



JACQUELINE METZ AND NANCY CHEW

19 still point/ from the centre outwards

Semiahmoo Library and RCMP District 4 Building, 1815 - 152 Street
September 2004

In the ground level lobby of the Semiahmoo Library and RCMP District #4 building, a unique installation created by Jacqueline Metz and Nancy Chew describes the accumulation of knowledge and the journey of ideas through a number of symbolic devices. Their conceptual approach for still point/ from the centre outwards involved two primary images: the mythic "tree of knowledge" and the rippling rings that emanate from a still point on a body of water. The piece includes growth rings made of metal typeface, text etched in granite, and a water surface with a still point and its outward ripples captured on glass.

The tree of knowledge symbolizes the powerful influence of thoughts, ideas and, in particular, the printed word. The water ripples represent the metaphoric journey through time and space of an individual or a culture. Together, the concepts stress the importance of knowledge and unfettered intellectual growth as well as the importance of the individual in the process.

A black granite base grounds the assemblage of interrelated components and symbolizes freedom of expression as a foundation of civil society. Text, including quotes about culture, literature and law, is etched chronologically from the centre out, like rings of time. The foundation is reminiscent of palimpsest, or recycled manuscript parchment, reminding us that ideas are derived from ideas.

Nancy Chew and Jacqueline Metz are professional site-specific public artists who have worked together since 1997; they have backgrounds as registered architects. Their practice explores ideas of place and perception, nature and culture. Metz explores similar interests through digital photography. Their highly acclaimed work has won numerous commissions in Canada and abroad for its simplicity and elegance.

City of Surrey Public and Community Art Collection

