and Irene Heywood Hemsworth.

1955

21 March

Bertram Brooker dies

1956

5 August

FitzGerald has a heart attack and dies in hospital.

EXHIBITIONS

1910

November

Roger Fry's first European modern art exhibition at Grafton Galleries, London.

1912

February

Futurists' Bernheim-Jeune Exhibition in Paris. Also travelling to London, Berlin, Amsterdam, Munich and many American cities (after 1914).

October

Roger Fry's second European modern art exhibition at Grafton Galleries, London, containing a Russian section which included Larionov and Gontcharova.

1913

February

The Armory Show, International Exhibition of Modern Art, New York and Chicago.

1915

Panama - Pacific International Exposition, in San Francisco, with a comprehensive survey of Futurism, and Boccioni's sculpture.

1921

8 Jan. - 6 Feb.

Paintings by contemporary American artists.
The Art Gallery of Toronto. Exhibition catalogue.

1922

7 Jan. - 6 Feb.

Paintings by French artists. Art Gallery of Toronto.
Exhibition catalogue.

9-31 March

Exhibition of Modern American and European Paintings.
Wanamaker Gallery in New York, including paintings by Larionov and Gontcharova.

November

British posters. Art Gallery of Toronto.

Fall

Exhibition of Russian art, Gallery Van Dieman, Berlin. Drier was there to purchase work.

1923

27 Jan. - 4 March

Paintings by contemporary American artists. Art Gallery of Toronto. Exhibition catalogue.

Large Berlin Art Exhibition, an exhibition of Russian art, including El Lissitzky's Proun Space.

Exhibition of Russian Paintings and Sculpture, at Brooklyn Museum, New York. Catalogue by Christian Brinton.

1924

9 Feb. - 2 March

Watercolours selected by the American Federation of Arts from the 1923-1924 combined exhibition of the New York Water Color Club and the American Water Color Society, and the Providence Water Color Club. Art Gallery of Toronto. Exhibition catalogue.

Société Anonyme exhibition of Russian modern art, New York, included work of Alexandra Exter, Kazimir Malevich, Vladimir Tatlin and others.

The Russian Art Exhibition, Grand Central Palace, New York, Organized by Igor Grabar, catalogue by Brinton.

December

International poster show. Art Gallery of Toronto

1925

2 Jan. - 14 Feb.

Exhibition of Contemporary British Painting, National Gallery of Canada.

4 April - 3 May

Art Gallery of Toronto. Exhibition catalogue for both galleries. [Composed mostly of works shown at the British Empire Exhibition, Wembley Park, London, 1924].

9 - 31 May

Works by contemporary Russian artists. Art Gallery of Toronto. Exhibition catalogue.

7-30 November

Paintings by contemporary American artists. Art Gallery of Toronto. Exhibition catalogue.

1-30 October

Catalogue of Modern British Prints, National Gallery of Canada. Organized by Brooklyn Museum, New York, 1924. Exhibition catalogue.

1926

Spring

Brooker sees modern Italian art in New York.

December

English, American and Canadian posters. Art Gallery of Toronto.

Philadelphia Sesquicentennial Exhibition

1927

- 8 Jan. - 6 Feb. Contemporary American Paintings. Art Gallery of Toronto. Exhibition catalogue.
- 22 Jan. [Bertram Brooker] Arts and Letters Club, Toronto
- 1 - 31 March Contemporary American Painting. National Gallery of Canada. Exhibition catalogue - folder. From the American Section of the International Exhibition, Pittsburgh, 1926.
- 2 - 24 April International Exhibition of Modern Art. Art Gallery of Toronto. Assembled by the Société Anonyme, New York, originating at Brooklyn Museum. Exhibition catalogue.
- 15-30 August William Blake Memorial Exhibition. National Gallery of Canada. [Perm. Coll.]
- 3 Dec. - 2 Jan. 1928 Group of European modern sculpture. Art Gallery of Toronto. Exhibition catalogue.

1928

- 7 - 30 March Contemporary American Painting. National Gallery of Canada. Organized by Art Institute of Chicago. Exhibition catalogue.
- 25 April - 25 May [Contemporary] British Paintings. National Gallery of Canada. Arranged in Great Britain for the National Gallery of Art. Washington. Exhibition catalogue.
- 29 Oct. - 12 Dec. Exhibition of Modern Woodcuts and Wood Engravings. National Gallery of Canada. Arranged in Great Britain. Exhibition catalogue.
- 3 - 28 November Paintings lent by the Phillips Memorial Gallery, Washington. Art Gallery of Toronto.

1929

- 12 - 25 Jan. Contemporary American Paintings. Art Gallery of Toronto. Exhibition catalogue.
- 2 - 31 March Drawings by Bertram Brooker. The Art Gallery of Toronto. Exhibition catalogue with introduction by Lawren Harris.
- 6-28 April Paintings by Joseph Stella. Art Gallery of Toronto. Exhibition catalogue.
- 18 Oct. - 20 Nov. Catalogue of Pictures in the National Loan Collection Trust. National Gallery of Canada; Art Gallery of Toronto. Arranged through Art Exhibitions Bureau, London. From Tate Gallery, London, 1928. Exhibition catalogues.
- 7 Dec.

- 31 Nov. - 3 Feb. 1930 Modern British Etchings. National Gallery of Canada. Arranged in cooperation with Art Exhibitions Bureau, London. Exhibition catalogue.
- 7 Dec. French paintings and sculpture from the Kraushaar Galleries, New York, and private collections. Art Gallery of Toronto. Exhibition catalogue.
- 1930 Baltimore Pan-American Art Exhibition. Canadians including Harris exhibited.
- 1931
- 14 - 30 March [Bertram Brooker Abstractions] Hart House Sketch Room, University of Toronto.
- 1935
- 18 May - 1 June An Exhibition of Drawings by Kathleen Munn, LeMoine FitzGerald, Bertram Brooker. Malloney Gallery, Toronto. Exhibition checklist published.
- 1937
- April [Bertram Brooker] The Picture Loan Society, Toronto.
- 1942
- January [Bertram Brooker] Hart House Art Gallery, University of Toronto. Exhibition checklist.
- 1943
- 12 - 25 February [LeMoine FitzGerald Drawings] Vancouver Art Gallery. Arranged by Lawren Harris.
- 1947
- September [Bertram Brooker] The Arts and Letters Club. Exhibition Checklist.
- 1949
- 13 Sept. - 2 Oct. FitzGerald Watercolours and Drawings. Vancouver Art Gallery.
- 7 Nov. [Bertram Brooker] Hart House Art Gallery, University of Toronto. Exhibition Checklist.

1951

17 February L. L. FitzGerald Paintings and Drawings. Winnipeg Art Gallery.

1956

18 March Bertram Brooker, O.S.A. (1885 [sic] - 1955)
Exhibition catalogue with introduction by LeMoine FitzGerald.
84th annual exhibition of the Ontario Society of Artists.

1957

19 Jan. - 1 Feb. Drawings: LeMoine FitzGerald. Picture Loan Society, Toronto.

30 March Memorial Room for LeMoine FitzGerald. Winnipeg Art Gallery
Catalogue with texts by Ferdinand Eckhardt and Lawren Harris.

1958

23 Feb. - 23 March FitzGerald Memorial Exhibition. Winnipeg Art Gallery; National
Gallery of Canada (and across Canada). Catalogue with texts by
Eckhardt, Harris and FitzGerald.

1963

April - May A New FitzGerald. Winnipeg Art Gallery. Catalogue, text by
Eckhardt.

1968

15 Nov. Bertram Brooker. The Arts and Letters Club, Toronto. Exhibition
Checklist.

1970

12 - 26 Sept. Bertram Brooker, 1888-1955. Drawings and Watercolours

1971

23 Oct. - 6 Nov. Bertram Brooker 1888-1955. The Morris Gallery, Toronto.
Illustrated catalogue published.

1975

31 Jan. - 13 April L. L. FitzGerald and Bertram Brooker: Their Drawings.
Catalogue, text by Patricia Bovey.

197824 March - 28 May

Lionel LeMoine FitzGerald: The Development of an Artist.
Catalogue. Texts by Bovey and Ann Davis. Winnipeg Art Gallery:
National Gallery of Canada (and across Canada).

198217 March - 15 April

FitzGerald as Printmaker: A Catalogue Raisonné of the First
Complete Exhibition of The Printed Works. Catalogue text by
Helen Coy.

10 Sept. - 31 Oct.

Lionel LeMoine FitzGerald: His Drawings and Watercolours.
Edmonton Art Gallery. Catalogue text by Maggie
Callahan.

APPENDIX I
BROOKER'S MODERNIST POETRY

Birk Sproxton has written that Brooker's poetry belongs to the modern tradition. The structures are open, conventional punctuation is set aside and the poems are composed of image sequences from everyday life. An examination of Brooker's poetry establishes his knowledge of Boccioni's writing.¹ Images from his poems Emergence and breakfast recall images from Boccioni's Futurist manifesto, although it will be noted that punctuation is not totally abandoned. It is the mind, instead of the Futurist's x-ray sight, which passes through objects:

let us see newness in flight
 the moment's formless act
 before it hardens into recognition
 and becomes butterfly, bottle, street-car tracks,
 or the definite, labelled shriek
 of a factory whistle

let us forget, for instance, street cars
 and when one plunges
 redly rushing out of a subway
 let us see newness of rushing redness
 pure emergent crimson
 and splintered with colourless oblongs
 that come afire with sunshine

let us see headlongness
 pouring itself rectangularly
 and feeling the jarring roar
 as the drums of our blood are felt
 beating the incredible swift inevitable march
 that is our own whole formless forward-going.

Extract from Emergence.

four minds passing through walls and air and trees and men and women
 and through the bodies of horses and of birds and through rocks
 and leaping the length of a day's journey
 in a moment
 oblivious of the collapsed space
 in their path

and reversing the flow of time
 putting latter things first
 and first things at the end

free of dimension
nowhere attached
or rigid
or taking up any room
or resisted by anything

Extract from breakfast.

Sproxton dates these poems from the same period of the early abstract painting: 1926 - until early 1930's. (Sounds Assembling: The Poetry of Bertram Brooker, ed. Birk Sproxton, Winnipeg: Turnstone Press, 1980).

Compare this extract from "Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto," 11 April 1910.

Who can still believe in the opacity of bodies, since our sharpened and multiplied sensitiveness has already penetrated the obscure manifestations of the medium? Why should we forget in our creations the doubled power of our sight capable of giving results analogous to those of the x-rays?...

The sixteen people around you in a rolling motor bus are in turn and at the same time one, ten, four, three; they are motionless and they change places; they come and go, bound into the street, are suddenly swallowed up by the sunshine, then come back and sit before you, like persistent symbols of universal vibration.

How often have we not seen upon the cheek of the person with whom we were talking the horse which passes at the end of the street....The motor bus rushes into the houses which it passes, and in their turn the houses throw themselves upon the motor bus and are blended with it.

Not only are the dynamic images of public transportation closely related, both "rushing" at break-neck speed, but the movement described is also "passing" through time backwards and forwards. Later events occur before what are logically first events, which are themselves collapsed backwards until later. There is passage through people, horses, houses, trees and rocks. Objects have no logical attachment. People and objects are burned or consumed by sunshine. Closely related verbs of action are an integral part of both the poetry and the manifesto; rushing, passing, plunging, springing, leaping, pouring, jarring, beating, in Brooker's poetry; rushing, passing, rolling, bounding, throwing, penetrating in Boccioni's manifesto. Both Brooker and Boccioni are released

into the realm of Taylor's ideal motion. The Futurist's moment of ecstasy, his contact with the "universal rhythm," is expanded to encompass both space and time.

1. Brooker makes a passing reference to "blasts and manifestos" in his Blake Lecture (1 November 1927), p.1 (Box 10, Folder 13).

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Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

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Fig. 46.

Fig. 47.

Fig. 43.

Naum Gabo, drawing for "Sculpture: Carving and Construction in Space."

Fig. 49.

Fig. 39.

Fig. 32.

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Fig 74

Fig. 75.

Fig 76.

Fig. 77.

Fig. 78

Fig. 79.

Fig. 80.

Fig. 55 (for comparison with fig. 80).

Fig. 81.

Fig. 83.

Fig. 84.

Fig. 82.

Fig. 85

Fig. 86.

Fig. 87.

Fig. 88.

Fig. 90.

Fig. 89.

Fig. 91.

Fig. 92.

Fig. 94.

END

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